

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES.

A Tree Trunk in Bagshot Sand at East Wellow.

By A. G. STEAVENSON, M.A.

DURING January 1955 Mr. F. Cottrill of the Winchester Museums informed Mr. P. S. Peberdy of the Southampton Museums that it was known that a fossil tree had been found in a sand-pit at East Wellow and at the end of the month I went and examined the specimen. It was in the pit of the Test Road Materials Co., half a mile due east of East Wellow church, in typical Bagshot Sand, pale buff, false-bedded sand with numerous thin partings and wisps of white pipe-clay and of black, indeterminate vegetable debris. It was the drifted trunk of a tree, which had been removed from and lay beside its original position. The cast of half its diameter remained in the sand and showed that it was about twenty feet long before being broken up. The trunk had been slightly flattened during fossilisation but was originally over a foot in diameter. Unfortunately it had been discovered several months previously and had become much broken up by the frosts and rains of the winter and by the removal of fragments as curiosities. It was, when found, an entire trunk. It was straight and showed no signs of branching and there seemed to be no trace of the bark. The wood was not sufficiently petrified for any exact determination, but from the general aspect of the trunk I think it was coniferous. A remarkable feature was that it was penetrated in many places by round borings from a third to half an inch in diameter with rounded and slightly distended terminations now filled with clayey sand. They have all the appearance of having been produced by boring molluscs. The Bagshot Sand is usually considered to be a fresh-water deposit, but this tree trunk may well have been drifted from a distant part of the estuary where the water was at the time tidal and brackish. Such large and complete tree trunks are rare in the Bagshot Sand. A specimen of the wood is in the Tudor House Museum at Southampton.

Mediaeval Harness Ornament.

By G. W. WILLIS.

THE pendant, illustrated herewith, was found recently in a garden in Station Road, Overton. It originally formed part of a harness ornament of a well-known mediaeval pattern. The material is bronze and although much corroded, still shows traces of gilding and red enamel, while the elongated hole by which it was suspended suggests a long period of use.

The ornament, of which it once formed part, consisted of an upright rod about four or five inches long, strapped to the saddle of a draught horse, surmounted by a fixed shield with an heraldic charge on both sides. At half its height the rod carried a revolving hollow sphere to which were affixed five curved upright arms from each of which was suspended a shield such as this, bearing the same arms as the fixed shield above. (See *Ant. Journal*, Vol. XXIX, Jan. 1949.)

A point of special interest in this case is that the pendant bears the Royal leopards of England.

It has been officially dated as late 13th or early 14th century and has been placed in the Basingstoke Museum.

A Secondary Neolithic Site on Oxenbourne Down, Butser.

By J. C. DRAPER.

THE pottery of the Neolithic "B" or Peterborough Culture was described over forty years ago¹; but it is only in recent years that the relative stone industries have been identified.

The Peterborough and several allied cultures have now been grouped and named Secondary Neolithic Cultures, by reason that in stratified deposits these are above the Windmill Hill and similar primary Neolithic Cultures.

Besides the igneous stone products of the northern axe factories several sites in Southern England as at Stourpaine in Dorset and near Avebury in Wilts have yielded the typical flint tools of these cultures; and a site on Oxenbourne Down south of Butser by also yielding typical flint tools may be added to this list.

This site (Grid. Ref. SU 715185) first came to my notice in 1938, the down here having been stripped of the turf some years previous, subsequent weathering laid bare the site and an area of approximately half an acre was covered with the waste of a flint-knapping site. In this waste were found the implements about

1. Smith, R. A., "The Development of Neolithic Pottery", *Arch.* LXII (1910), 340-52.

PLATE V.



Mediaeval Harness Ornament.

PLATE VI.



Professor Stuart Piggott with the Hampshire Field Club at West Dean,
Long Barrow, 6 July, 1955.

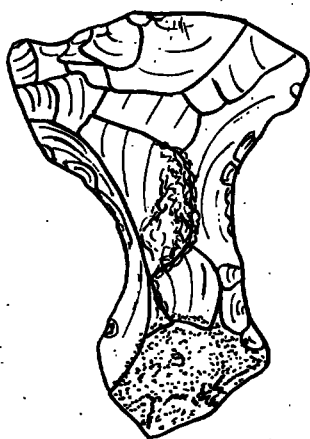


FIG 1.

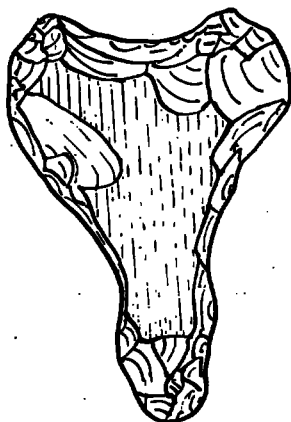


FIG 5.

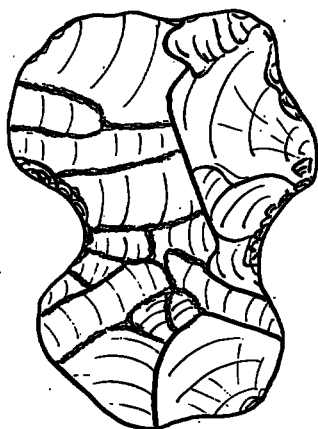


FIG 2.

ONE INCH.



FIG 3.

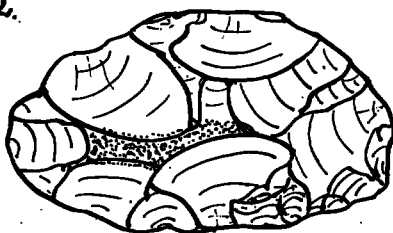


FIG 11.

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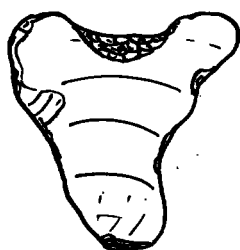


Fig 4.

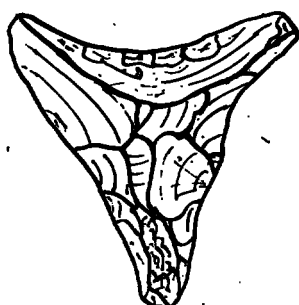


Fig 6.

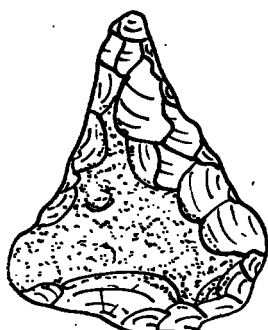


Fig 7.

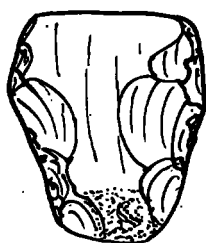


Fig 8.

ONE INCH.

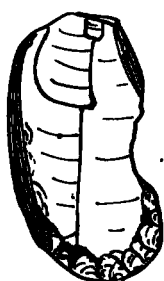


Fig 12.



Fig 9.



Fig 10.

to be described ; as is often the case from sites these implements are sometimes rejects and not always good examples of their type. All the artifacts from the site are deeply patinated as is to be expected from a site on chalk.

From the beginning I noted several unusual implements in my collection and it is only recently in correspondence with Professor Stuart Piggott and by reference to his latest book² that the true significance of these implements came to light. In my searching on the South Downs and other areas in South-East Hants I have found on rare occasions single examples of implements belonging to the Secondary Neolithic Culture and I have mentioned these below and illustrated some of them.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTS.

Apart from the implements illustrated thirty-seven scrapers of various shapes and sizes were found on the site.

The implement shown by *Fig. 1* is a waisted adze, and I have also single examples from Old Winchester and Salt Hill.

Fig. 2 represents an interesting example from below sea-level on Rainbow Bar, Hillhead. This adze was made from a derived Acheulian implement which was reworked ; the two methods of flint working are shown ; and the earlier surfaces are also rolled.

Fig. 3 shows a small axe-type implement.

Fig. 4 represents what for want of a better name has been called a "Y-shaped" tool by Piggott.

Another *Fig. 5* was found on Butser Hill and is again of interest, being made on part of a polished flint axe.

Fig. 6 is another example from Chidden Down.

A large boring tool is shown by *Fig. 7*.

A small implement with a tranchet cutting edge is shown by *Fig. 8*.

A petit-tranchet derivative or lop-sided arrowhead is shown by *Fig. 9*. This is not an uncommon type and I have single examples from Butser, Teglease Down and Wicor Shore, Fareham.

Fig. 10 shows a bifacially flaked point or lance-head which is again a typical implement of this Culture.

The two following implements were found on Salt Hill and are typical implements of the Secondary Neolithic Cultures.

Fig. 11 is a large lanceolate knife and *Fig. 12* is a scraper with a polished side. This is a rare type and the only example which I have noted in collecting several hundred scrapers.

2. Piggott, S., *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles*. Cambridge (1954).

The Great Barrow at Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire.

AN INTERIM NOTE BY PAUL ASHBEE.

THREATENED destruction by the agencies of the Bishop's Waltham Parish Council was the reason for the excavation of a barrow of considerable size, situated in the Folly Field, a sports ground, just to the east of the village centre. Before excavation it appeared as a gently contoured mound, some 180 feet in diameter, rising to just above seven feet in height. From a field inspection it would almost certainly have been classed as a denuded bowl barrow.

Excavation revealed that a great accumulation of soil completely masked a berm of an average width of eighteen feet, and a ditch, generally about fourteen feet wide and of a proportionate depth. A series of sections across this ditch was obtained, around the barrow, and the results suggest an ovate plan. The ditch was sterile, apart from a possible Early Iron Age sherd from the upper silt.

The variegated sands and clays which form the geological solid of the neighbourhood had been cut into deeply by the ditch, and the resultant throw-up produced a mound in which tip-lines, reflecting the mode of construction, were clearly visible. From this mound a flint industry and a series of sherds of urn, and allied wares, were obtained. The greater part of this material came from the humus and upper part of the mound, and the skirts. Such material may well have been purposefully incorporated as the mound was of clean material from a ditch. The flint industry included large numbers of freshly made scrapers, some of considerable size, as well as serrated blades and large lunates. Quantities of fire crackled flints were also recovered.

Beneath the barrow centre, and missed by a matter of inches by a bell-shaped modern pit, which had been driven deeply into the underlying sand, was an approximately rectangular grave, about eight feet in length, five feet in breadth, and one foot six inches in depth. It contained the carbonised, but readily recognisable, remnants of a rectangular tree trunk coffin. In the centre was a cremation piled into a neat ovate heap, with the larger fragments at the edges. This rested upon the bottom of the coffin but was covered by a brown, fibrous, bast-like material, which also covered the two bronze daggers which flanked it. One dagger, five inches or so in length, appears to have been flat bladed and slightly ogival. The other, 3.5 inches in length, has a mid-rib. As far as can be seen at this stage, it is not unlike a blade, dug by Colonel Hawley, from a barrow at Winterbourne Came in Wiltshire.¹ At the side of the coffin was an urn with the base apparently

1. *W.A.M.* XXXVI, 622; Fig. 4.

still in its original position—upon the surface of the grave infill around the coffin, but at a lower level than the pre-barrow ground surface. It is some twelve inches in height, of biconical form, with a well-formed, turned, and squared, rim; not unlike certain examples of the food-vessel class. Ornamentation, confined to the upper part of the urn and of remarkably fine workmanship, consists of zones of triangles and saltires executed by cording. It is difficult to point to a precise counterpart of this superb piece; however, its considerable diameter (over twelve inches) might link it with the "Wessex" bowls. This urn had been crushed by the weight of superincumbent soil, and pieces of it discovered inside against the side of the coffin not far above the bottom suggest the collapse of some kind of cover for the interment. The absence of post-holes may well preclude the possible existence of structures of mortuary house form, but it would seem that timbering, which would have allowed the urn to stand beside the coffin, may have been used. The only positive evidence for the existence of such a lid was streakings of carbonised wood, which were around and mingled with an anthropomorphic silhouette, which, in deep chocolate-brown sand, stood out in marked contrast to the grey-yellow sandy filling of the grave. This silhouette, made distinct by surface stripping, was but a layer about 2.5 inches in depth at its medial axis, merging into the surrounding sand at its edges and beneath. Adequate samples were taken and work is being undertaken to determine the nature of this deposit.

- A small mound of dark sand, capped by a pan layer, surrounded the grave, but the crown was broken above the grave and burial, a feature strongly suggesting collapse as indicated above. The dark mottled material of the mound extended down through, and merged with, the grey-yellow sandy material above and around the silhouette and cremation. A few inches from the grave, however, and to the south-west, was a curious elongated pit. It had been dug into the sandy bed-rock in a series of steps and its bottom was an almost circular scoop, one side of which ran out into a slight step. This pit must have been filled in soon after it had been dug, as there was no trace of the rapid silt which one would expect to find, after even one rainstorm, in such a pit. Its filling of soft, dark, clayey loam, quite homogeneous, was sterile. Such a feature can only be equated with the so-called "Ritual" pits encountered beneath certain round and long barrows.²

The superb urn, the cremation rité in a timber coffin, the plurality of daggers, the great size of mound and ditch, and the possibilities of the barrow having been of the "Bell" class,³

2. Glasbergen, *Eight Beatitudes*, 150; Piggott, *Neolithic Cultures*, ritual pits.

3. Grinsell, *P.P.S.E.A.*, VII, 203-230.

suggest the burial of a chief or potentate, indeed, affinities with certain barrows and their contents, included in the Wessex Bronze Age lists, are present. A series of regal barrows are known in the South Coast Region, specific examples being Hove,⁴ and Wareham.⁵ It may be to this extra-Wessex series that the Bishop's Waltham barrow and burial belong. It is of some interest to recall that but a few miles distant, on Portsdown,⁶ just after the last German war, Group-Captain Knocker recovered, possibly from a razed disc-barrow, a Wessex assemblage, surely feminine, of gold cone-button, beads, and a slotted incense-cup.

This barrow stands alone at Bishop's Waltham, its nearest neighbours being upon the chalk downs to the north-east and at West-End to the south-east. It is sited upon low-lying ground overlooked upon almost all sides. While no prehistoric site in this country is ever at a great distance from water of some form, this peculiar siting at the head waters of the Hamble River may be of some significance.

Throughout the excavation the writer was assisted by Miss J. Duckett, now Mrs. J. G. Hurst, who during the latter part of the operation was in sole charge of all day-to-day operations. Her good management and shrewd observation, during an operation undertaken through the winter months, ensured the modicum of success with which the labours were crowned. The excavation, which occupied two months of the winter 1953/4, was sponsored by the Ministry of Works.

4. Brighton and Hove *Arch.*, No. 2 (1924), 20-28.

5. *Gents. Mag. Lib.*, I, 94-95.

6. *Portsmouth Reader*, II, No. 3 (July 1948), 35-39.