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# SOME EARLY STONE AGE SURFACE SITES AROUND STELLENBOSCH, S.W. CAPE

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## Introduction

I have suggested in an earlier paper (Seddon, 1966) that the Early Stone Age material from the Bosman's crossing site at Stellenbosch, generally regarded as an early manifestation of the hand-axe makers in the south-west Cape, may be related in time, to that from Cape Hangklip and therefore dated to roughly 150,000–90,000 B.C., and mention that there is no good stratigraphic evidence known to me for dating the surface collections made in this area. The limitations of surface sites are well known (cf. P. & C. White, 1964), but any further research in this area will have to take these collections and their distribution into consideration and this paper is to record the positions of sites and collections. A great deal of the following information has been provided by Vincent Swart, to whom I am duly grateful.

## Distribution of Sites and Collections

The distribution of the sites from which collections have been made is shown in fig. 1, and the location of assemblages follows the numbering in that figure.

1. Gleneagles Hotel. On the hillsides above the hotel are found implements, the majority of which should probably be considered Early Stone Age. No implements were found below the 200 ft. contour and those recovered included both rolled and unrolled specimens (pers. recce., 1965).

2. The same remarks apply as for 1.

3. Olives Farm, Lynedoch. A large number of implements have been recovered from the hillsides around this farm. Implements were recovered mainly from between 250 ft. and 200 ft., nothing being found below 200 ft. (Mrs. Nobbs, pers. comm.) (pers. recce., 1965).

4. Spier Farm. The Abbé Breuil is said to have collected implements from here, but the farmer has none in his possession. These would have been washed down into the river in any case. ('Implements of Earlier Stone Age type are scarce in the valleys, though they do occur, having been apparently washed down from the higher levels'—Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929.)

5. Vlotenburg winery. Many artefacts unearthed during the construction of the factory (Mrs. Nobbs, pers. comm.).

6. Loushoogte site. Artefacts are found in ferricrete 'borrowpits' dug from what may be an old land surface 2–3 ft. below the present surface. This horizon is still undisturbed in some places. Artefacts are also found on the surface—especially about 1 to 1½ miles eastwards along the road, in the vicinity of Trig. Beacon 65 (V. Swart, pers. comm.).

7. Blaauklip. A rich site producing implements ploughed up from the top 3–4 ft. of a vegetable garden. A suggestion that the implements may derive from a gravel which does not quite crest the hill (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929). Site not seen.

8. Golf Course site. Artefacts are to be found on the southern part of the course in the vicinity of the earth-dam above the Blaauklip River (V. Swart, pers. comm., and pers. recce., 1965). The majority of the implements recovered were quite fresh.

9. Vredenburg Farm. A number of artefacts found (V. Swart, pers. comm.).

10. Bosman's Crossing. Artefacts found here on the surface and on both sides of the railway-line (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929). At least one horizon has revealed artefacts in place (Péringuey, 1911; Seddon, 1966). Sufficient material remains at this site for a further excavation to give some idea of the typology and implement percentages of the industry.

11. General Box Factory. Many artefacts unearthed during the construction of the factory (Mrs. Nobbs, pers. comm.).

12. Suikerbosrand Farm. Artefacts found in ploughed fields on this farm (V. Swart, pers. comm.).

13. Altavona Farm. Artefacts recovered from ploughed fields and vineyards (pers. recce., 1965).

14. Blake's Quarry. Artefacts recovered from the brick pit into which they probably washed from above, although it is possible that implements were washed into a pool of the river where clay was forming (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929).

15. 'Smit's' Quarry. Distinctive artefacts of 'white' quartzite of a type not noticed from any other site. It may be possible to regard these implements as forming a complete assemblage for typological comparison with material from Bosman's Crossing, Montagu, Hangklip and Hopefield.

16. Schoongezicht Farm. Early Stone Age implements reported from this site (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929).

17. Rustenberg Farm. The same information as for 16.

18. Lorraine Farm. Artefacts from gravels (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe, 1929). They are to be found all along the range of foothills from about 500 ft. up to 1500 ft. below the crest of Botmaskop. (Artefacts at the collection at St. Nicholas Priory labelled 'Botmaskop' come from Lorraine.) (V. Swart, pers. comm.).

19. Rozendal Farm. The same information as for 18.

20. Coetzenburg site. The foothills of Stellenbosch Mt. are littered with artefacts, many of them fresh,

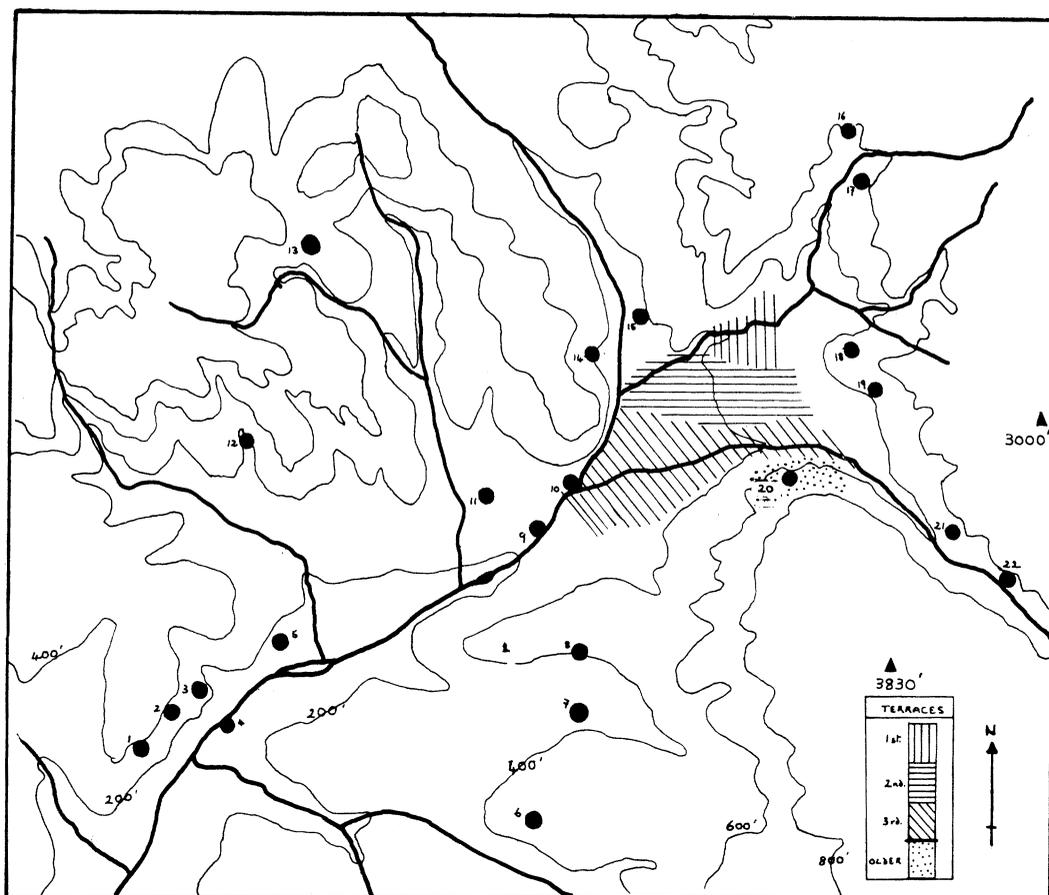


Fig. 1  
Distribution of known Early Stone Age sites around Stellenbosch.

which have been manufactured from boulders that presumably represent an old river terrace or, more probably, an old sea beach. Towards the bottom of the scatter, just above the Coetzenburg Sports Fields, is a possible land surface; although this may represent a secondary resting place for the artefacts.

21. Glen Conner. Believed to have produced artefacts (V. Swart, pers. comm.).

22. Old Nectar. As above.

Collections of artefacts from the above-mentioned sites are to be located in the following places:

<i>Location of collection</i>	<i>Site number</i>
South African Museum	15.
St. Nicholas Priory, Stellenbosch	11, 13, 15, 18.
School of African Studies, U.C.T.	1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 20.
V. Swart collection	6, 7, 8, 18, 19.
I.C. Rust, Geology Dept., Stellenbosch	9, 11.

### Conclusion

It is often difficult to make the distinction between surface sites containing derived material and undisturbed sites but it is one that should be made, if possible, in the case of the surface sites listed above. If some of these sites provide assemblages that have moved little from where they were dropped thousands of years ago, as is suggested by the fresh condition of most of the implements recovered, they could be of some value. The local geography and, more important, the local geomorphology of these sites should be studied; it is remarkable that only two publications describe the geology of the Stellenbosch area with more than a passing reference (Shand, 1913, 1917); and further studies attempting to link inland sequences with the raised beach sequences of the coastlines would be of inestimable value.

Many of the assemblages are of fresh implements found on top of old gravels but there is no instance

that is known to me in which implements can definitely be associated with these gravels. There is no basis as yet for a subdivision of the Early Stone Age in the south-west Cape into different stages or cultures and the classification of the Abbé Breuil, who studied the collection from Olives Farm (3) and subdivided the implements on grounds of wear and typology, should

be set aside until some better evidence can be brought forward to support it.

#### Acknowledgements

To Patrick Wallace for fig. 1.

To Mrs. Nobbs and the other farm-owners who allowed me to wander over their lands.

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## MIDDLE STONE AGE IMPLEMENTS ON AEOLIANITE AT ISIPINGO BEACH, NATAL

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Instances of stone implements cemented by calcium carbonate to aeolianite are rare. Mountain (1945) describes an occurrence at Bonza Bay near East London, where Middle Stone Age implements were found in a pebble layer resting on calcareous sandstone 2 ft. or 3 ft. thick and overlain by a similar mass of dunerock type.

Recently, the writer found three abraded Middle Stone Age implements firmly cemented to aeolianite at Tiger Rocks, Isipingo Beach, some 8 miles south of Durban. The implements were bedded in a thin band of younger coarse gritty sand and shell fragments, all cemented by calcium carbonate to the surface of a platform related to a marine transgression to 28 ft. above present mean sea-level.

R. R. Maud (paper in process of publication) has recognized three distinct periods of aeolianite formation on the Natal coast, which are correlatable with marine transgressions following periods of low sea-level during Pleistocene glacial times. The first period of deposition followed the Riss Glacial prior to 100,000 years ago. Cut across this lithified aeolianite, are platforms related to marine transgressions to 40

and 28 ft. Following the Early Würm Glaciation, a second aeolianite was deposited, while yet a third aeolianite followed the Main Würm Glaciation of 30,000 years ago. Marine transgressions to 15 feet predate and postdate the third aeolianite. The Main Würm Interstadial is correlatable with the earlier of the two 15 ft. transgressions, and was also a period of tropical weathering in the coastal region of Natal. The dating of the third aeolianite with the Main Würm Glaciation of 30,000 years ago correlates well with the dating at some 29,000 years ago of the Nahoon human footprints (Mountain, 1966; Deacon, 1966) found in an aeolianite of undoubtedly similar age.

It would appear that the stone implements found at Isipingo Beach are contemporaneous with the third aeolianite (the second aeolianite having been entirely removed by erosion at this locality), and have become cemented to the surface of the 28 ft. platform following local marine erosion of the third aeolianite. The evidence, therefore, suggests that the Isipingo Beach implements could be contemporaneous with the Nahoon footprints.

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