

# THE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY AT SAXONBURY, LEWES, EAST SUSSEX

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*In 1891, an Anglo-Saxon cemetery was found on the south-west edge of Lewes. Thirty-two or 33 inhumation burials were excavated over a period of several months. They were found in shallow graves about 18 inches deep, cut into the chalk subsoil. Most of the skeletons were oriented east-west, with one or two exceptions. The majority were supine. A large proportion of the grave-goods were weapons, although female ornaments were also found. The material from this site has never been fully described, and is now published for the first time.*

## INTRODUCTION

Information about pagan Anglo-Saxon settlement in Sussex is largely derived from archaeological material in the form of grave-goods, and also from place-name evidence. The excavation of a fifth-century cemetery at Rookery Hill, Bishopstone, East Sussex, revealed an associated settlement.<sup>1</sup>

Known pagan cemeteries in Sussex are, with a few exceptions, grouped around the main rivers, and along the coast from the mouth of the Arun to Pevensey (Fig. 1). The accessibility of the interior of Sussex from the sea at this time is clearly demonstrated.

In addition to the evidence presented by archaeology and place-names, there are also literary references. Among the most important of these is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. In the entry for the year 477, the *Chronicle* mentions the landing of Aelle and his three sons at *Cymenesora*. Both the time and the place of this event have been the subject of critical scrutiny. In his general assessment of 'Dark Age dates,' Morris would bring forward the landing by 20 years to 457.<sup>2</sup> It has also been suggested that *Cymenesora*, traditionally identified with the area around Selsey Bill in West Sussex, is more likely to lie in the area between the Ouse and the Cuckmere in East Sussex. In support of this claim, Welch has pointed out that five of the six well-authenticated fifth-century sites are found between these two rivers.<sup>3</sup> Since the site at Saxonbury is only a mile to the west of the Ouse (Figs. 1 and 10), it has been considered worthwhile to publish a fuller description of the finds from this cemetery than has hitherto been available.

## THE ORIGINAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE FINDS

In 1891, during the building of a house at Kingston, just outside Lewes, Anglo-Saxon graves were uncovered (the house was later called Saxonbury). From the information presented in Sawyer's original report on the findings, it seems that the excavation of the graves was carried out by the workmen responsible for building the house.<sup>4</sup> Although in some instances their progress

<sup>1</sup> M. G. Bell, "Excavations at Bishopstone," *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter *S.A.C.*), Vol. 115 (1977).

<sup>2</sup> J. Morris, "Dark Age Dates," in *Britain and Rome*, edited by M. G. Jarrett and B. Dobson (1966), pp. 145-185.

<sup>3</sup> M. G. Welch, "Late Romans and Saxons in Sussex," *Britannia*, Vol. 2 (1972), pp. 232-7.

<sup>4</sup> J. Sawyer, "Important Discovery of Anglo-Saxon Remains at Kingston, Lewes," *S.A.C.*, Vol. 38 (1892), pp. 177-182.

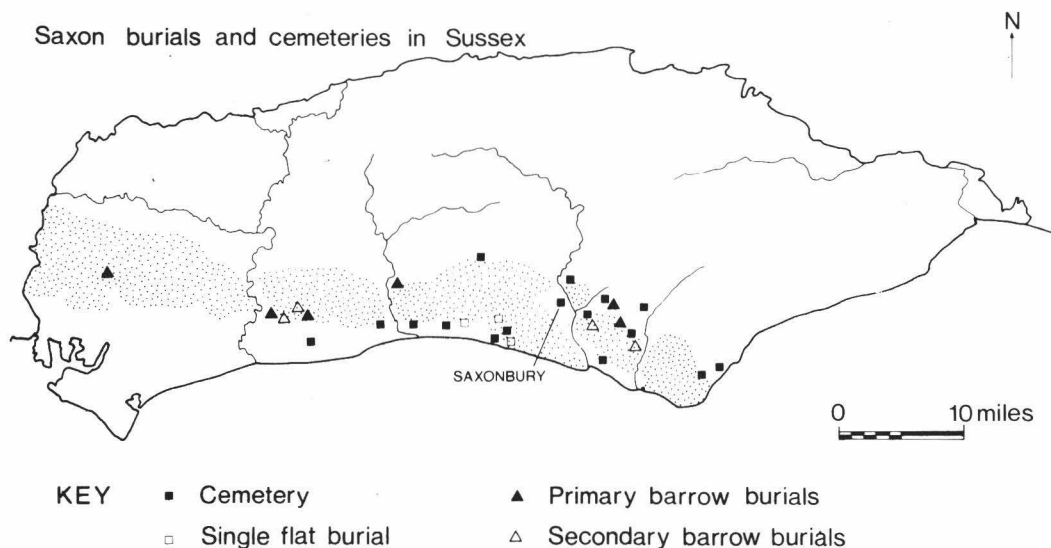


Fig. 1. Distribution of pagan Saxon cemeteries in Sussex

was watched by a representative from the local museum, this was not always the case. As a result, Sawyer's report is often inadequate or ambiguous; this means that it is not possible to sort the objects into grave groups with any degree of certainty. The plan included in the original report shows only seven of the graves and is not to scale.

Further information about the discovery of the cemetery comes from *The Antiquary*, a journal published from 1880 to 1915; however, the reports from this source do not always agree with Sawyer's descriptions. A further record of the finds is the museum accession register at Barbican House, Lewes.

This report takes the form of: (i) the arrangement, where possible, of material into grave groups; (ii) a catalogue, with a description of individual artefacts; and (iii) a short conclusion. A lengthy discussion has been avoided as Mr. M. G. Welch of the Ashmolean Museum is planning to publish shortly a complete account of all pagan Anglo-Saxon material from Sussex. It should be made clear that Mr. Welch and the author have jointly agreed on the grave groups presented here.

### GRAVE GROUPS

Because of the inadequacy of the original records of the site, the following arrangement of material is at best tentative, and should be considered with this in mind. For example, in some cases the description of an object in Sawyer's 1892 report<sup>5</sup> allows reasonable certainty in identification, but in many instances this is not so.

In the following section, some references are mentioned many times. In order to save space, these are listed below, and are then identified by the single letter in brackets at the left.

- (A) J. Sawyer, 'Important Discovery of Anglo-Saxon Remains at Kingston, Lewes,' *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 38 (1892), 177-83.  
 (B) *The Antiquary*, 23 (1891), 186.  
 (C) *The Antiquary*, 23 (1891), 237.

<sup>5</sup> J. Sawyer, *op. cit.*

- (D) *The Antiquary*, 24 (1891), 189.  
 (E) *The Antiquary*, 25 (1892), 4.  
 (F) Accessions Register of Lewes Museum, accession numbers 217-266.  
 (G) *The Antiquary*, 24 (1891), 7.  
 (H) Lewes Museum Catalogue.

*Grave 1*

Skeleton, male. Contracted position, on right side (A). About 18 inches under the turf (B). Oriented W/E (A).

Associations; Small urn or cup, 5 inches high and 4 inches in diameter. Black, without ornament, without rim, bottom flattened, smoothed all over; found between head and arm of the skeleton on side (B). Described in (A) as a small 'earthen' food vessel or urn (the only pottery vessel found), 6 inches high and 6 inches in diameter, black, of medium thickness, globular, without foot or ornament. Fragmentary 3/4 remaining,

A leaf-shaped iron spearhead (A). 14 inches long, between head and arm (B). Referred to on the plan in (A); the pottery vessel is illustrated with grave 4. The accounts in (B) and (C) are consistent.

*Graves 2, 3 and 4*

Skeleton. Found 18 inches under the turf (B). Orientation W/E, with head at the west end (A). Associations; None. Illustrated on the plan in (A).

*Grave 5*

Skeleton, male. Orientation S/W-N/E, with head at the S/W (A).

Associations; Iron shield boss on the centre of the body. Iron knife. Illustrated on the plan in (A).

*Grave 6*

Skeleton, male. Orientation S/N, with head at the south end (A).

Associations; Iron shield boss on the centre of the body. Iron knife.

(N.B. In reference (A), the plan shows graves 1-9, but grave 7 is omitted. This grave, however, is clearly mentioned in other sources, e.g. (H). To avoid confusion, therefore, this grave has been called no. 33 and placed at the end of this list.)

*Grave 7*

Skeleton; skull and upper part of the trunk perished, rest of the skeleton partly so (A). Found to the south-east of the house. Right arm parallel to the body, and left forearm across the chest. Consistent with the plan in (A). Orientation E/W, with head at the west end (A).

Associations; Iron knife near the spot where the hand would have rested (G) *but* iron knife near the spot where the *head* would have rested (A). The plan in (A) shows grave 7 with a knife in the left hand, and is therefore not consistent with its accompanying text. The accounts in (A) and (G) state that the knife was the only relic. Thus (G) is probably the more accurate account, and the word 'head' in (A) could be a misprint.

*Grave 8*

Skeleton, male. Left leg bent, left arm across the chest.

Associations; Iron spear head, bent, long leaf shape; iron knife at side of body (A).

*Grave 9*

Skeleton; skull was somewhat long, brittle, and broken. The left hand was placed across the thigh. The depth of the grave was 18 inches, and the chalk had been scooped out to receive the head. Orientation W/E, with the head at the west end (A).

Associations; Iron knife in the left hand; small, green glass bottle, Roman, with its lip broken; part of an iron knife blade and handle, described as Medieval (A). The last two objects were 'found near' the grave (A); this could mean that the objects were adjacent to the grave, rather than in its fill.

*Grave 10*

Skeleton lying 18-24 inches below the surface in rubble chalk and mould. This grave was 30 yards east of the porch of the house, next to graves 11 and 12. Orientation W/E (A).

Associations; Iron knife (A).

*Grave 11*

Skeleton, male. Stated to be '7 feet long' in (A). Found 18-24 inches below the surface in rubble and chalk, and situated between graves 10 and 12. Orientation W/E.

Associations; Iron sword blade in good condition, handle perished. Three feet long, two inches wide at the hilt and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide at the point. Placed on the left of the skeleton (A), (D). Bronze belt mount, rectangular, placed by the tang of the sword (A). Two bronze strap-ends, also placed by the tang. Two iron spear heads, an iron shield handle with rivets and stud of shield, and an iron knife (A).

*Grave 12*

Skeleton. 18-24 inches below the surface in rubble and chalk, next to graves 10 and 11. Thirty yards east of the porch. Orientation W/E (A).

Associations; Iron knife (A).

*Grave 13*

Skull flattened, lower jaw and teeth in good condition. A little further than skeletons 10-12. Orientation N/W-S/E.

Associations; Bronze rivet and bronze wrist-clasp (half only) found beneath the lower jaw. A circular stud or brooch; a bronze double ring (terret), diameter of the larger ring  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, placed against the left hip.

*Grave 14*

Skeleton entirely perished; near grave 13.

Associations; Iron knife and a small piece of iron like a brooch pin.

*Grave 15*

Skeleton, male; average height. Skull turned to the right and flattened. Teeth of the lower jaw worn. Found 30 yards to the east of the house, parallel with and slightly to the north of graves 10-14. Orientation W/E.

Associations; Iron spear head 7 or 8 inches long, placed on the right of the skull. Socketed (A). Iron arrow head, socketed,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, and placed to the left of the skull. Iron knife

placed to the right of the body at the waist. Iron shield boss with large rivets or studs. Traces of silver or tin on the knob; also traces of wood adhering to the rim and studs; the latter 'clenched' through small 'brass?' rings. Iron shield handle, riveted at each end. Iron rivet outside the left thigh. Bronze ring (A).

*Graves 16, 17 and 18*

Skeleton; orientation W/E.

Associations; None.

*Graves 19 and 20*

Skeletons; one female, one male. Orientation W/E.

Associations; Iron sword with ivory handle; bronze scabbard mount; wood grain of the scabbard visible; about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. Iron socket of spearhead. Iron knife. Iron implement. Bronze brooch  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter; small pattern within a ring (A). Blue glass bead.

*Grave 21*

Skeleton, male, located one or two yards east of grave 15, and parallel with some of the graves 16-20. Orientation W/E.

Associations; Iron spearhead, socketed, 9 inches long; different from those found in graves 1-20. Iron knife found near spearhead. Iron socket of spearhead blade (or ferrule) perished on the right side (A).

*Grave 22*

Skeleton. Further east than graves 16-21. Orientation W/E.

Associations; None.

*Grave 23*

Skeleton, female, head inclined to the right. Further north-east than grave 22.

Associations; Two bronze brooches placed to the left and right of the chin (A). Fragment of bronze dish. Small lead cylinder; perforated at one end for suspension (A). Bronze fragment, thin and bent. Iron knife. Bone gouge (?knife handle), incomplete. Iron stud of shield.

*Grave 24*

Skeleton, male. Found at a depth of two feet, 40-43 yards east of the porch of the house. Parallel with graves 26 and 27, with three feet between each grave. Orientation W/E.

Associations; Iron sword, two feet eleven inches long; traces of grain of wood in two places; found near the left thigh (A). Iron spearhead, long leaf shape, found to the right of the head. Iron knife placed by the right arm. Iron buckle by the centre of the body at the waist. Two small pieces of iron, each two inches long, at right angles to the knife tang.

*Grave 25*

Skeleton, with crossed legs. Female (?) indicated by small bones and thin skull. Found 40-43 yards east of the porch.

Associations; None.

*Grave 26*

Skeleton; female (?) indicated by small bones and a thin skull. Found 40-43 yards east of the porch. Parallel with graves 24 and 27, with three feet between each grave. Orientation W/E. Associations; None.

*Grave 27*

Skeleton; female (?) indicated by small bones and thin skull. Found 40-43 yards east of the porch, parallel with graves 24 and 26. Orientation W/E. Associations; None.

*Grave 28*

Skeleton; female (?) indicated by thin skull and small bones. Found 40-43 yards east of the porch, but situated further east of graves 24-27. Orientation W/E. Associations; None.

*Graves 29 to 32*

No information on the skeletons.

Associations; Two circular bronze brooches, different in design and larger than specimens found earlier (E). Amber bead, large and irregular (A). Blue glass bead, with large waved opal line around it (E); hole 1/8th of an inch diameter (A). Two shells, perforated for use as ornament (A).

*Grave 33*

Skeleton, male (?).

Associations; Piece of iron ten inches long, very corroded; impossible to say whether it was originally a spear or a long knife (G). Portion of a shield (H). Iron ferrule, possibly of a spear (H). The piece of iron mentioned in (G) is said to be "the only relic found with the bones." However, grave 7 is clearly mentioned in (H), and so is its location, i.e. "the Depot Field, S. Lewes." Omitted from the plan in (A).

*Unstratified finds*

A piece of bronze, a Nuremburg token, and three small coins or tokens were found near graves 10-12.

A glass bottle, lip and neck fragment only, near graves 24-28.

A bronze ornament (belt fitting), a bronze buckle (half missing), a dark green glass bead, and a bronze pendant, leaf-shaped with a dragon design were also found. A piece of burnt clay was recovered showing the impression of withies or rods, and six pieces of wire came from an area over the pelvis of either grave 10, 11 or 12.

## THE CATALOGUE

*1. The swords*

Three swords were found (Fig. 2); two are severely corroded, but the third (Fig. 2B), is better preserved, and parts of the scabbard and fittings remain.

Fig. 2A. Corroded iron sword. Length of blade 81.5cm.; width of blade 6.0cm.; length of hilt 12.0cm.

Fig. 2B. Iron sword which has recently been conserved at the Institute of Archaeology by Ms. C. Sease. The blade is corroded (Plate 1), and fragments of the wooden scabbard remain. Small fragments of leather adhere to the wood. The chape is bronze, with a series of incised lines on each arm towards the top, on one surface only (the back is flat and undecorated). These incised lines are gilded (Plate 2). Two rivets are present, one of which shows traces of silvering. A single incised and gilded line runs right round the inner edge of the chape (Plate 2). The scabbard mouthpiece is also bronze and has traces of either silver or tin on its surface (Plate 3). Length of blade 81.0cm.; width of blade 7.0cm.; length of hilt 10.5cm.; length of chape 7.5cm.; width of chape 6.0cm.; width of chape arms 1.6cm.

Fig. 2C. Corroded iron sword. Length of blade 76.5cm.; width of blade 5.6cm.; length of hilt 11.5cm.

## 2. *The brooches*

Plate 4; A pair of cast bronze saucer brooches, each 3.3cm. in diameter. The simple geometric decoration consists of a central dot surrounded by two concentric circles. A series of transverse hatchings encloses the central ornament. The whole design is contained within two more concentric circles. Both brooches show traces of gilding. On one brooch, the complete clasp is present; the pin is made of iron. On the other, the pin is missing, and the part of the clasp that survives is badly corroded.

Plate 5; A pair of cast bronze saucer brooches, each 3.1cm. in diameter. Both have traces of gilding. A single, raised circular border, with light and shade decoration, encloses a zoomorphic pattern, consisting of four animal legs arranged in a circular fashion. The upper part of two of the legs is defined by two curved lines, in two instances by three lines. On one brooch, the whole clasp is present, with pin made of iron; on the other, only part of the clasp remains, and is badly corroded.

Plate 6; A cast bronze saucer brooch, 3.7cm. in diameter. The ornament is geometric, consisting of six spirals arranged around a central circle. Surrounding the whole is a series of transverse hatched lines. Traces of gilding are present. Part of the clasp is present but corroded; the pin is missing.

Plate 6; A cast bronze button brooch, 1.7cm. in diameter. The decoration, rather worn, consists of a stylised human face. The prominent features are the mouth, nose, and arched eyebrows. The mouth is represented by three short, arc-shaped lines. The nose is a single raised line, which broadens considerably at the lower end above the mouth, representing a moustache. At its upper end, the line forming the nose bifurcates, forming the eyebrows. Further arc-shaped lines reinforce the shape. Short diagonal lines are present at each side of the face, between mouth and eyebrows. Faint traces of gilding remain. Part of the bronze clasp at the back survives, but the pin is missing.

## 3. *The wrist clasp*

Plate 7; Half a bronze wrist clasp, with chip carved decoration. Traces of gilding remain on the upper surface. The design on this surface is symmetrical. In the centre, next to the fastening, is a series of four transverse hatchings. Similar designs exist at each end of the clasp. An arc of spiral decoration partly encloses stylised animal heads.

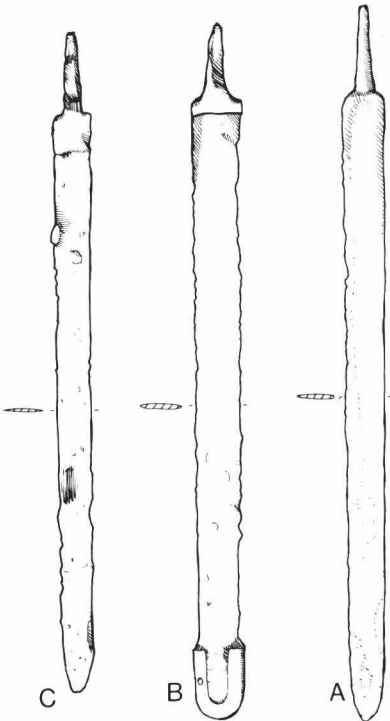


Fig. 2. Saxonbury. The three swords (xl/8)

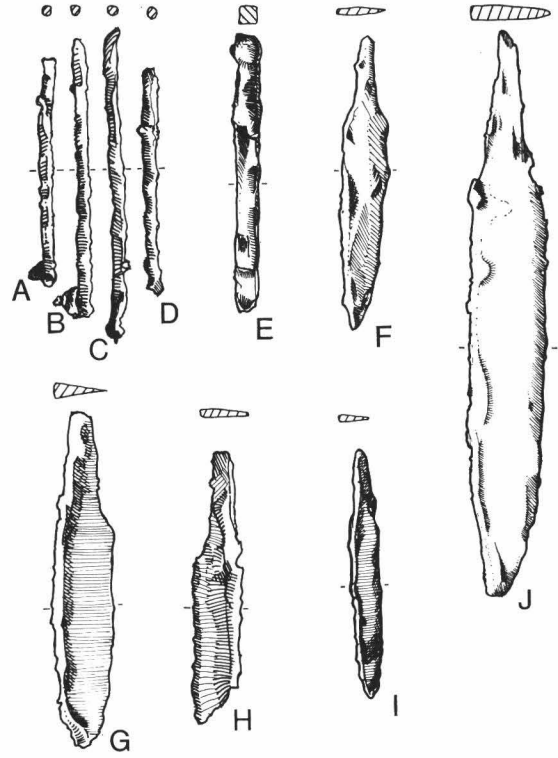


Fig. 4. Saxonbury. Iron objects (xl/4)

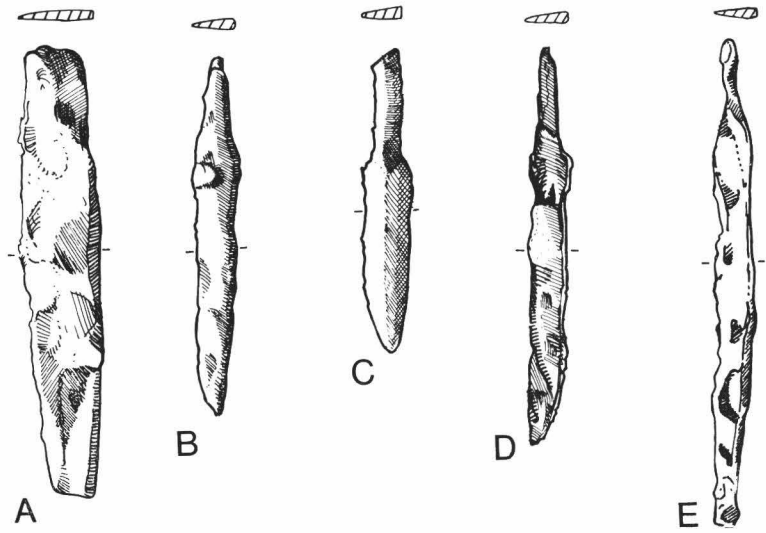


Fig. 5. Saxonbury. Iron knives (xl/4)



There are two small holes near the edge opposite the clasp. The design in this area is worn and corroded, and thus it is not possible to discern any detail. On the underside is a small hook which forms part of the clasp.

#### 4. *The belt mount*

Plate 8; Rectangular bronze belt mount; traces of silvering remain on the upper surface. At each end there is a row of three convex studs joining the back plate to the upper surface. The studs are at a slightly lower level than the central panel. There is another stud visible only from beneath. The decoration on the central panel is very simple. It consists of a series of grooves; on the flat surfaces between the grooves are rows of small indentations and a zig-zag design in the centre.

#### 5. *The strap ends*

Plate 9; Two similar leaf-shaped bronze strap ends. The smaller has traces of silvering. Running down the centre of each is a raised spine with decoration consisting of shallow serrations. The end which would have been attached to the strap divides into two flanges, pierced by two convex, circular studs. Lengths; 6.3cm. and 5.3cm., respectively.

#### 6. *The buckles*

Three buckles were found at Saxonbury; two iron, one bronze. The iron buckles are badly corroded.

Plate 10; Bronze buckle; oval loop, tongue missing. Length 3.8cm.

Not illustrated; Iron buckle; rectangular to oval loop. Rectangular plate; tongue broken. Length 3.5cm.

Not illustrated; Iron buckle; oval loop, straight tongue. Length 2.5cm.

#### 7. *The seax*

Fig. 4J; Iron seax with short blade. Length 29.5cm.

#### 8. *The iron knives*

About 30 knives were recovered from the Saxonbury cemetery. Those drawn and described are the best preserved, but all are badly corroded. The knives vary in shape and size, but all have blades which are triangular in section.

Fig. 4F; Tanged iron knife. Length 20.5cm.

Fig. 4G; Tanged iron knife with curved back. Length 23.5cm.

Fig. 4H; Tanged iron knife with broken blade. Length 19.0cm.

Fig. 4I; Tanged iron knife with straight back. Length 17.5cm.

Fig. 5A; Fragment of iron, probably knife blade. Length 26.5cm.

Fig. 5B; Tanged iron knife. Length 21.0cm.

Fig. 5C; Tanged iron knife with broken blade. Length 18.0cm.

Fig. 5D; Tanged iron knife with curved back and straight cutting edge. Length 23.0cm.

Fig. 5E; Tanged iron knife. Length 29.0cm.

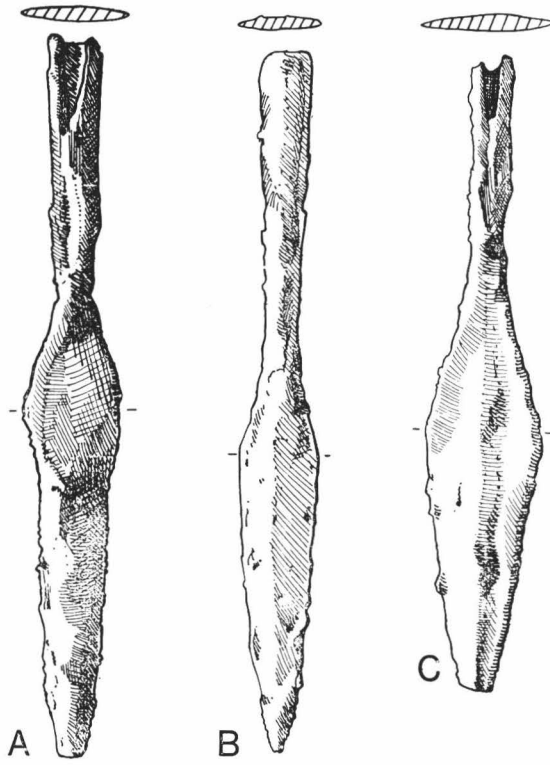


Fig. 6. Saxonbury. Spearheads (xl/4)

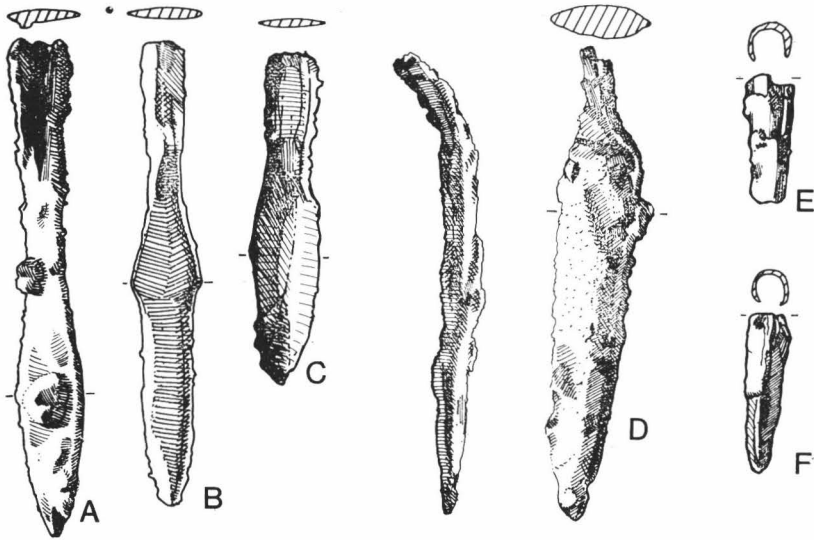


Fig. 7. Saxonbury. Spearheads, A-D; spearhead sockets, E, F (xl/4)

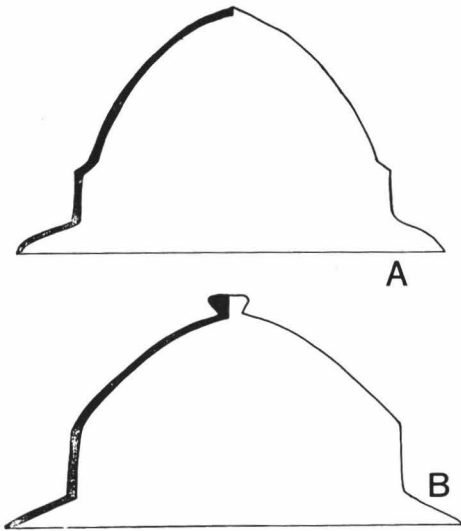


Fig. 8. Saxonbury. Shield bosses (x2/5)

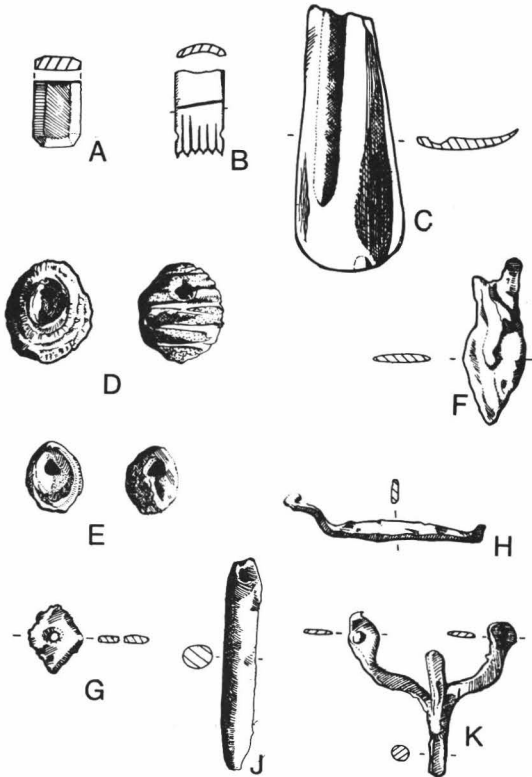


Fig. 9. Saxonbury. Miscellaneous finds. A; Ivory object. B; Bone weaving comb. C; Bone object. D, E; Pierced shells. F; Iron arrowhead. G, H, K; Iron objects. J; Cylindrical lead weight. All x  $\frac{1}{4}$ , except D, E, F, which are  $\frac{1}{2}$

### 9. *The spearheads*

Seven iron spearheads are recorded in the museum register. Of these, Swanton has described four.<sup>6</sup>

Fig. 6A; Spearhead with angular blade and cleft socket. Swanton type H3. Length 41cm.

Fig. 6B; Narrow, leaf-shaped blade with welded socket. Swanton type K2. Length 40cm.

Fig. 6C; Large, leaf-shaped spearhead with cleft socket. Swanton type C2. Length 36cm.

Fig. 7A; Leaf-shaped spearhead with cleft socket. Possibly Swanton type C1. Length 33cm.

Fig. 7B; Spearhead with angular blade and a concave curve above the angle. Cleft socket. Probably Swanton type HI. Length 31cm.

Fig. 7C; Leaf-shaped spearhead. Probably Swanton type C1. Length 22cm.

<sup>6</sup> M. J. Swanton, "A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Spear Types," *British Archaeological Reports*, no. 7.

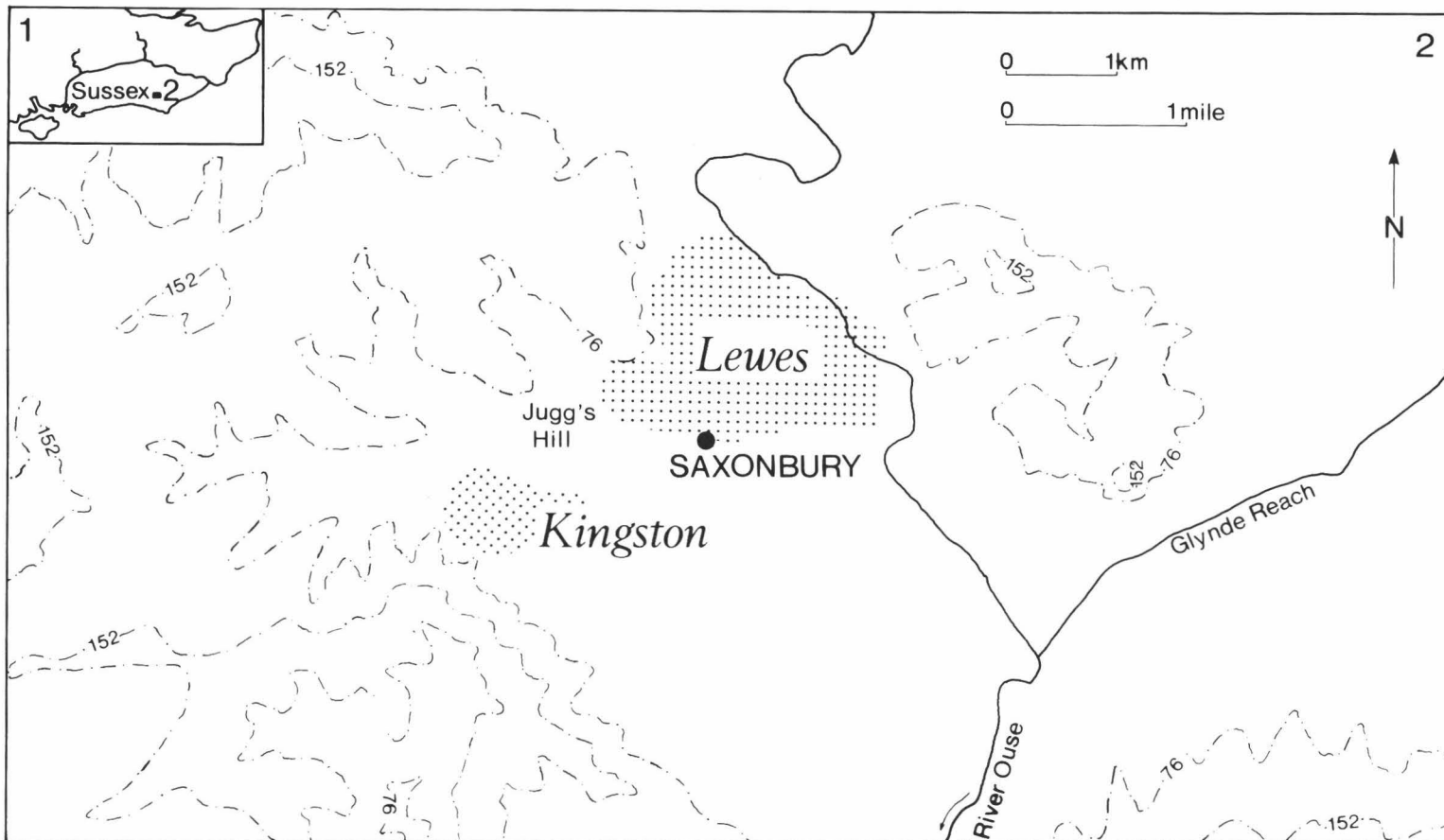


Fig. 10. Saxonbury. Site location. Contours in metres

Fig. 7D; Spearhead, very corroded. Bent before corrosion set in. No indication of type.  
Length 31cm. approximately.

There are in addition the following objects;

Fig. 7E; Iron socket, probably of spear. Length 7cm.; diameter 2cm.

Fig. 7F; Iron socket, probably of spear. Length 8.5cm.; diameter 1.5cm.

Not illustrated; Iron ferrule, probably of spear. Diameter 4.5cm.

Not illustrated; Fragment of iron, possibly socket of spear.

#### 10. *The shield bosses and shield fittings*

Three shield bosses were found. They are all in an extremely corroded and fragmentary state. One is almost unrecognisable and is therefore not drawn. The other two are illustrated by an outline drawing.

Fig. 8A; Iron shield boss; low, conical cone.

Fig. 8B; Iron shield boss; low, flat, carinated cone.

Not illustrated; Very corroded, fragmentary iron shield boss.

Not illustrated; Fragment of iron with rivet. Probably part of strap from shield. Length 7.0cm.; width 4.0cm.

Not illustrated; Iron strap of shield boss. Rivet at each end. Length 9.5cm.; width 2.0cm.

Not illustrated; Iron strap of shield boss, with two rivets. Length 16cm.

Not illustrated; Iron strap of shield boss, with two rivets. Length 13cm.

Not illustrated; Iron strap of shield boss. Rivet at each end. Length 11.5cm; width 2.0cm.

Not illustrated; Six iron rivets.

#### 11. *The weaving comb*

Fig. 9B; Fragment of bone weaving comb. Made from a curved piece of bone. Slight grooves on the convex surface extending from the teeth. One oblique groove in the centre of the convex surface. Two deep indentations on either side above the point where the teeth would have begun. Teeth missing. Width 2.6cm.

#### 12. *The glass*

One glass bottle and three fragments were discovered. One of these fragments has since been lost.

Plate 11; Small Roman glass bottle. The body is square with rounded corners, and there is a slight dimple in the base. The neck is round with a flared lip, slightly chipped in one place. The bottle is light green with partial silvery patination. Height 3.8cm.; width 2.5cm.

Not illustrated; Fragment of greenish glass; base of a small vessel.

Not illustrated; Fragment of greenish glass. Part of the neck of a small vessel. Diameter of neck 2.7cm.

#### 13. *The pottery*

Two pottery vessels are mentioned in the original museum catalogue; both are now missing.

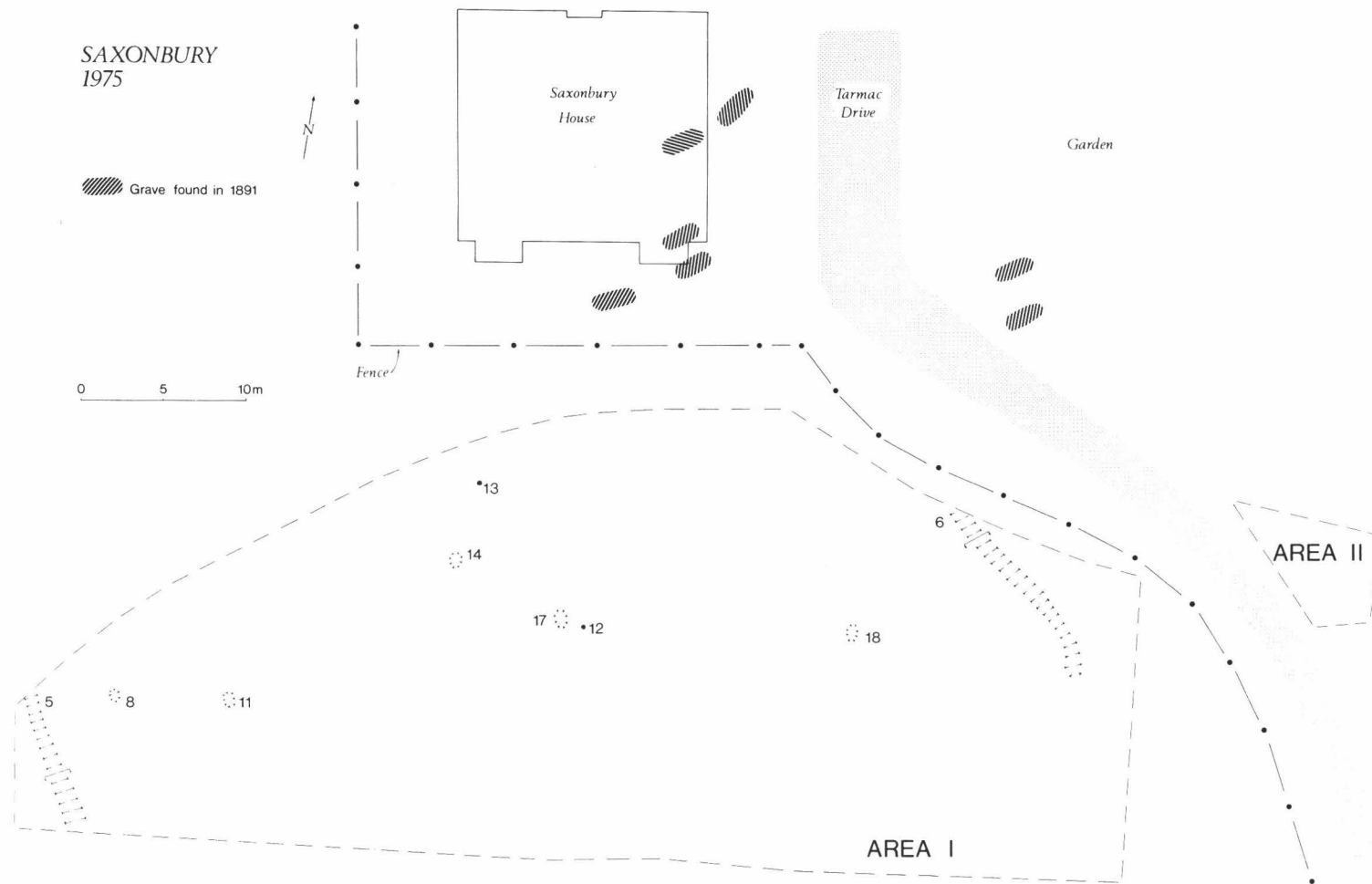


Fig. 11. Saxonbury. Plan of the 1975 excavations

14. *The beads*

Plate 12, left; Amber bead in the form of an irregular cube. Maximum dimension 1.5cm.; diameter of hole 0.3cm.

Plate 12, centre; Pale blue glass bead; barrel-shaped. Diameter 2.0cm.; diameter of hole 0.2cm.

Plate 12, right; Dark blue glass ring with white serpentine decoration around the outside. Diameter 2.0cm.; diameter of hole 1.0cm.

15. *The shells*

Fig. 9D; Pierced shell. Length 3.0cm.; width 2.0cm.

Fig. 9E; Pierced shell. Length 1.8cm.; width 1.2cm.

16. *Boars' tusks*

Seven boars' tusks of varying size were found at Saxonbury.

17. *Skeletal material*

In the museum catalogue, two adult human skulls and a jaw fragment are listed. Only one of these skulls can now be traced.

18. *Miscellaneous objects*

Not illustrated; 35 miscellaneous iron objects, corroded beyond recognition. 21 of these may be knives.

Fig. 9G; Diamond-shaped iron object, with hole in the centre. Length 4.0cm.; width 2.0cm.

Fig. 4, A-D; Four iron rods of irregular cross-section. Dimensions as follows;

A; Length 11.5cm.; diameter 0.4cm.

B; Length 14.0cm.; diameter 0.4cm.

C; Length 15.5cm.; diameter 0.4cm.

D; Length 12.0cm.; diameter 0.4cm.

Fig. 9K; Iron object, perhaps part of the fitting on the side of a bucket.

Not illustrated; Curved iron fragment, corroded.

Fig. 9F; Socketed iron arrowhead. Length 4.5cm.

Fig. 9H; Iron object, probably a latchlifter. Length 10.5cm.

Not illustrated; Thin sheet of bronze, pressed flat. Also three small bronze fragments.

Plate 13; Bronze object in two pieces. Each fragment has two holes. Possibly part of a buckle (medieval).

Plate 14; Bronze terret, with wear facet inside the larger ring. Length 6.6cm.

Not illustrated; Heavily tinned bronze buckle with numerous scratch marks. Length 4.3cm.; width 2.5cm. (medieval).

Fig. 9J; Narrow, cylindrical lead weight, with hole at one end for suspension. Length 5.0cm.; width 0.5cm.

Fig. 9C; Bone handle, possibly of a knife or similar object. Curved on the outside surface, and has a groove on the inside surface (to contain the tang?).

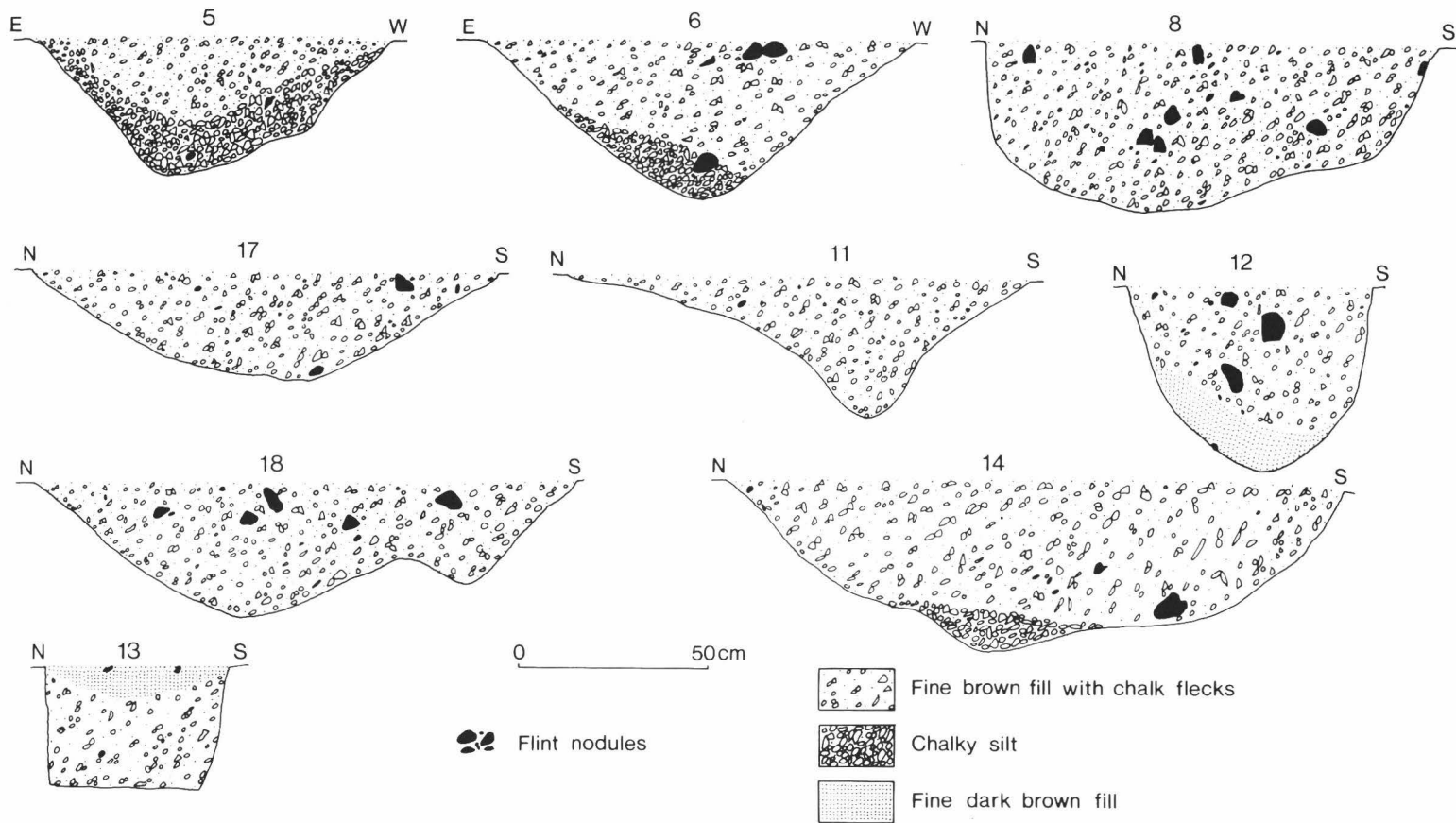


Fig. 12. Saxonbury. Sections



Fig. 9A; Piece of ivory. One surface flat; the other surface has two chamfered edges. Length 3.2cm; width 2.4cm.

Not illustrated; (Surface find). Razor (Medieval).

### CONCLUSIONS

On typological grounds, it would seem that the majority of the grave-goods belong to the sixth century. Some objects are decorated with Style I ornament, e.g. the wrist-clasp (Plate 7), and the zoomorphic saucer brooches (Plate 5), but none show Style II decoration, which would indicate a later date. The shield bosses are of the low cone carinated type, considered by Evison<sup>7</sup> to belong to the sixth century. One of the knives (Fig. 5D) possibly belongs to Bohner's type C, however; the cutting edge is practically straight and the back of the blade has a pronounced curve to the point. This is a type commonly found in seventh century graves.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the Saxonbury seax does not appear to have the tapered blade form ascribed to sixth century types,<sup>9</sup> and may thus be later. These two objects indicate that, although of predominantly sixth century date, the cemetery continued in use into the seventh century.

### *Acknowledgements*

I should like to thank the following for their assistance; Miss Fiona Marsden and Mr. Simon Garrett, Curator and Deputy Curator, respectively, of Barbican House Museum, Lewes; Mr. Con Ainsworth, Mr. Eric Holden, Mr. Martin Bell, Mr. James Graham-Campbell, Mrs. Lesley Webster, Miss Cap Sease, Mr. Philip Stanley, and Mrs. R. Jupe.

## REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS CARRIED OUT ADJACENT TO THE CEMETERY AT SAXONBURY, 1975

*by Owen Bedwin*

The Anglo-Saxon cemetery found in 1891 was not methodically explored.<sup>10</sup> Only those burials in the way of building operations were investigated, and thus the full extent of the site was not established. The area surrounding the house and garden has therefore always been considered of potential archaeological interest as it might contain further graves or a settlement site.

Plans for the construction of the Lewes by-pass included a link road across land immediately to the south of Saxonbury House, and it was decided to excavate a strip of land, 70m. by 20m., where the line of the road passes closest to the house (Fig. 11).

The excavated area was on the south-facing slope of a low chalk ridge running east-west. Excavation simply involved stripping topsoil down to the underlying chalk by machine. The chalk was then trowelled clean, and the features cut into it excavated. The results are shown in Fig. 11. Area II was barren, and Area I contained very few features, to none of which can be assigned a date earlier than medieval. The two narrow ditches, features 5 and 6, both contained

<sup>7</sup> V. I. Evison, "Sugar Loaf Shield Bosses," *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 43 (1965), pp. 38-96.

<sup>8</sup> S. C. Hawkes, "The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Polhill," in *Excavations in West Kent, 1960-70*, edited by B. Philp (1973), pp. 154-172.

<sup>9</sup> S. C. Hawkes, *op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> J. Sawyer, *op. cit.*

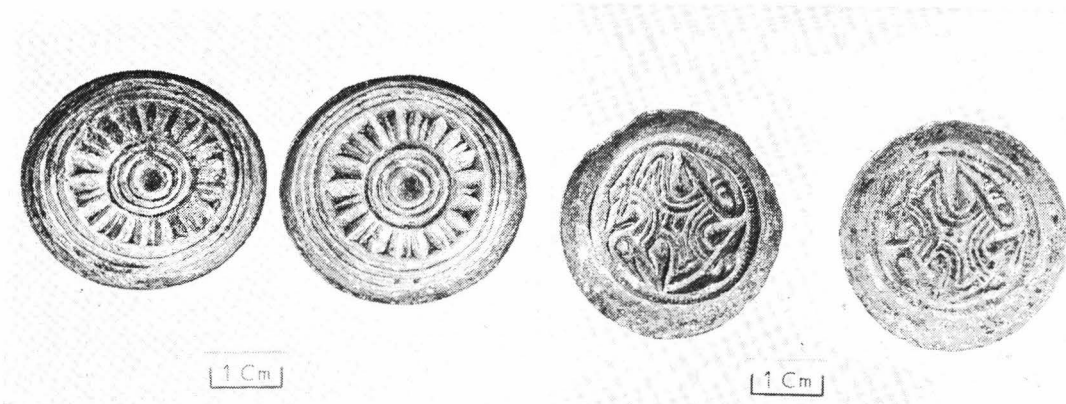


PLATE 4

PLATE 5

Plate 4. Saxonbury. Pair of bronze saucer brooches with geometric decoration (Photo: R. Jupe)  
 Plate 5. Saxonbury. Pair of bronze saucer brooches with zoomorphic decoration (Photo: R. Jupe)

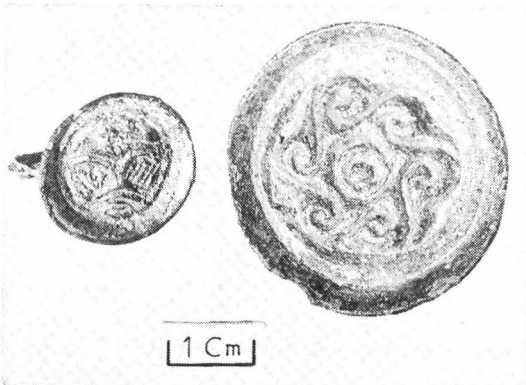


PLATE 6

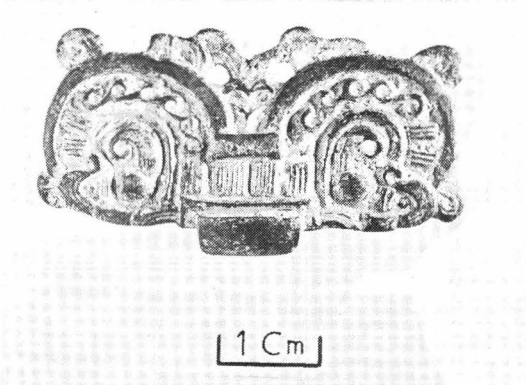


PLATE 7

Plate 6. Saxonbury. Bronze button brooch (left) with stylised human face. Large bronze saucer brooch with spiral decoration (Photo: R. Jupe)  
 Plate 7. Saxonbury. Bronze wrist clasp (Photo: R. Jupe)

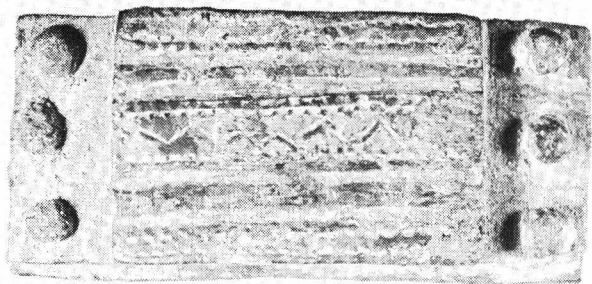


PLATE 8

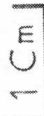


PLATE 9

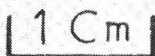
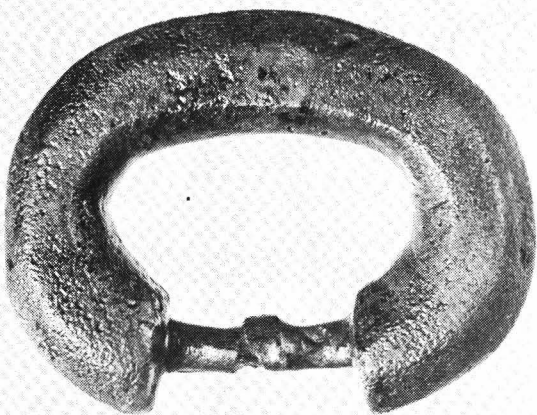


PLATE 10

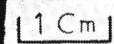
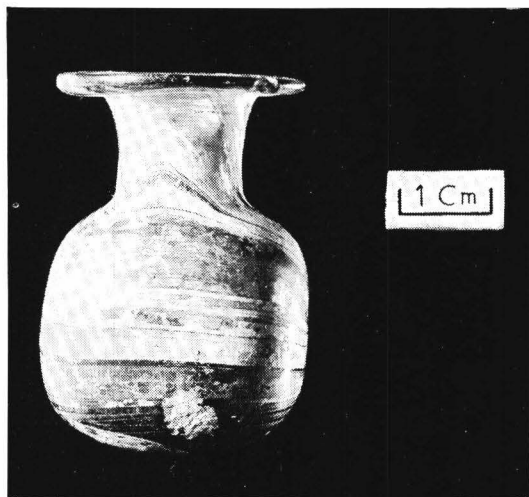
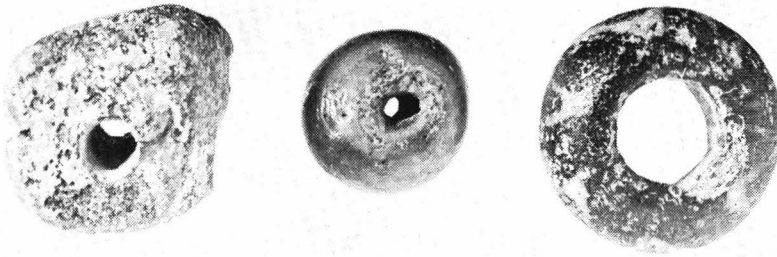


PLATE 11

- Plate 8. Saxonbury. Bronze belt mount (Photo: R. Jupe)  
Plate 9. Saxonbury. Bronze strap ends (Photo: R. Jupe)  
Plate 10. Saxonbury. Bronze buckle, tongue missing (Photo: R. Jupe)  
Plate 11. Saxonbury. Roman glass bottle (Photo: R. Jupe)



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PLATE 12

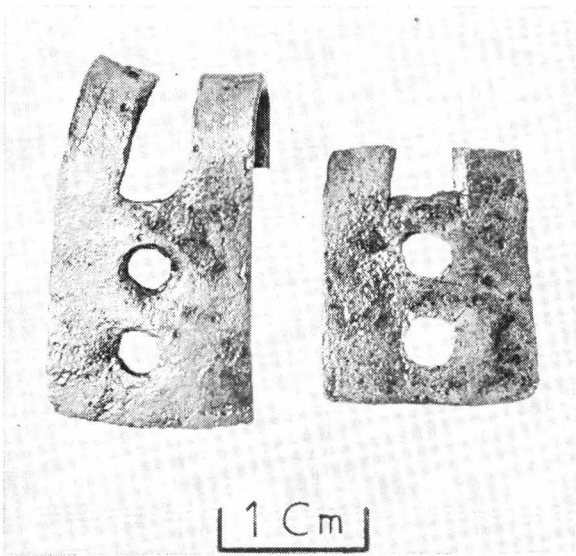


PLATE 13

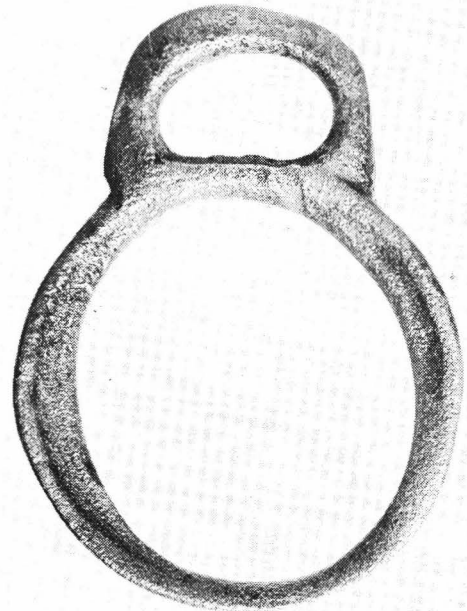


PLATE 14

Plate 12. Saxonbury. Beads. Left; amber. Centre; translucent light blue glass. Right; dark blue glass with white serpentine decoration round the outside (Photo: R. Jupe)

Plate 13. Saxonbury. Bronze object in two pieces; possibly part of a buckle (Photo: R. Jupe)

Plate 14. Saxonbury. Bronze terret ring (Photo: R. Jupe)