

An axe (Fig. 18, 2) was found in August 1962 at the western end of the Devil's Dyke near Bleaklow at 1,750 ft. O.D. (SK 092936). Peat acids have severely corroded the greenstone, which sectioning has determined to be an altered diorite of unknown origin. The axe is of considerable interest in that it must be one of the highest ever found in Derbyshire, and its discovery in the bottom of the Dyke might imply Neolithic tree clearance in the area, particularly in the upper Ford valley, and less likely a possible date for the cutting of the Dyke.

Measurements: Length	—	12.0 cms.
Breadth	—	5.7 cms.
Thickness	—	2.2 cms.
Cutting edge	—	5.7 cms.

EARLY IRON AGE POTTERY FROM MELBOURNE, SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

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THE late John Lomas located in 1959 a small site on the summit of Castle Pit Hill, Melbourne, that yielded after ploughing sherds or early Iron Age pottery. The site was limited in extent and on a low hill south of the River Trent (SK 407264), on the eastern side of Melbourne, that also produced flintwork of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age character. The pottery from this site with the greater part of the Lomas Collection has been deposited in the Derby Museum. The pottery comprised forty-eight broken and weathered sherds varying in size from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 in. square. The fabric is a moderately hard grey ware with dark brown to reddish and buff surfaces, plentifully mixed with sand and pieces of broken white quartzite pebbles which erupt through the surfaces giving a harsh feel to the fabric. Most of the sherds are body fragments without any features and there is one portion of a flat base. Five vessels are represented by rim sherds (Fig. 19):

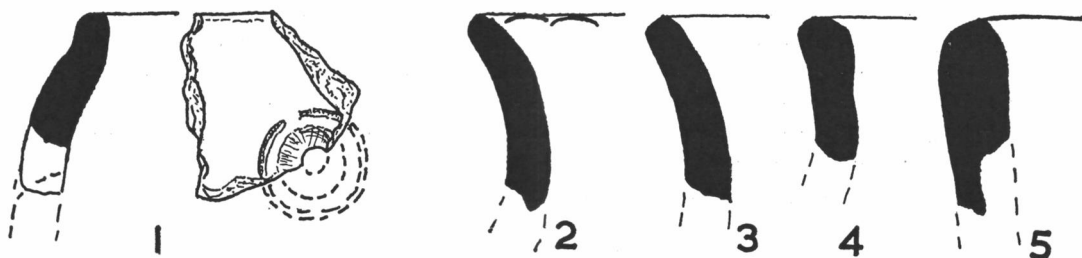


FIG. 19. Early Iron Age pottery from Melbourne (3).

1. Rim of grey ware, brown interior and dark grey exterior. Below the rim is a perforation pushed through from the outside with an incised circle around it. (Parallel at Ball Cross hill-fort.¹)
2. Outcurved rim, dark brown ware with finger nail impressions on the interior of the rim.
3. Outcurved rim of brown ware.
4. Slightly outcurved rim in a dark grey fabric.
5. Thick upright rim in grey fabric.

Apart from rim no. 2 the only decoration represented on this pottery is a sherd with finger tip imprints. The inturned rim no. 1 has parallels at Dowel Cave in northern Derbyshire² and at Breedon hill-fort in north Leicestershire. The outbent rims nos. 3-4 are rare at Breedon, but represented in the pre-rampart occupation level.³ The connections of the Melbourne pottery with Ball Cross and Breedon place it in the Trent Basin group of early Iron Age pottery distinguished by Kenyon.⁴ The Melbourne site with Iron Age pottery from Swarkeston Lows barrow ⁴⁵ links together the distribution of the Trent Basin pottery group in Leicestershire and south-west Lincolnshire with finds in the Peak District at Ball Cross, and Dowel, Rain's, Harborough and Old Woman's House Caves.⁶

The Trent Basin group of pottery was attributed by Kenyon to the tribe of the Coritani who are known to have had their cantonal capital at Leicester during the Roman occupation.⁷

The pottery finds of the Peak District sites indicate the cultural affinities of the area with the main Coritanian territory and show the extent of the tribe's area in pre-Roman times. Hawkes attributes this pottery to his early Iron Age Trent "A B" beginning soon after 200 B.C. and continuing on to the Roman occupation.⁸ The finger tip decoration and the outcurved rims of the Melbourne site suggest that it belongs to the beginning of the period rather than the end. It accords with the parallels at Breedon for the outcurved rims from the pre-rampart occupation; the later and more considerable occupation at Breedon was dominated by the globular and situlate jars with inturned rims like no. 1 at Melbourne.

¹ Stanley, *D.A.J.*, LXXIV (1954), 97, Fig. 3, 3.

² Bramwell, *P.A.S. Newsletter*, 15 (1959), 21, Figs. 1, 2; *D.A.J.*, LXXIX (1959), 107.

³ Kenyon, *T. Leic. A.S.*, XXVI (1950), 25-35, Fig. 2, 1.

⁴ Kenyon, 58-68; and *8th Ann. Rep. Inst. Arch.* (1952), 67-73, Figs. 22, 23.

⁵ Posnansky, *D.A.J.*, LXXV (1955), 132-4, Fig. 2, 1, 2.

⁶ Manby, *P.A.S. Newsletter*, 17 (1960), 19-22.

⁷ Kenyon, *T. Leic. A.S.*, XXVI (1950), 67.

⁸ Hawkes in *Problems of the Iron Age in Southern Britain*, 1958, 8, Fig. 2.