

FLINTS FROM THE BRICKFIELDS, DEVONPORT

## THIRTY-NINTH REPORT ON SCIENTIFIC MEMORANDA.

EDITED BY GEORGE M. DOE, RECORDER.

[*Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of  
Science, Literature, and Art.* 1933—Vol. lxxv, pp. 163-174].

THE contributors to this Report are Sir Hugh N. G. Stucley, Bart., Messrs. G. E. L. Carter, R. P. Chope, G. M. Doe, E. W. Hendy, E. Symes Saunders and R. Hansford Worth. It is regretted that Plates V and VI in the 1932 Report of this Committee have been inadvertently transposed. This has rendered it necessary to reproduce them with corrected titles; also the letterpress of the Reports has been revised to correspond with them, and to ensure greater accuracy of description.

### FLINTS FROM THE BRICKFIELDS, DEVONPORT.

The *Brickfields* have a slate subsoil, over which is a shallow layer of clay, covered in turn by a thin stratum of coarse loam immediately below the turf. In the clay there are occasional deeper pockets. In both loam and clay on the south-eastern slope of the fields I have found a number of flints.

There is no evidence of any beach, the flints are not pebbles, and they are widely distributed; that they have been brought on to the site by human agency appears certain.

It is interesting that the loam and the clay each yields its own type of flint. In the loam the flakes are without patination, and are grey or black; while there are nodules of flint, black on fracture, and in the form in which they would be derived from the chalk, evidently brought on to the site as raw material.

In the clay all the flints are well patinated, very markedly ochreous, and the edges are not so sharp as in the implements from the loam. The evidence seems clear that the deposits are of widely separated ages.

Plate XII gives photographs of selected implements and flakes.

Fig. 1. A well-worked scraper, with much secondary chipping and still retaining a keen edge, taken from the loam and neither patinated nor ochreous.

Fig. 2. A scraper, or, as Mr. Hansford Worth suggests, a fabricator, the edges have had a lot of wear and are well smoothed or rounded; taken from the loam and neither patinated nor ochreous.

The remaining figures present well patinated, ochreous flints, from the clay.

Fig. 3. A leaf-like flake.

Fig. 4. Perhaps a borer.

Fig. 5. A nondescript flaked flint.

Fig. 6. An implement of crude type, flaked on both sides, with secondary flaking on the cutting edge, found imbedded in the clay.

Fig. 7. Flaked implement found imbedded in the clay.

Fig. 1a. Possibly a hand-axe.

Fig. 2a. A flint core, from which three definitely leaf-like flakes have been struck.

Fig. 3a. A mass of flint, which has been fractured, material for manufacture of implements.

All fractures and worked faces in the flints represented by figures 1a, 2a, and 3a, are old and glazed.

E. SYMES SAUNDERS.

#### SITE OF AN IMPLEMENT FACTORY NEAR TORRINGTON.

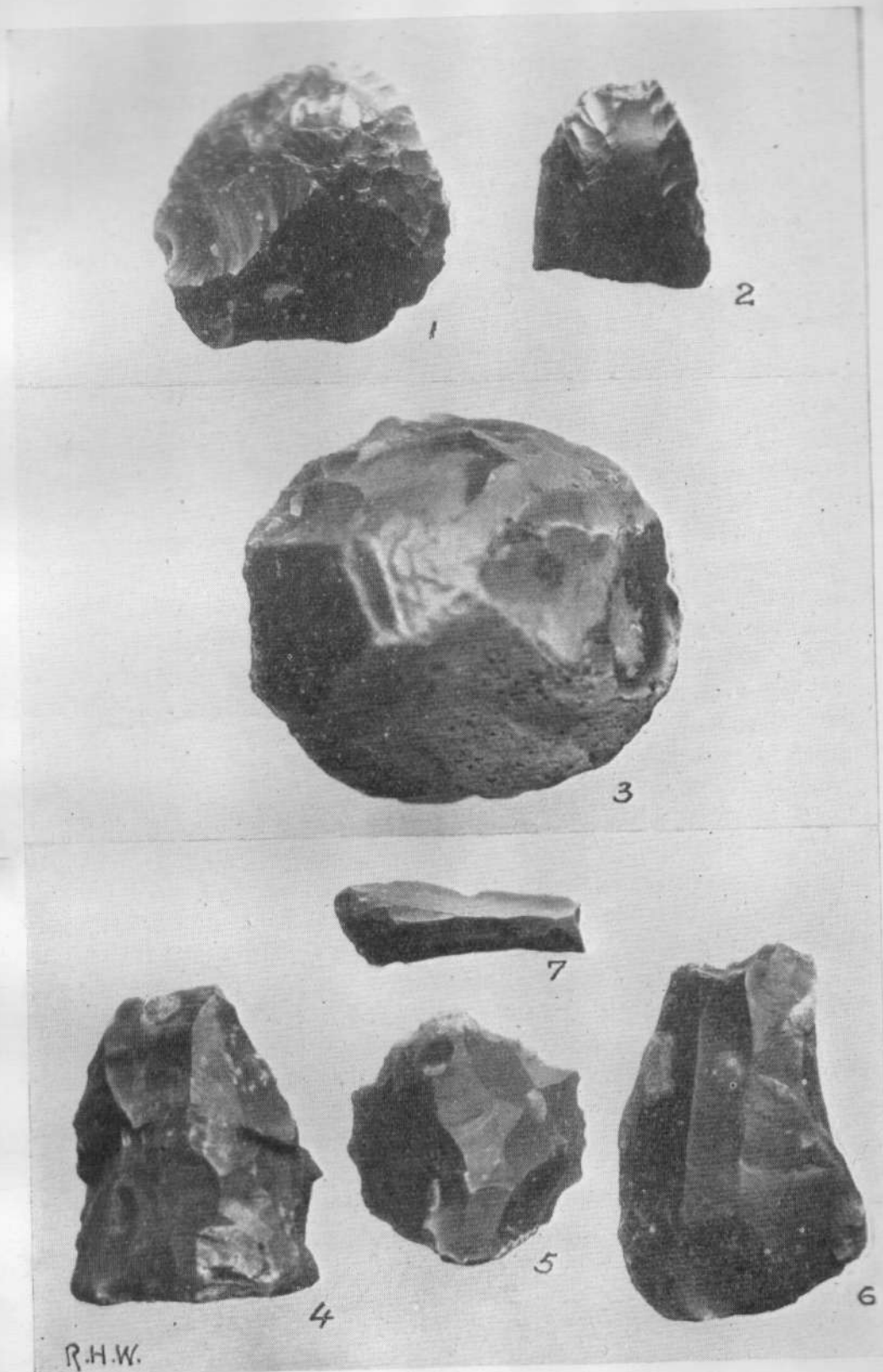
Not far from *Torrington*, beside the *Torrington-Bideford* road, and between the road and the railway, immediately before the turning to *Wear Gifford*, is a strip of land recently broken for gardening purposes by Mr. William Sparks of *Torrington*. Here Mr. Sparks has found a large number of flint chips of varying size. Among the collection which he has made are many well-marked cores, for the more part so far reduced by the removal of flakes as to have their possible yield exhausted.

Plate XIII. Figs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, give photographs of selected examples of flakes and cores.

So far, I have only seen two flakes with marked secondary chipping, of these, one is a perfect scraper with curved working edge, and was probably mislaid after manufacture, (Plate XIII. Fig. 1); the other is a piece broken from an implement, the precise nature of which is not determinable, it may have been a leaf-shaped arrow-head, or a small scraper, probably the former, and was very possibly broken in making (Plate XIII. Fig. 2.)

The greater part of the flint found consists of chips and flakes which are waste from the process of manufacture, being mainly such are not well adapted to receiving further work.

The cores, the two fully worked flints, and the many chips spread over some considerable area of ground are good evidence of the former existence of a factory on this site. The flint was probably of local origin, derived from the deposit near *Orleigh*; it is brown, possibly in some part further coloured by the nature of the soil in which it has long lain,



FLINTS FOUND NEAR TORRINGTON

(Natural Size)

Scientific Memoranda—To face page 164.



but it is not so far stained as to be described as ochreous, and it is not patinated. The factory must be assigned to the Neolithic, or perhaps the Early Bronze Age.

The find is of considerable interest, and I am indebted to Mr. W. Sparks for the opportunity of examining his collection, and to Mr. G. M. Doe for directing my attention to the matter, and for kindly conducting me to the spot.

R. H. WORTH.

#### PLAGUE OF STARLINGS.

In the 24th Report of this Committee in 1927 (*Trans.*, Vol. LIX), there is given an account of a visitation by a large flock of these birds, accompanied by redwings, on a plantation of young trees on the estate of Lord Clinton at Bickton, when, though thousands of the starlings had been destroyed by various means, a large part of the plantation was killed, and the rest of it considerably damaged. In the *Western Morning News* of the 2nd March, 1933, Mr. A. H. Machell Cox, of Yelverton, gives a detailed account of a somewhat similar visitation to places in both Devon and Cornwall in the early part of the present year from continental starlings both by day and night, their roosts, as in Lord Clinton's case, accommodating also hundreds of redwings. The most interesting part of Mr. A. H. Machell Cox's article is an account of the visit of these birds to Lundy Island, which I give in full. He says:—

"Mr. Gade has sent me a full and most interesting account of the happenings on Lundy, where the earliest "murmuration of stares" (or starlings at roost) is on record for Devon. The curiously mixed cover, comprising sycamore, oak, holly, rhododendron, fuchias, ash, and Douglas pine, lies adjacent to dwellings. All birds roosting on Lundy have fed there during the day. In mild weather the starling population amounts to less than 50 birds (which do not breed on the island); in cold snaps on the mainland numbers increase to many thousands. Buzzards often attend the roost, but do not seem to prey on starlings. Up to January 19 the numbers of the roost were much smaller than in previous winters.

On January 20 flocks began to arrive from North and South during the day; on the 24th about 2,000 birds were roosting. The following day Mr. Gade records the largest flock he ever saw there, all feeding in a 17-acres field; he estimated them at 150,000. They created quite a sensation as they rose and darkened the sky. Early next morning they passed on, but during the night some hundreds roosted in the church tower and under the eaves of houses and barns."

Having understood that Sir Hugh Stucley had been suffering for several years from a similar infliction, I wrote to him, when