

FIGURE 10.3.

A discussion of the Piltdown skull. This group portrait shows the principals in the controversy. Sir Arthur Keith, seated in the center in a laboratory coat, reconstructed a complete skull from some fossil pieces. Standing to his left is Charles Dawson, who found the fossils.



their teeth are far less subject to consumption by scavenger animals and decay than bones of the body. Thus, jaws and teeth are basically what have been preserved in the fossil record and what the paleoanthropologists have to work with.

Secondly, there is a distinct difference between the jaws of apes and the jaws of humans (see figure 10.12). Ape jaws are basically a rectangular U shape, and the human jaw is shaped more like a gently curved horseshoe. Because of this distinction, it was long thought by evolutionists that the famous *Piltdown Man* was the transitional form between apes and men. The Piltdown Man was "discovered" in 1912. The fossil had an ape-like jaw and a human-like skull. It was the pride of British anthropology, because the fossil was found in England and therefore indicated that the first pre-man was an Englishman. The Piltdown Man has since been proven to be exactly what it looked like -- the jaw of an ape and the skull of a man.

Although evidence had accumulated that the Piltdown Man did not fit properly into the theoretical transition from ape to man, it was hailed as the missing link until the early 1950s when the clever hoax was exposed. It is considered among the ten greatest forgeries by which man has been duped. Some unknown person with a good bit of scientific knowledge had taken the jaw of an ape and the skull of a man and cleverly doctored them to fit the scientific expectation of