

**LE MOUSTIER IMPLEMENTS FROM GRAVEL NEAR
REW STREET, ISLE OF WIGHT**

By HUBERT F. POOLE

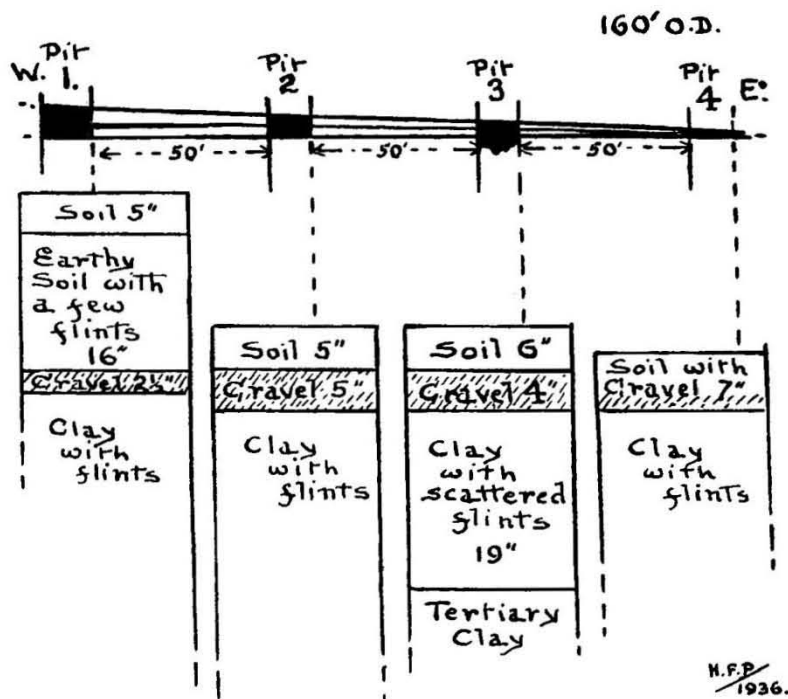
A THIN spread of gravel caps the hill between Rew Street and Sticelett, overlooking Thorness Bay, at an approximate height of 160 feet O.D., with a gentle slope downwards from south to north.

The site has been searched for several years by Mr. F. G. Flux of Rew Street, Mr. H. E. Pritchett of Northwood and myself. It has now been laid down to grass so that further work is impossible for the present.

The gravel lies so near the surface that it has been disturbed by the plough, and flakes and implements have been found on the ploughed portion. These surface flints are, naturally, of various dates, but may be divided into three clearly defined classes as follows :—

- A. Dull-surfaced flints of varied staining, very worn and evidently many times derived.
- B. Flints unworn, or with extremely slight wear, stained ferruginous-yellow to chestnut and with a lustrous surface. Many are artefacts, flakes showing the bulb-of-percussion being frequent, whilst definite implements have been found in fair numbers. These implements belong to types that may be compared with those of the later phase of Le Moustier. If transported by water they have travelled but a little way.
- C. Sharp unworn flints, unstained and lustrous. These are not so frequent and are mainly humanly struck flakes or crude implements that may be regarded as Neolithic. The broken, cutting end of a small polished celt is the only specimen at all dateable. They lie, approximately, where they have been discarded and have not been subject to water transport.

In an endeavour to gather more data regarding the flints of Class B, I obtained permission from Mr. H. G. Flux, the farmer, to excavate in the field. Four pits were dug on the eastern slope of the hill at 50 feet intervals, No. 1 being at the highest point and No. 4 at the lowest. (See diagram of sections.) The slope hereabouts is inconsiderable, there being only about 3 feet rise between pit 4 and pit 1. The depth at which the gravel lay was greatest at the highest point, but was even there only 21 inches from the surface. It was but a thin layer, its greatest thickness being 5 inches in pit 2.



The gravel consisted of flints of classes A and B without a trace of C. A few Tertiary pebbles were also included. From pit 2 came three humanly struck flakes of precisely similar colour and lustre to the surface finds and from pit 3 came two more, all from the gravel stratum. This, not very spectacular, result seems, however, to prove that the surface finds have been ploughed up from the thin stratum of gravel. The gravel rests on what appears to be re-arranged Tertiary clay with a moderate sprinkling of flints of similar character to those described as Class A.

A selection of ten typical implements is shown on Plates 1 and 2, of the natural size. The "points" show great similarity with one representing the last phase of culture in the Bleak Down deposit (252 feet O.D.)¹ and with others from the Great Pan Farm deposit (25 feet O.D.)² The "Tortoise core" is a small

1. The Gravel and Flint Implements of Bleak Down, I.W. *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, Vol. XII, pp. 20-47, pl. 4, Fig. 19.

2. Palaeoliths from Great Pan Farm, I.W. *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, Vol. IX, Part 3 (1925), pp. 305-319, Fig. 21.

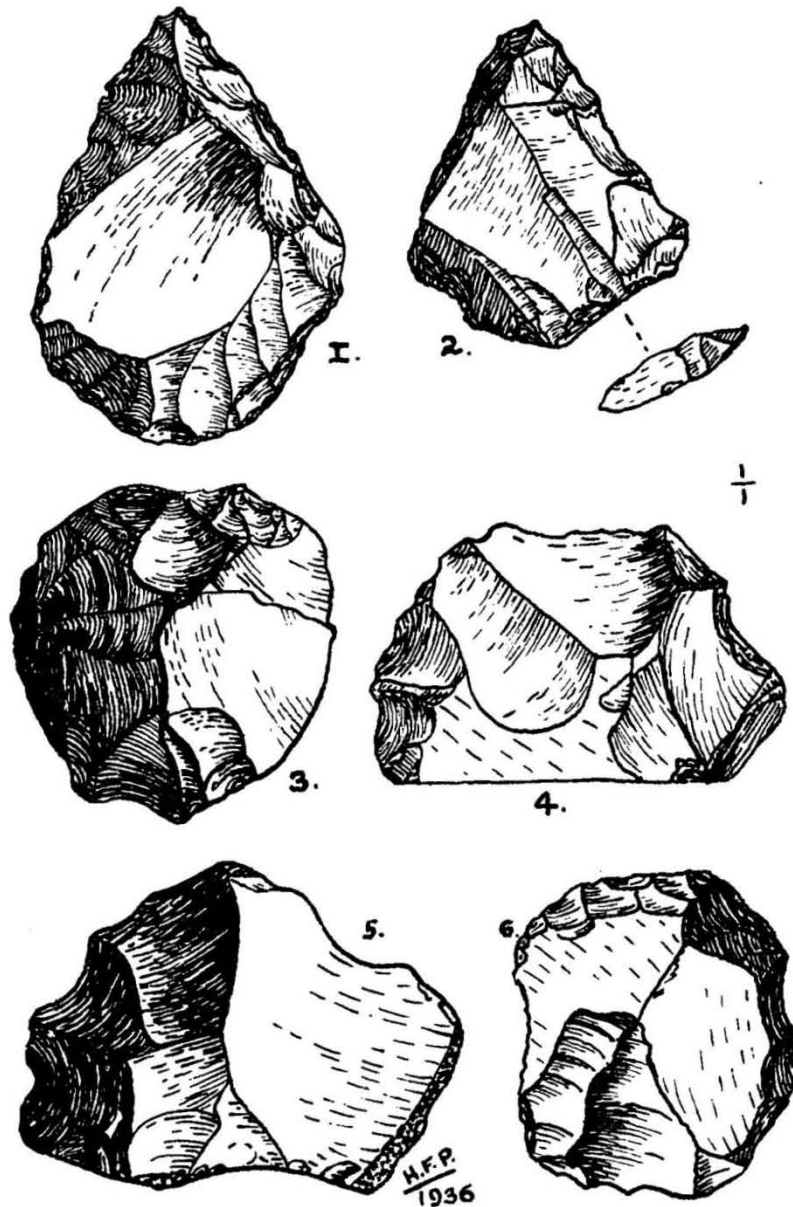


Plate I.

one, probably not so old as a larger worn specimen from the older gravel of Bleak Down. It is more comparable with one from Great Pan Farm where also the "segmented tea-cosy" types have their parallel. The two knives or side-scrapers are also similar to specimens from Great Pan Farm. The elongated implement, well chipped on both faces, with the broken point of a second, are a new type for the Isle of Wight.

Both in their bright colour and lustre these implements and their accompanying flakes are so different from the majority of the stones on the field that an artefact lying on the surface is immediately distinguished by these features alone. A number of flints with natural fracture have the same staining, but the lustre is not so pronounced. Flakes so far outnumber the implements that one can imagine the chipping site as having been fairly near, though there is no evidence for a "floor" and no re-assemblage of flakes appears possible.

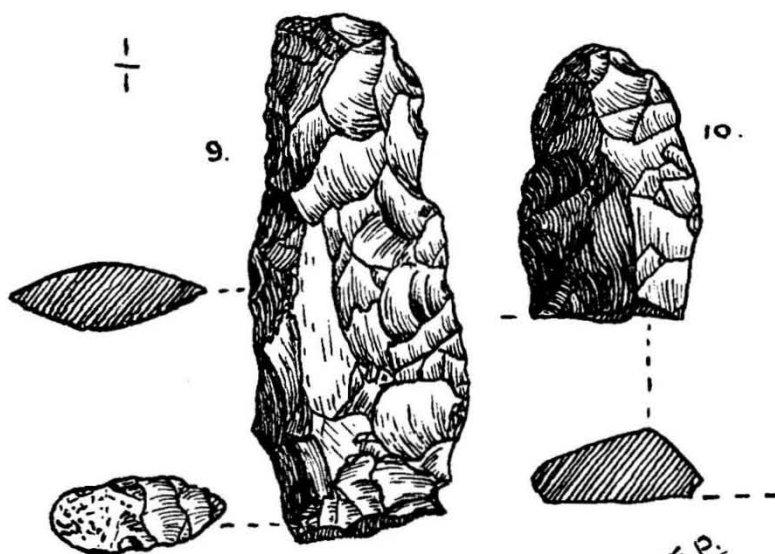
In point of erosion-level the gravel near Rew Street, described above, lies about midway between the Palaeolithic deposits of Bleak Down and Great Pan Farm, and, like them, contains implements in the style of Le Moustier. It thus affords welcome additional evidence of the continuity and technical development of the Mousterian culture in the Isle of Wight area, throughout a period represented by more than 200 feet of vertical subaerial erosion, which I envisaged in a former paper.³

DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTS.

PLATE I.

- No. 1. Le Moustier point in bright, ferruginous, yellow-stained flint with a lustrous surface, unworn. The opposite face to that illustrated is the bulbar and is very slightly retouched on one edge only. Maximum thickness, 7/12 inches.
- No. 2. Le Moustier point in plum-brown lustrous flint, unworn. The butt is faceted, as shown in the drawing.
- No. 3. Tortoise core in brownish-yellow-stained flint, lustrous, unworn. Slightly biconvex being worked on both faces. A particularly symmetrical and tortoise-like specimen. Several others have been found but not so symmetrical.
- No. 4. Segmented tea-cosy in dark brown-stained flint, lustrous, unworn. The base is flat.
- No. 5. Segmented tea-cosy in brownish lustrous flint, unworn. The base is slightly curved.
- No. 6. Scraper, made from a flake, in yellowish-brown, lustrous flint, unworn. Several specimens have been found. A similar type occurred at Great Pan Farm.

3. Bleak Down, pp. 43, 46.



H.F.P.
1936.

Plate II.

PLATE II.

- No. 7. Racloir, or knife, made from a flake, ferruginous-brown-stained and lustrous, unworn.
- No. 8. Racloir, or knife, made from a flake, the bulbar face is slightly retouched. In ferruginous-stained and lustrous flint, unworn.
- No. 9. Pointed implement of pointed-oval section with faceted butt, well worked on both faces. In chestnut-brown flint, lustrous, very slightly worn, ? derived.
- No. 10. The broken point of a similar implement to No. 9. In ferruginous-yellow flint, very slightly worn.

In addition to the illustrated types there were found a number of small cores and a few flakes with slight retouch, or wear due to use, at the edges. The flakes, some hundreds, were of small to moderate size.