

Short articles



A Mesolithic site and later finds at Magham Down, near Hailsham, East Sussex

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Over a period of six months in 2000 and early 2001, Sid Jeffrey found a scatter of Mesolithic and later flintwork whilst metal detecting around Gildridge Farm, Magham Down, just to the east of Hailsham in East Sussex (Fig. 1). The scatter of Mesolithic flintwork was centred on TQ614109, between the 10- and 15-metre contours, at the northern edge of the Pevensey Levels. Later flintwork was found over a wider area, including to the west of Gildridge Farm (around TQ611111). All the finds were recovered from fields that were either stubble or had been ploughed.

This report concentrates on the Mesolithic and later flintwork, but also summarizes the later metalwork, pottery and other finds recovered.

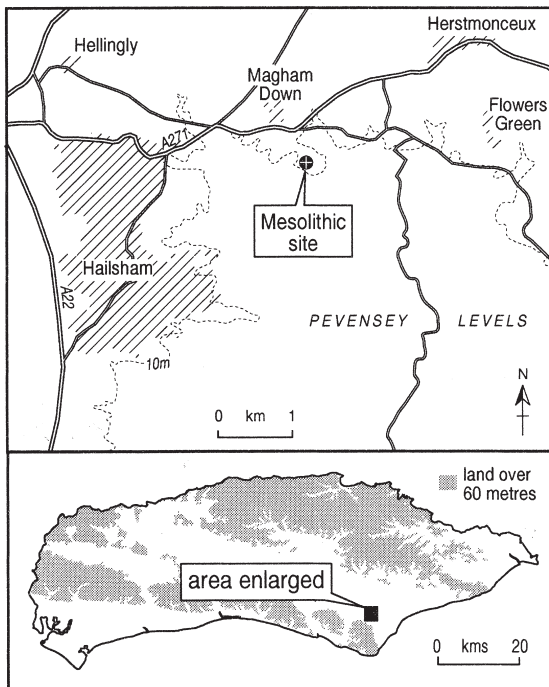


Fig. 1. Magham Down: location map.

Table 1. The flintwork.

Hard hammer-struck flakes	22
Soft hammer-struck flakes	41
Hard hammer-struck blades	2
Soft hammer-struck bladelets	19
Flake and blade/bladelet fragments	80
Unfinished microlith	1
Spall	1
Shattered pieces	7
Core rejuvenation flakes	3
Single platform flake core	1
Two platform flakes core	1
Single platform blade cores	2
Two platform bladelet cores	2
End scrapers	8
Side scrapers	3
Piercers	2
Notched pieces	3
Burin	1
Discoidal knife	1
Microliths	6
Arrowheads	3
Polished axe	1
Polished chisel	1
Fabricator	1
Hammerstone	1
Total	213

THE FLINTWORK

A total of 213 pieces of worked flint was recovered, and is summarized in Table 1. Over 73 per cent of the flakes, blades and bladelets collected were soft hammer-struck, of which some two-thirds are flakes and the remaining third bladelets. Most of these pieces, and a number of the hard hammer-struck flakes exhibit platform preparation, typical of that seen on pieces of Mesolithic date. Six of the hard hammer-struck flakes and two of the soft hammer-struck flakes had been retouched. A large number of fragments were also recovered. These make up 42 per cent of the debitage, and include both flake and bladelet fragments. Six of the fragments had been retouched.

Six cores were found, together with three core rejuvenation flakes and a single hammerstone. Most of the cores have some evidence of platform preparation, which, together with the core rejuvenation flakes, suggests careful working of the cores, again typical of the Mesolithic period (e.g. Fig. 2:1 & 2).

The implements found include six microliths (Fig. 3:11–16), and an unfinished microlith, which was partially retouched along one edge (not illustrated). The microliths are all scalene triangles, which can be dated to the latter part of

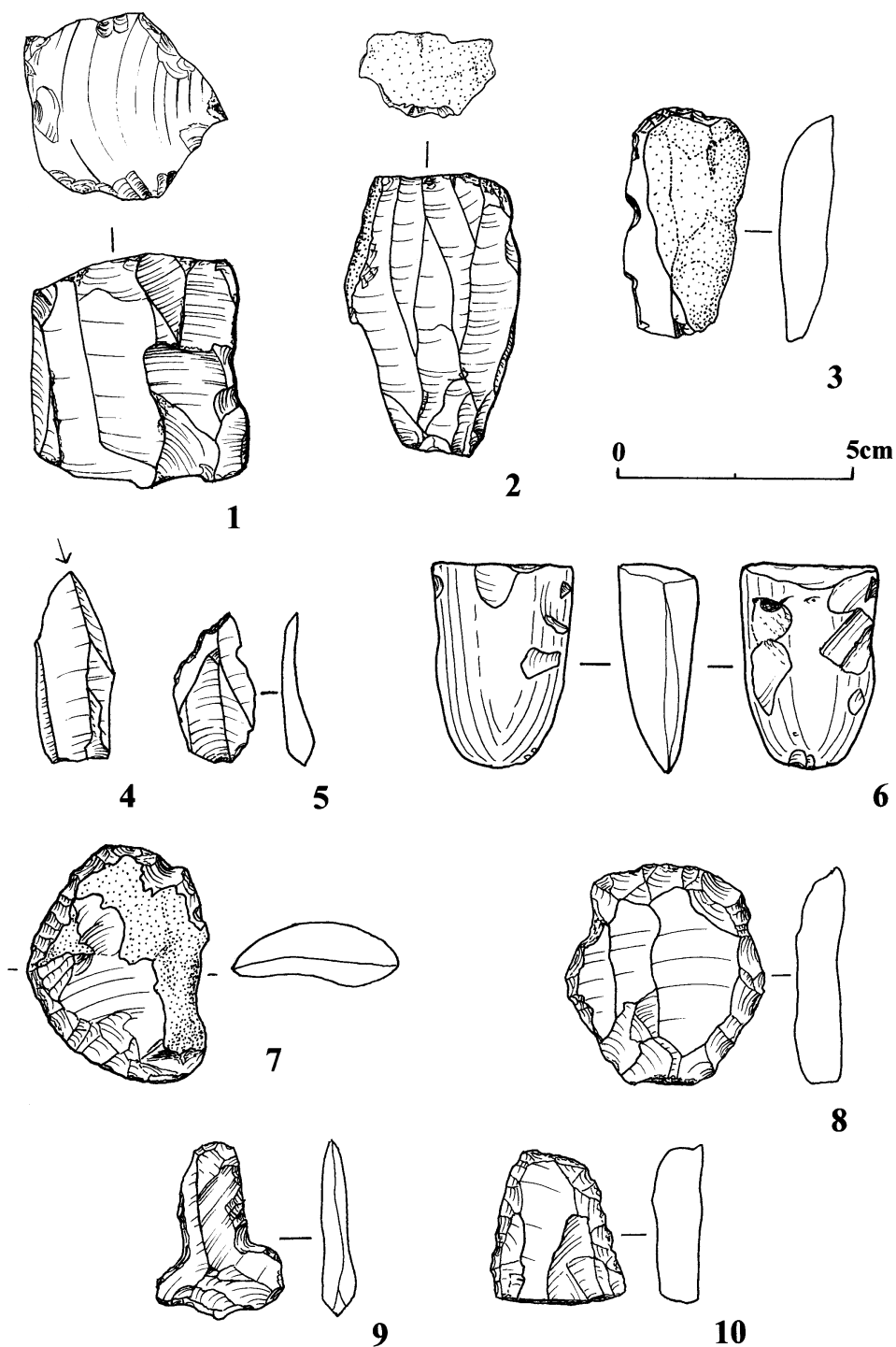


Fig. 2. Magham Down: the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork.

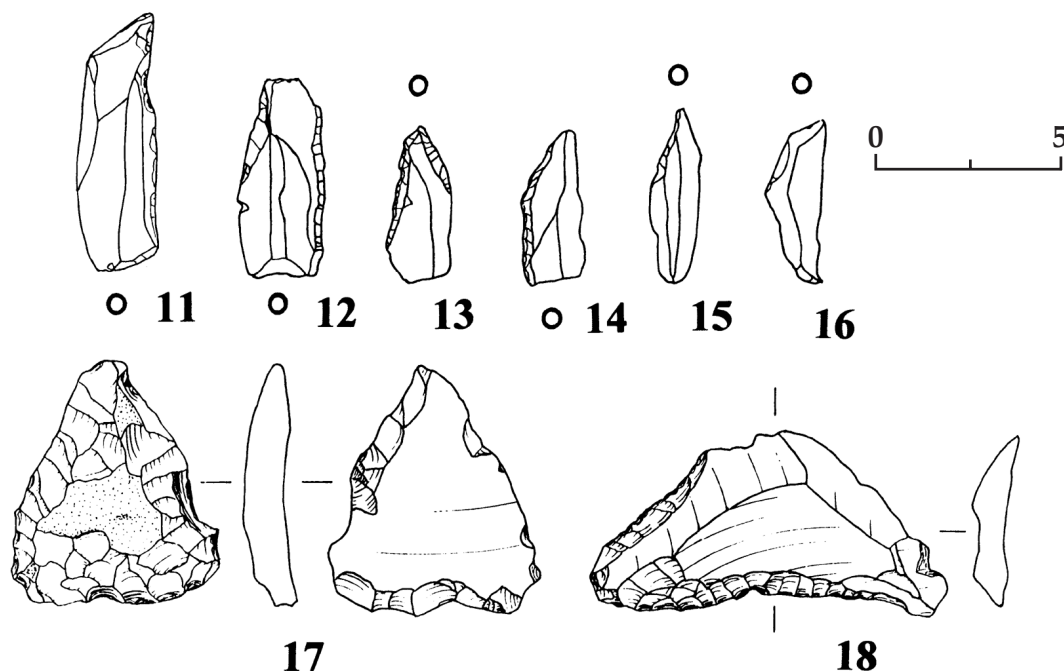


Fig. 3. Magham Down: Mesolithic microliths and Neolithic arrowheads.

the Mesolithic. Many of the broken bladelets found may also be the result of microlith production.

Other Mesolithic implements include a burin (Fig. 2:4), two end scrapers (e.g. Fig. 2:3), a piercer (Fig. 2:5), and two notched soft hammer-struck blades, one of which was also partially retouched along the other edge.

The three arrowheads, the polished axe and chisel, discoidal knife and most of the other items (Figs 2:6–10 & 3:17 & 18), date from the later Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. The polished axe fragment (Fig. 4:26) comprises just the broken cutting edge, which shows little evidence of utilization. The break and smaller scars that originate from the broken edge are all contemporary, although a large scar on the reverse is a result of more recent plough damage. The shock waves show that the original break was a result of a blow to the side of the axe, which snapped it. This, together with the lack of utilization damage, may indicate that the axe was ritually broken.

SAXON, MEDIEVAL AND LATER FINDS

There is no evidence of further activity until the Saxon and medieval periods. A number of pieces of pottery together with metallic finds from these periods were recovered, together with numerous post-medieval items. These are summarized below.

POTTERY

Fourteen sherds of 12/13th-century flint-tempered pottery, including one rim sherd from a cooking pot, together with five sherds of later medieval pottery were collected. A number of pieces of post-medieval pottery and clay pipe fragments were

also found.

COINS & TOKENS

Apart from a small fragment of a silver hammered coin, the remaining coinage collected is all of 19th- and 20th-century date. A lead token of 23 mm diameter, and weighing 7g has a cross on one side and numerous lines on the reverse. A further token (28 mm diameter and weighing 9 g) has '24' within a circle and rilled border on the obverse and stylized initials ('S or G' 'J'?) on the reverse.

COPPER-ALLOY OBJECTS

a) Bridle cheek piece (Fig. 4:19). Missing one looped terminal. A similar find has been dated to the 11th century (*The Searcher*, February 2001).

b) Snaffle bit (Fig. 4:20). Missing one end, and the other end is broken. Type I (Ward Perkins 1940). Medieval.

c) Broken terminal of a bridle cheek piece (Fig. 4:21). (Butler forthcoming a). Medieval.

d) Snaffle bit (Fig. 4:22). Broken at both ends. Type I (Ward Perkins 1940). Medieval.

e) Pin with slowly tapering shank although the point has been broken. At the thick end there is an annular knob, and above this a globular end, although this is broken too. Date unknown but either Roman or medieval (Fig. 4:23).

f) Stirrup-strap mount. Sub-triangular depicting a lion passant.

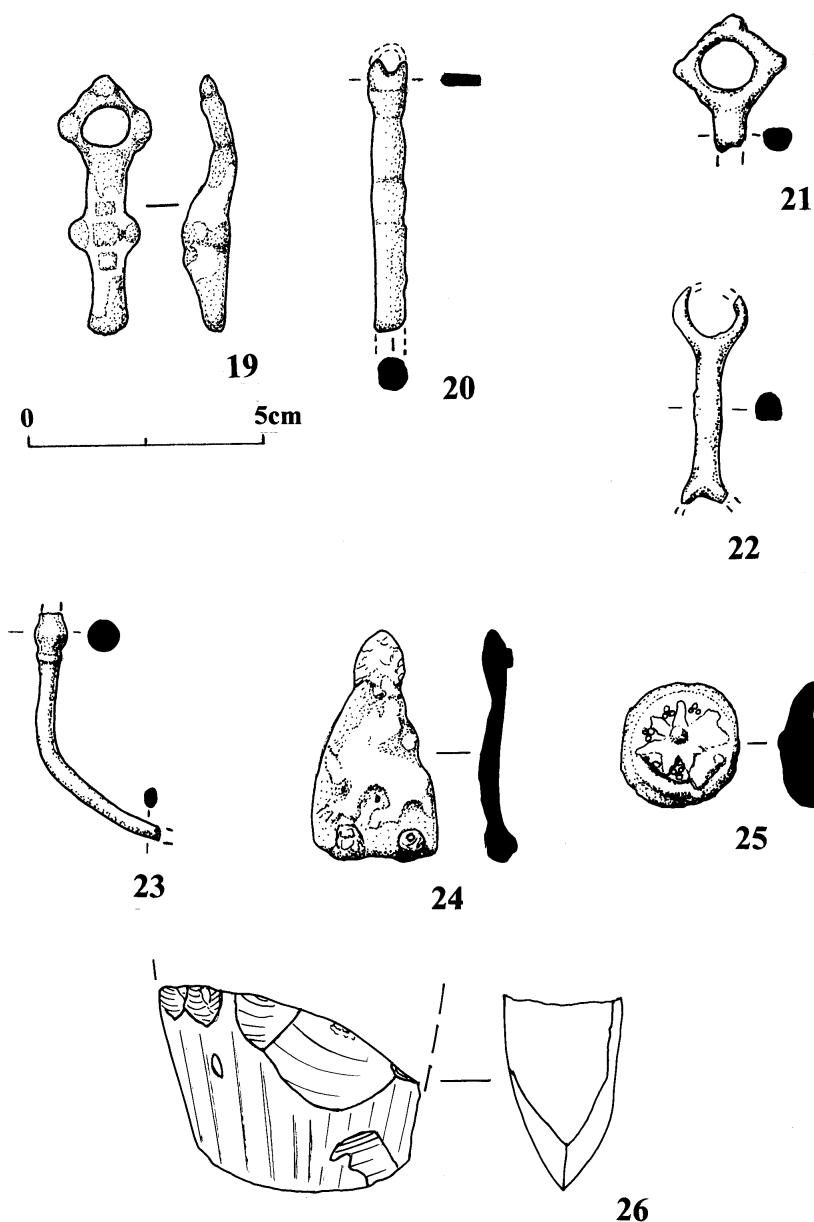


Fig. 4. Magham Down: Neolithic polished axe and metal finds.

The three iron rivets are still in place. Late Saxon: Class A, Type 11A. (Williams 1997) (Fig. 4:24).

g) Round lead weight with cast sun motif and central iron? boss. Between the sun's rays is a trefoil decoration. 26 mm diameter. 18 g (Tower system shilling?). 11th–14th century (Biggs & Withers 2000) (Fig. 4:25).

Post-medieval finds included numerous buttons, lead seals,

musket balls and weights, a barrel tap, and a copper-alloy buckle.

DISCUSSION

The Mesolithic flintwork found at Magham Down is typical of the range of material found at possible hunting camps. The predominant implement type found on these sites is the microlith, with small numbers of other types such as the end scrapers, burin and notched blade. These indicate that the main activities were hunting, the repair of hunting equipment, together with the initial processing of food.

In the Neolithic it appears that hunting was still the dominant activity at this site, with the three arrowheads, and a similar range of implement types present. The polished axe and chisel fragments suggest that the manufacture or repair of boats used for hunting and fishing may have been taking place nearby, although the axe may be the result of a ritual deposit.

It must be remembered that the flintwork has been collected in a non-systematic manner, and although there is a wide range of types present, including a considerable quantity of debitage, it is possible that a truly representative sample has not been collected.

There are no known Mesolithic sites within the Pevensey Levels, or indeed within any of the adjacent Levels (Wymer 1977; ESCC SMR) owing to the subsequent accumulation of peat. A single Mesolithic pick is recorded from a ditch at Tile Lodge Farm (TQ612108), between the 5- and 10-metre contours, just to the west of this site. It was found at a depth of 18 inches below the surface in or below the alluvium (Holden 1966).

Other finds from around the edge of the Pevensey Levels include

a transept axe, which was found on the high ground at Hankham (@TQ625060), on the south-west side of the Pevensey Levels (Wymer 1977, 325). Other Mesolithic flintwork is also recorded from Hankham (East Sussex SMR ES5042 and ES5051). A large assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork was also recovered from Pevensey itself (Burton 1940). This assemblage included 11 microliths and two transept axe-sharpening flakes, together with about a dozen scrapers, 30 cores and some 300 blades and flakes.

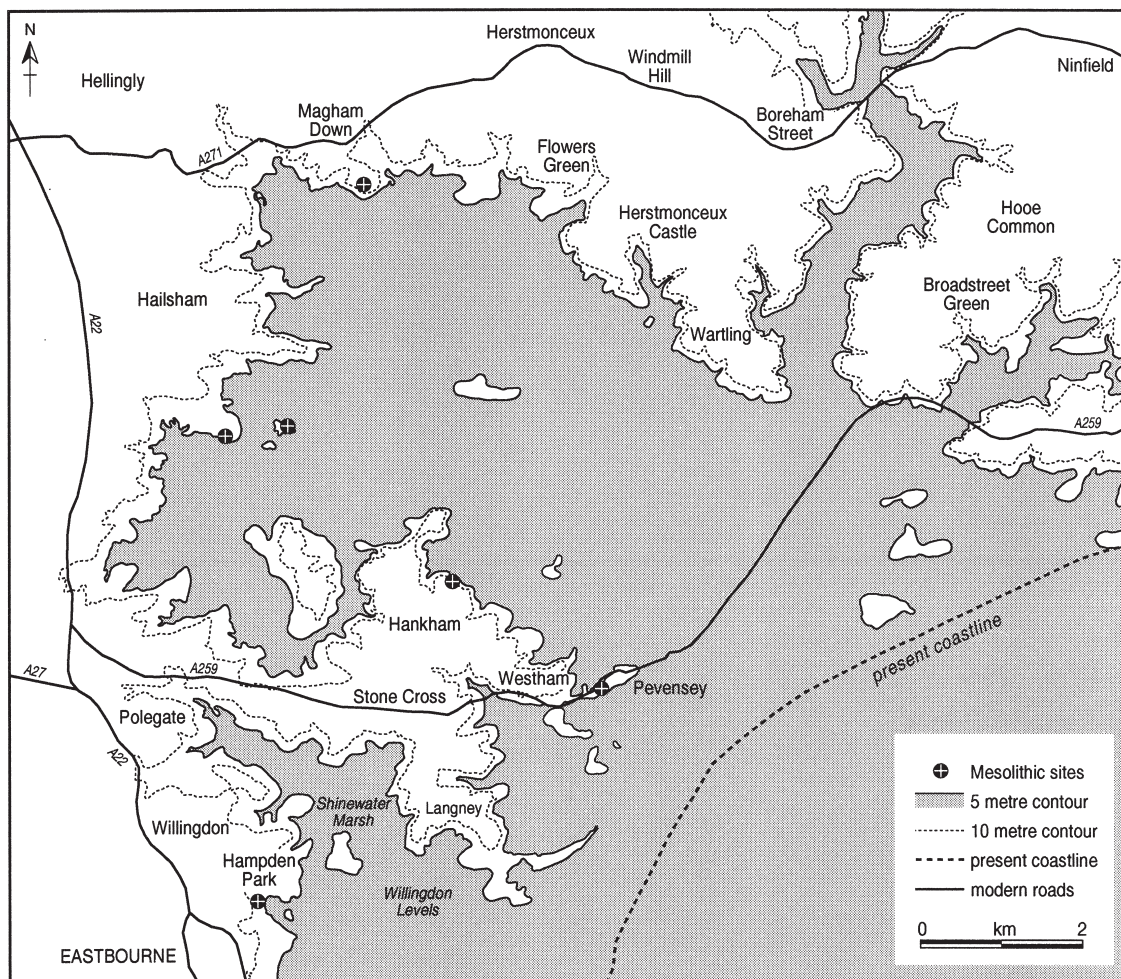


Fig. 5. Magham Down: the Pevensy Levels and known Mesolithic sites.

Also on the west side of the Levels, Mesolithic flintwork is recorded from Westfield Farm and Gasson's Farm (East Sussex SMR ES5157), probably from the outcrops of higher ground which have not subsequently been covered with peat. The only other site that has produced an assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork is at Decoy Drive in Eastbourne, just above the 10-metre contour on the edge of the Willingdon Levels. Here a small assemblage of Mesolithic flintworking debitage, together with a pick and a tranche axe-sharpening flake, was recovered during a watching brief at 9 Decoy Drive (Butler forthcoming b).

The Pevensy Levels, together with the other adjacent Levels, were above sea level during the Mesolithic period, and have subsequently been covered with an accumulation of peat (Woodcock forthcoming), possibly commencing in the Bronze Age. The sites that have produced Mesolithic flintwork (Fig. 5) are all on the higher ground around the margins of the Levels, and therefore have not been covered by these subsequent accumulations of peat. Perhaps the Levels provided an ideal

landscape for hunting and fishing, with numerous streams running off the higher inland ground through what are now the Levels, to the sea. There is tremendous potential for a preserved Mesolithic and Neolithic landscape buried below the peat here.

The lack of later activity at Magham Down is probably due to the marshy conditions that would have existed, and it is probably not until the medieval period that land drainage allowed the exploitation of this area for farming and other activities (Woodcock forthcoming).

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Sid Jeffrey for allowing me to report on these finds, and Claire Goodey who illustrated them. Sid would like to thank Mr Notley, the owner for allowing him to carry out the survey. Andrew Woodcock provided details of the sites recorded on the East Sussex SMR and Susan Rowland prepared the maps.

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FIELDWALKING DETAILS

With the exception of Field 3, the fields were walked along 20-metre spaced transects and archaeological material was collected at 20-metre intervals along these transects. For the very small Field 3, the transect spacing was reduced to 10 metres, but collections were still made at 20-metre intervals.

VARLEY HALLS, FIELD 1 – NORTH-WEST OF VARLEY HALLS – TQ33150905 (Fig. 1)

This triangular field lies between the Bronze Age excavated sites of Downsvew and Varley Halls. Aerial photographs taken in 1975 (Planning Dept, Brighton and Hove City Council) indicate several lynchets and part of a field system, some of which can still be seen. These require investigation to confirm dating, as they may relate to the Bronze Age settlements.

VARLEY HALLS, FIELD 2 – TQ33250880 (Fig. 1)

This 'L'-shaped field surrounds an area excavated in 1995 prior to the construction of a hall of residence for the University of Brighton.

VARLEY HALLS, FIELD 3 (TQ33200900) (Fig. 1)

This very small field, which is to the east of Fields 1 and 2 produced a collection of various flints and a single end-scraper.

MARQUEE BROW (TQ33800830) (Fig. 1)

This field has been severely clipped because of the construction of the Brighton Bypass.

THE FINDS

FLINT

The majority of collected flint (97 per cent) is patinated white; one brown patinated piece is probably from a Wealden source, its colour being due to the effects of iron-rich deposits. Most flakes were hard-hammered, only a small percentage showed any evidence of retouch.

	VH Field 1	VH Field 2	VH Field 3	Marquee Brow
Flakes	169	51	33	79
Scrapers (end)	7	—	2	5
Scrapers (side)	1	—	—	—
Cores	2	1	—	—
Notched pieces	3	—	3	1
Blades	6	—	2	5
Blade fragments	2	1	—	5
Picks	1	—	—	—
Leaf-shaped arrowheads	1	—	—	—
<i>Sub-totals</i>	192	53	40	95
Fire-cracked flint	151	15	6	115
Totals	343	68	46	210
Fire-cracked (gram)	3718	464	409	4590
Cortex flakes	101	31	28	59
	(60%)	(61%)	(84%)	(75%)

POTTERY

The sherds of pottery found were very abraded. The majority were of Roman date; a few pieces of prehistoric pottery, with calcined flint temper, were also collected.

Fieldwalking at Varley Halls and Marquee Brow, Stanmer, Brighton

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During the last 50 years the areas encompassing Coldean and Stanmer, just north-east of Brighton, have revealed many archaeological sites and isolated finds. The development of the Coldean estate in the 1950s uncovered evidence of Iron Age roundhouses and Roman ditches (Yeates 1950), whilst Bronze Age cremation urns were found at Wolseley Road and Saunders Hill, both on the estate. In 1950 members of Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society excavated a Bronze Age burial site along the Ditchling Road and in 1986/7 the route of the proposed bypass was fieldwalked (Hartridge *et al.* 1989). Prior to the construction of the Brighton Bypass in 1989, an excavation at Downsvew (Rudling 2002), produced evidence of Bronze Age activity in the Varley Halls and Marquee Brow areas. For some time barrows have been known in Stanmer and excavations in 1993 at Varley Halls (Greig 1997) found Bronze Age and Iron Age features.

In 1997 the Society carried out further fieldwalking in the Varley Halls and Marquee Brow area and a geophysical survey of part of Field 2 (Fig. 1). This report outlines the results of these fieldwalking surveys. Dot density diagrams were compiled of material concentrations (Figs 2–5). Although the geophysical survey indicated two, or possibly three, roundhouses cut into the chalk subsoil, confirmation of this will require further investigation.

Fabric categories

Prehistoric:

- 1 Reduced wares flint inclusions 0.5–1.5 mm length.

Roman:

- 2 Grog-tempered East Sussex ware.
- 3 Grey sandy wares (grey colour with firm/hard sand temper).
- 4 Orange/brown and tempered.
- 5 Orange/brown sand and grog temper.
- 6 Pink/orange colour.
- 7 Grey sandy ware – colour-coated.
- 8 Pink/orange outer with hard grey inner — 0.1 per cent flint inclusions.
- 9 Pink/orange sand temper — yellow glaze on inner surface (Oxfordshire ware).

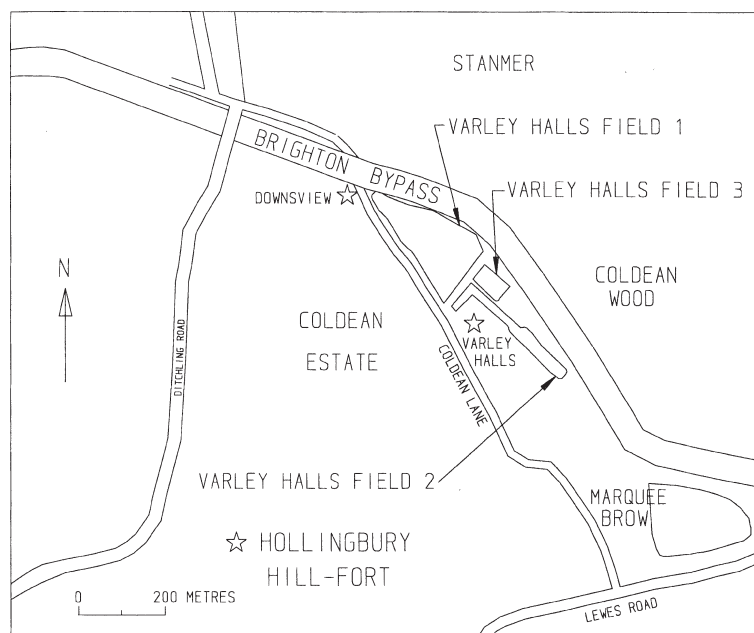


Fig. 1. Location of fields at Varley Halls and Marquee Brow.

POTTERY ANALYSIS				
Fabric categories	VH Field 1	VH Field 2	VH Field 3	Marquee Brow
1	2	—	—	4
2	8	—	1	6
3	2	—	—	3
4	6	—	—	6
5	2	—	—	—
6	1	—	—	1
7	—	—	—	—
8	1	—	—	1
9	—	—	—	1
Post-med	128	24	23	185
Total	150	24	24	207
CLAY PIPES	6	2	—	4
MARINE MOLLUSCS				
Oyster	18	3	1	21
Scallop	—	—	—	4
Whelk	—	1	1	1
Totals	18	4	2	26

SMALL FINDS

Fragment of a whetstone of brown ironstone with dressed and squared sides — 50 × 40 × 23/19 mm.

DISCUSSION

Both Field 1 at Varley Halls and Marquee Brow had areas of flint and fire-cracked flint concentrations (Figs 2 & 5). The

flint material from Marquee Brow contained a number of tools and at Varley Halls Field 1 (Fig. 2) a leaf-shaped arrowhead of Neolithic date was found. The overall flint collection, the style of tools and their method of manufacture, suggest later Neolithic to Early Bronze Age activity.

There is a wide range of pottery fabrics (Figs 2, 4 & 5); the most common examples were the locally-produced Late Iron Age/Early Roman grog-tempered East Sussex ware (Hamilton & Green 1977). Some small quantities of flint-tempered material suggest Iron Age or possibly Bronze Age activity, although the sherds lacked distinct diagnostic characteristics. The majority of pottery collected is of Roman date. Excavations at Coldean have also revealed finds of pottery and metalwork dating from prehistoric to the late Roman period (Funnell & Rudling 2002); the pottery from Field 1 (Fig. 1) may be associated with this settlement.

The most significant observation is the lack of any archaeological material in the proximity of the house-platforms located during the geophysical survey at Varley Halls Field 2 (Fig. 1), but the majority of Bronze Age pottery from both the Downsview and Varley Halls excavations was found in sealed contexts, such as pits or post-holes and the colluvium overlying the hut platforms.

CONCLUSION

The fieldwalking at Varley Halls and Marquee Brow has enhanced the existing archaeological data by emphasizing a Neolithic presence in most of these fields. Excavation demonstrated that Coldean was settled from Bronze Age times, and the fieldwalking indicates that its sheltered confines continued in use throughout the Iron Age and Roman periods.

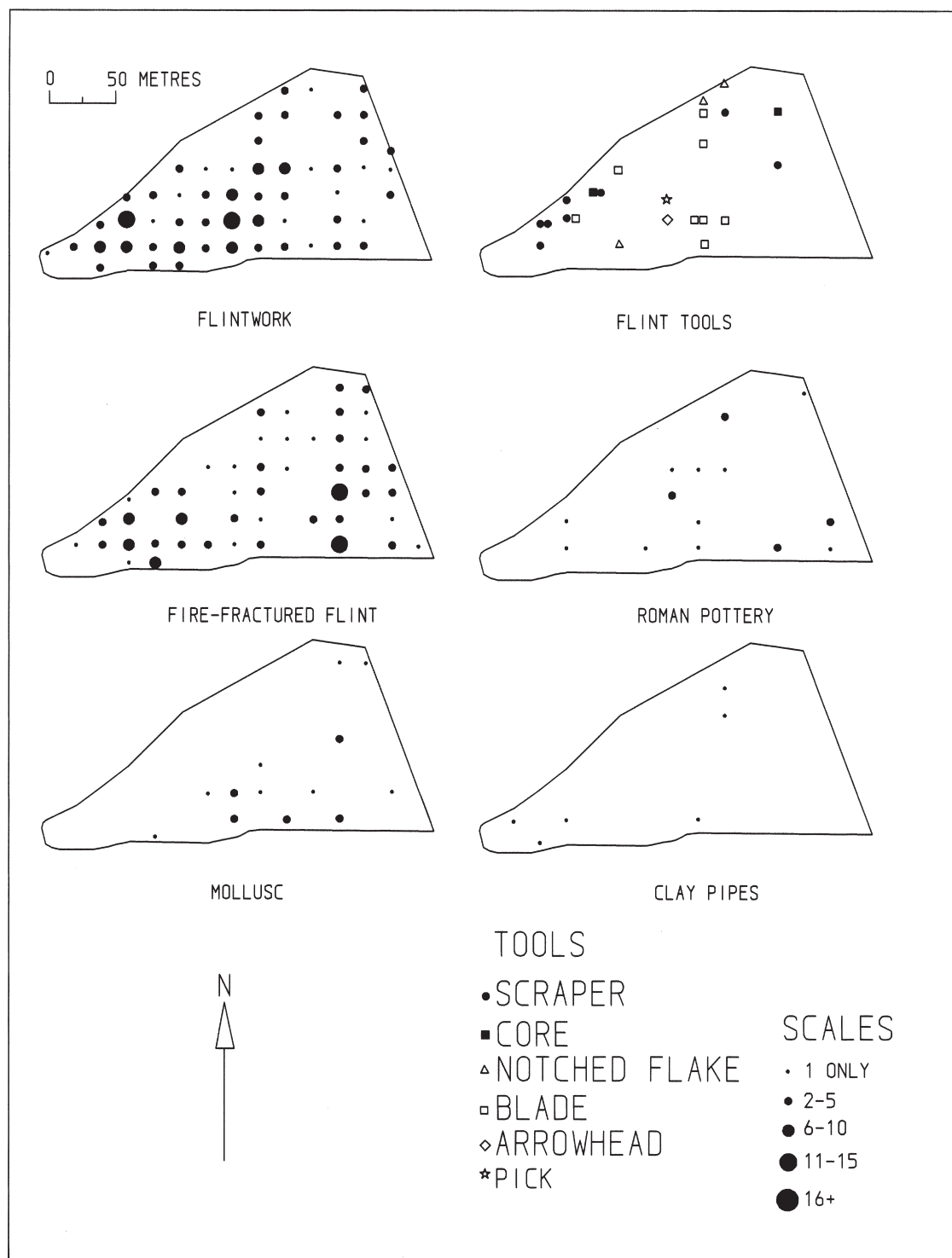


Fig. 2. Finds distribution Varley Halls, field 1.

Considerable quantities of contemporary debris, at the southern end of Marquee Brow, is probably associated with 19th-century cottages once located close to the bottom of Coldean Lane.

The two most important areas for future investigation appear to be the roundhouse sites discovered by geophysical survey in Field 2, and in Field 1 between the excavated areas of Downsview and Varley Halls.

Acknowledgements

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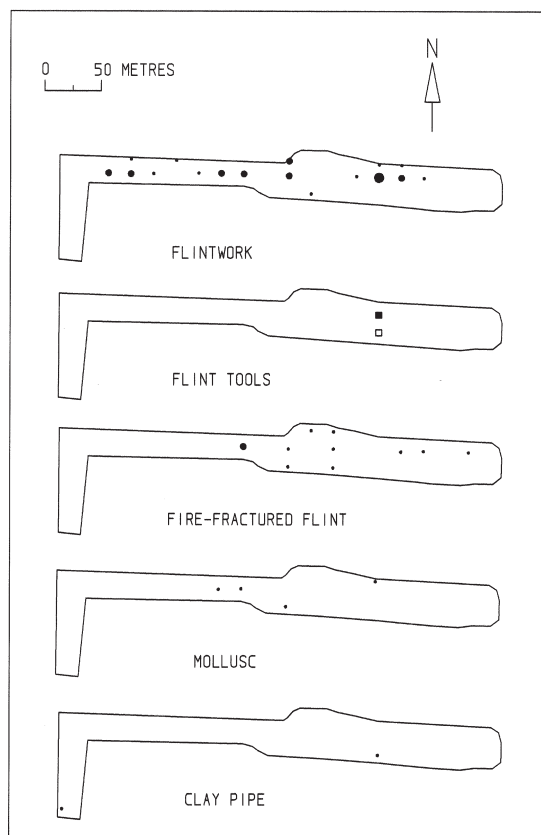


Fig. 3. Finds distribution Varley Halls, field 2.

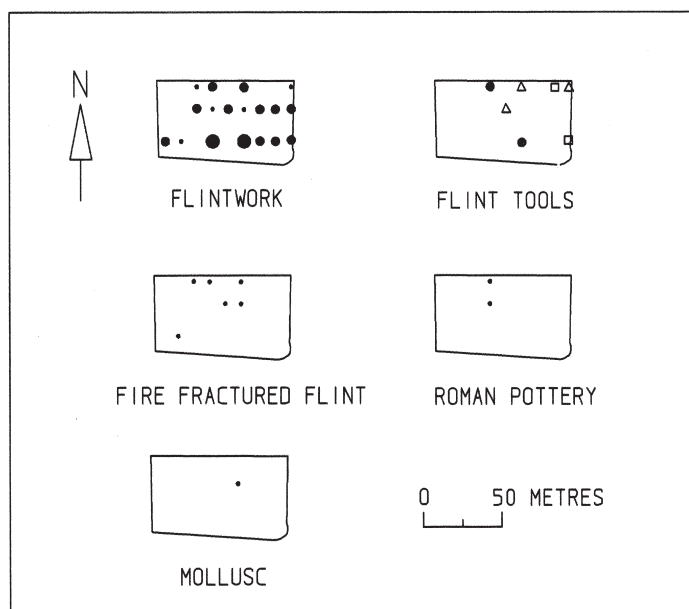


Fig. 4. Finds distribution Varley Halls, field 3.

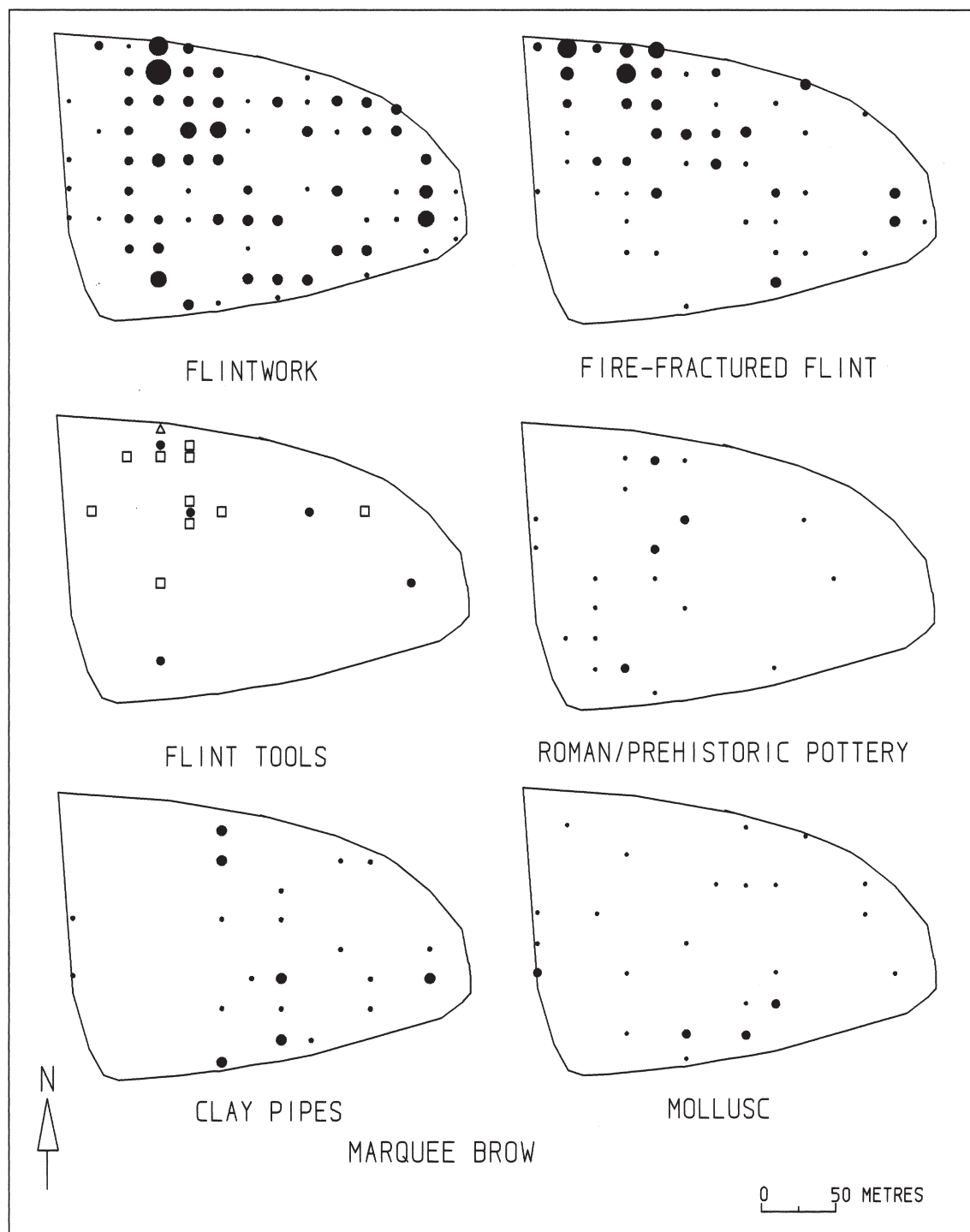


Fig. 5. Finds distribution at Marquee Brow.

Two Middle Bronze Age palstave axes from the western Weald

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Two palstave axes, both of broad-bladed type (Butler 1963; Rowlands 1976), and both metal detector finds, have recently been discovered some two kilometres apart. They come from an area of the Sussex/Surrey border with no recorded metal finds of similar date.

Axe 1 was found in early 2001 by Mr David Smith at Gostrode Farm, Chiddingfold, Surrey; the findspot is only a few metres into Surrey. This axe measures 158 mm in length and 56 mm across the blade. Most of the original surface has worn away, but sufficient detail remains to show a central rib as well as a series of grinding striations on the blade.

Axe 2 was found about 15 years ago at Fisher Street, West Sussex, but who found it is not known. This axe is strikingly similar to the one from Chiddingfold and also has a central rib, but it is less well-preserved. The terminal of the upper part of this axe is missing and the corresponding extant dimensions are 135 mm by 57 mm. It is understood that this axe had served for some time as a door wedge.

There are no records of finds of Bronze Age metalwork for many miles around these findspots, although flint arrowheads, scrapers and other material were found by a Mr Baker in the Chiddingfold area in the 1960s (Surrey SMR 1587, 1588, 2206), at a spot some 1.3 km distant from where Axe 1 was recovered. They are believed to be still in the possession of Mr Baker (D. Smith pers. comm.).

However, Axe 1 was found some 500 metres south-east of the site of a rare Wealden barrow east of Gostrode Farm (SU9619 3335, Surrey SMR 1576). The barrow was excavated by the Rev. J. Douglas in 1790, and yielded fragments of corroded brass, probably the remains of a clasp or buckle, as well as an inhumation and a pottery vessel. This barrow now appears to have been ploughed flat.

Both axes have midribs, neither has a side-loop and they are developments from the earlier flanged axes. Typologically, both axes fall within the earliest industrial phase of the Middle Bronze Age (known as Acton Park) and may be dated to c. 500–1300 BC.

Metal objects dating to the Bronze Age are infrequently found in the Weald, but where they do occur such deposits are often close to the watershed or source of important rivers, which may imply riverine access by mobile groups. In the present instance both findspots are within the watershed of the River Wey. While in themselves these two axes are unremarkable examples of their type, their importance lies in the positions of the findspots, which contribute to the growing evidence for the exploitation of the Weald in prehistory.

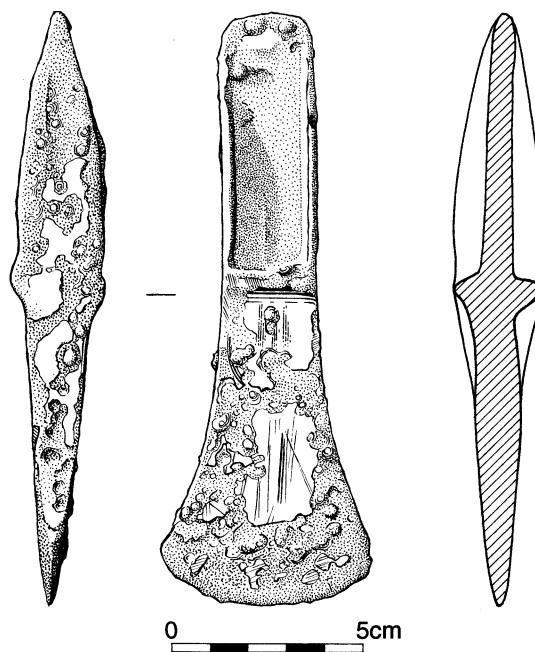


Fig. 1. Middle Bronze Age palstave axe from near Chiddingfold.

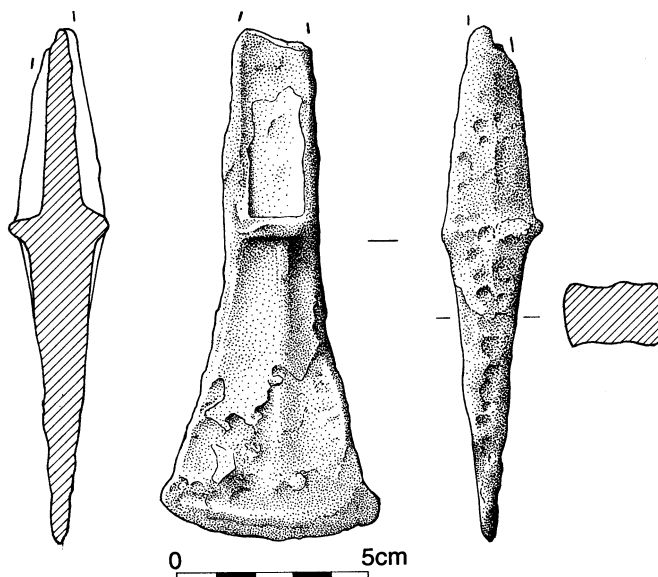


Fig. 2. Middle Bronze Age palstave axe from Fisher Street.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank David Smith for promptly reporting his find, for also informing me of the Fisher Street axe and subsequently acquiring that too for recording. I would also like to thank Audrey Monk for liaising with the finder and acting as carrier. David Dunkin very kindly commented on an earlier draft and provided many helpful comments some of which have been incorporated into the text. Both axes have now been returned to their finders.

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Roman nail-cleaner from Lancing Ring, West Sussex

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In February 1998 the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit visited Lancing Ring as part of its educational winter programme; the field to the east of Lancing Ring is the site of known Roman temple (Bedwin 1981, 37–55). The field to the west of the temple was then under wheat stubble. The high eastern boundary of the field lies on the 106 O.D. contour line, but drops deeply into the valley of North Sompting. From the footpath along the field boundary it was observed that among this stubble were significant amounts of Roman pottery and oyster shell. A small copper alloy object recovered from the field surface at location TQ177067 proved to be a Roman nail cleaner (Fig 1). A number of similar items were recovered from the excavations at Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971, vol. II, fig 42:67–71). The one from Lancing Ring is broken at one end where a hole had been pierced. The edges have notches either side at the widest section, and a number of horizontal lines decorate both sides of its upper surfaces.

Toiletry items such as tweezers, spatulas, depressing tools, ear-picks and 'ligula' or extraction tools have frequently been found during many excavations of the Roman period. Other rarer items include strigils, combs and mirrors (Bedoyere 1989, 115). The excavations at Wiggonholt produced a collection including nail scrapers and tweezers (Evans 1964, 123) and a small fragment of a nail cleaner was found during excavations on the Rustington bypass (Rudling & Gilkes 1990, 26). A small group of personal items, including tweezers, nail cleaner and ear pick were recovered from a site at Littlehampton (Gilkes 1993, 6). This particular collection was found with the remnants of a bronze alloy suspension hoop. The holes pierced in the nail cleaners and ear picks, and the compressed loop found in the tweezers suggest that they were attached to a ring and possibly hung on a belt. Small personal hygiene sets, or chatelaines, made of bronze and consisting of nail-cleaners, tweezers and ear picks seem to have been a particularly common possession (Bedoyere 1989, 15).

The dating of the finds from the excavation at Lancing, and the nail cleaners recovered from the earlier phase at

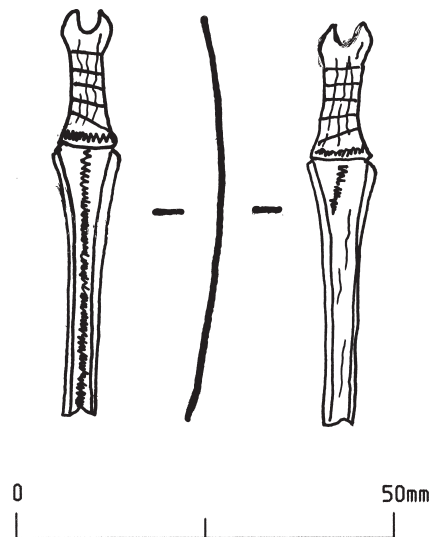


Fig. 1. Roman nail scraper from Lancing Ring.

Fishbourne, suggest that the nail-cleaner found on the field at Lancing is from the early Roman period.

The Roman nail cleaner has been passed to Worthing Museum.

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The Anglo-Saxon nunnery at Chichester: a further source

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According to William of Malmesbury (c. 1090–c. 1143), a community of nuns existed at Chichester at some time before the Norman Conquest: '*Cicestra ... ubi antiquitus et Sancti Petri monasterium et congregatio fuerit sanctimonialium*' ['Chichester ... where long ago there was a monastery of St Peter and a community of holy nuns'], he wrote (Hamilton 1870). The antiquary John Leland (c. 1506–52) copied this



information from William's *Gesta Pontificum*, and it was subsequently published among his *Collectanea* (Leland 1774). This single reference established a tradition to which many modern historians have subscribed. Until the appearance of Sarah Foot's healthily sceptical study *Veiled Women*, the existence of an Anglo-Saxon nunnery at Chichester was accepted wisdom. A number of scholars have even taken the liberty of supposing William's statement to refer to a double monastery of St Peter, accommodating both male and female religious (Foot 2000).

Dr Foot does not believe William of Malmesbury's statement sufficient proof of the existence of a pre-Conquest nunnery. She particularly rejects the notion that a double monastery is implied here. Stressing the fact that William's testimony constitutes our only primary evidence concerning the nunnery (and her knowledge of the relevant charter material is comprehensive), she explores the circumstances under which such an institution might have been established. Perhaps the bishopric of Selsey maintained a cell at Chichester before its own translation there in 1075. Or an independent religious house or houses may have existed in the city before the cathedral's relocation. She is obliged to conclude, however, that William's testimony alone is unreliable: the presence of an Anglo-Saxon nunnery in Chichester is at best a dubious proposition (Foot 2000).

However, there is at least one further piece of medieval evidence, apparently overlooked by Dr Foot, which supports the existence of such a nunnery. A catalogue of monastic foundation dates occurring in two Benedictine copies of the early 16th century, one from Glastonbury Abbey, the other from the abbey of St John at Colchester, records the 'construction' — here referring to the foundation — of a house of nuns at Chichester during the 7th century. The entry in the Glastonbury manuscript reads '*Constructio ecclesie monialium in Chichester anno domini 653*' ['Construction of the nuns' church in Chichester, AD 653': Cambridge, Trinity College MS. R. 5. 33, f. 20v]. That from Colchester is practically the same: '*Anno domini Dclij constructio ecclesie monialium de Chichester*' ['AD 653, construction of the nuns' church of Chichester': Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Gough Essex 1, f. 13v]. Internal evidence indicates that the original list from which these two derive was compiled at Leiston Abbey, a Premonstratensian house on the Suffolk coast, during the later 14th century (i.e. after 1363: James 1901). How the list became so widely disseminated apparently cannot be known.

As might be expected of a Leiston product, the religious houses catalogued (23 on the Glastonbury list, 25 on that from Colchester) are East Anglian, or else of national or international significance (e.g. Bec, Cluny, Glastonbury, St Albans, Westminster). With the exception of St Botolph's monastery at Iken (Suffolk), none of the listed houses besides Chichester was defunct at the time of writing. And no other nunneries are mentioned. Chichester's presence here is thus anomalous. Why the canons of Leiston included a reference to this long-vanished nunnery, and where they obtained their information concerning its date of foundation, is uncertain. They do not seem to have relied upon William of Malmesbury, for he supplies no foundational date. It is, moreover, most unlikely that the canons took their information from the *Gesta Pontificum* and invented a date to suit themselves, for they do not mention a monastery of St Peter as well as, or instead of, a nunnery. In any case, while some of the dates given in the list are spurious, all

reflect established post-Conquest traditions: they were certainly not invented at Leiston. We may conclude from this that at the time of the list's compilation, there was a current tradition concerning the mid-7th-century foundation of a nunnery (and not a double monastery) at Chichester, too. That it was widespread, if not necessarily widely-known, is supported by the Suffolk provenance of the list. The lack of other surviving references makes it hazardous to suppose that this nunnery was considered in any sense an illustrious institution, but its inclusion in a catalogue of great religious houses at least sanctions the conjecture.

Dr Julia Crick (pers. comm.) feels sure that the tradition reflected by the list, such as it may have been, was a post-Conquest one. The current writer has no grounds for supposing otherwise. It must, however, have been predicated upon something; as must William of Malmesbury's testimony (no one can justly accuse William of failing to do his research). As suggested above, the two existing references to an Anglo-Saxon nunnery at Chichester are apparently not directly related: where William is vague, the Leiston list is precise, without, however, giving as much information. That both sprang independently from a pre-existing tradition is the most that can be ventured at present. If this is the case, then William of Malmesbury's testimony appears more reliable than might otherwise be supposed.

Whoever considers these two sources to constitute sufficient evidence for the existence of an pre-Conquest nunnery at Chichester (and our knowledge of many early English religious foundations amounts to no more than this) will still find him or herself almost completely in the dark. The foundational date of 653 is untrustworthy, and not simply because the list attributes spurious dates to several other houses. As a number of scholars have pointed out, assigning correct foundational dates to Anglo-Saxon monasteries is a notoriously uncertain business (e.g. Gransden 1985). Moreover, the date 653 supposes a religious foundation in Sussex considerably prior to St Wilfrid's Selsey (founded c. 681). Although recent scholarship countenances a Christian presence in Sussex from the first half of the 7th century (e.g. Welch 1978), there has been no concrete suggestion that this took the form of organized monasticism. While the Leiston list tends to confirm William of Malmesbury's assertion, it does so without providing specific information of a reliable nature about the possible Anglo-Saxon foundation at Chichester.

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Building practices in the eastern Weald around 1700: an addendum

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In 'Building practices in the eastern Weald around 1700', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **126** (1988), 248–50, I drew attention to *The City and Country Purchaser, and Builder's Dictionary: or, the Compleat Builders Guide...*, first published in 1703, for the observations its author had made in the Weald. 'T. N. Philomath', named on the title page, said in the dedication that he had been brought up and educated under the roof of John Baker of Mayfield Place. I suggested that T. N. was Thomas Neve, perhaps the son of Thomas, joiner of Mayfield, baptised in 1666.

This suggestion gains strong support from a map which

Christopher Whittick has identified in the Public Record Office, C 103/152–153, copy at East Sussex Record Office, AMS 6601/1. It is 'A Survey and Ground Plot of a certain parcel of Land Lying and being in the Parish of Mayfield in the County of Sussex being a Parcell of the Possessions of William Weston...Survey'd and Drawn Anno 1697 by Tho Neve Philomath'. It is drawn in ink and colour on parchment in a floral border, measuring 30 by 34 cm. The land comprised some 35 acres, centred in TQ 577 284, north of Mayfield village. The map has come to rest in the PRO, in a group of documents exhibited to a master in chancery in *Barton v. Short*, datable from the pleadings (PRO, C11/139/9) to 1740. ESRO has a conveyance of the same land, with messuage, barn and oasthouse, in 1748, and a map of the following year by Thomas Weller (AMS 2040–41).

Thomas Neve does not appear in S. Bendall, *Dictionary of Land Surveyors and Local Map-makers of Great Britain and Ireland 1530–1850* (London: British Library, 1997).