

archaeological sites, the task of adequate and continuous surveillance has become somewhat formidable. For this reason it is particularly pleasing to be able to thank the members of the Derbyshire Archaeological Research Group, the Hunter Archaeological Society Field Research Section and the many individuals who devote time and not a little effort to watching the scheduled sites in their respective areas.

One particularly disturbing activity, which seems on the increase, is the unauthorized interference with scheduled monuments by so-called archaeologists. A number of sites have so suffered in the last few years. It can only be hoped that these people can be persuaded to join one of the local archaeological societies where their activities can be properly supervised.

With the increasing interest in monuments and remains of the industrial revolution a useful start in protecting such monuments has been made by the inclusion of no. 180, the Middleton Engine House, well known to all interested in early railway history. Whilst there are many more industrial monuments in the county worthy of protection, the problems of preservation often pose impossible financial problems. It is pleasing to know of the interest of the County Council in securing preservation orders on industrial monuments; this year saw orders on the Cromford Canal Pumping House and Heage Windmill. In addition a number of industrial concerns have monuments in their protection, but the rate of destruction of industrial remains is so high that the problem of their preservation calls for some official national policy.

As the new County Representative I shall be pleased to receive at the address given below reports or notes however brief on any unusual activities in the neighbourhood of scheduled or other archaeological sites, and I shall also be pleased to discuss the possibility of additions to the list of scheduled monuments.

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AN OCCUPIED CAVE OF THE BRONZE AGE, BUNKER'S HILL WOOD, BEELEY

By J. RADLEY and L. COOPER

CONCENTRATED field-work on the Beeley Moor section of the gritstone hills to the east of the river Derwent has produced numerous earthworks, some of which were previously unrecorded,¹ together with a perforated stone hammer,² flint tools and waste, which suggests that this part of Derbyshire supported a Middle Bronze Age population of some size.

¹ J. Radley, "A ring-bank on Beeley Moor", *D.A.J.*, LXXXV (1965), 126-31.

² In Derby Museum.

The search for dwelling sites has, however, not been rewarded and one can conclude that since the hill areas have funeral monuments and numerous arrowheads from hunting, they had at best only a pastoral use in the Bronze Age economy. Dwellings were presumably away from the hills, on valley sites now occupied by modern fields and settlements, for the same environmental reasons. Field-work on the large areas of moorland exposed by the 1959 fire confirms this conclusion, and the excavation of a ring-bank on Beeley Moor did not yield conclusive evidence of a dwelling even though it proved to be probably pre-Roman and not a burial circle.³ This paper describes a cave on Beeley Moor which was temporarily occupied in the Middle Bronze Age, but which does not answer the main question of what sort of dwelling the Middle Bronze Age population normally occupied.

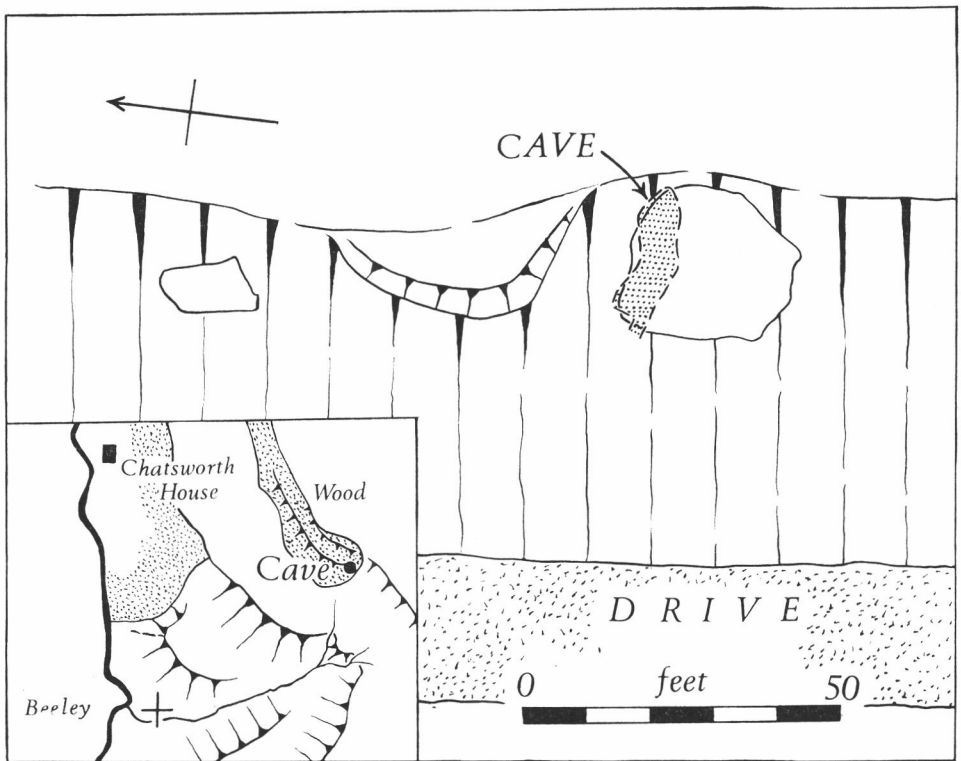


FIG. 17. Location map.

Discovery and first excavation

Mr. C. Gregory discovered the small cave in 1957 in Bunker's Hill Wood on the Chatsworth estate, near Hob Hurst's House (SK 69032847). A small overgrown gritstone face, at 1,050 ft. O.D., overlooks Beeley Moor to the

³ Radley, *D.A.J.*, LXXXV (1965), 126-31.

S. and W., and the Derwent valley beyond. A block of gritstone some 15 yards square and 15 feet high has moved away from this rock face to create a crevice with a piece of overhanging gritstone forming the roof, but originally it was probably open to the sky in places (fig. 17). When discovered, this cave was choked with silt and stones.

Mr. C. Gregory excavated the entrance and found two feet of rubble resting on a slab layer which sealed a thin horizon of grey sand. This sand had two distinct layers of charcoal $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, separated by a narrow zone of clean sand. Below the sand there were large blocks of gritstone with cavities between some of them. A spread of sherds of Middle Bronze Age pottery was found in the upper charcoal layer. In the later stages of the excavation, Mr. J. E. Bartlett, then of Sheffield City Museum, helped to extend the excavation into the cave to a distance of 14 ft. One particularly large sherd was found in the charcoal beneath a large rock at 4 ft. deep.

1966 Excavations

After examining the sherds, and with the permission of Messrs. Bartlett and Gregory and the Trustees of the Chatsworth Estate, it was decided that the site merited total excavation and publication.

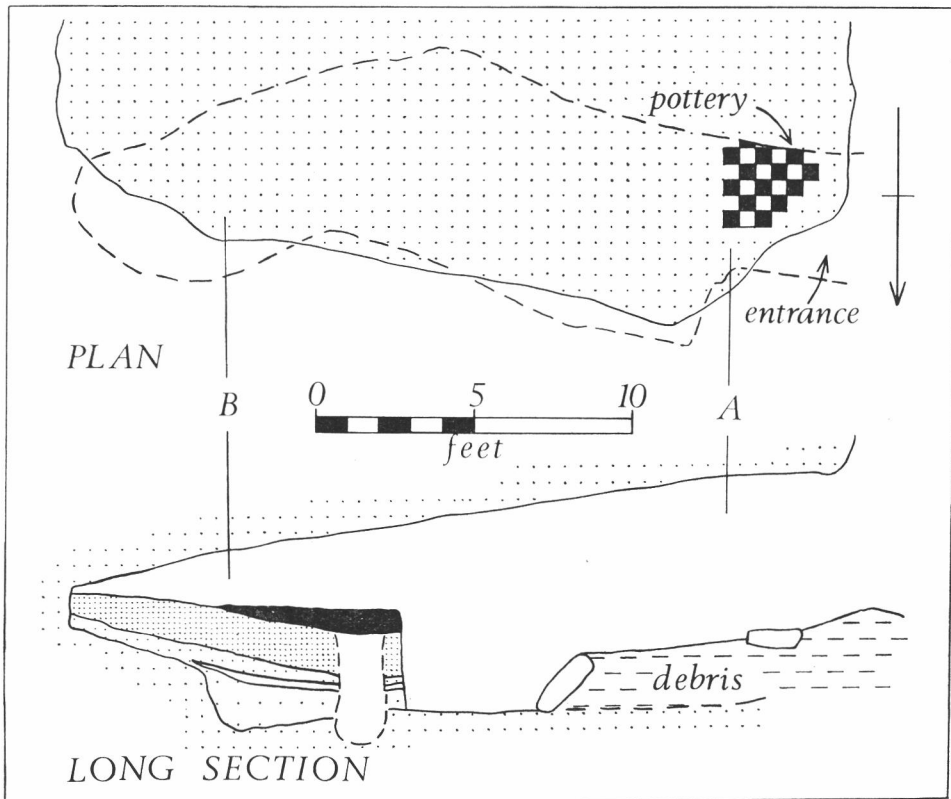


FIG. 18. The cave (dashed line) and the position of the pottery.

Fig. 18 shows the shape of the cave which declines in height from 5 ft. to 2 ft. towards the back of the cave, and is 23 ft. long and 5 to 7 ft. wide. No further pottery was discovered although a further 9 ft. of the cave was excavated.

Three horizons can be determined in the sections (fig. 19, A and B). The lower layer, not bottomed, is a yellow sand which is the primary silting which took place in late glacial or early post-glacial times. There is no evidence that there was any appreciable silting after the return of the vegetation cover to the area. This is supported by the fact that the next layer is a few inches of grey sand, the product of very slow weathering, in which the charcoal occurred.

The charcoal horizon was traced almost to the back of the cave, and it is possible that a natural hole in the rubble at the back of the cave may have formed a primitive chimney. Otherwise, the fragments of charcoal must have been moved to the back of the cave by the cave's occupants. Fine sand above the charcoal shows that the slow silting continued after the Bronze Age.

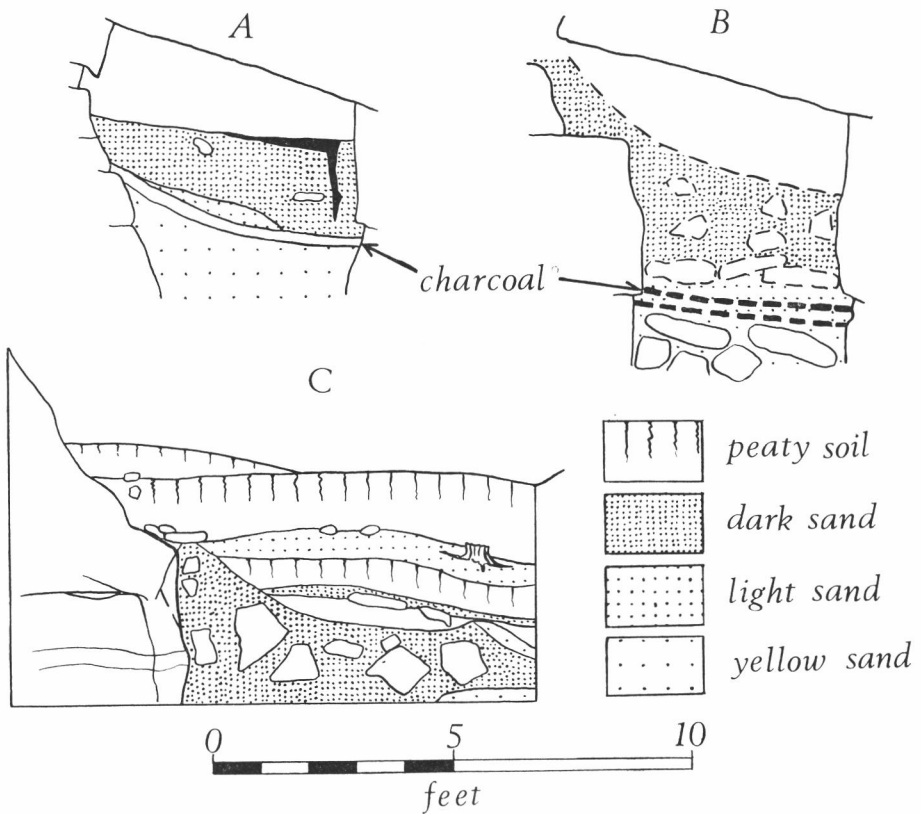


FIG. 19. Sections: A, 19 ft. inside the cave; B, a reconstruction at 3 ft. inside the cave; C, outside the entrance.

Above this there was a 2 to 4 ft. thick layer of rubble, clay, sand, and sheep manure, capped in places by a black mud (black in the sections). There were numerous holes and crevices in this poorly consolidated layer, with a mouse's nest at 29 in. A hole, 18 in. diameter, had been cut through this layer to the lower layer at some recent period, since quite well preserved pine needles were found in the fill. The character of this upper layer suggests a considerable disturbance on the ground above the cave which was probably still partly open to the sky in places which permitted sludge and stones to

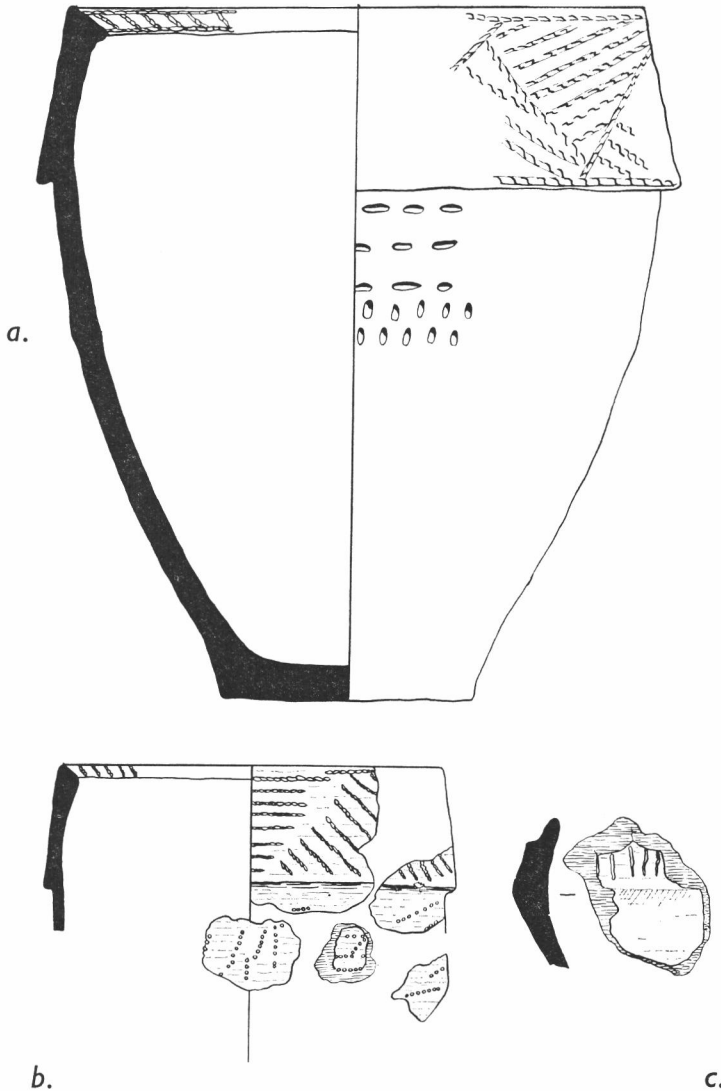


FIG. 20. The pottery (3).

slide into the cave. A pack-horse road passed nearby;⁴ a drive was built down slope from the cave, and the area was probably included in the landscaping schemes of Brown, Paxton and others in the 18th and 19th centuries. These could provide the disturbance, but it seems probable that the cave itself was used at this time, for a protruding stone at the entrance has been chiselled away, and a slot has been cut to hold the jamb of a low door. Outside the cave (fig. 19, C), no satisfactory Bronze Age horizon could be located. A tree stump in a buried turf horizon rested on other buried horizons and the spread from these levels has probably obscured overhangs on the lower side of the rock in which the cave is formed, and where other remains might be expected. The slope in front of the cave is planted with young larches and has not been excavated.

The pottery

Fig. 20a is a virtually complete Middle Bronze Age urn. It has a vestigial shoulder surviving as a slight swell in the body of the urn. The shallow overhanging rim and the internal bevelling have an elaborate cord-impressed decoration, the former with alternate hatched opposed triangles. The upper part of the body is covered with a less elaborate pattern of oval depressions of two sizes, three rows of lateral ovals and two smaller rows of vertical ovals. The urn is 27.4 cm. high and 25.8 cm. at its widest. The fabric is coarse and dark with gritty inclusions.

Pieces of the upper part of another overhanging rim urn (20b) have a well-made red fabric which is thin (7 mm.) and hard, with few inclusions. Six sherds of an internally bevelled rim are cord-decorated, and eleven of the body fragments have a rather haphazard pattern of tiny holes. A third urn (20c) is represented by a thick (16-17 mm.) coarse sherd of a shoulder decorated with vertical incisions. Five pieces of a base, 1 cm. thick, and some pieces, 16 mm. thick, may also belong to this vessel.

Conclusion

The cave was big enough to provide a roomy dwelling before it silted up. Charcoal was found throughout the cave, but concentrated at the entrance where all the sherds were found. Nothing was found outside the cave. No flints, worked stone or animal bones were found to suggest a lengthy occupation, but no cremated bones were found to suggest a burial. The spread of pottery is almost certainly domestic rather than funerary. Unfortunately, although we now have a temporary dwelling site of the Middle Bronze Age for Beeley Moor, it still leaves the major problem of finding a permanent or semi-permanent dwelling in the area.

Acknowledgements

The writers are grateful to Mr. C. Gregory for information on his excavation; to Mr. G. D. Lewis of Sheffield City Museum for making the pottery available for study; to Messrs. F. Hepworth and A. Miller for doing much of the present excavation; and to the Society for a grant towards the cost of the excavation.

⁴ Three small pieces of roasted lead ore were found in the rubble, which suggests that ore was being carried near the cave, perhaps from a nearby bole.