



The Newsletter of the Sutton Hoo Society

SAXON

President: the Duke of Grafton KG

No. 25 / 1997

THE PONY BRIDLE IN MOUND 17 - PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES *a résumé of the Spring Lecture by Angela Care Evans*



The excavations by the Sutton Hoo Research Project, directed by Professor Martin Carver, ended on a high note in 1991 with the discovery of an undisturbed double grave beneath the ploughed out remains of mound 17. The two graves contained the burials of a young man in his early twenties and his 14 hands high pony. Although most of the burials in the cemetery that lay beneath mounds had been gutted by earlier investigations, the excavations between 1984 and 1991 established that they were without exception of high status and probably royal. To have been buried in the cemetery beneath a mound suggests that the dead man in mound 17 should be a member of the East Anglian dynasty who ruled the kingdom in the late 6th and early 7th centuries. However the possessions in his grave reflect little of the status of the finds from the robbed graves beneath mounds 2, 14 or 5. These contained fragments of drinking horns and cups, ivory, embroidered textiles, silver-faced caskets and gaming pieces, all of which are pointers to the exceptionally high status of the men and woman they accompanied. The young man's grave contained none of these luxury objects and apart from two sets of gear — his sword and sword belt and the pony tack — his possessions are unexceptional.

The sword and its garnet-inlaid sword-fittings are one pointer to the high status of the dead man, but the most telling element in the grave assemblage is the remains of the pony's tack which lay in the northwest corner of the grave pit apparently with a withy-bound tub placed over it. The tub survived only as a circular stain in the sand and its identification remains tentative. The tack lay in a broadly L-shaped deposit made up of a confusing mass of gilt-bronze and iron fittings. These were eventually lifted as a block and excavated in controlled conditions in the British Museum by the Department of Conservation. When all the fittings, including fragments of a ?saddle, had been removed from the block, radiography in the British Museum Research Laboratory identified a large and confusing mass of iron as a snaffle bit. It was immediately assumed that all the fittings belonged to a set of harness. It was also realised that the harness was exceptionally complicated with thirty-six metal strap fixings, links and buckles with tiny

The 'Prince's Burial' beneath mound 17 (left) contained the remains of a young man. In the northwest corner of the grave lies a mass of metal and organic material, which was removed as a block for excavation in the British Museum. It turned out to be the remains of a pony's tack.

(Photograph: Nigel MacBeth)

lengths of various strap sequences adhering to them. The assemblage suggested that the East Anglian élite were not the reluctant horsemen that some authors have tended to believe of the Anglo-Saxons, but were more than capable of devising and using harness and tack as sophisticated as that of any contemporary horse-riding culture.

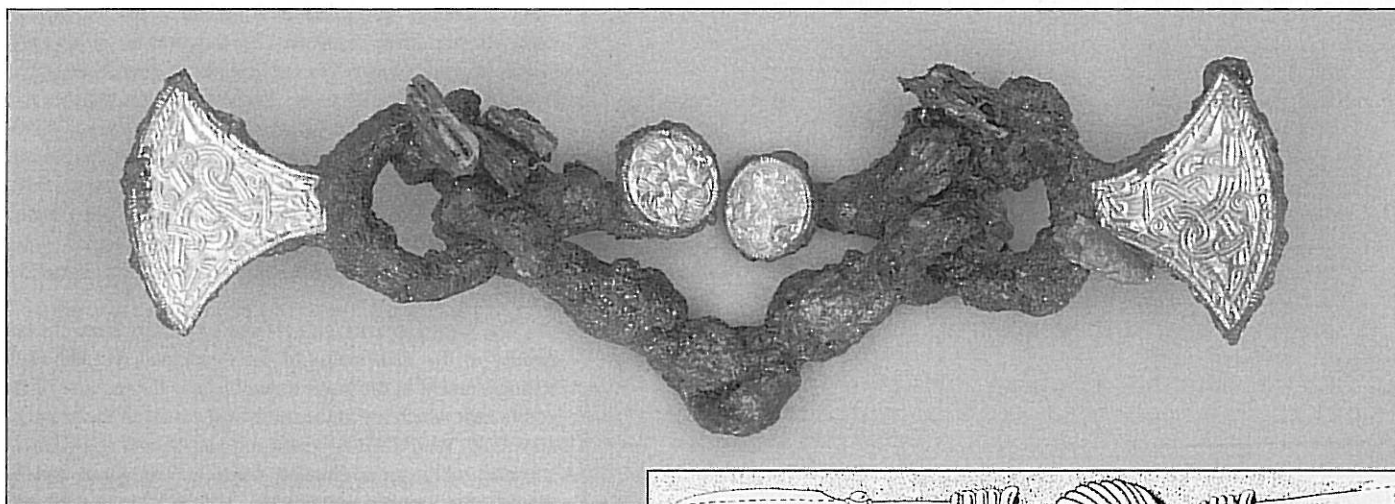
The assemblage included the iron snaffle bit (see photograph below) which has cheekpieces decorated with remarkably fine gilt-bronze interlace panels, three double strap links, a runner and three buckles, all of iron, clenched with bronze rivets with flat gilded heads and made *en suite* with the rein and cheek-strap fixings on the bit. Also included are a singleton gilt-bronze roundel and axe pendant decorated in superbly executed zoomorphic interlace, two pairs of gilt-bronze roundels with axe-shaped pendants all decorated in matching and highly sophisticated interlace, five pendant fixings in heavily gilded bronze and a three-way strap distributor of cast bronze. Decorated in different style are a matched pair of small strap links each with a bird-headed pendant in gilded silver sheet and two pendant axes overlaid with silver sheet. No other burial in late 6th- or early 7th-century Europe has produced horse gear that combines the many purely functional elements with the decorative quality of the assemblage in mound 17.

The way the tack lay in the ground suggests that the bridle may have been handed into the grave held by the bit and headband, with the

reins lying across the bearer's other arm - a logical way of offering up the dead pony's tack so that it would have been placed with dignity in the man's grave. The small space it occupies suggests that the longer straps may have been folded and the torque of the bit in relation to the adjacent fittings suggests either that it was twisted or inverted as it was placed in the ground or perhaps that it was placed over the saddle, which would almost inevitably have led to the distortion of the spatial relationships between the metal fittings as the organic materials of both the saddle and the tack decayed. Apart from this, even though the tack was probably ceremonially placed in the burial, the shovelling of sand into the deep grave pit would have shifted the relationship of the various fittings before the inevitable decay of the organic materials set in. In addition, the disintegration of the leather, except where it was in contact with protective metallic salts of the iron and bronze, has left the metal links and fittings isolated from each other. As anyone who has handled supple tack knows, if a bridle is handled carelessly, apparently coherent straps quickly become incoherent; without straps to link them, fittings alone can seem incomprehensible! Reassembly, then, of this large group of unattached metal fittings is not quite as simple as it might seem. It is of course ultimately an assumption that what was placed in the grave is a single set of pony gear, or indeed that it is *all* pony gear — amongst the fittings there is a handful that stand apart in terms of both scale and decoration and it is always

possible that they could be hunting or hawking equipment.

There are two strands to the reconstruction of complex archaeological assemblages. The primary source is the archaeological material itself, but any work is usually combined from the earliest stage of reconstruction with the collection of comparative material. In the case of the tack assemblage from mound 17, there is little directly comparable contemporary material for the group as a whole, although horse gear is frequently buried. This is especially true of Merovingian Europe and Scandinavia where there are several hundred instances of horse related objects from graves of varying status. Few, however, share the functional diversity of the Sutton Hoo fittings and it seems that most parallels for the functional links and bit type lie in Anglo-Saxon England. The style of the decorative elements, particularly the axe pendants, also seems to be more an insular phenomenon than a Continental, although axe-shaped elements associated with horse gear can be found in slightly earlier archaeological contexts in Eastern and Central Europe. The high quality interlace can be more readily paralleled in Anglo-Saxon England, particularly East Anglia, than elsewhere. However the overall style of the tack seems to derive ultimately from the cavalry gear of the later Roman Empire. Cavalry units were numerous in the Roman period and there is a large pool of iconographic sources for horse gear on tombstones and mosaics. Individual archaeological finds are prolific and there are



Above:
The iron snaffle bit with decorated cheekpieces.
(Photograph: British Museum)

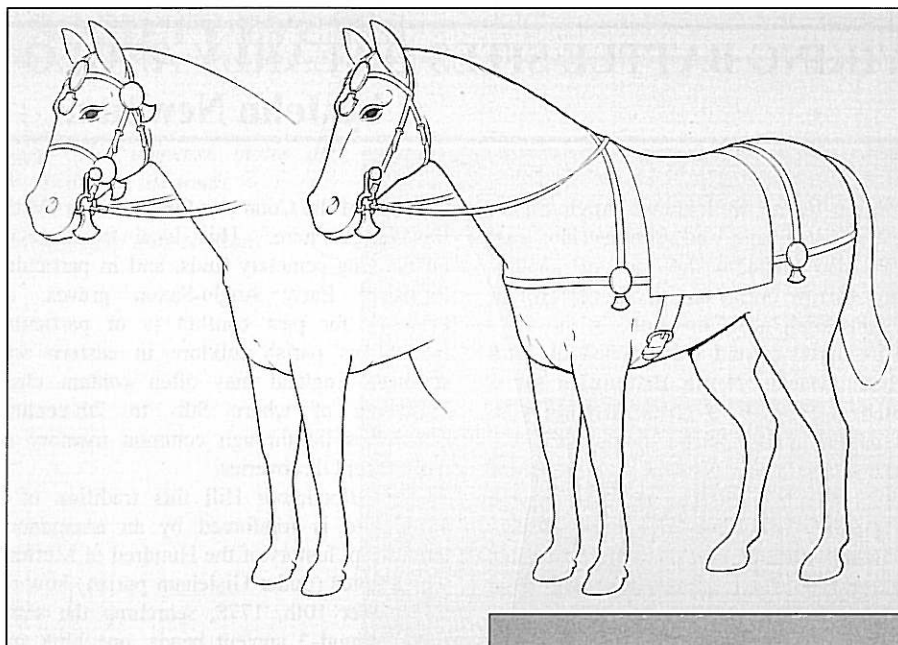


Right:
The fallen warrior scene from the helmet excavated in 1939 from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, which suggests possible configuration of strapwork. The scene was repeated on a number of panels, and this represents the sum of information compiled from the fragmentary remains. The gaps in the design are shown in dotted line. (Courtesy British Museum)

also manuals of horsemanship that provide an enormous amount of detailed information that makes compelling reading in the context of our tack. Modern reconstructions of Roman bit types and saddles, together with practical use in tactical riding based on Roman documentary sources, clearly show that the Sutton Hoo tack is, if anything, over complex and this may well suggest a ceremonial use for some of the fittings.

Although some of the most useful parallels lie in the equipment of Roman cavalry units, there are iconographic sources nearer home. The helmet in mound 1 is covered with decorative panels, one of which is a version of the fallen warrior theme (see diagram on previous page) This is seen in several different forms in both continental Europe and Scandinavia. Typically the Sutton Hoo panel shows a horseman riding down a fallen warrior who stabs up at the horse with his short sword. In the scene, the rider is shown holding a spear in his right hand and a shield in his left; the horse wears a bridle with a noseband and headpiece, the left rein is clearly shown taut as if hitched up to the saddle, which is indicated only by a thick girth strap. A knot on the haunch is evidence for breeching straps. The panels are all fragmentary and certain details are missing on the Sutton Hoo version but these can be restored from other versions of the same scene — roundels on the bridle for example. Although it is very tempting to use this scene as a basis for the reconstruction of the bridle, one must beware of placing too much reliance on the accuracy of the representation. All the scenes are highly stylised and share similar details and discrepancies as though the craftsmen are copying a well known formula. However it is possible to use the fallen warrior panel in a general way as a pointer to what style of horse-gear may have been extant in Anglo-Saxon England.

When the harness assemblage was first identified, it was optimistically supposed that putting it back into some sort of order would be little more than mere formality, particularly as the grave was undisturbed and a closed context where it could be accepted that the fittings share a logical relationship to each other. In 1993, the fittings were put on temporary display in the British Museum and at that stage a preliminary reconstruction showing two possibilities for the placing of the major pieces was put forward (above right). Since then research on the fragmentary leather remains has shown that neither option is easy to sustain because of differences in the strap dimensions. If one accepts that the elements do belong to a functional harness, then each fitting necessarily has to interact with its fellows, and while on comparative grounds it is possible to make intellectual choices about certain elements — the principal roundel and its axe pendant (photograph, above right) should go on the brow for example — it goes without saying that strap widths and thicknesses between connecting pairs of metal fittings must be consistent with each other. This puts the would-be reconstructor up against a seemingly impossible hurdle: the straps, which admittedly survive only in association with the metal fittings, are not wholly consistent with a coherent set of tack. We know now that there are two principal sets of straps

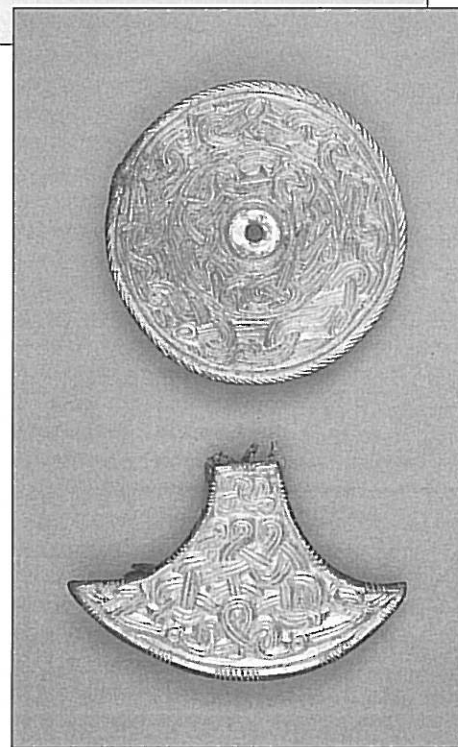


Above:

Two early suggested reconstructions for the bridle and tack found with the Mound 17 burial. Neither of these is now considered sustainable from the evidence. (Courtesy British Museum)

Right:

The principal roundel and its axe pendant which most probably fitted on the brow band of the bridle. (Photograph: British Museum)



with widths of 20/21mm and 12/13mm. To the former belong the rein and cheekpiece fixings on the bit, the strap links and buckles decorated *en-suite* with them and one pair of gilt-bronze roundels and their axe pendants. To the narrower strap system belong the principal roundel with its axe pendant, the second pair of roundels and axe pendants, the five gilt-bronze pendant fixings and probably the three-way distributor although no leather remains associated with it.

The problems that continue to confront us are simple but fundamental to understanding the assemblage and they can be condensed into two questions: one, do these two sets of straps belong together or do they belong to two separate suites of harness and two, how do the straps run between the metal fixings when the crucial widths and thicknesses are not consistent? It is possible that we may never quite resolve these problems which take on larger proportions the more one tries to juggle the systems. We may simply have to be content to offer alternatives. This is not perhaps unreasonable given the extraordinary variety of harness styles that we know existed throughout the Roman period and well into the misnamed Dark Ages.

Angela Evans is a member of the Dept. of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum, editor of Volume 3 of 'The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial', and author of the book, 'The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial'. Having excavated at Sutton Hoo in the late 1960s, she returned to supervise the excavation of a number of the interventions in the recent campaign. She is responsible for the curation of the Sutton Hoo material in the British Museum

*Members may be interested to know that a report on the skeleton of the pony which lay in the adjacent grave under Mound 17 has been published in a French archaeological journal by Terry O'Connor of Bradford University, Dept. of Archaeological Science: O'Connor, T.P. 'A Horse Skeleton from Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, UK' *Archaeozoologia* Vol. VII pt 1 pp.29-37.*

See also the back page of this edition

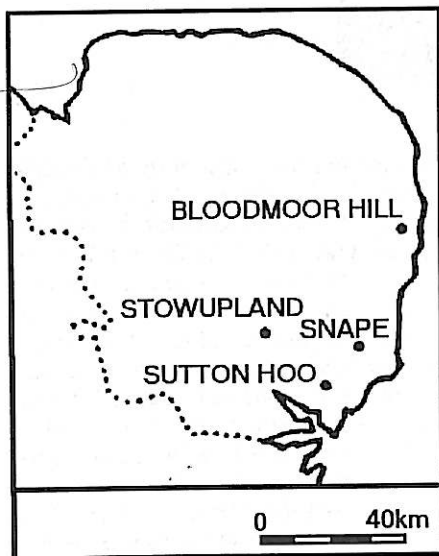
VIKING BATTLE SITES OR EARLY ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERIES?

by John Newman

In addition to the well known Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Snape and Sutton Hoo, east Suffolk also contains the site of another wealthy barrow burial on Bloodmoor Hill in Gisleham parish, near Lowestoft.

This burial mound was opened in 1758 and both Douglas' *Nenia Britannica (or a Sepulchral History of Great Britain)* of 1793 and the journal *Archaeologia*, for 1847, relate how a gold coin pendant of the Emperor AVITVS (455 AD) and a pendant set with an onyx intaglio in typical 7th-century mounts were found in the barrow. Douglas also notes the discovery of an engraved crystal from Bloodmoor Hill but it is not clear if this latter find is from the same barrow.

However, relatively little effort has been made to investigate other sources and it is therefore opportune that a recent archaeological evaluation of the area included a map and documentary search. The evaluation, which included trial trenching of a proposed residential development area on the eastern flank of Bloodmoor Hill, was funded by the prospective developers, J.S.Bloor Ltd. While archaeological fieldwork was restricted to the proposed development site, the map and document search took a broader remit and covered all of Bloodmoor Hill including the suspected cemetery area.



East Anglia; sites mentioned in the text

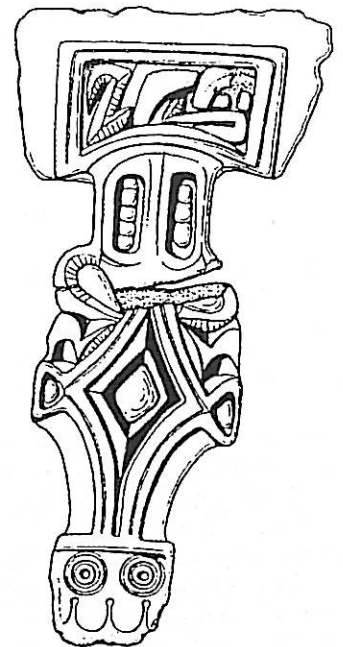
The first note concerning the gold pendants from Bloodmoor Hill comes in the *Minute Book of the Society of Antiquaries of London* for January, 1757 to May, 1762, where the entry for 2nd April, 1761, relates how 'Mr Duane presented to the Society Engravings of two curious Medals or coins.' One of these being the gold coin pendant of AVITVS, which has more recently been re-identified as a Visigothic coin of devolved Justinian type by Rigold in his review of Sutton Hoo period coin finds from England. The entry also notes about the site that 'The

tradition of the County is that a bloody Battle was fought here.' This local tradition of interpreting cemetery finds, and in particular furnished Early Anglo-Saxon graves, as evidence for past conflict is of particular interest as parish folklore in eastern and southern England may often contain clear indicators of where 5th- to 7th-century cemeteries lie through common memory of more recent discoveries.

For Bloodmoor Hill this tradition of a battle site is reinforced by an anonymous manuscript history of the Hundred of Mutford which notes (under Gisleham parish) how on 'November 10th, 1778, searching the same field I found 3 ancient beads, one blue and white striped, the others plain red and yellow, Mr Davidson at the same time found 19 of which 1 glass, 2 or 3 amber, some double, some of different colours and sizes.' The history then adds 'In a field near Barnby (corrected to Gisleham) called Bloodmere Field have been found many ancient beads, spears etc.' Finally Suckling, in his *History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk* of 1846, notes 'A mound of earth at the eastern extremity of the parish, near Parkfield, retains the name of Bloodmoor Hill and believed to mark the site of a battle-field. A Mr Downing, in sinking a pit, about the year 1780, at this spot, came upon the remains of armour, spears, horse bits and broken stirrup irons. Mr Reynolds, then the Rector of Gisleham stopped further search and insisted on their being reburied, where they now probably lie.' On Bloodmoor Hill such an account can only be interpreted as the discovery of an Early Anglo-Saxon folk cemetery. Suckling supports the Mutford Hundred history account with reference to spears and adds a list which indicates the former presence of furnished male burials. The Hundred history also implies the discovery of female burials with its reference to glass and amber beads while recent metal detector finds from Bloodmoor Hill have included part of a gold brooch set with garnets and blue glass, a plain gold pendant and fragments of cruciform brooches. The latter finds being typical 6th-century grave finds while the former, gold finds are of 7th-century date and indicate further high status burials on the site.

The documentary search for the Bloodmoor Hill area has therefore revealed valuable additional information on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery site. That an unknown number of burials were excavated in the 18th century is perhaps unfortunate as we have no record of grave finds or structure. However, it is now clear that a folk cemetery of at least 6th-century date lay close to the documented 7th-century barrow that was opened in 1758 and in this respect Bloodmoor Hill has more in common with Snape with its mix of flat and barrow burials, as recently investigated by William Filmer-Sankey, than with Sutton

Hoo. The reference to Bloodmoor Hill as a battle-field by Duane in his report to the Society of Antiquaries and by Suckling in his county history is also worthy of note as the accidental discovery of Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the Post-Medieval period has often been recorded in local memory as a 'battle site' in other parts of the country. The presence of human remains, spears and shield bosses, which are typical of 5th- to 7th-century male inhumations, giving rise to conflated stories of past confrontation. This assumed conflict often being given a Viking date.



Small Copper Alloy Square-Headed brooch from Stowupland

Similarly an area in Stowupland parish, near Stowmarket, has a long tradition as a 'Viking battle site'. The basis for this story again appears to be the accidental discovery of an Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery in the 18th or 19th century and recent metal detector finds from the site have included a small square-headed brooch and fragments of cruciform brooches. These finds are best interpreted as evidence for agricultural work disturbing graves of 6th-century date. Local tales of Viking and other ancient battle-fields are therefore always worthy of note as some past discovery is likely to have sparked off such fragments of parish history and myth.

John Newman is an archaeological field officer, working for Suffolk County Council, and represents the County Archaeological Unit on the Sutton Hoo Society committee. The site evaluation referred to was undertaken in 1995.

SOCIETY EVENTS

Society Visit to Thetford, Ely and Bury St Edmunds by Sam Newton

The 1996 Society outing took place in glorious sunshine on Sunday 15th September. The first visit of the day was to Thetford, one of East Anglia's major towns in the later Anglo-Saxon period. Here we scaled the immense Norman motte of Castle Hill, which, at 81 feet high, is the second largest man-made mound in the country. It was probably built soon after the Conquest and remained a baronial stronghold until it was confiscated by Henry II in 1157, who had its defences dismantled in 1173. The great motte stands in the angle of a bailey with unusually large double ramparts surviving to the north and east. Excavations have suggested that it is unlikely that these continued round into the flood-plain to the south, where the Rivers Thet and Little Ouse run. Indeed, the bailey appears to have been formed from the earthworks of an Iron Age promontory-fortress which ran in a curve to the north of the rivers, with the latter forming the southern defences.

This Iron Age fortress appears to have been built to control the fords which carry the ancient Icknield Way over the Little Ouse valley at this point. Indeed, these crossings appear to have given Thetford its name - from the Old English *þeod-ford*, 'people's ford'. Before the Normans re-used these earthworks, they may have provided the winter base for the 'great army' of Danes which occupied Thetford in 869, to which the **Anglo-Saxon Chronicle** refers. It was this army, led by the Ragnarrssons, which defeated and killed the famous East Anglian king Edmund on November 20th of that year.

Thetford was also a target for later Danish invasions. The town was attacked and burnt by Sweyn Forkbeard in 1004 as part of his campaign of retribution after the massacres of Danes on St Brice's Day, 13th November, 1002. As he was returning to his fleet at Norwich, Sweyn was met by the East Anglian Ealdorman Ulfcytel and his army on Wretham Heath to the north of the town. A hard battle followed and, although he could not prevent the Danes from getting back their ships, Ulfcytel earned the greatest respect from his opponents for his actions that day, as the **Anglo-Saxon Chronicle** tells us:

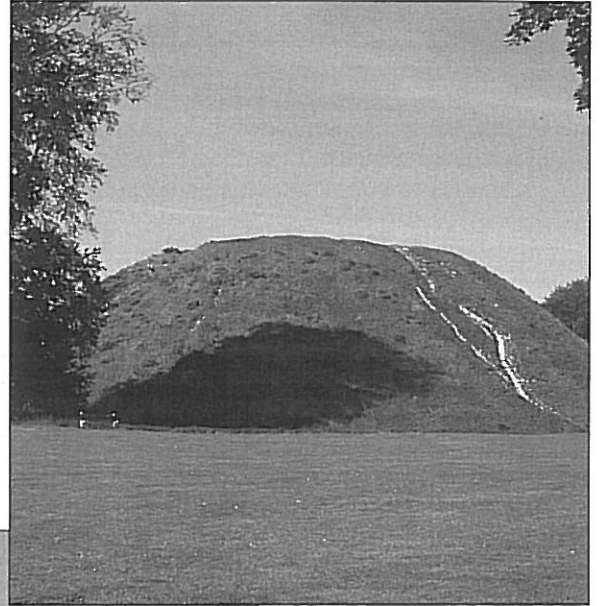
Swa hi sylfe sædon, þæt hi næfre wyrсан hand plegan on Angelcynne ne gemitton þonne Ulfcytel him to brohte.

'So they themselves said, that they never met with worse hand-play [i.e. battle-skill] among the English than Ulfcytel brought to them.'

Ulfcytel thus came to be nicknamed Snillingr [perhaps 'Valiant'] in Scandinavian sources and East Anglia came to be known as 'Ulfcytel's Land'. Ulfcytel fought another great battle against the Danes near Thetford

Right: The immense motte at Thetford from the south.

(Photograph: Sam Newton)



Left: Fredric Newton pointing out the spot in the field (left middle distance) where the Mildenhall Treasure was discovered.

(Photograph: Sam Newton)

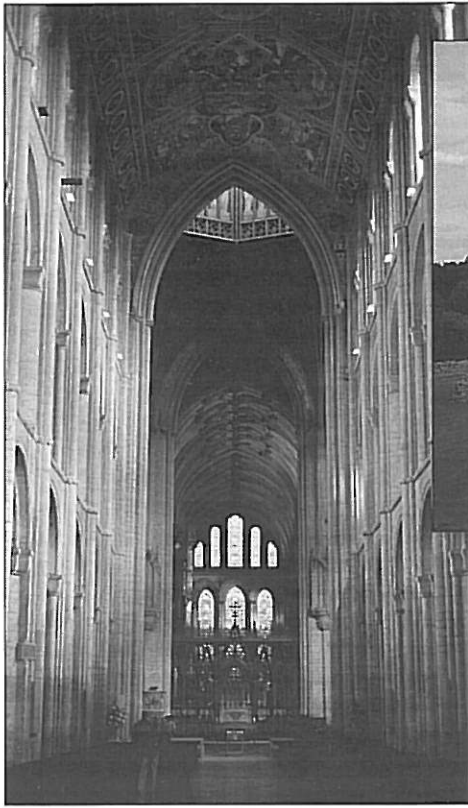
on 5th May, 1010. This was the famous Battle of Ringmere, which is described in the **Anglo-Saxon Chronicle** and in Old Norse sagas. This battle appears to have taken place to the south of the town, with the Danes advancing from Ipswich under the leadership of Sweyn's ally, Thorkell the Tall. The site was probably at the former meeting place now called Rymer Point. Ulfcytel eventually fell fighting against his old enemies the Danes at the Battle of Assendun in 1016, probably Ashdon near Hadstock in north-west Essex, which the Society visited in 1994. (see **SAXON 21**, 1994)

Our second visit was to the Fison's Way Industrial Estate which is built over part of Gallow's Hill to the north of the town. Between here and the Thetford bypass stood an important Late Iron Age Icenic religious site. This great rectangular sanctuary was originally identified from the air. Excavations in 1981 showed that during the time of the famous Icenic queen Boudicca this high-status site was enclosed by ditches, banks, and up to nine rows of closely spaced oak uprights, perhaps with branches still on them, creating what one archaeologist described as 'an artificial oak grove' (for more on this fascinating site, see Tony Gregory **Excavations in Fison Way Thetford, 1980-**

1982, East Anglian Archaeology 53 [Norfolk Museums Service 1991]). A Romano-Celtic altar probably later stood a little to south, for it was here that in 1979 the Thetford Treasure was discovered by a free-lance metal detector. This very rich hoard dates from the second half of the 4th century and includes gold and silver bracelets, necklaces, pendants, and rings, many of which are bejewelled with precious stones. Also found were 33 silver spoons, many of which bear inscriptions to the woodland fertility god Faunus.

We then embarked for Ely, pausing on the way to view the field adjacent to Mildenhall Airfield where another late Roman hoard was discovered by ploughing in 1942. The Mildenhall Treasure includes silver plates, the largest over 60 cms in diameter and weighing more than 8 kgs. It is beautifully decorated with a heavily beaded rim and finely engraved Bacchanalian figures in relief dancing around a central mask of the sea-god Neptune.

After lunch in Ely we had a guided tour of Ely Cathedral. This medieval architectural wonder was built in honour of St Æþelðryþ (Etheldreda, Audry), the most famous daughter of King Rædwald's nephew Anna. Æþelðryþ, Northumbrian queen and Ely's first Abbess, had founded the original Abbey in



Above: Inside Ely Cathedral looking along the length of the nave towards the east end where the focal shrine of St Edeldreda stood. (Photograph: Sam Newton).

673. When she died on 23rd June, 679, she was buried here and her Shrine became a place of veneration for pilgrims. She was succeeded as Abbess by her sister, St Seaxburh, queen of Kent, then by Seaxburh's daughter, St Eormenhilda, and then Eormenhilda's daughter, St Wærburh, all of whom were buried at Ely. Other famous

burials at Ely include St Æpelðryþ's step-sister, St Wihtburh, Abbess of Dereham, who died in 743, and Ealdorman Byrhtnoð, the heroic English leader killed at the Battle of Maldon in 991.

Following the refoundation of Ely under King Edgar in 970, the later Abbots of Ely wielded immense power on behalf of St Æpelðryþ over parts of East Anglia and the Fens. This included the Five and a Half Hundreds of Wicklaw in south-eastern Suffolk, the ancient territory with Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo close to its centre, which appears to derive from the old heartland of the Wuffing kingdom.

Our last visit of the day, to Bury St Edmunds, provided a striking contrast to the glories of Ely. Ely had escaped ruin after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539 because it had become an episcopal cathedral in 1109, unlike the Abbey of St Edmund at Bury. Here, bare, partly built-over ruins are all that is left of what was once one of the

Left: A contrasting view from the equivalent position in the ruins of the Abbey of St Edmund.

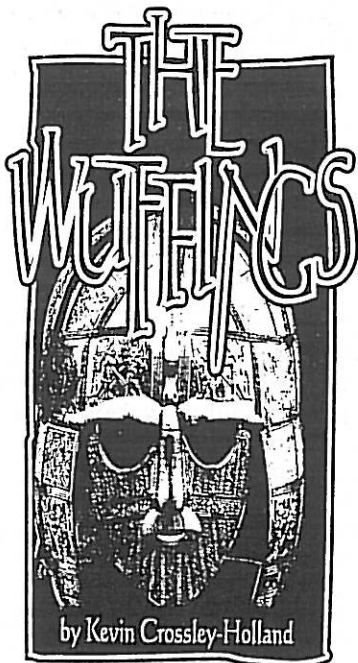
(Photograph: Sam Newton)

richest Abbeys in England, originally founded c. 633 by the first East Anglian martyr-king, Sigeberht, and later the burial-place of the last East Anglian martyr-king, Edmund, who was probably killed in battle, or shortly after, near Thetford by Ivarr Ragnarsson on 20th November 869. It was in Edmund's honour that the

Abbey later flourished as he became one of England's greatest national saints. On his behalf the Abbots ruled vast estates, including the Eight and a Half Hundreds of Thingoe, another ancient territory, which survived as the administrative unit of West Suffolk until 1974. We followed in the footsteps of countless medieval pilgrims before us towards the eastern end of the Abbey, at the heart of which was St Edmund's Shrine, where the probably mummified body of the last of the Wuffings lay exerting his curiously enduring posthumous power for so long. Close by we noted the positions of the adjacent Shrines of St Botolf of Iken, who died June 17th 680, and of St Jurmin, the Wuffing prince killed with his father Anna at the Battle of Bulcamp in 654.

Thanks are again due to Dr Sam Newton and Andrew Lovejoy for their combined efforts in putting together the day's events.

THE WUFFINGS ARE COMING!



Next summer the spirit of Rædwald will rise again and tread the sandy soil of East Suffolk. From 10th-27th July 1997, Eastern Angles, the region's very own theatre company is staging a remarkable event, *The Wuffings*. After converting Notcutt's despatch warehouse outside Wickham Market into a 400 seater theatre, the company will present a new play, commissioned from Kevin Crossley-Holland, based on the last days of Rædwald.

You may recall their small touring production about the finding of the Sutton Hoo treasure, *The Sutton Hoo Mob* (see SAXON 19 & 20). This time they are promising something very different — a spectacular production in a specially designed environment, involving the use of fire and water, a large cast and even larger setting with live music, picnic sites and exhibition areas, and education work for all ages. All this will surround the absorbing drama that must have heralded the event

leading up to the famous ship-burial in Mound 1.

The Society is in close contact with Eastern Angles regarding the production, and we shall be supporting their education work and organising extra site tours for audience groups.

For further details contact: Eastern Angles, Sir John Mills Theatre, Gatacre Road., IPSWICH IP1 2LQ. Tel: 01473 218202; or Fax: 01473 250954

SOCIETY REPORTS

Guiding and Membership 1996

The site was visited this season by nearly 1400 adults and 240 children, which is almost a 9% increase over last year, and brings us close to the visitor levels in 1993. As usual a number of booked tours visited, including five school groups. One of these, Rickmansworth PNEU School made the visit as part of a school trip to the area, staying at the Youth Hostel nearby at Blaxhall. (*Other school groups might like to consider this as a possible focus for visits to Sutton Hoo incorporating a short visit to a 'contrasting' region, so covering aspects of National Curriculum history and geography*). We were also delighted to welcome once more a party from the University of Gotenburg in Sweden.

Society membership now stands at 312 (20 of whom are overseas members).

Bequest

The Society was sad to receive the news of the death of one of our long-standing life members, **Mr H Russel Hill**. He has been very generous to the Society in leaving us a bequest of £1000. The Committee are considering how best to use this money. We feel that it should perhaps be put towards a specific project rather than used up in general expenditure

Dolphin Swimmer

In September members of the Committee were invited to the launch of a new novel. **Dolphin Swimmer** was written by Gerard Langelier, one of our American members. The story, set in Sutton Hoo country in the time of the Wuffings, was inspired by the coastal landscape of south-east Suffolk. Gerard and his wife Peggy came over to England for the launch, and we were delighted to make their acquaintance once more. We were treated to some short dramatic readings from the book, ably undertaken by two former committee members — Mike Weaver and Mark Mitchels, and we hope the book will be a great success.

New Publication

Over a year ago the Society decided to publish a leaflet, aimed at a young audience, explaining something of the process of archaeology, and the way in which the finds from Sutton Hoo have stimulated archaeologists to ask new questions about this important site. We applied to a number of bodies for funding, and were pleased to be supported in the venture by the Osla Henniker-Major Charitable Trust, The Ipswich Institute and BT Laboratories Staff Charity Fund. As a result we were able to cover the production costs of the full-colour leaflet. Although aimed at children in the 7-12 yrs age range, it is proving equally popular with adults — providing as it does colour photographs of the recent excavations. As part of the funding agreement we have circulated all Suffolk schools with copies of the leaflet. We would like to thank the Suffolk Education Authority Advisory team for allowing us to use the County mailing system to schools in the maintained sector. The leaflet is being sold for 40p on the site, and is also being sold through other outlets such as Ipswich Museum, Woodbridge Museum, and West Stow Anglo-Saxon village near Bury St Edmunds. The income generated will enable the Society to re-print if necessary.

Anglo-Saxon Ships: Experimental Archaeology

In **SAXON 23** we gave notice that an article by Edwin and Joyce Gifford on the results of their sailing experiments would be appearing in **Mariner's Mirror**. We can now give you the exact reference:

'The Sailing performance of Anglo-Saxon ships as derived from the building and trials of half-scale models of the Sutton Hoo and Graveney ship finds' **Mariner's Mirror** Vol.82 No.2 May 1996 pp. 131-153.

All being well, Edwin and Joyce will be returning to the Deben in the summer with *Sæ Wylfing* (half-scale replica of the mound 1 ship) in association with the Eastern Angles forthcoming production *The Wuffings*. More details in the next issue.

Extra Reading

Committee member Stewart Salmond has been putting together a list of paperbacks which may be of interest to members. Here is a small selection:

The origins of Suffolk

Peter Warner

(Manchester University Press 1996 241pp £14.99)

Coverage of the history and archaeology of the county from the first farmers to the coming of the Normans. Includes references to the Mildenhall and Hoxne treasures; Sutton Hoo, and explores Ipswich, England's earliest Anglo-Saxon town.

This is a companion volume to:

The origins of Norfolk

Tom Williamson

(Manchester University Press 1993 208pp £14.99)

Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest

H. R. Loyn

(Longman 2nd edition 1991 433pp £17.99)

An expanded and updated account of the social and economic developments in Anglo-Saxon England from the first settlements to the immediate aftermath of the Norman Conquest.

The Golden Age of Northumbria

Jane Hawkes

(Sandhill 1996 125pp £9.95)

Written to accompany last summer's exhibition 'Treasures from the Lost Kingdom of Northumbria' in Newcastle. This is a celebration of the achievements of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria in the 7th and 8th centuries, which became one of the greatest intellectual centres and a dynamic powerhouse of artistic creation in the early medieval world.

SUTTON HOO AND THE NATIONAL TRUST: PROGRESS SO FAR

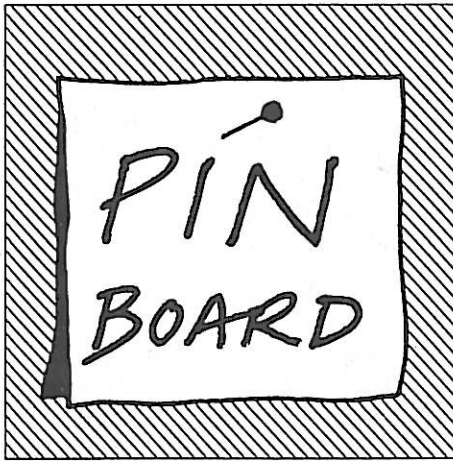
Consideration by the Heritage Lottery Commission of the plans submitted by the National Trust last May for the development of Sutton Hoo has been delayed. The Trust has been asked to submit new proposals which combine the development of the Coach House into a visitor centre, and Sutton Hoo House into a centre for residential educational courses. Previously each was to have been a

submitted as a separate project.

At the time of writing, the National Trust are considering plans put forward by two educational bodies, University College Suffolk (formerly Suffolk College) and the Field Studies Council, who have both expressed interest in running Sutton Hoo House as an educational centre.

The result is that development of the site

has also been put back, and is unlikely to happen before the end of the 1997 Season. For the Society this means that we shall be hosting visitors for the 1997 Season as in the past. If all goes to plan, the National Trust will, we hope, take over the site during 1997, and will be in a position to renovate the buildings and create the displays in the visitor centre ready for the 1998 season.



DIARY

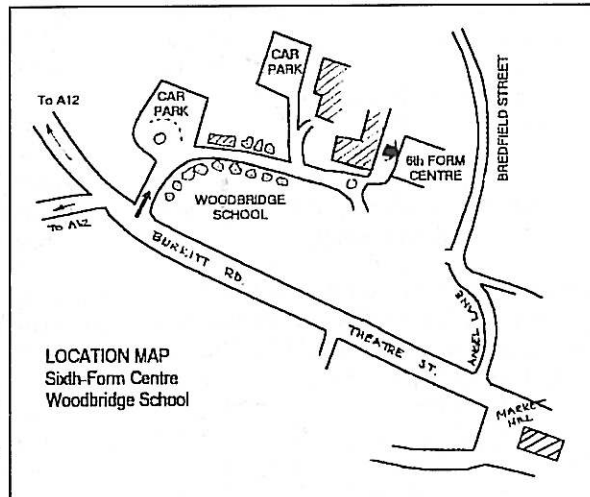
SUTTON HOO SOCIETY AGM

The next **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Friday 21st February 1997** in the **Sixth Form Centre at Woodbridge School, Burkitt Road, Woodbridge at 7.30pm** (see location map).

The business meeting will be followed by a lecture by **Martin Carver**, Director of the Sutton Hoo Project. He will present a preliminary analysis of the results of the excavation, *'Sutton Hoo complete — what's new and how shall we publish it?'*

AGENDA

- Apologies
- Minutes of the last AGM
- Reports and Accounts
- Election of Auditors
- Election of Committee
- Proposal: to increase subscriptions from January 1998:
Ordinary members: to £7.50
Life members: to £75
Overseas members: to £10
Juniors (under 18) to £5
- Proposal: to introduce a joint membership subscription of £12



STOP PRESS: Part of University College Suffolk's contribution to SET97 is a week of lectures on Science in Archaeology, including one by **Terry O'Connor** on **'The Sutton Hoo Horse and other Anglo-Saxon Bones'**. The SET97 lectures take place in the week beginning 17th March 1997.

For details contact: The School of Science, University College Suffolk, Suffolk College, Rope Walk, IPSWICH. IP4 1LT.

SPRING LECTURE

This year's lecture will take place at **St. John's Hall, St John's Street, Woodbridge on Wednesday 5th March at 7.30pm**. Andrew Reynolds from the Institute of Archaeology in London will present a lecture based on his recent research entitled **'Sutton Hoo and the archaeology of execution in Anglo-Saxon England'**.

1997 SEASON

The site will open on **Saturday 29th March** (Easter Saturday), and will continue to be open on weekend and Bank Holiday afternoons until **Sunday 14th September 1996**. Guided tours will begin at approximately 2pm and 3pm. Any variation to this pattern will be published in the next issue of **SAXON**, and will be circulated to local information centres. Entrance charges have been raised to £2 for adults and £1 for children.

THE WUFFINGS ARE COMING!

SEE SOCIETY EVENTS (inside back page) FOR MORE DETAILS - WE THINK YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks again to our volunteer guides and helpers for their sterling work through another long hot summer. Thanks also to Peter Berry for continuing to keep the site in good order, and for putting up with the vagaries of the mower.

Colin Moore, who has been our Honorary Treasurer for five years has taken early retirement from the NatWest Bank in Woodbridge. His role as manager has been taken over by Paul Duffy, who is also taking over as Hon. Treasurer to the Society. We would like to thank Colin for his dedication to the Society over the past years. Colin is a member in his own right, and has supported the Society in an extremely positive way, well beyond the requirements of the job. We are very grateful for his support.

APPEALS

GUIDES

We still need guides to spread the load so if you have an interest in the site and its history, and are able to communicate the Sutton Hoo story effectively in a way that brings the site to life, contact Andrew Lovejoy (address below). We would also welcome more volunteers to take round school parties. Most of our school parties consist of children in the age-range 7 - 11, who are studying the Anglo-Saxons as part of their history syllabus. Some local schools study the site as a local history topic. Ideally we would like you to have a teaching background for this job.

HELPERS

We need volunteers for the ticket hut taking ticket money and selling books, postcards etc. We shall be needing extra help in July when we shall be hosting the Eastern Angles Theatre group visits. If you feel you can help, then please get in touch with Andrew Lovejoy.

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A A Lovejoy, Membership and Guides Secretary, 28, Pembroke Road, Framlingham, Suffolk IP13 9HA

Who's Who — Sutton Hoo Society Committee Members

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Membership & Site Guides Secretary: Andrew Lovejoy Publicity: Peter Rooley Publications: Rosemary Hoppitt
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