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ABSTRACT

Analysis of human skeletal remains from 1978 and 1979 excavations and the 1978 survey is presented. At least 26 individuals from 14 sites are represented in the collections. None of the remains analyzed indicate that any of the individuals represented were in poor health. The fragmentary nature of the remains makes it impossible to draw any more definite conclusions concerning the health of the prehistoric population.

INTRODUCTION¹

Analysis of human skeletal remains excavated during the 1979 field season of the Dolores Archaeological Program (D.A.P.) revealed 14 individuals recovered from 10 sites. Of these individuals, 11 are adult and 3 are subadult. Analysis of skeletal remains from two 1978 excavations (Site 5MT2235 and Site 5MT4475) shows nine individuals, of which six are adult and three are subadult. Survey during 1978 produced three individuals, two adult and one subadult, from two sites (Site 5MT4449 and Site 5MT4638).

Sex and age determinants follow standard procedures, i.e., conservative estimates are based on the os coxae (pelvis) and dentition. Metric analysis is not appropriate at this stage, since most remains are fragmentary. Detailed discussions concerning the analysis of human skeletal remains at these sites are included as appendices to the individual site reports.

Work Summary

Between 400 and 500 hours were spent on the analysis of these human remains. The breakdown by task area of this work is as follows:

1. 65 percent - Analysis of remains and preparation of reports
(Analysis Summary).
2. 20 percent - Ancillary activities (Ancillary Activity Summary).
3. 10 percent - Preparation of Field Burial Recording Form.
4. 5 percent - Orientation for field crews.

¹A more extensive treatment of this data will be present in a future report (Chapter 3, Volume IX of the Dolores Archaeological Program Reports).

ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Table 10.1 Minimum Number of Individuals From Each Site

SITE	ADULTS	SUBADULTS
5MT0023	2	1
5MT2151	1	1
5MT2192	1	1
5MT2235	3	2
5MT2236	1	
5MT2320	1	
5MT2848	1	
5MT2853	1	
5MT2854	1	
5MT2858	1	
5MT4449	1	
5MT4475	3	1
5MT4545	1	
5MT4638	1	1

Table 10.1 shows the minimum number of individuals from each site that were represented by human skeletal remains. Figure 10.1 shows the locations of these sites within the Escalante Sectors. The majority of these individuals are represented by a small number of fragmentary remains. A site-by-site analysis is presented below.

Site 5MT0023

Excavations at Site 5MT0023 produced the skeletal remains of at least two individuals. One adult male is represented by a left femur, the os coxae, and bone fragments recovered from midden deposits located north of a large roomblock near the edge of the mesa. A second adult is represented by teeth and a left femur recovered from a probability square in the same area as were the remains of the first adult male. The recovery of human teeth and a maxillary from widely separated excavation proveniences suggests the presence of additional interments.

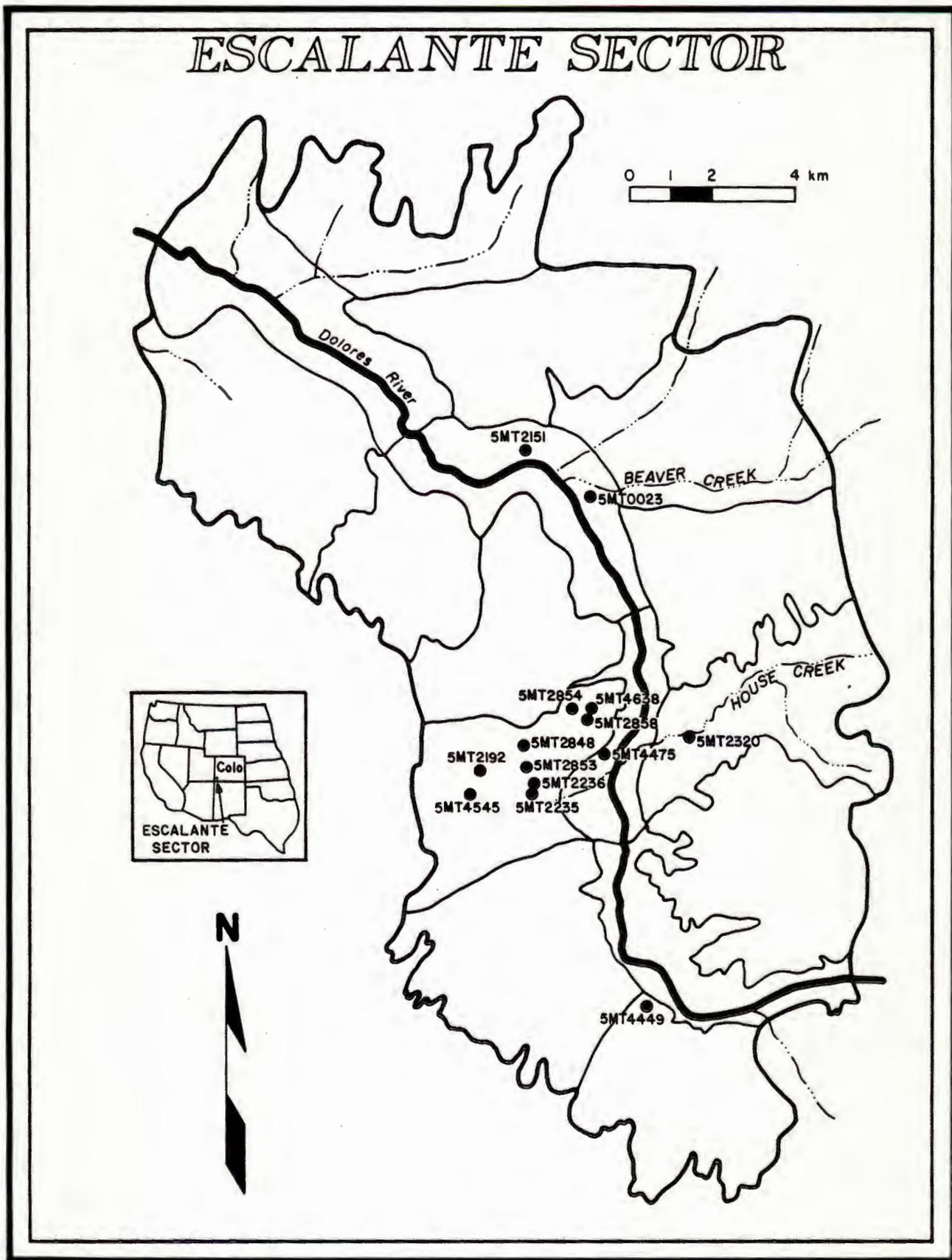


Figure 10.1 Location of sites discussed in the text.

Dental caries in one adult (the second individual described above) is the only sign of disease or abnormalities on these remains. The remains are fragmentary and indicate animal or human disturbance.

Site 5MT2151

Excavation at Site 5MT2151 produced a small collection of human and nonhuman bone; all remains were recovered in a disarticulated and fragmented state from the fill of Pithouse 1. At least two individuals are represented by adult and subadult tibia fragments. The third molar on an adult mandible fragment found in the collection appears to be slightly impacted. There are no other signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT2192

Excavation at Site 5MT2192 produced the skeletal remains of an adult male (Figure 10.2) and a subadult under six years of age. The adult was inhumed in the ventilator shaft of the only pithouse discovered at the site, while the child was apparently inhumed in the roomblock. Both individuals, therefore, were probably buried after abandonment of the site by the original inhabitants. The adult appears to have suffered from some degenerative joint disease, affecting portions of the lumbar spine and resulting in fusion of the right sacroiliac area. The first mandibular molars were lost some time before death, and the alveolar surface apparently healed. There are no other signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT2235

Excavation at Site 5MT2235 produced the fragmentary remains of at

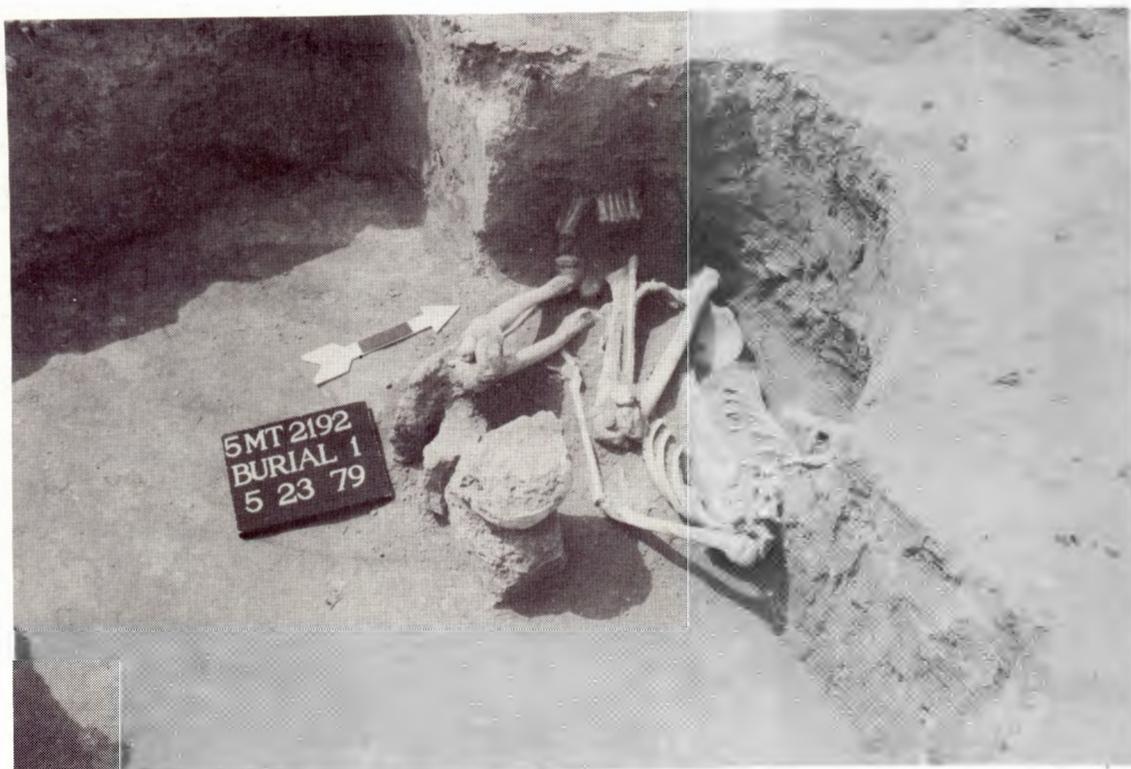


Figure 10.2 Burial 1, Site 5MT2192.

least five individuals, apparently representing a mass secondary burial. All five individuals were discovered in a disarticulated state in the fill of a small pitstructure. Two adults (Figure 10.3) are represented by the crania recovered near the floor of the pitstructure northwest of the central hearth. A third adult is represented by the right petrous temporal recovered from the same area. A fourth individual is represented by dental and post-cranial remains found scattered in pitstructure fill; the remains are probably that of a subadult about six years of age. Parietal fragments from the floor area might represent the fifth individual; the fragments are extremely thin and appear to be infantile.

There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains. The remains are quite fragmentary, suggesting animal disturbance and destruction, and some of the remains are charcoal stained and burned.

Site 5MT2236

Excavation at Site 5MT2236 produced a small collection of human and nonhuman bone. The provenience from excavation of these remains (in the fill of a roomblock) suggests post-abandonment interment at the site. These remains, of at least one individual, are extremely weathered and consist of many unidentifiable fragments. There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT2320

Excavation at Site 5MT2320 produced the skeletal remains of at least one individual; the individual was interred in an inferred midden, and the remains were exposed later by vandals. There are no signs



Figure 10.3 Burials 1 and 2, Site 5MT2735.

of disease or abnormality on these remains, which are extremely fragmentary.

Site 5MT2848

Excavation at Site 5MT2848 revealed the remains of at least one adult, possibly a female in her twenties. The individual was interred in the fill of a pitstructure at the site; therefore, it represents a post-abandonment use of the area. There is an unusual wear facet on the intercondylar eminence of the proximal tibia, but no signs of disease or abnormality are apparent.

Site 5MT2853

Excavation at Site 5MT2853 produced the extremely fragmentary remains of at least one adult. This individual was inhumed in a pit northeast of the roomblock. There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT2854

Excavation at Site 5MT2854 produced the extremely fragmentary remains of at least one adult, found in the upper fill of a pithouse at the site. There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT2858

Excavation at Site 5MT2858 produced a small collection of bone representing at least one individual; the remains were discovered scattered in the fill of Pithouse 1. There are stains from charcoal-streaked soil on some of the remains, although none of the bone is burned.

There are marks suggesting animal disturbance on some of the remains, but there are no signs of disease or abnormality.

Site 5MT4449

Archaeological survey operations at Site 5MT4449 collected the remains of at least one individual. There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT4475

Excavation at Site 5MT4475 produced the skeletal remains of at least four individuals. Two adults, probably one male and one female, are represented by the burials recovered from the south edge of the large midden; these interments are presumed to be associated with the later occupations of the site.

Site 5MT4545

Excavation at Site 5MT4545 produced the skeletal remains of at least one adult male (Figure 10.4); the individual was placed in a pit dug into the fill of a pithouse some time after the abandonment of the structure. These fragmentary remains show some destruction by animals, particularly on the long bone shafts, as well as substantial damage by root and soil movements. Since the bony thorax remains articulated, the burial was probably a primary inhumation. There are no signs of disease or abnormality on these remains.

Site 5MT4638

Archaeological survey operations at Site 5MT4638 collected the



Figure 10.4 Burial 4, Site 5MT4545.

remains of at least one adult and one subadult. The child was probably no older than six years at death and had caries. The remains associated with the child include a mandible with deciduous dentition and a second molar with occlusal surface caries; erupting adult dentition was not visible. There are no other signs of disease or abnormality on these remains. The remains from the adult include left petrous temporal fragments, facial skeleton fragments, radius fragment, metacarpal, tibia fragment, and unidentifiable fragments.

CONCLUSIONS

While it is not possible to make inferences concerning the health of prehistoric populations in the D.A.P. area, due to the fragmentary nature of so many of the human remains, an impression emerges that may be confirmed by future excavations. None of the remains uncovered to date shows an individual in poor health. There are no signs of fracture, no significant oral disease, and no skeletal sequelae of anemia or metabolic disease. In addition, all bone broken postmortem appears to be due to animal destruction, that is, there is no evidence that the many fragmentary remains at many of these sites were produced by human activity.

APPENDIX A
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS
by The D.A.P. Staff

The Bureau of Reclamation has directed that we include as part of the 1979 report on Human Remains recommendations for analytical procedures to be employed in field seasons subsequent to the 1979 season. We recommend that the D.A.P. follow those procedures instituted in the analysis of remains reflected in the report on analysis during the 1980 reporting year (Wiener [1]). These procedures are summarized below.

1. Human remains should receive only that cleaning necessary to allow observation of pathologies and measurement.
2. For each site, the human bone should be inventoried by field provenience unit.
3. The age and sex of each individual represented in the collection should be recorded when possible.
4. All pathologies and anomalies noted on the bones should be recorded.
5. The minimum number of individuals represented in the collections from each site should be determined.
6. Radiographic analysis of appropriate long bones should be conducted to provide information on pathologies and lines of increased density.
7. Observations on anthropometric, anthroscopic, and pathological features of the dentition, crania and post-cranial skeleton should be recorded.

Again, all of these procedures have been implemented by the D.A.P. A more detailed description of these procedures and the results of the application of the procedures may be found in the 1980 Human Remains Report (Wiener [1]).

APPENDIX REFERENCE

- [1] Wiener, Ann Lucy n.d. Analysis of Human Skeletal Material 1978-1980. In Laboratory analysis: 1980. Dolores Archaeological Program Technical Reports IX(3). Ms. on file, Dolores Archaeological Program, Dolores, Colorado.