

From the Museum

by Miranda Green

The Peterborough Museum's collections have been enhanced this year by the acquisition of four prehistoric implements. All were chance finds picked up by members of the public, and three possess local provenances, although none has an exactly-recorded find-spot. The new accessions comprise three Bronze-Age items — a narrow-butted flat axe, a haft-flanged axe, and a socketed axe — and a late Neolithic/Early Bronze-Age polished discoidal flint knife (fig. 20).

The Early Bronze-Age narrow-butt flat axe was discovered in North Kyme, Lincolnshire (TF 152528). It measures 142mm in overall length. The axe belongs to Group B in flat-axe typology, and was perhaps made as early as 2000 B.C. (Case (1966), 142-152; Burgess (1974), 191), possibly part of a Beaker assemblage, although definitely of British or Irish manufacture.

The haft-flanged axe was discovered during construction work between the Ortons (TL 163969), in the bucket of a JCB. It is a small, parallel-sided axe, measuring 91mm in length, with deep flanges, a pronounced stop-ridge, and an expanded blade. The haft-flanged axe-type (similar to the palstave, but with flanges limited to the hafted portion) is concentrated in the eastern half of England, with centres in Yorkshire and the Cambridge-Norfolk Fens (Smith (1959), 173). The date of manufacture was probably around 1200 B.C.

The Late Bronze-Age socketed axe, and the discoidal flint knife are both surface finds from Farcet Fen (TL 203943). The axe is 110mm in length and is decorated on both main surfaces with three longitudinal ribs ending in raised knobs or pellets — a characteristic of axes belonging to the final phase of the Late Bronze Age (Langmaid (1976), 56).

The polished discoidal flint knife (fig. 20) is the cream of the year's accessions. It is virtually undamaged, finely worked, with a polished, bevelled edge. The knife measures 88mm at its widest point, and is of brown, translucent flint with a blue-grey patina. Its date is around 2000-1700 B.C. The knife belongs to Clark's Type I (Clark (1929), 41); its distribution-pattern, which focuses on East Anglia (*ibid.*, 48, 51-2), probably relates to the use of mined flint for this type of artifact.

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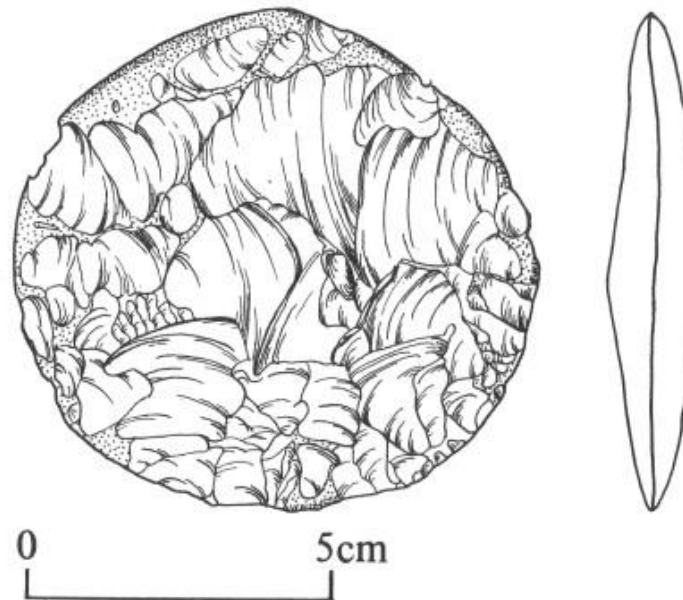


Fig 20 The discoidal polished flint knife from Farcet Fen