

**PETERBOROUGH (NEOLITHIC B) POTTERY FROM
HIGH WHEELDON CAVE, EARL STERNDALÉ,
NEAR BUXTON.**

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IN 1928-29 some interesting sherds of Peterborough pottery associated with a fragment of beaker ware were found at the entrance to Foxhole Cave, High Wheeldon, by the Rev. S. Graham Brade Birks, M.Sc. (Manch.) and Mr. Basil S. Furneaux, M.Sc. (Agric.).

These sherds have never been properly described or figured, though short references to them have been made by V. G. Childe and Stuart Piggott in their paper on "Neolithic Pottery of the British Isles" (*Arch. Journ.*, LXXXVIII, 1932, p. 156).

They were submitted by me some time ago to Professor Stuart Piggott and I am indebted to him for the detailed report and drawings which are appended to this paper. The pottery is preserved in the Buxton Museum.

High Wheeldon Cave opens at about the 1,250 ft. contour on the north-eastern face of the limestone hill (alt. 1,384 ft.), and is in the form of a long irregular tunnel extending some 190 feet into the hill. It is one of the highest caves in the country. At about 90 feet from the entrance the tunnel opens into a small and lofty cavern some 40 feet high from which other passages lead off on either side.

The discovery of the cave was brought about when a thirteen year old boy was engaged in the rescue of a trapped dog. A fine skull of brown bear was found by the boy in one of the passages.

Scientific investigations were carried out by the kind permission of Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., of Buxton, the then owners, and Mr. David Naden, the occupier of the land. Later the hill and cave became the property of the late Mr. F. A. Holmes, of Buxton, whose family, conforming to his wish, transferred the

hill to the National Trust as a memorial to the men of the Derbyshire and Staffordshire Regiments who fell in World War II. A tablet at the summit of the hill commemorates this.

On the first examination of the cave, the bones and teeth of various animals were found lying on the surface or slightly imbedded in the cave floor in some of the passages. Many were quite recent. There appeared to be much disturbance caused by badgers and other animals.

Among the remains submitted to me by the explorers I was able to identify the following: brown bear and larger form, wild cat, badger, fox, horse, pig, ox, sheep, red deer, hare, rabbit, water vole and hedgehog; also a number of bones of bird including those of fowl and goose.

Little can be said with regard to the age of the animal and bird remains, but more than one period is represented.

The most important and interesting fact about the cave is the use made of the entrance as a habitation or burial-place by Neolithic man, recalling some of the North Wales and West Yorkshire caves. Unfortunately, this part of the cave was much disturbed on enlarging the entrance to rescue the dog. It was here that the discovery was made of the Peterborough and Beaker pottery, together with two microliths of flint.

Other finds about the entrance consisted of sherds of red Roman pottery, and a late Roman bronze armlet similar to one found at Rushmore and figured by Ward in his "Roman Era in Britain", 1911, fig. 76B, p. 267.

All the remains from the cave are in the Buxton Museum.

Some other records of Peterborough pottery are from the chambered barrow at Five Wells, near Taddington, round barrow at Arbor Low; Rains Cave, Derbyshire: Gop Cave, near Prestatyn, North Wales: and the following caves in the Settle neighbourhood, Yorkshire, Lesser Kelco Cave, with skulls of Bronze Age affinity; Greater Kelco Cave; Sewell's Cave, Giggleswick Scars; and Horseshoe Cave, Attermire Cave.

APPENDIX.

Report on the pottery from High Wheeldon Cave by Stuart Piggott.

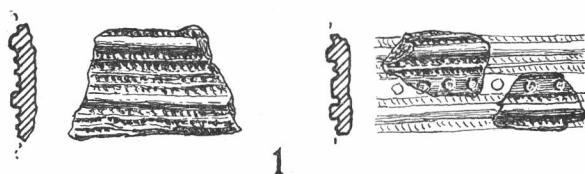
The pottery from the High Wheeldon Cave can all be assigned to the Early Bronze Age or the close of the Neolithic.

Evidence for this date is primarily provided by three fragments of Beaker (Plate A, fig. 1). These belong to the same vessel and are of dark brown fine paste with smooth outer surface. The interior has flaked away. The decoration is in zones and consists of raised fillets between lines of fine cord-ornament and one band of impressed circles which retain traces of white filling. The fragments are too small to indicate the type of beaker to which they belong, although their straight profile suggests that they may belong to the neck of a vessel of Type A. The impressed circle pattern appears to be particularly used on vessels of this type (compare the beaker from Lambourn, Berks., in Abercromby).

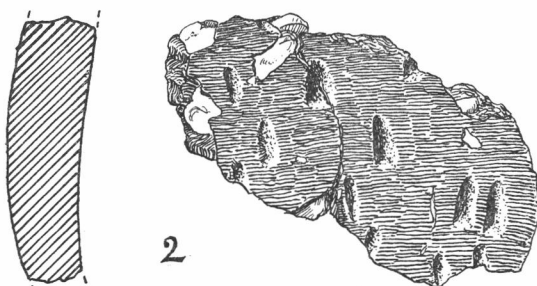
The remainder of the pottery fragments, over 60 in number, are of coarse wares, some bearing ornament. The general type represented seems to be that of the bowls of the later Neolithic in England named by Mr. Thurlow Leeds "Peterborough Type" (*Antiq. Journ.*, VII, pp. 438-64), but which may perhaps be better called "Neolithic B". Its general characteristics have been discussed in Mr. Leeds' paper and elsewhere and need not be entered into again here. No restorations can be made from the High Wheeldon fragments, but as fragments of only one flat base remain one can guess at a predominance of round bottomed bowls (as one would expect to be the case).

The main types which can be distinguished are as follows:—

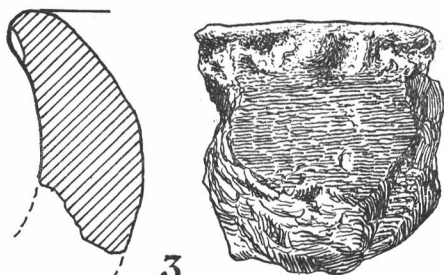
1. Fragments of a large vessel of coarse black pottery with frequent big lumps of limestone in the paste. (These lumps, some as large as $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x $\frac{1}{4}$ in., give the pottery in fracture an appearance like nut chocolate). The exterior is smooth, and three fragments (two shown joined in Plate A, fig. 2) have haphazard punch-marks made probably with the articular end of a bird's bone (see Dorothy Liddel's paper in *Antiquity*, III, 1929).
2. Large clumsy rim fragment of black pottery, no grit in the paste. Smooth surface, with remains of rough "finger-tip" decoration on the lip. This fragment is not easy to match and may be a local variety (Plate A, fig. 3).
3. Fragments of a pot of good ware, black interior and light red exterior, one fragment (Plate B, fig. 4) showing a simple fillet. This is not usual in Neolithic B. pottery, but may be compared with a sherd from Icklingham which seems to belong to this period. (Sturge Coll. Brit. Mus.).



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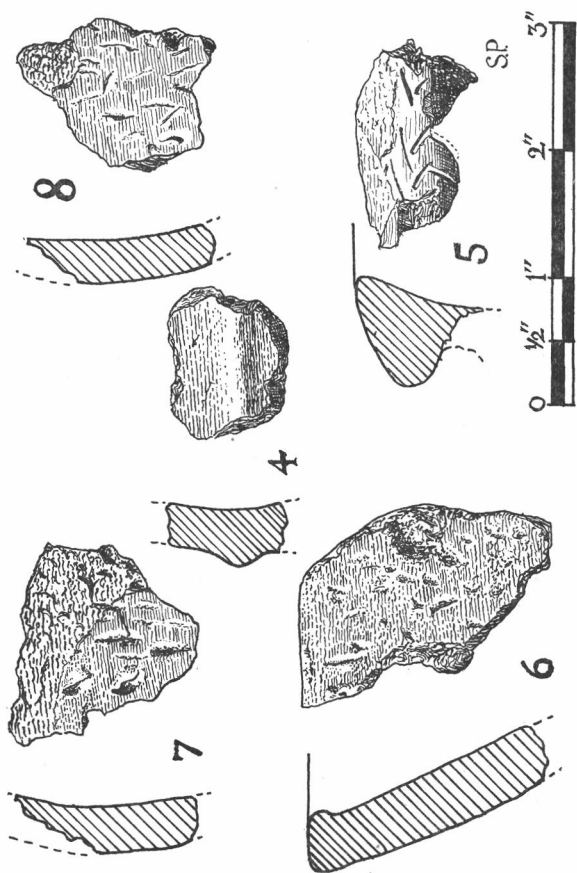
S.P.



POTTERY FROM HIGH WHEELDON CAVE.

PLATE A

4. Three fragments of a rim (one shown in Plate B, fig. 5) of hard flaky pottery, brown to black, with smooth surface and zig-zag incisions. This rim-type is characteristic of Neolithic B. pottery and is usually associated with a deep hollow neck moulding.
 5. Rim and wall fragment of a shallow bowl with simple flat-topped rim slightly pressed over inside; the exterior covered with slight haphazard fingernail impressions (Plate B, fig. 6). Good ware, red exterior and black interior. Several other fragments with similar decoration may belong to the same pot. This type of rim seems to be characteristic of small bowls or flat-bottomed saucers — e.g. bowls from the Thames at Kew and Putney (*Antiq. Journ.*, IV, pl. XXVIII) and a saucer fragment from Icklingham (Sturge Coll. Brit. Mus.).
 6. Several fragments of rather coarse ware, brownish exterior and black interior, with fingernail impressions on the exterior, may belong to one or more pots (Plate B, figs. 7 and 8). This type of decoration occurs on the earlier Neolithic pottery ("Windmill Hill Type" or "Neolithic A"), but on Neolithic B as well, and survives on some beakers (e.g. one from Lakenheath, Suffolk, Greenwell Coll. Brit. Mus.).
 7. Fragments of coarse greyish ware, two showing junction of side to flat base, with occasional fingernail impressions.
 8. One small fragment of brownish black ware with two parallel straight lines of "hyphenated" ornament very lightly impressed, possibly beaker.
 9. One small fragment with curve of shoulder (?) and three fingernail impressions. Coarse greyish ware.
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POTTERY FROM HIGH WHEELDON CAVE.

PLATE B