

CRANFLEET FLINTS ASSEMBLAGE, LONG EATON, DERBYSHIRE

By

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In 1995 Jacqui Truman, then a part-time archaeological student at Nottingham University, became aware of imminent gravel extraction at the Cranfleet site off Pasture Lane, Long Eaton (SK504321) (Fig. 1). Unable to obtain any involvement from professional bodies, single handedly she undertook a field walking programme in advance of the quarrying. The site of approximately 3.5ha lies close to the north bank of the present course of the River Trent. The site of approximately 3.5ha lies close to the north bank of the present course of the River Trent.

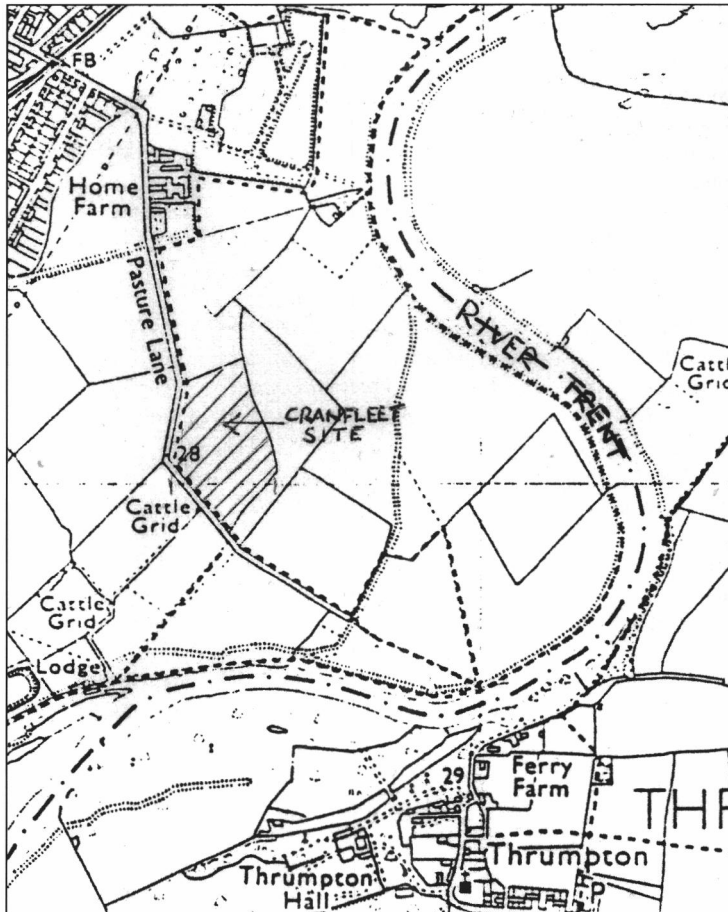


Fig. 1: Location map, near Long Eaton.

Recovered finds include 3rd century AD Romano-British pottery sherds and a Viking age whetstone perforated for a thong attachment (Plate 1), which has been identified by Dr. Lars Jorgensen, curator of Copenhagen National Museum. He suggests that it is made of a fine-grained grey sandstone from a Norwegian source.



Plate 1: Viking age whetstone. Half actual size.

In addition, 124 recognisable struck flints were recovered. This assemblage consists of 49 cores, 52 assorted struck flakes and blades, 10 scrapers, 3 possible scrapers, a piercer, 3 heavily patinated natural flints possessing a denticulated edge and a possible Palaeolithic flake (Appendix; Figs 2 and 3). Their dates range from the Mesolithic to the Early Bronze Age, except for 5 pieces of indeterminate age.

This assemblage illustrates that artefact manufacture was carried out on the site. This is not surprising since the only flint source locally is from glacial borne material from the north-eastern glaciers, deposited as till and subsequently washed out by melt water to form the gravel beds of the Trent Valley. Flint nodules would have been easily identified by prehistoric people and retrieved from the inner bends of watercourses, where the gravels were exposed.

The abundance of cores and waste flakes but relative lack of completed tools could be explained by successful pieces having been carried off to wherever they were to be used, leaving behind the cores, waste flakes and failed attempts. The few scrapers retrieved could indicate a settlement nearby or could have been used on site in associated product manufacture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is salutary that these important finds would have been lost to the archaeological record were it not for Jacqui's initiative and subsequent effort, and illustrates a clear need for better co-operation between professional archaeological bodies and dedicated local non-professionals if we are to be serious about preserving our heritage.

I am indebted to David Budge for identification of the flints and Erewash Museum for kindly undertaking custodianship of the assemblage.

APPENDIX

Illustrated flints**Figure 2**

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Regular blade core | Mesolithic |
| 2 | Opposed platform flake core | Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |
| 3&4 | Multiplatform flake core | “ “ |
| 5 | Multiplatform blade core | Mesolithic |
| 6 | Flake core fragment | Early Neolithic |
| 7 | Multiplatform flake core | Neolithic/Bronze Age |
| 8 | “ “ (burnt) | “ |
| 9 | Discoidal core | Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |
| 10 | End scraper | Neolithic |
| 11 | Core with embedded fossil | “ |
| 12 | Side scraper | Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |
| 13 | Opposed platform flake core | “ “ |
| 14 | Side scraper | “ “ |
| 15 | Side scraper | “ “ |

Figure 3

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 16 | Piercer | Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |
| 17 | Utilised tertiary flake | “ “ |
| 18 | Utilised secondary flake | “ “ |
| 19 | Hard hammered tertiary flake | “ “ |
| 20 | Hard hammered secondary flake | “ “ |
| 21 | “ “ | “ “ |
| 22 | Soft hammered blade | Mesolithic/Early Neolithic |
| 23 | Soft hammered secondary flake | “ “ |
| 24 | Hard hammered flake, utilised | “ “ |
| 25&26 | Secondary flake | Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |
| 27 | Core fragment utilised as scraper | “ “ |
| 28-30 | Side scrapers | “ “ |
| 31 | Core tablet utilised as scraper | “ “ |
| 32 | Denticulated natural flake | |
| 33 | Corticated flake | Possibly Mesolithic |
| 34 | Denticulated natural flake | |
| 35 | Corticated plunging flake | Possibly Mesolithic |
| 36 | Denticulated natural flake | |
| 37 | End scraper | Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age |

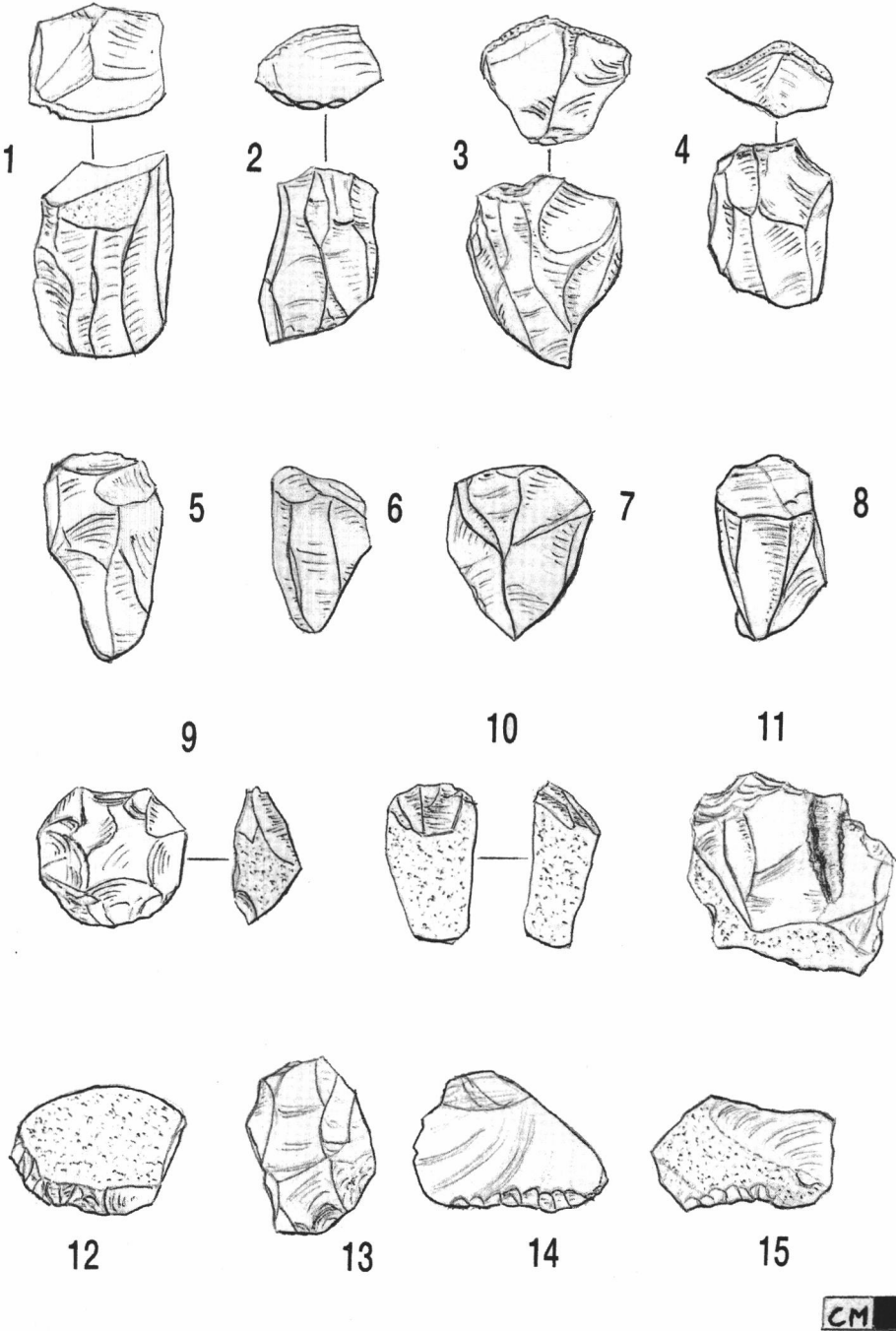


Fig. 2: Cranfleet Flints 1-15.

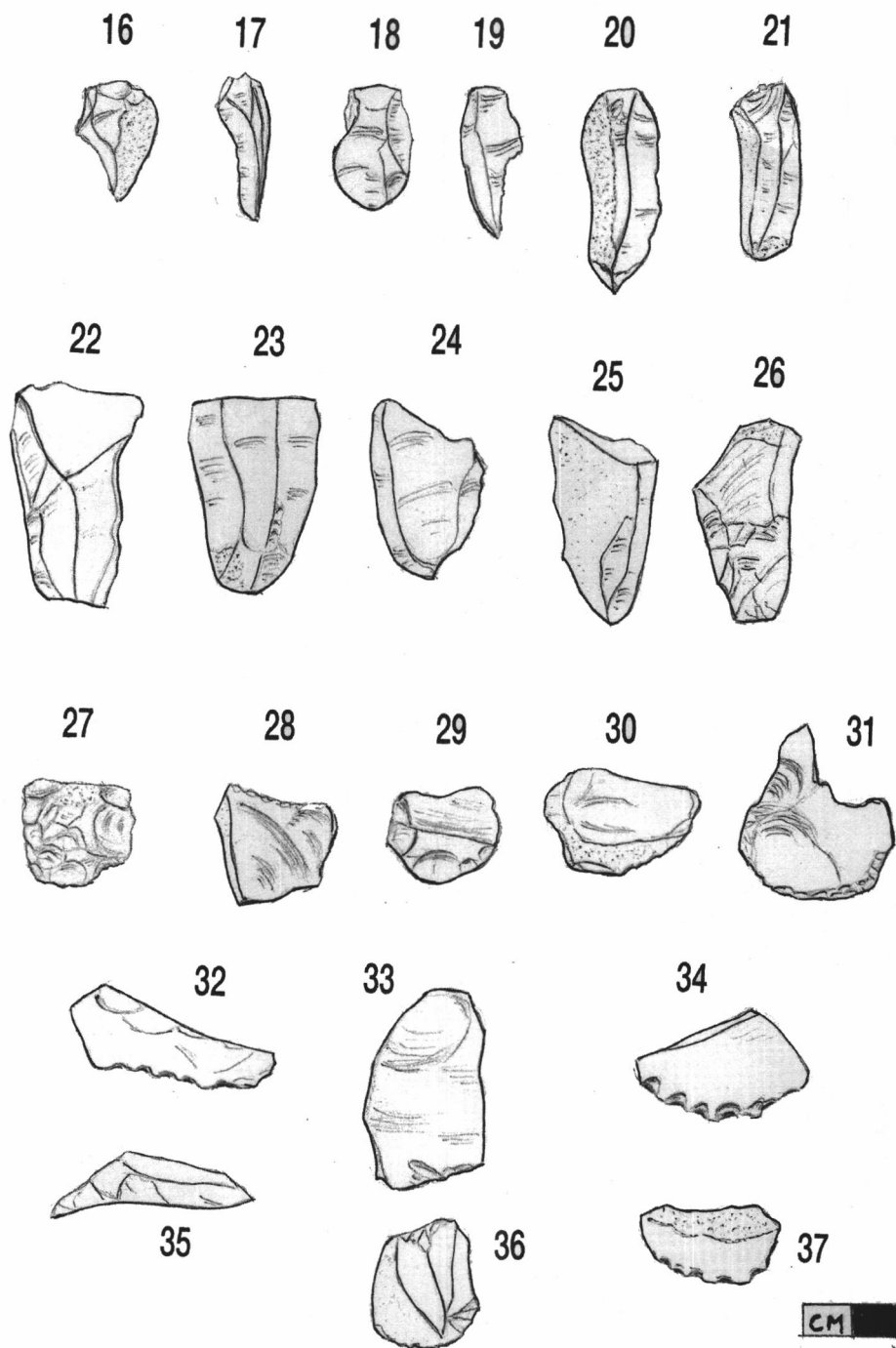


Fig. 3: Cranfleet Flints 16-37.