Comments and Communications

Prehistoric Sutton Hoo

SINCE the discovery of the archaeological treasure of Sutton Hoo (*1*) in Suffolk, England, little attention has been paid to any of the earlier horizons that occupy the immediate area. Basil Brown, of the Ipswich Mansion Museum (*2*), states that, during the 1938 excavations at the site in question, Neolithic and some Bronze Age flints were found, along "with sherds of Beaker pottery which were discovered in the mound content when the trenches were dug through three barrows." In the (80-foot wooden) ship mound itself, "when the trench was widened (1939), and below the old ground level, six Bronze Age pits or 'hut sites' showed up with hearths and Beaker sherds." However, to date, nothing has been published on these or other earlier remains—largely because the ship burial overshadowed everything else.

Only recently Bruce Mitford, Keeper of British Antiquities, of the British Museum, found a few stone specimens during one of his visits to the site. The author visited this archaeological locality in June 1950, in the company of Peter A. Green, of Ipswich, and collected a few Neolithic stone implements (Fig. 1) on the same spur of land as that occupied by the ship barrow. The presence of a very heavy patina may be noted on a majority of these flint artifacts.

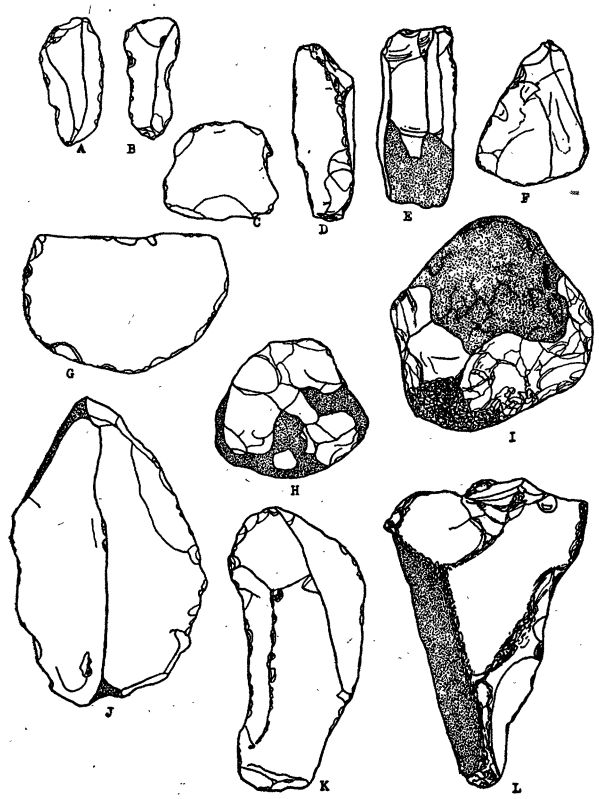

FIG. 1. Artifacts from Sutton Hoo, Eng. *A*, *B*, and *E* represent single and double longitudinal keeled end scrapers; *C*, *F*, and *G*, side scrapers; *D* (and possibly *K*), knife blades; *H*, flint core; *I* and *J*, choppers; and *L*, fist ax.

The sand impression of the ship's hull became a casualty of the recent war when a British soldier drove his tank down the center of the excavations during maneuvers!

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Oldest Natural History Museums and Institutional Herbaria in America[1]

THERE seems to be little question that the first organized society to acquire and exhibit natural history specimens in America was the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, which must have begun prior to April 20, 1770 (*1*). In his article on this subject G. G. Simpson states that, about three years later, January 12, 1773, the Library Society of Charles-Towne, S. C., "voted to establish a museum." Next in chronological sequence came the Philadelphia Museum, founded by Charles Wilson Peale in 1785. Dr. Simpson admits the difficulty in deciding how to arrange chronologically the other early museums at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the Peabody Academy at Salem, Mass., the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, etc. A recent issue of *American Heritage* includes an illustration of Rembrandt Peale's Baltimore Museum begun in 1813 "against the advice of his father. It is now one of the nation's outstanding municipal museums," according to D. S. Smith (*2*).

It is the purpose of this brief account to furnish the records of two more natural history museums in the Philadelphia area, as well as a bibliographic note on the Boston Society of Natural History, founded in 1830 (*3*) and included in the ensuing list of early institutional herbaria. All the museums listed were founded early in the nineteenth century. Of those omitted by Dr. Simpson, the first was organized at West Chester, Pa., March 18, 1826. Unlike the Literary and Philosophical Society of South Carolina, which was organized in 1814, the Chester County Cabinet of Natural Science was able to acquire a three-story brick building, which was operated as a sort of lyceum and museum. The building still stands on South Church Street in the borough of West Chester, but was sold to pay off a mortgage. For nearly a century it has been used for various educational and small business enterprises.

The entire mineral cabinet of the Chester County

[1] Acknowledgment is gratefully made to Bart Anderson, librarian of the Chester County Historical Society, and to Helen A. Russell, librarian of the Frances Harvey Green Library, Pennsylvania State Teachers College, both at West Chester, for assistance and loan of historic papers.

TABLE 1

OLDEST INSTITUTIONAL HERBARIA IN THE UNITED STATES

1812—The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.
1826—The Darlington Herbarium, S.T.C., West Chester, Pa.
1829—Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.
1830—Boston Society of Natural History, Boston, Mass.
1836—The New York State Museum, Albany, N. Y.
1838—The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.
1850—The Charleston Museum, Charleston, S. C.
1852—The Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wis.
1853—The California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, Calif.
1856—The University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.
1857—The Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Mo.

organization, including books, maps, pictures, and the herbarium of William Darlington, as well as the inevitable collection of stuffed birds, an alligator, birds' eggs, shells, "philosophical apparatus," and miscellaneous curios, was purchased by the West Chester Academy a hundred years ago (1850). In 1869, the State Normal School acquired all the property of the West Chester Academy (*4*). At present, most of the natural history specimens form the nucleus of the Science Museum at the State Teachers College. Since 1827, any local resident or interested visitor may have had access to the collections, although there were at least two periods when moving or renovations were in progress that made it difficult for people to make use of this opportunity.

Another early museum was that of the Delaware County Institute of Science, incorporated February 8, 1836. A two-story building was erected near Rose Tree, Pa., in 1837. At an organization meeting in Upper Providence on September 21, 1833, the parent institution was named the "Cabinet of Natural Science of Delaware County." Its incorporation as an Institute of Science no doubt became necessary when plans were made to erect the building. "Lectures were given in the hall and a museum was established, which received many specimens in every department of natural science" (*5*). It continues to meet in its present building, which was erected in Media, the county seat, in 1867. Its collection of local minerals and its scientific library are quite worthy of note.

In their recent listing of the institutional herbaria of the United States (*3*), Jones and Meadows have done a distinct service to their fellow-taxonomists. In the chronological list of herbaria the first section, including those founded before 1860, should contain two more institutional herbaria.

The Darlington Herbarium at West Chester, Pa., was established by William Darlington, M.D., who began in 1817 to collect a herbarium of the plants of Chester County (*6*). As noted above, he was a prominent figure also in the founding of the Chester County Cabinet of Natural Science (*7*), the first annual report of which was published in 1828 (*8*). Since the oldest specimens now found in the Darlington Herbarium bear the date 1826, there is sufficient evidence to show that it antedates that of the Boston Society of Natural History, which was founded in 1830 (*3*). Jones and Meadows may have omitted this herbarium because the Chester County Cabinet was later dissolved and its collections eventually became the property of the Pennsylvania State Teachers College at West Chester (*4, 9*).

"The question as to when an herbarium ceases to be a private one and when it becomes 'public' or 'institutional' is not always easily decided. For example, Asa Gray gave his herbarium to Harvard University in 1864, when it became an institutional herbarium. But the herbarium of Asa Gray is much older. It may be that the herbarium of the New York State Museum and the Darlington Herbarium are older 'institutionally' than we have listed them. We relied solely upon information submitted in the questionnaires" (*10*). The Herbarium of the New York State Museum at Albany should also appear in the earliest chronological group, as it was founded in 1836.

A revised chronological list of the oldest institutional herbaria in the United States is given in Table 1.

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A Modified Glass Filter Apparatus for Small Volumes

THE development of a practical UF (ultrafine) filter assembly was accomplished by Morton (*J. Bact.,* 47, (4), 379 [1944]). It combined the standard UF porosity sintered glass filter of Pyrex[1] with a mantle and joined them with a standard taper glass joint T-S 29/26 to a 250-ml Erlenmeyer-type flask. This was the first all-glass filter apparatus for bacteriological work. It has the advantages that it can be chemically cleaned and that it affords excellent protection from outside contamination by virtue of the glass mantle and standard taper joint closure. The glass joint closure also allows repeated use and sterilization without contamination from the rubber stopper. Frequent changes of the stopper necessitated by heat distortion and fusion to the glass are eliminated. The glass filters have offered a definite advantage over the Seitz or Berkefeld types of filters, which take up and hold

[1] Pyrex brand chemical glass #774, Corning Glass Works, Corning, N. Y.