

A Tale of Two Collectors



A Tale of Two Collectors:

The Lithic Collections of
Geoffrey Taylor and David Heys
(with particular reference to
the county of Yorkshire)

Keith Boughey
with contributions by
Alison Sheridan and Fraser Hunter

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“He does not die that can bequeath
Some influence to the land he knows”
Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953) Duncton Hill, Stanza 1

“The archaeologist is not digging up things, he is digging up people”
Mortimer Wheeler (1890-1976) Archaeology from the Earth (1954)

*Dedicated to the memory of
Geoffrey Vivian Taylor (1924-1997)*

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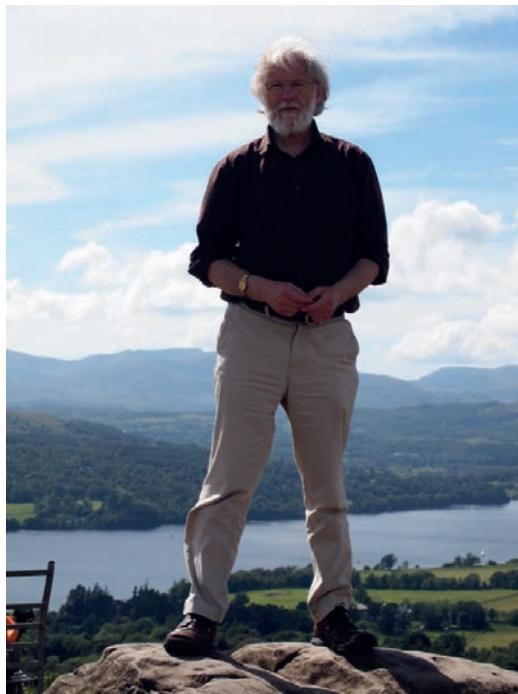
Preface

The present book does not aim to depict or to describe the collections of Taylor and Heys in full, even as far as the county of Yorkshire is concerned. To cover the entire collections and in appropriate detail would take a work of several volumes. Nor does it aim to establish the complete impact of their contents, collected over a lifetime, on UK prehistory, as this would require further programmes of research which could now well be undertaken, involving the use of 'modern' yet what are by now standard techniques of the analysis of material such as X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis, radiocarbon dating of charcoal or bone, and the osteological and isotopic examination of human remains such as bones and teeth. What the present book does set out to do, however, is to introduce the collections to the archaeological world and give the reader a clear impression of their contents.

The book begins with brief biographies of the two collectors, outlines the main areas in which they collected, principally the North York Moors, and their method of working, before attempting to set their work into its wider prehistoric context. It then explains how the over 18,000 worked pieces in the combined collections are each individually identified, and presents illustrations of selected groups of pieces, such as arrowheads, knives, axeheads, scrapers and so on. This is followed up with a more detailed look at some of the more notable classes of artefacts, such as discoidal knives, Iron Age glass bangles, and jet pieces including a superb undamaged Early Bronze Age wristguard (bracer), of which only one other example is known in Britain. But to correct the impression that Taylor and Heys only ever collected finds off the surface of the moors and farmland, details of several excavations, most of them never before published, are given. These include pioneering work on the Early Mesolithic of the North York Moors, and the discovery of an Early Bronze Age grave complete with cremated human remains, a decorated Collared Urn and a perforated battle axehead. At long last, the hitherto unheralded work of these two remarkable individuals has been given the long overdue credit it undoubtedly deserves.

K. Boughey
Baildon
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The Author



A former member of the Prehistoric Society and the Royal Archaeological Institute, the author is an active member of the Prehistoric Research Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society and Hon. Editor of their annual journal *Prehistoric Yorkshire*. His research passion is the prehistory of northern England, particularly the Bronze Age, and especially its rock art. He was a founder member of the Ilkley Archaeology Group and one of the chief contributors to *The Carved Rocks on Rombalds Moor: Gazetteer of the Prehistoric Rock Carvings on Rombalds Moor, West Yorkshire* (1986) and co-author, along with the late Edward Vickerman, of *Prehistoric Rock Art of the West Riding: Cup-and-Ring-Marked Rocks of the Valleys of the Aire, Wharfe, Washburn and Nidd* (2003). From 2008–13, he was Director of the Stanbury Hill Project, an HLF-funded community archaeology project that investigated an Early Bronze Age landscape on Bingley Moor, West Yorkshire, culminating in two publications: *Stanbury Hill Project: Archaeological Investigation of a Rock Art Site* (2013) and *Discovering Prehistoric Bingley: The Stanbury Hill Project* (2013). He has also been instrumental in locating, cataloguing, securing and publishing information on several private collections of prehistoric material, including the complete Lamplough-Lidster excavation archive of around forty Early Bronze Age barrows, excavated in advance of forestation on the North York Moors in the years after World War 2. His more recent publications include (as Editor) *Going Underground: An anthropological and taphonomic study of human skeletal remains from caves and rock shelters in Yorkshire* (2015) and *Life and Death in Prehistoric Craven: Welbury Wilkinson Holgate and the Excavation of the Hare Hill Ring Cairn* (2016).