

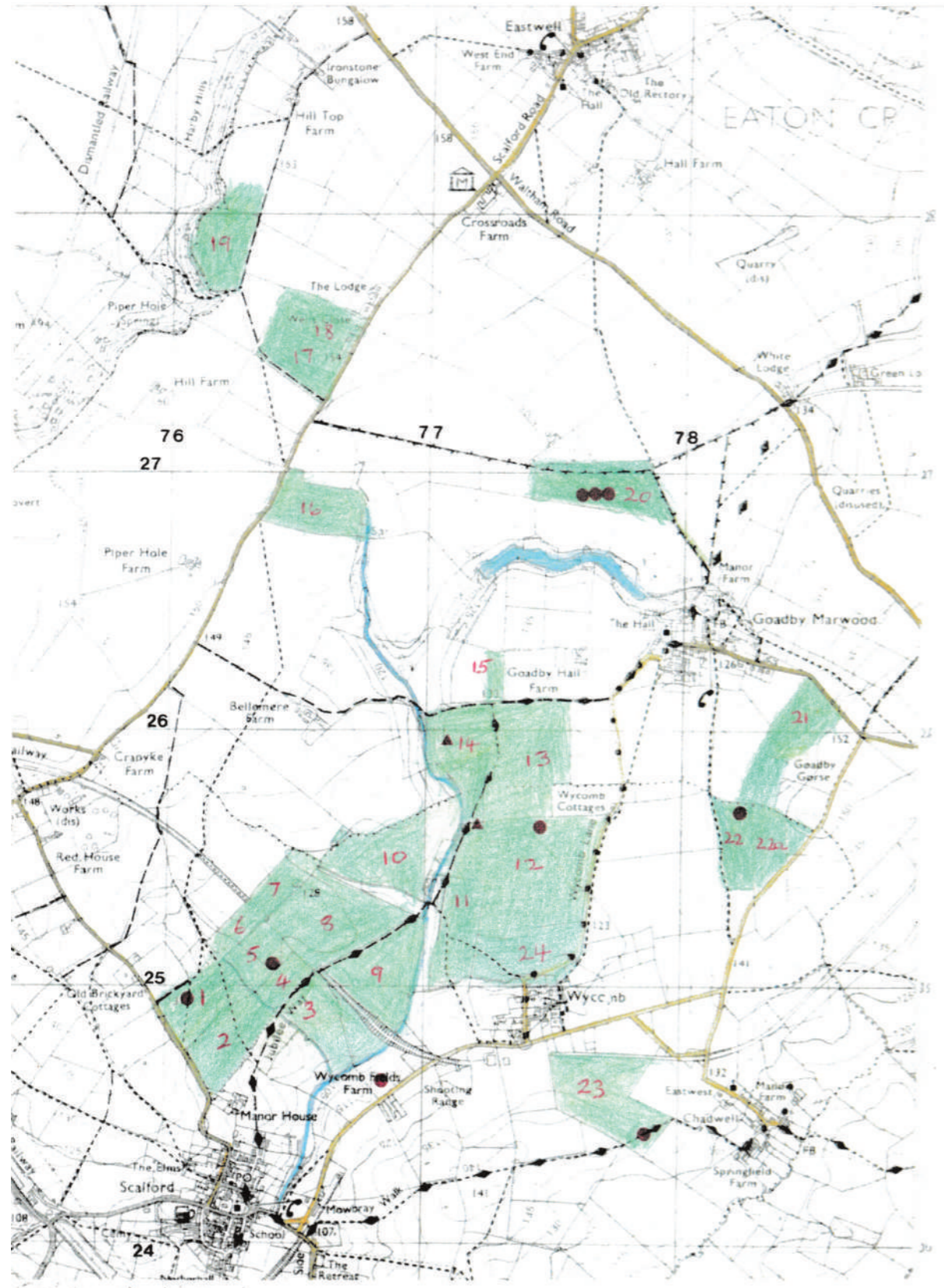
Man has lived in the Scalford, Eastwell, Stathern area since the end of the last Ice Age over 12,000 years ago.

We know this from the thousands of prehistoric flint and stone tools he left lying in the surrounding fields. Perhaps the most beautiful of these are barbed and tanged arrowheads from the Bronze Age (3500 years Before Present).



Prehistoric and Roman Artefacts from the Scalford - Wycombe - Goadby
Marwood District of N E Leicestershire

Red circles show Roman activity



Fields studied shown in green

The small, rather insignificant brook which flows by the Leicestershire village of Scalford starts its journey from a spring rising several hundred metres to the North at SK768 268. It was probably a somewhat larger stream, or even a river, in the past because books describing place-names state that the word Scalford means “shallow ford”. The profusion of flint tools lying in the surrounding fields shows how important this stretch of water was to prehistoric man from the end of the ice-age, about 13,000 years ago, right up to the Roman period.

In this area, flint patinates (recorticates) rather slowly due to low levels of calcium carbonate in the soil so that the characteristic blue-ish surface colouration only starts to be noticeable on tools which date from the early Neolithic era. Struck and worked flints from the Late Upper Palaeolithic, on the other hand, are totally white with a patination layer up to 0.5mm thick in some cases. Whilst patination does spoil the beauty of older tools, it does allow us to recognise that some flints were re-used several millennia later because the ‘new’ flaking scars starkly reveal the underlying flint colour against the white patina surface. That the patinated tools were able to be found for re-use implies the soil surface was periodically devoid of plants (ie was farmed.)

However, some of the older flints have a beautiful brown (ochre) colouration caused by prolonged periods of immersion in iron-contaminated water. In field 10 (see the map on front page) several ochreous flints were found lying next to ‘fresh’ Neolithic blades. This would seem to imply that the ochre-coloured tools had been made and used on a dry lands surface which was then inundated by water; later, possibly several millennia later, the water receded allowing man access to the land again. From the shape of the ochreous flints, a case could be made for suggesting that flooding occurred towards the end of the Late Upper Palaeolithic and that the water withdrew during the Mesolithic. (This was a time for increasing rainfall and wetter conditions, generally). If such a sequence of events did occur, the find-spots of ochreous flints in field 10 suggest that water reached up to somewhere between the 110 and 115 metre contours - the tiny brook winding its way towards Scalford is now all that remains.

On a side-scraper made from a very large flake, some small impact scars arising from plough damage revealed a brown (ochre?) layer lying under the white surface of the flint. Close examination of other large flakes, and the deliberate breaking of two, showed that the inner brown layer found in the scraper was not unique. Perhaps these artefacts had been under water, developed an ochreous surface and then, after the water dried up, the brown pigment began to diffuse

further into the flint during rain and dew. In general, ochreous flints appear to withstand the patination process - but this may simply be due to insufficient time having passed since the water released them to the ravages of normal atmosphere and soil conditions.

Two flints found reasonably close together at SK 7625 2500 and SK7630 2522 have sickle gloss on their cutting edges. If reeds were being harvested with these tools it would imply the ground in parts of fields 1 and 6 had been very damp, perhaps lying at the edge of a pond or slow-moving stream. In one of the fields just to the west there is a modern pond; furthermore, the flint from SK7630 2522 is stained brown from long contact with water.

The Scope of this Report

The map on the front page highlights in green the fields which have been searched for flint and Roman artefacts over a period of about twenty years. The flint work covers the time from the Late Upper Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age and includes a finely worked Neolithic knife, barbed-and-tanged arrowheads as well as broad range of blades, borers, saws, scrapers and cores. There is evidence, in the form of an aerial photograph and dense scatters of sandstone lumps, for several ploughed-out Neolithic and/or Bronze Age burials. (Patrick Clay, when excavating a nearby burial at SK762 266, found substantial quantities of sandstone debris within the structure; the burial was dated by ¹⁴C to be about 1500BC).

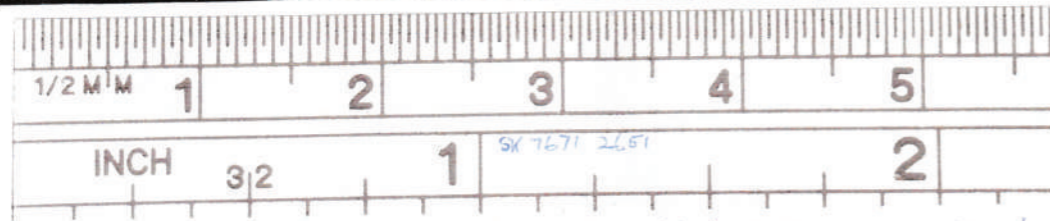
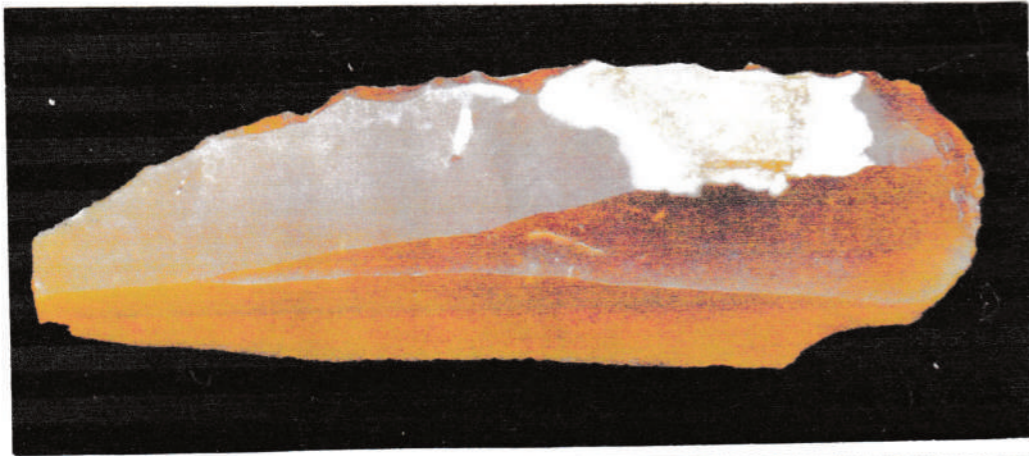
Romano-British potsherds, furnace slag and lumps of iron metal (one of which weighs nearly 4lbs) helped to pin point six "sites", whilst pottery and tesserae scatters suggest that the remains of several buildings lie under the surface of field 20. One large villa at Goadby Gorse, with a hypocaust and a bath house, was excavated by members of Framland Local Archaeology Group (FLAG) over three seasons.

The contents of the 23 fields will be summarised for each field in their numerical order and photographs displayed of the more unusual artefacts. Those fields coloured brown contained little or no archaeology and will not be discussed.

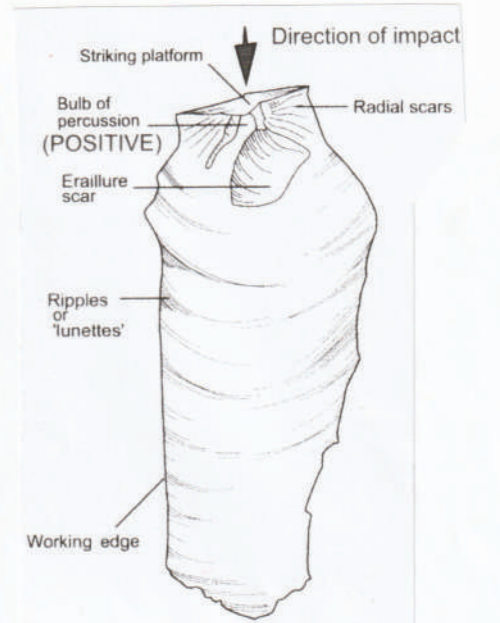
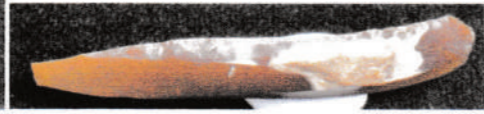
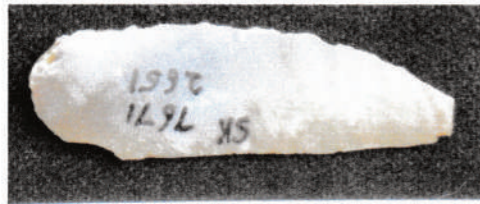
Perhaps the most exciting find, from the tiny area of Field 15 (next to Goadby Hall Farm), was a heavily patinated Levallois flake. This very characteristic item from the Middle Paleolithic is probably over 200,000 years old and was struck by a Neanderthal craftsman. A couple of hand-axe fragments each with a thick patina, may be of a similar age.

From Bellermere Farm.

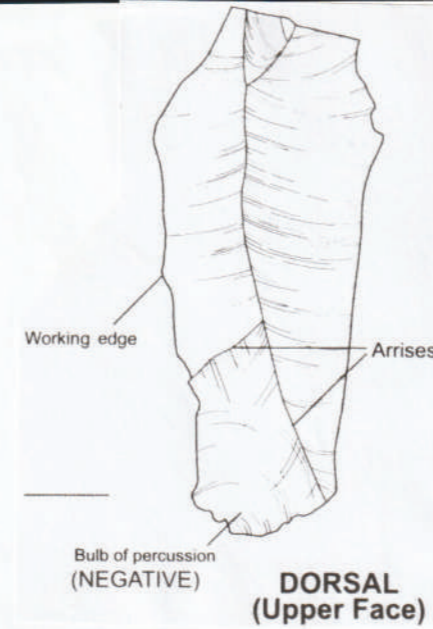




Backed blade (see bottom left opposite) dating to the Late Upper Palaeolithic, according to Roger Jacobi, 11,000 - 12,000 BP (?)

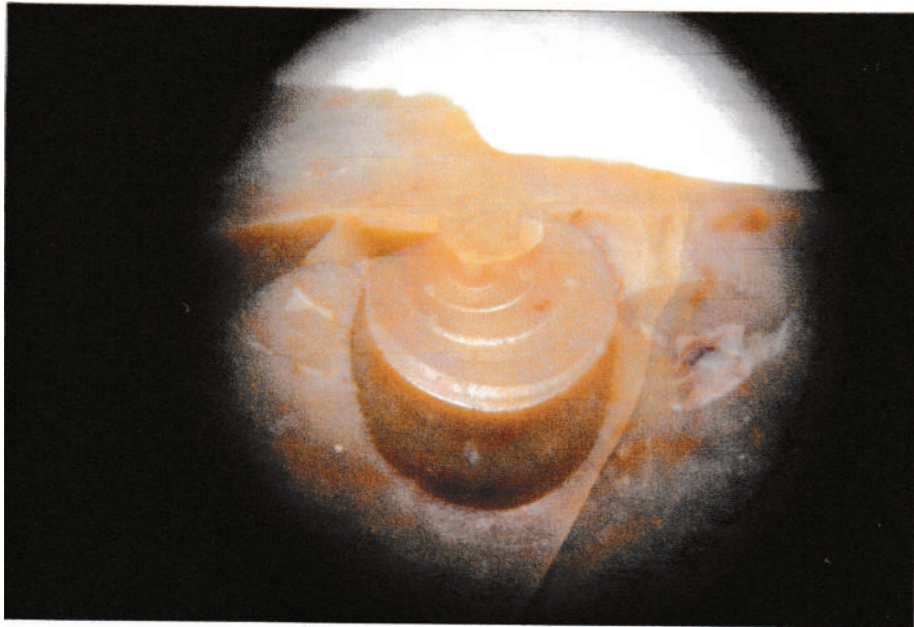


VENTRAL (Lower Face)

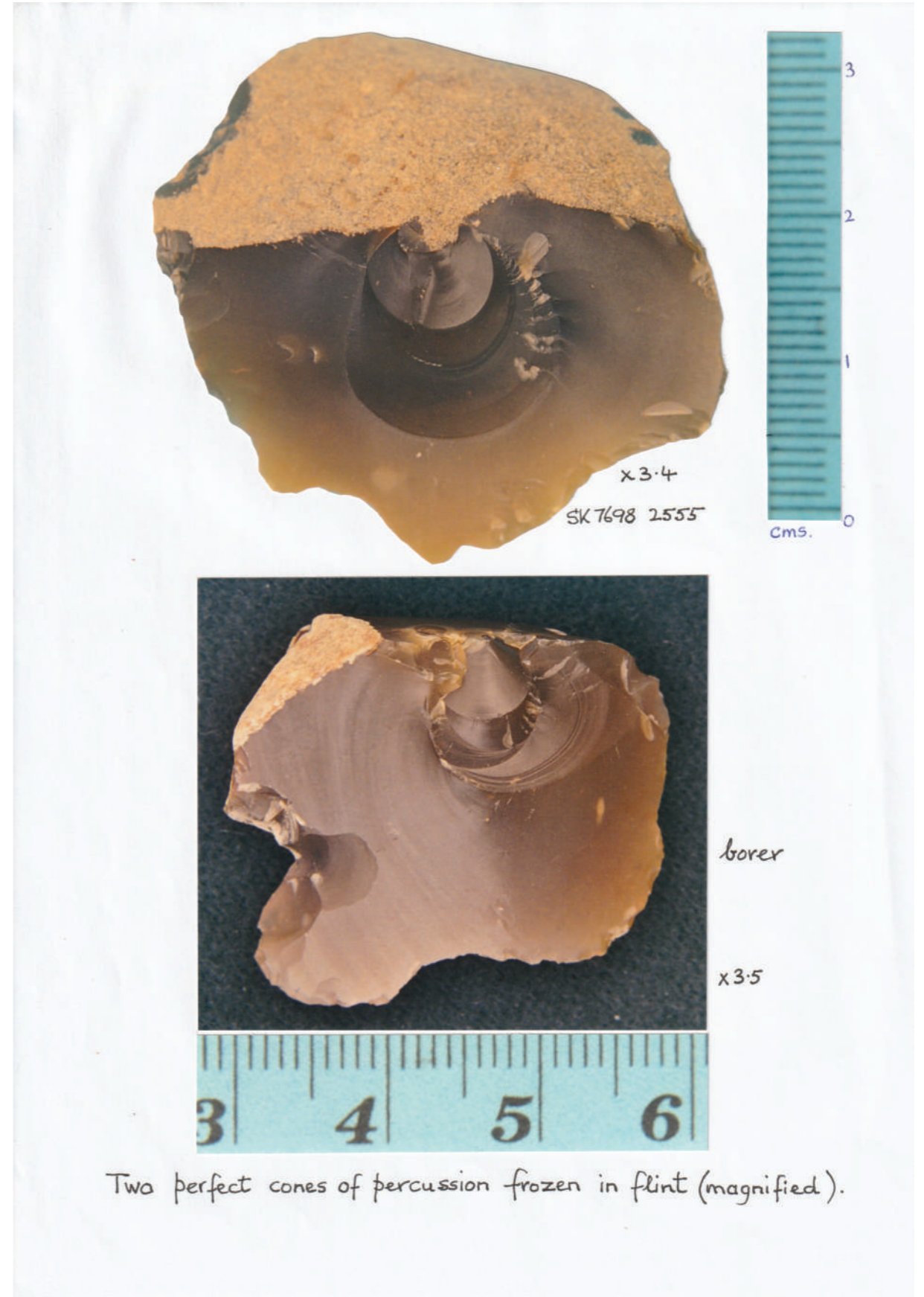
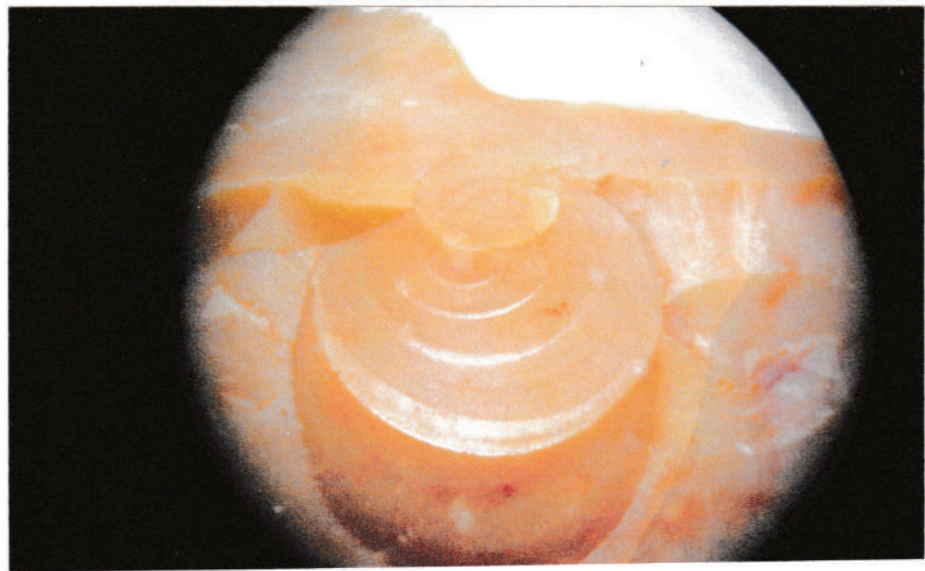
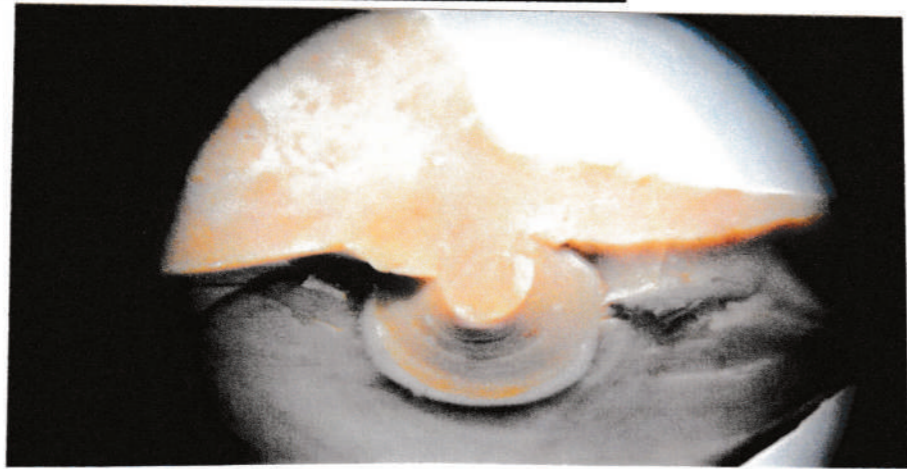


DORSAL (Upper Face)





Well developed
cone of percussion
SK 768 251



Two perfect cones of percussion frozen in flint (magnified).

Pyramidal core and its striking platform



SK 7696 2568



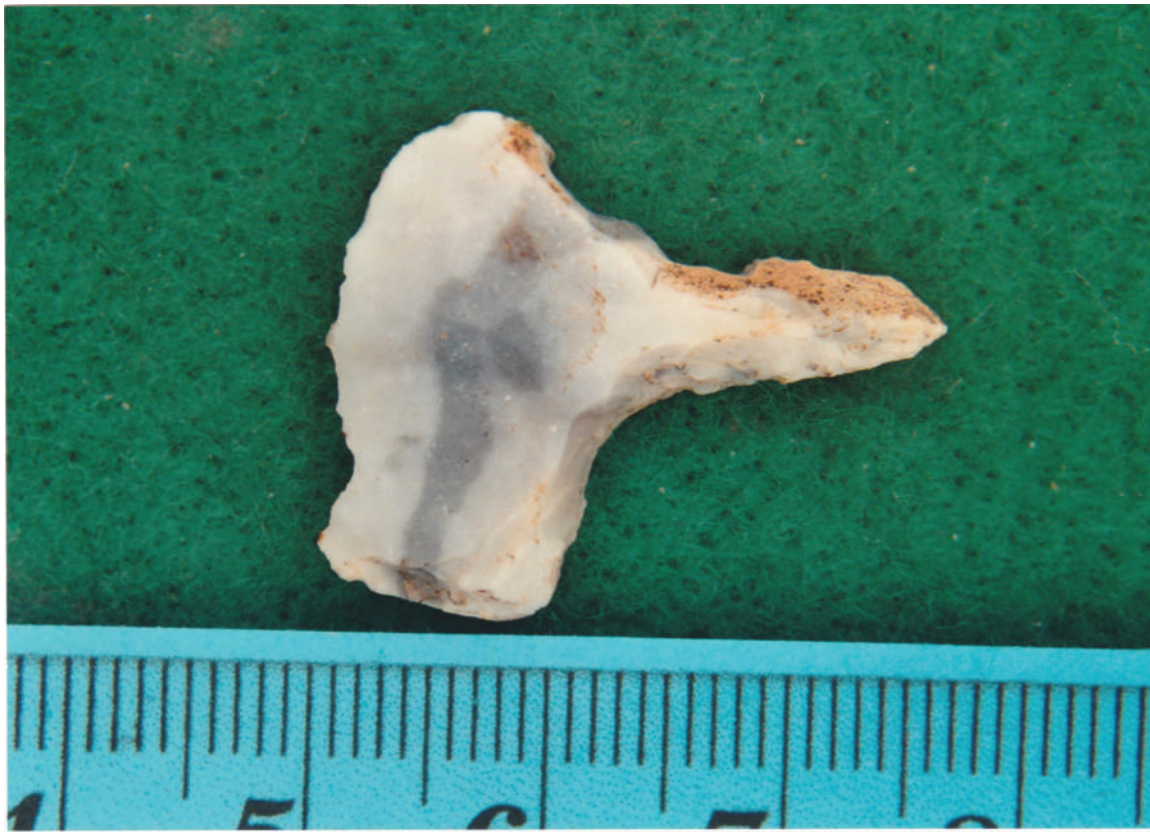
the striking platform (ie. the flat top of the pyramid)



Hammer stone used for working flint



Borers



SK 7669 2655 Bellemere Farm



A tiny, carefully worked flint piercer; SK 7618 2496



Size range of flint blades found in these fields (actual sizes)



Range of flint surface colours in these fields



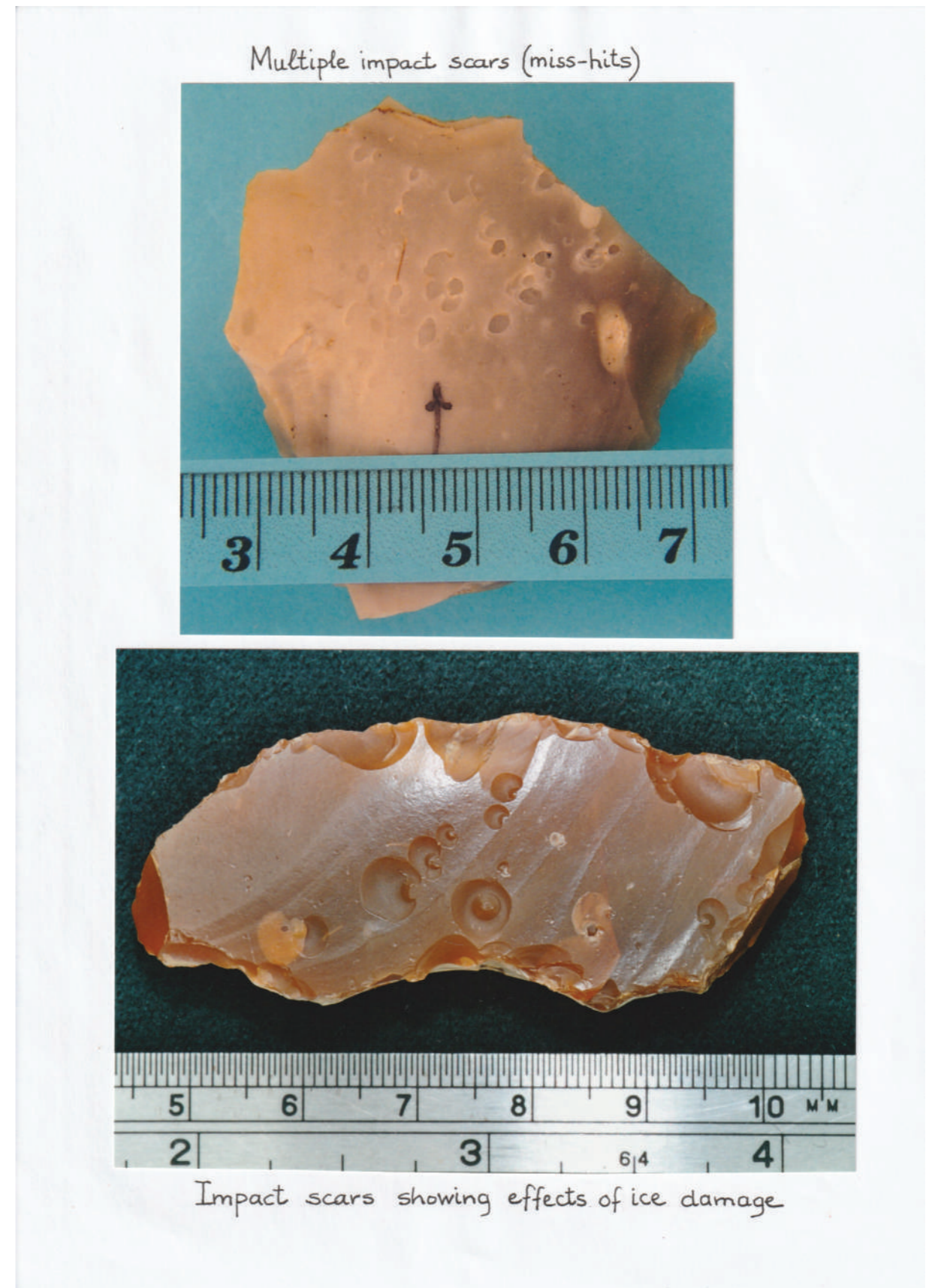
Two flints of different surface colouration found at the same spot in field 10 SK 7699 2551. Assuming they have not moved far from their deposition site, the brown flint on the right has obviously spent some considerable time in water - which had disappeared when the flint was used; ie the water was present at that part of the field in the time interval separating the two flints.

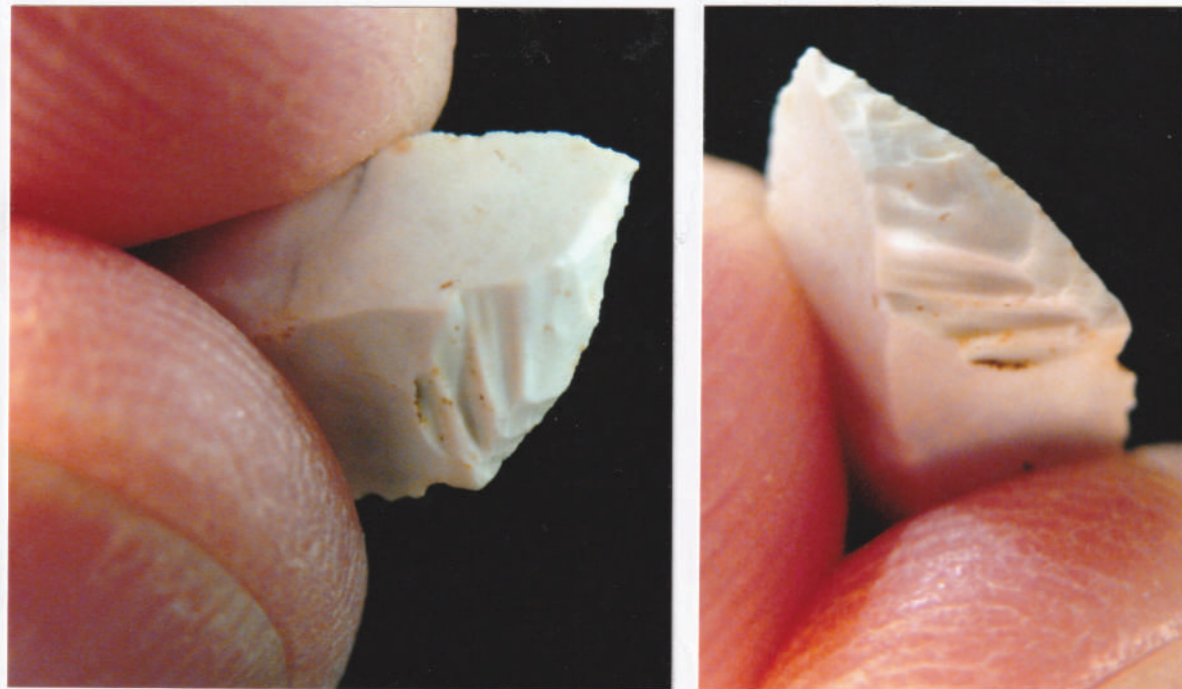
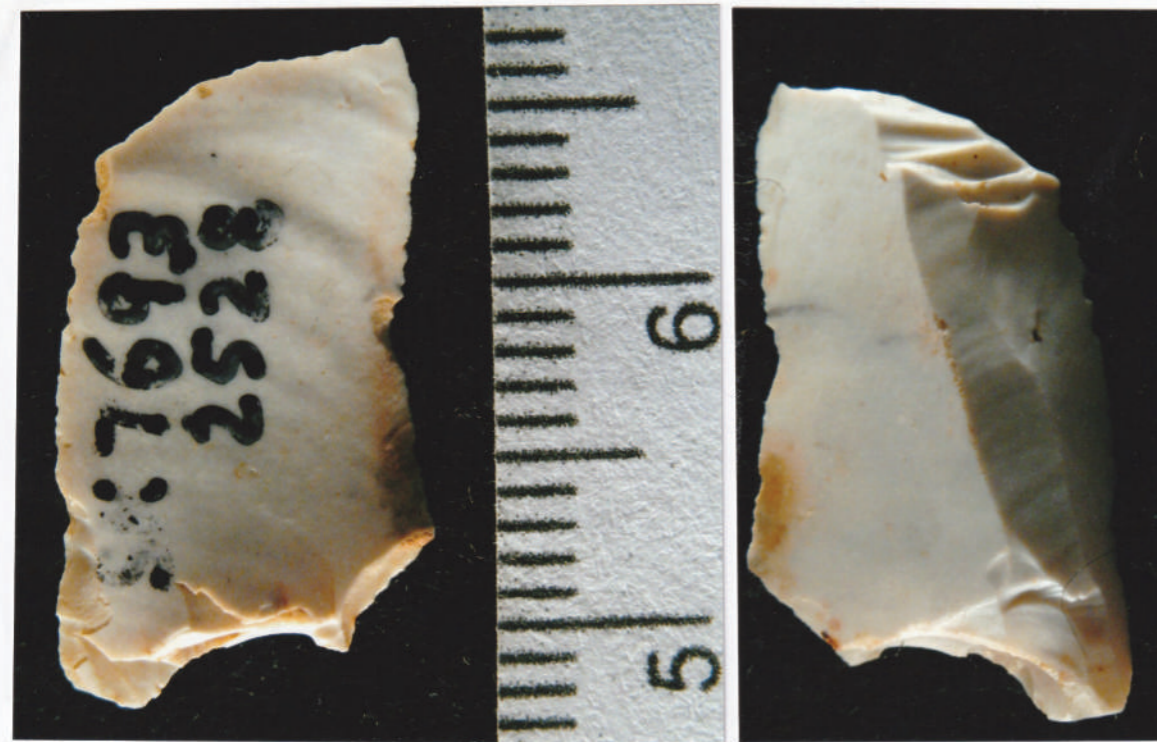


patinated core used as a hammer stone at both ends
(bruising of the top end shown on the right hand photograph)



Flake with two partially detached flakes on the ventral surface





An obliquely truncated point; Late Upper Palaeolithic.

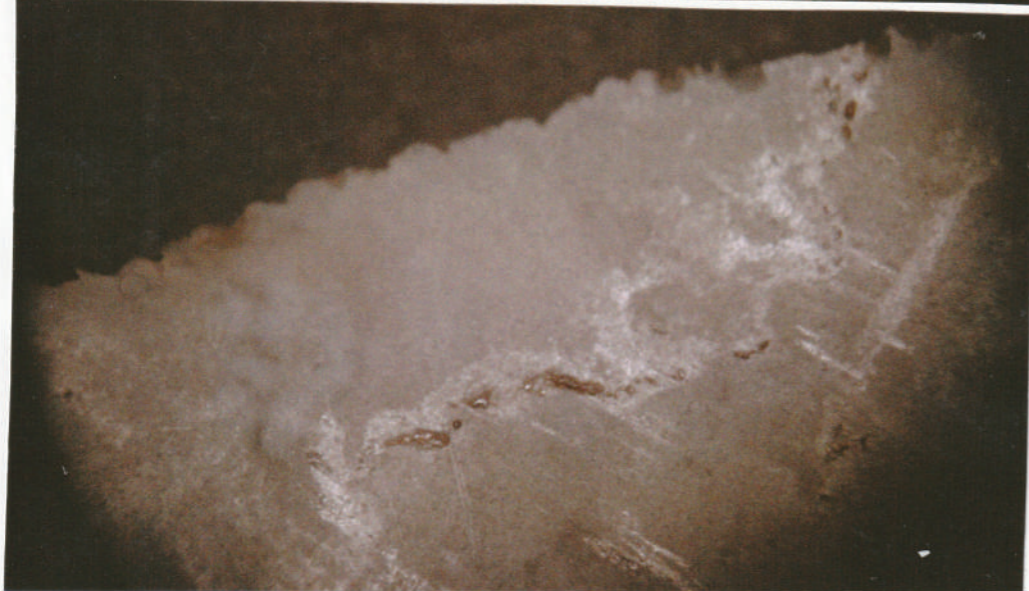


ca. 5cm long

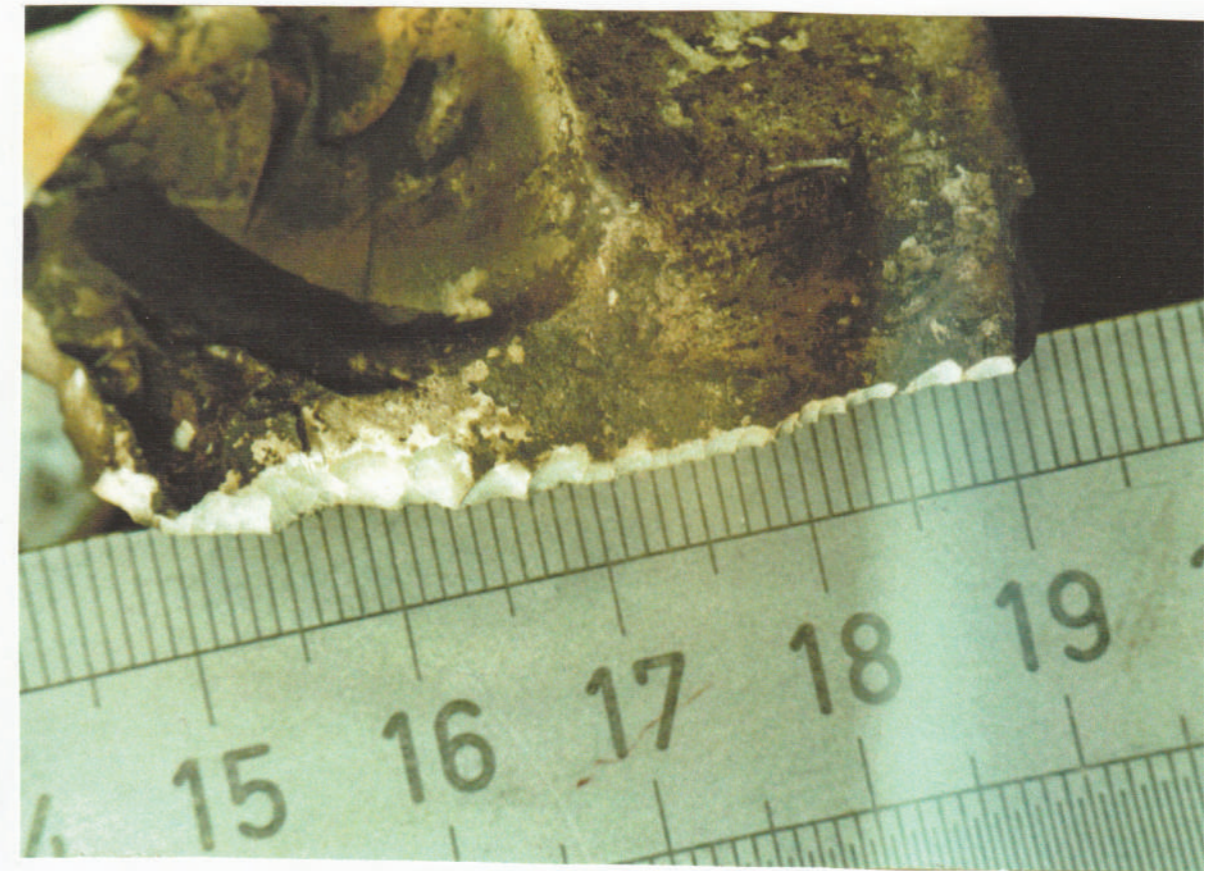


Double-edged flint saw which carries a deposit on both faces probably relating to the saw's use in the Neolithic (see the magnified images of the surfaces).





Photographs of a flint double-edged saw from SK 774 267 taken down the eye-piece of a microscope. Much of the flint surface carries a deposit apparently reflecting the saw's use in the Neolithic. Perhaps microbiological action transformed the original fat or wood sap left on the saw into the durable deposit we see now. (Certainly there are iron-containing species present, some actually between the saw teeth). Note the multi-directional scratches in the deposit which probably arose from movement of the flint within the soil rather than from use.



At SK 775 251 on August 16, 2000 this blackened flint was found in a small fire burning crop-stubble. The regular, white 'flaking' scars were formed by pieces of flint being detached by the heat of the fire!

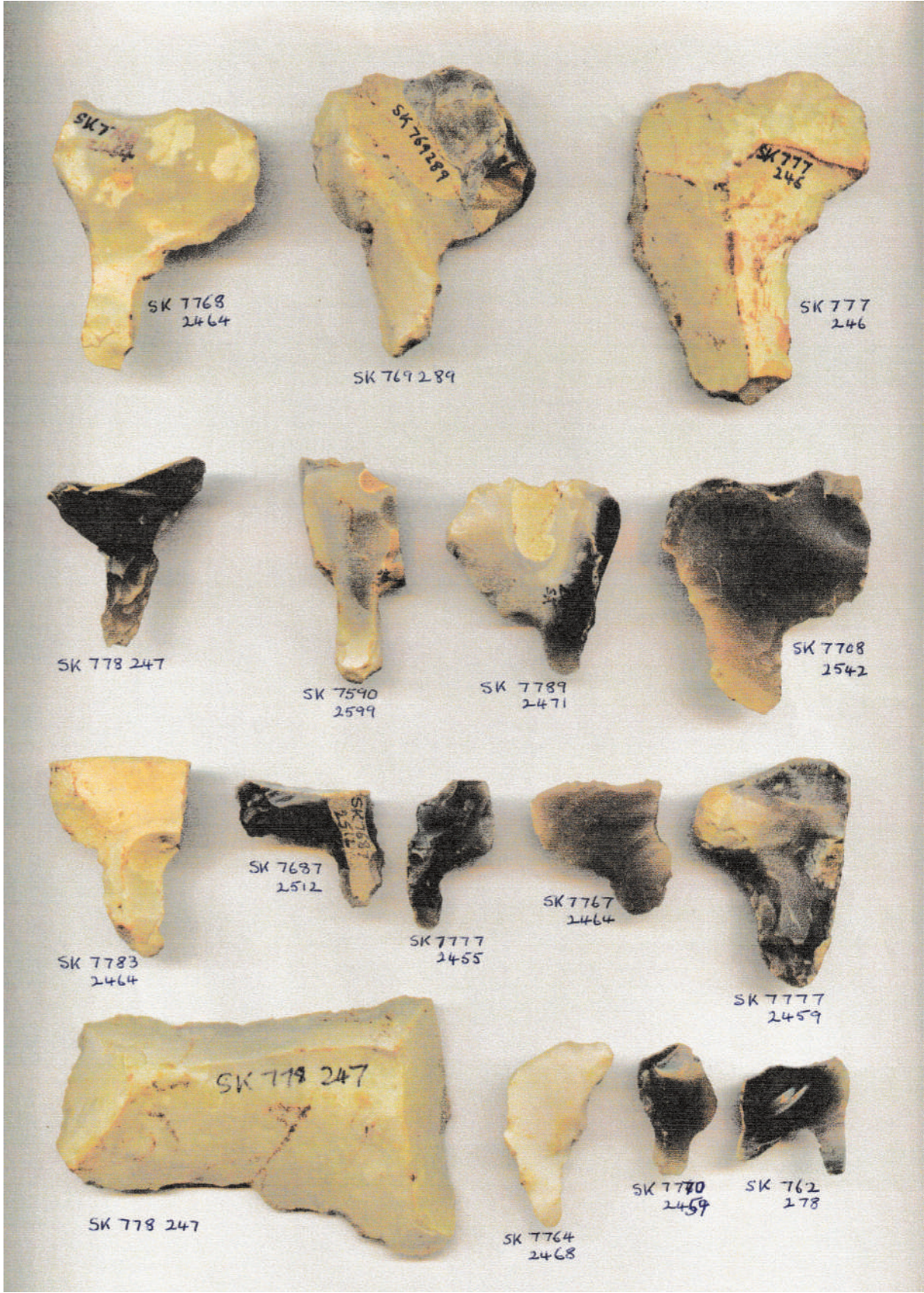


SK 7702 2555 14.8gm

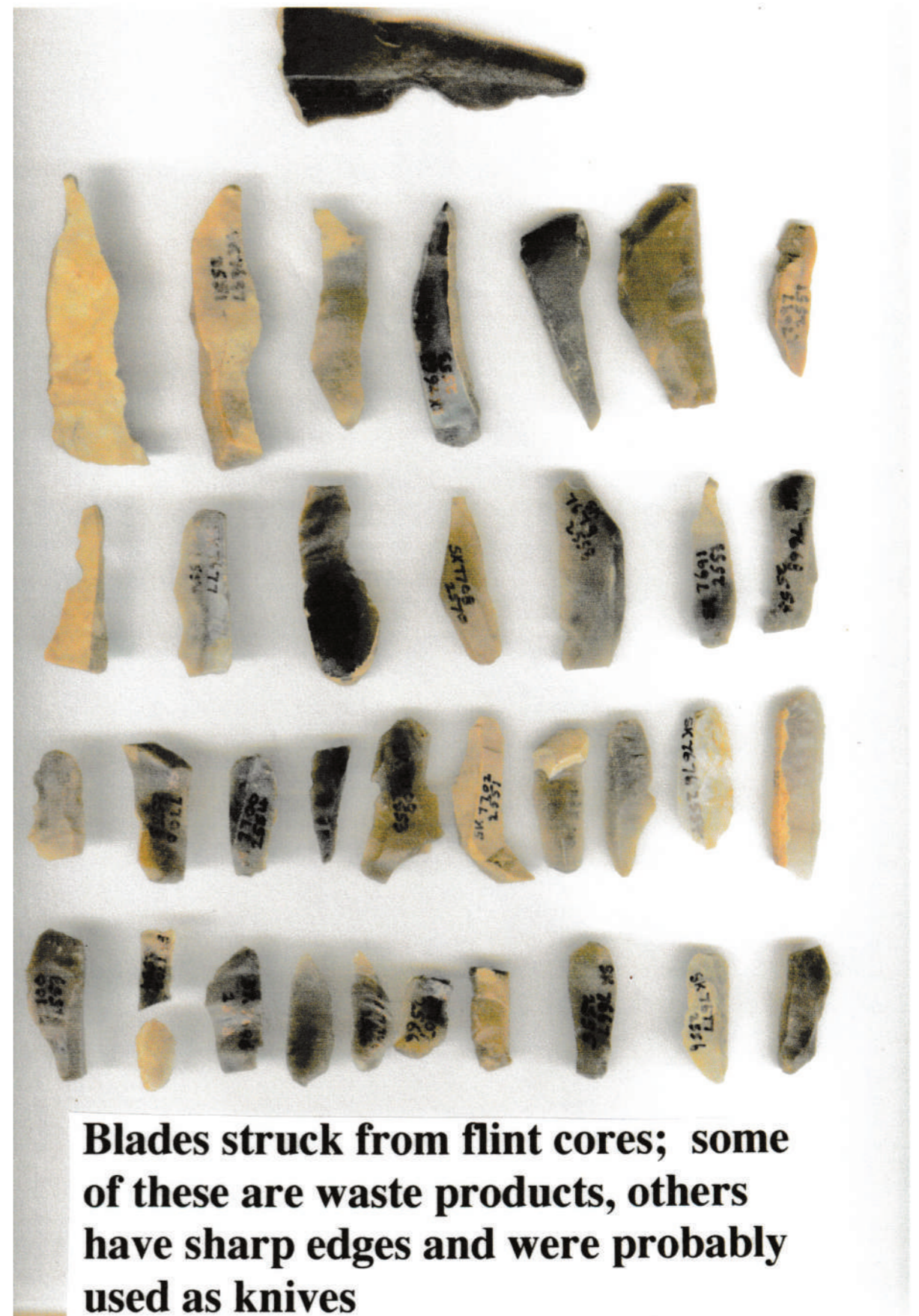
SK 7691 2559 5.9gm



two recorticated flints re-used to make a spoke-shave and a scraper



A selection of flint borers



Blades struck from flint cores; some of these are waste products, others have sharp edges and were probably used as knives



A typical Bronze Age “thumbnail” scraper. The name derives from the size of the scraper rather than its use; some people have suggested these small scrapers were used, in part at least, for scraping dirt off one’s body in the days before soap. (about 3500 years old?)



Range of scraper sizes



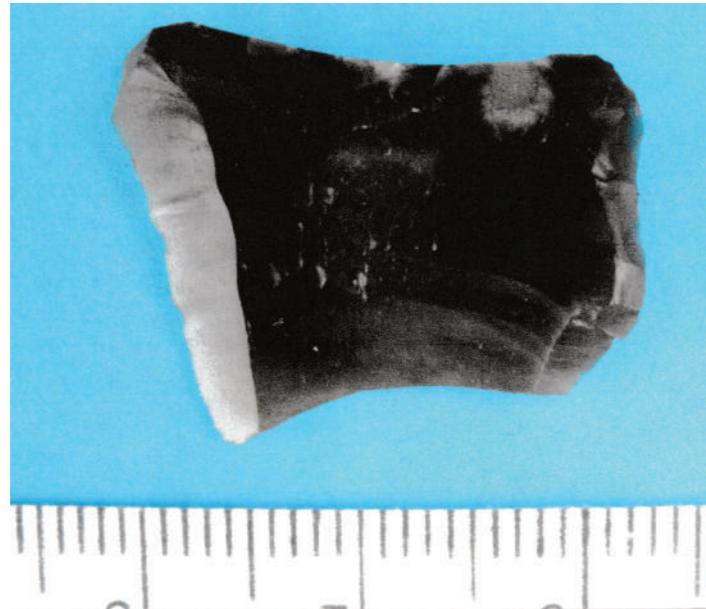
Re-worked flints

SK 7691 2522

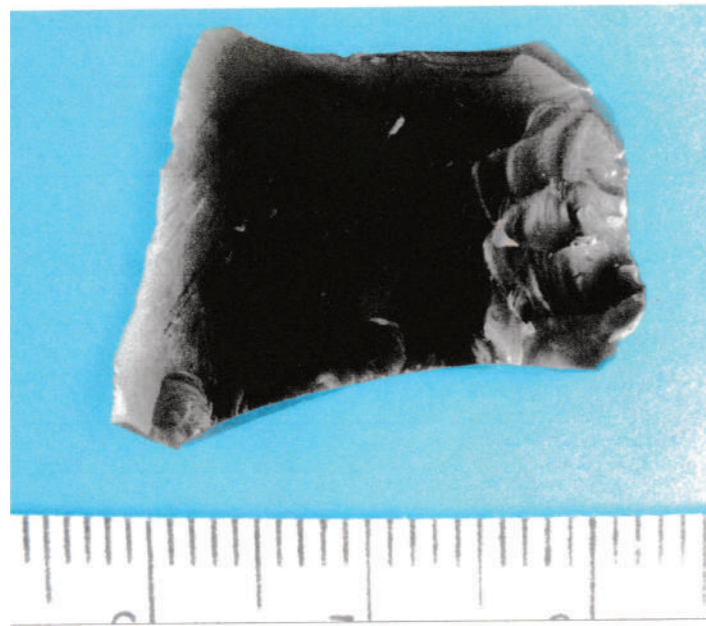


Re-used Mesolithic blade; made into a piercer





SK 7706 2571



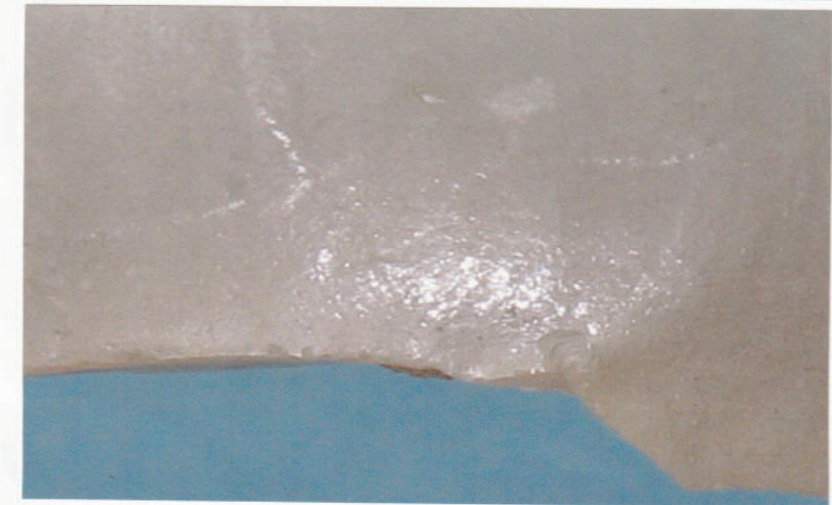
Transvers arrowhead SK 7706 2571

One flint from Field 1 is of particular interest because its working edge shows a considerable amount of "sickle gloss" caused by abrasion from phytoliths (minute silica particles in plant stems) when cutting straw, grass or reeds.



SK 7625
2500

5cm X 3cm

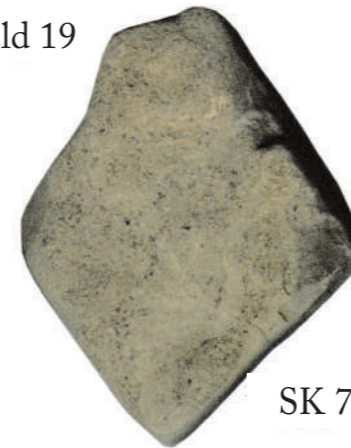


SK 77269 25124



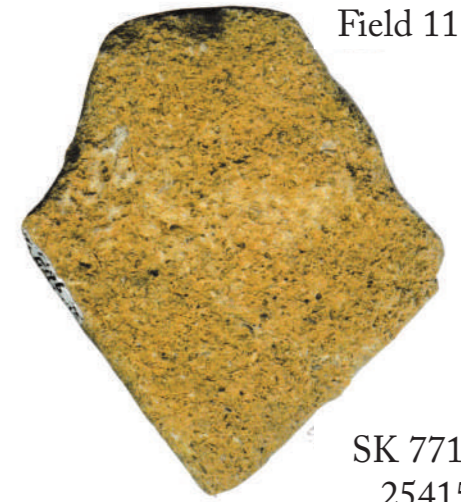
Ground stone axe head

Field 19



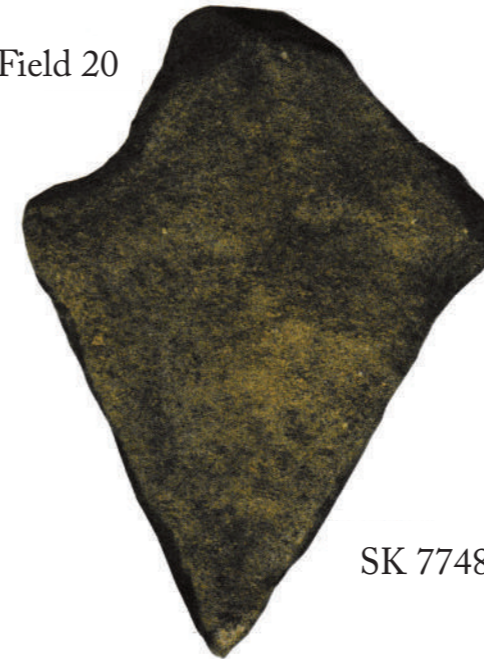
SK 7615 2786

Field 11



SK 77196 25415

Field 20



SK 7748 2691



Pointed stone implements from three different fields which were probably used for digging. Their 'tang' and spearhead-like shape suggest they were hafted, perhaps as shown in the illustration at the bottom right.

Early 1600s Clay Pipes

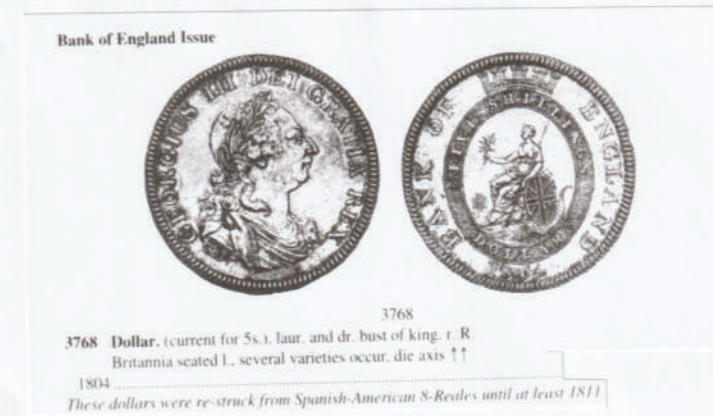
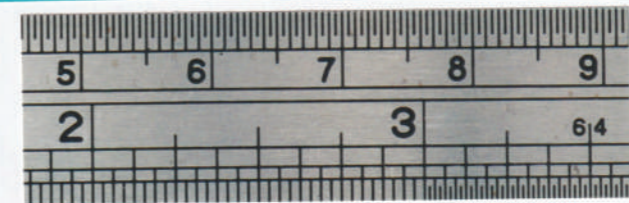


SK 7629 2499



Note how bowl size increase as tobacco becomes cheaper

Counterfeit dollar found in field 12 at SK7713 2548
1804 George III



When first made, the counterfeit dollar would have been silvered; five shillings (25p) was a considerable sum of money in 1804. Found by Sylvia Massey.

One of Sylvia's early finds - quite possibly it is of Late Upper Palaeolithic date. Note it has been in water at SK 7705 2567

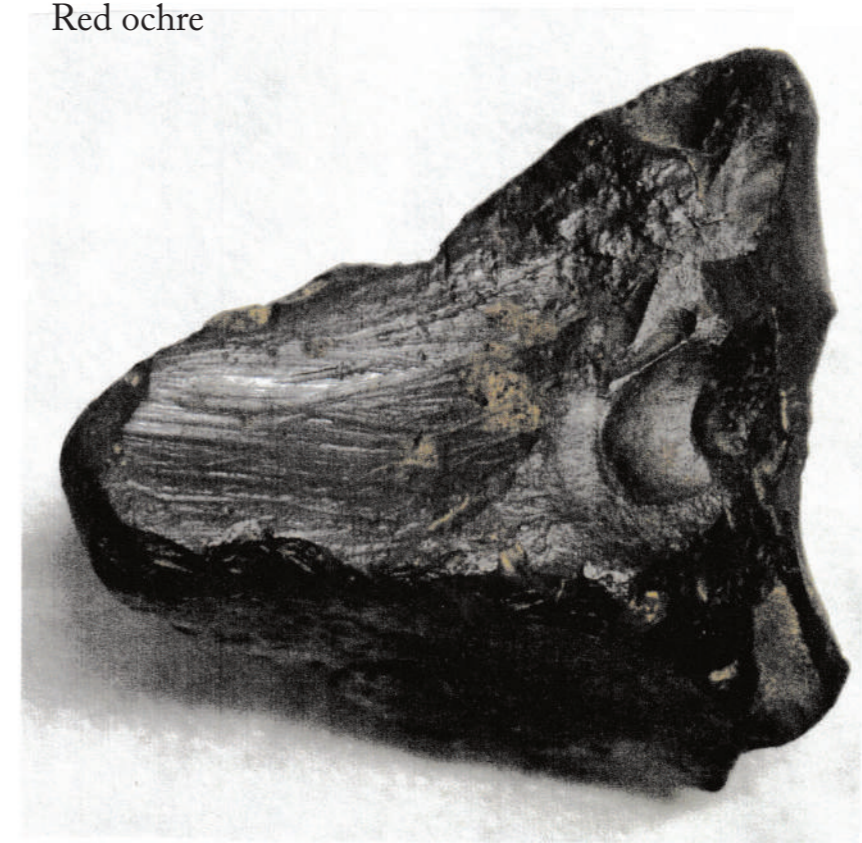


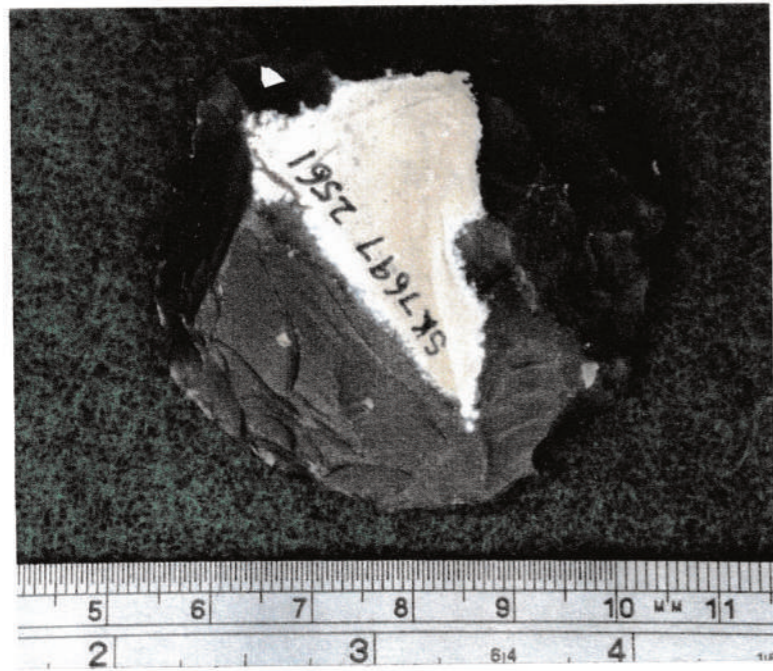
SK 7694 2526



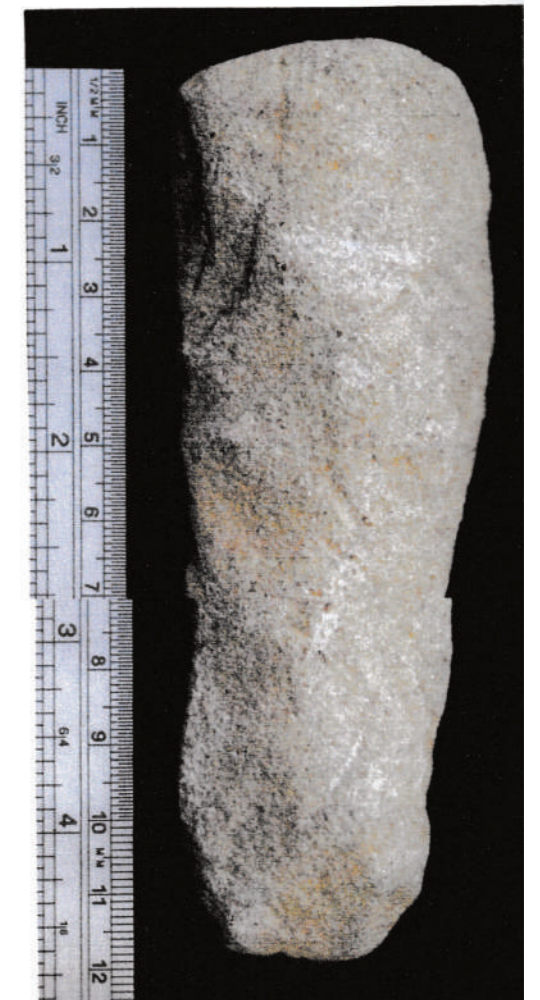
Haematite lump with scratches

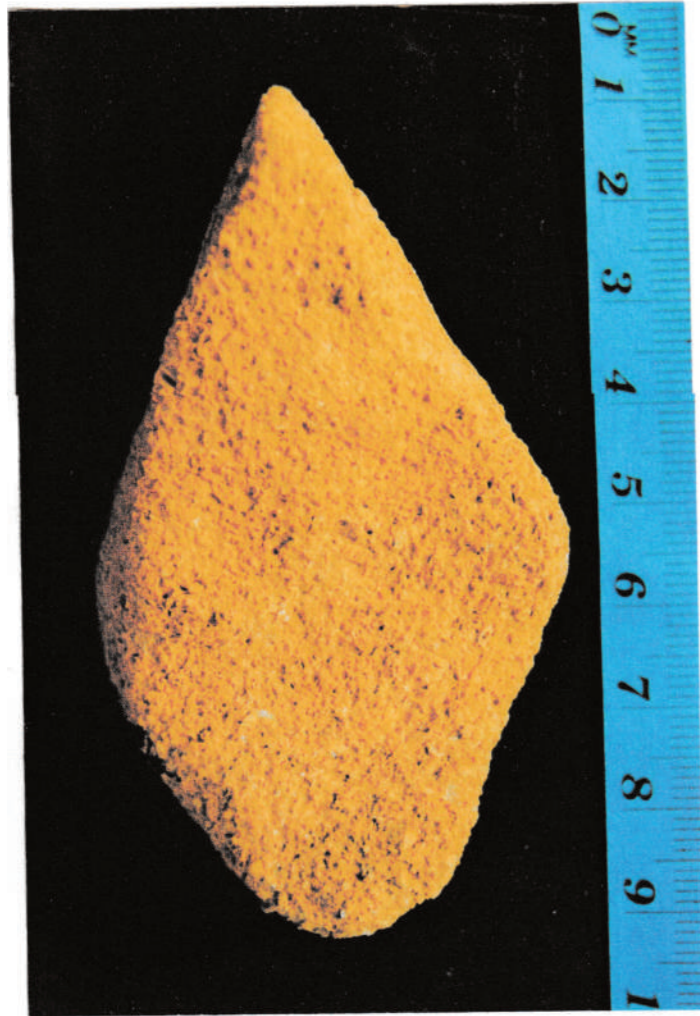
Red ochre





This disc is slightly ground in one or two places on both sides





Sandstone digger
SK 7689 2517



SK 7733 2509

67mm base
to point
64mm across
shoulders

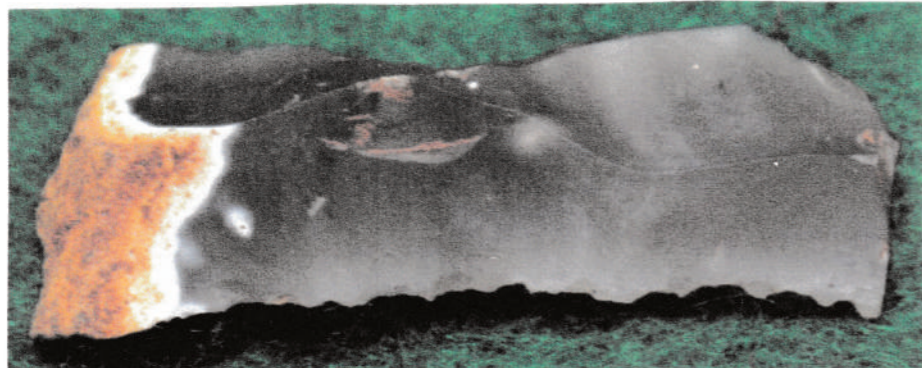
cms

The high symmetry of this sandstone tool can leave no doubts that stone-age man was using sandstone to make some of his tools. The 'tang' on this artefact suggests it was fitted into a 'tenon' socket, presumably to make a hoe or an adze, on a suitable branch.





Size and range of scrapers



32mm long



SK 7730 2563 Arrowhead or small knife

Field 1; SK 762 249

This field, alongside the road to Scalford, slopes gently at first before dropping more steeply to the ditch at its northern end; much of the flint-work is to be found on the top edge and slope of this steeper incline. Nearer to the entrance from the road, and immediately alongside the bridle-way which forms the western edge of the field, is much Romano-British debris including pottery, slate, coins and nails. Local metal detectorists claim that up to half a dozen coins can be found at each deep ploughing. Typical Roman-British objects from this site include:-

SK 7602 2496; partial pot-base with an internal pattern of two deeply incised concentric circles following the shape of the base; brown slip inside, remnants of orange slip on the outside.



SK 7603 2497; partial side and base of grey pot; whorl marks on the base; traces of black material adhering to the inside.

SK 7603 2496; part of pot rim (large diameter?); rough surface. Among these various potsherds were several nails and fragments of nails.

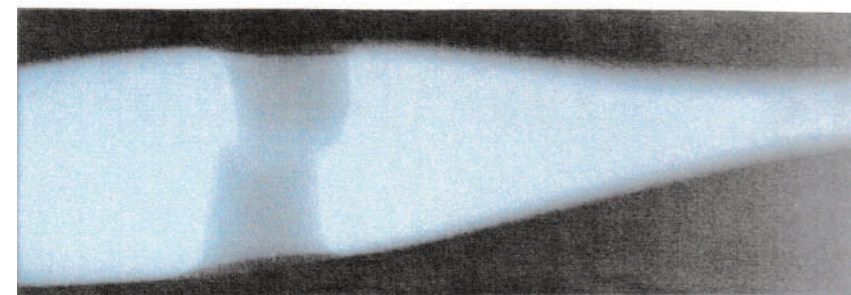
SK 7609 2494; black furnace slag (?) heavy; top surface has rusty fragments of metallic iron embedded in it.

SK 7621 2506; large lump of iron weighing nearly 2kgs; the mountain-like profile suggests run-off from a furnace and rapid cooling before the melt had time to form a flat 'ingot'.

The number of flint tools which are present is not large but the craftsmanship is generally good (note that a local collector, Kevin Shields, regularly 'walks' this field and also fields 2,3,3a,6 and 7). Most flints such as blades, scrapers and non-fancy arrowheads are probably of Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. The top end of a large stone axe from SK 7642 2484 was thought to be of Charnian origin when studied by Dick Merriman of the British Geological Survey at Keyworth. A complete stone axe measuring barely 2.5 inches in length was

found at SK 764 248 by Kevin Shields; he notes that most of his finds in these fields lie above the 115m contour.

A small, perforated stone implement found part way down the slope at SK 7618 2499 is almost certainly an early medieval whetstone (hone) which would have been suspended from the belt on a cord; this one was well used to judge from the wear around the hole edges. An X-ray photograph shows the hole had been drilled half way from each side because the two half-holes are somewhat out of line with each other.



X-radiograph showing the profile of the hole.

It is possible that, rather than being a hone, this object had been used as a wearing needle which again would explain the wear around the edges of the hole; the X-radiograph clearly shows the depression in the stone surface around the hole due to wear. (Two small flint scrapers were found close by).



In late May and early June 2008 the field was in crop with young maize plants and several days of heavy rain had made the soil surface ideal for searching. Two small cores (slightly blued, 11.7gms; SK 7606 2500; dark brown, 13.5gm; SK 7607 2498), blades, a tiny piercer (0.4gm; SK 7618 2496), two fine scrapers (12.5gm; SK 7613 2496; 2.3gm; SK 7613 2496) and an early 17th-century clay pipe bowl were among the finds.

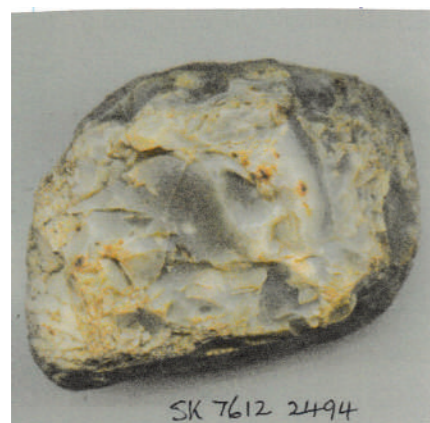
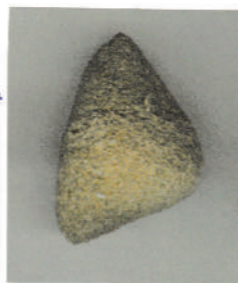


SK 7620 2497

For a few seasons, a generous scattering of sandstone lumps had caught my eye - were they natural, prehistoric or Roman-British in origin? The better field walking conditions resulted in the recovery of pointed sandstone digging tools and, more interestingly, tiny shaped sandstone objects like the ones discovered among the debris of the burial site in field 14. The top edge of the slope in Field 1 would make an imposing place for a similar burial ground.



sandstone digger; 90.0gm
SK 7614 2491



SK 7612 2494

flint hammer-stone



SK 7613 2493



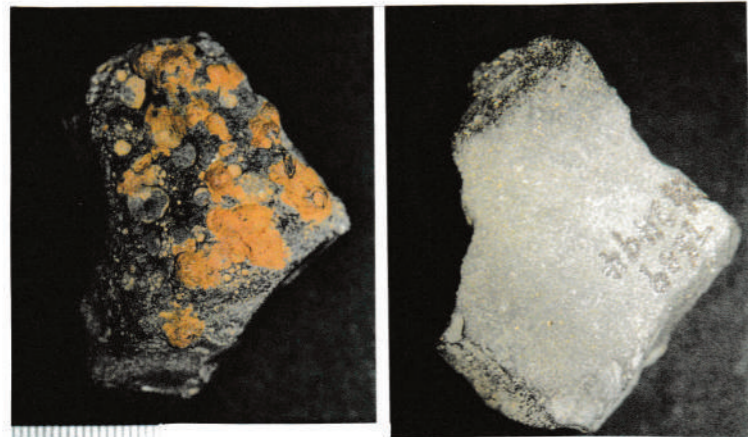
SK 7613 2493

Sandstone digger



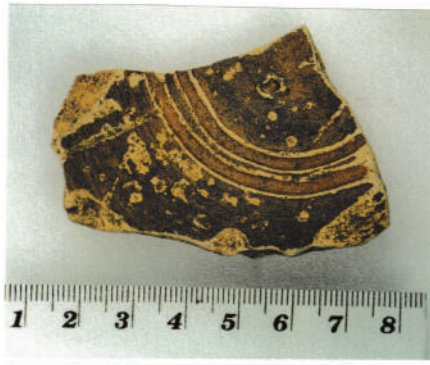
SK 7642 2486

Upper end of a broken stone axe



Romano-British objects from Field 1.

Heavy piece of slag with lumps of rusty metallic iron stuck to the upper surface.



Two potsherds inside



outside



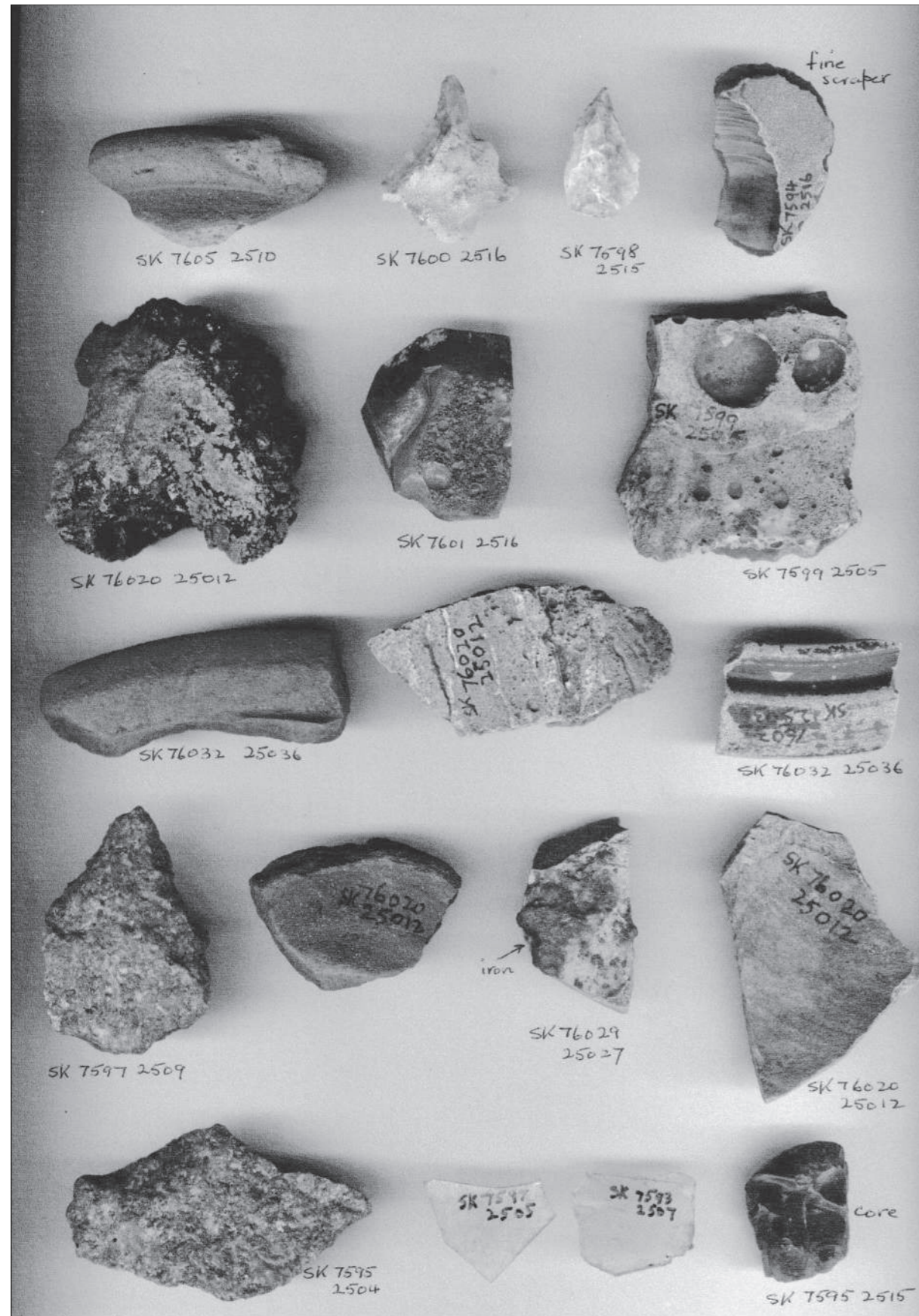
iron nail fragments



metallic lead with adhering charcoal



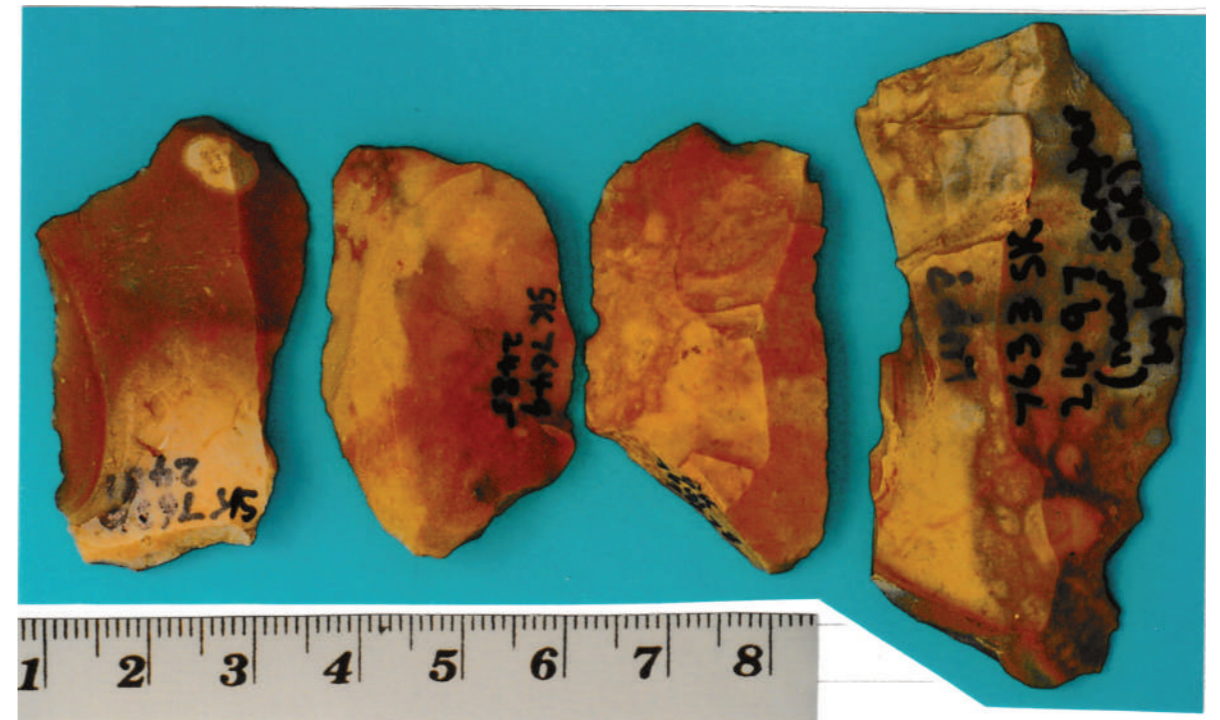
Romano-British objects from Field 1



The field immediately to the west of Field 1 has a large scatter of sandstone lumps, pottery and some worked flints.

Field 2; SK 763 248 and Field 3; SK 766 249

A track and the Jubilee Way traverse part of Field 2; little Romano-British material is present except for the odd piece of iron-working slag. The flints are similar to those found in Field 1 with the exception of three broad, ochre-coloured flakes of probable Late Upper Palaeolithic date, two of which have large bulbs of percussion. The find spots SK 7634 2481, SK 7641 2478 and SK 7649 2485 are remarkable because they show these flints lay high in the field above the 115m contour where ochre-forming water would be at least expected (unless it was in the form of natural springs flowing over the flakes)



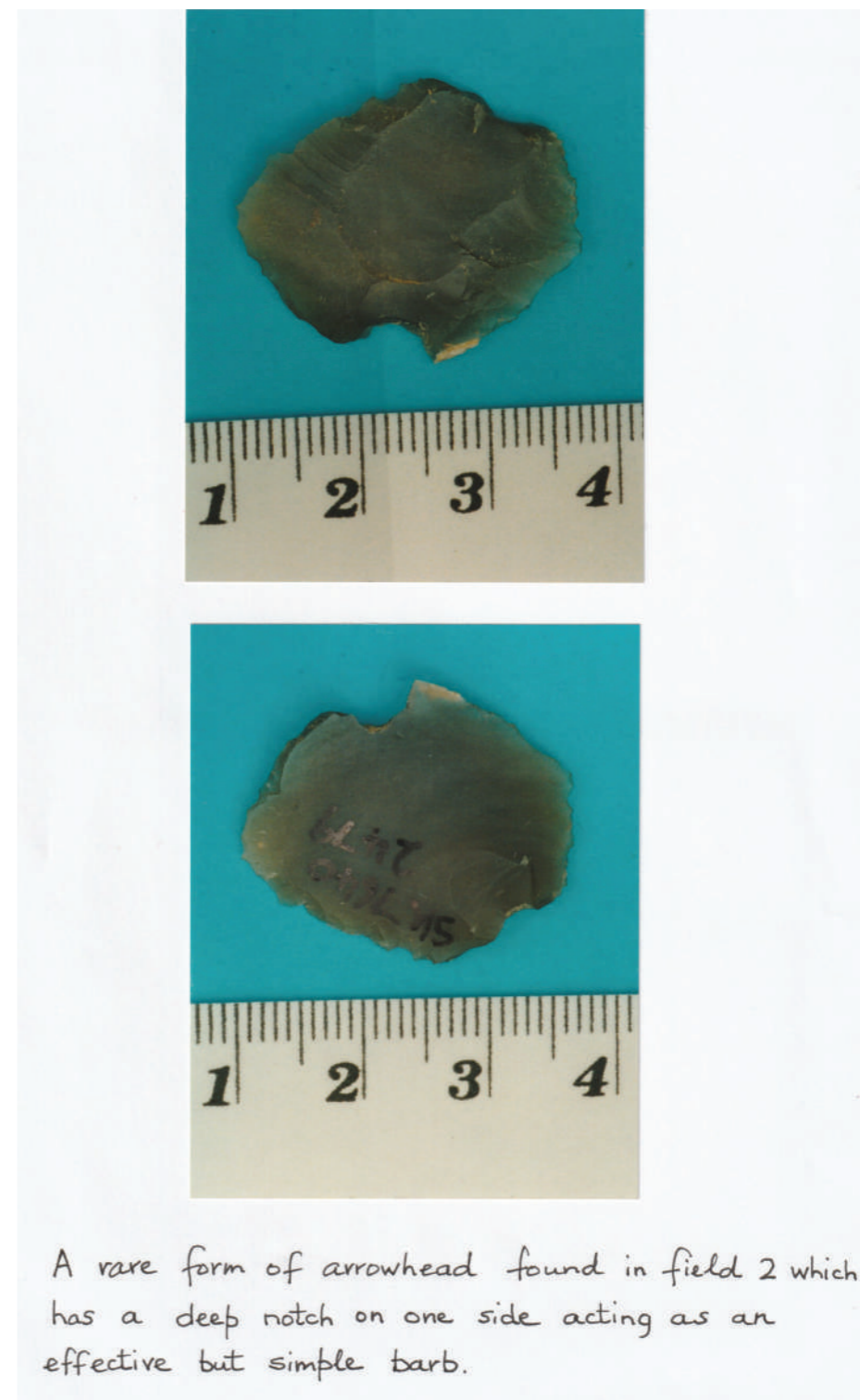
Careful searching has so far revealed only one other ochreous flint, at SK 7633 2497. Again, this is a broad flake with a large bulb of percussion and shows step-fractures from previous removals on its dorsal surface like one of the other ochre-flakes. Unlike its three probable contemporaries, this flake was actually found at the lowest point of Field 1, close to the bank of the modern drainage ditch - as was a fine Neolithic scraper at SK 7633 2498 which showed neither patination nor ochre colouration (another pristine scraper lay close by at SK 7632 2494). If this fourth flake had been struck in the Late Paleolithic and had then later been covered by flood-water which caused the ochre colour, the two scrapers clearly show the water had receded by the Neolithic era.

A more modern find from SK 7629 2499 is worthy of comment; it was a complete bowl and part stem from a clay pipe dating from the early 1600s. It is unusual to find intact pipe bowls, certainly of this age. This pipe nicely illustrates a

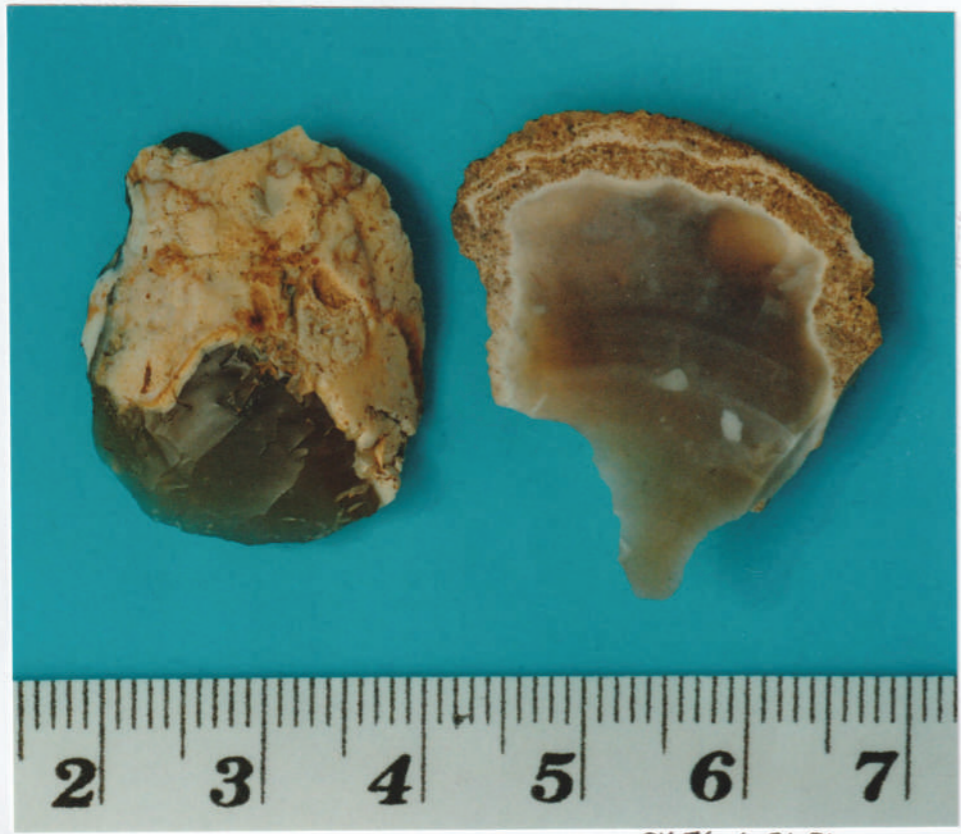
continuity of Man's presence in these parts from at least the Late Upper Paleolithic, through the Roman-British era and historical times, up to the present day.



Considering the number of Stone Age and Roman artefacts in the neighbouring fields, it was somewhat of a surprise to find only a very few struck or worked flints in Field 3, and even these were confined to the westward end. The field slopes downwards towards the Scalford brook and, after rainy weather, the bottom end by the brook tends to be boggy and is often flooded. These modern pools of water perhaps reflect in miniature a prehistoric mere which first attracted man to this pleasant area.



A rare form of arrowhead found in field 2 which has a deep notch on one side acting as an effective but simple barb.



SK 7606 2494



The flooded eastern end of field 3, early March 2007



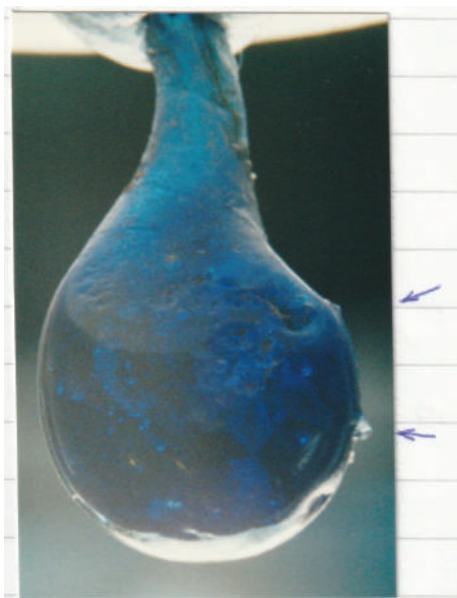
A track, predating the embankment, shows up in the crops on field 9 apparently heading south towards field 3. Some building rubble is at the northern end of the track in field 9.

Field 4(SK765251 and Field 5 (SK764251)

In early February 2003, a search in Field 5 for flint tools led not only to the discovery of Neolithic and earlier worked flint but also Romano-British pottery including patterned Samian ware. A combination of field-walking and metal detecting during February and March showed the Romano-British activity was largely confined to an area close to the eastern hedge. Magnet-dragging revealed that the scatter of hammer-scale from iron-working was quite widespread within Field 5, and even the small amount of soil trapped inside the narrow neck of broken pot from SK 7646 2511, contained several dozen iron fragments, some no bigger than a grain of sand. Several large pieces of slag still contained enough metallic iron from them to be found by the metal detector, pointing to a rather wasteful extraction process. Similarly, an iron ingot from SK 7641 2516 weighing over one kilogram smelt strongly of hydrogen sulphide (bad egg gas) when it was being cleaned under hot water: ie the finished iron product still contained some sulphurous slag.



Iron ingot SK 7641 2516



Amongst the pottery was a piece of beautiful cobalt-blue glass which must have obtained its tadpole-like appearance when it formed as a fugitive drip during glass-working.

'Droplet' of cobalt blue glass; note the sharp fragments of other glass stuck to the surface (arrowed); diameter 9mm

SK 7638 2510

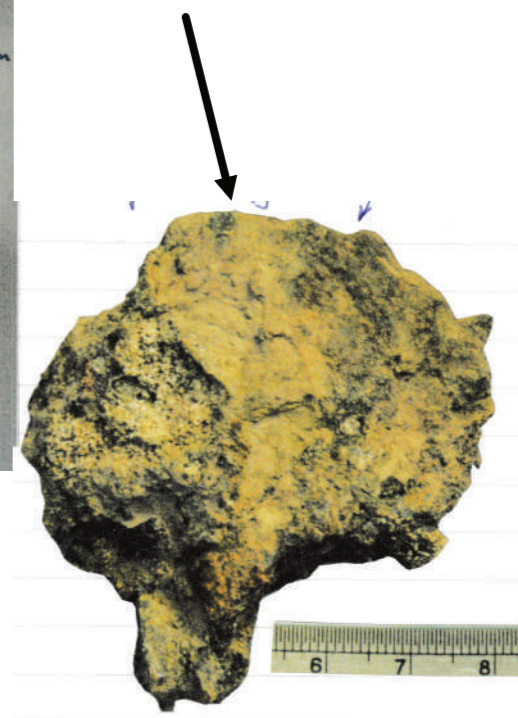
The range in size of iron-containing lumps from near to the eastern hedge of field 5 is quite impressive and shown by this selection:-



These smaller fragments were collected by dragging a large magnet over the soil; similar fragments appeared to be spread over the whole field. Some or most, are magnetic oxides.

The bigger lumps were found by a metal detector; only a small part of the field was scanned.

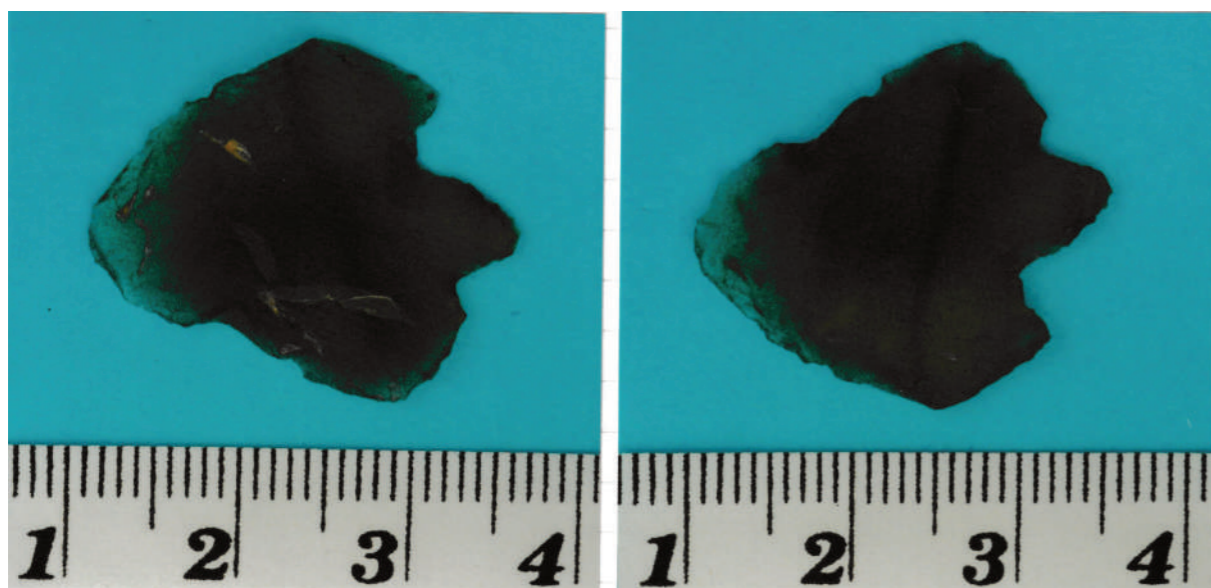
This particular lump contains much slag but the presence of metallic iron was confirmed using a magnet.



Field 4 was under a crop in Spring 2003 so an immediate search was not possible, but over the next three years it became obvious from pottery, bone, slag and metallic iron that some of the Romano-British activity had spread over from Field 5.

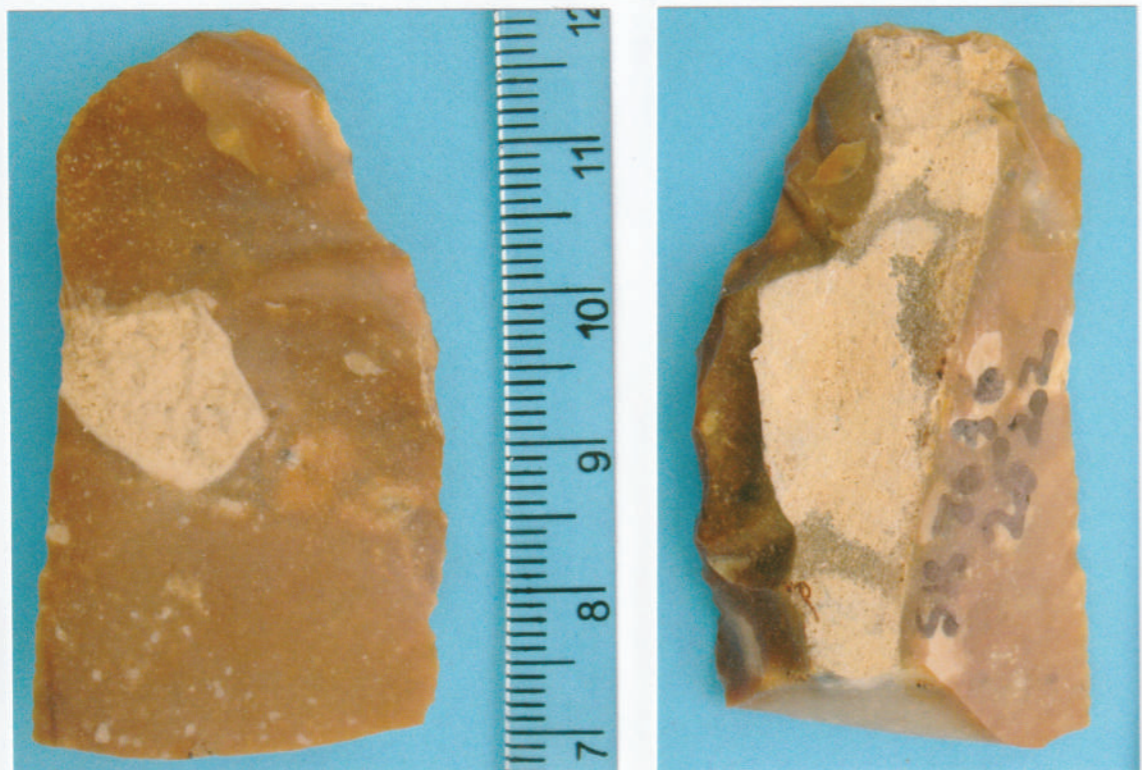


Part of a mortarium from Field 4 SK 7651 2513; other potsherds close by including fragments of samian ware.



An interesting flint artefact from Field 5 at SK 76326 25170 was what appears to be a very primitive form of barbed-and-tanged arrowhead perhaps made by a young, not yet, fully-skilled artisan:





note the lack of water stain on the broken surface

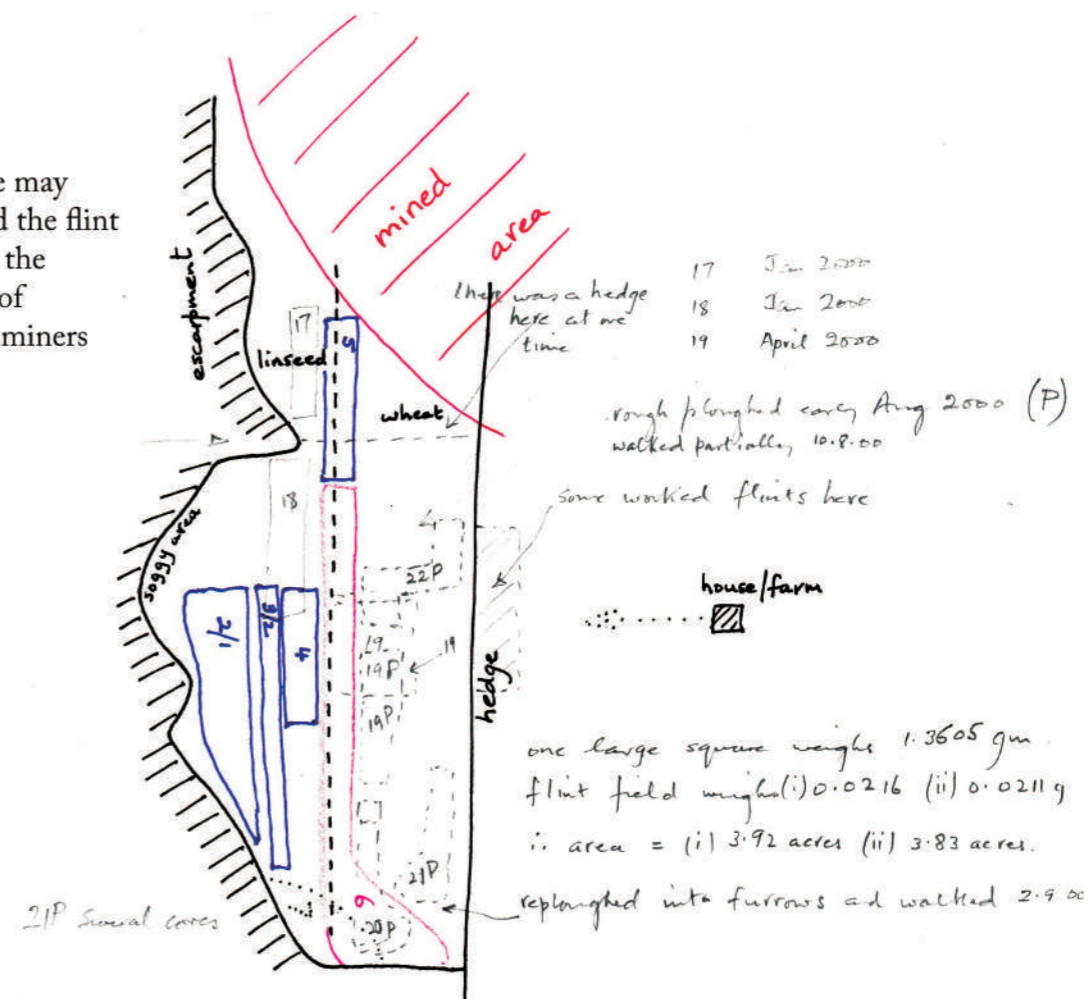


← sickle gloss

SK 7630 2522

This backed blade, which appears to have been broken in recent times, has sickle gloss on its cutting edge. Field 6

The hedge may have saved the flint area from the attention of ironstone miners



The approximate areas where flints were collected just after the linseed crop had been cut down; the wheat had been harvested about 3 weeks previously. Oddly, relatively few flints were found in the wheat area except at the southern end where a number of crude, large flint tool were picked up. Area 4 was cleared of all stones, flint or not, because this was where the flints covered in black deposits occurred.

Large flints and several cores were found in the N.W. part of area 2/1. Flints were fairly evenly scattered throughout the parts of the field which were searched; no thumbnail scrapers or b+t arrow heads were found whereas a potato field ca. 300 yards to the North yielded such objects of Bronze Age date.