



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AND
EXCAVATION AT TYBURN, TADCASTER ROAD,
YORK**

EXCAVATION REPORT

Report Number 2014/17 March 2014



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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out between the 16th and 28th of November 2013 on behalf of Interserve during the excavation of a trench for the installation of an 11kv cable. The trench was monitored where it crossed the A1036, Tadcaster Road, from the Knavesmire to Little Hob Moor, a little to the south of the York Tyburn memorial (Figure 1). Burials associated with the Tyburn were encountered on both sides of the road. As a result two small archaeological excavation trenches were opened on the east and west sides of Tadcaster Road to facilitate excavation of the burials in an appropriate manner. On the east side, in Trench 1, a mass burial containing 11 individuals was found below that of a single inhumation. On the west side of the road, in Trench 2, two more graves were encountered with five skeletons in one and a further two in the other. A southwest branch to the main cable trench was also opened as part of the installation work. It was decided that this ancillary trench would be abandoned and re-routed on the discovery of further mass burials along its line.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	Interserve 33 Core Utility Trench, York Tyburn
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Report status	Final
Type of Project	Watching Brief
Client	Interserve
NGR	SE 59053 50392
Museum Accession No.	YORYM : 2014.5
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1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 16th November 2013 and the 28th of November 2013, YAT carried out an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of an electricity cable trench running across Tadcaster Road from the Knavesmire to Little Hob Moor (Figure 2), York (NGR: SE 59053 50392). This was to enable the recording and excavation of archaeological remains encountered during the excavation of the trenches, before the laying of electric cable ducting. The work was carried out on behalf of Interserve. The monitoring was required as the trench was located within York's Area of Archaeological Importance as defined in the Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and had the potential to encounter significant archaeological remains. On excavation of the trench it became apparent that it ran through the area of unknown area of burials potentially associated with the Tyburn gallows. In order to ensure that burials were appropriately excavated two small excavation trenches were excavated in the west and east sides of Tadcaster Road, in consultation with the City of York Archaeologist.

2 METHODOLOGY

The excavation of the utility trench was undertaken in two phases to allow the continued use of Tadcaster Road to road traffic. The first phase of excavation was from the middle of the road running southeast onto the Knavesmire. The carriageway and footpath were both excavated to a width of 1m and to a depth of 1.2m. Ducting was then laid and the trench backfilled before the road surface and path re-laid. The continuation of the trench, into Tyburn Wood on the Knavesmire, was increased in width to 2m continuing at a depth of 1.2m. A 2.8 ton tracked mechanical excavator, with a 1.0m wide ditching bucket, was used for all excavation work to the point where archaeological deposits were encountered at which point an archaeologist commenced hand excavation as necessary. Where no archaeology was found, and working space allowed, ducting was laid and the ground reinstated. In the event the remains of five individuals were encountered within the extent of the trench. One skeleton was wholly within the trench with the remaining four seen to continue beyond the trench to the southwest. Advice given by the City of York Archaeologist, John Oxley, was to extend the trench to enable the removal of human remains found largely within the line of the cable trench, specifically of those five initially encountered. Any further human remains found within the trench extension were to remain *in situ* excepting any lower limbs extending into the line of the cable trench and its maximum depth extent of 1.2m below ground level. These were to have their location recorded before immediate reburial within the trench extension.

The second phase of work again involved the excavation of the utility trench from the middle of Tadcaster Road, in this instance to the west. As before the carriageway was excavated to a width of 1m and to a depth of 1.2m. Ducting was then laid and the trench backfilled before the road surface was reinstated. A wider section of trench measuring 1.8m wide and 1.2m deep over a length of 4m was then excavated from west to east along the path on Little Hob Moor, through a gateway and across the pavement to join with the section excavated across the road. A branch measuring 1m wide then projected for a short distance to the southwest as part of a joint bay. Any human remains found within the line of this trench were to be recorded and retrieved.

Archaeological deposits excavated were recorded using the standard YAT single context recording system. All contexts were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at 1:10 or 1:20 as deemed appropriate. Digital photographs were taken of each context and general trench views were taken at regular intervals. The site records are currently stored with York Archaeological Trust under the project number 5730.

3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The site is located approximately 1.5 km to the southwest of the historic core of the City of York, and situated at a point less than 0.5 km south of the high point of a moraine ridge. The moraine was created during the last glaciation and runs across much of the low lying Vale of York (RCHMY 3, xxxvii – xxxviii). The utility trench lies broadly on an east to west axis across the A1036, Tadcaster Road, the line of a major Roman road, and approximately 30m south of the site of the York Tyburn.

The solid geology of the site is Bunter and Keuper sandstones, overlain by a drift geology that is generally boulder clay over lacustrine clays with deposits of sand and gravel, lying within and over the clay in places (Geographical Survey 1967).

There is a significant slope on a west to east axis across the site. The existing ground level is at around 15.85m aOD on the west side of Tadcaster Road. The road itself lies at between 15.67 and 15.5m aOD from which point the ground falls away steeply to c. 14.0m aOD in the east.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies approximately 1.5km to the southwest of the city walls, which are thought to correspond to the line of a Roman defensive circuit around the town (*Colonia*) southwest of the river Ouse (RCHMY, 49). The site also lies close to the line of the main southwest Roman approach road to York from Tadcaster (RCHMY 1, 3; Road 10), which is broadly followed by Blossom Street, The Mount, Mount Vale, and Tadcaster Road.

The principal evidence for Roman activity lies to the north of the site. This is largely in the form of burials in a large cemetery which extended along the line of the approach road from the southwest, from at least as far away from the Roman town as Trentholme Drive, about 0.9km from the city walls. Apart from excavations at Trentholme Drive in 1951-2 and 1957-9 (Wenham 1968), and excavations at 35-41 Blossom Street in 1989-90 (1989.21 and 1990.21), most information about the cemetery comes from chance discoveries made during 19th and early 20th century building work (Hunter-Mann 2005). To the southwest of the site further evidence for Roman activity has been found in the area of Dringhouses, including the continuation of the southwest approach road, associated settlement and a small cemetery (Macnab 1997).

A monument to York Tyburn is situated approximately 30m to the north of the site on the east side of Tadcaster Road. Records of executions in York show that the Tyburn was used as a place of execution by the Crown's justice from 1379 to 1801. These records demonstrate that the scale of executions ranged from that of individual and small groups to larger groups of ten, twenty or more and that not all of these individuals were recovered by their families for burial at their own parish.

In the mid 17th century during the English Civil War, a sconce, or fort, was situated on the Mount, northeast of the site (Hunter-Mann 2005).

5 RESULTS

Results are given below listed by trench number, trench 1 being the excavation on the east of Tadcaster Road and trench 2 that on the west. The results are presented stratigraphically starting with the most recent contexts. A complete list of contexts observed and their descriptions is detailed in Appendix 2.

5.1 Trench 1

This trench was excavated from the centre of Tadcaster Road on a northwest to southeast axis. It was situated approximately 30m south of the Tyburn monument. The initial part of the trench, cutting into the road and pavement measured 1.0m wide. A sequence of build-up deposits relating to the modern road surface was revealed, no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Beyond the pavement the trench extended for a further 22m at a width of 2.0m. Turf and topsoil was observed to a depth of approximately 0.20m below ground level, this overlaid loose dark brown subsoil which extended a further 0.20m in depth. A layer of re-deposited natural was identified in section (Figure 3), varying in depth from 0.21m to 0.40m, this in turn overlaid a buried soil, context 1020. The buried soil was encountered at c.13.50m aOD (Plate 2) and varied in thickness from 0.16m to 0.22m. This deposit was seen to overlie context 1007, the backfill of a grave cut 1008.

A grave was encountered at 13.24m aOD. The north and west extent of the grave was disturbed during the machine excavation of the trench. What remained intact of the grave cut (context 1010) measured 1.80m long, 0.50m wide and 0.20m deep. A single inhumation (context 1002) was found in the grave, it was laid supine on a southwest to northeast orientation, (the head located to the southwest and feet to the northeast). It was clear that grave 1010 cut into the north corner of an earlier grave (context 1008), Plate 3 shows the left leg of skeleton 1002 overlying the skull of the eastern most skeleton (context 1012) found at the north end of grave 1008. The entirety of skeleton 1002 lay within the extent of the cable trench thereby necessitating its recovery. In addition despite the west side of grave cut 1010 being lost during the course of machine excavation it was clear that skeleton 1002 was the sole occupant of that grave, as no other human remains were discovered at the same depth or could be seen in the south west facing section of the trench.

Cut 1008 was a large north to south aligned grave found to contain the remains of eleven individuals. Four of these skeletons (contexts 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012), situated at the north end of grave cut 1008, were found to lie largely within the impact area of the cable trench, however they also extended beyond it to the southwest. On consultation with the City of York Archaeologist, John Oxley, it was decided that the recording and recovery of contexts 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012 in their entirety was desirable and some extension of the trench was to be undertaken if necessary. It was also stipulated that beyond the original trench line any further human remains encountered were to be recorded, but only uncovered where appropriate and were not to be removed from the trench. To facilitate this work the trench

was extended along its southwest side adjacent to the location of graves 1008 and 1010. The extension measured 4.5m x 2.3m on a northwest to southeast axis. Here evidence for a further seven individuals (contexts 1005, 1006, 1013, 1014, 1015, 1016 and 1017) within grave 1008 was found. Lying largely outside the impact area of the cable trench these remains were only partially uncovered. The skeletons were initially identified where their skulls were visible at the top of the unexcavated part of grave backfill (context 1007), and later in the areas where their legs intersected with the skeletons that were recovered (contexts 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012).

The majority of grave cut 1008 was exposed in the trench extension however both the southwest and southeast corners continued a little beyond the excavation area. It was roughly square in plan and measured 2.90m by 2.85m with a depth of 0.50m. The highest surviving point of the grave cut was at 13.19m aOD.

The eleven skeletons encountered in grave 1008 were laid out in two neat rows, one at the south end of the grave where five individuals were found, the remaining six at the north end. The six at the north end of the grave (contexts 1003, 1004, 1005, 1006, 1011 and 1012), were each laid out supine on a north to south alignment. Of these skeletons four were exposed and recovered in their entirety (contexts 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012), with a further one (context 1005) partially exposed before reburial. The limbs of each skeleton located at the north end of the grave were seen to overlap with their neighbours. The overlapping is a clear indicator that they were placed into the grave from its east side one at a time (Plate 4). Excavation of skeletons 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012 further revealed that they overlay at least four of the five individuals identified at the south end of the grave (Plate 5).

The relative positions of the skeletal remains indicate that those at the south end of the grave were the first to be laid out. This was done on a south to north alignment, the opposite of the skeletons at the north end of the grave. Of these, four were partially exposed (contexts 1014, 1015, 1016 and 1017) during the excavation of the skeletons at the north end of the grave. The positioning of the legs indicates that they were laid out supine. An order to their deposition could not be determined as none of the exposed bones overlapped.

After the recovery of skeletons 1002, 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012 but before backfilling of the trench extension, the lower legs of skeletons 1015 and 1016 were removed from the line of the cable trench and reburied with the remainder of each relevant individual.

Enough of their layout could be determined to give a good impression of how most of these seven individuals related to each other within the confines of the grave. Plate 5 shows skeletons 1011, 1012, 1015, 1016 and 1017 situated from the southeast corner of the grave, it demonstrates to an extent the order in which they were laid into the grave. Skeletons 1013 and 1014 lie at the south end of grave 1008 and although unexcavated they were identifiable by skull fragments seen in the grave backfill. A gap of approximately 0.90m lies between the skulls of skeletons 1013 and 1014. This is much greater than the 0.20m – 0.40m spacing seen between the other skeletons. A gap of this size infers the location of an additional, as yet undiscovered, individual, the remains of which lie below the depth limit of excavation. After the recovery of skeletons 1002, 1003, 1004, 1011 and 1012 but before backfilling of the trench extension, the lower legs of skeletons 1015 and 1016 were removed from the line of the cable

trench and reburied with the remainder of each relevant individual. All other remains were left *in situ* as they would not be impacted by the continuation of the utility trench works.

The stratigraphic sequence and spatial distribution of the graves in Trench 1 indicates that the mass grave was of a single burial event with the lone burial probably following soon after, probably while the location of the larger grave remained visible on the ground. The buried soil identified in the section of Trench 1 seals over the top of the mass grave where it provides a clear indicator of the graves shallow depth at the time of burial, the base of the grave being a mere 0.50m below the buried soil.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was excavated on a southeast to northwest axis from the centre of Tadcaster Road, deviating slightly south, but remaining on a southeast – northwest axis, at the junction with the path across Little Hob Moor. The initial section of the trench was cut into the road, here measuring 1.0m wide and 1.2m deep. A sequence of build-up relating to the modern road surface was revealed, no archaeological deposits were encountered.

At the junction with the path an area 4.0m long and 1.8m wide was excavated as far as the gate. This section of the trench was the focus of excavation on the west side of the road. Beyond the gateway the trench continued to the northwest, cutting through the path, at a width of 1.0m with an additional branch extending to the southwest. The trench was dug to a depth of 1.2m throughout. The positioning of the trench at the junction of an actively used footpath and cycle route across Little Hob Moor with Tadcaster Road did not leave any scope for extending the trench beyond that of the cable trench. A procedure was agreed with the City of York Archaeologist whereby if human remains were encountered only those parts directly impacted by the cable trench would be recorded and recovered.

19th and 20th century activity appears to have related to access onto Little Hob Moor. The existing gatepost, which appears to be of an early 20th century date, had been set in to the top of a substantially deeper posthole, context 2011, most likely that of an earlier gate post. The existing path, its bedding and rubble levelling account for the initial 0.60m to 0.80m below ground level which lies at 15.85m aOD (plate 6). A number of modern services were also found to run across the line of the trench. Those encountered in the southwest branch truncate to an extent beyond the depth of excavation. Services encountered in the main east – west line of Trench 2 do not extend below a depth of 15.20m aOD (Plate 6).

In the southwest facing section of the trench at its far northwest end part of a substantial cut feature (context 1015), probably a pit, was seen (Plate 6). This feature had a vertically cut southeast side and was seen to contain a number of sandy and clayey deposits tipping down to the northwest. No dateable material was recovered from this pit. It lay stratigraphically below the path levelling deposits and appeared to cut the west side of a grave cut 2009 (Figure 4).

A thin layer of re-deposited natural (context 2017) was seen in section below the path make-up. It overlay the backfills of two graves (contexts 2004 and 2009) found within the extent of the 1.8m wide part of Trench 2 (Figure 4). Although no dateable material was recovered from this deposit it appears to be similar to context 1020, a buried soil that overlies the mass grave 1008 in Trench 1.

The southwest end of a grave cut (2004) extended in to Trench 2. From the northeast side of the trench it ran for a length of 0.50m on a northeast – southwest axis. It measured 0.70m wide and was observed in section to extend from 15.06m aOD down to 14.48m aOD (Figure 4). Below a backfill 0.58m thick (context 2001) two skeletons (contexts 2002 and 2003) were uncovered within grave 2004 and seen to have been laid supine on a southwest to northeast alignment (Plate 8). The skulls and a small part of the upper torso and arms of skeletons 2002 and 2003 were recorded and recovered. Any other surviving elements of these individuals lay beyond the northeast extent of the excavation.

Adjacent to the southeast side of the gateway leading on to Little Hob Moor and extending across the width of Trench 2 was grave cut 2009. The northeast end of the grave lay beyond the extent of the excavation and the southwest end of the grave was truncated by posthole 2011. The northwest side of the grave was disturbed during the course of machine excavation of the cable trench, from which point parts of several burials were accidentally removed. Grave cut 2009 was aligned northeast to southwest and measured 1.60m long. In section it measured 2.14m wide and 0.45m deep with its highest point at 15.36m aOD (Figure 4). Parts of five individuals (contexts 2005, 2006, 2007, 2012 and 2013) were identified and recorded in 2009; none of these skeletons lay in their entirety within the excavation area, and as discussed below only parts of each could be recovered.

Skeleton 2005 was at the top of the sequence of five individuals recovered from grave 2009. It was aligned northwest to southeast and laid supine. The majority of the upper part of this individual lay beyond the northeast extent of the trench and could not be recovered. The right hand was tucked under the right side of the pelvis and was recovered along with the left leg and foot as well as parts of the lumbar vertebrae and sacrum. The right leg and foot were lost during the course of machine excavation of the trench. Skeleton 2006 was laid supine up against the southeast side of the grave with its legs and right arm underlying the left leg of skeleton 2005 (Plate 9). The skull and upper part of the torso lay beyond the northeast extent of the trench, in addition the lower parts of the right arm and leg including the hand and foot were lost during the course of machine excavation of the trench. Skeleton 2007 was situated towards the southeast side of the grave. It was laid supine on a southeast to northwest alignment (Plate 9). Again parts of the body were lost during machine excavation. The skull, right arm and hand along with the majority of the torso, pelvis and upper part of the legs were recovered. The lower parts of the legs extended beyond the northeast edge of the trench. Only the right leg and part of the pelvis of skeleton 2012 were found, their size is indicative of a juvenile (Plate 9). Skeleton 2012 was found underlying the left side of the torso of skeleton 2007 on a southeast to northwest axis and appeared to have been laid prone or on its right side. Also underlying skeleton 2007, in this instance the right femur, was a foot, context 2013, part of which extended in from the northeast side of the trench. No other part of this individual was encountered within the excavation area.

Beyond the northwest side of the gateway on to Little Hob Moor a branch off the main line of the trench was excavated. This was 1.0m wide and ran from the west corner of the main trench for a short distance to the southwest. Two live cables were encountered running across the width of this part of the trench down to a depth of c.1m. These services were seen to

disturb an unknown number of individuals, which may represent another mass grave. Further excavation of this branch was halted and it was subsequently backfilled.

6 DISCUSSION

The opening of a substantial extension on the southwest side of Trench 1 has made it possible to see close to the full extent of two different graves, and in doing so develop some understanding of how they relate to each other and fit into their surroundings. Without seeing a broader picture in Trench 1 it would have been more difficult to form a cohesive overview of the graves in Trench 2 where only a narrow window was available.

The stratigraphic sequence and spatial distribution of the graves in Trench 1 indicates that the mass grave (context 1008) was of a single burial event with the lone burial (context 1010) probably following soon after while the location of the larger grave remained visible on the ground. The buried soil identified in the section of Trench 1 (context 1020) seals over the top of the mass grave where it provides a clear indicator of the graves shallow depth at the time of burial, the base of the grave being a mere 0.50m below the buried soil. Although the majority of grave backfill 1007 was left unexcavated, enough of the layout of the eleven individuals in grave 1008 could be determined to give a good impression of how they related to each other within the confines of the grave. Plate 5 shows skeletons 1011,1012,1015,1016 and 1017 situated in the southeast corner of the grave, it demonstrates to an extent the order in which they were laid into the grave. Skeletons 1013 and 1014 lie at the south end of grave 1008 and although unexcavated they were identifiable by skull fragments seen in the grave backfill (context 1007). A gap of approximately 0.90m existed between the skulls of skeletons 1013 and 1014. This is much greater than the 0.20m – 0.40m spacing seen between the other skeletons. A gap of this size infers the location of an additional, as yet undiscovered, individual the remains of which lie below the depth limit of excavation.

The care with which individuals were laid into the graves does vary, the greatest contrast being between those in mass graves 1008 and 2009. In both cases the graves survive to a depth of less than 0.5m, the overlying stratigraphy suggests neither would originally have been substantially deeper, and individuals were orientated in a combination of north-south and south-north. What stands out is the orderly arrangement of individuals in grave 1008 in comparison to the jumbled dump of those in grave 2009.

There is extensive evidence of a large Roman cemetery following the line of the main southwest Roman approach road to York from The Mount up to the city walls. Typically for a Roman cemetery advantage had been taken of a prominent road side location, in this case a widely visible aspect when approached from the southwest. In contrast to The Mount the Tyburn area does not share such favourable characteristics for Roman burial activity, and although close to the known southwest extent of The Mount Roman cemetery, the graves found near the Tyburn appear unlikely to be a continuation of that cemetery. The topographical setting of the two sites contrasts considerably with a steep rise in ground level between them of around 4-5m, this is further exaggerated in the area of the Tyburn by the low lying Knavesmire on the east side of the road. Significantly no cultural material, deliberately deposited or casually discarded, was recovered from any of the grave backfills in Trench 1 with those in Trench 2 yielding only seven sherds of medieval and post medieval Ceramic Building

Material. This paucity of material contrasts with Roman burials found in the vicinity of The Mount, the burials in that cemetery are broadly representative of those of the Roman period in that an abundance of finds were associated with them. In addition, despite the acidic nature of the sandy material backfilling the graves, the bone was found to be in relatively good condition, itself suggesting a more recent date for interment.

The close proximity of the Tyburn monument, approximately 30m to the north of Trench 1 on the east side of the road, is particularly relevant. The likelihood is that all of the graves are of individuals executed at the Tyburn during the medieval and post-medieval period. This is supported by a small quantity of datable material, seven sherds of Ceramic Building Material, recovered from the graves in Trench 2. In addition the graves follow the northeast-southwest alignment as the road rather than the typical east-west alignment of Christian burials, this may be an indication that criminals were being interred within them. Records show that the Tyburn was in use from 1379 to 1801 with a mix of single and multiple executions, there is also the suggestion that not every executed individual was taken away for burial at their own parish. A nearby location for burial is likely and fits with the individual burial in grave 1010 and the mass graves 1008, 2004 and 2009.

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APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE

Item	Number of items
Context sheets	47
Levels register	4
Photographic register	-
Levels register	-
Drawing register	1
Original drawings	12
B/W photographs (films/contact sheets)	-
Colour slides (films)	-
Digital photographs	158
Written Scheme of Investigation	-
Report	1

Table 1 Index to archive

APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST

Trench	Context no.	Description
1	1000	Unstratified
1	1001	Skeleton. Same as 1002.
1	1002	Skeleton. Single inhumation in grave cut 1010.
1	1003	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1004	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1005	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1006	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1007	Upper backfill of grave 1008. Firm, mid brown sand.
1	1008	Cut of a mass grave.
1	1009	Backfill of grave cut 1010. Firm, mid brown sand.
1	1010	Grave cut.
1	1011	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1012	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1013	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1014	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1015	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1016	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1017	Skeleton. In grave cut 1008.
1	1018	Lower backfill of grave cut 1008. Compact, light yellow brown sand.
1	1019	Build-up. Firm, light yellow brown silty sand. Re-deposited natural.
1	1020	Build-up. Loose to friable, mid red brown silty sand. Buried soil.
1	1021	Natural. Compacted loose, mid yellow brown sand.
2	2000	Unstratified.
2	2001	Backfill of grave cut 2004. Hard, dark orange brown sand and clay.
2	2002	Skeleton. In grave cut 2004.
2	2003	Skeleton. In grave cut 2004.
2	2004	Grave cut.
2	2005	Skeleton. In grave cut 2009.
2	2006	Skeleton. In grave cut 2009.
2	2007	Skeleton. In grave cut 2009.
2	2008	Lower backfill of grave cut 2009. Loose, mid brown grey, silty sand.
2	2009	Cut of a mass grave.
2	2010	Backfill of posthole 2011. Loose, reddish brown silty sand.
2	2011	Posthole cut.
2	2012	Skeleton. In grave cut 2009.
2	2013	Skeleton. In grave cut 2009.
2	2014	Backfill of pit cut 2015. Light grey brown to reddish yellow silty sand.
2	2015	Pit cut.
2	2016	Levelling. Loose to friable, mid brown silty sand.
2	2017	Levelling. Firm, light brown grey, silty sand.
2	2018	Upper backfill of grave cut 2008. Firm, light brown, silty sand.
2	2019	Dumping/Levelling. Firm, mid reddish brown, clay.

2	2020	Loose, gritty sand, gravel and cobbles.
2	2021	Soft, mid yellow sand.
2	2022	Natural. Compact, mid to dark yellow brown and red brown clayey sand.

Table 2 Context list

APPENDIX 3 – CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL ASSESSMENT

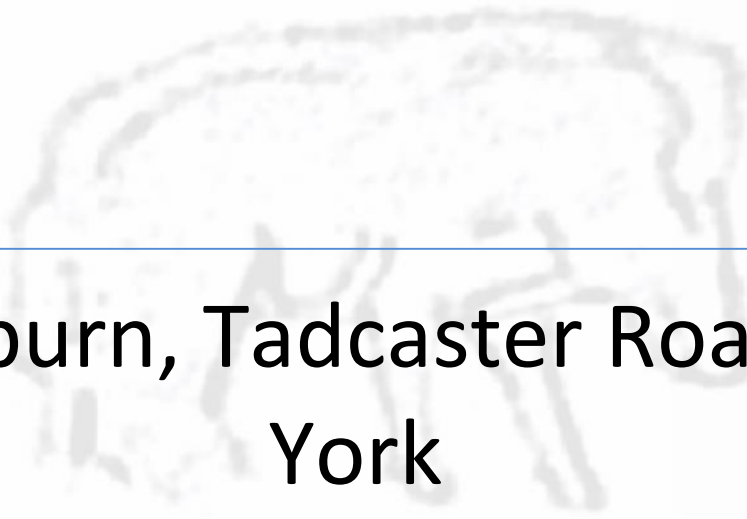
By J.M.McComish

A small quantity of ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from the site (7 sherds weighing 385g). The CBM was recorded to a standard YAT methodology, where by material is recorded and only retained if it is deemed to have further potential for research. In the case of this particular site the material was mainly of value for dating the contexts in question; the small number of sherds present offered no potential for any further research, and they were therefore discarded.

The CBM from the site was of medieval or post-medieval date. Context 2003 yielded a small sherd of brick, which could be medieval (14-16th century) or later date. Context 2010 yielded 5 sherds of 13-16th century plain tile and a single sherd of 16-18th century brick. All the fabrics present were typical for York as a whole, as were the surviving dimensions (thickness on 5 sherds).

Context	Fabric	Form	Weight	Thickness	Comments
2003	M23	Medieval brick?	10	0	No edges, could be later.
2010	M6	Plain	100	14	4 non adjoining sherds
2010	M1	Plain	50	20	
2010	M37	Post medieval brick	225	0	Slop moulded

APPENDIX 4 – OSTEOLOGICAL ASSESSEMENT



**Tyburn, Tadcaster Road,
York**

Osteological Assessment

York Archaeological Trust

REPORT: DL001/14

PROJECT ID: 5730

OSTEOLOGY REPORT

York Archaeological Trust

Dickson Laboratory for Bio-Archaeology
Block 2.01 • Kelvin Campus • West of Scotland Science Park
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Tyburn, Tadcaster Road, York; Osteological Assessment
York Archaeological Trust

Report by: Ruth Whyte
Edited by: Jennifer Miller

Date: 03/04/2014



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1. Summary

Rapid assessment of the human remains recovered from Tyburn, Tadcaster Road, York was undertaken in order to assess the potential for further analysis, and to gain a preliminary understanding of the age, sex and pathology of the twelve individuals recovered. Of these, the complete analysis of eleven individuals would be of great benefit to provide a greater understanding of the health and population dynamics in evidence within this assemblage.

2. Introduction

The excavation of 12 individuals at Tyburn, Tadcaster Road, York was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust between the 16th and 28th of November 2013. The work was undertaken on behalf of Interserve during the excavation of a trench for the installation of a 11kv cable. The excavated remains were submitted to the York Archaeological Trust Dickson Laboratory for Bioarchaeology for preliminary rapid assessment.

3. Methodology

The human remains recovered were analysed using rapid assessment techniques. The skeletal elements from each inhumation were examined in order to assess the level of their completion and preservation. The criteria available for the aging and sexing of each individual were noted, along with any evidence of pathology. The objective of this was to assess the potential of the remains for complete osteological analysis, in addition to gaining a preliminary understanding of the age, sex and pathology of each individual.

When assessing the sexing potential for each adult individual the presence of five sexually dimorphic cranial features were recorded; the nuchal crest, the mastoid process, the supraorbital margin, the supraorbital ridge, and the mental eminence.

The presence of four sexing elements of the pelvis was also recorded; the greater sciatic notch, the ventral arc, the subpubic concavity and the medial aspect of the ischiopubic ramus.

Methods to determine juvenile sex have high error rates, and are widely discouraged (Saunders 2000, Scheuer and Black 2000, Roberts 2009). Therefore in the case of juvenile remains in this assemblage sex determination will not be attempted.

As with sex, the presence of a number of different aging factors across the body was noted in order to assess the potential for further analysis. For juvenile individuals age is estimated through observation of the stages of fusion and epiphyseal closure for each skeletal element, and the stage of dental eruption. Thus the presence of dental elements and unfused epiphyses was noted. For adult remains, the presence of the auricular surface, the surface of the pubic symphysis, dental elements and cranial sutures was recorded.

For each individual all major skeletal elements were examined closely in order to ascertain the presence of any pathological conditions. This was done in reference to Brothwell (1981), White and Folkens (2005), Waldron (2009) and Roberts and Manchester (2010).

4. Results

4.1 SK1 (1001), (1002)

Completion & Preservation

SK1 was noted to be approximately 60-75% complete. Most main skeletal elements were present, but not all were complete. As is to be expected, the larger and more robust elements such as the long bones and vertebrae were better represented than smaller bones such as carpals and tarsals. The preservation was middling to fair. Most elements displayed very little surface degradation and low levels of post depositional wear. However many elements did demonstrate some level of fragmentation. Most long bone ends were cracked or incomplete. The skull and pelvis were both recovered in pieces, but could be re-fitted to aid analysis. The ribs were particularly badly fragmented, but this is not unusual.

Age

Precise aging of SK1 would be possible to a high degree since most aging factors are present. Although both the skull and pelvis are fragmented, the required features and surfaces for aging are intact. Additionally many unfused long bone epiphyses were present, indicating that the individual was a sub-adult. Initial observations of the epiphyses and teeth suggest that the individual, although sub adult, is at the higher end of this bracket; potentially in their late teens.

Sex

Sexing of the individual may be possible, depending on the exact age. Generally sub-adult individuals are not suitable for sex determination, because many of the key differentiating features of the skeletal system do not appear until puberty. However if the age of the individual is found to be towards the end of pubescent change, a sex may be determinable with some caution. The key features needed for sexing are certainly preserved in this instance.

Pathology

A fair amount of dental pathology was observed, including dental caries, calculus and possible gum disease.

SK2 (1003)

Completion and Preservation

SK2 was approximately 80-90% complete. The representation of elements followed expected patterns, with fewer small bones of the hands and feet being recovered than larger elements. The preservation was generally good. The ends of the long bones were incomplete and cracked in most cases, but this was mostly superficial surface damage. It is not thought that this will have a major impact on any future metric research such as stature measurements. Very little bone surface degradation was observed, and the bones appeared robust. Some elements were partially fragmented.

The most fragmented elements were the skull and ribs. This is not uncommon, since these are particularly susceptible to crushing from pressure post decomposition.

Age

The individual was observed to be an adult. Further aging would be possible in the future. The pelvis is fragmented but both pubic symphysis and auricular surface are present. This suggests that the age could be estimated to a high degree of accuracy, within approximately 10-15 years of age range.

Sex

Initial inspection indicated that the individual could be male. More complete sexing analysis would clarify this. Most pelvic and some crania sexing features are present, suggesting that sex could be determined with some confidence.

Pathology

Various dental pathological conditions were observed, including dental caries, calculus and possible gum disease. A possible fracture was noted in one rib.

SK 3 (1004)

Completion and Preservation

SK3 was approximately 50-60% complete. Most major elements were present, but many were incomplete. The hands and feet were particularly well represented in comparison to other elements such as the sacrum, vertebrae and scapulae. Most long bones were cracked and incomplete. This will limit the extent of metric analysis such as stature, although it should be noted that stature measurements should still be possible to some degree. The surface texture on many bones was fragile and splintering was recorded.

Age

Initial analysis confirmed that the individual was adult. The pelvic features needed for aging are mostly present and complete. Pubic symphysis and auricular surface texture analysis will be possible, giving an indication of age at death to within a 10-15 years range.

Sex

Two sexing criteria were present and intact in the cranium. A further three possible sexing criteria were also present in the pelvis. From initial inspection, the cranial features appeared indeterminate. Rigorous analysis of the pelvic features should reveal a sex with more certainty.

Pathology

The individual revealed a number of pathological conditions. Early signs of degenerative joint disease were noted in the vertebral column. Other slight degenerative wear was noted generally across the whole skeleton. A healed trauma in

the distal end of the right humerus and a healed break in one of the ribs were also noted.

SK4 (1011)

Completion and preservation

SK4 was approximately 80-90% complete. Almost all long bones were present and complete. This will aid further metric studies to determine stature of the individual. Other major elements such as the skull and pelvis were partially complete, with some fragmentation. The ribs, hands and feet were notably well represented and preserved.

Age

The individual was observed to be an adult. Further aging will be possible to a reliable degree, since all possible skeletal age indicators are present and intact. It will be possible to establish an age at death to within a 10-15 year period.

Sex

The majority of relevant criteria are present and should lead to a well informed sexing. Initial observations show mixed results; a feminine skull and a masculine pelvis. Complete analysis will help define sex with greater confidence.

Pathology

Degenerative joint disease was observed in the spinal column and more generally across the body. Some signs of potential rib trauma were noted. Dental disease was also noted, including gum disease and dental calculus.

SK5 (1012)

Completion and preservation

SK5 demonstrated approximately 60-80% completion. Most major elements were present in part, but not all were complete. Larger elements such as long bones were better represented than smaller elements, such as those of the hands and feet. The elements present were generally fairly preserved. The lower limbs were particularly fragmented, as were the scapulae, ribs, and the frontal and zygomatic elements of the cranium. Other than some partial fragmentation, the bones were robust in handling and demonstrated very low levels of post depositional wear.

Age

SK5 was noted to be adult. Most aging criteria are present. In particular, both the auricular surface and pubic symphysis are present, which will facilitate surface texture analysis. This will give an estimate of age at death to within a 10-15 year period.

Sex

Initial analysis of SK5 suggested that the individual was male. Most pelvic and some cranial sexing features are present. This indicates that full analysis should reveal an accurate depiction of the sex of this individual.

Pathology

A number of interesting pathological conditions were noted when examining SK5. An unhealed break was noted in the left arm. The healing stage of this suggests that it happened less than a month before death. Additionally small signs of degenerative joint disease were noted in the spinal column, as well as some light rib trauma and dental disease.

SK6 (2002)

Completion & Preservation

SK6 was estimated to be <10% complete. A small minority of elements were represented; parts of the skull, scapulae, clavicles, cervical vertebrae, right hand and ribs. These all originated from the upper to upper right of the body. The remaining elements were beyond the limit of excavation. No complete long bones were present, thus stature measurements will not be possible for this individual. The elements present were all extremely fragmented. They were noted to be delicate and fragile, with a significant amount of surface splintering.

Age

The individual was found to be adult. No aging criteria were amount the elements recovered. Consequently further analysis is unlikely to provide a better estimation of age at death.

Sex

Only two cranial sexing criteria were present. Both of these suggest that the individual is male.

Pathology

The only pathological conditions noted were common dental issues, such as gum disease and dental calculus.

SK7 (2003)

Completion & preservation

The completion of SK7 was very poor, with less than 10% of the skeleton recovered. The only elements present were parts of the skull, scapula, clavicle, ribs, cervical vertebrae and right humerus. The majority of these elements were incomplete. The right humerus was complete, meaning that an estimation of stature will be possible. The bones present were all from the upper torso. The remaining parts of the individual lay beyond the extent of the excavation. The preservation of elements was poor; most were fragmented and relatively fragile.

Age

The individual was adult. No pelvic elements were recovered for exact aging. This will greatly limit a more exact estimation of age at death. Cranial sutures and dental elements were recovered. These may provide a more general indication of the age of this individual.

Sex

The absence of pelvic elements greatly limits the accuracy of sexing for SK7. Yet most of the cranial sexing features are present. Consequently it is likely that an estimation of sex would be possible. Initial observations of these elements suggest the individual could be male.

Pathology

The only pathology observed at this stage of analysis was common dental issues, such as calculus and caries.

SK8 (2005)**Completion & preservation**

SK8 was estimated to be <15% complete.. The hands and feet were unusually well represented for such an incomplete individual. The elements present were badly preserved and many were highly fragmented, such as the right radius, left lower limb, and pelvis. The pelvis and sacrum were notably friable. Most elements also appeared abraded and worn at the edges.

Age

The individual was found to be adult. The auricular surface is present, thus a more accurate estimation of age at death will be possible.

Sex

The only sexing criterion present is the greater sciatic notch of the pelvis. This is not complete. Consequently it may not be possible to reveal the sex of this individual.

Pathology

No pathological conditions were observed at this time.

SK9 (2006)**Completion & Preservation**

SK9 was approximately 40-50% complete. A good number of major elements were present; upper and lower limbs, pelvis, and lower vertebrae. The skull was not present. Almost all long bones were present and complete; consequently stature measurements will be possible to a high level of accuracy. The preservation of the bones was fair; most were robust when handled and demonstrated very little surface wear. A few of the long bones had slightly flaky surfaces in places.

Age

The individual was recorded as adult. Both the auricular surface and pubic symphysis are present. Therefore an estimation of age at death to within a 10-15 year period should be possible.

Sex

The absence of the skull limits the sexing criteria available. However all pelvic sexing criteria are present, which will give an accurate indication of the individual's sex. Initial observations suggest that SK9 could be male.

SK10 (2007) Completion & Preservation

SK10 was approximately 40% complete. Most major elements were partially represented, particularly the skull, pelvis and upper limbs. The lower limbs were more poorly represented. However, the preservation of the elements was relatively poor. The majority were extremely fragmented, particularly the skull and ribs. The long bones were all broken in at least one place. The surface texture of many elements was flaky and many displayed slightly worn edges. A number of elements were fragile in handling.

Age

The individual was found to be adult. The only available aging criterion is the auricular surface, yet this should give a more in-depth estimation of age at death.

Sex

A small number of cranial and pelvic sexing criteria are present. Therefore it should be possible to establish the sex of the individual with a good degree of accuracy.

Pathology

A small amount of degenerative joint disease was noted in the vertebral column. A possible rib trauma was also noted.

SK11 (2012)**Completion & Preservation**

SK11 was less than 5% complete. The only elements represented were the pelvis, a patella and parts of the right lower limb. These were all only partially present. The elements were highly fragmented, in particular the right lower limb.

Age

The individual was sub-adult. Analysis of the epiphyses in the right lower limb may reveal a general indicator of age at death.

Sex

Sexing of the individual will not be possible as it is of sub-adult age.

Pathology

No pathology was observed.

SK12 (2013)**Completion & preservation**

SK12 was estimated to be <3% complete. Only 8 tarsal bones were recovered. The preservation of these elements was poor; most were incomplete and all had worn edges and a porous surface texture.

Age

The individual was adult. Any future analysis will not provide further insight beyond this.

Sex

Sex is undeterminable.

Pathology

No pathological conditions were noted.

Summary of results

Initial assessment of the inhumations lifted from Tyburn has revealed a number of results. Of the twelve individuals ten (SK2-10, SK12) were found to be adult and two were found to be sub-adult (SK1, SK11). The majority of these could be assigned to more exact age categories upon further analysis.

An initial observation of the ten adults has revealed that five of them are possible males. A further four are likely to be assigned to a sex upon further analysis.

The range of pathological conditions across the assemblage is rich, including broken limbs, rib trauma, degenerative conditions and dental disease.

Overall of the twelve individuals SK1-11 have good potential to reveal further information to varying degrees.

5. Discussion

Due to the preliminary and rapid nature of the current analysis, few definitive conclusions can be made at this juncture. Some general statements can be made; that within the assemblage there is a combination of both adult and sub-adult individuals, and that thus far no individuals have been identified as female. What has been established is that the majority of the inhumations are well represented and preserved, and consequently have high potential to reveal a significant amount of further information about the identities of these individuals.

Any further information gained in this vein would have extrinsic value. As stated in the excavation report (Savine 2014) the location of the inhumations has strong implications. The remains were recovered from four grave cuts; two mass graves, a dual grave, and an individual grave. The location of these grave cuts in relation to the Tyburn monument strongly suggests that the individuals were executed at the Tyburn during the medieval and post-medieval period. This is supported by their non-Christian burial alignment, which may indicate that they are criminals.

When this information is combined with the preliminary results of this report, the need for analysis is apparent. If complete osteological analysis is performed, not only will a better understanding be gained of the identities of these individuals, but also of any relationship to each other; particularly so in the case of the mass graves. Already, small nuances highlight the relevance of combining these initial results with the knowledge of their burial conditions. That two juveniles were potentially hanged as criminals, and that one adult had a newly broken arm at the time of execution, already demonstrates the interpretive value of these remains.

The knowledge gained from further analysis of these individuals has the potential to have real impact of our understanding of the archaeology of York, and the medieval to post medieval period more generally.

It is estimated that complete osteological analysis of the skeletal assemblage would take a further 13 days.

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FIGURES

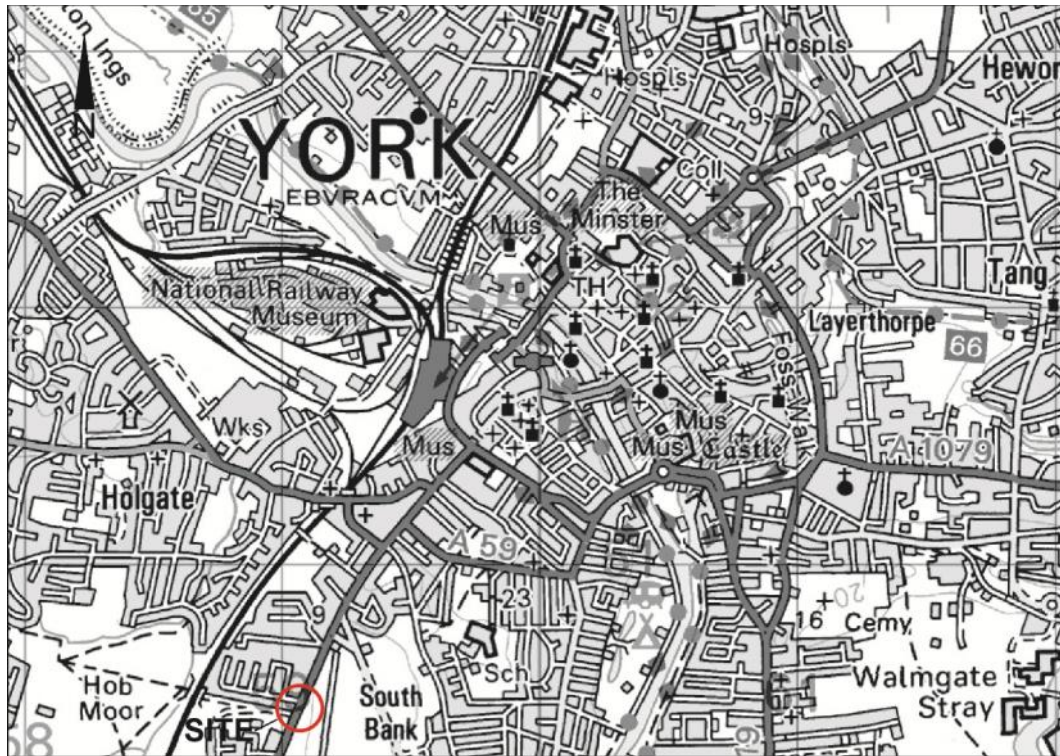


Figure 1. Site location

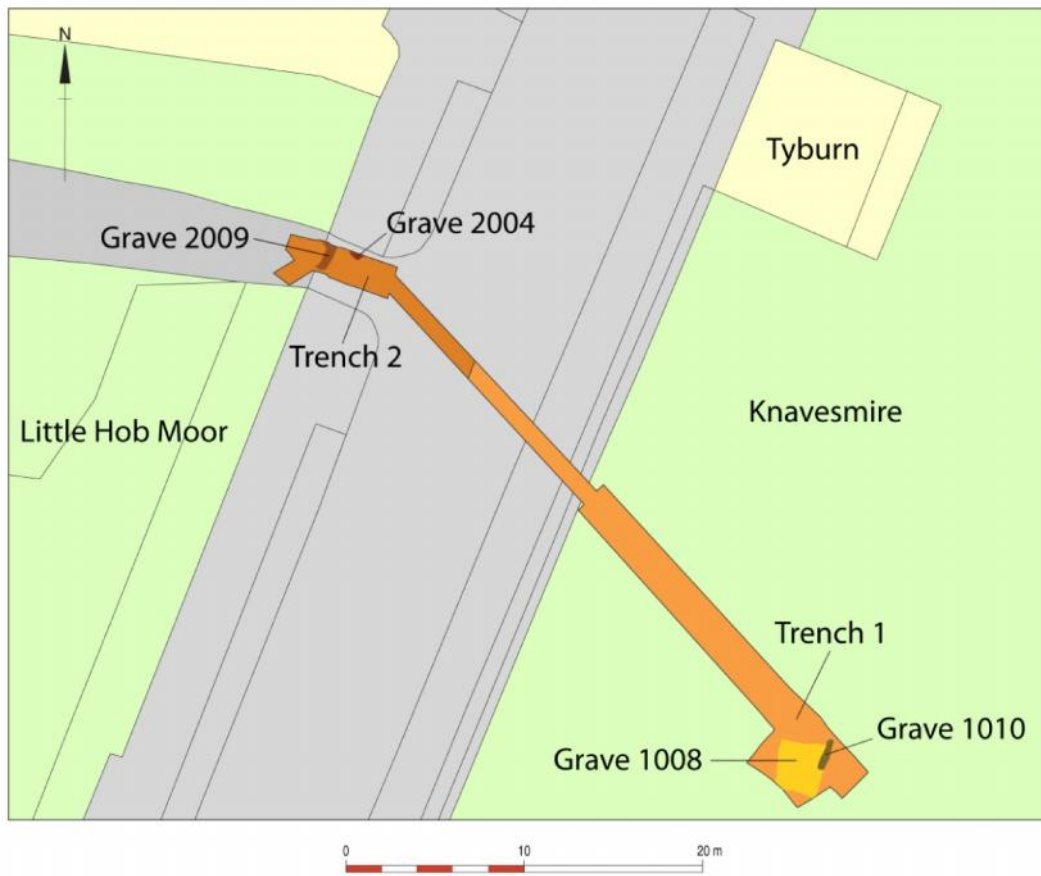


Figure 2. Trench location

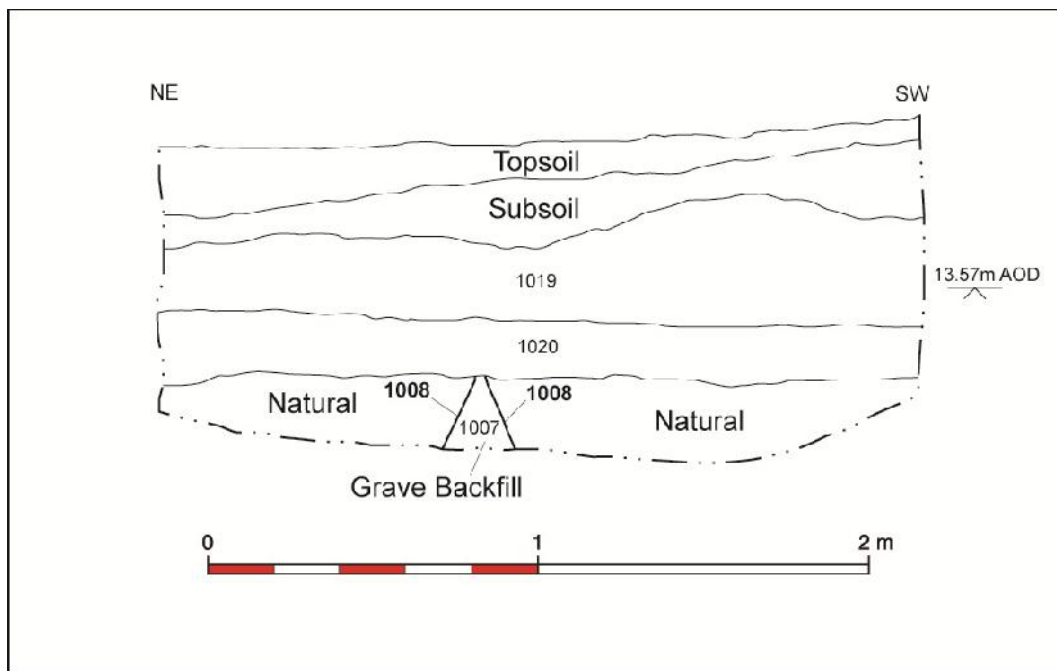


Figure 3. Trench1, northwest facing section

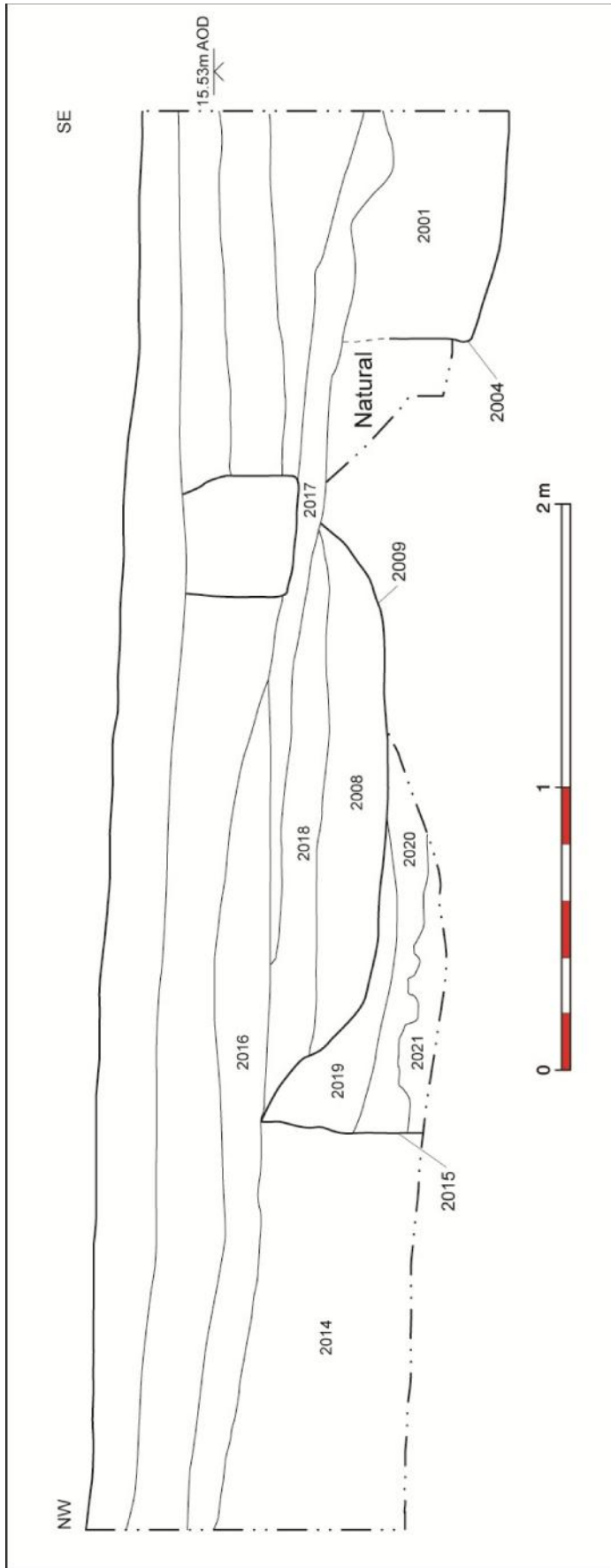


Figure 4. Trench2, southwest facing section

PLATES



Plate 1. Trench 1, northeast facing section of through east side of Tadcaster Road

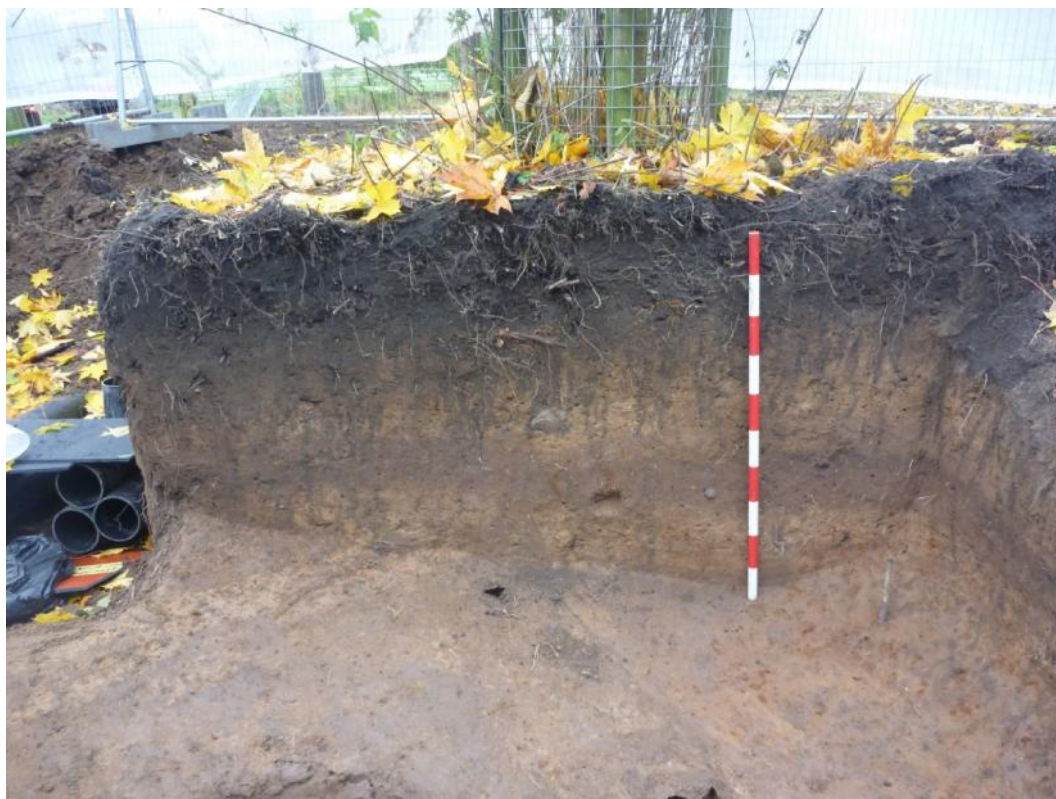


Plate 2. Trench 1, northwest facing section in trench extension



Plate 3. Trench 1, Skeleton 1002 in grave 1010 cutting into the NE corner of mass grave 1008



Plate 4. Trench 1, detail showing overlapping arms of Skeletons 1003 (top of frame) and 1004



Plate 5. Trench 1, skeletons 1011 and 1012 overlying the lower limbs of skeletons 1015, 1016 and 1017



Plate 6. Trench 2, south facing section showing the path make up sequence, a large pit to the west (left of frame) and grave cut 2009



Plate 7. Trench 2, east end of south facing section, grave cut 2004 is in the centre



Plate 8. Trench2, grave cut 2004



Plate 9. Trench 2, burials in grave cut 2009