

## Notes on Upper Palæolithic Implements from some Mendip Caves.

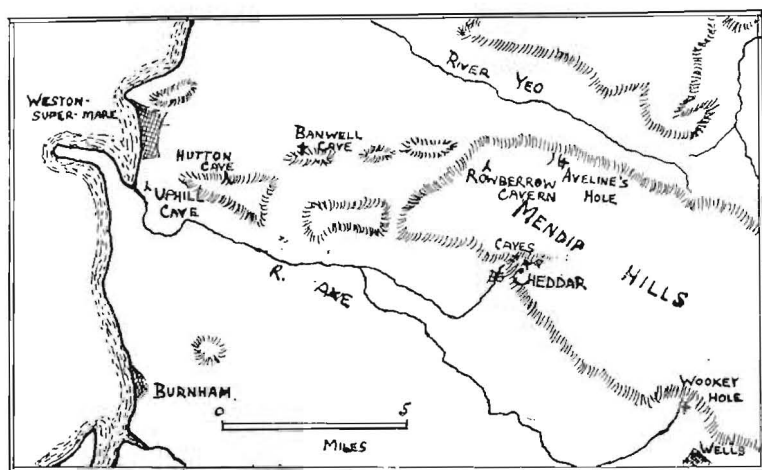
BY J. A. DAVIES.

(The references are :—Mother Grundy's Parlour, Creswell Crags : A. L. Armstrong ; *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. LV, p. 146. Paviland Cave : W. J. Sollas ; *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. XLIII, p. 1. Gough's Cave, Cheddar : F. G. Parsons and C. G. Seligman, *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. XLIV, p. 241.)

All the implements here figured are now in the museum at Weston-super-Mare.

### GOUGH'S CAVE, CHEDDAR (FIG. 2).

With the exception of the specimens from Uphill, all the stone implements to be described below were collected by Mr. Montague Porch. I am informed by a workman who assisted him that he operated in the Cheddar district about the year 1902.



Sketch Map of Mendip District

FIG. 1.

The first series of eight are labelled : "Mr. Gough's New Cave at Cheddar." This is the title which Mr. H. N. Davies gave to the famous show cave when he described the human remains therefrom in the *Quart. Journal of the Geological Soc.*, Aug. 1904. There are two large broad flakes, and one small narrow blade. The remainder are figured.

(1) A very long narrow blade bearing a feeble nibbling re-touch along part of the edge, identical with specimens already figured from this cave and typical of the large series now in the Taunton Castle Museum.

(2) A delicate shouldered point similar to specimens from Mother Grundy's Parlour where it was the most characteristic implement. It is the *pointe à cran atypique* of the Magdalenian, not the typical implement of the late Aurignacian or Solutrean stages.

(3) A knife or gravette point with the tip broken away.

(4) A thin blade that bears the same nibble as (1).

(5) A small keeled grattoir with steep bold flaking at the business end.

In patination these specimens are identical with the others at Taunton Castle: pale blue or dull pearl grey.

(6) A bone point fashioned from the metatarsal of a small ox or large deer, as far as can be ascertained. In general appearance it accords well with the bones of kindred animals found in Aveline's Hole. However, I am of the opinion that it might well have been taken from younger deposits superimposed on the flint horizon. In such deposits implements of the Bronze and Early Iron Ages were found in abundance.

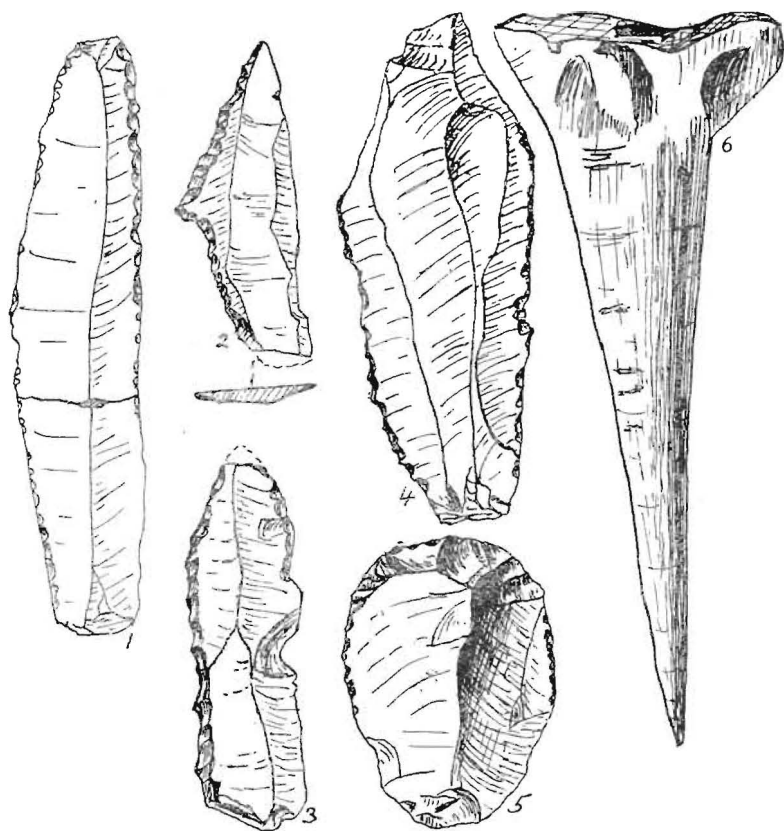
A glance at the Taunton Castle specimens will demonstrate that there was no recourse to the drastic economy in flint that is so evident in caves north of Mendip. The tendency everywhere is towards elongation, and to a greater degree than in Aveline's Hole or at Creswell.

The scarcity of graters, piercers, etc., is noteworthy. I have been unable to examine the Taunton specimens in detail, but such implements may be brought to light there.

Mr. H. N. Davies and Profs. Parsons and Seligman have already given reasons for ascribing the industry to the Magdalenian period. The shouldered point instantly recalls Mr. Armstrong's Base Zone at Mother Grundy's Parlour which was influenced by the Magdalenian. So that while adding nothing to the elucidation of the stratification of this cave, these implements strengthen the case for a Magdalenian date.

The fauna of Gough's Cave is Hyaena, Cave Bear, Lion, *Rhinoceros tichorhinus*, Boar, Horse, Stag, Reindeer, Irish Deer, etc., an early facies for the Magdalenian. The fauna of an island tends to simplification, with survivals, and to the periodical isolation of Britain in the Ice Age may be attributed the presence of hyaena and such animals long after they had vanished from France. The Uphill

remains have shown that it survived to the Solutrean. Possibly the implements are contemporary with the earliest development of the Magdalenian industry in France. In dealing with this cave one is always brought up short by the knowledge that it was excavated without regard to scientific method; and consequently there may have been admixture of faunas. However, there appears to be no



Natural Size

FIG. 2.

trace of any earlier culture beyond the basic Aurignacian evidenced by the gravette points. The latter implements are present throughout the British Upper Palæolithic. The Aveline's Hole series shows that the native modified Aurignacian had ousted most later influences by the last days of the Pleistocene; and thus our vaunted insularity has the additional virtue of a Palæolithic origin.

## THE CHEDDAR CAVES (FIGS. 3 AND 4).

The second series of 41 stone implements is displayed under the above label. The patination, which is consistent, is more blue and livelier than that of the Gough's specimens, and I am venturing to rule that cave out as a place of origin. Mr. Porch ransacked Great Oones Hole in Cheddar Gorge, where he found Pleistocene remains, and it is possible that that is their true provenance. On the other hand I am informed that he bought many flints from Mr. Pavey who excavated Flint Jack's Cave, Cheddar.

Many of the implements are elongate flakes, and even the roughest would not seem out of place if introduced into the Aveline's Hole collection, but some of the more wrought specimens differ from anything found therein.

But it must be borne in mind that a collector is wont to take only the daintiest specimens, and it is hard to believe that such selection was not employed when forming this very beautiful series. The same cause may be responsible for the rarity of burins. The series is so homogeneous in every way that it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was derived *in toto* from one place.

(8) An elongate flake, nibbled at one terminal oblique edge, is typical of the unfigured flakes of the series.

(7), (11), (15). Gravette points of the geometrical form typical of the British Upper Palæolithic. (7) Appears to be intermediate between the shouldered points and the other examples. The retouch at the backs is steep; that at the edges is a nibble, but is certainly purposeful.

(11) A gravette point converted into a beaked burin.

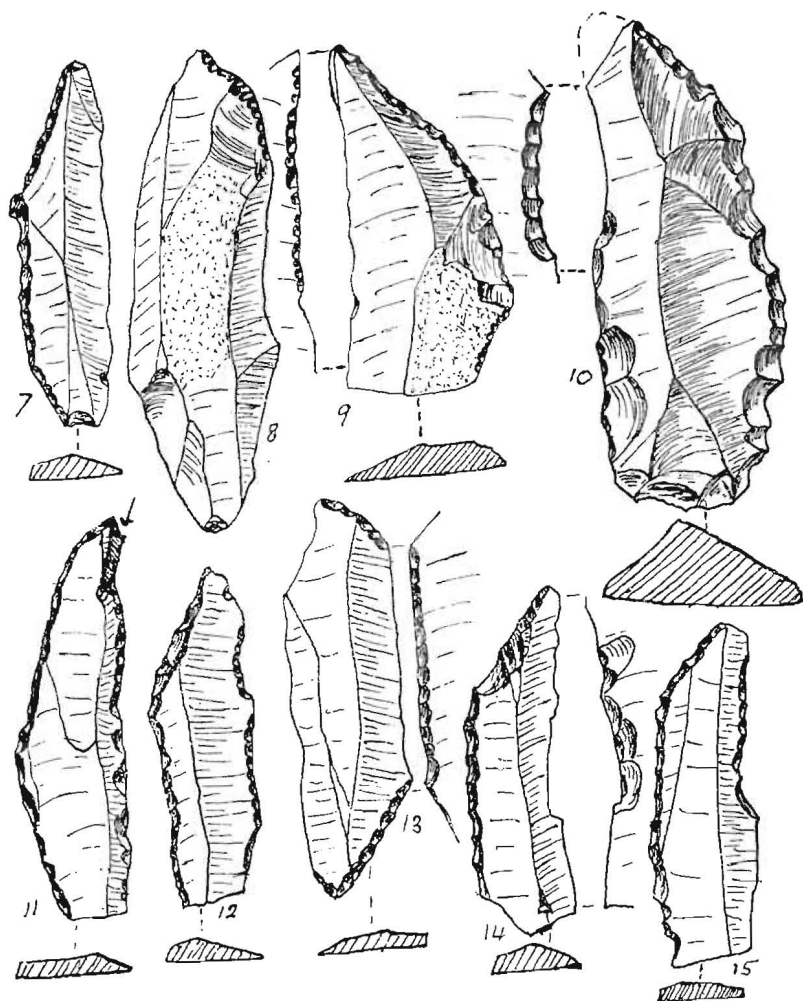
(13) The retouch of the back of this point which, like the others, is fashioned from a slender flake, is directed from above in opposition to the chipping on the oblique ends, which is directed from below. Its form recalls examples from Gough's Cave and elsewhere.

(14) A few flakes have been scaled off the bulbar face of this point by directing pressure on the edge from above.

The form of these points recalls Creswell. The chipping is nearer that of la Grotte de la Mairie, Teyjat, Dordogne.

(10) Resembles a chatelperron point, but the opposed retouch has been employed to trim the upper edge. The bold chipping on the back and butt accords with the quartzite from which it is fashioned. The upper extremity is missing, and it may have been broken off in a clumsy attempt to make a graver. Pseudo-chatelperron points occur in the Magdalenian deposits of France.





Natural Size

FIG. 3.

- (9) Also has an edge trimmed with the opposed retouch.
- (16) A long rough waisted flake.
- (17) Incurved knife with battered back.
- (18) A trimmed blade bearing a very oblique retouch.
- (19), (20), (21) and (24). Scrapers on the ends of long blades.
- (22) and (23) knives. The latter is scaled at the edges.

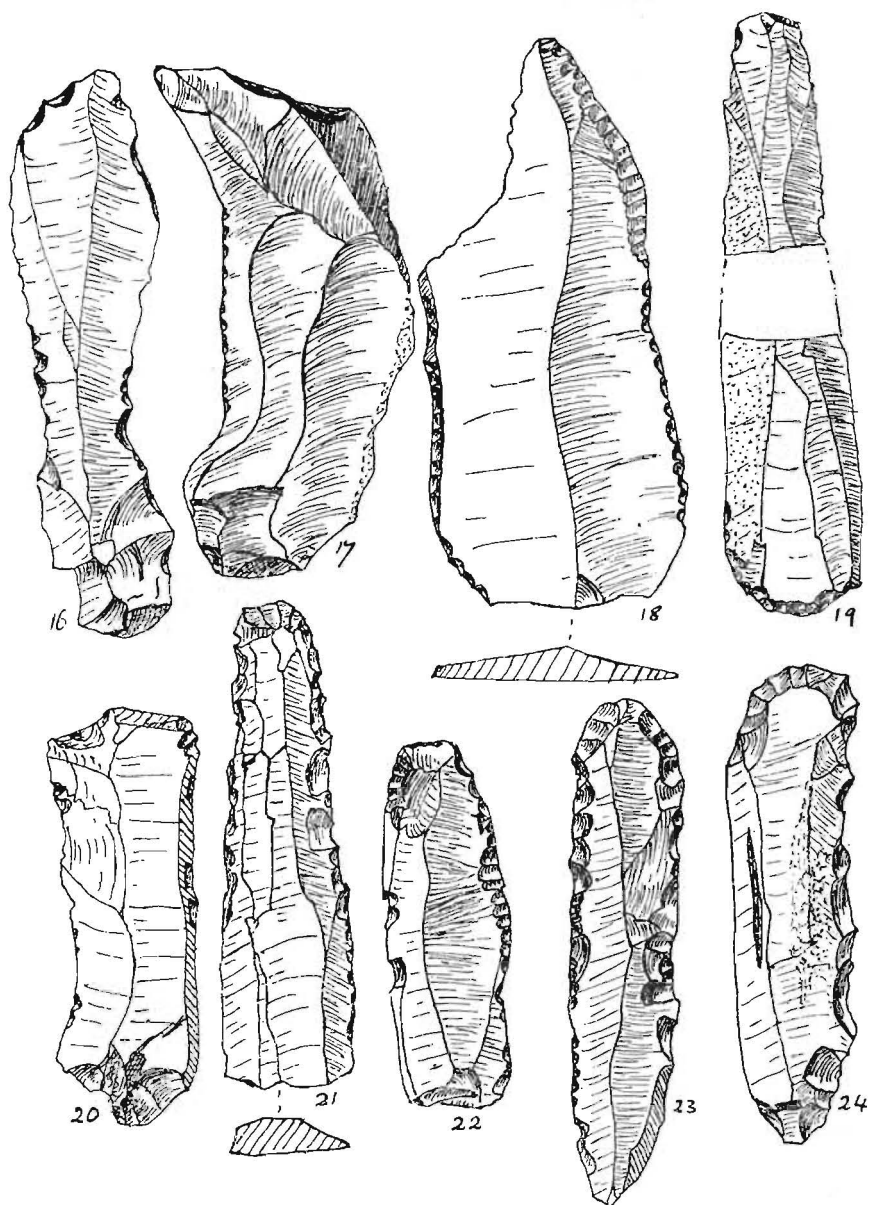
A stout spall (unfigured), 100 mm. long ; which appears to have been detached from a Solutrean blade by a gigantic burin blow, was found in the series. It carries an edge wrought by alternately opposed edge flaking, and there are indications of upper and lower scaled surfaces.

The flint of the series is of excellent quality, but there is a quartzite point and a chert blade. Some red earth adherent to most specimens might have come from any cave in Mendip.

As at Gough's the tendency is towards elongation, and there is little sign of economy. The absence of short scrapers, which even a collector would not despise, is significant.

The series belongs to the Creswellian (of Miss Garrod) or the British Magdalenian, and contains no vestige of Solutrean influence nor examples of the Aurignacian of Paviland. As one would expect its closest affinity is to be found in Gough's Cave. The presence of the nibble, the reverse retouch, and such forms as the pseudo-chatelperron point, and end scrapers, are factors that suggest an earlier date than Aveline's Hole.

That this interesting series has come to us without known provenance, and therefore without most of the value that it deserves, is in itself an indictment of the many collectors of bric à brac who, from time to time, have despoiled many caves in the southern flanks of Mendip. It is to be hoped that in future some way of checking their activities will be found. Unfortunately they are not the only offenders. Village folk with an eye to obtaining curios, and persons working under the cloak of science, but without approach to scientific method, who dig pit after pit and "rearrange" floor after floor, are steadily reducing the finest set of inhabited caves in the country to chaos. Until it is realised that cave excavation is one of the most difficult fields of all excavation, requiring stringent training and infinite restraint, the Cheddar floors with their great significance will remain at the mercy of every pot-hunter in the district.



Natural Size

FIG. 4.

## HUTTON AND BANWELL CAVES (FIG. 5).

(The best references to Hutton Cave are Buckland, *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*, 1824, p. 57, and Rutter, *Delineations of N.W. Somerset*, 1829, p. 100, in which the Rev. David Williams' explorations are recorded. The *Felidæ* and *Rodentia* were splendidly described by W. A. Sanford, *Proc. Somerset Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc.* Vols. XIV, and XV. Banwell Cave is described in Rutter, p. 150).

Mr. Porch collected 18 flints from these two caverns and treated them in the same way that David Williams treated the bones therefrom, a hundred years ago, so that attempts to assign them to their individual localities are destined to be hopeless. However, the appearance of the assemblage suggests two localities. Some of the flints carry an incrustation of red calcareous cave-earth that might have come from any cave, the others bear traces of grey chalky stalagmite. Distinctions in patination and in quality of material may be correlated with these differences. However, while Hutton was filled with ochre the Banwell floor consists of the usual red earth, so that the aforesaid differences are not instructive.

In 1920 this Society made an abortive attempt to locate Hutton Cave, but succeeded in learning something of the local topography. It is manifest from the presence of flints that at the date of occupation both of these caves had entrances other than those recorded, and since both are situated beneath the slopes of hills there is room for such.

Ten of the flints are stout blades, and there are three smaller examples. All are patinated, the alteration being least extensive in those with adherent red-earth.

All the figured specimens have stalagmite adhering to them and their patina is a uniform chalky grey.

(1) A stout gravette point nearer to three examples from Aveline's Hole than to anything else found in the kingdom.

(2) Retouched knife, extensively fire-crackled.

(3) A squamous flake such as those found in Paviland. The ends bear the marks of great violence. Professor Sollas states that these queer implements range from the Aurignacian, where they are abundant, to the Azilian.

(4) and (5) short grattoirs or knives on thin flakes. Both are excellent examples of flaking. An example from Paviland, similar in every respect, is assigned to the Middle Aurignacian.

He is a bold man who would date this tiny assemblage. It may be earlier than Aveline's Hole, the terminal phase of the Upper Palæolithic, since short scrapers were not found in that cave.

## THE HUTTON FAUNA.

A study of the mammalian remains from this cave is of great interest. Williams records Lion, Hyaena (2 individuals), Fox, Wolf, Horse, Boar, Mammoth and Hare. Catcott, the discoverer, found two species of *Cervus*, and one specimen of Cave Bear. Horse was very abundant, recalling Paviland, Uphill and King Arthur's Caves, and the Aurignacian level at Solutré.

Sanford adds the following :—

Irish varying hare.

A very large hare (probably *Lepus anglicus*).

Pika (not identical with the pika from Kent's Hole).

*Microtus ratticeps*.

*Evotomys glareolus*.

*Arvicola (Dicrotonyx) gulielmi*.

*Lemmus sp.*

*Spermophilus erythrogenoides*. (Williams had mixed the specimens, and since this specimen was assigned to Hutton on appearance alone it must be treated with some small reserve.)

A dwarf Hamster (*Cricetus songarus*).

The above suggested extreme continental climatic conditions to Sanford.

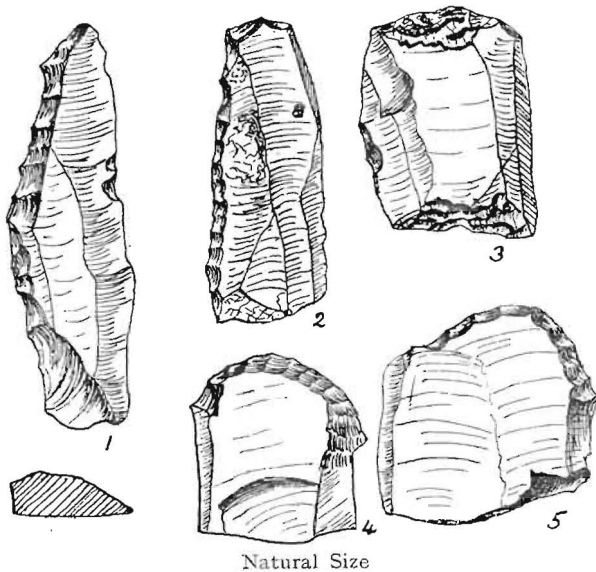


FIG. 5.

*Felis pardus* (also assigned to Hutton by virtue of its appearance and condition).

*Felis caffer*.

*Felis catus*.

Mr. S. B. Adams, Dr. F. S. Wallis and myself examined the remains from Hutton in the Catcott cabinet which reposes in the Bristol Museum, and were able to identify a molar of *Rhinoceros tichorhinus* and a second lower incisor of Hippopotamus. The adherent material, an ochreous concretion incorporating a milk molar of a pig, contrasts with the red earth on most of the specimens. But there is no doubt of the locality. It came from the skull, described at length by Catcott, which was found in an ochre pit at the bottom of the cave. Buckland, who figured it, examined it with the eye of faith, and pronounced it to be a huge boar tusk.

The deer in the cabinet are giant Red Deer, and one other species which is too fragmentary for identification.

Undoubtedly there were at least two horizons in this cave: the oldest underneath, and one fauna had strong affinities with that of the brick-earth of Fisherton, as the marmot remains tend to show.

At all events, it is impossible to draw even the roughest flakes in the Weston collection into association with the remains of Hippopotamus which disappeared from England with the Chellean.

#### THE BANWELL FAUNA.

According to Beard's description both *Ursus spelæus* and *arctos* were present; Bear being the preëminent beast. Remains of Ox were found in thousands as well as Irish Deer, Reindeer, Fox, Wolf and Wild Cat. Mr. M. A. C. Hinton has identified *Lemmus* and *Arvicola abbotti*, so that the occupation belongs to the late Pleistocene.

A feature of the cave is the entire absence of horse, wherein it contrasts sharply with Hutton and Uphill; moreover, the great pachyderms have passed away along with the hyaena; so that the occupation is later than Mother Grundy's Parlour. The arid conditions are ended, and the rain is coming on.

The importance of this list, if it be maintained, is that it puts the disappearance of *Ursus spelæus* from Britain after that of Mammoth, Rhinoceros and Hyaena, all of which are definitely missing from the cave, and thus gives it great value as a "dating" animal. It was missing from Aveline's Hole, at the very end of the Magdalenian.

## UPHILL CAVE (FIG. 6).

(Reference: E. Wilson and S. H. Reynolds, *Proc. Bristol Naturalists Society*, 1900, Vol. IX, N.S., Part III).

The Bone Caves at Uphill, near Weston-super-Mare are well known, and need no description. Those that concern us were about 50 feet from the top of the cliff, and have now been quarried away. They are distinct from the fissures wherein Buckland, the Rev. David Williams, and Mr. Pool found remains.

It will be remembered that the excavation carried out by Mr. Wilson in the rift revealed the presence of worked flints in a rubble which had undergone some displacement before it reached its final position. Mr. Wilson was unable to consider that these implements were contemporary with the bones of hyaena and rhinoceros with which they were associated, the theory being advanced that they became intermingled during the process of displacement.

Miss Garrod examined such of these implements as were in the Bristol Museum collection and discovered and described the following:

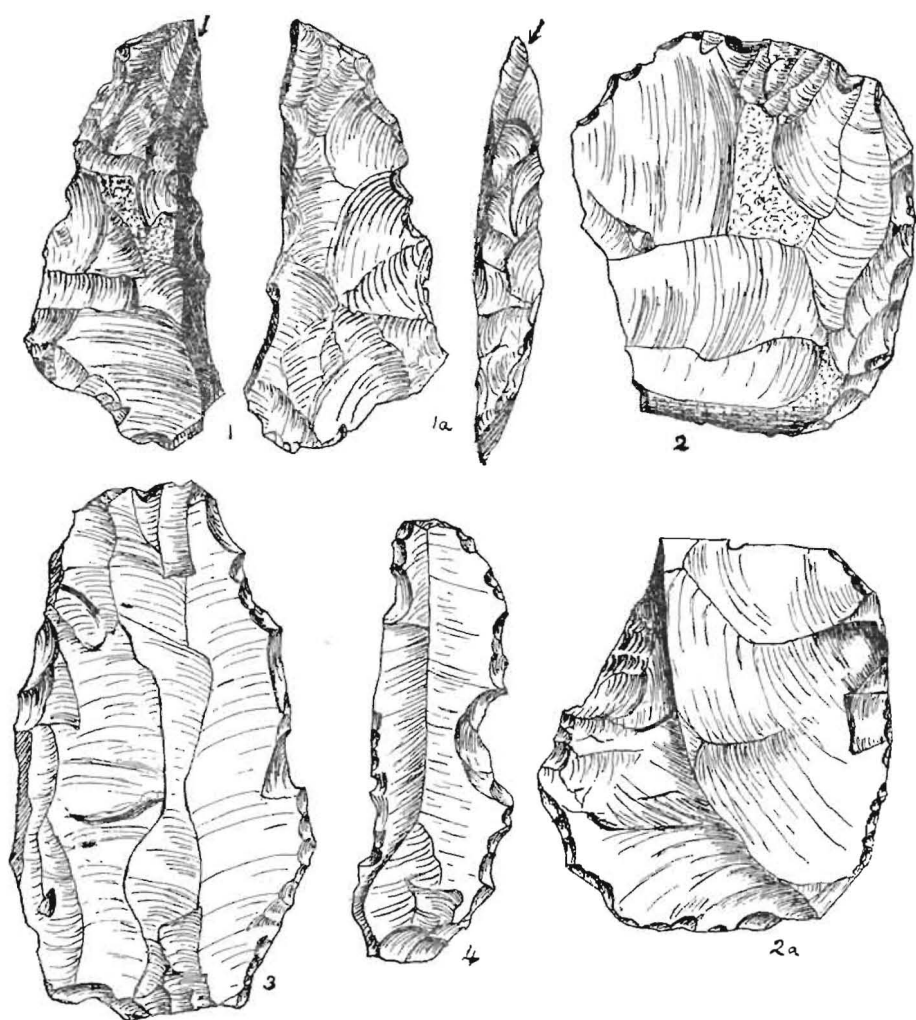
A large burin on a protosolutrean blade, 3 protosolutrean blades (flaked on the bulbar faces) and a nucleus scraper (F. 539); and a stout protosolutrean blade (F. 627).

The other material at Bristol from this cave consists of rough blades and flakes which have been struck off some of the many flint pebbles found in the cave.

The thirteen implements in the Weston Museum come from the collection of the late Mr. G. S. Weare, they include six small blades patinated grey, of the usual upper palæolithic form; a curved knife of greater thickness than breadth, with a battered back; and a small chipped blade.

(1) and (1a) a small blade in good quality chalk flint patinated pale blue, iron stained in places and flaked on both faces. The flake scars are deeper and less regular than those on the local knife daggers with Bronze Age associations. The edge has been damaged by the movement of the deposit, the patination being lighter on such scars, but there are vestiges of a final retouch. The back has been battered and a burin blow was struck at the pointed extremity,

Having regard to the form and associations there is no doubt that the implement is Solutrean, and as such is the first to be recorded from the south-west of England, though primitive fore-runners of the laurel-leaf are already known from Kent's Hole and Wookey Hole.



Natural Size

FIG. 6.

(2) and (2a) a discoidal scraper or knife, 1.5 cms. thick, flaked on both faces, exhibits protosolutrean technique—though not unlike many neolithic nucleus scrapers. The patination is chalky.

A small round scraper of identical flint, and with the under surface chipped, is also in the collection.

(3) An implement with yellow-grey patina and iron stained. It bears a steep retouch along one edge. Possibly a racloir.

(4) A notched blade with white porcellaneous patina.



In addition four flint nodules and six rounded pebbles of flint, sandstone and quartzite are at Weston. The sandstone pebbles have rough perpendicular facets at their ends, and were probably in use as hammer-stones.

After the presence of Solutrean implements the most significant feature of the Uphill assemblage is the absence of Aurignacian forms such as the gravette point.

In Britain the Solutrean was succeeded by a local development of the Aurignacian with Magdalenian influences, which Miss Garrod has named, "Creswellian." Now, at Uphill the Aurignacian was replaced by Solutrean with no vestiges of the earlier culture. Thus in Mendip we have the succession: Aurignacian; Solutrean; Aurignacian, it being understood that the term Aurignacian is applied, in the widest sense, to stone cultures only. To explain this sequence, it seems necessary to find a region into which the Solutrean did not penetrate, or, at least, threw influences forward only, without replacing the native Aurignacian.

A similar state of affairs was to happen in later years when the indigenous cultures of the British Neolithic survived in the North and West, and resurged over these islands in the Middle Bronze Age; as Dr. Cyril Fox has recently shown. In either case the sequence indicates that on a part of these islands the population remained relatively stable in constitution.

However, conclusions drawn from Uphill Cave must be received with a certain amount of caution; for though it was excavated with scientific care and thoroughness the floor of occupation of either man or hyaena was not encountered. Bones of animals split longitudinally by man and afterwards gnawed by hyaenas were common enough, but all were found in inner rifts among debris re-arranged by floor movement, and therefore there is a possibility that industrial elements such as the gravette point, are missing.

The associated animal remains were: Hyaena, Cave Bear, Badger, Fox, Horse, Woolly Rhinoceros, Bison, Red (?) Deer (large), Mammoth, and Squirrel. Mr. Hinton has added Lemmus. Hyaena and Horse predominate. It will be seen that this list is identical with the fauna of King Arthur's Cave. Mr. Weare's collection contains teeth of a large deer that may be Irish Deer.

In conclusion I have to thank Mr. W. H. S. Roberts, curator of Weston Museum, for permission to examine and figure the flints; Dr. H. Bolton, for permission to examine the Catcott and Uphill cabinets in Bristol Museum, and Dr. F. S. Wallis for much valuable assistance.