SHORTER PAPERS
The following short papers are summaries of papers delivered at the Lithic Studies Society Cardiff meeting (1997), and at the Bradford meeting on residues and use wear (1997).

Palaeolithic Typology and Paviland Cave.
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Professor William Sollas' excavations in the summer of 1912 produced the lithics sample from Paviland Cave, South Wales. The collection comprises four thousand pieces of debitage and six hundred retouched tools. Owing to the lack of recorded stratigraphy it is impossible to associate artefacts with one another, or with datable material. The Abbé Breuil (in Sollas 1913), Campbell (1977) and Jacobi (1980) have undertaken research on the Paviland collection, which has helped to formulate the British sequence.

The present research project has focused on firstly producing an illustrated catalogue of all finds with appropriate measurements, using de Sonneville-Bordes' standard typology (1960), and secondly isolating chronologically diagnostic artefacts to compare with similar finds from more thoroughly dated sites. All stages of the British Middle and Upper Palaeolithic are present in the Paviland collection, with Mousterian, Early, Late and final Upper Palaeolithic components of the assemblage, as well as six probable Mesolithic blade cores. No diagnostic artefacts have been noted from later periods.

Paviland remains primarily an Early Upper Palaeolithic site, with evidence for occupation in the leaf point and Perigordian 5a phases, although the majority of evidence is for an Aurignacian II occupation, on the basis of the presence of buisqué burins and nosed/shouldered scrapers. Whether the phases can be said to apply to British sites in the same way as those of Belgium and southwest France is a matter for future research.

The Paviland collection contains an implement type - or rather a style of retouch which is idiosyncratic to the site. This sub-parallel retouch is always present on the ventral surface and serves to round as well as thicken one edge, on blade and blade blanks. It has been used to produce a platform for a burin blow, and is also present on a trimming flake (Swainston 1997). In total, 25 pieces display this style, i.e. 4% of the retouched assemblage.

The standard typology was found to be of use only in description, and limiting in terms of technological aspects; for example the debitage from Paviland has largely been ignored. A more detailed system of recording cores and debitage than was used for the initial study will be needed to extract more information - accepting the biases inherent in the available collection. There are therefore two main objectives for further research: first, an examination of the collection will be carried out following a classification system designed to replicate the core reduction sequence. The resulting counts of implements and debitage for each raw material should allow conclusions to be made concerning strategies of curation and knapping, and treatment of different raw materials. The second objective is the description of similarities and variations which will allow Paviland to be compared with roughly contemporary sites - specifically Kent's Cavern, Devon, the second largest Early Upper Palaeolithic site in Britain, and Continental sites, whose stratigraphy is more thoroughly dated and understood.

References


