

NOTES

Two Neolithic axes from Suffolk. The Moyses Hall Museum collections have recently been enriched by the acquisition of two fine examples of Neolithic axes, one of stone and the other of flint.

In April, 1960, the breaking up of rough pasture at Woolpit Heath (TL/990620) resulted in the discovery of an axe (Plate XXXVI *b*) of fine-grained greenish-grey stone, ground and polished all over, and with squared sides. It is now in the possession of the Museum.

Length: $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches; maximum width: $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; maximum thickness: $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

The second specimen (Plate XXXVI *a*) was found in 1961, during the ploughing and cultivation of old pasture at The Medler Stud, Kentford, (TL/715666), and has been placed on permanent loan by the owner, Mr. H. B. Leach.

It is of fine pale grey flint, carefully ground and polished all over, obliterating every flaking scar, and has squared sides. The implement is of exact symmetry.

Length: $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches; maximum width: $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches; maximum thickness: $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

Across both sides of the butt end a series of 9 or 10 very small flake scars have been added after polishing.

These are not the only axes of such considerable size recorded from Suffolk. Sir John Evans¹ records a specimen from Stowmarket, with a length of $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Several Suffolk axes of considerable size are in the Ipswich Museum, 9 inches and upwards being by no means unusual. A specimen in flint from Lindsey, with sharp edges and rounded cutting face, reaches a length of $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Perhaps the largest known is one from Newton, Lancashire, measuring $17\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length.²

As has been indicated by Piggott,³ the flattened edge and narrowed butt do not necessarily imply a late date. In flint these forms have been found 'in primary associations at Windmill Hill'. At Hembury and Maiden Castle both flint and stone are found, but the latter do not seem to appear until later in the period. Flint and stone appear together on some Suffolk sites, but the flattened edge is the exception rather than the rule.

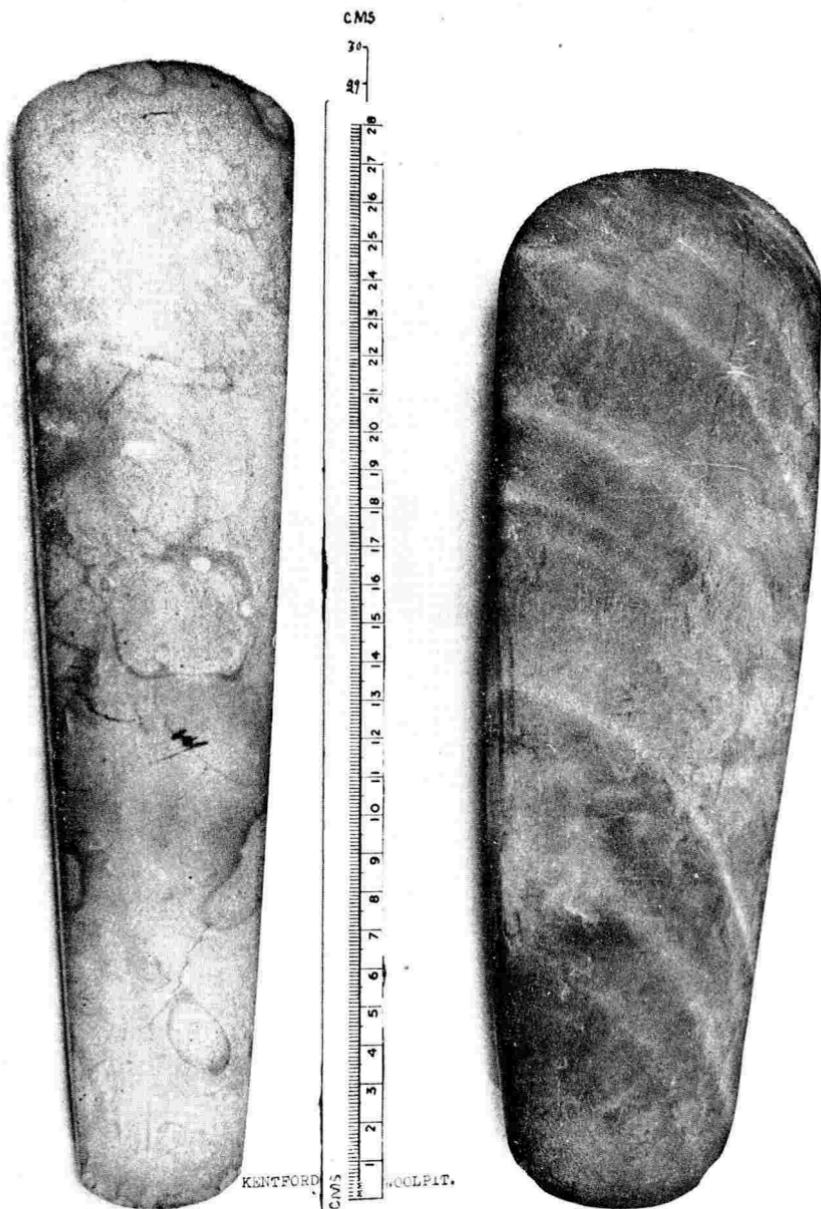
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¹ *The Ancient Stone Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain* (1897), p. 110; and *Archaeologia*, vol. xvi, Pl. LI, p. 361.

² Evans, p. 118; and *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, vol. III, p. 225.

³ *Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (1954), p. 76; and Bruce-Mitford, *Ant. Journ.*, vol. xviii (1938), p. 282.

PLATE XXXVI



a

b

Neolithic axes: (*a*) Kentford, (*b*) Woolpit.