

# The Wymington Hoard and other Hoards and Finds of the Late Bronze Age from the South Midlands

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## SUMMARY

*A catalogue with illustrations of the hoard of Late Bronze Age axes found at Wymington, Bedfordshire, in 1860 is accompanied by a discussion of the hoards of a wide area of eastern and central England. Opportunity has been taken also to illustrate a number of previously unpublished single finds, and to draw attention to a now lost sword from Turvey.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the fourth volume of the *Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal*, the present author's note on 'Bronzes in Bedford Museum' drew attention to the Late Bronze Age hoard found at Wymington.<sup>1</sup> This hoard is the only substantial hoard of the Late Bronze Age found in Bedfordshire but apart from the brief reference there and some terse earlier citations, it has had only passing notice in the literature. No illustrations have been given with the exception of a photograph which included six of the axes. This short account hopes to present the known items, with drawings of each, and to give a summary of their museum location and acquisition.

The paper also offers a short discussion of the context of the hoard, though the author is not a specialist in the study of Bronze Age metalwork. The known items of Late Bronze Age metalwork from the east Midlands were briefly surveyed in the discussion appended to the illustration of the New Bradwell hoard in 1969.<sup>2</sup> Since that was written, one further hoard has been found: at Aylesbury in 1973.<sup>3</sup> Despite the paucity of other new material, examination of the basements of a number of museums between 1968 and 1975 has unearthed several previously unpublished items, and these have been illustrated here for the first time (figs 5 and 6). From a wide area, covering the area within the basin of the rivers of the Wash, an attempt has been made to provide a map of the Late Bronze Age finds (fig 1), showing the regional setting of the Wymington hoard.

## THE WYMINGTON HOARD

The previous note expressed the hope that more axes from the Wymington hoard might be located, but the fifty then located have remained the number known from the find. Both Sir John Evans and Thomas George wrote of its size as "about sixty axes" but the researches of the present author have revealed only thirty-one extant and another nineteen known from casts. These were all known in 1969 when it was observed that as with so many archaeological finds made in the nineteenth century, the Wymington hoard is both scanty in its original provenience and broken in its current location.

The earliest reference to the find was made by Sir John Evans in *Ancient Bronze Implements* who referred to a hoard found on 'Manor Farm' of about sixty axes, some of which were in his possession.<sup>4</sup> Evans did not say how many axes he had, but two (1 and 2) were subsequently presented by his son, Sir Arthur Evans, to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. These two may have been all that Evans once possessed as neither the City Museum, St Albans, nor the British Museum, London, both of which contain items from Sir John Evans' collection, including Bedfordshire material, have any axes from the hoard.

The hoard was next referred to by Thomas George, curator of Northampton Museum between 1885 and 1921, when writing about the prehistoric material from Northamptonshire for the *Victoria County History* in 1902.<sup>5</sup> However, he does not mention that Northampton Museum have two axes (3 and 4) from the hoard. He gives the find spot as 'Mr Goosey's Farm', which was the same place as Manor Farm: various editions of local directories record Edward Goosey as tenant of Manor Farm, Wymington, between 1854 and 1877. The farm is situated near to the loop of the Midland Railway's Leicester to Bedford line opened in 1857. An approximate National Grid Reference is Area SP 963637.

If George, knowing of the hoard in 1902 or just before, did not mention these two axes (3 and



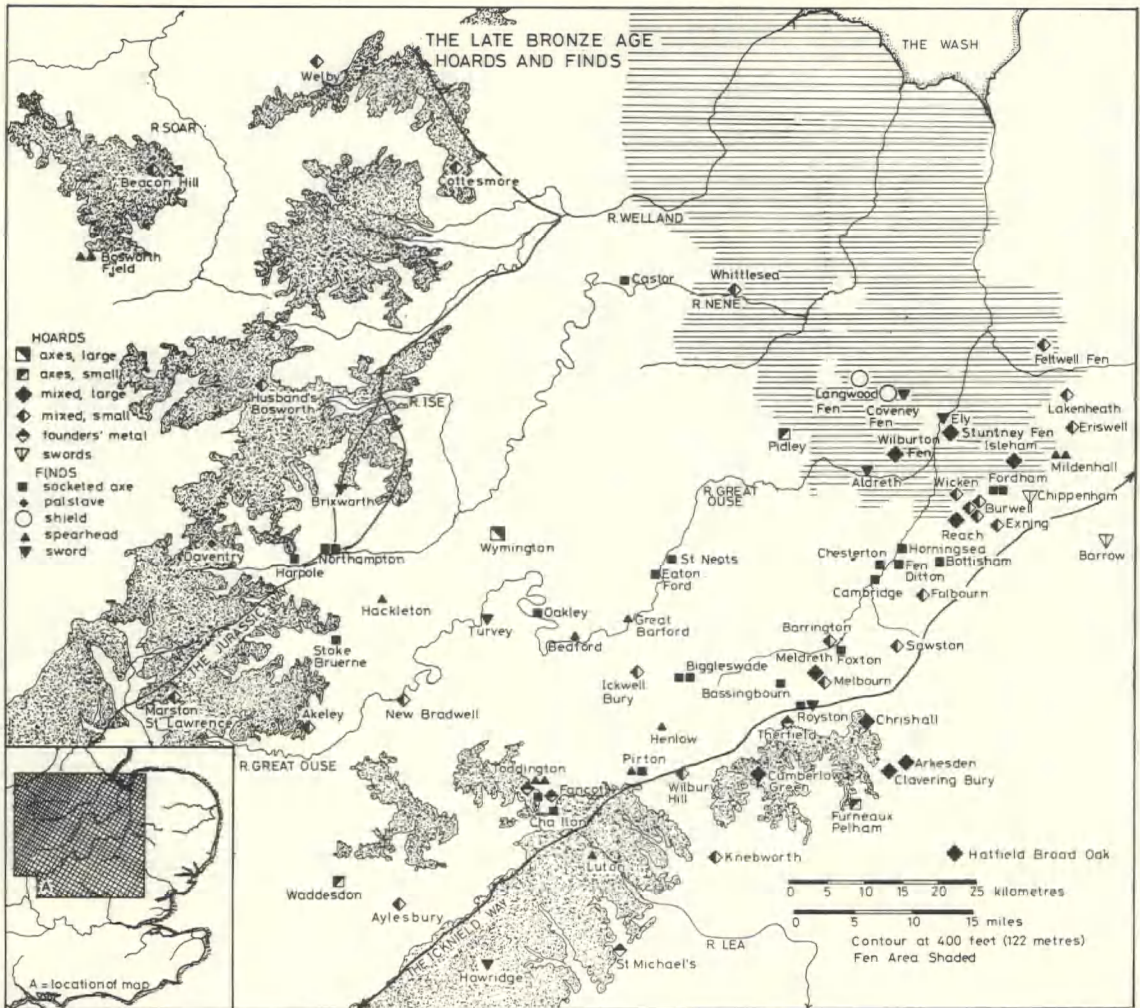


Fig 1 The context of the Wymington hoard. Finds and hoards of the Late Bronze Age from the Area of the Rivers of the Wash (the East Midlands and Cambridgeshire). The background shows physical features and prehistoric communications.

4) it can be assumed that they were not part of the collections of Northampton Museum until the early years of this century or later. The hoard was then unknown to Worthington G. Smith who contributed the section on 'Early Man' to the *Victoria County History of Bedfordshire*.<sup>6</sup>

The first mention of the Wymington hoard by any writer in Bedfordshire would seem to have been the Rev P.G. Langdon who illustrated six axes on the Bronze Age plate of the *Bedford Modern School Museum Guide*.<sup>7</sup> These axes can be identified and include two in Bedford Museum without accession numbers (11 and 12) as well as

four of these which have been placed in the accessions book (5, 6, 8, 9). Two other axes from the hoard are also in Bedford Museum (7 and 10). Langdon, however, seems to have been unaware that a great deal of the hoard was then in the basement of Bedford Town Hall, in the collections of the old Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute. How many axes the Institute once had is not known, but in 1931, casts of thirty-eight were made by Mr F.G. Howard for the then curator of Luton Museum, C.E. Freeman. For many years these casts formed the principal exhibit of bronzes in Luton Museum. When the



collections of the Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute were broken up in 1959, Freeman was able to acquire nineteen of the originals and some of these are now exhibited in the Bronze Age exhibition of Luton Museum.

The whereabouts of the remainder of the axes are unknown; they can be presumed lost or acquired by miscellaneous collectors. Thus Mr Howard's casts assume considerable importance. Amongst the supplementary casts are three which match originals in Luton Museum (20, 26 and 28). Comparison shows the quality of Mr Howard's work, and this permits figures to be made of the nineteen known only from casts (32-50) together with the nineteen originals in Luton Museum (13-31).

Figures 2 to 4 illustrate the known axes, either originals (1-31) or casts (32-50). From the recorded 'about sixty', it has been possible to trace fifty in four museums. It is possible that these are all which were found, more probable that they are the only ones now extant, but not absolutely certain that these represent the total once known from the hoard. To assist in a greater knowledge of the hoard the known have been drawn and illustrated. This may perhaps elicit knowledge of some others. Their context must now be examined.

## LATE BRONZE AGE HOARDS AND FINDS

The Wymington hoard, whether of fifty axes or of sixty, is the largest group of Late Bronze Age finds from the south Midlands. As a concentration it bears comparison with the large hoards of Cambridgeshire and the eastern edge of the Chilterns.<sup>8</sup> In contrast the material from the western area of figure 1 is more sparse, hoards are small and individual finds more frequent.

Individual finds very much characterise the known Late Bronze Age metalwork of the Nene valley: Wymington as a large hoard is in contrast. One small hoard is that from Thenford Hill Farm, Marston St Lawrence,<sup>9</sup> which consists of three complete spearheads, two fragmentary spearheads, a ferrule, two swords and a ring. The other Northamptonshire finds, however, are individual pieces: a sword from Brixworth<sup>10</sup> and a palstave from Daventry<sup>11</sup> have been figured elsewhere. This paper illustrates a number of other items (fig 5). These include socketed axes from Castor (fig 5b), Martin's Brickpit, Dallington, near Northampton where two axes have been found (fig 5c-d), Harpole (fig 5f) and Stoke Bruerne (fig 5g). The

chisel (fig 5e) is without exact provenience, but is an unusual item worthy of note.

Some small hoards from the area beyond the Welland may also be noted: those from Cottesmore, Welby and Husbands Bosworth. The last contained three socketed axes, three socketed gouges, a ferrule and two spearheads.<sup>12</sup> The Welby hoard included fragments of a cross-handled bronze bowl, harness mounts, a small bronze cup, a sword with a pommel, a spearhead and three socketed axes.<sup>13</sup> The hoard from Cottesmore consisted of a fragment from a sword blade, three socketed gouges, a narrow socketed chisel and two fragmentary and two complete socketed axes.<sup>14</sup> A single socketed axe was among the items in the hoard from Beacon Hill, Charnwood Forest, which also contained two spearheads, a socketed gouge and an armlet. None of these seems comparable to the Wymington hoard.

The Nene valley has also produced a single spearhead find, from Hackleton (fig 5a), and two have been picked up on Bosworth Field.

Spearhead finds are also a feature of Late Bronze Age material from the Ouse valley. Volume eight of this *Journal* noted those from Great Barford and Bedford,<sup>15</sup> illustrating the former, as well as one from Farley Hill, Luton. Spearheads have been found in two hoards from the Ouse valley. One is the New Bradwell hoard of two spearhead tips, a palstave, the fragments of a sword and twelve socketed axes, of which ten are in Northampton Museum with the remaining pieces.<sup>2</sup> The other hoard is that from Akeley, which contains two spearheads and a socketed axe of the Irish bag type (fig 6).

Irish bag type socketed axes have been found at Biggleswade<sup>16</sup> and other socketed axes are known from St Neots (fig 5h), Eaton Ford and Oakley.<sup>17</sup> A hoard with two socketed axes, a palstave and founder's metal, probably from Ickwell Bury, was destroyed in a fire in 1937.<sup>18</sup>

Individual finds and small hoards characterise the known material from the eastern Chilterns. Five axes were found at Lodge Hill, Waddesdon,<sup>19</sup> and the recently discovered hoard from Manor Drive, Aylesbury, consisted of seven socketed axes, two winged axes, a palstave and lumps of metal.<sup>20</sup> Both Toddington and Fancot have produced hoards purely of founders' metal.<sup>21</sup> Also from Toddington are a socketed axe and two lost spearheads,<sup>22</sup> one of which is barbed and belongs to the Broadwood complex.<sup>23</sup> Another socketed axe is that from Chalton<sup>24</sup> and there are individual finds of a socketed axe and a spearhead

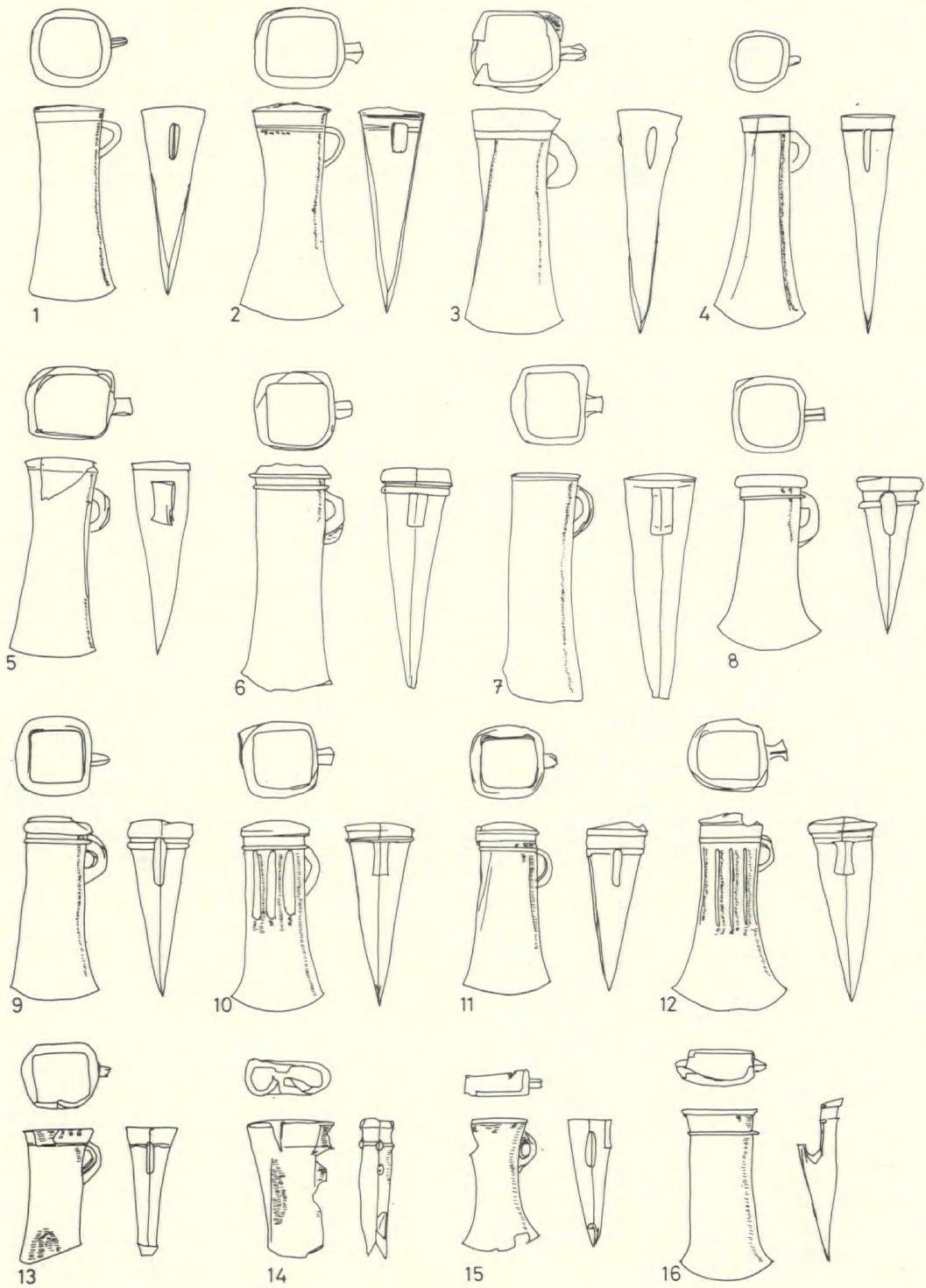


Fig 2 Late Bronze Age socketed axes from the Wymington hoard. All original axes, now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, (1-2), in Northampton Museum (3-4), in Bedford Museum (5-12), and in Luton Museum (13-16). (Scale,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).



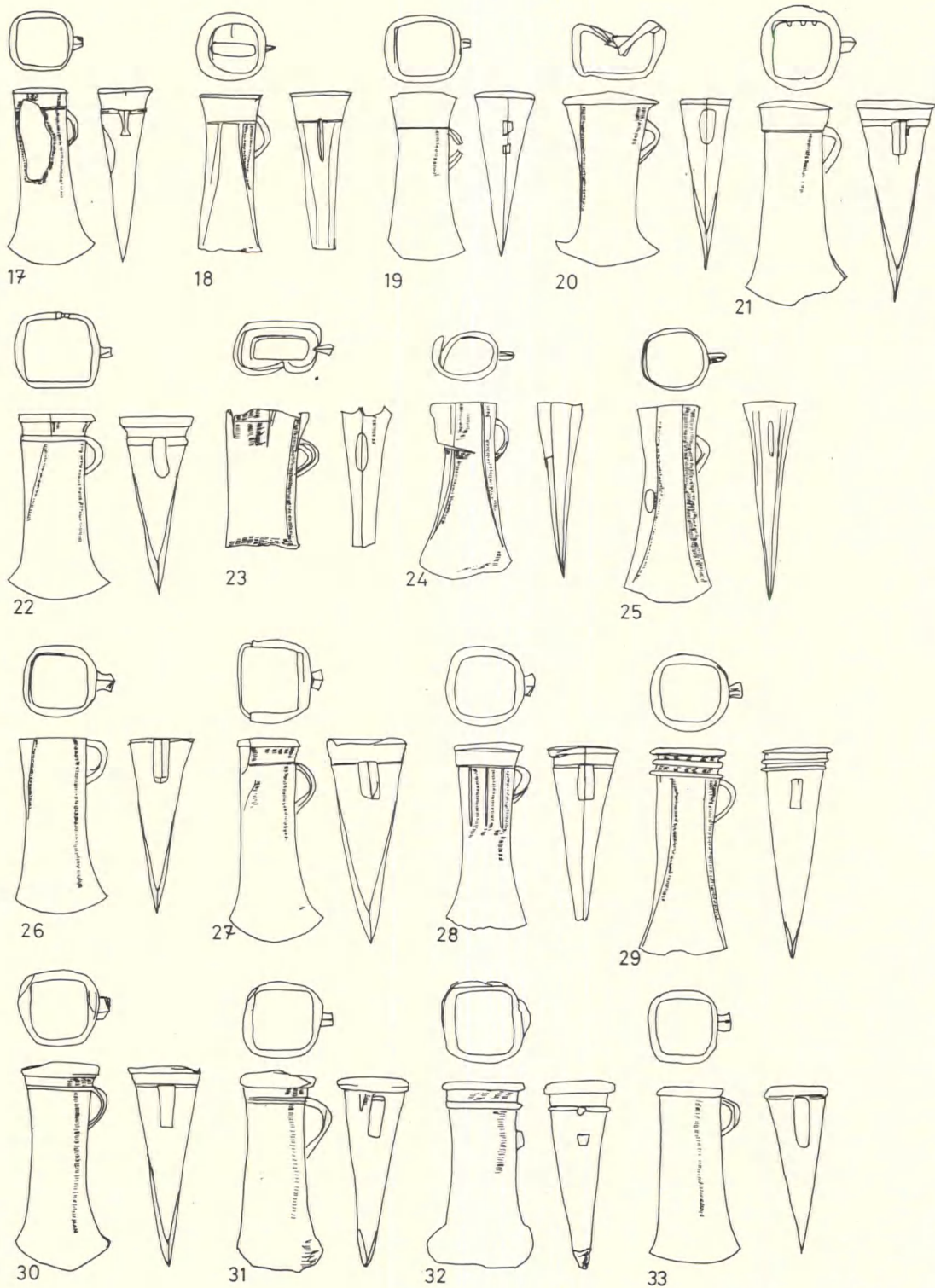


Fig 3 Late Bronze Age socketed axes from the Wymington hoard. All in Luton Museum: Original axes (17-31), casts (32-33). (Scale,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).

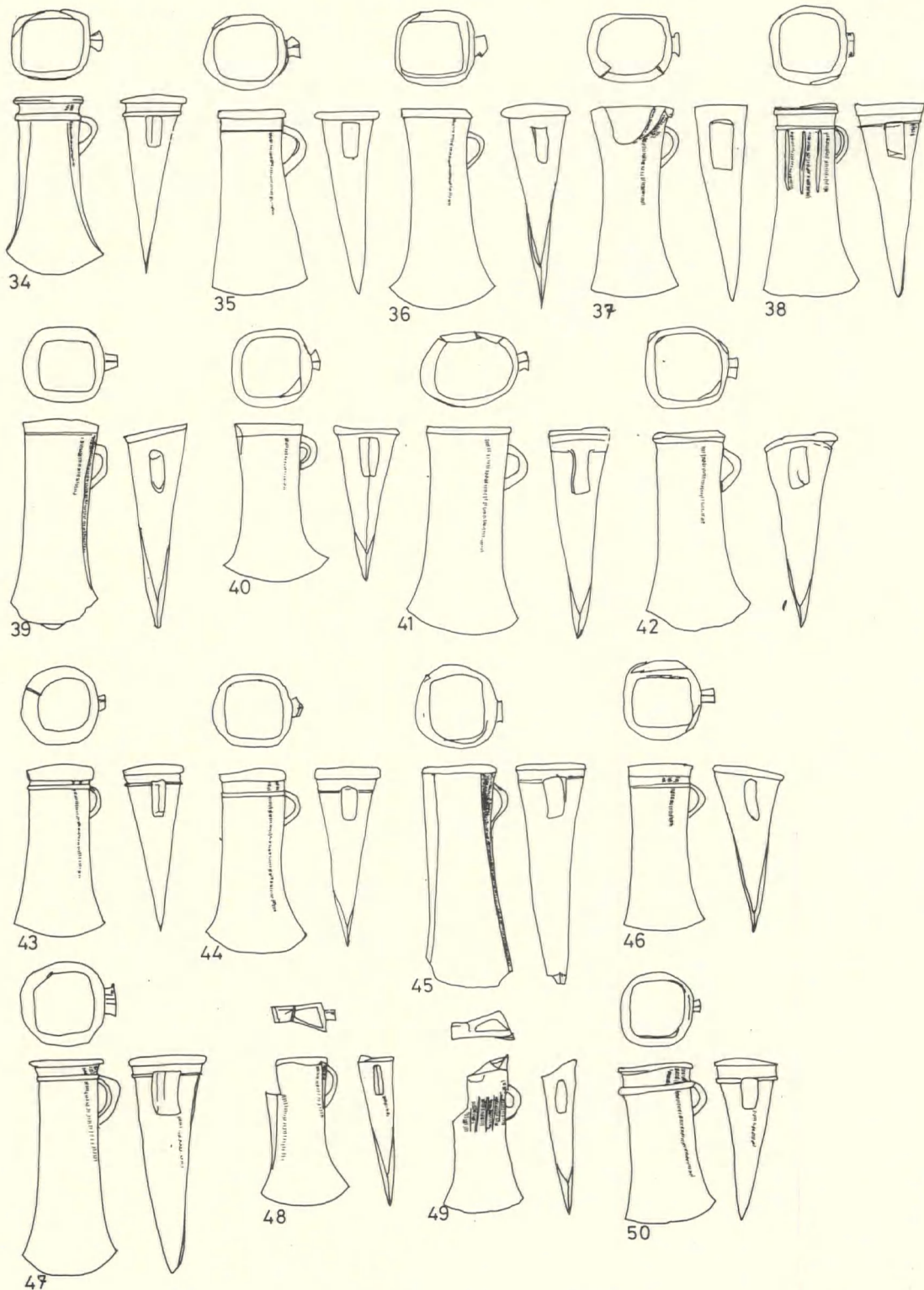


Fig 4 Late Bronze Age socketed axes from the Wymington hoard. All casts now in Luton Museum (34-50). (Scale,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).



fragment from Pirton.<sup>25</sup> The small hoards from St Michael's and Knebworth consist respectively of a socketed axe, part of a sword and metal and a palstave, two socketed axes and a further concentration of founders' metal.<sup>26</sup>

Further to the east there is a hoard purely of founder's metal from Therfield Heath, and a group of large hoards. Five large mixed hoards deserve total republication together as a group study. These are the hoards from Cumberlow Green, Rushden, from Hatfield Broad Oak, from Clavering Bury, from Arkesden, and from Chrishall.<sup>27</sup> They each contain a variety of pieces and are not strictly comparable with the Wymington hoard in their contents. Typical of these hoards is that from Cumberlow Green, Rushden, Hertfordshire, which is partly in the British Museum and partly in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge. In Cambridge there are two hilts and a tip from swords, the upper part of three winged palstaves, the top of a socketed axe and the lower cutting edge of another, together with five socketed axes which are more complete, three fragmentary spearheads, two bronze lumps and a bugle-shaped object. The British Museum hold four bronze lumps, eleven socketed axes (some of which are fragmentary), a winged palstave, sword fragments and a thin bronze plate. The other hoards too have miscellaneous contents. Among the pieces from Chrishall, Essex, in the hoard found in 1847 is the rim and handle attachment of a cauldron, associated with a Carps' Tongue type sword, and a Late Bronze Age type knife, as well as spearheads and socketed axes.

Cambridgeshire also has some large, and from the point of view of comparisons for the Wymington hoard, not particularly comparable hoards. Perhaps the best-known is that from Wilburton Fen, which is mostly socketed spearheads, but which does include other pieces. There are one hundred and fifteen spearheads, associated with nine ferrules, eleven leaf-shaped swords, four chapes, two socketed axes, a tanged chisel, a dagger (or knife), four solid rings, a palstave, a knife, four hollow rings, three looped buttons and seven miscellaneous objects. This is one of the largest Late Bronze Age hoards in existence but despite the preponderance of spearheads, almost one third of its contents are other items. Mixed hoards include those from Reach and from Meldreth and the assemblage from Chesterton may be thought typical. This contained seventeen socketed

axes, in a reasonable state of completeness, the parts of four others, a spearhead, a gouge and a ring, together with fourteen lumps of bronze weighing 6 kg (13 lb 3 oz). There are many smaller hoards such as that found in Burwell Churchyard in 1861 which contained a socketed axe, a tanged chisel, a spearhead and a lump of bronze. Found a year later in Burwell Fen was a hoard consisting of a socketed axe, a spearhead, a bronze ring and metal lumps. Hoards such as this invite comparison with that which used to be kept in Ickwell Bury rather than with the Wymington hoard.

Perhaps nearer in comparison to the Wymington hoard is that found at Stuntney Fen, Isle of Ely,<sup>28</sup> which was mostly socketed axes but again contained other pieces, together with metal lumps weighing 20 kg (43 lb). This hoard was found in a wooden tub and included three looped and two fragmentary palstaves, a socketed gouge, three fragmentary socketed spearheads, a rapier and a knife. In this hoard there were four faceted socketed axes, three of which were fragmentary, and one ribbed one, together with sixty-seven plain examples, of which forty-nine were complete.<sup>28</sup> This is not simply a hoard of axes.

The lack of direct comparisons make fixing a chronological point exactly within the Late Bronze Age difficult when trying to place the Wymington hoard. The current chronology places the Late Bronze Age within the first half of the first millennium B.C. No finer dating can be applied to the Wymington hoard: its position as a hoard simply of socketed axes may be unique.

If this is so, and no suggestions have ever been made of other objects with the hoard and the bronze cake seems unsubstantiated as a report, it does raise questions of the purpose of the hoard. Theories about ritual are frequently admissions of ignorance, but there does seem to be substantial evidence of the casting of objects into fens in prehistoric and protohistoric times. In the Late Bronze Age the finds of shields from Coveney Fen in 1846 and Langwood Fen, Chatteris, some years afterwards, but which was associated with a spearhead, may represent a deliberate casting away. However, there is no real evidence as to the mode of burial of the Wymington hoard and it is not therefore possible to argue that a hoard purely of axes represents a deliberate burial without the intention of retrieval. That in the case of the majority of known Late Bronze Age hoards that retrieval was not carried out is our gain, but



these, it is generally agreed represent the stock of a bronze smith. In all probability the Wymington hoard must be accounted the same, though its contents are unusual when viewed against their regional setting. It has been the purpose of this note to compare the Wymington hoard with its setting: not to provide a detailed study of that setting. The integration of the Wymington hoard within the context of the Late Bronze Age and the study of its metalwork may equally have been served just by its illustration.<sup>29</sup>

## DESCRIPTION OF AXES

### THE WYMINGTON HOARD

The Axes of the Wymington Hoard are located as follows:

1 and 2 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, register numbers 1927.2614 and 1927.2615.

3 and 4 Northampton Museum, accession numbers NN3 and NN4.

5-12 Bedford Museum, accession numbers 3626/3627/3628/3629/3630/3631 and two without accession numbers.

13-31 Luton Museum, accession number 71/59: originals.

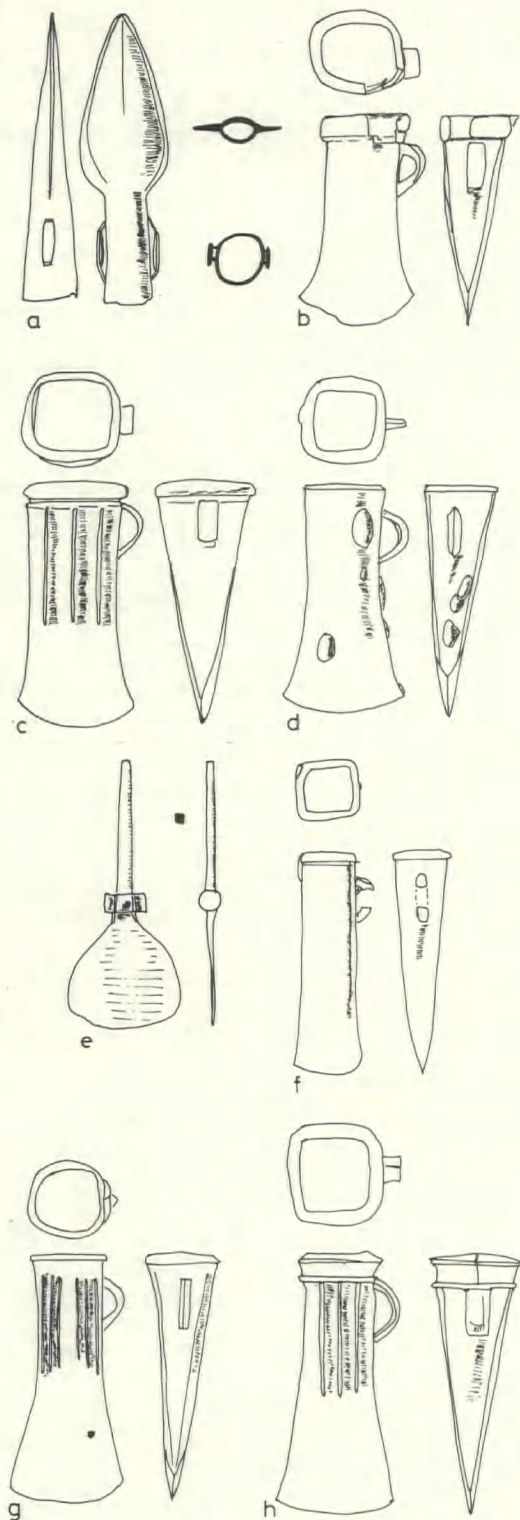
32-50 Luton Museum, accession number 71/59: casts.

The axes are illustrated on figures 2 to 4. In the descriptions which follow the dimensions given are those of the *inside* mouth, with that in the same plane as the handle given first, the maximum height and the maximum width of the blade. A square mouth is defined as one with a difference in measurement of less than 5mm.

- 1 Socketed axe, square mouth opening, broadened blade, single mouth band on face, retains loop; light green patina; mouth 30mm by 28mm; height 92mm; blade 41mm.
- 2 Socketed axe, oblong mouth opening, broadened blade, single mouth band on face, retains loop; green patina with some accretions; mouth 33mm by 28mm; height 101mm; blade 49mm.
- 3 Socketed axe, broken in one corner of square mouth, broadened blade, single mouth band on face, retains ridged loop; green patina; mouth 32mm by 32mm; height 105mm; blade 46mm.
- 4 Socketed axe, polygonal mouth, faced and splayed blade with single mouth band, retains loop; green patina; mouth 23mm by 22mm; height 99mm; blade 43mm.
- 5 Socketed axe, broken on one face at mouth, oblong mouth, broadened blade, retains loop; green patina with encrustations; mouth 34mm by 28mm; height 94mm; blade 40mm.
- 6 Socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade with edge damaged, two mouth bands on face, retains loop; green patina with encrustations; mouth 28mm by 28mm; height 105mm; blade 43mm.
- 7 Socketed axe, oblong mouth, plain blade, retains loop; green patina, encrusted; mouth 24mm by 32mm; height 108mm; blade 37mm.
- 8 Socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade, single ridge below mouth and thick mouth band, retains loop; green patina; mouth 28mm by 29mm; height 82mm; blade 49mm.
- 9 Socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade, single mouth band, retains loop; green patina; mouth 25mm by 24mm; height 85mm; blade 41mm.
- 10 Socketed axe, square mouth, splayed blade with single mouth ridge and three vertical ribs on face, which are very worn, retains loop; light green-brown patina; mouth 27mm by 28mm; height 89mm; blade 42mm.
- 11 Socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade with single ridge below mouth, retains loop; green-brown patina; mouth 26mm by 25mm; height 81mm; blade 42mm.
- 12 Socketed axe, oblong mouth, splayed blade with three ribs on face below a single mouth band; retains loop; green patina, encrusted; mouth 30mm by 23mm; height 92mm; blade 52mm.
- 13 Socketed axe, damaged on face at mouth and lacking all of cutting edge, square mouth, single thin mouth band, retains loop; light green patina; mouth 26mm by 25mm; height (maximum extant) 63mm.
- 14 Socketed axe, crushed, damaged at top and edge, vestiges of single mouth band, no loop surviving; green patina with encrustations; height (maximum extant) 65mm.
- 15 Socketed axe, lost much of top and damaged on cutting edge, oblong mouth, plain, retains loop; green patina, some encrustations; height 63mm.
- 16 Socketed axe, lost half of one side and loop, oblong mouth, single mouth band on face; light green patina; height 81mm; blade 43mm.
- 17 Socketed axe, large hole in face, square



- mouth, broadened blade, single mouth band, retains loop; light brown patina; mouth 24mm by 24mm; height 85mm; blade 42mm.
- 18 Socketed axe, broken off before cutting edge, oval mouth, faced profile giving hexagonal body, retains loop; green patina; mouth 25mm by 23mm; height (maximum extant) 77mm.
- 19 Socketed axe, corner of blade and loop broken, square mouth, plain blade broadening to cutting edge, centre of loop missing; green patina; mouth 26mm by 26mm; height 80mm; blade probably 40mm.
- 20 Socketed axe, damaged at top, originally oblong mouth, plain blade with splayed cutting edge, retains loop; green patina; height 83mm; blade 51mm.
- 21 Socketed axe, chipped on cutting edge, square mouth with three internal ribs on two faces, two mouth bands on broadened blade, retains loop; light green patina; mouth 27mm by 27mm; height 99mm; blade 50mm.
- 22 Socketed axe, damaged at top, square mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; light grey-green patina; mouth 32mm by 31mm; height 90mm; blade 48mm.
- 23 Socketed axe, damaged at mouth and lacking cutting edge, plain blade, retains loop; light green patina; height (maximum extant) 66mm.
- 24 Socketed axe, damaged at top, oval mouth, faced and broadened blade, plain, retains loop; green patina; mouth 27mm by 18mm; height 84mm; blade 46mm.
- 25 Socketed axe, with hole in side, polygonal mouth, faced blade giving hexagonal body, plain, retains loop; light grey-green patina; mouth 25mm by 26mm; height 95mm; blade 43mm.
- 26 Socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade, retains loop; light grey-green patina; mouth 27mm by 26mm; height 85mm; blade 45mm.
- 27 Socketed axe, side opposite loop broken at mouth, oblong mouth, single mouth band, broadened blade, retains loop; light green patina; mouth 27mm by 32mm; height 98mm; blade 44mm.
- 28 Socketed axe, chipped along cutting edge, square mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band and three ribs on face, retains loop; light grey-green patina with encrustations; mouth 28mm by 30mm; height 90mm; blade 39mm.
- 29 Socketed axe, chipped along cutting edge, square mouth, faced blade with two mouth ribs, retains loop; grey-green patina; mouth 29mm by 30mm; height 100mm; blade 43mm.
- 30 Socketed axe, polygonal mouth, blade is broadened with a single mouth rib at top, retains loop; grey-green patina; mouth 27mm by 30mm; height 100mm; blade 45mm.
- 31 Socketed axe, broken on cutting edge, square mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; green patina with much encrustations; mouth 28mm by 30mm; height 95mm; blade 41mm.
- 32 Cast of socketed axe, oblong mouth, single mouth band on broadened blade, lacks loop; mouth 29mm by 32mm; height 90mm; blade 50mm.
- 33 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, plain, retains loop; mouth 27mm by 27mm; height 86mm; blade 44mm.
- 34 Cast of socketed axe, oblong mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 31mm by 25mm; height 89mm; blade 48mm.
- 35 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade with a single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 30mm by 28mm; height 90mm; blade 46mm.
- 36 Cast of socketed axe, oblong mouth, broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 30mm by 26mm; height 100mm; blade 51mm.
- 37 Cast of socketed axe, broken at mouth on one face, oblong mouth, plain broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 32mm by 25mm; height 93mm; blade 43mm.
- 38 Cast of socketed axe, polygonal mouth, broadened blade with one mouth band and three vertical ribs on face, retains loop; mouth 28mm by 29mm; height 94mm; blade 44mm.
- 39 Cast of socketed axe, cutting edge broken, square mouth, plain broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 27mm by 26mm; height 102mm; blade 41mm.
- 40 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 28mm by 30mm; height 78mm; blade 50mm.
- 41 Cast of socketed axe, part of top missing on one side; oval mouth, plain broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 36mm by 30mm; height 100mm; blade 52mm.



- 42 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, plain broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 32mm by 32mm; height 96mm; blade 50mm.
- 43 Cast of socketed axe, oval mouth, broadened blade with two mouth bands, retains loop; mouth 25mm by 27mm; height 85mm; blade 42mm.
- 44 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 28mm by 29mm; height 90mm; blade 47mm.
- 45 Cast of socketed axe, broken on cutting edge, oblong mouth, broadened blade, retains loop; mouth 26mm by 32mm; height (maximum extant) 109mm.
- 46 Cast of socketed axe, square mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 26mm by 26mm; height 82mm; blade 40mm.
- 47 Cast of socketed axe, polygonal mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 30mm by 30mm; height 106mm; blade 45mm.
- 48 Cast of socketed axe, considerably damaged at the top, broadened blade, plain, retains loop; height 73mm; blade 42mm.
- 49 Cast of socketed axe, damaged at mouth, plain broadened blade, retains loop; height (maximum extant) 75mm; blade 40mm.
- 50 Cast of socketed axe, oblong mouth, broadened blade with single mouth band, retains loop; mouth 26mm by 31mm; height 78mm; blade 47mm.

#### OTHER FINDS

- a Spearhead, wide blade and continuous shaft, basal loops with peg hole above loops; length 119mm, blade 75mm.

*Location* Hackleton, Northants; recorded November 1910.

*Museum* Northampton Museum, D71/1954-55.

- b Socketed axe, damaged at mouth and rim, oblong mouth, splayed blade, retains loop, green

Fig 5 (Left) Late Bronze Age finds from the Nene and Ouse Valleys. Spearhead from Hackleton (a); socketed axes from Castor (b), Martin's Brickpit, Dallington, near Northampton (c-d), Harpole (f), Stoke Bruerne (g), and St Neots (h); and tanged chisel from Northamptonshire (e). (Scale  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).



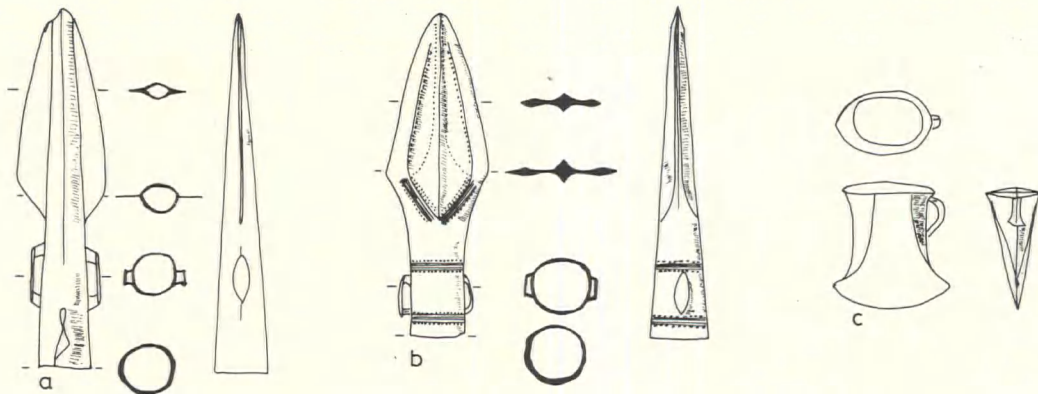


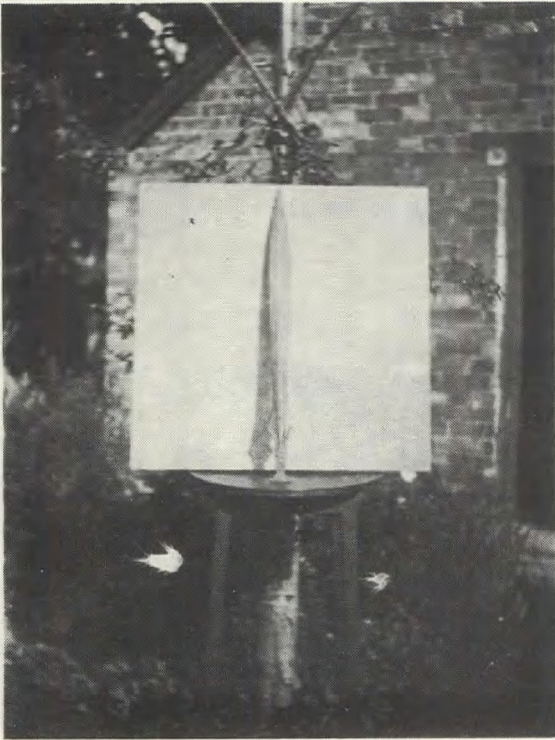
Fig 6 Late Bronze Age hoard found at Akeley, Buckinghamshire. (Scale  $\frac{1}{3}$ ).

- patina, heavy encrustation; mouth 30mm by 24mm; height 86mm; blade 49mm.  
*Location* Castor, Northants.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, D72/1954-55.
- c Socketed axe, square mouth, single mouth band and three ribs on face, retains loop; light green patina; mouth 30mm by 31mm; height 102mm; blade 47mm.  
*Location* Martin's Brickpit, Dallington, near Northampton; recorded August 1867.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, D75/1954-55.
- d Socketed axe, square mouth, plain blade, retains loop; green patina, distinct lumps of encrustation on face and sides; mouth 24mm by 25mm; height 94mm; blade 50mm.  
*Location* Martin's Brickpit, Dallington, near Northampton; recorded c 1893.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, D73/1954-55.
- e Chisel, square-sectioned shank, barrel-shaped joint with hammered ends, flat blade; length 110mm; blade 46mm.  
*Location* Northamptonshire, otherwise unrecorded.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, D36/1958-59, presented by Maidstone Museum.
- f Socketed axe, small square mouth, straight sides, loop broken; mouth 20mm by 19mm; height 94mm; blade 26mm.  
*Location* Harpole, Northants; recorded January 1960.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, D92/1959-60.
- g Socketed axe, square but almost oval mouth, splayed blade with six ribs on face, retains loop; mouth 25mm by 25mm; height 104mm; blade 44mm.  
*Location* Stoke Bruerne, Northants; recorded 1904.  
*Museum* Northampton Museum, ZL6.
- h Socketed axe, square mouth, single band at mouth with three ribs on face, splayed blade; retains loop; mouth 29mm by 31mm; height 108mm; blade 48mm.  
*Location* St. Neots.  
*Museum* Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, 33.145.
- The Akeley Hoard (fig 6)
- a Spearhead with continuous shaft, basal loops; length 147mm; blade 83mm; socket 20mm by 19mm.
- b Spearhead, dipped blade giving short socketed; decorated on socket with two sets of four broken lines and dots on the outside and on the blade with single and double rows of dots; length 130mm; blade 81mm; socket 24mm by 23mm.
- c Socketed axe, oval mouth, faceted with wide blade, of Irish bag type; mouth 40mm by 28mm; height 53mm; blade 46mm.  
*Museum* Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, 48.315A/315B/316.

#### APPENDIX

##### A Late Bronze Age Sword from Turvey

One of the last activities of F.W. Kuhlicke as the Director of Bedford Museum and Honorary Curator of the collections of the Pritchard Museum of Bedford Modern School (now housed in Bedford Museum) was to show the present author a photograph (pl 1) of an extremely fine Late



Pl.1 Late Bronze Age Sword from Turvey. Photograph taken before 1933. Present whereabouts of the sword are unknown.

Bronze Age sword found at Turvey. The present whereabouts of the sword are not known and it is hoped by this appendix to perhaps elicit further information concerning it. The sword was found some time before 1933 as the photograph was taken by the Rev. P.G. Langdon, curator of Bedford Modern School Museum between 1919 and 1933. When seen by Langdon, the sword was in the possession of a Mr Longuet Higgins of Vine Cottage, Turvey, and this collection later passed to a Miss Longuet Higgins, who died in 1950. Her collections have since been dispersed and though some are now in Luton Museum not all would appear to have reached a museum.<sup>30</sup>

The photograph shows a sword placed upon a circular occasional table and with a white board as a background. The length of the sword on the photograph is 40mm, which is equivalent to the height of the table as far as this can be judged: the feet of the legs are not visible. In the background is a wall, but this is of little assistance in judging the length of the sword because of the problems

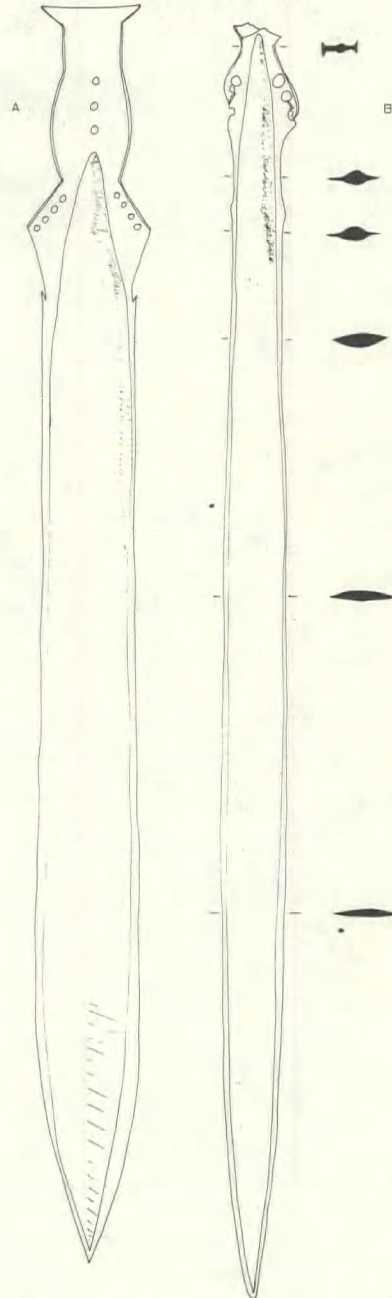


Fig 7 Late Bronze Age Swords from the South Midlands.

A. Lost sword from Turvey reconstructed from photograph.

B. Sword from Brixworth, showing cross-sections.

(Scales: A about  $\frac{1}{4}$ ; B at  $\frac{1}{4}$ ).



of perspective inherent in such an exercise.

It would seem that as far as can be judged the scale of the photograph is between one fifteenth and one sixteenth of the original, and the reconstructed figure (fig 7a) is based on the drawing being at one sixteenth size. The illustration, however, is no more than a representation rather than an accurate drawing. In all essentials, it is hoped that it faithfully reproduces the original.

The sword has a straight termination to the hilt, which is expanded from the grip. The grip is bowed towards the shoulders and has three rivet holes centrally placed. The shoulders are straight and there are four rivet holes on each side. The blade is long, leaf-shaped in all essentials, expanded slightly before the tip, and appears to have flattened considerably in the course of its length. There is a prominent swept-back ricasso.

This sword is the first Late Bronze Age sword to be noted from Bedfordshire and on this count alone deserves notice here. This example with V-shoulders belongs to a not uncommon type found in a number of British hoards.<sup>31</sup>

One other reasonably complete sword, also an individual find, is known from the south Midlands: that from Brixworth.<sup>32</sup> This was found before 1847, and is of a rather different type, with damaged curved shoulders and a long slender blade (fig 7b). It is included here to show the way in which the cross-section of a sword changes, which it was not possible to do with the drawing from a photograph in the case of the Turvey sword.<sup>33</sup>

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For permission to publish objects in their keeping, I am indebted to the authorities of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Bedford Museum, Luton Museum, Northampton Museum, and the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology Cambridge. For assistance at these institutions and at the British Museum, London, I wish to thank Mr P.D.C. Brown, Mr H. Case, Miss M.D. Cra'ster, Mr R.K. Hagen, Miss J.M. Hassall, Mr F.W. Kuhlicke, Dr I.H. Longworth, Mr. W.R.G. Moore and Mr W.N. Terry.

#### NOTES

- 1 D.H. Kennett, 'Bronzes in Bedford Museum', *Beds. Arch. J.*, 4, 1969, 80-81.
- 2 D.H. Kennett, 'The New Bradwell Late Bronze Age Hoard', *J. Northampton Mus.*, 6, 1969, 2-7, esp 4-6, this paper is cited as Kennett, 1969.
- 3 I owe knowledge to this to Mr M. Farley of Aylesbury Museum, who spoke about the discovery to the March 1974 meeting of C.B.A. group 9.
- 4 J. Evans, *Ancient Bronze Implements*, 1881, 113 and 466.

- 5 *V.C.H. Northants*, I, 1902, 143.
- 6 *V.C.H. Beds.*, I, 1904, 169.
- 7 *Bedford Modern School Museum Guide*, 1925, plate 5, lower portion of plate.
- 8 The material mapped on figure 1 is not all noted individually in the discussion. The sources are principally C.F. Fox, *Archaeology of the Cambridge Region*, 1923, 57-69 and list 323-324; J. Evans, *The Ancient Bronze Implements of Great Britain*, 1881, *passim*; and the author's personal researches in museum collections, particularly in Cambridge and Northampton.
- 9 *Inv. Arch.* GB 12.
- 10 Kennett, 1969, fig 4.
- 11 Kennett, 1969, fig 3.
- 12 Leicestershire items not otherwise noted are from *V.C.H. Leics.*, I, 1907, 168.
- 13 *Arch. J.* 105, 1948, 27-40.
- 14 *V.C.H. Rutland*, I, 1908, 83 with pl. opp 82.
- 15 R.K. Hagen, 'Three Bronze Age Spearheads in Luton Museum', *Beds. Arch. J.* 8, 1973, 1-4. For Henlow, see *Manshead Magazine* 21, 1972, 29 and fig 8.
- 16 A second axe of this type, accession number Z4307, could not be located in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge.
- 17 Reported *Beds. Arch. J.* 2, 1964, 33; the latter of these is lost, that from Eaton Ford is illustrated *V.C.H. Hunts* I, 1926, 208, pl. 2, 9.
- 18 *Ant. J.* 34, 1954, 232 and pl. 26b.
- 19 *V.C.H. Bucks* I, 1909, 180-185.
- 20 *Rec. Bucks.* 19, 1973, 344.
- 21 Material from the area is listed *Beds. Arch. J.* 2 1964, 33.
- 22 Hagen, 1973, 3-4 with fig 4.
- 23 C. Burgess, D. Coombs, D.G. Davies, 'The Broadwood Complex and Barbed Spearheads', in F. Lynch and C. Burgess (ed.), *Prehistoric Man in Wales and the West*, 1972, 211-283.
- 24 Luton Museum, unpublished.
- 25 Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, unpublished.
- 26 *V.C.H. Herts.* I, 1902.
- 27 For details of these hoards, albeit tersely given, see Fox, 1923, 53-62, and Evans, 1881, *passim*. The discussion which follows has largely been built up from looking at the actual objects in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, rather than by an examination of the original publications, many of which are not known to me. The Cumberlow Green hoard has been illustrated in part by Clarke, *loc. cit.* n.28, pl. 7.
- 28 J.G.D. Clarke and H. Goodwin, 'A Late Bronze Age Find near Stuntney, Isle of Ely', *Ant. J.* 20, 1940, 52-71.
- 29 Paper completed 21 September 1974. It is based on work done mainly in 1968, when the axes from the Wymington hoard came to light in the course of museum research on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery from Kempston.
- 30 I am grateful to Prof C. Longuet-Higgins and Mr M. Longuet-Higgins for answering my queries concerning the sword. It appears that the surviving members of the family have no knowledge of this object.

- 31 e.g. Gorleston, see *Bronze Age Metalwork in Norwich Castle Museum*, 1966, 27 and fig 45; New Bradwell, *J Northampton Mus* 6, 1969, 4 and fig 2, 14; Wilburton Fen, C.F. Fox, *The Archaeology of the Cambridge Region*, 1923, 59 and pl 10, 15; isolated examples include Aldreth, *ibid* pl 9, 1.
- 32 Northampton Museum, accession number D107/1954-55, previously illustrated *J Northampton*

*Mus* 6, 1969, fig 4: a most inadequate sketch. I am most grateful to Mr W.N. Terry and Mr W.R.G. Moore for assistance at Northampton Museum and for permission to publish my drawing of this sword.

- 33 Appendix completed 12 October 1974. I am grateful to Mr Kuhlicke for showing me the photograph and allowing me to retain it so that this note could be written.

*The Bedfordshire Archaeological Council is indebted to Luton Museum and to Bedford Museum for grants towards the costs of this paper.*