

Archaeological material from Scotland in West Midlands museums

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ABSTRACT

A survey of museum collections in the West Midlands was undertaken by the West Midlands Archaeological Collections Research Unit with the aim of disseminating information on non-local artefacts more widely. A range of prehistoric and medieval items which are originally from locations in Scotland was identified by the survey; these are described by a short catalogue.

INTRODUCTION

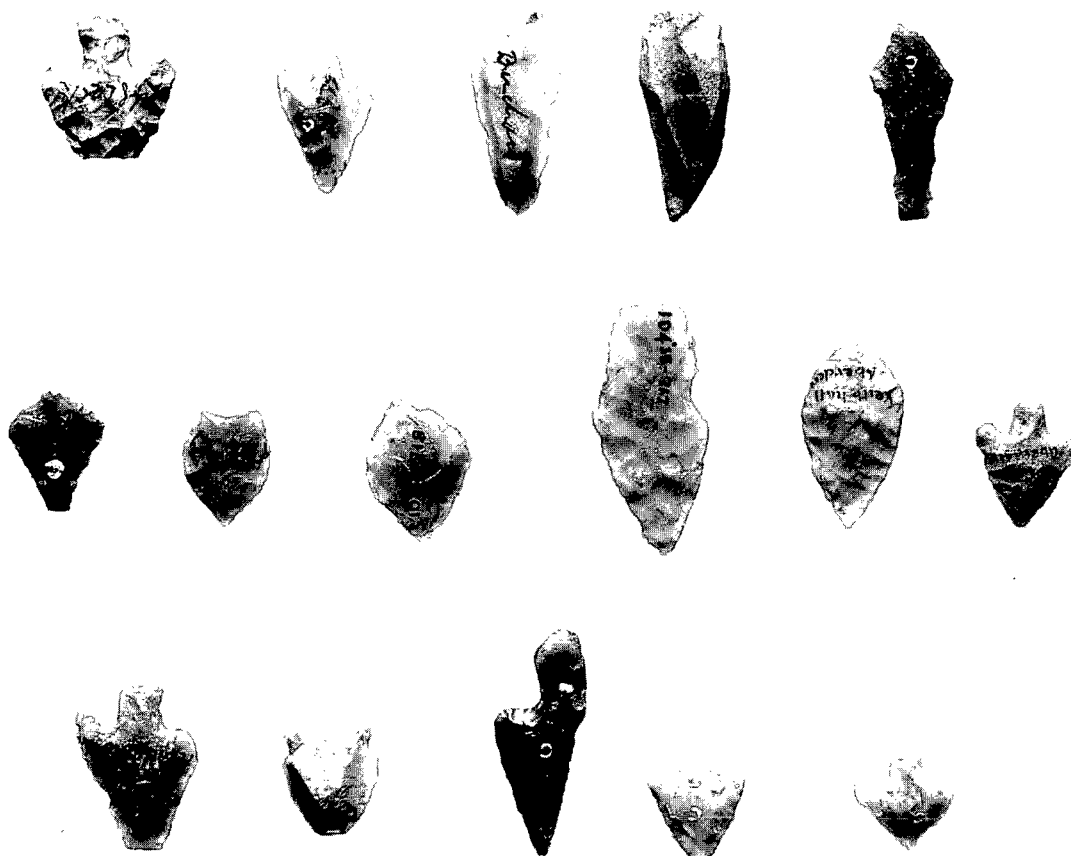
The following note is a result of a survey of archaeological collections in West Midlands museums carried out by the West Midlands Archaeological Collections Research Unit under the auspices of the West Midlands Area Museums Service. All museums in the counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands and Worcestershire were included in the survey, but not private collections or material currently under study at Field Units. One of the aims of the project was to make awareness of the collections more widely known, especially artefacts of non-local origin, through a series of short notes in relevant county and specialist journals. This method of disseminating information was thought preferable to the compilation of a single catalogue which would be so disparate as to be of little appeal to the researchers we are trying to reach.

The survey showed that there were only three museums in the West Midlands holding antiquities, of all periods, from Scotland. These are presented below, arranged alphabetically by site within periods. Many do not have a more precise provenance and the four-figure grid references in brackets are given merely as an aid for locating sites; where further details about findspots or circumstances of discovery are known these are noted, together with a fuller grid reference if available. Resources have not allowed the compilation of full catalogue details or extensive trawls through documentation and literature. As the primary intention of the listing is to give researchers an idea of the type and quantity of material held in West Midlands museums it is hoped that this brevity will be forgiven. We are grateful to Mr David Bailey at Birmingham Museum for taking and preparing the photographs.

All dimensions are in millimetres (mm). The following abbreviations have been used when citing museum accession numbers: Bir = Birmingham City Museums & Art Gallery; Nun = Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery; Wos = Worcester City Museum Service.

* Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham B3 3DH

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ILLUS 1 Arrowheads *top row* (l-r): a,b Affleck; c,d Buchan; e Donside; *middle row*: f Fyvie; g,h,i Huntly; j,k Keith Hall; *bottom row*: l Kirkbuddo; m,n,o,p Aberdeenshire(?) (*Birmingham City Museum*)

PREHISTORIC

P Watson & P Wise

Affleck, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 86 23) Two barbed and tanged arrowheads (one of Sutton type a?), but one barb is broken and one with broken tip (Bir 1935A104.723, 724) (illus 1a-b).

Buchan, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 97 49) Two arrowheads on flakes; grey flint (Bir 1935A104.728, 729) (illus 1c-d).

Burghead, Moray (NGR: NJ 11 68) Good barbed and tanged arrowhead; L 24, W 21 (Nun c/4/67/184).

Donside, Aberdeenshire Kite-shaped arrowhead, broken; reddish-brown flint (Bir 1935A104.726) (illus 1e).

Fyvie, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 76 37) Kite-shaped arrowhead in reddish flint; tip broken (Bir 1935A104.720) (illus 1f).

Huntly, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 53 39) Two arrowheads on flakes, one L 42, W 20, and tip only of a leaf-shaped arrowhead (Bir 1935A104.717–719) (illus 1g–i).

Keith Hall, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 78 21) One leaf-shaped arrowhead in pale brown flint, L 31, W 17, and one barbed and tanged arrowhead in brown flint, L 22, W 17 (Bir 1991A415) (illus 1j–k).

Newburgh, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 99 25) About 100 mesolithic waste flakes and blades including some microblades ‘found on the north bank of the River Ythan opposite Newburgh’ (Bir 1957A182).

Pennan Hill, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NJ 85 65?) Neolithic polished stone (epidiorite) axe with slightly convex sides tapering to a rounded butt; gently curved cutting edge. Ground all over. L 205, W 74, Th 40. Found on 27 August 1911 in a ploughed field on top of Pennan Hill (near Lord Pilsligo’s(?) cave) by Robert Hinsky? of 73 High Street, Strichen. (Bir 1957A158) (illus 2).

Aberdeenshire (?) no detailed provenance Carved stone (pink granite) ball with six knobs; Diam 63. Marshall 1977, type 4. (Bir 1957A161) (illus 3).

Aberdeenshire (?) no detailed provenance Nine arrowheads, leaf and barbed and tanged (Bir 1935A104.721, 725, 727, 730, 1533) (First four Illus 1m–p).

Aberdeenshire (?) no detailed provenance Neolithic adze, L 140, W 55, and granite maul with median groove and rounded ends, L 120, both assumed to be from Aberdeenshire as the donor (J Findlay) lived in Aberdeen (Nun c/4/66/114–115).

Pomona, Orkney Roughly chipped flat piece of stone with straight parallel sides; one end is rounded, the other sheered or snapped off at a slight oblique angle. Possibly an axe blank? L 200, W 92, Th 22 (Bir 1988A19).

North Roe, Fethaland, Shetland (NGR: HU 37 93) Small (votive?) polished stone axe with slightly convex sides tapering to a narrow rounded butt; gently curved, uneven cutting edge. Almost rectangular section; polished on both faces but not on edges. L 63, W 33, Th 15 (Wos A64–28).

Gruting Hill, Shetland (NGR: HU 24) Supposedly prehistoric plano-convex spindle whorl made of grey stone; di 40, H 18. ‘Found at a depth 3 to 4 feet in a peat bank on the north side of Gruting Hill about 1/4 mile south and west from Gruting Loch; Lat. 60 13’ 54” N, Long. 1 20’ (or 29’) 34” W.’ (Bir 1957A147).

Unst, Shetland (NGR: HP 60 09) Massive polished stone (spherulitic quartz, porphyry and tourmaline) axe with almost parallel but somewhat uneven sides; rounded butt and quite sharply curved cutting edge. Polished all over. L 395, W 95, Th 50 (Bir 1957A122) (illus 4).

Kirkbuddo, Angus (NGR: NO 50 43) One barbed and tanged arrowhead; one barb broken, other pointed. Brown flint (Bir 1935A104.722) (illus 1).

Loch Geirann Mill, North Uist, Western Isles Polished stone (ophitic olivine gabbro) axe with convex sides tapering to a thin pointed butt and a quite sharply curved cutting edge. L 195, W 67, Th 36 (Bir 1927A20) (illus 5).



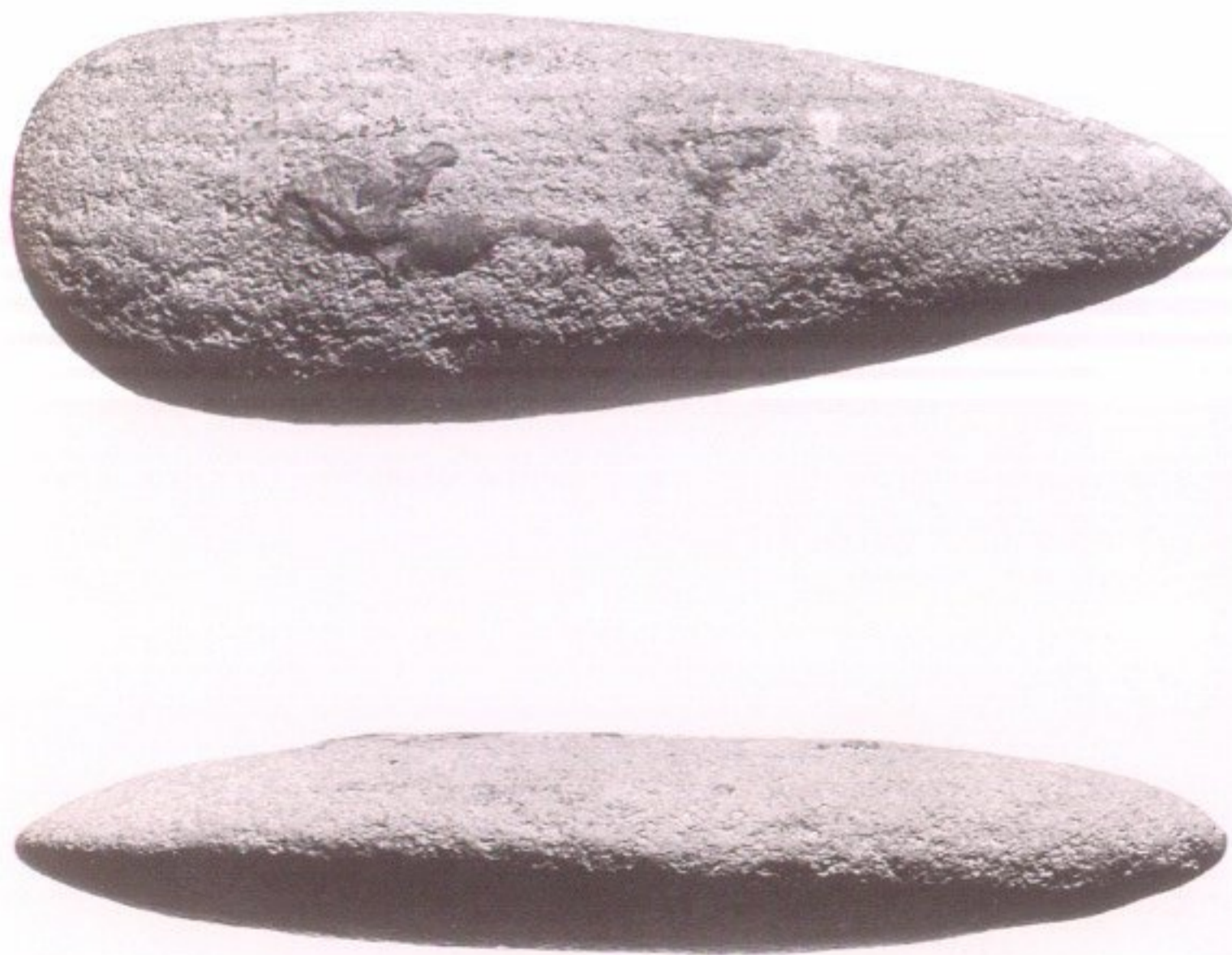
ILLUS 2 Stone axe from Pennan Hill
(*Birmingham City Museum*)



ILLUS 3 Carved granite ball, Aberdeenshire(?)
(*Birmingham City Museum*)



ILLUS 4 Polished stone axe from Unst (*Birmingham City Museum*)



ILLUS 5 Stone axe from Loch Geirann Mill, North Uist (*Birmingham City Museum*)

ROMAN

D Symons

Inchtuthill Fort, Perth & Kinross (NGR: NO 12 39) Representative set of five iron nails as distributed by the Iron & Steel Institute in 1962 (Bir 1964A2520).

MEDIEVAL

D Symons

Collieston, Aberdeenshire (NGR: NK 03 28) Gold and ruby ring inscribed 1571 'found on the beach opposite the wreck of the *Santa Catalina*' (Bir 1935A547.287).

Shetland, Brindister (NGR: HU 28 57) Ground stone button mould; roughly triangular with perforation at narrow end and a depression at the other (Bir 1957A234).

REFERENCES

Marshall, D N 1977 'Carved Stone Balls', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 108 (1976-7), 40-72.