

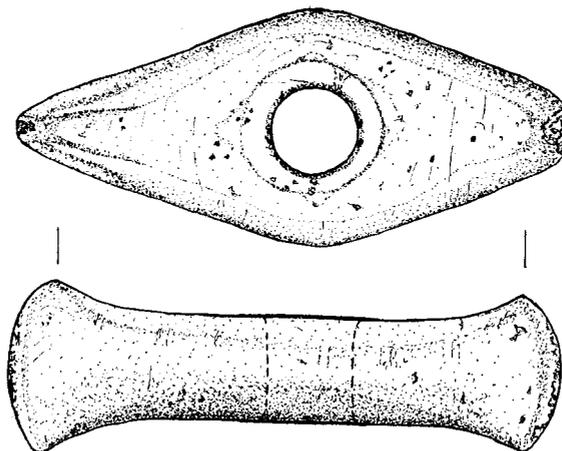
# AN EARLY BRONZE AGE BATTLE-AXE FROM WANDSWORTH

PATRICK LOOBEY

During its continuing watch along the Thames foreshore at low tide Wandsworth Historical Society has made a further number of discoveries,<sup>1</sup> including an Early Bronze Age battle-axe which was found in the Wandsworth reach.<sup>2</sup>

The axe is 144 mm long and 64 mm wide with a shafthole diameter of 22 mm. Its surface has been smoothed almost to a polish, but both the blade and the butt have been slightly damaged with use. Thin sectioning has revealed that the axe is of camptonite (Group XIV; sources West Midlands).<sup>3</sup>

The axe does not fit easily into any of Roe's nine groups:<sup>4</sup> the butt shape is intermediate between A and D suggesting the Calais Wold/Snowhill Groups; leaving this basic characteristic aside, the softly carinated sides, the long thin elevation and the longitudinal proportions would place the axe in the Loose Howe Group,<sup>5</sup> of which two other examples have been discovered in the London region.<sup>6</sup>



Scale 1/2

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Stan Warren for encouragement and for drawing the axe, Nicholas Farrant for my writing this description at all, Marion Smith and Mrs. Baker at Kingston Museum for help and advice. I must also thank Dr. A. C. Bishop and Dr. A. R. Woolley of the Department of Mineralogy, British Museum (Natural History) for the thin sectioning, and Dr. I. A. Kinnes of the British Museum for his help.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For two earlier finds see N. Farrant, "Two Weapons from the Thames", *Trans. London Middlesex Archaeol. Soc.* 24 (1973) 157-58.

<sup>2</sup> Full details of the find spot have been placed with the Museum of London.

<sup>3</sup> F. W. Shotton, "New Petrological Groups based on Axes from the West Midlands", *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 25 (1959) 135-143. Also for Group XIV see *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 28

(1962) 220. For preliminary details of the petrological survey of the London region, see F. Celoria, "Preliminary list of neolithic axes from London region. . .", *London Studies I* (1974) 87-92.

<sup>4</sup> F. E. S. Roe, "The Battle-Axe Series in Britain", *Proc. Prehist. Soc.* 32 (1966) 199-245.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 209, fig. 6b, no. 251.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, from the river at Kingston-upon-Thames, p. 237.