

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LV

JANUARY 1961 TO DECEMBER 1961

CAMBRIDGE
DEIGHTON BELL

1962

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



VOLUME LV

JANUARY 1961 TO DECEMBER 1961

CAMBRIDGE
DEIGHTON BELL

1962

*Published for the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (incorporating the Cambs and Hunts
Archaeological Society) by Deighton Bell, 13 Trinity Street, Cambridge*

*Printed in Great Britain at the University Press, Cambridge
(Brooke Crutchley, University Printer)*

CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1961-62</i>	<i>page vi</i>
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1960</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1960</i>	viii
Obituary Notes: L. C. G. Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A. <i>By M. HUTTON and G. H. S. BUSHNELL</i>	I
A Bronze Bowl and Other Vessels from Icklingham, Suffolk <i>By JOAN LIVERSIDGE, F.S.A.</i>	6
Pagan Saxon Burials at Little Paxton, Huntingdonshire <i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A. and T. C. LETHBRIDGE, F.S.A.</i>	8
An Eleventh-century 'Boat-shaped' Building at Buckden, Huntingdonshire <i>By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.</i>	13
The 'Boat-shaped' House in Northern Europe <i>By BRIAN HOPE-TAYLOR, PH.D., F.S.A.</i>	16
The Building of the Sixteenth-century Corpus Christi College Chapel <i>By E. R. SANDEEN</i>	23
Peter Gunning, 1613-1684: Churchman, Scholar, Controversialist <i>By The Rev. H. A. L. JUKES, M.A., F.R.HIST.S.</i>	36
The Significance of the Cambridgeshire Hearth Tax <i>By H. M. SPUFFORD</i>	53
Archaeological Notes <i>By M. D. CRA'STER, GRACE BRISCOE, C. F. TEBBUTT and D. F. RENN</i>	65

AN ELEVENTH-CENTURY 'BOAT-SHAPED' BUILDING AT BUCKDEN, HUNTINGDONSHIRE

C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.

IN the late summer of 1961 the construction of the by-pass on the A 1 past the village of Buckden was started, and by midsummer the whole route had been bulldozed to a depth of about 1 ft. (National 100 m. Grid TL 190675).

I noticed near the south end of the by-pass that a small area of the exposed surface—here a layer of clay—was stained with black wood ash and specks of bright red burnt clay. On scraping this with a trowel it proved to be a very thin layer, except in a narrow section where it went deeper. This soon showed itself to be a beam slot 8-9 in. wide at the top, 6 in. at the bottom and 4 in. deep, dug into the gravel subsoil. It was filled with clay, heavily stained with the burnt particles and charcoal already noted. Among these were larger pieces of carbonized wood and lumps of hard burnt clay that might have been daub.

This beam slot, running almost exactly east and west, was traced for a distance of 46 ft., where it ended abruptly at both ends. A return slot was searched for at the west end without success, but post-holes about 6 in. in diameter soon appeared in a regular line southwards and mainly equidistant. At 15 ft. a similar beam slot was found running eastward parallel to the first, but only for a distance of 41 ft. It was then seen that the two beam slots (representing the north and south walls of a building) were not straight but bulged slightly outwards in a regular curve, giving inside measurements of 17 ft. in the centre and 15 ft. at the ends (see plan, Fig. 1).

Post-holes were also found at the east end of the building, but not so regularly placed as those at the opposing end, and at the south-east corner they appeared to be in some confusion. While a modern pit near the south-east corner may have destroyed some post-holes, there was no doubt that the southern beam slot did stop short of the corner as shown on the plan.

Excavation had reached this point, when the road contractors began to dig out the pedestrian underpass tunnel across the new road 65 ft. south of the southern beam slot (the building lay across the line of both new motor lanes). Thereafter a shuttle service of lorries, carting away excavated material, crossed and recrossed the site for several days. This coincided with hot weather and the flattened surface turned to concrete.

Only later, after heavy rain, was it possible to return and restart trowelling the surface, and by this time the contractors' work on the road surfaces themselves had

HOUSE PLAN—BUCKDEN BY-PASS 1961

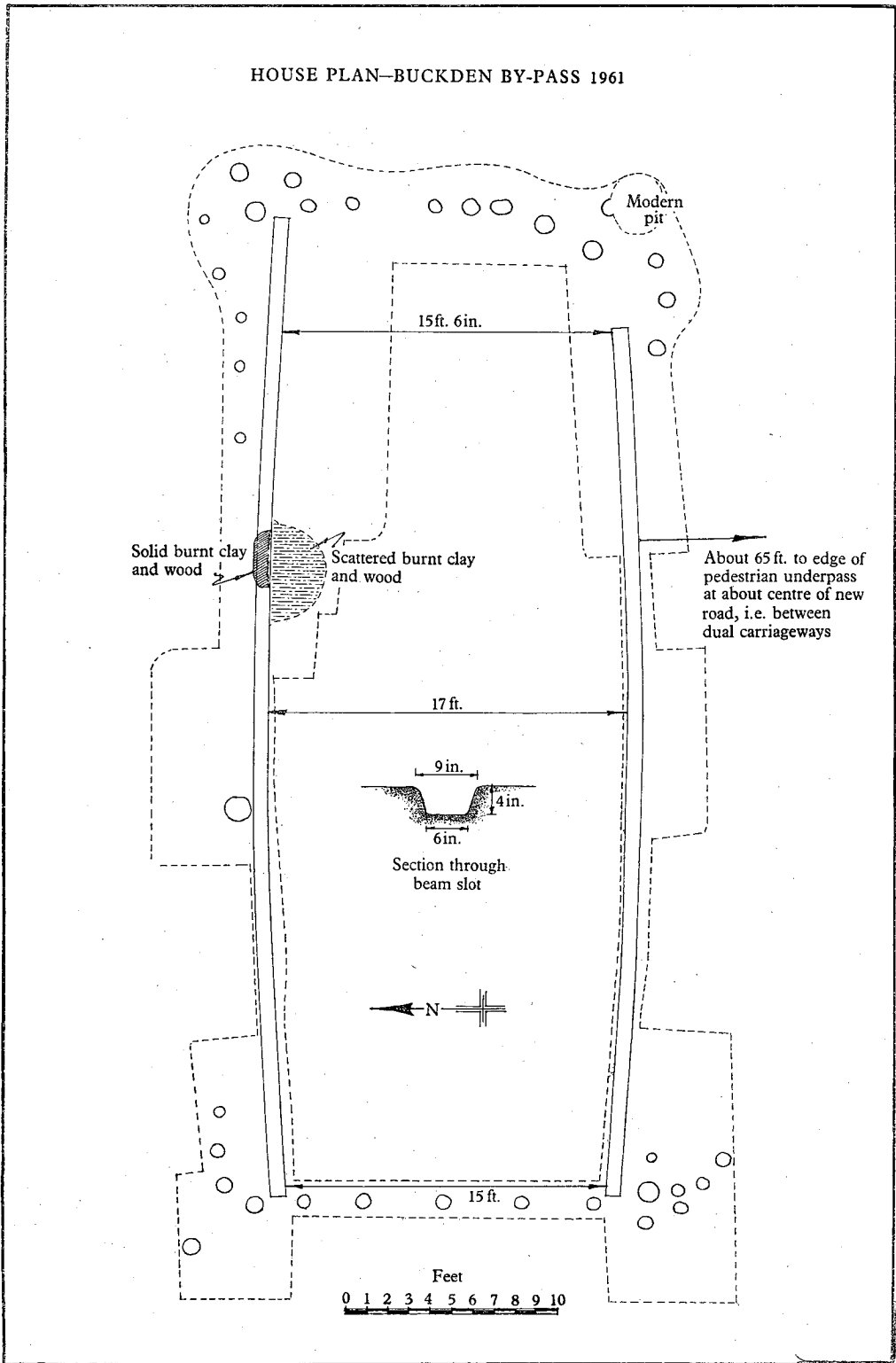


Fig. 1.

advanced almost to the site. In the limited time available, as much of the area as possible was scraped both inside and outside the building. This resulted in finding at three of the corners a number of smaller post-holes (possibly spurs) surrounding a larger one, and another large post-hole near the outside centre of the northern beam slot. The extent of the area examined is indicated on the plan.

No features were found inside the building except near the north wall to the east of the centre. Here was an area of greater concentration of burnt clay and wood than elsewhere, and the beam slot at this point was filled almost solid with similar material. There was however no great depth of burnt matter, and I am inclined to think that it may represent the place where the fire that destroyed the building was fiercest, rather than a hearth.

It is impossible to say with any certainty where the doorway or doorways into the building were. Possibly the wider gap (3 ft. 4 in.) between post-holes at the east end was one, while the shortened beam slot and irregular pattern of post-holes at the south-east corner may indicate some sort of porch.

There was no means of telling how much, if any, of the floor had been scraped away by the bulldozer. What was left was less than 1 in. in thickness and consisted of clay, probably artificially laid, resting directly on the underlying gravel.

Finds in the floor, beam slots and post-holes were unfortunately very scarce and, apart from two short iron nails, consisted of a number of sherds of well-worn pottery. These included one Roman Castor-ware base, several scraps of hand-made black micaceous Saxon pottery, and a rather more numerous group of St Neots-ware sherds. Of these last, two were found in one of the post-holes forming the east end of the building. All the other sherds were found either trodden into the floor or round the post-holes at the east end.

I am very grateful to J. Hurst, F.S.A., and B. Hope-Taylor, F.S.A., who have kindly examined the pottery. They agree that the St Neots-ware group is the latest, and dates from the second half of the eleventh century. This is, therefore, the likely date when the building became disused.

Wooden buildings with bulging or 'boat-shaped' sides are known over a wide area of Europe.¹ Their origins and connections are discussed by Dr Hope-Taylor in the article which follows.

I wish to thank Messrs A. Monk and Co. Ltd. for allowing me to work in the midst of their highly mechanized operations, Messrs E. Rogers and C. Daines for invaluable help in excavation, and Mr S. D. Cox for preparing the plan.

¹ A 'boat-shaped' Saxon house 15 ft. by 50 ft. was found by Group Captain Knocker at Thetford, but is not yet published.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

VOLUME LV
JANUARY 1961 TO DECEMBER 1961

20s. net.

CONTENTS

<i>Officers and Council of the Society 1961-62</i>	page vi
<i>Report of the Council for the Year 1960</i>	vii
<i>Summary of Accounts for the Year 1960</i>	viii
Obituary Notes: By M. HUTTON and G. H. S. BUSHNELL	I
A Bronze Bowl and Other Vessels from Icklingham, Suffolk By JOAN LIVERSIDGE, F.S.A.	6
Pagan Saxon Burials at Little Paxton, Huntingdonshire By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A. and T. C. LETHBRIDGE, F.S.A.	8
An Eleventh-century 'Boat-shaped' Building at Buckden, Huntingdonshire By C. F. TEBBUTT, F.S.A.	13
The 'Boat-shaped' House in Northern Europe By BRIAN HOPE-TAYLOR, PH.D., F.S.A.	16
The Building of the Sixteenth-century Corpus Christi College Chapel By E. R. SANDEEN	23
Peter Gunning, 1613-1684: Churchman, Scholar, Controversialist By The Rev. H. A. L. JUKES	36
The Significance of the Cambridgeshire Hearth Tax By H. M. SPUFFORD	53
Archaeological Notes By M. D. CRA'STER, GRACE BRISCOE, C. F. TEBBUTT and D. F. RENN	65