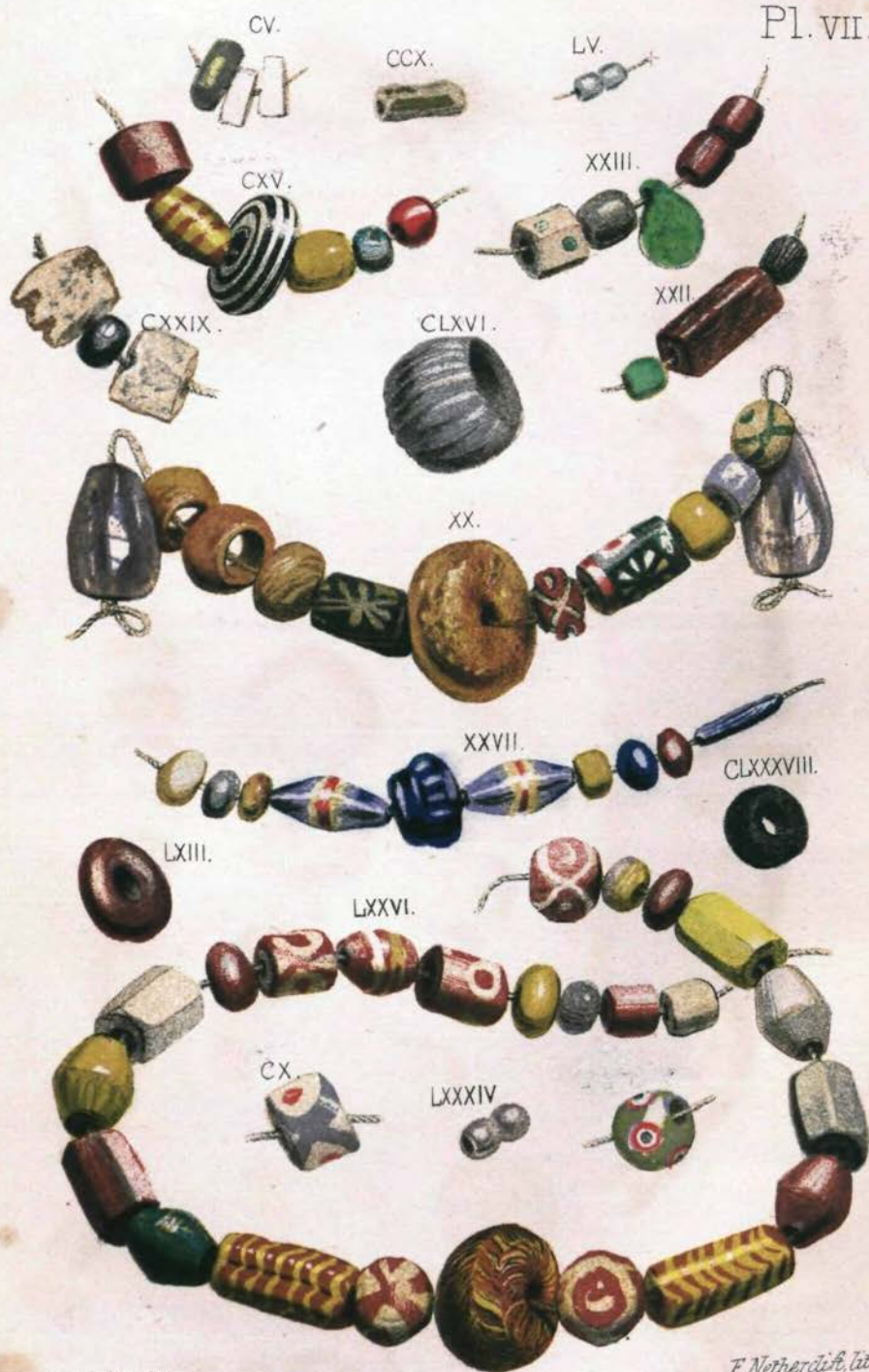




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Herbert L. Smith, del.

F. Netherclift, lith.

BEADS FROM SARR, N° 1

(The Numbers refer to the Graves.)



BEADS FROM SARR. N° 2.
(The Numbers refer to the Graves)

ACCOUNT OF THE SOCIETY'S RESEARCHES IN THE ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY AT SARR.

BY JOHN BRENT, JUN., F.S.A.

(Concluded from Vol. VI. p. 185.)

[Recommenced, August 22; finally concluded, November 4, 1864.]

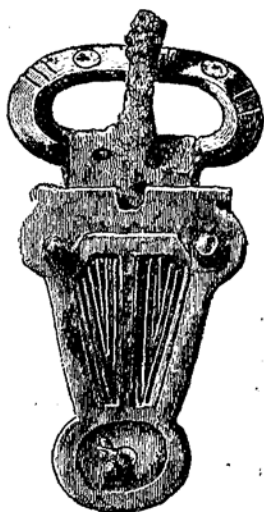
No. CLXXXV.—An ornamented bronze buckle, two inches and a half in length; a smaller bronze buckle, and a knife. An umbo lay edgewise by the left shoulder, and under it a spear-head.

No. CLXXXVI.—A small oblique grave, disturbed, and with the bones much displaced. An iron buckle, and a small substance resembling resin.



No. CLXXXVII.—

A woman's grave. At the feet were small cylindrical bronze fragments, portions apparently of hinges,—some with wood adhering; a small spring, and some bronze tags. Fragments of keys, by the left side, as usual; a small knife, broken; and a curious furciform object in bronze, about two inches and a half long,—probably a holder, which had been



suspended from the girdle, fragments of keys being attached to its lower end.

No. CLXXXVIII. — Grave of a woman and child. Teeth of an adult, and milk molar teeth. A single small amethystine bead first appeared, then three or four other beads, some very small; and small fragments of iron.

No. CLXXXIX. — An umbo on the left side, lying edgewise. A sword, a knife, and a spear-head.



No. CXC. — A sword by the left side, thirty inches long in the blade. A fractured umbo near the foot; a delicately-shaped spear-head, two knives, an ornamented bronze buckle, and an iron bolt-head.

Nos. CXCI.—CXCVII. — produced few relics. Some bronze platings and two broken knives. Nos. CXCI. and CXCVI., had been disturbed, and the bones much displaced. The latter had contained two persons.

No. CXCVIII. — (near the turnpike-gate on the Ramsgate road.) At the foot of the grave was a small hole containing human bones. Also about forty counters of bone or ivory, like those of grave No. VI., fifteen of which had two holes, penetrating some half inch, cleanly cut into their flat bottoms, doubtless a distin-



guishing mark; and with them were two dice, much decayed, one however bearing the mark of *cinq*, the other that of *six*, exactly as in modern dice, distinctly visible.

In this grave were also two gilt stud-heads or rivets, still quite bright; a bronze buckle, and one of iron, and

two small spear-heads. The grave measured seven feet by four. The lower end had been disturbed.

No. CXCIX.—A woman's grave. A broken knife and a key.

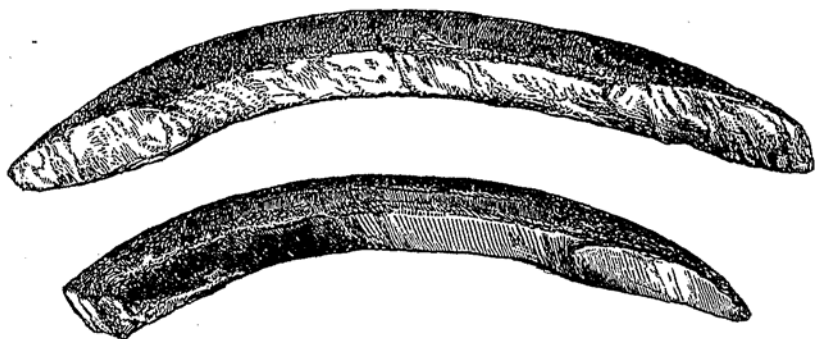
No. CC.—A deep, wide grave. One spear-head on one side of the skull, and two on the other; small pieces of bronze, a few broad-headed nails; iron staples at the feet. There was also a deep-cut hole, and a femur-bone protruded from the wall of the grave at its foot, evidently unconnected with the skeleton of the grave. Perhaps an older interment was disturbed in making this grave.

No. CCI.—Nothing. The bones displaced.

No. CCII.—At the left foot a vessel of red clay, with a wavy pattern, the narrow neck of which was broken. A small substance resembling resin, perhaps some unguent placed in the grave. The teeth those of a child or a very young person.

No. CCIII.—Grave of a woman. Portion of a key, and a fragment of bronze.

No. CCIV.—Grave of a woman. Two curved pieces



of ivory or morse-tooth, sliced down at each end,—one about six inches long. I can form no idea of their use. Near the neck were some beads, as well as a bolt for a lock.

No. CCV.—A child's grave. A small knife-blade, two inches and three-quarters long, lay by the left shoulder.

No. CCVI.—Two iron keys, indicating a woman's grave; also other fragments of iron, one of the shape figured at Grave CCXXXVIII.

No. CCVII.—Near the shoulder, a broken umbo; a spear-head and its ferule by the right ear; a knife, nine inches long in the blade; a black earthen vessel, narrow-necked, by the left foot. A fragment of mussel-shell.

No. CCVIII.—Clench-bolts in a row down the side. Iron shield-braces or bands, with clamps, and an iron buckle. Also, a small bronze buckle. There were oyster-shells in this grave, some with the valves in position, and therefore unopened when deposited, perhaps with a vague idea of supplying food to the deceased.

No. CCIX.—A spear-head; a portion of an iron ring; a knife and a small iron buckle. At the foot, a narrow-necked earthen vessel.

No. CCX.—A small grave, a girl's, the teeth being young. A collection of beads by the neck, one bugle-shaped, of white glass gilt, (Plate VII.) and, I believe, unique. A wire ring, a rusted mass of keys, a bronze rivet, and a bronze pin. Under the neck, a fine circular fibula. The centre is a boss of ivory, from which radiate three sliced garnets. The boss contains a garnet, and is surrounded by three rims of silver, rising each higher than the other, the innermost being the highest. The teeth of another child were also found in this grave.



No. CCXI.—A very perfect sword, thirty-five inches from hilt to point, lay from the centre high up by the skull, inclining to the right. It had borne a metal

sheath. Below it were a spear-head and a pike. A black earthen vessel, with broken lip, lay on its side near the centre. A bronze buckle, a pin of bone or ivory; and a beautiful ornament, perhaps a sword-knot, pyramidical in shape, but squared at the top, which is formed by a garnet set in a thin edging of bronze. The four sides of the pyramid are ornamented with ivory and coloured glass, set in gilt foil, and the base hollowed to receive a small bronze bar, through which a little strap or thong probably passed for suspension. Near the feet a knife and an umbo.



No. CCXII.—A small pair of scissors, near the head, on which were the remains of a wooden sheath. Part of a key. No doubt a woman's grave.

No. CCXIII.—A knife near the shoulder; a spear-head, and the fragment of a buckle.

No. CCXIV.—A bronze buckle; a broken knife. Evidences of wood down each side of the grave.

No. CCXV.—A very deep grave. Traces of wood as in the last; near the hip two glass vessels, much broken: one has since been restored,—it is elegant and very slight, but of common type. (See 'Inventorium Sepulchrale,' plate xviii. fig. 3; and 'Pagan Saxondom,' plate xxv. fig. 1.)

Nos. CCXVI.-CCXIX.—yielded no relics except a bronze buckle and two knives; they were probably women's graves. No. CCXVII. was nine feet long by four wide, and five and a half deep. It reminded me of No. IV., and when it yielded only a small rusty knife I was sufficiently disappointed. One point in it, however, was worthy of note, that the body had evidently been placed upon a bier or in a coffin, two planks apparently set edgewise, about twelve inches high and one thick,

being traceable down the whole length of the grave, and a piece of wood four inches square lying at the head and at the feet. No. CCXVIII. was equally large.

No. CCXX. — This was an interesting interment. Commencing at the feet, our usual practice, and working upwards, we found two urn-shaped glass vessels, close together. A thin circular stud of silver next appeared, some iron keys (one quite perfect, a very rare occurrence), a large bronze ring, and a flat bronze stud-head. On the breast, about thirty beads of porcelain, glass, and amethystine quartz; also an iron fragment, apparently a mounting for a purse, a broken knife, and an iron bolt.

Nos. CCXXI.-CCXXIV.—Only two broken knives. No. CCXXIII. was a child's grave by the teeth; the tender bones, as we often found in children's graves, had decayed without a trace.

No. CCXXV.—An amethystine bead, a broken knife, and the sliding bolt of a small lock. The bottom of the grave was lined with decayed vegetable fibre.



No. CCXXVI.—A broken knife, and what appeared to be nothing but a very common little stud. It proved to be two small silver sceattæ thus closely corroded together.



No. CCXXVIII. — Remarkable as containing fragments of pottery apparently Roman, and at one end a thick layer of mortar or cement; also mussel and oyster shells, and a few scattered bones.

No. CCXXIX.—A knife, and a few beads.

No. CCXXX. — A red earthen vessel of elegant shape; two spear-heads, some shield-studs, an umbo, and a broken knife.

No. CCXXXI.—At the feet, a red earthen vessel, with narrow neck. The nozzle having been broken.

previously to the interment, two holes for suspension had been made evidently to receive a thong or string. Here were also a spear-head, and down each side of the grave eight clench-bolts, about nine inches apart.

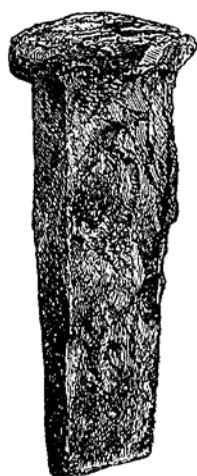
No. CCXXXII.—An elegant bronze buckle, a little more than two inches and a half long, ornamented below the tongue with ivory and a circular garnet, and lower still with a cruciform design, the arms being filled in with pale-green enamel and ivory, and the groundwork once inlaid with dark-green stones or glass, but now imperfect. Near the lower end is a sunken line, in which remain three little bronze studs.



No. CCXXXIII.—Two spear-heads, an umbo, and an iron rivet or clamp lay in the upper soil; lower down



appeared three rectangular bronze ornaments, each one inch by three-quarters of an inch, and once attached probably to leather or wood by studs at the corners. One bears an ornament of interlaced chainwork, another two rudely designed dragons intertwining, the third a dragon of another design, perhaps with a head at each end. All are unique in this country. In this grave were also a small iron wedge or cold chisel, two inches and a quarter long, a knife, a bronze stud, and a metal ornament,



much corroded, with thin edgings of gold. Traces of a bier or coffin were also found.

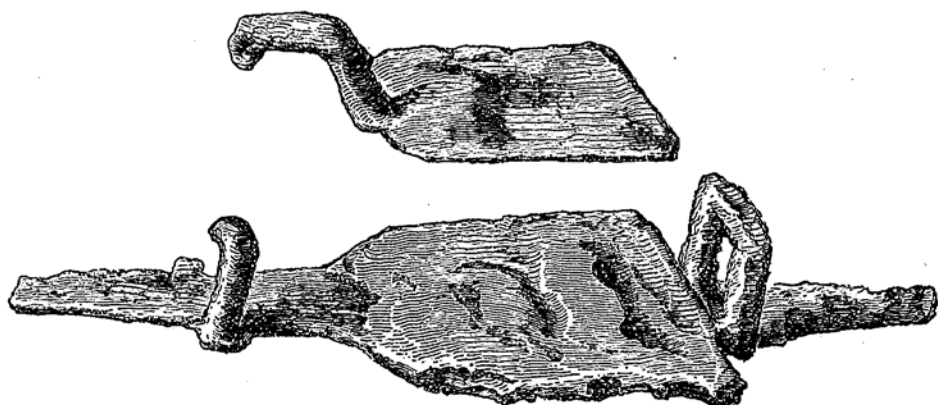
No. CCXXXIV.—A deep and irregular grave. No relics.

No. CCXXXV.—Two large iron clamps or rivets; a broken knife and traces of burnt wood.

No. CCXXXVI.—A woman's or girl's grave. Three knives and four beads of common types.

No. CCXXXVII.—A fine spear-head, vertically placed in the upper soil; a long knife, a broken umbo, some shield studs, and an iron buckle.

No. CCXXXVIII.—A spear-head vertically placed, as in the last grave, in the upper soil; an arrangement evidently designed, but for what object is not apparent. Three beads, a small bronze buckle, iron rivets, and a peculiar object in iron, about six inches and a half long;



the remains of keys or spears, much corroded, a foreign shell, the *Cyprea Arabica*, some broken mussel-shells, and a very small fragment of deep violet glass.

All these small objects appear to have been placed in a box, and exhibited more or less the action of fire. This grave yielded also pieces of iron, like links of a cable-patterned chain, and some bronze rings. Its incongruous contents might indicate a double interment,



CCXXX



XII



XXXV



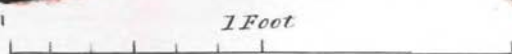
LXX



CCXXXI



CVIII





CIII



CCVII



CCII



XX



CCXI



CCIX



CLVII

1 Foot.



the beads and shell being the relics of a woman, the spear-head of a man.

No. CCXXXIX.—A very long grave, but very ill-shaped. A small bronze buckle, a rude iron buckle, and some fragments of wood stained with iron.

No. CCXL.—Burnt or decayed wood in some quantity. By the left shoulder, a spear-head of unusual shape, and its socket, both vertically placed, as in Nos. CCXXXVII. and CCXXXVIII. Also a large knife, and a black earthen vessel at the foot, too fragile to be preserved.

Nos. CCXLI.—CCXLIII.—Only an iron ring, a small bronze buckle, and a knife.

No. CCXLIV.—Disturbed. Shield-studs, and fragments of bronze and iron. At the foot, a flat piece of iron with two flattened circular knobs upon it; a spear-head lay in the cist at the head of the grave.

No. CCXLV.—A small knife; at the feet, clench-bolts.

Nos. CCXLVI., CCXLVII.—Children's graves. No relics.

No. CCXLVIII.—A woman's grave. A knife, a ring of copper wire round the bones of the left arm, and close beside it an iron key.

No. CCXLIX.—Disturbed. No relics.

No. CCL.—A red earthen vessel, lying on its side in a recess at the feet. Three shield-studs and a broken umbo; a sword, in a wooden or leathern sheath, imperfect; two spear-heads, one broken (an old fracture), and a knife.

No. CCLI.—Disturbed. No relics.

No. CCLII.—A knife only. There were traces of wood down the side.

No. CCLIII.—An irregular grave, with the head twelve inches higher than the feet. The skeleton was large. A knife with long and slender blade, a spear-head, also lightly made; some mussel-shells, pieces of unbaked pottery, and the teeth of sheep and oxen.

No. CCLIV.—An oblique grave. A fragment of iron only.

No. CCLV.—No fewer than eighty iron clench-bolts, which had perforated solid wood about three inches thick. They lay on both sides, and could not, I think, have been attached to shields, as supposed by some antiquaries. A shoulder-blade and an arm-bone lay above the skull. This grave was made on an incline of twelve inches at least, and was only separated from another grave by a narrow ridge of the chalk.

No. CCLVI.—A small and contracted grave, but containing a sword by the left side, its usual position,—a fine example, with a bronze pommel, and the blade of the usual length of about thirty inches, but nearly two inches and a half wide. A spear-head and its socket, and, at the feet, a small bronze ring or fibula.

Nos. CCLVII.—CCLVIII.—Small graves, probably of children. No relics.

No. CCLIX.—At the feet, a bronze stud or button, and some iron nails. Towards the knee a small iron pot, about three inches in length, and containing some remains of melted bronze,—perhaps the crucible of an artisan; or possibly a bell (Plate XI.). Near it lay a hone or knife-stone, exactly resembling some in modern use, and made of the same Turkish stone. Also a clench-bolt, an iron staple, and three broken knives.

No. CCLX.—Two interments, a woman and a child. A minute ring of silver-wire between the knees of the child, and a small circular fibula beside it; nearer



the head, a still smaller fibula. A bronze ornament,

broken, and very imperfect, but with the upper portion containing two garnets. Twenty-six beads, four being black bugles, and most of the others amber, lay near the neck of the larger skeleton. A bronze ring and a fragment of green glass, probably Roman, were at the feet. The fibula first discovered is of bronze-gilt, an inch in diameter, and of saucer-shape, an unusual type in Kent, with scrolled ornament, a sharp raised outer edge, and a garnet in the centre. The smaller fibula, little more than half its size, has also a garnet in the centre, and is ornamented with two raised beadings.

Nos. CCLXI., CCLXII. — Women's graves. Fragments of knives and keys, and two blue glass beads.

No. CCLXIII.—A small and slender spear-head.

No. CCLXIV.—A sword, thirty-four inches from hilt to point. A spear-head and a broken umbo; at the feet, the bronze ring or rim of a wooden stoup.

No. CCLXV.—At the feet, a small knife; in the centre, a very large key, a hook, and a corroded bunch of smaller keys.

No. CCLXVI.—A child's grave. No relics.

No. CCLXVII.—Grave of a woman and child. No relics.

No. CCLXVIII.—A long, deep grave. Four beads only; undoubtedly a woman's grave.

No. CCLXIX., CCLXX.—No relics.

No. CCLXXI.—Near the surface human bones, a horse's jaw-bone and teeth, and an iron snaffle-bit. A skeleton lay below, entire, with only a broken knife.

No. CCLXXII.—A small grave. No relics. This grave concluded our researches.

THE cemetery at Sarr is, with the exception of that opened at Kingston Down by Bryan Faussett, between 1767 and 1772, which contained 308 graves, the most

extensive of the Jutish or Old English burial grounds hitherto found in Kent. Including the two graves close to the windmill, found by Mr. Matson in 1860, 274 have been discovered; but this must be very far from the total number of its interments. The site of the chalk pit, described at its side towards Minster, formed part of the cemetery, and evidences and traditions exist of similar relics found there in digging the chalk. Others also have been found in an opposite direction, down to the Margate Road, and even to another chalk pit beyond it.

The 272 graves opened by the Society yielded an unusual number of swords, of the long, straight-bladed, double-edged type, namely twenty-six, averaging almost one to every ten graves. In no other Anglo-Saxon cemetery has anything approaching to this proportion been found. Sixteen only were found in the 803 graves of the "*Inventorium Sepulchrale*." In 188 graves at Long Wittenham, Mr. Akerman found but two¹; at Filkins,² in fifteen graves, but one; in about sixty at Brixhampton,³ only four; in rather more at Harnham,⁴ not one. 188 graves at Little Wilbraham yielded to Mr. Neville but four swords. At Wingham and Stodmarsh, where no accurate account was taken of the number of graves, none seem to have been found. At Stowting, last autumn, in twenty-six graves I found none, though four or five had, I believe, been found in former excavations. At Kemble, North Wilts, in twenty-six graves opened by Mr. John Mansell, there were also none.⁵

At Sarr the interments of men, women, and children were intermixed; and as one-fourth of these graves at least produced weapons of offence or defence, namely, swords, spears, and umbones of shields, we may estimate the adult male population at the same proportion.

Archæologia, vol. xxxviii. p. 315, and vol. xxxix. p. 135.

² *Id.* vol. xxxvii. p. 140.

³ *Id.* vol. xxxviii. p. 84.

⁴ *Id.* vol. xxxv. p. 259.

⁵ '*Horæ Ferales*.'

Thus at least one-third of the adult males buried at Sarr were sword-bearing warriors; and this fact must, I think, lead to a reconsideration of the various opinions that Saxon thegns, or the "viri electi," or the borsholders or tything-men were alone armed with this weapon. The "Capitularies" of Charlemagne seem to indicate that amongst the Frankish nations cavalry only then bore the sword.¹ This probably applied to those Continental tribes who were armed with the francesca, or axe, as well as the spear, a weapon certainly not in general use at the period of these interments, though introduced at a later period amongst the Anglo-Saxons, if we are to consider the Bayeux Tapestry as reliable historical authority.

One axe only was found at Sarr, and that probably not a battle-axe.

An angon, one of the weapons of the Franks, a long, barbed iron spear, with iron shank, forty-five inches in length, was found in a Sarr grave (Plate XIV.). It is almost a solitary example from any ancient English interment. Mr. Akerman has given an interesting account of this weapon ('Archæologia,' vol. xxxvi. p. 78), and Mr. Wylie also (Id. vol. xxxv. p. 48).

Amongst the glass vessels are the beautiful example from grave IV., with slender arched ornaments terminating in drops round its base, and the two "pillared" glass vessels from graves LX. and CLXVIII., almost the only specimens preserved entire in England. I have no doubt that these glasses were manufactured as sepulchral relics. Their "tear-drop" ornament, as it is sometimes called, is curiously illustrated by a similar

¹ The footmen of the Celtic tribes were armed with swords. M. Froyon, on the authority of Mr. Akerman, discovered iron swords in Switzerland, with the remains of the Celtic period. Amongst the Teutonic tribes, swords of iron might be confined to the aristocratic orders, and yet be considered too valuable or too useful to be buried with other relics in the grave. Spear-heads, knives, and keys could probably be hammered out by any village smith; but not so the sword.

but smaller design in pottery, upon a Roman earthen vessel, lately found near the Folkestone Road at Dover, and now in the Museum there.

The pottery from Sarr was not remarkable, if we except the two beer-jug-shaped vessels, with lips and handles, from graves CLVII. and CLXVIII., and the very elegant black earthen vase from grave LXX.

The proportion of clasp ornaments, or fibulæ, was small. The circular fibula found by Mr. Matson, the fine cruciform fibula from grave CLIX., and the archaic ornament from the narrow grave CXXVI. are, with the gold-plated buckle from grave LXVIII., perhaps all that deserve special mention.

The bone counters or draughtsmen, from graves VI. and CXCVIII., and the two dice which accompanied those from the latter, are notable as illustrating that wonderful passion for gaming which Tacitus mentions as prevalent amongst the Teutonic tribes.¹

The state of the human bones exhibited much variety. In some instances the skeleton was preserved entire, down to the smallest bones of the toes and fingers. In others scarcely a trace was apparent, beyond, perhaps, a few teeth, a fragment of the jaw-bone, or parts of the femora. On the whole, perhaps, the bones of old persons were best preserved; the tender bones of children rarely remained. I never found a child's skull; yet the crania of adults had been generally amongst the last bones to perish, although the part resting on the floor of the grave was almost always decayed.² Bodily health

¹ "Aleam, quod mirere, sobrii inter seria exercent tanta lucrandi pendive temeritate, ut, cum omnia defecerunt, extremo ac novissimo jactu de libertate et de corpore contendunt."—*De Mor. Germ.* sect. xxiv.

² M. Delasse is of opinion that the azote in bones varies with their antiquity, assigning about thirty per cent. of this substance to bones buried a century since, twenty-two per cent. to those of the era of Julius Cæsar, and eighteen per cent. to very ancient bones. (See Lyell's 'Antiquity of Man.') Various causes, however, contribute to disturb this calculation, and small reliance can be placed upon it. The state of preservation

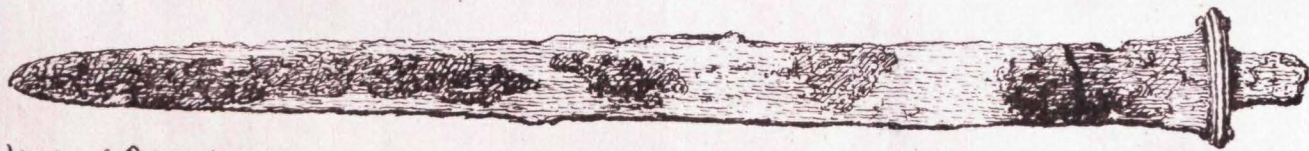
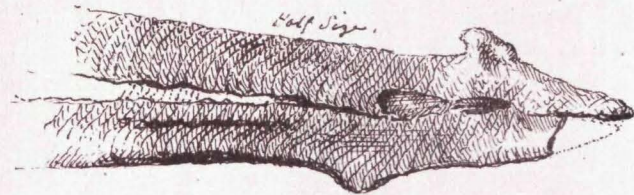
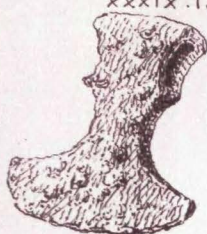
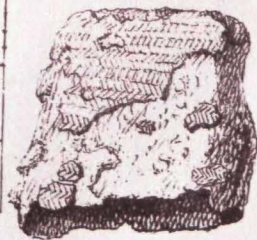
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CCLIX

1 Foot

XXXIX.1.

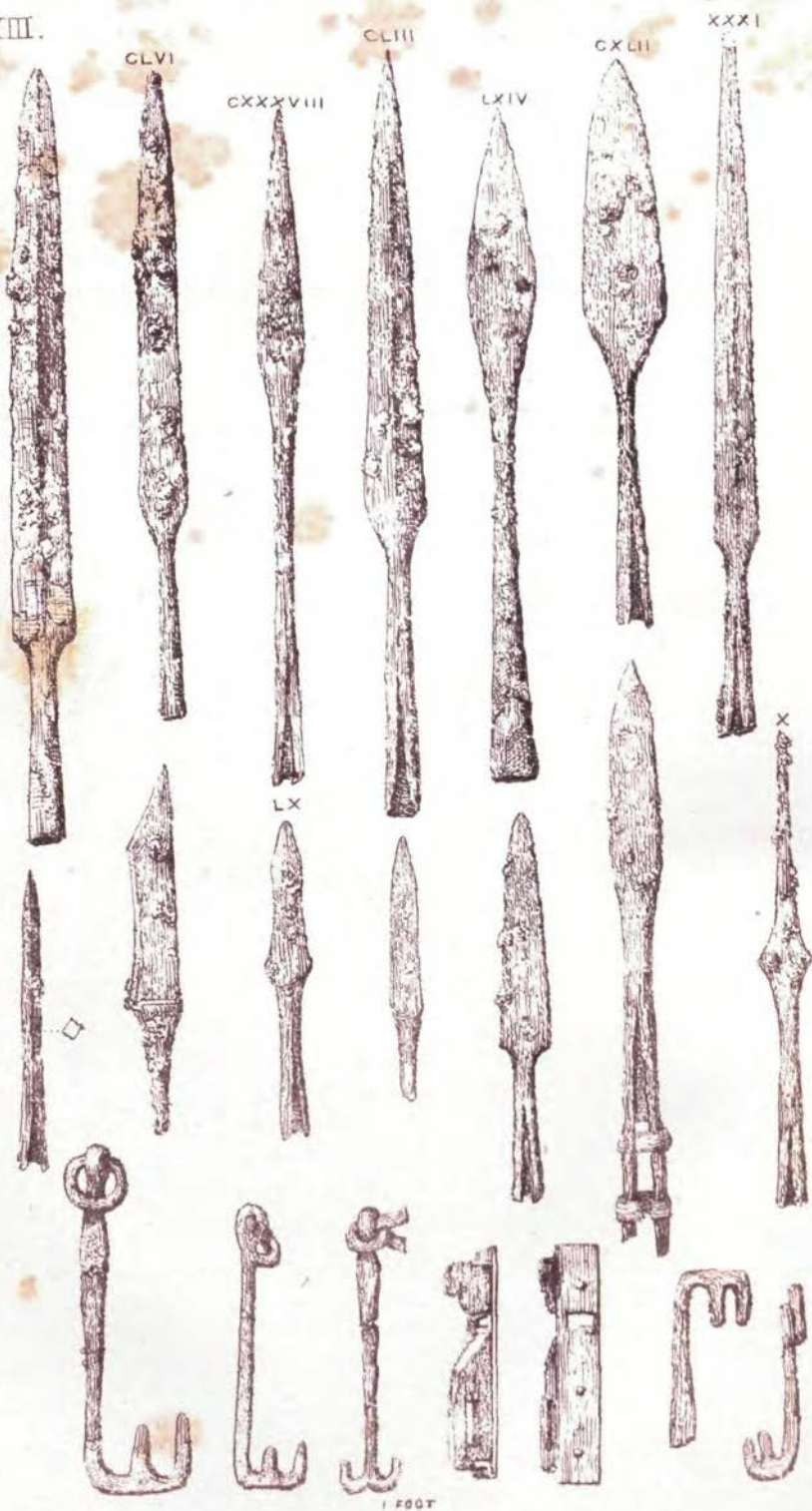
Half Nipper



Horwitz & Smith, del.

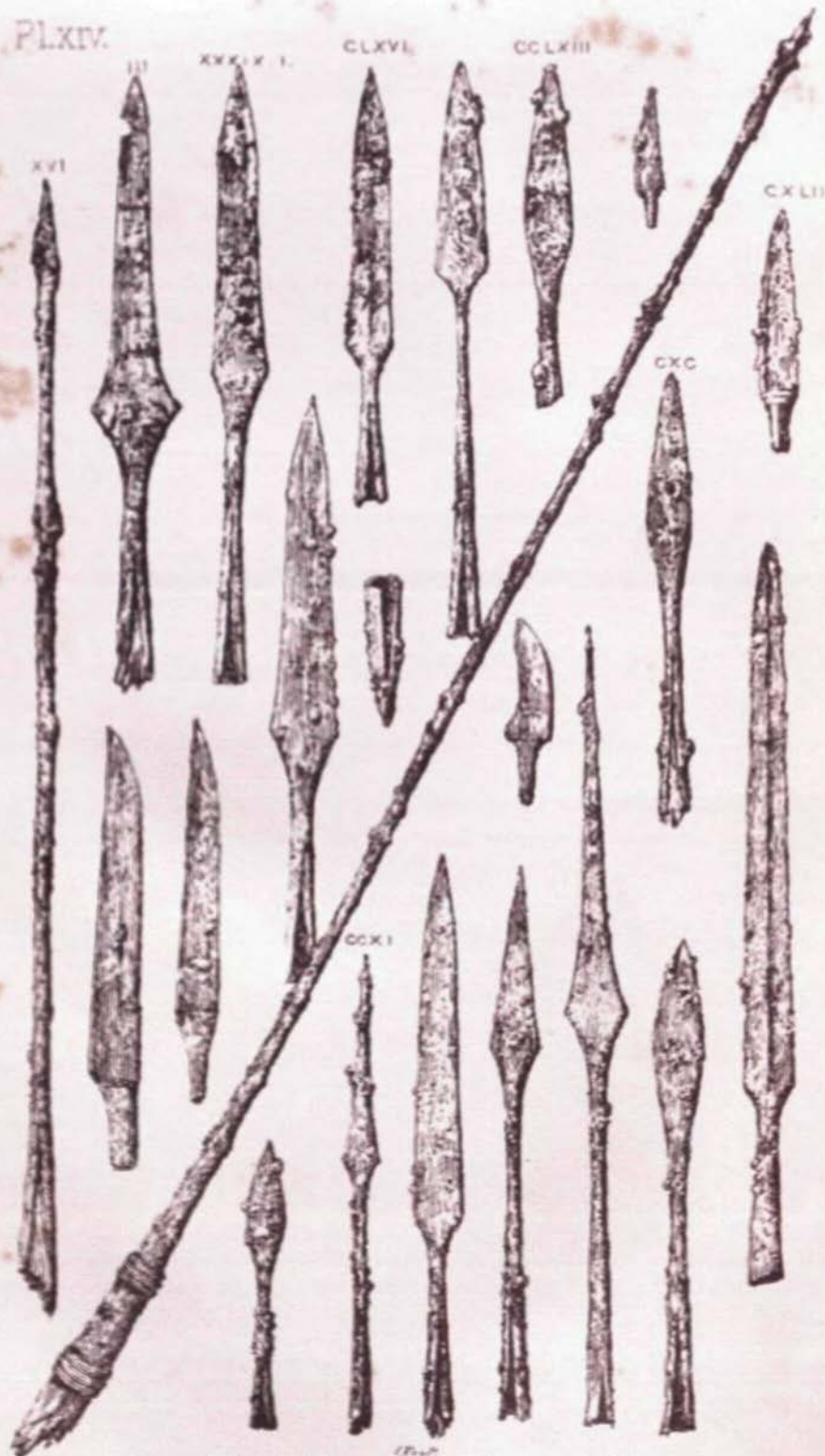


Herbert Smith del. et fecit.



Hebrews of Smith's desc. at foot.

PLXIV.



Antiquities of the British Museum

undoubtedly has considerable effect on the preservation of bones after burial. In graves apparently contemporary remarkable differences were found. The depth of soil, too, has an influence. In some deep graves at Sarr, scarcely a bone was preserved; in others, only a foot and a half or two feet in depth, the skeletons were often entire; the soil being the same in both instances. There was nothing remarkable in the size of the bones. The largest femur exhumed measured $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and as the hilts or handles of the swords were rarely more than five inches in length, it seems improbable that the men here buried exceeded ourselves in stature.

of the human jaw at Quignon, said to have been exhumed from the Tertiary of the valley of the Somme, and to have been contemporaneous with the flint implements of the drift, has been supposed by some osteologists to have justified the suspicion that it might have been taken from a graveyard in which the deposits scarcely exceeded a century.

[To the end of Mr. Brent's graphic account of his discoveries I append engravings of two specimens of Saxon cloth preserved by the rust of iron weapons, close to which they have lain in the graves, and to which they still adhere. For more, see Pl. XI. All ornaments, weapons, etc., being found on the bodies in the positions in which they would naturally be worn, it seems reasonable to suppose that a Pagan Saxon was buried in his ordinary dress, and not in any special grave-clothes.—T. G. F.]

