1. ABOUT THE DATASET

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Title: Anatomy of a Ritual: An examination of Romano-British ritual through the lens of the Nescot College shaft in Ewell, Surrey, England. Raw data.

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Organisation(s): University of Reading.

Rights-holder(s): Ellen Green

Publication Year: 2025

Description: Data on the human and animal remains recovered from the Former Nescot College Animal Husbandry Site in Ewell Surrey. The remains date to the late 1st Century CE/ early 2nd Century CE. Data was collected to investigate the ritual processes involved in creating the assemblage. Raw data includes: site code, context number, context type, species, anatomical element, side, zonation (following Knüsel and Outram 2004 and Dobney and Reilly 1988), state of fusion, butchery, gnawing, root etching, abrasion/erosion (following McKinley 2014), post and peri-mortem fractures, pathology, age (where possible), sex (where possible), Oxford histological index (where applicable), articulated/disarticulated (where known), Notes: macroscopic, Notes: microscopic (where applicable), Box number, Associated Bone Group (ABG) number, was a photo taken.

Cite as: Green, E.(2025) Anatomy of a ritual: an examination of Romano-British ritual through the lens of the Nescot College shaft in Ewell, Surrey, England. Raw data. University of Reading. Dataset. <https://doi.org/10.17864/1947.001385>

Related publication:

Green, E. 2023. ‘Death shall not part us: a potential case of the curation of human remains from Roman Ewell’ *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 105, 65-73.

Green, E. 2024. ‘Fragmented analysis, fragmented interpretation: The necessity of integrated faunal and human analysis for identifying and understanding ritual contexts’ *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 58, 104697

Green E. 2024. ‘Life from death: Multi-species fertility rituals within a Romano-British ritual shaft in southern England’ Oxford Journal of Archaeology 44 (1), 101-118.

Green, E. 2024. ‘The body mine: a review of human remains within Romano-British well and shaft deposits and evidence of multi-stage mortuary ritual in first century AD Surrey’ Britannia 55, 117-144

Green, E. 2025. ‘The pathology of sacrifice: dogs from an early Roman ‘ritual’ shaft in southern England’ International Journal of Paleopathology 49, 37-49

Green, E. J. 2025. Anatomy of a ritual: an examination of Romano-British ritual through the lens of the Nescot College shaft in Ewell, Surrey, England. PhD thesis, University of Reading

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2. TERMS OF USE

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3. PROJECT AND FUNDING INFORMATION

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Title: Anatomy of a Ritual: An examination of Romano-British ritual through the lens of the Nescot College shaft in Ewell, Surrey, England (PhD project)

Dates: September 2020- January 2025

Funding organisation: None

Grant no.: N/A

4. CONTENTS

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File listing

Nescot\_Database.xlsx

If relevant, include here any codebook or data dictionary for the dataset or constituent files, providing the following information as required:

- 11956 rows

- 22 variables (site code, context number, context type, species, anatomical element, side, zonation (following Knüsel and Outram 2004), state of fusion, butchery, gnawing, root etching, abrasion/erosion (following McKinley 2014 and Dobney and Reilly 1988), post and peri-mortem fractures, pathology, age (where possible), sex (where possible), Oxford histological index (where applicable), articulated/disarticulated (where known), Notes: macroscopic, Notes: microscopic (where applicable), Box number, Associated Bone Group (ABG) number, was a photo taken

Abbreviations used:

Ff = fully fused

Pf = partially fused

Uf = unfused

Na = not applicable

Y = present

N = not present

OHI = Oxford histological index

R = right

L = left

Artic = Articulated

Disartic = Disarticulated

Macro = Macroscopic

Micro = Microscopic

MC = Metacarpal

MT = Metatarsal

M= Molar

PM = Premolar

I = indeterminate

T = Tarsal

5. METHODS

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[This section should describe how the dataset was generated. The following information should be included as relevant:

-All bones were visually inspected with the naked eye and the use of a magnifying glass.

- A small subset (n=8) bones were examined microscopically using a optical microscope to assess bioerrosion. Details of this can be found in Green, in press.

Species identification was achieved using a combination of the University of Reading reference collection, Hillson 2012, Amorosi 1989, Prummel 1987 and White and Folkens 2005. Undiagnostic fragments were sorted into large mammal and medium mammal where possible.

Dobney and Reilly 1988 (for faunal) and Knüsel and Outram 2004 (for human) were used for zonation.

In the case of peri- and post-mortem fractures, the angle, surface texture, and colour of the fracture was recorded, allowing fractures to be sorted into ‘fresh’ fractures (which occurred when the bone contained the majority of its collagen), dry fractures (which occurred when the bone had lost most of its collagen but still within the past), and modern fractures (which occurred either during excavation or post-excavation handling) (Outram 2001.

Abrasion and erosion was recorded using McKinley 2004

Pathological lesions were recorded following Roberts and Connell 2004

Age estimation was done using epiphyseal fusion following Scheuer and Black (2000), Sumner-Smith (1966) and Amorosi (1989)

Sex estimation was only done for the humans, and followed Buikstra and Uberlaker 1994.

Amorosi, T. 1989: *A Postcranial Guide to Domestic Neo-natal and Juvenile Mammals: Identification and Aging of Old World Species* (Oxford, BAR Int. Ser. **533**).

Buikstra, J. and Ubelaker, E. 1994: *Standards for the Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains* (Fayetteville).

Dobney, K. and Rielly, K. 1988: A method of recording archaeological animal bones: the use of diagnostic zones. *Circaea* **5**(2), 79–96.

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Outram, A. 2001: A new method to identifying bone marrow and grease exploitation: why indeterminate fragments should not be ignored. *Journal of Archaeological Science* **28**, 401–10.

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Roberts, C. and Connell, B. 2004: Guidance on recording palaeopathology. In M. Brickley and J. McKinley (eds.) *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains* (Reading), 34–9.

Scheuer, L. and Black, S. 2000: *Developmental Juvenile Osteology* (London).

Sumner-Smith, G. 1966: Observations on epiphyseal fusion in the dog. *Journal of Small Animal Practice* **7**(4), 303–11.

White, T. and Folkens, P. 2005: *The Human Bone Manual* (London).