

## Three Flint Implements from Shimpling

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The three flints which are here described have been found at various times in the Parish of Shimpling near Diss; but only No. 3 can claim to be properly native to the village, for Nos. 1 and 2 were found in contexts which make it certain, or probable, that they were recently imported from elsewhere. They are nevertheless of local interest.

No. 1 is a partially polished flint axe, which was picked up on the gravel drive in front of Shimpling Place, and belongs to Miss Stearn. Down the side of one face, and along the cutting end of the other, are certain small recent fractures displaying a brown interior. The principal colouration is a mottled rich brown, but the face, along the side of which are the recent chips, possesses an extensive mottled creamy patina. The implement has been roughly blocked out and partially ground. There are few traces of step flaking. I am very grateful to Mr. M. C. Burkitt, M.A., F.S.A., for examining this specimen, and his notes have been incorporated herein. He states that it can belong to any period from the Early Neolithic to well on in the Bronze Age;<sup>1</sup> and he suggests that

<sup>1</sup> Cf., *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1936, part ii., p. 207, No. 8, from the Essex Coast.

the colouration may be due to the implement having lain for some time in a peaty alluvium. It is difficult to suggest a place of origin; perhaps it became incorporated in a load of stones from some pit in the Waveney Valley; or possibly was brought to the spot from the marshy meadows north of the village.

No. 2 is a polished axe of the usual neolithic type, and was picked up on a stone heap outside Shimpling Rectory in 1904 by Rev. C. W. Millard, the present Rector of Burston, and by him given to the writer. The inside flint, as revealed by some recent chips is a nondescript buff to brownish grey; while the original flake surfaces are covered by a thin white patina, giving a light blue colour. There are patches of iron stain on either face. The polished surface is a very light grey-brown. The implement has been carefully shaped, but the extreme butt end is now missing. Its place of origin must remain obscure; but it is likely to have been the Waveney Valley.

No. 3 is a pick of steep triangular section, discovered in 1936 by Mr. David Frere in the field immediately east of Valley Farm and its orchard, bounded on the south by the farm lane. Pot-boilers occur plentifully on the site and in adjoining fields. The implement has been carefully shaped by steep controlled flaking from each side, and the flat bottom has been similarly shaped. Two small patches of cortex remain, one on the keel, and one on one of the sides. The flint, grey-buff inside, has a thick white patina, and plentiful small iron stains. It has been examined by Dr. Grahame Clark, F.S.A., who agrees that it has a mesolithic ancestry in the tranchet picks of that period.<sup>1</sup> He would assign it to the Neolithic or Early Metal Age. Such a find is noteworthy considering the boulder clay subsoil, and the heavy character of the humus, which in primitive times must have borne a dense forest.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., the pick from Holderness.—Clark Mesolithic Age in Britain, Fig. 2, 4, or from near Haslemere, Fig. 39, 1 and 2.