

**EXPLORATION OF PREHISTORIC SITES IN EAST
DERBYSHIRE.**

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SINCE the submission of the 1953 Report the excavation of Ash Tree Cave, near Whitwell, has been continued by Mr. Leslie Armstrong, Dr. Arthur Court, Mr. W. H. Hanbury and Mr. Horace Jones and search has been made in the district for further sites of possible Creswellian occupation.

With regard to Ash Tree Cave, the excavation of the central section has been sunk to a depth of 12 feet over an area 11 feet 6 inches in width and 6 feet in breadth. Evidence of periodic occupation by Mousterian man persists and at the level now reached appears to be increasing. The Cave earth has become much more calcareous, closely compacted, and full of small stones; but large slabs and rocks, which in the upper layers were so abundant, are infrequent. On both sides the Cave wall is shelving rapidly backwards, thereby increasing the width of the excavation. The artifacts recovered include a well worked Mousterian point in flint, patinated white, similar in type to examples from the Pin Hole Cave, Creswell; a few small flakes of flint; split quartzite pebbles; also a number of large quartzite pebbles, possibly used as pounders, but bearing no evidence of use.

Small pebbles, about the size of acorns, have been numerous and may possibly be sling stones. They have been noted at all levels, but are of more frequent occurrence in this zone.

Bone tools and utilised split bones have been numerous and two large pieces of split bone, probably Rhinoceros, or Mammoth long bones, and a portion of rib, showing signs of use, have been found. The faunal remains chiefly comprise teeth; large bones are rare and fragmentary. Several teeth of Woolly Rhinoceros, both young

and old, have occurred; also part of an uncut tooth of Mammoth; teeth of Hyaena; Giant Deer; Horse; Wolf and a number of Cave Bear teeth. Teeth of Reindeer, or fragments of Antler, have been few, as have also rodent remains and molluscs.

Owing to Mr. Armstrong's absence in Rhodesia the work at Ash Tree Cave was discontinued during the summer, but his colleagues have made a valuable reconnaissance of the Whitwell and Whaley area, in search of possible rock shelters of Creswellian occupation and trial sections have been dug at three sites. Two of these, a rock shelter in a limestone outcrop, near the Parish tip at Elmton; and a site in proximity to Ash Tree Cave, yielded negative results, but a section on the line of the Whaley Cave and Rock Shelter (No. 2) outcrop, is in progress and the indications are more promising there but not yet positive.

During the progress of the Elm Tree Cave work facilities have been given this season to several students of archæology to participate in the work of excavation and gain experience in the technique of cave digging.

A PRE-NORMAN CARVING AT BASLOW.

By F. N. FISHER and F. WILLIAMSON.

VISITING BASLOW church in September 1954, the contributors of this note observed built into the west wall of the south porch a small fragment of pre-Norman carving, which was originally part of a cross-shaft.

Two edges are at right angles, the horizontal edge being about ten inches long, and the vertical edge six inches. An irregular curve joins these two points. The decoration is a plain cord interlace, but there is not sufficient to indicate a definite pattern.

According to Dr. Cox (*Churches of Derbyshire* I, 53) the earliest reference to a church at Baslow occurs in the reign of John, as recorded in Dugdale's *Monasticon* (III,