

An evaluation of the human bone recovered during an Archaeological Targeted Watching at 23-28 Charterhouse Square, Farringdon (XSF10)

Context: utilities diversion TWB [66]

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An evaluation was conducted on the human skeletal remains recovered during archaeological investigations in September 2011 by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). These works were carried out as part of an archaeological targeted watching brief at the site of the proposed Crossrail Farringdon Eastern Ticket Hall. All disarticulated remains were examined following Museum of London Archaeology standards (Powers unpublished).

One context of human bone [66] was recovered from a utilities diversion trench. This comprised the disarticulated remains (not in anatomical position) of a minimum number of three individuals: two adults and one subadult and included skeletal elements from the skull, thorax, upper and lower limbs (Table 1). The bone was in good condition with cortical and joint surfaces surviving, however, of post mortem damage through later disturbance affected most elements. Three skulls were present and observations of morphological characteristics indicated the presence of two adult females. An unfused proximal epiphyses of a right humerus (upper arm) indicated the presence of a non adult (<18 years). Pathological bone changes observed included ante mortem tooth loss (during life) and calculus (mineralised dental plaque).

In addition, six fragments of animal bone were identified. This consisted of fragments of a pig pelvis, sheep/ goat radius and metatarsal, and a cow scapula. All showed evidence of butchery marks.

Previous archaeological works within the area have revealed evidence of human burial (Barber and Thomas 2002, 12—14). The possible association with the charterhouse burial ground suggests that the human bone from context [71] most likely relates to the redeposition of remains due to later disturbance of medieval burials within the vicinity.

Site code	Context	Body area	Elements present	Age	Sex	Pathology	MNI	Comments
XSF10	66	Lower limb	R. femur	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Missing proximal end
XSF10	66	Upper limb	R. humerus	Subadult	Subadult	None	1	Unfused Proximal epiphyses
XSF10	66	Upper limb	L. humerus	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Missing proximal end
XSF10	66	Upper limb	Humeral midshaft	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Post mortem damage
XSF10	66	Upper limb	R.scapula	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Post mortem damage
XSF10	66	Upper limb	L.ulna	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Missing distal end
XSF10	66	Upper limb	L.radius	Adult	undetermined	None	1	Missing distal end
XSF10	66	Upper limb	L.radius	Adult	undetermined	None	1	missing proximal and distal end
XSF10	66	Thorax	1st thoracic vertebrae	Adult	undetermined	None	1	None
XSF10	66	Thorax	R. rib	Adult	undetermined	None	1	None
XSF10	66	Thorax	L. ribs x 4	Adult	undetermined	None	1	None
XSF10	66	Skull	Frontals, parietals, occipital	Adult	Female	None	1	Metopic suture, wormian bones
XSF10	66	Skull	Frontals, parietals, occipital, temporals, maxilla	Adult	Female	AMTL	1	Post mortem damage Iron stains
XSF10	66	Skull	Frontal, parietals, supra occipital	Adult	Female?	None	1	Fragmented, metopic suture
XSF10	66	Skull	R. maxilla	Adult	undetermined	Calculus	1	None
						TOTAL MNI	3	

Table 1 Summary of human bone from context [66]

Bibliography

Barber, B, and Thomas, C, 2002 *The London Charterhouse*, MoLAS Monogr 10, London

Powers, N, Unpublished Museum of London Archaeology Service guidelines for the assessment of inhumations and disarticulated bone