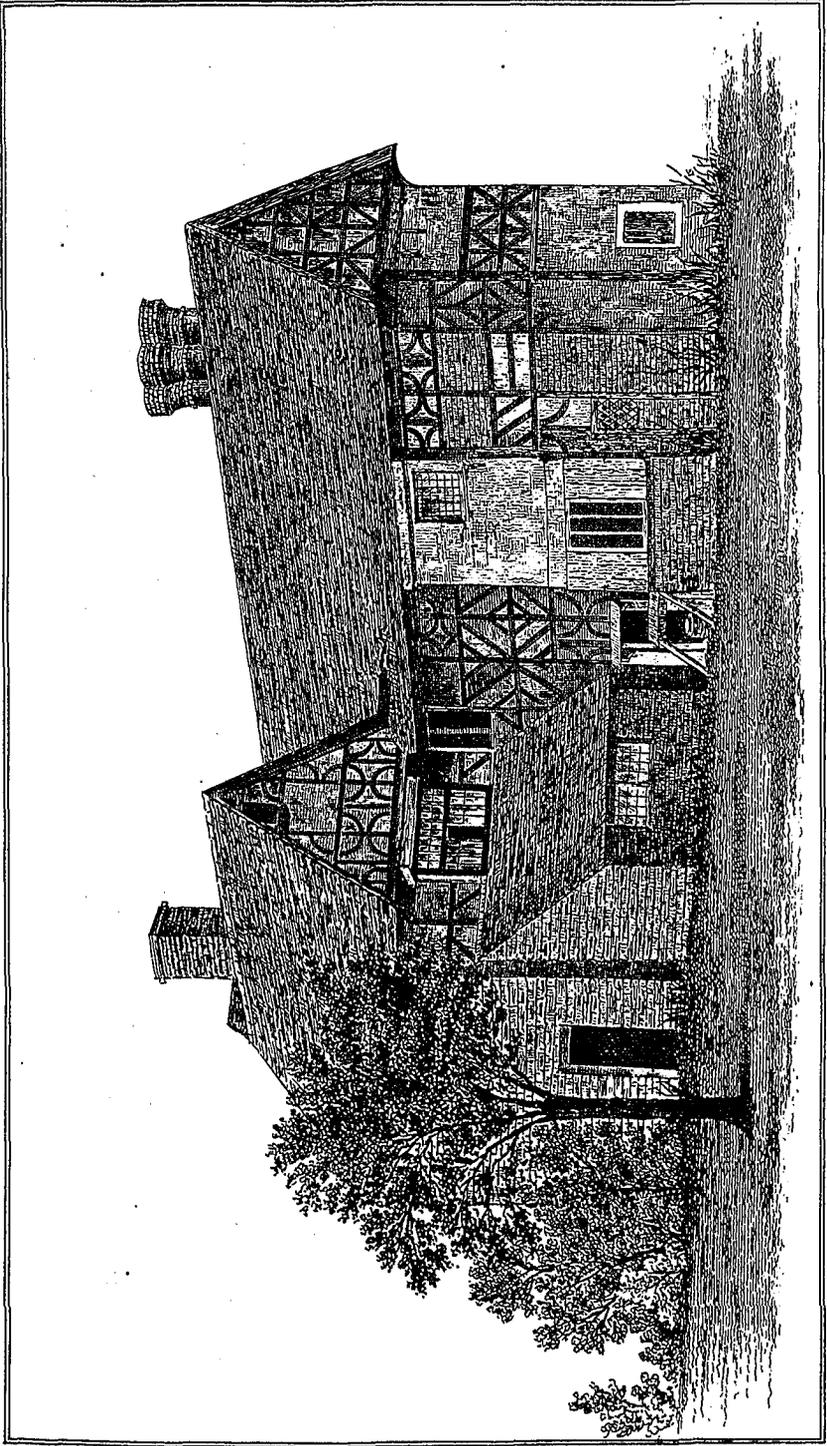


CELTIC REMAINS  
DISCOVERED AT GROVEHURST, IN  
MILTON-NEXT-SITTINGBOURNE.

BY GEORGE PAYNE, JUN., F.L.S.

GROVEHURST, formerly reputed to be a Manor, is situated about two miles to the north of the town of Milton, and was for several centuries a place of some importance. Hasted states that Sir William de Grovehurst possessed it in the reigns of Edward I and II, and his descendant Sir Richard Grovehurst in that of Henry VII. The Grovehursts alienated it to a Finche, whose descendants held it for several generations. It subsequently passed into the hands of the family of Keat; Sir Jonathan Keat, Bart., died possessed of it in 1700. His heirs sold it to Peachy of Petsworth in Sussex, whose descendant, Sir James Peachy, Bart., afterwards Lord Selsey, owned it in 1798. It is now the property of William Whitehead Gascoyne, Esq., of Sittingbourne. The Manor-house was destroyed about A.D. 1871, when a new farm-house was erected in its place. Adjoining this manor was the manor of Owre, at the northern extremity of Kemsley Downs. According to Hasted, Owre in the reign of Edward I was a possession of the family of Savage, one of whom, John le Sauvage, had a grant of free-warren and other liberties in his manor of Ore near Middleton (Milton). In the reign of Edward II it passed into the hands of John de Haudlo. In that of Richard II it became the property of the crown, and was granted to Alice de Preston and her heirs. From thence it passed into the family of Monins, and afterwards to the Finches, one of whom sold it together with Grovehurst to Keat, before mentioned, who disposed of it to



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GROVEHURST MANOR HOUSE, MILTON.

Whitman & Bass, Edito to the Queen, Lond. n.

Peachy, in whose family it continued down to the Right Hon. Lord Selsey. A portion of this estate as well as the house was, during the reign of Charles I, possessed by Ambrose Tomlyn, from whom it passed to Samuel Hunt, his daughter carried it in marriage to Rev. Charles Hinde, vicar of Milton, in 1718, whose daughters pulled down the ancient house in 1768. The lands are still in the possession of the Hindes. The manors of Grovehurst and Owre are divided by the branch line to Sheerness of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company. The fields which form the eastern embankment of the line at this spot have of late years been extensively worked for brick-earth by Messrs. Tildsley and Minter, and Mr. Robert Watts, the brickfield of the latter being the site of the following discoveries.

On the 21st January, 1871, intelligence was received of the discovery of Flint weapons and flakes, together with pottery and animal remains. An examination of the ground from whence these were taken, shewed that originally a hole had been dug out to a depth of from three to four feet, and about ten feet in diameter, the bottom of the cavity, which was in the form of a bowl, being covered with a layer of burnt vegetable matter about a foot thick. From the year 1871 to 1878 discoveries have been frequently made of a precisely similar nature. During that time the writer on several occasions personally conducted the excavations, and was thus enabled to determine with certainty, that the layers of burnt and decayed material represented the floors of primitive dwellings. It is probable that the circular pits as described above were once covered by a wooden structure thatched with turf or reeds, analogous to the huts erected by modern savages. These erections having long since perished, the cavities became filled up from natural causes. The well-known seam of black burnt earth which invariably indicates the presence of a sepulchral deposit, must not be confounded with those already mentioned, although at first sight it was difficult to detect the difference between them.

A closer inspection, however, of the débris upon the so-called "floors" revealed quantities of flint weapons and

tools, evidently made on the spot, as innumerable chips and flakes were found which had been splintered off in the process of their manufacture. Blocks of sandstone were occasionally met with for grinding and polishing purposes, some of the smaller pieces being conveniently fashioned for use in the hand. One large block was much hollowed, and worn quite smooth from friction. Several bones, skulls, and horns of *Bos* were likewise found, doubtless the remnants of daily meals, also fragments of rude urns made of clay mingled with minute particles of flint. The urns appeared to have been, when whole, in the shape of a flat-bottomed basin, some specimens being pierced with holes round the rim, about an inch apart. The following is a descriptive list of the principal objects discovered, which are figured on the annexed Plate.

Figures I, II, III. Polished Celts, roughened at the butts.

Ditto I a, II a, III a. Side views of I, II, and III.

Ditto IV. Portion of polished Celt.

Ditto IV a. Side view of IV.

Ditto V. Portion of polished Celt of black flint.

Ditto VI. Chipped Celt of black chalk flint, the facets polished by friction.

Ditto VII. Hammer Stone of black flint, chipped into a circular form and partially ground down.

Ditto VIII. Celt of Greenstone, ground down, but unpolished; much worn from use.

Ditto VIII a. Side view of VIII.

Ditto IX. Portion of large Celt highly polished.

Ditto IX a. Section of IX.

Ditto X. Portion of polished Celt.

Ditto XI. Curved Knife, with broken point; well made, and chipped on both sides.

Ditto A. Lance head of black flint.

Ditto B. Point of a lance head of grey flint.

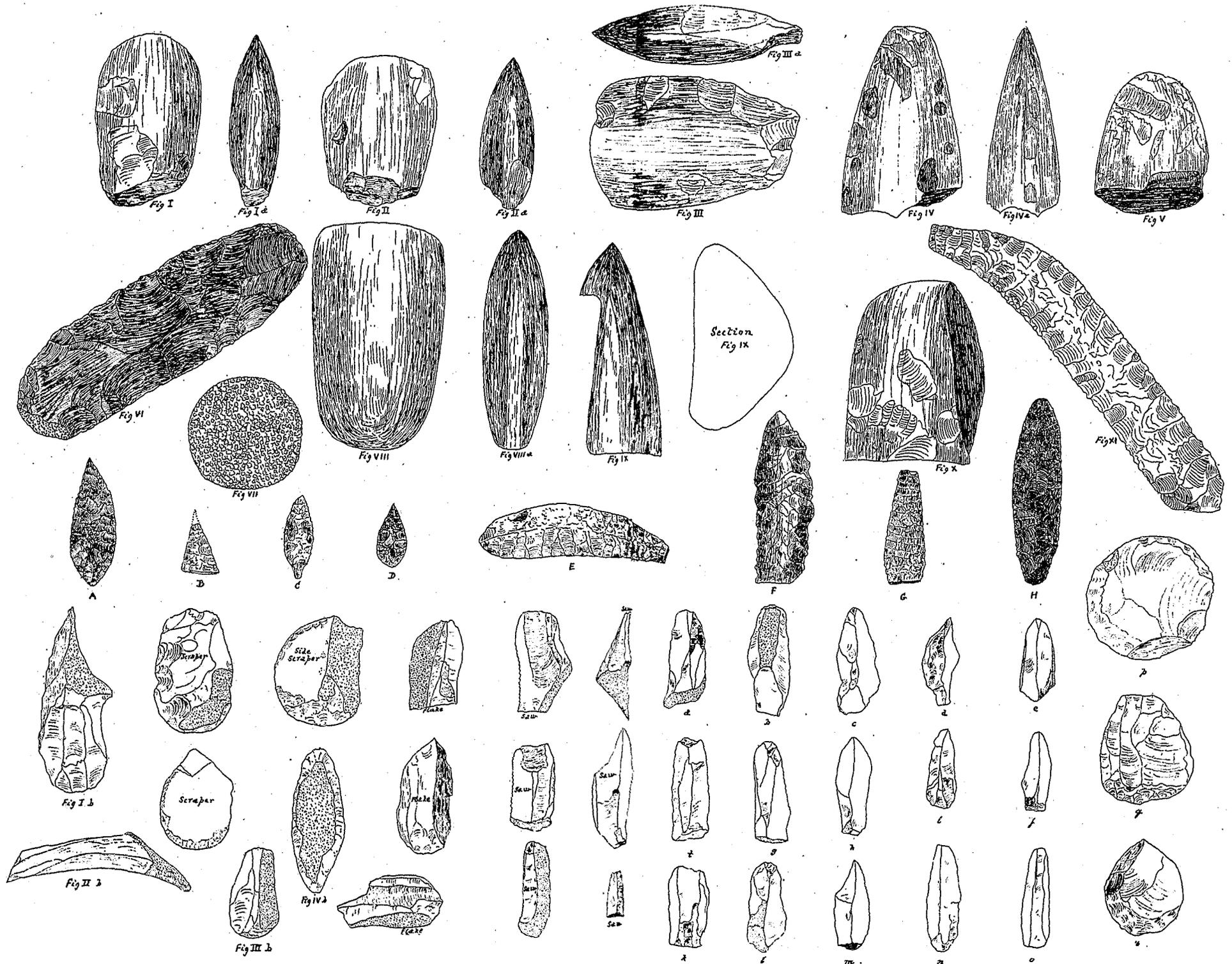
Ditto C. Arrow head of grey flint.

Ditto D. Leaf-shaped arrow head of black flint.

Ditto E. Curved knife, of brown flint, with broken point.

Ditto F. Lance head of brown flint.

Ditto G. Lance head of black flint, with broken point.



CELTIC FLINT IMPLEMENTS FOUND AT GROVEHURST IN MILTON.  
*Scale 1/8 full size.*

Figure H. Lance head, of black flint, worked on one side only.

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, are all worked on both sides, and beautifully made; A, D, and G, being so thin, as to be almost transparent.

Figures I b and II b appear to have been made for scrapers with the butts left rough, to give firmness when fitted into the socket of a handle.

The two examples marked "*Scraper*" were both used with handles. The side *Scraper* used in the hand only.

Figure III b. This can hardly be looked upon as a flake, it having become highly polished from friction; it may have been used as an awl, the point is now wanting.

Figure IV b. An arrow-maker chipped round the edge and on one side only.

The three "*flakes*" are merely given as examples of many found. The six "*saws*" have serrated edges artificially made.

The fifteen specimens from *a* to *o* are all "*flakes*;" some of them may have been in use if found to be available for any purpose.

Figures *p*, *q*, *r*, are types of the so-called Thumb Flints or Finger Flints. Weapons, implements, and flakes, such as those described, are figured in Sir John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, and Evans's *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain*, both of which valuable works should be consulted for further information.

Besides the above list of articles several natural spherical and oval flint nodules were found at Grovehurst, suitable for missiles, sling or hammer stones. It is reasonable to infer, from the entire absence of metals and ornaments throughout these discoveries, that they belong to the neolithic or polished stone age. As stone weapons of the type usually assigned to this era are found accompanying objects in bronze and iron, we might have looked for some traces of these metals at Grovehurst, had they been known at the time when this early settlement was occupied; although it by no means follows, because bronze and iron are wanting, that they had not been introduced into Britain at that period. Possibly they may have been in use elsewhere, but had not yet come within the reach of the settlers in this part of the island. However, from the extent of the discoveries, their primitive nature, the simplicity and rudeness

of the pottery, we claim for them a place of high antiquity as already stated. It is interesting to note the fact that we are enabled to follow the footprints of successive generations at Grovehurst even from Prehistoric times. We have traced a Celtic settlement. The Romans have also left us remains on the estate, likewise the Anglo-Saxons. We obtain evidences of the latter nation in the Cold Harbour marshes which bound the north-east side of the property; the term Cold Harbour being of Saxon origin, signifying "a place of shelter by the side of an old road." The Danes too are said to have landed near here in 893, on Kemsley Downs, where they erected a fortress afterwards known as Castle Rough (Hasted's *Kent*). The ditch which surrounded it is still to be seen. It is probable that remains of these piratical invaders may be met with at some future time on the Downs, which are at no very distant date to be worked for brick-earth. We have mentioned the names of the possessors of Grovehurst, from the reign of Edward I until the present time, in the early portion of this paper. The writer is pleased to state, that the whole of these Celtic relics, together with the interesting particulars connected with them, would probably have been lost, had it not been for the courteous assistance of Mr. Gascoyne, of Mr. Robert Watts, and of Mr. Thomas Watts, the foreman of the brickyards, the latter displaying an enthusiastic zeal in the cause, rarely to be met with.