Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 59/90

GAMSTON IRON AGE SETTLEMENT,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, 1989.
THE VERTEBRATE REMAINS.

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Summary

Excavations at Gamston Iron Age settlement produced a
small assemblage of bones. The small number of bones
and their poor state of preservation was due to the
acidic nature of the soil. Most of the 139 fragments
were unidentified. Of the identified bones, cattle
were in the majority, followed by sheep/goat. Pig and
horse were also represented. Most of the identified
bones were teeth.

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The bones from excavations at Gamston, Nottinghamshire were extremely poorly preserved due to the acidity of the soil. As a result, only 139 fragments from useful contexts were recovered, the majority of which were so fragmented they could not be identified.

There are 44 bones of cattle of which 30 are teeth fragments; 15 of sheep/goat (14 teeth fragments); 1 of pig (lumbar vertebra) and 1 of horse (tooth fragment). The remaining 82 fragments were not identified.

Needless to say there is little useful information that can be extracted from such evidence. None of the bones could be measured. Three cattle lower third molars were complete enough to record wear state: two at g and one at e (method of Grant, 1982). One cattle humerus has proximal end fused and one cattle scapula has glenoid tuberosity unfused.

Table 1 gives a summary of the assemblage. Not all the bones were phased, but all can be said confidently to be Iron Age.

Reference:
Grant, A. 1982. The use of tooth wear as a guide to the age of domestic ungulates. In (edited by B. Wilson, C. Grigson and S. Payne) *Ageing and sexing of animal bones from archaeological sites* Oxford: BAR (British Series 109) 91-108.

Table 1. Summary of the bones from Gamston Iron Age Settlement

Taxon	Elements	N
a) unphased		
Cattle	2 sk, 8 ut, 8 lt, 3 tf, 2 hum, 1 rad, 1 tib	25
Sheep/goat	4 ut, 4 lt, 3 tf, 1 tib	12
Pig	1 lv	1
Horse	1 ut	1
ULM	3 tf, 1 rib, 12 frg	16
UMM	8 tf, 1 rib, 4 lb, 32 frg	45
Total		100
b) Phase 1		
Cattle	1 tf	1
UMM	2 tf	2
Total		3
c) Phase 2		
Cattle	2 ut, 4 lt	6
Sheep/goat	2 lt	2
ULM	3 tf	3
UMM	5 tf, 5 frg	10
Total		21
d) Phase 3		
Cattle	1 ut, 3 lt, 1 tf, 1 man, 1 scp, 1 tib	8
Sheep/goat	1 ut	1
ULM	2 frg	2
Total		11
e) Phase 4		
Cattle	1 sk, 1 ut, 2 tf	4

Key:
ULM - unidentified large mammal; UMM - unidentified medium mammal.
sk - skull; ut - upper tooth; lt - lower tooth; tf - tooth fragment;
man - mandible; lv - lumbar vertebra; rib - rib; scp - scapula;
hum - humerus; rad - radius; tib - tibia; lb - long bone; frg - fragment.