

PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN MATERIAL FROM THE BRASSINGTON AREA OF DERBYSHIRE: ‘THE RADFORD COLLECTION’

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INTRODUCTION

At the request of the late Kathleen Radford, who died in 1995, it was her last wish to record the work of the Radfords and their collection while she was still alive. This was done with the help of notes and a map, together with Kathleen’s memories of the sites and finds.

Kathleen, and the late Frank and Fred Radford were keen amateur archaeologists, field walking in the Brassington area from the early 1950s up to a little before Frank’s death in 1970. This material formed part of their archaeological collection which has been deposited in Derby Museum. Some of their finds had been given away to other collectors, whilst others are presumed lost. A number of their finds had been recorded and published earlier in the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* or in the *East Midland Archaeological Bulletin* (Radford 1969; Radley and Radford 1969; EMAB 1962).

The Radfords, living at Brassington, were able to take advantage of their locality by knowing where and when ploughing was taking place and then, as the opportunity presented itself, visiting the fields soon afterwards. They did this mainly during the evenings and at the weekends, as both Frank and Fred worked at the local brickworks. They covered an area ranging from Newhaven-Arbor Low in the north to Rainster Rocks-Carsington Pastures in the south (Fig. 1), though most of their field walking was concentrated around the Longcliffe and Brassington Moor areas.

The Radfords were operating at the same time as the former Brassington Archaeological Field Group who were carrying out their own archaeological field work and collecting in the area. Some members of the group still have their own collections as far as the author is aware. The ‘Radford Collection’ represents many years of actively searching the area, recording finds and their approximate locations, and illustrates a wide range of lithic artefacts and pottery from the Mesolithic through to the Romano-British period.

This collection demonstrates that there was an active landscape in the Brassington area during the Neolithic and Early Bronze Ages, similar to those at Aleck Low (Hart 1981, 40–45; 1985) and Kenslow-Mount Pleasant (Garton 1991). Further work based on the find spots could lead to more discoveries and information as to the character of the distribution pattern and periods of occupation. Some of this has already been expanded on by the author’s new discoveries in the area (to be published in the future).

Most of the lithic finds are indicated on Figure 2, but some of the finds did not correspond closely enough to give a grid reference and have not been included. It does however illustrate the widespread nature of prehistoric activity on Brassington Moor,

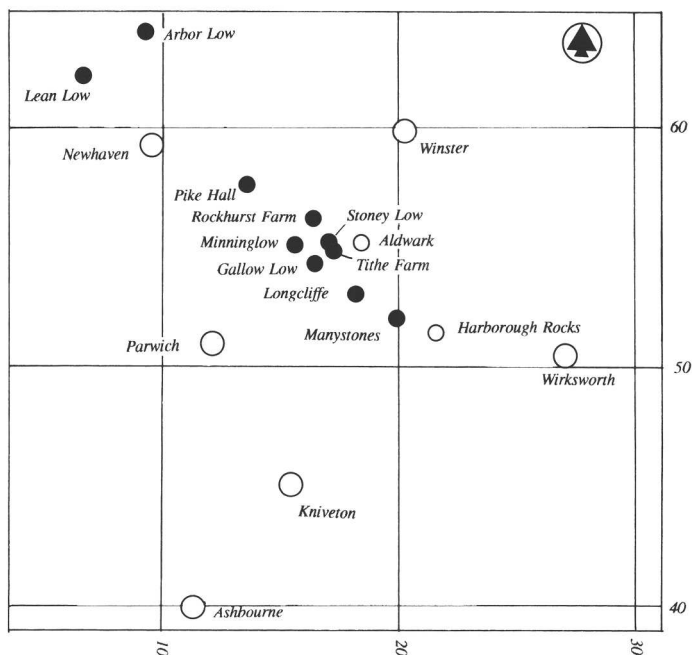


Fig. 1: Main sites in the Brassington area.

which formerly could only be hinted at by three barrows, the Early Iron Age and Romano-British settlement at Harborough Rocks and by Harborough Cave.

The map of Brassington Moor (Fig. 2) covers an area of limestone plateau lying between 300m and 360m OD, which gently slopes down to the north-east towards the valley at Grange Mill. It shows the main concentrations of flint scatters/sites at SK 23555605, SK 22485657, SK 22505653 and SK 23025600, demonstrating that this valley and the neighbouring shelves were prime locations for settlement from the Mesolithic onwards.

Two (possible Mesolithic) maceheads found near Hoe Grange (Radford 1969) at SK 21955635 add to the increasing number found in the region (Ford and Hughes 1963; Collis 1974). The site at Hoe Grange has produced other flints and a quartzite pebble fabricator, and another quartzite fabricator was found close by at Longcliffe Farm.

Early Iron Age pottery found at SK 240556, lying in the saddle of Brassington Moor between Manystones and Harborough Rocks (Radley and Radford 1967), may mark the site of another settlement or an outlier to the Early Iron Age settlement at Harborough Rocks (Makepeace 1990). The pottery is very similar in style and form to that from Harborough Rocks. Other Iron Age sherds (not illustrated) in the collection were taken from the waste tips of the earlier excavations in front of Harborough Cave.

The Romano-British pottery (Nos. 63–66) came from the excavations conducted by S. O. Kay in 1962 (Kay 1962) at the kiln site at Holbrook.

Grid References

Drawings of the artefacts were made as they were boxed in the collection and are not in any sequential or period order. A six-figure grid reference is given where the artefact can

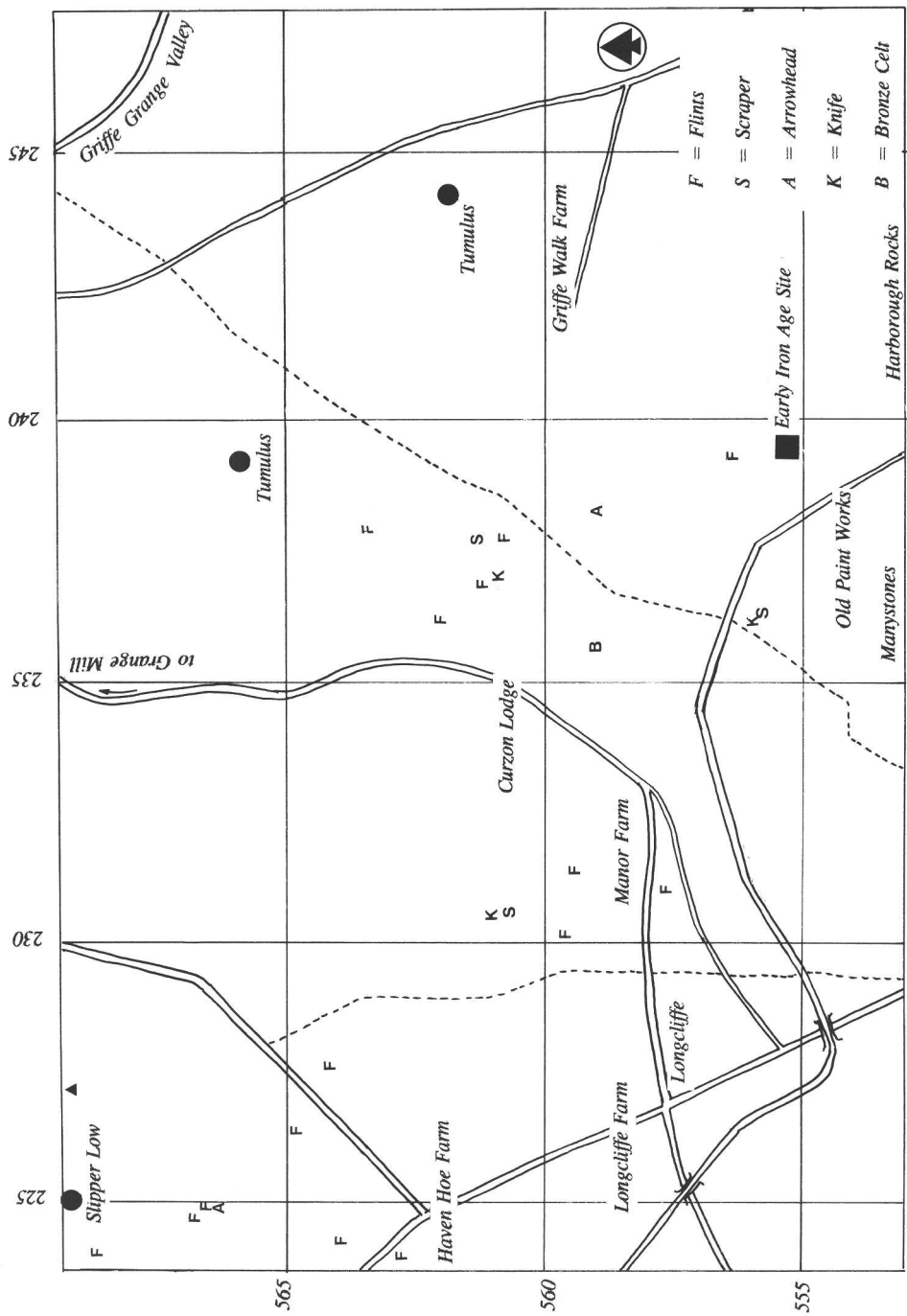


Fig. 2: Brassington Moor.

be shown to have come from that site. Where there is an approximate find spot, this is prefixed by 'c'. Where finds cannot be located to a six-figure reference only the placename of the locality is given.

THE RADFORD COLLECTION

Fig. 3 Lean Low *c.* SK 149621

- 1 Transverse arrowhead, bifacial working, brown flint.
- 2 Transverse arrowhead, bifacial working, brown flint.
- 3 Transverse arrowhead, bifacial working, brown flint.
- 4 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, broken barb, bifacial working, light brown flint.
- 5 Barbed and tanged arrowhead. barb broken, bifacial working, light brown flint.

Brassington Moor, Stoney Low SK 218578

- 6 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, barb broken, bifacial working, white flint, tip point broken.
- 7 Transverse arrowhead, bifacial working, dark brown flint.

Longcliffe *c.* SK 226559

- 8 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, bifacial working, dark brown flint.
- 9 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, barb broken, bifacial working, light grey flint.

Fig. 4 Gallow Low and Minninglow areas *c.* SK 212568–SK 218566

- 10 Thumb scraper, grey flint.
- 11 Scraper, dark brown flint.
- 12 Thumb scraper, white-grey flint.
- 13 Thumb scraper, white-greyish blue flint.
- 14 Scraper, white greyish-blue flint.
- 15 Thumb scraper, light brown flint.
- 16 Thumb Scraper, reddish brown flint.
- 17 Scraper, white flint.

Pike Hall *c.* SK 195590

- 18 Blade (knife or saw), black chert, secondary working on one edge.
- 19 Blade, black chert worked along one edge.
- 20 Scraper, black chert.

Fig. 5 Aldwark *c.* SK 229572

- 21 Transverse arrowhead, bifacial working, dark brown flint.
- 22 Tanged arrowhead, bifacial working, light brown flint.

Brassington Moor *c.* SK 216572

- 23 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, barb broken, bifacial working, dark brown flint.

Longcliffe *c.* SK 226559

- 24 Leaf shaped arrowhead, bifacial working, white greyish blue flint.

Manystones *c.* SK 239553

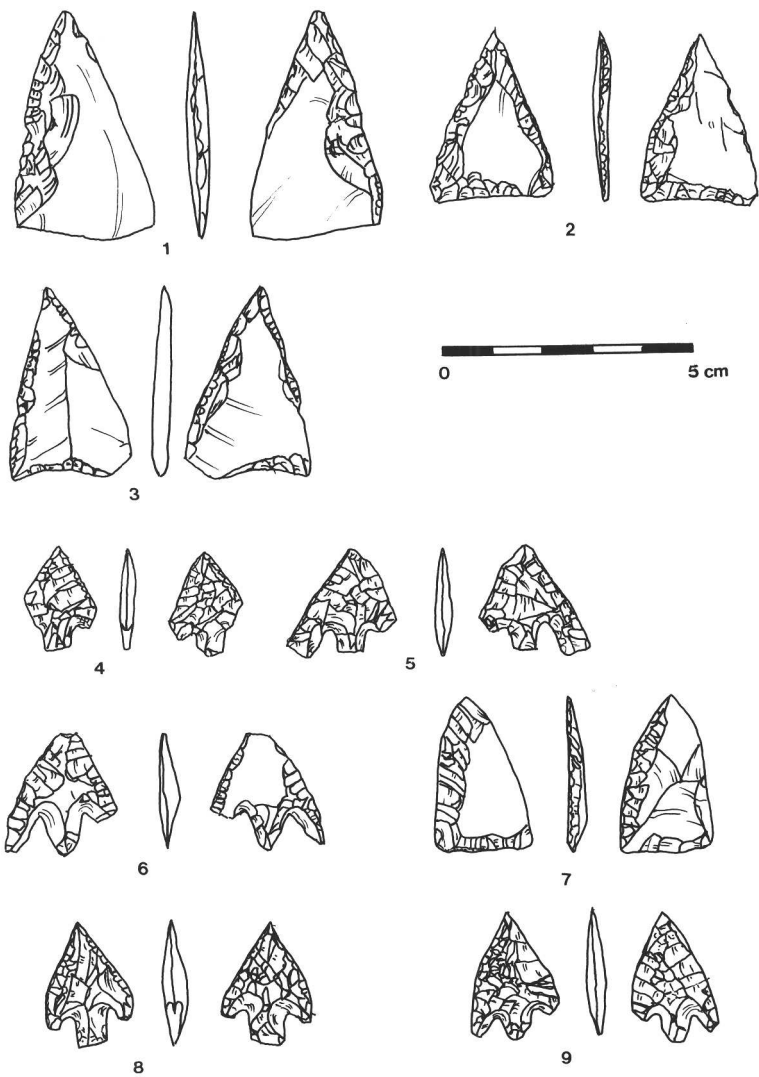


Fig. 3: Finds 1 to 9.

- 25 Barbed and tanged arrowhead, barb broken, bifacial working, white flint.
Minninglow c. SK 210571
- 26 Scraper, discoidal, grey flint.
Pike Hall c. SK 194593
- 27 End Scraper, dark brown flint.
- 28 End Scraper, grey flint.

- Fig. 6 Tithe Farm c. SK 216572
- 29 Leaf shaped arrowhead, broken, dark brown flint.

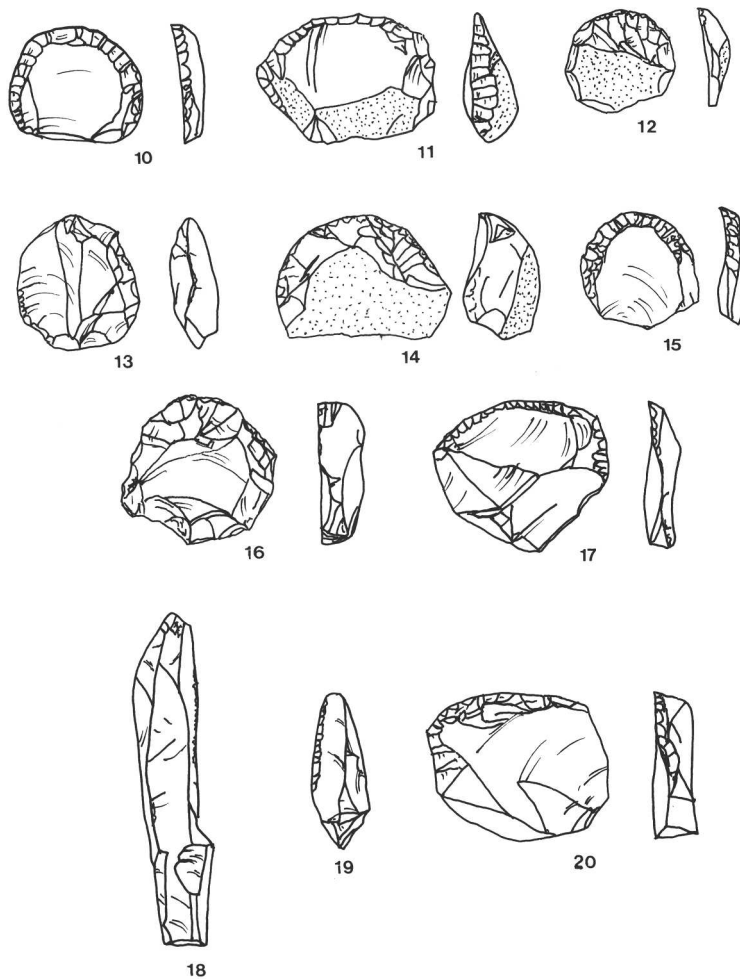


Fig. 4: Finds 10 to 20. Scale as for Fig. 3.

- 30 End scraper, dark brown flint.
- 31 Transverse arrowhead, grey flint.
- 32 Scraper, dark brown flint.
- 33 End scraper, dark brown flint.
- 34 End scraper, dark brown flint.
- 35 Thumb scraper, greyish blue flint.
- 36 Thumb scraper, brown flint.
- 37 Scraper/knife, dark brown flint.
- 38 Knife, dark brown flint.

Fig. 7 Rockhurst Farm c. SK 217582

- 39 Microlith, backed blade, white-light brown flint.
- 40 Microlith, blade — possible point, light grey flint.

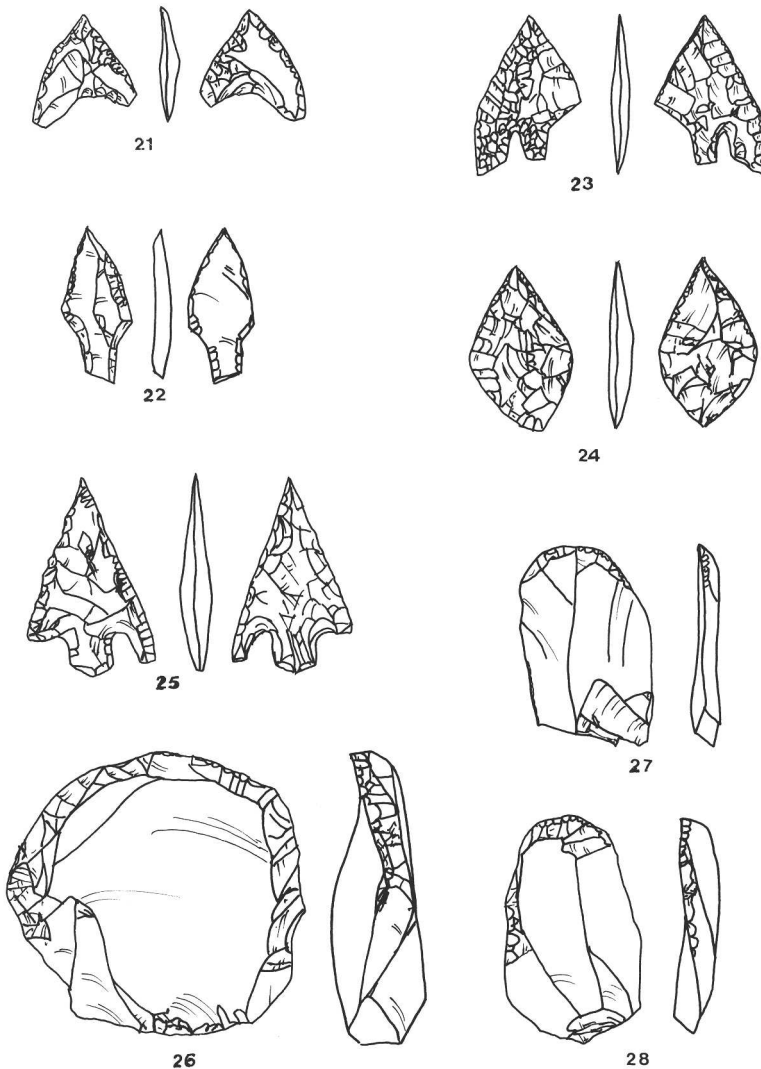


Fig. 5: Finds 21 to 28. Scale as for Fig. 3.

- 41 Microlith, backed blade, white-light brown flint.
Pike Hall c. SK 194593
- 42 Core, conical, Mesolithic, dark brown-grey flint.

Fig. 8 Pike Hall (cont.)

- 43 Knife(blade), grey brown flint.
Longcliffe c. SK 218560
- 44 Knife, bifacial working, brown flint.
Longcliffe Farm c. SK 226559
- 45 Possible plano-convex knife, grey flint.

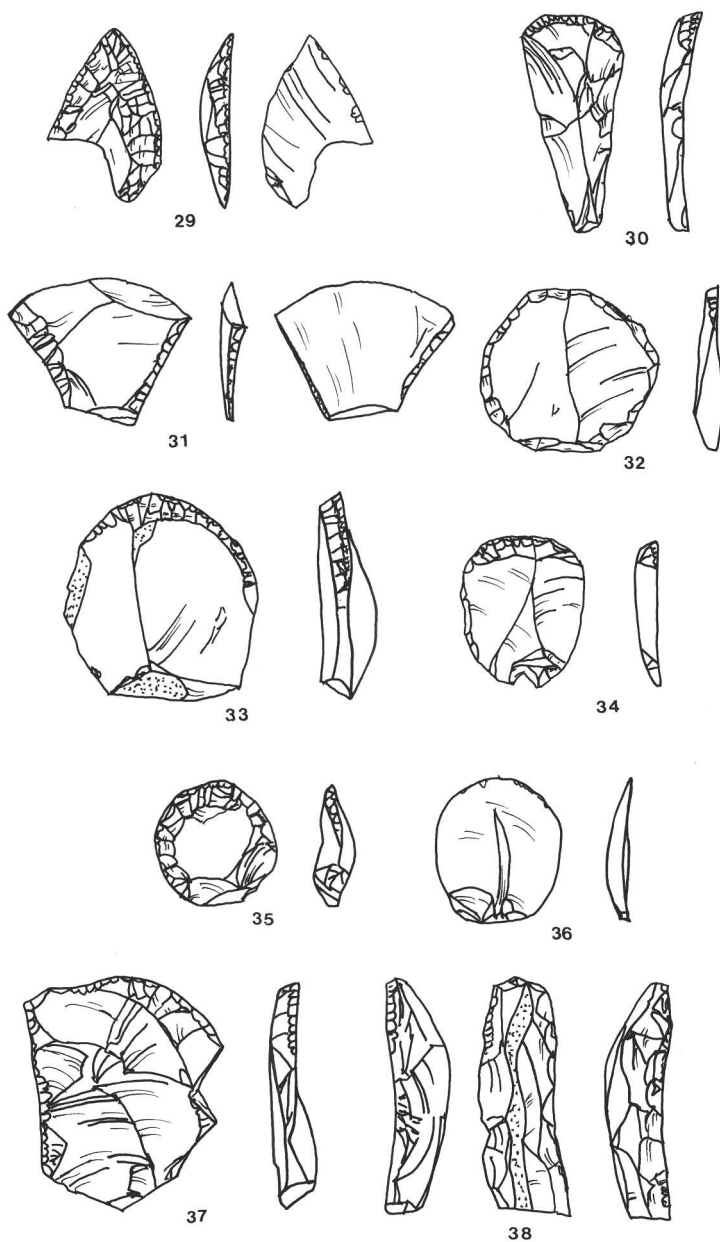


Fig. 6: Finds 29 to 38. Scale as for Fig. 3.

- 46 Scraper, discoidal, bifacial working, dark brown flint.
- 47 Scraper, discoidal, grey flint.

Fig. 9 Arbor Low c. SK 160636

- 48 Scraper, discoidal, grey flint.

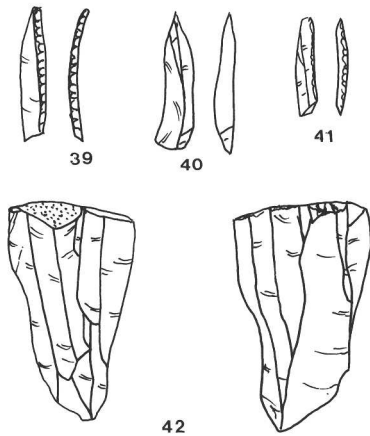


Fig. 7: Finds 39 to 42. Scale as for Fig. 3.

Brassington Moor *c.* SK 216570

49 Knife, dark brown-black flint.

50 Knife, bifacial working, grey mottled flint.

Longcliffe *c.* SK 228560

51 Large knife/scrapper, bifacial working, dark brown flint.

Fig. 10 Longcliffe (cont.)

52 Scraper, discoidal, dark brown flint.

53 Borer, dark brown flint.

54 Knife/scrapper, white bluish-grey flint.

55 Knife, grey flint.

Brassington Moor *c.* SK 2157

56 Knife/scrapper, dark grey brown flint.

57 Possible borer/burin, or broken scaper, grey flint.

Fig. 11 Longcliffe *c.* SK 228560

58 Thumb scraper, light brown flint.

Longcliffe Farm *c.* SK 226559

59 Glass Bead, blue-black, date unknown.

Brassington Moor *c.* SK 2157

60 Knife, brown flint.

61 Blade, knife, grey-light brown flint.

62 End scraper, grey flint.

Holbrook Romano-British Kilns (Derbyshire Ware)

63 Everted Rim sherd, grey brown exterior/interior, grey core.

64 Everted rim sherd, light red-orange interior; red-orange exterior, red-orange core.

65 Everted rim sherd, buff-brown exterior, light cream-buff interior and core.

66 Everted rim sherd, dark brown-grey exterior, dark grey interior, brown core, some warping.

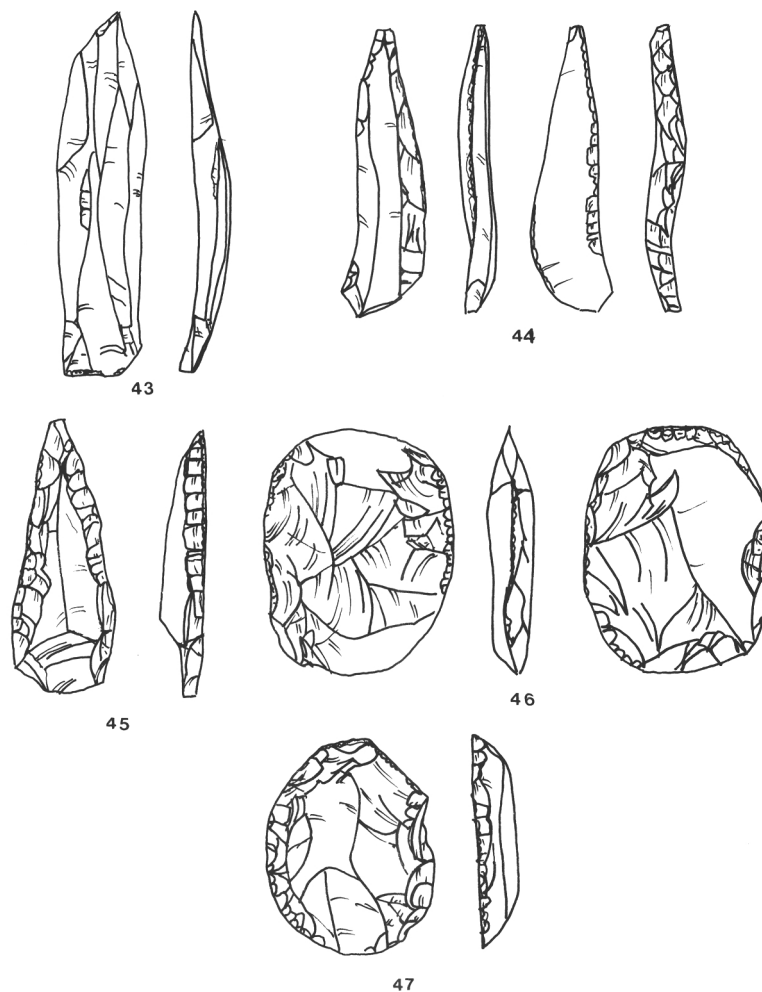


Fig. 8: Finds 43 to 47. Scale as for Fig. 3.

Not Illustrated

Romano-British Pottery from Rainster Rocks SK 218547

- i Mortaria base, white grey ware, trituration grits
- ii Derbyshire Ware, grey body sherd with wavy decoration.
- iii Selection of rim sherds and base.
- iv Hammerhead mortaria rim sherd, white fabric.
- v Romano-British bronze ring

Longcliffe Farm c. SK 226559

- i Quartzite pebble, 5.7cm x 1.5cm x 1.9cm
Bruised on one end, possible fabricator

Hoe Grange Farm c. SK 215562

- i Quartzite pebble, 4.3cm x 2.7cm x 3.2cm
Bruised at both ends, possible fabricator

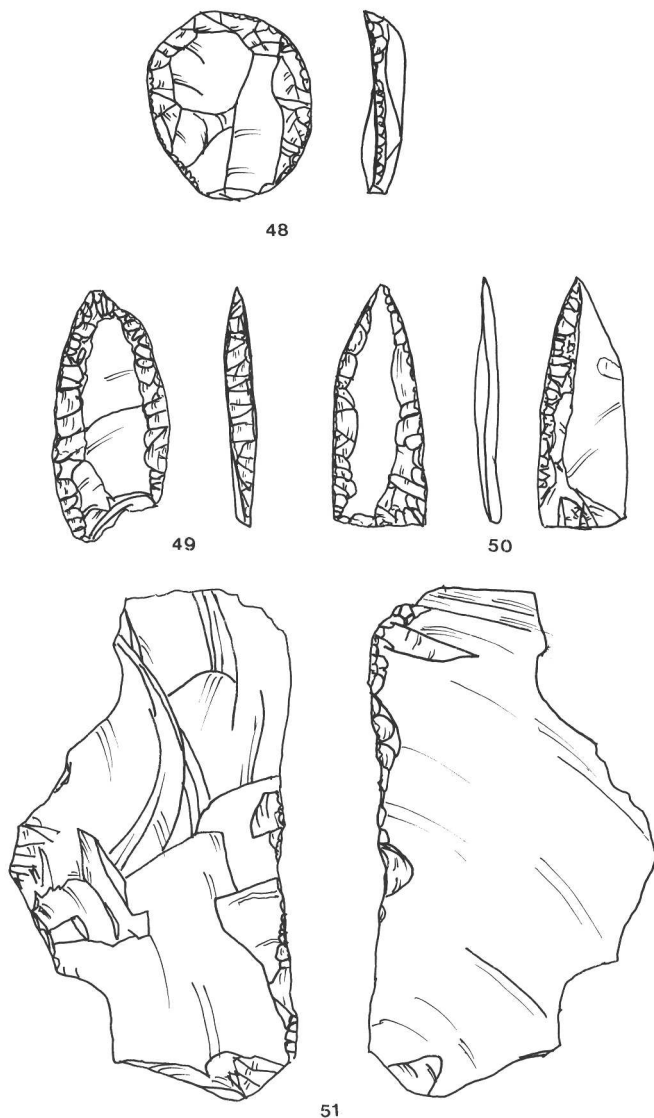


Fig. 9: Finds 48 to 51. Scale as for Fig. 3.

Harborough Rocks Cave SK 242553 (waste tips)

- i Iron Age body sherd, slightly burnished, coarse fabric, brown exterior, black interior and black core.
- ii Iron Age body sherd, coarse fabric, brown exterior, grey interior. These are similar to the those from the Harborough Rocks settlement (Makepeace 1990).

Harborough (near Moot Low) SK 238557

- i Iron Age body sherds (Radley and Radford 1969) Similar in form and texture to those from the Harborough Rocks settlement (Makepeace 1990).

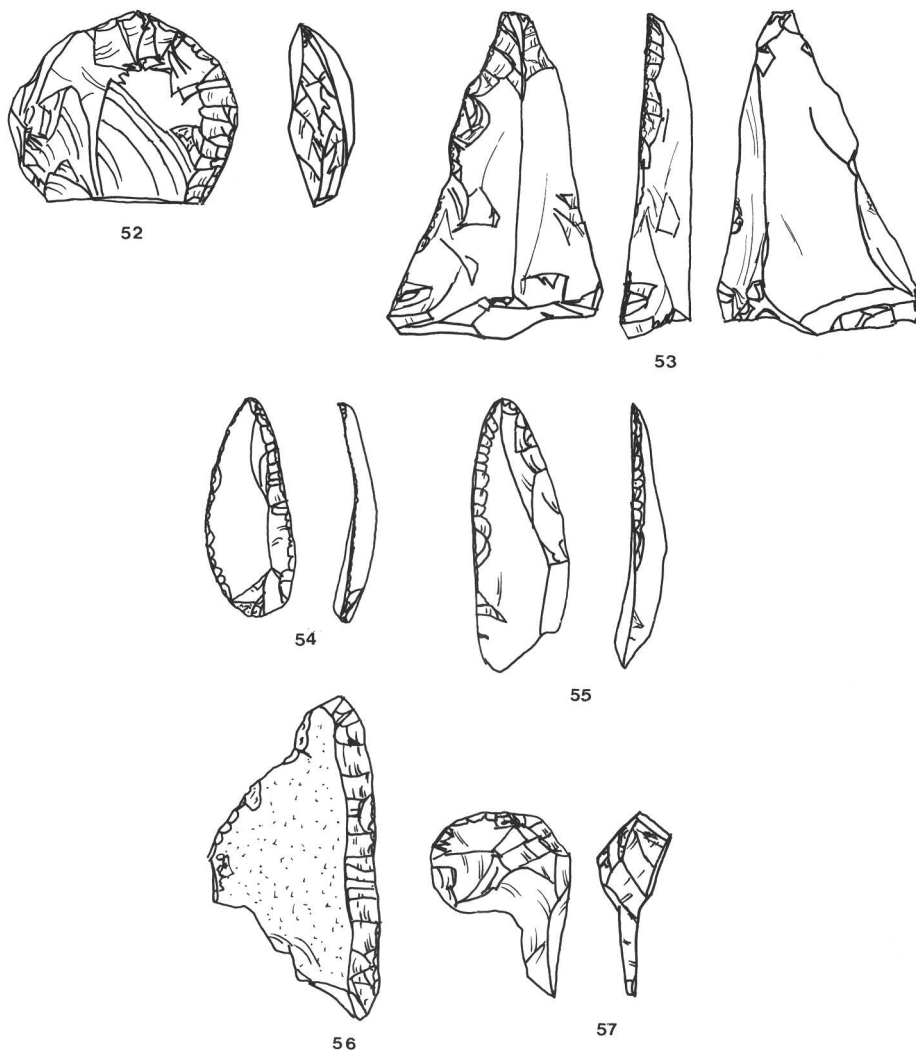


Fig. 10: Finds 52 to 57. Scale as for Fig. 3.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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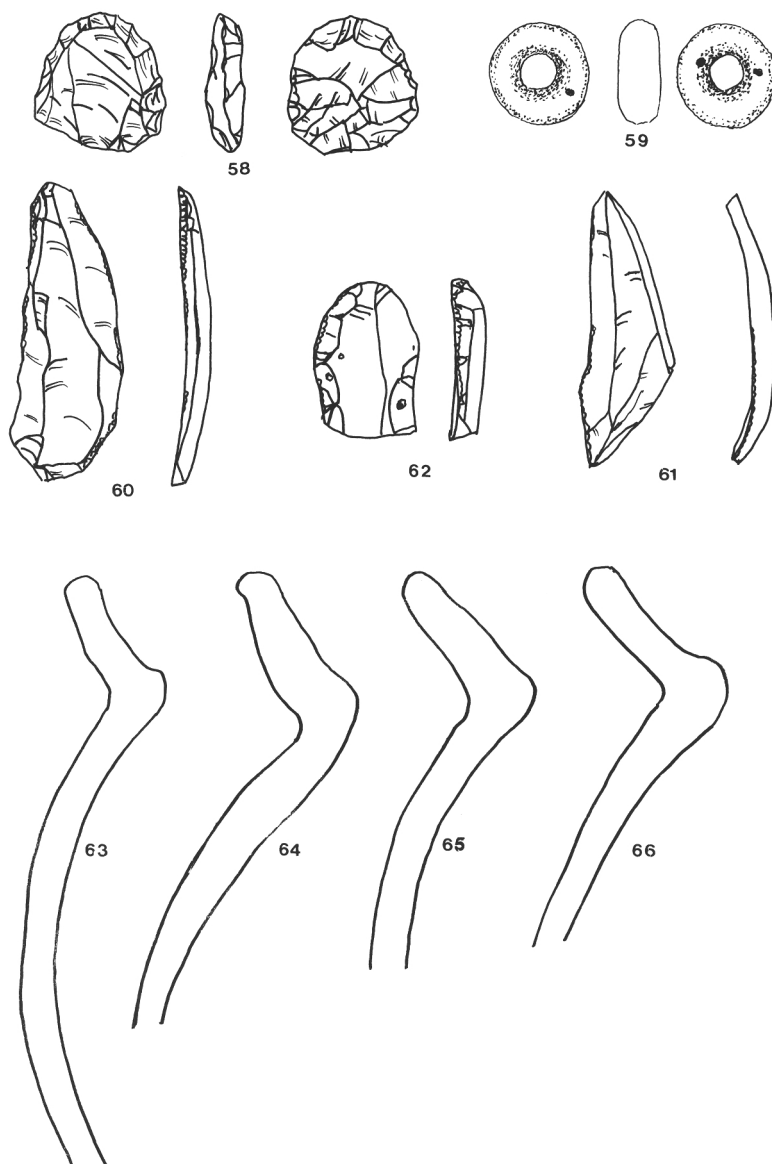


Fig. 11: Finds 58 to 66. Scale as for Fig. 3.

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