

Report 5, 8th of August 1999

The graves, part 1

During the last weeks most of our effort has been devoted to the preparing and excavation of a number of graves at the northern part of the settlement area. In my last report (number 4), I gave a short introduction to some of the graves, while pointing out that in one of them we found a picture stone.

All together, we have investigated, more or less, seven graves. As usual I would say there was not enough time in the end, so one of the biggest graves we have found so far in the area, has to be left for the next year. Below, I will give a short introduction to the different graves we have excavated. In this report I will deal with three graves. In the next the other four graves.

However, it is to be remembered that we haven't yet done any serious osteological investigation of the skeletons, even if Sara Cherubin and Annicka Willim have been of great help to classify the bones and the skeletons.

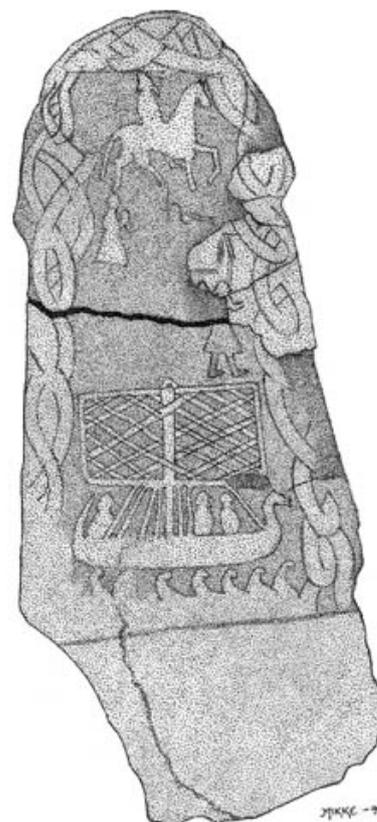
Grave 14 contained, as found out by Erik Hegg, Sara Cherubin and Ewa Edsler, three persons; one rather young person, and one rather old woman (the one buried first). They were buried on top of



Three of the artefacts found in grave number 14. To the left is a well preserved animal head brooch of a typical gotlandic style, decorated with animal figures and made of bronze. Top right, a comb made of bone and below one of the two dress pins found. Photo D. Carlsson

each other, and most of the bones were very much mixed, making it rather difficult to decide the actual number of persons. The female had, besides some beads, a well preserved animal head brooch, a typical gotlandic brooch. This kind of artefacts seems to only have been used by gotlandic women, so when we found one of these brooches, we can actually say that it probably is a gotlandic woman. She also had a rather well preserved comb made of bone. It was a typical one-sided comb, but without any decoration. The animal head brooch gives a dating of the person to the 9th or the 10th century.

Grave 15 was the one with the picture stone, mentioned in report 4. Some of the staff (Anna Karlsson, Jan Olofsson, Eva Svennung, Karin Uhlman, Maj-Britt Andersson och Mikke Brännström) have put a lot of effort in trying to get an idea of the pictures and scenes on the stone, and their ideas have been transformed into a drawing by Mikke Brännström. As can be seen from the drawing, there is a horse with a man on his back on top of the stone. A woman, probably a Valkyria, is greeting the man with a drinking horn in her hand. Further down the stone, to the right, one can see some persons; probably men carrying some kind of weapon. The scene as a whole is rather typical for this kind of stones and the stone can be dated to the 8th or 9th century.



The skeleton was very well preserved and it was a man according to the osteological examination.

Grave 16 were found in the northern most corner of trench number 14. The skeleton was placed over one meter under the surface, and under a loose packing of stones. Gillian, Aura, Anna-Klara, Tord and John had a hard work to open up the grave, and to remove the soil from the skeleton. The size of the skeleton suggested that it might be a man, but we can't be clear on that until further osteological investigations has taken place. They found a handful of beads, some of them of a very nice colour and decoration.

