

Two cremations from Bromfield Quarry, Salop.

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Neither of the two Bronze Age cremations examined was complete, the total weight of bone being well below that of an average sized skeleton. Cremations usually contain a high proportion of fragments from the larger and more easily recognisable bones while small and friable bones are under-represented. This is the case here, although the major long bone fragments are not as frequent as one would normally expect, especially in B123.

The bone fragments were sieved and the weights of the various size fractions recorded. Very few of the fragments under 6 mm were identifiable but the larger pieces included most parts of the body.

Fragment size	<u>B 123</u>	<u>B 124</u>
over 6 mm	267	91
over 3 mm	296	67
under 3 mm	236	60
	<u>799 g</u>	<u>218 g</u>

It can be seen from the above table that cremation B 124 contained a higher proportion of identifiable fragments although it was far smaller than B 123 in total weight. It also had a larger maximum fragment size (8 cm as compared with 5 cm) and more of the fragments were nearer the maximum size.

B 123

There was no evidence of more than one individual being represented although the cremation did contain a few fragments of burnt animal bone. The bones were all small, thin and gracile and unfused epiphyses were noted on the long bones but not in the vertebrae. The degree of fusion noted, when taken together with the presence of an unworn molar crown suggests an immature individual probably within the age range 15-20, although possibly a few years younger. The extreme gracility of the bones suggests a female individual but it is possible that they are from a young male.

B 124

These bones came from a larger and more robust individual than B 123 but also contained fragments of unfused and partly fused epiphyses. Those that could be positively identified suggested an age in the range 16-23. Sex cannot be determined objectively but subjectively this individual is more probably male than female although the reverse would be quite possible.