

A FIELDWALKING PROJECT AT HOLLINGBURY, BRIGHTON

by JOHN FUNNELL

Introduction

Members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society walked the field at Hollingbury during the months of December 1991 and January 1992, assisted on one occasion by members of the Young Archaeologists group. The excavations of the hill-fort at Hollingbury: contained evidence for an east gate with a gravelled path leading up to the entrance (Curwen 1937). The field being investigated (Fig 1.), lies south east of the east entrance. A soil mark of a chalk circular area was noted in the south west section of the field and in the north west corner a depression was also observed. During the second world war four bombs had fallen in this area but not in these locations. The objective of the exercise was to determine evidence for Iron Age activity east of the hill-fort.

The field, centred (TQ324074), is bounded by the Hollingbury golf course and the Iron Age hill—fort to the west, the Hollingdean housing estate to the south, Wild Park to the north and the Home Farm industrial estate to the east. The soil varies across the field width; to the south west a clay with flint 1ayc~r predominates while to the north the soil texture becomes a chalky loam. The field was walked north to south in 20 metre transects. The finds were collected in 20 metre sections on each transect. The grid lines 'V' through to 'CC' were walked after the field had been harrowed. The weather was predominantly overcast but dry.

The Finds

The majority of finds, apart from the flint material proved to be of 19th and 20th century dating with a considerable quantity of brick and tile.

The Flint Assemblage

Debitage	Number of Pieces
Flakes	610
Blades	9
Cores	5
Implements	
Scrapers	22
Notched Pieces	8
Fire-Fractured Flint	193
Total	847

The flint recovered was of typical downland material consisting of either black/grey with white cortex attached or white in colour with some patination

The Pottery

Only 3 sherds of ancient pottery were found, all were badly abraded. The majority of ceramics recovered dated to the 19th and 20th century

East Sussex Ware (Grog Tempered)	1 sherd
Grey Sandy Ware	1 sherd
Medieval Ware (Sandy fabric with quartz inclusions)	1 sherd
19th/20th Century	117 sherds

Clay Pipes

Fragments of 18 clay pipe stems were found but no bowls. The stems varied in diameter from 5.6 millimeters to 7.9 millimeters. The narrow bores of the pipes would date them from c1720-1900+ (Atkinson)

Molluscs

Although the field lies some 3 kilometres from the sea evidence of marine crustaceans were found in the south section of the field.

Oyster	16 fragments
Scallop	4 fragments

Discussion

Flintwork from the field at Hollingbury was of a general dispersal with no evidence for intense activity. The south west section of the field contained a larger proportion of flint tools, but the quantity was still small and widespread. The clay pipe and molluscan material lay in the south east part of the field close to the location of Harrington Farm (TQ315071), now built over by the Hollingdean housing estate. Noted features observed during the walking were investigated in the course of the project. A large white circle contained 20th century material eroding out of the centre (brick, sand and tile). A depression in the north west corner produced very little evidence for activity during antiquity. The feature does lay close to a noted building, Hollingbury Barn. A map of 1894 also shows a trackway and pond in this area. (Ref. Brighton Reference Library map No. 47)

The Iron Age hill-fort at Hollingbury has been partially excavated and evidence has suggested settlement inside the enclosure (Holmes 1984). Field systems are recorded to the west of Hollingbury hill and dated to the Iron Age period (Toms 1910). The significant feature of the field to the east of the hill-fort is the lack of any evidence for settlement or agricultural use in any period other than the most recent. The result of the fieldwalking would suggest two possibilities for activities during the Iron Age; the area may either have been used for grazing or it was not used at all.

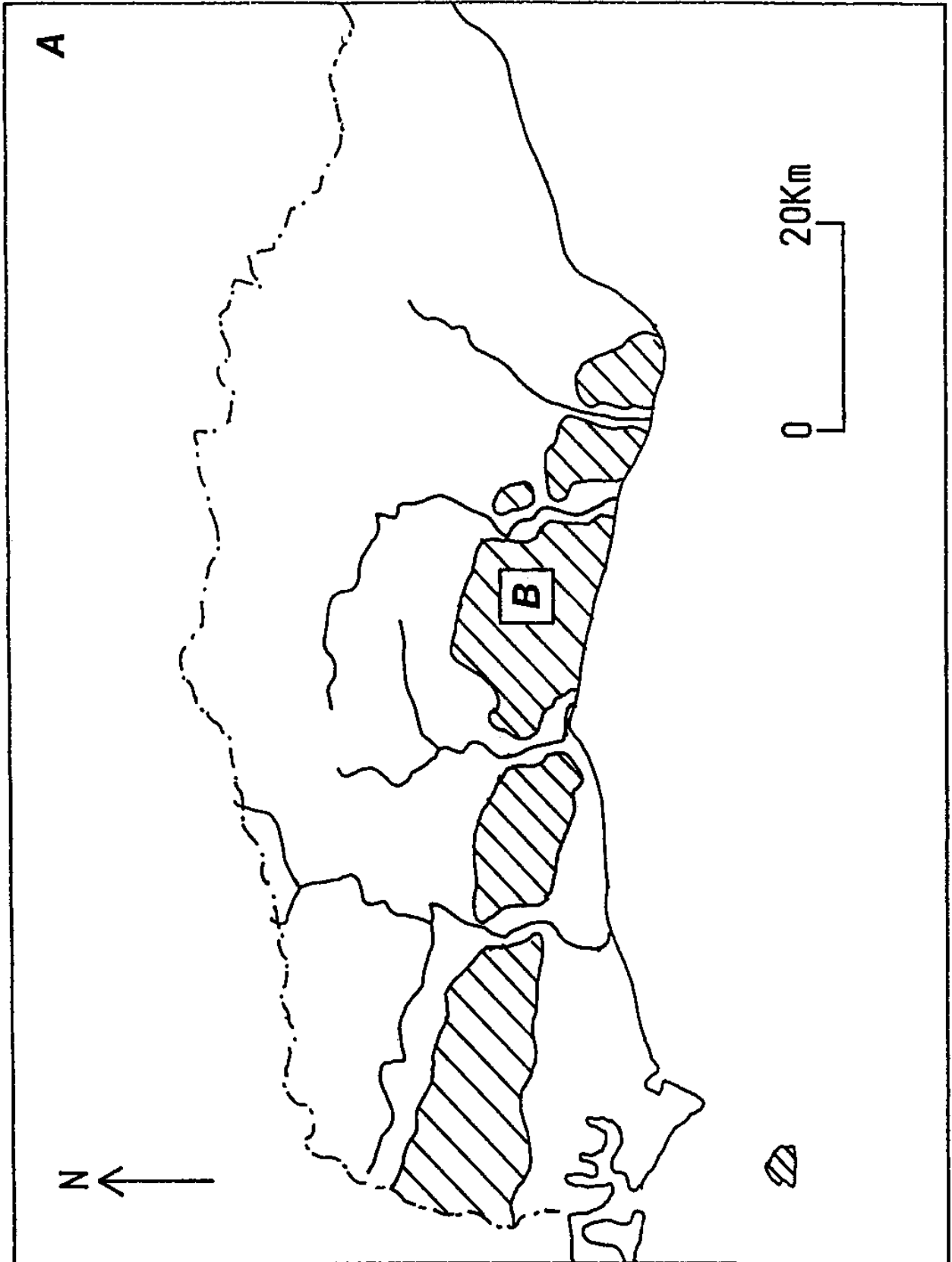
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Mr David West, the farmer, for allowing access to his lands, Mr Chris Butler for his examination of the flint material and Mr L.Gaston, Mss D.Lindsay and members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society and the Mid-Sussex Field Archaeological Team for their assistance during the fieldwalking.

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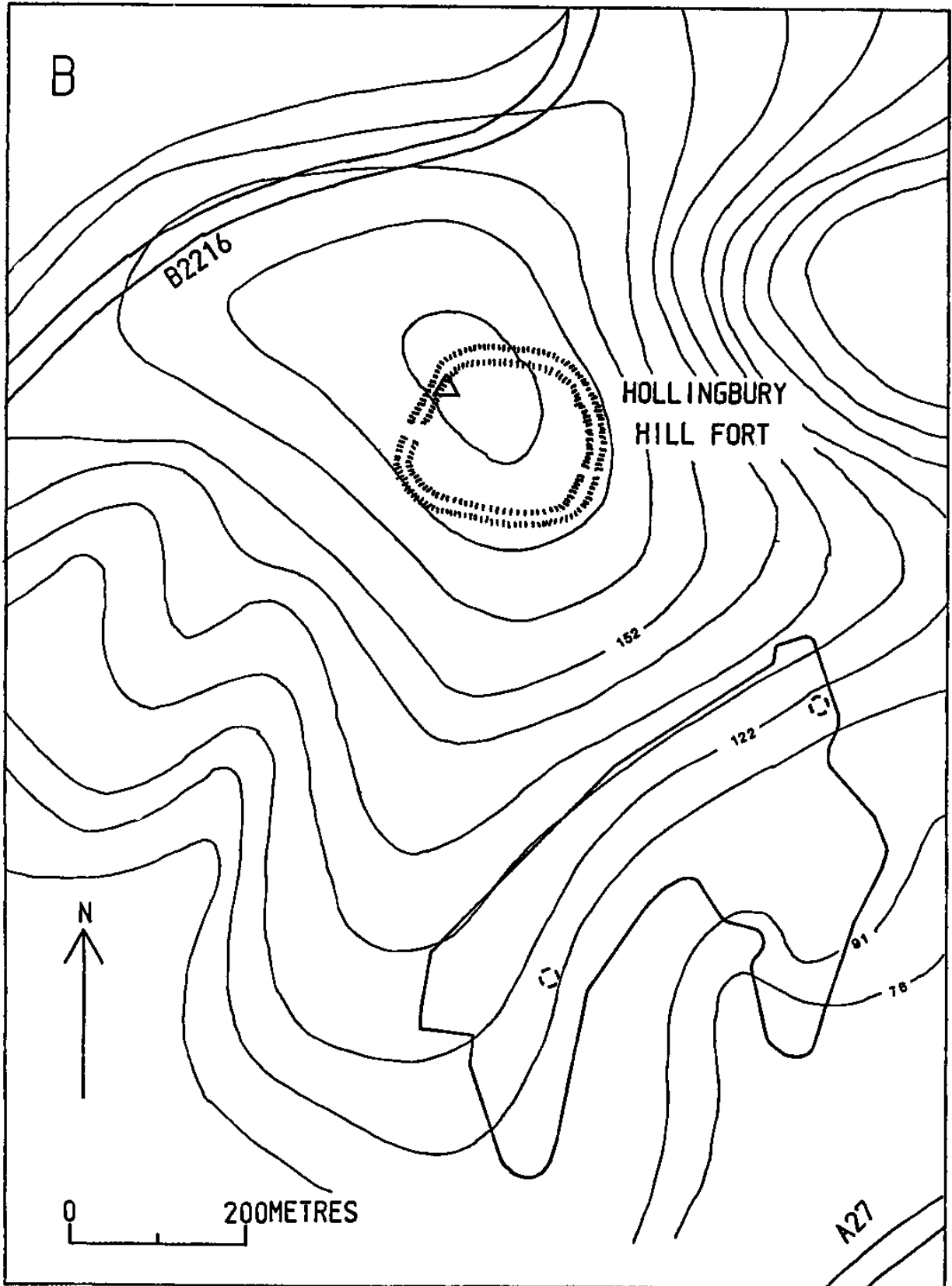


FIG 1 LOCATION OF FIELD AT HOLLINGBURY

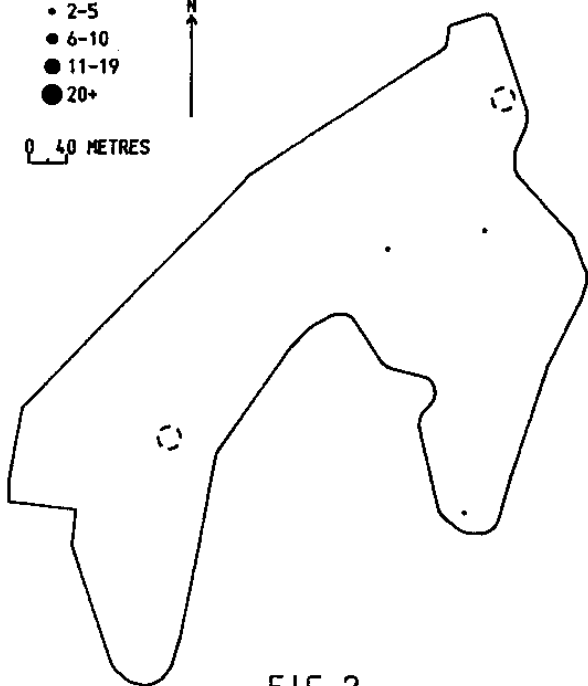
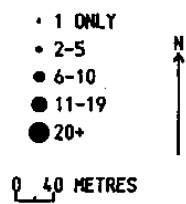


FIG 2
ROMAN POTTERY

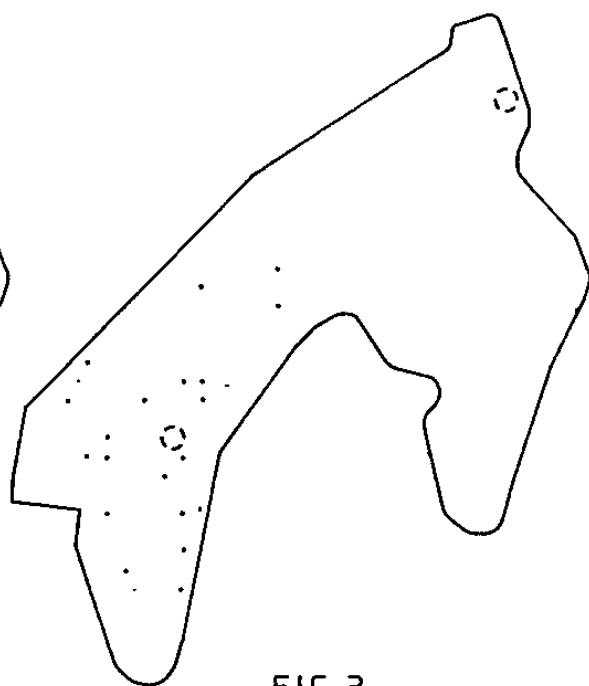


FIG 3
MOLLUSCS

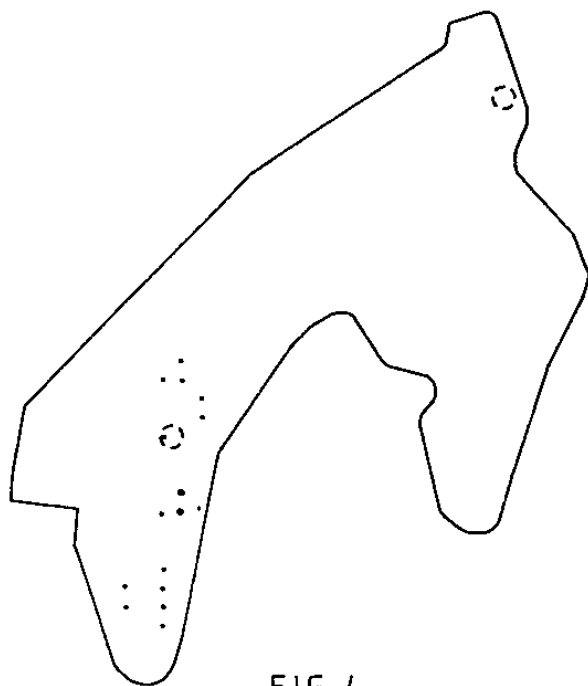


FIG 4
CLAY PIPES

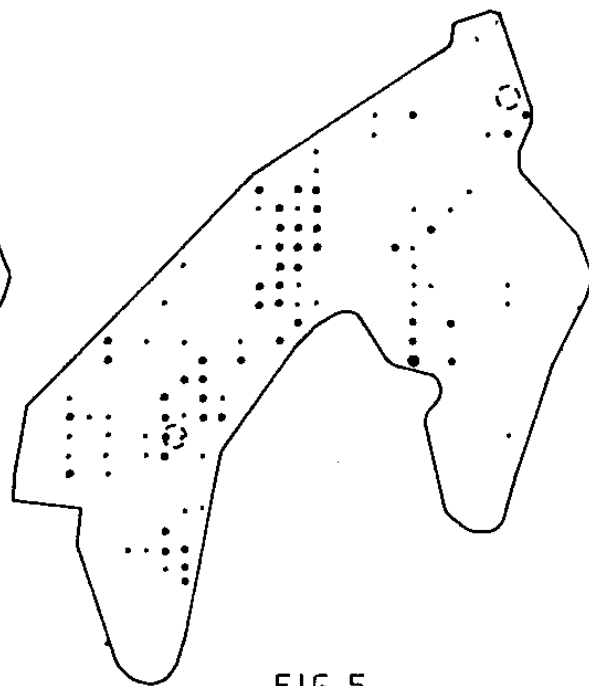


FIG 5
FIRE-FRACTURED FLINT

• 1 ONLY

• 2-5

• 6-10

• 11-19

• 20+

0 40 METRES

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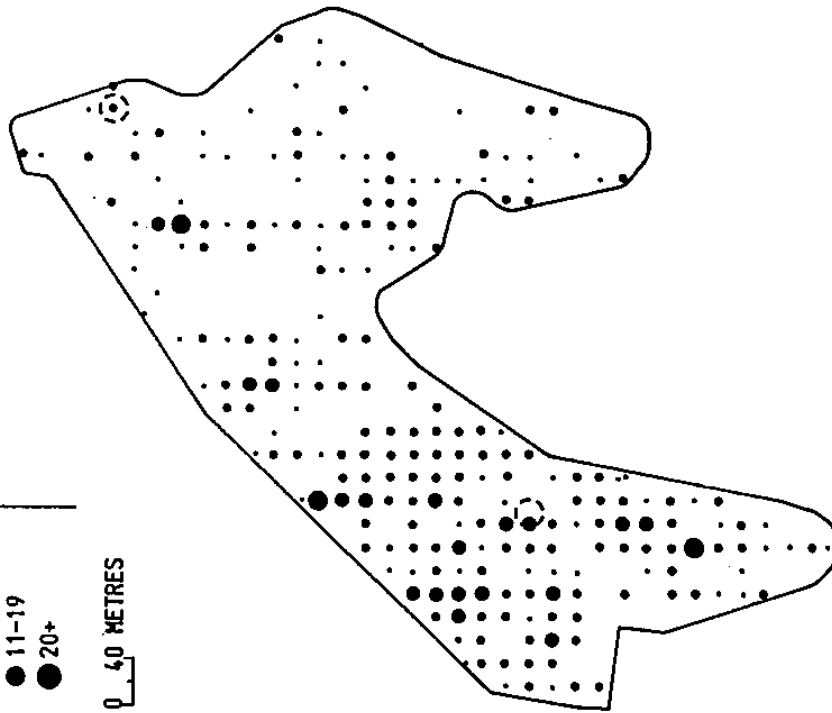
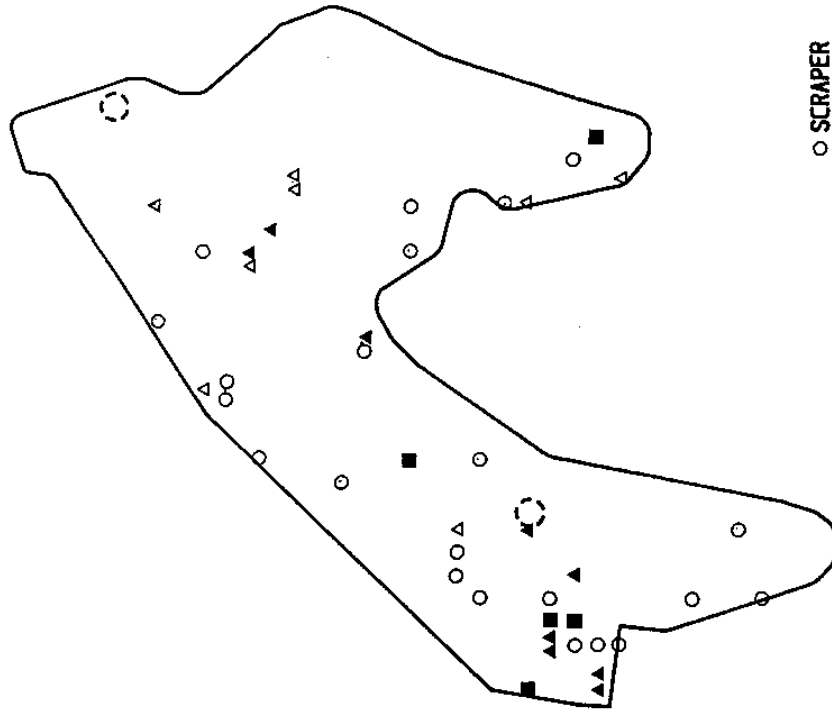


FIG 6

FLINTWORK



○ SCRAPER

■ CORE

▲ CUTTING FLAKE

△ NOTCHED FLAKE

FIG 7

FLINT TOOLS