

TWO BRIDLE SPURS FROM BASINGSTOKE

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DURING a recent search amongst some miscellaneous material at Reading Museum, Mr. C. J. Scott and the writer have come across two bronze bridle spurs (for the significance of this term see Reginald Smith in *Proc. Soc. Ant. Lond.* xxix 1916-17, pp. 24-41)—both from Basingstoke. Formerly they were in the collection of the late Mr. C. Cooksey, who did much excavating in the Basingstoke district at the end of the 19th century.

The first (Fig. 1) is of an Italian Early Iron Age type (B.M. Guide to the Early Iron Age Antiquities, 1925, Fig. 167). Although this bridle spur is a singular one to have been found in Hampshire, there is little doubt about the place of finding. The late Dr. Joseph Stevens, who was extremely cautious in such matters, described this particular object, in the Reading Museum Catalogue, Part I, 1896, as "a bronze bow strainer, 15th century, rare, from Basingstoke."

The second bridle spur (Fig. 2) was found with Roman remains, apparently from the excavation "on the north bank of the Loddon, in the parish of Newtown," mentioned in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 1880, p. 118. It is interesting in that it illustrates a point in Mr. Smith's paper (*op. cit.* pp. 30-31) by showing how the functioning spikes of the earlier forms have been reduced to mere ornament. In this example the ornament seems to have been adapted to resemble an animal's head.

It is, perhaps, a still further development of the form which is shown on the Snaffle-bits illustrated in "London and the Vikings" (London Museum Catalogue, No. 1, 1927, Fig. 20). Dr. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler, however, only notes, when commenting on these, that "the bosses on the side-links are reminiscent of the bosses on the Viking stirrups."

I have to thank the Curator of the Reading Museum, Mr. W. A. Smallcombe, B.Sc., for permission to reproduce the drawings.

LIZARD ORCHID.

THE Lizard Orchid (*Orchis hircina* Crantz) was brought into the Reading Museum on the 5th July, 1935, from the Odiham district. A photograph of this has been placed in the British Museum (Natural History) for record purposes. A pressed specimen from near the same locality is in the herbarium of the Reading Museum and was presented by Mr. G. W. Willis in July, 1928.

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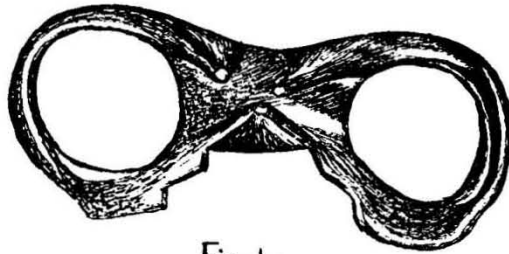
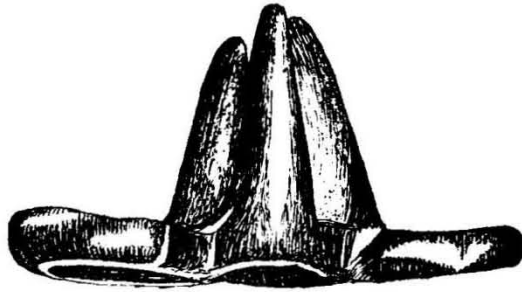


Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

*L.R.A. Grove
1936.*



1 INCHES 1

Bridle Spurs from Basingstoke.