

A BRONZE AGE FLAT AXE FROM THE NEW FOREST

By M. A. BRISBANE

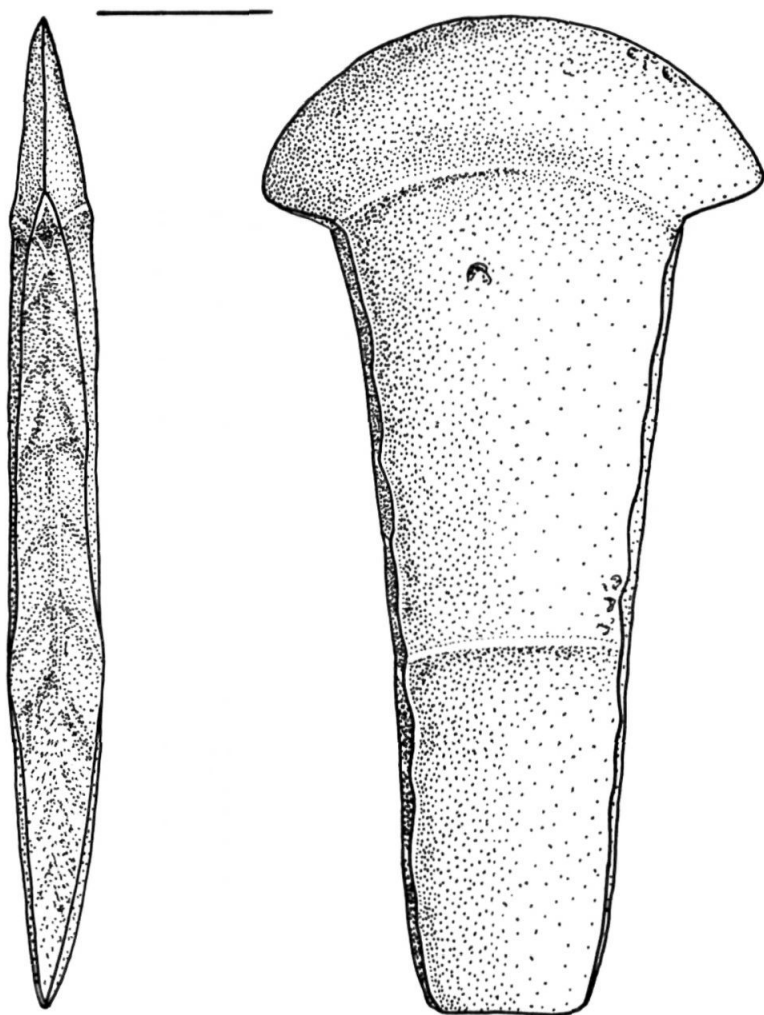


Fig. 1. Flat axe from the New Forest. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$. Drawn by Jane Timby.

In October 1977 a bronze flat axe (Fig. 1) was brought into Southampton City Museums by D. P. Spratt of 46 Botley Road, North Baddesley, Hampshire. The findspot is uncertain as the axe had been handed down to the

present owner by his grandfather, Mr. P. Spratt, who is believed to have found the axe somewhere near Lyndhurst between 1900 and 1920.

The axe is in very good condition, apart

from pitting caused during castings. It is unflanged and thin butted with straight sides that widen toward the blade end. It is 132 mm long and 64 mm wide at the blade. Although unflanged, the sides have been hammered removing all traces of any casting seam. These side hammerings form a faint herringbone design. The axe is an Irish/British type resembling the thin butted Early Bronze Age axe of Ballyvalley type (ApSimon 1969, 28–32). However, unlike the Ballyvalley type, this axe has a squared butt, its midrib bevel is towards the butt-end, and it has a semi-circular cutting edge. This last characteristic resembles the Irish Derryniggin type, (ApSimon 1969), while the decoration on the hammered edges and their proto-flange appearance is paralleled in some axes of the Migdale-Marnoch tradition (Britton 1963, 263–79). The axe closely resembles a decorated one from Ireland now in the Pitt Rivers Museum (P.R. 307. 2877; Museum No.

1884.119.83) which is included by Allen *et al.* (1970, No. 25) in their metallurgical report on Bronze Age implements in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

Acknowledgement

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REFERENCES

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