Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (London, 1974), 23–124, pl. 21). The gem is commonplace although the ring is splendid.

[37] The Great Cameo of St Albans, see Henig, op. cit. in note 32, 162 and fig. 3, (almost certainly much too fine to have come from Verulamium); E. G. Grimme, *Der Aachener Domschatz* (Düsseldorf, 1972), 24–28, no. 22.

[38] Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 1, 113.

EARLY SAXON SETTLEMENT FINDS

Mucking is one of a growing number of excavated sites of the early Saxon period which offer alternative, settlement, data to the long domination of cemetery evidence. Reports of these excavations are now appearing in print: Bishopstone,[1] Heybridge,[2] Old Down Farm,[3] Walton,[4] and Willington[5] are examples. It would seem that by far the greater number of finds, and that mostly pottery, derives from the fills of sunken huts. Sites represented for the most part by ground-level buildings, such as Chalton,[6] Catholme,[7] Cowdery's Down,[8] and Thirlings,[9] produce few finds.

There is a tendency to publish these new settlement finds as hut groups, following Leeds's example with the Sutton Courtenay material. However, Leeds regarded *his* Saxons as living in their 'cabins, with bare headroom, amid a filthy litter of broken bones, of food and shattered pottery'.[10] With recent changes in attitude to Saxons and Vikings such huts (and their contents) are also due for a reappraisal, particularly where finds deposition is concerned. Yet only two of the sites mentioned make a distinction between upper and lower fills, while another recent report attempts to date a hut on the basis of 20 sherds 'found either in the fill of the hut or nearby'.

It might be argued that when small amounts of pottery are in question their presentation is of minor interest. The site value is then the important factor, at times leading to new distribution maps following Myres's[11] exemplars with '*stehende Bogen*', *Buckelurnen*, facetted carination, etc. Some recent finds already suggest new maps: of surface treatments such as '*Schlickung*', combed and rusticated;[12] of shapes such as 'swallows' nest' lugs and all-over perforated braziers.[13] All these can be reliably identified from the small sherds typical of settlement material. Distribution maps are already an integral part of the new Archive of Anglo-Saxon Pottery Stamps.[14]

With large assemblages, however, where there is a good chance of establishing an internal sequence, the detailed presentation of finds *in their contexts* is important. This seems especially true of Mucking where the 1965–78 excavations fulfilled several criteria in the Society's research priorities. It is not only the largest excavated settlement, but it is the only site where cemeteries and settlement(s) showing a succession from extensive Romano-British settlement (with four cemeteries) have been excavated at one time. Evidently it has an important role as type site and reference collection.

The Mucking settlement finds are from several different types of context. There is an approximately equal amount from the late fills of earlier (usually Romano-British) features such as ditches and wells, and from pits and post-holes, which occasionally form elements of the 50 or so ground-level buildings. By far the largest amount comes from the fills of the 213 sunken huts. (Proportions of pottery are [in D.o.E. boxes with an estimated 300 sherds per box] 30:30:260 — more detailed figures must await computer retrieval.) Associated with this pottery are:

c. 60 pieces of copper alloy including brooches and military belt fittings
c. 700 pieces of iron including pins, buckles and knives
Roman and Saxon coins including the only 'mini-hoard' of primary sceattas yet found[15]
glass fragments including cone and claw beakers
whetstones and querns and, rarely, jet, shale, amber and amethyst.

Finds reflecting the economy include animal bone. This had a low survival rate but horse, ox, sheep, pig, deer, dog and cat are identified. Seed impressions on sherds include barley, wheat

and oats. Slag (including slag blocks), lead melt and fragments of a piece mould for a brooch indicate a wide range of metalworking. Cloth production is attested by loomweights (of clay and lead) and spindlewhorls; while there survives textile, both actual, and replaced in the corrosion products of metal objects in graves and as accidental impressions of cloth on pot sherds.

Apart from any intrinsic interest these settlement finds may possess, their contexts and associations can be very significant. Ditch and well fills provide vertical stratigraphy to link with Romano-British material; pits provide closed finds groups; comparisons between individual finds from cemeteries and settlement(s) are frequent. Most dating will need to rely on stratigraphy and comparanda, but there is some independent dating: the sceattas, regarded by Rigold as datable to the 690s, and two radiocarbon dates — a.d. 470 and a.d. 550 uncalibrated.

It is the writer's contention that any consideration of the finds from hut fills (that is, the majority) cannot ignore the mechanism by which they were deposited, and that this in turn relates to whatever structural interpretation is put on the sunken areas. Without going over the subject once more[16] let it be said that the huts at Mucking are not regarded as anything but below-ground house floors. This makes their fills and any objects in them post-occupation accumulations. The only finds which can then be stratigraphically related to each hut are those which lie *on*, not *above*, these floors. In some instances they are even pressed into the natural.

However, there were problems of excavation. As with most gravel fills it was frequently difficult to see, let alone excavate separately, successive layers. Finds were therefore recorded in 3 in. (76 mm) levels (and by hut quarters) except for those huts which could only be salvaged or hastily dug. As with other features such contextual data are fed into the computer with details of finds. With mechanical handling these data can be presented in various ways, textual and graphic. They can for instance be organized hut by hut, or by site totals, or divided into the two settlement foci either side of Saxon cemetery 2. Different presentations would facilitate comparisons with other sites, whether English or continental. Demolon[17] attempted to arrange the Brebières huts in sequence through their contained finds to help to establish the development of this Merovingian village. At Wijster,[18] however, more emphasis was put on a finds chronology based upon 'outside criteria' rather than the stratigraphic associations recorded in the finds inventories, in order to achieve a wider view of the history of this Dutch settlement with cemetery which came to an end at about the time that Saxon Mucking began.

A method of retrieval already used with material from Mucking, employing a digital plotter, records the horizontal distribution of finds throughout the 40 acres (16 ha) of the excavated area, whether found in pits, post-holes, ditches, gullies, graves *or* sunken huts.[19] Such a presentation was used at Feddersen Wierde where it illustrated the development of this N. German coastal *wurt* from a flat settlement. It is a method which thrives on large data bases. One completed Mucking distribution shows Romano-British building tile from 1500 contexts concentrated along the field ditches of the pre-Saxon settlement, with sporadic finds in Saxon huts. Distributions of such finds as late mortaria will clearly be invaluable in attempting to assess the Roman/Saxon transition in general, and the reasons why Romano-British pottery sherds are numerous in some huts but not in others. The computer program for the Saxon pottery contains some 300 variables and any of these can be retrieved in this way. Telling comparisons might emerge from suspected like distributions such as rusticated and *Schlickung* sherds; or contrasted traits, say early faceted carinated sherds (with one entire burial pot) against late wheel-thrown (Frankish) sherds which also include a single burial example. The distributions of the nineteen different fabrics should provide food for thought. Traditional studies of metalwork/pottery associations will benefit by the retrieval of all relevant data, and not simply a subjective sample.

It is however with the handling of finds within each hut fill that the unique capacity of a computerized data base will make its most significant contribution. Assuming that finds from the sunken floors only can produce a reliable estimate of the date of a hut, the computer can

be used to isolate them to facilitate comparisons with finds from the upper fills. Such hut analyses can in turn be compared with intra-site distributions, of which the following seem likely to be specially significant: 'grass'-tempered, *Schlickung* and rusticated sherds, nails and slags. These are finds which occur in their thousands and could scarcely be handled in this way without a computer.

Work at Mucking Post-Excavation has been aimed at this kind of achievement, which seems to be a logical outcome of the Frere recommendations, and it would be a pity if financial cuts were to jeopardize this unprecedented and probably unrepeatable opportunity to record and analyse major evidence for the onset of the Migration period in England.

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NOTES

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[2] P. J. Drury and N. P. Wickenden, 'An early Saxon settlement within the Romano-British small town at Heybridge', *Medieval Archaeol.*, XXVI (1982), 1–40.
[3] S. Davies, 'Excavations at Old Down Farm, Andover. Part I: Saxon', *Proc. Hampshire Field Club Archaeol. Soc.*, 36 (1980), 161–80.
[4] M. Farley, 'Saxon and Medieval Walton, Aylesbury', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, XX (1976).
[5] H. Wheeler, 'Excavations at Willington, Derbyshire 1970–72', *Derbyshire Archaeol. Soc.*, XCIV (1979), 58–220.
[6] P. V. Addyman, 'The Anglo-Saxon village at Chalton, Hampshire', *Medieval Archaeol.*, XVII (1973), 1–25.
[7] S. Losco-Bradley, 'The Anglo-Saxon settlement at Catholme', *Trent Valley Archaeol. Res. Ctee.*, 8 (1973), 1–35.
[8] M. Millett, *Excavations at Cowdery's Down* (Basingstoke, Basingstoke Planning Dept, 1980).
[9] R. Miket, *Medieval Archaeol.*, XIX (1975), 226–27.
[10] E. T. Leeds, *Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1936), 26.
[11] J. N. L. Myres, *Anglo-Saxon pottery and the settlement of England* (Oxford, 1969), maps 3, 4a, 5b.
[12] M. U. Jones, 'Saxon pottery from a hut at Mucking, Essex', *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek*, 19 (1969), 145–56; W. A. van Es, *Wijster: a native village beyond the Imperial frontier* (Groningen, 1967), 273–75.
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[14] T. Briscoe, 'Anglo-Saxon pot stamps', *Anglo-Saxon studies in Archaeol. and Hist.* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Reps. Brit. ser. 92, 1981), 1–36.
[15] W. T. Jones and S. E. Rigold, 'A group of "primary sceattas" from Mucking, Essex', *Antiq. J.*, LVII (1977), 321–22
[16] M. U. Jones, 'Saxon sunken huts: problems of interpretation', *Archaeol. J.*, 136 (1979), 53–59.
[17] P. Demolon, *Le Village Mérovingien de Brebières* (Arras, 1972).
[18] W. A. van Es, *Wijster: a native village beyond the Imperial frontier* (Groningen, 1967).
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ISLAMIC GLASS VESSEL FRAGMENTS FROM THE OLD VICARAGE, REIGATE, SURREY (Figs. 2 and 3; Pl. XI, B)

Introduction

Five small fragments of manganese glass[1] were found during excavations by the Holmesdale Archaeological Group on the site of The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Reigate.[2] These have been identified by Mr R. J. Charleston[3] as Islamic, from a vessel or vessels manufactured in Syria in the 13th century.

The Glass Fragments

The five fragments were found within a layer of sandy brown soil representing the upper filling of a ditch originally cut in the 12th century or earlier. The ditch lay adjacent to the earliest house which was later extended to cover it. There was no evidence for deliberate infilling or rubbish disposal and it is likely that the ditch silted naturally. Associated pottery confirms a general date for the deposition of the glass in the late 13th or early 14th century, and thus also for the extension of the house.

Charleston has recently reviewed the evidence for decorated Islamic glass from contexts in Britain and Europe, both from excavations and as survivals from old collections.[4]