

REPORT ON THE CREMATIONS FROM GREENLANDS FARM, WINTERBOURNE STOKE.

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Six cremations from three barrows were examined. Two, from Site A and Site C, were from disturbed central graves. The rest came from other parts of the burial mounds. Sites A and C are disc barrows and Site D a bowl barrow.

The bone was mostly well calcined and not very friable. The fragments varied in size from pieces over 10 cm. long down to those only a few mm. across. Some of the cremations must have been deliberately crushed after burning as no large pieces survive. Others appear to have been buried as they were; e.g. the cremation from Site D (NE Quadrant) has the mandible and maxilla preserved in sufficiently large pieces that almost the complete dental formula can be recorded.

Most parts of the body are represented in all the cremations except that from Site D (SE Quadrant) where only a few small fragments survived. Table 1 shows the weights of the different parts of the body identified and their relative proportions expressed as a percentage of the total weight of the identified bone fragments. For comparison the weight distribution for a complete skeleton of unburned bones is also given. It can be seen that in the cremations the long bones and skull are over-represented. This is as expected as they are the larger and more robust bones and when they break, do so in characteristic and easily recognisable ways. The less dense bones such as vertebrae completely disintegrate, and the small bones of the extremities break into unrecognisable fragments.

None of the cremations contained recognisable juvenile bones or teeth. None contained any obvious duplicated bones and so probably each represents the remains of only one adult individual.

Table 1 - Weights of cremations (gms.)

Burial	skull		vertebrae		long bones		hands & feet		scapulae		pelvis		ribs		patellae		misc. frags. weight	total weight
	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%	weight	%		
Site A Central Grave	55	38	1	1	75	49	5	3	3	2	2	1	13	8			108	262
Site A East baulk	129	29	5	1	264	58	20	4	5	1	14	3	15	3			282	734
Site C Central Grave	99	23	23	5	214	50	9	2	11	3	43	10	28	7			186	612
Site D SW Quadrant	207	25	19	2	442	53	32	4	9	1	37	4	87	10			797	1630
Site D SE Quadrant																	4	4
Site D NE Quadrant	198	23	59	7	456	53	45	5	7	1	20	2	70	8	4		1016	1875
Unburnt bones		20		11		40		9		2		7		8				

Site A (Central Grave)

There is medium osteo-arthritic lipping on one lumbar spine but no other traces of degenerative joint disease. One upper right molar (probably 71) has a dental abscess.

No sexing could be made but the age was at least 25 and most probably older.

Site A (East baulk)

No traces of degenerative joint disease were observed which indicates the remains were probably those of a young adult. No sexing could be made.

The central part of the mandible survived showing that both the lower canines were double rooted.

Site C (Central Grave)

Some vertebrae show medium bony lipping due to degenerative joint disease (osteo-arthritis). Part of the sacro-iliac joint is preserved and shows the same lipping.

No sexing could be made but the individual was at least 25 and most probably older.

Site D (SW Quadrant)

Very slight osteo-arthritic lipping was observed on the articulations of the vertebrae and long bones. Parts of 18 tooth roots were preserved, representing mainly anterior teeth.

No sexing was possible. The individual was adult.

The cremated remains also included some clinker.

Site D (SE Quadrant)

Only a few bone fragments were preserved. They are probably human.

Site D (NE Quadrant)

No degenerative joint disease was observed. The jaws were very well preserved as mentioned above, giving a dental formula

--- 6 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 -

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 ---

-- = area missing

Parts of the roots of 6 molars and 6 anterior teeth were also preserved.

This individual had healthy teeth and was probably a young adult.

The cremation also included a few charcoal fragments. These were identified as oak.