

similar lack of qualification:<sup>22</sup> "The small equal-armed pendant gold cross has a central faceted garnet boss secured by a beaded mount . . .". R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford has reproduced a drawing of the cross together with a separate diagram of the garnet which emphasizes the cruciform pattern of the facets.<sup>23</sup> In each of these descriptions there is no comment to dispel the obvious implication of the stone's originality.

The garnet is not original. This is made quite clear by James Douglas in *Nenia Britannica*:<sup>24</sup>

"Having directed some enquiries concerning this barrow to Mr. H. Rooke, of Woodhouse Place, near Mansfield, a member of our Society [of Antiquaries], and a gentleman who has frequently visited Derbyshire, to explore many curious British remains of great antiquity in that county, I received from him the following information: 'About twenty years ago, a woman picked up in a field near Winstor . . . a small brass cross of filagree-work; in the middle is a socket, which probably contained a stone. It is now in the possession of Mr. Mason of Winstor'."

Douglas also illustrated the cross, which he mistakenly took to be of brass, with its central socket empty. The present garnet must have been added between the years 1797, when *Nenia Britannica* was published, and 1835 when the cross came into Thomas Bateman's possession at the death of his father, the antiquary William Bateman.

The original stone would not have been anything like the present one. Anglo-Saxon garnets were never enhanced with multiple facets, although a single facet is sometimes found on stones set *en cabochon*.<sup>25</sup> Baldwin Brown describes and illustrates: "round, square, oval, or triangular garnets cut and polished with rounded faces, so as to make them what would be called in popular language carbuncles."<sup>26</sup> Consideration of the analogous Winstor Moor brooch<sup>27</sup> shows that this is the type of stone which the central setting is most likely to have contained.

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#### ANGLO-SAXON LYRE TUNING PEGS FROM WHITBY<sup>28</sup>

N. YORKSHIRE (FIG. 46; PL. XII, B)

Abbess Hilda founded the monastery of Whitby at Streanæshalch in 657, and it survived until the Danish destruction in 867. Simeon of Durham reports the area reoccupied c. 1075. Sir Charles Peers and C. A. Raleigh Radford excavated the Yorkshire site in 1924-5, unearthing traces of foundations of the Anglo-Saxon monastic buildings in an area at least 300 by almost 200 ft.<sup>29</sup> They recovered a considerable number of pieces of sculpture and inscribed crosses, some pottery, coins, a textile, and numerous small artifacts of miscellaneous materials, including four bone objects which they classified simply as "pegs".<sup>30</sup>

These four bone objects, now placed on permanent loan in the British Museum by Mrs W. H. Strickland (inventory numbers W. 521-524), show the distinctive characteristics of lyre tuning pegs (FIG. 46): a long tapering shaft, with a single string hole near its narrow tip, expanding to a shoulder, above which is a faceted head, coming to a blunt point, for attaching a tuning wrench.

<sup>22</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Jewellery* (Aylesbury, 1974), 76.

<sup>23</sup> *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology* (London, 1974), 235, fig. 40, d, e.

<sup>24</sup> *Nenia Britannica* (London, 1793), 68. The illustration is in the vignette on p. 67.

<sup>25</sup> e.g. on the necklets from Brassington Moor (Derbys.), and Desborough (Northants).

<sup>26</sup> G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, iv (London, 1915), 424.

<sup>27</sup> *Catalogue of the Bateman Collection* (1899), 223.

<sup>28</sup> I wish to thank R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford and Myrtle Bruce-Mitford for their generous assistance with this article.

<sup>29</sup> C. Peers and C. A. R. Radford, 'The Saxon monastery of Whitby', *Archaeologia*, LXXXIX (1943), 27-88, pls. xviii-xxx.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 71, items 110-12, fig. 21.

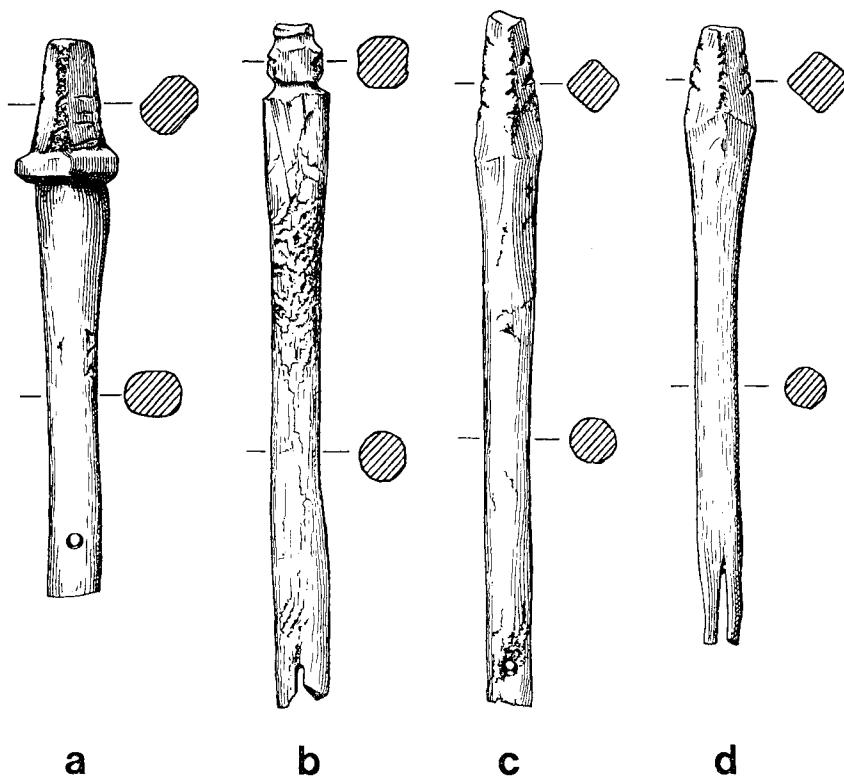


FIG. 46

## LYRE TUNING PEGS, WHITBY, N. YORKS.

British Museum registration nos.: *a.* = W.521; *b.* = W.522; *c.* = W.523; *d.* = W.524  
 Sc. 3:2 (drawing by Miss M. O. Miller)

## CATALOGUE

1. W.521, Peers and Radford, no. 110 (FIG. 46, a): 55 mm. long. Shaft, 40 mm. long, tapers from diameter of 5 mm. at tip to 8.5 mm. at shoulder. Shoulder has rounded band, 3 mm. wide, 9 mm. diam. Head tapers from 5-6 mm. at shoulder to 2.5-5 mm. at point, which shows slight chipping. Hole, 5 mm. from tip, is 1.5 mm. diam. Head edges have nicks toward shoulder end, as one would expect if some sort of socketed object served as tuning wrench. Hole has several chips along perimeter, but no striations from strings.

2. W.522, Peers and Radford, no. 111 (FIG. 46, b): broken, now 67 mm. long. Shaft, 60 mm. long, tapers from diameter of 5 mm. at tip to 5-6 mm. at shoulder, with slight reverse entasis halfway along. Stepped head tapers to 4 mm. at point, with wrench damage on edges of both steps, especially outer one, now nearly round. Although most of tip has broken away, it originally contained not string hole, but slot 1 mm. wide. Scratches run perpendicular to shaft across slot, more likely result of whittling and smoothing than string damage. Whole peg carelessly worked with rough surface.

3. W.523, Peers and Radford, no. 112 (FIG. 46, c): 69 mm. long, somewhat whiter and heavier than other three. Shaft, 55 mm. long, tapers from diameter of 4 mm. at tip to 5.5-6 mm. at shoulder, beginning without break reverse taper of head to irregular point about 3 by 4 mm., crudely finished off at angle. Edges show wrench damage all along length, growing worse towards shoulder. The 1 mm. hole, 4 mm. from tip, has perimeter chipped perpendicular to shaft, and some broad grooving in same places.

4. W.524, Peers and Radford, no. 112 (FIG. 46, d): 61 mm. long. Shaft, 51 mm. long, begins in squared cross section 3 by 3.5 mm. at tip, and tapers to 5.75 mm. square at shoulder, which blends without break into reverse taper of head, ending in rough point, 4 mm. square. Edges show wrench damage except at very point, as do faces. Tip ends in 1 mm. slot, 6 mm. deep, with convex rounding of slot bottom. Seen in cross section, this peg appears slightly faceted all along shaft.

Prior to this new identification, only six surviving lyre tuning pegs from the early middle ages were known, those found at Sutton Hoo (Suffolk) in 1939.<sup>31</sup> Because of their poplar or willow composition, they had badly shrivelled and provided little data beyond that derived from the better preserved peg holes in the yoke of the Sutton Hoo lyre. The four newly identified Whitby pegs furnish further insights into the nature of Anglo-Saxon lyres and lyre-playing. They confirm Miss Bruce-Mitford's exclusion of metal strings,<sup>32</sup> since none shows any sharp wear or metal staining around the holes or slots. The damage to the appropriate areas of the head edges confirms the use of a tuning wrench, and manuscript illuminations often show David using one.<sup>33</sup> However, no one has yet identified any surviving object as a tuning wrench, although I suspect that several have been excavated.

Tuning pegs require perfect matching with their yoke holes to avoid slippage of the strings, yet crude workmanship characterizes all four pegs. W.521 curves slightly, precluding a tight fit, as would W.522's concave entasis and W.524's faceted shaft. Surely a lyre equipped with such pegs would require constant retuning, perhaps for each song.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, the placement of holes and slots might tighten the pegs somewhat. The Sutton Hoo pegs have holes near the shoulders rather than at the tips,<sup>35</sup> so that the strings tend to pull their pegs towards the wider end of their tapered holes, thus loosening them. These new pegs would be pulled tighter against the taper into their holes, perhaps minimizing the loosening effect of the crudeness of the shafts. But of course the string pulling on the smaller (and weaker) tip of the peg would tend to cause breakage, as perhaps seen in W.522. The ease of restringing slots might offset the weakness of slots as compared with holes.

The four pegs lack an exact archaeological context, and, therefore, precise dating; we cannot rule out the possibility that they may originate from the post-conquest strata at Whitby Abbey. They may, also, have formed part of some stringed instrument other than a lyre, such as a harp. Harps first appear in Europe in the middle ages in 9th-century manuscript illuminations.<sup>36</sup> But the association of the pegs with the other excavated objects (including bone pins, styli and other objects indicating a flourishing bone industry) clearly attributable to the period 657–867,<sup>37</sup> and the rarity of harps in England at so early a date, argue for interpreting them as parts of a round lyre.<sup>38</sup> As such, these pegs, found appropriately at the very monastery where Caedmon refused the lyre passed to him at that famous beer party,<sup>39</sup> join the growing evidence for this universal instrument of the early Germans.

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<sup>31</sup> M. Bruce-Mitford and R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Sutton Hoo lyre, "Beowulf" and the origins of the frame harp' in R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology, Sutton Hoo and Other Discoveries* (London, 1974), 188–9, pl. 40. For other lyres and parts see F. Crane, *Extant Medieval Musical Instruments* (Iowa City, 1972), 10–14. Pegs from the Cologne lyre disintegrated when exposed to air; F. Fremersdorf, 'Zwei wichtige Frankengräber aus Köln', *IPEK*, xv–xvi (1941–2), 124–39.

<sup>32</sup> Op. cit. in note 31, 189.

<sup>33</sup> For example, St Gallen Stiftsbibliothek Codex Nr. 21, p. 5, pictured in H. Steger, *David Rex et Propheta* (Nuremberg, 1961), pl. 11; Bibliothèque Nationale MS. lat. 11550, fol. 7v, in C. Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments* (New York, 1940), pl. 15; Ivrea Bibliotheca Capitolare MS. Nr. 85, fol. 23v, and Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek MS. lat. 343, fol. 12v, in F. Behn, *Musikleben in Altertum und frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1954), pls. 89 and 88 respectively.

<sup>34</sup> Miss Bruce-Mitford suggests to me that the "pegs might have been rejects; if so one would not necessarily expect to find a lyre with them. . . . The fact that they are all slightly different from one another (and not very well made) reinforces this theory". Perhaps so, but we would not expect to find such extensive wrench damage (implying use) on rejects.

<sup>35</sup> Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 31, pl. 40.

<sup>36</sup> J. Rimmer, *The Irish Harp* (Cork, 1969), 13 ff.; R. Rensch, *The Harp, Its History, Technique and Repertoire* (New York, 1969), chap. 2. See further, R. B. Armstrong, *The Irish and Highland Harps* (Edinburgh, 1904; reprinted New York, 1969), pl. ii, opp. p. 160.

<sup>37</sup> Op. cit. in note 29, 46; cf. C. A. R. Radford, 'A medieval leaden cross from Whitby', *Antiq. Jnl.*, xx, (1940), 508–9.

<sup>38</sup> Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 31, 192–3.

<sup>39</sup> Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., Oxford, 1969), iv, 24.