

Skeletons found in the Chapter House at Battle Abbey

Justine Bayley
Ancient Monuments Lab.

None of the bones were very well preserved. Most were broken and showed slight to severe surface erosion. In the three main burials (features 49, 148 and 208) all parts of the body were represented although some of the bones were rather disturbed. Age at death was estimated from the degree of molar wear ^(Brothwell 1972) and maximum stature calculated from the formulae of Trotter and Gleser.

Feature 49

These were the remains of a male individual, probably aged 35-45. The teeth were in a good state although there ^{were} slight signs of periodontal disease by the lower right molars and fairly widespread medium calculus deposits. The dental formula was :-

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

Very little osteo-arthritis was noted in the post cranial sketon. The long bone measurements were only approximate but suggested a stature of around 180 cm.

Feature 148

The bones were too fragmentary for the sex of this individual to be determined. The remains are those of an adult aged 25-35. As with burial 49 the surviving teeth were free of caries but had medium calculus deposits. The dental formula was :-

7					2				4	2		5				
7	6	5	4	3	2											

Very slight traces of osteo-arthritis were noted on some of the vertebrae. If it is assumed that this individual was male, then stature was 171 cm.

Feature 208

This individual was male and probably aged 25-35. The teeth were in a far worse condition than those of the other two burials. The tooth roots were unusually massive and there was evidence of medium to severe periodontal disease as well as multiple caries and medium calculus deposits. The dental formula was :-

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		MC	E	E										E		
		A	A											A		
		SC	SC											SC		

Maximum stature was about 172 cm.

Feature 163

This feature produced two human skulls. One consisted only of the vault. The brow ridges were very slight but the occipital and mastoids were missing and therefore not available for examination. The skull could have come from either a female or else from a lightly-built male.

The second skull was complete, except for the mandible, and was that of a male individual aged at least 35-45. Most of the anterior teeth had been lost ante mortem. There were signs of severe periodontal disease. The dental formula was :-

$\overset{A}{\text{---}} \begin{matrix} X & I & I & H & X & X & X & & X & X & I & H & I & I \end{matrix}$													
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The following skull measurements were taken :-

	<u>42</u>	<u>208</u>
Max length	184	
Max breadth	151	151
Min frontal B.	101	99
Basio-bregmatic H.	139	
Frontal arc	123	
Parietal arc	119	125
Occipital arc	129	120
Frontal chord	108.5	
Parietal chord	109.4	112.0
Occipital chord	108.4	97.0
Biasterionic B.	119	115
Foraminal length	38.3	31.5
Foraminal B.	30.8	27.6

Measurements are in mm. and are defined in Brothwell (1972)

References

- Brothwell, D.R. (1972) Digging up bones.
Trotter, M. & Gleser, G.C. (1952) Estimation of stature from long-bones of American Whites and Negroes. Amer. J. phys. Anthropol. 10, 463-514.

Key to dental formulae

— = area missing	A = abscess
- = tooth present, no jaw	E = pulp cavity exposed
X = lost ante mortem	SC = severe caries
/ = lost post mortem	MC = mesial caries