

A NOTE ON PLEISTOCENE MATERIAL FROM LIME KILN HILL QUARRY, MELLS, SOMERSET by R. D. VRANCH

At Lime Kiln Hill Quarry near Mells a large phreatic cave which acted as a natural pitfall (report in preparation) is under investigation by the author and has yielded an important Pleistocene fauna tentatively assigned to the late Ipswichian—early Devensian. Man is represented here by a single small mousterian cordiform axe made of greensand chert and was unstratified. This artefact represents the oldest evidence of *Homo sp.* east of the Hyena Den and Rhinoceros Hole in the Wookey Hole ravine. A similar site in the same quarry has yielded the tooth of a mammoth and possible small tusk fragments.

The late Professor Tratman (Pers. com.) mentioned Donovan finding a single large piece of yellowish flint showing human workmanship. It was found 17m. from the surface in a fissure infilling some 30m. away from the mammoth fissure (Donovan 1954) at A. R. C. New Frome Quarry. Its original form could not be determined but shows signs of re-use as a knife or scraper.

Two fissures discovered recently in this quarry contained the remains of *Bos sp.* in one and bones and teeth of the woolly Rhinoceros and a small carnivore in the other. Man was not represented here.

It is likely that during the course of sediment infilling our ancestors may have made use of the cover afforded by the fissures; perhaps covering the opening to the surface with skins, thus making a rude shelter or utilizing the natural gulleys as hunting pitfalls. My wife recently found a Neolithic Bronze age pointed flint knife with a hollow scraper worked onto one edge on the quarry's northern environmental bank. This might be a recent intrusion carried into the quarry in a load of dumped soil or have originated within the confines of the quarry.

REFERENCE

- DONOVAN, D. T. 1954 An occurrence of Mammoth and other Bones at Whatley, Somerset, *Proc. Univ. Bristol Spelaeol. Soc.*, 7 (1), 51-53.