A seventh-century princely burial ground and its context

Sutton Hoo on the River Deben near Woodbridge in Suffolk was the scene of the discovery in 1939 of a burial ship 27 metres long containing a fabulous seventh-century treasure, now in the British Museum.

Using innovative fieldwork procedures, a new archaeological campaign began in 1983 to discover the context of the ship and the cemetery in which it lay. A hectare of the cemetery was excavated, the Deben valley was intensively surveyed, and comparisons were drawn with monumental practices in neighbouring kingdoms across the North Sea. The newly excavated Sutton Hoo burials proved to be highly diverse, including cremations in bronze bowls, a second ship-burial (Mound 2) and the first complete horse-burial, with its harness, to be excavated in England.

The eleven mounds contained the burials of the leaders of the young kingdom of East Anglia, perhaps including some cited as ‘kings’ by Bede in his History of the English Church and People. The burials reflected the mood of the English at a crucial moment in their history, when they were being obliged to choose between their ancestral allies in Scandinavia and the new opportunities of a Christian Europe.

From the eighth to the tenth century, the ‘burial ground of kings’ was used as an execution site, where the new Christian authorities exercised power through the capital punishment of dissenters. Two groups of unfurnished burials were discovered, one associated with the posts of a gallows or gibbet.

This book offers a full description of all the investigations undertaken at Sutton Hoo, including a reinterpretation of the famous ship-burial in Mound 1. Contributing experts study the newly recovered Early Medieval artefacts, and the environmental and Prehistoric sequences at the site and its surroundings.

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Sutton Hoo

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This book is dedicated to Madeleine Hummler and our children Frédéric, Geneviève, Jacques and Louis who were all born during the Sutton Hoo research campaign and spent their early years on the site.

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Martin O. H. Carver has asserted his right to be identified as the author of this work

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Abstract

Sutton Hoo is an Early Medieval cemetery situated beside the River Deben in south-east Suffolk, England. It has been made famous by the discovery there in 1939 of an intact ship-burial of the seventh century AD, the contents of which are now in the British Museum. This ship-burial, which lay beneath Mound 1, was subjected to comprehensive study and further fieldwork between 1946 and 1975, and published between 1975 and 1983. This work led to an interpretation of Sutton Hoo as the burial ground of the early kings of Anglo-Saxon East Anglia.

A new campaign of excavation and survey began in 1983, designed to put the Mound 1 ship-burial into context. Eight mounds were investigated or re-examined in an excavated area of one hectare. These proved to have contained another ship-burial, the burial of a horse and rider, the chamber-grave of a rich woman and a number of wealthy cremations, all dated to the seventh century AD. The use of the burial ground was brief, but seems to have begun with cremations and continued with ship-burials and ended with the graves of adolescents and a woman of high rank.

Between the eighth and the eleventh centuries some sixteen individuals had been hanged or decapitated, and buried in pits around Mound 5, in the centre of the mound-cemetery. Some further twenty-three individuals had been buried at the edge of the mound-cemetery, around the possible site of a gallows. Most of these are interpreted as judicial executions authorized by Christian kings of East Anglia or of England.

A number of other studies was undertaken to help put the Early Medieval burial-ground into its context. The Prehistoric use of the site and its environment showed a sequence of land-use from the middle Neolithic until the Late Iron Age and Roman periods. The history of Sutton Hoo from the eleventh to the twentieth century was studied through excavation, survey and documentary research. The mounds had stood among rabbit warrens and sheep-walks until they were ploughed in the later Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century a first major campaign of mound digging took place, to be followed by a second in 1860. In the Deben valley, land use and settlement patterns from the Neolithic to the Medieval periods were studied through field survey. An Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the sixth–seventh century discovered on the occasion of the construction of the Sutton Hoo visitor centre may have been the folk cemetery that preceded the seventh-century princely burial ground. A series of international seminars helped to relate Sutton Hoo and East Anglia to other Early Medieval cemeteries and early kingdoms on the shores of the North Sea.

Sutton Hoo is here interpreted as a short-lived and theatrical monument created in response to the first Christian missions to England. The burials expressed the identity and autonomy of East Anglian aristocrats, their aspiration to kingship and their resistance to the political and ideological agenda of early seventh-century continental Christianity. When the ideological battle was lost, East Anglia became a Christian kingdom and the former princely burial-ground became a place of execution.
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The late Brian Hope-Taylor, Philip Rahtz and Steve Roskams, for their interest in the problems of excavation, and Birgit Arrhenius, Martin Biddle, John Bradley, Richard Bradley, Nicholas Brooks, James Campbell, Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, Tania Dickinson, Bob Farrell, Roberta Frank, Helen Geake, Catherine Hills, Catherine Karkov, Simon Keynes, Colin Renfrew, Else Roedahl, Michael Ryan, Michael Müller-Wille, Geoff Wainwright, Peter Wells, Stanley West, Chris Wickham, Patrick Wormald, the contributors to the Sutton Hoo Seminars, and numerous other colleagues whose friendship and advice has been supportive and inspiring.

Andy Copp, Cathy Royle, Nigel Macbeth and Madeleine Hummler for setting and maintaining the highest standards of fieldwork.

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John Newman, for his professional contribution and friendship.

Elizabeth Beasley, Merlin Waterson and John Miller for their help in securing the long-term future of the site.

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The chairmen and members of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust for their support and vision.

The first draft of this report (1997) was substantially revised by Martin Carver as a result of the suggestions of Sue Hirst, Madeleine Hummler, Chris Fern, Angela Evans, Leslie Webster, the referees and the publishers, to all of whom I am extremely grateful. I admit to not accepting all their recommendations and bear the whole responsibility for what this book now says.

The author would like to thank Carolyn Jones and Teresa Francis of the British Museum Press for their advice, guidance and support in the publication of this book. The final publication has benefited very greatly from the diligence and good sense of the publisher’s editor, Sean Kingston of Sean Kingston Publishing Services.

Sutton Hoo Research Trust and British Museum Press would like to thank the Sutton Hoo Society for a generous subvention towards the costs of publication.

The author and the Sutton Hoo project team owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to Madeleine Hummler for her intelligent judgement, careful management of the records and stimulating discussion over more than a decade of service to Sutton Hoo.

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Site
Preface

The publication of the field surveys and excavations conducted between 1983 and 1993 at Sutton Hoo – arguably the most famous of all Anglo-Saxon burial grounds – is a triumph from several viewpoints. This was a project that was pioneering in the way that a clear research agenda for resolving specific problems was laid out from the beginning, and carried through to its conclusion. For the Early Medieval scholar, the meticulous dissection of the site’s history from the Prehistoric period to the later Middle Ages has cast new light not only on the richly furnished ship-burial excavated under Mound 1 in 1939, but on the society of that time and its aspirations. The Mound 1 ship-burial now appears as a singular moment in a short-lived seventh-century cemetery notable for the variety of its burial practices. Still more surprising was the discovery that in the following generation the site became a place of execution where individuals were hanged or beheaded. This adds an archaeological dimension to textual accounts of judicial processes, and pushes such processes back to the times of the earliest Christian kings of East Anglia. In addition, the analysis of how the site contributes to our wider understanding of the political and ideological aspirations of emerging kingdoms around the North Sea was given greater depth by the regional surveys and international seminars which accompanied the fieldwork. Mound 1 can now be seen within the context of a hectare of excavated ground, the Deben Valley, the nascent kingdom of East Anglia and the early nations of Northern Europe.

The Sutton Hoo Research Trust provided guidance and funding throughout the project, and its members must be congratulated for their stamina and vision that enabled them to bring the project to such a successful conclusion. Nevertheless, the long list of persons and institutions that generously gave their time and money and supported the project in divers ways is closely linked to Martin Carver’s ability to share his ideas as they developed and to inspire enthusiasm for the aims and methods of the work. Of course this promotion of the site was also shared by the whole field team (listed in this volume), and by the many volunteers who emerged locally to form the Sutton Hoo Society. Indeed, the involvement of local, regional, national and international interests in this project is one of its major successes.

As well as prosecuting the fieldwork and its publication, the Trust was much preoccupied with the long-term future of the site, the site archive and the finds, and from the viewpoint of the general public the outcome has been conspicuously happy. The generosity of Mrs Edith Pretty, the sponsor of the 1938–9 excavations, in donating the artefacts to the British Museum has been followed by that of Mrs Annie Tranmer and her trustees, who have donated the site and the entire Sutton Hoo estate to the National Trust. The British Museum, the major partner in the Sutton Hoo Research Trust and custodian of Sutton Hoo’s treasures, has provided valued expertise in conservation throughout the project, and holds the site archive. We are all further indebted to them for the publication of the present volume and their active cooperation with the National Trust in the new on-site display that was opened by Seamus Heaney in March 2002.

From the viewpoint of the Society of Antiquaries, which, with the British Museum and the BBC, was the principal financial sponsor of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, the involvement of so many scholars and specialists in the achievement of this new understanding of Sutton Hoo, its publication in this volume and the conservation and public presentation of the site, are sources of much satisfaction.

Rosemary Cramp
(one-time President of the Society of Antiquaries, Trustee of the British Museum and Head of Archaeology at the University of Durham)
Participants

An archaeological expedition depends on those who own the land (owners), those who promote the work (managers), those who fund it (sponsors) and publicize it (broadcasters and patrons), those who carry out the fieldwork (the field team), and those who study the results, write about them, illustrate them with drawings and photographs and publish them. All these have helped to bring our campaign to fruition and to produce this book and are to be thanked and credited in equal measure.

Owners
Mrs Annie Tranmer gave permission for access to her estate for excavation and survey. In 1997 the estate itself was transferred into the ownership of the National Trust through her generosity and the good offices of her daughter, Mrs Valerie Lewis, and her Trustee, John Miller.

Mr Robert Pretty exercised his prerogative to authorize excavation and possess finds from Sutton Hoo by virtue of the Deed of Covenant inherited from his mother, Mrs Edith Pretty. In 1988 the Deed of Covenant was redrafted in favour of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, who in turn revised it in favour of the British Museum and the National Trust in 2001.

Colin Walker and Property Growth Assurance Ltd gave permission for access to their estate, which formerly lay adjacent to the east and south of the Sutton Hoo site, for excavation and survey in 1983–6.

The Sun Alliance Assurance Group donated land at the south end of the burial site to the Sutton Hoo Research Trust in 1987, who donated it to the National Trust in 2001.

Mr Peter Waring gave permission for access to his estate, which lies adjacent to the east and south of the Sutton Hoo site, for excavation and survey from 1986 to 2001.

With the agreement of Mrs Tranmer and Mr Waring, and in recognition of the Pretty Covenant, all finds from the 1983 campaign have become the property of the British Museum.

In 2001 the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, its work completed, was wound up and its members, responsibilities and covenant accepted by the Society of Antiquaries and the British Museum.

Mr John Knight of Bury St Edmunds, acting as Honorary Solicitor to the Sutton Hoo Research Trust, was instrumental in executing these agreements in their permanent legal form.

Management
The Sutton Hoo research project was promoted from 1975 by Rupert Bruce-Mitford, Rosemary Cramp, Philip Rahtz and Arnold Dufry in partnership with Robert Pretty, Mrs Edith Pretty’s son and heir.

The Sutton Hoo Research Trust was formed by a partnership between the British Museum and the Society of Antiquaries of London. It was chaired, in turn, by Christopher Brooke, Michael Robbins, John Evans, Barry Cunliffe and Simon Jervis; consecutive Presidents of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Its initial members were Sir David Wilson, Leslie Webster and Sir David Attenborough, representing the British Museum, and Barry Cunliffe and Philip Rahtz, representing the Society of Antiquaries. In recognition of local interests, they were joined by Stanley West, who represented Suffolk County Council. The members of the Trust, which was a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, met about every six weeks to audit and review progress.

The Sutton Hoo Research Trust appointed Martin Carver as Director of the new campaign in 1982.

The project was hosted by the University of Birmingham’s Field Archaeology Unit between 1983 and 1986, and by the University of York from 1986.

From 1983, Rupert Bruce-Mitford acted formally and informally as advisor to the Director.

Paul Ashbee, principal excavator in the British Museum campaign of 1965–71 supplied field records from the archive, and offered advice and support.

The Sutton Hoo Research Committee was a group of experienced academics meeting twice a year and acted as advisors to the Director and Trustees.

The sometime members of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust
Sir David Attenborough CBE (BM)
Professor Christopher N. L. Brooke PSA (SoA)
John Cherry FSA (BM)
Professor Barry W. Cunliffe CBE, FBA, PSA (SoA)
Professor John D. Evans PSA (SoA)
Simon Jervis PSA (SoA)
Dr. Ian H. Longworth FSA (BM)
Dr. David W. Phillipson TSA (SoA)
Professor Philip A. Rahtz FSA (SoA)
Dr. Derek Renn TSA (SoA)
R. Michael Robbins CBE, PSA (SoA)
Keith Wade (Suffolk County Council)
Mrs Leslie Webster FSA (BM)
Dr. Martin G. Welch FSA (SoA)
Dr. Stanley E. West FSA (SoA)
Sir David Wilson FBA, FSA (BM)

Co-opted members
Professor M. O. H. Carver FSA, FSA (Scot.), Director of Research and Company Secretary
John Knight, Honorary Solicitor
Martin Burchmore, for the auditors Kingston Smith
All members of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust were also members of the Sutton Hoo Research Committee.
Participants

Additional members of the Sutton Hoo Research Committee
Dr. Paul Ashbee FSA
Professor Martin Biddle FBA, FSA
Dr. Sheridan G. Bowman
Rupert Bruce-Mitford FBA, FSA (consultant)
Dr. Catherine M. Hills FSA
John G. Hurst FBA, FSA
Professor Henry Loyn FBA, FSA
Lt. Comm. David Pretty RN
Dr. Michael Tite
Edward V. Wright MBE, FSA

Sponsors
The project was sponsored principally through an agreement between the British Museum, the Society of Antiquaries of London and the British Broadcasting Corporation. The Sutton Hoo Society extensively grant-aided the project with money raised from site tours, sales and other public activities.

The work of the Sutton Hoo Research Trust was given financial support by:
- Aurelius Trust
- British Academy
- British Broadcasting Corporation
- British Museum
- East Anglian Daily Times
- Esmée Fairbairn Trust
- Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge
- Leverhulme Trust
- National Maritime Museum
- National Westminster Bank (Woodbridge)
- Norwich Union Insurance Group
- Royal Historical Society
- St John's College, Cambridge
- Scarf Trust
- Society of Antiquaries of London
- Sutton Hoo Society
- Trinity College, Cambridge
- W. A. Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Wolfson Foundation

The funds for the radiocarbon dates for Mound 17 from the Sutton Hoo Society included a substantial part of the bequest of Mr Russell Hill of Clacton.

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- Aldous Homes Ltd (back-filling, construction of viewing platform)
- Andrews Industrial Equipment (floodlighting)
- Aco Mowers Ltd (mower)
- Bartington Instruments (loan of magnetic susceptibility meter)
- Boydell Press (reception for the Duke of Edinburgh, publication of Bulletins)
- Central Electricity Generating Board (the large sectional wooden building that formed our kitchen, finds-processing office and exhibition room)
- East Suffolk Health Authority (loan of microscope)
- J. and E. Eastwick-Field (photographic equipment)
- Fairlawn Ltd (loan of turf-cutting machine)
- F. Ingram Smith Ltd (Portakabin site office)
- Goblin Ltd
- K&C Mouldings Ltd (supply of material and expertise for silicone-rubber mouldings)
- Kendrick Plant Hire
- Manpower Services Commission (field team 1986–7)
- National Monuments Record (loan of sonic tape)
- Notcutts Garden Centre
- Oceanfix International (radar survey)
- Osram Ltd (bulbs)
- Powergen plc (gift of generators)
- Psion Ltd (three Psion Organiser hand-held computers)
- Ransoms Sims and Jefferies plc (gift of a tractor mower in 1984, which was still mowing up until 2001)
- Brian Ribbons (hot air balloon for photography)
- David Shuster (dental tools)
- Stephens and Carter Ltd (scaffolding tower, at concessionary rate)
- Stowmarket Caravans Ltd (mobile home, at concessionary rate)
- Suffolk Coastal District Council (noticeboard)
- Sun Alliance Assurance Group (gift of land at the south end of the site)
- Sutton Hoo Society (theodolite, wet-sieve/flotation tank, marquee, tarpaulin, scaffolding, answeringphone, generator, kitchen facilities, generators, tower, sieves and mobile home)
- United States Air Force (reconnaissance trip in a Super Jolly Green Giant helicopter; loan of cordons for royal visit)
- Vinamul Ltd (supply of industrial PVC for consolidating sandy surfaces)
- Woodbridge School (loan of white-liner)

The Trust also acknowledge, with pleasure, the collaboration of the following institutions that supplied additional input, or lent staff on secondment or students on formal training attachments:
- Academy of Sciences of the SSR Moldava
- Academy of Sciences of the USSR
- Anglo-Soviet Archaeology Committee
- British Academy
- British Council
- British Museum
- Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography
- Geoscan Research Ltd
- IBM Ltd
- Leverhulme Trust (sponsors of the Leverhulme Trust Project on Decay and Detection on Archaeological Sites)
- Marquette University, Milwaukee
- Oceanfix International Ltd
- Reading College of Technology
- St Hugh's College, Oxford
- Scale Committee for East Anglian Archaeology
- Scott Polar Institute, Cambridge
- Simon Fraser University, British Columbia
- Società Lombarda di Archeologia
- Suffolk County Council
- Università Cattolica di Milano
- Università degli Studi di Siena
- University College London
- University of Bamberg
The British Museum was a principal sponsor of the fieldwork. It seconded research and conservation staff to the field team, undertook the research, analysis and conservation of all the Early Medieval objects, funded the assistant editor and now hold the archive from the campaign.

The Society of Antiquaries of London was the initiator and principal sponsor of the campaign. It gave moral and financial support to the fund-raising, fieldwork, analysis, administration and publication.

Publicity and patronage

The BBC planned a series of films in collaboration with the Trust, four of which were made. *The Million Pound Grave* was a remake of a film about the discovery of the Mound 1 ship-burial originally shown in the 1960s. *New Beginnings* recorded the evaluation phase, 1983–6, and attracted three million viewers. *The Last of the Pagans* was first broadcast in 1988 and *Sea Peoples* in 1989. The footage recorded for these, and for later programmes which were not made, is stored in the British Museum. The project gained a great deal from the knowledge and interest of Ray Sutcliffe, the driving force behind the ‘Chronicle’ series, who produced the Sutton Hoo programmes.

Press coverage was co-ordinated nationally and internationally by the *East Anglian Daily Times* of Ipswich.

The successful plays produced by Ivor Cutting for the East Angles Theatre Group, *The Sutton Hoo Mob* (1994; by Peppy Barlow) and *The Wuffingas* (1997; by Ivor Cutting and Kevin Crossley-Holland), helped to raise the profile of the site.

The public was welcomed onto the site throughout the bank holidays. An on-site display was created by Amanda Balfour, Caroline Fleming and Ron Warrington, working in a job-creation scheme led by Elizabeth Hooper at the University of Birmingham. This display, periodically updated, was viewed by the public from 1984 until 2001.

Field team

The full list of those that assisted in the field from 1983 to 1992 will be found in the *Field Reports*, vol. 1/5. Those who carried particular responsibilities were:

- **Graham Bruce** (1991): excavated Mound 14
- **Sarah Calvert** (1985–7): excavator and recorder in Mound 5
- **Martin Carver**: Director (1982–2001)
- **Andrew Copp** (1984–94): excavator and recorder; supervisor of Int. 41, 44, 52; excavated Mounds 2, 5 and Group 2 burials
- **Katherine Dowse** (1987–8): finds supervisor
- **Justin Garner-Lahire** (1989–92): supervisor Int. 50
- **Helen Geake** (1986–91): excavated Mound 7
- **Liz Hooper** (1984–91): excavator and recorder
- **Madeleine Hummler**: Deputy Director (1989–97); training supervisor, Int. 48, 55; author of report on the prehistory; archive manager; producer/editor of *Field Reports*
- **Gillian Hutchinson** (1984–7): excavator and recorder in Mound 2
- **Faith Jerromes** (1984–91): camp supervisor
- **Peter Leach** (1984–7): excavated Group 1 burials
- **Nigel Macbeth** (1985–92): photographer
- **Linda Peacock** (1989–92): finds supervisor
- **Annette Roe** (1989–91): excavated Mound 17; preparation of publication drawings
- **Catherine Royle** (1984–91): excavation supervisor, recording systems designer, surveyor, section recorder and finds supervisor; studied Mounds 2, 5, 6 and 7
- **Luigi Signorelli** (1986–90): excavated Mound 13

Commissioned fieldwork and analyses

- **Philip Bethell**, University of Birmingham (chemical mapping)
- **Julie Bond**, University of Bradford (cremated animal bones)
- **John Bruce** (contour survey)
- **Andrew David**, English Heritage (gradiometry survey)
- **Julie Dunk** and **Ian Lawton** (resistivity survey)
- **Chris Fern** (research on Early Medieval burial rites)
Participants

Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd (topographical and geophysical survey)
Charles French, University of Cambridge (micromorphology)
Mike Gorman, Scott Polar Institute (radar survey)
David Gurney, Norfolk Archaeological Unit (phosphate survey)
Alan Hall, Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York (charred plant remains)
Frances Lee, University of Bradford (human bone)
Joanne Miles, University of Birmingham (soil chemistry)
John Newman, Suffolk Archaeological Unit (Deben Valley survey)
Terry O’Connor, University of Bradford (animal bones)
Steve Rothera, Essex County Council (botanical survey)
Rob Scaife, University of Southampton (plant biology)
Lorraine Stewart, University of Birmingham (soil chemistry)
Penelope Walton Rogers (textiles)
Peter Warner, Homerton College, Cambridge (documentary research)

Specialist advice and fieldwork

This was offered gratis by:

Peter Warner, Homerton College, Cambridge (documentary Penelope Walton Rogers (textiles)
Lorraine Stewart, University of Birmingham (soil chemistry)
Rob Scaife, University of Southampton (plant biology)
Steve Rothera, Essex County Council (botanical survey)
Penelope Walton Rogers (textiles)

Participants

Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd (topographical and geophysical survey)
Charles French, University of Cambridge (micromorphology)
Mike Gorman, Scott Polar Institute (radar survey)
David Gurney, Norfolk Archaeological Unit (phosphate survey)
Alan Hall, Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York (charred plant remains)
Frances Lee, University of Bradford (human bone)
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Rob Scaife, University of Southampton (plant biology)
Lorraine Stewart, University of Birmingham (soil chemistry)
Penelope Walton Rogers (textiles)
Peter Warner, Homerton College, Cambridge (documentary research)

Specialist advice and fieldwork

This was offered gratis by:

Paul Ashbee, University of East Anglia (excavation and prehistory)
Helen Atkinson, Department of Quaternary Research, Stockholm (sedimentology)
Nick Balaam, English Heritage (environmental strategy)
Alastair Bartlett (magnetometry)
Elizabeth Beasley (site management)
Leo Biek (taphonomy)
Christopher Brooke, Nottingham University (infrared photography)
Rupert Bruce-Miford (excavation)
Victoria Bryant, University of Birmingham (MA on aerial evaluation)
Kate Clark, University of Bradford (magnetic susceptibility survey)
Tony Clark, English Heritage (geophysical survey)
Malcolm Cooper, University of Birmingham (database management system)
Ole Crumlin-Pedersen, Centre for Maritime Archaeology, Roskilde (ships)
Andrew David, English Heritage (cesium magnetometry)
Simon Dove, British Museum (on-site conservation)
Brian Durham, Oxford Archaeological Unit (lithophotography)
George Edens, &C Mouldings (silicone rubber moulding)
Ann Ellison, University of Birmingham (prehistory)
Margaret Gelling, University of Birmingham (place names)
Mike Gorman, Scott Polar Institute (ground penetrating radar)
Mike Hayes, University of Birmingham (soil chemistry)
Jim Hooker, City University (photogrammetry)
Cliff Hoppitt (aerial photography)
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Mike Kelly, University of Bradford (resistivity)
Sean McGrail, National Maritime Museum (ship replication)
Edward Martin, Suffolk Archaeological Unit (Suffolk prehistory)
Edward Morgan (photography)
Michael Müller-Wille, University of Kiel (Early Medieval burial practice)

Publication team

The field records were prepared by the field team, curated by Madeleine Hummler with A. Copp, L. Peacock and A. Roe, and have been deposited in the British Museum. The Field Reports were prepared by the field supervisors (see above) and contributors to the research report (see below) under the supervision of Madeleine Hummler, with the assistance of Maureen Poulton, Project Secretary 1992–7. For an index to the Field Reports, see the end of this book.

British Museum research team undertaking analysis and conservation of the Early Medieval artefacts

Janet Ambers (radiocarbon dating)
Angela Evans (research of Early Medieval artefacts)
Fleur Shearman (conservation and investigation of all objects; lifting the bridle block from Mound 17)
Mike Tite (conservation and laboratory research)
Penelope Walton Rogers (study of textiles)
Leslie Webster (Early Medieval consultant)
Man Yee Liu (conservation and study of the leather)
Participants

Texts
The late Leo Biek, 15A Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HT: contribution to Chapter 3 (taphonomy).
Julie Bond, Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford: contribution to Chapter 7 (animal bone).
Martin Carver, Department of Archaeology, University of York: Chapters 1–6, 8–10, 12 and 14; editing of all chapters.
Angela Evans, Department of Medieval and Modern Europe, British Museum: contributions to Chapter 7 (Early Medieval artefacts).
Christopher Fern, Department of Archaeology, University of York: co-author of Chapter 8 (Early Medieval burial rites).
Charles French, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge: contribution to Chapter 10 (micromorphology).
Alan Hall, Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York: contribution to Chapter 11 (plant remains).
Madeleine Hummler, University of York: Chapter 11.
Frances Lee, Department of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford: contributions to Chapters 7 and 9 (human bone).
John Newman, Suffolk Archaeological Unit: Chapter 13 (Deben valley survey).
Terry O’Connor, Department of Archaeology, University of York: contribution to Chapter 7 (horse).
Steve Rothera, Essex County Council: contribution to special reports (modern plant regime).
Rob Scaife, University of Southampton: contribution to Chapter 10 (pollen analysis).
Penelope Walton Rogers, York: contribution to Chapter 7 (textiles).

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Victor Ambrus.
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Assistant Editor
Sue Hirst.

Editor
Martin Carver.

referers
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Andrew Copp, Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd (all).
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Helen Geake, Suffolk County Council (all).
Frances Healey, Wessex Archaeology (Chapter 11).
Sue Hirst, freelance editor (all).
Edward Martin, Suffolk Archaeological Unit (Chapter 11).
Michael Müller-Wille, University of Kiel (Chapters 4–6).
Philip Rahaz, University of York (all).
Andrew Reynolds, King Alfred’s College, Winchester (Chapter 9).
Christopher Scull, English Heritage (all).
Keith Wade, Suffolk Archaeological Unit (all).
Leslie Webster, British Museum (all).
Martin Welch, University College London (all).
Stanley West, Suffolk County Council (all).

Under commission from the British Museum, Sue Hirst, assistant editor, checked the text and illustrations for archaeological sense, and prepared the text and figures for publication. She discovered omissions and contradictions, improved the presentation, and helped make this a more accessible and usable book.
### Participants

**Table 1**

**Key to the abbreviations and terms used in this book**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBN</td>
<td>Basil Brown’s notebook. Held in archive by Ipswich Museum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body bearer</td>
<td>Means of carriage or support for a dead body used in a grave. A term used because the evidence at Sutton Hoo is often equivocal (as to whether bier, bed, boat or coffin).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>In excavation records, a stratigraphic unit, for example a layer. Contexts are always numbered with 4 digits: e.g. Context 1254, and restart at 1000 for each intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>In excavation records, these are a set of contexts defined as belonging together, for example a pit with its cut and fills. Features are numbered 1–999, with a separate series for each intervention. So F 123 or Int. 48 (123).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>A field report. So, FR 4/7.1 is section 7.1 in volume 4 of the <em>Field Reports</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Any archaeological operation in the field. So Int. 24 was a trench in Top Hat Wood, and Int. 35 was a geophysical survey. For a list of interventions see Table 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quadrant (Quad.)</td>
<td>A rectangular excavation area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robber trench, pit</td>
<td>A trench (or pit) cut by unknown people who have left no records. Generally thought to be cut for the purposes of finding and keeping grave goods, hence the name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stance</td>
<td>Where something had stood. Used for very slight features or contexts which imply something has stood at that place but been removed: for example the bucket in Mound 2 or the bowl in Mound 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>In excavation records, this is a stratigraphic unit like a mound or a building. A structure is always a set of features. Structures are numbered from S1, and there is a single series for the whole campaign. For a list of structures, see Chapter 3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>