

NOTES

Anglo-Saxon Burials at Bungay. In May 1951 workmen digging trenches for a new house forming part of the Bungay Urban District Council housing estate on the south side of Hillside Road, about three-quarters of a mile south-east of the centre of Bungay, uncovered an iron spearhead. This discovery was reported to Norwich Castle Museum and, through the courtesy of the Council's surveyor, I was able to investigate the remains which were indicative of Anglo-Saxon burials. The site is now covered by a pair of houses, Nos. 55 and 57 Joyce Road, which face northwards onto this road and lie at the southern extremity of this estate, just below the crest of the hill followed by the 50 foot contour (O.S. 6-inch Suffolk Sheet VIII S.E.; Nat. Grid. Reference 62/347891). The finds are the property of the Bungay Urban District Council but their permanent home has not been decided.

The cleft-socket iron spearhead (Fig. 17 *a*) was found just outside the west wall of house No. 57 in a rectangular depression (Grave I) cut into the gravel at a depth of 1 foot 3 inches below modern ground surface with its axis almost due east and west. The spearhead pointed to the west and the workmen noted that it had been attached to a wooden shaft clearly visible as a stain in the soil. No human bones remained in this or Grave II but this is not surprising in view of the acid nature of the soil. 1 foot 6 inches to the east of the spearhead was a small bronze buckle, broken by the finders but since repaired (Fig. 17 *b*). This was probably round the waist of the adult male who probably occupied this grave with head to the west.

I noted the presence of a second grave lying transversely across the foundation trench for the south wall of house No. 55, 36 feet north-east of Grave I and lying exactly parallel to it. I excavated this on 12 May, 1951. Grave II was 6 feet 6 inches long by 2 feet 9 inches wide with its bottom 3 feet below the modern surface. The infilling was a greyish silt. At 4 feet from its eastern end and in the centre of the grave was a circular 'elastic' wire-ring of debased silver (Fig. 17 *c*) and the disintegrated remains of a small green glass bead which probably once adorned it. This find suggests that it was a woman's grave.

No other archaeological material was noted during the preparation of the remainder of this housing site and, unless this pair of burials is isolated, then the remainder of this inhumation cemetery is likely to stretch to the south over the brow of the hill. The date of the burials identified may be assigned to the 6th or 7th century A.D.

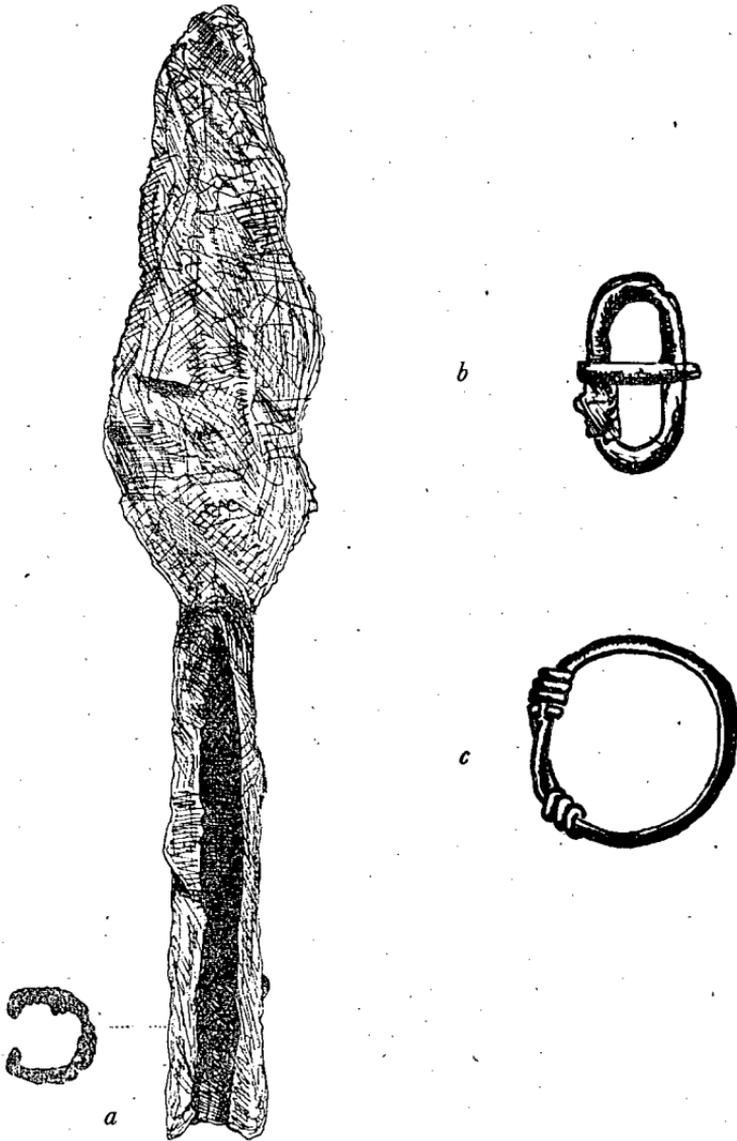


FIG. 17.—Saxon Finds, Bungay.

a. Iron Spearhead ($\frac{1}{2}$); *b.* Buckle ($\frac{1}{4}$); *c.* Wire Ring ($\frac{1}{4}$).

on the evidence of the wire-ring, a type which has been identified in several cemeteries of this period.¹ Another Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the same date or earlier is suggested by the report of urns at Stow Park, Bungay, about 1½ miles to the south-west of the present site but as the pottery seems to have disappeared little can be said about it.²

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Christopher Eachard, Vicar of Cransford. In the spring of 1951 Lady Hamilton, of Cransford Hall, drew my attention to the discovery in Cransford Church of a slab commemorating a former parson of the parish. In reply to my enquiry, the present incumbent, the Revd. V. M. Harvey-Fuller, writes:— ‘During repairs to the sanctuary floor in 1950 a large slate slab 6 feet by 3 feet by 6 inches thick was uncovered 9 inches below floor level just to the south of the altar. It marked the spot where a former incumbent of Cransford was buried. The incumbent was the Revd. Christopher Eachard . . . and the inscription reads as follows:—

Here lieth interred the Body of the late Rev. Mr. Christopher Eachard of this church Vicar 48 yrs. He died the 17th of December A.D. 1743 aetat 71 and of Mary his wife.

On it was a beautifully carved crest of a harp and an eagle with a key in its beak. The crest was slightly oval.’ Unfortunately the slab was covered up again when the work was completed.

Now Cransford Church was visited in 1825 by the Revd. John Wareyn Darby, whose manuscript Church Notes are in the Ipswich Public Library. He noted the slab and inscription, with the addition of these words at the end: ‘who died 15th March 1747 aged 69’, referring, of course to the wife. Darby also noted the heraldry as follows:—

Erm. on a bend 3 millrinds (EACHARD), impaling, A chev. betw. 3 talbots hds erased and collared (ALEXANDER) Crest, An ostrich³ wings elevated in his beak a key.

It is clear, therefore, that this slab was visible in 1825 and that the chancel floor was raised at some subsequent date, thus covering the slab. Mr. Harvey-Fuller tells me that no-one now living in the parish can remember the work being done, nor can he find any record of it in the parish papers; so it was probably carried out

¹ Lethbridge, *Recent Excavations in Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk* (1931), Figs. 24 and 25 (Burwell, Cambs.); Leeds, *Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology* (1936), Pl. XXXI (Camerton, Somerset).

² *Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. iv (1855), p. 315.

³ *Visitation of Suffolk, 1664* (Harl. Soc., lxi, 1910, p. 62) gives the bird as a ‘Swan.’