

## Peg Low, Breadsall.

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**I**N a field to the south-west of Breadsall Rectory is a mound known as Peg Low. On the six-inch Geological Survey Map it is marked as a patch of Boulder Clay lying on Limestone Shales.

The mound is oval in plan and is 30 feet high at its apex. Its longer axis (N.W. and S.E.) is about 130 yards and its shorter about 110 yards. It is difficult to define the exact boundary of the mound as the lower part of the slope merges gradually into the surrounding field.

The S.W. slope is much steeper than that to the N.E. The distance from the apex to the foot of the mound is 40 yards. From the apex to the N.E. boundary is nearly twice this distance.

Concentric with the base of the mound on the S.W., at a distance of seven yards, is a low bank 90 yards long. There is also a slight ridge along the base of the mound parallel with the bank.

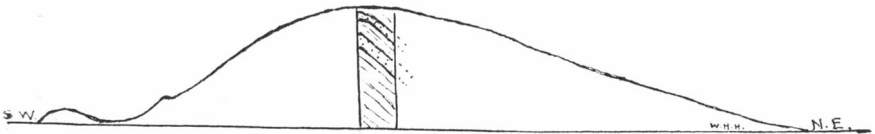
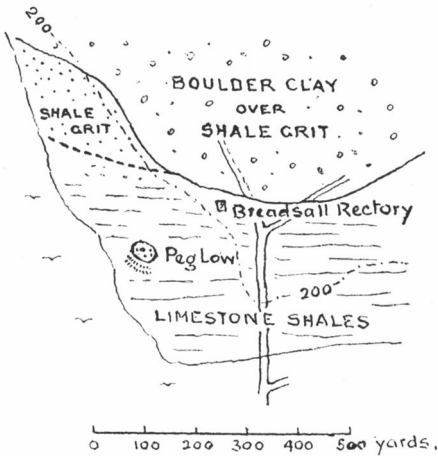
There is a local tradition that the mound contains buried treasure.

On the assumption that Peg Low was a prehistoric burial mound, the late Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe had a shaft sunk through it at the apex, and several trenches cut. I was invited to inspect the excavations, and made notes which are here put on record for the first time.

No evidence of burial was found, but the shaft revealed beds of Shale Grit interstratified with shale, inclined towards the S.W. at a high angle. Near the top the beds were bent over into a nearly horizontal position.

About a hundred yards to the north of the mound the Shale Grit crops out capped with Boulder Clay.

From these facts it seems reasonable to conclude that the mound is the result of a landslip, and is therefore, a geological, not an archaeological problem.



Vertical scale twice horizontal.

**PEG LOW, BREADSALL.**

The bank on the S.W., which at first sight appears to be artificial, would be thrown up in front of the advancing mass of earth. Similar ridges may be seen at Crich to the west of the Cromford road. These were produced by the great landslip of nearly sixty years ago.

It is not possible to say definitely when, and in what circumstances, the Breadsall slip occurred, but a little speculation may be permissible.

Immediately after the slip, weathering would give the mound its rounded contour, but did not go so far as to remove entirely the capping of Boulder Clay. After the mound became covered with turf, further denudation would be checked, and the mound may have had its present form for many centuries; nevertheless, by the geological time-scale, it is of recent origin.

The slight difference in level (less than 20 feet), between the mound and the parent strata, and the high inclination of the slipped beds, suggests the operation of considerable superincumbent pressure.

It is tempting to assume that this pressure was exerted by an overlying ice-cap. The creeping forward of the ice after the slip would account for the bending over of the top of the upturned beds in the mound.

If this assumption be correct, then the slip occurred at the close of the last Ice Age.

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