

FLINT ARTEFACTS FOUND AT QUARRY COTTAGES, 1995

By

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For a number of years now I have been drawing and surveying the remains of all the buildings on the island as research for a future publication in which it is intended to produce visual reconstructions of how they may have appeared when first constructed. The study will include sequences of drawings (speculative where evidence is unavailable) that will detail the changes to the structures during their existence until their demise, demolition or redevelopment.

Apart from the drawings, the research also entails the investigation of various middens, tips and waste dumps that survive on the island, as well as sifting through any rabbit scrapes and walking any ploughed or disturbed ground to try to identify any evidence that may help to build up a clearer picture of the history of any given site.

It was against this background that I investigated an area of freshly disturbed ground surrounding the well at Quarry Cottages (NGR SS 1379 4495). The ground here had been scarified to level out the ruts and divots left by cattle feeding during the previous winter, and to promote new growth. This disturbed ground extended to a circular area c. 75m in diameter with the well at its centre.

A methodical inspection of the full extent of the disturbed ground surface was undertaken over several days, once after heavy rain and after the ground had been rolled. All artefacts were collected on each occasion. These included sherds of Victorian and Edwardian china and pieces of decorative glass in an area close to the cottages, sherds of North Devon ware, possible whetstones, as well as 170 flint artefacts (forty-nine were collected from the first inspection, thirty-four of which were found in the area north of the well). These are believed to be the first flint artefacts recorded from this site, and the composition of the assemblage provides an interesting comparison to that from the area around test-pit 94 (TP94), recorded previously (Schofield and Webster 1990) and located some 200m to the WSW. Both assemblages come from archaeologically undisturbed areas, and thus areas where previous collection has not diminished their size or affected their composition. The comparison is made in Table 1. In summary, the following points can be noted: there is a similarity in the proportions of artefact classes, specifically the low frequency of retouched material, confirming the status of flint as a precious island resource to be curated and reused where at all possible - thus few retouched items would have become 'rubbish' and discarded; the poor quality of flint that characterises most of the assemblage; the fact that much of the collection appears crudely struck, and thus reminiscent of Bronze Age technology (though there are items which appear of microlithic proportions suggesting a Mesolithic component - this is given further support by the presence of eight blades and a blade core within the collection).

Additional finds included, at the extreme western edge of the broken ground, a round lump of earth containing a metal sphere 70mm in diameter, and almost identical to the cannonball once kept in the Tavern. Identification by a qualified source will confirm or refute this claim.

Also, on the extreme south eastern edge of the area, were the remains of what could be a hut circle, in poor condition but identifiable nevertheless. Again identification needs to be confirmed, but the site is not in the National Trust's Archaeological Survey (Thackray 1989) and may simply be a group of field clearance stones.

By the end of the survey, 170 flint artefacts and additional finds had been collected, shown to Reg Lo-Vel, then Acting Agent, to whom I explained my intentions as to their future. Myrtle Ternstrom, who is collating and cataloguing the Lundy archive, was informed, and the collection passed to John Schofield to examine the flint artefacts. Details of the finds were entered into the LFS Log, and a catalogue of the items was made.

Some further interpretation of the flint assemblage can be made, based on its proximity to the existing well, indicating a water source, and nearby springs, identified as E6 (NGR SS 1378 4489) and E7 (SS 1380 4486) (after Langham 1968). Also significant may be the aspect and location of the site, and the possible hut circle to the south east may provide a context for the Bronze Age component. Given all of this, it seems reasonable to entertain the idea that this would have been an ideal situation for just the type of enterprise that the collection of artefacts suggest, namely a flint working site used sporadically between the Mesolithic and Bronze Age periods, making artefacts from the poor quality beach flint collected from the island's beaches at low tide.

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REFERENCES

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- Schofield, A.J. & Webster, C.J. 1990. Archaeological fieldwork 1990: further investigations of artefact concentrations south of Quarter Wall. *Annual Report of the Lundy Field Society* 41, 34-52.
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Table 1: A comparison of number of artefacts by type (percentage figures appear in brackets)

Artefact type	TP94 flint artefact concentration	Quarry Cotts.
primary waste	18 (18)	30 (18)
secondary waste	30 (30)	46 (27)
tertiary waste	41 (41)	79 (46)
cores	5 (5)	5 (3)
hammerstones	3 (3)	0 (0)
bashed lumps	3 (3)	10 (6)
retouched artefacts	1 (1)	0 (0)
Total	99	170