

REPORT ON THE CREMATIONS FROM LLANDEGAI

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Of the seventy cremations submitted for examination, only seven were large enough to repay detailed study. Several more contained fragments which could be definitely identified as human. The remainder were only small quantities of small fragments which at best may be described as "probably human". A few cremations contained fragments of bone which were definitely not human.

The three largest groups of bone (A111, B23 & C72) were all close to 2 kg. in weight, suggesting that most of the bone from the body had been recovered. There was no evidence of more than one individual being represented in any of the cremations.

The larger cremations

The seven largest cremations (marked with a star in Table 1) are discussed individually below. In all cases except 166 recognisable fragments of all parts of the body were present. The weights and relative proportions are given in Table 2 where they are compared with those for an uncremated skeleton. It can be seen that in all cases long bones are over-represented in the identified material as they are more robust and tend to be found in larger pieces than other bones and are hence more readily recognised. Skull fragments are also easily distinguished and so the percentage identified compares favorably with that in the unburnt state. The more friable bones - ribs, vertebrae and extremities - are under-represented as they tend to break down into small, unrecognisable fragments.

A13 The largest bone fragments were 6 cm. long, with average sizes of 1-2 cm. The mastoid processes were small, suggesting that the individual was possibly female.

A111 Bone fragments ranged up to 5 cm. in size but with most falling around the 3 cm. mark. Despite the large quantity of bone present no sex can be suggested as no diagnostic fragments were found. The individual was adult. One vertebra showed some arthritic lipping, a degenerative change which becomes commoner with advancing age.

Table 1 - The cremations

| Cremation no. | Unidentified fragments | Skull | Long bones | Vertebrae | Total weight |
|---------------|------------------------|-------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| <u>Site A</u> |                        |       |            |           |              |
| Pit 1         | A81                    | x     | x          |           | 15           |
|               | A101                   | x     | x          | x         | 25           |
|               | A111 *                 |       |            |           | 1829         |
| Pit 2         | A110                   | x     |            |           | 80           |
|               | A119                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A123                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A139                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Pit 3         | A76                    |       | x          |           | -            |
|               | A82                    |       | x          |           | -            |
|               | A83                    | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A94                    | x     |            |           | 30           |
|               | A95                    | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A98                    | x     | x          |           | 30           |
|               | A114                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A116                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A132                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Pit 4         | A68                    | x     |            |           | 20           |
|               | A69                    |       | x          |           | -            |
|               | A96                    | x     | x          |           | 10           |
|               | A157                   | x     | x?         |           | -            |
| Pit 5         | A86                    | x     | x?         |           | -            |
|               | A125                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Pit 6         | A70                    | x     |            |           | -            |
| Pit 7         | A166 *                 |       |            |           | 400          |
| Pit 13        | A215                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| NW Side       | A14                    | x     |            |           | 10           |
| Posthole 3    | A108                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A120                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 18   | A142                   |       | x?         |           | -            |
|               | A151                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 23   | A16                    |       | x?         |           | 25           |
| Posthole 76   | A190                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 77   | A191                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 83   | A202                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 98   | A214                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Posthole 326  | A244                   | x     |            |           | -            |
| Feature 156   | A255                   |       | x?         |           | -            |
| Feature 278   | A245                   |       | x?         |           | -            |
| Feature 376   | A252 *                 |       |            |           | 1113         |
| Ditch fill    | A89                    |       | x?         |           | -            |
|               | A117                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A145                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A175                   |       |            | x?        | -            |
|               | A177                   |       | x?         |           | -            |
|               | A194                   | x     |            |           | -            |
|               | A13 *                  |       |            |           | 447          |
|               | A25                    |       | x?         |           | -            |
|               | A195                   | x     |            |           | -            |

Table 1 cont.

| Cremation no.     | Unidentified fragments | Skull                | Long bones         | Vertebrae | Total weight |
|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------|
| <u>Site B</u>     |                        |                      |                    |           |              |
| Pit II            | B23 *                  |                      |                    |           | 1897         |
| Posthole 3        | B76                    | x                    |                    | x         | -            |
| Posthole 5        | B72                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
| Posthole 8        | B78                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
| Posthole 9        | B73                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
| Feature 15        | B11                    | Probably not bone    |                    |           |              |
| Feature 138       | B120 *                 |                      |                    |           | 863          |
| Feature 151       | B136                   | x                    |                    |           | 25           |
| Feature 166       | B139                   | x(inc. animal bone?) |                    |           | 10           |
| Ditch fill        | B5                     | x                    |                    |           | -            |
|                   | B27                    | x(inc. animal bone)  |                    |           | 25           |
|                   | B37                    | x(inc. animal bone)  |                    |           | 15           |
|                   | B86                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
|                   | B95                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
|                   | BX1                    | Probably not bone    |                    |           | -            |
| <br><u>Site C</u> |                        |                      |                    |           |              |
| G.21              | C13                    | x                    |                    |           | 15           |
| CP 1              | C37                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
| Ditch             | C45                    | x                    |                    |           | -            |
|                   | C20                    |                      | x                  |           | -            |
| Circle VI         | C50                    | Not bone             |                    |           | 10           |
| G 51              | C16                    | x                    | x(possibly female) |           |              |
| Outer ditch       | C72 *                  |                      |                    |           | 1657         |

Note: weights are expressed in grams.  
 - = less than 10 grams.

A166 No fragments were larger than 3 cm. and most were only around 0.5 cm. in size.

A252 The cremated bone was mainly in small fragments, maximum size being 1-2 cm. The individual was adult and, judging by the appearance of some of the fragments of pelvis, was probably female.

B23 Most of the bone fragments were under 5 cm. and the majority of these were under 2 cm.

B120 The average size of bone fragments was 1-2 cm.

C72 This cremation was comparatively well preserved. The bones were those of a young adult. The brow ridges were fairly massive suggesting that the individual was possibly male.

Table 2 - The larger cremations

| Cremation no.                       | Skull<br>weight % | Long<br>bones<br>weight % | Pectoral G<br>and pelvis<br>weight % | Hands<br>& feet<br>weight % | Ribs<br>weight % | Vertebrae<br>weight % | Misc.<br>frags.<br>weight | total<br>weight |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| A13                                 | 44<br>13.5        | 263<br>81.1               | 6<br>1.8                             | 3<br>0.9                    | 3<br>0.9         | 5<br>1.5              | 123                       | 447             |
| A111                                | 175<br>31.8       | 258<br>46.9               | 95<br>17.2                           | 2<br>0.3                    | 2<br>0.3         | 18<br>3.2             | 1279                      | 1829            |
| A166                                | 28<br>28.0        | 69<br>69.0                | -                                    | -                           | -                | 3<br>3.0              | 300                       | 400             |
| A252                                | 56<br>10.9        | 402<br>78.5               | 14<br>2.7                            | 5<br>0.9                    | 21<br>4.1        | 14<br>2.7             | 601                       | 1113            |
| B23                                 | 125<br>15.2       | 582<br>70.9               | 60<br>7.3                            | 6<br>0.7                    | 24<br>2.9        | 24<br>2.9             | 1076                      | 1897            |
| B120                                | 71<br>13.5        | 433<br>83.0               | 3<br>0.5                             | 4<br>0.7                    | 3<br>0.5         | 10<br>1.9             | 339                       | 863             |
| C72                                 | 198<br>19.7       | 594<br>59.6               | 86<br>8.6                            | 26<br>2.6                   | 39<br>3.9        | 60<br>6.0             | 654                       | 1657            |
| Uncremated<br>skeleton<br>(approx.) | 20                | 40                        | 10                                   | 10                          | 8                | 12                    |                           |                 |

N.B. Percentages are expressed as proportions of identified fragments only.

Weights are given in grams.