

## A LATE BRONZE AGE HOARD FROM HOADEN, KENT

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In 1974 at Hoaden, Ash-next-Sandwich, on land belonging to Mr. Lewis Hayward, a potato-harvesting machine turned up some metallic objects, which were shared out among the farm workers. One piece was subsequently identified by a local school-teacher as a bronze axe. The number of items originally found is not known, but seven have been traced and are described below. They have been deposited in the Royal Museum, Canterbury, with the permission of the owners, Mr. L. Hayward and Mr. J. Hudd.

The find-spot<sup>1</sup> (N.G.R. TR 267598) was on a low mound, about 8 m. above sea-level, close to where the arable land joins the imbanked marshes that were once the Wantsum Channel. The Late Bronze Age coastline is impossible to reconstruct with any certainty, but the hoard must have been deposited very near to the open water of the channel. The surface soil of the mound is a gravelly loam and was thoroughly searched between crops. No other traces of occupation were found.

The seven pieces that have been traced (Fig. 1) all have the same high degree of corrosion, and most show signs of recent physical damage, probably in the process of discovery. This helps to confirm the correctness of the identification of these items as those originally found in the hoard.

The hoard comprises:

1. Socketed axe with large collar and horizontal moulding at the level of the top of the loop. The upper body is rather slender and parallel-sided, curving out to a sharply expanded cutting edge. It is highly corroded and the blade edge has been damaged in antiquity;

<sup>1</sup> The find-spot is shown in J.D. Ogilvie, 'The Stourmouth-Adisham Water-main Trench', *Arch. Cant.*, xciii (1977), fig. 3, no. 4.

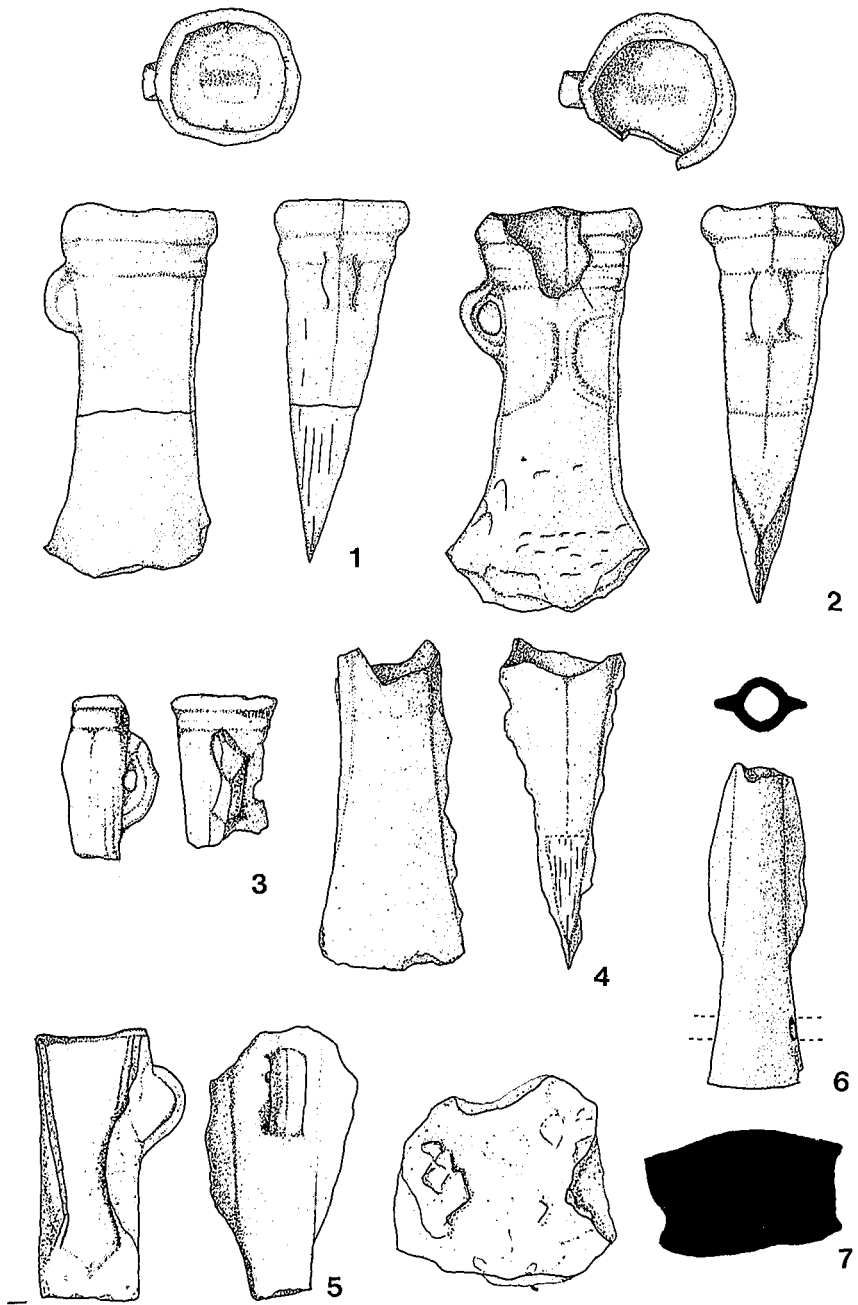


Fig. 1. Late Bronze Age Hoard from Hoaden (Scale: 1/2).

recent damage includes further breakage of the blade, scratches to both faces and a complete break through the body, now repaired. Length 9.4 cm., maximum surviving width 4.2 cm. It is an example of the very wide-spread south-eastern type of socketed axe, with collar, moulding and fairly straight sides; the type belongs to the Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park phase.<sup>2</sup>

2. Socketed axe with ribbed wing decoration. Below the protruding collar there is a pair of slight mouldings, the lower at the level of the top of the loop. The low rib moulding of the wing pattern is carried faintly round onto both narrow sides. There is severe corrosion and modern damage including scratches, chips out of the blade and a piece missing from the mouth. Both faces of the blade show the facets of hammering. Length 10.3 cm., width 4.6 cm. Such wing-decorated axes are particularly associated with Carp's Tongue hoards in Kent, Essex and the Thames Valley.<sup>3</sup> The precise form of the wings and mouldings varies greatly, and no exact parallel for this axe has been found.

3. Mouth fragment of a faceted axe with sharply profiled collar and fine mouldings. It is heavily corroded and has suffered some slight damage recently, but was certainly broken in antiquity. Faceted axes are widely distributed in south-eastern England, with particular concentration in East Anglia and the Thames Valley; they are restricted to the Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park phase.<sup>4</sup>

4. Blade fragment of socketed axe. The profile is markedly slender and parallel-sided and the section almost square. It has heavy corrosion and some modern damage to the top edge, but was certainly broken in antiquity. Surviving length 8.3 cm. This fragment could possibly be from an Armorican socketed axe, but the section seems more appropriate to a particularly slender version of the south-eastern type, such as those from the Bexley Heath<sup>5</sup> or Minnis Bay<sup>6</sup> hoards.

5. Fragment of winged axe. It is heavily corroded and has suffered

<sup>2</sup> J.J. Butler, 'Bronze Age Connections across the North Sea', *Palaeohistoria*, ix (1963), 82-4; C.B. Burgess, 'The later Bronze Age in the British Isles and north-western France', *Arch. Journ.*, cxv (1968), 17, 39 and fig. 13, 5-7; B. O'Connor, *Cross-Channel Relations in the later Bronze Age*, BAR S91, 1980, 161.

<sup>3</sup> Butler, *op. cit.*, 84; Burgess, *op. cit.*, 17, 39 and fig. 13, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Butler, *op. cit.*, 86-7; C.B. Burgess and R. Miket, 'Three socketed Axes from north-east England, with Notes on faceted and ribbed socketed Axes', *AA*<sup>5</sup>, iv (1976), 3-5.

<sup>5</sup> D. Britton, *Inventaria Archaeologica*, GB 53 (1960), no. 27.

<sup>6</sup> F.H. Worsfold, 'A Report on the late Bronze Age Site excavated at Minnis Bay, Birchington, Kent 1938-40', *PPS*, ix (1943), Pl. XI, no. 5.

recent damage to the tips of the wings, but was certainly broken in antiquity. Winged axes are found in Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park contexts from Sussex to East Anglia with particular concentrations in the Thames Valley and Kent.<sup>7</sup>

6. Plain, leaf-shaped, pegged spearhead with simple rounded mid-rib. It is badly corroded and has recently had the tip broken off. Surviving length 8.0 cm. This type of plain leaf-shaped spearhead had a long life, but was commonest in the Wilburton and Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park phases.<sup>8</sup>

7. Fragment of metal from plano-convex ingot. Maximum dimensions 5.3 cm. by 4.2 cm. by 3.2 cm. Fragments of such ingots, or occasionally whole specimens, as in the Bexley Heath hoard,<sup>9</sup> are well known in hoards of the Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park phase in south-eastern England.

All the items in this hoard can thus be easily paralleled in Carp's Tongue/Ewart Park hoards of the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. in south-eastern England, and in particular in those of Kent. Though the original composition of the hoard is unknown, the surviving examples might not be unrepresentative, since Kentish hoards of this period are dominated by axes, with weapons, ornaments and other tool types occurring in comparatively small numbers. Scrap and fragmentary items are also a well established feature of these hoards.

The Hoaden hoard is therefore typical in its range of items and in their condition on deposition of a large number of hoards of the later Bronze Age in southern England. There are particular concentrations of such hoards in southern Essex, in north Kent around Rochester and Hoo, and in north-eastern Kent around the former Wantsum.<sup>10</sup> The hoards from Minnis Bay<sup>11</sup> and Minster<sup>12</sup> in the Isle of Thanet, and from Swalecliffe<sup>13</sup> and Stourmouth<sup>14</sup> all have closely

<sup>7</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.*, fig. 14; O'Connor, *op. cit.*, 159.

<sup>8</sup> M. Ehrenberg, *Bronze Age Spearheads from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire*, BAR 34, 1977, 13-15; Burgess, *op. cit.*, 36, 39.

<sup>9</sup> Britton, *op. cit.*, no. 11.

<sup>10</sup> T.C. Champion, 'Settlement and Environment in later Bronze Age Kent', in J. Barrett and R. Bradley (eds.), *Settlement and Society in the British later Bronze Age*, BAR 83, 1980, 229 and fig. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Worsfold, *op. cit.*, 34-5 and Pl. XI-XII.

<sup>12</sup> G. Payne, *PSAL*, 2nd series, xiv (1891-3), 309-11.

<sup>13</sup> R.F. Jessup, *Archaeology of Kent* (1930), 108.

<sup>14</sup> D. Coombs and J. Bradshaw, 'A Carp's Tongue Hoard from Stourmouth, Kent', in C. Burgess and D. Coombs (eds.), *Bronze Age Hoards*, BAR 67, 1979, 181-96.

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similar ranges of material, and were all found in similar locations near to what must have been the Bronze Age coastline.

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