Chesterfield and Bakewell indicates the probable means of transport for the finished product.

Farey lists the following places of scythe-stone manufacture, as distinct from whetstone and other stone products: Belper, Birchover, Breadsall, Coxbench, Darley East Moor, Duffield, Heage, Holbrook, Horsley, Little Eaton, Melbourne, Morley North-West Moor and Harthill in South Yorks. The exclusion of Beeley Moor from this list may indicate a pre-1811 date for the industry in this particular area. He also notes that at Alton in Ashover strips of wood with sand glued to them were sold as "scythe-sticks" and in 1811 were made with coarse emery powder at Melbourne. No evidence has been found for the beginning of the scythe-stone, but in its latest mass-produced form it is probably not earlier than the 18th century. The use of emery powder at Melbourne was part of the beginnings of the modern abrasives industry which brought to an end the Derbyshire scythe-stone industry.

THE ORIGIN OF ARBOR LOW HENGE MONUMENT

By J. RADLEY

THIS note, in fact, has little to say about Arbor Low itself, but is the result of posing the question: why is Arbor Low where it is? Fieldwork has revealed two features at and near the barrow called Gib Hill, which lies close to Arbor Low (fig. 4), which permit a tentative reconstruction of the events which led to the construction of Arbor Low.

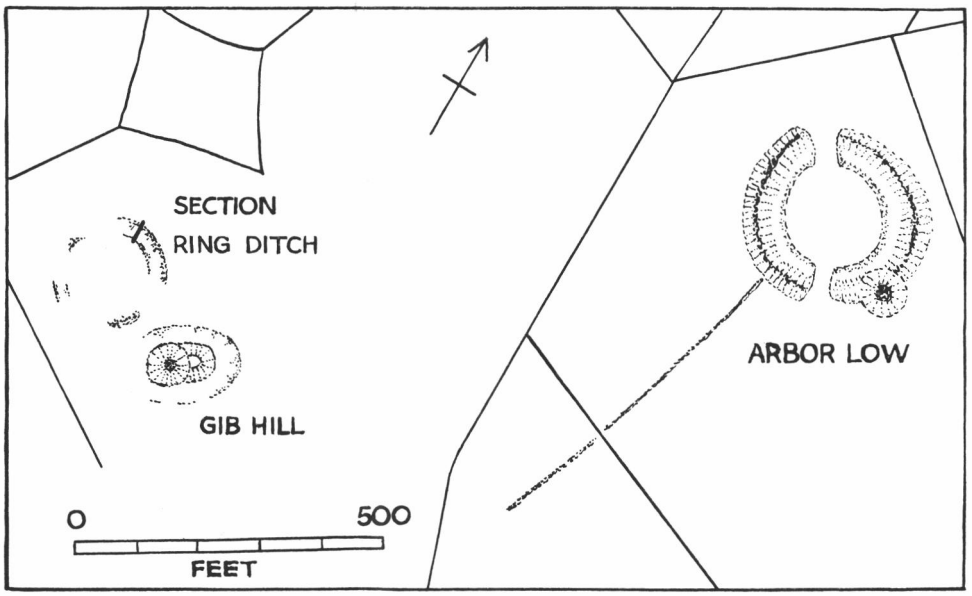

FIG. 4. Location of the ring ditch near Arbor Low.

Arbor Low is situated at 1200 ft. O.D. on one of the highest and most exposed limestone ridges of the Peak District, in sharp contrast to the lowland situation of most type 2 henges. The only comparable type 2 henge in England is the Bull Ring which lies 10 miles north-west of Arbor Low and has a similar altitude at 1100 ft. O.D. One might expect Arbor Low to have had a more congenial setting, or to be close to water as are most other henges. If the henge had to be constructed on the high limestone in or close to the densest population grouping, an upland basin such as the one occupied by the village of Monyash, two miles north of Arbor Low, would have been logical. Perhaps the only logic was that of personal whim, but two features at Gib Hill, 1,000 ft. to the south-west of Arbor Low and at the same altitude, suggest that the henge occupied an area already made notable by the presence of older earthworks.

Gib Hill appears to be a satellite of Arbor Low, but it has had a more complex history than has been hitherto realized. William Bateman excavated at the barrow in 1824, and it is best described by his assistant Samuel Mitchell.[1] Mitchell recorded a section composed of 6 ft. of soil and stone resting on a thin layer of stones, underneath which was 4½ ft. of loose soil and stone and another thin layer of stones. This rested on a core of stiff red clay which yielded layers of burnt bones, an arrowhead 2½ in. long, scrapers and other flints, a battered stone celt and animal matter including ox bones. In 1848, Thomas Bateman cut a trench 25 x 18 ft. in search of the primary burial but only when he tunnelled westwards did a cist fall from above.[2] The cist was only 18 in. from the top of the mound, and its cremated contents and pottery date from early in the bronze age. Clearly the red clay core is something different from the rest of the mound. Mitchell believed that the core of the mound represented a funeral pyre, and in 1908 John Ward suggested that the upper material represented an enlargement of the barrow.[3]

A ground survey (fig. 5) shows quite clearly that Gib Hill is basically an oval barrow measuring about 120 x 70 ft. with traces of a broad ditch or scraped area on all sides save the west where it has been quarried.[4] The eastern end of this presumably neolithic oval barrow can be seen on the ground and on aerial photographs.[5] Mitchell's clay core would appear to be part of this barrow, incorporating contemporary neolithic refuse. The 1848 excavation yielded evidence of "four smaller mounds" under the main barrow, but Bateman's sketch of this[6] can hardly be correct since he excavated less than half the diameter of the mound, and it is more likely that he saw dump lines in the oval barrow.

The 11 or 12 ft. of stone and soil resting on the oval barrow forms a

[1] Ward, J., *D.A.J.*, XXX (1908), 162-6.
Bateman, T., *Vestiges of the antiquities of Derbyshire*, 1848, 31.
[2] Bateman, T., *Ten years' diggings . . .*, 1861, 17-20.
[3] Ward, 164, footnote.
[4] The ground survey and excavation was done with the help of L. B. Cooper and M. Plant, and thanks are due to Messrs. Bolter for permission to excavate.
[5] 540/568. 4026-7, July 1951.
[6] Bateman, 1861, 18.

round barrow with a 90 ft. diameter which rides over all of the oval barrow save for about 40 ft. of the eastern end. The position of the cist in the round barrow makes sense as a primary interment in a secondary barrow, perhaps copying the round barrow superimposed on the bank of Arbor Low itself.

The idea of a neolithic oval barrow obviously needs testing by excavation since, apart from other problems, it is impossible to spot the exact position of Bateman's trenches, and although rather unlikely the eastern extension of the barrow could be interpreted as spoil from these excavations. However, the question of Arbor Low's siting may be virtually answered by the presence of a neolithic barrow exerting an attraction of age or sanctity.

Immediately adjacent to Gib Hill and within the quarried area already

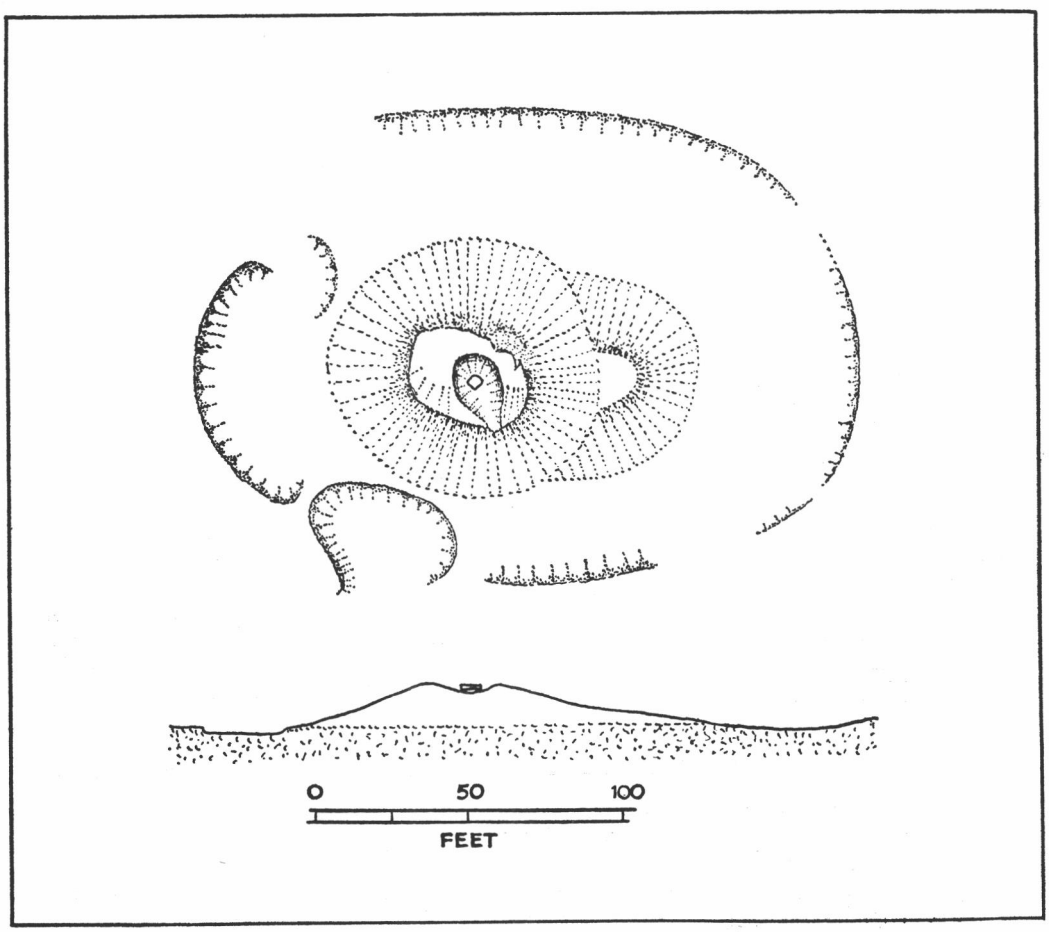

FIG. 5. Plan and section of Gib Hill.

noted is a fragment of a circular earthwork, comprising a ditch and the vestiges of a very flattened external bank. This unrecorded earthwork survives in most of one quadrant and can be inferred elsewhere on the circumference to give an overall diameter in the region of 180 ft. A section was excavated in May 1968 to test the age and nature of the ditch. It proved to be rock cut, about 20 ft. wide, and with steep sides. The maximum depth of infill was 3 ft. 6 in., and fig. 6 shows a buried turf-line covered by a stony layer and the present thick soil profile. The upper stony layer was probably due to a slighting of the bank many centuries ago. No dating evidence was found but the deep soil horizons, comparable with some of those in sections of the Arbor Low ditch cut by St. George Gray,[7] and the proximity of the circle to Gib Hill suggests that it is prehistoric. Even with only a fragment of ditch and one excavated section it is difficult to resist the temptation to interpret it as a type 1 henge since it is comparable in size and altitude with the other two Pennine type 1 henges. Yarnbury, Grassington,[8] is 116 ft. overall and at 1100 ft. O.D., and Castle Dike, Aysgarth,[9] 230 ft. overall and at 1,000 ft. O.D., both on exposed sites. The slighting of the ?proto-Arbor Low could be nicely coincident with the "removal" to Arbor Low.

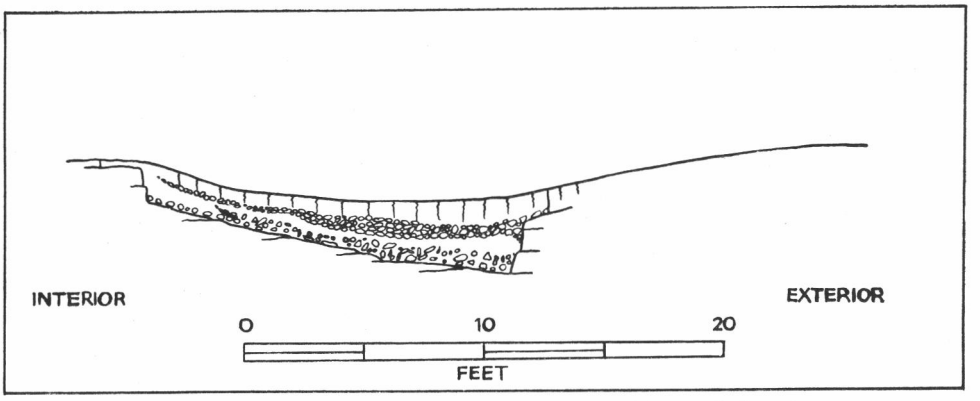

FIG. 6. Excavated section of the ring ditch at the position marked on fig. 4.

Thus it seems probable that a neolithic oval barrow had a type 1 henge, or some other circular feature, built alongside it, which would be an adequate reason for constructing Arbor Low in the same vicinity. Subsequently the two round barrows were added, one to Arbor Low and one to Gib Hill. The group of monuments make an attractive complex, and perhaps spanning only a few centuries, but the proof of the suggested evolution needs testing by large-scale excavation.

7 St. George Gray, H., *Arch.* 58, 1903, 461-98, e.g., Sections C-D, E-F, Q-R.
8 Dymond, D. P., *Y.A.J.*, Pt. 161, 1963, 6; Pt. 163, 1965, 323.
9 *V.C.H., Yorks.*, II, 1912, 62.