

Building A4, fitting the Northern system, was constructed¹⁸ in Phase IIIC which marked 'an impressive expansion of the township' and 'appears in all respects most convincingly to reflect the power and order of the Deiran Edwin's reign'. In the 11th century the church was 'to be responsible for just weights and measures',¹⁹ a responsibility, amongst others, taken over from the kings. If it was Edwin's responsibility to maintain standard measures it is, perhaps, not surprising that the power and order of his administration should be reflected in the major building work of his reign.

P. J. HUGGINS

NOTES

¹ B. Hope-Taylor, *Yeaving: an Anglo-British centre of early Northumbria* (London, 1977).

² *Ibid.*, 147.

³ K. A. and W. J. Rodwell, pers. comm.

⁴ P. J. Huggins, 'Excavation of a Belgic and Romano-British farm with Middle Saxon cemetery and churches at Nazeingbury, Essex', *Essex Archaeol. Hist.*, 10 (1978), 64-65.

⁵ Hope-Taylor, *op. cit.* in note 1, 129.

⁶ Huggins, *loc. cit.* in note 4.

⁷ F. Petrie, *Weights and Measures* (London, 1934), 5-6.

⁸ F. G. Skinner, *Weights and measures* (Science Museum Survey, London, 1967), 91.

⁹ P. Grierson, *English Linear measures* (Reading, 1972), 14.

¹⁰ Hope-Taylor, *op. cit.* in note 1, n. 70.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, fig. 33.

¹² *Ibid.*, figs. 68, 69.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 259.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, fig. 64.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, fig. 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fig. 71.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹⁹ D. B. Loomis, 'Regnum and sacerdotium', in P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (eds), *England before the Conquest* (Cambridge, 1971), 143.

P. KIDSON writes: It should be noted that what has been designated the 'Northern foot' by modern writers is probably to be equated with the *Pes Drusianus*, a foot of eighteen Roman digits in use among the Tungri by the last century B.C., and which occurs frequently in the pre-metric systems of Italy. As with other measurement systems, the ultimate origin of what was to become the English rod or perch lay in the Roman rather than in the Germanic world.

SOME LATE SAXON FINDS FROM LILLA HOWE, N. YORKS. AND THEIR CONTEXT (Fig. 4; Pl. xrv)

The purpose of this note is to draw attention to two gold discs and four silver strap-ends said to be from the Bronze Age barrow known as Lilla Howe, N. Yorks. (SE88929868), and to consider the implications their date has for the frequent attribution of the barrow as the burial place of the Anglian noble Lilla, murdered in A.D. 626. The story concerning Lilla, as recorded by Bede, is as follows:

... there came to the kingdom an assassin whose name was Eomer, who had been sent by Cwichelm, King of the West Saxons, hoping to deprive King Edwin of his Kingdom and his life... He came on Easter Day to the King's hall which then stood by the River Derwent. He entered the hall on the pretence of delivering a message from his lord, and while the cunning rascal was expounding his pretended mission, he suddenly leapt up, drew the sword from beneath his cloak, and made a rush at the King. Lilla, a most devoted thegn, saw this, but not having a shield in his hand to protect the King from death, he quickly interposed his own body to receive the blow. His foe thrust the weapon with such force that he killed the thegn and wounded the King as well through his dead body.¹

From their first mention in print in 1871 the discs and strap-ends were said to be 'probably' from Lilla's grave,² a likelihood converted to a certainty by Mr and Mrs

F. Elgee who were able to write in 1933 of the 'only known Anglian interment in a Bronze Age barrow on the Eastern Moorlands [that] can be directly associated with an historical event. . . Lilla was undoubtedly buried in Lilla Howe, . . .'.³ Largely thanks to this latter identification the notion that Lilla Howe contained a high status Anglian secondary burial has entered the archaeological and historical literature.⁴ However, an examination of these discs and strap-ends, now in the Mayer collection in the County Museum, Liverpool, shows that they post-date Lilla's burial by at least two centuries.

THE FINDS AND THEIR DISCOVERY

Description of finds

Pair of gold discs

Gold disc (accession number 12.6.79.15; Pl. xiv, A, bottom left.) Circular gold sheet with gold filigree decoration dividing the upper face into an inner and outer zone. The inner zone has five central granules, the four outer granules each connected to two filigree scrolls curving outwards from the centre. Each scroll curves inwards to meet the scroll projecting from the adjacent granule, then outwards again from a dividing loop. A fleur-de-lis effect is thereby created. The outer zone has running scroll extending round the disc. The back of the object is plain.

Diameter 36 mm.

Gold disc (12.6.79.14; Pl. xiv, A, bottom right). This is virtually identical in construction and decoration to the first disc, but has only four granules in the centre.

Four silver strap-ends

Silver strap-end (12.6.79.18; Pl. xiv, A, top left; Fig. 4). At the terminal is a formalized animal head in relief. The snout is plain, the eyes round, and the ears formalized. The forehead bears a triangular impression. At the split end there are four holes for two rivets. Between the rivet holes is a scroll design. The long sides each have a beaded edge. A single line of rings between two solid lines encloses the central panel. In this there is a monstrous animal form, the body marked with incised lines. The head, with open jaws, has a protruding tongue, which crosses the body to terminate in scroll-like extensions. Tendrils and foliage occupy the remaining area of the panel. The back of the object is plain.

Length 63 mm.

Silver strap-end (12.6.79.17; Pl. xiv, A, top second from left; Fig. 4). At the terminal is a formalized animal head in relief. The snout is plain, the eyes round, the ears formalized. The split end is incomplete, but there are traces of the original four holes for the rivets. Between the remains of the holes are the vestiges of a scroll design. The long sides originally each had a beaded edge, but these are now partly missing towards the split end and rather indistinct for the remainder of the length of both sides. A single line of rings between two solid lines encloses the central panel. The rings are increasingly indistinct towards the terminal end of the object. In the central panel are three animal heads, two on one side of the panel and one on the other. A fourth head, to make a pair on each side of the panel, may have originally existed but been lost in the general obscuring of the decoration towards the terminal end of the panel. The clearest one of the pair of heads and the single head can both be seen to have gaping jaws. The bodies of these creatures are interwoven and help to form the ribbon-like interlace covering the remainder of the panel. The back of the object is plain.

Length 61.5 mm.

Silver strap-end (12.6.79.16; Pl. xiv, A, top second from right, Fig. 4). At the terminal is a formalized animal head in relief. The snout is plain, the eyes round, and the ears formalized. At the split end there are four holes for two rivets, only one of the lower holes out of the four now remaining open. Between the rivet holes is a scroll design. The long sides each have a beaded edge. A single line of rings between the solid lines encloses the central panel. In this there is a monstrous animal form, the body of which is embellished with incised lines. The animal's tongue extends from its gaping jaws and lies across its body, terminating in scroll-like structures. Tendrils and leaves occupy the remainder of the panel. The back of the object is plain.

Length 62 mm.

Silver strap-end (12.6.79.19; Pl. xiv, A, top right; Fig. 4). At the terminal is a formalized animal head in relief. The snout is plain, the eyes round, the ears formalized. At the split end there are four holes for

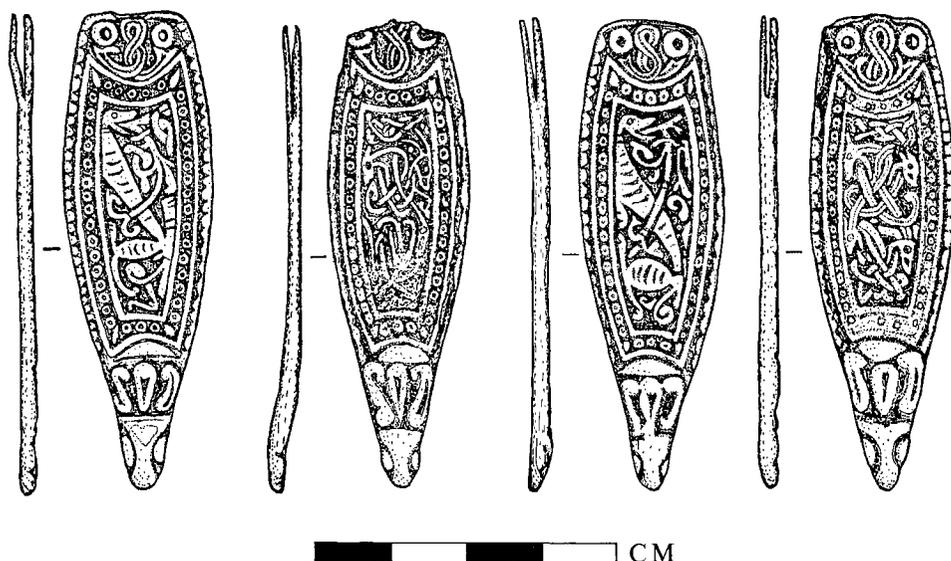


FIG. 4

Lilla Howe, North Yorkshire. Late Saxon silver strap-ends. Scale 1 : 1

two rivets. Between the rivet holes is a scroll design. The long sides each have a beaded edge. A single line of rings between two solid lines encloses the central panel. The rings become less well defined towards the terminal end of the object. In the central panel are four animal heads, with gaping jaws, two on each side of the panel. The bodies of these creatures are interwoven and help to form the ribbon-like interlace covering the remainder of the panel. The back of the object is plain. Length 62.5 mm.

All six items have been published before, but not together. The two gold discs were illustrated and discussed in 1961 by Professor V. I. Evison, who suggested that they may be English, possibly Northumbrian, products, apparently of the 9th century.⁵ However their closest parallels seem to be Scandinavian and both Dr D. M. Wilson and Mr D. A. Hinton feel they could well be imports, the latter favouring a date as late as the 10th century.⁶

The strap-ends have also been illustrated before, in an article by E. T. Leeds in 1911,⁷ although he was not aware of their provenance or their association with the discs. Strap-ends with stylized animal-head terminals are well known from middle and late Saxon contexts,⁸ nearby examples from Whitby, N. Yorks. being attributed to the early 9th century.⁹ However the details of the zoomorphic ornament on the central panels are more difficult to parallel. Only the first pair of strap-ends, with a single animal in the central panel, shows any close similarity to any other yet published. The animal ornament here is very like that on a strap-end from the Talnotrie hoard, deposited *c.* 875.¹⁰

Unfortunately little is known of the circumstances of the discovery of this important group of finds, but all the evidence points to them being found in Lilla Howe or its vicinity shortly before their first mention in print in 1871. This brief report leaves it unclear whether the barrow was subjected to deliberate excavation or whether the objects were surface finds from the locality of the Howe. However the number of finds, which included 'several plain gold rings and a gold brooch which is said to have had a white stone in it',¹¹ now no longer traceable, and their attribution to a particular place, indicates excavation of a casual kind at least. It is unfortunate that so far no further details about the provenance of these finds have been encountered in the correspondence of Joseph Mayer concerning his archaeological collection.¹²

It is clear though that the discs and strap-ends cannot be associated with any 7th-century burial, and in the absence of the mention of a body in the report of 1871 the notion of a 'Viking Age hoard' put forward by Wilson¹³ seems quite plausible.

THE EVIDENCE FOR IDENTIFYING THE HOWE WITH LILLA

The absence of archaeological finds contemporary with the Anglian Lilla shifts the case for identifying the Howe as his burial place primarily onto the place-name evidence, and this too can be shown to be inconclusive. As far as is known the earliest recorded use of a place-name 'Lilla Howe' in this part of Yorkshire is in a boundary charter of 1109 in the Whitby Chartulary, where one MS of the charter refers to *Lilla cros* while another MS names *Lillahou cros* as forming part of the boundary of the abbey's estates. This in itself does not allow us confidently to trace this particular place-name back to the 7th century, while evidence from elsewhere suggests that the personal name Lilla was not uncommon during the Anglo-Saxon period and later in northern England. Thus in N. Yorkshire there is the place-name Lilling, apparently 'the settlement of Lilla and his dependants',¹⁴ while in Tyne and Wear the place-name Lilswood appears in a 13th-century MS as Lilleswrth, that is, 'Lilla's wood'.¹⁵

The 'cros' element in the name presumably refers to the stone cross at present standing on Lilla Howe, which has been supposed by some writers to be a memorial for Lilla.¹⁶ However, this cross, now standing to a height of a little under 2 m above the barrow, is of a crude monolithic type totally unlike the series of Anglian crosses known from early Christian Anglo-Saxon contexts in Yorkshire.¹⁷ As noted above, a cross on Lilla Howe is first mentioned in the Whitby Chartulary's records of the estates granted to the abbey by its first post-Conquest benefactor, William de Percy, and confirmed by his son Alan. It is possible that this is the cross which still stands on the Howe, in which case it can be dated to some time between the restoration of the abbey in c. 1078 and the written record of the Percy grant in the early 12th century. Alternatively, the cross may have been erected as a boundary marker for the estates of the first abbey at Whitby which was destroyed by Vikings in 867. No evidence survives to confirm whether or not this part of the moors lay on the periphery of the early abbey's estates but, even so, the idea that the surviving cross on Lilla Howe may date from the time of the first foundation at Whitby is not supported by the shape of the cross and its lack of linear or zoomorphic ornament. Both of these features support the theory of a post-Conquest date for the cross, although it may, of course, be a later medieval replacement of the original boundary marker. Incised on the cross are what appear to be post-medieval letters (see Pl. xiv, B) but their significance and exact date remain uncertain.

The site of the barrow itself on Goathland Moor on the North York Moors is further evidence against its use as Lilla's burial place if current views about the location of King Edwin's *villa regia* are accepted. For although Lilla Howe does lie near the source of the R. Derwent the most usual proposal for the as yet unidentified site of the royal residence is in the vicinity of Old Malton, further along the course of the river.¹⁸ If this identification is accepted it places the burial mound some 27 km NNE. of the *villa*, rendering any connection between the two unlikely.

CONCLUSIONS

From the archaeological evidence reviewed above it is clear that there is no justification for the secondary Anglo-Saxon barrow burial plotted by the Ordnance Survey¹⁹ or its identification with a specific personage. Moreover, while the known penchant of the Yorkshire Angles for secondary barrow burial²⁰ means that the possibility of locating such an interment in any future excavation of the mound cannot be discounted, the likelihood of the body being that of the Lilla mentioned by Bede is slim. The theory that this was his mound seems to have arisen from the fortuitous juxtaposition of the appropriate barrow

name and an appropriate river name, combined with the location of Saxon period finds of whose late date not all writers are aware. The only possibility by which these finds could be related to a 7th-century burial is if the missing material is some two centuries earlier than that examined here, and this seems unlikely. Instead, the presence of an important Viking Age 'hoard' from this site should perhaps be more widely appreciated and the material gain the attention it deserves.

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NOTES

¹ Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, eds B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), Bk. 11, ch. 9, p. 165.

² *Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancashire Cheshire*, new series XI (1871), 200.

³ F. and H. W. Elgee, *The Archaeology of Yorkshire* (London, 1933), 185-86.

⁴ In addition to Elgee and Elgee (*ibid.*), the Lilla mentioned by Bede may also be found associated with the Howe in L. V. Grinsell, *The Ancient Burial-Mounds of England* (2nd edn., London, 1953), 234; A. L. Meaney, *A Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites* (London, 1964), 293-94; A. Raistrick, *Vikings, Angles and Danes in Yorkshire* (Dalesman publication, Clapham, North Yorkshire, 1965), 11; A. Raistrick (ed.), *North York Moors* (National Park Guide No. 4, 2nd edn., H.M.S.O., 1969), 84-85; T. H. Woodwark, *The Crosses of the North York Moors* (4th edn., Whitby, 1970), 23; W. A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester 1970), 98; J. Morris, *The Age of Arthur* (London, 1973), 32, 623; H. G. Ramm, *The Parisi* (London, 1978), 58.

⁵ G. C. Dunning and V. I. Evison, 'The Palace of Westminster Sword', *Archaeologia*, xcvi (1961), 150-51, pl. xlv, a.

⁶ D. M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700-1100* (British Museum Publications, 1964), 19-20 n. 12; D. A. Hinton, 'Late Saxon treasure and bullion', in D. Hill (ed.), *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, British Archaeol. Reports, 59 (Oxford, 1978), 152.

⁷ E. T. Leeds, 'Notes on examples of late Anglo-Saxon metal work', *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, IV (1911), 1-9, pl. 1, 1, A-D.

⁸ D. M. Wilson and C. E. Blunt, 'The Trehiddle Hoard', *Archaeologia*, xcvi (1961), 120-22.

⁹ Wilson, *op. cit.* in note 6, nos. 114-29, pp. 195-200.

¹⁰ H. Maxwell, 'Notes on a hoard of personal ornaments, implements, and Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian coins from Talnotrie, Kircudbrightshire', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scotland*, XLVII (1912-13), 12-16, fig. 3 on p. 14.

¹¹ *Op. cit.* in note 2.

¹² Information from Mrs M. Warhurst, Keeper of Antiquities, County Museum, Liverpool. We are grateful to Mrs Warhurst for permission to publish these finds.

¹³ Wilson, *op. cit.* in note 6.

¹⁴ A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire* (English Place-Name Soc., vol. 5, Cambridge, 1928), 32-33.

¹⁵ A. Mawer, *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham*, (Cambridge, 1920), 134. See also E. Ekwall, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (4th edn., Oxford, 1960), 298, for place-names south of the R. Humber including the 'Lilla' element.

¹⁶ Raistrick (1965); Raistrick (ed.) (1969); Woodwark (1970). All *op. cit.* in note 4.

¹⁷ Cf. W. G. Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age* (London, 1927).

¹⁸ Ramm, *op. cit.* in note 4; B. N. Eagles, *The Anglo-Saxon Settlement of Humberside* (British Archaeol. Reports, 68, Oxford, 1979), 202.

¹⁹ Ordnance Survey, *Britain in the Dark Ages*, (2nd edn., Southampton, 1966), 43.

²⁰ Meaney, *op. cit.* in note 4, 18-19.

A VIKING AGE SPEAR-SOCKET FROM YORK (Pl. xv, A)

The ornamented spear-socket illustrated in Pl. xv, A has been known since the middle of the last century, though it has perhaps not always received the attention that its decoration warrants. Since York has in recent years yielded such a quantity of Viking Age artefacts and sculpture, the designs engraved upon the spear-socket can now be more usefully compared with Anglo-Scandinavian styles in the locality, and a firmer dating postulated.

According to Wardell's initial notice of the object,¹ though it had spent some time in a museum in Leeds before its exhibition at the Royal Archaeological Institute, it was found on Severus's Hills, 'outside the city walls at York'. It later formed part of the Pitt-Rivers collection at Farnham in Dorset, when it was published by Kendrick,² and it has recently been acquired for a private collection. Severus's Hills are in fact two miles W. of the city walls at Acomb, three glacial mounds which between 1847 and 1848 were transformed into a reservoir by the new York Waterworks Company.³ With the spear-socket was 'a boss of