The Trumpington Cross in context

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ABSTRACT

An Anglo-Saxon gold and garnet cloisonné pectoral cross from a seventh-century bed burial at Trumpington, Cambridgeshire is the fifth such example to be found. Details of the contextual associations of the five crosses are used to argue that these artifacts, and other high status cross-shaped pendants, were overt Christian symbols, strongly associated with high status female burials of the later seventh century. That one of the five examples was associated with the burial of St Cuthbert is highlighted as an anomaly, and could indicate that the Cuthbert Cross may have been a gift, rather than a personal possession of the saint.

THE TRUMPINGTON CROSS

Excavations in late 2011 on a development site at Trumpington, to the south of Cambridge, revealed a small burial group dating to the seventh century (Figs. 1*a* and 1*b*), within part of a contemporary settlement, which included a hall-type structure and four sunken-feature buildings.[1] Intriguingly, radiocarbon-dating has demonstrated that the four burials cannot be a contemporary group. Two burials most probably date to the second quarter of the seventh century, while the other two date to the second half of the seventh century. Three of the four burials were furnished, one very elaborately with a gold and garnet cloisonné cross and a pair of gold and garnet linked pins at the upper chest, an unusual chatelaine arrangement at the waist, an iron knife, possibly also suspended from the waist, a bone or antler comb, and possibly a leather-lined ash box (Figs. 2*a* and 2*b*). The body in Grave 1, of a probable female aged between fourteen and eighteen years, had been clothed in fine linen tabbies, with a bead-edged shawl, then laid out on a wooden-framed bed of ash with iron fixings; the wooden headboard had carved decoration, and a wool blanket lay over the bed, under the body. This was the latest dated burial of the four on the site.

The cloisonné cross (SF 379 <2141>) was constructed from a gold sheet

[1] C. Evans, R. Patten and S. Lucy, *River Cam-side Investigations: Neolithic Barrows, Iron Age Occupation, Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery Excavations at Trumpington, Cambridgeshire*. Cambridge Landscape Archives: New Archaeologies of the Cambridge Region 2 (Cambridge, forthcoming).

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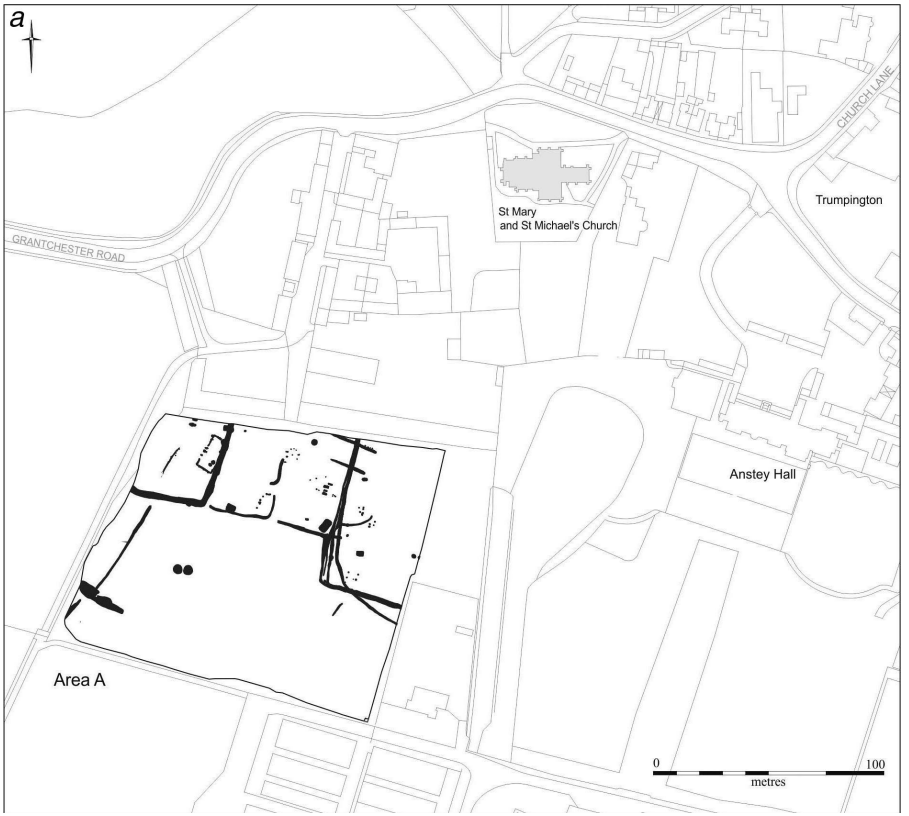


Figure 1: Location plan (*a*) and cemetery plan (*b*) of the burial group, Trumpington.
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back-plate, with applied cloisonné cells containing flat-cut garnet settings (Fig. 3). Each of the simple garnet settings, including the central roundel, is backed by gold foil impressed with a fine waffle pattern laid over a white paste. The flaring arms of the geometric cross spring from a central roundel. The cloisonné work runs in bands around the edges of the arms of the cross and around the central flat-cut garnet boss (this having a small chip at one edge). Each of the arms has five cells running around the outer circumference, and four running up either side of the arm, with the roundel surrounded by a further ten cells. The centre of each arm has seven gold stud and wire ring-and-dot decorative protrusions that have been applied directly to the back-plate. It was in a fair condition when found, with no obvious repairs, although there is some wear and slight scratching to the reverse. Eight of the garnet settings from the arms had become detached and six were subsequently

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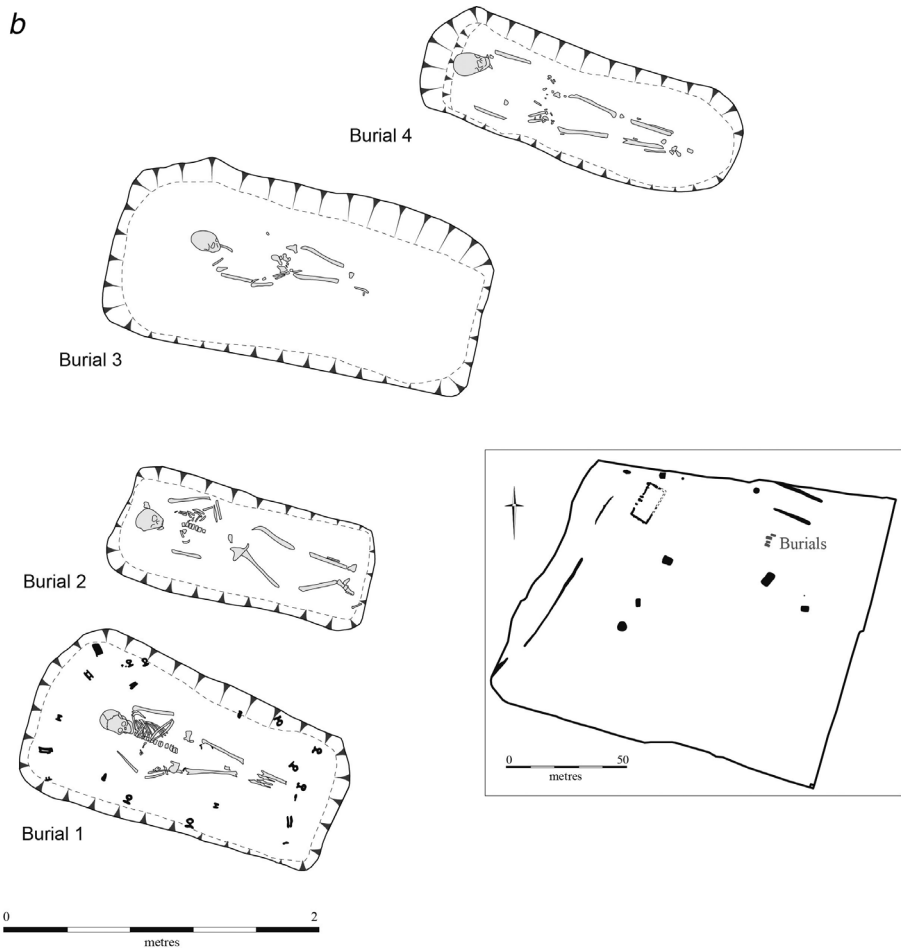


Figure 1 (continued)

recovered from the grave fill. The cross measured 34.5mm in diameter, and the central roundel 11mm.

Unlike the other pectoral crosses of this type, the Trumpington Cross was not technically a pendant, having a gold attachment loop applied rather crudely to the rear of each arm, but its location suggested that it had either been worn as a pendant (with a suspension cord that has not survived), or had possibly been sewn onto clothing or another item on the upper chest. While it could have been applied to a leather bag or similar (although such bags in seventh-century burials would be more commonly found at the waist in burials), its position in the grave strongly suggests its use as a pendant, even if it was not

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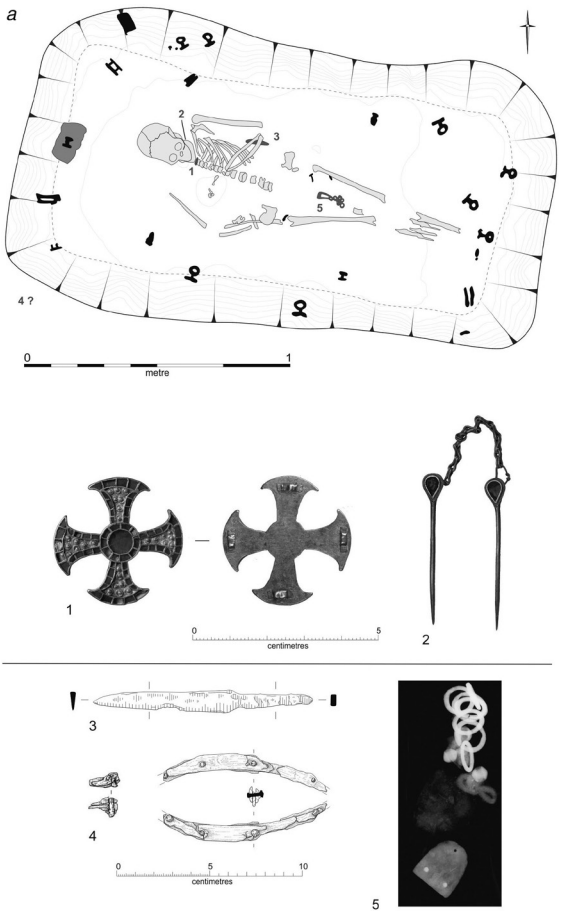


Figure 2: Plan (*a*) and photograph (*b*) of Burial 1, Trumpington.
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designed as such, much as the silver cross from Chartham Down in Kent, which although perforated at each arm terminal, was believed by Faussett to have been suspended from the neck of the skeleton.[2]

The associated burial was radiocarbon-dated to either 661–722 (66.5% probability) or to 741–64 (28.9% probability); the former is the more likely (SUERC-49844), both in statistical terms, and also in the light of current knowledge about Anglo-Saxon grave-good chronologies, [3] which will be discussed further below.

[2] B. Faussett, *Inventorium Sepulchrale* (London, 1856), pp. 169–70.
[3] A. Bayliss, J. Hines, K. Høilund Nielsen, G. McCormac, G. and C. Scull, *Anglo-Saxon Graves*

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Figure 2 (continued)

The excavation of this grave to modern archaeological standards within a settlement provides, for the first time, reliable contextual information for the deposition of such gold and garnet cloisonné pectoral crosses. Although it is the fifth such cross to be found (previous ones being the Cuthbert Cross, the Wilton Cross, the Ixworth Cross and the Holderness Cross), all the others were either antiquarian or chance finds. As such, this is a good point at which to review the known evidence for such crosses, together with similar finds of cross-shaped

and Grave Goods of the 6th and 7th Centuries AD: a Chronological Framework. Soc. for Med. Archaeol. Monograph 33 (London, 2013).

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Figure 3: The Trumpington Cross (front and reverse). © Cambridge Archaeological Unit.

pendants, in the light of the evidence both from Trumpington, and from recent work on seventh-century burial practice generally.

This article will start by presenting descriptions of the other four cloisonné pectoral crosses, together with details of their circumstances of discovery, before going on to consider the broader later sixth- to seventh-century tradition of employing cross-shaped pendants as grave-goods in the light of new chronological information now available. It will conclude by considering the significance and meaning of these artifacts in the context of seventh-century conversion.

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THE IXWORTH CROSS

The circumstances of discovery of the Ixworth Cross (Fig. 4) require some teasing out. Meaney, in her *Gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites*, reported: '1856: Labourers accidentally dug up, in what appeared to be a grave, iron objects associated with wood and conjectured to come from a coffin (the illustrations make it seem more likely that the object was a bed such as Lethbridge found at Burwell Ca), a gold cross set with garnets, and the upper plate of a gold jewelled brooch ornamented with filigree work and 5 bosses and greatly resembling that found at Sutton near Woodbridge.'[4] She also reported other finds from Ixworth, including an early cruciform brooch (in 1859), a pair of cruciform brooches on

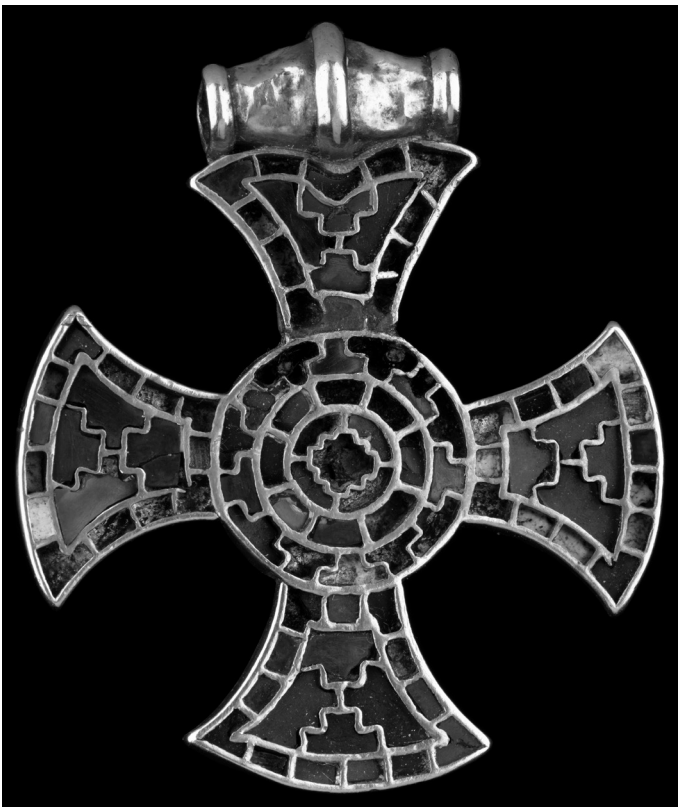


Figure 4: The Ixworth Cross (AN1909.453. Jewelled cross pendant, gold and garnet, AD 600–700, Ixworth, Suffolk. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford).

[4] A. Meaney, *A Gazetteer of Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (London, 1964), p. 229.

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the shoulders of a skeleton from a meadow near Cross House (in 1868), with an animal ornament plate, sword, spearhead, knife and three shield bosses from the same field (in 1871). Some of these finds were in the collections of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford,[5] including the pectoral cross (AN1909.453) and the cloisonné disc brooch (AN1909.454) from the same grave.

The English Heritage Record (Monument No. 385467) comments:

> Anglo-Saxon burials discovered in 1868 in a field called Cross House Meadow TL 9352 7005(2), where a pair of cruciform brooches were found on the shoulders of a skeleton. Previously in 1856, labourers dug up the famous Ixworth gold pectoral cross with cloisonné garnet work found with the upper plate of a gold jewelled filigree brooch and 5 bosses, and in 1871 a bronze plate brooch with horse like motifs, a sword, a spearhead, knife and 3 shield bosses (2 with handles) were also found in the same field. The 7th century Ixworth Cross is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (Meaney, listing a large number of finds wrongly interprets them all as belonging to this site. Those that do not, are shown under TL 97 SW 22).

While this might be read as implying that the Ixworth Cross also derived from Cross House Meadow, this is in fact uncertain.

The original record of the find was published by Roach Smith in his *Collectanea Antiqua*,[6] and the report was reproduced in the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*.[7] There, he reports that the finds were in the collection of Mr Joseph Warren, of Ixworth, and had been dug up about a year before, in what appeared to have been a grave. The report reproduces images of the ironwork associated with the burial.[8] Roach Smith's figure 1 is clearly the end of a bed head-stay, with twisted ironwork terminating in a bracket; there were reported to be four of these, which would imply two complete head-stays. Figure 2*b* depicts an iron clenched staple, of which there were twenty-four. Together with the comment that the workmen had noticed a quantity of mouldering remains of wood in the grave, these finds clearly indicated the presence of an iron-bound wooden bed, as seen at Trumpington. There is, however, no indication in this report of the location of the grave, although it is stated that the cross 'very closely resembles one found in a gravel-pit at Lakenheath, near Brandon, in Suffolk, a few years since'; this must refer to the Wilton Cross (see below).

In fact, in the journal notes accompanying the sale of Warren's collection to Sir John Evans in 1866,[9] Warren recorded: '1856 February 18th. This day was

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] C. Roach Smith, 'Saxon remains, found near Ixworth, in Suffolk', *Collectanea Antiqua, etchings and notices of ancient remains* IV (1856), 162–4.

[7] *Proc. of the Suffolk Inst. of Archaeol.* III (1863), 296–8.

[8] Identified as bed-fittings by Meaney, *Gazetteer*, p. 229 and by G. Speake, *A Saxon Bed Burial on Swallowcliffe Down*, English Heritage Archaeol. Report No. 10 (London 1989), 99–101.

[9] which his son donated to the Ashmolean Museum in 1909.

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brought me a Gold Cross set with small garnets, also the front of a circular gold fibula, covered with filigree work . . . they were found by a man raising gravel at Stanton.'[10] The Suffolk Historic Environment Record provides some more information: Warren had caused the finder to sift through the earth in which the objects were found, but nothing further was recovered.[11] The HER record also notes that in 1858 an apparently Bronze Age burial was reported to Warren, having been 'found by a man raising gravel from the Pit on the left hand of the turnpike road going from Ixworth to Stanton', and suggests that this could possibly be the same site.[12]

Webster and Backhouse describe the cross as follows:

The cross has flaring arms springing from a central roundel and a biconical suspension loop. It is decorated with all-over cloisonné work using stepped T-shaped and simple cells deliberately to create a variety of effects. At the centre is a larger multi-stepped cell enclosed by four garnets whose long edges are cut on the curve. Encircling this is a band of interlocking T-shaped cells, again cut to conform to the circular frame from which the arms spring.

Each of the flaring arms contains a skillfully contrived design that at first sight appears purely abstract. Within a border of small rectangular garnets lies a motif built up of four large garnets cut to the curving planes of the arms. The cloisons are thinner than those of the borders and the garnets are a deeper, purplish colour, in contrast to the clear red of those in the borders. The foils are difficult to see but an empty cell suggests that differently stamped foils back the darker garnets. The motif is thus deliberately singled out, by size, tonal contrast and different foils.

The shape of the upper arm is modified to accommodate the heavy biconical loop: its outer edge is indented and the cloisons reflect this, giving the central panel an insect-like appearance (cf. Kidd 1988, 86–8) – a deliberate statement that is less apparent in the austere layout of the other arms. The loop is made of sheet gold and is embellished in the middle and at either end by applied fillets of gold. It is lightly worn.

The back of the cross is cut from a single sheet of gold. This is plain apart from the upper arm which is decorated with a chevron arrangement of four gold fillets. These are roughly cut off against the edge of a repair patch covering a break across the junction of the upper arm and central roundel. The patch, made of sheet-gold, is held in place by four gold plugs. Analysis suggests that it may be contemporary with the making of the cross.[13]

[10] http://www.stedmundsburychronicle.co.uk/Chronicle/1813-1899.htm.

[11] Record No. SNT Misc.

[12] The coincidence of a Bronze Age burial and an elaborate cross and bed burial is also seen at Trumpington, and could represent the often seen practice of focusing Anglo-Saxon burials on prehistoric monuments.

[13] L. Webster and J. Backhouse, *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600–900* (London 1991), pp. 26–7.

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Webster and Backhouse argue that its construction is indistinguishable from the Wilton Cross (see below), and belongs with the repertoire of the goldsmith's workshop that produced the Sutton Hoo jewellery, suggesting that it may therefore be of a similar date. The question of how to date these objects will be returned to below.

THE WILTON CROSS

The circumstances of the finding of the Wilton Cross (Fig. 5) are even more opaque. MacGregor describes this as a stray find.[14] Information from Dr Sonja Marzinzik (formerly Curator of Insular Early Medieval Collections at the British Museum) has clarified matters somewhat in correspondence.[15] She



Figure 5: The Wilton Cross. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

[14] A. MacGregor, 'A Seventh-century Pectoral Cross from Holderness, East Yorkshire', *MA* 44 (2000), 217–22; see also R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology: Sutton Hoo and Other Discoveries* (London, 1974), pp. 28–33; Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, no. 98.

[15] http://www.stedmundsburychronicle.co.uk/wiltoncross.htm.

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states that the British Museum acquired the cross in May 1859 through the sale of the Chaffers Collection at Sotheby's.[16] Marzinzik notes that the original register entry (written on accession of the object) originally read: 'Found at Lakenheath Suffolk in a Chalk pit. Jl. Arch. Assoc. VIII.1839' but that the same nineteenth-century hand had later altered the entry, crossing out Lakenheath and the find spot now reads: 'Wilton in Norfolk (not at Lakenheath Suffolk)'.[17]

It was noted above that Joseph Warren believed that the Wilton Cross was found in a gravel pit at Lakenheath. Marzinzik notes that there is a wood called Wiltonhill Wood on the western side of Brandon in the Lakenheath area, although the Wilton Cross has, since the nineteenth century, generally been attributed to Hockwold cum Wilton, just across the River Ouse from Lakenheath into Norfolk.

The original report of the discovery of the cross dates to 1852, and states that the cross was 'detected in a pit at Wilton, near Methwold, by some boys who were digging gravel. As far as I can learn, no other relics were discovered at the same time or place: at all events, no others have been preserved. Soon after it was brought to light, this rare object was purchased by Mr W. Eagle, of Lakenheath, near Brandon, in whose possession it still remains.'[18]

Webster and Backhouse's description is as follows:

Garnet-inlaid pendant cross with expanded equal arms springing from a central roundel pendant set with a lightweight solidus of Heraclius (613–32). The coin is set in a filigree collar and depicts Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine on the obverse and a cross on steps on the reverse. It can be dated to 613–30 and was struck with the reverse die upside-down in relation to the obverse.

Each of the three flaring arms of the cross is filled with a finely executed cloisonné design based on a single multi-stepped cell containing a pair of mushroom-shaped cells lying head-to-head, separated by a pair of stepped cells with concave sides. The device may be read as a cross, establishing within the overall cruciform design a cryptic cross motif in each arm. The fourth arm is straight-sided and filled with a double herringbone motif executed in small garnets. Its upper edge is shaped to accommodate a

[16] William Chaffers was a dealer in antiquities and ceramics active through much of the nineteenth century and this is thought to represent his own collection.

[17] It should be noted that there is no journal of that number and year linked to any of the archaeological societies; this would also seem to be an error. The correct reference is *Jnl Archaeol. Assoc. VIII* (1853), 139, which states that 'Mr. Burkitt exhibited a gold Saxon cross, which was dug out of a gravel-pit at Lakenheath, near Brandon, in Suffolk, about two years since. It is in the possession of W. Eagle, esq., and was obtained from the workman who found it.'

[18] G. J. Chester, 'Notice of a Gold Cross Found at Wilton, Norfolk', *Norfolk Archaeol.* 3 (1852), 375–6. This combination of findspot and purchaser would seem to account for the mistake made in the original accessioning, and in the 1856 reporting by Roach Smith and that in 1853 by Burkitt.

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heavy biconical loop decorated with panels of plaited gold wire and worn beaded filigree. The base of each arm rests against the outer wall of a cloisonné roundel enclosing the solidus and filled with small square and rectangular garnets set alternately. All the garnets are backed with gold foil impressed with a fine waffle pattern. The back-plate, made of fine sheet-gold, is featureless and is confined to the cloisonné frame so that the face of the solidus can be seen.

The cross on the solidus was evidently a critical element in the overall design of the pendant, yet it appears upside down. This may be because the jeweller respected the orientation of the obverse even though it is not visible when the cross is worn, or because the cross was oriented to stand upright to the owner's downward glance.[19]

Along with the Ixworth Cross, they argue that the Wilton Cross was the product of an East Anglian workshop active in the first half of the seventh century: 'The Wilton Cross shares the high quality of the Sutton Hoo jewellery as well as the specific cell types and combinations and small design details, for example the double herringbone filling the suspension-loop arm, that are a familiar part of the repertoire of the Sutton Hoo workshop.'[20] Marion Archibald's work on the pendant has refined this further, arguing that the coin is unlikely to have been mounted in the pendant until the mid-630s.[21]

THE CUTHBERT CROSS

Unike the Wilton and Ixworth Crosses, the circumstances of the discovery of the Cuthbert Cross (Fig. 6) are well known, although it is unclear at what point the cross was included in the grave furnishings. Cuthbert's relics have a mobile past. After his death on Farne, and burial at Lindisfarne in 687, his body was exhumed in 698 and declared uncorrupted, leading to his immediate canonization and enshrinement above ground in the monastic church at Lindisfarne.[22] Welch argues that he was originally buried wearing a waxed shroud, head cloth, priestly garments and shoes, and that he had been accompanied by other items including a chalice, ivory comb, scissors, linen cloth and paten. He also argues that only the outer garments were removed in 698 and replaced by fresh items.[23] It is uncertain whether the pectoral cross, found during the investigation of the coffin in 1827 by Raine, was one of the original grave-goods, or

[19] Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, pp. 27–8.
[20] *Ibid.* p. 28.
[21] M. Archibald, 'The Wilton Cross Coin Pendant: Numismatic Aspects and Implications', *Early Medieval Art and Archaeology in the Northern World*, ed. A. Reynolds and L. Webster (Leiden, 2013), pp. 51–72.
[22] M. Welch, 'The Mid Saxon "Final Phase"', *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, ed. H. Hamerow, D. A. Hinton and S. Crawford (Oxford, 2011), pp. 266–87, at 273.
[23] *Ibid.*

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Figure 6: The Cuthbert Cross. © Durham Cathedral.

whether it represents part of the replacement costume and enshrinement in a decorated wooden coffin in 698. Welch argues for the former,[24] as it lay among the undergarments that do not appear to have been replaced at this point, whereas Coatsworth is less certain.[25] The cross was not observed either during translation of the shrine to Durham in 1104,[26] or during its opening by Henry VIII's commissioner in 1537.[27] Raine reports that the cross was found 'deeply buried among the remains of the robes which were nearest to the breast of the saint', and portions of the 'silken cord, twisted with gold, by which it had been suspended around the neck' were apparently still visible on the breast of the skeleton.[28] Kendrick argues that, had it been a later gift, it would have been

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] E. Coatsworth, 'The Pectoral Cross and Portable Altar from the Tomb of St Cuthbert', *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 287–301, at 289.

[26] From Chester-le-Street, where it had eventually settled after the Viking raids on Lindisfarne.

[27] W. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: the Church of Durham, 1071–1153* (Woodbridge, 1998).

[28] J. Raine, *Saint Cuthbert: With an Account of the State in which His Remains Were Found . . .* (Durham, 1827), p. 211.

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recorded, in the way that Athelstan's offerings of precious vestments and other objects in the tenth century were.[29]

The anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne, who recorded the 687 burial, stated that Cuthbert's head was covered, he was clothed in the robes of a priest, had the sacramental elements placed upon his breast and sandals on his feet, and was provided with a waxed shroud.[30] Bede's version does not mention the original dressing of the body, but states that in 698 'they took away the outer garments to show the miracle of his incorruption, for they did not care to touch what was nearest the skin',[31] and that the brethren subsequently wrapped the body in a new garment.[32] These near-contemporary sources do not mention the comb or scissors, and it is unclear what the 'obley' (*oblate/oblato*) or sacramental elements were.[33] These descriptions do not support the idea that Cuthbert was buried with objects other than these specifically mentioned items, clothing and textiles,[34] but it seems likely that the cross was among these. The comb and scissors are first mentioned in the eleventh century, and again in the account of the 1104 opening of the coffin in Durham.[35]

Webster and Backhouse describe the cross as follows:

> The equal-armed pectoral cross has expanded terminals, and a central boss with four attendant lobes, one in each arm-pit. It is of multiple, soldered construction, built up in three tiers on a gold backing sheet. Each tier is edged with beaded wire: the first tier is studded with dummy rivets which punctuate the wire trim, the second has soldered dogtooth decoration framing the garnet cloisonné inlay, which forms in turn the third tier. A similar dogtooth border encircles the central shell and garnet boss. A filigree loop is riveted to the top of the cross. The back is undecorated but shows ancient repair to a break at the top of the lower arm.[36]

The cross had been broken in antiquity, and repaired twice, as described by Kendrick.[37] The cross had been badly damaged before being found in 1827: the original ring or loop for suspension had been broken off with some force, and a replacement loop made of different gold, with coarser filigree. Moreover, the lower vertical arm had been wrenched off, and the break repaired in antiquity

[29] T. D. Kendrick 'St. Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross, and the Wilton and Ixworth Crosses' *AntJ* 17 (1937), 283–93, at 283.
[30] *Two Lives of St Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 130–1.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 292–3.
[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 294–5.
[33] Possibly consecrated or blessed bread: G. J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist. A Process of Mutual Interaction* (Leiden, 1995), at p. 127.
[34] See also Coatsworth, 'St Cuthbert', p. 287.
[35] Raine, *St Cuthbert*, pp. 58–9, 81, 199.
[36] Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, pp. 133–4.
[37] Kendrick, 'St Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross', pp. 284–7.

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with a rivet plate; it had then broken again in the same place, tearing three of the rivet holes across. The second repair for this involved an internal silver plate.[38] Rollason argues that the cross may have been a reliquary: the central raised boss has a cavity with shell walls below its garnet plug, which may have contained a relic.[39]

Webster and Backhouse see the Cuthbert Cross as a descendant of the crosses typified by Ixworth and Wilton as, although it uses similar design motifs, its simpler cell shapes and poorer gold content are thought to indicate a date of manufacture in the second half of the seventh century.[40] In this they agree with Bruce-Mitford who saw no reason for it to have been made before 650:

> Certain of its technical features are not found on other jewels of the period. These are the solid dog-tooth mouldings, the tiny dummy rivets which are empty, fully tubular shafts external to the body of the cross surmounted by fully spherical pellets and the absence of gold foil under the garnets . . . The trend to sequences of plain rectangular cells is in fact highly characteristic of the decline of cloisonné work, as is illustrated in the book-covers and reliquary shrines of the eighth century.[41]

THE HOLDERNESS CROSS

The Holderness Cross (Fig. 7) is yet another item with an opaque history. The initial discovery of the cross was made in the 1960s, when Ronald Wray of Gray's Garth Farm (TA246312) found the cross lying face down in his stack-yard, after exposure by rain. It was, after some attempts at identification, placed in a box at the back of a drawer, where it remained until 1998. It was then taken to a Finds Day at the Hull and East Riding Museum, where it was recognized as being a pectoral cross.[42] It is now on display in the Ashmolean Museum, after its acquisition from the finder.

Gray's Garth Farm is in Burton Pidsea, which is the location for a known seventh-century cemetery. Poulson records the site as follows:

> In the spring of 1818, whilst excavating for the foundations of a house on the estate in this place, belonging to Dr Raines, the workmen discovered two human skeletons, about five or six feet below the surface of the ground, in an unusually perfect state of preservation, but upon exposure to the air they gradually crumbled to dust, except the skull and some of the larger bones. No coffins were observed, but in the earth, on

[38] It was found broken in 1827, as this silver strip had corroded.
[39] D. Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), p. 29.
[40] Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, p. 134.
[41] R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Pectoral Cross of St Cuthbert', *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology: Sutton Hoo and other discoveries*, ed. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford (London, 1974), pp. 281–302.
[42] MacGregor, 'Seventh-Century Pectoral Cross', p. 217.

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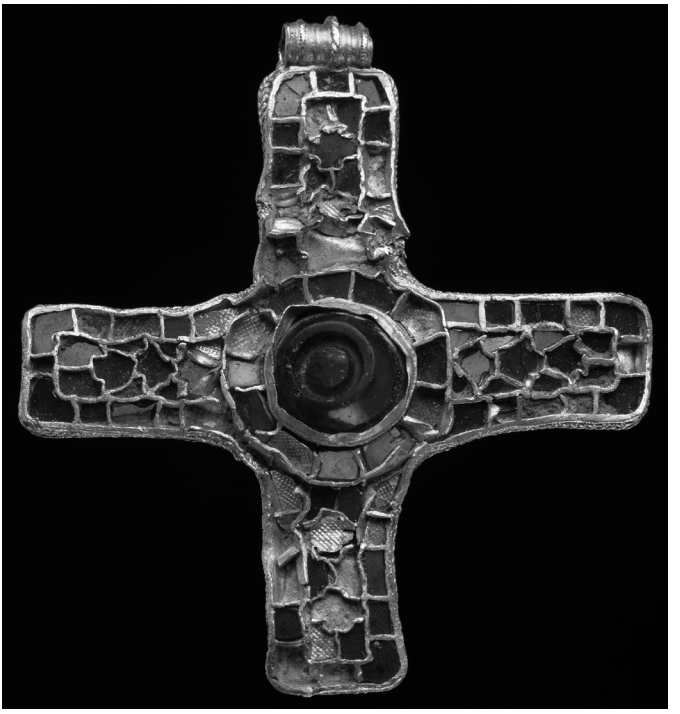


Figure 7: The Holderness Cross (AN1999.206 Jewelled cross pendant, gold and garnet, AD 600–700, Holderness, East Yorkshire © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford).

each side of one of the skeletons, were found two antique circular ear-rings, of vitrified glass, a blue coloured stone, of beautiful transparency, with a perforation through each, and suspended by a few inches of very fine gold wire, rudely twisted through the centre of each aperture. A plain gold ring, somewhat corroded, was also found with the bones. The ear-rings were presented to Whitby Museum, by Dr Raines . . . and the ring was allowed to be kept by John Loter, the man who first made the discovery. From the number of human bones exhumed in the gardens, at the time above-mentioned, it was supposed that the field had been an ancient cemetery, though no coffins were found.[43]

Fine beads suspended from gold wire rings (whether or not they were actually ear-rings) are characteristic of the mid-seventh century, indicating that the cemetery was at least partly of this date.

Although Meaney gives the OS reference for the Burton Pidsea finds as TA252311 (that is, 600 m to the east of where the cross was found),[44] the *Victoria County History* records that in 1818 Isaac Raines built Graysgarth

[43] G. Poulson, *History of Holderness II* (1841), p. 44.
[44] Meaney, *Gazetteer*, p. 283.

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House (renamed Burton Hall in 1852), on the site of another house;[45] it must have been during the construction of this house that the burials were found. Graysgarth House still exists, and is next to Grays Garth Farm. The discovery of two seventh-century finds in the same area of the same village can be no coincidence, and Graysgarth Farm/House is surely the site of a single seventh-century cemetery, from which the Holderness Cross derived.

Angela Care-Evans (on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database) records the cross as follows:

> The cross is equal-armed, each arm with rounded corners and with cloisonné cell-work of gold built up on a thin backplate. The cell-work is filled with poorly shaped garnets over a calcium carbonate backing paste. At the centre of the cross is a large flattened cabochon-cut garnet whose upper surface is drilled with a circle, probably for the insertion of a gold or blue glass fillet, now missing. The cabochon is set in a simple cell with a collar of undecorated gold strip, and is surrounded by a ring of twelve square or rectangular garnets (three now missing) set over pointillé gold foil.
>
> The four arms of the cross spring from this central field and are filled with garnets. Within a simple border of roughly square garnets, the arms share paired motifs: the upper and lower arms are decorated with a central panel containing two cruciform stones surrounded by small garnets cut to accommodate them, and the lateral arms contain a panel filled with very poorly made pointed mushroom/arrow-shaped garnets, again with small garnets cut to fill the panel's margins. The cross is suspended by a heavy gold suspension loop soldered to the backplate and decorated with fine filigree wire, and a double strand of twisted wire (SZ) runs around the edge of the cross disguising the join between the cellwork and backplate. The cross is battered and the arm ending in the suspension loop has been bent and straightened out, causing the cell-work to buckle.
>
> Dimensions: Height: 53 mm; width: 50 mm; metal analysis: 77% gold, 22% silver; weight: 12.23g.

CLOISONNÉ PECTORAL CROSSES: DISCUSSION

The five crosses are all unified by having arms decorated with gold-and-garnet cloisonné cellwork, around some form of circular central boss. They also differ in a number of aspects, which will be explored further below.

In terms of suspension method, the Trumpington Cross is distinctive, in having four attachment loops, one at the rear of each arm; these are of gold, but are plain and rather crudely applied. The other four crosses in this class have a single attachment loop, explicitly designed for suspension, whereas the

[45] G. H. R. Kent, K. J. Allison, A. P. Baggs, T. N. Cooper, C. Davidson-Cargoe and J. Walker, 'Middle Division: Burton Pidsea', *A History of the County of York East Riding: Volume 7: Holderness Wapentake, Middle and North Divisions* (2002), pp. 27–40. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=16126 Date accessed: 08 September 2014.

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intention seems to have been to fasten the Trumpington Cross more securely – perhaps by sewing it on to an item of clothing.[46] Whether sewn on or not, the placement of the cross in the grave suggests that it was either worn as a pendant, suspended from one of the loops, or was intended to look as if it was.

The single suspension loops on the other crosses were decorative as well as functional.[47] That on the Ixworth Cross was moulded into a barrel shape; that on the Wilton Cross was also of this shape but was decorated with all-over herringbone filigree; that on the Cuthbert Cross was tubular rather than barrel-shaped sheet gold with applied filigree (possibly in a cross design) and beaded rivets, while the Holderness Cross also had a tubular mount with linear applied filigree.

All five crosses have a backplate cut from a single sheet of gold.[48] The gold cellwork is then built up as a separate layer soldered on to this backplate, with paste and gold foils applied within the cells and cut garnets inserted. With the exception of the Holderness Cross, the standard of gold-working on all the crosses is very fine. Indeed, the contrast in craftsmanship of the Holderness Cross is interesting: with its poorly shaped garnets and rough cell shapes, it seems to be a much less carefully worked object.[49] It is also the only cross to employ shaped garnets (in the form of its central roundel), rather than flat.

Within these crosses there are dramatic differences in the garnet shapes used. While the Trumpington Cross employs a relatively simple range of forms (generally trapezoidal, with pointed cells for the arm corners), the Ixworth Cross uses a wider and more complex range: T-shaped, rectangular, trapezoidal, stepped, cornered, with a complex symmetrical stepped roundel. Its gold cellwork is extremely fine, to cater for these complex shapes. The Wilton Cross also picks up on the idea of the complex symmetrical stepped shape, except in this case it forms the centerpiece of each of the three flared arms,[50] and itself contains two stepped and two mushroom-shaped cells. The cells framing these motifs are also complex, although those surrounding the central coin are simpler, merely using an alternating pattern of narrow and wider rectangular cells to enhance the pattern. The Wilton Cross is the only one to use the herringbone motif, which is seen on its upper arm. The Holderness Cross

[46] No trace of any such fixing now remains, as contact with gold does not produce any corrosion products that might have preserved traces of any textiles.

[47] Although that on the Cuthbert Cross is thought to be a replacement for the original.

[48] Plain, except for the upper arm of the Ixworth Cross, which is decorated with a chevron arrangement, and obviously with a circular cut-out for the Wilton Cross coin, which enabled the obverse of the coin to remain visible.

[49] Although is not helped by the clear damage it has sustained at some point in the past, with the bending and straightening of the suspension arm causing its cellwork to buckle.

[50] Interpreted by Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, pp. 27–8, as a 'cryptic cross motif'.

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(while not being the same quality of craftsmanship) also uses a wide range of cell-shapes: rectangular, trapezoidal, cornered and either mushroom or arrow-shaped. The Cuthbert Cross, however, uses much simpler tapered shapes, more like the Trumpington Cross, and also like the garnet disc brooches such as that from Boss Hall, Suffolk and West Hanney,[51] which are dated to the middle of the seventh century, but may have been deposited later.[52]

While the Ixworth Cross seems to use different types of backing, the Wilton, Holderness and Trumpington Crosses consistently use gold foil impressed with a waffle pattern. The Cuthbert Cross does not use foil beneath its garnets at all, instead employing a light-coloured paste, which made the garnets appear darker.[53]

All the garnets in the Trumpington, Cuthbert, Wilton and Ixworth crosses were flat-cut examples, although those in the Ixworth Cross were of different thickness and colour, apparently deliberately to create colour differentials in the cell-work (the interior of its arms being thicker and therefore darker than the surrounding cells). Different backings also seem to have been used to accentuate these differences. Only the Holderness Cross employed a cabachon garnet, for its central roundel.

Current research suggests that seventh-century Anglo-Saxon cloisonné jewellery made use of a mixture of garnets ultimately from different sources: typically almandine from northern and western India and pyropes probably from Bohemia.[54] The trade route from India seems to have failed at the start of the seventh century, and older garnets may have been recycled; this particularly applies to larger garnets, as Bohemian garnets typically do not exceed 2–3m in size. Shaping them was a highly skilled job, and possibly even carried out before importation using templates.[55]

All the crosses except the Holderness Cross share the flaring arms springing from a central roundel.[56] Each of these four designs was based on a series

[51] C. Scull, *Early Medieval Cemeteries at Boss Hall and Buttermarket, Ipswich, Suffolk*, Soc. for Med. Archaeol. Monograph 27 (London, 2009), 88–91; H. Hamerow, 'A High-Status Seventh-Century Female Burial from West Hanney, Oxfordshire', *AntJ* 95 (2015), 91–118.

[52] The pendant recently discovered at Diss in 2015, although not itself cross-shaped, employs mushroom-shaped cells alongside other cell shapes; accompanying coins in the female grave suggest that this burial belongs to the middle or later part of the seventh century.

[53] R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Pectoral Cross', *The Relics of Saint Cuthbert, Durham Cathedral* (Durham, 1956), pp. 308–25, at 313.

[54] A. Hilgner and C. Fern, pers. comm.

[55] B. Arrhenius, *Merovingian Garnet Jewellery: Emergence and Social Implications* (Stockholm, 1985). The garnets on the Trumpington Cross and the linked pins have not yet been analysed, but this is planned (along with analysis of their gold fineness) once their status as treasure has been resolved, and they can be transported to either Mainz or Paris for specialist analysis.

[56] Although this roundel is substantially bigger in the Wilton Cross, thereby cutting down on the length of the arms.

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Table 1: Diameters of cloisonné crosses

	Overall diameter	Central roundel diameter
Trumpington	34.5 mm	11 mm
Ixworth	45 mm	19 mm
Wilton	56 mm	36 mm
Cuthbert	60 mm	13 mm
Holderness	50 mm	17 mm

of inscribed circles, although they differ somewhat in size; the following table presents the comparative dimensions of the crosses and their central roundels.

The Wilton Cross uses multiple versions of the cross motif: in the shape of the artifact itself, in the 'cryptic' cross motif embedded in its arms, and in the cross on the central solidus, which may have been intended to appear upright to the wearer glancing down.

The repairs seen on a number of the crosses confirm that they were highly valued objects. The Ixworth Cross has a large gold repair patch covering a break across the junction of the upper arm and the central roundel.[57] The Cuthbert Cross is even more heavily repaired, having been broken and repaired at least twice before its deposition with Cuthbert;[58] its original suspension loop had been broken off and replaced, and the lower arm had similarly been broken off and re-fixed with a rivet plate.[59] Both the Wilton Cross and the Trumpington Cross merely have some slight wear and scratching on the reverse.

Dating of these pectoral cloisonné crosses has largely rested on art-historical grounds, particularly the similarity of some of the construction details and cell-work designs to some of the jewellery found at Sutton Hoo. It seems to be the use of mushroom-shaped cells in the Ixworth Cross that is particularly cited as evidence for this;[60] these are also possibly employed on the Holderness Cross, although the mis-shapen nature of many of the cells means that this cannot be definitely stated as the designer's intention.

[57] Although Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, p. 27, suggest that analysis of the gold content implies that it may have been contemporary with the making of the cross.

[58] Kendrick, 'St Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross', pp. 284–7.

[59] This seems to have broken again in the same place, tearing some of the rivet holes and being repaired again.

[60] Cf. Adams' recent work for current research on the chronology of this cell shape: N. Adams, 'Rethinking the Sutton Hoo Shoulder Clasps and Armour', *Intelligible Beauty. Recent Research on Byzantine Jewellery*, ed. C. Entwistle and N. Adams, Brit. Museum Research Publ. 178 (London, 2010), 83–112; N. Adams, 'Earlier or Later? The Rectangular Cloisonné Buckle from Sutton Hoo Mound 1 in Context', *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in honour of Martin G. Welch*, ed. S. Harrington, S. Brookes and A. Reynolds, BAR Brit. Series 527 (Oxford, 2011), 20–32.

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Some authorities have therefore dated the manufacture of the Wilton and Ixworth crosses to the earlier seventh century, largely based on the similarity of the garnet cell-work to some of the Sutton Hoo finds.[61] The Cuthbert Cross has been seen as a descendant of Wilton and Ixworth, due to the simpler cell shapes and poorer gold content.[62] Bruce-Mitford saw the use of plain rectangular cells as characterizing the decline of cloisonné work.[63] However, archaeological evidence for the deposition of these crosses suggests a later date (of deposition, if not manufacture).

There is now sufficient evidence to place the deposition of at least four of these crosses into the second half of the seventh century. The radiocarbon dating for the burial containing the Trumpington Cross means that it must have been deposited after 661. Its association with a bed-burial and gold-and-garnet linked pins fits easily with a date for this burial in the 670s or 680s.

Placing the Trumpington burials in context is a task made much easier by the recent publication of a detailed chronology for this period,[64] which has made use of extensive radiocarbon dating integrated with assemblage analysis, correspondence analysis and Bayesian modelling. This has confirmed that the female burial assemblage underwent a dramatic shift in character in the mid-seventh century, a shift characterized by the familiar 'Final Phase' finds (henceforth Phase FE) such as gold and silver jewellery, workboxes, cowrie shells, certain types of pendants (including cross-shaped), wire rings and the like. In East Anglia, the period immediately preceding this phase sees female graves relatively sparsely furnished (Phase FD), this being characterized by a limited range of buckle, bead, pin and pendant types, along with occasional disc and annular brooches. The bed burials at Shudy Camps and Swallowcliffe Down are assigned to this phase, suggesting that bed burial starts around the middle of the seventh century, but other known bed burials can be firmly placed within Phase FE, such as the radiocarbon-dated Coddenham Grave 30.[65]

This later dating is confirmed by the presence of the gold and garnet linked pins in the Trumpington burial (Fig. 8). Only a few examples of gold

[61] E.g. Bruce-Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*, p. 29; Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, pp. 26–8.

[62] Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, p. 134.

[63] Bruce-Mitford, 'Pectoral Cross of St Cuthbert', p. 281.

[64] Bayliss *et al.*, *Anglo-Saxon Graves*.

[65] K. Penn, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Shrubland Hall Quarry, Coddenham, Suffolk*, East Anglian Archaeol. 139 (Bury St Edmunds, 2011); the recent find of a bed burial at Collingbourne Ducis in Wiltshire unfortunately offers no independent dating evidence: K. Egging Dinwiddy and N. Stoodley, *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Collingbourne Ducis, Wiltshire*, Wessex Archaeol. Report 37 (2016).

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Figure 8: The Trumpington linked pins. © Cambridge Archaeological Unit.

linked pins set with garnets are known: Cow Low,[66] Roundway Down II and perhaps Seamer.[67] Otherwise, this pin type is more usually found in copper

[66] T. Bateman, *Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire* (London, 1848), pp. 91–5, except that here the setting was ruby glass and not garnet: S. Ross, 'Dress Pins from Anglo-Saxon England: their Production and Typo-Chronological Development' (unpubl. DPhil dissertation, Oxford Univ. 1991), p. 255.

[67] A. Ozanne, 'The Peak Dwellers', *MA* 6/7 (1962–3), 15–52, at 28; H. Geake, *The Use of Grave-Goods in Conversion-Period England, c.600–c.850*, BAR Brit. Series 261 (Oxford, 1997), 100.

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alloy or silver.[68] Although Shephard suggested that these pins belonged to the second quarter of the seventh century,[69] all the recent evidence, including the new chronology, points to a later date, firmly in the second half of the seventh century,[70] which would also accord with the radiocarbon dating of Trumpington Grave 1.

Trumpington and Ixworth can therefore be placed into the second half of the seventh century through their use of bed burial and elaborate jewellery of a distinctive type. The Holderness Cross can be argued to derive from a furnished cemetery of similar date, although this cannot be argued strongly for the Wilton Cross. The weight of evidence from the other crosses does, however, suggest that it also belongs within this time-frame. The Cuthbert Cross cannot have been placed in the grave before 687 at the earliest, with deposition in 698 also a possibility. To shed more light on the significance of these cloisonné crosses, this article will now look at the tradition of burial with other forms of cross-pendant.

CROSS-WEARING IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

These crosses also need to be seen in the context of the broader group of gold pectoral crosses without cloisonné decoration that also characterize later seventh-century burial practice. There are three crosses that have a central cabochon garnet with filigree-decorated arms (although one is not burial-related),[71] three with a central cabachon garnet but plainer decoration on the arms,[72] plus two plainer gold cross-shaped pendants without a central garnet (Fig. 9).[73] Examples of plainer silver crosses will also be considered.

The initial description of the cross from the Staffordshire Hoard is as follows:

> Pendant cross with expanded arms and central flat top cabochon stone, the stone is red and presumed garnet. The top arm is detached, torn rather than a deliberate cut. The decoration goes from the front over the loop and finishes on the back. This damaged area shows that the arms may have been added to the central area and soldered in position. The main cross has three other arms with a circular filigree pattern with twisted wire work edging. The left arm has been bent upwards and inwards. The central garnet

[68] In Geake's study, eight silver examples of a total of thirteen were included, four of which had garnet settings; Geake, *Use of Grave-Goods*, pp. 35–6.

[69] J. Shephard, 'The Social Identity of the Individual in Isolated Barrows and Barrow Cemeteries in Anglo-Saxon England', *Space, Hierarchy and Society*, ed. B. C. Burnham and J. Kingsbury, BAR International Series 59 (Oxford, 1979), 47–80, fig. 4.1.

[70] Geake, *Use of Grave-Goods*, pp. 35–6; Bayliss *et al.*, *Anglo-Saxon Graves*, tab. 10.1.

[71] From the Staffordshire Hoard, White Lowe, Elton in Derbyshire and an undisclosed location in the Newark area.

[72] From Thurnham and Milton Regis in Kent and Desborough, Northants.

[73] From Newball, Lincolnshire and Westfield, Ely in Cambridgeshire

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Figure 9: Comparative crosses: (a) Staffordshire Hoard. © Birmingham Museums Trust (b) White Lowe, Elton in Derbyshire. Image courtesy of Museums Sheffield (c) Milton Regis, Kent. © Maidstone Museum & Bentlif Art Gallery (d) Desborough, Northants. © The Trustees of the British Museum (e) Newball, Lincolnshire. Courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (f) Westfield, Ely, Cambridgeshire. © Cambridge Archaeological Unit.

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is set in the gold, which has decorative twisted wire work. The garnet has a flat top which is showing general wear and worn smooth tiny chips. Inclusions are visible in the stone at 10 × 6 magnification and thin lines are visible at the back of the garnet, possibly from a cracking paste below. The sides of the arms and back are plain gold and very clean. General wear is visible on the surface.[74]

It measures 66.1 × 50.3 × 4.3 mm. During conservation and analysis, CT scans revealed a small hollow behind the central garnet, leading to a suggestion that the cross was possibly a reliquary pendant.[75]

The White Lowe pendant was an eighteenth-century find, which may have been associated with the levelling of a mound in the 1760s, during which other seventh-century objects were recovered; the assemblage thus suggests a destroyed burial. While Mander reports on these other objects (including a filigree-decorated and garnet-set circular brooch and glass vessels),[76] no mention is made of the cross until Bateman reports that 'it was found in the process of demolishing a tumulus on Winster Common, about the year 1767, and was bought from the labourer who was so fortunate as to find it'.[77] Ozanne describes the cross as 'made up of a solid gold plate with a central setting containing a single faceted garnet, decorated with filigree in a scroll-pattern and bordered by beaded gold wire; near the loop is a transverse line of plait filigree'.[78] In fact, the garnet appears to be a later insertion. Douglas reproduced an oral report of the find which stated that 'About twenty years ago, a woman picked up in a field near Winstor . . . a small brass cross of fillagree-work; in the middle is a socket, which probably contained a stone', illustrating the cross with the empty socket;[79] the stone therefore seems to have been inserted between 1793 and 1835, when it came into the possession of Thomas Bateman.[80]

A more recent find is the gold cross-pendant from the Newark area, reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme in 2007.[81] Measuring 28.5 × 25.4 × 4.9 mm, this is described on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website as:

Gold cross-pendant set with four garnets, damaged, warped and missing one more garnet. The cross arms are of almost equal length and have concave ends, each of

[74] http://www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk/staritems/petctoral-cross [stet].
[75] 'Rethinking the Staffordshire Hoard – Piecing Together the Wealth of Anglo-Saxon Kings', *CA* 290 (2014).
[76] Mander, 'XXIX. Discoveries in a Barrow in Derbyshire. Communicated by Mr. Mander, of Bakewell, in the said County', *Archaeologia* 3 (1775), 274–5.
[77] Bateman, *Vestiges*, p. 21.
[78] Ozanne, 'The Peak-Dwellers', p. 26.
[79] J. Douglas, *Nenia Britannica* (London, 1793), p. 68.
[80] G. Lester, 'The Anglo-Saxon Pendant Cross from Winster Moor, Derbyshire', *MA* 20 (1976), 136–7.
[81] DERBY E5895.

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which contains a round setting. Two of these still contain small cabochon garnets, one of them contains flat garnet and a fourth, larger stone mounted very crudely at the centre of the cross. The cross arms are filled with filigree wires, while a grooved gold band runs around the sides of the cross. The back of the object is plain and concave, with a tear visible in one of the cross angles. The object is slightly warped and the lower and proper right arm are bent; the grooved gold band is torn in one of the cross angles and the attachment loop is missing. Minor remains of the latter can still be seen on the front and in form of a triangular attachment on the back of the cross. All four garnets are poorly mounted, with the settings squeezed around the stones which are obviously too small. The empty setting has a regular, unsquashed frame. This, together with the unsuitable size of the other stones and the presence of a flat rather than cabochon gem suggests that the garnets may be replacements or that it was impossible for the goldsmith to get appropriate stones.

Analysis of its composition suggests that gold content is low, at 77–81%, and may be connected to the debasement of Merovingian gold coinage during the seventh century.[82]

Although unfortunately none of these three finds has reliable contextual information (unless we accept that the Winster Moor/White Lowe pendant did come from a grave under the barrow), more is available for the two of the three crosses with central garnet but plainer arms, which would seem to be directly related. That from Thurnham, near Maidstone in Kent, does appear to have been a stray find, found during ploughing in 1967.[83] No further investigation was allowed by the landowner, and no other known archaeological site lies nearby.[84] Bruce-Mitford describes the cross as:

> . . . rather thick in construction, with hollow arms. The arms are straight but expanded towards the outer ends. At the centre is a circle from which the arms emerge. In the extremities of the arms are oval garnets set *en cabochon* in deep settings with filigree collars. The central part of the cross holds a large circular cabochon garnet which has been cut flat on top. The suspension loop has, unusually, filigree bindings laterally at its base, between the loop proper and the top of the arm of the cross to which it is attached. The cross is of pale gold.

The crosses from Milton Regis and Desborough have more secure contexts. Although there are no detailed excavation records available, it seems clear that the series of finds recorded from Milton Regis were made by a brickearth digger, R. Mills, in 1916.[85] These made their way into the collections of the British Museum and Maidstone Museum from the 1920s to the 1960s. In the

[82] *Ibid.* The cross is now in Newark Museum.
[83] R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Gold Cross from Thurnham, Kent', *AntJ* XLVII (1967), 290–1.
[84] The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Thurnham Friars being two miles or more to the west.
[85] Geake, *Use of Grave-Goods*, p. 164.

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1920s, the British Museum acquired three gold filigree pendants and six sceattas from Mills, with fourteen further sceattas from the same 1916 find brought to Maidstone Museum in 1958.[86] In 1962, the last remaining finds from Mr Mills' collection were purchased by Maidstone Museum from Mills' great-nephew, comprising a pottery vessel, a triangular buckle, a cabochon garnet pendant in a cloisonné frame, a gold filigree disc pendant, a gold pectoral cross and thirty-two glass beads. While it cannot be assumed that any of these items came from the same grave, the presence of a seventh-century cemetery in this location would be a safe assumption. The original findspot was traced to approximately TQ 90496477, just north of Cooks Lane in Milton Regis.[87] Chadwick Hawkes and Grove record a gold pectoral cross, 3.1 cm long including the attachment loop, having hollow semi-circular-sectioned arms, gently expanded towards the ends and decorated with three groups of four lightly incised transverse lines. A circular cell set with a cabochon garnet is positioned at the intersection of arms.[88]

The Desborough Cross formed part of a more elaborate necklace, found in a grave in 1876. A contemporary description states that during ironstone diggings sixty inhumations were found within an old encampment.[89] The bodies were not in coffins, and many of the graves were empty or contained only a few fragments of bone with occasional pieces of coarse pot and burnt stones. The graves were roughly made, wide at the top and narrow at the bottom; the heads of the skeletons were always at the western end. Two elaborately furnished graves were reported, both containing a skeleton. In one was found a bronze skillet, fragments of the bowl of a pair of scales, a silver or white metal spoon, a buckle with animal ornament, a bronze pin, two possible tools, and a pair of amber glass palm cups. In the other a necklace that:

> lay in disconnected pieces near the head of the skeleton, and consists at present of thirty-seven portions, viz. seventeen barrel-shaped or rather double-cone-shaped beads, slightly varying in size, made of spirally-coiled gold wire. Two cylindrical beads of similar make, which may have been connected with the clasps. Nine circular pendants of gold, convex on one side and flat on the other, and with the loops by which they could be strung; five of these are beaded around the edges, the others are plain. Eight gold pendants of various shapes and sizes, set with garnets, with delicately-worked loops for suspension. They vary considerably in form . . . the edges are beaded and the backs plain. Lastly, a gold cross, which formed, no doubt, the central ornament

[86] The twenty coins were published as a hoard dating to *c.* 695–705 by S. Rigold, 'The Two Primary Series of Sceattas', *BNJ* 30 (1960), 46–7.

[87] R. Smith, 'Note', *AntJ* 6 (1926), 446–7.

[88] S. Chadwick Hawkes and L. Grove, 'Finds from a Seventh Century Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Milton Regis', *AC* 78 (1963), 22–38, at 29.

[89] R. S. Baker, 'XXIV. On the Discovery of Anglo-Saxon Remains at Desborough, Northamptonshire', *Archaeologia* 45 (1876), 466–71.

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of the necklace . . . The body is formed of two cylinders of gold, and at the intersections is set a small garnet surrounded by beaded work; the other side had a similar ornament now wanting.[90]

The illustration showing an ordered necklace should be seen as tentative:[91]

The preservation of the gold necklace . . . is due to Mr. Hickman, who happened by mere accident to come up at the very moment of discovery, and found the men scrambling for the prize, of which each had got some portions. Perceiving the interest of the find, he induced the men to give up their various shares by telling them that the ornament was worth more as a whole than in separate pieces, and that he would take care that each man received his share of the proceeds. Whether any portions were after all kept back, or whether any portions were removed with the barrows of earth before the precious fragments were noticed, we cannot tell.[92]

The items were acquired by the British Museum in the same year.

Webster and Backhouse describe the cross as: 'curiously constructed of two tubes of heavy sheet gold, cut away where they overlap and lidded at each end. At its centre is a poorly-fashioned filigree setting containing a small cabochon garnet. The rivet securing the setting holds the cross loosely together.'[93] They argue that it was probably assembled in the second half of the seventh century, although its style is based on continental fashions of the second half of the sixth century.

Finally, we come to the gold cross-shaped pendants without a central garnet setting. One is a find reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme in 2005, from Newball, West Lindsay, described in the database as follows:

Gold Latin cross made with long arm uppermost. The cross is hollow and its structure complex. It is made up with one cruciform sheet, which extends into the suspension loop, acting as a base-plate. A single strip of gold, set on edge, is neatly soldered to this forming a cruciform cell. This is then covered by second sheet of gold whose edges are partially enfolded by the top of the cell wall. The sheet forming the base-plate is pierced at the centre by an equal armed cruciform opening which is partially filled by a thin gold sheet, itself pierced with a smaller equal armed cross. In the interior of the cross, immediately beneath the smaller opening is what appears to be a circular element resembling a stud, but no trace of this can be seen on the front plate. The arms are irregular, with the upper and left ends being cut square, while the right and lower ends are rounded. The swagged suspension loop curls over to rest against its upper edge and is threaded by a length of gold wire made into a slip knot ring and shows little sign of wear.[94]

[90] *Ibid.* pp. 469–70.
[91] *Ibid.* pl. XXXIX.
[92] *Ibid.* pp. 470–1.
[93] Webster and Backhouse, *Making of England*, pp. 28–9.
[94] http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/519474.

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The gold cross from Westfield, Ely formed part of a composite necklace, that also included six hemispherical silver pendants, another in gold, and a further gold pendant with a stirrup-shaped cabochon garnet setting.[95] The top 'arm' of the cross-shaped pendant was a simple ribbed attachment loop; the side arms together form a single kidney-shaped gold plate, bordered with a single strip of filigree. The bottom arm mimics the half-kidney shape, and is similarly bordered with filigree, extending up across the middle plate to form a square central setting. No trace remains of any settings; it is possible that the cells were intended to remain empty. L: 25 mm; W: 18 mm; Th: 2 mm. As well as the necklace, the grave contained a wooden casket containing two blue-green glass palm cups and a composite comb, a silver pin with attached chain (the remainder of a set of linked pins), a knife and a girdle-group consisting of a firesteel and a padlock key (for the casket's barrel padlock).

Silver cross pendants are also a feature of mid- to later seventh-century burial practice. Examples are known from Kingston Down (with a pair found in Grave 142) and from Grave 9 at Chartham Down in Kent, as well as from Grave 11 at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville in Suffolk and Grave 187 at Butler's Field, Lechlade in Gloucestershire.[96] The Kingston Down pair are silver gilt (so with a golden appearance). All these graves can be more or less securely dated to the middle or second half of the seventh century AD.[97] Butler's Field Grave 187 was osteologically female, while the other graves with silver cross pendants had strongly female-associated assemblages.

The wearing of cross-shaped pendants firmly belongs in the tradition of furnished female burial of this period. Apart from that of Cuthbert, there is no definite or even tentative male-associated grave with one of these pendants; these are clearly female-associated artifacts, found in cemeteries that furnish a select number of burials within them with elaborate grave-goods, including beds, boxes, work-boxes, glass palm cups, linked pins (perhaps for fastening a

[95] S. Lucy, R. Newman, N. Dodwell, C. Hills, M. Dekker, T. O'Connell, I. Riddler and P. Walton Rogers, '"The burial of a princess?" The Later Seventh-Century Cemetery at Westfield Farm, Ely', *AntJ* 89 (2009), 81–141, at 88–9.

[96] B. Faussett, *Inventorium Sepulchrale* (1856), pp. 66–9; *ibid.* pp. 169–70 (the Chartham Down cross was originally intended for mounting, with a suspension hole on each arm, although it seems to have been worn as a pendant in the grave); S. Lucy, J. Tipper and A. Dickens, *The Early Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Cemetery at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk*, East Anglian Archaeol.131 (Cambridge, 2009), 391–3, fig. 7.10; A. Boyle, D. Jennings, D. Miles and S. Palmer, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Butler's Field, Lechlade, Gloucestershire 1. Prehistoric and Roman Activity and Grave Catalogue*, Thames Valley Landscapes 10 (Oxford, 1998), 133–4, fig. 5.106.6.

[97] Butler's Field Grave 187 having a radiocarbon date of cal AD 605–55 at 95% probability: Bayliss *et al.*, *Anglo-Saxon Graves*, tab. 7.1; Bloodmoor Hill Grave 11 was adjacent to and aligned with a grave dated to cal AD 610–65 at 95% probability.

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veil), chatelaines, as well as elaborate items of jewellery that were often focused around the upper chest and neck.

The wearing of cross-shaped pendants, whether in gold or silver, or of gold and garnet cloisonné crosses is thus clearly a feature of mid- to later seventh-century burial practice in eastern England. Even if some of these crosses were of earlier manufacture, the weight of chronological evidence would now suggest that all were deposited as grave-goods within Phase FE of the new chronology (*c.* 640–85).[98] This sudden flourish of furnished female burial is characterized by coherent burial assemblages which are not regionally-specific; many of the associated artifacts have been argued to have overtly Christian associations.

Are these then Christian cemeteries? Increasingly the consensus of academic opinion would seem to be that they are, with the recognition that the rise in popularity of cross-shaped pendants coincides with the consolidation of the religion in the east of England,[99] as does the use of amethyst beads, cowrie shells, and the small 'workboxes' that have now been convincingly argued to be portable reliquaries.[100] As well as having high status accoutrements, therefore, these women and their mourners were drawing on a series of artifacts with strong Christian association, and there seems to be no reason to argue that they were not members of Christian communities.

It is now very clear that this is a highly distinct female-associated assemblage that was probably linked to a particular social sphere and probably the Christian religion, and was in use for a relatively short period of time, rather than stretching across the entirety of the seventh century. The Trumpington Cross, and undoubtedly the other pectoral crosses, should be seen in this light. The remaining puzzle is why one such cross was buried with St Cuthbert. It has been suggested that the Cuthbert Cross may have been a reliquary, and that a relic may have been contained in the cavity below the garnet central boss.[101]

No other cross pendant is known to have been deposited with a male burial during the seventh century (although Cuthbert's grave is the only known burial of a furnished ecclesiastical burial of this date). Could this have been a gift, perhaps at his death? Bede refers in the *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* to the Abbess Verca of South Shields having given Cuthbert the gift of fine cloth or linen,

[98] See A. Bayliss *et al.*, *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods of the 6th and 7th Centuries AD*, fig. 8.14c.
[99] Bayliss *et al.*, *Anglo-Saxon Graves*, pp. 364–5.
[100] C. M. Hills, 'Work Boxes or Reliquaries? Small Copper-Alloy Containers in Seventh Century Anglo-Saxon Graves', *Dying Gods – Religious Beliefs in Northern and Eastern Europe in the Time of Christianisation*, ed. C. Ruhmann and V. Brieske, Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung 5 (Hanover, 2015), 1–12.
[101] Rollason, *Saints*, p. 29.

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which he wanted to be buried in; the same chapter refers to other gifts, but without specifying what they were or what was done with them.[102] One possibility is that these gifts included the cross, and that the decision was taken to include this with him at burial. Alternatively, it may be that ecclesiastical cross-wearing was already established at this time. Stephen of Rippon's *Life of Bishop Wilfrid* refers to Queen Iurminburg taking holy relics in a *chrismarium* from Wilfrid's neck and wearing them herself.[103] Although not explicitly referring to a cross, it may suggest a form of pendant equally appropriate to a queen as to a bishop.

The settlement evidence from Trumpington has helped to set the burial evidence in context.[104] The range of material found within the associated features helps to characterize the settlement as fairly typical of the seventh century, albeit with slight suggestions of some higher status activity. While the make-up of the animal bone and botanical assemblages indicate the general self-sufficiency of the settlement in faunal and arable products, with occasional exploitation of locally available wild resources (birds and fish), the fragments of glass vessels, the handful of sherds of imported pottery (particularly those associated with the importation of wine) and the extensive worked bone assemblage that included a playing piece, all help to suggest that the Trumpington settlement in the seventh century had linkages to wider networks of supply, and that it saw practices associated with high status activities in this period.

What does remain unexplained is the pattern of burial at the site, with burials that are argued to have been made in both the earlier seventh and the later seventh century – perhaps only one or at most two per generation, with the final burial being Grave 1. This young woman was dressed in fine textiles, and possibly wore a beaded shawl, with a gold and garnet cross, gold linked pins and a chatelaine, and the body was placed on a blanketed bed within the burial. The precise date of this burial cannot be certain, but it is possible that the settlement went out of effective use shortly after it had been made, to be replaced by a landscape given over to cultivation. The site of Burial 1 does not appear to have been memorialized in any way, and its location was then forgotten.[105]

[102] Ch. 37; Colgrave, *Two Lives*, pp. 272–3. I am grateful to Prof. Barbara Yorke for these references, and discussion of this point and the subsequent one.

[103] Chs. 34–9; B. Yorke, '"The weight of necklaces". Some Insights into the Wearing of Women's Jewellery from Middle Saxon Written Sources', *Studies in Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology: Papers in honour of Martin Welch*, ed. S. Brookes, S. Harrington and A. Reynolds, BAR Brit. Series 527 (Oxford, 2011), 106–11, at 109.

[104] Evans *et al.*, *River Cam-side Investigations*.

[105] I am very grateful to Newnham College for supporting the costs of reproduction permissions.

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