

## **The Stone from Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney, Lincolnshire, Phase 5 (NDTF 06)**

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A small quantity of stone artefacts from the archaeological excavations at Tonge's Farm, Norton Disney, was submitted by the excavators, LAS, for identification and reporting. The finds come from a rural settlement of Roman date but include two possible saddle quern fragments which, if correctly identified, are probably of earlier prehistoric date. The remainder are fragments of rotary querns of Roman date.

### **Description**

#### **Identification of Stone**

All of the objects were examined at x20 magnification using a stereomicroscope. In all cases, the stone employed appears to have been Millstone Grit, of which the nearest source to Norton Disney is the Peak District, about 50 miles to the west. In the Roman period, and later, millstones and querns were produced in large quantities at numerous quarries where this rock is exposed and Millstone Grit is by far the most common material from which Trent valley and western Lincolnshire querns were made.

#### **Form**

##### **Saddle Quern**

Saddle querns had a concave working surface and were used with a rubber stone in a very labour intensive process of grinding cereal grains to flour.

SF11. Context 5201. A possible fragment of saddle quern.

SF19. Context 5477. A definite fragment of saddle quern.

##### **Rotary Quern**

Rotary querns were made from two stones, a bottom and an upper stone. They are circular and have a central dowel hole in the bottom stone which stopped the upper stone from sliding off during use. The upper stone has a central hopper into which grain was fed. In most examples the flour was not channelled but collected from around the edge of the bottom stone.

SF 3. Context 5262. Bottom stone, 300mm diameter with a conical scoop on the understone, presumably to reduce the weight of the quern.

SF7. Context 5405. Bottom stone. 380mm diameter.

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SF9. Context 5706. Bottom stone. 600 mm diameter.

SF17. Context 6092. Upper stone. 420 mm diameter.

SF12. Context 5442. Fragment of upper stone.

SF18. Context 5201. Fragment of either upper or bottom stone.

## Discussion

The majority of these quern fragments come from rotary querns which are most likely of Roman date. Given the Roman date of the settlement, the possible identification of saddle querns should be treated cautiously.

The distribution of the finds across the site indicates that they were found scattered in features associated with four enclosures. This is consistent with the domestic production of flour rather than a specialist grinding area.

## Appendix 1

Action	Context	REFNO	class	Description	Subfabric	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Diam
DISCARD	5451	27	GEO		TRIASSIC MARL		BS	2	1	166	0
DISCARD	5201	13	GEO		SHERWOOD SANDSTONE	BROKEN PEBBLE	BS	1	1	176	0
RETAIN	5706	9	STONE	BOTTOM STONE	MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	R	1	1	6500	600
RETAIN	5262	3	STONE	BOTTOM STONE	MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	R	1	1	1303	300
RETAIN	5477	19	STONE		FINE TEXTURED MILLSTONE GRIT	SADDLE QUERN	BS	1	1	1108	0
RETAIN	5405	7	STONE	BOTTOM STONE	MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	R	1	1	743	380
RETAIN	6092	17	STONE	UPPER STONE	MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	R	1	1	307	420
RETAIN	5201	18	STONE		MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	BS	1	1	618	0
RETAIN	5201	11	STONE		MILLSTONE GRIT	SADDLE QUERN?	BS	1	1	754	0
RETAIN	5442	12	STONE	UPPER STONE	MILLSTONE GRIT	ROTARY QUERN	BS	1	1	436	0

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