

## BRONZE AGE AXES FROM HALESWORTH &amp; DISTRICT.

Several years ago a Bronze Age palstave was found at Wissett, a small village two miles NW of Halesworth, and some time earlier a Bronze socketed axe had been discovered in Halesworth. My attention was directed to them by the late Mr. Fred Lambert of Halesworth and both specimens still remain in private possession; and it is by the kind permission of their respective owners, Mr. George Kerrison of Wissett and Mrs. J. N. Cooper of Saxmundham that I am able to describe them here.

The palstave from Wissett (Fig. 1) was found in 1939 just below the

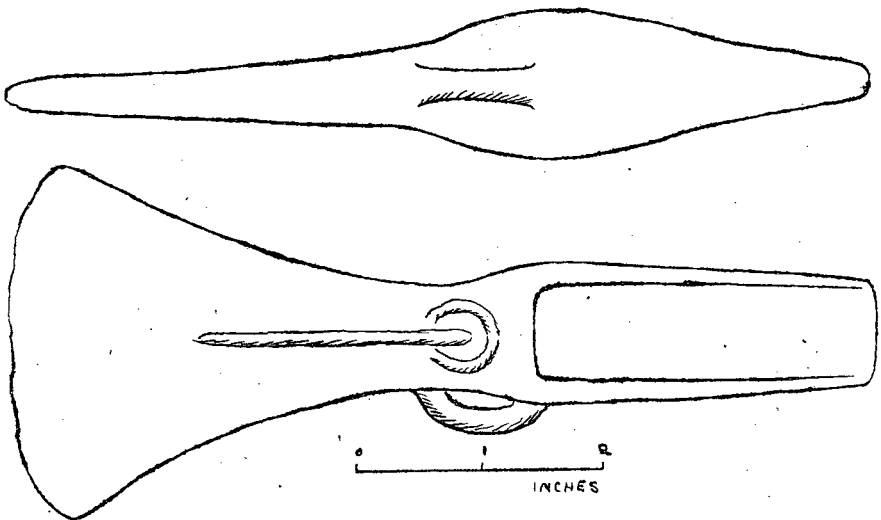


Fig. 1

surface whilst digging foundations for extensions to the Jubilee Cottages in Wissett Street. It measures  $6\frac{3}{8}$  inches in length and is in a good state of preservation. The blade has been blunted from use and a slight defect in the casting appears beneath the stop-ridge. A "bronze celt" from Wissett is recorded as exhibited to the Archaeological Institute at Norwich by the Rev. Samuel Blois Turner (Archaeological Institute Norwich 1847 page XXVI) but this is another specimen of which there is now no trace. This is also referred to in the Victoria County History Vol 1 p. 277 where the above reference is wrongly quoted.

The socketed axe from Halesworth came to light earlier in the present century in the garden of "The Bungalow", Holton Road. This is a particularly fine specimen (Fig. 2) and is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length. In this case too another Bronze Age implement is recorded from the same area. A palstave found at Halesworth in 1849 (Fig. 3) much corroded on the surface is preserved in the Fitch Collection at the Castle Museum Norwich No. 758.76.94. but unfortunately there is no indication of the site from which it came.

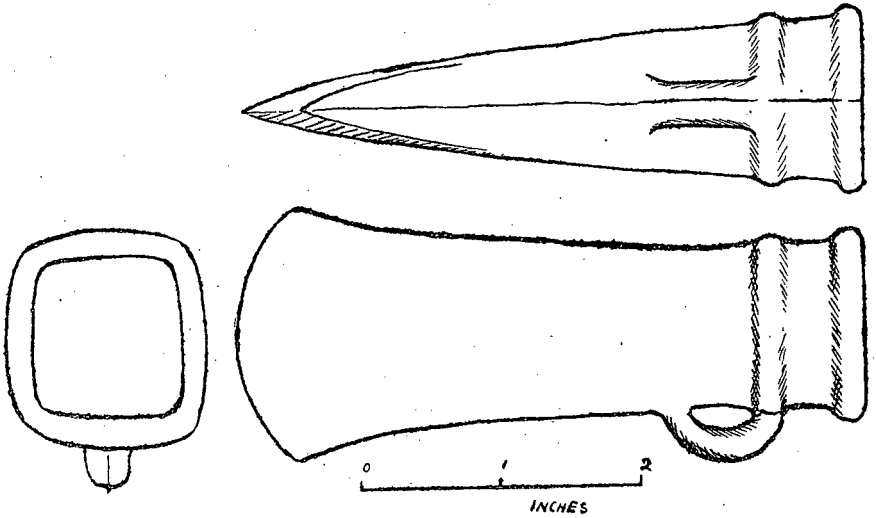


Fig. 2

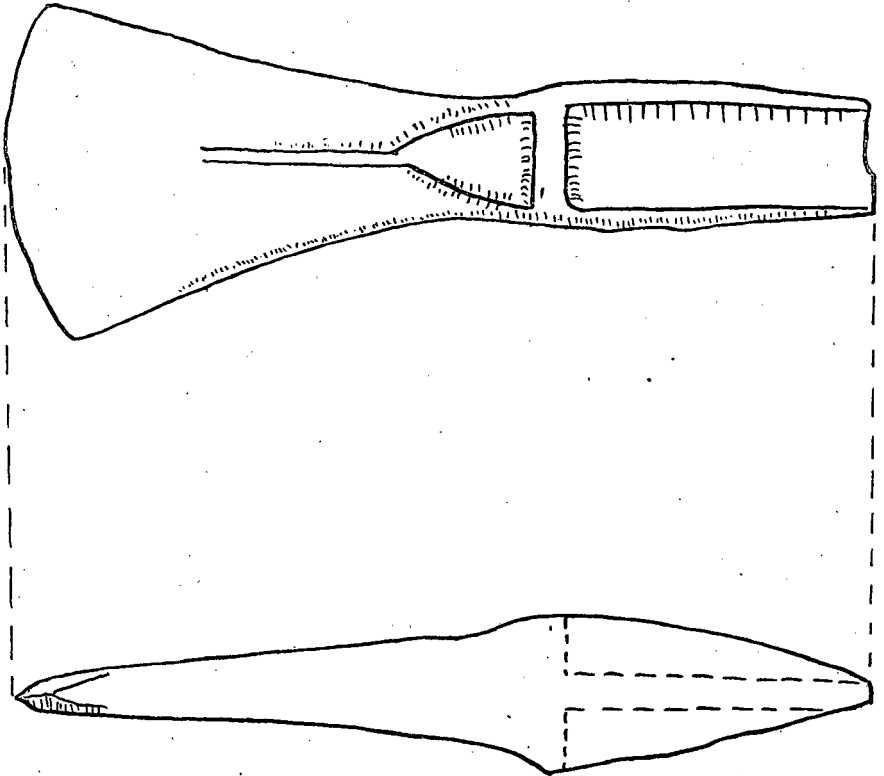


Fig. 3

It is significant for our knowledge of the Bronze Age in the district of Halesworth that there is evidence of other finds prior to those now recorded. It should be noted that there is a palstave from Ubbeston (Fig. 4) in the British Museum and a small socketed axe from Blythborough (Fig. 5) at Moyses Hall Museum, Bury St. Edmunds. All these sites are close to the banks of the river Blyth or its tributaries. The

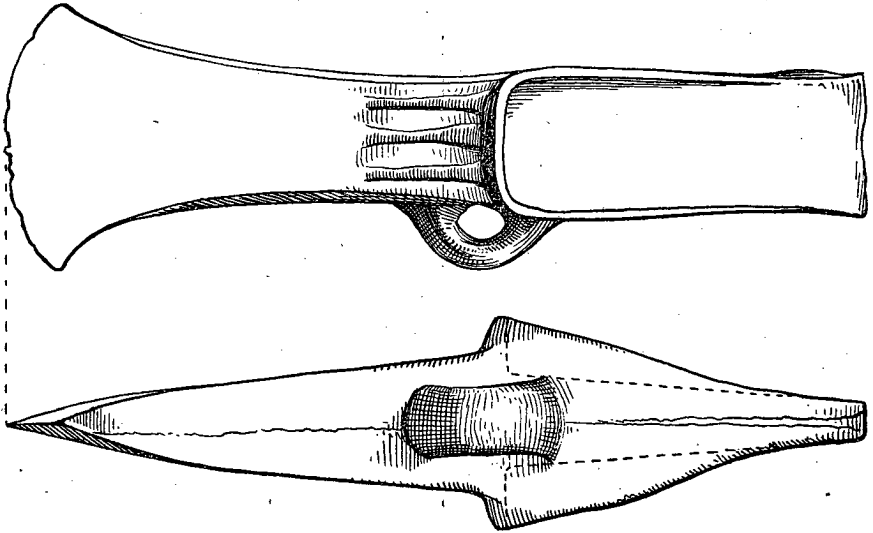


Fig. 4

palstaves from Halesworth and Ubbeston and the socketed axe from Blythborough are plotted on the distribution maps for the Middle and Late Bronze Ages respectively that accompany Sir Cyril Fox's study of "The distribution of Man in East Anglia 2300 BC—50 AD" (Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society Vol. VII, 1933 pp. 149—166; Fig. 4 and 5). To these distribution maps the Wissett palstave and the Halesworth socketed axe can now be added. These further additions make it reasonable to suppose that there was a penetration of the Blyth by man in both the Middle and Late Bronze Ages though in a less degree than Sir Cyril Fox suggests took place along the Deben and the Orwell.

My thanks are due to Mr. H. J. Maltby of Moyses Hall Bury St. Edmunds for information regarding the Blythborough socketed axe; to Mr. C. O. Waterhouse of the British Museum for the drawing of the Ubbeston palstave; to Mr. H. Spenser of Ipswich Museum for preparing drawings of Fig. 1, 2, and 5; and to Mr. R. R. Clarke M.A., F.S.A., for the drawing of the Halesworth palstave at the Castle Museum Norwich and for general advice.

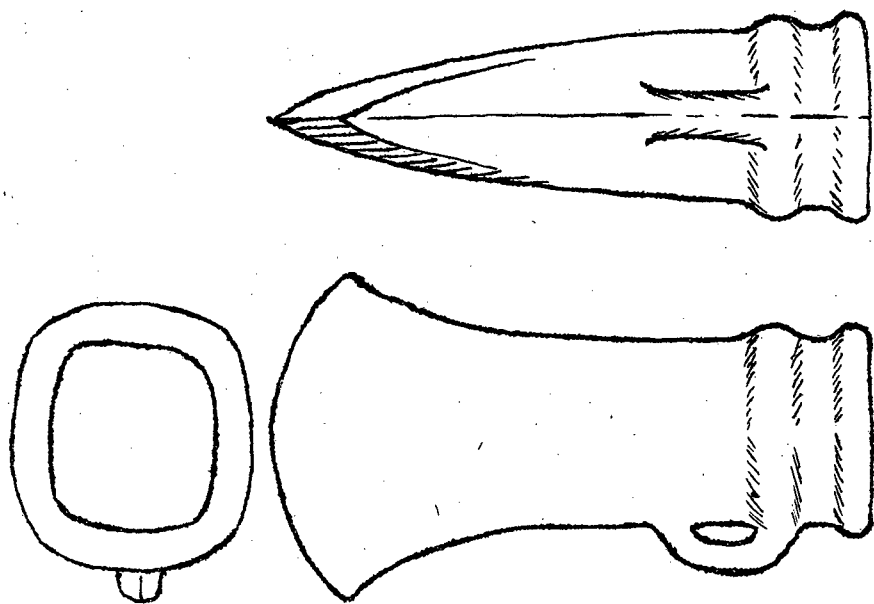


Fig. 5