

## NOTES

*A squat ground axe from Cavenham.* In 1943-44 when the South Fields, Cavenham (which run between the River Hind and the Black Ditches from the Lackford-Cavenham road to Roberts Bridge), were ploughed for the first time since 1924, the writer walked over them to see if anything had been exposed. At a point approximately on the 100 ft contour (TL/767692) a polished stone axe was picked up from the surface (Fig. 76). Subsequently this axe was sectioned,

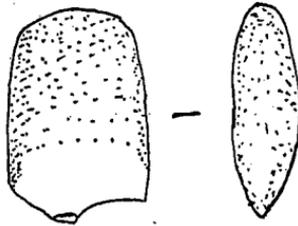


FIG. 76.—A squat ground axe from Cavenham. Scale  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

through the kindness of the late Dr. T. G. E. Powell, by Professor F. W. Shotton of Birmingham University whose report reads:

254/200 Suffolk—Squat ground axe.

*Olivine basalt.* Fresh laths of medium labradorite, euhedral olivine changed to serpentine along cracks, granular titanite and abundant iron ore. The whole rock very fresh. I did not match it with any of my slices. It need not be British in origin.

It is in the writer's possession. There were no other finds in the area though subsequently there appeared to be two ploughed-out barrows at the extreme edge of the fields by Roberts Bridge (TL/774684). The axe is listed as S21 from Suffolk in the Norwich Museum Regional List.<sup>1</sup> It is from the Neolithic Period.

The axe had been damaged in antiquity at the cutting edge, which is polished, the other end being still rough. It is light brown in colour and measures 10 x 7 cm at the cutting edge and is 3.2 cm thick.

The findspot is above an old ford over the Hind. This ditch is now completely dry except after exceptionally heavy rain. Up to 1929 it contained water and flooded frequently each winter. The bottom in most places at this time contained up to 6 ft of mud. At a point

<sup>1</sup> T. H. M. K. Clough and Barbara Green, 'The Identification of Stone Implements', *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, xxxviii (1972).

to the south-east of the find-spot it has a gravel bottom and there was a track running on fairly high ground along the Higham Parish boundary across Higham Heath which carried on down to the gravel ford, but disappeared when the cultivated fields were reached. This track was approximately 400m south from the Icknield Way and running parallel with it. The track was ploughed out in 1942-3 when the whole area came under cultivation. This crossing could well have been used as an alternate to the Icknield Way as these two gravel patches would have been the only two crossing places suitable for animals over about 2 miles of the river. The meadow area each side of the river used to be very wet in winter and according to elderly people living in Cavenham in the 1930s the whole form of the river and its water table changed after the building of the railway embankment at, and the subsequent draining of, Barrow Bottom in the 19th century.

TERESA BRISCOE

*A Roman road at Bradfield St. George.* Norman Scarfe, in his book, *The Suffolk Landscape* (1972), p.183, suggests that a Roman road may run parallel to the known Long Melford to Ixworth road (Margary's 33a). From Cockfield the road would lie 2km east of the known route by Eastlow Hill, skirting Hessett and Beyton parishes. We investigated the section from Quakers Lane, Beyton to Mill Farm, Bradfield St. George. Rural district and parish boundaries indicate much of this route, being supplemented by hedgerows, footpaths and straight lengths of modern road. The alignment lies generally north-north-east from Bradfield St. Clare to Thurston. It reveals careful surveying, changing direction between straight sections at good sighting points. No deviation of more than  $10^{\circ}$  is made from the general alignment. Along the length examined, occasional linear scatters of flints were seen. Beyond Free Wood, Bradfield St. George, the road crosses open arable country. An ancient hedge follows the course of the road south of the Blackbourne crossing at TM/923596. This hedge terminates abruptly in an arable field. The road alignment continues to a high point in Holly Bush Lane, where a change of direction leads to an interesting section through an overgrown cutting *c.* 6m wide. In line with the cutting a stream has been hardened in its bed, to take a ford. A raised cartway, with very old tree stumps in its verges, continues the road southward.

To confirm the existence of the road under the arable field we approached Mr. Derek Meekings, who readily gave us permission to excavate. The site of the work is shown at S on the accompanying map (Fig. 77). A trench, 1m wide, was opened at right angles to the line of the road. The soil was brown loamy clay to a depth of 52cm, where a scatter of small chalk fragments peppered the loam. A row