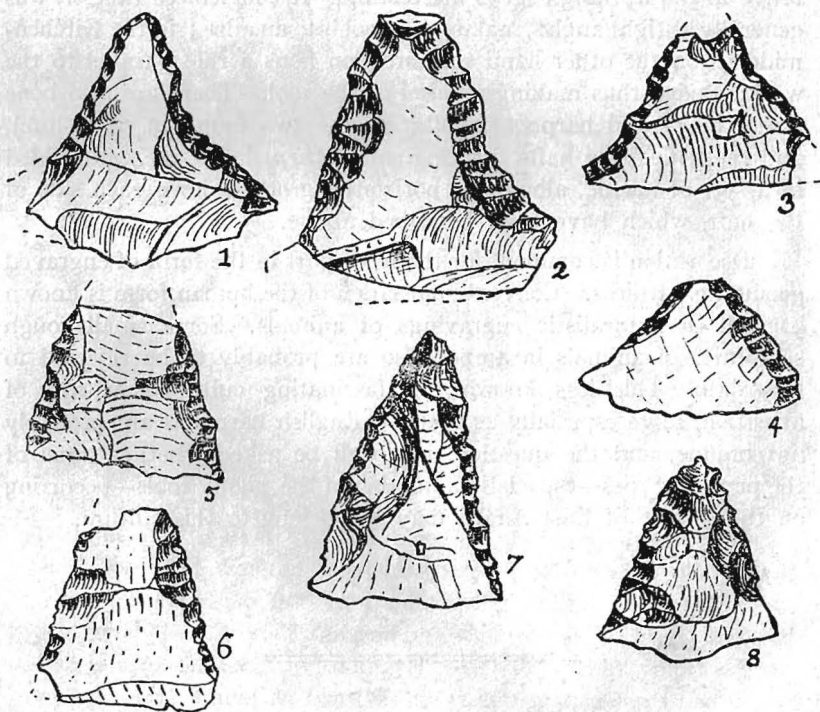


Notes on some Chisel-like Implements from Mendip.

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Capitan, in his paper on the industry found in the hut foundations at Campigny, figures several examples of the most typical tool of the station—a chisel-like implement called by him the *tranchet*.¹ These are of various sizes, and perhaps are best described as choppers or proto-celts. The Campignian industry is now recognised as the earliest phase of the Neolithic stage in Western Europe—a period of extremely coarse pottery, anterior to polished tools—and therein the business end of the palæolithic point migrates from the narrow pointed end of Acheulean and Mousterian hand-axes to the wide end, where, in the modern axe, it yet remains. Simultaneously the section is flattened. Some of the *tranchets* from Campigny were small.



¹ Capitan *le Campignien*, *Revue de l'École d'anthropologie*, 1898. pp. 20-21

Recently the Society's museum has been enriched by a fine collection of surface flints found on Mendip by Mr. A Selley, and prolonged work during the past six years by many of our members has augmented the total. From this certain specimens, kindred to the smaller tranchets from Campigny, have been chosen for illustration.

Nos. 7 and 8 are miniature specimens; 7 is worked on one face only, whereon may be seen a bar of white patination from the surface of some former implement. It is in the shape of an isosceles triangle, the sides are blunted by pressure chipping as in a scraper, the unchipped base forms a sharp cutting edge. No. 8 a very small example with steel blue patina, has both faces and sides chipped, but as in No. 7, and most of the examples described hereafter, the base is sharp and bears signs of wear. Nos. 5 and 6, are lightly patinated, and worked on one face only, but in the latter the trimming of the edges has been directed from that face and therefore is seen from the other aspect; furthermore, one edge has been chipped from the reverse also. No. 3, which is unpatinated, marks a further development; the sides have become concave, marking an elongation of the sharp base, and are wrought from both faces. No. 4 is also squat and otherwise similar.

Nos. 1 and 2 mark the final development. The faces are practically unflaked, but the sides are retouched. No. 2 has had one edge chipped from both obverse and reverse. Possibly the chipping from the obverse was to reduce inequality of surface on the opposite face. In No. 1 both sides are worked from the reverse only. An almost identical tool was found, last August, in the E. Barrow, Tynings Farm, and is described elsewhere in this number. It is beautifully symmetrical, bears a rudimentary patina, and was associated with an urn burial of the earlier middle Bronze Age. Nos. 1—4 have been described as bell shaped scrapers.

Small tranchets were figured by Sir John Evans on page 291 of *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, (1872.) Two specimens from the Yorkshire Wolds are given. Fig. 231 is of a type kindred to No. 2; Fig. 232 to No. 1, but somewhat larger. The specimens are described as of doubtful determination. On page 329 Egyptian arrows with chisel heads are cited, and on page 352 (Fig. 342) is figured an "arrow head" of this type from Urquhart which is the counterpart of Nos. 5 and 6. On page 365 (Fig. 344) will be found a description of an implement of this type secured to a wooden shaft by fibre; the chisel end turned outwards. It was discovered in a peat-moss

in the parish of Vissenberg, in the Isle of Fünen. Sir John considered it to be an arrow-head of the Egyptian type.

Whether these implements are arrowheads or scrapers or chisels must remain in doubt. The tranchets from Campigny and elsewhere are certainly cutting tools, and there seem to be grounds for regarding these examples from Mendip as small forms of the same tool, such as were hafted in the manner of the specimen from Fünen, and for which purpose they appear to be admirably adapted.

The undoubted association of one bell-shaped specimen with a Bronze-age interment gives a very late date for the incurved type. Possibly the evolution of the bronze axe had an influence on the shape: the first bronze axes were copies of the stone axe; as it became common knowledge that hammering tempers copper and its alloys the edge lengthened and the sides grew concave. We find a reflection of this new technique in the stone axe-hammers from Bronze Age barrows, which have this splayed edge. The bell shape of these very late chisels or diminutive tranchets may be a kindred reflection.
