

Record Name: Swaag in Eden 8. Hoard of Late Bronze Age Metalwork from Gilmonby

SWAAG ID Number: 517

Recorded Date: 2012-05-08 17:31:03

Recorded by: Tim Laurie

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Northern Britain

Site Access: Private

Record Date: 2012-04-29

Location: Gilmonby

Civil Parish: Not known

British National Grid: #NZ 407 127

Description: A total of 127 objects (including copper based metal objects, copper ingot fragments and six ferrous metal objects) were found in the course of excavation of the site after initial discovery of a spearhead by the farmer during field drainage operations.

This significant hoard is interpreted as a smith's hoard.

The fidsite is in a wet pasture to the south of the River Greta on the line of the direct route from the South and East (from the Vale of Mowbray) to the north and west (to the Vale of Eden) and is interpreted as confirming the existence of a trackway on the eastern approaches to the Stainmore Pass. This trackway, crossing Gayles Moor, Barningham Moor and Scargill Moor, survived as the route taken by Scots Raiders, as a drove road for cattle from Galloway to the Markets of the South, and for Travelling Tinkers through post medieval time as the Badger Way.

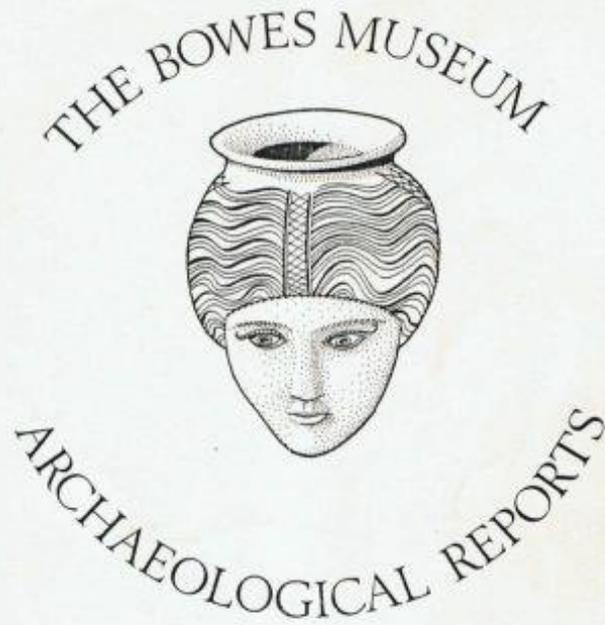
Dimensions: See Coggins and Tylecote 1983.

Additional Notes: During our visit to the Roman Fort and to the Norman Keep at Bowes, much discussion was centred on the existence of a Cross-Pennine route across Stainmore and that the eastern approach to this trackway followed the southern edge of the Tees Valley to join the line taken by the Roman Dere Street from Scotch Corner.

The evidence for Roman and Norman Occupation at Bowes is of course most prominent but there is much evidence for the existence of a prehistoric route 66 also, but on a more direct and different line.

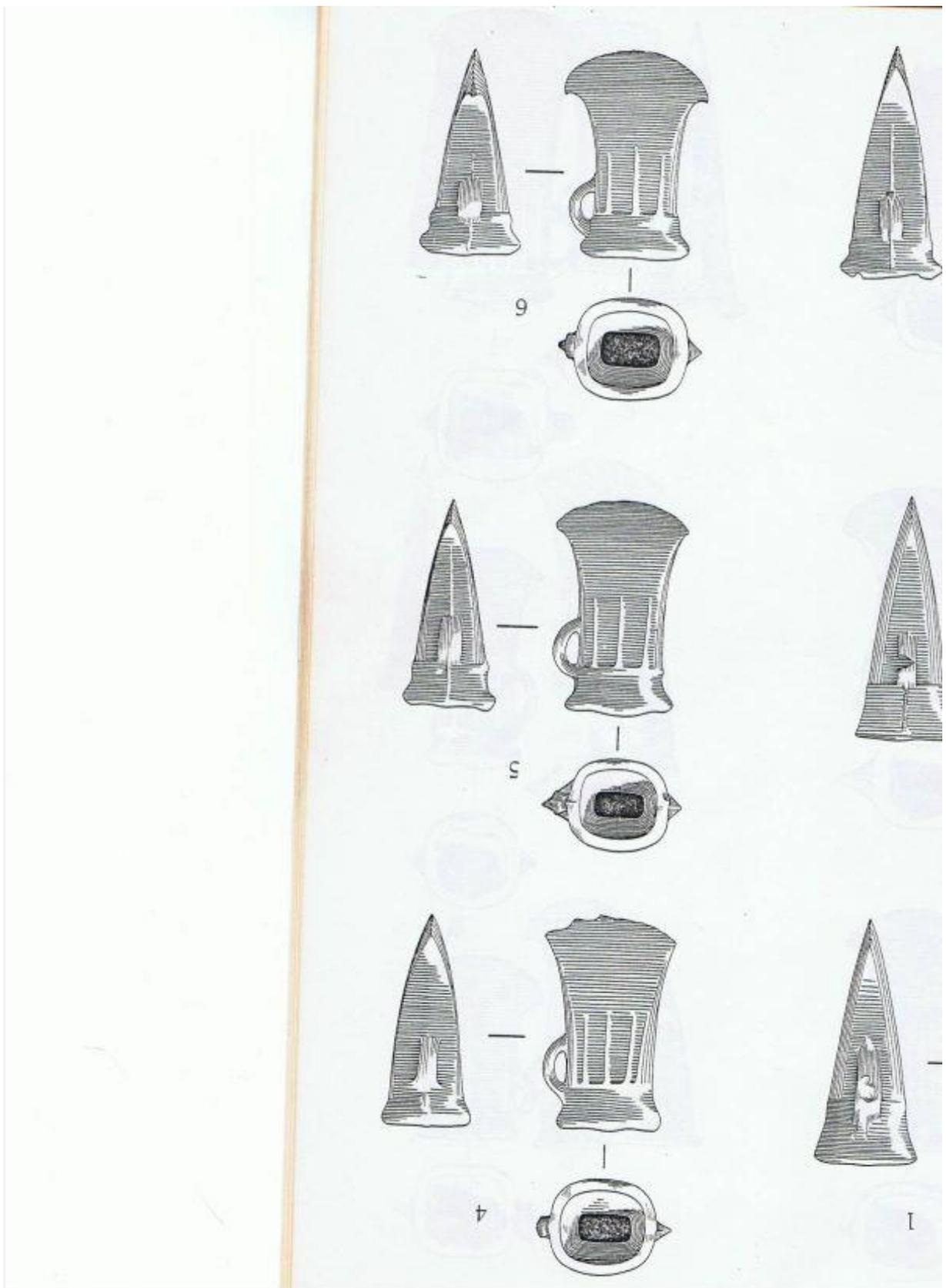
For an account of the circumstances of the finding of the Gilmonby Hoard, for very fine drawings of all the objects, and for an account of the metallurgy represented by the objects, see Coggins, D. and Tylecote, R.F. 1983. 'Hoard of Late Bronze Age Metalwork from Gilmonby'. The Bowes Museum. Archaeological Reports, Volume 2.

Last Update: 2012-05-08

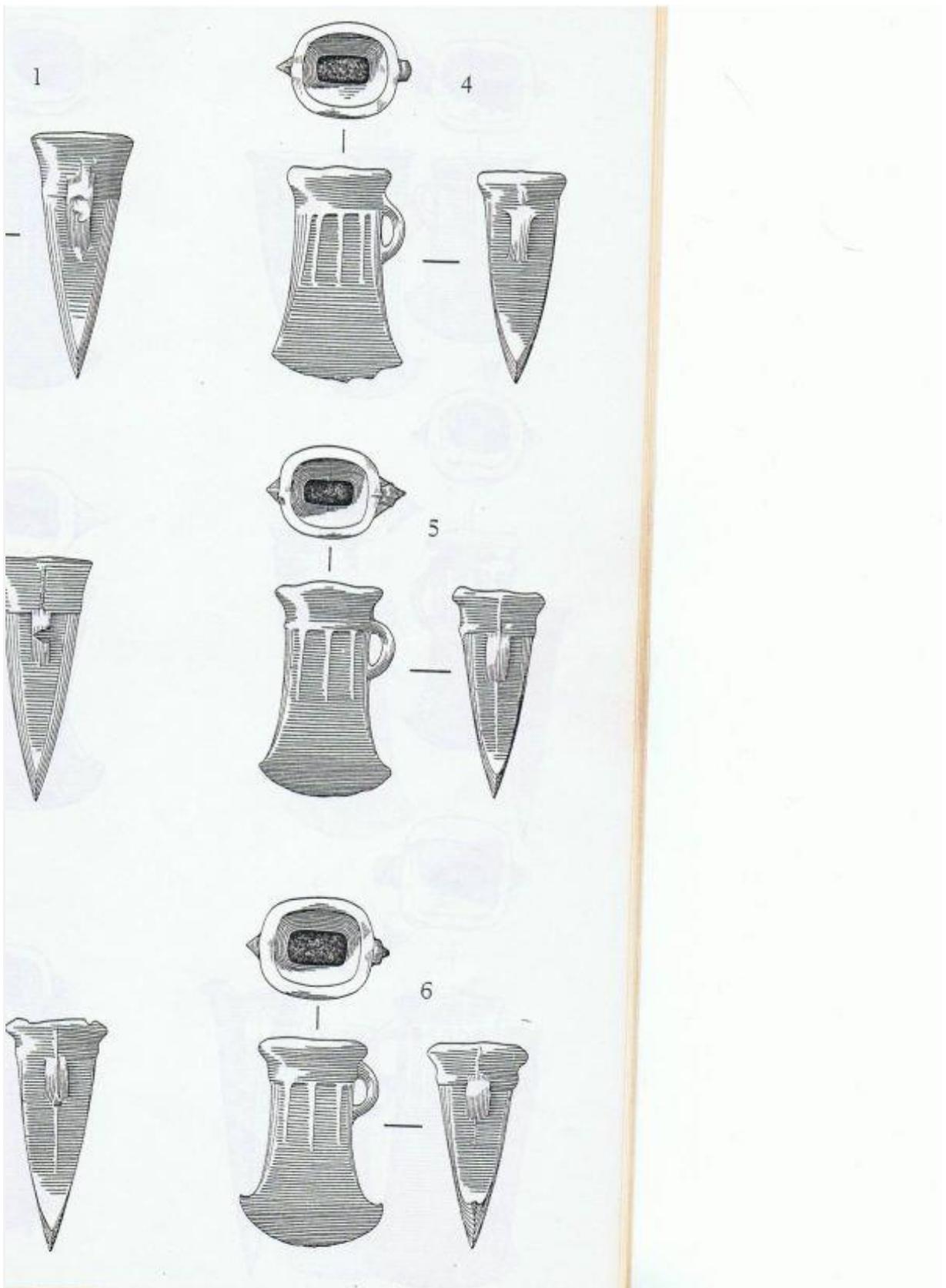


Volume 2

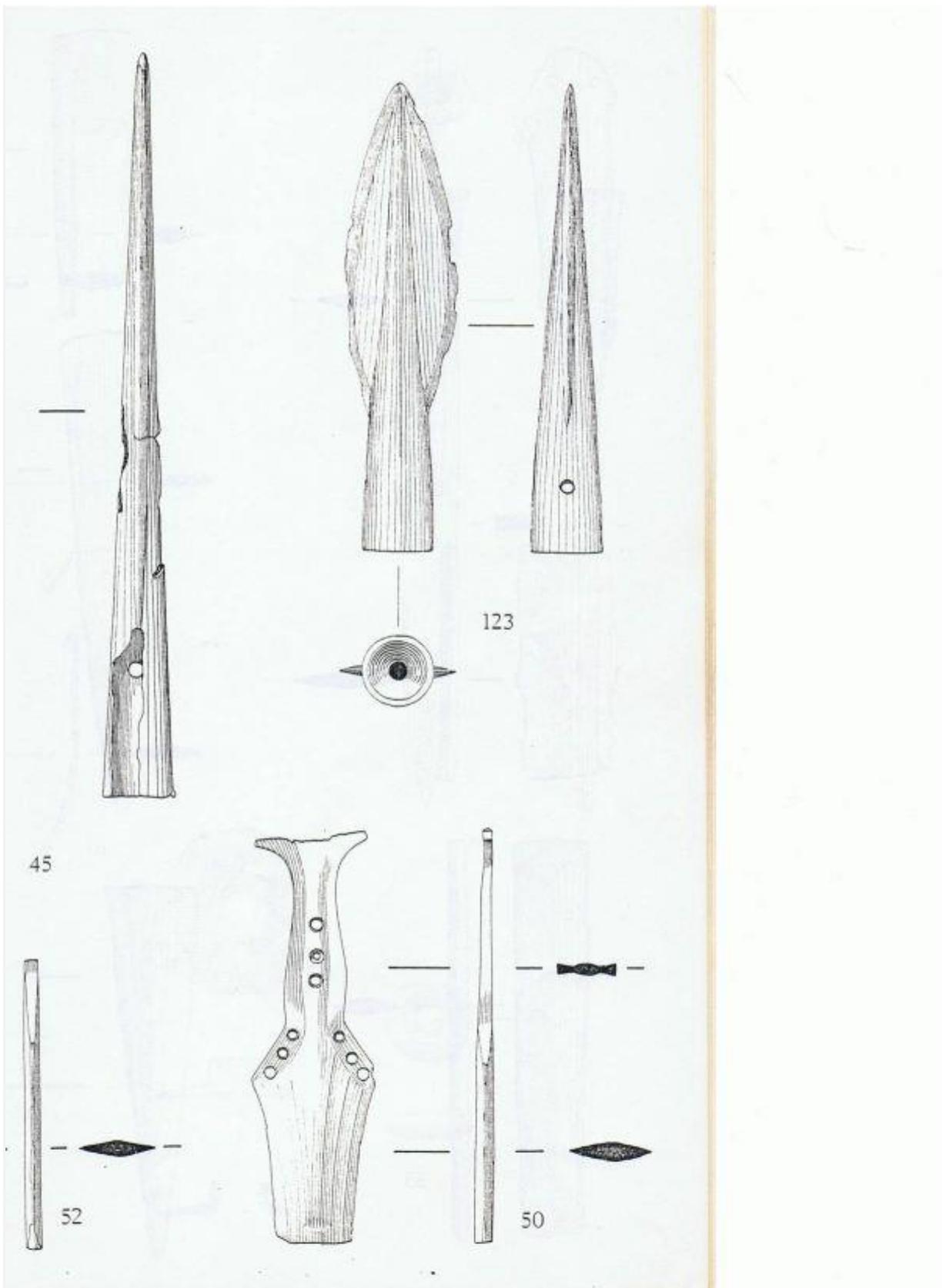
A hoard of late bronze age
metalwork from Gilmonby



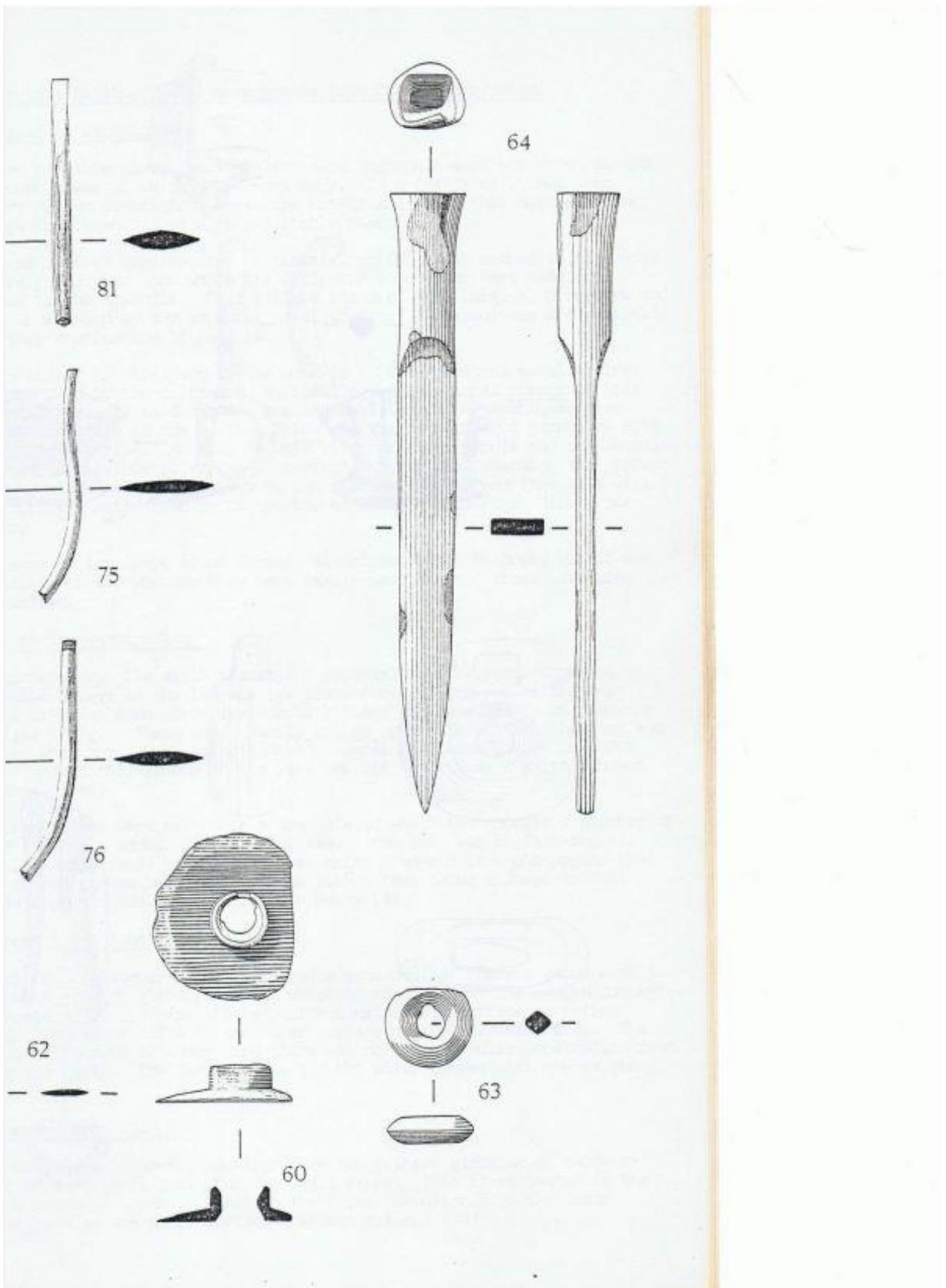
Record Number 517 >>> Image 2: Example page of the objects illustrated (Drawings by Sandy Morris and Alan Dyson).



Record Number 517 >>> Image 3: Example page of the objects illustrated (Drawings by Sandy Morris and Alan Dyson).



Record Number 517 >>> Image 4: Example page of the objects illustrated (Drawings by Sandy Morris and Alan Dyson).



Record Number 517 >>> Image 5: Example page of the objects illustrated (Drawings by Sandy Morris and Alan Dyson).

On the basis that when one is cutting any fairly hard material e.g. wood or metal, then the material from which the cutting implement is made must be harder than the material which is being cut, otherwise it will not cut it.

Gilmonley Axes.

No 1. Casting ridges - ~ - have been filed off.

No 13 ~ - - and on one face near the mouth are file marks.

No 15 ~ - - and some of the file marks are visible.

In late Bronze Age, before the use of iron had been developed, or even discovered, working on bronze which had probably been work hardened and is therefore fairly tough (rather than hard - brittle).

Question What material harder than the bronze was used to make the files out of, and what material harder than the files was used to cut the teeth on the files.

Gilmonley Swords + Tools.

No. 50. Blade oval ~ - - hollow ground edge.

No. 54 oval section - - - hollow ground edges.

No 58 - - - hollow ground edge

No 59 ditto

Tools. No 60. edge - hollow ground.

How were the hollow ground edges achieved. ?

A hollow ground edge implies the use of an accurately mouth running grinding wheel - at a time when there is little if any basic wheeled transport let alone the technology of grinding wheels, lathes etc which must have come at a very much later date.

Record Number 517 >>> Image 6: Notes on the use of iron files to remove casting ridges and on hollow ground edges implying use of the wheel.

If the writer of these notes contacts me I shall be grateful, as the notes are not signed!

Record Name: Bowes Roman Fort.Dedication Slab honouring the (African) Roman Emperor Severus and his two sons Caracalla and Geta.

SWAAG ID Number: 588

Recorded Date: 2012-07-29 16:55:23

Recorded by: Tim Laurie

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Archaeology

Record Date: 0000-00-00

Location: St Giles Church, Bowes. Found in the Vicarage Garden, 1929.

Civil Parish: Not known

British National Grid:

Altitude: N/A

Geology: N/A

Description: This fine stone slab (see attached photos) honours the Emperor P. Lucius Septimius Severus on his advance into Northern Britain during the first decade after AD 200 to subdue an insurrection by the Scots. The slab also honours Severus's two sons who accompanied him: Caracalla and Geta who each were his heirs and mutually in distrust and enmity (for a vivid description of their mutual enmity and their designation by Severus each as Augustus and Joint Emperors with Severus in order to reconcile and pacify them. But this to no avail, see: Gibbon: 'Decline and Fall Vol 1.87 et seq. The Emperor Severus died at York in AD212 leaving his two sons to decide who inherited the position of Emperor. All references to Geta throughout the Empire were erased from all Inscriptions on instructions from Caracalla following the murder of Geta in front of his mother at Rome. Geta had been tricked by Caracalla into attendance on his Mother the Dowager Empress, for reconciliation. This slab was excavated from the Vicarage Garden in 1929 and now rests in St Giles Church at Bowes.

For an account of the Roman Forts on the line of the A66 Road visited recently by SWAAG members, see SWAAG Record No. 532.

Last Update: 2012-07-29



Record Number 588 >>> Image 1:

Record Name: Roman harness fittings
SWAAG ID Number: 592
Recorded Date: 2012-08-18 14:34:26
Recorded by: Will Swales
Category: Archaeological Find
Record Type: Archaeology
Record Date: 2012-08-18
Location: Fremington Hagg
Civil Parish: Reeth
British National Grid:

Description: Among the items listed in the 1852 catalogue of the Yorkshire Museum in York was "Several specimens of silvered horse furniture, ornamented with slightly engraved patterns. Found on Fremington Hagg, near Reeth in Swaledale. Presented by Capt. Harland." (Wellbeloved, Rev C: Descriptive account of the antiquities in the grounds and in the museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, 1852).

Horse furniture is a rather curious phrase for harness fittings. The donor was presumably Captain John Harland (1788-1875), the famous dalesman, soldier in the Napoleonic Wars, chairman of the Reeth Poor Law Union, and compiler of the Glossary of Swaledale Dialect Words (Cooper, Edmund: A History of Swaledale, 1973, p67).

The first comprehensive published analysis of the find was written in 1971 by G A Webster (A hoard of Roman military equipment from Fremington Hagg, in *Soldier and Civilian in Roman Yorkshire*, ed. R M Butler, 1971, p107-126). He explained that another reference to the find placed the date of it at least 19 years before the catalogue listing, and it also seemed likely that the Yorkshire Museum's collection of harness fittings was either the result of two separate donations of items from the same find, or from more than one find, or even a combination of both.

Webster identified 75 pendants, roundels, strips and studs that he felt were likely to have belonged to the original hoard, and noted that seven of these had been given to the British Museum in 1880. As a consequence of Webster's article, the British Museum conducted a detailed scientific analysis of comparable samples from the London and York collections to test whether they did in fact belong to the same hoard. The results were published in the *British Museum Quarterly*, vol. 37, summer 1973, and confirmed that the metal compositions were so similar as to suggest "that not only were they cast in the same workshop, but also from the same crucible of metal."

Webster dated the fittings to before 69 AD, i.e. before the completion of the Roman conquest of this part of the north. He surmised that the hoard was probably the enterprise of a looter from the equipment of Roman cavalymen who had been sent to quell a local revolt. Nothing more is known about the date, location or circumstances of the find.

Currently three of the fittings are on display in the Yorkshire Museum's permanent exhibition, in case 13 of the Roman section (see photo 1 below) where they are described as "copper-alloy harness mounts decorated with silver gilding and niello." A selection of the fittings that remain in the museum's storeroom are shown below at photos 2 and 3.

Last Update: 2012-09-11



Record Number 592 >>> Image 1: The three Fremington Hagg harness fittings on display in the Roman section of the Yorkshire Museum's permanent exhibition and described as "copper-alloy harness mounts decorated with silver gilding and niello." Photographed by Ric Carter by permission of York Museums Trust



Record Number 592 >>> Image 2: Fremington Hagg harness fittings from the storeroom of the Yorkshire Museum (copyright York Museums Trust). Most are silvered copper alloy. The item bottom right is an iron pendant featuring a female face. Above it is a copper alloy terret ring for holding chariot reins



Record Number 592 >>> Image 3: Fremington Hagg harness fittings from the storeroom of the Yorkshire Museum (copyright York Museums Trust). Most are silvered copper alloy. The item at second row centre features a female face. At third row right is a scabbard fitting called a chape.

Record Name: Roman coin hoard
SWAAG ID Number: 593
Recorded Date: 2012-08-18 14:55:14
Recorded by: Will Swales
Category: Archaeological Find
Record Type: Archaeology
Site Access: Private
Record Date: 2012-08-18
Location: Scarr House, Swale Hall Lane, west of Grinton
Civil Parish: Grinton
British National Grid: SE 041 983
Altitude: 210m

Description: The hoard of Roman coins was unearthed in 1988 by a metal-detectorist in a field next to Scarr House, on Swale Hall Lane to the west of Grinton. The coins are thought to have been buried in an organic container because none was found. They were declared treasure trove and placed in the custody of the Yorkshire Museum. Shortly afterwards they were analysed and described by P J Casey and P Wenham (A second-century denarius hoard from Grinton, North Yorkshire, in Yorkshire Archaeological Journal vol. 62, 1990, p9-11). They described 53 recognisable coins, with issue dates spanning 74 to 169 AD, and noted nine illegible fragments of coins. Casey and Wenham concluded that the Grinton find seemed to fit with the general distribution of Roman coin hoards, also that it was similar to finds from all periods of the occupation, and so it was probably not related to any extreme event such as attack or rebellion. The coins are currently on display in the Time Tunnel of the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes (item HAZFM 1578).

Last Update: 2012-08-18



Record Number 593 >>> Image 1: Roman coins from the Scarr House hoard on display at the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes

Record Name: Roman lead pigs from Heyshaw, Nidderdale

SWAAG ID Number: 604

Recorded Date: 2012-09-05 17:16:50

Recorded by: Will Swales

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Archaeology

Record Date: 2012-09-05

Location: Heyshaw, near Dacre, Nidderdale

British National Grid: SE 173 618

Description: Two reported finds of Roman lead pigs in Swaledale – at Hurst Mines and at Crackpot – are known to be unreliable because in both cases no proper record was made and the finds do not exist.

See details at Additional notes below.

In any search for evidence that could support either story it might be helpful to consider the nature of similar finds in other lead-mining areas. This record relates primarily to the two Roman lead pigs found together near Dacre, in Nidderdale, about four miles from the lead mines on Greenhow Hill. It also includes an image and urls linking to further information about three Roman lead pigs found elsewhere in the country that closely fit the description of the one reportedly found at the Hurst Mines.

Nidderdale find – Arthur Raistrick and Bernard Jennings in *A History of Lead Mining in the Pennines* (1965) cited an article by the Rector of Ripley in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* vol. 41 (1735), p560, that describes the Nidderdale find. It related that in 1731 on the side of an old trackway near the hamlet of Heyshaw, a countryman's horse slipped when its foot fell into a hole covered with heather. The curious rider thrust his hand into the hole and pulled out two large pigs of lead.

Both became possessions of the Ingleby family of Ripley Castle, and in 1772 one of them was bequeathed to the British Museum, where it remains. See below for image and link to the museum's online catalogue. The other pig was kept at Ripley Castle until being sold by auction in the mid 1990s. It came up for auction again in 2007 when it was sold for £36,000. See below for url linking to Bonhams online catalogue.

The pigs are almost identical, measuring about 58.5cm long, by 13.5cm wide, by 10cm deep, and weighing 70kg. The raised inscription on the top reads IMP CAES DOMITIANO AUG COS VII, which when the abbreviations are expanded becomes IMPERATORE CAESARE DOMITIANO AUGUSTO CONSULE VII, which translates as Emperor Caesar Domitian Augustus seventh year as consul. Another inscription on another face reads [BRI]G, which is thought to be an abbreviation for BRIGANTICUM, the name the Romans gave to the Pennine region.

Additional Notes: The only known report of the Roman lead said to have been found at the Hurst Mines in Swaledale was in Harry Speight's book *Romantic Richmondshire*, published in 1897. He wrote (p207-8): "The mines at Hurst are believed to be on the site of a Roman penal settlement, to which the Roman commanders sent their convicts to labour. A piece of lead bearing the name of ADRIAN was discovered in one of the oldest workings about 50 years ago, and is now in the British Museum."

However in 1956 Marie Hartley and Joan Ingilby in their book *The Yorkshire Dales* reported (p251) that the pig was now lost, and then in 1965 Arthur Raistrick and Bernard Jennings added in their *History of Lead Mining in the Pennines* (p3) that all efforts to trace it had failed, and it was feared it had been melted down. At the request of the contributor of this record, another search of the British Museum collection was kindly conducted by one of its curators in 2012, but once again drew a blank.

If the story of this find has any truth to it, a clue to its outcome might lie in Speight's brief description of the item. He called it a "piece of lead" not a pig or ingot, suggesting it was a fragment. And his report of the inscription ADRIAN supports the idea. It cannot have been a full inscription, as is indicated

by the inscriptions on complete lead pigs from the period of Emperor Hadrian that are preserved at the British Museum. See the sample image below, together with urls linking to further information on this and two other similar examples at the museum's online catalogue.

If the Hurst Mine find was a poor quality fragment of a pig, perhaps this was a reason for it to be rejected by the British Museum, and consequently for it to be deemed of little value and melted down. Perhaps it was the last fragment of what had been a small collection of ancient pigs being progressively used up at the mines for some work-related functions, or even systematically plundered by locals.

The second Roman lead pig reportedly found in Swaledale was also described by Hartley and Ingilby in their book of 1956. They told (p251) of the find occurring sometime around the 1870s at Crackpot in the Little Haverdale valley. They reported that its historic value had not been realised and it had been melted down. Later, Edmund Cooper, in his wonderfully succinct book *A History of Swaledale* (1973), expanded the story, revealing (p15) that this pig was said to have borne the imprint of an emperor's head and some Roman lettering, and had been found in Crackpot Gill by Mr Francis Garth. Cooper said he had been told by the finder's daughter, who must have been very old at the time, that her father melted it down to fix iron crooks into stone gateposts.

Given what is known about the several preserved examples of Roman lead pigs from other lead-mining areas, the stories of the Swaledale finds must be considered to have some credibility. The locations and descriptions seem entirely plausible; the sparse, unembellished details have the ring of truth; and it would appear that at no stage has anyone gained from promoting the stories. However, without the finds and without any evidence other than hearsay we can only guess at whether they are true or distortions of something, or merely romantic invention.

Last Update: 2012-09-05



Record Number 604 >>> Image 1: Roman lead pig found at Heyshaw, near Dacre in Nidderdale in 1735, and now at the British Museum. The image is the copyright of the British Museum and reproduced here with permission. The raised inscription on the top reads IMP CAES DOMITIANO AUG COS VII. For further information see the museum's online catalogue at: <http://tiny.cc/ro55jw>. For an image and further information on the other pig found at the same time and recently sold at auction see <http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/15215/lot/303/>



Record Number 604 >>> Image 2: Roman lead pig from the period of the Emperor Hadrian, found in Shropshire in 1795 and now at the British Museum. The image is the copyright of the British Museum and reproduced here with permission. The raised inscription, which is the briefest of the three on lead pigs identifying Hadrian in the museum's collections, reads IMP HADRIANI AVG. See further information on this at <http://tiny.cc/eq55jw>; and on two similar finds at: <http://tiny.cc/7q55jw>; and <http://tiny.cc/ur55jw>

Record Name: White patinated flint end scraper with some associated artefact finds from this location.

SWAAG ID Number: 907

Recorded Date: 2015-11-18 12:12:41

Recorded by: Tim Laurie

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Archaeology

Site Access: Public Access Land

Record Date: 2015-10-12

Location: Brownsey Moor, Stoups Rigg

Civil Parish: Melbecks

British National Grid: #NY 96595 98688

Altitude: 430m.

Geology: Outcrop of the Five Yard Limestone overlooking a peat infilled mire, once an upland tarn.

Description: This flint end scraper is a fine example of an artefact type which is characteristic of Mesolithic assemblages. Scraper forms of Neolithic Age tend to have retouch which extends over a larger proportion of the perimeter of the scraper.

This artefact is the latest find from a locality which has produced a large assemblage of flint, chert and occasional quartzite artefacts, some of which are shown below.

Dimensions: See photos

Additional Notes: This fine small scraper was found at a known lithic scatter site which, being at a view point directly above a constant spring on the south side and a peat infilled mire on the north, which during prehistory would have been an open tarn surrounded by woodland, thus conforming to the localities preferred by mesolithic hunter groups.

However, preferred localities like this were re-occupied time and time again through centuries and millennia and the artefacts collected are of different periods, reflecting different lithic technologies and human cultural activities through prehistory.

The very few microliths found here are of Later Mesolithic character being geometric in form (rods and crescents) and extremely small, ie they are minute: being less than 10mm in length and less than 4mm wide, see image nos.

However the presence of several burins and the small shouldered poin indicate an Early Mesolithic presence here also.

SWAAG Site: Low Row Pastures

Last Update: 2015-11-22



Record Number 907 >>> Image 1: End scraper, white patinated flint



Record Number 907 >>> Image 2: Selected artefacts of flint and chert



Record Number 907 >>> Image 3: End scraper, White patinated flint.



Record Number 907 >>> Image 4: Struck flake, Quartzite. Dorsal view.



Record Number 907 >>> Image 5: Struck flake, Quartzite. Ventral view.



Record Number 907 >>> Image 6: Small shouldered point (Pointe a cran).



Record Number 907 >>> Image 7: Broad chert flake suitable as a blank for converting to an arrowhead



Record Number 907 >>> Image 8: Selected artefacts of flint, olive chert of unknown origin and black Pennine chert. Dorsal view



Record Number 907 >>> Image 9: The same selected artefacts of flint and chert. Ventral view



Record Number 907 >>> Image 10: Burin on chert blade and small bladelet with cortex



Record Number 907 >>> Image 11: Selected artefacts



Record Number 907 >>> Image 12: Selected artefacts



Record Number 907 >>> Image 13: Lunate microlith, unpatinated flint retouched on both upper surfaces.



Record Number 907 >>> Image 14: Rod microlith, white patinated flint. Broken.



Record Number 907 >>> Image 15: View from the outcrop of the Five Yard Limestone southward over the springs across and down Swaledale

Record Name: Barningham Low Moor. A fine flint discoidal scraper of Neolithic character.

SWAAG ID Number: 989

Recorded Date: 2017-04-15 16:37:11

Recorded by: Tim Laurie

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Archaeology

Site Access: Public Access Land

Record Date: 2017-04-06

Location: Barningham Low Moor

Civil Parish: Barningham

British National Grid: #NZ 04852 08194

Altitude: 378m

Geology: Drift over Namurian Five Yard Limestone series strata.

Description: This very fine discoidal scraper of unpatinated grey/white speckled flint was found close to the Badger Way below Eel Hill. This isolated stray find was recognised by Sue and Les Knight during a recent walk with Tim Laurie across Barningham Low Moor in search of Shap Erratics. This circular scraper is steeply retouched for the whole of the perimeter except for the striking platform. Flint scrapers fully worked in this manner are characteristic of the Neolithic/Early Bronze Age in contrast to scrapers of the Mesolithic period which are characterised by end of blade scrapers and by flakes with minimal or part retouch.

This scraper was recognised on turf close to the Badger Way Footpath where it descends from Eel Hill at the edge of the The High Moor, to Black Hill Gate where it passes through the Stang Forest to Hope, Gilmonby and Stainmore.

The concentrations of prehistoric sites, for example the concentrations of Rock Art sites and the site of the Gilmonby hoard- see previous SWAAG Database Record Nos 541 and 770, are all on the line of the Badger Way. These sites confirm that the Badger Way, braided track ways which follow slightly different routes southward from Stainmore across Gilmonby Moor, Barningham Moor, Gayles Moor and Feldom to Richmond, and all points south, was the preferred route for the traveller on foot from the Vale of Mowbray to the Vale of Eden, to Galloway and to Ireland throughout Prehistory. The Badger Way is so called as it was frequented until very recently by badgers or itinerant salesmen knocking at doors and offering to sharpen knives and provide haberdashery accessories, buttons, cotton and ribbons.

Dimensions: See photographs

Additional Notes: Representative lithic finds from Teesdale including Barningham Moor and from Swaledale can be inspected at the Swaledale Museum, Reeth.

Lithic finds from Wensleydale can be seen at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes.

In the course of almost 40 years of fieldwork on the Swale-Tees/Greta interfluvium, I have concluded that lithic scatters and stray finds from the mid-upper slopes of Teesdale were almost exclusively scraper dominated and of Later Prehistoric, Neolithic- Early Bronze Age character. In contrast, lithic scatters on the actual watershed, typically located close to the highest springs feeding the tributary streams of Marske Beck and of Clapgate Beck at Feldom were microlith dominated with very few scrapers and consequently of Earlier Prehistoric, Mesolithic character.

For survey details and images of settlement, rock art and lithic finds from Barningham Moor, see SWAAG Record Nos 84, 541 and 770.

Last Update: 2017-04-16



Record Number 989 >>> Image 1: Barningham . The Low Moor below Eel Hill. Flint scraper, dorsal view.



Record Number 989 >>> Image 2: Barningham . The Low Moor below Eel Hill. Flint scraper, ventral view.



Record Number 989 >>> Image 3: Barningham. View westward on the Badger Way from Eel Hill down across the Low Moor and Stang Forest to distant Stainmore.

Record Name: Burnt Mound
SWAAG ID Number: 1010
Recorded Date: 2020-05-21 12:13:19
Recorded by: Test User Account
Category: Archaeological Find
Record Type: Archaeology
Site Access: Private
Record Date: 0000-00-00
Location: Reels Head
Civil Parish: Grinton
British National Grid:
Altitude: 323
Tree Site:
SWAAG Site: Hagg Farm
Last Update: 2020-05-21



Record Number 1010 >>> Image 1: 2233

Record Name: **Fremington Bronze Age axe heads**

SWAAG ID Number: 1012

Recorded Date: 2020-05-27 08:31:29

Recorded by: Will Swales

Category: Archaeological Find

Record Type: Archaeology

Site Access: Private

Record Date: 2020-05-27

Location: Fremington

Civil Parish: Reeth

British National Grid: SE 04 99

Altitude: 180

Description: Among items recently added to the British Museum's online catalogue are photographs of two Bronze Age, copper-alloy, axe-heads, described as found with others at Reeth in Swaledale, possibly part of a hoard.

Confusingly, nineteenth-century labels on the objects, which are visible on the photographs, denote they were found at Fremington Edge, a high ridge on the opposite side of the dale from Reeth. A brief provenance explains that they were in the collection of Rev William Greenwell and were donated to the museum in 1909 by John Pierpont Morgan.

Greenwell almost certainly wrote the labels on the objects. His separate notes about who owned the axe-heads before him are given online but they leave many questions unanswered. This article draws on multiple sources to try to piece together more of the story of where and when the axe-heads were found and discovers interesting ideas about how they might have been used by Bronze Age men and women.

Reported find of four axe-heads in about 1785

The earliest surviving report of the find appeared in Thomas Dunham Whitaker's *An History of Richmondshire*, published in 1823. He wrote (p. 315) – 'About half a mile eastward [of Maiden Castle] are several deep entrenchments extending in the same direction; one of which crosses the whole vale, pointing on Reeth and Fremington, near which, about the year 1785, four brass celts were dug up'.

Whether four axe-heads count as a hoard can be debated. If there were four, then shortly after Whitaker's book was published two of them disappeared from public knowledge. 'Celts' was the term used at the time to identify ancient cutting tools. The OED definition of 'celt' is 'an implement with a chisel-shaped edge, of bronze or stone (but sometimes of iron), found among the remains of prehistoric man. It appears to have served for a variety of purposes, as a hoe, chisel, or axe, and perhaps as a weapon of war'.

Whitaker's description of the dyke is peculiar. It does not cross the dale from Reeth to Fremington, as he implies, but from near Grinton to Fremington. At Low Fremington it climbs up the dale-side, about 50 metres in height, ending just above High Fremington. To reach Fremington Edge is another 200-metre climb over a distance of 750 metres. So, there is quite a gulf between Whitaker's account of the find-spot 'near the dyke' and the one indicated on the objects' labels as Fremington Edge.

Greenwell's acquisitions - the mid-to-late 1800s

Rev Canon William Greenwell was born in 1820 and hailed from Greenwell Ford, County Durham. He was one of the most prominent archaeologists of his era and a major collector of prehistoric finds. According to Greenwell's notes, he was given the axe-head that now has the museum catalogue reference WG 1820 by John Bailey Langhorne, who Greenwell recorded as a nephew of the owner of the land on which it was found.

From other sources we learn that John Bailey Langhorne was a wealthy solicitor who lived from 1816 to 1877. He was born in Berwick-upon-Tweed, the son of John Langhorne, a banker. John Bailey Langhorne became the proprietor of the *Newcastle Chronicle* and by 1845 he was living at Richmond in Swaledale and serving as the deputy registrar of the Archdeaconry of Richmond. He was related to Canon Greenwell

through one of his grandmothers, who was a Greenwell (Bill Greenwell, see link below).

The identity of the uncle on whose land the axe-head was found is not known, although there are clues. There was a Rev John Langhorne who was curate of Grinton for more than 40 years from as early as 1766. He served under three vicars who according to the parish-record entries for baptisms, marriages and funerals left almost all the work to Langhorne. He could not have been the uncle of John Bailey Langhorne, but he could have been his great uncle, which was perhaps a fine point of difference easily overlooked in Greenwell's account.

In 1804 and 05, and probably for many more years, Rev John Langhorne occupied land next to Low Fremington belonging to Arkengarthdale Church (NYCRO ZLB 6.12, church rents). He would have sub-let it to a farmer. The main part of it comprised three large fields bordering the road between Reeth Bridge and the first turn-off for High Fremington. The first two fields are now merged and form the current Reeth Show Ground. The third field, next to the road leading to High Fremington, is only about 120 metres from the dyke, and so potentially fits Whitaker's description of the find-spot.

According to Greenwell's notes, the axe-head catalogued by the museum as WG 1821 was bought by a Swaledale farmer at a sale of household goods. The record is partially illegible, but the mention of the sale was followed by the word Rev'd. One might wonder if this was a sale following the death of Rev John Langhorne in 1808. Greenwell reported that the farmer sold the axe-head to a Mr R Little of Carlisle, who sold it to Greenwell. No dates for the transactions are given.

Rev Langhorne had two wealthy sons. The elder, John Langhorne, died in Reeth in 1848, aged 77. The younger, Thomas Langhorne, lived farther up the dale at Kearton, but before the census of 1841 he had moved to the Lake District, and later moved to Derbyshire. Nonetheless he retained ownership of a significant amount of property and land in the Reeth area. Rateable valuations for 1870 recorded him as the owner of six houses in Reeth, the Buck Inn, a slaughterhouse, two stables, and about 45 acres of land in Reeth and Fremington (see link below). He died in 1871 in Derbyshire, aged 93.

The long-standing relationship between the Langhorne family and land at or near Fremington seems to make Rev John Langhorne the favourite for being the first modern owner of both axe-heads.

Report in the year 1881

In 1881, one of the axe-heads was featured in a major publication, *The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland*. It was the third in a series of comprehensive volumes on British prehistoric artefacts by John Evans, a pioneer in the development of professional archaeology in Britain and another major collector of prehistoric objects. Among the 540 wood-cut illustrations in Evans' book were two views of an axe-head reported as being in the collection of Canon Greenwell and as found 'with others near Reeth'. By the look of it, it was WG 1820, the one donated by John Bailey Langhorne. It was the better looking of the two Fremington axe-heads, both of which were presumably by this time in Canon Greenwell's collection.

British Museum acquisition 1908

In 1908 Canon Greenwell sold his entire extensive collection of prehistoric bronze artefacts for £10,000. The buyer was a wealthy America collector, John Pierpont Morgan who the following year donated the lot to the British Museum.

In 1910 the Ordnance Survey researched a revised edition of its 25-inch map of Yorkshire to include, for the first time, references to locations of important archaeological finds. The researchers concluded that the find-spot for the axe-heads was in Low Fremington, just behind Draycott Hall, and in the Grinton-Fremington dyke. The modern OS grid reference is SE 0458 9901. It was marked on the new map, published in 1912, with a new symbol for antiquities and the label 'Bronze Celts found'. The evidence used to determine the location is unknown, but at this low altitude it could not by any assessment be called Fremington Edge.

In summary

In summary, the so-called 'Reeth Hoard' may not have been quite a hoard, and the mention of Reeth is only because it is a bigger and better-known village than its neighbour Fremington, where there are now three possible find-spots. It might have been somewhere very broadly in the vicinity of Fremington Edge; or in Low Fremington in the dyke behind Draycott Hall; or somewhere in the field next to Low Fremington on the east side of Reeth showground. Further research at the British Museum and into the Langhorne family's land holding around Fremington might prove more enlightening.

Tree Site:

Additional Notes: **Age and uses of the Fremington axe-heads**

In 1981, exactly 100 years after the seminal publication by John Evans, the understanding of north British prehistoric axes was advanced by Peter Karl Schmidt and Colin B Burgess who published *The Axes of Scotland and Northern England*, in the series *Prähistorische Bronzefund*, Part IX (axes), vol. 7.

The two Fremington axe-heads were categorised as a type called Ulrome, which the authors described as having 'a gently, evenly S-curved body'. By further explanation, the authors said that when viewed on the broad side, starting from the top, the body bulges slightly, returning to a distinct waist and then turning out to the width of the cutting edge. Schmidt and Burgess noted that the distinctive wings or flanges on the Fremington axe-heads were common to several types, but not indicative of a type on their own.

The authors attributed the date of the Ulrome axe-heads to the so-called Taunton Phase of the Middle Bronze Age (c.1400–1250 BC) and noted that only scattered examples had been found, in north-eastern Britain from Aberdeenshire to Yorkshire. The Reeth finds were the only example of two Ulrome types found together (Schmidt and Burgess pp. 94-99).

Ulrome axe-heads were not socketed, so to fix a handle, a wooden shaft had to have a splice cut into the end for the wedge-shaped head of the axe to fit into. In 1881, Evans suggested that axe-heads like those found at Fremington could have had their wings hammered around the shaft to create a double socket. The joint would also have been bound with twine.

For use as an axe or hatchet, it was necessary for the wooden shaft to have a right-angle turn or crook near the fixing end. But it is also possible that the Fremington axe-heads could have been fitted to the end of a straight shaft. Evans thought that winged axe-heads were particularly suitable for a straight-shafted palstave, which was an Icelandic name for a type of chisel or hoe. Such a tool could have been extremely useful for the job of digging out or 'stubbing' thistles in a field. Another such implement was used like a chisel for removing bark from felled timber, in which case it was called a spud.

Links to references above:

[British Museum object WG 1820](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_WG-1820)

[British Museum object WG 1821](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_WG-1821)

[Whitaker's History of Richmondshire](http://www.archive.org/stream/historyofrichmon12whit#page/n394/mode/1up)

[Greenwell family story](http://www.billgreenwell.com/fishinatree.php?id=686)

[Reeth 1870 valuations](http://www.johnhearfield.com/Swale/Home_ownership_1870.htm)

Last Update: 2021-06-14



Record Number 1012 >>> Image 1: British Museum object WG 1820, length 181mm, butt width 31mm, cutting-edge width 69mm. Image copyright © The Trustees of the British Museum. Source: British Museum object WG 1820.



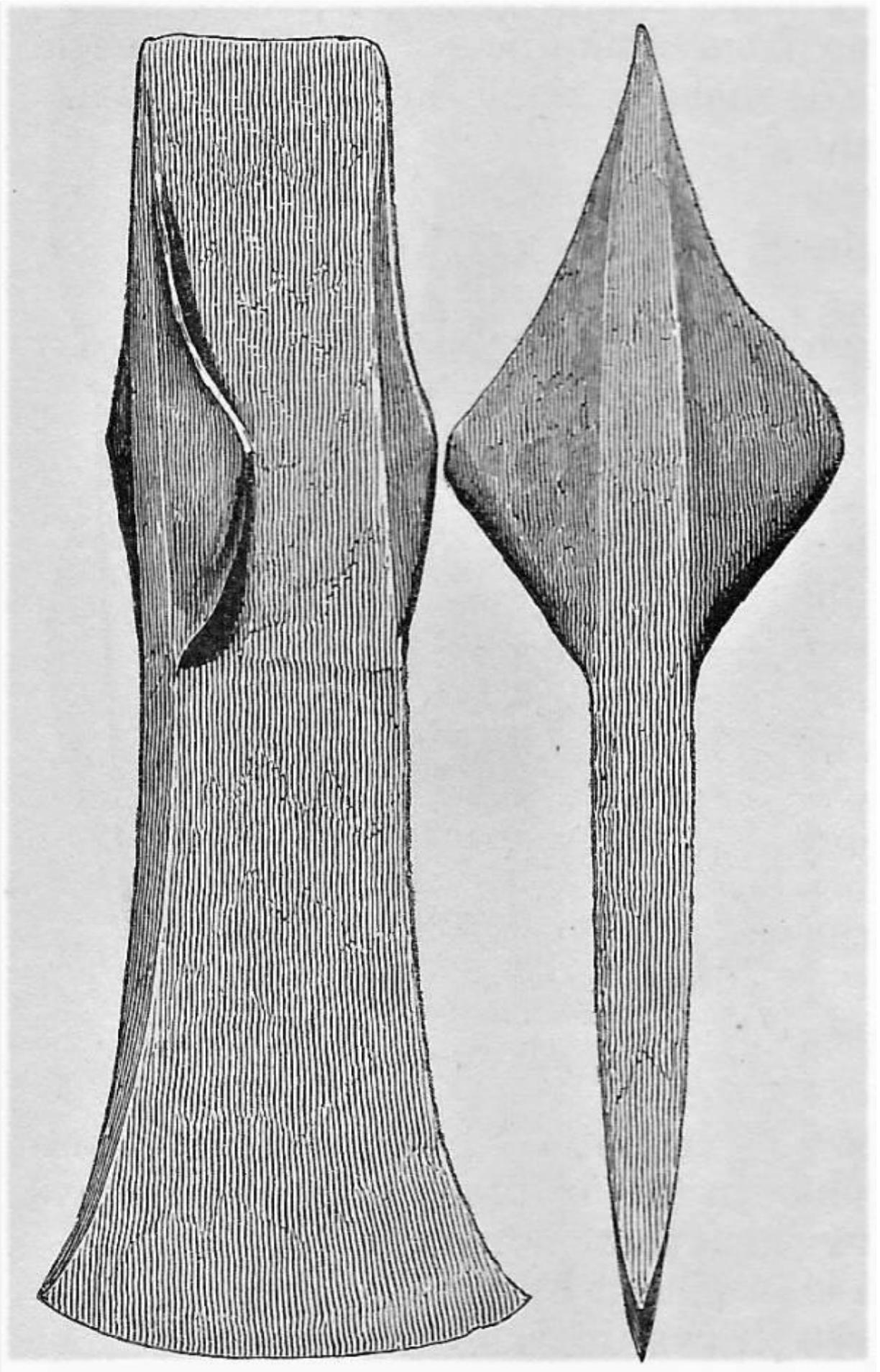
Record Number 1012 >>> Image 2: British Museum object WG 1820, deepest 50mm, weight 691g. Image copyright © The Trustees of the British Museum. Source: British Museum object WG 1820.



Record Number 1012 >>> Image 3: British Museum object WG 1821, length 178mm, butt width 27mm, cutting-edge width 69mm. Image copyright © The Trustees of the British Museum. Source: British Museum object WG 1821.

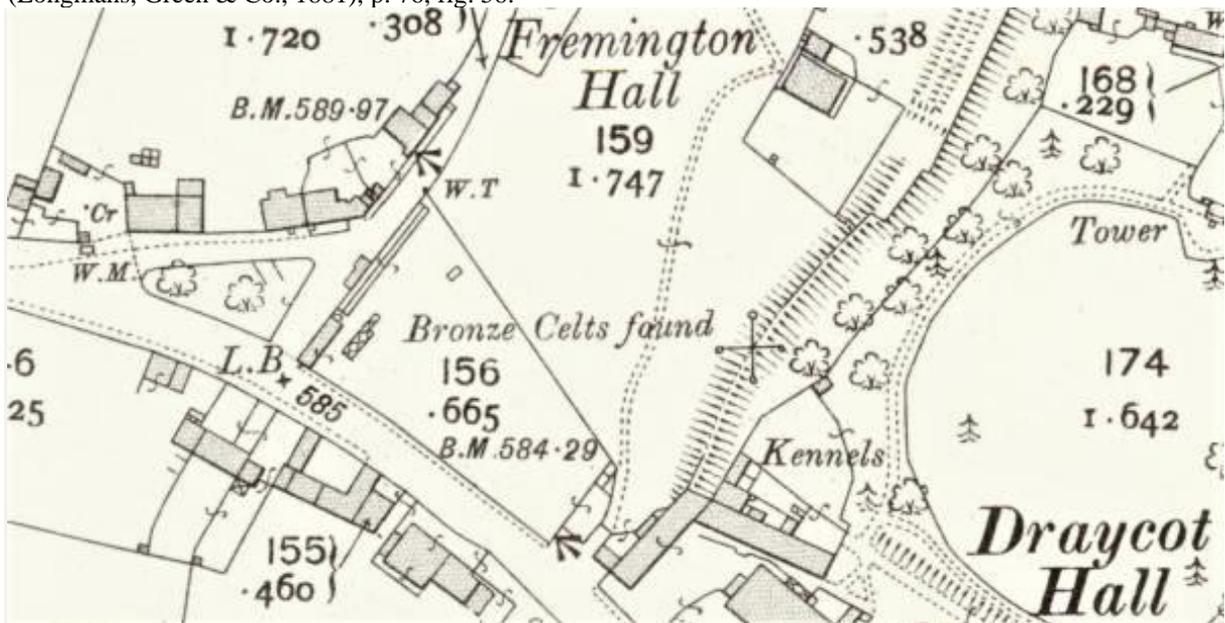


Record Number 1012 >>> Image 4: British Museum object WG 1821, deepest 39mm, weight 582g.
Image copyright © The Trustees of the British Museum. Source: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_WG-1821 British Museum object WG 1821



Record Number 1012 >>> Image 5: One of the Reeth axe heads depicted as a wood-cut illustration in

John Evans, *The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1881), p. 76, fig. 56.



Record Number 1012 >>> Image 6: Section from OS 25-inch map Yorkshire sheet LII.3 Grinton, Reeth, published 1912. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

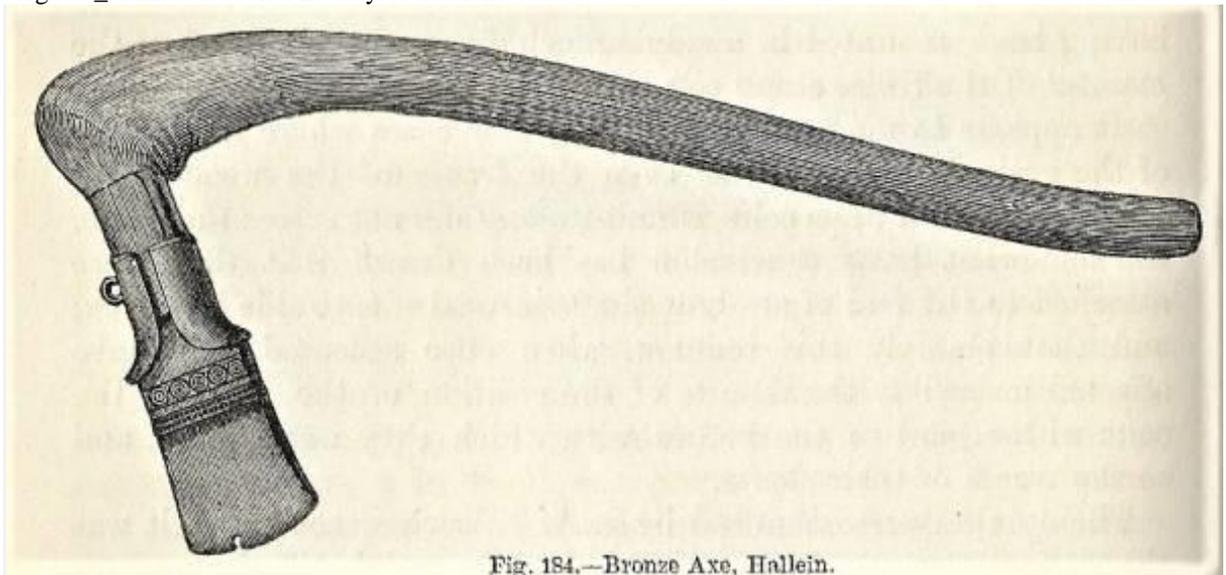
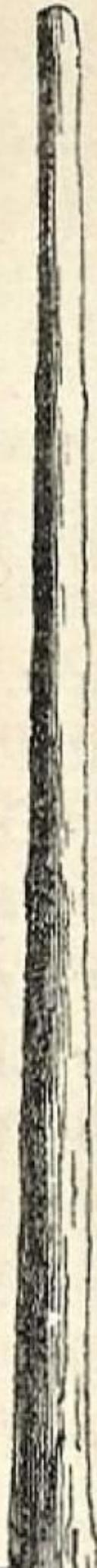
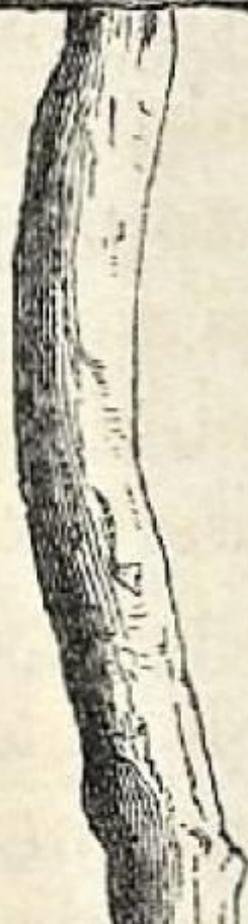


Fig. 184.—Bronze Axe, Hallein.

Record Number 1012 >>> Image 7: Speculative Bronze Age axe, here with a socket fixing depicted as a wood-cut illustration in John Evans, *The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1881), p. 152, fig. 184.



Record Number 1012 >>> Image 8: Speculative constructions of a palstave or spud depicted as a wood-cut illustration in John Evans, *The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1881), p. 71, figs. 48, 49.