

by Roger Thomas, R.A. Chambers and Bob Wilson

Oxoniensia, forthcoming

from St. Helen's Mews, Abingdon, Oxon.

Animal Bones and Shells. (Bob Wilson)

General results of examination are given in Table 1. This also compares the results of taking one bucketful of soil from c. 1.00 m. deep in F17 and sieving with a mesh of 2 mm. Note the many small and burnt fragments. Numerous Romano-British sherds but no mediaeval ones were retrieved. Consequently the records of small animals are believed to be reliable.

The Iron Age and early Roman occupational debris is similar to that at most regional sites of this period, yet it contrasts with a few, for example at nearby Barton Court Farm villa (). Although the difference reflects that between Celtic and Romanised settlements, the associated pattern of husbandry and economy could have differentiated during the Late Iron Age or Belgic period. In Abingdon itself, evidence of the earlier pattern was found also at East and West St. Helen Streets, but possibly at Broad Street changes in the economy are indicated by second to fourth century AD deposits ().

At this site, another sign of the 'Celtic' pattern is the age data. 29% of the 14 sheep epiphyses from three features, and Mandible Wear Stages () of 9e 11e & 32 indicate the killing of sheep relatively young although it is possible to see this as a marketing pattern of the early Roman period.

Table 1. Frequency of bone and shell fragments at St. Helen's Mews, Abingdon

Period	Iron Age & Romano-British					Sieved Sample	Mediaeval 12-13th cent	
Feature	8	4	1	17 8	6	Total	F17	Total
Cattle	-	3	2	2	1	8	1	6
Sheep/goat	-	6	14	3a	2	25	19	9
Pig	1	1	4	1	1	8	-	3
Horse	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-
Mouse, cf	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Apodemus</u> sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Total	1	10	20	6	4	41	20	18
Unidentified	-	8	28	-	2	38	278	25
Burnt	-	1	1	-	-	2	80	1
Domestic fowl	-	-	-	-	-	-	?1b	1
Other bird	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Fish	-	-	-	-	-	-	6 ^c	-
Human infant	-	-	5e	-	-	-	-	-

Notes: a: Including horn core of goat.

b: With egg shell cf. domestic fowl. Bird bones identified by E. Allison

c: The fish include pike Esox lucius L., eel Anguilla anguilla (L.), stickleback Gasterosteus aculeatus

d: The only mollusc present was Theodoxis fluviatilis (identified by Mark Robinson).

e: May also be described as "nail hammer"

and cap family Cyprinidae