

VI

NOTES

1. PREHISTORIC HABITATION SITES IN THE DURHAM CITY AREA

THE PURPOSE of this note is to record the results of a limited survey of ploughed fields in the Durham City area for evidence of prehistoric habitation, in the form of surface scatters of flint and chert artefacts, carried out between 1972 and 1975. A selection of artefacts found is shown in Fig. 1. All map references are from O.S. Sheet NZ24/34.

The main concentration of artefacts occurred on Buck's Hill (Map Ref. 4276 5409) at approximately eighty metres O.D. The site lies in a field of sandy loam on a tongue of high ground overlooking the River Wear. The predominant raw material used was a pale grey flint with white inclusions, similar to that from the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds. Yellow pebble flint and opaque black chert were also used.

A total of one hundred and ninety six artefacts was found. These include six cores, Fig. 1, 1 and 2. The cores illustrated have well-defined striking platforms and have been used to produce small blades and narrow flakes. The remaining cores possess less well-defined striking platforms, and have been used to produce broader flakes. Two core rejuvenation flakes were also found, both of which exhibited secondary working, Fig. 1, 3.

Twenty-four blades were found, Fig. 1, 4-7, of which twelve bore traces of retouch or utilization. Two of these, Fig. 1, 5 and 6, are retouched obliquely across the distal end with fine blunting. There were also seven bulbar rejects i.e. bulbs of percussion removed from blades by direct snapping, rather than by the microburin technique. No microliths or microburins were found.

Eight scrapers were found, Fig. 1, 8-12. The majority are steeply retouched. The assemblage also includes seventeen artefacts with small amounts of secondary retouch, Fig. 1, 13-15 and 11 pieces showing signs of edge damage consistent with utilization.

A scatter of flints was found across the top of a broad ridge in the field adjoining to the north west (Map Ref. 4275 5412) including a utilized blade, Fig. 1, 16, two bulbar rejects, Fig. 1, 17 and a utilized flake. A fire-damaged scraper was found some 400 metres to the south west (Map Ref. 4272 5404).

Two flints were found on Mountjoy (Map Ref. 4279 5415) some 400 metres north of the main flint scatter, comprising a blade in lightly patinated red flint and a knife in dark grey flint, Fig. 1, 18. A flint flake was also found near St. Aidan's College (Map Ref. 4270 5413). This field contained an unusually large number of flint pebbles compared with surrounding fields.

Flints were also found on a terrace of the River Wear at Shincliffe (Map Ref. 4289 5411) including a large patinated flake retouched as a concave scraper, Fig. 1, 19, a

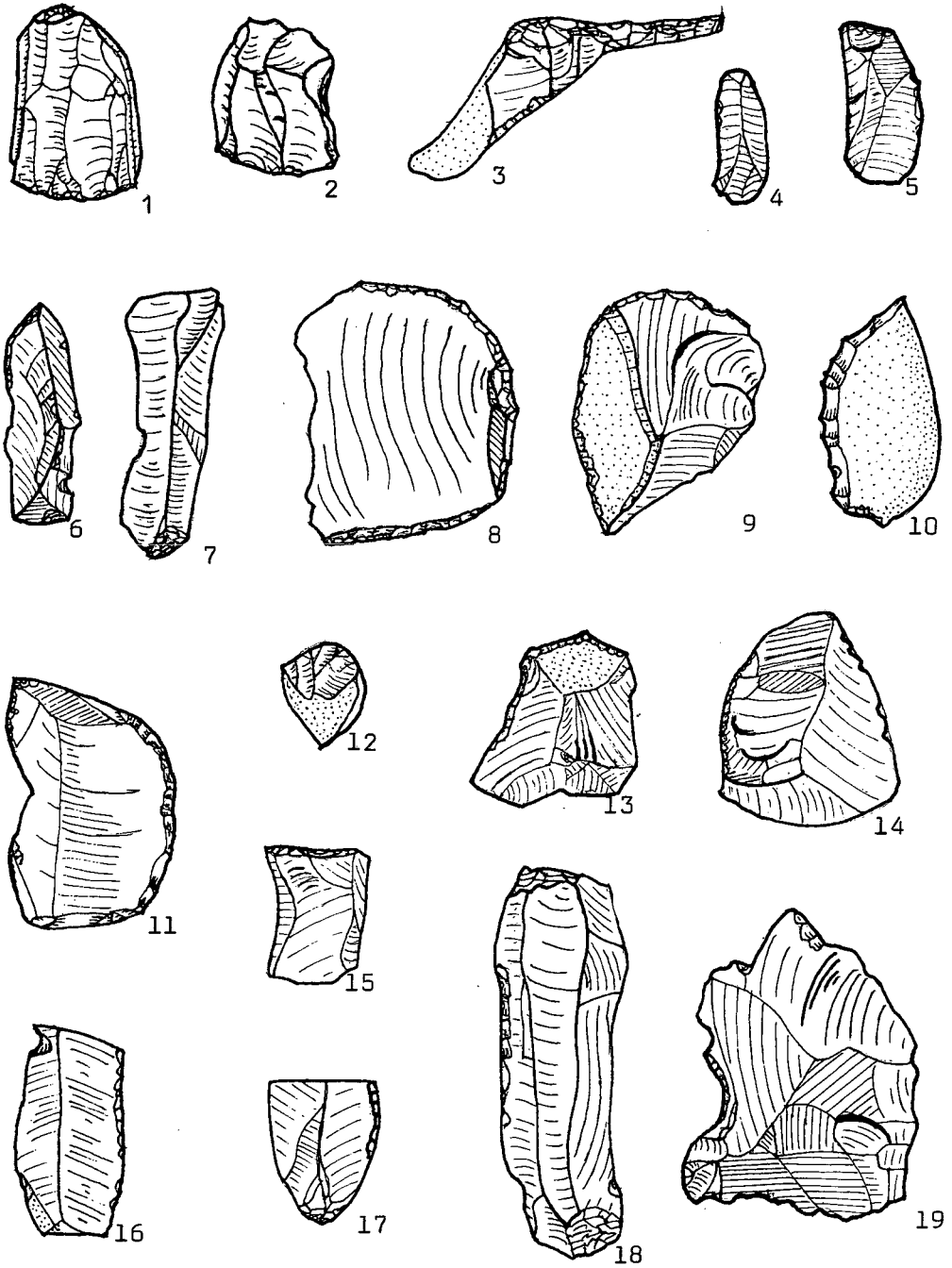


Fig. 1 Flint and chert artifacts from Durham ($\frac{1}{4}$).

bulbar reject, a flint blade which shows signs of being water worn, and four waste flakes.

To the north of the City, the countryside is less open and ploughing was more sporadic. A broken core in yellow pebble flint lacking a defined striking platform was found above Kepier Quarry (Map Ref. 4293 5442). No other artefacts were found.

Evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age habitation is well documented in Upper Weardale.^{1, 2} Given the absence of microliths and microburins, the assemblage from Buck's Hill is likely to be Neolithic in date, in view of the significant number of blades found. The various miscellaneous finds are consistent with habitation during the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

The writer was assisted in this survey by Mr. J. C. Grainger. The flints were drawn by Mr. J. Cherry. All finds have been deposited at the Department of Archaeology of Durham University.

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REFERENCES

¹ Fell, C. I. and Hildyard, E. J. W. "Prehistoric Weardale—A New Survey", *AA*⁴ XXXI, 98.

² Fell, C. I. and Hildyard, E. J. W. "More flints from Weardale—A Postscript", *AA*⁴ XXXIV, 131.

2. A GERMAN SIEGBURG BEAKER IN THE CHESTERS MUSEUM COLLECTION, NORTHUMBERLAND

During a recent visit to the Chesters Museum, my son Ashton brought to my attention a small pot that had a very different foot ring from the rest of the Roman ceramics on display there.

The only published description of this pot is to be found in E. A. Wallis Budge, 1903, p. 373, Number 595, Accession Number (3584) where we find the following short description of the vessel in question, it is described as follows "Drab terra-cotta vase, height $4\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $2\frac{7}{8}$ in."

This pot is immediately recognizable as a typical product of the Siegburg pottery kilns, which, in common with the whole of the Rhineland, had close trade links with England from the late twelfth century right up to the first half of the nineteenth century.

Description of the pot: Siegburg beaker of type 133, see B. Beckmann, 1974, p. 218, Fig. 17, in V. Evison, H. Hodges, and J. G. Hurst, 1974. Height 12 cm., diameter 6.6 cm.

The fabric is the usual typical unvarying Siegburg fabric, a hard fine grained grey-buff stoneware. The colour is rather uneven as is to be expected on this class of early salt glazed stoneware, although very little glazing is evident on this example except for a slight glossy sheen, and a runnel on one side. The general colour is medium green/brown A4. (Romano-British coarse pottery colour chart). 10.YR. 5/1.

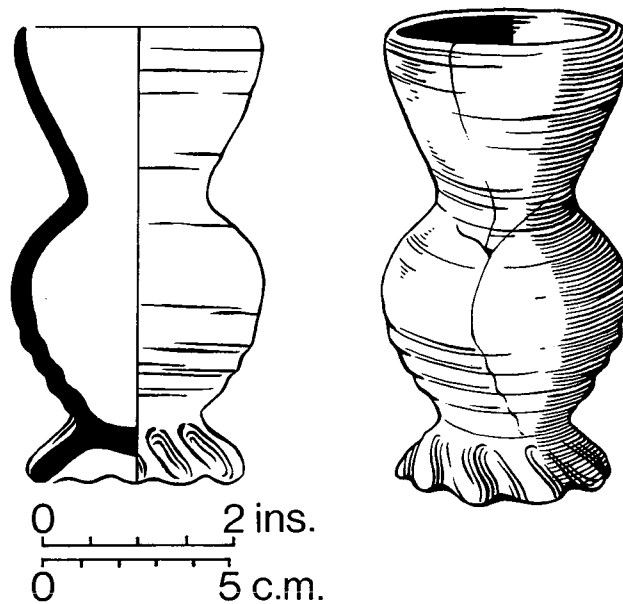


Fig. 2 Beaker in the Chesters Museum ($\frac{1}{2}$).

(Munsell soil colour chart). For a detailed description of the firing of salt glazed ware, see J. Troy, 1977.

The form of this vessel is globular with a trumpet neck, see illustration, and is closely paralleled in B. Beckmann, 1974, p. 218, type 133, except that the pronounced grooving at the junction of the neck to the body is absent in this example, although the vigorous throwing rings that are such a common feature of this ware are present all over its surface.

The foot ring that was the first clue to this pot's place of manufacture has been turned, but then pinched into a frilly edge, much as is seen in pastry, a feature noted on some Medieval ceramic productions, but never on Roman pottery.

Dr. B. Beckmann dates this form to the beginning of the fourteenth century.

As evidence of the close trade links between the Rhineland and England in the fourteenth century and later, pottery from this area of Germany has been found on almost every Medieval urban excavation in this country, and the North East is no exception. Considerable quantities of Siegburg ware were recovered from the Castle Ditch, Newcastle upon Tyne during excavations there, B. Harbottle and M. Ellison, 1981, pp. 148–50, Fig. 28., and has turned up on smaller sites as well, such as Holy Island, see L. Bown in D. O'Sullivan, 1985, pp. 75–6, and are roughly of the same date; although mostly all beakers or mugs, the forms do vary.

A very early illustration of this type of Siegburg beaker is to be seen in the English manuscript known as the Luttrell Psalter, of c. 1340. It shows a kitchen scene with three vessels of this type in use on the trestle table, see G. Trevelyan, 1978,

pp. 16–17. Obviously ours is not the only age to visit the wall, either for wonder or walling stone.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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3. A MINOR QUARRY ON THE BARROW KNOCKS, NORTHUMBERLAND

As a footnote to Jobey's masterly account of millstone quarries in Northumberland,¹ it is timely to record some abortive quarrying below the Barrow Knocks (NT914058) near Alwinton, Northumberland. On a slab of Fell Sandstone, fallen or slidden from the outcrop above, three circular stones have been marked out or partly cut. Of one the initial circumference only has been defined, probably by pecking; of the second a full channel for extraction has been cut; of the third the marking out of the initial circumference has been left uncompleted. No radial slots have been marked out or cut. The dimensions of the stones fall in Professor Jobey's second group. A circle, of which no trace remains, must have been scribed, giving after pecking an outer diameter of some 33 to 33½ inches. From this the extraction channel was worked about 3½ inches towards the centre and 5 inches into the slab, yielding had any been extracted a stone some 25 inches in diameter and 5 inches thick.²

The stones have been abandoned quite evidently because the quarryman must have realized that they were going to break along two flaws, probably on extraction, certainly in transit or in use. For what purpose did the quarrier intend them? The obvious purpose is as millstones for Barrow mill: there was a ford across the Coquet which would be practicable when the water was low. Alternatively he may only have been seeking grindstones for use at Barrow Pele. That he marked out three stones rather supports the view that supply to the mill was planned. There is no track from the site.



b) The delineation on the Barrow Knocks, Northumberland.

In this context we cannot ignore the delineation³ which has been chiselled on a face of an outcrop of rock immediately above the abortive quarry. It presents a Prussian soldier wearing a spiked helmet, an Iron Cross, and a somewhat austere expression. The execution is competent; the notable point is that someone should have been in such a place equipped with hammer and chisel. It is inevitable that this *jeu d'esprit* should be associated with the quarry at the foot of the slope. On the face below the overhang there is a name and date in Roman capitals not quite Trajanic but certainly competent:

ANDREW BUGLASS
BARROW AUGUST 28TH
1872

The date, so shortly after the Franco-Prussian war, which must have figured prominently in the illustrated periodicals of the time, goes far to explain the choice of subject. Does it also date the quarry? Andrew Buglass was for some years a shepherd at Barrow Pele⁴ and, if he had the skill to cut the inscription and doubtless the

delineation, the quarrying of millstones or grindstones would have been within his scope. There are grounds for supposing the Barrow mill still to have been working at this date,⁵ so that consideration provides no obstacle. There is however another claimant, in that on an outcrop closely facing is another inscription, though in part difficult to read:

THOMAS DANIEL WOOD
 BARROW (?) JULY 21(?)
 1893 (?8)

Perhaps T. D. Wood⁶ was A. Buglass's successor as shepherd at Barrow Pele. If the quarry-workings were his, this brings their operation onward to the nineties, or he may merely have sought to emulate his predecessor's bid to make his name immortal?⁷

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¹ AA⁵ XIV, 49–80.

² Jobey, op. cit., 61 and 64. See also Savary des Bruslons (trans. M. Postlethwait), *The Universal Dictionary of trade and commerce*, London 1751. *They strike a line, and by this cut a little channel with their stone-ax, and in the channel set five or six wedges.*

³ First reported to the Society in my paper "Stones of Harbottle" in August 1967.

⁴ Information from the late Mr. T. Carruthers whose father is said to have farmed Barrow for some forty years.

⁵ Survival of the roof timbers of the kiln to

1952, when photographed by the author, suggests maintenance into the 20th century. See AA V, 160.

⁶ Daniel Wood, perhaps grandfather of Thomas, was tenant of East Wilkwood in 1818. Dixon, *Upper-Coquetdale*, 33.

⁷ These dates place a long gap between this small-scale enterprise and any date yet suggested for the closure of the Harbottle millstone quarry. If the absence of provisions for the latter quarry in the Enclosure Award of 1817 implies that at that date its working had for some time been discontinued, then the gap would be even longer.

