

APPENDIX 1 - FAUNAL REMAINS

1.1 Assessment of the Animal Bone

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Introduction

1.1.1 Excavations in the Nashenden Valley produced a total of 3 fragments (135 g) of hand retrieved bone, which were collected with the intention of shedding light on the agricultural economy and human exploitation of natural resources in the area. A further 14 fragments (244 g) were retrieved from environmental samples, sieved through a mesh of >10mm.

1.1.2 The recovery and study of the material was undertaken in accordance with the Fieldwork Event Aims (see section 2, main report), in particular 1-3 and 5.

Methodology

1.1.3 The assemblage was recorded through the use of a simple recording sheet. This enabled a rapid calculation of totals to be made along with a rough estimation of the number of individuals in each context and in total. With regards to the Caprine sub-family it was attempted to separate the sheep and goat bones, whose similarity often pose difficulties in identification, using the criteria of Boessneck (1969), Prummel and Frisch (1986). However, since no goat bones were identified in the collection all caprine bones are listed as sheep. The ageing of the domestic animals for the assessment was based on the epiphyseal fusion of the bone due to lack of other indicative elements. Silver's tables (1969) were used to give timing of epiphyseal closure for the cattle and sheep.

Quantifications

1.1.4 A breakdown of the assemblage by context is given in Tables 3.1 - 3.

Table 3.1: Summary table of all bone

Context	Interpretation	Count	Weight (g)	Comments
4	Layer	1	116	Horse
44	Pit	16	263	Cattle and sheep
Total		17	379	

Table 3.2: Percentage of identified fragments by context, feature and period

Context	Interpretation	Period	% of identified fragments			Count	Weight (g)
			Horse	Cattle	Sheep		
4	Layer	Undated	100	0	0	1	116
44	Pit	Late 2 nd - 4 th century AD	0	0	100	2	19

Table 3.3: Percentage of identified sieved bone, by context, feature and period

Context	Interpretation	Period	% of identified fragments			Count	Weight (g)
			Horse	Cattle	Sheep		
44	Pit	Late 2 nd - 4 th century AD	0	14	86	14	244

- 1.1.5 Cattle and sheep bones were the only bones identified to species from the assemblage. The majority of the identifiable fragments of bone came from the hand collected and sieved material from the late Roman pit fill 44 (pit 42) which consisted mainly of sheep bone in addition to one cattle tibia and scaphoid bone. The cattle tibia belonged to an individual over the age of 2-2.5 years (Silver 1969). The sheep long bones indicated that at least one individual was less than 1.5-16 months and that another was over 2.5-3 years of age (Silver 1969).

Provenance

- 1.1.6 The bones from pit fill 44 were in good condition. Only one other fragment, a horse bone from an undated layer, was recovered during the watching brief. Eleven small fragments of burnt bone were retrieved from the sieved material, all of which was from within context 44.

Conservation

- 1.1.7 The containment of the animal bone material within finds boxes is satisfactory for long term storage.

Comparative material

- 1.1.8 Comparison can be made with the much larger assemblages from the nearby White Horse Stone group, in particular the Iron Age settlement at White Horse Stone. Other sites along the CTRL are likely to provide comparable data.

Potential for further work

- 1.1.9 The only part of the assemblage with any value as an economic indicator is the material recovered from the later Roman pit (42). Cattle and sheep made up most of the assemblage and indicate the presence of these animals in the area in the Roman period. However, the assemblage is too small to permit any conclusions regarding the use or relative importance of the species present.
- 1.1.10 The variations in the age at death of the sheep indicated in the later Roman assemblage, suggest that with a larger assemblage some of the research priorities relating to agriculture and economy could have been addressed. As it is, the assemblage is too small to permit any conclusions regarding the development and practise of animal husbandry.
- 1.1.11 It is recommended that no further work be done on the assemblage other than the re-working of the assessment into the eventual publication.

Bibliography

Boessneck, J, 1969 Osteological Differences in Sheep (*Ovis aries* Linné) and Goat (*Capra hircus* Linné), in *Science in Archaeology* (eds D Brothwell and E Higgs), Thames and Hudson, 331-358

Prummel, W and Frisch, H J, 1986 A Guide for the distinction of species, sex and body size in bones of sheep and goat, *Journal of Archaeological Science* **13**, 567 – 77

Silver, I A, 1969 The Ageing of Domestic Animals, in *Science in Archaeology* (eds D Brothwell and E Higgs), Thames and Hudson, 283-302