

## A bronze socketed axe from Gauldry, NE Fife

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A bronze socketed axe was found about the year 1900 near Gauldry, NE Fife, by a Mr J Mitchell of Woodend, but details of the find spot and circumstances of the find are not now known. The axe was retained in private hands until 1970,<sup>1</sup> when it was donated to Ceres Folk Museum;<sup>2</sup> no previous record of the axe has been traced.

The axe (fig 1) is complete, in very good condition, of excellent workmanship, and is now covered by a fine, dark green patina. It is 89 mm long, 63 mm wide at the cutting edge and 45 mm wide at the mouth. It has a square socket with rounded corners, a pronounced, slightly irregular, rounded mouth moulding and a flaring blade, decorated on front and back with four parallel ribs and pellets, which start just below the mouth moulding, as does the loop. The edges are gently rounded at the top, but become more angular towards the cutting edge. The casting ridge has been hammered down, though it is still quite pronounced at the mouth and on the side without the loop. The cutting edge does not show signs of use and is not now sharp. Vertical striations on the front and horizontal striations on the back of the blade do not appear to be due to wear.

The inner surface of the socket is rough, with minor traces of the haft surviving, and there are two inverted V-shaped raised mouldings, running from the middle of the broad sides of the socket to two horizontal parallel grooves at the base. The socketed axes in the NMAS and in Norwich Castle Museum were examined for comparison with the Gauldry axe,<sup>3</sup> and various internal arrangements were seen, but none of the examined axes has inverted V-shaped mouldings

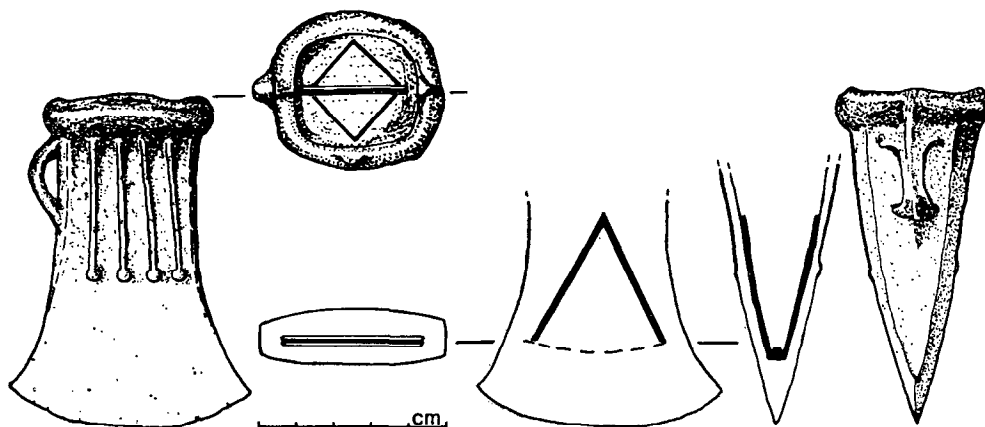


FIG 1 Socketed bronze axe from Gauldry, NE Fife

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