

## Fourth Report on Read's Cavern.

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Comparatively few results have been obtained in this cave since the last Report, appearances tending to show that there are few untouched deposits now left.

### I.—EXPLORATION.

The Boulder Chamber and the grotto connected with it have been surveyed. Apart from a few unimportant passages no advance has been made in exploration.

### II. FINDS.

The work in the cave has been mainly limited to finding patches of stalagmite floor hitherto unlifted and sorting the subjacent black layer.

At B40 and B41<sup>1</sup> a large sheet of stalagmite, 15 cm. thick, was raised (entire), discovering several articles of interest—a (third) iron key, pottery fragments, and a wooden handle of some implement. These will be mentioned under their respective headings. At this spot also was found a large flat stone 50—60 cm. in diameter, surrounded and continued in the same plane by a layer of reddish clay. The black charcoal layer was above and below this slab, which from its arrangement appeared to be a hearthstone.

#### 1. HUMAN BONES.

A few more human bones, chiefly fragments, have been found; the following are the only ones of interest:

J45 Lower end of adult femur, much damaged. The bone was found in the entrance shaft, where it must have dropped out of a loose heap of scree near the surface. This strengthens the supposition that the majority of the human remains fell into the cave with the surface fall that blocked the entrance.

G22/23, portion of right upper maxilla, bearing no teeth. (Plate III., No. 7). This has several features of interest, and a report by Mr. E. K. Tratman, B.D.S., is here appended:

"The portion recovered consists of the greater portion of the right palate and the alveolar portion of the bone. The antrum, of which only the floor and part of the walls remain, appears to have been of good average size with the roots of the second

<sup>1</sup> The letter and number refer to the area in the cave. See map, Vol. I, No. 1 and 2.

premolar and first molar in close relationship to the floor, which was possibly just perforated by the root of the second premolar.

The following teeth were lost before the individual to whom the fragment belonged met his end, namely the upper right second and third molars and the upper right central incisor. It is also probable that the first molar was lost very shortly before death. From the appearance of the bony ridge behind the sockets of the first molar it is evident that the order in which the teeth were lost was from behind forwards.

The cause of the loss of the molar teeth was most probably chronic periodontal disease of long standing, as there is evidence that a rarefying osteitis had been at work in the case of the first molar and second premolar, which latter tooth had apparently been but little affected. The remaining tooth sockets show no signs of the results of periodontal disease, and it is therefore probable that the central incisor was lost through an accident, probably within a short period of the death of the individual.

From the appearance of the socket of the palatine root of the first molar it seems very probable that the whole of the palatine aspect of this root was exposed owing to the destruction of the bone such as one sees at the present day in cases of long-standing chronic periodontal disease.

The second and third molars must have been lost at least two or three months before death."

## 2. OTHER BONES.

The animal bones found in this cave were recently submitted to examination by J. Wilfrid Jackson, Esq., M.Sc., F.G.S., of Manchester, who very kindly drew up the report on page 55 *et seq.*

## 3. WORKED BONE.

(Plate III),

F34. A flat piece of rib, 70 mm. long, perforated by a round hole. (No. 3). The broader end is trimmed off, the other is rough.

C41. A small piece of rib showing half a hole which once pierced it. (No. 1).

EF25/26. A pointed concave fragment which appears to have been used for some purpose. (No. 5).

D18. Another bone fragment very similar to the last. (No. 4).

C29. A small rounded bone point, too little of which remains to ascertain its use. (No. 2).

#### 4. WORKED STONE.

Three more flat rubbing stones have been found, similar in type to preceding specimens. (cf. Plate XXVII, Proc. Vol. I. No. 3).

At C27 was found a small flint flake, not showing signs of work and probably of no importance.

From E21 comes the butt-end of a stone axe very similar to one in the *Glastonbury Lake Village*, Vol. II.

#### 5. BRONZE.

Only one piece of bronze has been found. This consists of a piece of sheet metal (Plate III, No. 8) perforated by what appears to be a rivet or tack hole; the longest side measures 38 mm.

Occasional green stains on bones, etc., in the black layer, probably indicate portions of copper or bronze which have long since disintegrated.

#### 6. IRON.

Three iron articles are worthy of mention.

G22/23. Portion of an iron nail, much corroded, 56 mm. in length. It was apparently square in section.

D22. A saw blade, 118 mm. long, 18 mm. wide at the handle end. (Plate III, No. 6). This is in a fair state of preservation, sufficient to show that the teeth, as in other contemporary saws, cut on the "pull" stroke. There is a rivet still *in situ* at the handle end, which also bears decayed wood, the remnants of a handle. A similar saw was found at Hambleton Hill, Blandford, Dorset, and is now in the British Museum (Case C, Roman Britain Room).

B40. (In the undisturbed area previously mentioned.) A key or latch lifter, the third specimen found in the cave. This was found in two portions, a small piece between these appearing to be missing. Allowing 3.5 cm. for the missing portion the total length is 24 cm., less than either of the previous ones. At the butt end is a ring like that on the first key found.

#### 7. POTTERY.

A certain amount of pottery has been found, some of it decorated

—the latter includes a fair-sized fragment with a band of cross-hatching. Most of the fragments are of the usual black mixture containing particles of limestone, quartz, etc.; one however was composed of fine red sandy material similar to only one or two previous finds.

In the area at B40 and B41 many pieces were found, evidently belonging to one large pot which had fallen to pieces or been broken *in situ*.

Lumps of prepared clay, red or grey-green, still occur here and there, a good deal of the red kind having been found at B45, some of which is grooved on the inner surface as if sticks had been partly embedded in it, while the two outer surfaces meet at right angles.

Much more work has been done of late in the reconstruction of pots, and several more vessels are now taking shape from fragments recently pieced together.

#### 8. OTHER FINDS.

Wood in surprisingly good preservation turns up now and again, for further mention of which see page 59, *et seq.*, (Report by Prof. O. V. Darbishire). At B40 in the area previously mentioned a wooden handle, partly burnt, was discovered adhering to the under surface of the stalagmite.

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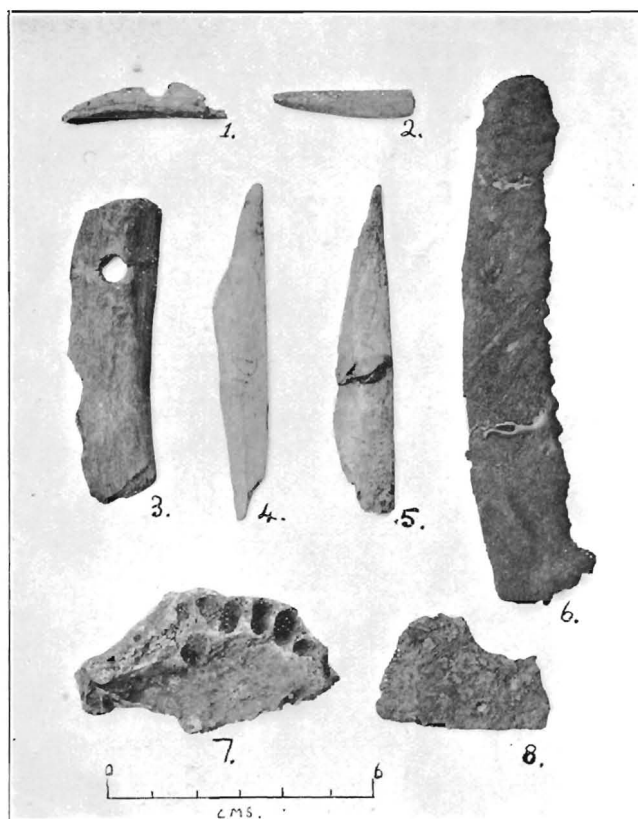
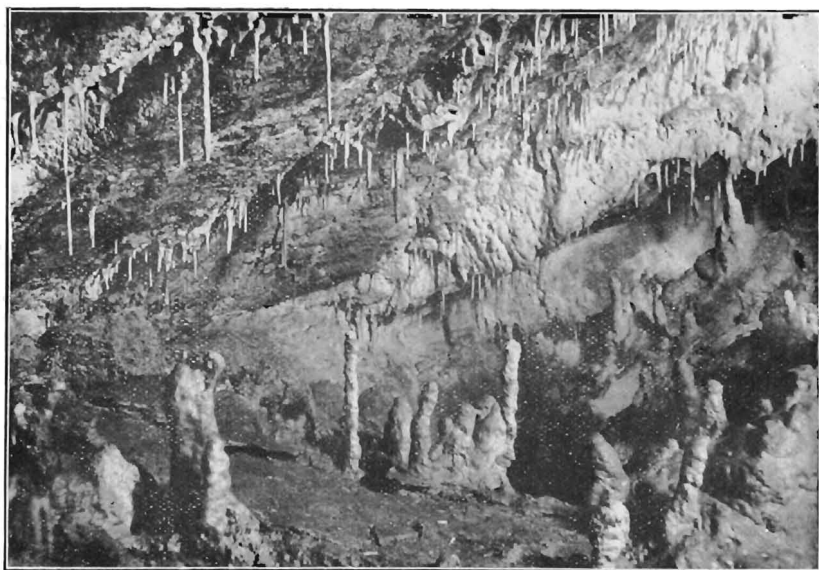


PLATE III.



READ'S GROTTTO ; BAKER'S TEMPLE.  
PLATE IV.