

Three Handaxes from Surrey

Three flint handaxes (fig 1:1-3), now in the Museum of the John Evelyn Society in Wimbledon, are labelled as having been found in the historic county of Surrey. In this note they have been classified according to Wymer's handaxe typology (1968).

No 1 (type Fb/i) This piece, labelled as 'probably from Putney', is a large implement 177mm long by 83mm wide. The tip is oval and the butt thin; the implement is thickest through its centre section. The edges are slightly blunted, but traces of alternate flaking remain, varying in extent. There is heavy surface flaking on both sides of the handaxe; the surfaces near the butt have been worked with a hammerstone, and those nearer the tip by the use of bar hammer technique. Three small patches of cortex remain. The flint is mid-grey, with fairly extensive buff patination on both surfaces.

No 2 (type G) This sub-cordate handaxe, labelled 'P15 AWAS, Mortlake 1919', is 107mm by 66mm in size, and is ovoid in shape, with a blunt tip and a thick rounded butt. The implement is battered and rolled, and the edges blunted; the flaking technique appears cruder than on the

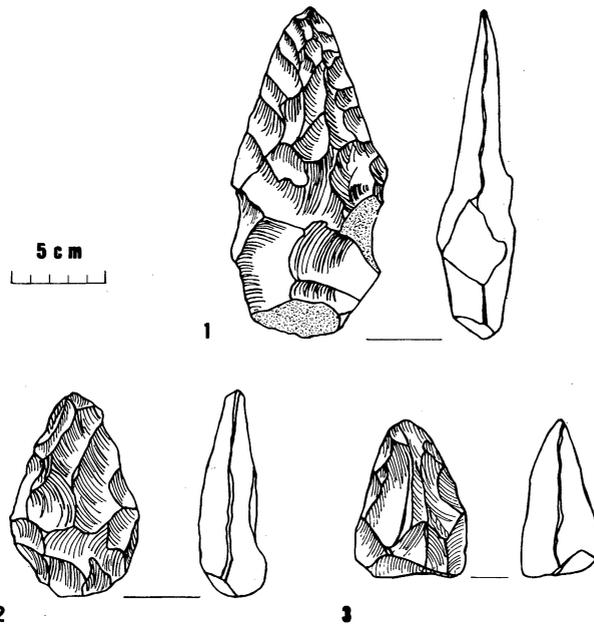


Fig 1 Three handaxes from Surrey (½)

handaxe described above. The flint is light grey, with considerable whitish patination almost covering one surface. The other surface has a corticated hollow into which the user's fingers fit comfortably while the butt rests in the palm of the hand. It is possible that this feature caused the piece of flint to be selected for use as a tool.

No 3 This handaxe, labelled '31' and catalogued as 'found in Merton Abbey Grounds near Nelson's House', is 83mm by 60mm. It has a blunt tip and a heavy, sub-rectangular, flattish butt, though it is not clear whether the shape of the butt is deliberate or whether the implement has been broken near its centre. The latter is perhaps more likely, as there is no trace of cortex on the butt surface. The implement is rolled, with blunted edges and surface flaking, but there are faint traces of the use of bar hammer technique, especially on the surface with the '31' label. The flint is mottled greyish-brown in colour, heavily patinated. This handaxe's place in Wymer's typology is difficult to determine. If complete, it could be type E (cf implement found at Peasmarsh, Surrey, c 1840: Evans 1897, 594-5, fig 455); if incomplete, ie lacking the butt, it could be type F/i.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

- Wymer, J J, 1968 *Lower Palaeolithic archaeology in Britain as represented by the Thames Valley*
 Evans, J, 1897 *The ancient stone implements of Great Britain*, 2 edn

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