

ANCIENT MONUMENTS LABORATORY

REPORT

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SERIES/No	CONSULTANT
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TITLE	The remains of birds from Denny Abbey Church.

REPORT ON THE REMAINS OF BIRDS FROM DENNEY ABBEY CHURCH.

Code; 72I60I A

Of domestic fowl there are remains from at least one bird, of small size, but it may be that the remains are part of the group of fowl from 72I60I B.

A group of fragmentary feathers is difficult to identify but the feathers could belong to fowl. They are mixed with what appears to be dung, glass fragments and metal débris and the inference is that poultry were penned within the church after it became a ruin.

There are 4 bones of an immature rook or crow which are at a similar developmental stage to the bones of rook or crow from 72I60I B.

Code; 72I60I B

There are bones belonging to at least 8 domestic fowl, all of a small variety and possibly of a single breed. Selective breeding of poultry in mediaeval times seems confined to religious institutions, whereas from town or castle sites very mixed populations are encountered.

The rook or crow bones represent two young but flying birds but at a stage when they can be easily shot as they sit about the tree branches waiting to be fed.

The single goose bone is a carpo-metacarpus measuring 98.5 mms., and I would think it belonged to a gander of a domestic bird.

The bones of a single jackdaw probably are from a bird living in the ruinous walls when they stood at a good height.

Measured bones of domestic fowl, all hen birds:

skulls, max. hind widths, 25.5 and 23 mms.

skull, overall length, estimated 59 mms.

Two mandibles (lower beaks), 54 and 48

humeri, lengths of 60 and 66.5

ulnae, 59.5 to 71

femora, 58.3, 73 and 76

tibiae, 96 to 110

tarso-metatarsi, 62 to 76

A skull measurement of an early variety of domestic fowl is seldom obtainable as the more delicate nasal bones are usually damaged, so the Denney Abbey church estimate is of considerable interest, allowing comparison with present-day breeds.

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6.9.43