



Whithorn investigations

In our last newsletter we reported that the group was about to sponsor a visit to Scotland by a young American researcher in dental anthropology. This followed inquiries made by Dr Dorothy Lunt and Dr Marie Watt, who had been studying various aspects of the dentitions excavated at Whithorn in southwest Scotland. They felt, particularly in view of the large amount of material available, that this resource was so important that morphological aspects should be examined in detail. They contacted the world expert in this field, Christy Turner in Arizona State University, who developed the currently most widely used system of recording dental traits, the ASU method. He recommended Ms Alma Adler, an anthropologist in his department with expertise in this method, having recorded the dentitions of modern Finns for her M.A. in anthropology. Support from the Dorothy Geddes Donation, along with some other sources, enabled her to come to Scotland this summer. Alma arrived in Glasgow on June 4 and left on August 16. During her stay in Scotland, as well as looking at the Whithorn dentitions, she spent about three weeks in Aberdeen and about a week in St Andrews examining thirteenth-to-seventeenth-century dentitions from Aberdeen, Perth, Linlithgow and St Andrews in order to compare the Whithorn material with these East-coast populations. In future, she would very much like to extend these comparisons to some English populations.

Alma's account of her work in Scotland will appear in the next newsletter.