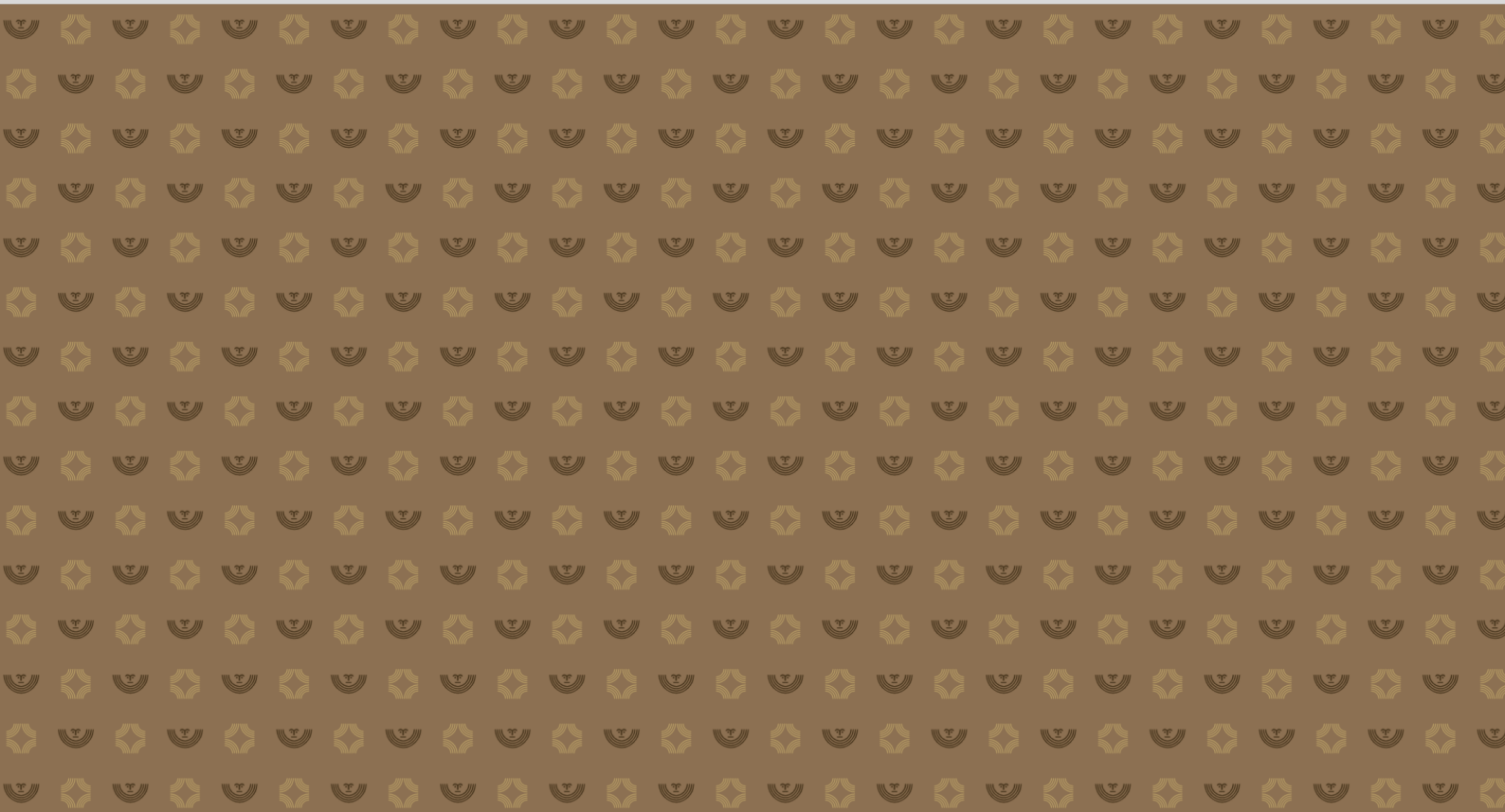
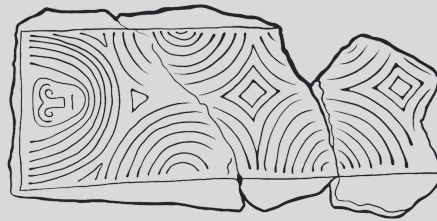


STORIES FROM THE GRAVE: ANGLO-SAXON OXFORD

PRE-VISIT RESOURCES



Teacher Information

Welcome to the **Stories from the grave: Anglo-Saxon** pre-visit information pack for teachers.

This will support your pupil's visit to the Museum of Oxford.

In this pack, you will find:

1. Pre- visit information about the Anglo- Saxons in Oxford.
2. Links to 3D scanned artefacts for your pupils to virtually handle.
3. Information and questions for each of the 3D artefacts to support your pupil's knowledge and understanding of Anglo-Saxon life in Oxford.
4. Links to a 2 minute video about an Anglo- Saxon Oxford legend.

These sheets have been designed for pupil's use in classroom.

National Curriculum KS2 Links:

Britain's settlement by Anglo- Saxons

- Anglo-Saxon invasions, settlements and kingdoms: place names and village life
- Anglo-Saxon art and culture

A local history study

- A study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality.

Where does the name Oxford come from?

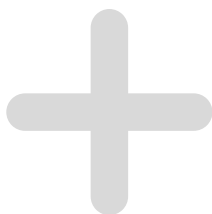
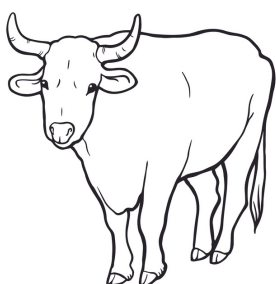
The Anglo-Saxons
were the first to settle
in Oxford.

They called it
Oxnaford.

An **ox** (or oxen if there is more than one) is cattle that has to be over four years old and has been trained to do work. This work might be pulling machinery on farms and ploughing fields.

A **ford** is a crossing in the river that you can walk across.

There must have been a place for the ox to cross over the river safely!



Maybe the River Thames or the River Cherwell!



What was life like in Anglo- Saxon Oxnaford?

Ruthless Rulers!

England during the Anglo-Saxon period wasn't ruled by one ruler like it is today. England was divided into different Kingdoms with different rulers called **cyning**- the Anglo-Saxon word for King.

Oxford was on the border between the Kingdom of Mercia and the Kingdom of Wessex.

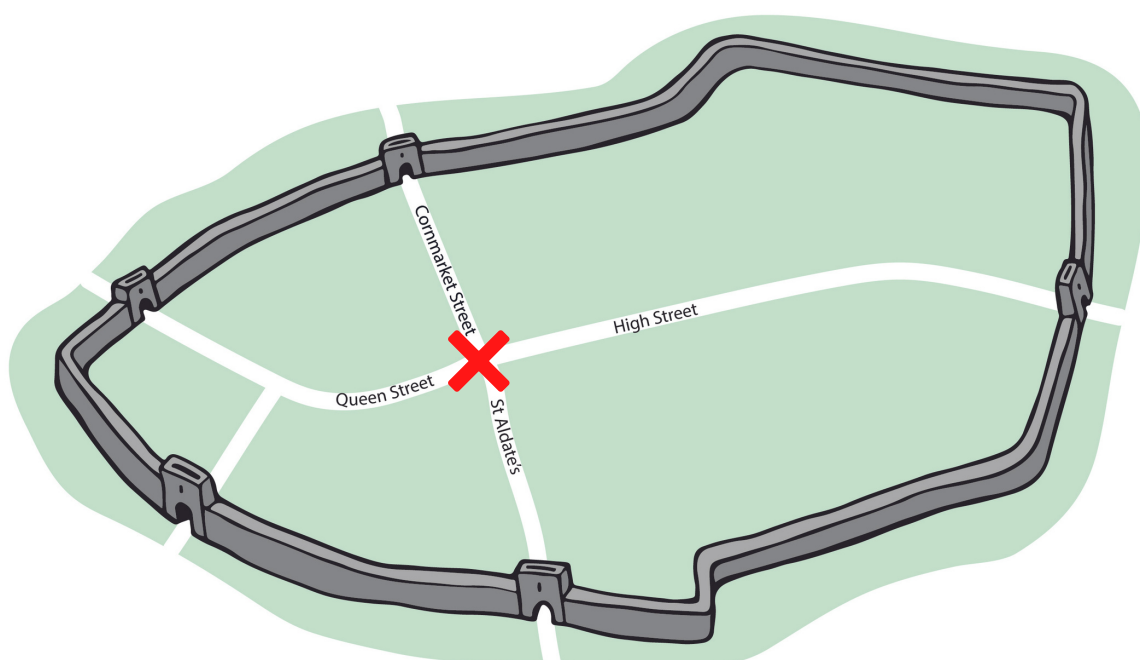


Keeping the enemies out!

By the late Anglo- Saxon period in 911 CE, Oxnaford had grown into a **burh**. A burh is the centre of an Anglo-Saxon town which is surrounded by defences and fortifications.

Oxnaford's burh was surrounded by a fortification which is a high wall to keep enemies out!

The burh was made up of two main streets. The first street ran through what is now known as Cornmarket and St. Aldates and the other street, ran through what is now Queen Street and the High Street. Take a look at these more clearly, on the map below.

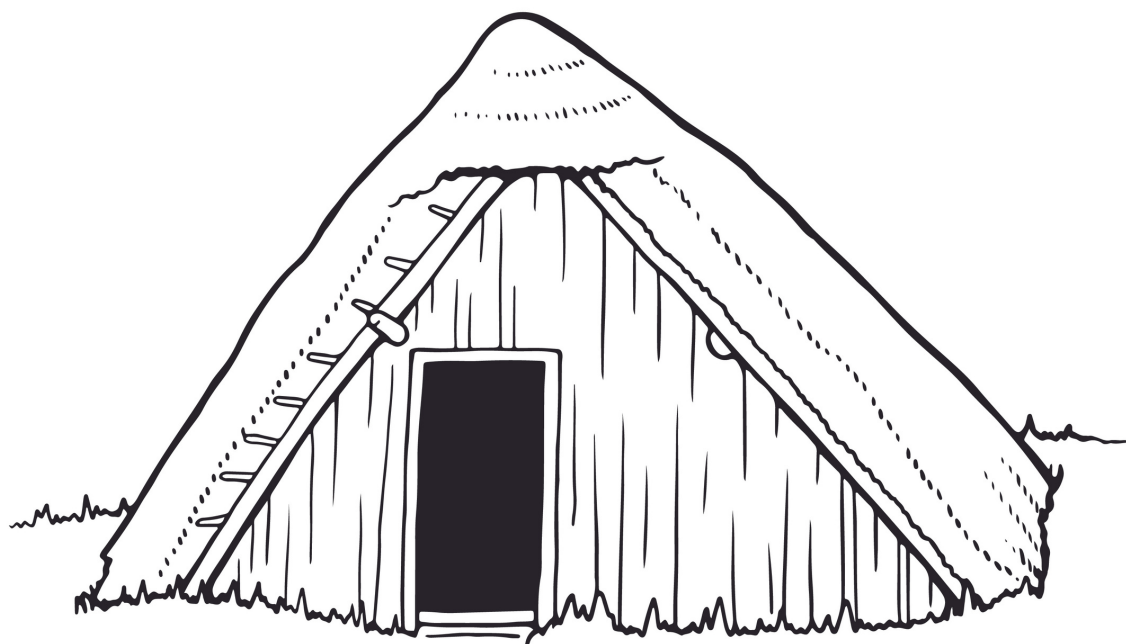


Where they met in the middle, was known as Carfax and this is where the main activity of the burh took place.

Home Life

Along these streets, they built homes made from wood with thatched straw roofs. The home would have had one large room for the whole family to share, with a fire in the middle for cooking, heating and lighting and a cooking pot hanging from a chain above. These homes would have used pits dug in the ground to throw their rubbish into! These pits can now tell us a lot about what Anglo-Saxon people ate and the objects they used in everyday life. These pits have been excavated by archaeologists in Oxford.

They would have had to cut down 18 trees to make one home!



How do you think your home now is different to an Anglo-Saxon home?

Digging for coins!

There might have been a market in the middle of the burh, where people could get food, cattle and cloth.

Most people from the early Anglo-Saxon's (450-700 CE) would not have paid with coins though!

Early Anglo- Saxon coins were made from gold and were very valuable, so they were not always used.

Instead, they might do bartering, which would involve exchanging objects instead. You might exchange your leather shoes for a wild boar to eat.

People during the later Anglo-Saxon period (700-1066 CE) did use coins. Each Kingdom had its own King whose head was on one side of the coins.

It gave the Kings an extra chance to show off just how important they were!



If someone was travelling to different kingdoms, then they would need to change their coins into the correct ones- a bit like how you might do today when you travel to a different country!



These coins would be made of silver. By the end of the year 1000 CE, Oxford had a mint with 4 coin makers. A mint is where they make coins.

The Anglo-Saxons did not have as many types of coins as we do. If they needed to buy something that was half a penny but they only had a coin that was one penny- they would cut the penny coin in half and use half the coin!

Just like these ones here from the museum.



Who is on our coins now?
Is this the same all over England?

Anglo- Saxon Fashion

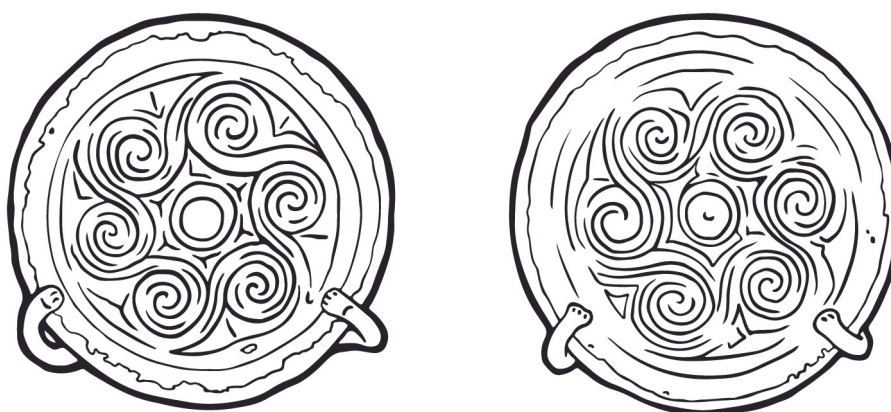
Anglo- Saxons brooches were called **dalc** or **spennels** and were mainly worn by women.

They might have worn them in pairs, like this example, to fasten their cloaks together.

These ones are made from bronze, but they could also be made from iron and decorated with gold or silver if you were wealthy.

They would have been decorated to make them look nice, to show others how wealthy you were and maybe also to show a religious meaning.

Not many Anglo-Saxons could read or write so they used patterns and carvings on brooches to tell stories instead.



Some brooches showed animals and faces which might have represented myths, Gods and stories the Anglo-Saxons wanted to tell.

The images of powerful animals and their Gods would have offered them symbolic protection a bit like a good luck amulet, maybe in war or in difficult situations.



- What story do you think this brooch is trying to tell?
- How would you wear these brooches?
- Think of a story you have read recently or something else that symbolises something important to you. How would you decorate your brooch?

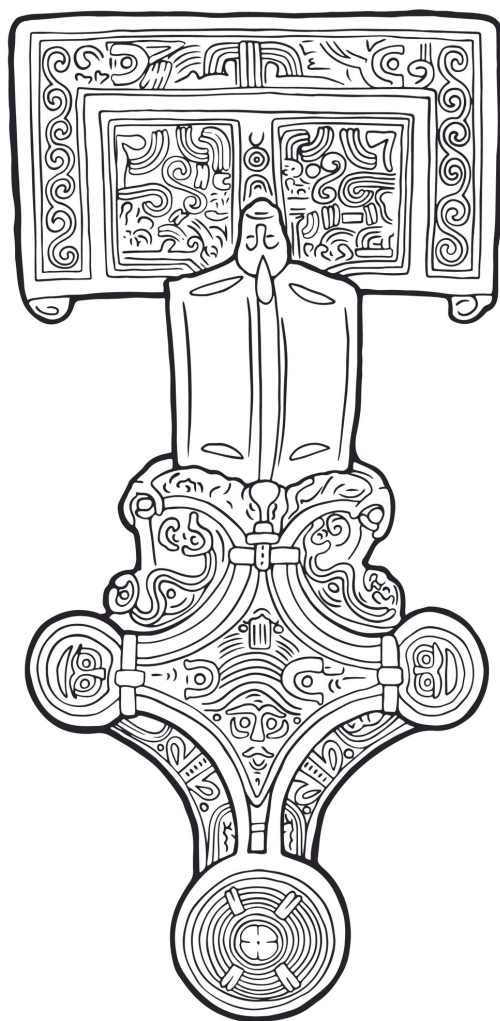
The chief Anglo- Saxon God was called Woden. He was the God of battles and war. His special animal was a wolf so you might often see some brooches with a wolf on. Maybe a warrior would have worn a brooch with a wolf on so that Woden protected them in battle?

He was so popular, that the day Wednesday was named after him.

They didn't have to be circular either. Some were square and some had many different shapes, like the ones shown below.

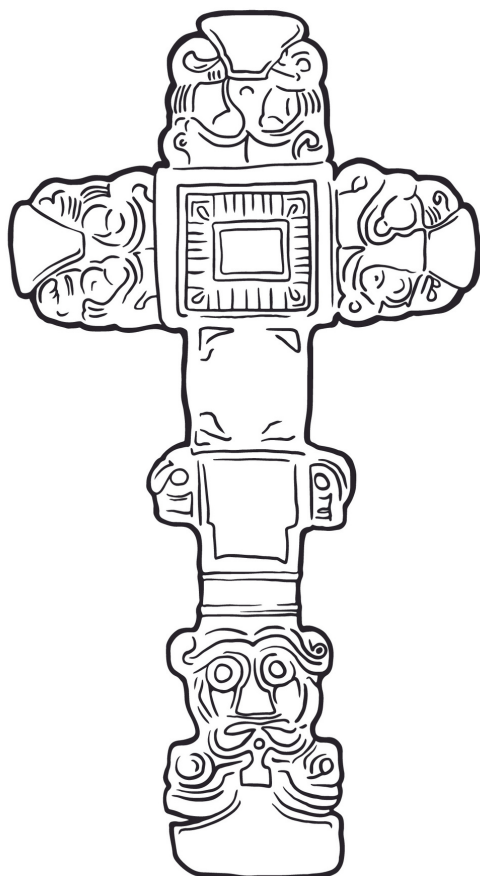


- Have a look at these examples- what can you see?
- What stories are they trying to tell?



Square headed-

- Most common
- Square top
- Usually decorated with animal patterns.
- Very expensive because they were harder to make.

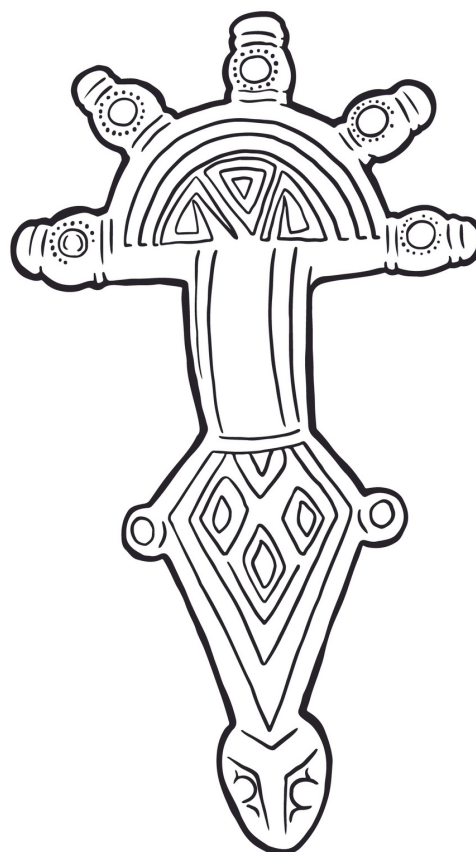


Cruciform

- It looks like a cross but the Anglo- Saxons were not Christian. However, over time they did slowly convert to Christianity.
- Before this, they were pagans and believed in different Gods.
- They were quite superstitious and would carry around lucky charms.

Radiate headed

- Can you see an animal anywhere on this brooch?



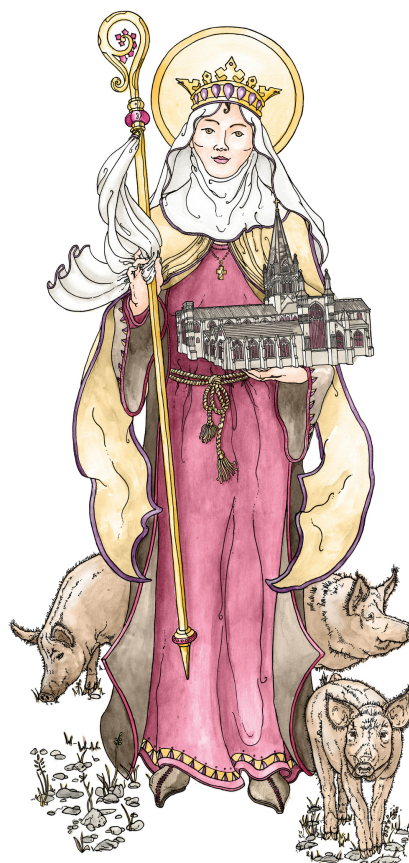
Legend of the Princess

You may have heard of the legend of St. Frideswide.

She was an Anglo-Saxon princess whose name means peace and strong.

She established one of the first church's around 650. It stood where Christ Church Cathedral now stands.

She became a nun but continued to be courted by many men including King Agar, who was determined to marry her.



She fled her home to avoid him and tried many attempts to say hidden, even hiding in a tree!

Soon she asked for her God's protection.

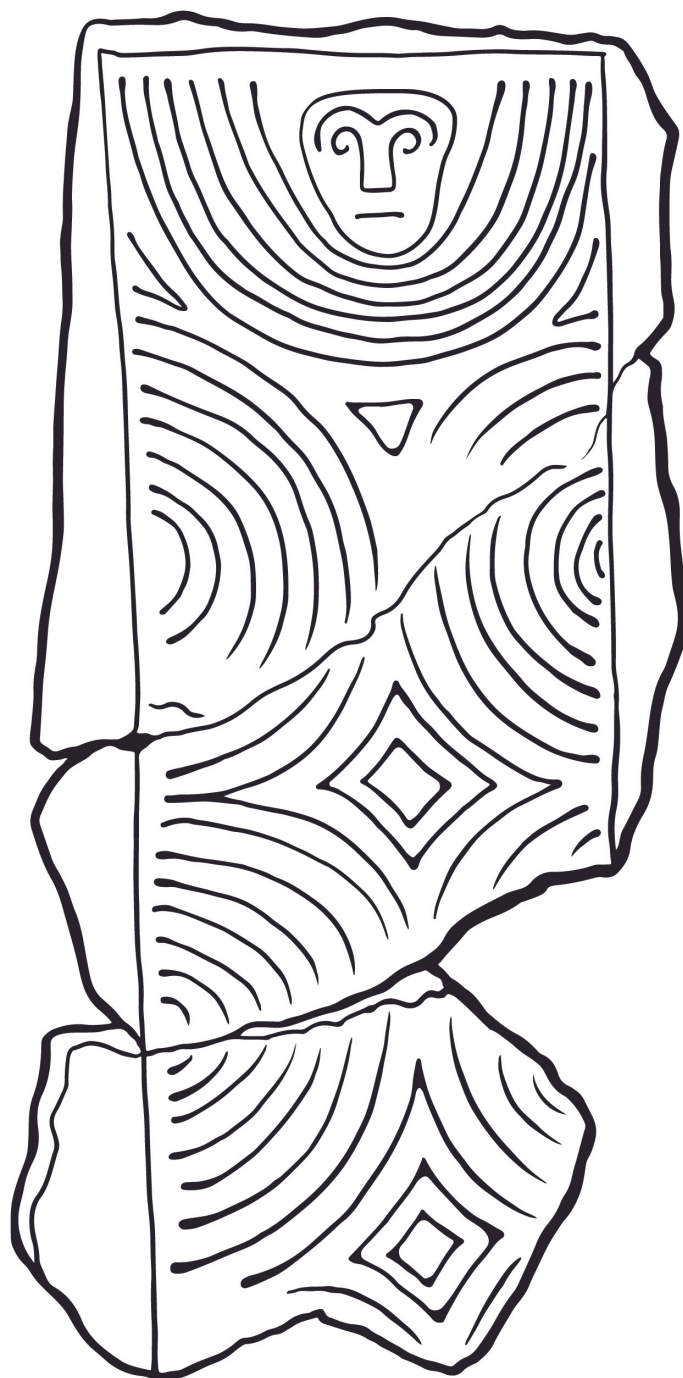
God made the King blind and only then, did he ask for forgiveness from St. Frideswide.

She granted it and grew a reputation as a healer and miracle worker.



Watch our 2 minute video about the life of St. Frideswide and join us as we journey to the church she fled to in Binsey.

You can see her shrine stone in the Museum of Oxford which shows a carving of her.



How are these artefacts discovered?

These artefacts are excavated from known Anglo-Saxons sites by archaeologists in Oxford. It's an archaeologist's job to discover the past by digging carefully in the ground and looking for artefacts from people who lived. They might discover coins, tools, pots and bones. They use these artefacts to understand how people in the past lived. They also can work out whether the object counts as treasure.

3D artefact handling

Your pupils can now spend some time developing their object handling and historical enquiry skills through our 3D scans of Anglo- Saxon artefacts.

The sheets below have been designed to be used in conjunction with the 3D scans and have additional information and tailored questions to support.

You can use these links to load the scans onto your pupil's tablets.

Vessel

Spearhead 1

Spearhead 2

Pottery fragment

Vessel

Anglo-Saxon vessels can tell us a lot about how people used to live.

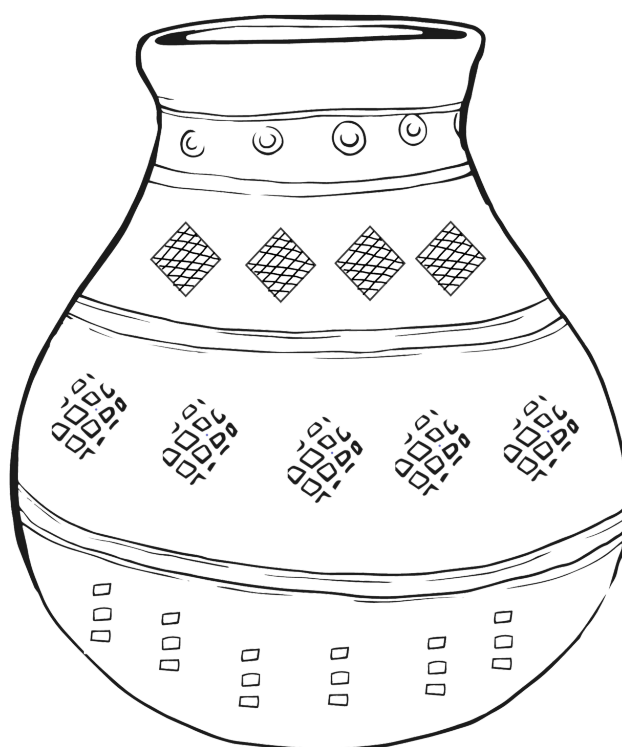
They can tell us how food was cooked- maybe over the fire?

They can tell us the liquids they used to drink from jugs and cups- maybe wine or water?

The type of vessels discovered by archaeologists can also tell us about what that land was used for.

In the case of the 2019 St. Aldates excavation, the archaeologists discovered that different layers of the ground had different types of vessels used by both a house and a pub. It seems that a house had once stood on this site, before changing to a pub called the Battes Inn.

Spend some time exploring this original Anglo- Saxon vessel discovered and excavated in Oxford.



- What do you think might have been kept inside?
- What material do you think they are made out of?
- What material would they be made out of in the present day?
- What do you think they looked like before they were broken?

2 spearheads

Spend some time exploring these original Anglo- Saxon spearheads.

Anglo- Saxon spearheads were mainly made from iron.

They would have been attached to a pole made from wood. Spearheads were the most common weapon used in Anglo-Saxon England.

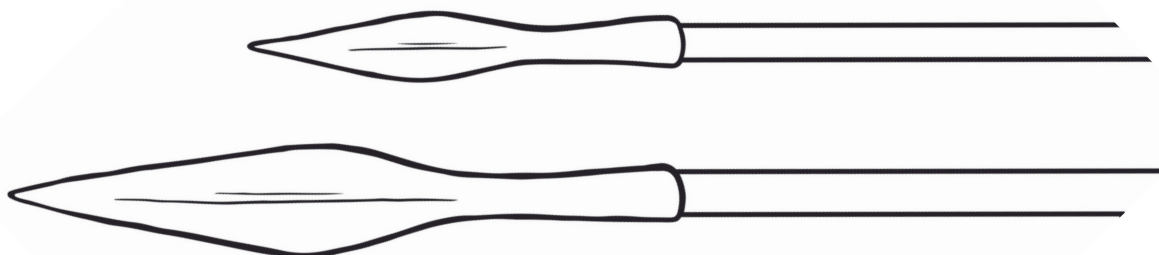
They might have been used during battle- as missiles.

They might have also been used for the hunting of animals to kill- to eat their meat and to use their fur to make cloaks.

One of these battles might have been between the Anglo-Saxons and Danish Vikings who were trying to invade Oxford. Oxford was threatened by many invasions from the Danish Vikings throughout the late Anglo-Saxon period and one of these included the St. Brice's Day Massacre, which saw the mass killing of Vikings in Oxford during the year 1002. The Vikings sought refuge in St. Frideswide's Church but were instead met by the townspeople and killed.



- Can you practice your spear throwing skills?
- How did you do?
- How can you describe the type of person that might have used this weapon?



Pottery fragment

Pottery was mainly used for storing food and cooking.

They might have used animal bone or a piece of wood to carve the patterns.

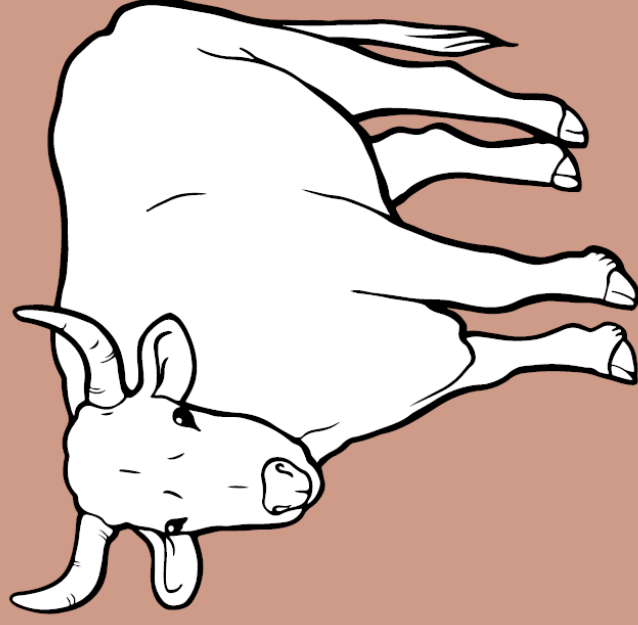
Patterns might show religious symbols or show Anglo-Saxon runes.



- What do you think the completed object might look like?
- Can you draw what you think it would look like before it was broken?
- How would you decorate a pot?

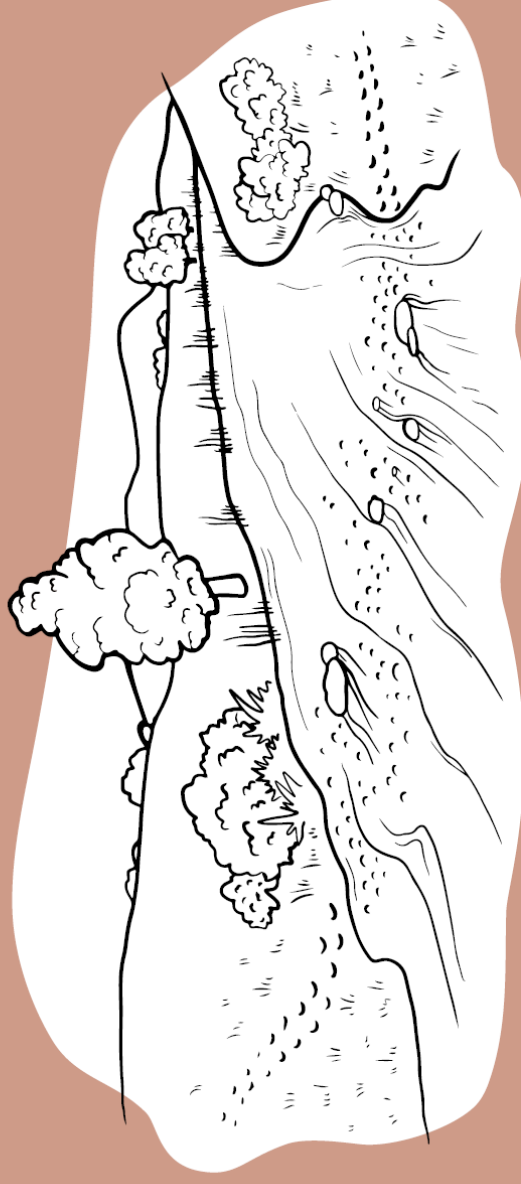
Images

Below you can find all images used in this resource pack.



Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 1: OX



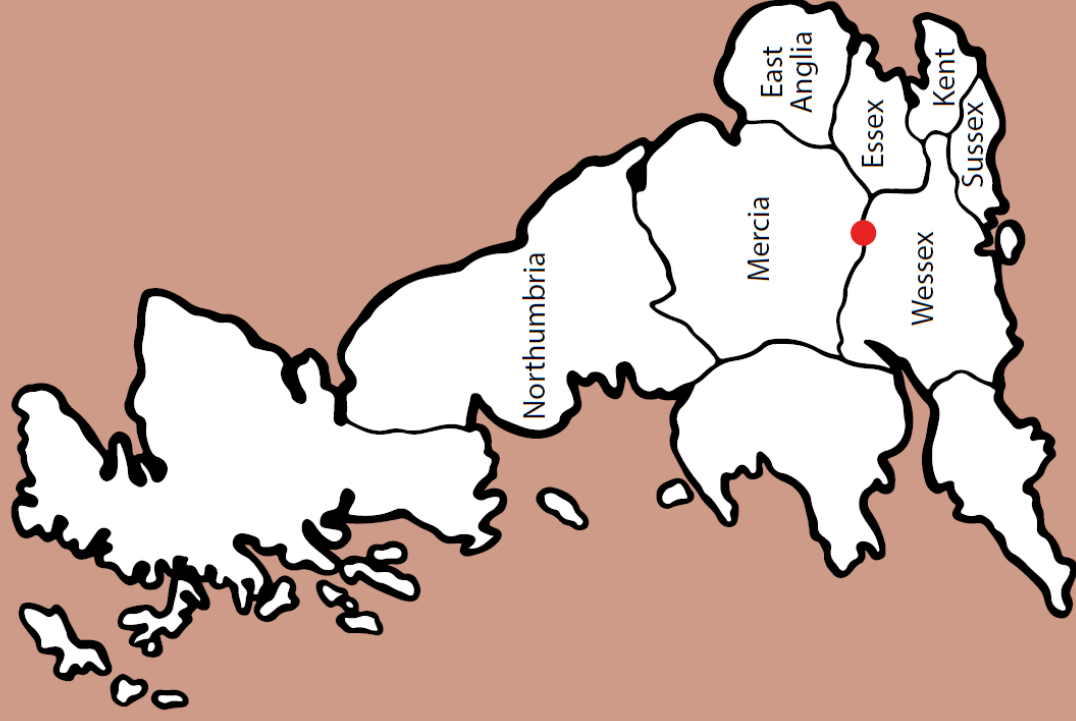
Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 2: SHALLOW RIVER



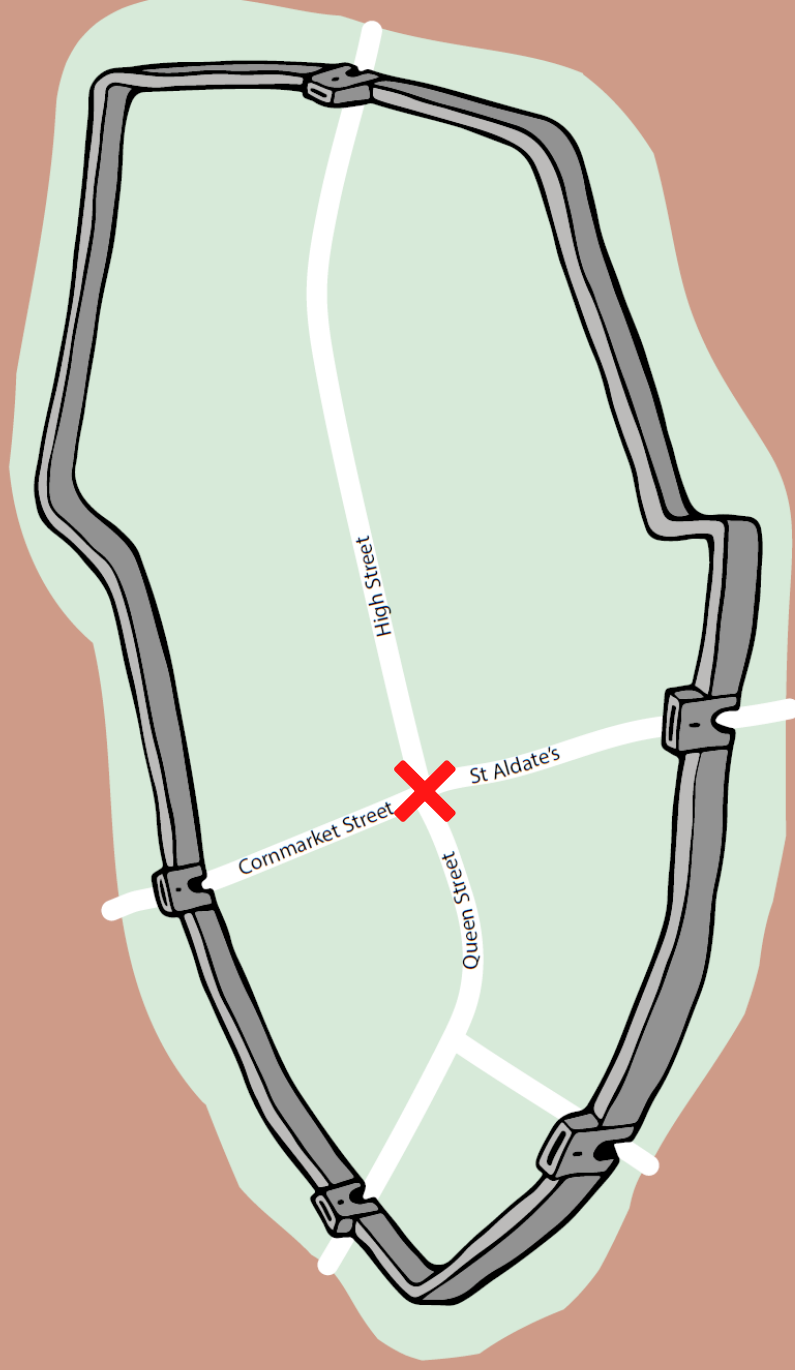
IMAGE 3: SIMPLE OXFORD MAP

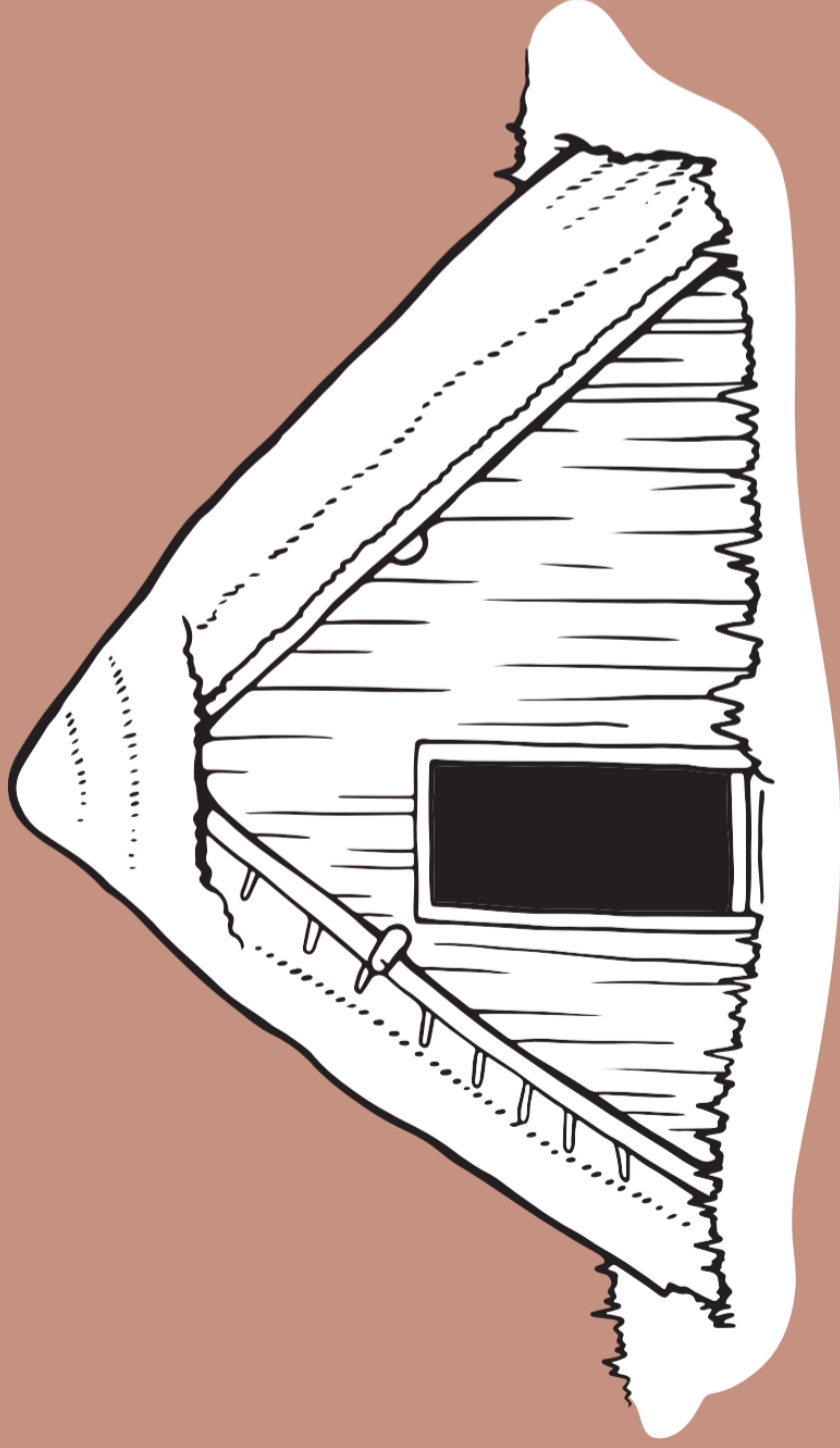
Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION



Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 4: KINGDOMS MAP





Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 13: HOUSE



Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 6: WHOLE COIN AND HALF COIN

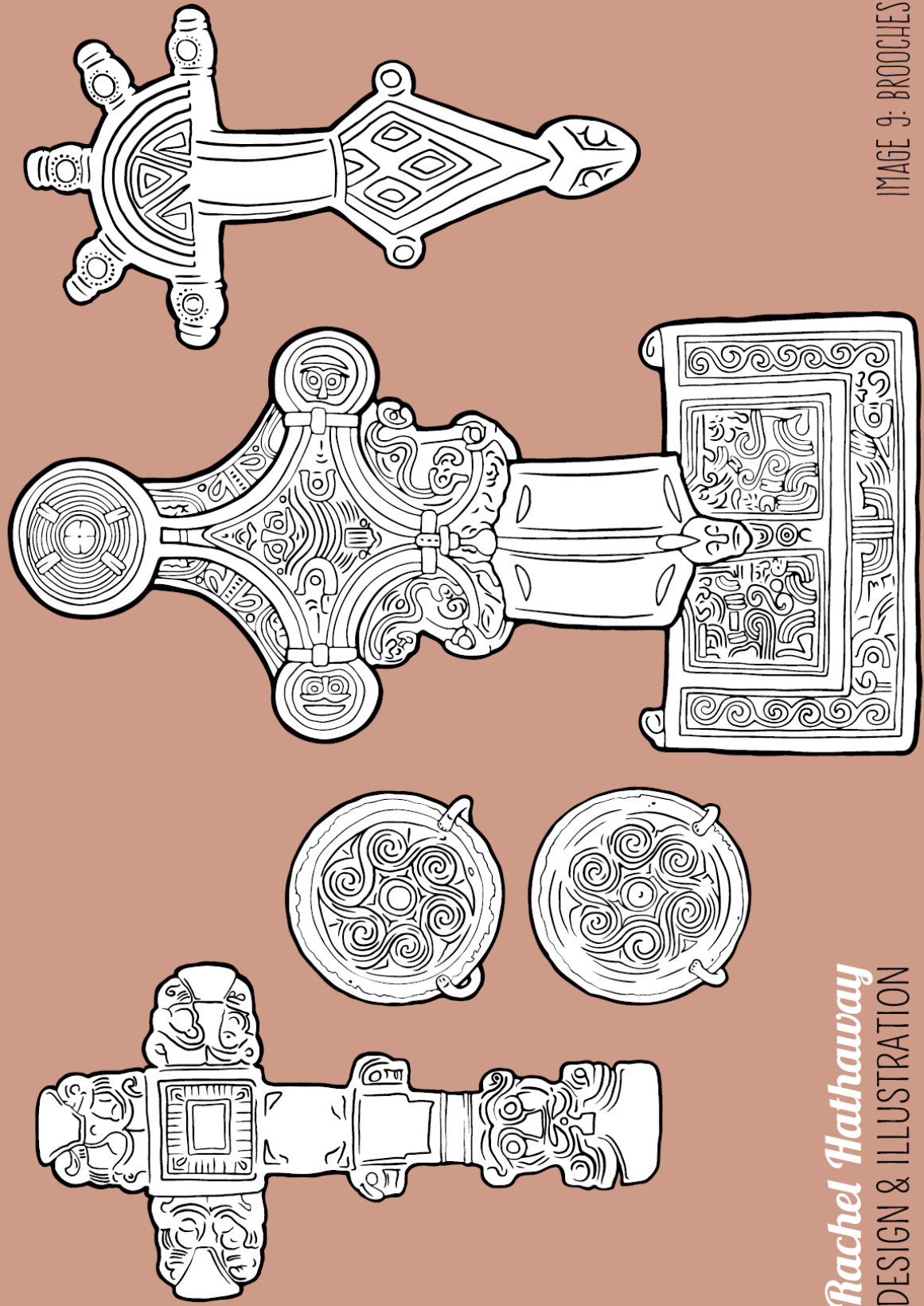


IMAGE 9: BROOCHES

Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION



Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 14: KING

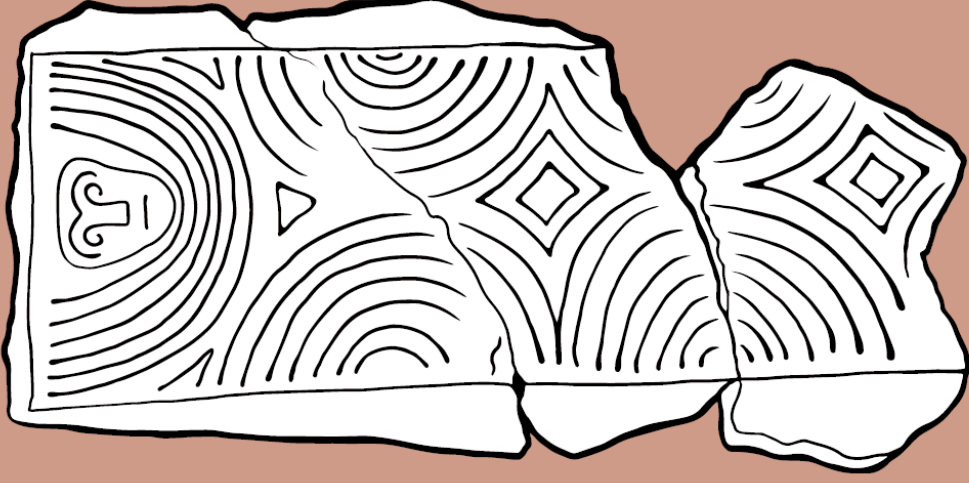


IMAGE 7: TOMBSTONE OF ST FRIDESWIDE

Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

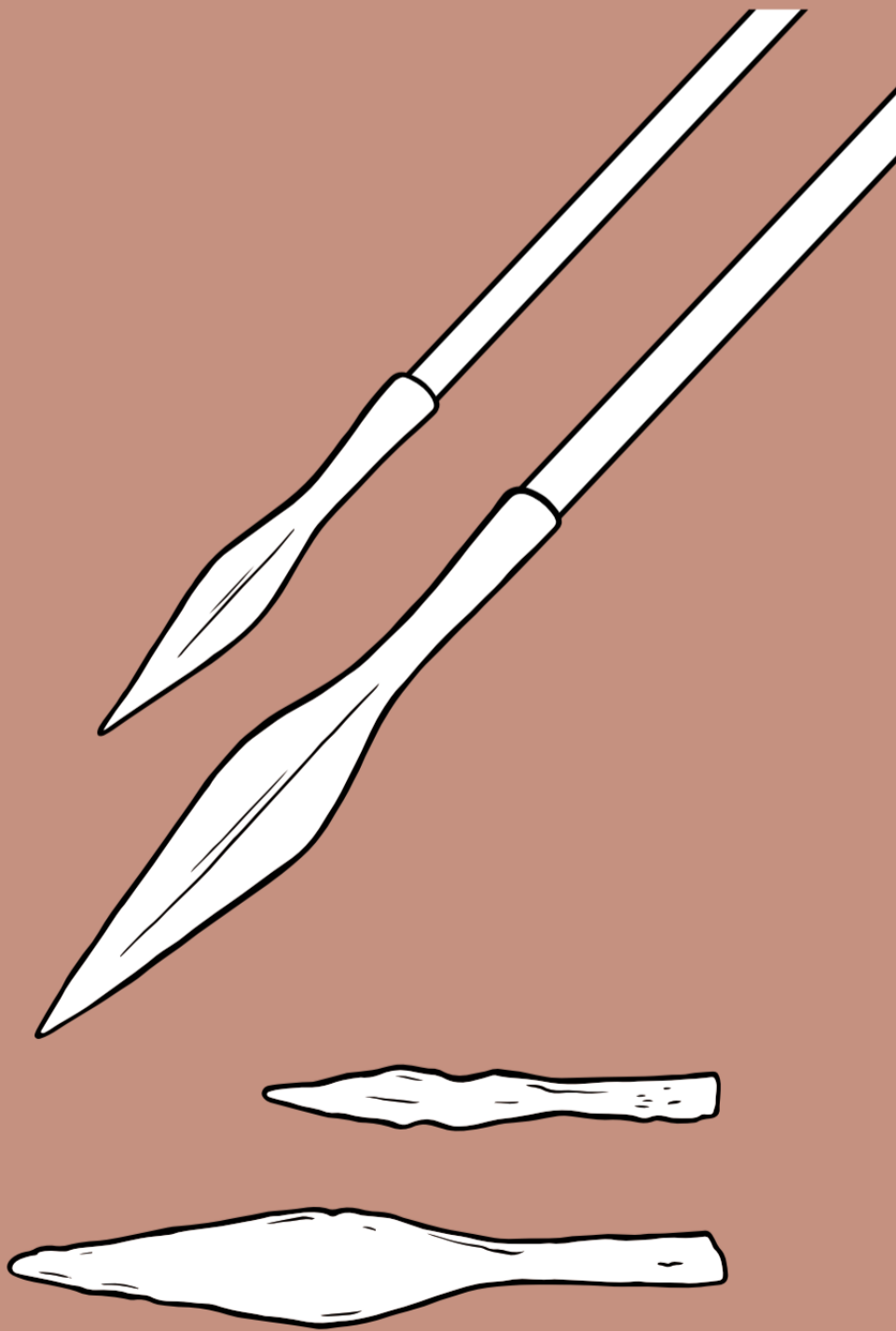
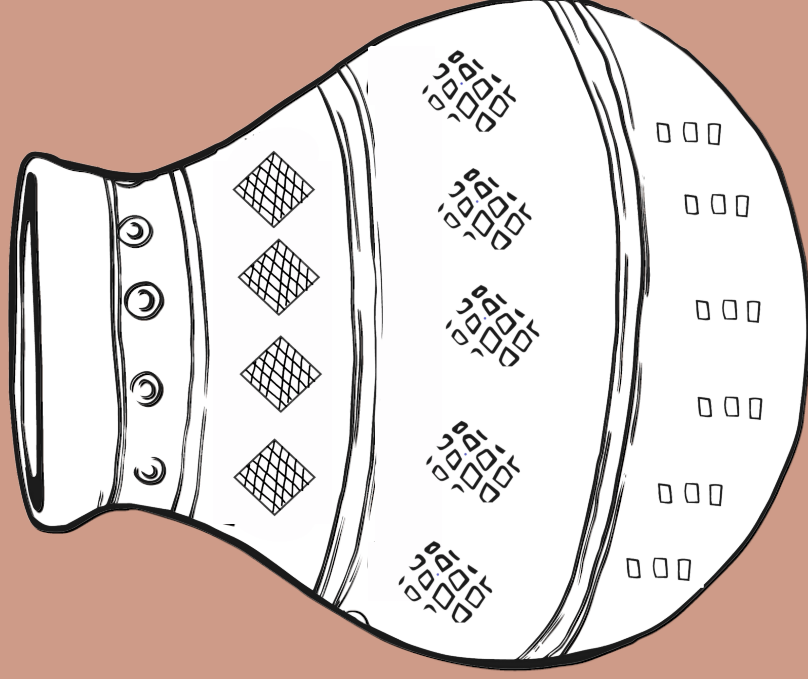
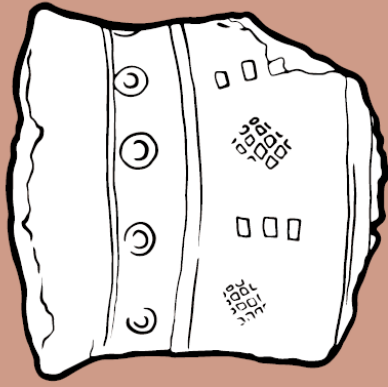


IMAGE 16: SPEARS (ARTEFACT AND POSSIBLE ORIGINAL APPEARANCE)

Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION



Rachel Hathaway
DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION

IMAGE 10: POTTERY SHERD PLUS POSSIBLE UNBROKEN APPEARANCE