



NEW ZEALAND
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A GUIDE TO THE DESCRIPTION OF ADZES

MEMBERS OF A STUDY GROUP
OF AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION

Janet Davidson

Discussions on adzes at the extended A.G.M. of the Association were stimulating but inconclusive, and I felt it would be unwise to prepare a list of terms and important features, such as was suggested at the final session, without further discussion. A series of study groups on the description of adzes was therefore held by the Auckland University Archaeological Society, and the following guide is the result, not of individual work, but of the combined efforts of a number of people. I am very grateful to all those who helped by coming along and participating in the discussions.

The aim of the study groups was to survey the terminology and criteria of description employed in previous work on adzes and to select those most suitable for the present purpose. Seven people presented summaries covering the existing literature on adzes. With this background, details of description were discussed with reference to the Artifact Record Form and the resulting guide was tested and revised. At the final session more than sixty adzes were actually described.

TERMINOLOGY

An adze is described with the long axis vertical, the cutting edge (the sharp edge which actually does the cutting) downwards, and the bevel away from the observer. The surface towards the observer is then the front, the opposite surface the back, and the remaining surfaces the sides. (N.B. in adzes of triangular cross-section the front or the back is generally considered to be the narrow ridge which forms the apex of the triangle.)

The adze may be divided into two portions, the butt and the blade. The butt is that portion of the adze which is covered by the lashings when the adze is hafted. In some adzes the butt is distinguished in some way, in others it is not. Where it is distinguished this is often called a tang or grip, and such an adze may be referred to as tanged or gripped.

The upper extremity of the butt is called the poll.

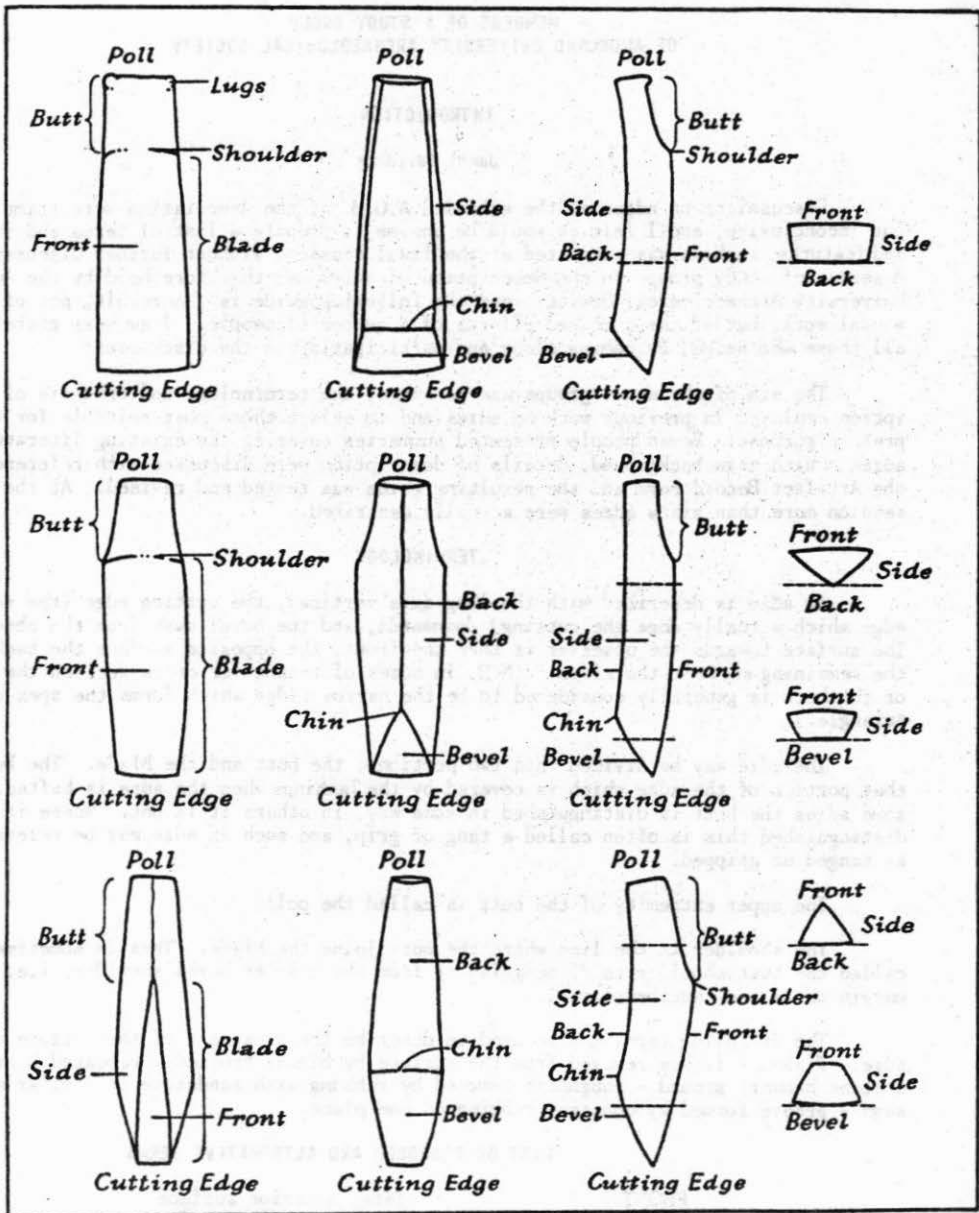
The shoulder is the line where the butt joins the blade. This is sometimes called the butt shoulder to distinguish it from the chin or bevel shoulder, i.e. the margin where back and bevel meet.

The following terms may be used to describe the treatment of the surface of the adze:- flaked - flakes removed from the surface by blows; bruised - repeated blows by a stone hammer; ground - roughness removed by rubbing with sandstone or similar material; sawn - groove formed by constant rubbing on one place.

LIST OF PROPOSED AND ALTERNATIVE TERMS

FRONT
BACK
SIDES

face, anterior surface
base, posterior surface
laterals, lateral surfaces



BUTT	grip
TANG	grip
LUG	projection
SHOULDER	butt shoulder
POLL	
CUTTING EDGE	edge, bit
BEVEL	
CHIN	bevel apex, bevel shoulder
FLAKED	including chipped, roughed out, etc.
BRUISED	including pecked, hammer-dressed, etc.
GROUND	including polished, smoothed, etc.
SAWN	

DESCRIPTION OF ADZE

State whether the adze is:

1. complete
2. broken (state what portion)
3. roughout only.

Wherever possible a drawing of the outline of the adze and of the profile (side view) of the adze should be given. This may be done by laying the adze on its back and tracing around it, and similarly by laying it on its side; or if preferred, free-hand drawings may be given.

MATERIAL

This should be specified only to the extent to which the recorder feels competent.

In all cases it should be possible to state whether the adze is of stone or some other material, such as shell or bone, which should be specified. If possible distinguish between greenstone, igneous (light or dark) and sedimentary or metamorphic. Those who are competent may distinguish further, e.g. bowenite, nephrite, andesite, basalt, greywacke, argillite.

MEASUREMENTS

The following measurements should be given and marked on the drawings. Wherever possible measurements should be in millimetres rather than in inches:

- Total length
- Length of blade when butt is differentiated
- Width of cutting edge
- Width of poll
- Width of all surfaces of cross-section
- Length of bevel (where differentiated from back)
- Any other measurements thought necessary.

N.B. For adzes of oval or circular cross-section, give thickness from front to back and from side to side, or circumference.

CROSS-SECTION

At least one cross-section must be taken, at the shoulder, or, on an adze where the shoulder is not defined, near the centre. If the cross-section appears to vary elsewhere, cross-sections should be given at these points also.

Indicate clearly on the outline drawing where the cross-sections are taken, and draw the cross-sections in an adjacent position as shown on the illustration. A quick way to draw a cross-section is to wrap a piece of stiff wire around the point where the cross-section is taken, then slip it off the adze, lay it on the paper and draw around it. It is normal to draw a cross-section with the front uppermost.

Below is given a list of cross-sections which may occur. It must be emphasized that these are ideals only, and intended only as a guide to description. In all cases a drawing is preferable.

- I. Quadrangular to triangular, (these form a continuous series). Choose that to which the cross-section is closest.



Triangular with apex to back.



Trapezoidal or quadrangular with back narrower than front.



Quadrangular or rectangular.



Trapezoidal or quadrangular with front narrower than back.



Triangular with apex to front.

- II. Other symmetrical forms.



Lozenge.



Diamond.



Oval.



Lenticular.



Plano-convex (semi-circle), back flattened.



Plano-convex, front flattened.



Circular.

- III. Asymmetrical forms.



(There are many other forms)

TREATMENT OF BUTT

Indicate into which of the following three groups the adze appears to fall and give details if possible for groups 2 and 3.

1. Butt undifferentiated, i.e. there is no distinction between the butt and blade portions of the adze.
2. Minor differentiation, e.g. rounding off of junction between front and sides (front edges); differential treatment of surface of butt and blade.
3. Major differentiation, e.g. reduction of front, reduction of sides, reduction of front and sides, reduction of front and front edges, raised shoulder. (N.B. This is a guide only - combinations of 2 and 3 are possible.)

TREATMENT OF SURFACE

Say if the surfaces are flaked, bruised or ground, or a combination of these, e.g. an adze may have front and bevel ground, back and sides bruised. Note any traces of sawing.

SPECIAL FEATURES

There are a number of special features which should be mentioned if they occur. Some are listed below as examples of the sort of thing that may occur. Anything that seems to be unusual or not covered elsewhere in the description should be drawn and described.

Some special features are: ornamented poll, e.g. 1 spiral, 2 spirals; 'eyebrows'; series of notches on side edges; and drilled hole at butt end, particularly on greenstone adzes.

OTHER FEATURES

The above are probably the most important in describing an adze, and should all be dealt with if possible. Below are mentioned other features worth noting if the recorder has sufficient time.

BEVEL: State if the surface of the bevel is straight, curved or convex. State if the bevel is continuous with the back, or if there is a line of demarcation or ridge where they meet.

CUTTING EDGE: State if the cutting edge is straight, curved, oblique. Note the condition of the cutting edge, e.g. sharp or blunt.

SHOULDER: If the butt is reduced on the front, note whether the line of the shoulder is straight or curved.

PROFILE: The drawing should be adequate, but if a drawing is not given the following should be noted:-

If the butt of the adze is not differentiated, state if the front and back of the adze are straight, concave, convex, or irregular longitudinally.

If the butt of the adze is differentiated, state if there is an angle between butt and blade on front; state if back is straight, concave, convex or irregular; and if front of blade is straight or convex.

Note also projections or ridges on shoulder butt or poll.

A GUIDE TO THE DESCRIPTION OF FISHHOOKS

C.D. SMART

The basic elements of the hook are shown, along with some descriptive terms, in fig. 1. There are two limbs, the SHANK limb and the POINT limb, connected at the bottom of the hook by the BEND. The two essential elements are the point TIP, on which the fish is caught (in most types of hook), and the shank HEAD, by which the hook is attached to the line.