

The Human Bones from Darenth, Kent

The human bones from 7 burials were examined in the laboratory and the minimum number of individuals is 8. There were also two small samples of human bones which were not included in these results as it is not certain if these samples represent 2 more individuals or are part of the 7 present. Observations were made for demography (age, sex and stature), anthropology (metrical and morphological variables) and pathology. The results by individual for bone preservation, sex, age and stature are given in the catalogue attached with the methods which produced these results.

The information on anthropology is given in the archive as it was not possible to make many observations on the data. Table 1 summarises these results (see below).

Demographic results

In the 7 burials there were at least 8 individuals :- 2 females, 2 probable females, 1 male, 1 adult, 1 child, and 1 infant. The two small samples may represent two individuals but it was impossible to determine age, sex and stature.

Anthropology

Two of the individuals (388 and 432) had congenital absence of their 3rd molars. Both were female and between the ages of 25 and 35 at death. The same two individuals also had wormian bones in both their left and right lamboid sutures.

Pathology

Burial 133 (male) had a lesion on the lateral surface of the left tibia. This may be a solitary benign tumour (osteoid osteoma) and was positioned on one of the commonest sites for this lesion on the lower half of the tibia (plate 1). Burial 184 had facet joint osteoarthritis on both the superior and inferior facets of one of the thoracic vertebrae.

References

Brothwell, D. R. : Digging up Bones: 3rd ed. British Museum (Natural History), 1981.

<u>Burial no.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Stature</u>		<u>Pathology</u>
			<u>Metric</u>	<u>Imperial</u>	
85	-	Over 15-21mo.	-	-	x
108	-	Adult	-	-	x
124	-	-	-	-	x
133A	Female	? 25-35	-	-	x
133B	Male	Adult	-	-	✓
156	-	-	-	-	x
184	? Female	35-45	-	-	✓
220	-	About 6 yrs	-	-	x
388	Female	25-35	-	-	x
432	? Female	25-35	-	-	x

Table 1 The summary of results from Darenth, Kent.

The Catalogue of Human Bones from Darenth, Kent

Grave 85

Bone preservation: very good although only two erupted deciduous molars are present

Sex: -

Age: over 15-21 months based on the teeth (Brothwell 1981)

Stature: -

Pathology: -

Grave 108

Bone preservation: very poor, the bones represent only the tibia and fibula

Sex: -

Age: adult based on the size of the long bones

Stature: -

Pathology: -

Grave 124

This consisted of 17 fragments of burnt human bone with no morphological or pathological anomalies.

Grave 133

There were 2 individuals in this grave:-

133A

Bone preservation : fragmentary and grossly eroded

Sex: female based on the pelvic and skull morphology

Age: 35-45 based on the molar attrition (Brothwell 1981)

Stature: -

Pathology: a medium degree of periodontal disease.

133B

Bone preservation: fragmentary and grossly eroded

Sex: male based on the pelvis and the long bone size

Stature: -

Pathology: the left tibia had a low raised lesion, elliptical in shape of dimensions 32x11mm. It was on the lateral surface of the lower half of the tibia with its long axis in the long axis of the tibia (Plate 1).

Grave 156

This is a collection of 14 long bone fragments, most of which are probably human but had no distinguishing features. No pathology or morphology was noted.

Grave 184

Bone preservation: very badly preserved, both fragmentary and eroded

Sex: ? female based on the pelvic morphology

Age: 35-45 based on the molar attrition (Brothwell 1981)

Stature: -

Pathology: there are 2 substantial carious cavities, one on 1,4 and the other on a loose molar tooth. The individual also had considerable periodontal disease and mild enamel hypoplasia.

One of the thoracic vertebrae had facet joint osteoarthritis on the superior and inferior facets.

Grave 220

Bone preservation: extremely poor

Sex: -

Age: about 6 years based on the eruption of the teeth (Brothwell 1981)

Stature: -

Pathology: -

Grave 388

Bone preservation: very poor

Sex: female based on the skull and pelvic morphology

Age: 25-35 based on the molar attrition (Brothwell 1981)

stature: -

Pathology: the mandible has slight periodontal disease.

Grave 432

Bone preservation: quite well preserved

Sex: ? female based on the skull and pelvic morphology

Age: 25-35 based on the molar attrition (Brothwell 1981)

Stature: -

Pathology: there is a medium degree of periodontal disease on the mandible and enamel hypoplasia was present. There was only a slight amount of calculus, and one of the loose molar teeth had a carious cavity.

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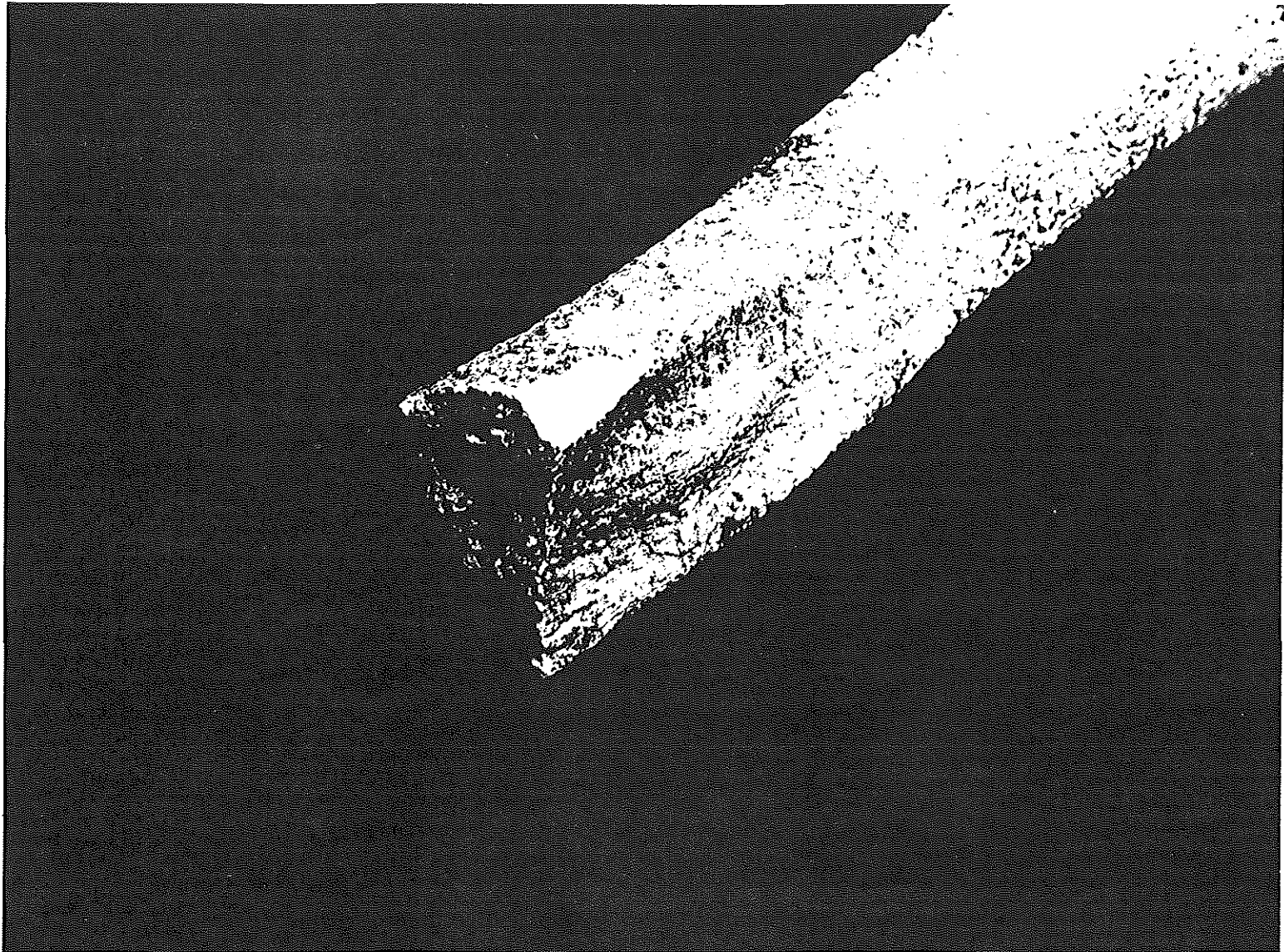


Plate 1 Darenth Burial 133 : A benign solitary tumour (? osteoid osteoma) on the tibia.