

ART. IX.—*A Stone Axe of the Pointed Butt type from Lindale-in-Cartmel.* By J. C. DICKINSON.

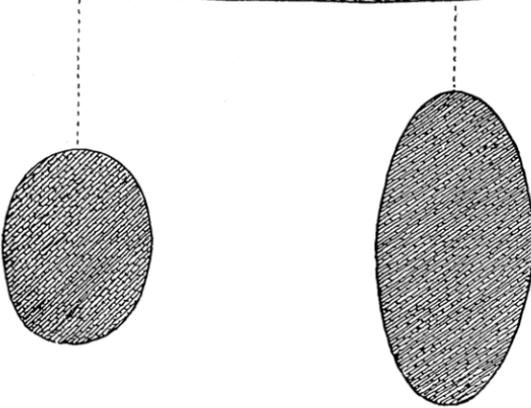
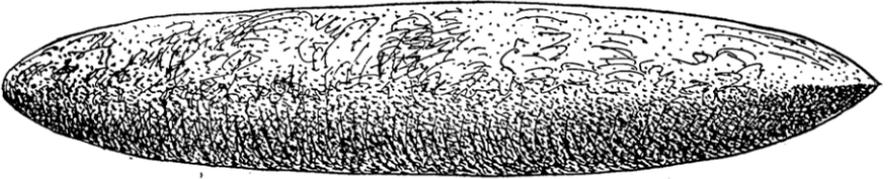
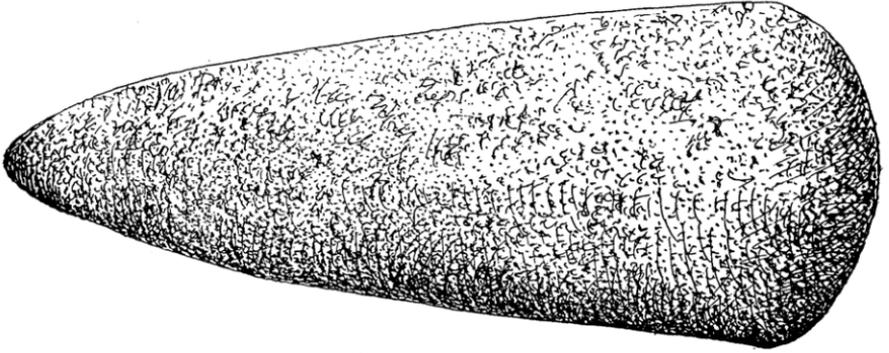
*Read at Carlisle, June 19th, 1934.*

THE Axe which is the subject of this paper was recently found by the writer outside a cottage in Cartmel whither it had recently been brought from Lindale-in-Cartmel.

So far as the writer could gather from conversation with its then owner—Mr. Robinson Wilson of Flookburgh—and from further local enquiries it seems likely that the axe was found in recent years at Lindale-in-Cartmel, possibly during the construction of a sewer though unfortunately one cannot be sure of the exact date or place of the find.

The axe which is in a perfect state of preservation, except for some slight weathering on the grain side, is 8.7 ins. long (22.2 cm.) with a maximum width of 3.5 ins. (8.9 cm.) and a maximum girth of 8.0 ins. (20.3 cm.), its weight is 43.2 ozs. (1233 grams).

When I brought it to the notice of our President, he recognized it as a type rare in our district and had it submitted to expert opinion. As the stone of which it is made is unlike that of any other axe hitherto found in our Society's district a geological report was kindly furnished by Dr. H. Thomas of the Geological Museum. In a letter to Mrs. Collingwood, dated 13th March, 1934, he writes: "The material of which the axe is made is a moderately fine-grained Dolerite with the characteristic ophite structure. It has weathered by a decomposition of the white mineral (felspar) to a rough surface and does not appear to have contained any olivine. Dolerite is an igneous rock akin to basalt.



CONICAL-BUTTED STONE AXE FROM LINDALE (b).

This particular rock does not suggest any Lake District occurrence to me and it is much more like the dolerites of North Wales. Similar rocks, however, occur in south-east Ireland but I think Wales is the most likely source. Similar material has been used for axes found in the south of England and it is evident that such implements wandered great distances from their place of origin."

With this report the axe was then submitted to Mr. Reginald A. Smith of the British Museum who expressed the opinion that it was of an early Neolithic type dating approximately to 2500 B.C. He writes "The celt returned herewith is a fine example of a fairly common type—it is called the pointed butt variety and has an oval section and much curved cutting edge. It is generally dated before the Dolmens, and you may find its evolution discussed in *Archaeologia*, LXXI, 118; see also Stone Age Guide, fig. 95. It should certainly be recorded locally or in the *Antiquaries Journal*."

It thus appears that the axe is important as being amongst the earliest authentic relics of man yet found in north-western England, predating by several centuries the age now usually ascribed to the first human occupation of our district. Yet the geological report shows that the axe is in any case an intruder, so the crucial question is whether it was dropped at Lindale-in-Cartmel in prehistoric times or whether it was brought into the district at some later date.

Unfortunately the nature of the evidence is such that for the present, at least, this question must be left unanswered.

In conclusion, the writer would like to thank the President for constant help and encouragement in preparing this note, and for his adjoining drawings of the axe.