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ON ANGLO-SAXON REMAINS DISCOVERED RE-
CENTLY IN VARIOUS PLACES IN KENT.

IN A LETTER FROM C. ROACH SMITH, ESQ., H.M.R.S.L.,
TO THE HONORARY SECRETARY.

MY DEAR SIR,

Since I addressed you two years and a half since, on the subject of Anglo-Saxon antiquities discovered in the county of Kent, you have been so fortunate as to receive communications on other objects of the same class, brought to light at various places, under accidental circumstances. On the former occasion, the Kent Archæological Society, by a liberal supply of engravings, spared the readers of its Transactions a considerable amount of what would have been, to them, tedious description; for it is the eye only that can clearly and fully appreciate the subject-matter of disquisitions on varied and complicated works of ancient art, such as are illustrated in the first volume of the 'Archæologia Cantiana.' In most branches of natural history, recognizable types can usually be referred to, so as to dispense with engravings; but it is not so in the regions of antiquity. It is true that reference can often be made, as it necessarily must be, to illustrated works; but these are not accessible at all times to everybody. The effect of the most careful and laboured description of antiquities, unassisted by drawings or engravings, is repulsive to the general reader, and often unsatisfactory even to the proficient anti-

quary. What description could possibly have conveyed a correct notion of the elaborate ornamentation of the jewellery and horse decorations which are the subjects of the plates referred to ?

On the present occasion, when I am called upon to address you and the Society, an ample and faithful supply of illustrations again relieve me of disquietude in suspecting I may fail in making myself fully understood in pointing out those minute details forming the characteristics upon which correct classification is founded. I only regret, that from the accidental manner in which the objects now under consideration were brought to light, we are deprived of the circumstantial evidence so important to the scientific inquirer. In such fortuitous discoveries, however, the chances are so many in favour of the melting-pot, and so few on the side of the archæologist, that we may congratulate ourselves in having secured an examination of what has been saved, although valuable links in the chain of testimony are wanting.

The digging at Lullingstone and the railway-cutting at Eynesford have evidently intersected two distinct Saxon burial-places. From the latter locality I have seen only the umbo of a shield; but abundant evidence has been given of the finding of weapons and ornaments, and also an enamelled bowl, from description, resembling that in the possession of Sir Percival Hart Dyke, which constitutes the subject of Plate I. The workmen, as usual, concealed the more valuable objects, and took them, either whole or broken up, to the neighbouring towns for sale. The bowl alluded to, I am informed, was taken to Dartford.

The Sarre remains, represented in Plates II., III., and IV., were discovered under circumstances purely accidental, for the particulars of which we are indebted to Mr. John Brent. The fifth plate of the series given in this volume contains a further selection from the col-

lection of Mr. Gibbs of Faversham, the value of which must be admitted and appreciated by all who have attended the annual congresses of the Society, at which extensive portions have been exhibited; as well as by the possessors of the first volume of the 'Archæologia Cantiana.'

The full and true interest of these remains can only be properly estimated when they are seen and studied in connection with the great mass of Anglo-Saxon antiquities which has now been brought together in various publications, the copious illustrations in which admit of comparison, whereby alone a clear notion can be obtained of the extent and the peculiarities of the various classes, their relationship to each other in various parts of this country; and, somewhat more remotely, to those of cognate races on the Continent. Accumulated facts, diligently collected and carefully studied, have led to the displacement of much theory, and rendered intelligible much which, only a short time since, was either not attempted to be explained, or was interpreted erroneously. Of all departments of archæology, that relating to our Saxon forefathers was the most neglected. Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Etruscan antiquities received due attention from able scholars; and those of Great Britain in general were studied with more or less success; but the remains of the Teutonic races were the last to be discriminated and fully understood. Now, however, simple inductive reasoning has enabled us to speak with some degree of confidence; and it may be safely affirmed, that a hitherto unwritten chapter has been added to our national history in one of its most obscure epochs. As grave by grave yields up its long-buried testimony, some new fact is continually being added to the materials from which historical information is elicited; or facts, if not wholly new, are strengthened and confirmed by additional evidence.

We may congratulate ourselves in the acquisition of the coins from the grave at Sarre, because they constitute means whereby we may decide upon the approximate date of the interment; and here is a case in point, of the importance of authentication in such discoveries. Had the coins been separated from the circumstances attending their exhumation from the grave, their value as testimony on date of interment would have been worthless; and the other objects which accompanied them might possibly have been assigned to an earlier period than that to which they must now be placed. It is obvious that the interment must be either coeval with, or posterior to the time of the latest of the princes in whose names the coins were struck.

Three of the coins bear the effigies and superscription of emperors of the East, Mauricius and Heraclius; and the fourth, that of Chlotaire II. of France. Mauricius reigned from A.D. 582 to A.D. 602; Heraclius from A.D. 610 to A.D. 641; and Chlotaire II. from A.D. 613 to A.D. 628.

The *solidi* of the Eastern Empire were commonly imitated in France under the Merovingian princes, and constituted part of the legalized currency; and these pieces are of that class, being copied, and not very accurately, from the coins struck by Mauricius and Heraclius. Admitting, as probable, that they were coined at some time during the long reign of Chlotaire II., who was contemporary with Heraclius, but who died long before him, we cannot well assign the time of their deposit in the Saxon grave at Sarre to a date much earlier than the middle of the seventh century, while at the same time it may have been some years later. It will be seen by reference to an extract from my summary of former discoveries (printed in the *Introduction* to the 'Inventorium Sepulchrale') that these coins found at Sarre decide that some, at least, of the Saxon remains disco-

vered in Kent, are posterior to any heretofore recorded, so far as the presence of coins may determine.

“When we find in a grave a coin of Justinian, who reigned from A.D. 527 to A.D. 565, we immediately arrive at the conclusion that the interment could not possibly have taken place prior to the reign of that emperor; and we may infer that the adjoining graves, at least, were not earlier. Thus far our ground, retrospectively, is sure; but not so in the other direction. We cannot be certain even that this coin was deposited at any period during the long reign of Justinian. The evidence supplied by the two gold Merovingian pieces is about equal to that afforded by the coin of Justinian. They are probably of the middle of the sixth century, before which period we cannot consider them to have been buried; but we can by no means so limit them prospectively. Unfortunately these coins range over a rather extended period of time; and as they bear merely the names of towns and of moneyers, it is seldom their precise date can be determined. The coin of Justinian, it may be observed, though bearing the name of that prince, is one of those numerous imitations struck by the Frankish kings. This fact may weigh somewhat against the probability of the coin being deposited in the Anglo-Saxon grave during the first half of the sixth century. Contemporaneous with the Merovingian gold are the earliest Anglo-Saxon silver coins, commonly called *sceattas*, some of which were found by Mr. J. P. Bartlett, in one of the tumuli upon Breach Downs, near Kingston, in Kent. (See ‘*Collectanea Antiqua*,’ vol. ii. pl. vi.) Although, unfortunately, these early Saxon coins, like the Merovingian, bear no inscription to guide us to the precise period when they were struck, they serve to cumulate testimony, which throws the date of some of the graves in a descending direction.”

The looped gold coins found, together with a Roman

intaglio, and a Saxon or Frankish circular ornament set with garnets,¹ in the burial-ground attached to the ancient church of St. Martin, at Canterbury, may be considered as forming part of a funereal deposit. Some of the coins are Merovingian: one is of Justin, who died A.D. 527; and one, unique and of good workmanship, of Eupardus, Bishop of Autun, of about the middle of the sixth century. The church of St. Martin, without the walls of Canterbury, is mentioned in charters of Ethelbert, A.D. 605 (Cod. Dip. *Ævi Saxon.* ii. and iii.); and also by Bede, who states it was a Roman building, and that in it Bertha, the wife of Ethelbert, a Christian convert, used to worship; and Augustine and his companions also. It is most probable that, from their costly nature, these ornaments belonged to some lady of the royal family or court, and were interred with her.² Gold coins of Mauricius and of Heraclius, mounted in crosses of gold set with garnets, have been found in Norfolk; but no crosses such as these have as yet been recorded as discovered in Saxon graves: they are probably of somewhat later date than the ornaments under consideration. The coins found in the Frankish graves in France and Germany, do not assist us beyond the advances we have made hitherto in our investigations in England. The Abbé Cochet, to whom alone in all France we are most indebted for valuable materials from Frankish cemeteries in Normandy,³ cites comparatively few coins; and those chiefly of the Merovingian epoch, bearing names of towns and moneyers. The piece of Charlemagne found in the valley of the Eaulne, was not actually, it appears, taken from a grave, but from a cut-

¹ They are now side by side with the Faussett Collection, in the Museum of Mr. Joseph Mayer, having been secured by the zeal and vigilance of the late Mr. Rolfe, of Sandwich.

² They are figured in the 'Collectanea Antiqua,' vol. i. pl. xxii. and lv.

³ 'La Normandie Souterraine,' second edition, 1855. Paris, London, and Oxford.

ting about midway between the surface and the skeleton. The scrupulous accuracy of the learned Abbé compels this piece to be rejected as a valid witness in this inquiry.

The mounting of the coins found in Saxon graves was probably executed in Britain. The earliest known Saxon coins were of silver; and therefore these gold exotics would be looked upon with greater curiosity; but from the constant communication between this country and France, they could hardly be estimated as novelties. At all times gold coins were a favourite decoration of the female costume: they are worn at the present day; and the gold Roman imperial coins were often set in an *entourage* of goldsmith's-work of great beauty. The circular pendant of mosaic-work will find its counterparts in the Faussett collection;¹ and in that from a Frankish cemetery in the valley of the Eaulne.² The latter is an ingeniously constructed ornament, combining the principle of the button with that of the circular Roman fibula. The mode of construction of these elaborate works was precisely similar to that still practised in Italy at the present day. The cubes are formed of vitreous pastes of various colours. In that from the Frankish cemetery the colours are chiefly red, blue, white, and yellow, blended with great skill, the cubes being so minute that they cannot be well distinguished without a magnifying-glass.

Of the magnificent fibula which forms Plate III. but little need be added to the remarks made on those from Faversham, engraved in Vol. I. It belongs to the same class as Lord Amherst's, found at Minster, which I have described fully in the *Introduction* to the 'Inventorium Sepulchrale.' It is only second in size, beauty, and richness to the splendid Kingston fibula, which remains unrivalled.

¹ Inventorium Sepulchrale, pl. iv. fig. 7.

² Collectanea Antiqua, vol. iii. pl. xxxv.

Copper or bronze bowls nearly always indicate graves of women. They are by no means of common occurrence, as may be seen by reference to the comparatively few examples procured from the numerous graves opened by Bryan Faussett. With them are sometimes found metal trivets, upon which they stood when set upon the table. That they were intended for the dinner-service, and not to be used upon fire, is obvious, from the delicate and peculiar character of the ornaments, which would become detached by heat. But those decorated with enamelled ornaments are of uncommon occurrence; and this from Lullingstone is a novel variety, though I am informed by Mr. Albert Way, that another, very similar, has since been found with other Saxon remains in Leicestershire. The bowls from Saxon graves are sometimes of stout bronze, either with or without handles and a foot, as in Plate IV., and of various dimensions. Others are in very thin copper, and they also vary in size, and somewhat in form. One in the Museum of Mr. Mayer, found at Gilton, near Sandwich, has been repaired with small plates of metal upon which are figures. In one instance they are fishes and quadrupeds on either side of a twisted scroll terminating in loose knots: the other plates are stamped with the figure of a minstrel or gleeman, with long hair, dancing and playing on a viol of six strings. The ornaments upon the Lullingstone bowl are of a different kind, having been evidently manufactured for the special purpose to which we see them adapted. They nearly all bear traces of red enamel, which must have been applied with some skill, and probably not with a bad effect, though the ornaments are quaint, and in some instances rude. The whole of them are copies of Roman works of art, or rather, copies of copies, settled into those very peculiar patterns which we recognize as Saxon. The goldsmith's-work in the jewellery is of a far higher order. The fibulæ, especially

such as those of the more costly kinds, evince good taste in design, and wonderful manipulatory power; and we have only to behold them, to enlarge and exalt our notions respecting, at least, the artistic refinement of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

There is one point of view in which, I think, our Saxon antiquities have hardly been sufficiently studied. It is that which arises from the localities where they have been brought to light; and a consideration of the state of those localities during the early Anglo-Saxon epoch. I need not enumerate here all the places where the richest remains have been found; but I will restrict myself to a few, and mention, Barham Downs, Breach Downs, Kingston, Gilton, Woodnesborough, Adisham, Sittingbourne, Faversham, Sarre, and Minster. It is, I submit, clear that populations which included wealthy and powerful persons must, at very early times, close after the withdrawal of the Romans, have grouped themselves round these spots over a considerable period of time. Now it is important to be observed that we do not discover these rich remains in and about the ancient towns. Canterbury, the metropolis of Kent, reveals Roman remains only; but a few miles from it are evidences of regal splendour in the graves at Kingston. Gilton, now a small village, must have been the residence of persons of high position and of affluence; and so with Sarre, Minster, and numerous other places now of little account. The inference to be drawn is, that the Roman population remained undisturbed in the towns; and that the Saxon chiefs established themselves in the rural districts, surrounded by their dependants, colonizing the country far and wide, implanting their own laws and institutions while availing themselves of much of Roman civilization. The Roman Durobrovis was not occupied: it still remained a walled town; but the Catti settled to the east of it; and while no Saxon re-

mains are found at Rochester, the heights of Chatham were covered with the tumuli of the new settlers, whose habitations at length became the nucleus of the present town. Faversham also became another Saxon town. As you are aware, the site of the cemetery which has given us these splendid specimens of goldsmith's-work, and the swords of thanes, is yet called *the King's field*. That many of these localities were the sites of regal residences may be inferred from historical evidence which records them as selected for synods, councils, and witenagemots. With this important testimony, (the value of which no one better appreciates than yourself,) may, I am convinced, be coupled the information derived from archæological researches such as those you are so well promoting; and you will admit that no trifling point has been gained, if in any way the facts we produce from the Saxon graves can be used as a comment on some passages in the 'Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici.'

Believe me, my dear Sir,

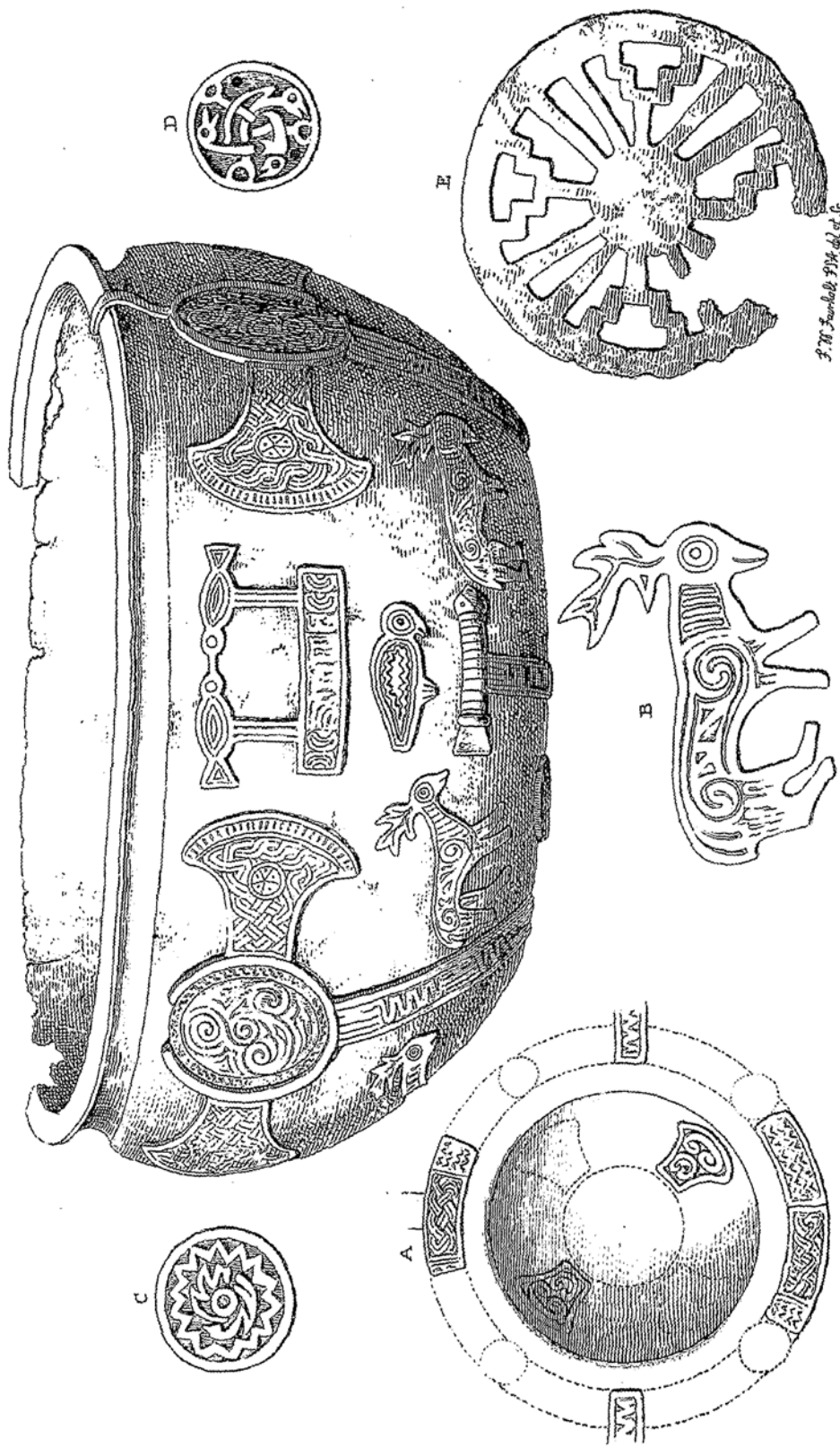
Sincerely yours,

C. ROACH SMITH.

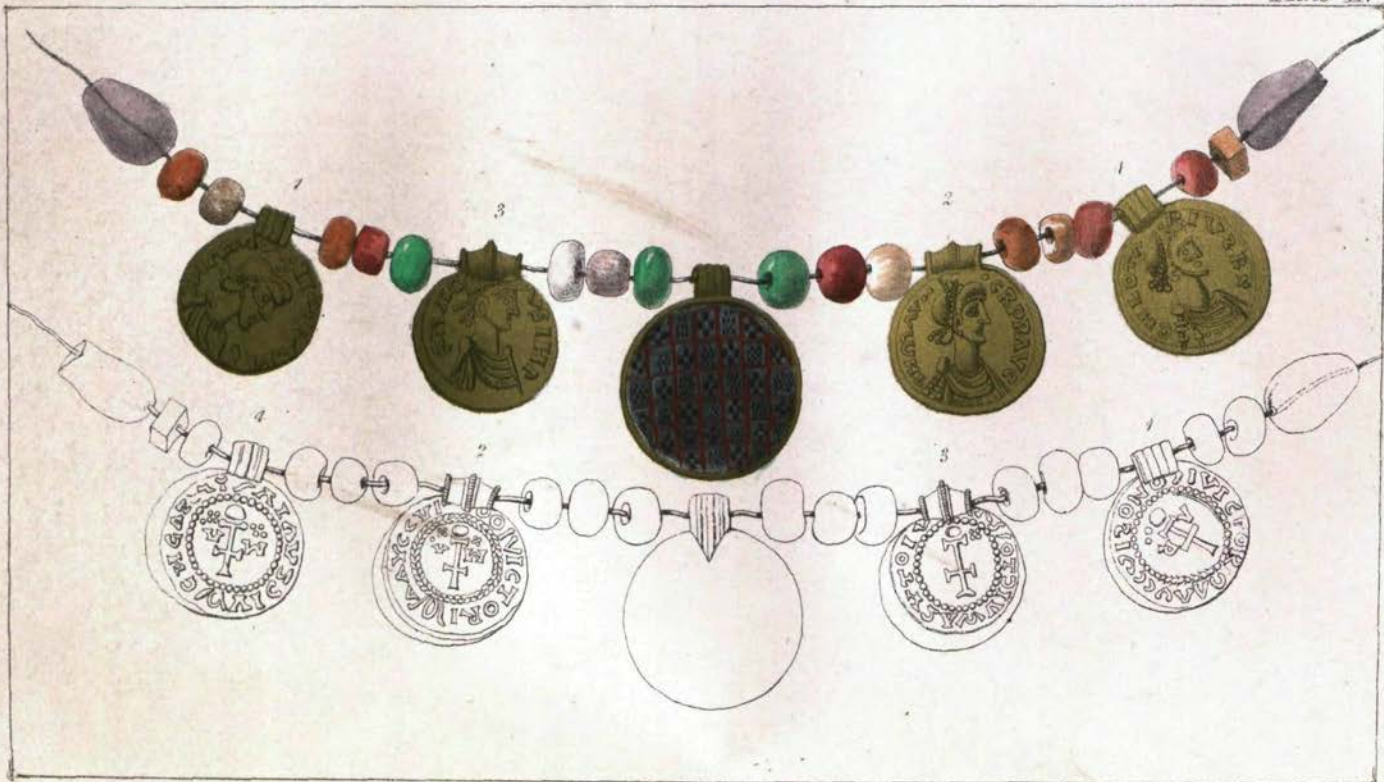
Temple Place, Strood, March 16th, 1861.

Description of the Plates.

PLATE I.—Copper Bowl (engraved half the actual size), discovered, in 1860, by labourers digging for brick-earth, in a clay soil, north of Lullingstone, near the line of railway. A. Bottom of the Bowl, showing the arrangement of the ornamental work, portions of which yet remain. B. One of the figures on the side, full size. C, D. Studs, also from the exterior of the Bowl, full size. Most of the ornaments bear traces of a dull red enamel. E. Metal ornament (of the actual size), found with the Bowl, but apparently belonging to some other object now lost. The graduated pattern arranged cross-wise somewhat resembling the steps and shaft of a cross, occurs in the higher class of the circular fibulæ, and probably was copied from the Byzantine coins, upon many of which a flight of steps surmounted by a cross is of common occurrence. See also Fig. 2. Plate V.



METAL BOWL FOUND AT LULLINGSTONE, KENT.
(Half the actual size.)



ANGLO-SAXON ANTIQUITIES EXCAVATED AT SARRE, KENT.



ANGLO-SAXON FIBULA, EXCAVATED AT SARRE, KENT.

J. Beacroft del et lith



10
20
Inches

METAL BOWL FOUND AT SARRE, KENT.

The Society is indebted to the kind courtesy of Sir Percival Hart Dyke for an exhibition of the Bowl, and for permission to engrave it.

PLATE II.—Personal ornaments found in a grave at Sarre, with the contents of Plates III. and IV. It is not unlikely they may have been arranged, by the lady who owned them, for a necklace, much in the same manner as they are grouped in the Plate. The gold coins enumerated in chronological order, are as follows:—

1. *Obv.* DN MAVIIAPPAHC. As No. 2, but of very rude workmanship.

Rev. VIC · OR · AVGGVI · CONOB. As No. 2, but with the letters M R.

2. *Obv.* DN MAVRIC RPPAVG. The head of Mauricius Tiberius wearing the diadem, to the right.

Rev. VICTORIA AVGGVI · CI P A cross upon a globe dividing the letters M A and the numerals XXI.

3. *Obv.* ERAC · VS INP. Diademed bust of Heraclius, to the right.

Rev. VICTO . . With letters transposed and illegible; a barbarous copy of the reverse of the coins of Heraclius, reading *Victoria Augusti*. Cross upon a globe, as in No. 2.

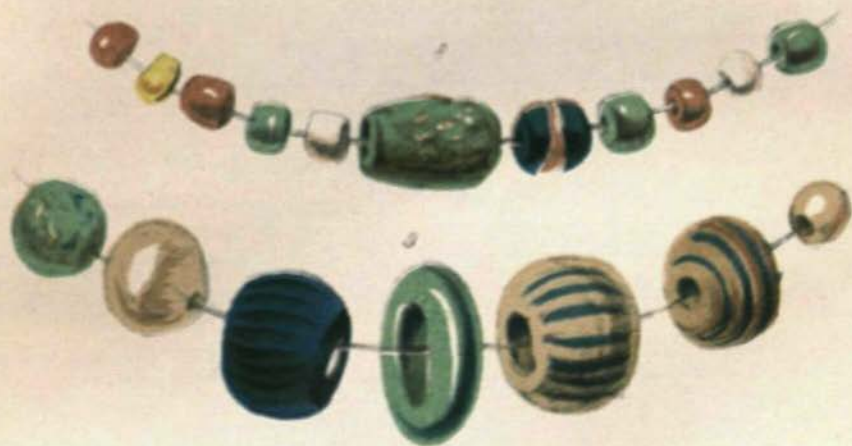
4. *Obv.* CHLOTARIVS RX. Diademed bust of Chlotaire, to the right.

Rev. VICTVRIA CHLOTARI P Cross and globe, as in No. 1. The first word of the reverse of this coin is without doubt *Victuria* for *Victoria*; the second, though at first sight it would appear barbarous and unintelligible, when read from left to right appears intended for *Chlotarii*. The reverse of No. 4 is the first on the left in the plate.

The letters M A on the reverse of these *solidi* indicate the mint of Marseilles. These letters and the rude execution of the coins bearing the names of the Byzantine emperors, show that they are copies struck in Gaul. In the centre hangs the gold pendant referred to in the foregoing letter. The beads are of glass and coloured clay, with the exception of the two which terminate the necklace: they are of amethystine quartz. To the practised numismatist the engraving of these coins will present no difficulty when collated with the text; but it may be observed that the artist in drawing, only arranged them partially in chronological order, and he reversed the necklace, so that the reverse of No. 1 is that on the extreme right of the lower row: the second obverse is that of Heraclius, No. 3 in the text, to which the third on the lower row (from left to right) is the reverse. As third, the artist has placed the second coin of Mauricius, to which the second reverse applies; and the obverse of Chlotaire, the first on the right, requires for its reverse the first on the left of the lower line. I am indebted to Mr. Vaux for impressions of the coins.

PLATE III.—Gold fibula set with garnets and gold filigree-work. The central boss and the four smaller are composed of ivory or sea-horse's tooth, and set with carbuncles. It was fastened to the dress by an *acus* at the back. Of the actual size.

PLATE IV.—Bronze Bowl, 15 inches in diameter and $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches in depth. For a precisely similar bowl, found at Wingham, near Sandwich, consult



ANGLO-SAXON ANTIQUITIES,
Excavated at Faversham.

Mr. Akerman's 'Remains of Pagan Saxondom,' pl. x.; and for other examples the 'Nenia Britannica,' pl. xi. and xii. The Bowl, which is probably of Roman manufacture, bears evidence of having been repaired by its later possessors.

The whole of the objects in these Plates without doubt belonged to the grave of a female, who, from the costly nature of the ornaments, must have been a lady of distinction. From Mr. John Brent's account of the discovery (published in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for November, 1860), it appears that two graves were found. Possibly there were three; for the large sword mentioned is indicative of a male of superior rank; and one grave is stated to have contained nothing but bones. The bones of sheep and oxen may have been the remains of a funeral repast.

PLATE V.—Further examples of personal ornaments from the cemetery at Faversham. From the collection of Mr. William Gibbs.

Figs 1 to 6. Gold pendants, analogous to, but differing in pattern from, those in the Faussett collection, engraved in the 'Inventorium Sepulchrale,' pl. iv. It is somewhat difficult to say whether the red substance in these jewels is glass or garnet. In several which on former occasions we were enabled to test, they were decidedly garnets cut into thin plates. Mr. Gibbs informs me he considers those in figs. 1 to 3, and 4 and 6, are glass. The blue stones are either turquoise or lapis-lazuli. Fig. 5 is set with what appears to be fine, streaked marble. Fig. 7. Bead in amethystine quartz. Figs. 8 and 9. Beads in glass and coloured clay.

C. R. S.
