

## Rubble from the Iron Age Fiskerton Causeway, Fiskerton, Lincolnshire

### *Alan Vince*

One of the latest events in the life of the Iron Age timber causeway excavated at Fiskerton was the deposition of a spread of rubble, predominantly limestone, over the site. This deposit has been interpreted either as the remains of the latest metallurgy of the causeway surface or as a ritual closing deposit following the decision to cease using the causeway for religious purposes. In 2004 a watching brief on earth disturbance in the causeway area carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Lincoln revealed more of this deposit (context 7). Stones from two other contexts were also recovered.

### Rubble Deposit

A sample of 40 fragments, weighing 9.5 kg, was examined. The material came from a variety of sources, listed here in chronological order of the likely source rock (Table 1).

*Table 1*

Subfabric	Total Number	Weight	Mean	
LINCOLNSHIRE LIMESTONE; MICRITE	3	3	1015	338
LINCOLNSHIRE LIMESTONE; OOLITIC LIMESTONE	6	6	996	166
LINCOLNSHIRE LIMESTONE - UPPER BEDS; FOSSILIFEROUS CALCIRUDITE	13	13	3528	271
LINCOLNSHIRE LIMESTONE - UPPER BEDS; FOSSILIFEROUS CALCARENITE	7	7	1377	197
LINCOLNSHIRE LIMESTONE - UPPER BEDS; FOSSILIFEROUS SANDSTONE	1	1	158	158
GREAT OOLITE LIMESTONE; SHELLY LIMESTONE	2	2	240	120
CHALK	1	1	92	92
FINE-GRAINED WHITE SANDSTONE	4	4	1571	393
FINE-GRAINED WHITE SILTSTONE	1	1	197	197
FLINT	2	2	326	163

The majority of the fragments are of Middle Jurassic limestones ranging from the Lincolnshire limestone to the Great Oolite limestone. Cornbrash, which outcrops closest to the causeway, is absent. The remaining fragments are derived from fluvio-glacial gravels and include Cretaceous material from the Chalk (a rounded chalk pebble and two roughly spherical but not rolled flints) and erratics (white siltstones and sandstones).

There is no evidence for the secondary rolling of the limestone fragments, most of which show the sort of weathering one might expect in the brash subsoil overlying solid rock. The micrite fragments, which come from the lowest represented strata, are blocky with their faces either being recent breaks or joints whilst all the rest are more weathered with some evidence for a decline in fragment size as one moves

up the geological sequence. If these fragments all come from a single exposure then the source should have the following characteristics: a) the Northampton Ironstone is not exposed), b) the Great Oolite is the latest strata present. On the north side of the Witham the only area which satisfies both criteria is on the east side of the Greetwell Hollow whilst on the south side the potential source area is wider, stretching from the railway bridge on Washingborough Road to the east side of Washingborough village. In either case, the likely source would be a natural cliff face, perhaps enlarged into a quarry or clearance cairns or drystone walls formed from brash disturbed during ploughing.

At neither site is there likely to have been a source for the erratic cobbles, which must therefore have originated elsewhere. Boulder clay outcrops in a small lobe close to the Witham to the west of the causeway and extensively to the north of the Fiskerton to Short Ferry road.

### Other Stone

Two rounded white sandstone cobbles, similar to those from the rubble deposit, were submitted for identification from contexts 10 and 19. Both are cracked cobbles but with no positive evidence for human use. An unworked pebble of fine-grained basic igneous rock was also submitted from context 19. This pebble has a 2-3mm thick whitish weathering crust which has only been removed where the pebble is chipped and the pebble could not have been used as a rubber or whetstone.