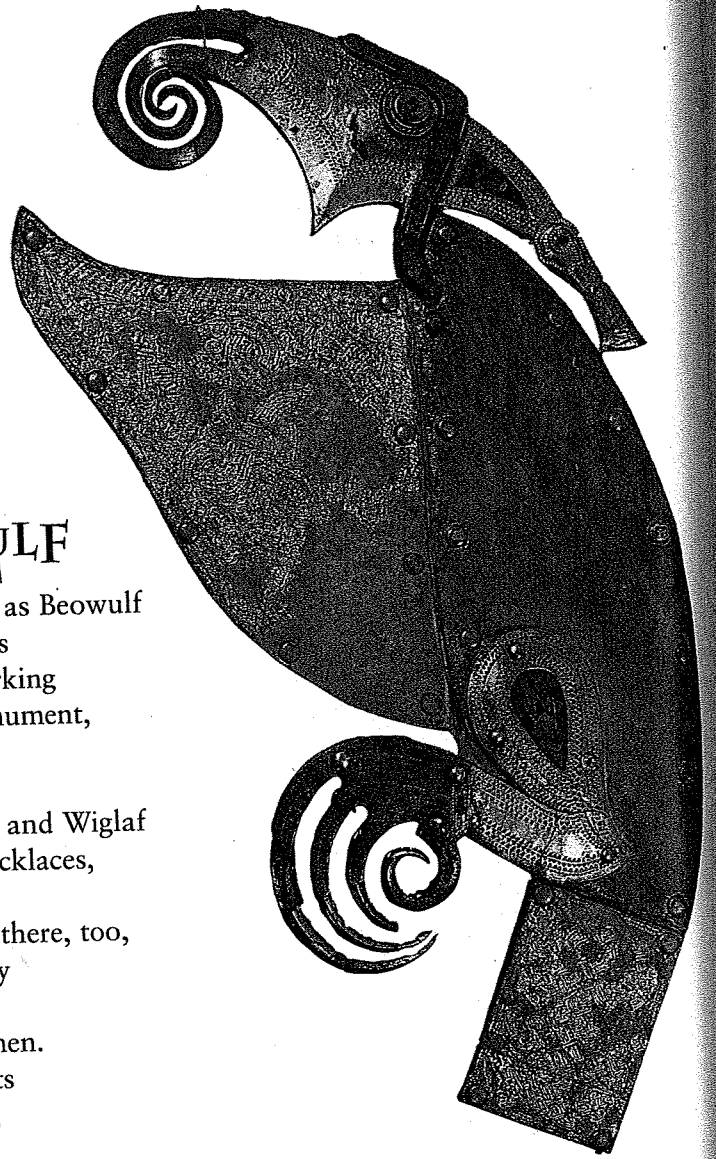


## MOURNING BEOWULF

Then the Geats built the tower, as Beowulf  
Had asked, strong and tall, so sailors  
Could find it from far and wide; working  
For ten long days they made his monument,  
875 Sealed his ashes in walls as straight  
And high as wise and willing hands  
Could raise them. And the riches he and Wiglaf  
Had won from the dragon, rings, necklaces,  
Ancient, hammered armor—all  
880 The treasures they'd taken were left there, too,  
Silver and jewels buried in the sandy  
Ground, back in the earth, again  
And forever hidden and useless to men.  
And then twelve of the bravest Geats  
885 Rode their horses around the tower,  
Telling their sorrow, telling stories  
Of their dead king and his greatness, his glory,  
Praising him for heroic deeds, for a life  
As noble as his name. So should all men  
890 Raise up words for their lords, warm  
With love, when their shield and protector leaves  
His body behind, sends his soul  
On high. And so Beowulf's followers  
Rode, mourning their beloved leader,  
895 Crying that no better king had ever  
Lived, no prince so mild, no man  
So open to his people, so deserving of praise.



Ornamental bird used as decoration on a shield, from the Sutton Hoo ship burial

**896 mild:** gentle or kindly. Do you agree that Beowulf was a mild ruler? Why or why not?