

A Native North American Projectile Point from Cranleigh

This implement (fig 1) was found in recent years in the topsoil of a garden in Cranleigh (TQ 0665 3963), in an area that was farmland until about 1960. Measuring 80mm in length and 30.5mm in breadth at its base across the barbs, its maximum thickness is 9.2mm. It is made from greyish-brown chert, and is pressure flaked on both surfaces, with fine retouch along both edges.

The tip is slightly squared off, with a possible small tranchet blow on one side and some surface damage on the other side. On one surface a small fossil is embedded, with another very small hole nearby. The sides are asymmetrical; this appears to be a not infrequent feature of native North American projectile points (Justice 1987), and is possibly deliberate, to cause the point to spin in flight. The end of the tang has one broken corner, and the end of the corresponding barb is also broken, this damage possibly occurring in antiquity. It has been suggested by the Museum of Mankind (British Museum) that the point might date from the Archaic period in North America, that is from before cAD 200.

How this point came to be deposited in Surrey farmland may never be known; it is worth mentioning, as a matter of historical fact, that units of the Canadian army were stationed in the Cranleigh area during the preparations for the invasion of German-occupied France in June 1944. There is also the possibility that the point is a relatively modern replica.

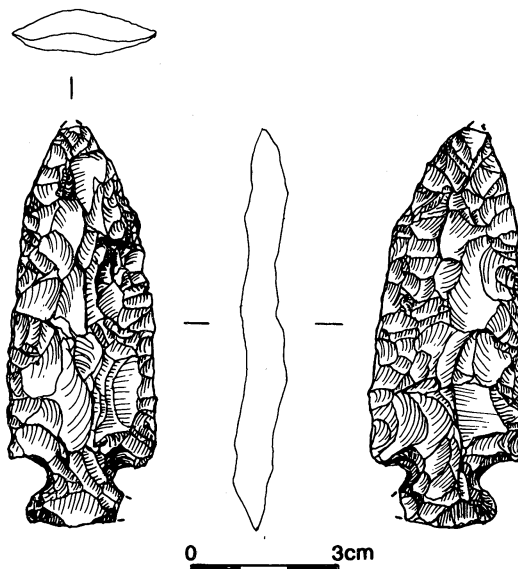


Fig 1 North American projectile point from Cranleigh

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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