

When Were Hanging Bowls Deposited in Anglo-Saxon Graves?

By HELEN GEAKE

It is suggested that hanging bowls, whatever their date of manufacture, have a restricted date of deposition in Anglo-Saxon graves. They form part of the distinctive assemblage conventionally known as the 'Final Phase' of Anglo-Saxon furnished burial.

'They are the one thing found in Anglo-Saxon graves that neither date themselves nor the objects associated with them.'¹

E. T. Leeds made this well-known statement over 60 years ago, and many archaeologists would still agree with him. We still do not know for certain when hanging bowls were manufactured, where, or by whom; we do not know by what mechanism they spread over the British Isles, or for what they were used. Hanging bowls seem to have developed from Romano-British antecedents, and they are often decorated using late Roman or 'Celtic' techniques and motifs. Despite this, the only contexts in which they are found in quantity are furnished graves from the Anglo-Saxon areas of Britain; but, as objects found in Anglo-Saxon graves which were apparently made in the contemporary non-Anglo-Saxon parts of the country, they do not fit in to any clear pattern of trade or exchange.

Past approaches to the study of hanging bowls have mainly tried to establish when and where they were made, concentrating on the escutcheons which are so rich in art-historical information.² If there is a consensus, it might be that hanging bowls were manufactured from the late 4th or early 5th century until the 8th century, probably in northern Britain or perhaps eventually in some parts of England; and that a rough chronology can be given for the escutcheons, from Roman-type motifs on the one hand and La Tène-type motifs on the other, through an evolution to the sort of trumpet-spiral and pelta motifs also found in 7th-century manuscript art.³ Unfortunately, however, bowls bearing art-historically 'early' escutcheons can be found in undoubtedly 'late' graves, and the problems of curation before burial have not yet been satisfactorily addressed.⁴

¹ E. T. Leeds, 'An enamelled bowl from Baginton, Warwickshire', *Antiq. J.*, xv (1935), 109-12.

² Summarized by J. Brenan, *Hanging Bowls and their Contexts* (BAR British Series, 220, Oxford, 1991), 5-26.

³ R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'Late Celtic hanging-bowls in Lincolnshire and South Humberside', 45-61 in A. Vince (ed.), *Pre-Viking Lindsey* (Lincoln Archaeological Studies, 1, Lincoln, 1993), pp. 45-47.

⁴ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 11.

The approach taken in the present paper, looking at the *contexts* of hanging bowls, was first taken a few years ago by Jane Brenan, who looked at all hanging bowls and fragments of bowls known from England and Scotland, and the contexts (mainly graves) in which they were found. Her work included investigations into the function and physical characteristics of the bowls, as well as their contexts, and concluded that they were deposited in graves, and hence probably manufactured, only in the years A.D. 550–700.⁵ Brenan's study, treating the hanging bowl as a purely archaeological object, was a landmark in hanging bowl studies. I seek only to re-examine a small part of it; my argument will be that hanging bowls were placed in Anglo-Saxon graves only in the 7th and early 8th centuries, and that they form part of a coherent assemblage of objects which deliberately revive classical or Romano-British style.

DATEABLE HANGING BOWLS

'It is fascinatingly easy to be wrong about hanging-bowls.'⁶

I became interested in hanging bowls after carrying out a survey of 7th- and early 8th-century furnished burials.⁷ The corpus of these burials happened to contain almost all known hanging-bowl graves, suggesting that it might be possible to refine further the dating of the *deposition* of the bowls in Anglo-Saxon graves. Although this would not necessarily tell us anything about the date of their *manufacture*, it might help us not only to date associated objects, but also to learn something about the way in which these objects were seen by the people who buried them.

Brenan considered that 22 graves with hanging bowls or parts of bowls could be dated.⁸ In some cases the dating evidence was very good, with many associated objects known from the grave, and in others it was very poor, with no record of which grave the hanging bowl came from or with which objects it was found. Brenan did not include the burials at Gally Hills, Banstead Down, and at Bevis's Grave, Bedhampton, in her list of examples, although she discusses them in the text.⁹ Since Brenan prepared her list in 1988, two further hanging bowl graves have come to light at Castledyke, Barton-on-Humber, and Wollaston, near Wellingborough, and more details are now available for a number of other bowls.

Although in most cases Brenan concluded that the graves with hanging bowls were most likely to be 7th-century (thirteen of her 24 datable bowls being ascribed by her to the second half of the century), she believed that six to eight bowls might date from the 6th century.¹⁰ As more is now known about the dating of 7th- and early 8th-century grave-goods,¹¹ it seems sensible to review the dating of deposition

⁵ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 65–75.

⁶ T. Kendrick, 'British hanging bowls', *Antiquity*, vi (1932), 161–184.

⁷ H. M. Geake, *The Use of Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England, c. 600–c. 850* (BAR British Series, 261, Oxford, 1997).

⁸ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, fig. 2.3.

⁹ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, fig. 2.3 and pp. 68–69 and 71.

¹⁰ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 65–67.

¹¹ Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7.

of *all* the bowls or fragments of bowls recorded by Brenan as coming from funerary contexts. The assumptions according to which the contexts of these hanging bowls are dated are those set out in the writer's D.Phil. thesis.¹²

To begin with, all stray finds from Brenan's corpus, and those without a certain or probable funerary context, were discarded, leaving a total of 50 bowls from graves. Eight graves or probable graves with hanging bowls had no other associated objects, or no recorded associations, and were isolated burials, not found in cemeteries (Group A; see Table 1). A further five finds were in isolated graves with grave-goods which are not closely datable (Group B). After discarding all these undatable hanging bowls, we are left with seventeen finds of bowls or parts of bowls which can only be dated to the overall date-ranges of the nine cemeteries in which they were found (Group C), and twenty graves with bowls or parts of bowls which have more closely datable grave-goods (Group D).

We therefore have 37 hanging bowls, from Groups C and D, which can help us in the dating of the deposition of hanging bowls in Anglo-Saxon graves.

Group C burials

These are taken in a rough order, from the hanging bowl grave which has the best claim to a comparatively early date, to that which has the best claim to a comparatively late date.

The cremation/inhumation cemetery at *Baginton* in Warwickshire was destroyed in 1934 by gravel quarrying. Many objects, including a hanging bowl, were salvaged, but no associations could be recorded. The objects are apparently predominantly 6th-century, but among them is a Group 7 shield-boss, 172 mm tall, dated to the later 7th century by Dickinson.¹³ Following Dickinson and Härke's chronology, at least one grave must therefore be dated to this time, and so there is a possibility that the hanging bowl also came from a 7th-century context. An article on the cemetery in the *Illustrated London News* states that the bowl contained a cremation, but there is no supporting evidence for this.¹⁴

The objects from *Faversham* inhumation cemetery in Kent were found by workmen, firstly in 1858 during the construction of a railway, and secondly between 1866 and 1894 during brickearth digging. They were sold to a collector, but no attempt was made to record grave-groups. In addition, many objects may have been wrongly attributed to Faversham; as it was such a rich and famous site, it was considered the 'right' place for an Anglo-Saxon object to come from. The objects now thought to come from Faversham date from the 6th to the early 8th centuries and include a complete hanging bowl, three enamelled discs, an oval escutcheon, and three circular escutcheons with cross decoration.

The *Hadleigh Road* cemetery, on the edge of Ipswich, was discovered during the levelling of land by workmen, who sold some of the early finds.¹⁵ A catalogue

¹² *Ibid.*, especially 7–10.

¹³ V. I. Evison, 1963, 'Sugar-loaf shield bosses', *Antiq. J.*, XLIII (1963), 38–96, p. 44 and fig. 24a; T. M. Dickinson and H. Härke, *Early Anglo-Saxon Shields* (*Archaeologia*, cx, London, 1992).

¹⁴ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 57–58 and 67.

¹⁵ N. F. Layard, 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Ipswich', *Archaeologia*, LX (1907), 325–52, p. 338.

TABLE I
HANGING BOWLS FROM CERTAIN OR PROBABLE FUNERARY CONTEXTS

Group A: Isolated burials with hanging bowls or fragments, without other recorded associated grave-goods

Brenan catalogue no.:	13	Capheaton, Northumberland
	31	Grindlow, Derbyshire
	34	Hildersham, Cambridgeshire
	35	Hitchin, Hertfordshire
	40	Lullingstone, Kent
	41	Manton Warren, Lincolnshire
	48	St Paul-in-the-Bail, Lincoln
	53	Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

Group B: Isolated burials with hanging bowls or fragments, with associated but not closely datable grave-goods

3	Barlston, Staffordshire	knife, sword
6	West Ham, Basingstoke, Hampshire	knife, spearhead, playing pieces, iron 'bowl' (?shield boss)
11	Caistor, Lincolnshire	?shield-boss
44	Garratt Piece, Middleton Moor, Derbyshire	?skillet handle with spiral decoration
75	Keythorpe Hall, Tugby, Leicestershire	double-sided comb, 2 dice, 47 playing pieces

Group C: Hanging bowl graves which are only dated by the date range of the cemetery in which they are situated

1	Baginton, Warwickshire
4, 80	Barrington, Cambridgeshire
-	Bevis's Grave, Bedhampton, Hampshire
12	Camerton, Somerset, grave 32
-	Castledyke South, Barton-on-Humber, grave 179
23-27	Faversham, Kent
29	Garton Station, East Yorkshire
32	Hadleigh Road, Ipswich
49, 50	Sarre, Kent
36	Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire (discs)
37	Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire (Hanging Bowl 2)

Group D: Hanging bowl graves which can be dated by their associated grave-goods

2	Gally Hills, Banstead Down, Surrey
5	Barton-on-Humber, Lincolnshire
9	Benty Grange, Derbyshire
16	Chessell Down, Isle of Wight
-	Cleatham, Lincolnshire
28	Ford, Laverstock, Wiltshire
33	Hawnby, North Yorkshire
76	Kingston Down, Kent, grave 76
77	Kingston Down, Kent, grave 205
38	Loveden Hill, Lincolnshire (Hanging Bowl 1)
39	Lowbury Hill, Berkshire
42	Marina Drive, Dunstable, Bedfordshire
83	Orsett, Essex
52	Sleaford, Lincolnshire, grave 103
54-56	Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, mound 1
57	Thornham, Norfolk
73	Oliver's Battery, Winchester
-	Wollaston, Wellingborough

of 147 inhumations and twelve cremations was published, nine of the inhumations dating to the 7th or early 8th centuries. These inhumations contained objects including keystone disc brooches, silver wire rings, chatelaines, a triangular brooch with interlace decoration, two Dickinson Group 7 shield bosses and a pair of plain glass palm cups. Layard does not appear to have been aware of the hanging bowl, which makes its first appearance in print in 1962, shortly after its acquisition by Ipswich Museum.¹⁶ There seems to be little doubt, however, that it came from the area of the cemetery, and so again it is possible that it came from a 7th- or early 8th-century context.

Hanging Bowl 2 at *Loveden Hill* was the larger of the two bowls from this cremation/inhumation cemetery, and contained a cremation. It seems that a firesteel, an undecorated iron and bronze belt-mount and possibly a pottery vessel were associated with this bowl. There seems comparatively little doubt about the associations of this grave-group (unlike the other complete hanging bowl from the site; see below), but it is unfortunately not closely datable. Brennan's catalogue lists, in addition to the two complete hanging bowls, two enamelled bronze discs from Loveden Hill which have been damaged by heat; these were found with a 'bronze hook'.¹⁷ This assemblage, again, is not closely datable. The Loveden Hill cemetery was founded in the 5th century and continued in use through the 6th; there are good reasons, explored below under the Group D burials, for dating at least one or two graves to the 7th century. Hanging Bowl 2 was found in the vicinity of these burials, and so it is possible that a 7th-century date is appropriate.

The inhumation cemetery at *Sarre* in Kent was excavated from 1862 onwards, and although it was recorded and published fairly well for the time, most of the grave-goods are not illustrated, and some illustrated objects are not mentioned in the catalogue. The three hanging bowl escutcheons in Maidstone Museum which are labelled as coming from Sarre are unfortunately not identifiable in any published account.¹⁸ The cemetery as a whole dates from the 6th and 7th centuries; most of the datable 7th-century objects belong to the first half of the century, but one grave contained 'Pada' thrymsas, datable to c. 670 at the earliest. There is no reason therefore why the escutcheons should not have been buried in the 7th century.

The inhumation cemeteries at Edix Hill and Hooper's Field, *Barrington*, Cambridgeshire, (Barrington A and B) were partly excavated in the 1860s and 1880 respectively. Details of some of the graves were published, most of which appear to be 6th century although a few graves from Barrington B can be assigned to the 7th. There are a number of objects in the Ashmolean Museum which do not appear in the published accounts, including two enamelled discs, one certainly and one probably from a hanging bowl.¹⁹ Plough damage in the 1980s led to further

¹⁶ A. Ozanne, 'The context and date of the Anglian cemetery at Ipswich', *Proc. Suffolk Inst. Arch.*, xxix (1962), 208-12; Brennan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 67.

¹⁷ Brennan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 235.

¹⁸ Brennan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 59.

¹⁹ Brennan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 58 and 302; T. Malim and J. Hines, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Edix Hill (Barrington A), Cambridgeshire* (CBA Res. Rep., 112, York, 1998), 319-21.

excavation at Edix Hill, and the discovery of a number of 6th- to late 7th- or early 8th-century graves. The latest graves here include a very badly damaged skeleton with a necklace made up of silver rings, small monochrome glass beads, a gold disc pendant and a small crystal ball in gold slings, and two well-preserved bed burials.²⁰ The enamelled discs could have been buried at the end of either cemetery's life, in the 7th if not the early 8th century.

The hanging bowl from the 1990 excavation at *Castledyke South*, Barton-on-Humber,²¹ was found in grave 179 with the inhumation of a teenager aged twelve to sixteen. The grave also contained a sword and the socket of a spearhead. Neither of these associated finds are particularly closely datable, but the cemetery as a whole dates from the late 5th or early 6th century to the late 7th century, and the stratigraphy suggests a late date for grave 179.²²

The Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery at *Garton Station*, in eastern Yorkshire, was excavated in 1985 and is still unpublished. It is now clear, however, that it dates exclusively from the 7th and early 8th centuries. The hanging bowl at Garton Station grave 5 was found at the foot of a disturbed grave, perhaps robbed in antiquity; a fossil and three glass beads found in the fill of the grave were the only other associated objects.²³

The cemetery at *Camerton* in north Somerset consists of 104 inhumation graves, which were excavated in the 1920s and 1930s in advance of quarrying. Sixty of these were unfurnished, and may possibly be sub-Roman (the famous Roman small town is nearby). All the datable grave-goods found in the cemetery belong to the 7th or early 8th centuries, and include a cowrie shell, a pair of shears, silver wire rings, silver bulla pendants and gold disc pendants. Grave 32 contained three enamelled discs and two frames, from one or more hanging bowls. The smallest disc was suspended on a necklace with another metal disc and five beads; the two larger discs and the frames were found resting on a piece of wood between the legs of the skeleton, which was probably the remains of a box.²⁴ Although the associated finds from grave 32 are not illustrated, and are therefore difficult to date precisely, all would be at home in the 7th or early 8th century.

The hanging bowl disc from *Bedhampton* in Hampshire was found in the 1970s, in a grave in a poorly furnished inhumation cemetery dug into Bevis's Grave long barrow. The 71 graves from the cemetery, in which 88 individuals were buried, are still unpublished. The grave with the disc also contained a knife, iron ring and bronze pin, and is not closely datable. The other grave-goods from the cemetery included two antler combs, some iron knives and buckles, and an early 9th-century strap-end.²⁵ It is not impossible that the foundation of this interesting cemetery pre-dates the 7th century, but it does not seem at all likely.²⁶

²⁰ Malim and Hines, op. cit. in note 19.

²¹ Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 3, 48; G. Drinkall and M. Foreman, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Castledyke South, Barton-on-Humber* (Sheffield, 1998).

²² Drinkall and Foreman, op. cit. in note 21, xxi and 314–31.

²³ S. Youngs (ed.), *The Work of Angels: Masterpieces of Celtic Metalwork, 6th–9th Centuries AD* (London, 1989), 47–48.

²⁴ Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 47–48 and 70.

²⁵ David Rudkin, pers. comm.

²⁶ Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 71.

We have therefore seen that, although none of the Group C burials can be dated precisely from associated grave-goods, the cemeteries in which they occur were all in use in the 7th century. None of the Group C hanging bowl graves, then, has to date from before the start of the 7th century, and three of the eight (Garton Station, Camerton and Bedhampton) *must* reasonably date from this time or later.

Group D burials

These are looked at in a rough order of confidence in dating, starting with barrow-burials and moving on to cemetery finds.

The best-dated of all the hanging bowl graves is perhaps Mound 1 at *Sutton Hoo*. Three hanging bowls came from this grave; one large bowl with a bronze fish mounted on a central internal pedestal, and two smaller bowls.²⁷ The date of Mound 1 depends on the date at which the associated coins were assembled; this is usually quoted as after c. 620–25, but the earliest suggested date that I am aware of is now post-613.²⁸ The earliest possible date for the burial of these hanging bowls cannot therefore be pushed back further than the second decade of the 7th century.

The hanging bowl at Gally Hills, *Banstead Down*, was found in 1972 in an inhumation grave within a mound.²⁹ The upper part of the burial, above the waist, had been severely disturbed by the erection of a later gallows, but the surviving grave-goods included a knife, a buckle, a spearhead and a Dickinson Group 7 shield-boss 163 mm tall. The bowl contained crab-apples, and had been covered with a linen cloth tied with a string. It had been placed on top of a stack of leather and fabric, including leather boots and a pile cloak. The pile cloak has parallels in a number of rich 7th-century burials; the shield-boss, according to Dickinson and Härke's chronology, places the grave in the second half of the 7th century or the first years of the 8th.

The isolated Anglo-Saxon grave at *Ford*, near Laverstock in Wiltshire, was excavated in 1964.³⁰ The inhumation was surrounded by a ring-ditch, and was furnished with a hanging bowl containing onions and crab-apples, two spearheads, a Dickinson Group 7 shield-boss 142 mm tall, three shield-studs, a narrow seax in a scabbard with a tiny buckle, a double-sided antler comb, a possible handle lug from a wooden vessel and a double-tongued buckle with cabochon garnets on the rectangular plate. The seax has a two-handed grip, a silver-plated bronze pommel and the remains of a scabbard with silver fittings. The pommel and scabbard chape bear Style II decoration; this, the shield-boss and the double-tongued buckle place the burial in the second half of the 7th century or the first years of the 8th.

²⁷ R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial, Volume 3: Late Roman and Byzantine Silver, Hanging Bowls, Drinking Vessels, Cauldrons and Other Containers, Textiles, the Lyre, Pottery Bottle and Other Items* (London, 1983), 202–315.

²⁸ A. M. Stahl and W. A. Oddy, 'The date of the Sutton Hoo coins', 129–47 in R. Farrell and C. Neuman de Vegvar (eds.) *Sutton Hoo: Fifty Years After* (American Early Medieval Studies, 2, Oxford, Ohio, 1992).

²⁹ J. F. Barfoot and D. Price-Williams, 'The Saxon barrow at Gally Hills, Banstead Down, Surrey', *Research Volume of the Surrey Archaeological Society*, III (1976), 59–76; Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 68–69.

³⁰ J. Musty, 'The excavation of two barrows, one of Saxon date, at Ford, Laverstock, near Salisbury, Wiltshire', *Antiq. J.*, XLIX (1969), 98–117; Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 46–47 and 68–69.

A complete hanging bowl was found at Oliver's Battery, *Winchester*, during excavations in 1913 designed to date the Battery earthwork.³¹ An inhumation was found dug into the highest part of the bank, at the NE. corner. The grave contained the bowl, a spearhead and a narrow seax with silver pommel and upper guard. The seax is similar in blade shape and length to that at Ford, and although its pommel has a different construction it too is of the 'cocked-hat' shape. It is likely, therefore, to belong to the same general date-range as Ford.³²

An isolated barrow within the Romano-British enclosure on *Lowbury Hill* in Berkshire was excavated in 1913.³³ The central grave was found to contain a skeleton with its head to the south, a hanging bowl, a sword with no surviving fittings, a shield with a Dickinson Group 7 boss 149 mm tall, a spearhead, a knife, part of a pair of shears, a possible firesteel, a small bronze and a small iron buckle, a hump-backed antler comb in a wood and leather case, and a rectangular strip of bone pierced at both ends. The bowl contained a small hook made from rolled sheet, which may be a hooked tag. The comb, the shield-boss and the hooked tag (if that is what it is) all contribute to dating this grave to the second half of the 7th, or early 8th, century.

Three hanging bowl discs were found in the famous *Benty Grange* barrow in Derbyshire, but all were in poor condition and now only two now survive. Brenan thinks it is likely that an entire bowl was placed in the grave, but that the body of the bowl had corroded away.³⁴ The grave also contained, among other things, a pile cloak, some chain perhaps from a cauldron, some silver mounts from a cup, and a curious iron implement 'very much like an ordinary hay-fork', in addition to the famous boar-crested helmet. There were no skeletal remains in the acid soil; a possible robbing of the barrow may have contributed to their destruction. The helmet's manufacture has been dated on art-historical grounds to the second half of the 7th century,³⁵ and the pile cloak also suggests a 7th-century date. Very recently another boar-crested helmet has been found with a hanging bowl, in a barrow-grave at *Wollaston* near Wellingborough in the Nene Valley.³⁶ It seems very likely that this burial belongs to the same broad date-range as Benty Grange.

The details of the discovery of the hanging bowl grave at *Hawby*, North Yorkshire, were published in the *Proceedings of the Geological Society of the West Riding of Yorkshire* for 1865.³⁷ Although this publication was summarized by Meaney³⁸ it has never become well known,³⁹ and so it is worth quoting at length here. A large barrow, 120 ft. in circumference, 4 ft. in height and surrounded by eight or nine smaller mounds, was excavated and found to contain the fragmentary skeleton of a

³¹ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 49-50; W. J. Andrew and R. A. Smith, 'The Winchester Anglo-Saxon bowl', *Antiq. J.*, XI (1931), 1-13.

³² Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 68.

³³ D. Atkinson, *The Romano-British Site on Lowbury Hill in Berkshire* (Reading, 1916), 15-23.

³⁴ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 51.

³⁵ R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (London, 1974), 242.

³⁶ I. Meadows, 'Wollaston: the 'Pioneer' burial', *Current Archaeol.*, 154 (1997), 391-95.

³⁷ *Proc. Geological Soc. West Riding Yorkshire*, IV (1865), 497-99.

³⁸ A. L. Meaney, *A Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (London, 1964), 290-91.

³⁹ For example, Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 55 does not mention this reference.

woman lying with the head to the north. At the head was 'a bowl of thin bronze, with three handles, about eleven inches in diameter, which had a wooden cover ornamented with strips of bronze arranged in a diamond pattern, and fastened with a bronze hasp. The wood was decayed, and the lid had fallen inside the bowl.' At the waist was a leather girdle with a buckle 'made of two plates of gold, one of which, worked or engraved in a cross-shaped pattern, and set with four garnet-coloured glass ornaments, still remained'. Between the two plates, which were fastened with gold rivets, a scrap of leather remained. Also by the head were two pins, one of gold with a flat pear-shaped head bearing incised decoration, and the other larger, of silver with two perforations. Meaney then refers to four silver annular brooches and one of moulded bronze, but the *Proceedings* lists 'several rings made of silver wire, the ends joining together in a twist'. Also with this group of objects were blue glass beads, part of a knife and other iron fragments, a rectangular bronze plate and a stone spindle-whorl. The article then goes on to say that the cutting edge of the front teeth of the lower jaw were filed into three points, and it is details like these which suggest that the article was compiled from an eyewitness account. The account of this barrow concludes by saying that the finds had been dispersed, with the bowl now in the possession of Mr Craster of Middlesbrough; this gentleman later presented it to the British Museum. The smaller mounds were also investigated, and one was found to contain, among other things, a workbox dating to the later 7th or early 8th century.

The identifiable grave-goods from the large barrow at Hawnby therefore comprise the hanging bowl, perhaps contained in a bronze-bound wooden box, a gold-and-garnet buckle, two pins, a necklace of blue glass beads and silver slip-knot rings, a knife and a spindle-whorl. These would all be at home in the 7th or early 8th centuries, and the necklace is a type-fossil of the period. Without illustrations of the objects, though, the date range of the Hawnby burial cannot be narrowed down any further.

The inhumation cemetery at *Marina Drive*, Dunstable, was excavated in 1957.⁴⁰ It contained 48 graves disposed in rows some distance from each other; all of the datable graves belonged to the 7th or early 8th centuries. The hanging bowl disc was found in a double grave containing a man and a woman lying side by side. Between the two bodies was a collection of objects: a hump-backed antler comb, a pair of iron shears, part of a set of scales, a workbox, a knife and a leather purse. The woman had a knife at her waist. The comb, shears and workbox date this burial to the second half of the 7th century or the early years of the 8th.⁴¹

Possible hanging bowl fragments were found in 1975 in an inhumation grave at *Orsett* in Essex. Two graves were excavated, each within a ring-ditch; grave CF9 contained, under the pelvis, a bundle of objects wrapped in a checked cloth or bag. The objects comprised an iron chain, some iron rings, a shale or lignite bead, an iron plate from the lower guard of a seax and the two hanging bowl fragments,

⁴⁰ C. L. Matthews, 'The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Marina Drive, Dunstable', *Beds. Archaeol. J.*, 1 (1962), 25-47; Brennan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 48-49 and 70.

⁴¹ Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7, 63, 96 and 34.

which were interpreted by Webster as the frame from a basal disc and part of a decorative enamelled basal ring. All of the objects could together have formed a chatelaine hanging from the waist, with possibly amuletic items attached to it. Webster dates the grave to the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century.⁴² There remains some doubt, however, as to whether the two fragments really do represent parts of a hanging bowl.⁴³

The unpublished cemetery at *Thornham* in Norfolk contained 24 inhumation graves, thirteen of which were unfurnished and most of the rest of which contained only a buckle or a knife. The grave with the most grave-goods, grave 10, contained a bronze bracelet with five glass beads, a bone bead and a bronze 'fitting', and one or two iron chatelaine chains, one of which carried a pierced hanging bowl disc.⁴⁴ The similarity of this grave to Orsett grave CF9 suggests that they are of similar date.

The second hanging bowl known from the Castledyke South cemetery tends to be called the *Barton-on-Humber* bowl. Brenan summarizes the circumstances of discovery of this bowl by Tom Sheppard in 1939 during the construction of an air-raid shelter.⁴⁵ Various items were recorded by Sheppard as being associated with grave I, an inhumation. A workbox, a set of scales and weights, an incomplete antler comb, a rectangular silver buckle plate, and parts of a tripod-ring bronze bowl were all apparently found in addition to the hanging bowl. Among the weights was a rectangular plate, perhaps from a belt, with interlace decoration, and a 'patrix' die for a bracteate, bearing Style II decoration. Among a few items less certainly associated with this burial was a cylindrical gold bead decorated with longitudinal grooves.⁴⁶ Although Sheppard's ascriptions of objects to particular graves should be treated with caution, this group of objects does form a coherent group, with nearly all the closely datable items in this grave belonging to the 7th and early 8th centuries. One exception is perhaps the tripod-ring bowl which, although more commonly deposited in the 7th century, can occasionally be found in graves of the later 6th century.⁴⁷

The predominantly cremation cemetery at *Cleatham* in northern Lincolnshire is still unpublished, but it is now clear that it may begin as early as the 5th century, and extends well into the 7th.⁴⁸ The hanging bowl from *Cleatham*⁴⁹ was found with an inhumation; the only closely datable object found in the grave was a small round-section annular brooch which suggests a 7th- or early 8th-century date.⁵⁰

⁴² L. Webster, p. 13 in J. D. Hedges and D. G. Buckley, 'Anglo-Saxon burials and later features excavated at Orsett, Essex', *Medieval Archaeol.*, xxix (1985), 1-24; Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 70-71.

⁴³ Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 303-04.

⁴⁴ Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 48.

⁴⁵ Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 54.

⁴⁶ Drinkall and Foreman, op. cit. in note 21, 94-95.

⁴⁷ P. Richards, *Byzantine Bronze Vessels in England and Europe* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1980), 19.

⁴⁸ Kevin Leahy, pers. comm.

⁴⁹ Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 3, 51; Brenan, op. cit. in note 2, 62-64. The *Cleatham* bowl is mentioned in Brenan's text, but does not have a catalogue entry or number.

⁵⁰ Kevin Leahy, pers. comm.; J. Hines, 'A new runic inscription from South Humberside, England', *Nytt om Runer*, 4 (1989), 14.

The Group A Manton Warren bowl, which was found by workmen in a sandpit with traces of cloth but apparently no surviving evidence of human remains, was found in a different part of the same parish.

The two hanging bowls from the inhumation cemetery at *Kingston Down* in Kent were found in graves 76 and 205. Brenan gives a detailed account of the two graves.⁵¹ Grave 76 contained, in addition to the hanging bowl, a spearhead, a knife, a seax with a spherical 'pommel' and a bronze buckle. The 'pommel' and the buckle are illustrated; the buckle had a rectangular plate, deeply toothed at the attachment edge, with seven dome-headed rivets. The 'pommel' looks in fact very much like the object discovered by Leeds in a disturbed grave in the 7th- to early 8th-century cemetery of Chadlington, described by him as a bead. The Kingston example was made of silver, set with rectangular cells of white material; the Chadlington one was made of bronze with gold filigree bands around rectangular settings of white material. Leeds quoted a further parallel from Kempston.⁵² Both the buckle and the 'pommel' serve to date this grave to the 7th or early 8th century.

Kingston Down grave 205 is a very famous grave, and the contents hardly need rehearsing here; the remarkable Kingston disc brooch, a gold disc pendant, two silver safety-pin brooches, a wooden box with iron fittings including a lockplate, an iron chatelaine chain, a wheel-thrown biconical pot, a plain glass palm cup, and a tripod-ring bronze bowl, in addition to the hanging bowl. The disc brooch has stylistic parallels with some of the jewellery from Sutton Hoo Mound 1, and probably therefore dates the grave to the first half of the 7th century.⁵³

There is doubt about the exact associations of the hanging bowls and discs found at the cremation/inhumation cemetery of *Loveden Hill* in Lincolnshire. This is partly the result of the damage caused to the site by deep ploughing, and partly the result of Fennell writing the excavation report in the form of a Ph.D. thesis.⁵⁴ Brenan summarizes the rather tortuous arguments concerning the hanging bowls which have arisen over the years; the clearest exposition of the situation is in an unpublished paper by Dickinson.⁵⁵

The smaller Hanging Bowl 1 was found in the same general area as the Group C Hanging Bowl 2, and also contained a cremation.⁵⁶ Hanging Bowl 1 was found within a foot of the head of an inhumation ('Body 2'), and contained the cremated bones of a human and some animals, an iron nail, a partially melted green glass vessel, a fragment of a double-sided bone comb and two pairs of small bronze vandykes. Immediately adjacent to Hanging Bowl 1 was a sword, folded into three,

⁵¹ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 91-92; also see B. Faussett, *Inventorium Sepulchrale* (London, 1856), 55 and 77-79.

⁵² E. T. Leeds, 'Two Saxon cemeteries in north Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, v (1940), 21-30, pp. 25-26.

⁵³ C. Haith, 50-51 in L. Webster and J. Backhouse (eds.), *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600-900* (London, 1991).

⁵⁴ K. R. Fennell, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Loveden Hill (Hough-on-the-Hill), Lincolnshire and its Significance to the Dark Age Settlement of the East Midlands* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nottingham, 1964).

⁵⁵ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 51-54; T. M. Dickinson, 'Metal-vessel cremation burials at Loveden Hill' (unpublished paper, 1977).

⁵⁶ Richards, *op. cit.* in note 47, fig. 54 provides a plan.

with one end touching the rim of the bowl. Lying over both sword and bowl were similarly folded lengths of iron strip which were interpreted as the bindings from a large bucket.

About 6 ft. SW. of 'Body 2' lay an upside-down plough-damaged bronze bowl (Bowl 4), which Fennell thought had been moved by the plough from the vicinity of Hanging Bowl 1. It covered 'material from the bucket complex' including iron suspension rings, large bronze vandykes, and bronze bands with repoussé decoration; and a spearhead, a lump of fused amber-coloured glass, and a sherd of Romano-British Caistor Ware. Also nearby were an iron snaffle bit and possibly a drop handle from a bronze 'pan', but there were no bones, either burnt or unburnt.

When Kerr re-excavated the site in 1972, he found a stone edging to Body 2 and, secondary to it, a cremation urn, both lying on the line between the Hanging Bowl 1 and Bowl 4 assemblages. As Dickinson comments, these 'could have been a significant obstacle' to the movement of the Bowl 4 assemblage. It therefore seems likely that the Bowl 4 assemblage is a separate, although plough-damaged, group. Bone survives well in the soil at Loveden Hill; the group may have been a cremation burial, with a melted glass vessel, the cremated bones having been lost during plough damage, but it is also possible that the melted glass lump was intrusive, and that the Bowl 4 assemblage represents a votive deposit or 'token burial' of which a number were apparently found at Loveden Hill.

The potentially datable elements of the Hanging Bowl 1 assemblage are the green glass vessel, the small vandykes and the iron-bound bucket. If the Bowl 4 assemblage were to be included, we could add (or substitute) an iron- and bronze-bound bucket, Bowl 4 itself, and perhaps the iron snaffle bit and the drop handle from the bronze 'pan'.

The glass vessel was described by Fennell as a palm cup with self-coloured trails, but he illustrated what is in fact a squat jar of Harden's type VIII a iii, with trailed decoration of spirals on the neck and loops on the body. Harden dates squat jars as a group to the 7th century and later but allows that a few may have been made in the last years of the 6th century.⁵⁷

The four small vandykes have been struck from two dies. All have a border of diagonal lines; two have a simple triple-strand twist, and two have a more complicated but rather disjointed interlace. Art-historical arguments would place the manufacture of these vandykes in the 7th century, probably early in the century.

Buckets bound with iron are known from graves from the middle of the 6th century onwards,⁵⁸ but are far more common in graves of the 7th or early 8th centuries.⁵⁹ The bronze bucket fittings from the Bowl 4 assemblage are decorated with repoussé interlace ornament and human figures, all of the parallels of which

⁵⁷ D. B. Harden, 'Glass vessels in Britain and Ireland, AD 400-1100', 132-67 in D. B. Harden (ed.) *Dark Age Britain* (London, 1956), pp. 141-42.

⁵⁸ K. East, 554-96 in Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 27, p.587.

⁵⁹ Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7, 90-91.

date to the 7th century.⁶⁰ Whether these fittings belong to the iron-bound bucket, or represent a separate item in their own right, is immaterial as regards the dating.

Bowl 4 is described by Richards as a 'far from diagnostic' vessel with an out-turned horizontal rim; it seems not to be closely datable.⁶¹ The drop handle from the bronze 'pan' sounds like it may have come from a tripod-ring bowl or a 'Coptic' bowl; the former can be found in later 6th- and 7th-century contexts, and the latter is exclusively 7th-century. Finds of horse-harness buried without horses have hitherto all been of 7th- or early 8th-century date.⁶²

It seems therefore that the Hanging Bowl 1 assemblage should be dated to the early 7th century on the basis of the interlace patterns on the four vandykes, with corroborating evidence coming from the squat jar. The Bowl 4 assemblage may not be relevant, but must also be dated to the 7th century on the basis of the decorated bucket fittings.

The site at *Sleaford*, excavated in 1881, is well known as a late 5th- and 6th-century cremation/inhumation cemetery,⁶³ but there are hints that one or two graves (such as grave 26, with a 'small earring of twisted silver wire') may date from the 7th century. Grave 103, the inhumation with the hanging bowl, is one such grave. It contained, in addition to its bowl, a pair of bronze tweezers and an iron-bound bucket with a bronze rim. East has examined the construction of this bucket and, while she does not attempt to date it, she does give the nearest parallels as the buckets from Melton Mowbray and Taplow.⁶⁴ Taplow is, of course, well-known as a 7th-century burial, and the cemetery at Melton Mowbray, which has produced amethysts and a Dickinson Group 6 shield-boss, must date at least in part from the same century.⁶⁵ Again, then, it is possible that the Sleaford grave 103 bowl was deposited in the 7th century.

The hanging bowl from the cremation/inhumation cemetery of *Chessell Down* on the Isle of Wight was found in grave 26, an inhumation grave, together with 'rims of buckets', a sword, shield, spearhead and knife, ten arrowheads and a straight-sided bucket made entirely from bronze and decorated with incised horizontal lines. The hanging bowl, bronze bucket, sword and some of the arrowheads survive, but there are no clear descriptions or illustrations of the missing objects.

In common with other Isle of Wight cemeteries, Chessell Down is usually thought of as a wholly 5th- and 6th-century cemetery; Arnold goes so far as to say that there is 'nothing dateable to the 7th century from the island'.⁶⁶ This is an odd phenomenon, but a clear pattern, and it is possible that there may have been a

⁶⁰ K. R. Fennell, 'The Loveden Man', *Frühmittelalterliche Stud.*, III (1969), 211-15.

⁶¹ Richards, *op. cit.* in note 47, 394.

⁶² Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7, 101.

⁶³ Meaney, *op. cit.* in note 38, 162-63; G. W. Thomas, 'On excavations in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Sleaford, in Lincolnshire', *Archaeologia*, L (1887), 383-406.

⁶⁴ East in Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 27, 589 and n. 2.

⁶⁵ Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7, 167.

⁶⁶ C. J. Arnold, 'The Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of the Isle of Wight: an appraisal of nineteenth-century excavation data', 163-75 in E. Southworth (ed.) *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries: a Reappraisal* (Stroud, 1990), p. 175. See also K. Ulmschneider, this volume.

reluctance to break the pattern by suggesting that a hard-to-date grave might post-date the 6th century.

Is it possible that Chessell Down grave 26 might be 7th century? The sword has no fittings; there are no extant descriptions or illustrations of the spearhead, the knife or the shield fittings. The dating of the grave must therefore depend on the 'rims of buckets', the arrowheads, and the bronze bucket.

The object or objects which may be represented by the term 'rims of buckets' are uncertain. If they were indeed bindings from a bucket, their dating depends on whether they were of bronze or iron. Bronze-bound buckets are more common in the 6th century, but are occasionally found in the 7th or early 8th; iron-bound buckets are more common in the 7th or early 8th century, but are occasionally found in the 6th. The arrowheads belong to a small group of Anglo-Saxon arrowheads from graves listed by Manley.⁶⁷ These graves appear to cover the entire date-range of Anglo-Saxon furnished burial, with no particular chronological concentrations.

We are left with the bronze bucket. This has vertical sides and a rolled-over rim; the handle is suspended from pierced lugs which rise from the body. The body is decorated with pairs of incised horizontal lines. The dating of the bucket depends on its similarity to the bronze bucket in Chessell Down grave 45; this is a very similar size and shape, also with a rolled-over rim, but with slightly outward-sloping sides and with an elaborately decorated body. Two punches have been used to create a frieze of leopards or dogs chasing deer through trees and other plants; a runic inscription has been scratched over the top of one of the deer. Grave 45 also contains three square-headed brooches, a keystone garnet disc brooch and a crystal ball and perforated spoon and must therefore be dated to the second half of the 6th century.⁶⁸

The bronze bucket from grave 45 is part of a class of late Antique decorated hammered-bronze vessels discussed by Mundell Mango *et al.*,⁶⁹ whose manufacture is dated to the 6th century on art-historical grounds; a 6th-century date is also acceptable on runological grounds for the runic inscription on the Chessell Down grave 45 bucket.⁷⁰ The Chessell Down grave 45 bucket is, however, the only one of this group with a datable context of deposition.

It would seem plausible, then, that Chessell Down grave 26 should, on the grounds of its bucket, also be dated to the 6th century. This *prima facie* case may, however, not necessarily be correct. Firstly, Mundell Mango *et al.* observe that vessels of eastern Mediterranean manufacture with firm associations 'are found in a variety of early to mid-7th-century graves with the exception of the two buckets from Chessell Down', and that their burial is 'restricted to the first half of the 7th

⁶⁷ J. Manley, 'The archer and the army in the late Saxon period', *Anglo-Saxon Stud. Archaeol. Hist.*, iv (1985), 223-35, pp. 232-34.

⁶⁸ C. J. Arnold, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of the Isle of Wight* (London, 1982), 26-28.

⁶⁹ M. Mundell Mango, C. Mango, A. C. Evans and M. Hughes, 'A 6th-century Mediterranean bucket from Bromeswell parish, Suffolk', *Antiquity* LXIII (1989), 295-311.

⁷⁰ Arnold, *op. cit.* in note 68, 60; J. Hines, 'The runic inscriptions of Early Anglo-Saxon England', 437-55 in A. Bammesberger and A. Wollmann (eds.), *Britain 400-600: Language and History* (Heidelberg, 1990), pp. 437-38.

century except for the Chessell Down, Isle of Wight buckets'. These graves seem, therefore, to be exceptional.

Secondly, the conservatism of the late Antique bronze vessel industry is notorious.⁷¹ The only datable vessels of this shape are those with complex decoration, but it is possible that the manufacture of buckets with less complex, and therefore less easily datable, decoration may have continued well beyond the end of the 6th century. In other words, the validity of transferring the art-historical date for the decorated bucket in grave 45 to the undecorated bucket in grave 26 is dubious. Thirdly, we know that exotic vessels, such as the 'Anastasius' dish from Sutton Hoo Mound 1, could be deposited in burials a century or more after their manufacture.

We are thus dealing at Chessell Down grave 26 with a type of object found more commonly in graves of the 7th century, whose manufacture is not closely datable, and which can be found as an antique in graves. To be on the safe side, then, the range of possible dates for grave 26 should include at least the first years of the 7th century.

There are hints that other 7th-century graves remain to be identified within the Chessell Down cemetery. Several beads made of chequered millefiori glass survive in the British Museum's collection.⁷² The Chessell Down beads are apparently the closest parallel known to the Sutton Hoo chequered millefiori inlays, and should therefore perhaps be dated to the early 7th century. Their associations, unfortunately, are unknown.⁷³

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

We have now examined the dating evidence for all datable hanging bowl graves. None of the Group C burials, those which cannot be dated more precisely than to the general date-range of the cemetery in which they were found, have to have been buried before c. A.D. 600, and three of these burials must reasonably have been buried later. In addition, the two less closely datable finds from Loveden Hill could easily date from the 7th century.

Of the Group D burials, Sutton Hoo Mound 1 dates to the first half of the 7th century, as does Kingston Down grave 205. The burials at Banstead Down, Ford, Winchester, Lowbury Hill, Marina Drive, Orsett and Thornham all date to the second half of the 7th century or the early years of the 8th century.

The burials at Benty Grange, Wollaston, Hawnby, Barton-on-Humber, Cleatham and Kingston 76 all certainly date to the 7th or early 8th centuries, but cannot safely be dated with greater precision; the uncertainty over the Hanging Bowl 1 assemblage at Loveden Hill means it should probably be given this date range as well.

⁷¹ Richards, *op. cit.* in note 47, 113.

⁷² M. Bimson and W. A. Oddy in Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 27, 927–28; British Museum accession no. MLA 67, 7–29, 148.

⁷³ Arnold, *op. cit.* in note 68, 49.

Finally, although some may think that the balance of probability lies the other way, there is no compelling reason why the burial of the Sleaford or Chessell Down bowls should not have taken place after c. A.D. 600.

Why start burying hanging bowls at that time?

This question does not require consideration of when, where and by whom hanging bowls were made. If hanging bowls were only manufactured during the years in which they were deposited, why did their manufacture and deposition begin? If they were antiques, why did they only become appropriate for deposition in the 7th century?

Although there is no complete consensus,⁷⁴ the turn of the 7th century has generally been accepted since the 1930s as the point at which a new assemblage of objects begins to be used in graves. The change in objects is most conspicuous in female dress accessories, with the abandonment of most of the familiar elements of 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' costume. Out go long strings of amber and polychrome glass beads, wrist-clasps, girdle-hangers, and almost all brooches; Style I is abandoned; many glass and bronze vessel types go out of use. The new objects which come in to replace these are also well known. The jewellery tends to be small and delicately made, and includes choker necklaces of silver wire slip-knot rings, small monochrome glass beads, amethyst beads, cabochon garnet pendants, disc pendants and hemispherical bulla pendants. Slender linked pins, tiny hooked tags, small round-section annular or penannular brooches and safety-pin brooches replace the earlier dress fasteners; buckles also become very small. Long iron chatelaines, often with amuletic objects attached, replace the girdle-hangers. Where objects are decorated, it tends to be with delicate filigree and cloisonné work, and smoothly interlacing Style II animals. New types of vessel include plain glass palm cups and bronze 'Coptic' bowls. Most of these object types then continue in use until the end of furnished burial in perhaps the 720s.

This new assemblage has become known as the 'Final Phase' assemblage, after the title of the chapter in which Leeds first discussed it as a group.⁷⁵ It has sometimes in the past been described as having a 'Kentish' flavour, but this is due largely to the accident of early discovery in Kent. In fact, the prototypes of this group of objects are found most easily among contemporary (6th- and 7th-century) objects from Byzantium and the eastern Mediterranean, and among earlier Romano-British objects.⁷⁶

Some objects were probably imported from the Mediterranean (large garnets, amethysts, cowrie shells, 'Coptic' bowls). Other objects may have been manufactured as copies or adaptations from Romano-British objects, or may in fact be re-used Roman objects. Linked pins, for example, are not found elsewhere in Europe

⁷⁴ John Hines is a notable sceptic, preferring a somewhat earlier date; see J. Hines, *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the Pre-Viking Period* (BAR British Series, 124, Oxford, 1984), 30–32.

⁷⁵ E. T. Leeds, *Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1936), 96–114.

⁷⁶ Geake, *op. cit.* in note 7, 107–22; H. M. Geake, 'Invisible kingdoms: the use of grave-goods in seventh-century England', *Anglo-Saxon Stud. Archaeol. Hist.*, x (1998), 203–15

and may have been developed from the peculiarly British habit of linking Roman bow brooches with a chain.

Hanging bowls fit well into this 7th- and early 8th-century assemblage. Most studies on hanging bowls have emphasized their descent from Irchester-type bowls, a distinctive British product of the Roman period.⁷⁷ The decoration on hanging bowls commonly includes leaf patterns, peltae, hexafoils and millefiori inlays, all of which have Roman origins. The La Tène-derived spirals which are the most common element in hanging bowl decoration are sometimes termed 'Celtic', but they also occur on 'Trompetenmeister'-type objects in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., and so it is possible that these motifs would also have conveyed a Romano-British flavour to the Anglo-Saxons.

We can see this new 7th- and early 8th-century assemblage very clearly, and we can date it fairly precisely, because it was buried in graves. Furnished graves appear to have been used by the Anglo-Saxons as advertisements of identity — maybe the identity of the deceased, maybe the identity of the mourners — and the elements of this identity could perhaps include wealth, social status, gender, age and cultural identity. It seems likely that cultural identity was one of the things most strongly signalled in the furnishings of a grave; it is, after all, what reaches out to us over the centuries to mark a grave as 'Anglo-Saxon'. Whoever the people were in the 5th century who began to use 'Germanic'-style objects in graves, it seems likely that they wished to advertise a 'Germanic' cultural identity. In the 6th century, people living in the same areas appear to have been signalling an 'Anglian' or 'Saxon' identity.⁷⁸ And in the 7th century, perhaps with an eye on the Roman church or the kings trying to create *imperium*, we see the signalling of *Romanitas* in the grave; a similar trend can be seen in other archaeological and historical sources.⁷⁹ The deposition of hanging bowls in graves can thus be associated with other 7th-century attempts to recreate the power of Rome.

CONCLUSION

Brenan's work has effectively highlighted the problems inherent in a traditional dating of the deposition of hanging bowls. Her dating of deposition, from c. A.D. 550 to c. A.D. 700, is a step in the right direction, but it does not explain *why* hanging bowls began to be deposited in graves. The hypothesis proposed here, that the deposition of hanging bowls in graves should be dated exclusively to the 7th and early 8th centuries, enables the bowls to be incorporated into a coherent framework of 'classicizing' objects often known as the 'Final Phase' assemblage. The bowls may still not date themselves, but if this hypothesis is accepted, they will

⁷⁷ Brenan, *op. cit.* in note 2, 7–21.

⁷⁸ E. T. Leeds, 'The distribution of the Angles and Saxons archaeologically considered', *Archaeologia*, xc1 (1945), 1–106, pp. 78–79; C. Hills, 'The archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England in the pagan period: a review', *Anglo-Saxon England*, viii (1979), 297–329, p. 317; Hines 1984, *op. cit.* in note 74, 275.

⁷⁹ N. J. Higham, *An English Empire* (Manchester, 1995); R. J. Cramp, 'The Anglo-Saxons and Rome', *Trans. Architectural Archaeol. Soc. Durham Northumberland*, III (1972), 27–37; R. J. Cramp, 'Anglo-Saxon and Italian sculpture', *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo*, xxxii (1986), 125–42.

at least date the objects found with them in Anglo-Saxon graves. The reasons behind their deposition may perhaps also now be a little more understandable.

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