

ANCIENT MONUMENTS LABORATORY

REPORT

1524

SERIES/No

CONSULTANT

AUTHOR

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TITLE

CHALK 1961

animal Bones

CHALK 1961

APPENDIX B ANIMAL REMAINS

By Mrs A. Eastham, BA

The faunal remains on this site appear to represent the residue of meals and similar debris, almost exclusively. There is a preponderance of domestic animals amongst the remains, though the results of hunting, fishing and even perhaps fowling expeditions are also represented. Some attempt has been made to discover the relative proportion of each animal within each occupation layer on the site; but no attempt has been made to interpret the bone finds in terms of actual numbers of animals. The reason for this is that since the site was being excavated as a rescue dig there was neither the time nor the manpower available, either to collect every identifiable fragment of bone, though - as far as possible - a representative sample was preserved; or to study each bone sufficiently to determine the age of the animal with any accuracy. Nor was it possible to keep any but the most important material for further study at the close of the excavation.

Assuming that the faunal remains recorded were in fact a representative sample, the domesticated species which appear in all levels are, as might be expected, ox and cow (Bos longifrons), pig, sheep and horse. Of these in each period the ox is by far the most common. The individual beasts vary in size, even when fully adult, some being fairly large and other, comparatively small with many intermediate variations. Since this variation shows itself in the bulk and diameter, rather than the length, of the long bones it is possible that it is not

significant of differences of breed, for modern cattle do maintain growth in bulk over a long period of their adult life even after the epiphyses have fused. Unfortunately too few unbroken long bones were recovered to make any measured comparison of size meaningful; and equally unfortunately for the same reason it has not been possible to produce any statistics to show the ages at which the cattle were slaughtered. The impression, however, is that both young and mature beef was enjoyed by all the occupants of the site; but there is little evidence that much veal was eaten. One should remember, however, that there is little certainty that cattle and sheep were reared primarily for meat.

The sheep appear to have been killed both for lamb and mutton, though there was a greater proportion of fairly young individuals than of old. They appear to have been a horned variety with short stubby horn cores 2-3 ins. long. During the earliest occupation the sheep remains were slightly more numerous than those of pig, but the later occupation debris shows a preference for pig over sheep. On the whole, the bones of pig belong to mature specimens, but a certain number of mandibles and maxillae were found showing either milk teeth or with very few erupted teeth at all.

The bones of horse were comparatively fewer than these, in all layers, and while many were large animals, there were a few which were much smaller, probably belonging to ponies of 12-13 hands.

Of the hunted animals, red deer were much the most numerous. They were apparently killed at all seasons of the year, as both head and attached antler have been found, together with crania lacking antlers. The antler appears to have been used for making pins in the basement (p.), and it seems to have been the practice to saw the antlers from the skull for this purpose when the deer was cut up. Roe deer was also found in the lowest level, and again the antlers, where present, were sawn up for use. In connection with hunting it may be of interest to note that the inhabitants of the site did make some use of the river Thames, as vertebrae of salmon and some kind of flat fish, a dab perhaps, were found.

To turn away from items of diet, dogs seem to have been fairly common around this dwelling. There were mandibles and/or maxillae of nine dogs in the early occupation level, and several in the later periods. They were all of a similar type.

The proportion of each animal found in each layer, expressed in percentages, is as follows:

Layer	Ox	Pig	Sheep	Horse	Red deer	Roe deer
7, 8	46.6	15.0	19.0	14.0	4.6	.75
5, 6	30.61	9.2	27.6	19.4	13.2	
3	44.0	27.0	19.0	7.0	3.0	
Total bones in each layer: Layers 7, 8					-	427
					5, 6	- 98
					3	- 306

ANIMALS

CHALK 1961

Fauna.

The faunal remains on this site appear to represent the residue of meals and similar debris almost exclusively. There is a preponderance of domestic animals amongst the remains, though the results of hunting, fishing and even perhaps fowling expeditions are also represented. Some attempt has been made to discover the relative proportion of each animal within each occupation layer on the site; but no attempt has been made to interpret the bone finds in terms of actual numbers of animals. The reason for this is that since the site was being excavated as a rescue dig there was neither the time nor the manpower available either to collect every identifiable fragment of bone, though an entirely representative sample was preserved; or to study each bone sufficiently to determine the age of the animal with any accuracy, nor was it possible to keep any but the most important material for further study at the close of the excavation.

Assuming that the faunal remains recorded were in fact a representative sample, the domesticated species which appear in all levels are, as might be expected, Celtic ox and cow (Bos longifrons) Pig, Sheep and Horse. Of these in each of the two well-defined occupation periods the ox is by far the most common. The individual beasts vary in size considerably even when fully adult, some being fairly large and others comparatively small with many intermediate variations. Since this variation shews itself in the bulk and diameter rather than the length of the long bones it is possible that it is not significant of differences of breed, for modern domestic cattle do maintain growth in bulk over a long period of their adult life even after the epiphyses have fused. Unfortunately too few unbroken long bones were recovered to make any measured comparison of size meaningful; and equally unfortunately for the same reason it

M's copy = I've sent RAW one to keep. I think this is typical of the kind of thing we need to avoid at all costs - it is worse than useless: it may be harmful!

I would not be associated with it, and I think, if possible, one ought plan to make it clear that this is not AM lab - arranged, in the report

19 MAY 1969

(b) to ensure DEJ realises exactly what's involved. L 245

Of the hunted animals, red deer were much the most numerous. They were killed apparently at all seasons of the year as both shed and attached antler have been found together, with cranial lacking antlers.

The antler appears to have been used for making pins in the first occupation layer and it seems to have been the practice to saw the antlers from the skull for this purpose when the deer was cut up. Roe deer was also found in the early occupation level and again the antlers, where present, were sawn up for use. In connection with hunting it may be of interest to note that the inhabitants of the site did make some use of the river Thames as vertebrate of salmon and of some kind of flat fish, a dab perhaps, were found.

To turn away from items of diet, dogs seem to have been fairly common around this dwelling. There were mandibles and or maxillae of nine dogs in the early occupation level and several in the secondary occupation period. They were all of similar type and a full report will be prepared by the British Museum (Natural History).

The proportion of each animal found in each layer expressed in percentages is as follows;

Layer,	Ox	Pig	Sheep	Horse	Red deer	Roe deer
7&8	46.60%	15.0%	19.0%	14.0%	4.6%	0.75%
5&6	30.61%	9.2%	27.6%	19.4%	13.2%	