

**Clue A**



## Clue B      Where did this all happen?

This excavation took place over 70 years ago, in 1939.

There was a large mound close to the River Deben at a place called Sutton Hoo in Suffolk.

The archaeologists dug a long trench into the mound.

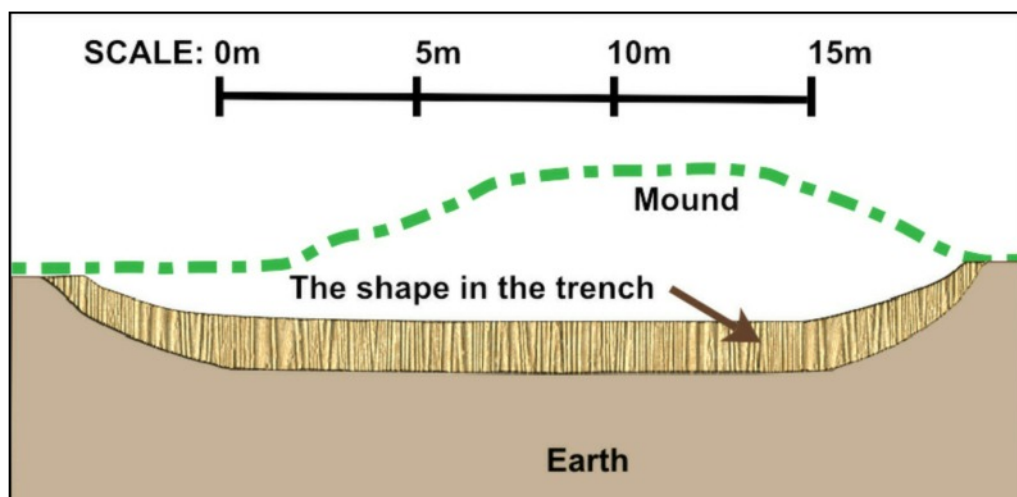
Clue A showed you a picture inside the trench.

The soil in the trench was a different colour from the surrounding soil because it contained rotted wood.

The long rows of 'dots' you saw in Clue A were iron rivets (a kind of nail).



**This is a lengthways section of the trench.**



## Clue C What did they find at Sutton Hoo?

Here are three objects found in the trench. Many objects were in pieces and were put together again carefully.



They also found:

- A shield, spears and a sword decorated with jewels and gold
- Drinking horns
- An iron axe and chain-mail armour
- Silver bowls and dishes
- A golden shoulder clasp decorated with jewels
- A stringed musical instrument like a harp



## **Clue D      Beowulf – the burial of a hero**

‘On a spot overlooking the sea, the lords of the people began to build Beowulf’s funeral fire, hanging on it his helmets, battle-shields and shining armour. In the centre they laid Beowulf’s body and all the time they were weeping at their hero’s death.

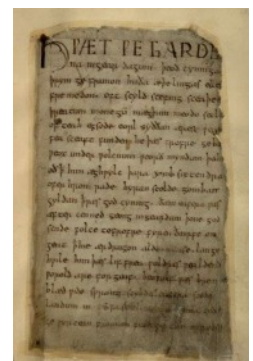
Black wood smoke began rising from the fire and then the sound of roaring flames and weeping men.

Then the lords built a burial mound, high and broad so it could be seen out at sea. It took ten days to finish this monument to their hero. Inside the mound they put rings and jewels and ornaments and all his gold and treasure.

Finally they rode round his grave mound, praising his greatness and all his brave deeds.’

**These lines come from a poem called ‘Beowulf’, a story written around 700-750AD. They describe the burial of Beowulf.**

**This is a fictional story but the writer probably based this description on events he had seen.**





## Clue E

## Discoveries in other places

In 1862 archaeologists found a ship buried under a mound at Snape, about ten miles north of Sutton Hoo. In the ship were spearheads, a gold ring, a glass beaker and coloured glass.

These things were often buried with wealthy people but there was no body in this ship burial at Snape.

Then, in 1904 a ship was found buried under a mound in Oseberg in Norway. It contained the bodies of two women. One may have been Asa, a Viking queen.

Alongside the bodies were many objects – beds, lamps, a cart, sledges and tapestries. Jewels and treasure had probably been buried too but they had been stolen sometime in the past.



## Clue F

## More finds at Sutton Hoo

37 gold coins and pieces of gold were found at Sutton Hoo. They came from the country we call France.



The pictures and faces on the coins help archaeologists work out how old they are. They come from the early 600s AD and must have been buried sometime between 610 and 635 AD.



## Clue G

## Did they find a body?

The archaeologists did not find a body at Sutton Hoo.

But later they did tests on the soil to find out if a body had been buried there. These tests showed there had been a body – they found a chemical left after a body decays, even when no bones are left at all.

This is what the original burial might have looked like.



## Clue H

## Who was buried there?

Here is some information about four kings of East Anglia, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom which included Sutton Hoo:

### 1. **Raedwald:** king from 599 to 625 AD

Raedwald was a very rich and powerful king. He was overlord of all the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the most powerful king in England.

### 2. **Eorpwold:** king from 625 to 627 or 628 AD

Eorpwold was Raedwald's son. He only ruled for a very short time before he was murdered.

### 3. **Sigebert:** king from about 630 to 637 AD

Sigebert really wanted to be a monk and shared the kingship with Ecric, his cousin. Sigebert was probably buried near Ely, over 50 miles from Sutton Hoo.

### 4. **Ecric:** king from 634 to 637 AD

Soon after Ecric became king East Anglia was attacked by other kings. Ecric and Sigebert were killed in battle in 637.