
6 The quartz by *Michael Donnelly*

Two pieces of quartz (small finds 2 and 3) were recovered from below Skeleton 1 (primary cairn, context 007: [Section 3.2](#)). Both are pieces of tabular, opaque, milky quartz with occasional purplish veins. One (small find 2) displays areas of damage along two of its edges that may relate to crude retouch and/or extensive use. This piece also has a possible bulbar area, although it is difficult to be exact in this identification in tabular quartz. The second piece is less convincing as a worked item; however, if the first example is genuine, then the possibility that the second has also been struck must be considered. Overall, small find 2 may be deemed to be a probable example of struck quartz, while small find 3 would only be considered as a possible.

Small find 2 is a probable regular quartz flake, 31mm × 22mm × 13mm, with possible retouch/damage along its dorsal distal and ventral right margins, possible highly prominent tabular bulbar cone and indication of two or more possible uniplane

removals. **Small find 3** is a possible irregular quartz flake, 21mm × 14mm × 6mm, possibly snapped distally, with indications of two or more possible uniplane removals.

The use of inferior quartz types is known from Scotland and other countries ([Alakärppä et al 1998](#); [Bang-Anderson 1998](#)). While certain types of quartz will display telltale signs of knapping, such as bulbs of percussion, radial fissuring, negative removal scars on the dorsal surface, etc., other types will not. At Ben Lawers on Loch Tayside ([Atkinson et al forthcoming](#)), a Mesolithic cache of low-quality quartz was found in a pit alongside an assemblage containing flint and several types of quartz that split with a conchoidal fracture (as opposed to tabular). Thus in Scotland, even supposedly inferior quartz can find itself being prized for reasons unknown (possibly having a ritual or symbolic relevance: see [Darvill 2002](#)).