

surrounds an inner lozenge and overlaps the flanking triangles. The inlay here is copper. Since this motif also occurs on Anglo-Saxon material at this period, it is impossible to determine its origin in England, Scandinavia or central Europe.⁵³ Finally, the inlaid pattern on the sword from Al'met'evo may be interpreted as a badly worked zig-zag trellis pattern,⁵⁴ rather than the running animal suggested by Kirpichnikov.⁵⁵ Animal motifs are in any case rare on swords of this period, although they do become more common after c. 1100.

The sword from the Lea at Hertford, in short, falls into a sub-group of 10th and 11th-century Viking swords, decorated in a way found throughout Europe, although itself of a more easterly distribution. The possibility that central European mercenaries were present in Viking or Saxon armies should not be rejected. There are indeed connexions between the Anglo-Saxons and central Europe—for example, the son of Edmund Ironside, the ill-fated Edward Atheling, who died mysteriously in England in 1057, had spent most of his life as an exile in the area. Also, the *Ulfberht* and *Ingelri* swords found in England are of continental German origin, not Viking. A more definite interpretation, however, must await future work on the provenance and distribution of the work of each smith.

All that can be said at present is that the Hertford sword confirms the name *Leut* —, with various bungled suffixes,⁵⁶ as that of a swordsmith whose products were very widely dispersed. Indeed, it may well be that we know today as much—or as little—about the name as that smith himself.

B. D. ADAMS

A BOAT BURIAL FROM COUNTY ANTRIM

There is a possibly Viking ship burial from Ballywillin, co. Antrim, which was omitted from Shetelig's list of those known from the British Isles.⁵⁷ Some of the sixteen ship burials quoted by him are of doubtful authenticity⁵⁸. This one, however, is certainly a buried ship, though its contents and age are unknown.

The following description is taken from a newscutting in one of the notebooks of T. Crofton Croker:⁵⁹

"*Glenvale August 25th.*⁶⁰ The remains of a vessel were lately discovered in Ballywilliam Bog⁶¹ about a mile from Portrush in the liberties of Coleraine. From the examination of the size and form of the ribs and boards, it has been conjectured that she carried at least 40 or 50 tons. Notwithstanding the injuries of time, the outside boards still measure an inch and a quarter in thickness; of them, however, only small pieces could be discovered. Some of the ribs were 8 inches broad, 5 inches deep and 7 to 8 feet long. Many of them exceeded this measurement considerably. Neither the keel nor the mast was

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.* in note 49, 180 n.

⁵⁵ *Op. cit.* in note 48, 39.

⁵⁶ See also H. R. E. Davidson, *The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1962), 45.

⁵⁷ A. W. Brogger and H. Shetelig, *The Viking Ships* (Oslo, 1954), 95.

⁵⁸ G. Bersu and D. M. Wilson, *Three Viking Graves in the Isle of Man* (Soc. Med. Archaeol., monograph series, no. 2, 1966), 92.

⁵⁹ The present account derives from Joly Mss. 21, National Library of Ireland. For a short biographical account of Croker see G. Eogan, 'The Mull Hoard', *Antiquity*, xli (1957), 57.

⁶⁰ Glenvale, near Newry, co. Armagh, was the home of Isaac Glenny, a well-known antiquary, whose collection is mentioned by John O'Donovan in an account in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, iv (1835), 97-8; and by William Gray, 'The Glenny Collection', *Jnl. Roy. Hist. and Archaeol. Assoc. of Ireland*, vii, 4 ser. (1887), 162. Glenny died in 1853. There seems to have been some confusion in the mind of Adams (*op. cit.* in note 65) about this address since there is another Glenvale just to the SW. of Portrush at N.G.R. C 857393.

⁶¹ Ballywilliam is apparently the old name for the townland since this is the name which appears on the map of 1694 [S. Molyneux, 'The Giants Causeway', *Phil. Trans.* (1694), 212, 169-182]. Ballywillin may have come into use to avoid confusion with Ballywilliam, co. Derry, no more than 10 miles away.

discovered. It is rather to be lamented that she was torn up before her situation could be exactly investigated. The timber is all of oak, several car loads of it were drawn away.

She was found in a mound about 40 feet in diameter, composed of stones and clay, but chiefly moss, about 15 perches from the shore of the bog; the bog has been all cut away around this mound; it is about 6 or 8 feet in height. Several bones have been found in it, to what species of animal they belong cannot be ascertained; the air speedily dissolves them. Some silver coins have been found in it, the letters cannot be distinctly discerned. From comparisons, however, the date of one of them might probably be ascertained; hence the age of the vessel, and the purpose for which she was employed, may also be discovered.

Some are of the opinion that, at a very distant period, there was a communication between this bog and the sea. This seems to be improbable, as the bog is elevated more than 40 feet above the level of the sea. At the same time, it must be observed, the sea has been retreating for many centuries in the neighbourhood of Portrush⁶² as well as in many other places in the North of Ireland. It could be established, on tolerable authority, that the lands of Cloughorr, Crocknamuck, and Kernabawn and Maghrema⁶³ were formerly covered with sea water, and that the hill on which Portrush stands, was surrounded like the Skerries, with water. Though all this should be admitted, it would not be sufficient to establish a communication between the place where the vessel was found, and the sea. Every circumstance considered, it is likely that the place where the bog now stands was a lake, and that the vessel was used thereon, as a place of safety during the time of invasions, or while hostile feuds prevailed between contending chieftains.

We are now convinced that the inhabitants of Ireland were reduced to the disagreeable necessity of making caves to answer these purposes, whilst the Danes and Normans ravaged the Northern Coast. We have seen ashes to a very considerable quantity cast out of these caves, in which vertebra were found, that seemed to belong to the human spine.

Phenix, Aug. 1813."

Confirmation of this account is to be found in the Ordnance Survey Memoirs for co. Londonderry. In August 1835 John Bleakley notes in his fair sheets:⁶⁴

"About 15 years ago, the keel of a ship was found in Ballywillin Bog, when cutting the turf on Samuel Knox's Farm." "A few pieces of ancient coin of silver was found in Ballywillin Bog with the old boat mentioned in a former page, and at the same time, by Andrew Knox farmer. The boat had no nails was put together with pegs of wood."

This information probably came from the Rev. William Mill, rector of Ballywillin, whose name appears as an informant at the foot of preceding pages.

There is a published account of the burial, obviously based upon the newspaper account and differing little from it, save that it also includes the name of the discoverer, Andrew Knox. It differs a little from the technical detail given in the original account and asserts that "in the bottom of the boat was found a quantity of white limestone gravel for ballast, and a large flat stone for a hearth at one end of her, and a quantity of ashes".⁶⁵ A parting shot notes, contrary to the newspaper account, that the ship was all put together again and taken to Dublin. The additional information in this published account must be treated with caution. Its author was not only well acquainted with the account by 'Phenix', but also probably with surviving local oral tradition.

Ballywillin townland is situated immediately to the E. of Portrush (O.S. 6 in., sheet 6, co. Antrim; N. Ireland, 1 in., sheet 1, N.G.R. (approx.) C 865405). Most of the townland is now built up or under plough or pasture. The bog referred to in the discovery account has now gone. The War Hollow, which is now part of the Royal Portrush Golf Links in Ballywillin, is still credited with being the scene of an ancient battle fought between the Irish and the Danes.⁶⁶ It seems likely that this tradition derives from the discovery of the ship, but there is also some probability that this name was

⁶² Sand dune formation certainly may have varied considerably over the past 2,000 years. The local coastline, however, appears to have remained stable in outline ever since the late 17th century (cf. Molyneux, *op. cit.* in note 61, with G. V. Sampson, *A Map to Accompany the Memoir of County Londonderry* (London, 1813); and O.S. 1 in. map).

⁶³ The 1962 *Topographical Index* (H.M.S.O.) lists Cloughorr, Antrim, O.S. 6 in., sh. 2, 6; Magheramengh, sh. 6; both adjacent to Ballywillin. Crocknamuck and Kernabawn are no longer identifiable.

⁶⁴ Royal Irish Academy Ms. box 31, par. II, fasc. 4, pp. 6 and 16.

⁶⁵ W. Adams, *Dalriada* (Coleraine, n.d.), 121.

⁶⁶ *Official Guide to Portrush* (Portrush, n.d.), 79.

strengthened by the not infrequent discovery of flint arrowheads in its vicinity. There is now no local oral tradition concerning the ship.⁶⁷

Magnus Barefoot was traditionally buried on Irish soil. The site of his grave has never been satisfactorily identified, though a small triangular mound close to Downpatrick known locally as *Magnus' Grave* has been suggested as a possibility.⁶⁸ This mound is undistinguished in character, but its proximity to the Quoile marshes at once suggests a similarity to the marshes so vividly described in the *Heimskringla*.⁶⁹ The discovery of such a large ship at Ballywillin (not certainly Viking, but buried in a manner characteristic of the Viking period) provides ample grounds upon which to speculate that Magnus, or another similarly distinguished warrior, may have been laid to rest there.

C. S. BRIGGS

A LATE MEDIEVAL JUG WITH LETTERING FROM CANONS ASHBY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (PL. XXXI; FIGS. 55-6)

In 1963 Mr. J. S. Ashby of Coventry found a potsherd at Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire; it is now in the Central Museum at Northampton (no. D 29/1964). The find-spot is 700 ft. NNW. of St. Mary's Church, close to the western side of a field on the E. side of the road from the village to Central Farm, and on the opposite side of the road to the Manor House. The sherd lay amongst the roots of a fallen tree, in line with the N. garden wall of the Manor House grounds.⁷⁰

It is very probable that the find-spot is on the site of the medieval village of Canons Ashby.⁷¹ The fields (ridge and furrow) of the village are in the deer park to the W. of the Manor House. The main part of the village itself is almost certainly in the field in which the sherd was picked up; slight earthworks are still visible over much of this field. In any case the location is not on the site of Canons Ashby Priory, which lies to the S. and E. of the existing church. I am grateful to J. G. Hurst, who has visited Canons Ashby, for kindly showing me air photographs and discussing the layout of the site.

The fragment (PL. XXXI, A; FIG. 55) is the rim and upper part of a jug. The stump of the upper end of the handle is present; it has two wide grooves down the back, at each side of a sharp central ridge. The fabric is brown in fracture, dense in texture and highly fired. The outside surface is purple-brown, with splashes of a purple glaze; the inside is dark brown and unglazed. Sufficient of the rim remains to show that the jug is narrow-mouthed, with the rim sloping outwards and with a step inside at the turn into the splayed conical neck. The rim-section compares closely with that of a 15th-century jug of similar fabric from the excavations of Coventry city wall.⁷² The jug from Canons Ashby thus belongs to the 'midland purple' group of ceramics, and this identification will be referred to again below.

Parts of two lines of lettering are preserved near the lower edge of the sherd, which are thus the upper part of a wide zone above the bulge of the vessel. The lettering passed round the body of the jug, and continued across the space inside the handle. All the letters are incuse, that is, stamped into the surface. The first line has ten consecutive letters, all perfectly clear, which read *CONMMQEIDM*. The letters are Lombardic,

⁶⁷ Mr. Laurence May kindly imparted much information about local tradition and put the notes of his father, the late A. McL. May, at my disposal.

⁶⁸ *The Archaeological Survey of Co. Down* (H.M.S.O., 1967), 170.

⁶⁹ E. Monsen, *The Heimskringla* (Cambridge, 1931), 603. A more detailed survey of this earthwork is currently being prepared for publication by Michael Avery; I am grateful to him for drawing this to my attention. I must also thank the Librarians of the National Library and the Royal Irish Academy for allowing me to study the documents and for permission to publish them; Professor M. Dolley for encouragement, and Don Patterson of the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast, for telling me of Adams' book *Dalriada*.

⁷⁰ N.G.R. SP 577506, O.S. 6 in. map, Northamptonshire, LV, NW.

⁷¹ K. J. Allison, M. W. Beresford and J. G. Hurst, *The Deserted Villages of Northamptonshire* (Leicester Univ., Dept. of English Local History, occasional papers, no. 18, 1966), 35.

⁷² *Trans. Birmingham Archaeol. Soc.*, LXXXI (1966), 114, fig. 8, no. 21.