

Finds of stone from Sprotbrough Gardens, Sprotbrough, South Yorkshire (OSA01 EX03)

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Nine stone objects from excavations at Sprotbrough Gardens were submitted for study but two of these were unworked pebbles (of coal and a fine-grained brown sandstone respectively).

The remaining objects include a worked flint, possibly from a flintlock pistol, a spindlewhorl, and a hone.

Description

Medieval?



Plate 1 Spindle whorl – obverse face



Plate 2 Spindle whorl – reverse face

Spindlewhorl. Context 3123 (Phase 3 to 4) (Fig 00 No.6; Plates 1 and 2). A fragmentary spindlewhorl made from a black finegrained material, probably coal from the Coal Measures. The stone has a conchoidal fracture and is snapped in half. There are no signs of finishing on either of the two flat surfaces and both the outer and inner surfaces are rough. Possibly not finished. Such coal would have been readily available locally and this whorl might have been broken during manufacture.

Post-medieval?

Flint tool. Context 2054 (Phase 6). An unpatinated rectangular flint tool, worked on all four sides. Possibly from a flintlock pistol rather than a prehistoric implement but no signs of scratches from steel.

Glazed stone. Context 2097 (Phase 5 Group 6). A roughly cuboid lump of finegrained grey sandstone with extensive areas of glazing on all surfaces. The glaze is in parts colourless and in parts has an olive brown colour. Without analysis it is not possible to identify the main fluxes in the glass which could be alkalis from a wood or coal fire, salt or lead. If either of the latter two were present then the glaze must be the accidental byproduct of a deliberate attempt to glaze ceramics or glass but if the former it merely indicates that the lump was subjected to a high temperature (almost certainly in excess of 1000 degrees

given the lack of iron in the stone). With only a single example, it is not possible to say where this firing took place but industrial waste tends to be widely dispersed, for example as hard core, and this piece comes from a 17th-century dump.

Undated

Two unworked pebbles were submitted and are ignored here.

Burnt shale. Context 4148. A fragment of burnt shale, presumably waste from the use of coal as fuel.

Hone. Context 1095. A large hole with a circular cross section, tapering in both directions from a central point 40mm diameter to 25mm and 31mm. The hone is made from a micaceous grey sandstone, possibly of upper or, less likely lower, Carboniferous origin. The hole is almost completely circular in cross section which might suggest the use of a lathe but there are no turning lines surviving. Hones of very similar form are in use at present and this example is probably of 19th century or later date.

REFNO	Context	subfabric	Form	Nosh	NoV	pot catalogues.Description	Weight	Condition
511	2054	FLINT	TOOL	1	1	FLINT FROM PISTOL?	4	
	3123	CM SHALE	SPWH	1	1	ROUGHLY SHAPED;POSSIBLY BROKEN DURING MANUFACTURE;TOOLING MARKS ON OUTSIDE EDGE AND CENTRAL HOLE ONLY	3 IN HALF	SNAPPED
	4148	COAL	GEOL	1	1	SUBANGULAR COAL PEBBLE	2	
	4148	CM SHALE	WASTE	1	1		1 BURNT	
	2097	FINEGRAINED GREY SST	WASTE	1	1	ASH?/SALT?/LEAD? GLAZE OVER ROUGH SURFACES	144	
	2211	FINEGRAINED DARK BROWN SST	GEOL	1	1	NO SIGN OF USE SO PROBABLY JUST A PEBBLE	82	
	1095	MICACEOUS GREY SST	HONE	1	1	CIGAR-SHAPED (CIRCULAR CROSS SECTION TAPERING FROM CENTRE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. LOOKS REGULAR ENOUGH TO BE LATHE TURNED BUT NO SIGNS OF TURNING GROOVES	458	