

Two Stone Hammers from East Surrey

The purpose of this note is to put on record two ground stone implements, both presumably hammers, of prehistoric date. One is from Reigate, the other from Lower Kingswood, unfortunately neither implement can be precisely provenanced.

The hammer from Reigate (fig 1A) was found, unburied, in the garden of 6 Slipshoe Street, Reigate, a house of c1600, by the house's recent owner Mrs D Knight whose ancestors had lived there for over a century. The implement is certainly out of context and may have been brought to Slipshoe Street in recent times. The hammer measures 137mm long by 81mm broad. The hole is 17mm in diameter. The stone is dark red in colour with a slightly pitted surface, smooth to the touch. The implement appears to have been formed from a naturally-shaped oval pebble, probably a volcanic rock of andesitic affinity. There are, however, clear striations at either end which may have been caused either in preliminary shaping or through use. Both ends exhibit a little pitting and chipping which are likely to have been brought about during a hammering action.

The second hammer (fig 1B) was found recently in the garden of 1 Mint Cottages, 93 Buckland Road, Lower Kingswood by Mr P D Hewett who moved here in 1946. This object measures 101mm by 53mm. The hole is 20mm in diameter. The hammer has been formed from a fine-grained basaltic rock, dark grey-brown in colour, displaying a little recent iron staining. It is sub-rectangular in section with a tapering profile. The blunt end shows clear signs of hammering in the form of an uneven surface and areas of pitting. A distinct 'ledge' has been provided adjacent to the hammered surface for which no ready explanation can be offered.

Discussion

Ground stone implements of late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age date from Surrey have recently been discussed by Field & Woolley (1984) and it would be otiose to repeat much of their discussion here. The Reigate implement would fit well under the heading 'pebble hammer' of which 24 Surrey examples are cited. The Lower Kingswood example does not fall into any obvious category although the use of both objects as hammers appears clear. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, neither object was found in an archaeological context although of the two the Lower Kingswood hammer has the better claim to being a local find. Both rock types could have come from Britain and may possibly derive from Wales or perhaps by long shore drift from northern Britain or Scandinavia.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank C J Stanley of the Geological Museum, South Kensington, whose comments on the petrology of the implements are used above; Mrs D Knight of Slipshoe Street for giving me the pebble hammer; David Field and Stuart Needham for commenting on this note; John McNally, Conservation Officer for Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, for drawing my attention to the Lower Kingswood hammer and P D Hewett for allowing it to be recorded. The future of the two objects is yet to be decided.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Field, D & Woolley, A R, 1984 Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ground stone implements from Surrey: morphology, petrology and distribution, *SyAC*, 75, 85-109

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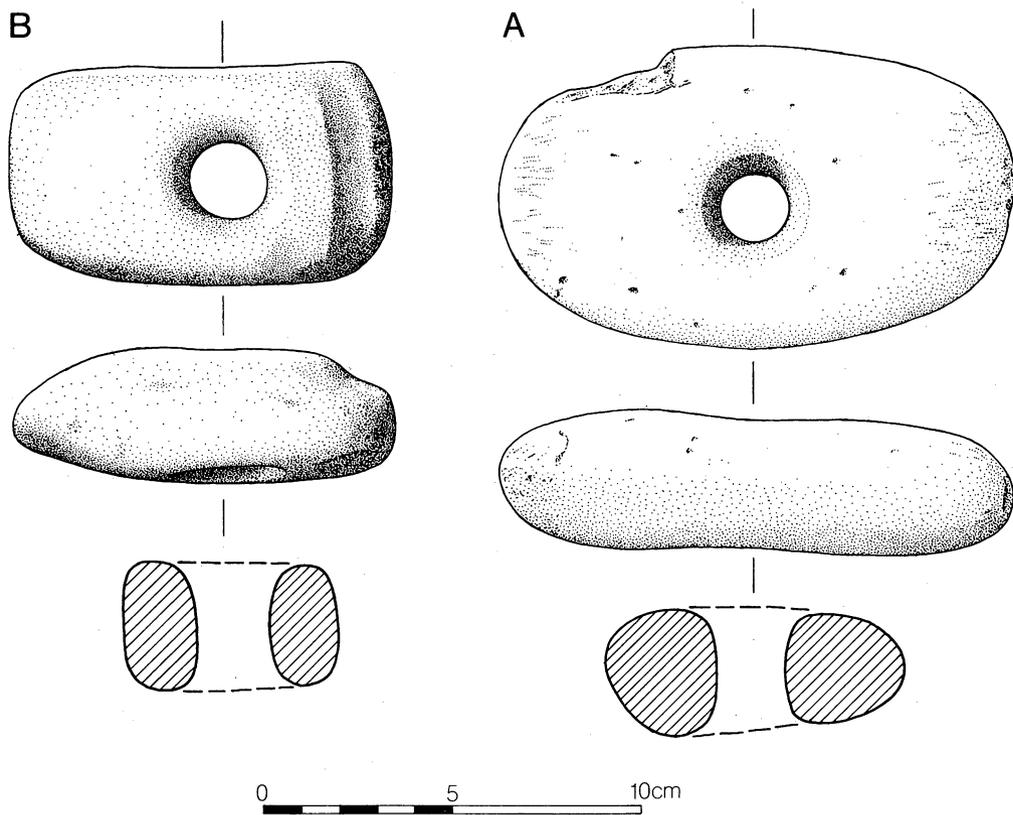


Fig 1. Two stone hammers A, from Reigate and B, from Lower Kingswood