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Austin Friary, Penrith

Excavations conducted on the site of Austin Friary , Penrith in 1974 produced a small collection of animal bones of mediaeval and post-mediaeval date associated with pre- and post-dissolution levels of the Friary . Two areas were excavated , one in an area of modern garden and the second a trench in a backyard . The excavator divided the animal bone material into eleven groups. Three of these groups , D ,F and I , were not analysed ; the material was derived from disturbed layers or pits and associated with modern pottery . The remaining material is summarised in Table 1 .

38% of the bones were identified the remaining being loosely catalogued under size groups (see Table 1) . Ox bones are the largest component , being 47.6% of the identified bone fragments and 70.4% of the major food animals (cattle , pig and sheep or goat) . This is mirrored in the unidentified group of bones where ox- sized (large ungulate and large animal) bones conditute 86.5% of the fragments . Pig and sheep (or goat) constitute respectively 6% and 14% of the identified fragments and 8.8% and 20.7% of the major food animals .

Domestic fowl bones although 23% of the identified fauna contribute relatively little to the diet in terms of meat weight . It is apparent that cattle are the most important food source if estimated by meat weight . The samples are too small for the minimum number of animals to be a useful guide to the importance of the individual species , fragment numbers only are therefore considered .

Among the excavators divisions only group H contains a sample of any size . The large number of fowl bones , aswell as domestic goose and duck and the only fish bones on the site make this group significantly different from the remainder of the collection . What their presence indicates is not known and as noted above they are insignificant in terms of a meat contribution .

Table of species and fragment numbers . В Α & K & J G & H С & E Total Horse x0 Pig 1. Sheep or goat Sheep . Ча Fowl Goose , cf domestic Duck , cf domestic <u>ו</u> Red deer , Cervus elephas Columba sp , pigeon Fish Large ungulate Small ungulate Large animal Medium animal Small animal Totals

Groups I , J & K were excavated from a trench in a backyard .

Table of the bone fragments of 0x, ox-sized, pig, sheep-sized and sheep (or goat).

	0x	0x-sized	Pig	Sheep-sized	Sheep(or	G)
Horn core				`		
Skull, inc. maxilla	6	6		1	1	
Mandible	7	4	2			
Teeth , loose	15	3	1		2	
Cervical vertebra	3	6				
Thoracic vertebra		18		3		
Lumbar vertebra	1.	29		5		
Sacrum	3		1			
Caudal & indet. vert.		20		3		
Ribs , proximal		10		11		
Ribs , shaft & sternu	m	112		12		
Scapula , blade	4	5		1	x i	
Scapula , glenoid&nec	k 3				1	
Humerus , proximal	2	4			1	
Humerus , distal	l	3	2	2	3	
Radius & ulna , prox.	5	. 1	1		5	
Radius & ulna , dist.	2		1		1	
Carpus	3					
Netacarpus , proximal	1				2	
Metacarpus , di atal	3					
Pelvis , acetabulum	4				1	
Pelvis, others	5	5	1			
Femur, proximal	4			1	1	
Femur , dist.;patella	6	1	1			
Tibia, proximal	2	9	1	2	1	
Tibia , distal	1				4	
Tarsus	11	l	1			
Netatarcus , proximal	3				4"	
Metataraus , distal					3"	
Metapodial , distal		1		1		
Phalanges	17		· 2		3	
Long bone	54	54		6		
Fragment ?	41	41		2		

'-indicates a whole bone. Idoutfried shaft fragmante of long bones are lated under the proximal part of the bone Although in Table 1 the fragments are listed within the excavators grouping, the sample is small and the following analysis considers the bones as a single group of the late mediaeval date.

Table 2 lists all the fragments of ox , pig and sheep and the comparable sized unidentified fragments . The samples are small for pig ang sheep (or goat) and do not justify comment but all the bones of cattle are represented and one may suppose that whole carcasses were available . The amalgamation of a numb number of groups in this table might have evened up the occurrence but infact no group showed any marked selection of fragment type .

A few of the bones exhibited characteristics associated with the age of the animal at death . Five of the six bones of pig showing these features were juvenile and the sixth a distal humerus indicating an age of over one year (Silver, 1969). Only two of the eighteen sheep (or goat) bones aged were juvenile, both indicating an age at death of under $2\frac{1}{4}$ years, and 44% of the fused bones (39% of all the aged bones) indicated an age in excess of two years. Fifty one cattle bone fragments exhibited age characters; 25.5% of these showing juvenile features; 21% of the fused bones (15.5% of all aged cattle bones) indicate an age of the pigs appear to be slaughtered young, less than three years old, but the size of the sample of ox and sheep (or goat) bones is not great enough to show a pattern in the age of the animals when slaughtered.

14% of all the fragments show the visible evidence of butchery, the majority occurring on the ribs and vertebrae. One bone, the metatarsus of a sheep (or goat) exhibited a pathological condition. Exostosis occurred around the proximal end, possibly associated with an arthritic condition (Plate L).

In conclusion the collection is dominated by fragments from the bones of cattle . The sample is too small to give any indication of slaughter age and animal husbandry , except in the case of pigs . Whole carcasses may have been available on site . Group H suggests some difference or change on the site indicated by the large number of fowl and also domestic gooose , duck and the fish remains . The only wild species were red deer , identified from a fragment of metatarsus and a dove represented by a complete coracoid bone .

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Salar States

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