

TWO EGYPTIAN FLINT KNAPPING SCENES

by S. R. Snape and J. A. Tyldesley

In an article in the *Newsletter of Lithic Technology*, Bruce Bradley (1972) suggested an "inductive technological sequence" for the manufacture of two types of flint implement from predynastic Egypt. He based this hypothetical manufacturing sequence on his observation of the "chronological truncations of flake scars and/or ground surfaces on the finished implement", paying special attention to what appeared to be the final shaping of the implement by pressure flaking. Evidence confirming the use of a tipped baton in the pressure flaking of flint knives in Egypt, although from a later period than those discussed by Bradley, may be found in two remarkable tomb scenes whose existence may well be unknown to many lithic specialists.

The scenes in question come from the tombs of two provincial magnates of the early Middle Kingdom (c. 2000-1900 BC) at Beni Hasan, Middle Egypt (Griffith 1896, pls. 7 and 8). A regular feature of the tombs of Egyptian nobles of this period was the depiction of scenes of daily life, including various crafts and industries. Tomb 15 depicts the work of four flint knappers, accompanied by the legend in hieroglyphic

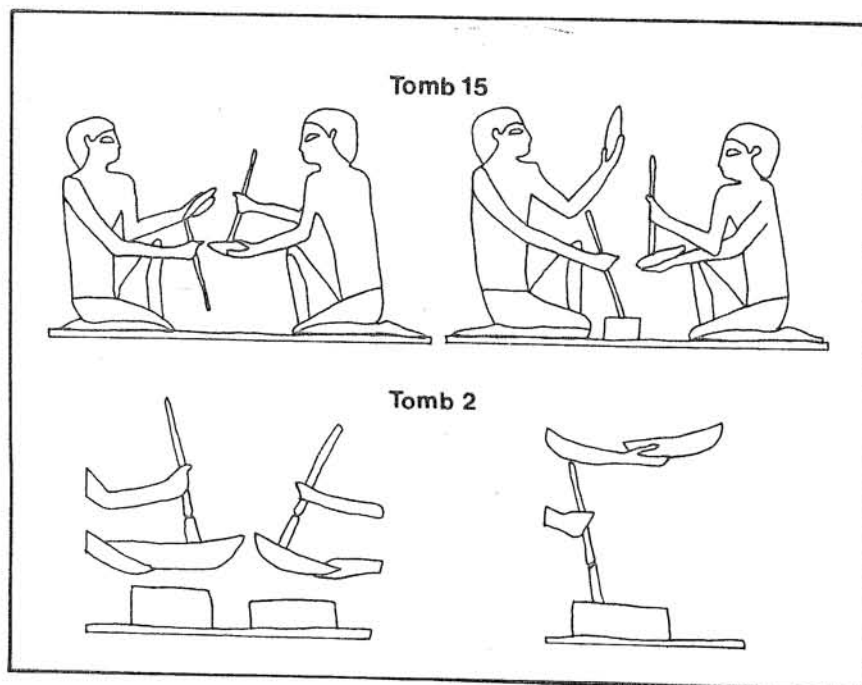


Fig.1. The flint knapping scenes from Tombs 15 and 2 (after Griffith 1896, pls. 7 and 8).

text, "striking flint/knives" (for a discussion of the various Egyptian terms for flint see Midant-Reynes 1981). These artisans appear to be completing the final stage of manufacture, holding the almost-finished implement in the left hand and pressing, rather than hitting, the flint tool with a long baton. Tomb 2 shows flint workers seated around what appears to be an anvil, again apparently putting the finishing touches to flint knives by pressure flaking. The batons in the latter tomb appear to have a separate tip of a different material, the original drawing showing a black baton with a brown end-piece.

It is not intended to suggest that the illustrations are "photographic" reproductions of flint knapping in Egypt. Stylistic licence must be taken into account, as must the artist's selection of those scenes of manufacture which, to him, best represented the activity. The fact that only the final stage of the sequence leading to the production of flint knives is depicted must not be taken to imply anything about the location or organisation of the previous stages of manufacture.

Acknowledgement

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REFERENCES

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WORKED FLINTS FROM COASTAL SITES IN HAMPSHIRE (WARBLINGTON - EMSWORTH AREA)

by Ted Masson Phillips

The foreshore at the two sites described here consists of flint-gravel on top of eroded clay, or Coombe-rock. The natural beach flint is apparently derived from the erosion of the Coombe-rock and the individual flints are angular and battered, and discoloured orange-red or brown, or sometimes white. Among them, especially at site I, there are many undiscoloured, humanly-struck flakes of glossy black flint and a small number of definite implement types.

The only reference I have been able to find to this area occurs in the *Archaeological Review* for 1968 published by the Council for British