

Notes and News

A *TUTULUS* BROOCH FROM KIRMINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE (S. HUMBERSIDE) (FIG. 1)

The presence of an extensive Romano-British site at Kirmington, S. Humberside (formerly Lincolnshire), has been known for many years. Discoveries made during the construction of the second world war airfield¹ and subsequently as a result of ploughing, have been prolific; the site, SE 095114 (centre), now enjoys a wide reputation among local coin collectors.

That an extensive and successful settlement should have developed at Kirmington can be readily understood. The site lies in a broad valley through the northern Wolds which makes a natural route running from E. to W., and close to Kirmington the valley is traversed by another presumed prehistoric route which serves as a bridleway and as a boundary between numerous parishes, and which crosses the Wolds in a south-easterly direction from the R. Humber at S. Ferriby. Further evidence of the local importance of the position is provided by the defensive earthwork known as Yarborough Camp which stands on the flank of the Wolds overlooking the Kirmington Gap about 1½ km. NW. of the main settlement.

In 1966 the first of a small series of iron age coins was found at Kirmington, and an examination of recent surface finds, many still in private possession, suggests that the site was already in occupation during the last century of the pre-Roman iron age.²

The medieval and modern village of Kirmington lies immediately E. of the site and it is not surprising therefore that a small number of later medieval objects are included among the material recently recovered.

Several collectors who regularly fieldwalk at Kirmington have readily agreed to make their finds available for examination and it is proposed in due course to publish drawings and descriptions of much of the material recovered from the site in recent years. During the preliminary stages of this work it was realized that among the prolific Romano-British finds from Kirmington is a small but significant group of objects which suggests the presence of Germanic elements on the site both in the late 4th or early 5th century and later in the 6th century. It was felt that the importance of this material justifies its publication in advance of the full collection, and the owners of the objects, Miss H. Sands and A. Harrison, have kindly co-operated with this proposal.

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION

The most important piece of Germanic metalwork from the extensive Romano-British settlement site at Kirmington is undoubtedly the so-called *tutulus* brooch (FIG. 1, No. 1). It may be described:

Bronze. Base plate with eight roundels on the edge, evenly spaced; overall diameter 27 mm. Plain cone of *tutulus*-form³ in sheet bronze, with broad undecorated flange and eight arched roundels on the edge matching those of the base plate (only three survive); the knob is plain and spherical, with small moulded collar, and complements the decoration of the edge-roundels: height 15 mm. Spring and pin of one piece: pin-catch 17 mm. tall, widening slightly towards the base-plate. In possession of Miss H. Sands.

This brooch-type is found on the NW. European mainland in the later part of the Roman iron age, but is no longer current in the migration period as it affects England: it is accordingly exceedingly rare in this country. It is usually treated by continental

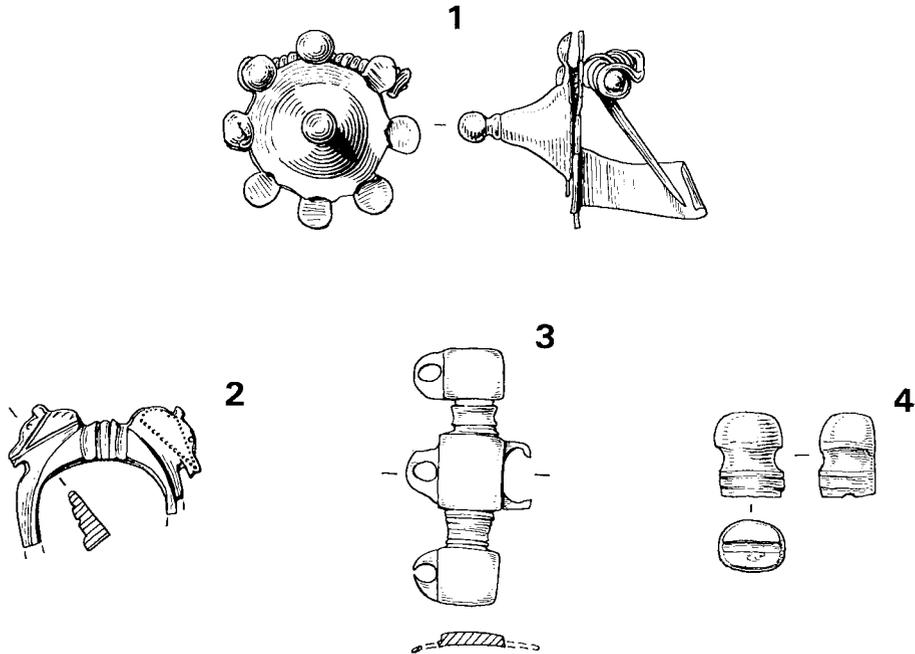


FIG. 1

LATE ROMAN AND GERMANIC METALWORK,
KIRMINGTON, S. HUMBERSIDE. Sc. 1:1
(drawings by Mrs Marion Cox)

scholars as a specialized sub-category of disc brooches (*Scheibenfibeln*). It shares their construction principle of a base plate with spring and catch attached to one side and decorative element to the other. For this category, the decorative element consists of a hollow cone, which is supported internally by a rod whose one end is riveted in a central hole in the base plate and other end pierces the apex of the cone. A knob completes the assembly and holds the cone in place. This composite nature most clearly marks the brooch out as Germanic as against its Roman provincial counterparts. At the same time, the various components of this brooch-type — knob, cone, supporting rod, base plate with rivet hole, even spring and catch — can be sufficiently distinctive individually to be identifiable when separate. Indeed it is mostly only detached components that are found. This is the case not only in cremation cemeteries where the effect of the fire and deposition of already broken or fragmentary objects would produce this tendency, but even in inhumation graves and settlement contexts. The completeness of the Kirmington piece is therefore in itself remarkable. It is entirely of bronze. Most brooches of this type have their components all of a single metal, usually bronze but not infrequently silver. The amber cones of the pair from Hassleben⁴ are exceptional.

The remains of only two other *tutulus* brooches have so far been recognized in England. The more complete comes from the mixed-rite Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Abingdon, Oxon. (formerly Berks.).⁵ It came from the inhumation grave, B106, of an adult female, and had been repaired before deposition. Associated with it was an applied brooch with simple running spirals of a sort that could be taken as early in that brooch typology. In the published report, E. T. Leeds took the *tutulus* brooch to be "... a treasured jewel, damaged and repaired, but no heirloom..." and cites parallels in Denmark and N. Germany of assumed late 5th-century date.⁶ More recent assessment

of the pottery from this cemetery has shown a Germanic presence there from rather earlier in the 5th century ("... within a generation or so of the breakdown of Roman rule in Britain and very possibly before the final extinction of Romano-British life...") and provides a context for the *tutulus* brooch somewhat closer in date to that suggested by continental evidence.⁷ The second is a base plate only, from grave III of the famous early graves at Dorchester-on-Thames (Oxon.).⁸

Like these other English examples, the Kirmington *tutulus* does not fit readily into the main typologies developed in recent analysis of the continental material both within and outside the Imperial frontier.⁹ According to the analysis offered by Sigrid Thomas in a comprehensive study of *Scheibenfibeln* in the Germanic lands outside the Empire, the Kirmington brooch would fall into her Type B, Series 3. It is small in that series, both in diameter — 26 mm. against a range of 29 to 63 mm. — and in height of the *tutulus* — 15 mm. against a range of 9 to 100 mm. which averages 50 to 60 mm. This smallness is perhaps rather more in keeping with Thomas's Type B, Series 2. It is also in the two earlier series of Type B that the Kirmington brooch finds parallels for its decorative roundels. The splendid pair of brooches from Hassleben, Kr. Erfurt (Thomas Nos. 214 and 215, Tf. IV) has eleven each of fully-round form, and the example from Libochovice, Czechoslovakia (Thomas No. 510) has eight as at Kirmington. Others have numbers from six to twenty-four, generally of semicircular form comparable to those found on late Roman plate brooches.¹⁰ Kirmington's plain cone and broad undecorated flange similarly find analogies within Type B.¹¹

The date-range of brooches of Thomas's Type B, Series 3, on the basis of dated groups is approximately A.D. 250–400: Series 1 and 2 begin a little earlier and end by the mid 4th century.¹² The overall distribution of Type B is very much concentrated between the Elbe and Weser and in southern Schleswig-Holstein: there are outliers only in Poland (1), in Bohemia (1) and on the Rhine (2). That of Series 3 specifically is still more markedly centred on the lower Weser.¹³ Indeed, the *tutulus* brooch-type is confined to just that area, and in several instances just those cemeteries, in which Dr Myres finds close parallels for the earliest pottery in the cremation cemeteries of eastern England.¹⁴ Seven of the seventeen in Thomas's catalogue come from the great cemetery of Westerwanna, Kr. Land Hadeln. A recent doctoral study of the material from that cemetery broadly agrees with the dating of Thomas in assigning the *tutulus* brooch-type to the site's date-phase C1–C2 (A.D. 150–350).¹⁵

Böhme's authoritative study has shown the *tutulus* brooch as a characteristic element in the early Germanic finds within the Empire in N. France and the Low Countries, with a range of occurrence from the first half of the 4th century to the beginning of the 5th century.¹⁶ In form, the Kirmington example would appear typologically earlier than the latest developments into tall forms of elaborate construction catalogued in Böhme's work.

It is not impossible that this rare brooch-type was an heirloom of considerable age at Kirmington, but this is not indicated by any evidence of repair. The accumulation of chronological evidence, and especially that from possibly comparable social contexts in N. Gaul, suggests that the brooch may have been in contemporary use with at least the latest phases of Romano-British occupation at Kirmington.

Also from fieldwork at Kirmington and of relevance to this discussion is a late Roman belt buckle (FIG. 1, No. 2) of Hawkes and Dunning type IB.¹⁷ It may be described:

Cast bronze. Loop only, with lower sides, hinge-bar and tongue missing; width 25 mm. Moulded on one face, flat the other. Dolphins stylized to point of non-existence, but residual triple moulding of the jaws and pellets. Horse-head clear — ears, punch-dot eyes, mane indicated, and reins/bridle by grooves on the left side and dots on the right. In the possession of Miss H. Sands.

This buckle adds to a growing catalogue of such late Roman buckles known in Lincolnshire and S. Humberside, now numbering seven. It is nevertheless the first of type IB from this county. The others are from Osgodby (IA; *Medieval Archaeol.*, v (1961),

309), Dragonby (IIA; *Britannia*, v (1974), 387 and fig. 3.4), The Park, Lincoln (IIA; *Britannia*, v (1974), 387 and fig. 3.5), Saltersford (IIA; *Medieval Archaeol.*, v (1961), 57 and fig. 18k), Sleaford (IIB; *Medieval Archaeol.*, v (1961), 57 and fig. 19b) and Hibaldstow (IIIA; *Britannia*, VIII (1977), 390 and fig. 18). All apart from that from Sleaford are from Roman sites lasting in date at least into the late 4th century. Indeed, there are now few of the large Roman settlements and towns of the county which have not metalwork or pottery of the latest Roman or earliest Saxon sorts from them or their immediate vicinity. Kirmington itself has produced a sherd of Romano-Saxon pottery in addition to this metalwork.¹⁸

This new discovery, taken in conjunction with the example from Osgodby which itself has not yet been included in published catalogues, has a marked impact on the distribution map of type I buckles (see most recently *Britannia*, v (1974), 391). Hitherto the distribution has appeared southerly, excepting a group around the R. Tees, with a westerly bias. Though the spread into N. Lincolnshire is thin, the effect is to align the distribution much more closely with that of type II (map, *Britannia*, v (1974), 392) in extent if not in weight of numbers.

Mrs Hawkes considers type I buckles to be of British manufacture during the last three decades of the 4th century, with a possible life into the early 5th.¹⁹ This may give the Kirmington buckle a contemporary currency with the *tutulus* brooch discussed above.

In considering possible wider implications of these finds, a point of special importance is that the *tutulus* brooch-type is female apparel. Though there can be no direct association between such surface finds as there is with a sealed grave group, the implied presence, as represented by the belt buckle, in late Roman N. Lincolnshire offers a parallel to the famous burials at Dorchester-on-Thames, and is an important addition to the evidence relating to 'soldiers and settlers' in late Roman Britain. For the essential identification of a Germanic culture-group within the Empire with Germanic peoples beyond it rests heavily on the women's brooch types and the fashions of dress which they indicate. Böhme has done much to document that relationship in N. Gaul, but the evidence is still sparse for Britain.²⁰

It may, indeed, be possible to envisage a social and historical context for these finds with a greater measure of confidence, thanks to Böhme's work on the early Germanic grave finds of N. Gaul and his historical interpretation of them.²¹ For his study has important implications for the comparable material in England. Böhme shows that in northern Gaul Germanic people were settled within the Empire from about the reign of Valentinian. While the women maintained Germanic fashions, the men came to be equipped in a manner common to a military zone along the whole NW. frontier; and burials of both sexes display considerable wealth compared with those in *Germania libera* and a pride in their military standing. They may mark out people with the favoured status of *foederati*.

Two further pieces of Germanic metalwork from the site at Kirmington are a detached knob from an Anglo-Saxon cruciform brooch and the 'eye' half of a pair of wrist clasps (FIG. 1, Nos. 3, 4). They date to the 6th century. It would be unwise to take these without further corroboration as evidence of continuous Anglo-Saxon settlement of the site. Yet they point at least to re-use in some form of this favoured site in the early medieval period.²² Further work in defining the relationship between this and the adjacent later medieval village is much to be desired.

P. EVERSON AND G. C. KNOWLES

NOTES

¹ H. E. Dudley, *Early Days in North-West Lincolnshire* (Scunthorpe, 1949), 170.

² J. May, 'An Iron-age spout from Kirmington, Lincolnshire', *Antiq. Jnl.*, LI (1971), 253-9; and idem, *Prehistoric Lincolnshire* (History of Lincolnshire, Volume 1, Lincoln, 1976), 169-72 and 181-2. Interpretations of cropmarks recorded at the site have recently been published by J. K. S. St Joseph, *Jnl. Roman Studies*, LXVII (1977), 158-9 and Pl. XVI, 2, and by D. N. Riley, *Britannia*, VIII (1977), 189 and Fig. 1.

³ For the *tutuli* of the continental European bronze age which give their name to the distinctive shape see Jan Filip, *Enzyklopädisches Handbuch zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte Europas* (Prague, 1969), II (L-Z), 1518.

⁴ W. Schulz and R. Zahn, *Das Fürstengrab von Hassleben*, Römisch-Germanische Forschungen, VII (Berlin and Leipzig, 1933), 5-6, Taf. 1, 1 and 6, 12; and below.

⁵ E. T. Leeds and D. B. Harden, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Abingdon, Berkshire* (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1936), 51-2, Fig. 7 and pl. xvi.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷ Myres in M. Biddle, H. T. Lambrick and J. N. L. Myres, 'The early history of Abingdon, Berkshire, and its abbey', *Medieval Archaeol.*, XII (1968), 26-69, esp. 35-41. Leeds himself later conceded that the brooch was "... probably of earlier date than previously suggested ...", *Oxoniensia*, XVII-XVIII (1952-3), 73.

⁸ Joan R. Kirk and E. T. Leeds, 'Three early Saxon graves from Dorchester, Oxon.', *Oxoniensia*, XVII-XVIII (1952-3), Fig. 30, 2: this was identified by H. W. Böhme, *Germanische Grabfunde des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts zwischen unterer Elbe und Loire*, Münchener Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte, XIX (München, 1974), 21, but erroneously referred to as Grave II.

⁹ Böhme, *op. cit.* in note 8, 19 ff., and S. Thomas, 'Die germanischen Scheibenfibeln der Römischen Kaiserzeit in freien Germanien', *Berliner Jahrbuch*, VII (1967), 1-183.

¹⁰ For Type B generally see Thomas, *op. cit.* in note 9, 31-42. Examples with semicircular roundels are from Cheine, Kr. Stendal (Thomas catalogue no. 45), Rötha-Geschwitz, Kr. Borna (Thomas catalogue no. 144), Wechmar, Kr. Gotha (Thomas catalogue nos. 222 and 223), Słoponowo, Poland (Thomas catalogue no. 538): also the brooch from Csongrád/Szentcs, Hungary (*ibid.*, Taf. iv).

¹¹ e.g. Cheine, *ibid.*, Abb. 13, 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, 40 and Abb. 26, 1. Thomas allows some survival for Series 3 into the early years of the 5th century, *ibid.*, 70.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Karte 5.

¹⁴ e.g. J. N. L. Myres, *Anglo-Saxon Pottery and the Settlement of England* (Oxford, 1969), 8 ff. and 71 ff.; and J. N. L. Myres and Barbara Green, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Caistor-by-Norwich and Marshall, Norfolk*, Society of Antiquaries Research Report, XXX (London, 1973), 43 ff.

¹⁵ Olav Röhrer-Ertl, *Untersuchungen am Material des Urnenfriedhofes von Westerwanna, Kr. Land Hadeln* (Hamburg, 1971), 27-9.

¹⁶ Böhme, *op. cit.* in note 8, 34-6.

¹⁷ S. C. Hawkes and G. C. Dunning, 'Soldiers and settlers in Britain, 4th to 5th century', *Medieval Archaeol.*, V (1961), 1-70.

¹⁸ *Lincolnshire History and Archaeol.*, II (1967), 38. Some impression of the quantity and distribution of the relevant material may be gained from the juxtaposition of late Roman metalwork, Romano-Saxon pottery and the earliest Anglo-Saxon pottery in D. Longley, *The Anglo-Saxon Connexion*, British Archaeological Reports, XXII (Oxford, 1975), 1-4, though this national survey is far from up to date for Lincolnshire.

¹⁹ *Britannia*, V (1972), 387.

²⁰ Böhme, *op. cit.* in note 8, *passim*; Hawkes and Dunning, *op. cit.* in note 17.

²¹ Böhme, *op. cit.*, 187 ff.; and for an important earlier statement of similar ideas see J. Werner, 'Kriegergräber aus der ersten Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts zwischen Schelde und Weser', *Bonner Jahrbuch*, CLVIII (1958), 372-413. See also the review of Böhme's work by Sonia Chadwick Hawkes in *Archaeol. Jnl.*, CXXXII (1975), 333-4.

²² P. V. Addyman and J. B. Whitwell, 'Some middle Saxon pottery types in Lincolnshire', *Antiq. Jnl.*, L (1970), 98.

RECENT FINDS OF PRE-NORMAN SCULPTURE FROM GILLING WEST, N. YORKSHIRE (FIG. 2; PLS. XX, XXI)

INTRODUCTION

Two large fragments of pre-Norman sculpture were recently recovered by Peter Wenham from work by contractors to the side of Gilling Beck (NZ 179053) at Gilling West, near Richmond, N. Yorkshire (FIG. 2), and not far from where a Viking period sword was also found recently. Mr Wenham arranged photography of the stones as recovered, which he kindly made available for purposes of publication, and contacted one of the authors (JTL) of this note. The stones and site were examined in February 1977, and, although full publication will be in the projected Yorkshire volume of the *Corpus of Pre-Norman Sculpture of England*, they seemed of sufficient interest to merit a preliminary note to bring them to the attention of others. They have been on temporary loan to the Department of Archaeology, Durham University, for purposes of study, but will shortly be returned to the care of the N. Yorkshire County Council at Richmond.