

**DISCOVERIES AT OAKES PARK, NORTON.**

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**I**N the spring of 1946 permission was given to Dr. and Mrs. Timperley to follow up what were believed and have since proved to be interesting archæological sites. Until full reports can be published, the findings can be summarised as follows.

*“Q” Holes.* These are circular holes in the ground, from three to six feet deep, with a raised edge having a dip in one side, from which runs a straight gully. Because of the shape we have called them by this name. Over an area of several square miles we have found 85 of them, and studied four by excavation. In May 1950 Prof. V. Gordon Childe of the London University School of Archæology visited the sites and saw a “Q” hole which we have excavated. He said that in his experience they were unique, and a major find which should be fully investigated.

*Circular Flats.* Flat circular patches of ground within thirty yards of a “Q” hole. Three have been trenched, and show scattered hearths with charcoal on the clay beneath the upper soils.

*Mounds.* Several have been found, some certainly barrows, long and round, others may be. One in Graves Park is probably a bronze age round barrow. Another is being excavated and has been shown to cover artificially worked rock in which there are cysts. Aurignacian type flints are being found in it.

*Sites cut into natural rock.* Before excavation these appear as irregular depressions in the ground. Two are being excavated and it has been shown that they are the remains of early settlements of a type which, so far as can be ascertained, have not hitherto been found in Britain. They have been made by removal of the sandstone along the lines of natural fracture — this can be done with primitive tools — to leave blocks of rock, platforms and steps arranged to form permanent settlement

sites, which were further divided into chambers by dry walling. In the site at Bridle Wood a mound covers cysts cut into the rock.

*Gritstones.* The area contains gritstones which are not in their natural geological setting. Some are arranged in lines along the tops of ravines which run through the valleys, others have fallen into the streams. Many of the stones are artificially worked. There are several areas in which the stones are concentrated into groups and purposely arranged, we think, for some ritual pattern. In these groups many of the stones are cut to shapes which are found at several groupings; others are set in circles. One large stone is almost certainly a fertility-goddess, another probably is.

*Marked stones.* Seventeen stones, from one to six feet long, have been found, in the surface of which marks have been cut. Similar marks are found on several stones, many almost identical in shape with those of the Aurignacian cave paintings.

*Ritual marks.* We have recently found at the Bridle site well defined markings on the rock face. One design is a male fertility pattern.

*Flints and artifacts.* Thirty flint artifacts of the Aurignacian type, together with stone hand hammers and a bone "trowel" have been found at the excavation of the mound in Bridle Wood.

The finds have been listed singly, but we think they are all of the same culture and are parts of an extensive settlement area.

The work of excavation has gone on for five years, and we express our sincere thanks to those who have helped in the field, to Mrs. Bagshawe for her permission to dig and for her constant help, interest and hospitality, and to Mr. J. B. Himsworth, Dr. A. Court, Prof. V. Gordon Childe and Mr. W. H. Hanbury.