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NOTES

- ¹ A. J. Reynolds, 'Excavations at Steyning New Museum, Church Street, Steyning 1989', *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, 130 (1992), 60–68.
- ² X-ray fluorescence semi-quantitative analysis of the surface indicated 75–80% tin and 20–25% lead.
- ³ D. M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700–1100, in the British Museum* (London, 1964), figs. 20 and 23.
- ⁴ R. Hattatt, *Ancient Brooches and Other Artefacts* (Oxford, 1989), fig. 105, no. 1697.
- ⁵ B. Ó Riordáin, 'The High Street Excavations', *Proc. Seventh Viking Congress*, eds. B. Almqvist and D. Greene (Dublin, 1976), 135–40, pl. 19.
- ⁶ Wilson, op. cit. in note 3, pl. xlii, cat. nos 134 and 142.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pl. xxvi, cat. no. 52 right hand.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. xvii, 11 and Hattatt, op. cit. in note 4, fig. 105, cat. no. 1698.
- ⁹ Wilson, op. cit. in note 2, 35–36.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.
- ¹¹ Compare the concentric beaded decoration of the Cheapside and Cloak Lane brooches with the styca shown in Wilson, op. cit. in note 2, pl. iv, (c), top right.
- ¹² Dr Walker in Wilson, op. cit. in note 2, 148.
- ¹³ I. Stewart, 'Anglo-Saxon gold coins', *Scripta Numaria Romana, Essays Presented to Humphrey Sutherland*, eds. R. A. G. Carson and C. M. Kraay (London, 1978), 143–172, A.120 and A.121.
- ¹⁴ J. Brøndsted, *Early English Ornament* (London, 1924), 145–46.
- ¹⁵ A. MacGregor, 'A Pre-Conquest Mould of Antler from Medieval Southampton', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 24 (1980), 203–05; C. J. Newman, 'Three Antler Moulds From Ipswich', forthcoming, *Findings Research Group Datasheet 17*.
- ¹⁶ K. Leahy and C. M. Coutts, *The Lost Kingdom: the search for Anglo-Saxon Lindsey*, Scunthorpe Museum and Art Gallery (1987), 14, fig. 1. For a recent review of the evidence, see: J. Bayley 'Anglo-Saxon non-ferrous metalworking: a survey', *World Archaeol.*, 23:1 (1991), 115–30.
- ¹⁷ I am grateful to Maureen Bennell for this suggestion.

TWO COPPER ALLOY CROSS-STAFF HEADS FROM WARWICKSHIRE (Fig. 3, Pl. xiv, A, B)

Two copper alloy objects, both consisting of collars with open-work bodies are in the collections of the Warwickshire Museum. The first of the objects was recovered from in the bed of an ornamental lake in the grounds of Walton Hall, Wellesbourne. The second object was discovered in the parish of Wixford, adjacent to Wixford church.

*The Walton cross-staff*¹

This object was first recorded by J. Burgess in 1876. It had been discovered adjacent to some flint objects found while excavating the bed of some ornamental water at Walton. Burgess wrote that 'the boss is cast with a cone' and 'the curious reticulation and the fact of its having been cast in a peculiar manner, gives it an interest apart from its presumed antiquity'.² He assumed it to be a probable dagger handle, but was almost certainly wrong in his interpretation. Sword and dagger pommels are normally affixed by the tang of the blade, peened over at the end. The Walton object has no provision for such a method of fixing. Also, the collar is too wide to fit tightly around the sword tang.

The Walton object, cast in copper alloy, consists of a latticed sphere surmounting a cylindrical collar. It weighs 29 g, and its overall height is 47 mm, and the sphere is 34 mm in diameter. The lattice decoration consists of roughly executed lozenge-shaped holes which radiate from a boss or knob 7 mm in diameter. The holes alternate with small protruberances, 1–2 mm in relief of the surface. These appear to be slightly more abraded toward the

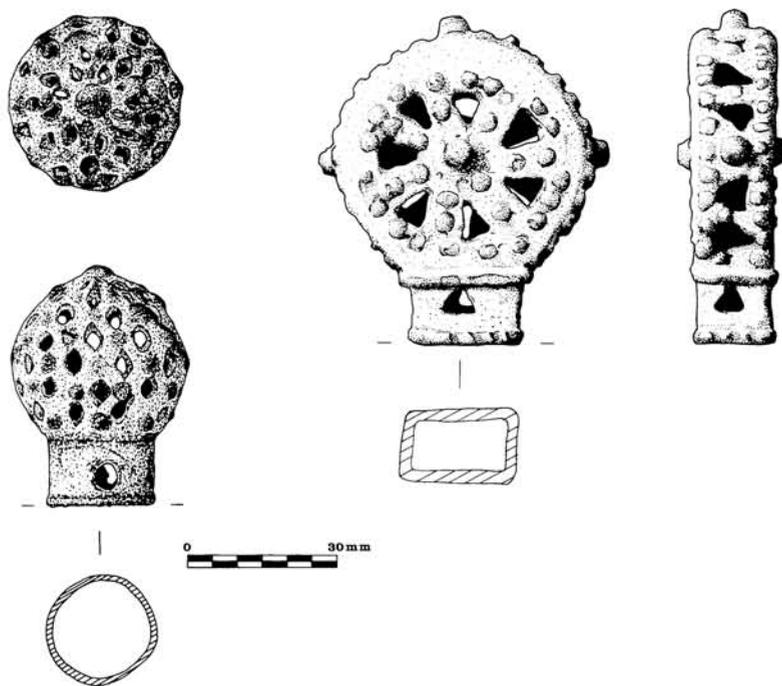


FIG. 3

Cross-staff leads from Warwickshire. Left: Walton; right: Wixford

apex. The collar is 13 mm high, with a diameter of 22 mm. The metal is 1.5 mm thick at the base of the collar, which is pierced by four holes, arranged roughly at right angles to each other. The roundest of the holes, visible in the illustration, is 5 mm in diameter. These holes appear to have been for rivets to attach the object to a wooden staff. All four holes are slightly elongated towards the base of the collar. One hole in particular is 8 mm in length, the hole being greatly worn towards the collar base. The remaining thickness of metal is only 1.5 mm. This wear suggests that the object had become loose on the end of the staff, and moved in a rocking motion which abraded the lower edge of the collar against the rivets. This wear pattern raises an important question, which is whether or not the object was mounted with the sphere upright. The wear pattern suggests otherwise, probably indicating that the weight of the object hung upon the rivets, the friction being assisted by gravity. Thus, it is more likely that the object was held with its sphere pointing downwards.

There are several parallels for this type of object. An object bearing a great similarity to the Walton example is published as a sword pommel from London.³ The copper alloy object depicted is of the same shape, a cylindrical collar being surmounted by an open-work sphere decorated with protruberances, but with open-work based around four crosses. The dimensions are similar to those of the Walton object. No wear is visible on the rivet hole in the collar. A similar object, with the same decorative scheme as the London example, comes from Halifax Place, Nottingham, stratified in an excavated context. In his discussion of this piece, John Cherry refers to three other examples of spherical topped cross-staffs.⁴ A similar object from Cambridgeshire is decorated with open-work crosses which are best viewed with the sphere pointing upwards. The rivet hole is unworn. The upright crosses suggest that it may have been ecclesiastical in origin.⁵ Two sceptre mounts based upon the dodecahedron, although similar, are much smaller (35–40 mm overall height) and may be Roman in date.⁶

*The Wixford cross-staff*⁷

This copper alloy object was discovered near Wixford church by Mr F. White, a metal-detector user, in 1986. The object was discovered in the field at the same time as a bronze rumbler bell, two Edward I pennies and a Henry VI groat.⁸

The object consists of a rectangular collar surmounted by a circular, open-work top. The weight of the object is 91 g and its overall height is 67 mm. The rectangular collar is 16 mm high with flanges at the top and bottom. The lower flange is decorated with a series of incised diagonal lines, giving a hatched appearance. The collar is pierced by four possible rivet holes, which are triangular and have been formed by casting. The collar has a width of 18 mm on the sides parallel to the flat sides of the circular top. The breadth of the collar is 23 mm. The base of the collar is 3 mm thick, inclusive of the flange. The circular top of the object has a diameter of 59 mm and 25 mm from front to back. The decoration consists of a wheel-like pattern with seven radiating spokes, which vary in width from 5 to 8 mm. Each spoke is decorated by two small, bead-like protruberances of 1–2 mm in relief of the surface. The rim of the wheel is defined by a ring of identical protruberances. Outside this is a plain border c. 5 mm in width. Between the spokes are roughly cast triangular holes radiating from the centre, which is defined by a knob, projecting 4 mm, and 7 mm in width. The sides of the object are decorated by open-work consisting of alternate triangular holes, roughly formed, each separated by a strip decorated with a protruberance. The holes are set within a border of protruberances. At right angles to each other are three large knobs. One is at the apex and the other two level with the centres of the wheel patterns.

The object appears to have been designed to fit upon a staff or rod of rectangular section, at least at the point of attachment. The staff within the 18 × 23 mm collar would have been too thin and flimsy to have been a load-bearing staff. This is suggestive of a possible ceremonial function for the object.⁹ The rivet holes appear largely unworn. Faint traces of silvering can be observed on the surface of the object.

The Wixford object can also be paralleled by an object from London which also has alternate open-work triangles around the circumference of the sides.¹⁰ The bead-like protruberances and the form of the collar are also very similar. The design differs by having a central cross, surrounded by alternate open-work triangles, on the face.

Another similar circular object is the Fishamble Street mount from Dublin, dated to the mid 11th century by archaeological context.¹¹ It is of cast bronze and is gilded. The edge is decorated by alternate triangles, within a border of bead-like protruberances. It has a cruciform motif on each face, decorated by four zoomorphic figures. The collar or socket has been broken off. A similar cruciform pattern, decorated by animals in relief, is to be seen on an unprovenanced mount in the British Museum. Halpin observed that this and the Fishamble Street example have patterns which can only be viewed properly when the collar is facing upwards. He suggests that these objects may have been mounted on the bases of staffs rather than the top, and that the staffs must have been relatively short, as the cross-staffs were not intended to come into contact with the ground. Indeed, none of them are worn at the apex; perhaps such staffs were ceremonial wands or sceptres.

John Cherry describes a circular cross-staff or mace-head from St George's Street, Canterbury.¹² It is 70 mm wide, surmounting a flanged, cylindrical collar. This collar is narrow and the two rivet holes are worn oval. It has a cruciform, radiating pattern on the face, encircled by bead-like protruberances, outside which is a plain border. Within each quarter of the face is a lily-like motif, radiating from the centre. As a whole, the pattern is suggestive of a wheel. The circumference of the sides is decorated by open-work alternating triangles, two rows of them in this case. This object is dated to the end of the 11th century; its similarity to the Wixford object is notable.

Discussion

The spherical Walton cross-staff and the circular Wixford example have been compared with a number of similar objects. The 'Winchester' style object from Dublin has been dated

to *c.* 1020–30. Its stylistic affinities have assisted its dating as well as its context. The Canterbury example has been dated to the end of the 11th century. This suggests strongly that the class of objects is medieval in origin. The Wixford object was found adjacent to a church and some medieval objects, although it lacks a context.

The Warwickshire examples are unusual in that they lack any cruciform patterns, apart from the Wixford example having knobs around the circumference, which suggest the ends of a cross. The majority of cross-staffs are decorated with cruciform designs. Of the spherical type, three out of five which have descriptions available are decorated with cruciform patterns of one sort or another. Of the circular type, four out of five examples have definite cruciform motifs. This prevalence of cruciform patterns further suggests that the objects may be ecclesiastical in origin. However, one must bear in mind, for example, that many medieval tiles were decorated with cruciform patterns. Such tiles were not always found in ecclesiastical buildings.

The great majority of cross-staffs were cast in copper alloy, decorated by openwork holes and small bead-like protruberances. In the case of the circular-topped objects, the sides of all fully illustrated examples are decorated by alternate triangles of one form or another. The objects are all similar in their dimensions and their method of attachment. It appears, therefore, that the objects are all designed for the same, or a similar purpose.

It has been suggested that these objects are ceremonial mace-heads of one form or another. Major General H. D. W. Sitwell notes 'two Sergeants-at-Arms of the thirteenth century whose maces are extremely crude, and very much for use and not ornament. The usual war mace was of various forms, consisting usually of a rod of iron or steel . . . with a head fitted with cutting edges'.¹³ Any decoration on early maces tended to be in the form of a small rosette on the end of the handgrip, or a small acorn at the top of the head, neither ornaments being spherical or circular.¹⁴ Such mace mounts also lack open-work. Hence, it appears that these objects are not mace mounts; medieval maces were real weapons and not ceremonial.

The majority of cross-staffs have collars designed to fit on to slender staffs, suitable only for ceremonial purposes. An ecclesiastical use is probable, and would place the cruciform designs decorating the majority of them into a plausible context. This use would explain the proximity of the Wixford object find spot to the church.

The Walton cross-staff sheds further light on question as to whether the objects were affixed to the top or the bottom of ceremonial staffs. Most of the objects offer no clue as to their positioning. However, the wear pattern on the Walton cross-staff suggests that it may have been attached to the bottom of a staff. An additional clue for the attachment of this class of object is the inversion of the pattern of the Fishamble Street object from Dublin, and the unstratified example from the British Museum. Lastly a suggestion may be made regarding the function of these objects. Halpin does not believe that the Dublin cross-staff is a piece of royal regalia, but suggests that 'some form of ceremonial staff does seem to provide the best explanation for its function'. The rough execution of the Walton and Wixford cross-staffs, and their being of base metal, indicates that they were hardly royal regalia.

Later medieval illustrations show the use of sceptres with lower terminals. For examples, an alabaster carving depicts Herod holding a short sceptre over his shoulder.¹⁵ The top of his sceptre is much larger in proportion to the whole than any of the cross-staffs would be. However, below his hand can be seen the lower terminal of the sceptre. This is similar in form to the Walton object and even has an apical knob. In proportion to his hand, it is similar in size to the cross-staffs. On the fifth panel of the rood screen of Nayland Church, Suffolk St. Edward the Confessor, in full royal regalia, holds a sceptre over his shoulder.¹⁶ The top, as with King Herod's, is large and elaborate, as big as his hand. Below his hand can be seen the small, spherical terminal of the sceptre. Again, this is similar in size and shape to the Walton cross-staff.

Such illustrations are not a fully reliable source, but such portrayals do indicate that both ends of a ceremonial staff or sceptre were fitted with metal terminals. Although unfit to be royal regalia, the Walton and Wixford objects may have had a liturgical use as staff or sceptre terminals, and perhaps can be tentatively dated to the 11th or 12th centuries.

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NOTES

- ¹ Warwickshire Museum cat. no. A37, NGR SP 283525.
- ² J. Burgess, *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, 2.7 (1876), 258.
- ³ J. B. Ward-Perkins, *London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (London, 1940), 23, fig. 2, no. 1.
- ⁴ J. Cherry, 'A copper alloy staff head from Halifax Place, Nottingham', forthcoming.
- ⁵ Anon, 'Open-work bronze object', *The Searcher*, July 1993, 25.
- ⁶ M. Henig and K. Leahy, 'Two sceptre mounts based on the dodecahedron', *Antiq. J.*, 69 (1989), 321-23.
- ⁷ Warwickshire Museum cat. no. A7157, NGR SP 089549.
- ⁸ John Pickin pers. comm.
- ⁹ Barbara Clayton pers. comm.
- ¹⁰ Ward Perkins, op. cit. in note 3, 23, fig. 2, no. 2.
- ¹¹ A. Halpin, 'A 'Winchester-style' bronze mount', *National Museum of Ireland*, 7-12.
- ¹² J. Cherry, 'Excavations at St. George's Street, Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 105 (1988), 115-17.
- ¹³ H. D. W. Sitwell, 'Royal Sergeants-at-Arms and the Royal Maces', *Archaeologia*, 102 (1969), 203-50, pl. xvi.
- ¹⁴ Chris Gavett, Royal Armouries, Tower of London, pers. comm.
- ¹⁵ W. L. Hildburgh, 'English Alabaster Carvings as Records of the Medieval religious Drama', *Archaeologia*, 93 (1949), 51-102, pl. xvi.
- ¹⁶ H. Smith, 'Fifteenth-century Painted Panels from the Rood Screen of Nayland Church, Suffolk', *Antiq. J.*, 3 (1923), 345-46.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD 'KEEP' (Pl. xiv, c)

When we use the word 'keep' we have at the back of our minds the feeling that it derives from the verb and implies tenacity, holding-out, the ultimate defence in a castle. This no doubt influenced the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary* who, quoting their two earliest references of 1586 and 1598, suggested that it derived from an English translation of the Italian word *tenazza*.¹ This might suggest some sort of derivation connected with Renaissance artillery fortification. The purpose of this note is to show that this suggestion is very wide of the mark and that the word evidently derives from a very improbable Middle English noun.

One of us had drawn attention to an earlier occurrence of this word in 1567, applied to the circular keep at Cornet Castle, Guernsey,² and invited information on earlier occurrences. This led to a lively exchange of letters and postcards between the authors, each one pushing the date further back. In fact it emerged that the late David Cathcart King had already found the reference of 1523,³ as will emerge. The simplest way of dealing with this will be to set out the references chronologically rather as students of place-names do, but before doing so a short account of Guines Castle, seven miles S. of Calais, must be given.

At Guines a motte, 60 m in diameter across the top, bearing an 18th-century clock tower, is all that survives,⁴ but the castle's history goes back to the 10th century when it was founded by the first count of Guines, and towards the end of the 12th century Baudoin II, count of Ardres, erected a 'donjon cylindrique en pierre de taille'. In 1352 it was taken by the English and held until 1558 when it was 'demantelé'. Fortunately, several plans and views were made in the last years of English occupation, kept in the British Library, and they have been published.⁵ The castle is shown fortified with three trilobate bulwarks and the keep is shown unmistakably on its motte. It appears to have had a flat roof over the interior with a wooden turret on it, but the roof is suspiciously flat like the interiors of the bastions as if it had been filled in to create a gun platform. There seem to be gabions around the top, rather than merlons, of the type used by gunners for protection. The keep, which is quite tall, has three