

# The Towton Battlefield Archaeological Survey Project

would like to thank the following organisations for their assistance  
with the project



GEOSCAN RESEARCH



York Osteoarchaeology Ltd

Royal Armouries, Leeds

University of Bradford

GSB Prospection Ltd

Channel 4 Television

Granada Television

Lion Television

Geoscan-Research

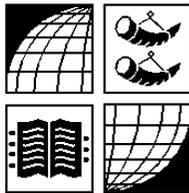
Garmin Instruments

Strata Software –Penmap

Society of Antiquaries, London

The Towton Battlefield Society

North Yorkshire County Council



University of Bradford



# UNKNOWN SOLDIERS: THE DISCOVERY OF WAR GRAVES FROM THE BATTLE OF TOWTON AD1461

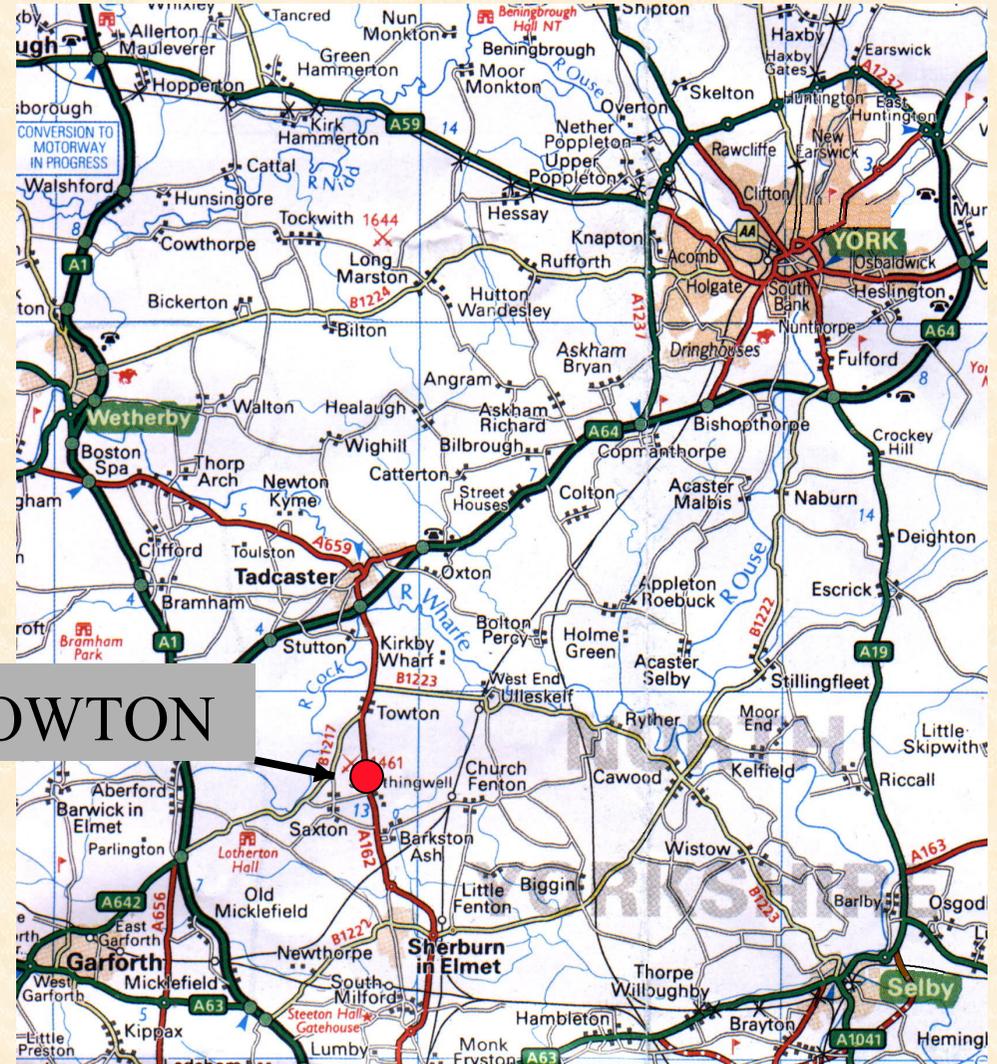


## **UNKNOWN SOLDIERS: THE DISCOVERY OF WAR GRAVES FROM THE BATTLE OF TOWTON AD1461**

**The Towton Battlefield Archaeological Survey Project, now in its tenth year, owes its continued existence to the perseverance of many people, but especially that of Arnold Aspinall. Without his extensive help, the generous use of his free time and his unfailing interest this project would never have made it beyond its very difficult initial years.**

**So – was it worth ten years of unpaid back-breaking work?**

**The following paper summaries the archaeological work carried out, as part of the project, at Towton Hall from 1996 - 2006**

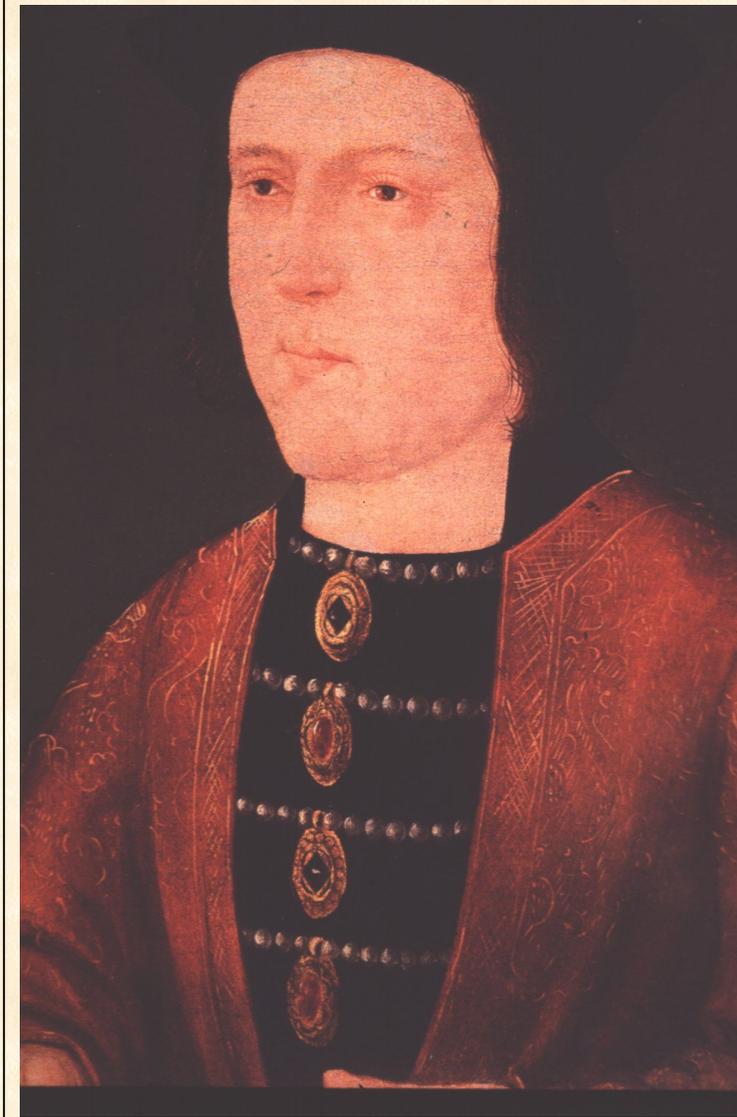


TOWTON

Site location



King Henry VI  
House of **Lancaster**



Edward, Earl of March  
House of **York**

**Royal Armouries Analysis Record**



**Job Code: AM 1717**

**ARTEFACT:**

Arrowheads from Towton Battlefield

Date: 1461

Collection: Simon Richardson

Inventory No: 1-22

Contact: Simon Richardson/Tim Sutherland

Date received: 10/3/2002

**ANALYSIS REQUEST:**

X-radiograph for recording

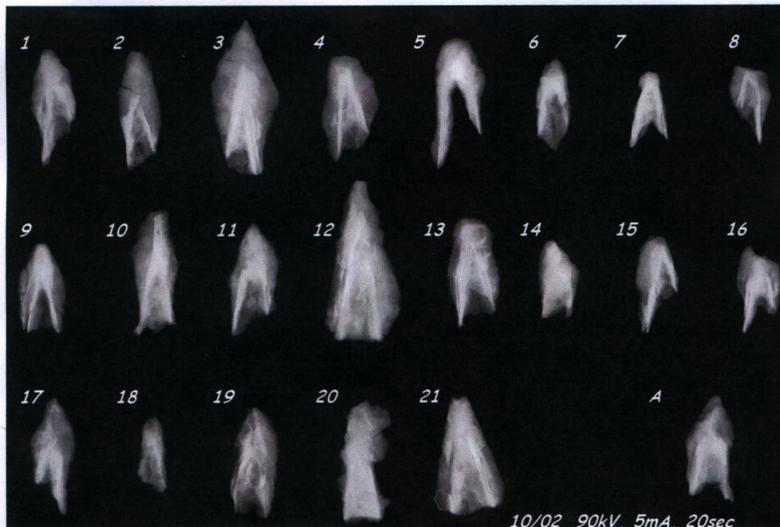
**ANALYSES:**

X-Radiographs: 10/02, 17/02

**UNDERTAKEN BY:** David Starley

**RESULTS :**

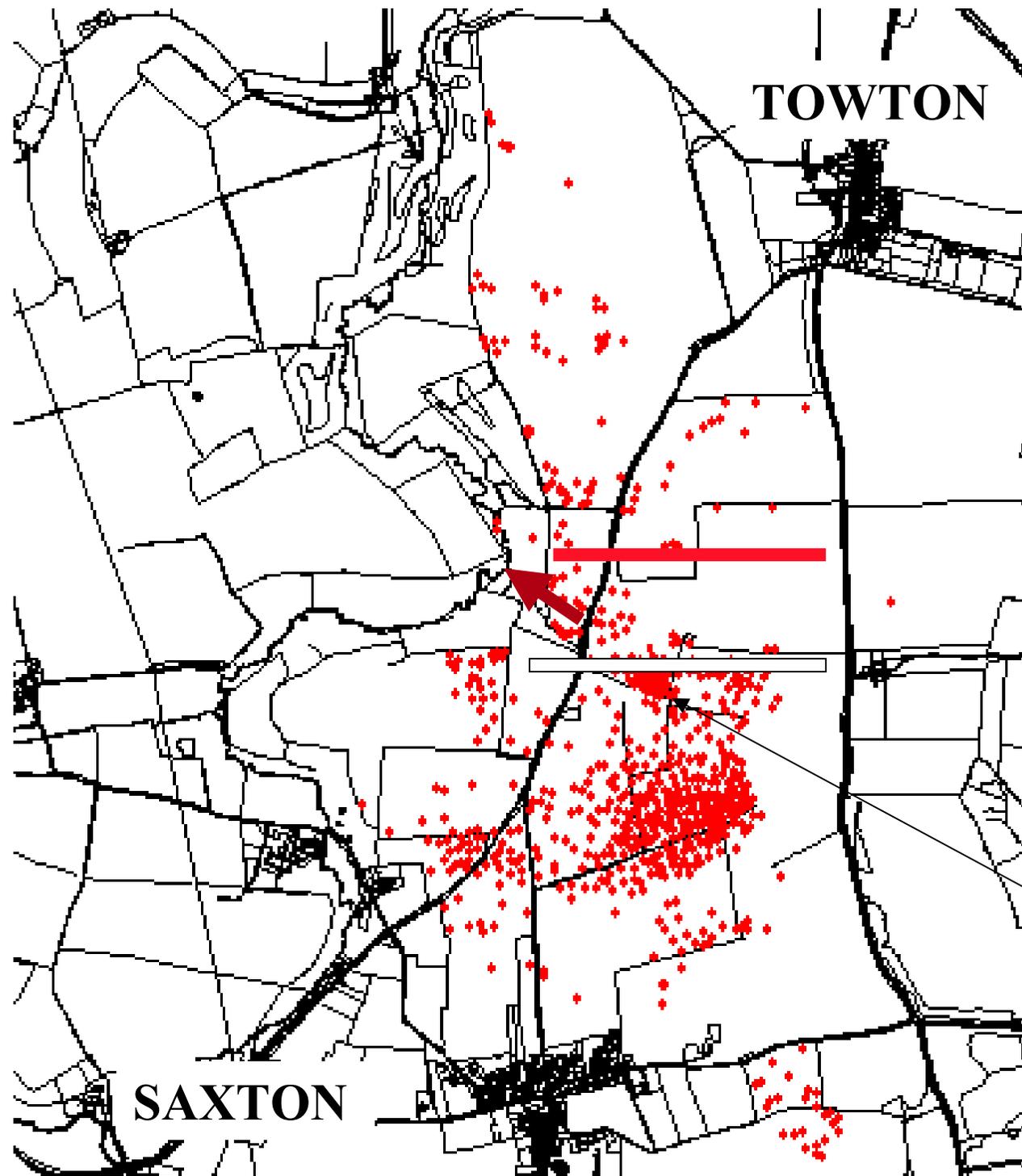
	mass (g)	max height (mm)	max width (mm)	magnetic response		mass (g)	max height (mm)	max width (mm)	magnetic response
1	5.5	37.6	14.8	weak	12	18.4	51.4	25.0	good
2	5.4	38.6	14.0	good	13	8.2	35.4	17.4	weak
3	12.8	50.1	22.0	weak	14	4.4	25.2	13.5	weak
4	6.2	34.4	19.1	strong	15	4.7	31.3	13.9	good
5	7.2	42.4	20.6	strong	16	4.0	28.5	15.4	good
6	4.3	29.4	11.8	weak	17	5.2	37.3	15.3	weak
7	3.3	24.9	12.6	good	18	2.1	24.5	10.1	weak
8	2.9	36.6	14.6	good	19	5.8	35.2	15.9	weak
9	5.1	29.3	16.2	good	20	10.3	39.1	17.8	weak
10	7.8	41.4	15.9	strong	21	10.6	38.0	23.0	strong
11	6.5	36.4	17.5	good	A	6.4	33.5	16.3	good



10/02 90kV, 5mA, 20sec

A small selection of battle-related copper alloy and ferrous artefacts located by Simon Richardson during the metal detecting survey



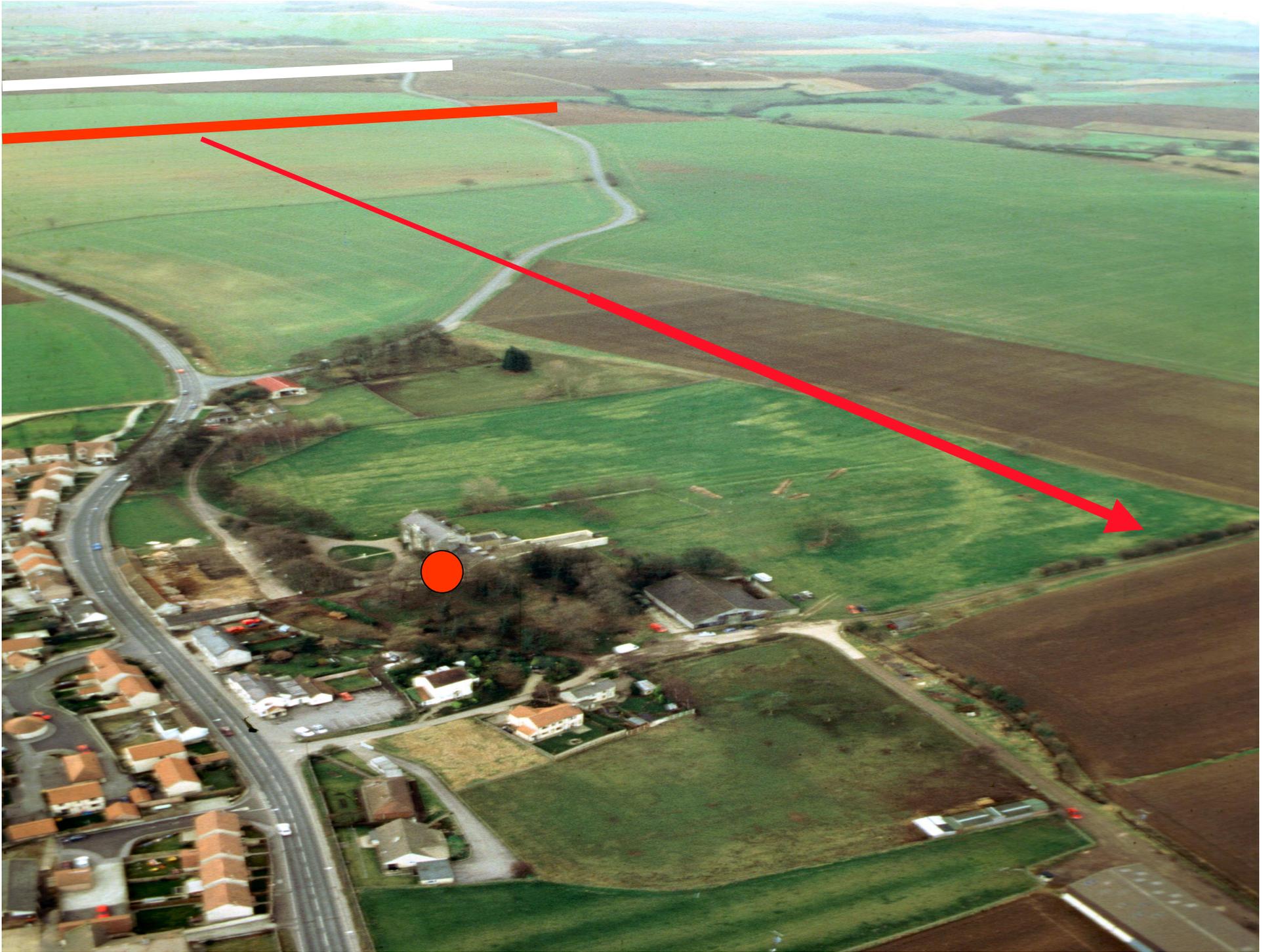


Locations of  
fifteenth  
century  
artefacts, by  
coordinate

Location of recently  
discovered mass  
graves

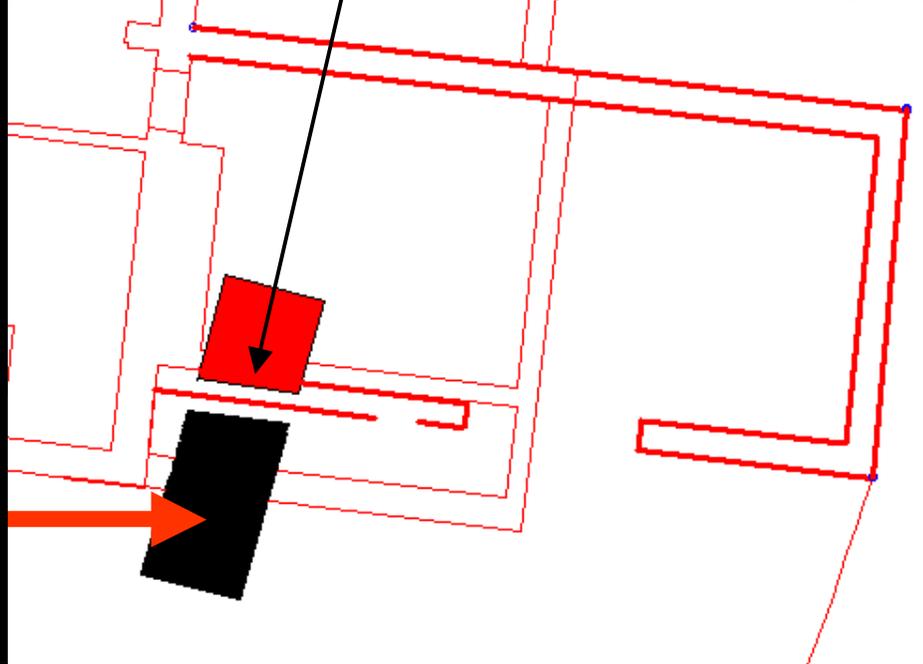


The rout across the the Cock Beck



# Towton Hall pre -1996



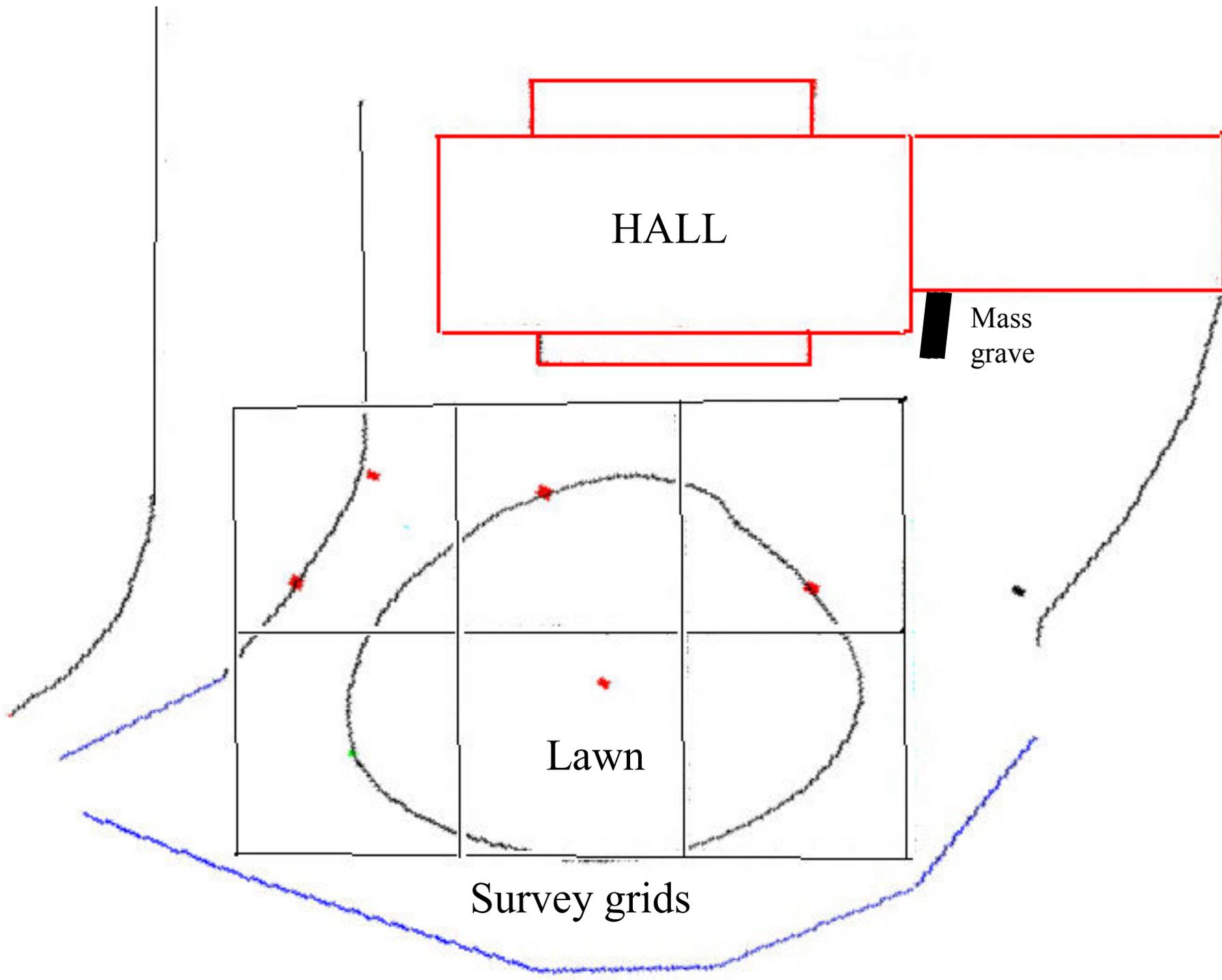




New work at Towton Hall, 1997



Arnold Aspinall carrying out an earth resistance survey at Towton Hall in 1997



HALL

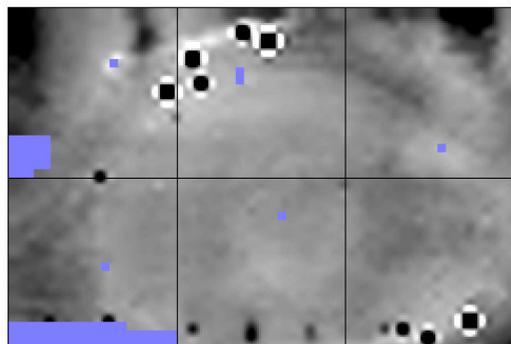
Mass  
grave

Lawn

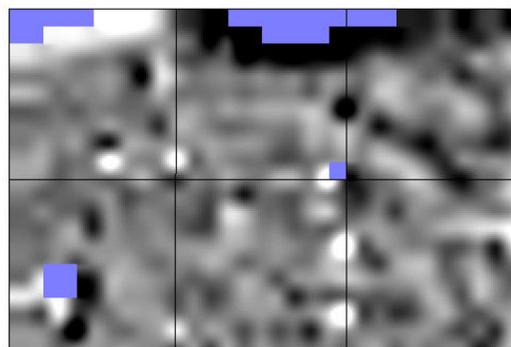
Survey grids



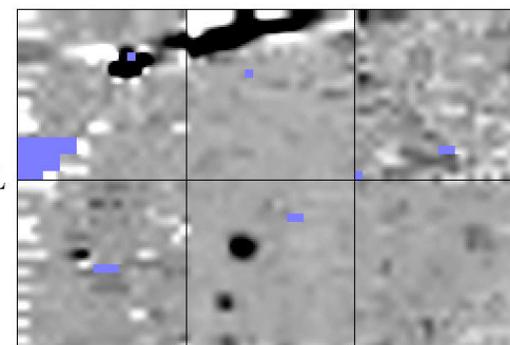
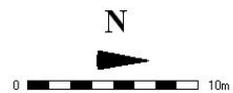
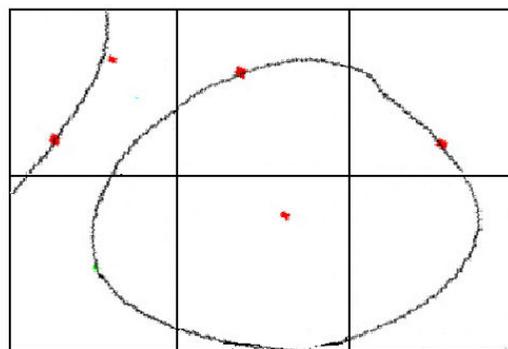
Arnold Aspinall & John Crummet testing out a new electromagnetic instrument at Towton Hall in 1997



RES

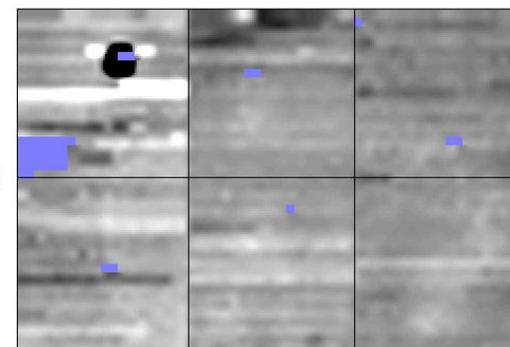


MAG



METAL

**Em**



CAVE

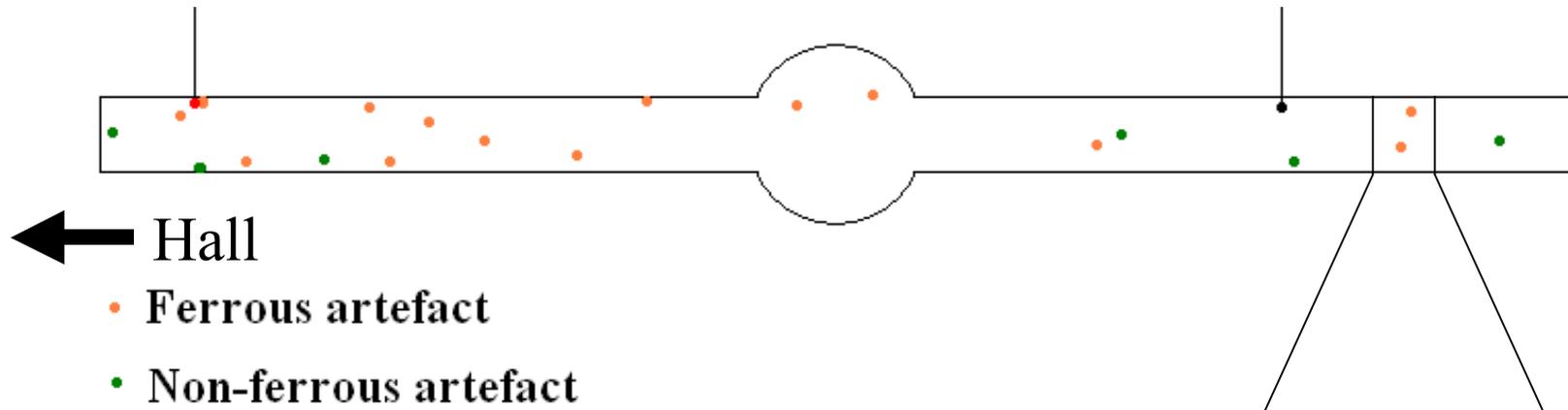




Front Lawn, 1998

Human tooth

Medieval silver penny



Excavation trench located across the front lawn of Towton Hall, 1998

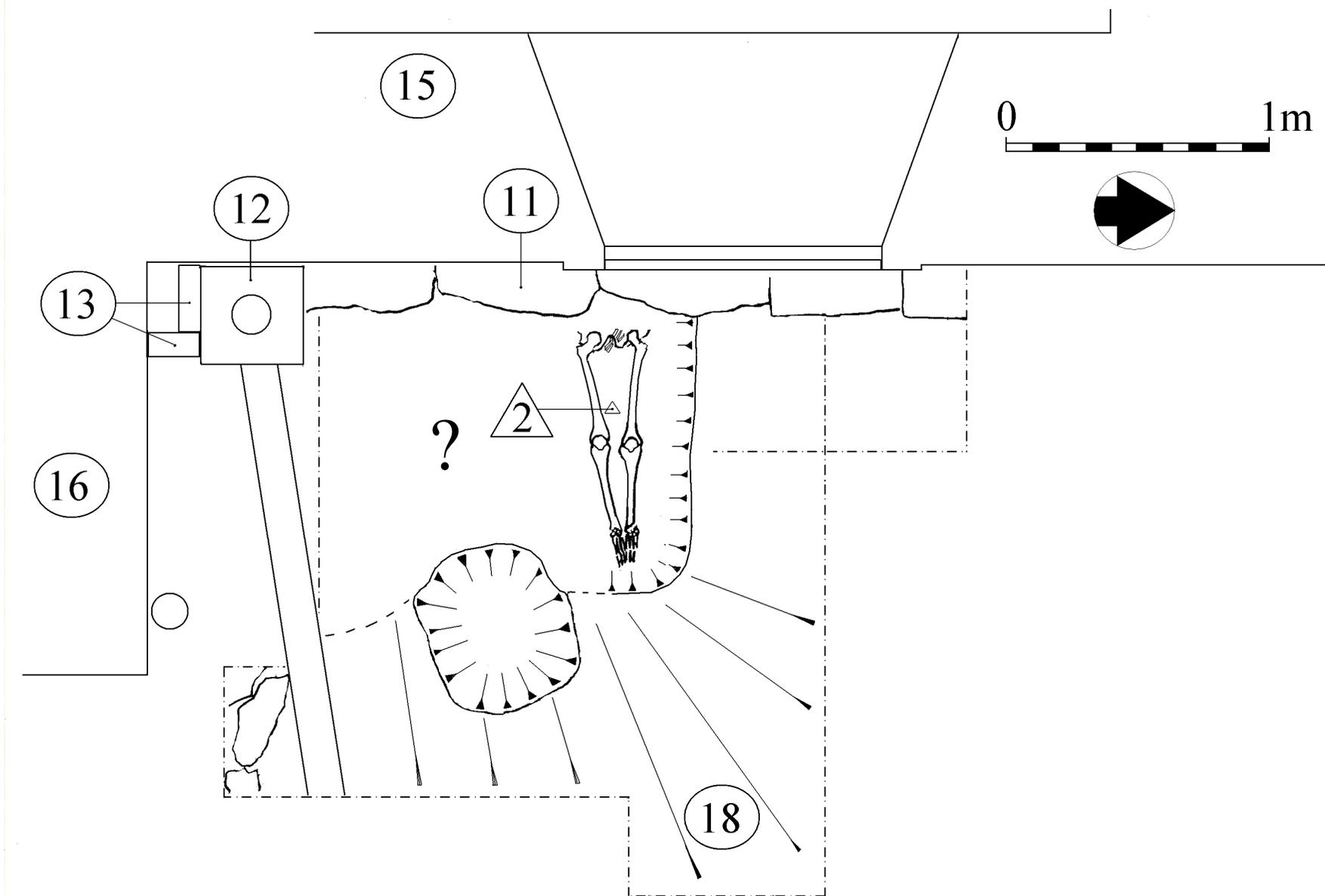


Medieval wall



Flower Bed 200



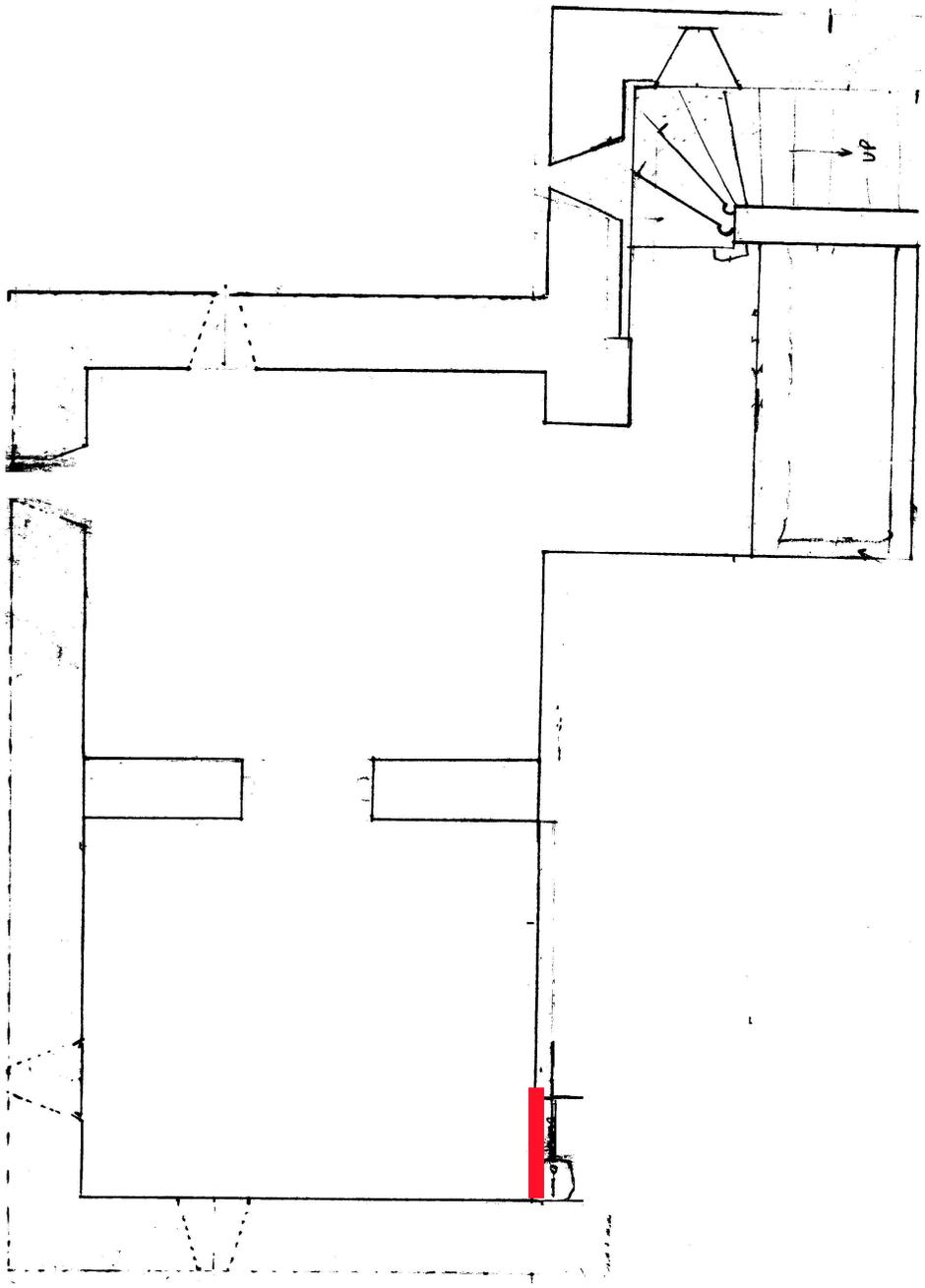




Cellar, 2002

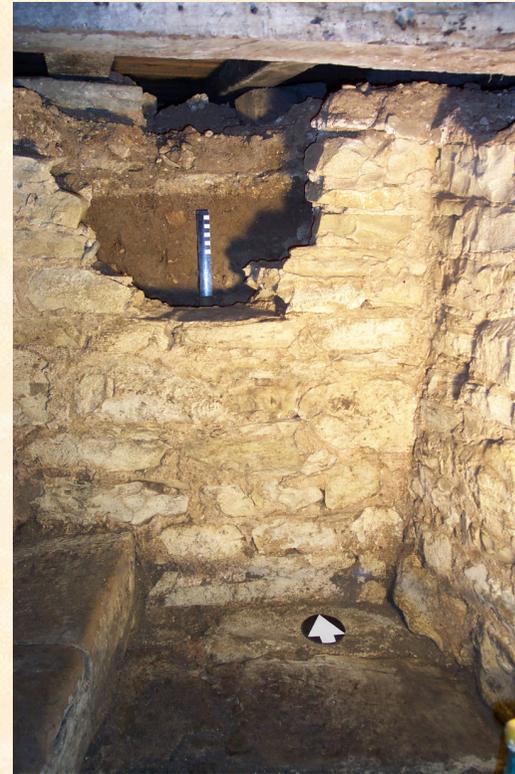
‘...the cellars of Towton Hall were extended to meet a solid wall of human skeletons in the late 1700’s (Boardman 1996, 96)





# Cellar of Towton Hall

2002



Few  
Human  
remains in  
back-fill



North East Corner of Hall, 2003



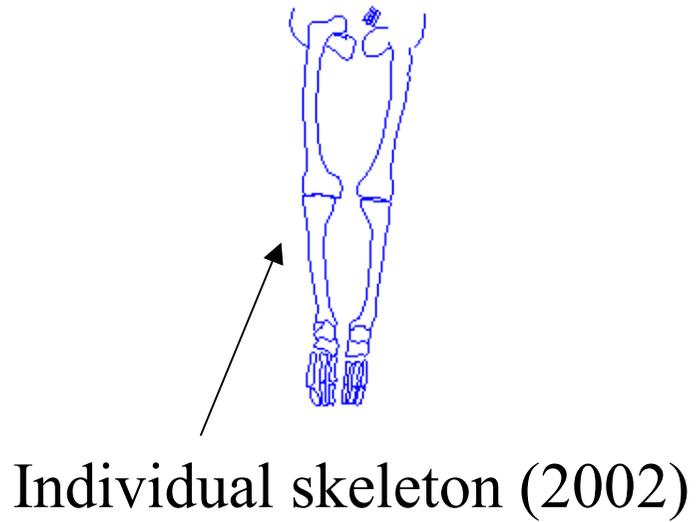




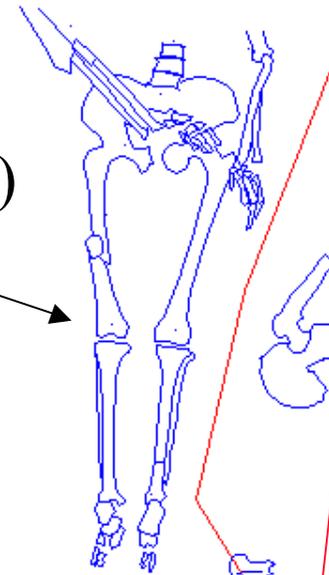




# TOWTON HALL



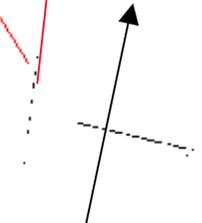
Individual skeleton (2003)

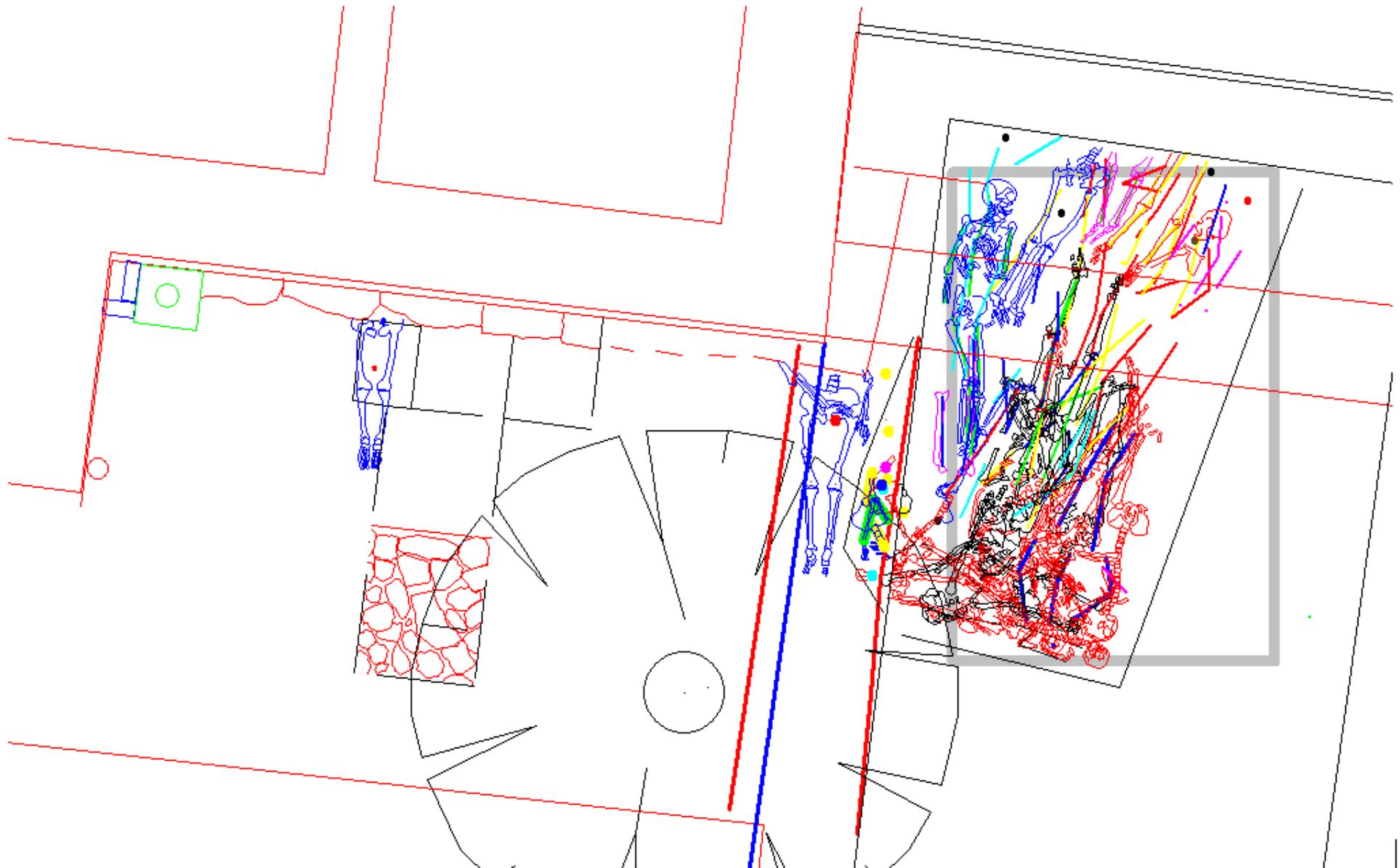


Edge of mass grave (2003)

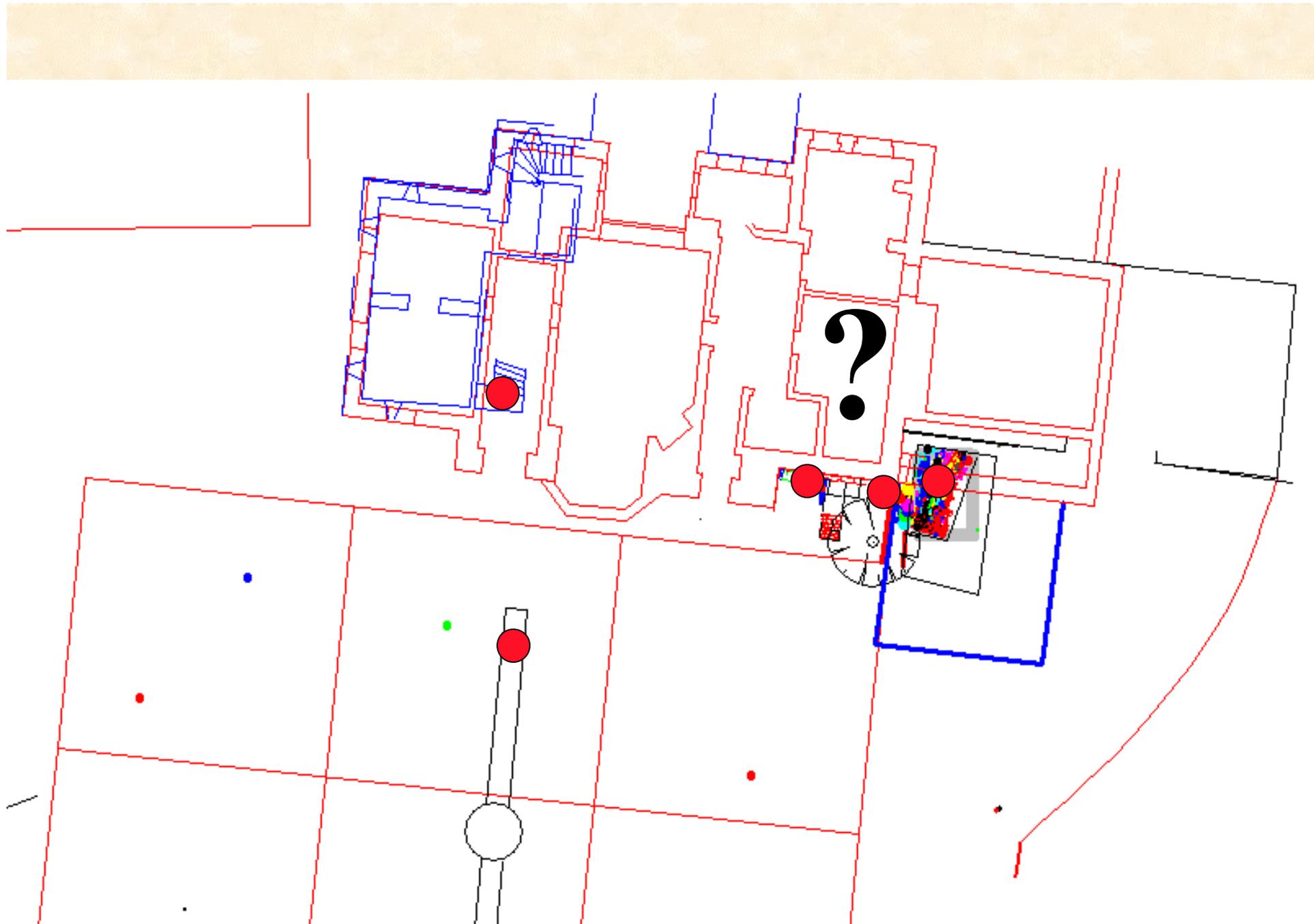


Mass grave (1996)





Locations of human remains discovered near to the north east corner of Towton Hall



● = Human remains

EXCAVATIONS IN THE DINING ROOM  
OF TOWTON HALL, 2005

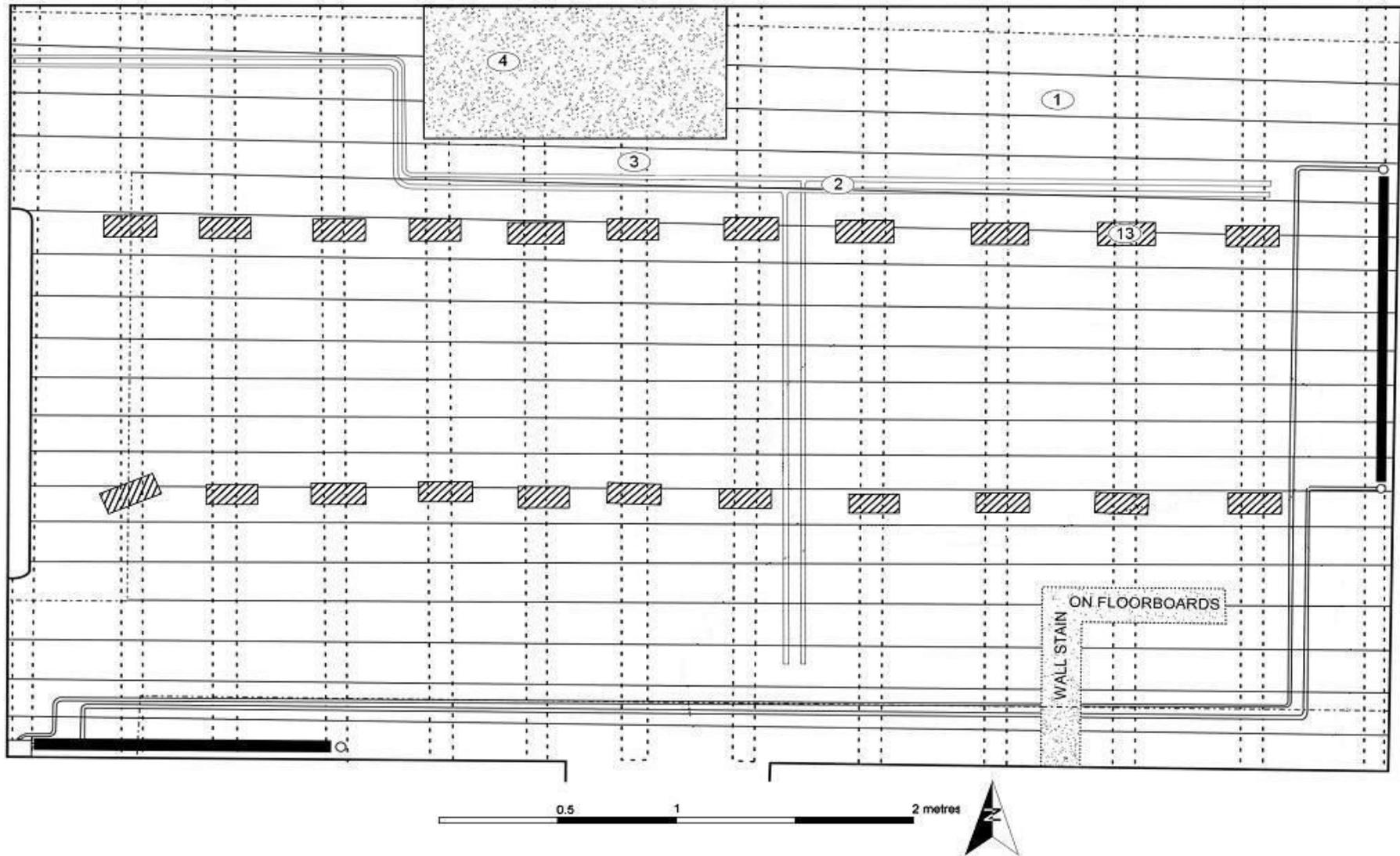
Sponsored by The Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds



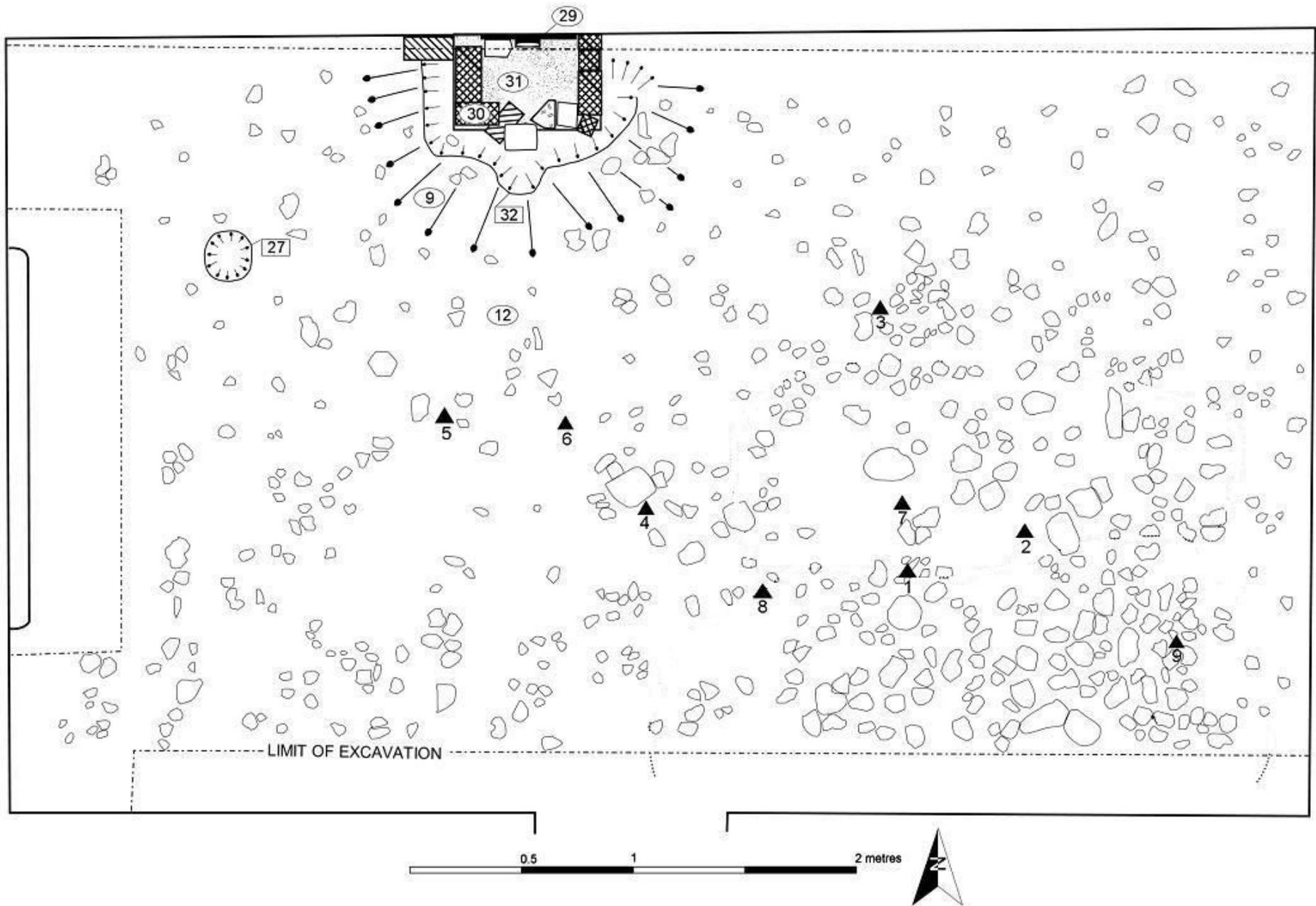
With special thanks to Mrs Verity, of Towton Hall,  
Peter Armstrong, Graeme Rimer and John Waller



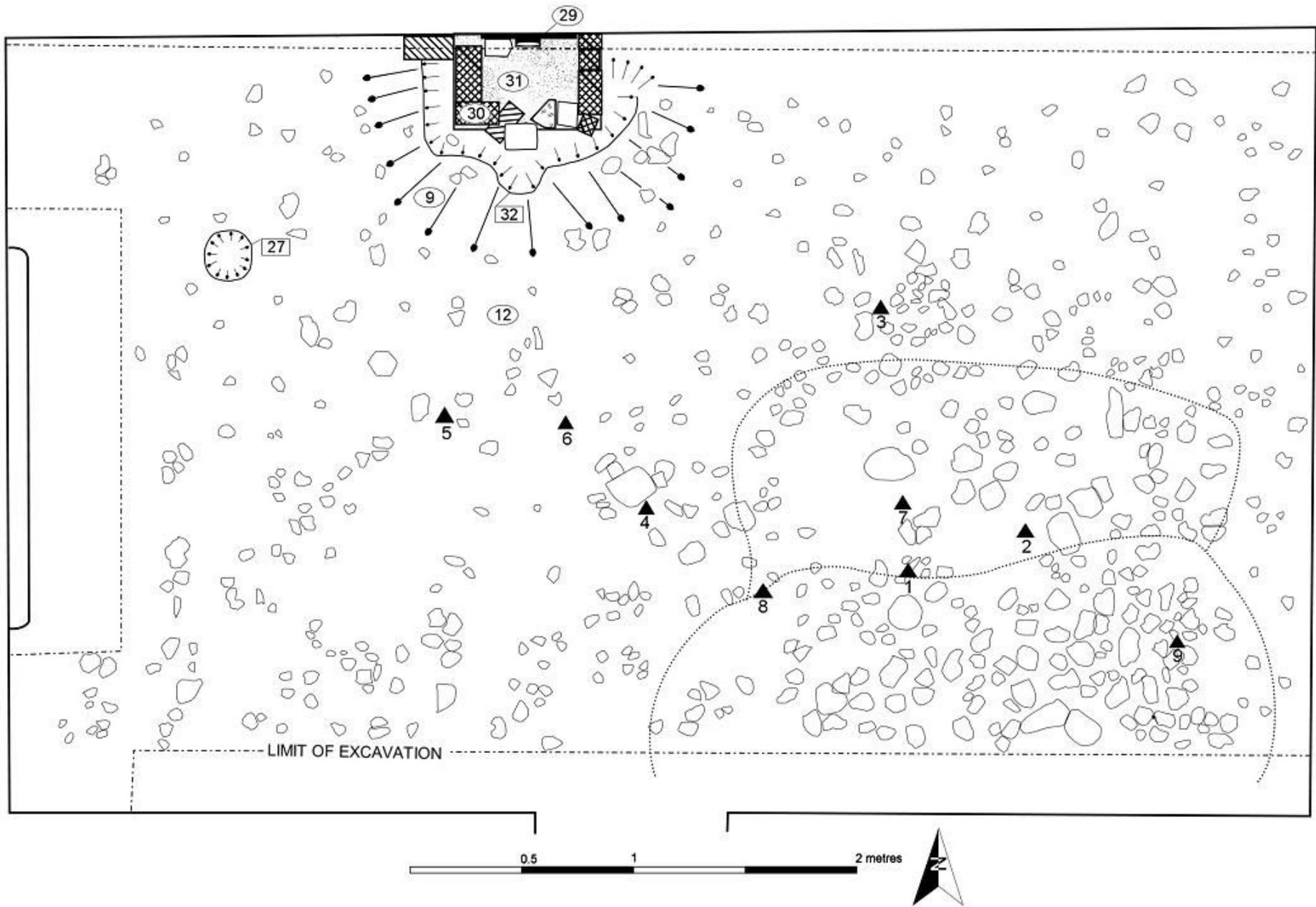
Dining Room of Hall, 2003



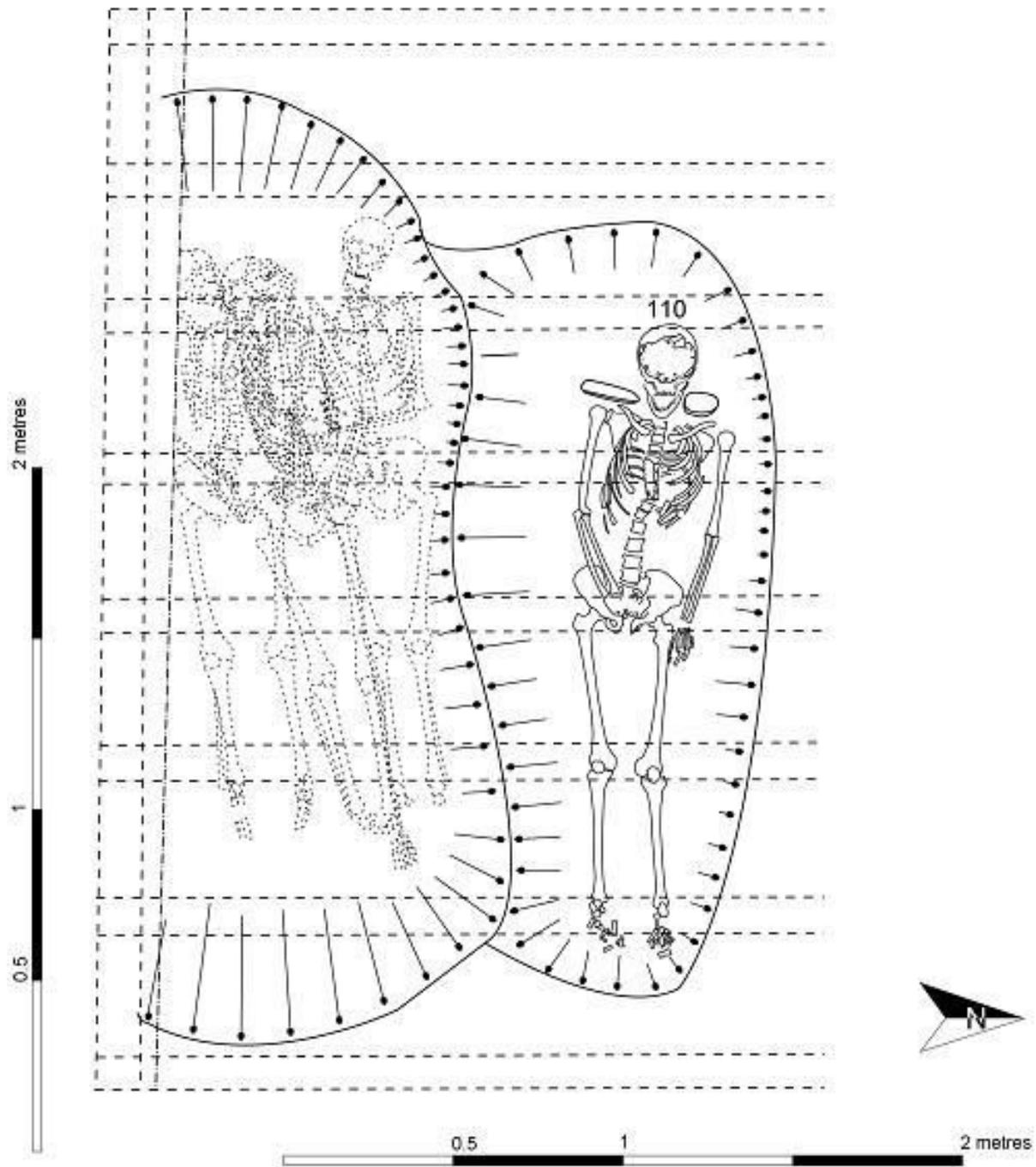
Fireplace, floor board, joists, and pipe work in dining room



Under floor building debris removed - base of fireplace – stone layer



Stone layer – area of larger stones



Skeleton 110

Male

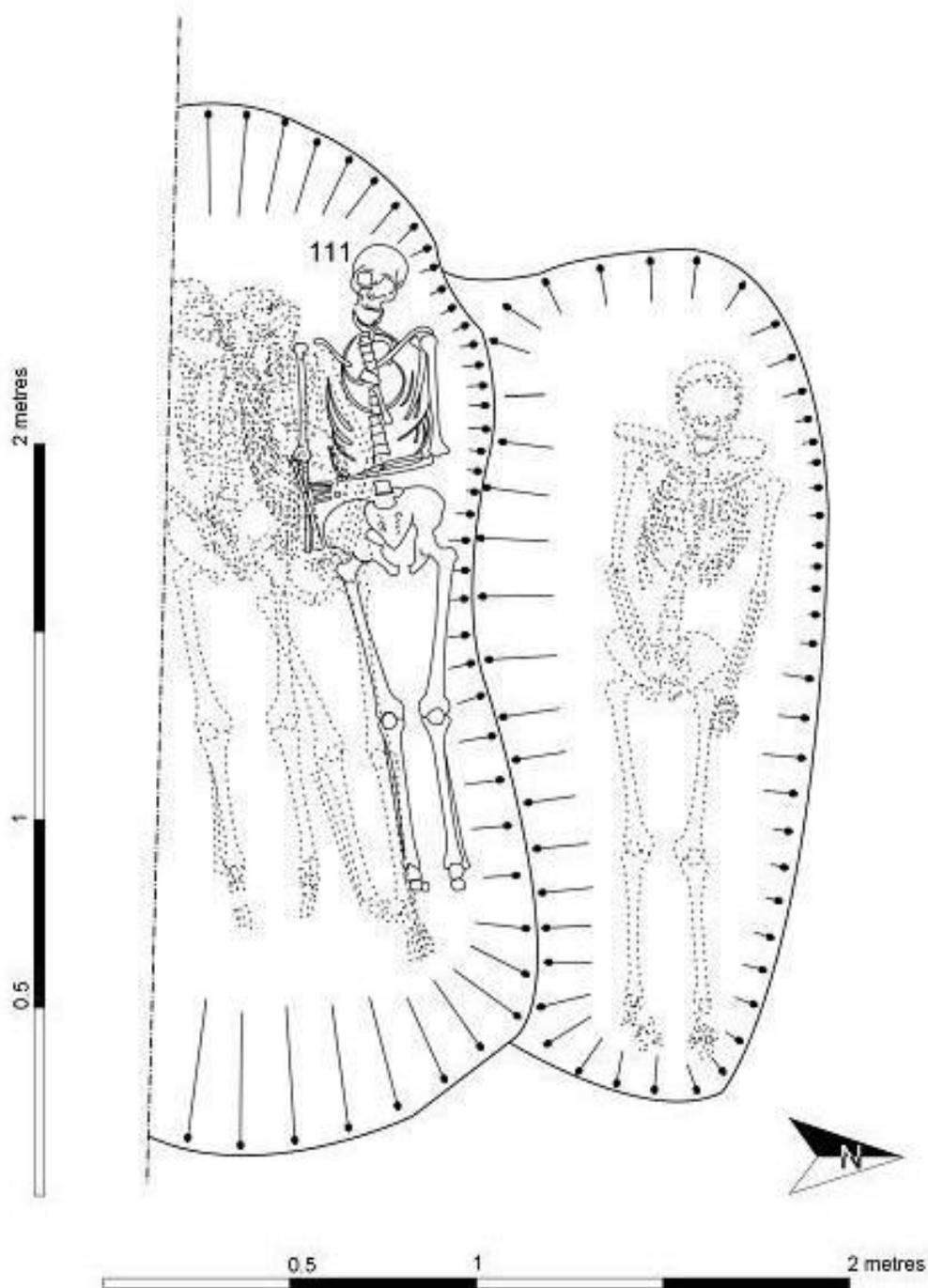
36 - 45 years old

Old middle adult

c. 172cm







Skeleton 111

Male

36 - 45 years old

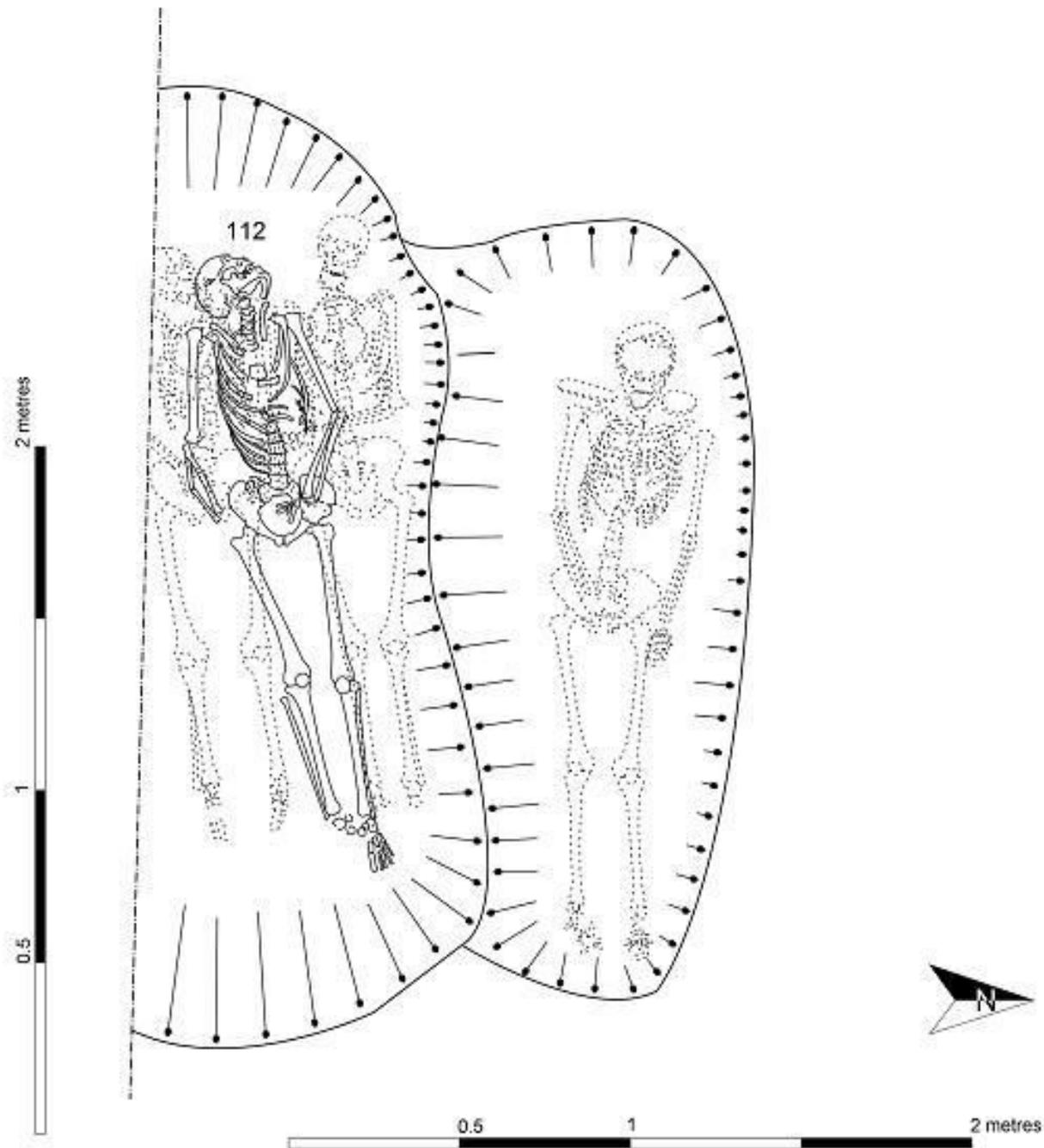
Old middle adult

c. 184cm



Skeleton 111





Skeleton 112

Male

26-35 years old

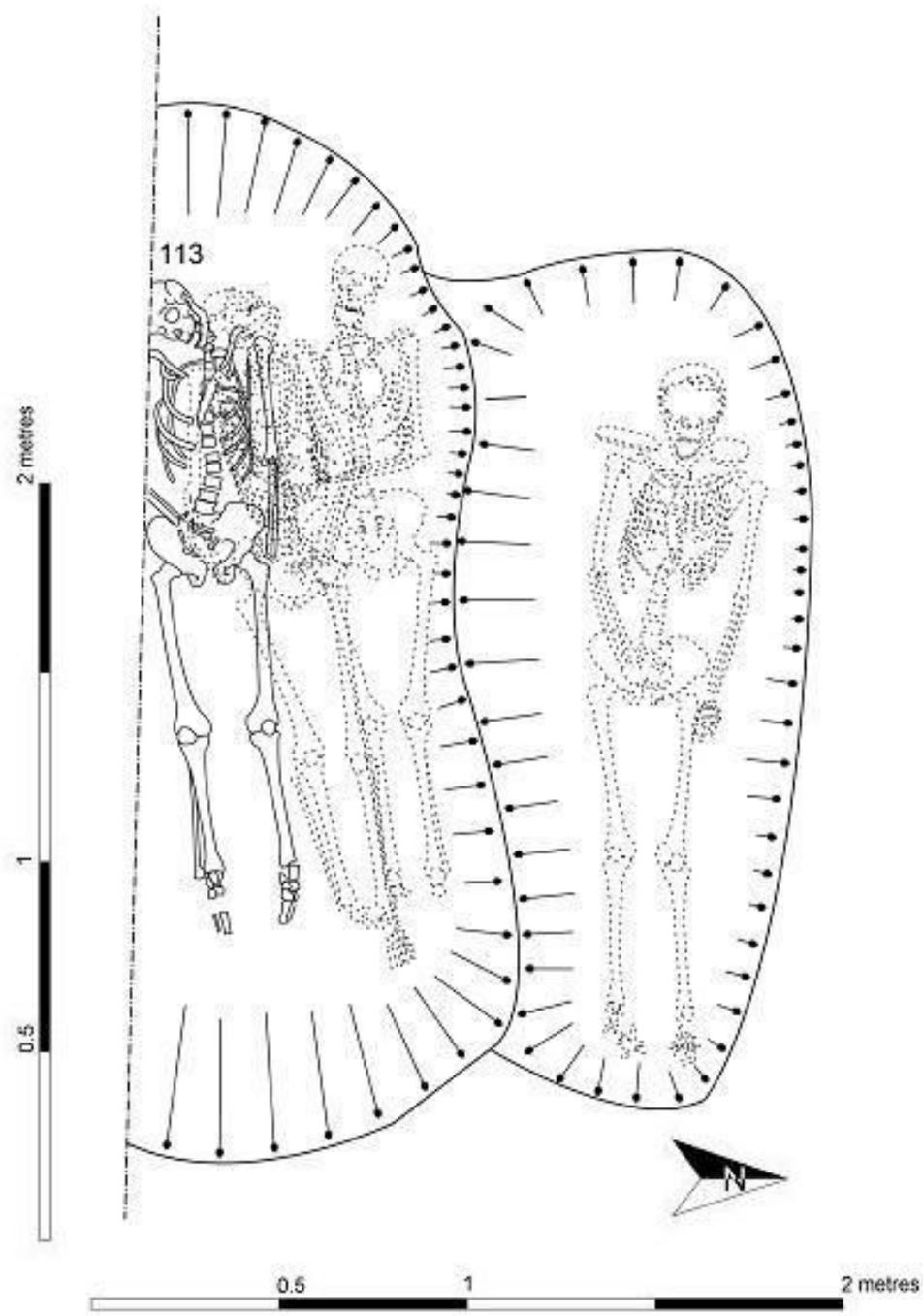
Young middle adult

c. 181cm



Skeleton 112





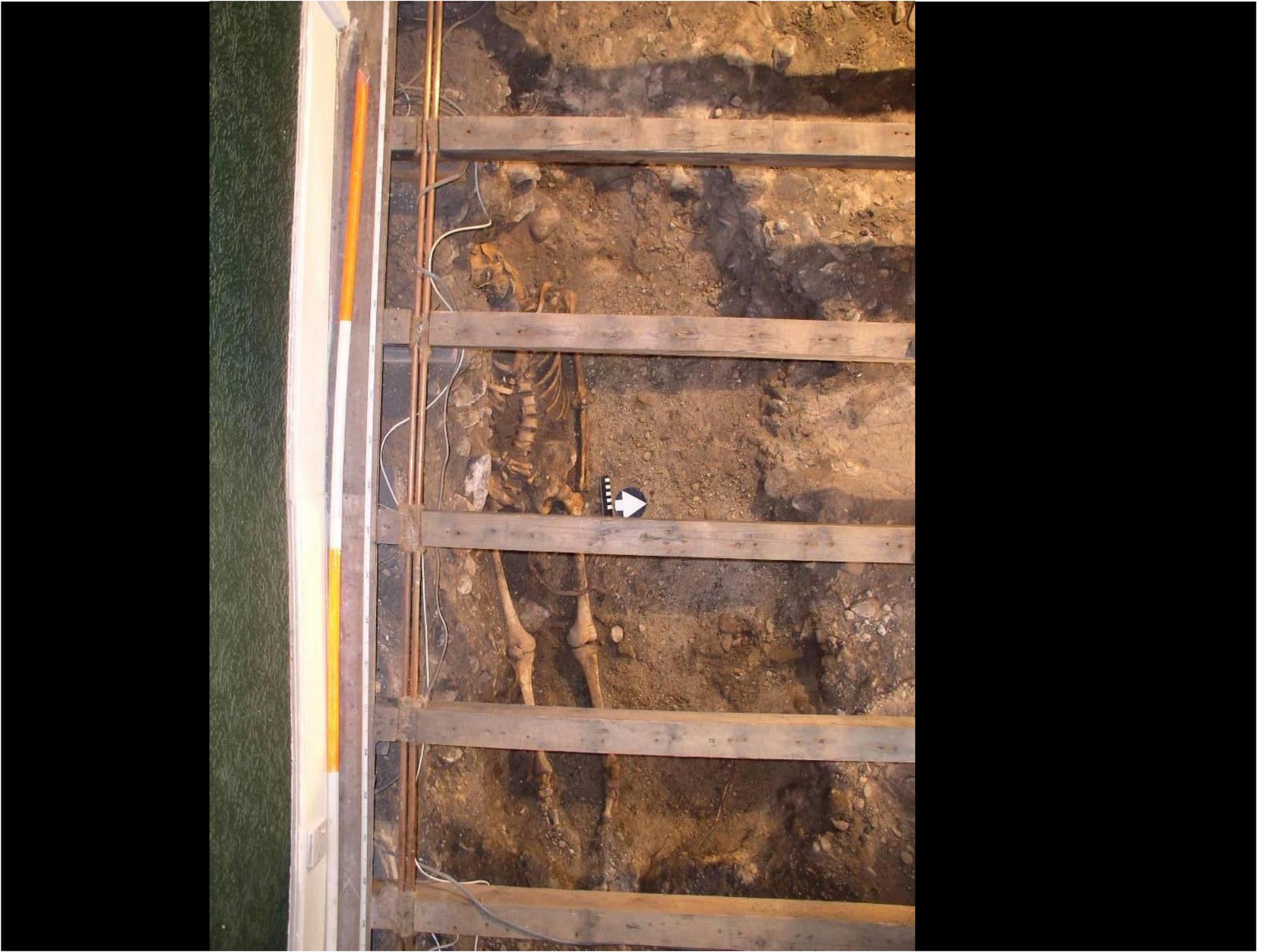
## Skeleton 113

Male

26 - 35 years old

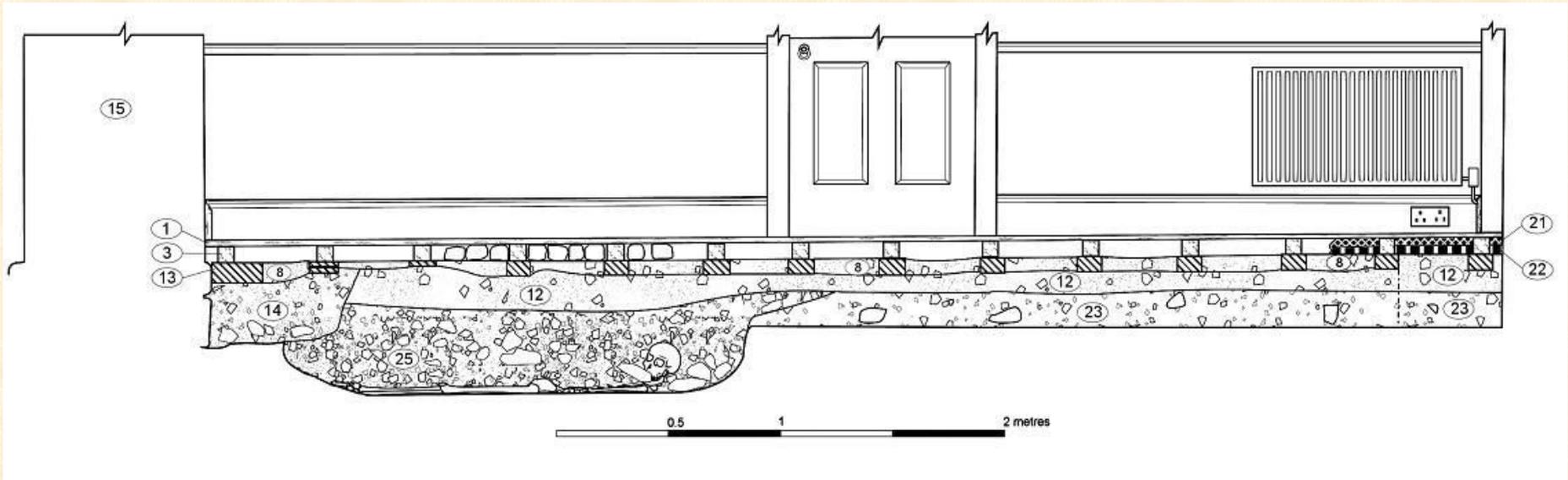
Young middle adult

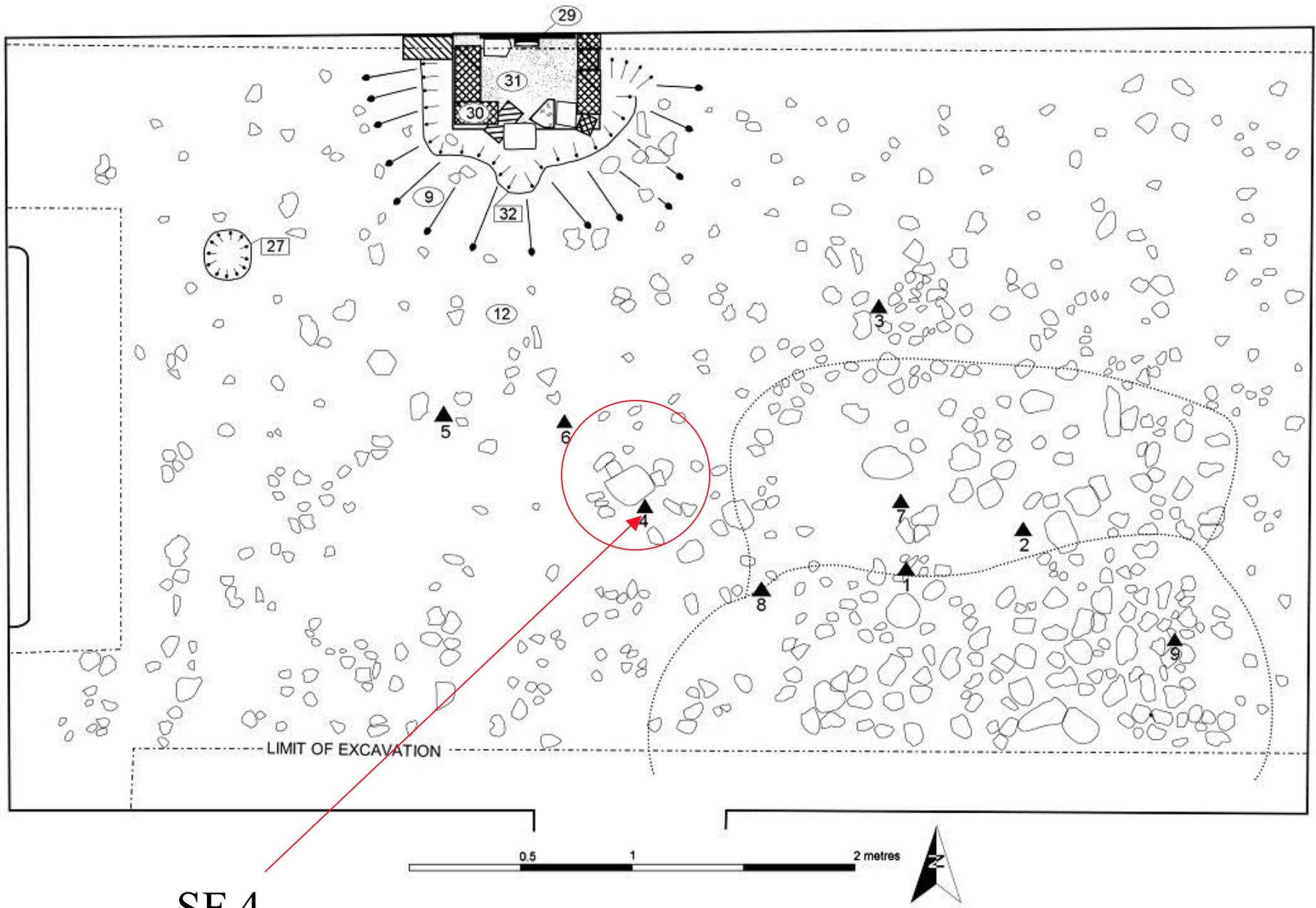
c. 174cm



Skeleton 113

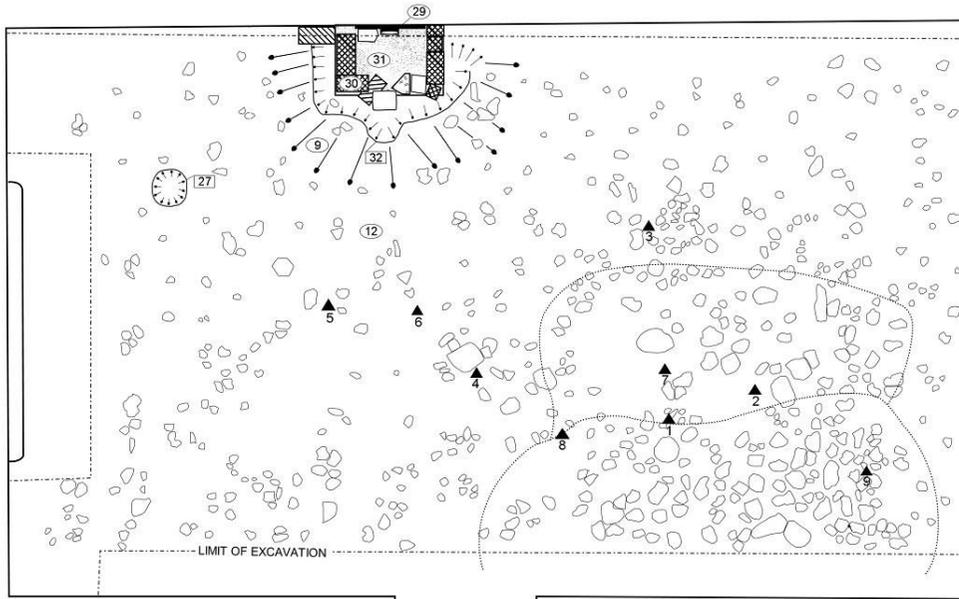




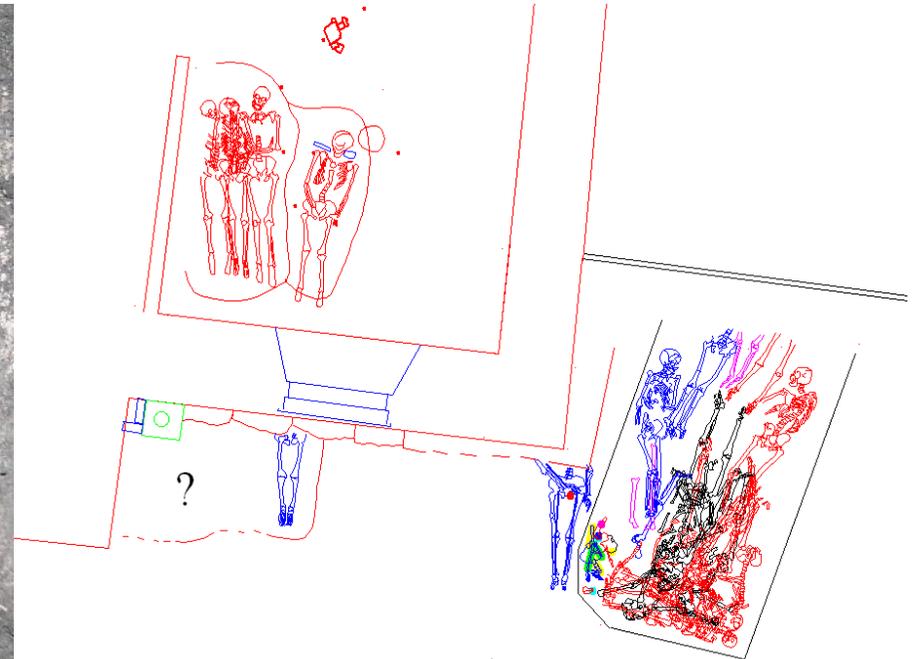


SF 4





# Interpretations?



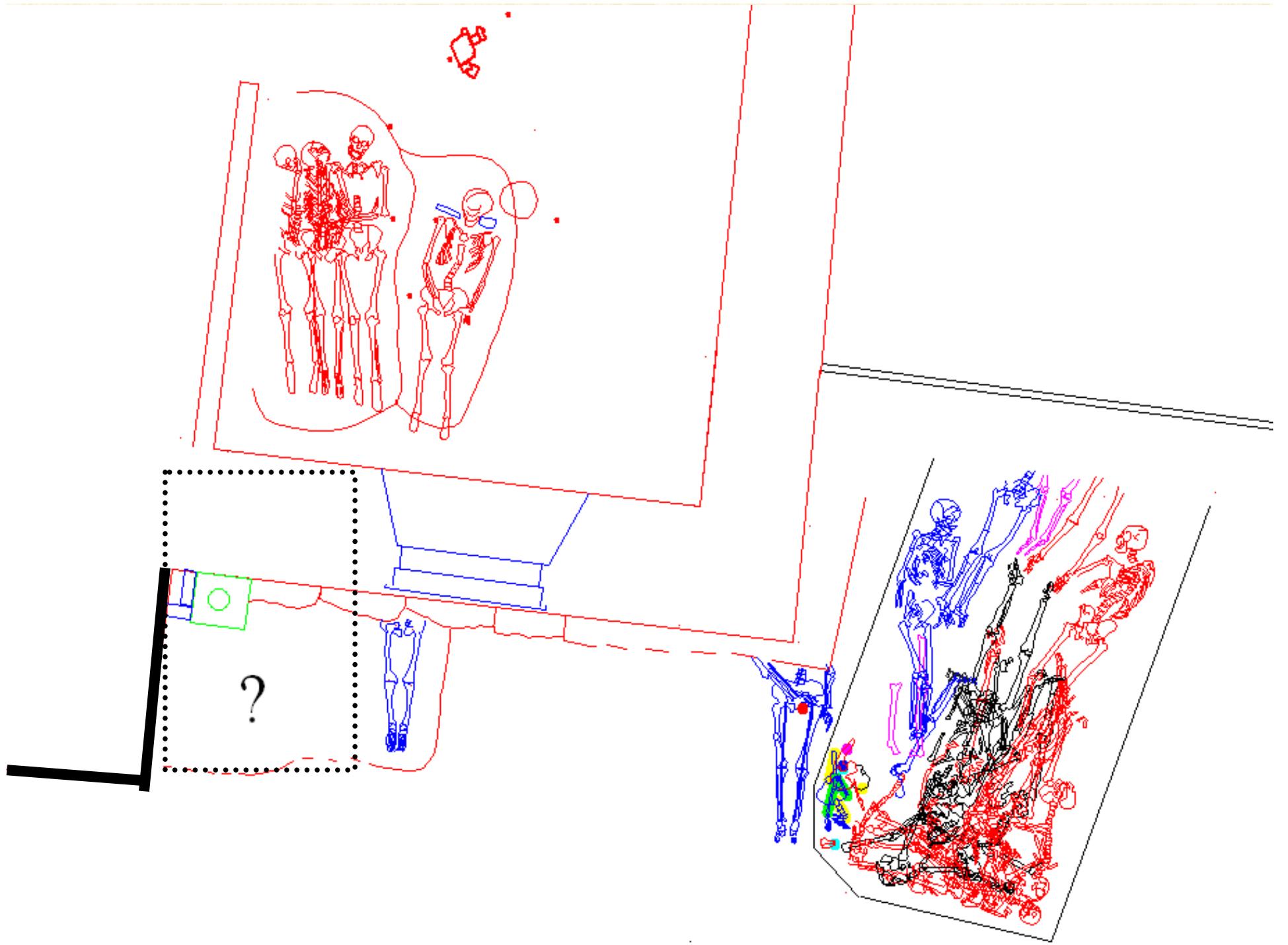
*‘An Argentine veteran of the Falklands war, ties rosary beads to the cross marking the grave of a fellow soldier’*

([www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk))



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## The Towton Battlefield Archaeological Survey Project

– ten years of unpaid back-breaking work...

and a unique research project helped, in no small part, by the (almost) tireless efforts of Arnold Aspinall and his former 'henchman', John Crummet



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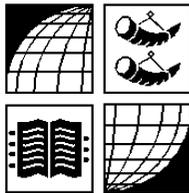
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