ART. I. – *Prehistoric Habitation Sites in West Cumbria: Part II, The Nethertown and Seascale Areas.*

By J. CHERRY, B.SC., AND P. J. CHERRY, B.A.

OUR final report on the prehistoric habitation sites in the St. Bees area is already published in the Transactions of this Society.[1] It is our intention, in this paper, to record all the sites and artefacts which we have discovered since 1967 in ploughed fields and erosion scars, during field walking on the coastal strip between St. Bees and Seascale over a distance of about twelve kilometres. Artefacts found at several locations further inland are also recorded, and although most of the occupation evidence has been in the form of artefacts of flint, chert and stone, objects of pot, iron and jet are recorded from two of these locations.

The coast road from St. Bees to Braystones follows the line of a natural depression which runs almost parallel to the coast-line in a south-easterly direction. To the west of the road the land rises to form a low ridge before falling sharply to the sea-shore and below the ridge the Barrow to Whitehaven railway follows the shore-line along the thirteen metre contour. Most of the artefacts found between St. Bees and Braystones lay at the seaward edge of the fields on the higher ground above the railway.

The position of the sites to the north of Seascale is given in Figure 1, the numbers and types of artefacts found are listed in Tables 1 and 2, and a selection of these is illustrated in Figure 2. Sites at Seascale were reported in 1967,[2] and passing reference only will be made to many of the sites there, so that this paper should be read in conjunction with the 1967 report.

The term "chalk flint" is used to describe flint which does not originate from beach pebbles or the glacial drift of West Cumbria, but which has all the appearance of flint removed from its natural chalk matrix. The expression "bulbar reject" refers to bulbs of percussion which have been removed from blades by direct snapping and not by the microburin technique.

COULDERTON 1

Map reference: 2975 5099 NX91 Height OD: 37 metres.

In a field to the north of an observation hut belonging to the Proof and Experimental Establishment, Eskmeals, to the north-west of Coneyside Cop was a small scatter of flints of pebble origin including a core rejuvenation flake, together with a utilized flake of chalk flint. Three of the pebble flakes are fire-damaged.

COULDERTON 2

Map reference: 2978 5092 NX91 Height OD: 37 metres.

In a field to the west of Coneyside Cop we picked up a few flints which include a patinated blade, a short, lightly patinated notched blade, and a core front rejuvenation flake.

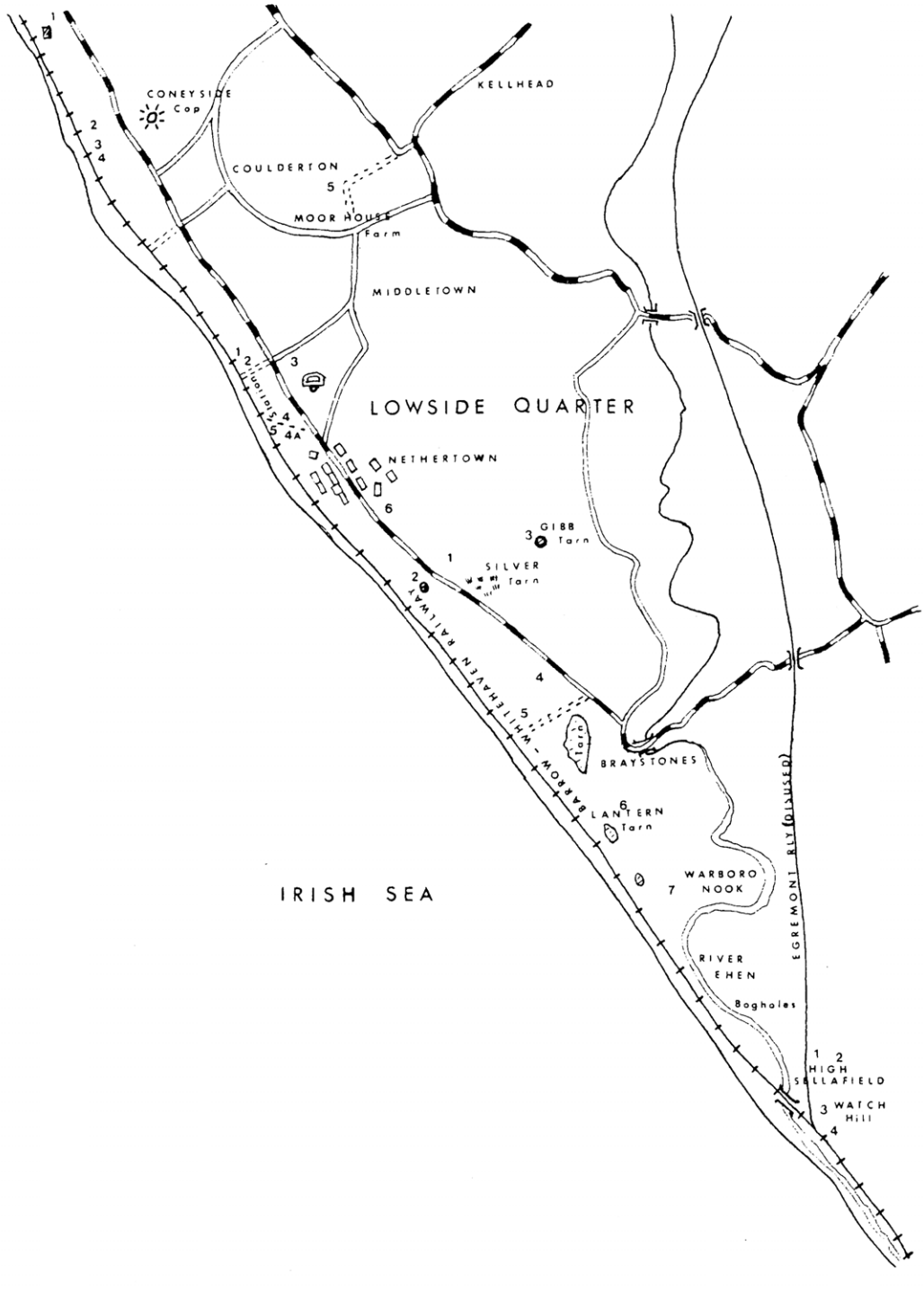


FIG. 1. – Distribution of flint sites in the Coulderton, Nethertown, Braystones and Sellafield areas.

COULDERTON 3
Map reference: 2978 5091 NX91 Height OD: 37 metres.

In the adjoining field to the south of Coulderton 2 we found a few artefacts of flint, chert and volcanic tuff. The last is in the form of a large trapezoidal flake with traces of pebble cortex and no secondary retouch. Among the flints is a small truncated blade with some blunting at the bulbar end suggesting the use of the microburin technique to remove the bulb of percussion. In addition there is a Bronze Age type flake core and a small side scraper or knife in grey flint, Fig. 2, 24. None of the flint exhibits any marked degree of patination.

COULDERTON 4
Map reference: 2979 5091 NX91 Height OD: 30-38 metres.

In the field to the south of Coulderton 3 below Coneyside Cop and about three kilometres from the most southerly of the St. Bees Mesolithic sites, we picked up a number of flints with late Mesolithic characteristics including a microlith, Fig. 2, 1, and two blunted fragments together with bladelet cores and small blades. In the assemblage are scrapers, utilized and worked flakes, an awl, and a few fragments of chert and volcanic tuff. Six of the flints show signs of fire-damage. At the southern side of the field is a pronounced depression which is probably the remains of a kettle hole and the artefacts were picked up on the high ground at the seaward end of this and down the slope to the north. The next field to the south, bordering on the hollow, was also ploughed, but nothing was found.

COULDERTON 5
Map reference: 2991 5089 NX91 Height OD: 65 metres.

On the high ground to the west of the lane between Kell Head cottage and Moorhouse farm, we found a number of lightly patinated flints with Bronze Age characteristics, including several crudely made scrapers and a core. At map reference 2996 5090 we found a Bronze Age type flake core reworked as a side scraper.

NETHERTOWN 1
Map reference: 2985 5082 NY00 Height OD: 37 metres.

There was a concentration of more than twelve hundred flints at the seaward edge of a field about one hundred metres west of the road and two hundred metres north of Nethertown station house. A high proportion of the flints is patinated, and includes microliths in triangular, quadrangular and crescentic forms, Fig. 2, 2-4, together with battered back blades, cores, blades, scrapers, utilized and blunted pieces typical of the littoral Mesolithic communities of West Cumbria. One microburin, Fig. 2, 19, was found, but the large number of bulbar rejects clearly indicate that direct snapping was the preferred method of removing the bulbs of percussion from blades during the manufacture of microliths on this site. The assemblage also contains a small nodule of slightly patinated chalk flint.

NETHERTOWN 2
Map reference: 2986 5081 NY00 Height OD: 36 metres.

In the next field, to the south of Nethertown 1, was a scatter of flints, mostly patinated, including bladelet cores, a blade and a fire-damaged end scraper.

NETHERTOWN 3

Map reference: 2988 5081 NY00 Height OD: 34 metres.

To the east of the road, in a field to the north of the Nethertown caravan site, we picked up a mixed assortment of flints including patinated bladed cores, with well defined striking platforms; lightly patinated flake cores with no defined striking platforms; patinated blades, one of which had been heavily utilized; an end scraper and two knives. One of the knives, made from a blade 4·2 centimetres long in caramel flint, triangular in section, with rather steep retouch along one edge, Fig. 2, 25, is similar in style to knives found at Seascale, e.g. Fig. 2, 37, which were associated with late Neolithic material. In addition to the flints the collection includes a flake of heavily oxidized volcanic tuff.

It is likely that the bladed cores and other patinated material represent scatter from the late Mesolithic sites which lie to the west of the road.

NETHERTOWN 4

Map reference: 2988 5078 NY00 Height OD: 27 metres.

On a south-facing slope above a small area of uncultivated boggy land, west of the Nethertown caravan site, we found a concentration of flints similar in type and quantity to Nethertown 1, including microliths of triangular and quadrangular form, Fig. 2, 5-9; blunted fragments; battered back blades; unworked blades; retouched and utilized pieces; bladelet cores and scrapers, including a nosed scraper or awl, Fig. 2, 21. We also picked up a large number of bulbar rejects, but only one microburin, Fig. 2, 20.

The assemblage also contains a core and a blade of volcanic tuff.

NETHERTOWN 4A

In the adjacent field to the west, above a footpath leading to Nethertown station was a further scatter of flints with no defined centre of concentration. We also picked up one or two flints embedded in the footpath adjacent to Site 4 so that we consider this scatter to represent the seaward edge of that site.

NETHERTOWN 5 Station Footpath

Map reference: 2987 5077 NY00 Height OD: 31 metres.

About eighty metres west of Nethertown 4 was another concentration of flints with late Mesolithic affinities, lying in a fairly narrow band close to the edge of the steep bank above the railway. Most of the material is heavily patinated and the microliths, Fig. 2, 10-18 are generally thinner and of more definite geometric form than those from the other Nethertown sites; they include battered back blades, triangles, a crescent and quadrangles. Some of the last could be fragments of larger triangular forms. We also picked up flints with secondary retouch including scrapers and awls, Fig. 2, 22 and 30, together with a number of blades.

This is the only Nethertown site on which awls of this size have been found although one was found at Coulderton 4, and a few were found on the St. Bees Mesolithic sites.

Nine of the flints show signs of fire-damage and the collection also includes a number of bulbar rejects but no microburins. Three struck flakes of chert were also found.

NETHERTOWN 6

Map reference: 2994 5074 NY00 Height OD: 25 metres.

In the fields east of the road, to the south of Nethertown, we found a few scattered flints including a scraper and a Bronze Age type core, both in lightly patinated caramel flint.

BRAYSTONES 1 Silver Tarn
Map reference: 2997 5069 NY00 Height OD: 31 metres.

At the top of a field adjacent to the road, above the northern end of Silver Tarn, and on the edge of a well defined kettle-hole, we picked up a quantity of lightly patinated flints, the only tool being a large scraper with some retouch of the pebble cortex bordering a struck face. A polished stone axe is reported from Silver Tarn.[3]

BRAYSTONES 2 Harnsey Moss
Map reference: 2995 5069 NY00 Height OD: 22 metres.

Out of a few molehills on the north bank of Harnsey Moss, which lies across the road from Braystones 1, we found four blades which appear to derive from grey chalk flint; two of these have edge damage from use. In the corner of the field on the edge of Silver Tarn were several pebble flints including a slightly patinated honey-coloured blade and two fire-damaged fragments. In molehills on the high ground west of Harnsey Moss were a few more nondescript flakes of flint.

BRAYSTONES 3 Ehenside
Map reference: 3003 5071 NY00 Height OD: 19 metres.

The discovery of the Neolithic settlement, brought to light by the draining of Gibb Tarn in 1869, is well documented in the report to the Society of Antiquaries by R. D. Darbishire in May 1872,[4] and a note to the *Whitehaven Herald* in November 1870 by the Reverend J. W. Kenworthy states that "Stone and flint implements, such as axes, knives and chisels, were plentiful".

In his report, however, Darbishire makes no mention of flint artefacts of any sort in his catalogue of finds, although it might reasonably be expected that flints would be more numerous than artefacts of any other material on a site of this period. Consequently we have watched this area carefully over the years, although the tarn field and most of the surrounding fields have remained unploughed.

On the high ground to the south-west of the tarn we found a scatter of lightly patinated flints, which were mainly Bronze Age in character, including a side scraper or knife, two flake cores, a single platform blade core and a broken fire-damaged core.

At the bottom of a slope, which originally formed the south bank of the tarn, in the field adjoining the tarn field, we picked up two small blade fragments of grey flint, each of which is damaged along one edge. In a cow-tread on the east side of the tarn site, we found a fragment of a blade of brown flint with slight edge damage and a little retouch on one end, Fig. 2, 26. This piece seems to be water-worn and we feel that the brown colour could be staining due to submersion in the peaty deposit at the bottom of the tarn before it was drained. This flint was found in a position approximating to the spot marked "Fireplace with large urn" on the map in Darbishire's report.

The ploughing of the field to the west of the tarn site clearly revealed the old shore line of the tarn where the ground slopes steeply down towards the east. In this field we found a few flints in a wide scatter in the direction of Silver Tarn.

Below Gibb Tarn at the bottom of a steep bluff near the bank of the Ehen, on river terrace gravel, we picked up a patinated rejuvenation flake from the striking platform of a large core with traces of narrow blade scars.

During drainage operations at Low Mill Farm, about 500 metres north-east of Ehenside, a Cumbrian type axe was found.[5]

BRAYSTONES 4
Map reference: 3002 5064 NY00 Height OD: 20 metres.

In a field adjacent to, and west of, the road was a small scatter of lightly patinated flints including a Bronze Age type core and a long blade-like flake of grey flint; from its size it is possible that this piece derives from chalk flint. In addition to the flints we picked up a chip of heavily oxidized volcanic tuff.

BRAYSTONES 5 Braystones Station
Map reference: 3002 5062 NY00 Height OD: 22 metres.

Two hundred metres north-north-east of Braystones Station, we found a small concentration of flints including a flake core with no defined striking platform and a knife 4·5 centimetres long, made from a large core rejuvenation flake in grey flint, which exhibits chalk flint cortex.

In a hollow to the west (Map reference: 3001 5062) we found a bifacially worked tool in creamy flint made on a thick flake struck from a platformed core, Fig. 2, 28; most of the retouch is around the pointed end and along one side.

While walking along the road near Braystones, a small steeply worked scraper in caramel flint was found at the bottom of a slightly eroded hedge bank (Map reference: 3002 5065). In the field above this find, on the high ground, was an end scraper and two flakes, all very lightly patinated (Map reference: 3001 5067).

BRAYSTONES 6 Lantern Moss Tarn
Map reference: 3005 5057 NY00 Height OD: 20 metres.

To the north of Lantern Moss Tarn we found a small concentration of flints, including four crudely struck cores, three of which seem to have been produced by utilizing a natural hollow in the surface of the pebble flint as a striking platform. This technique appears to have been common on the Bronze Age pebble industry sites of West Cumbria. Together with these was a utilized flake of creamy white flint and a broken blade of rather coarse volcanic tuff.

BRAYSTONES 7 Warboro Nook
Map reference: 3008 5052 NY00 Height OD: 33 metres.

Towards the top of Warboro Nook was a rectangular area of bare ground about 9 metres long and 4·5 metres wide, probably the site of a haystack. On this and in the few molehills which surrounded it we found more than twenty-five flints, including three cores, one of which is fire-damaged; long blades; the end of a thick blade blunted across its width; and a small pointed flake worked on two sides bordering the point, which may have been intended as a borer, or is possibly a fragment of a *petit tranchet* derivative arrowhead, Fig. 2, 27. In a molehill about fifty metres below this (Map reference: 3006 5053) we picked up a very fine scraper made from chalk flint, Fig. 2, 23, which has a convenient depression for the thumb. The scraper shows no sign of use and is the finest and sharpest thumbnail scraper we have found during the whole of the West Cumbrian survey. Although there were many other molehills in the vicinity, nothing else was found.

A stone axe is said to have been found on Warboro Nook[6] and two arrowheads of doubtful provenance at Beckermet[7,8], one of which is possibly of Irish origin.

SELLAFIELD 1

Map reference: 3017 5044 NY00 Height OD: 23 metres.

Near to the edge of the high ground overlooking the disused Egremont railway and the low lying plain known as the Bogholes was a concentration of more than two hundred and fifty, virtually unpatinated flints with Bronze Age characteristics. The occupation debris, which was of the usual kind, with broken stones and struck flint flakes, was concentrated in an area of about twenty metres long and ten metres wide along the edge of the high ground.

Among the flints are nine cores, only three of which have prepared striking platforms, and a number of scrapers of good workmanship, one of which has been produced by retouching the flake scars around the edge of a concave striking platform of a core. The scraper assemblage also includes a hollow scraper, Fig. 2, 29, and a large-nosed scraper or borer on which the secondary retouch has not completely removed the pebble cortex along the edges bordering the point, Fig. 2, 34. There are four knives made from flakes which are worked along more or less straight edges, the finest of these, Fig. 2, 35, is broken and exhibits long narrow trimming scars; there is a little retouch also on the ventral surface and it has been suggested that this could be an unfinished arrowhead which was abandoned after breaking. There is no obvious evidence of wear on the worked edges.

Although the predominant colour of the flint on this site is a rich yellow caramel there are a few artefacts of grey flint, including a small fabricator of triangular section, Fig. 2, 33, with pronounced resolved flaking along one edge and some retouch on the opposite edge, the majority of damage and flaking being on both sides of the dorsal face of the artefact. A small amount of thin chalky cortex still remaining suggests that this piece was made from chalk flint. Among other artefacts of grey flint are two end scrapers, one of which has pebble cortex and the other which is decorticated, is a dual-purpose end scraper and knife, Fig. 2, 36, similar in size and style to a tool from How Man, St. Bees XII.[1] The blade content of this site is almost non-existent, and nine out of the ten blades which we have recorded could perhaps be described as blade-like flakes.

Close to the area of highest concentration of artefacts we picked up a tanged and barbed arrowhead of the Sutton B type,[9] Fig. 2, 32, and a fragment of a small axe of grey-green volcanic tuff, stained brown in patches, with faceted edges. The axe, which is 6·5 centimetres long and 5·5 centimetres maximum width, had been broken in antiquity, and flakes had been removed from the ends, leaving flake scars on both faces; the surviving facets are approximately 0·5 centimetres wide. In addition to the axe fragment there is a struck flake of volcanic tuff which is the same colour but which has no polished surface.

A roughout axe of volcanic tuff is recorded as having been found during drainage operations at the Bogholes, almost immediately below this site.[10] The dimensions of this are almost identical with the roughout that we found at Moorside (Seascale 6).

There was a light scatter of flints across the field to the north; a few flakes and a scraper were found together about one hundred metres from the main concentration on a south-facing bank (Map reference: 3017 5047).

SELLAFIELD 2

Map reference: 3018 5044 NY00 Height OD: 28 metres.

At the top of the bank to the east of Sellafield 1 in the adjoining field we found another

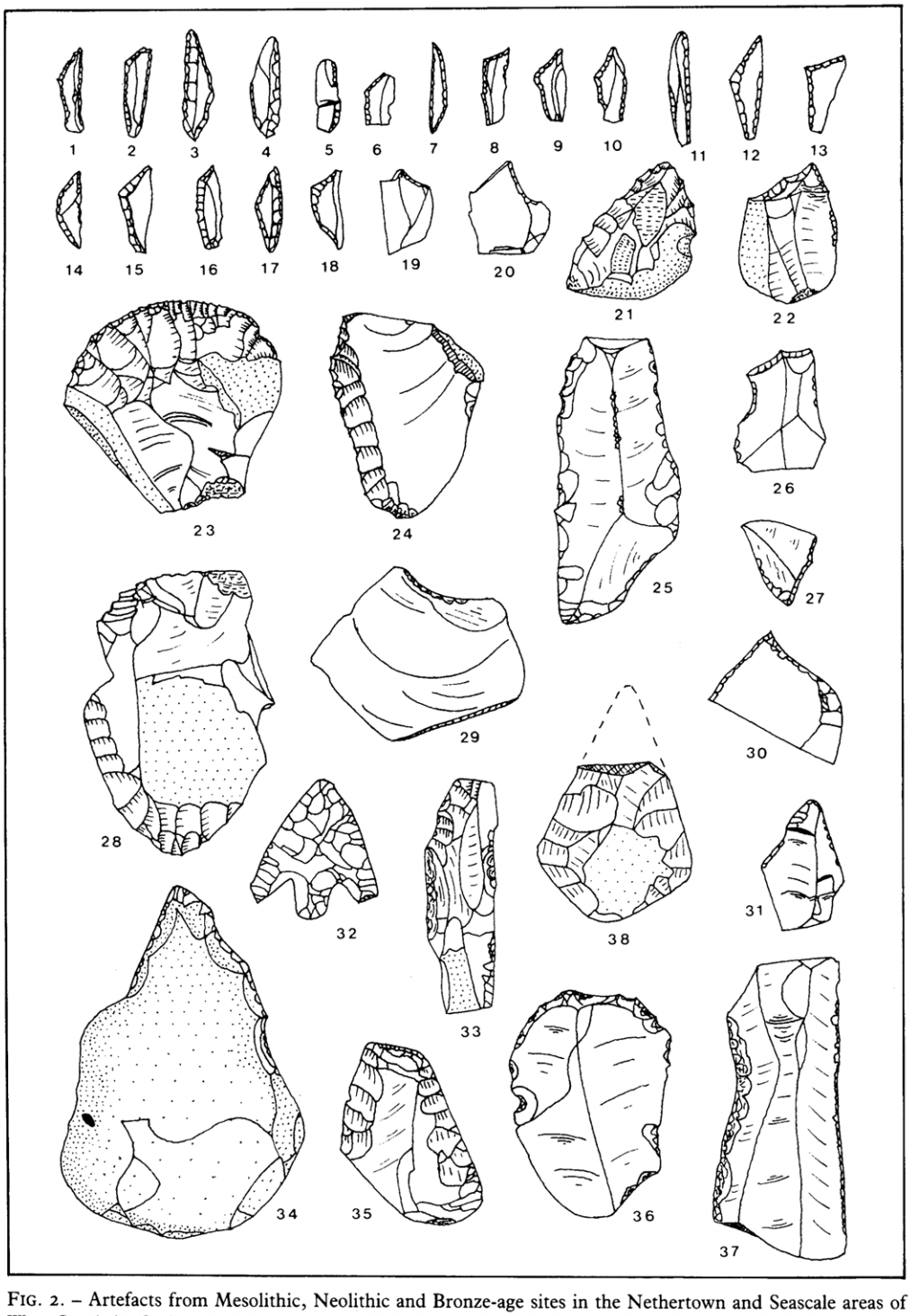


FIG. 2. – Artefacts from Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze-age sites in the Nethertown and Seascale areas of West Cumbria. Scale 1:1.

small concentration of flints including two knives, blades, a broken borer, several utilized flakes and one bulbar reject. There are also six fragments of fire-damaged flint including a core rejuvenation flake and a small piece which is possibly from chalk flint.

SELLAFIELD 3 Watch Hill A
Map reference: 3016 5042 NY00 Height OD: 23 metres.

At the northern end of a field on the south side of Watch Hill we picked up a number of crudely struck flints all of which are only lightly patinated and among them are cores, a scraper, a utilized flake and a tool made from a grey flint flake, steeply trimmed along one slightly curved edge and worked bifacially on a longer straight edge. There is also a small flake of yellow flint with some blunting along two edges bordering a slightly obtuse-angled point.

SELLAFIELD 4 Watch Hill B
Map reference: 3017 5041 NY00 Height OD: 24 metres.

Sixty metres or so to the south of Sellafield 3 was a scatter of flints, rather less crude in form than those at Sellafield 3. These include a small single platform bladelet core and a core front with narrow blade scars; scrapers; knife-forms; blades and utilized pieces; a dual purpose tool in dark grey pebble flint, with a notch worked on one edge while the opposite edge shows signs of utilization, and a flake with a small amount of blunting along one edge at its bulbar end. In addition to the flints there is a core of grey chert and a large unworked nodule of volcanic tuff, which probably demonstrates the presence of this material in the glacial drift.

To the north of Newmill Beck, overlooking Seascale stone circle we found a few slightly patinated flakes of flint lying on the surface of fields which had been trodden by sheep after a crop of turnips (Map references: 3029 5027; 3030 5024; 3032 5018).

GOSFORTH 1 Julian Holme
Map reference: 3094 5037 NY00 Height OD: 42 metres.

This site was recorded in 1966,[11] and there is nothing further to report. Several polished stone axes[11,12] have been found near here in the past, and about one kilometre to the east at Bolton Wood a bronze "battle axe" is recorded.[6]

GOSFORTH 2 Infell
Map reference: 3059 5061 NY00 Height OD: 160 metres.

During an attempt to re-seed the rough pasture to the west of the earthwork at Infell,[13] a group of small cairns interfered with ploughing. As the farmer, Mr P. Stanley, wished to remove the stones a survey was carried out by the South-West Regional Group of this Society, and one of the cairns was sectioned. Within the stones, just above the base of the cairn, two iron blade-like objects were found. A flint flake of pebble origin was found beneath the cairn and several more crudely struck fragments of yellow flint and grey flint were found nearby in plough furrows. The stony nature of the pasture finally caused ploughing to be abandoned.

A well worn whetstone made from a long pebble and the base of a small vessel in a hard grey unglazed fabric were found in the roots of fallen trees at the earthwork some fifty metres from the cairn. Passing between the cairns and the earthwork is a hollow trackway.

A limited excavation was carried out later, by Mr D. G. Benson of the Dyfedd Archaeological Trust, on a cairn to the south of the cairn originally excavated and a series of dark parallel lines, several inches apart, was observed on the surface of the clay subsoil; these appeared to consist mainly of tiny fragments of charcoal. This effect could possibly be caused by the burning of surface vegetation, followed by ploughing; in which case the ploughing would have had to predate the placing of the stones. Nothing else was found.

A *The Iron Objects*

These are illustrated in Fig. 3, and are described by Professor R. F. Tylcote of the Historical Metallurgy Society, as follows:

EXAMINATION OF BLADES FROM INFELL, PONSONBY, CUMBRIA

The Fragments appeared to be from two artefacts at least. One (B and C) is similar to a typical La Tène sword of lozenge section. The other (A) bears some resemblance to an intrusive Late Hallstatt sword shown in Fig. 23 (1) of the B. M. Guide on later Prehistoric Antiquities, 1953 Edition. This type of blade went on being used in the Early Iron Age for spearheads.*

The blade A was sectioned and found to be entirely mineralized with a hollow centre. Furthermore it had cracked due to "jacking" i.e. increase in volume on the conversion of iron to iron oxides. Still, it seems to have preserved something of its original ogival section.

The formation of a "hole" during corrosion is not uncommon and is due to the consumption of iron by corrosion processes and its migration outwards to form corrosion products beyond the original metal-air interface. Even so this is a very lengthy process under corroding conditions at ambient temperatures and could not be connected with the loss of a coulter during the last two centuries.

I feel that these fragments do represent very early iron but it is difficult now to be certain what artefacts they represent.

* This might explain the "hole".

[signed] R. F. Tylecote
January 1983.

B *The Potsherd*

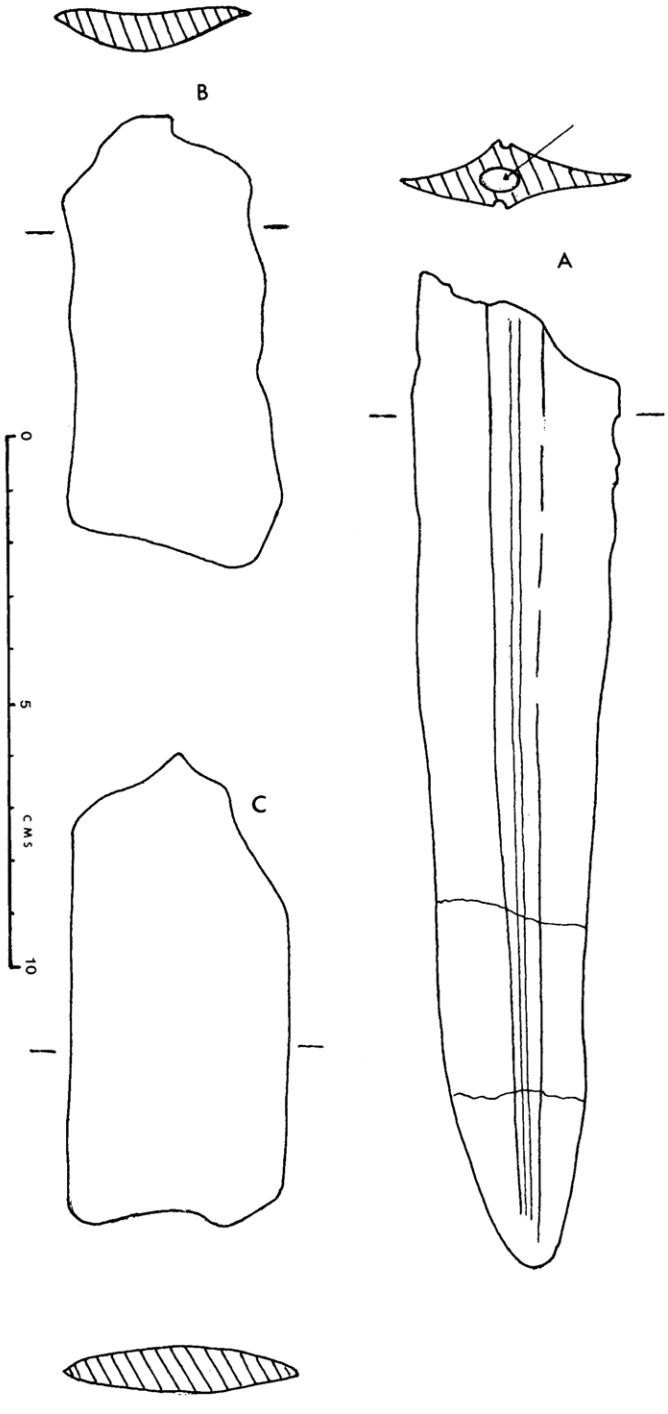
The fragment is part of the base of a wheel-turned pot in a hard dark grey fabric. The bottom seems to have spread slightly during manufacture to give a slight rim about four millimetres wide around the circumference. The edge is damaged in places giving an effect which we thought, at first, might be a deliberate finger decoration, and that the sherd might therefore be as late as medieval in date. The fragment was examined by Mr B. J. N. Edwards, who wrote: "Whatever may be the date of the site itself, there is no doubt that the pottery is part of the base of a Roman cooking pot."

This Romano-British date for the period of manufacture of the pottery was confirmed by Mr J. Gillam.

A broken red sandstone mortar[14] was found in a field above and to the south of Calder Abbey below the Infell site (Map reference: 3052 5060). Examination of the surface of the field after ploughing yielded no other artefact. There is a small sandstone quarry nearby.

GOSFORTH 3 Hurlbarrow
Map reference: 3072 5057 NY00 Height OD: 180 metres.

In the fields on either side of the service road leading to Hurlbarrow Farm was a number of small cairns. As a part of land improvement, the farmer, Mr T. G. Watson, removed many of the cairns and drained the land. While digging a drain a few yards to



Sketch by R. F. Tylecote

FIG. 3. – Blade-like iron objects from Infell, Ponsonby.

the south of the road, quite near to the farmhouse, a large quoit-shaped jet ring of Iron Age type was found in the black peaty soil. The ring is 4·8 centimetres in diameter, 1·3 centimetres thick, with an "hour glass" hole tapering from a maximum of 2·8 centimetres to about 1·5 centimetres, drilled slightly off-centre through the face of the bead. There have been finds of unassociated jet rings in Yorkshire and a jet ring almost identical in size was found in a burial at Willerby associated with a bronze awl and a pygmy cup. The hole in the ring was somewhat bigger than the hole in the Hurlbarrow ring. However, the Hurlbarrow ring seems to be of a later form and could be of Iron Age date or later. We examined all the disturbed soil to the south of the road and found nothing, but in a small potato field to the east of the farmhouse we found a flake of pebble flint and a blade 4·5 centimetres long with narrow blade scars. Along the slopes of the West Cumbrian fells at about the same altitude are a number of cairnfields and structures of Romano-British and possibly earlier date.[15,16]

GOSFORTH 4 Thornbank
Map reference: 3075 5023 NY00 Height OD: 65 metres.

On Gallows Hill we picked up three flakes of flint, two of which were fire-damaged, together with a flake of volcanic tuff. A polished stone axe of the Cumbrian type was found in 1937 at Kell Bank[17] which lies just to the north of the Thornbank fields, and a chisel-shaped implement in volcanic tuff is recorded from Farcroft, Gosforth.[12]

SEASCALE 1 Bailey Ground North
Map reference: 3043 5010 NY00 Height OD: 23 metres

There appear to be three sites here with the greatest concentration of flints in the northernmost field on the edge of a boggy hollow; since 1967 we have picked up more flints including a broken kite-shaped arrowhead, Fig. 2, 38.

SEASCALE 2 Bailey Ground South
Map reference: 3043 5009 NY00 Height OD: 24 metres

A few more flints have been found here, the most interesting of which is a large thick blade of dark tortoiseshell coloured flint, Fig. 2, 37, retouched and heavily utilized on both edges of its dorsal and ventral surfaces.

SEASCALE 3 Bailey Ground East
Map reference: 3044 5009 NY00 Height OD: 28 metres

Within a few feet of the findspot of the Ronaldsway type axe, reported in 1967[2], we discovered a small "anvil" stone made from a sub-circular flat coarse millstone-grit pebble, about nine centimetres in diameter, with a shallow depression pecked into each of its flat surfaces.

The material from the Bailey Ground sites can be ascribed to a late Neolithic context but probably belongs to at least two different groups as Seascale 3 seems to be a separate group of the "Ronaldsway" culture.

Since our earlier report we have also found a few flakes of flint to the north and west of the golf-course (Map references: 3031 5021; 3034 5022), and in the fields to the west of Brown Bank (Map reference: 3044 5024) we found several flakes of flint and three small scrapers. At Bleawath, below the sandpit to the north of the road, a roughout axe was found.[14]

SEASCALE 4 Whitriggs
Map reference: 3047 5003 NY00 Height OD: 23 metres

A few more flints have been found here, but nothing of significance.

SEASCALE 5 Stony How
Map reference: 3051 5003 NY00 Height OD: 23 metres

Ninety metres south-west of Stony How, in a field where we had earlier found a stone axe fragment, we found more flints confined within a small area, including blades, scrapers, knives, borers, utilized flakes, and two struck flakes of volcanic tuff. Six of the flints were fire-damaged. This assemblage appears to be Neolithic in character.

SEASCALE 6 Moorside
Map reference: 3054 5006 NY00 Height OD: 25 metres

In the field two hundred and thirty metres south of Burnt Moor we found a roughout axe with a pointed butt, made from volcanic tuff.[14] This was lying towards the bottom of the field about 50 metres from the area in which we had found the flints reported in 1967.

SEASCALE 7 Broom
Map reference: 3059 5011 NY00 Height OD: 37 metres

There is nothing further to report from the field belonging to Mr Farrish of Hallsenna. A stone axe was found near here in 1855.[17]

SEASCALE 8 Burnt Moor
Map reference: 3051 5009 NY00 Height OD: 20 metres

There is nothing further to report from here except to note that the microlith recorded in 1967 was the only patinated flint found on this site.

SEASCALE 9 Acrelands
Map reference: 3052 5014 NY00 Height OD: 30 metres

Nothing of significance has been found here since our earlier report, although we have picked up a number of nondescript flakes. A stone axe[18] is reported from Lingmell, six hundred metres east of Acrelands.

SEASCALE 10 Black How
Map reference: 3048 5012 NY00 Height OD: 41 metres

On the high ground to the east of Bailey Ground and overlooking Seascale IX we found a number of flint flakes, a scraper and two utilized pieces.

SEASCALE 11 Stubble Green
Map reference: 3058 5002 NY00 Height OD: 45 metres

On a saddle on the high ground above Moorside farm, we found a few artefacts including scrapers, a knife made on a thin flake of grey flint and several flakes. The later finds have enabled us to identify the position of this site more positively than in 1967. A polished stone axe and a stone mace-head are reported from Drigg village just to the south of Moorside.[11]

SEASCALE 12 Hallsenna Moor
Map: NY00 Height OD: 31 metres

A search of the fields around the peat bog known as Hallsenna Moor produced little, although a high proportion of the fields was not ploughed during our survey. At map reference 3063 4996 we picked up six flint artefacts, including a sidescraper and four fire-damaged flakes and chips. At map reference 3070 5000 we found two flakes of slightly patinated flint. A beehive quern was found in an adjoining field.[16] Above the bog to the south-west at map reference 3060 5005 we picked up three slightly patinated flakes of flint and a flake of volcanic tuff.

Although a few of the sites in this section lie just within the parishes of Gosforth and Drigg we have classified them as Seascale for convenience of reporting.

Discussion

The Mesolithic sites in this survey are all clustered to the north, mainly on the higher ground overlooking the shore and are generally similar to the late Mesolithic sites at St. Bees, although the material from Nethertown 5 differs in some respects from the others. The microliths from this site seem to be finer, and with a stronger geometric element; the blade content is unusually large and a higher proportion of the material is heavily patinated. Only the Mesolithic site at Fleswick I[1] has yielded a bigger percentage of highly patinated flints. These differences suggest that the flint assemblage from Nethertown 5 represents an earlier occupation and is not a contemporary resiting or overspill from Nethertown 4.

The fact that the quality of the microliths within each assemblage seems to be fairly uniform and that variations in the quality of workmanship can be discerned from site to site also suggest that there was only one principal flint knapper in each group, and that consequently the size of the group would be restricted, possibly to a single family.

Although patination of flint is dependent on too many variables to be used as a means to date flint artefacts, it would seem reasonable to use it in a general way to classify material providing that the flint is of the same variety, the sample is a large one, and the conditions in which it has lain since knapping are similar.

It is therefore worth noting that the percentage of patinated material from the Nethertown Mesolithic sites lies within the percentage range of patination of the Mesolithic sites at St. Bees, suggesting a general overall contemporaneity of occupation. Another factor linking the two groups is the evidence for the use of volcanic tuff on all the sites except Nethertown 5.

Similarly, a common factor on many of the later sites with Neolithic or Bronze Age affinities is the occurrence of chalk flint artefacts which have been identified at St. Bees and on the sites to the south of Nethertown. The chalk flint is generally unpatinated and is similar to the material from St. Bees VIII[1] where the flint industry is based entirely on chalk flint, although in some cases the flint is a lighter grey in colour than the St. Bees flint, and contains white inclusions. We also found a small number of artefacts of white flint. It has not been possible so far to identify the source of the chalk flint, but it seems likely that it originates from east of the Pennines where grey and white flint are favoured materials on prehistoric sites. We were able to determine the origin of the

scraper from Warboro Nook as being from chalk flint because of the trace of cortex remaining and it is likely that there are other artefacts in the assemblages, which are made from this material, but which we cannot identify because they have been decorticated.

It has been suggested that Cumbria was settled, in the Neolithic period, by migrant herdsmen from east of the Pennines who had traded in stone axes made from Borrowdale series volcanic tuff, which were polished in areas where suitable sandstone was to be found, especially on the coast of West Cumbria.[19] If the source of the chalk flint could be identified as Yorkshire, then it would lend support to this theory. The association of chalk flint with pebble flint industries would certainly suggest that the chalk flint people were in significant contact with the coastal communities, or that they themselves colonized the land to the west of the Pennines and exhausted any flint which they had brought with them and found it necessary to use the poor quality material from the beach.

References

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[2] J. Cherry, 'Prehistoric Habitation Sites at Seascale', CW2, lxvii, 1.

[3] M. C. Fair, 'A Stone Axe from Silver Tarn, Braystones', CW2, xxxvii, 215.

[4] R. D. Darbishire, 'Notes on the Discoveries at Ehenside Tarn, Cumberland', *Archaeologia*, xliv, 273.

[5] C. I. Fell, 'Note on a Polished Stone Axe from Low Mill, Beckermet, Cumberland', CW2, lxii, 21.

[6] C. A. Parker and W. G. Collingwood, 'The Gosforth District', CW Extra Series, xv, 79.

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[8] Report in *The Whitehaven News*, 24th April, 1980.

[9] H. Stephen Green. 'The Flint Arrowheads of the British Isles', B.A.R. British Series 75 (i), 1980.

[10] W. H. Watson, 'Stone Implements found at Braystones, Cumberland', CW2, iii, 91.

[11] J. Cherry, 'Four Stone Axes and a Stone Mace-head from South-west Cumberland', CW2, lxvi, 474.

[12] M. C. Fair, 'A Note on some West Cumberland Stone Axes', CW2, xxxv, 259.

[13] C. A. Parker, 'The Earthwork on Infell, Ponsonby', CW2, v, 145.

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[16] T. W. Potter, 'Romans in North West England', CWAAS Research Series, I, 5.

[17] M. C. Fair, 'The Gosforth Area in Prehistory. A co-ordination of recorded finds to 1942', CW2, xliii, 50.

[18] C. I. Fell, 'A Stone Axe from Seascale', CW2, lxvii, 230.

[19] T. G. Manby, 'The Distribution of Roughout, "Cumbrian" and Related Stone Axes of Lake District Origin in Northern England', CW2, lxv, 1.

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Plans of a possible Romano-British settlement at Thornholme Farm,[16] at Calderbridge, and a Medieval farmstead at Low Ground, Birker Fell, have been prepared by our member Mr R. McIlven and are deposited at Carlisle Library.

TABLE 1. – List of Artefact Types and their Provenance.

Site	COULDERTON					NETHERTOWN							BRAYSTONES						
Site number	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	4A	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Type of artefact																			
(i) *Flint*																			
Waste Flakes etc.	8	3	4	103	15	849	4	15	990	180	332	6	30	3	6	10	4	7	20
Burnt Material	3	—	1	6	—	48	—	—	74	3	13	—	—	1	3	—	—	1	1
Struck Pebbles[a]	—	1	—	7	—	58	—	6	63	13	6	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	1
Cores	—	—	2	19	1	108	3	4	125	14	22	1	—	—	4	2	1	4	3
Core Rejuvenations	1	1	—	—	—	9	—	1	19	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Microliths & Fragments	—	—	—	3	—	10	—	—	12	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Microburins	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bulbar Rejects	—	—	—	1	—	34	—	—	37	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Blades	—	1	—	11	—	42	1	2	63	16	36	—	—	1	3	1	—	—	2
Retouched/ Utilized Blades	—	1	1	—	—	8	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Miscellaneous Retouch	—	—	—	7	—	21	—	—	28	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Utilized Flakes etc.	1	—	—	1	—	30	—	—	14	9	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Scrapers	—	—	—	4	3	9	—	1	21	3	7	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Knives	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Awls	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arrowheads	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chalk Flint	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5[b]	—	—	—	—	—
Total	14	7	9	163	19	1229	9	31	1456	245	467	8	31	10	20	13	6	13	30
% Patinated	NIL	25	NIL	63	NIL	67	50	47	53	45	82	NIL	6	10	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	20
(ii) *Volcanic Tuff*																			
Waste	—	—	1	2	—	2	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Cores	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Blades	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Bulbar Rejects	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Axes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	NIL	NIL	1	2	NIL	7	NIL	1	3	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	1	NIL	1	NIL

[a] Pebbles from which some of the cortex has been removed but which seem to have been rejected as unsuitable for tool manufacture.
[b] Includes several retouched pieces.

TABLE 2. – List of Artefact Types and their Provenance.

Site	SELLAFIELD				SEASCALE											GOSFORTH			
Site Number	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4
Type of Artefact																				
(i) *Flint*																				
Waste Flakes etc.	178	26	15	28	497	131	45	35	42	33	—	20	24	16	33	7	2	8	1	1
Burnt Material	5	2	1	4	40	12	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	2
Struck Pebbles[a]	10	5	—	7	51	14	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cores	9	1	5	3	61	12	3	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	3	—	1	—	—	—
Core rejuvenations	1	1	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Microliths	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bulbar Rejects	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Blades	2	2	1	1	—	3	—	1	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Retouched Blades/ Knives	12	2	—	3	4	8	1	1	3	1	—	—	2[e]	—	1	—	1	—	—	—
Miscellaneous Retouch	4	—	—	1	19	3	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Utilized Flakes	9	3	1	1	34	7	—	2	3	—	1	4	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	—
Scrapers	13	—	1	4	44	10	5	4	7	3	3[g]	2	—	1	4	1	1	—	—	—
Concave Scrapers	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Awls	1	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Arrowheads	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Fabricators	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chalk Flint[c]	2	1	1	—	5	4	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	252	45	26	53	762	206	60	45	61	37	6	30	26	19	45	12	7	8	2	3
% Patination[b]	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	8	6	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL[d]	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
(ii) *Volcanic Tuff*																				
Waste	2	—	—	1	2	—	2	—	2	—	1	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Axes	1	—	—	—	—	—	—[f]	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	3	NIL	NIL	1	2	NIL	2	NIL	3	1	1	NIL	2	NIL	NIL	1	NIL	NIL	NIL	1

[a] Pebbles from which some of the cortex has been removed but which seem to have been rejected as unsuitable for tool manufacture.
[b] NIL here means any patination is slight.
[c] Includes a proportion of retouched pieces.
[d] Microlith was the only patinated artefact here.
[e] Includes knife reported in CW2, xxxviii 312.
[f] One Ronaldsway type axe coarse grained igneous rock.
[g] Two of these probably chalkflint.