

Notes

MESOLITHIC TRANCHET AXE FROM GODALMING

The implement shown in Fig. 1 was found by the writer on the surface of a newly-ploughed field in the grounds of Charterhouse, Godalming (SU 957452). It is a tranchet axe of a dark grey flint with slight surface patination. It is of quadrangular section with marked longitudinal ridges on both faces and has a pointed butt.

This implement fits comfortably into a West Surrey mesolithic context and comes from a locality that has yielded considerable quantities of flint implements and waste material of types ranging from mesolithic to bronze age.

E. E. HARRISON

NEOLITHIC AXEHEADS FROM THE THAMES AT TEDDINGTON

The four axeheads illustrated (Figs. 2 and 3) were discovered early in 1975 during dredging operations along the River Thames at Teddington Lock (TQ 165714). They are all Neolithic and represent the latest finds in a series of discoveries at this point of the river¹.

No. 1 which is 165 mm long, has a pecked and ground surface and an oval section. It consists of a dark green greenstone which should probably be assigned to Group I despite the absence of augite in the section. Group I axes came from the Penzance region of Cornwall.

No. 2 is a rather flat ground axe, 179 mm in length, with a carefully worked blade. It is made of a medium grey greywacke with some similarities to Group XV. Group XV axes have abundant mica, mainly muscovite, which is scarce in this specimen, while calcite, which is rare in Group XV axes, is abundant here. Nevertheless it is still possible that this implement originated in the Southern Lake District.

No. 3 is 145 mm long and made from a coarse-grained flint or chert. Although much of the implement displays a roughly flaked and only partially polished surface the blade is still razor sharp.

No. 4 is rather elegant and of impure, grey-brown, opaque flint with yellow patination. It is 224 mm long, of oval section and has been polished over the entire surface leaving slight grinding marks still visible down its length. The blade has suffered battering in the river and the whole is marginally rolled. It may be worth noting its similarity to another implement from Teddington Lock² and to one found at Cobham³.

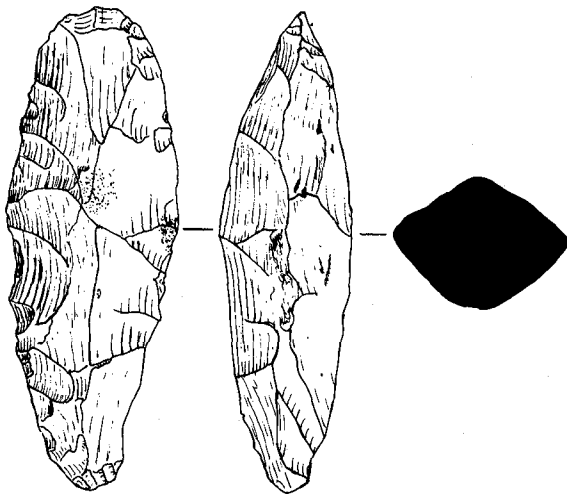


Fig. 1 Mesolithic tranchet axe from Godalming. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$

I would like to thank Mr M. Beach for kindly making the material, now in his possession, available for study and sectioning. Also, I would like to record my gratitude to Mr A. R. Wooley for arranging the thin-sectioning and identifying the rock types and to Dr R. Harrison for subsequently restoring the axeheads to their near-perfect condition.

References

1. Cf. for example the three axes in the British Museum pamphlet, *Flint implements*, 3rd ed., revised by G. de G. Sieveking, 1967, plate IX, nos. 8, 9 and 10
2. *Ibid.*, plate IX, no. 9
3. Harrison, E. E. 'Polished flint axe from Cobham', *Sy AC* 65 (1968), 129

PAUL ARTHUR

A FLINT SCRAPER FROM RIPLEY

A flint scraper (Fig. 4) was found by the author at the edge of a field in Ripley in 1975 (TQ 045 553). The scraper is of good quality dark grey flint, with patches of poorer quality light grey material included. It has been made on a thick, plano-convex flake with a domed back. No cortical material remains. The working edge has been considerably battered and blunted, presumably by heavy use, since the other parts of the tool remain fresh and

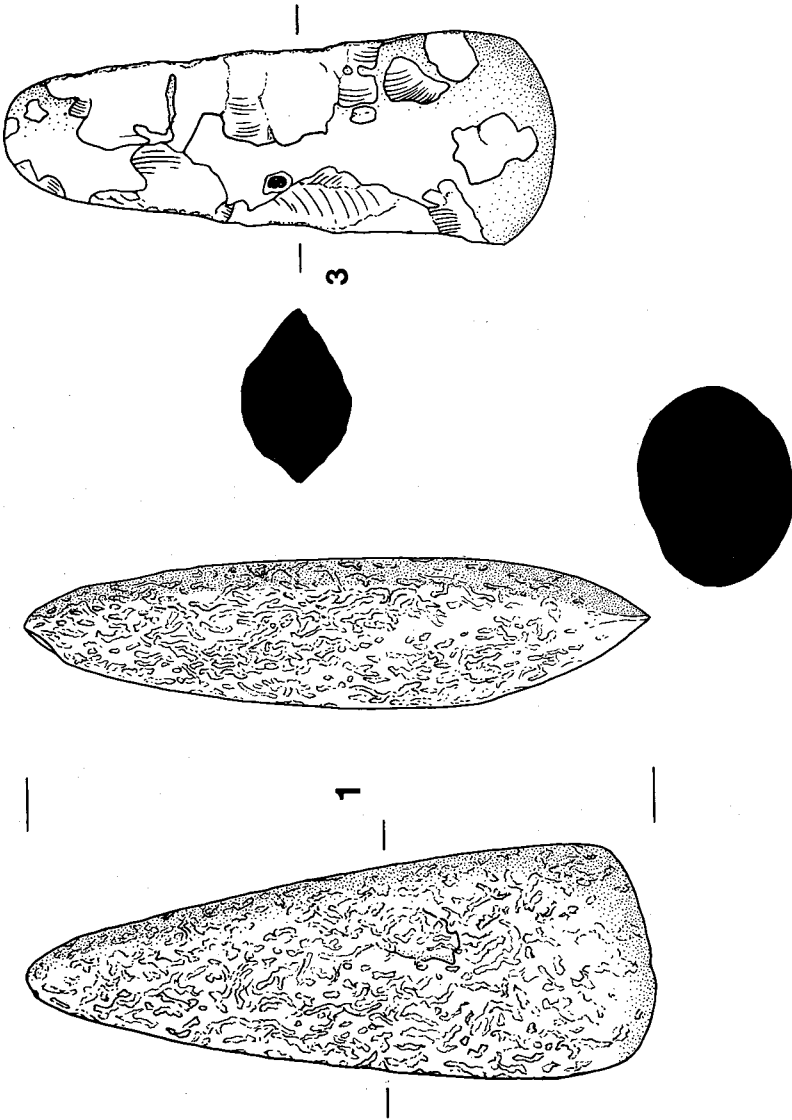


Fig. 2 Neolithic axeheads from Teddington, nos. 1 and 3. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$

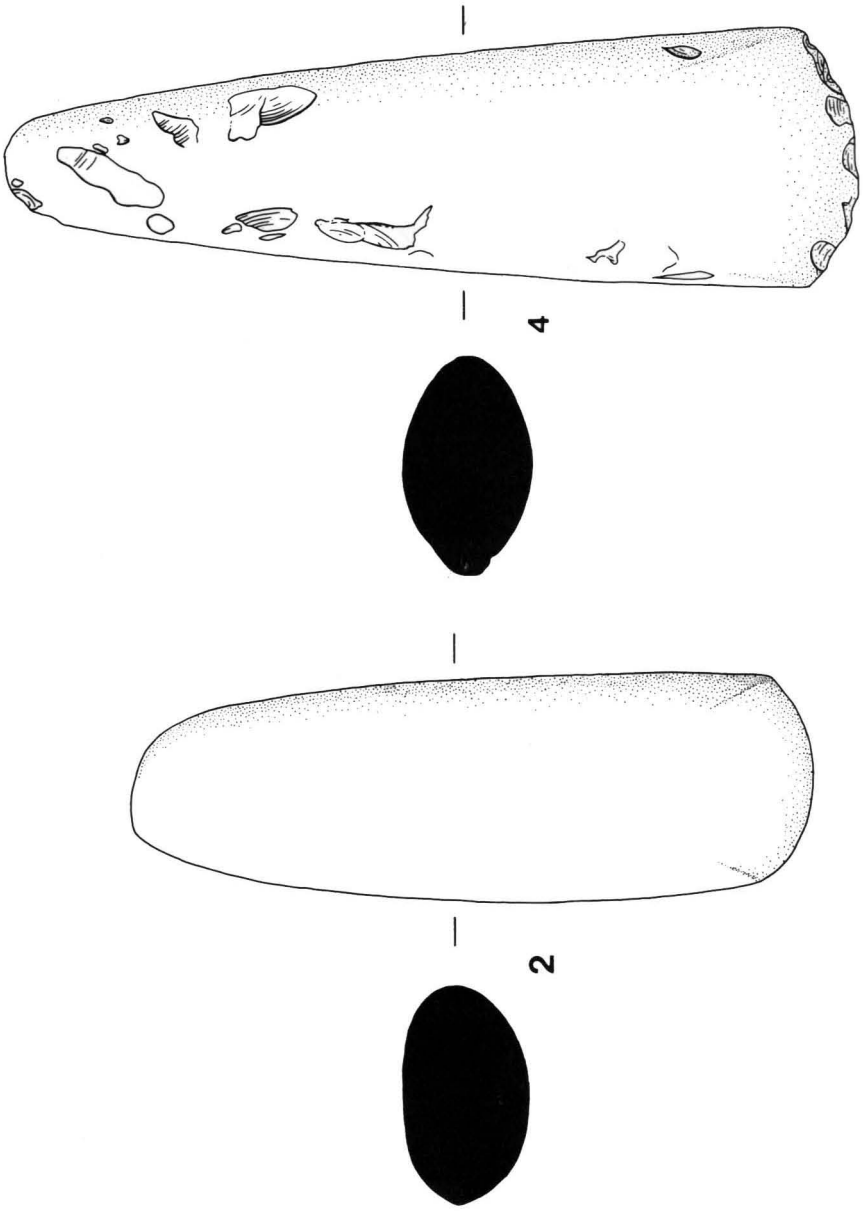


Fig. 3 Neolithic axeheads from Teddington, nos. 2 and 4. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$

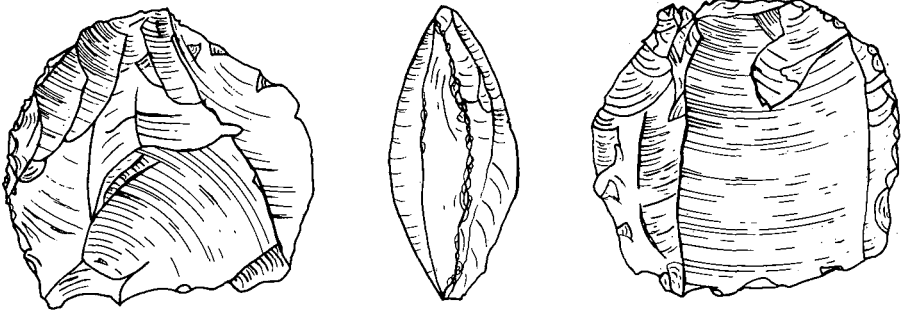


Fig. 4 Scraper from Ripley. Scale $\frac{1}{4}$

undamaged. This implement is one of the type generally known as thumb-nail scrapers, in common use throughout the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. The flint is currently retained by the author.

G. L. CANVIN

8 AND 9 LITTLETON

The majority of the older historic buildings of Surrey are timber-framed and although several of these have been discussed recently in the *Collections*, the author makes no apology for bringing yet another to members' notice. The mediaeval house, which now forms two cottages—numbers 8 & 9, is on the west side (at SU 981473) of Littleton, a hamlet in the parish of Artington and the manor of Loseley. It has been very much altered since it was sketched by Ralph Nevill¹, but is basically timber-framed and of four bays. Its plan is shown in Fig. 5 and this is completely conventional with a single service bay to the west (the position of the service doors could not be proved), a two-bay hall and a single-bay parlour/solar to the east. There are, however, two interesting structural features. First the roof has no purlins, although each pair of 6×4 inch rafters has its own collar and upon each of the tiebeams, which form the centre and ends of the hall, there is a vertical strut to the collar. These are not crownposts because they do not support a collar purlin, but since they are otherwise similar may be referred to as crown struts. This similarity is further reinforced since the crown strut on the centre-of-hall truss (Fig. 6) is five inches wide with two-inch chamfers and has a simple cushion base and has broach stops at its upper end. In this it is like the crownpost in the now-demolished hall-house at North Cray², but has no braces. A more direct parallel is the crown strut at Homewood House, Bolney³, also with chamfering and no braces. Interestingly it is found there in the company of a dais beam with a 14th century moulding and also a single aisle with a base-cruck in the central truss. There are a number of other houses without purlins in Surrey (e.g. Sumners, West Horsley; The Old House, Lingfield;

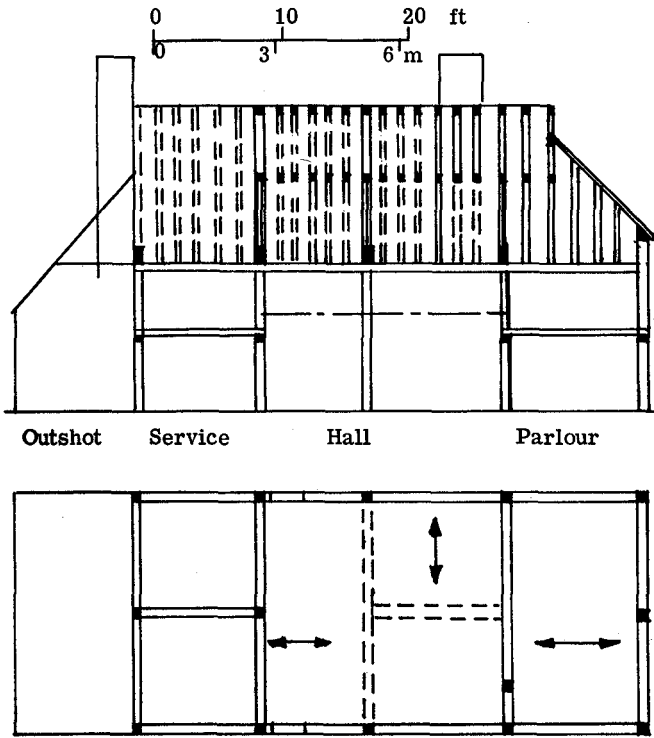


Fig. 5 8 and 9 Littleton. Longitudinal section and plan

Poplars, Bisley), but these do not have crown struts, although they are all early in date.

The other feature of note at 8 & 9 Littleton is the pair of eaves crucks in the east wall, at the parlour end of the house (Fig. 6). These must be distinguished from the crucks⁴ which are associated with the northern and western schools of timber framing, a representative of which is found as near as Lime Trees at Crodall in Hampshire and from which they are very different in character. Unlike these the Littleton eaves crucks do not reach near the apex of the roof and are not associated with a ridge piece. The major differences are that there are no side purlins mounted on the outer side of the crucks nor wallplates outside them, for the wallplates butt into the rear faces of the crucks. They are not alone in Surrey; another pair remain in the cottage attached to The Old House at Elstead (and are illustrated by Gertrude Jekyll⁵), but this cottage has been altered so that the character of the rest of the building is not so clear as at Littleton. There are many parallels in Kent, for example, Frogholt, Newington, and Burnt House, Benover (where eaves crucks are found in association with

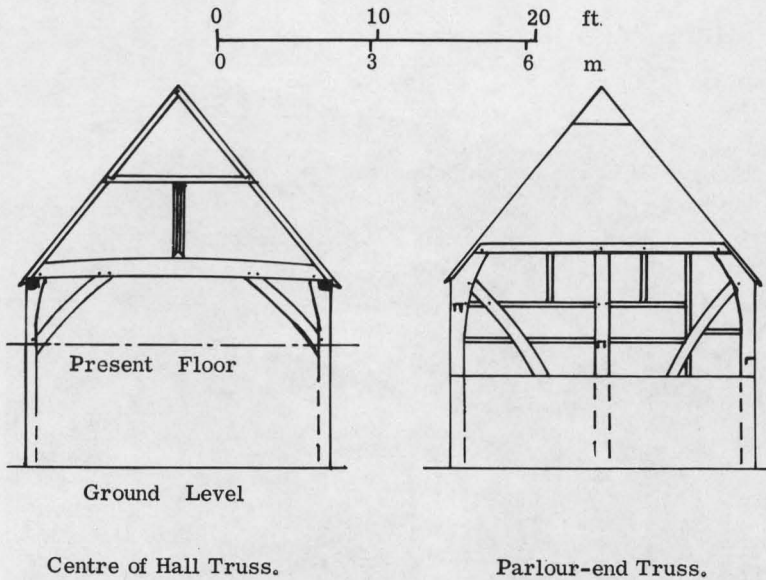


Fig. 6 8 and 9 Littleton. Cross sections

base crucks), but the Kent examples all seem to have a jetty at the parlour end. The eaves crucks should be compared with base crucks and in these the blades start well below the eaves and continue to the tie beam, often supporting an aisle plate. An inventory of these has been made by Alcock and Barley⁶, who have listed ten in Kent and Sussex and one aristocratic example of five trusses in Surrey, the Guardroom at Lambeth Palace⁷. There is much controversy as to whether base crucks are part of the same tradition as the crucks of the north and west, but these parallels show that such a connection is not necessary to explain the eaves crucks of Elstead and Littleton. Their structural advantage was to give more headroom to the upper room (or solar, perhaps) at the parlour end. This is an indication of its importance when the house was built. The presence of erection notches only on the outer face of the crucks shows that they were reared from the end of the house and this is distinctly unusual in south-east England, where most of the principal uprights were reared from the side of the house. The floor of the solar may have been raised in recent times, but the original joists remain (and it would appear that the stairs to the solar were in the hall). They were thirteen in number and nine inches wide.

There are no mouldings at 8 & 9 Littleton and the house can only be dated from these parallels. However, it represents a late example in the series of experiments which ceased with the development and general adoption of the crown-post roof and can be tentatively placed in the middle of the 14th century. It is not easy to see the roof, which appears to be blackened over



Fig. 7 8 and 9 Littleton. Exterior from the south-east

the parlour as well as the hall, indicating that the wall was not sealed above the collar and perhaps suggesting that the gablet was used as a smoke vent. It was not possible to examine the roof at the west end at all, but it is likely that this was originally hipped.

The directions of the ceiling joists (indicated by the double-headed arrows in Fig. 5) show that the hall was converted in two stages. It appears that the west bay, which contained the cross passage, was covered first, leaving the east bay as a wide smoke bay and later a large chimney with a bread oven was built outside the south wall at this point and the ceiling inserted in the east bay. This was a 17th century alteration and used as main girder the main post from another timber building, fixed with its jowl at the east end. There are no original ground sills left, the ground floors and the whole of the north front being replaced in Bargate stone with garnetted joints. They may be contemporary with the chimney, as may the rebuilding and the outshot at the west end.

Finally, since Ralph Nevill completed his drawing there have been considerable alterations. The large chimney stack was removed—the present chimneys are modern—and four dormer windows were inserted in the south side, greatly improving the lighting in the upper rooms (Fig. 7).

The author is indebted to Mrs D. Holloway for her kind permission to explore this house and publish his findings.

References

- 1 Nevill, R. *Old cottage and domestic architecture in Surrey*, 1891, 70
- 2 Tester, P. J. 'A medieval hall-house at North Cray.' *Arch. Cant.* **87** (1973), 9
- 3 Mason, R. T. 'Fourteenth-century halls in Sussex.' *SvAC* **95** (1957). 85
- 4 Alcock, N. W., ed. *A catalogue of cruck buildings*, 1973
- 5 Jekyll, G. *Old West Surrey*, 1904, 6
- 6 Alcock, N. W. and Barley, M. W. 'Medieval roofs with base crucks and short principals.' *Ant. J* **52** (1972), 132
- 7 RCHM *West London*, 1925, plate 135

K. W. E. GRAVETT

A FOURTEENTH CENTURY CRUET FROM CHERTSEY

In 1975 Chertsey Museum was able to purchase from a local resident a pewter cruet which he had found a year or two previously in silt dredged from the Abbey River, Chertsey, just west of the cattle bridge on Abbey Chase Farm (TQ 047 671).

The vessel (Fig. 8) has been examined by Mr C. Blair, Keeper of Metalwork

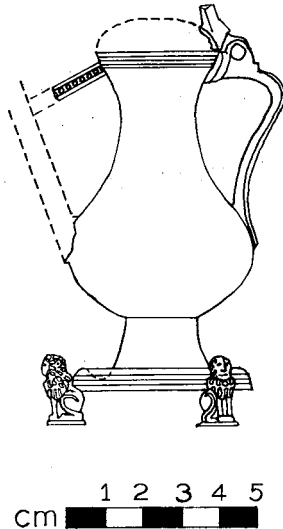


Fig. 8 14th century cruet from Chertsey

at the Victoria and Albert Museum, who has dated it on stylistic grounds to the 14th century. Very little medieval pewter has survived in Britain, but Mr Blair compares the cruet with jugs of similar form described and illustrated in the current *Medieval catalogue* of the London Museum, and others depicted in illuminated manuscripts of 14th century date, such as Queen Mary's Psalter in the British Library. He also draws attention to six cruets, four of pewter and two of silver, from the Treasury of Basle Cathedral. The pewter cruets, now in Basle Museum, are very similar to the Chertsey cruet except that they lack feet, and they can be dated, by their heraldic decoration, to the period 1366-1382. The silver pair are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Their shape and decoration are similar to our example, but they lack the feet, and have lips instead of spouts.

While it seems likely that the Chertsey cruet may have been used by the monks of Chertsey Abbey, this can unfortunately be no more than surmise due to the circumstances of its discovery.

J. L. BENTLEY

MERTON CHURCH HATCHMENT

Recent visits have been made to the British Library by members of the Society to view the grangerised copy of Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, enlarged from three volumes to thirty volumes by the addition of over 6,000 illustrations. One of the additional drawings depicts the hitherto untraced hatchment in Merton Church with a marginal note 'Henry Simon'. The arms are: Azure, a chevron between three trefoils argent.

The hatchment must have been displayed to mark the death of the widow of Henry Simon, Mrs Elizabeth Simon, who died 21 March 1798. She left £600 for general charitable purposes (M. & B. 1, 265; VCH 4, 68). A benefaction board existed at the west end of Merton Church from 1798 until the late 1950s and the facts are recorded on a metal plate on the south wall. She also left £200 for the poor of Wimbledon (M. & B 3, 283; VCH 4, 125).

LIONEL GREEN