

ART. X.—*A Prehistoric Settlement on Walney Island.*
By MARJORIE CROSS.

PART I. THE FLINT-CHIPPING FLOOR.

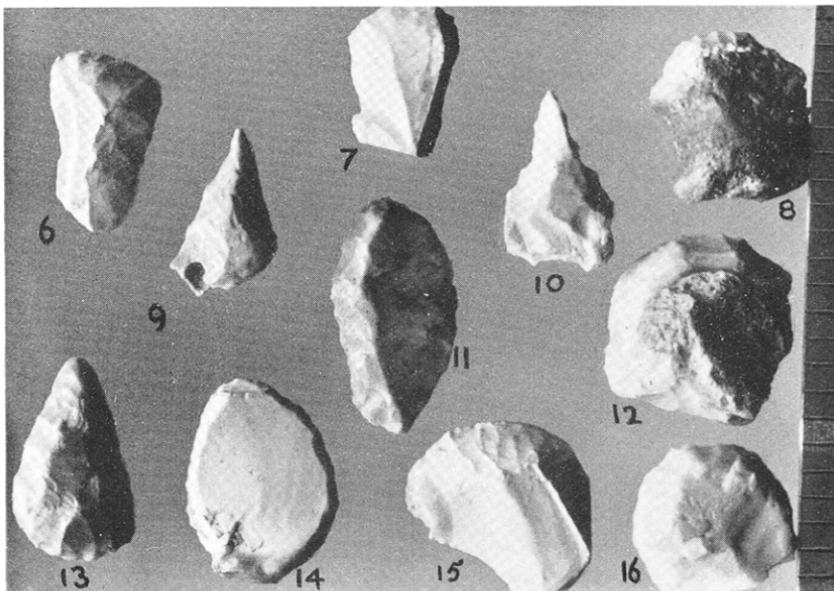
OUR late President, Mr. W. G. Collingwood, used to prophesy that some day somebody would find the traces of intensive prehistoric occupation of the coast-line of our area. I am happy to report that, by a lucky chance, my sister and I follow hard on the heels of Miss Markham at Eskmeals in fulfilling his prophecy.

In August, 1936, we were walking across an exposed beach in the sand-hills at the north-east end of Walney Island, when my sister noticed that the beach was thickly strewn with flint pebbles and that the majority of these pebbles had been worked by man. We were obviously upon the site of a prehistoric flint factory.

The beach, a portion of the so-called 25 ft. beach, runs east and west at the foot of a 50 ft. sand-hill, which is moving off in a northerly direction, leaving the beach exposed.*

Flint is rare in the Lake District and chalk is absent. But flints in chalk occur in the same latitude in Yorkshire and Northern Ireland. The late J. G. Goodchild was of the opinion that the whole or much of the Lake District was submerged in the Cretaceous Period and that subsequent erosion and ice-action have obliterated all traces of the chalk. The theory is supported by the types of locality in which vestiges of the flints remain, viz. caught up in the

* Bearings from the top of this sand-hill (in 1937) were: Black Combe cairn 353, North End Windmill 207, Cemetery Chapel (C. of E.) 151, Hawcoat Tower 139, Sandscale Farm 87. The simplest route from North End Farm is $\frac{3}{4}$ hour's walk along the edge of Walney Channel, turning into the sandhills at the point where the shingle begins.



To face p. 160.

PLATE II.

Photo. by R. G. Collingwood.

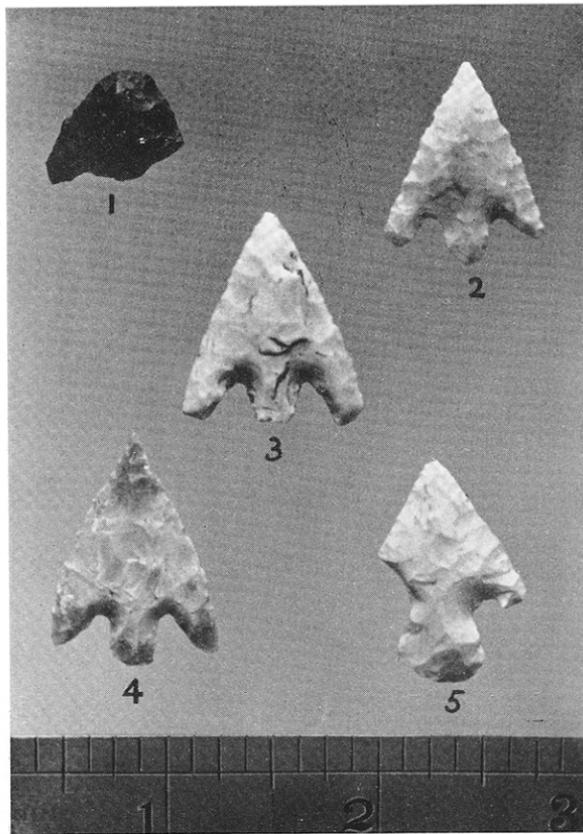


PLATE I.

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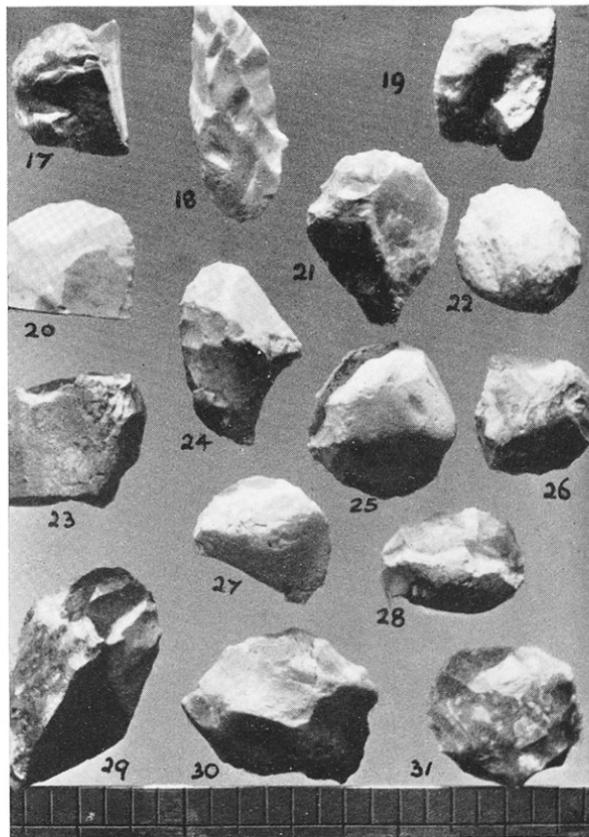


PLATE III.

Photos. by R. G. Collingwood.

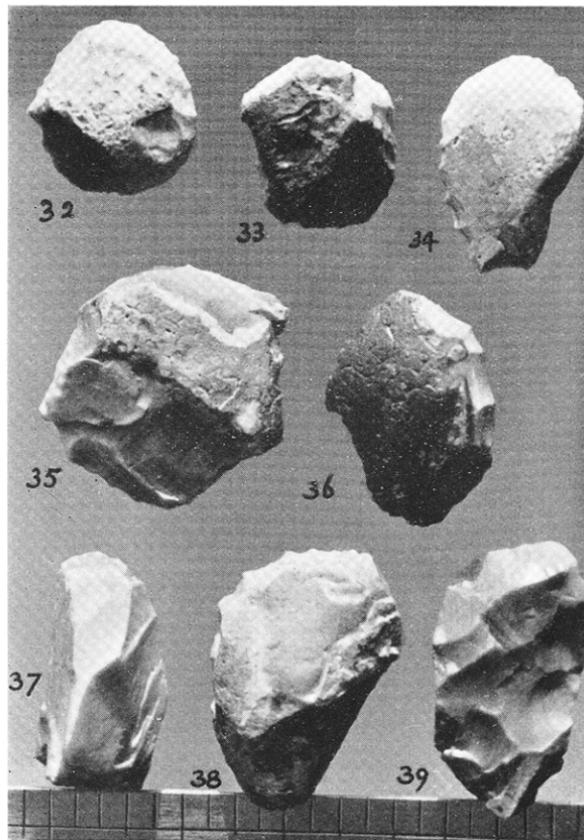


PLATE IV.

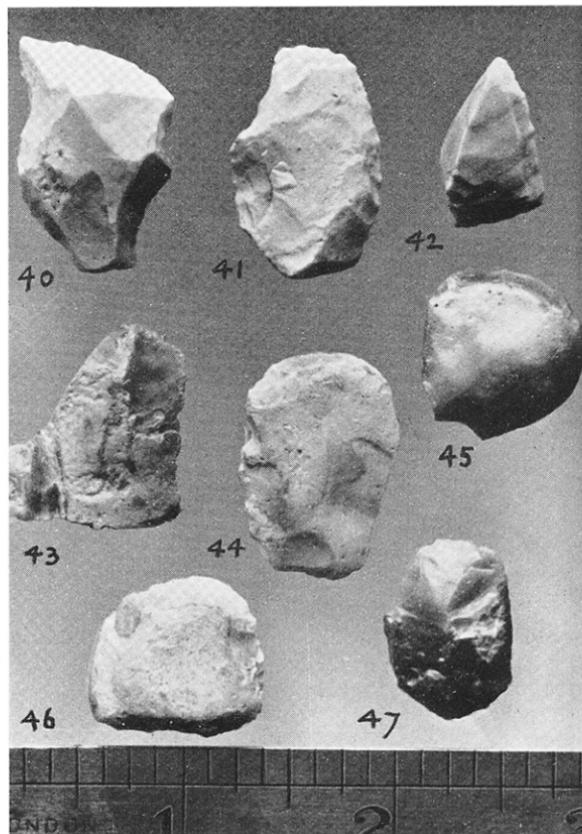


PLATE V.

Photos. by R. G. Collingwood.

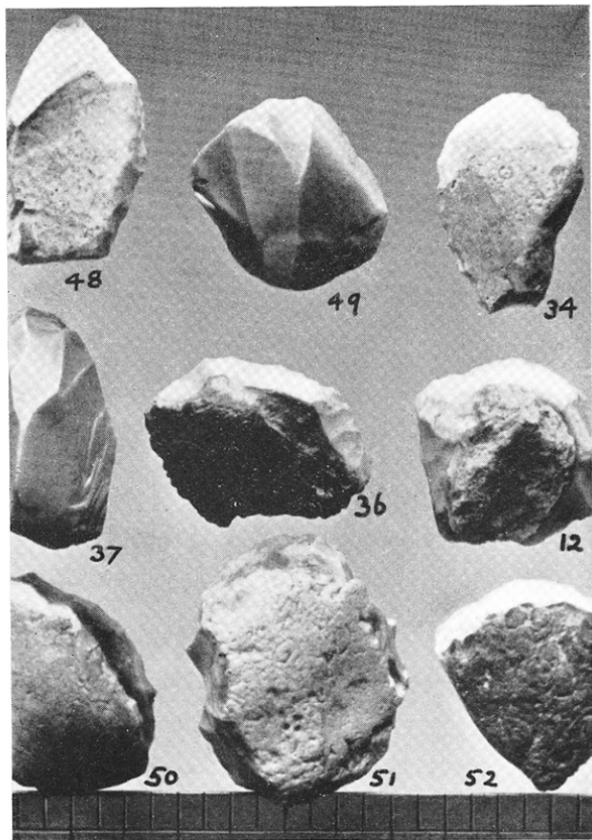


PLATE VI.

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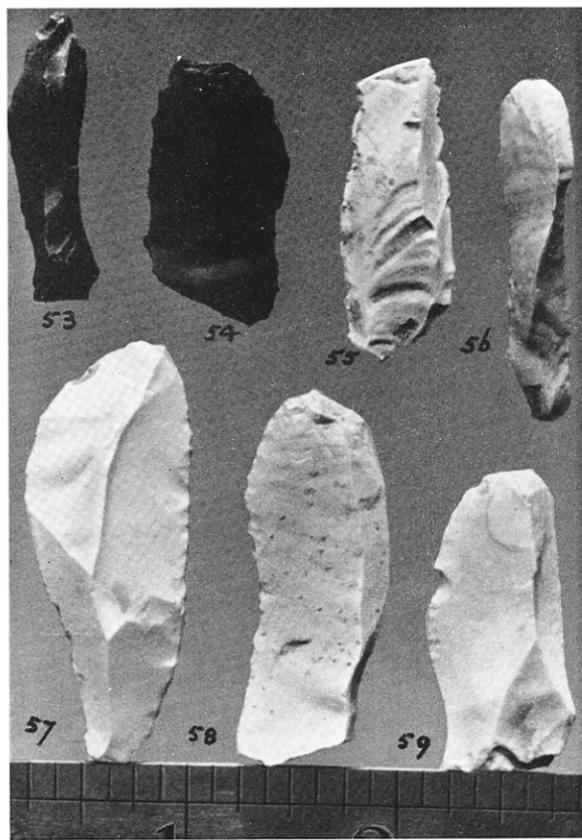


PLATE VII.

Photos. by R. G. Collingwood.

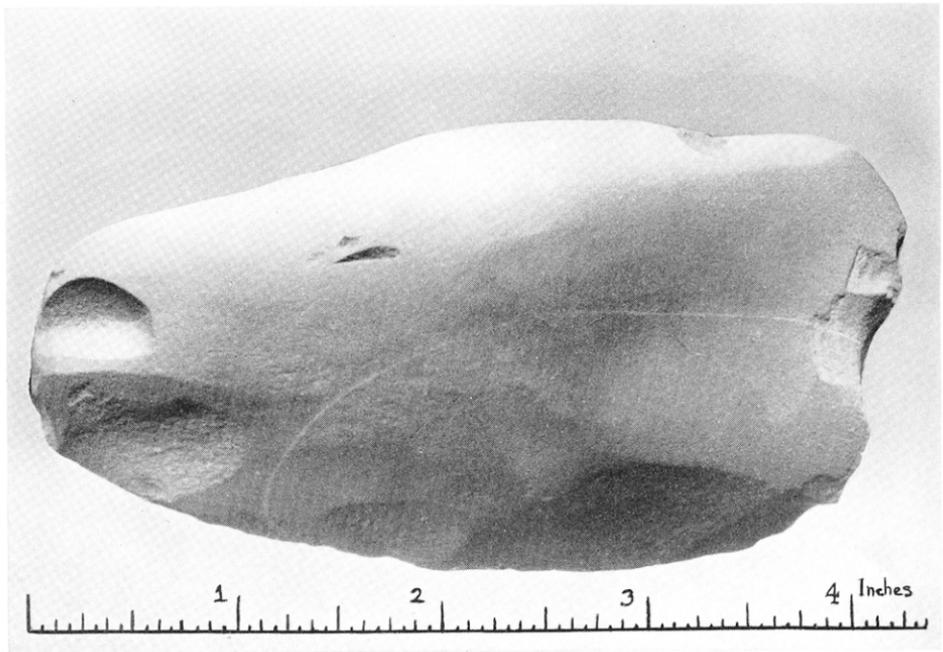


PLATE VIII.—Stone Axe.

Photos. by R. G. Collingwood.

becks (Rowfold Beck in the Duddon Valley and Newland Beck, Ulverston) and dumped in beaches with ice-borne pebbles at the mouths of the estuaries (abundantly on Walney and at Eskmeals, sparingly at Haverigg and Silecroft). Every colour of flint is represented on Walney: white, grey, honey-colour, brown, pink, red and black.

The industry closely resembles that recently found at Eskmeals.* Mr. Smith and Mr. Kendrick, of the British Museum, who kindly examined the 1936 finds, say that it has also affinities with the flint industries of Luce Bay and Gullane. We may assume that Walney and Eskmeals were two ports of call for the coastal trade of the early dwellers in the Highland Zone, when the sea offered the easiest means of communication, and the people of Anglesey, the Isle of Man, Northern Ireland and Wigtownshire were the (pre-) Cumbrians' most accessible neighbours.†

Chronologically, Mr. Smith and Mr. Kendrick place our 1936 finds at the overlap of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

Flint No. 13 is a very thick variety of late Neolithic leaf- or pear-shaped arrowhead (c. B.C. 2000†). It is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick and only $\frac{15}{16}$ inch long. (We found a normal birch-leaf the following year).

To the Neolithic Period also belongs the small polished greenstone axe shown in Plate VIII. It measures $4\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{8} \times 1\frac{3}{8}$ inches and weighs $9\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. It is the same width as the small axe found at Silecroft in 1933,§ but slightly longer and thicker and the butt flatter. Some of its many scars are rolled. Whilst this might be taken to mean that the axe antedates the beach, it is equally possible that it is the result of sand-blasting. Mr. Lacaille states that all Neolithic artifacts at Glenluce are altered by sand-blasting.

* *Trans. N.S. xxxv*, 20, 226.

† *The Personality of Britain*, by Sir Cyril Fox, p. 61.

‡ Mr. R. A. Smith.

§ *Trans. N.S. xxxvii*, 98, 102.

The majority of our arrow heads are of Mr. Reginald Smith's "Beaker Type"* with tang and barbs of approximately equal length. They are of most exquisite workmanship, particularly the two honey-coloured ones, Nos. 2 and 4. No. 3 is white veined with blue. No. 1 in black flint appears to have been a smaller type, with the second barb and tang broken off. No. 5, in white, quite opaque, is a clumsy effort with very wide tang, one barb missing.

No. 9 is a tiny borer, triangular in section, worked on all three sides to the point. No. 10 is worked on two sides only, the under side being the plain flake surface.

The blades Nos. 55, 57, 58 and 59 are heavily patinated. They are trimmed on one or both sides on the upper surface, No. 58 slightly on the under surface also.

Of the multitude of scrapers of every colour and shape, No. 22 is the smallest made from a split pebble only $\frac{5}{8}$ inch across. The largest, No. 51, is only $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch. Nos. 36 and 52, of whitish flint with brown cortex, are the exact counterparts of the scraper found under the entrance of a hut at Urswick Stone Walls.† The wall on the opposite side of the hut to the entrance produced a piece of engraved bronze dated by its pattern to the 2nd or 1st century B.C., but it is of course impossible to say at what period in the life of the Urswick Settlement the scraper was brought up from the factory.

No one has attempted to arrange the scrapers and miscellaneous pieces in any chronological order, but I think the following numbers (all white) are perhaps more opaquely patinated and/or have their edges slightly more dulled than the rest: 11, 15, 32, 33, 34, 40, 41, 48, 56, 58.

So far diligent and careful search has failed to produce any micro-burins or indeed any microliths of any description.

* *Archaeology in England and Wales*, by T. D. Kendrick and C. F. C. Hawkes, p. 102.

† *Trans. N.S.* vii, 89, now in Barrow Town Museum.

All these 1936 finds will shortly be placed in Barrow Town Museum. For easy reference all are numbered according to the plates.



Urswick Scraper †.

In the next volume I hope to give a detailed report of the 1937 discoveries, which, in addition to more Neolithic and Bronze Age implements, include the habitation sites of the people who made them, their larders, hearths, shell-middens, pottery of hybrid Neolithic-Bronze Age character and a few objects described as "conceivably Mesolithic."