It would appear that such areas could be turned to good account by the formation of game reserves and by conducting trapping, etc., on business lines, with due consideration to conservation and a limited yearly return of skins, etc. Present methods are wasteful and constitute a source of economic loss as well as tending to the ultimate extinction of the larger marsupials.

The main difficulty in dealing with questions in relation to our fauna is that they are subject to political considerations, and the annual return in licence fees is given more consideration than the capital sum. In short, the total capital value of our fauna appears nowhere on the Treasury books as such and is disregarded. Not only is the yearly interest on this capital spent, but the capital sum is itself being seriously depleted. On economic grounds alone, apart from purely scientific or sentimental reasons, our native fauna and particularly the marsupial section, may well claim considerably more attention in the future than has been bestowed upon it in the past. We, as Australians, have been placed in charge of a wonderful heritage, and it rests with us to respond to the trusteeship which has been granted us.

APPENDIX 1.

The following gives the returns from Wallaby and Phalanger hunting for the years 1923 to 1926 inclusive:—

	(Bennett's Wallaby) *M. ruficollis*	(Scrub Wallaby) *M. billardieri*	(Brush "Opossum") *T. vulpecula*	(Ringtail "Opossum") *P. cooki*
1923 ..	146,236	201,365	105,968	587,179
1924 ..	59,448	86,393	45,978	273,421
1925 ..	75,979	121,245	60,212	596,526
1926 ..	66,114	94,531	49,737	634,620

APPENDIX 2.

Fees collected by Government in 1923 to 1926 in relation to marsupials:—

	Licence Fees.	Royalties.
1923 ..	£4,119	£15,878
1924 ..	£1,974	£6,928
1925 ..	£2,500	£11,148
1926 ..	£2,402	£10,382

NOTES ON A SERIES OF "POUNDERS" FROM CERTAIN LOCALITIES OF THE WEST COAST OF TASMANIA.

By

R. W. LEGGE, Cullenswood.

Plates XIII., XIV.

(Read 13th June, 1927.)

All students and collectors of Tasmanian stone implements are more or less familiar with the type generally known as "Pounder" or hammer-stone, which occurs on most of the ancient native camping grounds along the East Coast, the estuary of the river Derwent, and in the wind-blown sand pits of the Midlands.

This type is fairly well represented in the collection at the Tasmanian Museum, and the writer has been able to secure a wide range of specimens for the Cullenswood collection, including the distinct disc-like type, varying in diameter, from 3ins. to 5½ins., and averaging 1in. in thickness, having the periphery more or less worn to a flat surface, and the ovate or true hammer-stone chosen from the beaches and beds of streams for their handy shape and suitability for the delivery of hard fracturing blows, evidence of such usage being plainly marked at their extremities.

There is also another type, typical of the East Coast camps in particular. This is distinguished by its somewhat elongated shape, best likened to that of a small Banana, or perhaps better, to the white Passion-fruit of temperate climes.

This last-mentioned type was probably used for breaking open the shells of the Green Whelk (*Turbo undulatus*) which figured so largely as an article of food with the natives whilst they were roaming the coast-line.

Having made a close study of the foregoing, ably assisted in their collection by my wife and fellow-student, it came as a considerable, if not to say very pleasant surprise to us, when, during our late Xmas and New Year holidays, we

made our first visit to the great native feeding-grounds along the shores of the Northern part of the West Coast, and soon discovered what was to us, at least, a totally new and distinctive type of "Pounder," lying, in considerable numbers around and upon the great "kitchen middens" of this, at one time, comparatively thickly populated locality. It is quite evident, even to the casual observer, that these implements must have been in constant, if not in daily use by the natives living at these great camps, for, in the majority, those examined shew traces of much wear, and many split halves occur, the pebbles having finally succumbed after long and constant use.

As the source of supply must always be considered in dealing with our Stone-culture, it would be well to state at this point, that the occurrence of these remarkable miniature "pounders" in such quantities at the Bluff Point middens, and in a lesser degree, at those existing both to the Northward and Southward, over a limited area, may be readily accounted for in the presence, at the former, of large beds of white waterworn pebbles of Quartzite, or wonderful symmetry and smoothness, which have been cast up by the sea on the shores of some small coves at this locality, and of which no further traces were seen, during a later examination of the coast as far South as Sandy Cape, and to the North, to a point 3 miles above Mt. Cameron West.

These beds gave the natives of this locality, a ready source of supply from which to select the pebbles suitable both for these "pounders," and for their throwing stones, of which latter too, one may see countless numbers lying about the slopes of the mounds, and in one instance the writer came upon a little cache of 15 of these pebbles lying in a little heap, high up on the side of the great camping mound at the Bluff.

Now, the first thought that comes to the observer, after picking up several of these remarkable little implements, is "What were they used for? What was it that caused them to be come so well, and evenly worn ?" For that they owe their condition to regular usage, cannot for one moment be doubted.

In attempting to give anything like an adequate description of these most interesting implements, it may be mentioned here that, with very few exceptions, all those which have

come under the writer's notice, are composed of a white quartzite; a few were found of diminutive size, of a black stone, possibly diorite, and the best of the miniature specimens are of this stone.

These "pounders" may be divided into two classes, and for purposes of description will be termed the Ovate and the Disc-like.

Taking the Ovate first, 17 specimens of this class have been selected for description, and are illustrated on Plate XIII. to give some idea of their character and the amount of wear which they have sustained. These examples, which form a good average group representative of the class, range in dimensions from 61mm. long x 53mm. wide x 45 mm. thick in the largest, to 40mm. long x 35mm. wide x 25mm. thick in the smallest. Larger specimens have been examined, showing much the same characteristics, but fall more into a class by themselves.

It will be seen that, with one exception, the individuals in this class as illustrated, show signs of wear at the extremities only, and the deformation at these points is such as to suggest that the blows causing it, were of a light tapping nature.

The second, or Disc-like class are the more interesting of the two, as they have been chosen, almost without exception from pebbles of circular form. The 27 specimens shewn on Plate XIV. will serve to illustrate the class, although the worn edges do not show to advantage.

This group ranges in dimensions from 55mm. in diameter x 26mm. in thickness, down to 22mm. in diameter x 13mm., whilst an odd example will measure 35mm. in width with a diameter of 43mm. The periphery having been worn down so much as to show a surface 21mm. wide.

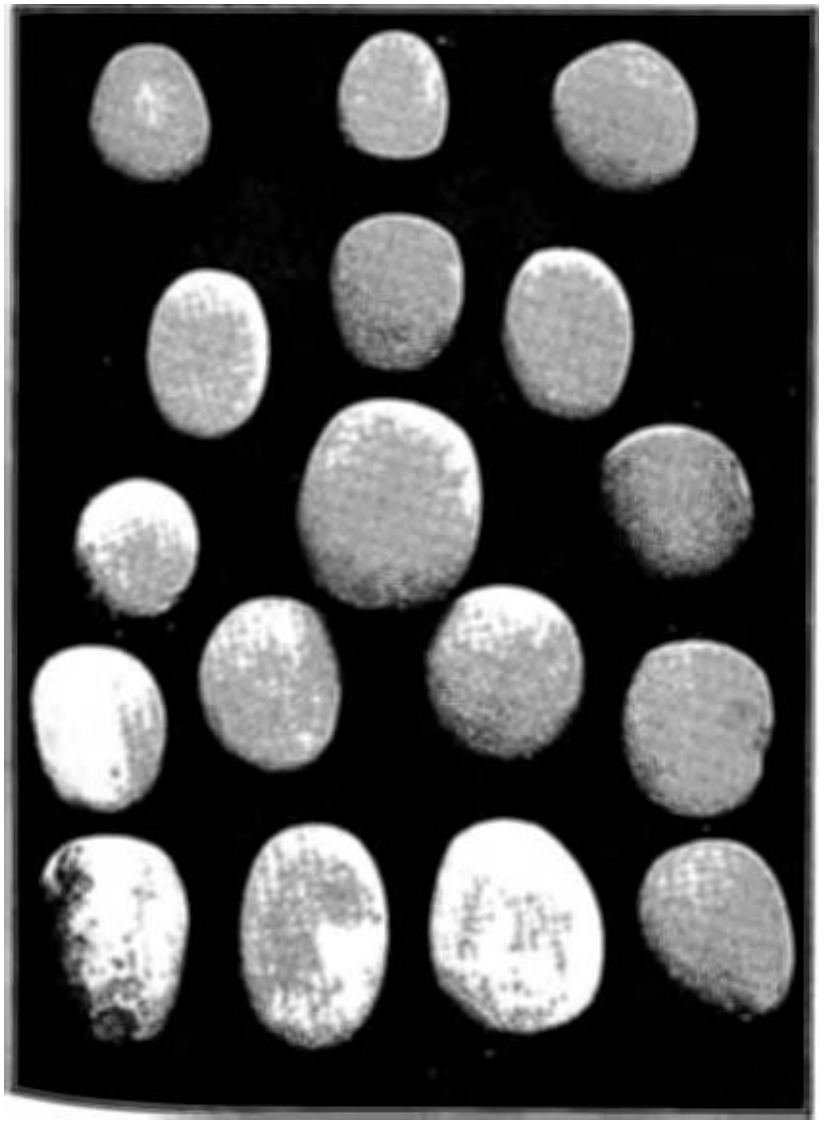
Several halves of this Disc-like type were found, the pebbles having evidently parted asunder after long usage, and on one camp, notably at the Arthur River, the two halves of the one pounder were found lying close together.

The student of Tasmanian Stone-Culture cannot examine these so-called "Pounders" without speculating as to what was their usage. That they were in constant use is

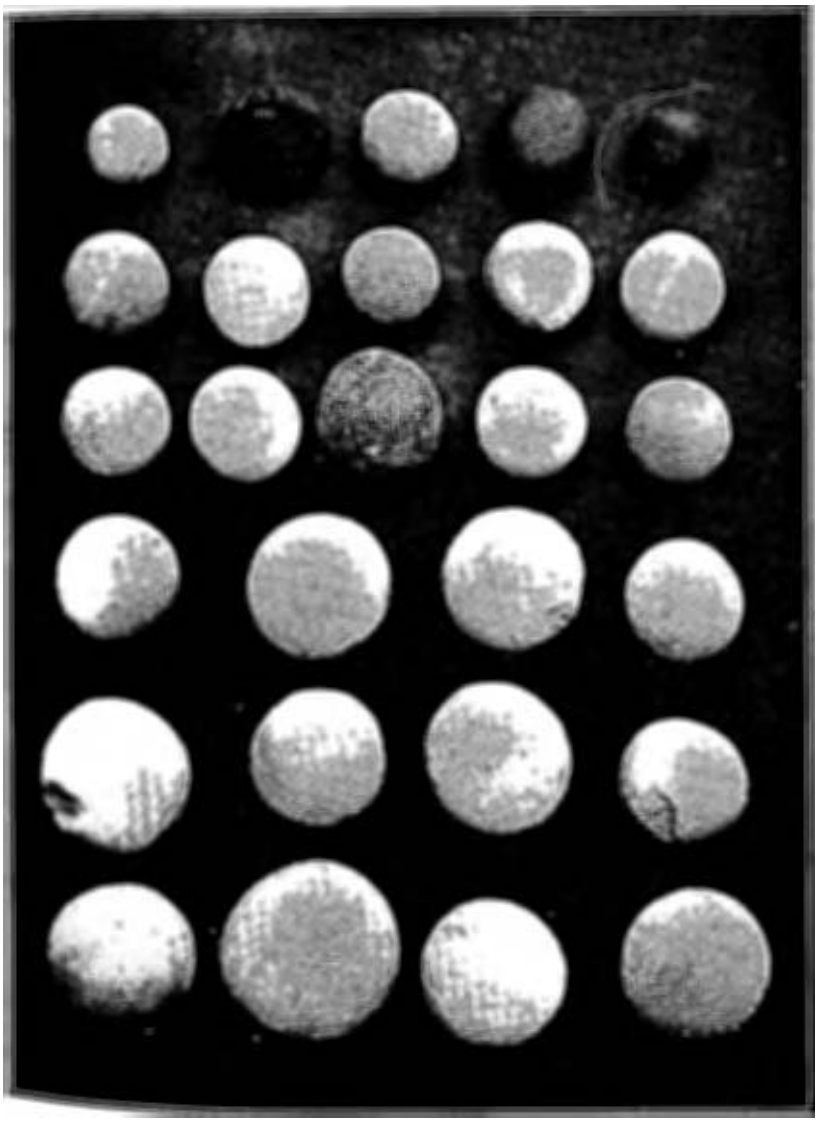
almost certain, and after careful study of the two aforementioned types and of the sites from which they were obtained, the writer finds it difficult to associate them, with anything but food supply, and the conclusion has been finally arrived at that these implements were used by adults and young alike, for the express purpose of breaking the bones of Kangaroo, Opossum, and other marsupials, in order to extract therefrom the marrow which would have provided a welcome tit-bit on the bill of fare. In a lesser degree too, they may have used them for opening, or rather breaking the convolutions of the Whelk shells so as to obtain whatever portions of the contents they could not draw out with a sharp piece of stick or possibly of bone. In this latter hypothesis, however, one is brought to an abrupt stop when one finds heaps of these shells on some of the middens, which are quite intact!

The theory that this class of implement was used for the purpose of flaking or secondary chipping of the scrapers, points, and other tools, does not appeal to the writer as being sound, as the worn surfaces which they exhibit are not likely to have been produced by the glancing blows necessary for this work.

Finally, it is a lamentable fact that conjecture must ever enter largely into the study of the probable usages of the various stone implements used by our vanished race, and their ruthless and rapid extinction will always leave those who have endeavoured to solve the many problems which they have left, with feelings of deep regret that so little was done while yet there was time, and opportunity remained, to make fuller study and investigation of the habits and customs of one of the most remarkable races of mankind.



Tasmanian Stone Implements.



Tasmanian Stone Implements.