

## Ipswich Museum acquires the Rendlesham Collection

After many months of fundraising, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service was delighted to be able to complete the purchase shortly before last Christmas of the first part of a nationally important collection of finds from Rendlesham, near Woodbridge, in Suffolk for the collections at Ipswich Museum. The finds are the result of a programme of systematic metal detecting of a large area of arable farmland which commenced in 2008 and is due to be completed this summer. Here the collection is described by PHILIP J. WISE, Collections and Curatorial Manager of Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service.

The Rendlesham Collection is outstanding in terms of its quality and composition. This collection covers a broad date range, including Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval finds, although of these the Anglo-Saxon finds are the most archaeologically important. The Anglo-Saxon coinage in particular is notable, both for the total number (40) and types of gold and silver coinage represented. Both continental and English issues are present, the latter originating in the kingdoms of Kent and the East Saxons as well as East Anglia. Several items may be regarded as high status objects, including a complete gold pin, a silver sword mount, and a gold bead from a woman's necklace. Other items are foreign imports such as two brooches from France, a coin weight of Byzantine-type from the eastern Mediterranean and a fragment of a Coptic, or Egyptian, bronze vessel. The Anglo-Saxon finds also include ten brooches, eighteen buckles, a

fragment of a silver wrist clasp, a cosmetic implement, a girdle hanger, three finger rings, five hooked tags, four Late Saxon strap ends, three spangles, twelve mounts, three pins, one stud and two weights.

Among the highly significant and very rare elements of the collection are 6th and 7th century coin weights, indicating that this was the site of high-value transactions in bullion currency, and evidence of fine metalworking which includes precious-metal waste and unfinished or failed castings. There are clear links between items in the collection and the contents of the royal burial mound excavated in 1939 at Sutton Hoo, only a few miles from Rendlesham, and the internationally important Staffordshire Hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold metalwork found in 2009.

The Anglo-Saxons have been a subject of study and collecting activity at Ipswich Museum since 1906 when Nina Frances Layard excavated a cemetery site at

Foxhall Road, Ipswich. Later in 1938 and 1939 Basil Brown undertook the famous excavations at Sutton Hoo, the finds from the 1938 season being in Ipswich Museum. More recently the museum has acquired the finds from the high status cemetery site at Coddanham, near Ipswich. In 2012 the nationally significant finds from the Anglo-Saxon town of Ipswich recovered during a series of major excavations in the 1970s and 1980s, including the Buttermarket, were deposited at Ipswich Museum by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service. Ipswich Museum also continues to acquire individual Anglo-Saxon objects, usually Treasure items, as these become available; most recently in 2011 a gold and garnet pendant of Anglo-Saxon date from the Halesworth area of Suffolk.

In the near future a small group of artefacts and coins from the Rendlesham Collection will go on display at Ipswich Museum. A larger selection will be featured in the new permanent archaeology gallery created as part of the major redevelopment of Ipswich Museum due to take place over the next few years.

Further groups of finds from the Rendlesham Collection will become available in the near future and it is intended to purchase the entire collection, or as much as the available finances will allow. Fundraising is therefore continuing for at least another twelve months.

The acquisition of the Rendlesham Collection is highly appropriate for Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service on grounds of provenance and relevance as well as the artistic merit and rarity of many of the items in the collection. This is an exceptionally rare opportunity to preserve for future generations archaeological evidence from the dawn of English history.



*A Merovingian tremissis in the Rendlesham Collection, which is a unique type of 7th century date.*



*A complete Anglo-Saxon gold pin in the Rendlesham Collection decorated with an opposing pair of birds' heads and dated to c. 620-720 (Photos: Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).*

The purchase of the Rendlesham Collection has been made possible by generous grants from the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Art Fund, the Friends of the Ipswich Museums, the Headley Trust and the Sutton Hoo Society.

# The wolf-coats in Sweden



*Wulfheodenas on the mounds of Old Uppsala (photo: Vince and Grace Evans; all other photos, Lindsay Kerr).*

Formed six years ago, Wulfheodenas is England's only re-enactment group dedicated to recreating aspects of the 6th-7th centuries. Their name is the Old English equivalent of the Old Norse *ulfheðnar*, meaning 'wolf-coats'. Largely based at Sutton Hoo, many of its twenty-five recruits are also members of the Sutton Hoo Society. They provided a spectacular start to the Society's 2011 conference, *Sutton Hoo: a Swedish Perspective* in Ipswich, where the academic speakers suggested they should visit them in Sweden. So in May this year, sixteen members of the group made the trip to Uppsala, described here by PAUL MORTIMER, alias Raedwald.

On the morning of Monday 13th May, the group presented itself to an invited audience of academics at Gamla Uppsala, by marching into the room and loudly proclaiming their presence. This was followed by three members of Wulfheodenas giving presentations, followed by question and answer sessions. Stephen Pollington spoke first, on *'Ingwine and Ynglingar: cultural and political links between Eastern Sweden and Eastern Britain in the Early Mediaeval Period'*. Matthew Bunker followed, with *'Hildewaépnum ond Heaðowaédum, Weapons of Battle and War-dress: where iconography, archaeology and reconstruction converge'*, about the imagery contained in the pressed plates

found mainly on helmets from Sweden, Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire Hoard.

I gave the final offering, *'Misenlicu Ping or Various Things'*, giving some idea of the items we could not take to Sweden, as well as an account of remaking the Sutton Hoo whetstone and a new replica of the Mound 1 sword that I had commissioned. Dave Roper, the maker of the highest quality reproductions of the Sutton Hoo regalia, some of which are now in the Treasury at Sutton Hoo, was part of the expedition. So too was Vince Evans and his wife Grace. Vince, one of the best pattern-welded sword-makers in the world, lives in Hawaii and researched and made the blade for my new sword.

Afterwards, the group was given a

tour of the current archaeological dig by Jonas Wikborg and his team, and then John Ljungkvist showed us the significant sites of Gamla Uppsala. Later on, the group mingled with the public and gave an impromptu presentation in the theatre of Gamla Uppsala museum. Throughout the day we were looked after handsomely by Fredrik Käck the curator, Gunilla Beckholmen, Linda Klementsson and other museum staff.

Tuesday 14th began with a trip to Valsgårde, where we could appreciate the beautiful setting and the wild flowers growing among the mounds. Later that day we visited the Gustavianum in Uppsala, where we were allowed to take photographs of the exhibits and discuss





John Ljungkvist guides the group around the mounds at Old Uppsala.



Anne-Sofie Gräslund, Professor Emerita, Uppsala University (left) with Helena Hulth (centre) and Dave Roper (right).

them with John Worley, the museum curator. John also arranged for us to visit the museum's store, where we were shown many valuable items not currently on display. Throughout Tuesday we were guided by Peter Johnsson, a world class swordsmith who lives in Uppsala and has a deep interest in his country's history.

Tuesday gave us a break from wearing 6th-7th century garb, but we dressed up again on Wednesday morning to go to the Historiska Museet (The National History Museum) in Stockholm, where we did our utmost to entertain the visitors, who were mostly children from primary schools. They were very enthusiastic and interested in our costumes and most - probably all - spoke some English. It was good fun and while in costume we were aided by Linda Wahlander of the museum. During the afternoon, the curator, Kent Anderson, gave us a special dispensation to take

pictures in the museum, including the Gold Room.

Some of our members went back to England on Thursday morning, while the rest of us were given a presentation about recent finds from the current dig at Gamla Uppsala. Then we went to look around the Upplandsmuseet (Upplands Museum) in Uppsala.

During our final afternoon in Sweden, we were privileged to be taken to the site of Ultuna by Helena Hulth. Not far from Uppsala, Ultuna once had some 700 mounds, but unfortunately few of them were ever excavated properly and much information was lost over the years due to building works. Nevertheless, dedicated archaeologists like Helena have been able to make discoveries, and the work goes on.

We were treated with the utmost kindness throughout our stay in Sweden, and everyone went out of their way to

make sure that we got the best out of our short stay. I would particularly like to thank Neil Price, Frands Herschend, Anne-Sofie Gräslund and Torun Zachrisson, all speakers at the Society's 2011 Conference, who helped make our visit so memorable and gave us so much to think about.

Paul Mortimer regularly performs at Sutton Hoo and elsewhere as Raedwald. He is the author of *Woden's Warriors: warfare, beliefs, arms and armour in the 6th and 7th centuries in Northern Europe* (Anglo-Saxon Books, 2012) and co-editor, with Stephen Pollington, of *Remaking the Sutton Hoo Stone: The Ansell-Roper reconstruction and its context*, which will be published later this year by Anglo-Saxon Books.

[www.asbooks.co.uk](http://www.asbooks.co.uk)  
[www.wulfheodenas.com](http://www.wulfheodenas.com)



The group's public presentation at Old Uppsala.



Bruce Tordulf explains the details of his seax.



# In the Parker Library and the 'Arch and Anth'

It may seem hackneyed to write of a spine-tingling experience, writes PAULINE MOORE, but that is what many of us from the Society felt on 14th June, as Dr Christopher de Hamel, Donnelley Fellow Librarian of Corpus Christi College, led us through the historic Cambridge quad and into the Parker Library. It houses the collection made by Archbishop Matthew Parker, formerly chaplain to Anne Boleyn, who was catapulted into the archbishopric of Canterbury by Elizabeth I. He believed the Golden Age of England to have been the Anglo-Saxon period, when the king could possess a copy of the Bible in English.



Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: Parker Library, far right (all photos: Nigel Maslin).

As a great privilege, Dr Hamel had prepared a special display for us, laying open on a table Anglo-Saxon manuscripts for us to inspect 'up close and personal'. Dr Hamel told us, "Twenty-five per cent of all surviving manuscripts in Old English are within twenty feet of you; and ten per cent of all manuscripts known to have existed in England before the Conquest, are within twenty feet of you."

Our host had specially opened and labelled the Old English Bede, given to Exeter Cathedral by Leofric, at the page telling how Raedwald had been 'admitted to the sacrament in Kent', and how the queen and counsellors had objected. Beside it was the Parker Chronicle, the oldest version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, again mentioning Raedwald as King of East Anglia.

The highlight for this scribe was to stand before the Gospels of St Augustine, who brought them, as Bede says, before King Aethelbert of Kent, as the saint approached him with a crucifer. (One can only surmise that Raedwald could have seen this book later at his baptism). Imagine what effect it might have had on Anglo-Saxons less tutored than Aethelbert

may have been (he had a Christian queen) to see magical marks held on strange paper between wooden covers. We could see faded ink, but the coloured illustration had survived on the pages opened to us.

We saw the second oldest copy of the Gospels in English, translated in about 1000 AD in Bath Abbey: Parker's own glosses, in red chalk, were in Latin. There too was the Bury Bible, produced at Bury St Edmunds Abbey in the 1130s, and Felix of Crowland's Life of St. Guthlac, and in the beautiful round script of Canterbury was the Pontifical service book used by Archbishop Stigand in the coronation of Harold Godwinson, and possibly also William the Conqueror. This is a treasure-house, and we are very privileged to have seen it.

Our two groups made a brief visit to St Bene't's (Benedict's) Church, owned by Corpus Christi, with some of its original Anglo-Saxon building, especially the tower, still visible. The Parish Clerk, Deborah Meyler, guided our morning visit, and Richard Andrewes, a member of the congregation, the afternoon. Several of us were amused to see two large tombs, with a Samuel Newton interred in each!

At the Museum of Archaeology and

Anthropology we were delighted to be allowed to don gloves and handle a great many Anglo-Saxon artefacts in the Archaeology Workroom, again specially laid out for us. In the morning we were welcomed by Dr Catherine Hills, Senior University Lecturer and excavator of the Spong Hill cemetery in Norfolk. Under the helpful guidance of Imogen Gunn, Collections Manager (Archaeology), and her colleague, we held girdle-hangers, latch-lifters, necklaces, square-headed brooches and pins of 5th-8th centuries. We inspected an early sundial from St. John's College, the Hildersham hanging bowl and a fragile bone comb, reliquary and needle. Spare time allowed us to visit the newly refurbished museum, which includes the collections of cultural anthropology, with a current exhibition on *Chiefs and Governors: Art and Power in Fiji*.

Sincere thanks go to Megan Milan and Bryony Abbott for organising such a wonderful visit. Details of a second trip to Cambridge in September are enclosed as a flyer in this issue.

<http://parkerweb.stanford.edu>

<http://maa.cam.ac.uk/maa>



Dr Catherine Hills (right) with Imogen Gunn (centre left) pointing out features of the Hildersham hanging bowl.



The 7th century hanging bowl from Hildersham, Cambridge (D 1950.11).



Inside the newly refurbished Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge.



# Inside and underneath Colchester Castle



Colchester Castle (photo: [www.flickr.com/photos/gauiscaecilius](http://www.flickr.com/photos/gauiscaecilius); other photos, Megan Milan).



St Christopher carrying the Christ Child.

Colchester Castle is closed for redevelopment until 2014, but before restoration work started, the Museum gave members of the public the chance to view the Castle, stripped bare of display cases, in all its architectural splendour. On March 16th, a cold and blustery day, a group of Sutton Hoo Society members and National Trust volunteers were treated to a private tour, described here by MEGAN MILAN.

Measuring 46 x 33.5m, Colchester Castle is not just the largest Norman keep in England but in all of Europe. Strictly speaking, the Castle falls just outside the membership's area of interest, but such an opportunity was too good to pass up, and, as the group discovered, the origins of the Castle inspire romantic musings on possible links with the Anglo-Saxons.

Crossing through the round, Norman archway, the group was met by Philip Wise, Collections and Curatorial Manager at Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, who gave an overview of the history of the Castle before taking the group into the main ground-floor area. The Castle was built on the site of the Roman Temple of Claudius, and material from the Temple was used in its construction. Indeed, the foundations of the Temple can still be seen beneath the Castle. Built in c. AD 54, the Temple was the grandest building in Camulodunum, former stronghold of the Trinovantes and first capital of the province of Britannia. Sacked by Boudica in AD 60/61, its history brings to mind the evocative image *enta geweorc*, the 'work of giants,' of the Old English poems.

Some one thousand years later, construction of the Norman Castle began. It was likely designed by Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester, 'architect' of the White Tower of London and 'father of the Corps' of the Royal Engineers. Construction

began in the early 1070s – just a handful of years after the Battle of Hastings. This was the era of Hereward the Wake, and the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of Colchester surely witnessed the building work, perhaps even participated in it. The work was interrupted, possibly at the time of the death of William I in 1087, but was finished by the early 12th century. Interestingly, it was only used as a castle proper for some two hundred years being converted into a prison and continuing as such, with various interruptions, until the early 19th century.

Armed with an understanding of the Castle's history, the group followed Philip Wise into the main ground-floor room, where he pointed out evidence of a now vanished arcaded wall, which divided the cavernous space on a north-south axis, and typical Roman, flat, red bricks in the walls. This area was probably used for storage. Philip also shared the results of the latest research on the Castle, explaining that it is now thought that, although the Castle may originally have been intended to have three stories, only two were built, but with higher corner towers. Certainly, analysis must have been made much more difficult by the actions of John Weeley, who bought the Castle in 1683 and proceeded to dismantle much of the upper structure to sell off as building material. Thankfully, he went bankrupt before he could demolish the rest of the building.



Members of the Sutton Hoo Society consigned to the cells of Colchester Castle.

The group then proceeded to the upper storey, stopping on the way to view graffiti scratched into the sentry's seat by the entrance and into the wall at the base of the Great Stair; among them are a Norman knight and an image of St Christopher carrying the Christ Child. Here, on the first floor, were the hall where the king, or his representative, received visitors, and the royal bedchamber. Here too were great fireplaces, among the earliest examples surviving in England, and garderobes. Also on this storey was the Castle chapel and an intriguing staircase leading from the chapel to somewhere unknown down below, the exact purpose of which is still a mystery.

The tour concluded in the dungeons, where hundreds of prisoners were confined, from 1226 until 1835. Their most famous occupants were probably the hapless victims of Matthew Hopkins, Witchfinder General. Standing in the dimly lit, cold cells, looking through the iron bars, with the weight of the castle pressing down all around, it was not hard to imagine the feelings of those confined here, or to believe that the spirits of some may linger here still.



# The Pontefract connection



Part of a much larger group picture, this section conveniently shows five of the Sutton Hoo diggers in 1963, on a site which PontArc is still digging. L to R: Kevin Stubbs; Fred Morris; Terry Carney; Ken Wilson; Margaret (Peggy) Wilson.



The end of the Mound 1 ship in 1967: Don Lodge extreme right.

Last year's reunion of Sutton Hoo diggers from the 1960s made one of them, ERIC HOULDER, reflect how fleeting people's memories are: the subsequent feature in the *East Anglian Daily Times* showed how faulty memories could become over forty years. Here he puts the record straight on the group of '60s Sutton Hoo excavators who came from Pontefract on the eastern boundary of Yorkshire. Edith Pretty, incidentally, the owner of Sutton Hoo in 1939, came from Elland on the western edge of West Yorkshire.

The Pontefract connection with Sutton Hoo really begins in the late 1950s. Inspired by a WEA class in archaeology sponsored by Leeds University, a group of enthusiasts in Pontefract formed the Pontefract & District Archaeological Society (PontArch). The same thing was happening all over the country at this time, and much of the momentum came from the wonderful programmes the BBC was broadcasting at this time. The Pontefract group, however, was different in one particular: it attracted a charismatic pair of experienced archaeologists who had the knowledge, contacts, and sheer inspiration to empower a group of individuals to become really efficient excavators, both as a team and individually. As one of that group, and moreover the only one who has remained seriously involved in archaeology to the present day, I want to set down the background to our involvement at Sutton Hoo.

## Ken & Peggy Wilson

The Pontefract group had its own dig, St John's Priory, which was advertised each year in the *CBA Calendar of Excavations*. In 1959, one of the respondees was Kenneth Wilson, Schools Museum Officer at the Abbey House Museum in Leeds. Ken had had a varied career since his birth

in Hull, including service as a regular in the Royal Navy, war experience aboard *HMS Rodney* and other vessels, and teacher training. (It was only later that we discovered that Ken was a published war poet with a national reputation. He was also one of the eye-witnesses to the loss of the airship R38.) During regular excavation work during the summer vacations after the war, he was lucky enough to be a joint discoverer of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure. A brilliant raconteur, the evenings spent in local pubs were enlivened by Ken's tales of his adventures both in the war and in the trenches. These tales encouraged a few of us to subscribe to the *CBA Calendar* and participate in other digs. This was easier for those of us in full time education either as students or teachers, for most 'serious' digs took place during the academic summer holidays.

By total coincidence, another respondee to the *CBA Calendar* that summer was Margaret (Peggy) Markham White. Peggy had a privileged background, her father being important in the diplomatic service. Whilst she was young, her family had been posted to the Falkland Isles where Peggy learned many useful skills including how to strip down and re-assemble a Lee Enfield rifle. Following education at Roedean

she became an actress under her maiden name of Margaret Dean. Peggy was also an excellent raconteur, telling, amongst other tales, the one of her tea-date with J. B. Priestley. Her skills with the Lee Enfield had been put to use in the early days of the Home Guard, after which she became involved in the supply of clothing to bombed-out civilians – a vital but largely unrecognised role.

After the war Peggy came into archaeology, and her top-level contacts enabled her to move into the higher echelons. This is not the place to describe the very small world of post-war archaeology, suffice to say that fewer than one thousand people were involved, largely in the academic summer holidays. It was inevitable that Ken and Peggy would be drawn together, and they set up home in Ilkley, from where they began a programme of re-invigorating Yorkshire archaeology. As part of the plan, they organised small-scale digs using the very best of current methodology; someone once remarked, "Peggy out-Wheelered Mortimer

Wheeler himself." Whilst true, the couple were also aware of the developing trend towards open area excavation, and this eventually became the cause of the rift that developed between them and the Ashbees in 1967/8.



Their position at Sutton Hoo was always somewhat anomalous. Many of us believed at the time that Ken was actually Deputy Director (with Peggy in the background – a position she preferred), though in many ways Richmal Ashbee also fulfilled that role.

As someone who remained friendly with both parties, I am in a good position to describe what happened. It must be said that Paul never regarded their parting of the ways as a rift, more as a difference of opinion. Basically, Peggy felt that the Sutton Hoo site should be dug as an open area excavation with recording in metric, following the new trend being pioneered by the emerging younger archaeologists like Barry Cunliffe and Peter Addyman. (Peter, a friend and contemporary of mine, is currently President of the Pontefract & District Archaeological Society, and recalls working as a supervisor for Paul long before Sutton Hoo.) Paul, on the other hand, felt that as Basil Brown and Charles Phillips had begun the dig as a series of boxes using Imperial measurements, it made sense that it should continue as such. My opinion, for what it is worth, was with Paul. Thus, Ken and Peggy were absent from Sutton Hoo for the 1969 and subsequent seasons.

### **Fred Morris and Don Lodge**

During the autumn and winter of 1966-7, I was directing a small-scale dig on a Roman road at Ilkley for the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. Amongst the workers were Don Lodge and Fred Morris, both members of the Pontefract group. Following each meeting of PontArch (as it is called today) we active diggers gathered in the New Inn – now long demolished – to analyse the lecture and catch up on the gossip. It was here, under conditions of strict secrecy, that we heard about the proposed new work at Sutton Hoo from Ken & Peggy. Amongst those invited to participate were Don, Fred, myself and Joan, Terry Carney, and Kevin Stubbs.

Fred was of the older generation. He had taken part in the ill-fated Norwegian campaign of 1940, and as a result never spoke of his wartime experiences. He was a lorry driver by profession, working for one of the local liquorice manufacturers, Dunhill's. Fred was a type you rarely meet today, but common on the committees of local societies of all types then. He had only had an elementary education, but by dint of evening classes and much reading he had educated himself in both topography and archaeology.

Don was of the same generation, and indeed was a boyhood friend of my own father. His family owned a local building



*Derek and Anne Thorpe outside their tent, probably on a Sunday, at the Five Winds campsite (photo: Derek W. Thorpe; other photos, Eric Houlder LRPS).*

firm so that he served an apprenticeship as a bricklayer and stonemason. In 1939 he proved unfit for the forces, and joined the fire service, with which he served in, amongst other blitzed towns, Coventry and later the York Baedeker Raid. He is the foreground fireman damping down in York station in the picture seen in many history books of the Second World War. Like Fred he had educated himself and was a founder member of PontArch. Don eventually became President of PontArch, and died shortly after visiting Sutton Hoo with a group of my students in about 1985.

By the time we found out about the 1967 season at Sutton Hoo, some of us had made holiday arrangements which could not be altered. Thus, whilst Don, Terry and Kevin accompanied us to Sutton Hoo, Fred was unable to come, though he and Don spent a fortnight each in the subsequent 1968 and 1969 seasons. This was their entire annual holiday entitlement, and the minimum time which Paul allowed anyone to stay on the site. It should be said that this condition was quite normal as most directors felt that it took a week to become familiar with local soils etc., so that only the second week became archaeologically productive.

### **Derek & Ann Thorpe**

When Paul asked me to supervise a quarter of the site in the 1968 season, he asked me if any other PontArch members should be asked. I suggested Derek and Ann Thorpe. Derek was (and is) a skilled photographer, having undertaken the

photography on a number of the Wilson's sites. As they only had a fortnight paid holiday per year from Derek's work in engineering, the pair came on the same conditions as Fred Morris and Don Lodge. Naturally, they timed their stay to coincide with that of the latter two, and made a point of going around together on Sundays and in the evenings. Shortly after Sutton Hoo Derek and Ann started their family, and dropped out of PontArch and archaeology in general.

### **Kevin Stubbs**

Kevin was a founder member, with Terry Carney, of the junior section of PontArch. At the time of Sutton Hoo he was a trainee teacher, and attended Paul Ashbee's annual Whitsuntide dig on the Scilly Isles. He only dug at Sutton Hoo in 1967.

### **Terry Carney**

Terry was another member of PontArch who joined the excavation circuit, digging with the Ashbees on Scilly, and supervising at Sutton Hoo followed by a similar job at Mucking. All this was done in his vacations from university and for a few years afterwards. Staying in the area of Mucking, Terry eventually obtained a post in the museum at Thurrock, working his way up the hierarchy until he retired quite recently.

### **Eric & Joan Houlder**

As a founder member of PontArch, I was heavily involved with both society and the Wilsons' digs from 1957 onwards.

Joan and I married in 1963 and from then onwards she came with me on various excavations chosen from the *CBA Calendar of Excavations*. Among them were West Stowe and those along the (then) new M4 motorway. I too specialised in site photography, though my oeuvre was colour rather than monochrome. Around the time we were digging at Sutton Hoo I was experimenting with the newly available polarising filters which clarified soil sections in some lighting conditions.

Outside archaeology, I taught history in a mixed school, and Joan was head of geography at a large girls' school. Naturally my work involved much archaeology, and included some of the earliest excavation work undertaken by school pupils.

During our involvement at Sutton Hoo, where I ended up being supervisor in charge of half the site, I was offered a similar post on a ship excavation in Scandinavia, and had to make a decision on whether to stay in teaching or strike out as a professional archaeologist. After much heart-searching I chose teaching, though archaeology played an increasingly important role in this; one of the last such involvements was working with sixth form pupils on an Anglo-Saxon cemetery.

Following early retirement because of ill health, I went back into professional archaeology as chief photographer to the Wood Hall Archaeological Trust. I was also involved with photographing the Towton Battlefield skeletons, and shortly afterwards was asked to participate as photographer/supervisor on the St Aiden's Sunken Ships Project; we won the Pitt Rivers Award for this with special commendation of the photography.

PontArch survives as a small town society with an average of a hundred members in most years. However, those heady days of the late 1960s were probably the last occasions when skilled amateurs could participate in supervisory roles on a dig of international importance. Each time I speak on Sutton Hoo, I remember those times with affection, pride and rather too much nostalgia.



Eric and Joan Houlder outside our tent on the Wood Hall campsite, one Sunday in 1968.



Robert during the trip he organised to the reconstructed meadhall at Wychurst, Kent, on 12th June 2010

## Robert J. Allen 24<sup>th</sup> November 1939 – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Robert Allen, a senior member of the Sutton Hoo Society, died in hospital on Sunday 9th June 2013. He was 74 years of age. He had suffered a long period of ill-health which finally overcame even his indomitable spirit and will to live.

Robert, retired school teacher and school inspector, was a multi-talented linguist and had an enthusiastic interest in history, architecture – especially ecclesiastical – and particularly archaeology. It seemed almost inevitable, despite his many other interests, that he would find time for the Sutton Hoo Society. He stayed with the Society for twelve years until the very end. During this time he became a member of the Executive Committee and an Honorary Member of the Society.

Robert was a natural public speaker and this led him to join the 'guiding group' making many appearances amongst the Anglo-Saxon mounds whatever the weather. The high standards he set himself were always apparent for others to see and to emulate. Not every one of us was capable of achieving his level but he was always available to help them to improve their performance. In this way he enhanced the reputation of the guiding force and to the overall reputation of the Society.

Even as his health made it more difficult for him to walk far unaided, or to stand for long periods, he was considering how to continue his volunteering for guided tours. He soon found the answer in the motorised mobility scooter. He managed to persuade the National Trust that he had the capability to ride the device over the mounds and after detailed discussions he was allowed to do so. This was a concession offered to no one else. Soon he became a familiar sight leading his tour party on his mechanical steed in a manner somewhat reminiscent of a cavalry charge.

Robert subsequently took over the management of the guiding rota where his organisational skills were put to good use. He further expanded his volunteering portfolio by taking on the organisation of events run by the Society for its members.

Over time the range and scope of the Society's offerings included our annual lecture, academic conferences and regular coach trips to places of related interest.

It was here that he really achieved his finest hour. Trips became short breaks and then full blown holidays, all with an educational focus. The variety included taking groups of members to Denmark, Sweden, the north east of England, and the Republic of Ireland. Thomas Cook would have been envious! In between all this there were the local day trips to places of Anglo-Saxon interest. Undoubtedly local coach companies are sure to miss his entrepreneurial zeal and his frequent calls for their services.

Robert's interest in helping others to learn did not exclude expanding his own desire to expand his own knowledge whilst at the same time enjoying the cut and thrust of debate on matters of history, language and archaeology in weekly classes run by Dr Sam Newton at Sutton Hoo. He also brought into play his wealth of friends and acquaintances built up over a life time, which always provided him with an anecdote to illustrate his arguments. His ability to name-drop in these circumstances became legendary.

Robert was a larger than life character and all who met him, or volunteered alongside him, felt they had a special friend who was always willing to support and encourage them in their endeavours. All of this varied activity added to the reputation of the society and contributed to its success and growing status in recent years. Robert leaves behind him a legacy to be proud of and memories which will surely inspire those who are following in his footsteps.

MICHAEL ARGENT  
Chairman, Sutton Hoo Society



# Those elusive villagers

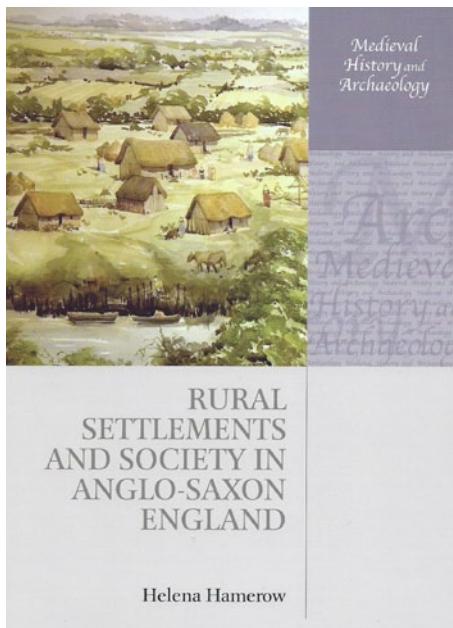
A review by MARTIN CARVER,  
Professor Emeritus of Archaeology,  
University of York.

I've been reading Helena Hamerow's *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England* (2012), a survey that shows how timber buildings are put together, lays out the settlement plans, describes 'ritual deposits' and says a little about agricultural practice and rural industry, in six succinct chapters. It's enough to weave a serviceable storyline. In the early days (5th-7th century), the Anglo-Saxons built numerous small, dispersed hamlets consisting of family-sized post-built houses and huts with sunken features used for weaving and grain storage. They were immigrants from the continent, where both types of house can be found, but they didn't bring with them the huge continental byre houses where people and cattle live in chummy proximity - they didn't have the capital to build them. In the 7th century more varied and grander types of settlement appear: the 'palace' or royal villa, the monastery, the wic (a coastal trading centre), and its inland equivalent, detected from a scatter of coins. This colourful Middle Saxon world came to an end with the 9th century Viking wars, after which the settlement strategy was given a makeover: in their third period, the Anglo-Saxons invented England, a land of aristocratic estate centres, villages, towns and ports, of a type that a medieval person could more or less recognise. As for the houses, they get larger and sturdier, can have an upstairs or a cellar, but are still built of timber and mud.

The book is a learned treatise and its author is the safest of guides to Anglo-Saxon settlement archaeology, if not the most chatty. There are none of those enlivening images you might hope for to conjure up those elusive villagers: rolling hills in slanting sunlight, historic meadows and fords, tracks, tools, architectural reconstructions, pottery, grain dryers, hearths and pits. There is one photograph (p. 132): a picture of a bone in some gravelly soil, taken by an eminent professor. There are plenty of line drawings, though, in fact a relentless parade of monochromatic lines, dots and blobs as fascinating (to an expert) as close-up slides of bacteria. The author allows credit where it is due and her style of criticism rarely exceeds a distant Oxfordian dissent. But actually she does have something to complain about - and so do we.

Some of the best research sites (eg Chalton) remain unpublished, and although rescue archaeology over the last ten years has brought a bonanza of ditches and post-holes, bones and potsherds, it has generated rather more academic heat than light. Did sunken-features buildings have wooden floors? Are 6 hectare sites 'proto-towns' (West Heslerton) or small hamlets wandering about (Mucking)? Well, are they? "We do not as yet have the evidence at our disposal to resolve these apparent contradictions" says Hamerow (2012, 65). Perhaps we should consider why we don't. Excavating early medieval buildings in north-west Europe is a serious business if you want to extract details of their architecture and use, requiring a lot of time, extreme care and ideally

distinguished the Anglo-Saxon cultivated land from that occupied by houses, so showing the size of settlement and the development of agriculture in the early, middle and late Saxon periods: the number of hectares given over to arable, it seems, virtually doubled every 150 years. This project has always seemed to me one of the cleverest in Anglo-Saxon settlement archaeology. Its modern peer is perhaps Mary Chester-Kaldwell's study of settlement and cemetery patterns in Norfolk (2009), and if you add to this the high quality publication of settlement and cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill (2009), it seems that East Anglia is almost in position to write its own book on Anglo-Saxon settlement. Maybe it should, with Witton showing the way.



on-site physical and chemical mapping. Trenching, stripping of the ploughsoil without recording it, timid designs, lack of allocated time and money, lack of architectural reconstructions, both on paper and for real - these are among the reasons that we don't measure up too well to the results from extensive settlement excavations on the continent.

A puzzling omission was the Witton project, the fruits of a Norfolk farmer's long-term archaeological love affair with his farmland, nurtured by Andrew Rogerson and analysed by Keith Wade (1983). Pottery retrieved from the fields was divided into 'abraded' and 'less abraded' sherds and held to indicate ploughland and settlement debris respectively. When mapped, they

## Further reading

Carver, Martin 2011 *Making Archaeology Happen. Design versus Dogma* (California: Left Coast Press)

Champion, Tim 1977 'Chalton', *Current Archaeology* 59: 364-369

Chester-Kaldwell, M. 2009 *Early Anglo-Saxon Communities in the landscape of Norfolk* (BAR 481)

Hamerow, Helena 1993 *Excavations at Mucking Volume 2: The Anglo-Saxon Settlement* (London: English Heritage)

Hamerow, Helena 2002 *Early Medieval Settlements: The archaeology of rural communities in North-West Europe 400-900* (OUP)

Hamerow, Helena 2012 *Rural Settlements and Society in Anglo-Saxon England* (OUP)

Hope-Taylor, Brian 1977 *Yeavinger: An Anglo-British Centre of early Northumbria* (HMSO)

Lucy, S., Tipper, J. & Dickens, A. 2009 *The Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville* (East Anglian Archaeology 131)

Rahtz, Philip A. 1976 Buildings and rural settlement in D Wilson (ed.) *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England* (Methuen): 49-98

Rahtz, Philip A. 1979 *The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar* (BAR 65)

Tipper, J. 2004 *The Grubenhaus in Anglo-Saxon England* (Yedingham)

Wade, Keith 1983 in A. Lawson (ed.) *The Archaeology of Witton, near North Walsham* (East Anglian Archaeology 18)

# Of image and ambiguity



Mike Argent about to introduce lecturer Leslie Webster



Leslie Webster's recent booklet on *The Franks Casket*.

Professor LESLIE WEBSTER gave this year's Basil Brown Memorial Lecture on *Tradition and Innovation in Anglo-Saxon Art* to an audience of more than a hundred in the Riverside Theatre, Woodbridge, on 11th May.

This hugely entertaining, brilliantly illustrated lecture was essentially an epitome of Leslie's new history of Anglo-Saxon art, which was published last year. To have all the complex visual and interpretive themes encapsulated within an hour made a dramatic narrative, which, were it published, would make the perfect introduction to the subject.

The broad historical themes are familiar from the book: the early inheritance of Roman and Danish forms, Celtic and eastern influences, symbolism in

the service of political power and Christian mission, and finally the Viking impact.

While this broad historical chronicle unfolded, Leslie was always concerned with 'reading the image, seeing the text', an apparent contradiction that is key to the art she was analysing. Like Arab calligraphy, illuminated texts present us with pictures, while images have subtle symbolic meanings that have to be read.

We heard about the shape-shifting beings and the gods of illiterate tribal

societies of the 5th and 6th centuries, and became instant specialists in the 'amuletic bracteates' of these people, who left only high status metalwork and cremation urns to pass on their message.

Roman parade helmets morphed into Anglo-Saxon designs; animal ornamentation derived from metalwork adjusted to new contexts in copies of the Gospels; but the human images that must once have been worked in wood are lost.

Complex surface patterning masked the verbal texturing of riddles produced by a cryptic imagination, "packed with more double entendres than a *Carry On* film". The best example of passing on riddles and messages is the early 8th century Northumbrian Franks Casket, with scenes of Weland the Smith, the Adoration of the Magi, the Sack of Jerusalem, Romulus and Remus and tales of Egil, Hos and Erta, all carved on whale bone. It reflects a complex combination of runic and Roman traditions, Germanic legends, and Byzantine Christianity that were typical of the intellectual and artistic ferment of the age, and which our lecturer did so much to unravel for us. – N.M.

**Professor Leslie Webster**  
*Anglo-Saxon Art, a new history*  
(British Museum Press, 2012)  
*The Franks Casket*  
(British Museum Press, 2012)

## Redwald, Redvald, Rædwald, Hrédwald, Hráðwald, or Hráðwold

The last issue of *Saxon* printed the script of Professor MARTIN CARVER's recent essay for BBC Radio 3 on Rædwald, where the name was spelt phonetically as 'Radwarld'. This brought protests from our favourite Anglo-Saxon studies leader, Dr SAM NEWTON, a reply from Martin, and explanations from both of them.

Martin Carver emailed, 'Yes of course I did spell it phonetically to remind me not to say "Redwold". I am spelling 'Raedwald' thus, and pronouncing ae as in 'hat', a as in 'father'. See Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Primer*, ninth edition page 1. I was taught Old English by Rosemary Cramp (BA Oxon.). It would not be amazing if Oxford and Cambridge had equally strong and differing convictions about how Anglo-Saxons talked.'

Turning from phonetics to linguistics, Sam Newton emailed to give us the background to the spelling they both agree on, as follows:

'Our earliest forms of the name of this great Wuffing king dates from the early 8th century and are provided by Bede, who renders it in Latin as Redwald, and the Whitby author of *The Life of St Gregory*, who spells it Redvald. The Old English form appears in all major manuscripts of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the earliest of which dates from around the late 9th century, as Rædwald.

Rædwald is clearly a regular Old English compound-name, the second element of which must have been -wald,

"power". The first element may be one of three possibilities:

(1) ræd, "counsel", the usual interpretation, but which is more usually found as the second element in royal compound names, as in Æþel-ræd, "Noble-counsel";

(2) hræd (also spelt hræð, hraðe, or hreð), "ready" or "hasty", which might seem plausible, given the tendency for Latin writers to drop the h in Old English words beginning with hr and to substitute d for the Old English ð (eth), but which seems to have no clear parallels in Old English royal name-giving; or

(3) hræd, hréd, hréð or hróð, "victory" or "glory", which might also seem plausible for the same reasons noted in (2) above. This form, however, does have parallels in early royal name-giving, as in Beowulf, especially in the Danish dynastic names Hróðgár, Hrópulf, Hróðmund, or Hréðric, and in the Geatish royal eponym Hréðel and its variant Hrádel. Similarly varying spellings of names based on this word are also cited in the Old English

catalogue-poem, *Widsith*, where it is particularly associated with the Goths.

I suggest then that the form Redwald and Redvald are Latin versions of an Old English Hrédwald, Hráðwald, or Hráðwold, which would mean something like "Victory Power".

This suggestion strengthened by the presence of the name Hróðmund preserved in the upper reaches of the East Anglian royal pedigree preserved in the Anglian Collection, to which it would be related by alliteration and back-variation (on the name Hróðmund and the possibility that it may be that of the young prince of Denmark in Beowulf, see chapter 4 of my *Origins of Beowulf*?

**Dr Sam Newton**  
*The Origins of Beowulf and the Pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia*  
(D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, 1993)

*The Reckoning of King Raedwald: the story of the king linked to the Sutton Hoo ship-burial*  
(Wuffing Studies I, Red Bird Press, 2003)

Professor Martin Carver's talk on King Raedwald and his wife (Radio 3, *The Essay: Anglo-Saxon Portraits*, 19 October 2012) is still available on BBC iPlayer at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01nb0t0>



## Membership matters

PAULINE MOORE, our membership secretary, writes:

We can only continue to fulfil our constitutional aims – to help safeguard and promote the burial site at Sutton Hoo, tell its story, and spread knowledge about Anglo-Saxons – if we have a strong enough membership to give support.

Our members do give loyal support to our conference events, trips and lectures; they share their involvement in relevant areas of archaeology and study, and help publish and post **Saxon** twice a year. We have also helped National Trust commission excellent replicas of some of the ship burial treasures for public display, and for use in the 'Out of the Case' handling sessions which the Society has introduced this year in the Exhibition Hall.

In recent years, costs involved in every one of these areas have risen, and we are now having to raise our subscriptions for 2014, as agreed at the last AGM:

Ordinary membership	£15.00
Family membership	£22.50
Student membership	£7.50
Overseas (all categories)	£30.00

Overseas members may prefer to pay via PayPal on our website, [www.suttonhoo.org](http://www.suttonhoo.org)

Those members who pay subscriptions by STANDING ORDER should now, please, notify their Banks that payment to our CAF Bank should change accordingly, ready for payment on 31 December 2013.

If you wish to use this easy method of payment, please contact the Membership Secretary (see back page) to ask for details of how to set this up. It will save us money if you can supply email address or write with S.A.E. My phone number is 01394 382617. Please note Standing Order is required by our bank, not Direct Debit. The CAF bank (Charities Aid Foundation) is for use by charities such as this Society.

This year we have welcomed a number of people who have been given membership as gifts – what a lovely present to have received! We do hope this will result in long association with us.

Sincere thanks to all our members. It is a great pleasure to meet up at our various events, and we welcome the appreciative and helpful comments so many of you have made about **Saxon** and our other endeavours.

## Nydam launch nears



The ship shed (or 'naust') being built on the shores of Allsund, Denmark, to house the reconstruction of the 4th century Nydam ship.

Ole Brixen Søndergaard writes: "Just a short follow-up on the NYDAM boat project. The boat is almost completed, the hull being painted with a mixture of tree tar and lime oil, and work has now moved to raising the NAUST (ship shed). All the stout timber was been prepared at the shipyard during the winter, and is being put together at the beach. Time is now running fast, with only a month to go before the launch. All hands are at work and our wives are sewing, weaving and dyeing Iron Age dresses, all by hand, in order for us to be properly dressed on the 17 of August."

## Street House



© Brian Smith

Dr Stephen Sherlock, who delivered the Society's spring lecture in 2010 (**Saxon** 50, p.15) has now published his unique 7th century cemetery site at Street House, North Yorkshire. The finds, like the gemstone pendant above, are on permanent display at Kirkleatham Museum, which has copies of the site report (Tees Archaeological Monograph Series, vol. 6) for £15 + p&p.

## West Stow

West Stow is one of the most important Early Anglo-Saxon settlements in the country, continuing from the 5th into the 7th centuries. It remained virtually intact and was never subject to later occupation. The seventy sunken-featured buildings, grouped around seven halls, produced an abundance of evidence of pottery, weaving and bone working. The site was excavated in the 1970s by Dr Stanley West when he was County Archaeologist, and his report, long out of print, has now been reprinted in two volumes. West Stow is examined in the context of the nearby inhumation cemetery (investigated in the 19th century), the cremation cemetery a mile away at Lackford, and Saxon settlement in the Lark Valley generally.

When one of the reconstructed halls (elsewhere) burnt down in 2008, the remains were painstakingly excavated using forensic as well as conventional methods, in order to understand the destruction processes involved, and inform future archaeological investigation. The results have now been published in a monograph by Dr Jess Tipper, who has succeeded Keith Wade as Suffolk County Archaeologist.

*Experimental Archaeology and Fire: the investigation of a burnt reconstruction at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village* [East Anglian Archaeology 146] by Jess Tipper ISBN 978 0 9568747 3 3; 200pp, 147 illustrations; £20

*West Stow, the Anglo-Saxon Village, Suffolk* [East Anglian Archaeology 24] by Stanley West (1985) ISBN 0307 2460; 2 vols, 184pp, 305figs, 11pls; £30.00

Both books are distributed by Oxbow Books ([www.oxbowbooks.com](http://www.oxbowbooks.com))

## Join us on e-mail!

While regular events such as the Annual General Meeting, the Basil Brown lecture and the annual trip will continue to be advertised in **Saxon**, from time to time we may become aware of last minute opportunities of potential interest to our members. Please note that the only way we will be able to organise and directly notify you of these 'pop up' events is by e-mail, so if we do not have your e-mail address, we will not be able to send you any details. Of course, we will post notices of all such events online on the Society website at [www.suttonhoo.org](http://www.suttonhoo.org) but, for direct notification, you will need to be on our e-mail list.

**Don't miss out!** To receive notices and reminders of Sutton Hoo Society events by e-mail, please send an e-mail to Nan Waterfall at [thesuttonhoosociety@gmail.com](mailto:thesuttonhoosociety@gmail.com) with your name and 'Please add me to the Sutton Hoo Society e-mail list' in the subject line.

Please be assured that we will only use your e-mail address to communicate with you about Society matters and that we will not disclose it to third parties.

**2014 is the 75th ANNIVERSARY of Basil Brown's discovery of the Sutton Hoo Ship in Mound 1.**

A full programme of events is being planned, and details will be announced in our January issue.

## A memorable visit to Sutton Hoo begins with a memorable burial ground tour

LINDSAY LEE, Guides Training and Guiding co-ordinator, writes: "If anyone would like to join our merry band of guides please contact me on 01728 746104. Many thanks to Gill Kimmerling and Robert Harmon who have had to give up guiding because of a move to Norfolk. They were two of the earliest volunteers to sign up as SHS guides after the NT centre opened in 2002. They are both very popular with winning smiles and we miss them greatly. We all wish them the very best in their new home."

## Events Diary

**Saturday 17 August**  
*Launch of the replica Nydam ship*  
Allsund, Denmark [www.nydam.nu](http://www.nydam.nu)

### Friday 13 September, all day *SHS trip to Cambridge*

The Society will start the day with tea and a talk by Dr Sam Lucy at Newnham College, Cambridge. We then go to the Fitzwilliam Museum for a private viewing of East Anglian coins of the early and mid-Saxon period. The trip will conclude with a private tour of The Wren Library at Trinity College, which houses an important collection of mediaeval manuscripts. The group will lunch in hall at Corpus Christi College. Please book tickets on the enclosed flyer.

### Saturday 14 September, all day *CBA East Conference*

Bury St Edmunds Cathedral  
*Recent Anglo-Saxon Research in the East of England*  
Topics include Oakington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Cambridgeshire; Hartismere Anglo-Saxon Settlement, Eye, Suffolk; Excavations at Watton-At-Stone, Herts.  
Tickets from [cbaeast@archaeologyuk.org](mailto:cbaeast@archaeologyuk.org)  
[www.archaeologyuk.org/cbae](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbae)

### Friday 8 November, all day *Research Seminar*

Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE  
*Re-dating Early England*  
Presentation and discussion of the research results of the publication of the Anglo-Saxon pottery at Spong Hill (Hills and Lucy 2013) and a national study of C6th-C7th burials (Hines and Bayliss, eds., 2013)  
Speakers include Drs. Catherine Hills and Sam Lucy, Profs. John Hines, Alex Bayliss, Andrew Reynolds and Chris Scull.  
To book, email Jola Zdunek at the Society of Antiquaries, [Jola@sal.org.uk](mailto:Jola@sal.org.uk) or phone 020 7479 7080



[WuffingEducation.co.uk](http://WuffingEducation.co.uk)

Visit [www.wuffingeducation.co.uk](http://www.wuffingeducation.co.uk) for the autumn programme of Saturday Study Days on Anglo-Saxon archaeology and history. Lecturers include Dr Sue Youngs, Dr Lucy Marten, Jo Caruth and Dr Angela Evans. 21 Sept. to 14 Dec. (excl. 2 & 16 Nov.) 10.00-16.00 at Sutton Hoo, to be pre-booked on the website at £38.

Also [www.wuffings.co.uk](http://www.wuffings.co.uk) for Dr Sam Newton's weekly Wednesday morning seminars at Sutton Hoo, on Old English history as illuminated by Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire hoard. 18 Sept. to 18 Dec. (excl. 16 Oct.) 10.30-13.00 at Sutton Hoo, bookable online at £15.

**The  
Sutton  
Hoo  
Society**



[www.suttonhoo.org](http://www.suttonhoo.org)

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