

The Souldern Burials

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SUMMARY

The small, little-known group of finds from Souldern demonstrates the immense complexity of early Anglo-Saxon England. A fifth-century Buckelurne suggests a potter whose other known piece is a vessel from Sandy, Beds., and the early date of the finds points to a possibility of subsidiary settlements being founded early in Anglo-Saxon times.

INTRODUCTION

IN 1845, Sir Henry Dryden contributed an appendix on 'Sepulchral remains found at Souldern' to William Wing's *Antiquities of Steeple Aston*.¹ Sir Henry recorded a single inhumation and three pots, two of which certainly contained bones. In this article, it is hoped to draw attention to these finds and to re-examine the context of the burials. The material from the site became dispersed after discovery, but the three pots are now in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, and one of the objects associated with the inhumation—the bronze bindings of a bucket—is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. The remaining items have not survived.

Sir Henry Dryden noted that the 1844 discoveries which he recorded in detail were not the first to be found in the area. Some finds had been made in 1840, but their context is not clear, and another skeleton was found before 1840.² The 1844 discoveries were made during digging for stone, and comprised a single inhumation and three urns. The inhumation burial was fully articulated, lying S.W.-N.E., with its head at the former. It lay in a roughly hollowed grave and was accompanied by a pair of bone ornaments (5), now lost, and the fragments of the bronze bindings of a wooden bucket. The latter were discovered near the head and were originally interpreted as the bindings for a leather helmet. The bone ornaments were by the right side of the head.

One of the urns (3) was found at the same time as the skeleton, 7 ft. (2 m.) north of it. Bones, thought to have been disturbed, were found in a heap 5 ft. (1.5 m.) south-east of the pot, and 11 ft. (3.3 m.) away from the inhumation. Later in 1844, two further vessels were discovered (1 and 2). Their exact rela-

¹ H. Dryden, 'Sepulchral Remains found at Souldern', in W. Wing, *Antiquities of Steeple Aston*, Oxford, 1845, 72-74, with lithograph opposite 74. (The collection of books of the Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society, housed in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, has two copies of this work.) This note is henceforth cited as *Dryden*, 1845. There are subsequent accounts in *Arch. J.*, III (1847), 352-3; *Trans. North Oxfordshire Arch. Soc.*, XXII (1887), 3-5; A. L. Meaney, *A Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (1964), 212; these are derivative. Meaney also cites J. C. Blomfield, *History of the Deanery of Bicester* (1882), 21, but Mr. P. D. C. Brown has kindly informed me that it is a verbatim copy of *Dryden*, 1845.

² Possibly about 1810; Gough, *Historical and Descriptive Notices of the parish of Souldern*, Oxford Arch. Soc. (1887), suggests finds with beads at Carpenter's Yard c. 1810. I owe this reference to the kindness of Mr. Brown.

tionship to the earlier discoveries was not given, but it seems clear that they were found in the same garden. The exact location of the burials cannot now be reconstructed but it is recorded that the garden was on the west side of the narrow road leading south away from the main street of Souldern (the modern A 41 road). It seems probable that the location should be placed in the vicinity of SP 522 305, but this is by no means certain.

A further skeleton seems to have been found in 1849, 'at the declivity of the hill between Aynho and Souldern'³ and this may represent another burial from the cemetery.

When Sir Henry Dryden wrote in 1845, the three pots, the bucket fragments and one of the two bone ornaments were in his possession. Their subsequent history is indistinct. Dryden's collection was broken up at his death and part was sold: one part, without any finds from Souldern, was acquired by Northampton Museum. The bucket was purchased by a Mr. Fenton and when his collection was sold at Sotheby's on 28 November 1927, it was purchased as part of Lot 185 by the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. The three pots meanwhile had come into the possession of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, in 1900.

THE FINDS

The finds from Souldern (FIGS. 1 and 2) have been numbered in order of their museum acquisition. The three pots therefore precede the bucket and the now lost bone ornaments.

1. Small plain sub-biconical urn, heavily restored in the upper part, in a dark grey ware. It had been broken to take the skull of a newly born infant, which has not survived.

H. 15.7 cm.; rim d. as restored 8.8 cm.; basal d. 6.4 cm.

Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, acc. no. 1900. 10a.

Literature Dryden, 1845, 74 and Fig. C of his plate.

2. Very heavily restored bowl in a black ware, with smooth surfaces where original. Sufficient remains to confirm the profile and decorative scheme. On the constriction of the neck is a row of circle stamps with a ring of small dots inside the rim of the stamp. Below this is a row of circles delineated by grooves and below this a criss-cross pattern ending in a groove just above the shoulder. On the shoulder is a row of touching pendant triangles, each filled with circles. From Dryden's account, it seems evident this vessel was reasonably complete when found: damage and restoration is therefore subsequent to its original discovery.

H. 14.2 cm.; rim d. 16.0 cm.; basal d. 10.0 cm.

Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, acc. no. 1900. 10b.

Literature Dryden, 1845, 74, and Fig. b of his plate.

3. Buckelurne of Myres' group II, very heavily restored, lacking all evidence of the rim. Seemingly in a light grey ware, but the present condition of the pot precludes absolute certainty on this point: much restored. The decoration consists of a flat collar below the neck ornamented with chevrons and dimples and with grooves below; there is a second collar on the shoulder of double line chevrons and dimples; and the main decoration is four arched *stehende Bogen* bosses, with slashed grooves on them, and each outlined by two grooves. Below each boss is a vertical arrangement of grooves and dimples placed flat on the body of the pot. Between each *stehende Bogen* boss is a plain circular boss. The pot has been restored to give a flat base: none of the original base is clearly visible.

H. extant 18.7 cm.; basal d. as restored 12.2 cm.

Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, acc. no. 1900. 10c.

³ Beesley, *History of Banbury* (1841), 37-38; I owe this reference also to the kindness of Mr. Brown.

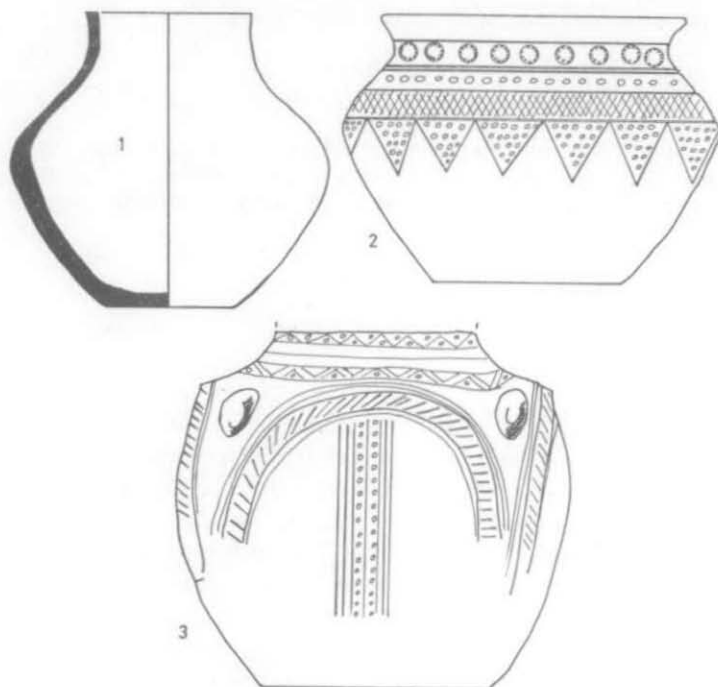


FIG. 1

Cremation Pottery from Souldern. (Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.)

Literature Dryden, 1845, 73 and Fig. A of his plate, which shows a flat base and slightly more of the pot above the upper collar but no rim. The pot is listed *Myres*, 1969, 144.

4. Fragments of the bronze bindings of a bronze-bound wooden bucket, which have been reconstructed on a new plaster base. The fragments comprise parts of the top and uppermost horizontal band of the binding and pieces from a second horizontal band below. There is one complete attachment and fragments of a second, and mainly on the horizontal bindings evidence of three of the four verticals. The 'U'-shaped binding on the top retains clips fixing it to a top band 1.9 cm. wide, with a reconstructed gap of 2.6 cm. below this to a second (? central) band 1.6 cm. wide. The verticals were secured to the horizontals by soldered rivets, of which there is one complete example on the top band, a broken example on the lower band and a third is represented by a bare rivet head only, also on the lower band. The clips over the rim are secured by the rivets on the top band and these are placed above the verticals. Two extant verticals are 1.4 cm. wide; the third is 1.9 cm. wide. The surviving fragments are decorated with 'V' stamps above single dots along the edges. The handle attachment holds a small fragment of a curving, fairly thick bronze handle. On the inside of the bucket is a short vertical, with two rivets, one for the handle and one for the top band of the main binding. The latter penetrates through the wood of the bucket. Both rivets end in elaborate heads on the outside in front of the outer vertical of the handle attachment. This ends in a stylized anthropomorphic face, 7 mm. thick, with hatching indicating hair. The outer vertical of the handle attachment partly masks a clip with a longer vertical on its outside. It is placed over the central portion of an omega-shaped ornamental plate ending in a stylized beak head at each outside termination with a rivet for the eye. This is ornamented with crescent punched marks (on the second handle attachment the ornamental plate with

the beaked heads is no longer extant). As reconstructed, the bucket is 7.7 cm. high and 13.3 cm. diameter.

Museum Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, acc. no. 1927.4617.

Literature G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, IV (1915), Pl. cxiii, 4 (view of handle attachment).

5. Pair of bone ornaments, length recorded as 2 inches (5 cm.), in the shape of a four-sided cone. Each side of the cone is ornamented with engraved ring-and-dot ornament. The text records nine such, but the illustration shows only eight. An iron rivet was recorded in the smaller end of each cone.

Museum Not known to me.

Literature Dryden, 1845, 73, and inset on his plate.

DISCUSSION

The finds from Souldern clearly represent a small group of mixed burials. Three urns are known: and each may be presumed to have contained a cremation, though the contemporary record is a little indistinct on this point. Two skeletons, at least, were noted, and one of these contained a bucket and bone ornaments.

The pottery from Souldern is of three very different vessels. The small sub-biconical urn (1), now heavily restored, is of a common type, and is not easy to date with precision.⁴ Seven examples are known from Kettering Stamford Road, the largest of the cremation cemeteries in Northamptonshire, three of which are of comparable size to that from Souldern.⁵ Also from Northamptonshire are two sub-biconical urns from Brixworth⁶ and one from Newton-in-the-Willows.⁷ There is another from Wallingford, Berks.⁸

The open bowl (2) has a form of decoration which has been discussed more than once in recent studies.⁹ Triangular panel style without bosses is thought to date to the late sixth century and is common in Northamptonshire and the Upper Thames valley.¹⁰ The form of the pot, the open bowl, begins in the fifth century with well-known examples like that from Milton Malsor, Northants,¹¹ but has a long life.

The most distinctive of the vessels from Souldern is (3), a Buckelurne of Myres'

⁴ J. N. L. Myres, *Anglo-Saxon Pottery and the Settlement of England* (1969), 26 and 152 with Fig. 3; this work is henceforth cited as *Myres*, 1969.

⁵ Four in Kettering Museum, including no. 7 (*Myres*, 1969, Fig. 3, 745), two others are of the small size; and three in Northampton Museum, acc. nos. D 345/1954-55, D405/1954-55, and D 395/1954-55, of which the second is comparable in size to that from Souldern.

⁶ Northampton Museum, acc. nos. D 312/1954-55 and D 322/1954-55.

⁷ *Myres*, 1969, 152 and Fig. 3, 740.

⁸ Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

⁹ *Myres*, 1969, 56-59, 117 with map 10, and 204 with Fig. 29. D. H. Kennett, 'An Urn from Mogerhanger and Panel Style at Kempston', *Beds. Arch. J.*, vii (1972), 39-44; D. H. Kennett, 'Some Anglo-Saxon Pottery from Luton', *Beds. Arch. J.*, viii (1973), 95; and D. H. Kennett, 'Burton Latimer: Anglo-Saxon finds made in the late nineteenth century', *J. Northampton Mus.* forthcoming.

¹⁰ *Myres*, 1969, 117; Northampton Museum has two pots in this style found at Kettering Stamford Road, previously given the accession numbers ASP 16 and ASP 17. They are apparently by the same potter and another vessel by him was found at Little Weldon, illustrated *Myres*, 1969, Fig. 44, 810. In the large unprovenanced collection of Northampton Museum, most of which is thought to derive from Kettering Stamford Road cemetery, is a sherd of a very fine urn in this style. Kettering Museum has two sherds of urns found in the 1929 excavations at Kettering Stamford Road, which are in this style; also from Northamptonshire are two vessels from Brixworth, both in Northampton Museum, one formerly accessed as ASP 58, and the other illustrated *Myres*, 1969, 202 and Fig. 28, 789.

¹¹ *Myres*, 1969, 156 and Fig. 5, 807.

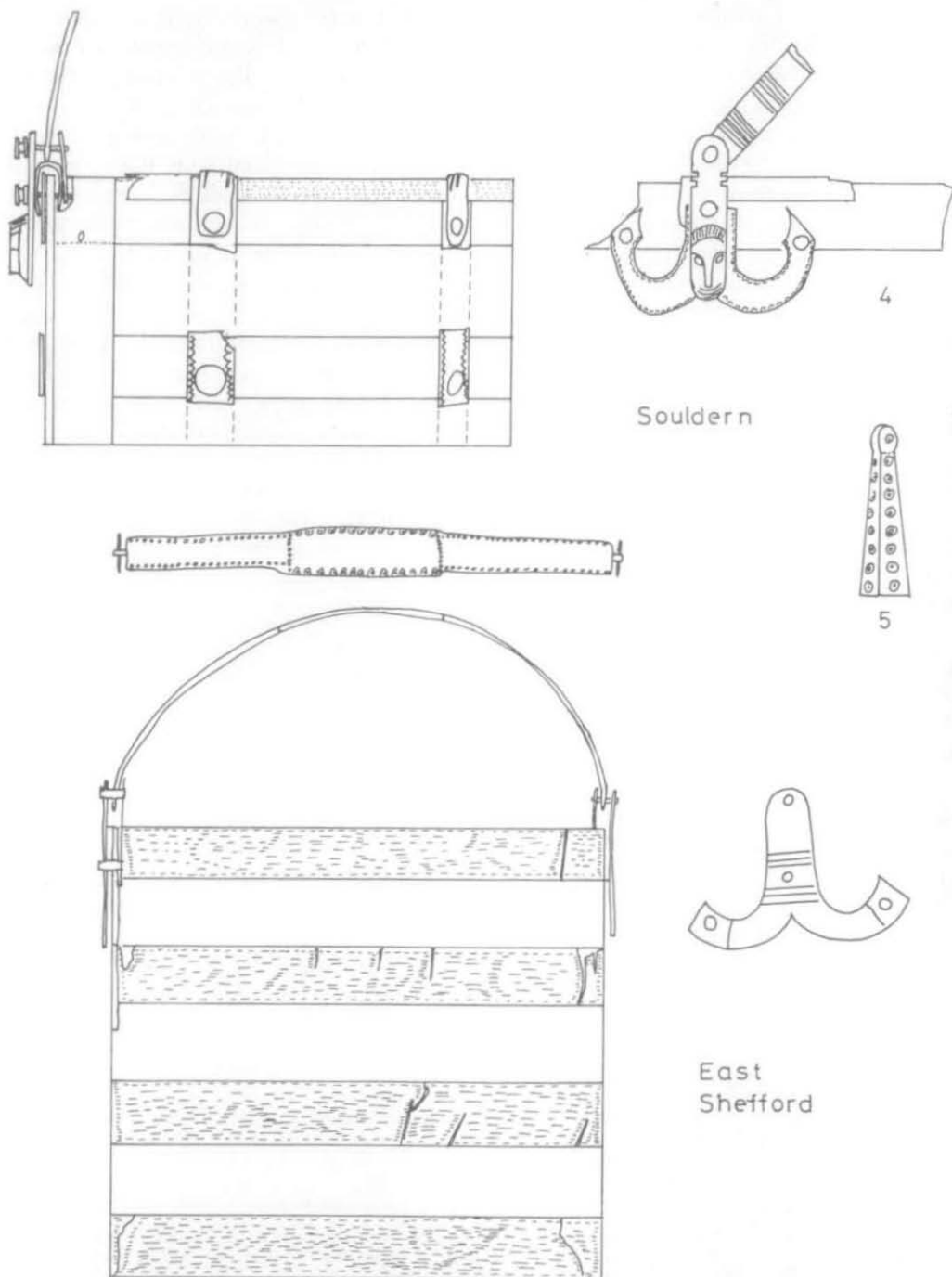


FIG. 2

Bronze-bound bucket and bone piece from Souldern; bucket fittings from East Shefford, Berks. (Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.)
Bone piece after Dryden.

group II, those without stamps and with a flat base.¹² However, it is unlike examples of the form from Wallingford,¹³ Abingdon¹⁴ and Kettering.¹⁵ In spirit it is much closer to a vessel from Sandy, Beds.¹⁶ This is a Buckelurne of Myres' group V, those with or without feet, with a free or exuberant use of stamps, and like the Souldern pot it is in the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge. The Sandy pot has four *stehende Bogen* bosses and four small circular bosses placed in identical positions on the pot. It differs in having circular stamps on the arched *stehende Bogen* bosses rather than the slashings of the Souldern pot and the stamp is found on the circular bosses of the Sandy pot. The vertical decoration of the Souldern pot is replaced by a feathered boss on the Sandy vessel and the neck is ornamented with collars. Yet despite their decorative differences when the two pots are placed side by side, they do display a very close similarity. They are almost identical in dimensions and in the layout of their main features: the four arched *stehende Bogen* bosses and the four circular bosses. It may not be too far fetched to suggest that they are the product of the same potter. If this is the case, it suggests that one potter's products might have been transported a distance of over 70 km. (42 miles) at a very early date, some time in the second half of the fifth century, if the date suggested for the Sandy pot in 1970 still holds good. The Lackford/Thurmaston potter's products, presumably to be dated to the sixth century, i.e. a generation later, are found over 150 km. (80 miles) apart.¹⁷ The Souldern/Sandy potter, if one may call him that on two urns, may be a precursor.

As was suggested in the discussion of the Sandy pot, their individuality makes discussion of these pots difficult. However, one can note the use of arched *stehende Bogen* bosses on a Buckelurne from Shopham, Norfolk,¹⁸ and a vessel from Sancton, Yorks.,¹⁹ with finger-tipped arched *stehende Bogen* bosses, broken at the top, and placed over plain vertical bosses; these may be related to the work of the Souldern/Sandy potter, but a personal examination would be necessary to make the ascription definite.

The two other finds known from Souldern, the bucket bindings (4), and the bone ornaments (5), were both found with the single recorded inhumation.²⁰ No other finds seem to have been present but Dryden did receive his information at second-hand from the workmen.

Where the evidence survives, a bucket is part of the accoutrements of a comparatively rich grave.²¹ Five of the six buckets found at Abingdon were from

¹² Myres, 1969, 45-46, and list, 143-145.

¹³ Myres, 1969, 192 and Fig. 23, 2086.

¹⁴ Myres, 1969, 192 and Fig. 23, 2042.

¹⁵ Northampton Museum, acc. nos. D 342/1954-55 and D 344/1954-55.

¹⁶ Myres, 1969, 194 and Fig. 24, 328; see also D. H. Kennett, 'Pottery and Other Finds from the Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Sandy, Bedfordshire', *Med. Arch.*, xiv (1970), 17-33, esp. 18 and Fig. 6, 1.

¹⁷ Myres, 1969, 128 and 236 with Fig. 45.

¹⁸ Myres, 1969, 194 and Fig. 24, 1180.

¹⁹ Myres, 1969, 192 and Fig. 23, 128.

²⁰ Dryden, 1845, 73.

²¹ Not all buckets, of course, have been found in associated contexts, for example the four from Baginton, Warks. This discussion draws heavily on the author's unpublished discussion of the bronze-bound buckets from Kempston, Beds., see D. H. Kennett, 'The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Kempston, Bedfordshire: a reconsideration', (1968, unpublished). Copies of this work are available in the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum, London, and the library of the County Record Office, County Hall, Bedford. Those using either are requested to contact the author in advance of any detailed citation as there are a number of slips.

female graves,²² each with a pair of brooches and other objects, and grave 48,²³ the only male at Abingdon with a bucket, had shield, a spear and a knife. Swords are frequently found with buckets, as at Brighthampton grave 31²⁴ and Fairford grave 30,²⁵ and Long Wittenham grave 26 also contained a bronze bowl.²⁶ The presence of an unusual item like the bone mounts in the Souldern grave does not suggest any lack of accompanying objects and one may legitimately wonder what other items originally accompanied the burial.

As will be seen, the bone ornaments (5) are of a type found exclusively in female graves²⁷ and Souldern is not the only woman's grave with a bucket: other than those from Abingdon, it is possible for example to cite three graves at Linton Heath,²⁸ and two of the three graves with buckets at Little Wilbraham²⁹ among Cambridgeshire cemeteries. It will be evident that the bucket is not the sole prerogative of the male, as the late E. T. Leeds once attempted to maintain.³⁰

However, like another status symbol, the sword, the distribution of buckets seems to follow no set pattern. Three only are known from Northamptonshire: two from Duston, both unassociated,³¹ and one from grave 22 at Nassington.³² In the Avon valley they are more common: three are known from Longbridge³³ and four from Baginton,³⁴ with single examples also published from Broadway Hill³⁵ and Bidford-on-Avon.³⁶ Apart from six noted already among the Abingdon material, another six are known from Long Wittenham,³⁷ and individual examples may be quoted from Ewelme, Fairford and Brighthampton.³⁸ One further bucket, that from grave 6 of the 1890 excavations at East Shefford, Berks.,³⁹ can be instanced and has been figured here (FIG. 2), to assist in the discussion. Like many Anglo-

²² Graves 7, 24, 60, 61, and 93. See E. T. Leeds and D. B. Harden, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Abingdon, Berkshire* (1936), 32 and Pl. 7; 37 and Pl. 10; 43; 43 and Pl. 13; and 49 and Pl. 16 respectively. In no case is a bucket reconstructed.

²³ *Ibid.*, 39-40 with Pl. 18 and 19 for the weapons. The bucket was not illustrated.

²⁴ Accessibly V. I. Evison, *Fifth Century Invasions south of the Thames* (1965), 105-6 with Fig. 11. The bucket is Fig. 11, m.

²⁵ W. M. Wylie, *Fairford Graves* (1852), Pl. 8, 3.

²⁶ J. Y. Akerman, 'Report of researches in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Long Wittenham, Berkshire, in 1859', *Archaeologia*, 38 (1860), 339; the bucket is British Museum, reg. no. 1875, 3-10, 2.

²⁷ See below p. 209, with n. 46 and 47.

²⁸ R. C. Neville, 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Linton Heath, excavated January, 1853', *Arch. J.* ix (1854), 96 with Fig. 8, 108 with Fig. 9, and 109, for the buckets from graves 8, 72, and 76 respectively.

²⁹ R. C. Neville, *Saxon Obsequies Illustrated* (1852), 15 and Pl. 17, and 19 and Pl. 17, for the buckets from graves 32 and 81. The third bucket from Little Wilbraham is an earlier find, illustrated J. de Baye, *The Industrial Arts of the Anglo-Saxons*, (1893), Pl. 13, 7 as 'Cambridgeshire'. This bucket is British Museum, reg. no. 1851, 6-3, 1. The associated objects are male.

³⁰ E. T. Leeds (and R. J. C. Atkinson), 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Nassington, Northant.', *Ant. J.*, xxiv (1944), 114.

³¹ Northampton Museum, unpublished.

³² E. T. Leeds, *loc. cit.* n. 30, 107 and Pl. 22a.

³³ British Museum, reg. nos. 1880, 5-21, 3/4/5.

³⁴ Coventry Museum, accession numbers A/1091/1, 2, 3, 4.

³⁵ J. M. Cook, 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Broadway Hill', *Ant. J.*, xxxviii (1958), 70 and Fig. 9, 11.

³⁶ V. I. Evison, *loc. cit.* n. 24, 113 and Fig. 24, f-j.

³⁷ Graves 26, 43, 82, 91, 92, and 128; see J. Y. Akerman, 'Report of Researches in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Long Wittenham, Berkshire, in 1859', *Archaeologia*, 38 (1860), 339, 340, 344 and 345; and J. Y. Akerman, 'Report of Researches in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Long Wittenham, Berkshire in 1860', *Archaeologia*, 39 (1861), 135.

³⁸ Ewelme is British Museum, reg. no. 1908, 2-7, 2; for Fairford and Brighthampton see n. 25 and 24 respectively.

³⁹ The associations are unknown. Information about the grave number is derived from an entry in the British Museum's register. It came originally from a plan of the 1890 excavations at East Shefford, now unfortunately lost.

Saxon buckets it is a reconstruction, for only the horizontals survive. The four verticals are missing and the height of 13.0 cm. is thus an approximation. The diameter, of 14.0 cm. is definite, however. The handle is complete and there are fragmentary attachments surviving.

Much work can be done on reconstructing Anglo-Saxon buckets from fragments and some are complete. These show that diameters and heights are usually similar: grave 9 at Linton Heath²⁸ has both a diameter and a height of 10.75 cm. and the complete bronze-bound bucket from Kempston⁴⁰ is 14.2 cm. high and 14.1 cm. in diameter. In contrast the Souldern piece is markedly dissimilar in its dimensions: height 7.7 cm. against a diameter of 13.3 cm. And while there are buckets of dissimilar dimensions, e.g. Nassington grave 22 with a diameter of 10.2 cm. and a height of 7.6 cm.,³² there are suspicions that the Souldern bucket should be reconstructed as of more equal dimensions with a further band below the two extant.

Three or four horizontal bands are more usual on buckets. That from East Shefford has four, as do buckets from Linton Heath grave 72²⁸ and Petersfinger grave 60,⁴¹ but three are found on the buckets cited from Fairford grave 30,²⁵ Brighthampton grave 31²⁴ and the four from Baginton.³⁴

Both the buckets illustrated have bronze handles: that on the East Shefford bucket has a distinct broadening at the centre. There is another group with handles of uniform width, of which the two buckets from Duston³¹ are examples.

The only decoration present on the main metal work of the Souldern bucket is punch marks on the sides of the main verticals. Both buckets have bifurcated mounts with up-curved beaks as escutcheons, and this is probably the most common form of escutcheon on Anglo-Saxon buckets. Usually it is the stylized flat plate as found in very simple form with the mount from the East Shefford bucket. Two beaked heads can sometimes be worked up into elaborate moulded pieces as with the attachments from grave 81 at Little Wilbraham.⁴² It is rare to find the human head incorporated in the mount as in the Souldern bucket. Rivets are usually simple as on the bucket from Fairford grave 30,²⁵ or dome-headed as on that from Brighthampton grave 31.²⁴ On the Souldern bucket they are solid, more elaborate and waisted.

There is a variety of fittings on buckets, which neither of those figured exhibits. Separate vandykes are found on one from Little Wilbraham⁴³ and Brighthampton grave 31²⁴ has a border of vandykes to the uppermost band. Vandykes ending in a disc are found on the bucket from Long Wittenham grave 26,⁴⁴ and separate plaques are known from Higham-next-Rochester, Kent.⁴⁵ The complete bucket from Kempston has circular escutcheons.⁴⁰

Buckets have a wide variety of dates, and until more research has been completed it is not possible, except in rare cases, to be definite from the bucket itself of the date of a grave.

⁴⁰ British Museum, reg. no. 1891, 6-24, 76; see D. H. Kennett, *loc. cit.* no. 21, for a detailed account.

⁴¹ E. T. Leeds and H. Shortt, *An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Petersfinger, near Salisbury, Wilts.* (1953), 38 and Pl. 10.

⁴² There is a good photograph of this in A. Era-Esko, *Germanic Animal Art of Salin's Style I in Finland* (1965), Fig. 53; see also n. 29.

⁴³ British Museum, reg. no. 1851, 6-3, 1; see also n. 29.

⁴⁴ British Museum, reg. no. 1875, 3-10, 2.

⁴⁵ G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, IV (1915), Pl. 112, 1.

The bone ornaments associated with the Souldern bucket, however, belong to a distinct group of fifth-century objects. These ornaments (5) are exclusively found in female graves.⁴⁶ A good local parallel is the group from Wallingford grave 15.⁴⁷ Associated are a necklace of blue glass and paste beads with a single crystal bead; two applied brooches; a pair of annular brooches; and two pins. One of the latter has a double truncated cone head, and is a variant of a continental type of the late fourth and very early fifth centuries.

The inhumation it would seem should be dated to the fifth century, and at least one of the pots from Souldern (3) is of a similar date. The unassociated burials and the undecorated pot (1) could be of any date. There is thus cause to suspect that the presence of the late sixth-century pot (2) might not result from fortuitous use of an earlier site. Individual cremation burials of the late sixth century are known. Two examples, both from Bedfordshire, are Moggerhanger⁴⁸ and Dunstable.⁴⁹ But equally the Souldern pot could be evidence for a site, which though small in total numbers could have been in use for a long time, as for example in the finds from Newton-in-the-Willows, Northants.⁵⁰

However the Souldern burials are to be interpreted, whether as a fifth-century group with a late sixth-century stray burial, or as a small but continuously used cemetery of the fifth and sixth centuries, they should be connected with the much larger cemetery found in 1842-3 at Marston St Lawrence, Northants.⁵¹ This cemetery of 33 recorded inhumations and four cremations began in the fifth century and continued well into the sixth. Around it are scattered a number of smaller groups, none of which is a well-known find. There are seven burials from a barrow at Thenford,⁵² and individual male burials can be cited from Brackley,⁵³ Chipping Warden,⁵⁴ Aynho⁵⁵ and Greatworth.⁵⁶

The single burials may represent members of the community buried where they died when away from the main settlement. However, the minimum of five identifiable burials from Souldern does suggest that it could be evidence of a move by a small group away from the main Marston St Lawrence community to another

⁴⁶ J. Werner, 'Herkuleskeule und Donar-Amulett', *Jahrb. des Romisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz*, xi (1964), 176-197, for a discussion which omits that from Souldern.

⁴⁷ Ashmolean Museum, Oxford: there is a brief discussion of the Wallingford cemetery, E. T. Leeds, 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Wallingford, Berkshire', *Berks. Arch. J.*, xlii (1938), 93-101. I understand that Mr. J. Daw has in preparation a revision of the Wallingford material.

⁴⁸ D. H. Kennett, 'An Urn from Moggerhanger . . .', *Beds. Arch. J.*, vii (1972), 39-44, esp. 41 and Fig. 1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 42 and Fig. 49, 329.

⁵⁰ I am not sure how much of the Newton-in-the-Willows material has not survived. There are seven pots and a pair of girdle-hangers. Six of the seven urns are illustrated in *Myres*, 1969, 152 and Fig. 3, 740; 162 and Fig. 8, 738; 194 and Fig. 24, 744 with Pl. 3c; 234 and Fig. 44, 742; Pl. 4d (ascribed in error to Kettering); Pl. 6b. For some comments on the lack of survival see D. H. Kennett, 'Burton Latimer', *J. Northampton Mus.* forthcoming.

⁵¹ H. Dryden, 'An account of Saxon discoveries at Marston St Lawrence, Northamptonshire', *Archaeologia*, 48 (1882), 328-339. There is an earlier account by Dryden, *Archaeologia*, 33 (1849), 326-334.

⁵² V.C.H. Northants. I (1902), 254.

⁵³ Northampton Museum has a shield boss and a spearhead from this parish, presumably from a burial.

⁵⁴ D. H. Kennett, 'Anglo-Saxon Northamptonshire: some minor sites', *J. Northampton Mus.*, vi (1969), 47 and Fig. 3a.

⁵⁵ G. Baker, *The County of Northampton* (1830), 558; Dryden, 1845, 74 mentions burials from Aynho; and Northampton Museum has a spearhead from this place.

⁵⁶ Northampton Museum, acc. no. D 155/1969; D. H. Kennett, 'An Anglo-Saxon Shield Disc from Greatworth', *J. Northampton Mus.*, x (1974), 18-20.

site. If this is so, the evidence is that this move took place not long after the commencement of the Marston St Lawrence cemetery.

The Souldern cemetery may not be large, but as mentioned above its finds do have an intrinsic interest of their own. They raise also points concerning the complexity of early Anglo-Saxon England. If this complexity has become more apparent in this paper, the exercise will have high-lighted the need for the continued republication of the cemeteries found in the nineteenth century.⁵⁷

APPENDIX: THE EAST SHEFFORD BUCKET

Figure 2 includes a bucket from East Shefford, Berkshire, now in the British Museum, reg. no. 1893, 7-16, 120. It is figured here for the first time. Four horizontal bands survive from this object which has also the handle and the fragmentary remains of a mount extant. The diameter is 14.0 cm. The height has been reconstructed at 13.0 cm., with the bands respectively 1.5 cm., 1.8 cm., 1.8 cm., and 1.8 cm. wide. From slight indications on these, it seems there were only two verticals to the bucket. No wood is extant. The handle remains with both mounts. The handle is wider in the centre than at the edges and broadens two-thirds of the way up the curve. Both mounts are shaped like two co-joined 'U' plates, more exactly bifurcated. The extremities are shaped into a very weak beaked head and pierced by a rivet hole. The bucket, though recorded in the British Museum's register as from grave 6 of the 1890 excavations, has no other known associations. The grave attributions are derived from a lost plan of the site.

Acknowledgements

In preparing this paper, I have incurred a number of specific debts which it is my pleasant duty to record. I am particularly grateful to Mr. P. D. C. Brown for assistance with the earlier literature on the site, reading the paper in draft and allowing me to examine the Souldern bucket in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. At the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, Miss M. D. Cra'ster made it possible for me to see the ceramics, and at the British Museum, Mrs. L. E. Webster kindly allowed me unlimited access to the East Shefford material, and the available documentation on the site. To the authorities of all three institutions, I tender my thanks for permission to publish objects in their care.

⁵⁷ Paper completed November 1973, and revised August 1974.