

THE ANGLO-SAXON GRAVES, WARREN HILL, MILDENHALL.

At the meeting of the Institute, held at Mildenhall, June, 1870, I had the honour of reading a paper upon the interesting tumuli formerly existing upon Warren Hill,* the extreme western end of Mildenhall parish, and the British and Saxon remains that were found in them.

I have now much gratification in resuming the theme, by describing the results of some diggings upon the site of a small Saxon cemetery, distant but a few score yards along the top of the ridge from where the tumuli formerly stood.

The existence of this burial-place had, it appears, been known to a few individuals for some time, but its discovery was made afresh in May, 1881, in the extension of the cart-road from the highway to a new stone pit on the eastern slope of the hill. In making the necessary excavations for this, the remaining portion of a slight ridge of sand was cut through, and two graves intersected.

Through the courtesy of the agent of Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart., timely information of the discovery was given me, and I very shortly afterwards had the pleasure of commencing excavations upon the spot. I found the ground in the vicinity of the roadway much broken up, and only a narrow strip remaining undisturbed to the west of the cutting. On the right, or eastern side, a larger portion of surface remained, and as it was in this that the sections of the two graves were exposed, it first claimed my attention.

The grave at the southern end, No. 1, which I have made my measuring point, was about three and a-half feet deep, and contained the remains of a man in an advanced state of decay, the bones of the lower limbs being alone discernible. He had been laid extended with his feet to the E. by S E. On his breast were the iron remains of

* Proceedings Suffolk Institute of Archaeology, Vol. iv., 287.

his shield, an umbo, or boss, with its handle, studs, and rivet plates. By his left hip a turned wooden drinking cup had been deposited, of which nothing remained except the small portions of wood enclosed within the folds of the little plates or fillets of bronze with which the cup had been strengthened or repaired. There is no doubt but an iron spear-head accompanied this interment, and that it was overlooked by the workmen when they dug away the head of the grave.

No. 2, at 12 feet north-east of No. 1, and similarly directed, was another shallow grave, containing an iron spear-head 11 inches in length, of the form usually found in the district.

Upon my second visit I turned my attention to the western ground, and effected its examination by digging a trench through it parallel to the road cutting, and about four feet from it. Here two disturbed places were met with; that to the north-east was a conical excavation, of about 5 feet in diameter and 3 deep, containing dark soil and fragments of charred wood, but no interment.

The other, which was removed 21 feet S.W. by W. of No. 1, proved to be a grave (No. 3), containing a most interesting interment. It was that of a woman who had deceased in the earlier portion of the middle period of life, but of whose frame few traces remained. She had been interred oriented in a grave about 4 feet deep, at the head end of which a large flint stone had been placed. The examination was commenced from the foot. At her middle, on left side, was an iron knife of small size, and a double hook of the same metal, somewhat resembling an anchor. It had a flat stem $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, turned over at the end to form a loop by which it was suspended to a small ring, through which doubtless once passed the girdle of the deceased. Slightly higher up was a bronze clasp of good design and workmanship, with portions of cloth adhering. On her breast was a second clasp like the first, with more cloth and much remains of wood. At her neck to the left was a fine bronze gilt cruciform

fibula, $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, with much cloth of two differing degrees of coarseness adhering to it, and close by to the left and right, a penannular fibula; and between them and under the large fibula the remains of a necklace of beads of amber, paste, and rock crystal. I succeeded in uncovering a portion of this without disturbing it, and found the arrangement to be three small beads, a large one, then three other small ones, &c. Almost intermingled with the beads, but retaining the positions they occupied in life, were the enamel cases of the teeth. They appeared to have been a good and regular set, with their crowns only slightly flattened from wear. The outline of the skull and lower jaw were just perceptible in the sand and decay surrounding them, showing that the face lay turned to the north. Of the other parts of the skeleton, the left ulna, was the only bone in at all an entire condition, and that through being permeated with the ærugo of the large fibula, with which it lay in contact. It was evident from the remains of wood found in the upper part of the grave that the body had been protected from the earth so far as the lower part of the chest, by roughly-hewn boards, and from the fragments of coarse wheat straw, which I afterwards detached from the face of the bronze clasp found at the waist, that it had been covered in the grave with that substance, probably in the form of a matting.

In examining the large fibula from this grave I found that the wing ornaments of the cross had been broken off before the interment took place, and that they were sewed to the garment with double thread of about the same size as that in common use at the present day. The perforations at the chin of the lateral masks, had been utilised for the purpose, whilst a thread was passed half-a-dozen times round the neck of each limb. Within the cloth at the back of this fibula were two beads of paste and a solid ring of bronze, six-tenths of an inch in diameter, about the size of and greatly resembling a wedding ring, giving the idea that the outer cloth was the remains of a gar-

ment in which the corpse had been wrapped, with certainly the left arm flexed, and the hand between the breasts, and that the large fibula had been sewn upon this outer garment, or winding sheet. No remains of the iron acus or pin adhered to this object, which shows it to have been imperfect before interment.

Curiously enough, in removing the filling-in of this grave, I found at about nine inches above the head of the buried person, a nicely-worked ovate flint implement. As the relics of the First Stone Period abound in the gravel of Warren Hill, one, perhaps, should not be surprised at the occurrence of an example under the circumstances, seeing that the grave had been partly dug in the gravel bed. Nevertheless, the thought arises—In what light did these old Teutons, who lived nearer the Age of Stone by over a thousand years than we, regard this shapely flint? Did they pass it by as a thing of naught; or, recognising it as the work of men of bygone days, or as a missile from the Thunder god, with superstitious awe, replace it in its tomb?

Our diggings on this side of the roadway yielding no further results, an adjournment to the eastern ground was decided upon. Here, at 12 feet E. by S.E. of No. 1 grave, and at 2 feet below the surface, we came upon a small inverted urn of black hand-made pottery. It was perfect when first uncovered, and was $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, by the same in diameter. Close by it, was found one half of a gilt clasp, of smaller size than those usually found; some half a dozen small rounded beads of amber, and three brass ferules, two of which appear to have been strung upon a rolled-up strip of cloth. Some carbonised matter occurred in the neighbourhood of the little urn; but otherwise there was no trace of an interment.

At 7 feet S.E. by S. of No. 1, another urn of the same character as the last, but a little larger, was found. It lay upon its side, at about 18 inches below the surface; and close by it was the enamel shell of a well-developed second molar tooth of a very young person, but no other

remains of the body. The urn in this and the other instance contained nothing but sand. There is no doubt, I think, that they marked the graves of children of tender years, whose frames had long since returned to earth. That one tooth only should have been preserved is, however, not a little remarkable. The soil around the urn was removed in the most careful manner, and the presence of even fragmentary teeth would without fail have been detected.

After a further two days patient investigation of the eastern ground without result, the conclusion was reluctantly arrived at that nothing more was to be found in that direction. Our trenches revealed also the fact that the old surface fell away to the east, and that the gravel raisers had levelled up the slope with their siftings, which rendered the proper examination of what remained of undisturbed ground both laborious and uncertain. The work was therefore abandoned.

Thus far my own experience. Mr. Simeon Fenton, of Mildenhall, however, was one of those persons referred to as having previous knowledge of this old burial place, and he has very kindly placed at my disposal the notes he had made from time to time respecting it. These I have printed verbatim, reserving any comments I may have to make upon them to the end of the paper. In passing, however, I may remark that I consider Mr. Fenton is deserving of all credit for the care he evidently took in following up and recording the discoveries made by the gravel-raisers, and in the preservation of the objects found—by which our knowledge of the interesting character of the cemetery is enlarged to an extent that would certainly otherwise have been unattainable.

MR. FENTON'S NOTES.

For many years past, antiquities have been brought to me at intervals, by the labourers working in the stone-pits of Warren Hill; but it was not until 1875 that the

immediate site of the Saxon Cemetery came under my personal observation.

On November 24th of that year, the men sent for me, saying that they had found something. I went up and saw that they had come upon a grave, and had removed the earth from it to a depth of about 3 feet from the surface. Further examination resulted in the finding of about a pint of charred, or decomposed matter, in which was a pair of bronze tweezers, some fragments of cloth, part of a bronze ring of twisted wire, a small triangular bronze plate, with rivets, and some remains of wood. The men had previously found in an adjacent grave the boss of a shield and a spear-head, both of iron.

On the next day I went again to the spot, and following up certain indications, I found the remains of a skull about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the surface; the grave in sand, filled up with rubble. The body was much decayed, no arm bones or vertebræ remaining. By the side of the face was a bronze cruciform fibula, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by $2\frac{1}{4}$ wide, the verdigris from which had stained the teeth quite green. Round the fibula were the remains of cloth, and near by two circular fibulæ, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. The leg bones of the body remained, but were very tender.

Nothing further of any consequence was found on this occasion.

In the following month I resumed my diggings, removing the earth to a depth of from 2 to 3 feet from the surface—came upon several cone-shaped holes, containing burnt matter. They were generally about a foot deep, and from 8 to 10 inches in diameter at top. I found also two small-sized plain urns, of black ware, one having a flat cover of the same material. These I consider to be British. I emptied the larger-sized urn of the two, and found it to contain sand only.

In the following year (1876), the men had come across another grave, and sent for me. Upon my arrival I found the interment had been broken up, but that it had

contained a fine bronze cruciform fibula, 6 inches by $2\frac{1}{4}$, part of a circular fibula, and some remains of cloth, in which the large fibula had apparently been wrapped. From the soil removed from this grave I succeeded in finding nearly one hundred rudely-shaped beads of amber, and one paste bead, which the men had overlooked, together with four very thin discs of silver, four whole rings, about half an inch in diameter, neatly formed of silver wire, and portions of others. Of the silver discs, two were $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and the other pair $1\frac{1}{4}$. They are ornamented with a central fine-rayed star, enclosing a slight boss, and around the outer edge a circle of dots, formed by punching from the back of the plate.

On April 3, 1877, another burial was found, and examined by me; only portions of the skull remained. Accompanying it were three small-sized cruciform fibulæ, respectively $2\frac{3}{4}$, $3\frac{1}{2}$, and $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, of differing designs. On each side of the body, where the arms had lain, was a bronze clasp, of thin plate, with hook and eye fastening, and ornamented with small punched indentations. To the clasps, cloth was attached; and I am led to think that they formed the fastenings either of the wristbands of the dress of the deceased, or of cloth bands, serving as bracelets. The left arm of this body had apparently been bent round the fragments of an urn, and near it was an iron knife, 5 inches long.

Not far from the last interment, another and a somewhat remarkable grave was met with. It was that of a lady, probably of rank. By her left side were a pair of silver bracelets, and within them were two finger rings, also of silver. The bracelets are bands of thin "latten" plate, ornamented with a central and marginal lines of small punched circlets, and their ends so overlap that they admit the passage of the hand, and spring to form when upon the arm or wrist. If flattened out, they would measure about 11 inches in length. The rings are similar to the bracelets in design, very neatly made, and they are

ornamented with a central raised band, and both their ends taper to a point, forming as it were a double ring. No other relic accompanied this interment.

Within a few yards of the graves just described, to the northward, was found the entire skeleton of a horse, which had apparently been placed in a hole upon its haunches, and then covered over. With it was a small iron buckle. It was just beside the horse, to the west; that the grave mentioned in the early part of these notes as containing the boss and spearhead occurred. All these burials were found to the left, or on the the western side, of where is now the road cutting.

SIMEON FENTON.

Mr. Fenton has favoured me with a view of the objects recovered from the graves above described, and they form, in conjunction with those found by myself, an interesting and somewhat unusual series of Anglo-Saxon antiquities. The articles of silver, from their rarity,* first claim attention, and of these again, the bracelets. So far as I can learn, such objects have been found in very few of the regularly explored Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, viz. — at

* As silver, at least in the form of coins, must have been in some abundance in this country toward the close of the Roman occupation, it is difficult to understand why so few objects in that metal are found in the Saxon graves. That they are rare can be amply demonstrated by a reference to the published reports of the results of the examination of a few of the more extensive and better explored cemeteries. Thus at Harnham Hill, near Salisbury, where sixty-four graves were opened, only three yielded silver ornaments. The same number are recorded out of the 127 graves of the cemetery of Long Wittenham, Berkshire. At Brighthampton, in Oxfordshire, there were two out of 54 graves. At Barrow Furlong, Northamptonshire, there was a solitary instance among 37 interments. Coming nearer home, of the two cemeteries explored by the Hon. P. C. Neville, in Cambridgeshire, viz., Little Wilbra-

ham and Linton Heath, the former out of the large number of 188, returns only one grave; and the latter out of 104, three graves in which small objects of silver, chiefly finger rings, were found. At Barrington, in the same county, of the 26 graves, the contents of which are described by J. Wilkinson, Esq., in the Proceedings of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society (Vol. i., p. 50), but one gave silver—the armet mentioned above. The Kentish cemeteries are apparently slightly more productive of the metal, and it occurs in a greater variety of forms. Thus at Sarr, where 272 graves were explored, six yielded relics in silver. The 25 graves at Stowting, a single one; and the rich cemetery at Bifrons, eight out of 81. Thus of the total of 988 graves, there were but twenty-nine instances in which silver in any form occurred, or under 3 per cent. of the entire number.

Harnham Hill, near Salisbury;* Long Wittenham,† in Berkshire, and at Barrington, in the neighbouring county of Cambridgeshire. At the two last-named places, they appear to have been merely plain bands of silver, whilst that from Long Wittenham was a spiral band of the same general character as those from Warren Hill; but much broader and of superior design of ornamentation. In each case they were found in position upon the *left* arm or wrist of the female occupant of the tomb. The Warren Hill examples, according to Mr. Fenton's testimony, lay together at the left side of the body, with the finger rings in their midst, as if they had been deposited in a small box or coffer. There is, however, no difficulty in the supposition that they occupied their places upon the wrist and hand of the deceased at the time of burial, and had fallen together upon the decay of the bones, and the pressure of the surrounding earth.

The Saxon lady had evidently been laid in her tomb in all the dignity of her ornaments—

“ earm-reáde twá, hrægl and bringas.”

The absence of the fibulæ, &c., the almost invariable accompaniment of the best interments, can, I think, only be accounted for by the supposition that the head of the grave, at some previous time, had been dug away by the workmen and these objects overlooked.

The spiral rings † that accompanied this burial are seven-tenths of an inch in diameter, and of better make than those usually found in Saxon graves. A comparatively few instances, however, are on record of their discovery. When they occur they accompany the remains of females, and are often found in pairs, and mostly upon the left hand, and where the bones are sufficiently well preserved and due attention has been given by the

* “Archæologia,” xxxv., 475.

† Ibid, xxxviii., 338.

† The spiral was apparently the form most in favour among the Tuetic and cognate races at this period. Whether any belief was symbolised by it, or any talismanic virtue attributed to it, I will not venture to say, but it is certain that

the majority of the finger rings found in the Saxon cemeteries of this country are in this form. For Scandinavia, see Engelhardt; “Denmark in the Early Iron Age,” pp. 11-15; Worsaae's *Primi- val Antiquities of Denmark*, p. 59.

explorer, generally on the third finger, which would appear to have been the ring finger then, as now. That these rings, whether of brass or of the precious metals, were the betrothal rings of the deceased, is, I think, * very probable, for it is almost certain that such were in use in Western Europe, both in heathen and early Christian times. †

“ A shield for the soldier,
A shaft for the robber,
A Ring for the bride.” ‡

The small rings of silver wire mentioned by Mr. Fenton as occurring with the beads in the fourth grave examined by him, are too small for finger rings, and unless they were ear-rings, of which I have examples of the same form in bronze wire, I can only suppose them to have formed part of the necklace. Similar rings were found in a like position in one of the women's graves at Linton Heath, || and also at Sarr, in Kent.

Of the silver discs found with the above, we have an exactly similar example in our Museum from the cemetery at West Stow. The mode in which they were used as ornaments to the female dress is, however, very problematical, and it is much to be regretted that Mr. Fenton had not the opportunity of seeing the position they occupied upon the body. As they present no perforations by which they could be sewn to the garment, it is possible they were set in frames of some perishable material and were worn strung about the neck in the same way as the golden bracteates, that are occasionally found in the Jutish and other Saxon cemeteries of this country.

The Fibulæ from Warren Hill present no new types.

* In one of the two graves at Harnham Hill yielding silver finger rings, were a silver spiral, and a plain ring of

† “With us * * . In the espousals the man first presents the woman whom he bethroths with the *arrhæ*, or espousal gifts, and among these he puts a ring

gold exactly resembling a modern wedding ring.—“*Archæologia*,” vol. 35, p. 265.

upon her finger.” Nicholas I., Pope, A.D., 860. *Responsa ad Consulta Bulgarorum*. (Labbé, vol. viii., p. 517.)

‡ *Codex Exoniensis*, Gnomie Verses, p. 341.

|| “*Archæological Journal*,” vol. xi., p. 97.

That from grave No. 3 is the finest of the series and closely resembles one in our Museum from West Stow Heath,* and also another in my own collection from the ancient cemetery of Mitchell's Hill, Icklingham. Its form is that of a Latin cross, with the limbs terminating in grotesque horned masks, surmounting four oblong tablets, which originally were covered with thin laminae of silver. Upon its stem below the bow, which is so characteristic of Anglian fibulae of the long form, are wing ornaments somewhat resembling the sacred eye of the Egyptians. The Warren Hill fibula, though so much like the others mentioned, did not come from the same mould, being lighter in make. It is evident, too, upon examination that unlike them, the lateral masks were not cast in a piece with the stem, but are furnished on the back with eyelets, like the shanks of buttons, through which, and a perforated plate upon the back of the centre of the fibula, an iron pin passed, which held all together, and to which the acus was attached. The contrivance was a somewhat frail one, and it is not surprising that in wear its parts came asunder.

The large fibulae found by Mr. Fenton are "moth shaped," and like many found in this district of East Anglia, terminate in a rude and grotesque representation of a horse's head. The smaller fibula resemble those from West Stow, shown in figures 2, 4, and 5 of plate 8, and 1 and 4, plate 4, of the first volume of our Proceedings.

Clasps of thin bronze plate, such as those found by Mr. Fenton near the wrists of the occupant of his 5th grave, are not unfrequently found in Anglian cemeteries, but those of moulded bronze, especially the more ornamental ones, are somewhat rare. The examples from grave No. 3 are of a pattern not previously known to me. They are $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, and resemble small fibulae, and it is not improbable that like the large fibula they accompanied, they were originally gilded. From the position

* See Plate XLIA, vol. 2, of the "Collectanea Antiqua," and vol. 1. "Proc. Suffolk Institute," Plate 6.

they occupied upon the body, and the fact that in the hollow back of the largest half of each clasp were the remains of a strip of wood, it is concluded that they formed the ornamental fastenings of a boddice, which was strengthened in front by a sort of busk.

Portions of the cloth of which this garment was composed still remain attached to the Clasps, by the thread, with which they were originally sewn to it. The fabric is of wool and of the substance of a medium flannel, whilst that of the outer garment, to which the large fibula was sewn, is a twill of open texture. Both stuffs are now a rich brown in colour, and what remain, without doubt, owe their preservation to some property evolved from the oxidation of the metal with which they were in contact. This fact will explain Mr. Fenton's supposition that the larger fibulæ found by him were deposited wrapped up in cloth.

Of the iron relics from Warren Hill, the shield fittings from Grave No. 1, from their completeness, are worthy of some notice. The boss, which is of the form most usually found, viz., basin shaped, terminating in a projecting button,* is 6in. in diameter, inclusive of the rim. It was secured to the shield by five circular studs, three quarters of an inch in width. Beneath the boss was the strip of iron that formed the handle by which the shield was held, the hand being at the same time protected by the boss. In the oxidation of the lower side of the rim of this are preserved traces of the woodwork of the shield, which was apparently constructed of seven or more narrow boards, the joints of which were strengthened by a dozen slight iron cramps of 1½ in. in length. Six of these I found in position in the soil of the grave where the lower half of the shield had rested.† Besides these were a small half round buckle of iron that had probably belonged to the guige, or strap by which the shield was slung over the shoulder of its bearer when not in use, and two larger studs, 1½ in. in diameter, the exact applica-

* See Fig. 6, Plate 19, vol. 1, Hewitt's "Ancient Armour, &c."

† It is generally believed that the Anglo Saxon shield was covered with leather, but there are no traces of such on the iron work in this case.

tion of which is now difficult to determine, but as the rivets of these have wood attached to them, and were found near the boss, it is possible they were used on the inside of the shield for the better securing of its handle. This view is rendered probable by other indications, which it is not necessary here to detail. From careful measurements made of the various attachments of the iron work to the wood work of this shield, I have ascertained that the thickness of the boards composing it did not certainly exceed four-tenths of an inch. This conclusion is established by my own observation in another instance, and by a reference to the shield boards that formed part of the hoards of arms, &c., found in the mosses of Thorsbjerg and Nydam, in South Jutland, described by Conrad Engelhardt.* The heaviest board there found was only about three-and-a-half tenths of an inch in thickness, which proves, I think, that these arms of defence could be of little avail when opposed to heavy cutting weapons,† but were useful only in the hands of a dexterous warrior for warding off the darts thrown by his adversary, or turning the home thrust of his spear. Under these circumstances one is not surprised to read that the "war-board" was frequently shattered in the conflict, and that the warriors matched in single combat had three shields at their disposal, which were borne by attendants and handed to them, so soon as the ones in use became no longer servicable.

* "Denmark in the Early Iron Age," p. 49. In the description of the Gothic shields referred to, M. Engelhardt says that "they were circular and flat, their diameter ranging from 22½ inches to 44 inches. In the centre was the opening for the hand, across which was inserted the wooden handle. In front of the opening was the boss of metal, concave on the inside. * * * How the eight or ten boards of which the shield was composed were kept together, we cannot tell. One fragment with a covering of thin leather, and only one, was brought

to light, but such a cover appears insufficient to hold the boards in their places even if we presume that the shields were usually strengthened in this manner. In one instance only, among the many hundred boards which were found, small square pieces of wood (or dowels) projected from the edges so as to fit into notches made in the next board. On one board traces of an iron mounting was found; but its form could not be recognised, the iron being much corroded."

† One of the bosses of shields found in the Saxon cemetery at Barrington had been cut nearly into two parts by a blow

from a taper axe. (Cambridge Antiq. Society's Reports, vol. ii., 9.)

The two little vases found by Mr. Fenton are counterparts of those which accompanied Interments Nos. 4 and 5, examined by myself, and I have no doubt were deposited under like conditions, namely, at the heads of the graves of children. I have similar vessels which were found under just the same circumstances at Mitchell's Hill, Icklingham, and there are one or two others of the same character in the Museum from the cemetery of West Stow. It is evident that they were not designed for sepulchral purposes, but are culinary vessels, the prototypes in fact of the pipkin. The urns that are found in Saxon graves accompanying the unburnt body, and which Mr. Kemble believed to have held either "holy water," or (in the case of pagans) the broth of boiled horseflesh,* are in the majority of cases of another form, and more or less ornamented. Unless indeed they cover some occult piece of heathenism yet to be discovered, I regard the little vessels as those in which the food of the infant was prepared, and from which they ate it. Thus, as the full grown man was buried with his shield and weapons, and the housewife with her ornaments, and insignia of office, so, in some cases, there was placed in the grave with the child, the little porringer (possibly filled with food) he was accustomed to use. Regarding this hypothesis as well founded, the custom would appear to be confined, so far as I have been able to ascertain at present, to the western district of East Anglia. The occurrence of these vessels in childrens graves is confirmed by the researches of the Hon. R. C. Neville, in the cemetery at Little Wilbraham, who remarks† that "amongst the numerous urns found (over 100) not more than a dozen can be attributed to culinary or domestic purposes, and three or four of these were with infant skeletons."

The finding of the skeleton of the horse at Warren Hill is very interesting, and suggestive of the slaying of the animal at the funeral of its master. The number of cases of horse burial that have come to light in the Saxon

* *Home Ferales*, p. 222.

† *Saxon Obsequies*, p. 9.

cemeteries of this country are very few, and the greater part of them, if not the whole, appertain to the districts settled by the Angles, and especially to East Anglia, which can now claim three out of the four cases of which I have been able to find any record. An instance of horse burial came under my own observation in the Saxon portion of the old cemetery at Mitchell's Hill, Icklingham, more than once referred to in this paper. A second is recorded by Sir Hy. Dryden as occurring in the Saxon burial place at Barrow Furlong,* explored by himself. In these two instances the grave of the horse does not appear to refer immediately to any other, but to have been a little apart from them, occupying a place upon the northern verge of the cemetery, which was, in fact, the position in which the horse-grave at Warren Hill was found. This is suggestive rather of a possible consecration of the ground for burial purposes, by the slaying of the animal as a sacrifice to the gods, and after its flesh had been partaken of by the assembled worshippers, the burial of its remains as a first offering to Loki's dreaded daughter Hel, the goddess of death.

At Little Wilbraham† the evidence of the horse having been slaughtered over the grave of its rider, and afterwards interred by his side, is more complete, and may rank with those instances elsewhere, as in Denmark, where the practice of horse burial more constantly prevailed.‡ “In Teuton, belief, says Mr. Wylie,§ the warrior rode his steed to Valhalla,” but as no one went thither but those slain in battle, it may with probability be inferred that the individuals with whom the horse is found buried, so met their end, and also that they were somewhat above the rank of ordinary persons, certainly freemen and the heads of families,|| or as in the case at

* Archæologia, vol. 33, p. 334.

† (Grave No. 44) Saxon Obsequies, p. 9.

‡ The greater part of the few barrows of the iron period which have hitherto been examined in Denmark, contain not

only the remains of the warrior but also those of his horse. Worsaae. Trans by Thoms, p. 100.

§ Archæologia Vol. 36, p. 146.

|| Saxo Grammaticus says that Frotho prescribed to certain tribes which he had conquered that every head of a

family who fell in battle should be buried with *his horse* and arms.

Wilbraham, when the warrior was interred with his shield, spear, and sword, of the rank of thane.*

A few words, by way of conclusion, as to the probable condition and surroundings of the little community of half Christian, half Pagan Saxons, whose graves are the subject of this paper. In all likelihood they were the family and dependants of some well to do petty chieftan to whom this outlying portion of the mark had been allotted for his alod, and whose dwelling places were on the hill side, not far removed from the little run of water at its foot.

The aspect of the country immediately around could not have differed materially then, from what it did two centuries ago, when we know it to have been given up as a habitation to the bittern, lapwing, and rabbit, and nothing met the eye but a weird waste of fen, moor, and heath, unbroken by anything save, here and there, a self-sown thorn or elder tree.

In this apparently uninviting spot the lot of these early settlers was cast, and here doubtless they passed their not altogether uneventful lives, subsisting by the pasturing of their cattle, sheep, and swine upon the heath and moorland, and the tillage of such portions of the same as were suited for cultivation. From thence, also, to the little cemetery on the top of the overlooking tumuli crowned hill, the site of which is marked by an aged elder tree, they bore the several members of the commune for burial when life's short dream was over; a bleak spot at the best of times, across which the varying winds eddy, and one to which, in the days of old, the bardic song† would have been very applicable. "A tree stands alone on the hill, its leaves whirl around with the wind and strew the graves of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the departed, when the musing hunter alone stalks slowly o'er the heath."

HENRY PRIGG.

* *Horæ Ferales*, p. 207

† *Ossian*.—*Carric-Thura*.