

**Notes on the vertebrate and shellfish remains from Friary Gardens, Richmond,
North Yorkshire (site code RGF00)**

by

Deborah Jaques

Introduction

Six trenches located within an area to the west of the Friary Gardens, Richmond, North Yorkshire, were excavated by On-Site Archaeology during February and March 2000. The evaluation was undertaken prior to the development of the gardens, with a view to establishing the presence (or not) and potential of archaeological remains within the area.

Several bags of vertebrate remains (1347 g) representing 10 contexts were submitted for evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential.

Methods

The vertebrate remains were recorded using the protocol outlined in Dobney *et al* (1999). Where possible, fragments were identified to species or species group, using the reference collection at the Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York. Fragments not identifiable to species were grouped into categories: large mammal (assumed to be cattle, horse or large cervid) and medium-sized mammal (assumed to be caprovid, pig or small cervid). Notes were made of preservation, angularity (i.e. the nature of the broken surfaces) and colour. The total weight of bone was recorded for each context. Measurements were not taken because of the modern or uncertain date of the deposits.

Results

Artefactual remains, context descriptions and pottery spot dates all indicate that the deposits from which the bones were recovered were of modern date, or contained residual or redeposited material. Although most of the material was well-preserved, human remains from Contexts 1035 and 1039 were rather eroded, and the presence of these fragments, and the human teeth from Context 1001, also suggest that these deposits contained some reworked material.

Fresh breakage was noted throughout the assemblage and evidence for butchery was observed on a few fragments. No burnt or dog gnawed fragments were recorded.

The hand-collected assemblage amounted to only 67 fragments, of which 26 were identified to species (Table 1). Species present included cattle, caprovid (sheep/goat), horse and pig. The human teeth (Context 1001) represented an adult individual, whilst the cranial fragments and ulna (Context 1035) were from the remains of a baby. A detailed list of identifications can be found in the appendix.

Discussion and statement of potential

Although mainly well-preserved, this small assemblage is mostly of modern origin or reworked from earlier deposits, it is therefore of little interpretative value. No further work is warranted on this material.

Retention and disposal

The vertebrate assemblage may be discarded.

Reference

Dobney, K. M., Jaques, S. D. and Johnstone, C. J. (1999). Protocol for recording vertebrate remains from archaeological sites. *Reports from the Environmental Archaeology Unit, York 99/15*.

Table 1. Hand-collected vertebrate remains from Friary Gardens, Richmond, North Yorkshire.

Species		Total fragments
<i>Equus</i> f. domestic	horse	1
<i>Sus</i> f. domestic	pig	1
<i>Bos</i> f. domestic	cow	6
Caprovid	sheep/goat	5
<i>Homo sapiens</i>	human	13
Large mammal		11
Medium mammal		17
Unidentified		13
Total		67

Appendix 1

Trench 1

Context 1001

Preservation: variable – mostly good
Angularity: variable – mostly ‘spiky’, but few fragments eroded and rounded
Colour: fawn

Human: 3 permanent teeth – 2 upper premolars and 1 upper canine
Cattle: 1 upper molar
Large mammal: 1 rib fragment
Medium mammal: 4 shaft fragments – including tibiae
Unidentified: 12 fragments, mostly small and with fresh breaks

Fresh breakage noted throughout assemblage.

Weight: 104.4g

Context 1002

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Caprovid: 1 distal metacarpal (meas), chopped through shaft
Medium mammal: 1 shaft fragment, 1 cervical vertebra
Shellfish: 1 very eroded oyster shell fragment

Fresh breakage noted.

Weight: 25g

Context 1004

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Cattle: 1 chopped pelvis fragment – from large individual

Caprovid: 1 upper molar

Medium mammal: 1 mandible fragment and 1 vertebra fragment

Fresh breakage noted.

Weight: 130.5g

Context 1006

Preservation: fair
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Large mammal: 1 rib fragment

Weight: 6.5g

Context 1008

Preservation: very poor
Angularity: eroded and battered
Colour: brown

Unidentified: 1 fragment

Weight: 5.3g

Trench 2

Context 1026

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Cattle: 1 distal humerus fragment – heavily chopped through distal articulation and down shaft

Weight: 72.7g

Trench 3

Context 1029

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Large mammal: 3 cranium and 2 shaft fragments

Fresh breakage noted.

Weight: 73.8g

Trench 4

Context 1035

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn

Human: 8 cranium fragments and 1 ulna fragment representing a baby

Medium mammal: 6 vertebra fragments, including sacrum, lumbar (chopped longitudinally) and cervical fragments. Also 1 rib and 1 pelvis fragment. Vertebrae and pelvis chopped.

Shellfish: 1 cockle shell

Fresh breakage noted.

Weight: 35.7g

Trench 5

Context 1039

Preservation: good
Angularity: variable – spiky and battered
Colour: brown

Cattle: 1 distal tibia fragment

Caprovid: 1 metacarpal (rather battered)

Large mammal: 1 femur and 1 vertebra fragment

?*Human*: 1 fragile fragment

Weight: 144.8g

Trench 6

Context 1042

Preservation: good
Angularity: spiky
Colour: fawn or brown

Horse: 1 tibia (distal articulation measurable)

Cattle: 1 unfused distal tibia, 1 heavily chopped pelvis fragment

Caprovid: 2 tibia fragments (both measurable), representing large individuals

Pig: humerus shaft fragment

Large mammal: 1 pelvis fragment and 1 thoracic vertebra

Medium mammal: 1 femur shaft fragment

Shellfish: 1 oyster shell

Fresh breakage noted throughout assemblage.

Weight: 748.3g