

ANIMALS

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Animal Bones from Brough, Yorks.

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Introduction and Methods

The collection comprises less than 200 specimens. These come from several different sites and, in time, are spread over more than 300 years. From this it is evident that any sort of analysis is out of the question and the report must be purely descriptive.

Proximal and distal widths of long bones are measured across articular surfaces and all measurements are in millimetres. Sex determinations of cattle were made by the calculation of breadth/length indices (Howard 1964) and heights by the method of Boessneck. (1956)

Description of Material

The bones were well preserved and the species represented were cattle, sheep, pig, horse and dog.

The measurements of the cattle long bones are given in Table I and show them to have been from animals similar in height to Chillingham cattle.

Table 1 Measurements of Cattle Long Bones

<u>Metacarpals</u>							Height	
t.l.	p.w.	m.s.d.	d.w.	100m.s.d/t.l.	100 d.w/t.l	sex	cms.	ins.
188	49	-	54	-	28.6	♂	120	47.5
195	61	34	63	17.4	32.3	♂	125	49.5
<u>Metatarsals</u>								
214	47	29	58	13.5	27.1	♂	122	48.3
215	42	24	49	11.2	22.8	♀	121	47.9
<u>Radius</u>								
275	68	36	57	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Humerus</u>								
235	-	33	64	-	-	-	-	-

t.l. = total length. p.w. = proximal width. m.s.d. = mid shaft diameter.
d.w. = distal width. ♂ = Steer. ♀ = Cow.

The cattle remains included many waste bones, portions of skull, jaws, metapodials and phalanges. This suggests that the animals were brought in on the hoof, and slaughtered, rather than as already dressed carcasses.

Table 2 Sheep Long Bones

Radius	145.	25.	14.	21.
Metacarpal	113.	19.	12.	20.
	115.	19.	17.	21.
Tibia	214.	-.	15.	22.
Metatarsal	119.	16.	10.	18.
	131.	17.	11.	21.

These are very similar to those of the Soay and suggest long limbed

slender animals.



There were only two specimens of horse, a complete radius of 333 mm and a humerus of 257 mm; both these would have come from ponies of less than 13 hands.

The few pig remains do not merit special comment.

The only specimen of dog was a slightly damaged skull the dimensions of which are shown in Table 3, compared with those of a beagle in the writer's private collection.

Table 3. Dimensions of Dog Skull

I	III	IV	X	XI	XIII	XIV	XV	M	
153.	71.	86.	52.	52.	114.	44.	59.	20 x 8	Brough
160.	76.	88.	50.	59.	120.	45.	68.	19.5 x 7.3	Beagle - 67.4

- I Occipital protuberance to alveolare.
- III Posterior junction of nasals to alveolare.
- IV Bizygomatic breadth.
- X Greatest breadth of palate at junction of PM⁴ and M¹
- XI Maxillary tooth row
- XIII Condyle - Infradentale.
- XIV Vertical Height of the coronoid process.
- XV Mandibular tooth row.

Dogs in Roman times varied very considerably, ranging from the size of a Jack Russell terrier to that of a big male Alsatian. (Harcourt - In prep.) The very small ones must have been house pets and the very large possibly hunting or guard dogs. The functions and uses of those in the middle range must remain conjectural.

References

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