

ART. III – *Sub-Roman and Anglo-Saxon Finds from Cumbria*

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THE purpose of this paper, which is essentially a handlist with an associated discussion, is to bring together the evidence of stray finds of objects of either sub-Roman or Anglo-Saxon date, which have been found in Cumbria. The study complements the earlier although still useful catalogues of Viking-Age material by J.D. Cowen (1934, 1949) and includes both extant and lost items. Richardson (1990) has recently published a comprehensive listing of recent material acquired or reported to Tullie House, but in fact the majority of the material with which this paper is concerned is no longer housed in Cumbria: much of it is in the British Museum. Although recent work at Dacre (Leech and Newman 1985) and Bryant's Gill (Dickinson 1985) has revealed the remains of at least two excavated sites which were occupied in the post-Roman centuries, and excavations in Carlisle have also produced some Anglo-Saxon finds (Richardson 1990, 41; Taylor and Webster 1984), there is still a remarkable lack of evidence for this period, and any relevant discoveries should not be ignored. Such maps of data as have been published (e.g. Clack and Gosling 1976, 41; Cramp 1983, figs 4–6; Higham 1985, fig. 6.2) have not always been based on critical research and have sometimes included inappropriate items and omitted relevant finds; also, the data on which these maps have been based have never been presented or discussed. It is true that a study of chance finds is of limited value. In some instances it is at least possible that the material made its way to Cumbria in later times and it is also feasible that some of it is Viking loot, brought from further afield. However, many of the Cumbrian finds are of intrinsic interest, while in other cases the find-spot of the object is already potentially a post-Roman or Anglo-Saxon site, and the chance find may be seen as corroborative evidence. Some types of material are omitted from this study. Numismatic finds are already well-published in various standard works (Thompson 1956; Metcalf 1960; Pirie 1987) and are not considered here. Likewise, all material from excavated sites has been omitted, including the finds from the group of possible Anglo-Saxon burials in the Upper Eden Valley (O'Sullivan 1980, 169–195), recent finds from Carlisle, and the Anglo-Saxon type loomweight from the 1954 excavations at Bewcastle, recently noted by Richardson (1990, 41). The corpus of early medieval sculpture includes a number of items which could be considered stray finds but as this material has recently been exhaustively dealt with (Bailey and Cramp 1988) it is likewise omitted from consideration. These exceptions apart, all possible objects are included for discussion. Objects of certain date are included in list A. As some of the items are now lost it is impossible to be sure if some finds are really of post-Roman or Anglo-Saxon type and these and other uncertain or doubtful objects are included in list B. Two objects which occasionally feature in the literature but should now be discounted, are briefly noted in list C. One is an

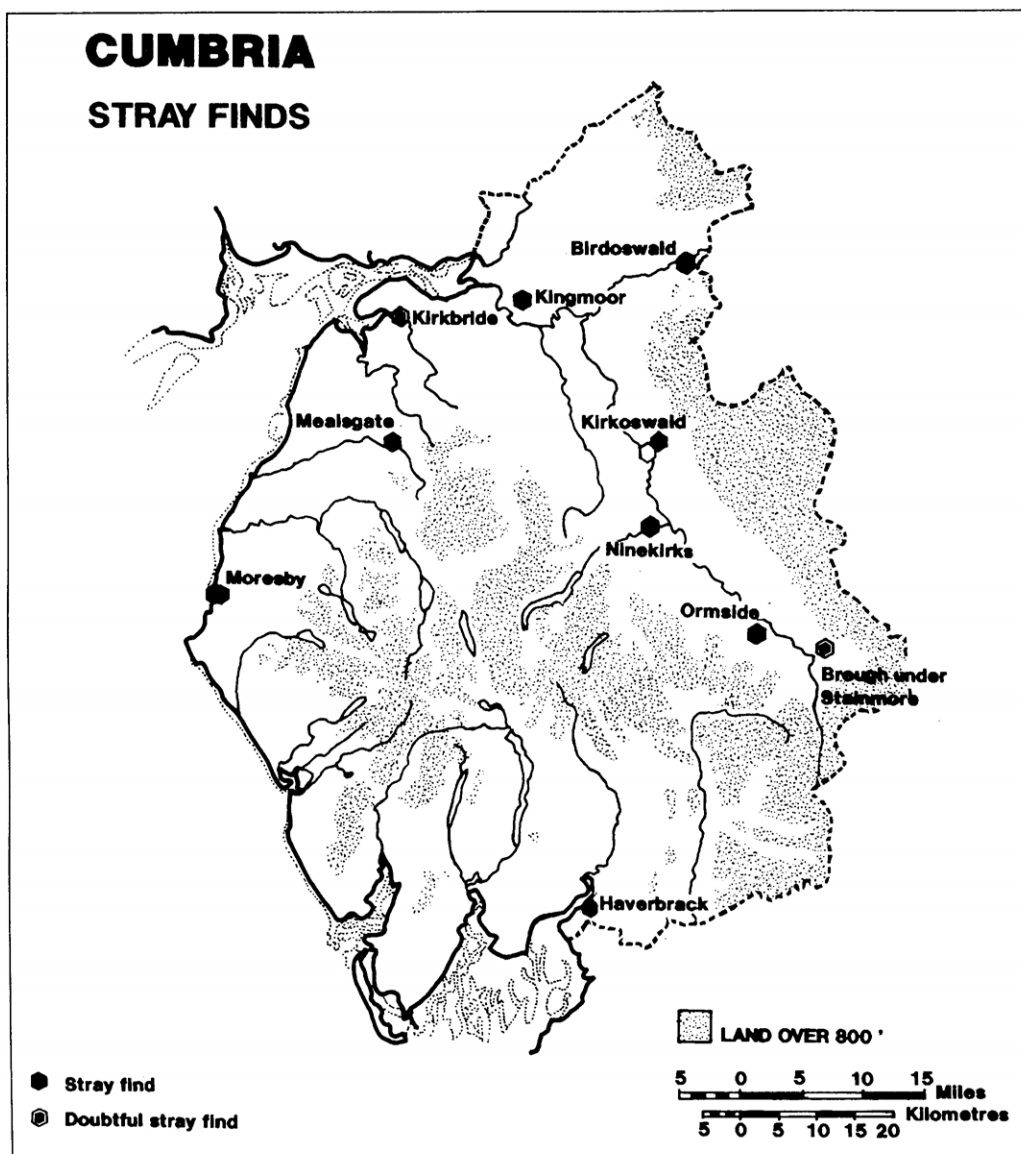


FIG. 1. Map of Cumbria showing find-spots of Early Medieval stray finds

item from Cumbria which has been wrongfully attributed to this period and one is from elsewhere but has been erroneously attributed to Cumbria.

All finds are briefly described, and little-known objects are described in some detail. Much of the material consists of ornamental metalwork and where this has already received full and/or recent attention the reader is referred to these standard studies. Illustrations are provided for the majority of objects: 'non' finds, missing items and objects previously published in the *Transactions* are not illustrated.

LIST A:*A.1. Birdoswald: Bronze pin.*

This was found during 'routine clearance' of the south face of Hadrian's Wall, between Birdoswald and Milecastle 49 (Harrowscar) and is now in Tullie House Museum, Carlisle (Acc. No. 40-1965). An eighth-century date has been suggested (Cramp 1964).

The pin is of tin-plated bronze, with a large, flat head and a tapering pin. The head-plate and pin are cast separately, and joined by a rivet. Decoration is confined to the head-plate. The circular field is divided into quadrants by a central cross, and in each sector thus formed there is a chip-carved triquetra knot. There are two raised ridges around the circumference, of which the outer is partly damaged. The head-plate is pierced asymmetrically, clearly indicating that the pin is part of a linked set of three. The group of pins from the river Witham (Wilson 1964) is probably the best-known example of this type of Anglo-Saxon fastening, which seems to have been current in the eighth century.

The pin is fully described, discussed and illustrated by Cramp (1964).

A.2. Cumberland, Crosthwaite Museum: gilt-bronze mount (Pl 1.a,b.).

The find-place of this object is not known, but it is recorded as found "in Cumberland" in the MS sale catalogue of the Crosthwaite Museum. It was acquired by the British Museum from a dealer in 1870 (Reg. No. 1870, 10-13, 17). The

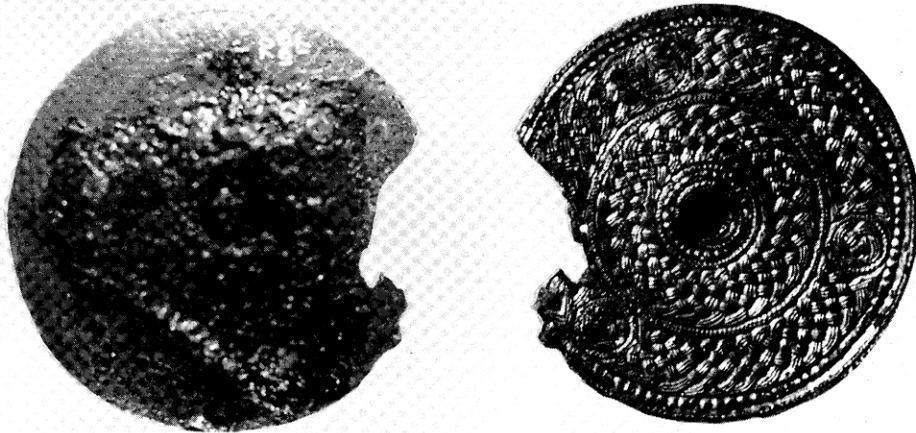


PLATE 1, a,b. Gilt-bronze mount "from Cumberland" (Diam.: 8.7 cm. Photo: DOS)

mount is a partly damaged, slightly concave, rather heavily gilt bronze disc. Its upper surface is decorated with two concentric bands of closely-woven interlace, and there is a triangular iron mount attached to the back. This piece has been described and discussed by the writer elsewhere (O'Sullivan 1990). Good parallels for the type of interlace are to be found on a number of Anglo-Saxon mounts from southern England, and also on the mould fragments from the Mote of Mark. It is of seventh century date, although when in that century is debatable.

A.3. Cumberland, Crosthwaite Museum: enamelled bronze escutcheon (Pl 2).

This item was acquired by the British Museum under the same circumstances as the gilt-bronze mount (No. A.2 above; Reg. no. 1870, 10–13, 16).

The disc is flat, and decorated with a pattern of inlaid spirals filled with red enamel, in the style known as the developed trumpet pattern type, usually dated to the sixth and seventh centuries. Bruce Mitford has placed the escutcheon in his “modified” category, which he believes to be late in the series. It has been listed in a number of publications (*V.C.H.* 1901, 282; Kendrick 1936, 99; Haseloff 1959, 78; Fowler 1968, 308; Bruce Mitford 1987, 31) and illustrated and discussed by the writer (O'Sullivan 1990).

A.4. ‘Cumberland’: Sword Handle (Pl 3).

The find-spot and circumstances of discovery are unknown; the item was acquired by the British Museum (Reg. No. 1876, 7–17, 1) through a dealer in Carlisle from a Mr Archibald Dodds in 1876.



PLATE 2. Enamelled mount “from Cumberland” (Diam.: 4.3 cm. Photo: DOS)

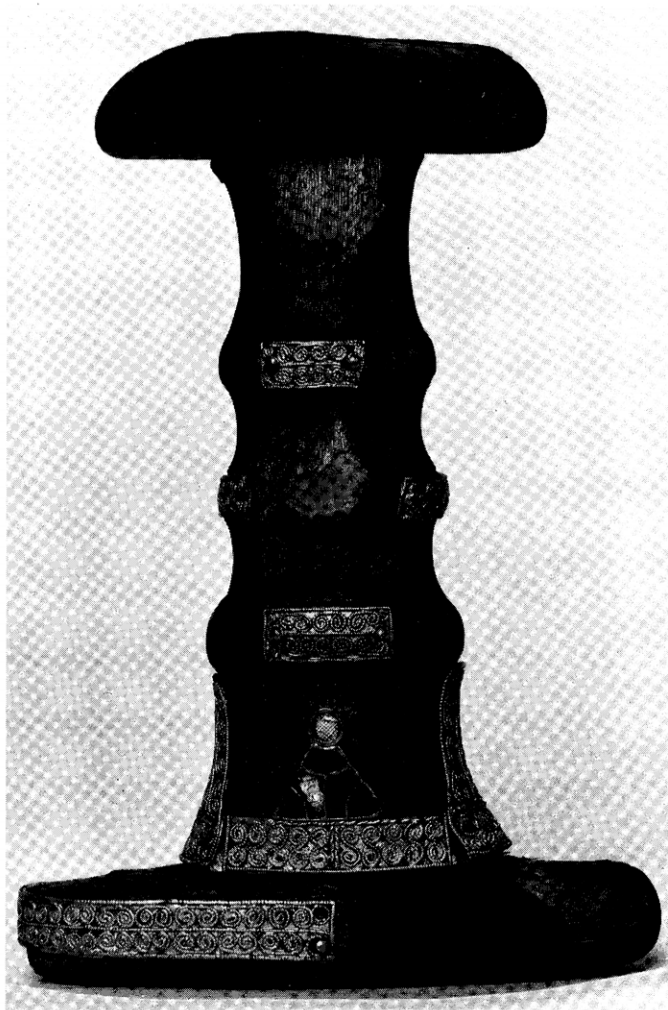


PLATE 3. Sword handle "from Cumberland" (Length: 12.5 cm. Photo: British Museum)

The handle is of wood, decorated with gold filigree mounts and a single gold and garnet setting. It has a straight guard, and is shaped for gripping. The pommel is slightly domed. Originally it would have had a total of fourteen mounts; two are now missing. The mounts are arranged symmetrically: two paired mounts are placed on each of the three grip-ridges, and the base of the handle above the guard has one at each side and face and one in the middle. The guard had a complete border of gold filigree, in two strips, but only one of these now survives.

Each plaque has a sheet gold backing, with gold filigree superimposed. The plaques are attached to the handle with small gold pins. The ornament consists of small coiled gold spirals, sometimes opposing, sometimes paired. The garnet cells fill a triangular zone, which is surmounted by a circular cell. Two of the garnets are now missing. The sword-handle has been illustrated and discussed on a number of

occasions (British Museum 1923, 92–3, pl VII; Wilson 1971, 110). It is usually dated to the early seventh century on the basis of the filigree ornament and cloisonné, but Bone (1989, 64) has recently pointed out that the form of the handle is actually a much earlier type. He suggests that the filigree and garnet mounts may be later additions to a fifth-century grip.

Gold filigree is otherwise unknown so far north and west in this period. The handle may of course be an import. The combination of gold and garnet decoration with spiral filigree very similar to that on the Cumberland sword-handle is found on a cross and silver-gilt disc from White Low, Derbyshire (Ozanne 1964, fig. 11, pl IV E and D). The technique is known in Northumbria in a slightly later context, however, on the pectoral cross of St Cuthbert, which has been considered a local product (Bruce Mitford 1956, 325; Coatsworth 1989).

A.5. 'Furness': ?mount; gilt-bronze head, filled with lead (Pl 4).

The find-spot and circumstances of discovery are unknown. The object was donated to the British Museum by a Mr R. Hinde in 1870 (Reg. No. 1870, 6–9, 1).

The head is really a moulded face-mask with projecting ears. The back was originally hollow and presumably undecorated, but is now filled with lead. In the top of the head there is a central, circular depression which may be functional, perhaps to contain a fitting. The hair consists of gilded wavy lines, now slightly worn. The head-band consists of a row of (originally) twelve tightly-coiled, cast running spirals. Gilding fills the space between the coils. The almond-shaped eyes are finely cut, with prominent, feathered eyebrows. The left eye is more or less intact, although the gilding is damaged. The sockets are now hollow, but may have originally held a setting. The cheeks are pouched, and the bearded chin is slightly pointed.

The head has been illustrated by Henry (1965, 113–4, pl 66) in the context of a discussion of the human figure in Early Christian Irish metalwork. It has also been included in the recent exhibition of insular metalwork, "The Work of Angels" (Ryan 1989, 142–3). Henry considered the Furness Head to be of Irish manufacture, whilst Ryan suggests either an Irish or Northumbrian provenance. The treatment of the hair has been compared to that on the human heads on the St Germain plaques,



PLATE 4. Gilt-bronze mount in the shape of a head, "from Furness" (Length: 3.8 cm. Photo: British Museum)

which are normally dated to the late eighth or early ninth century (Ryan 1989, 145). Close parallels for the head are, however, hard to find; indeed we do not even know what its original function was, and it is possible that it was part of a larger mount, perhaps a complete figure. The circular concavity in the crown of the head, and the filling in of the back with lead, point to its use as a weight, although there is no dating evidence for this operation either. It is assumed by Henry and Ryan that this use is secondary, but this may not be the case: a small head, similarly hollowed but backed with iron, was among the finds from excavations at Glastonbury Tor (Rahtz 1971, 54–5), and this was dated on stratigraphic grounds to the sixth century. A small head also filled with lead from Ixworth in Suffolk (Ryan 1989, 143) has many similarities of detail but rather marked differences in general style.

A.6. Kingmoor: gold ring with runic inscription (Pl 5).

The ring was found on Greymoor Hill (NY 392596) in 1817, by a young man employed in levelling a fence. It is now in the British Museum. The runic inscription is inlaid with niello and reads:



The last three staves are on the inside of the hoop. This transcribes as *aerkriufltkriuri onglæstaep on tol*. This is apparently meaningless and may be a magical formula. The ring and its affinities have been fully described and discussed by Wilson (1959; 1964, 73–5, 138–9, pl XIX, 27).



PLATE 5. Gold runic ring, Kingmoor, near Carlisle (Diam.: 2.7 cm. Photo: British Museum)

A.7. Kirkoswald: silver trefoil ornament (Pl 6).

The precise find-spot is unknown. The ornament was discovered in a pot, about 1814 with a large hoard of coins “near” Kirkoswald, when a large tree was blown over. The finds came up in the roots of the tree. The coins were dispersed but the ornament is now in the British Museum (Reg. No. O.A. 21). The object is a flat trilobate plate, with applied filigree and niello decoration on one side only. The back carries no trace of an attachment. There is a central boss, pushed through from the back. There was originally a boss on the end of each arm but the remains of only one of these now survives. The border is of twisted silver wire.

The Kirkoswald ornament has been fully described by Wilson (1964, 17–19, 139–40, pl. 19, 28). The coin hoard indicates that the ornament was probably buried c. 855, but Wilson believes it to be of eighth-century date.

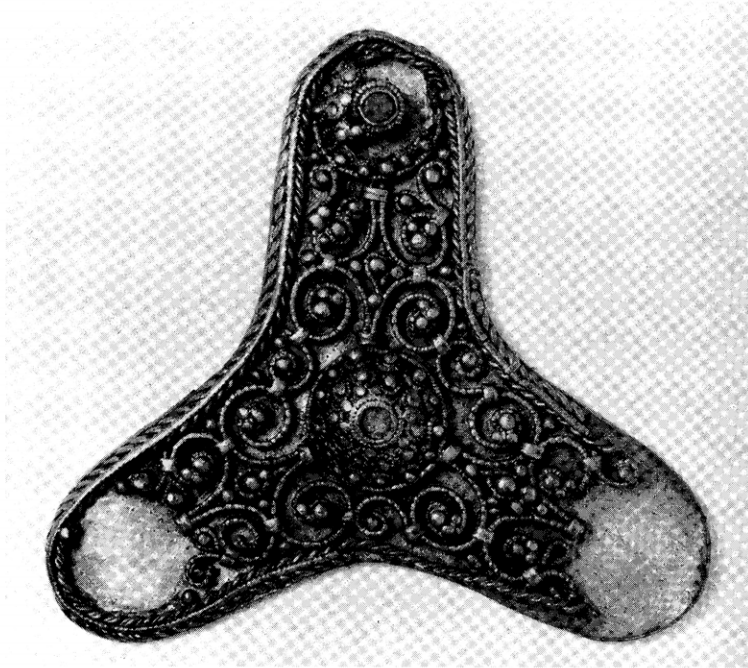


PLATE 6. Silver trefoil ornament, Kirkoswald (Length: 9.0 cm. Photo: British Museum)

A.8. Mealsgate: small penannular bronze brooch (Pl 7).

The brooch was found at a depth of 1–2 feet, south-west of the filter works at Mealsgate, about 60 yards from the River Ellen, in 1953. It was donated to Tullie House Museum by Mr J. Bryson of Fletcherstown (Acc. No. 22–1953).

The brooch ring is cast as a single piece: the pin is made of a strip of sheet metal, rolled over the ring. The ring has triangular, hollow, cast terminals which now contain the remains of solder and must have originally housed mounts of glass or enamel. At the apex of the triangular cavities are two bulbous swellings. There are also swellings at the exterior corners. The pin has an expanded shaft. There are pronounced traces of gilding on the shaft, and some on the ring. The back is plain.

The brooch was included in Fowler's corpus of sub-Roman metalwork (1964, 134), and has also been considered by Kilbride-Jones (1980b, 143). On the basis of Fowler's classification it belongs to type F1, and therefore made in Britain "during the primary settlement of the Anglo-Saxons". Associated examples elsewhere are found in late fourth to sixth century contexts; they have a fairly wide distribution in Britain and Ireland but there are fewer in the south and east. Kilbride-Jones' much more detailed classification places it in his type C (second series), which he holds to be products of a fifth-century Irish workshop, probably located in the Meath area (1980a, 214, 219; 1980b, 54–7).

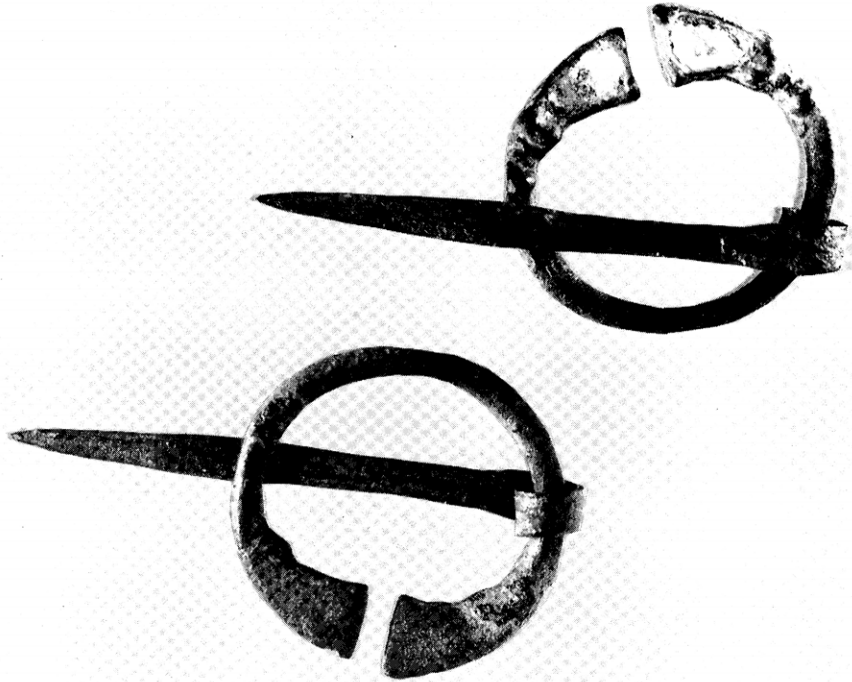


PLATE 7. Penannular bronze brooch, Mealsgate (Length: 5.2 cm. Photo: DOS)

A.9. Moresby: glass spindle whorl (Pl 8).

The find-spot and circumstances of discovery are unknown. The pin was acquired by the British Museum in 1891, with the collection of Sir A.W. Franks (Reg. No. 1891, 3–20, 3). The spindle whorl is bun-shaped, with a flat, undecorated base. It is made of black glass. The decoration has been superficially applied in grooves in the surface, and has suffered some damage. It consists of swirls of red and yellow glass, which radiate from the central hole. This decoration is not quite regular, but a definite scheme has been followed: the inner whirls are of smooth, red glass; the

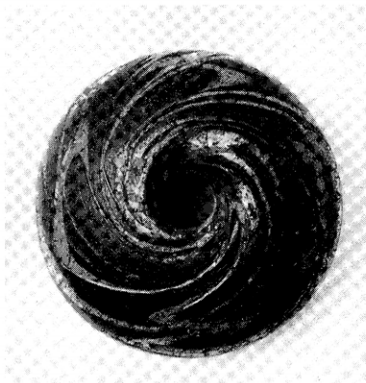


PLATE 8. Glass spindle whorl, Moresby (Diam.: 4.1 cm. Photo: British Museum)

outer, of rather pitted, yellow glass. It is clear that the yellow has been applied first.

Occasional reference has been made to this object in standard reference works (*V.C.H.* 1901, 284; British Museum 1923, 89) but it has never been previously illustrated. Anglo-Saxon spindle-whorls await systematic study. Most are known from the context of pagan graves, and are frequently made of bone, chalk or stone, as well as glass. The Moresby spindle whorl is a perfectly acceptable example, although the use of three colours renders it more elaborate than most.

A.10. Moresby: Proto hand-pin (Pl 9).

The find-spot and circumstances of discovery are unknown. The pin was acquired by the British Museum in 1898 with the collection of Canon Greenwell (Acc. No. 1898, 6–18, 17).

The pin is of copper-alloy and was apparently cast in one piece. The shank is slightly curved, and the tip is damaged and split. There is no trace of applied decoration. The headplate is of the usual form: a semi-circular flat plate, which projects above the shank, surmounted by a row of three pellets.

Fowler included this pin in her catalogue of sub-Roman metalwork (1964, 152). It has previously been illustrated by Smith (1905, 351) and Kilbride-Jones (1980, 213). The latter implies an Irish origin for it.

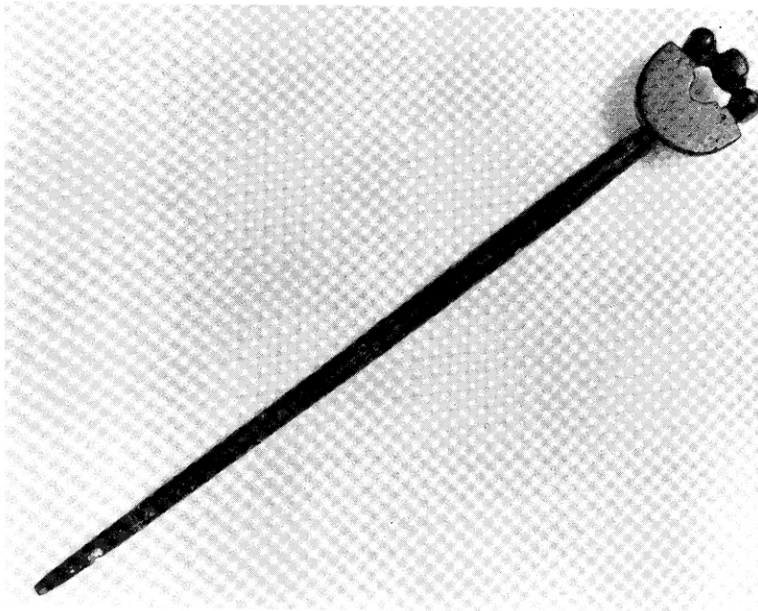


PLATE 9. Proto-handpin, Moresby (Length: 11.6 cm. Photo: British Museum)

A.11. Ninekirks, Brougham: gilt (?copper alloy) mount (Pl 10).

This object was found adjacent to Norman burials in the parish church of Brougham, in the chancel near the south wall, possibly associated with one particular skeleton, under a blank tombstone. It is now lost. The original discovery was reported in *The Archaeological Journal* (Way 1847) and it has more recently been republished and fully discussed by Bailey (1978). It was almost certainly an ornamental drinking-horn mount. The decoration consists of three panels of interlace, interspersed with three figures, whose lower limbs develop into the



PLATE 10. Gilt mount, Ninekirks, Brougham (Diam.: 2–3 inches (5.08–7.62 cm) illus: *Archaeological Journal*)

interlace panels. Parallels for the style of ornament indicate a date in the eighth century.

A.12. Ormside: small silver and gilt-bronze bowl, "the Ormside Bowl".

The bowl was found in Ormside Churchyard at some date before 1823, and is now in the Yorkshire Museum. The precise circumstances of the discovery are not known.

The bowl is made of two hemispherical cups joined by bosses and medallions and (originally) a binding strip around the rim. The outer cup is of silver gilt, and is elaborately decorated with repousse ornament of inhabited bushvine. The base-plate had undergone rather crude repair. The inner bowl is of gilt-bronze; only the base-plate is decorated, with bosses and interlace ornament.

The Ormside Bowl has been frequently illustrated and discussed in print, (e.g. Collingwood 1899; Brown 1921, V, 318–28, pls XXX, XXX1; Bronsted 1924, 86–88, figs 72–73; Kendrick 1937, 150–1, 157, 182, pl LX; Bakka 1963, 18–25, 57–58; Cramp 1967, pl 38; and most recently in Yapp 1990).

A.13. Wetheral: copper-alloy strap-end.

This object was found by a metal detector in the bed of the River Eden in 1985. It was donated to Tullie House, (Acc. No. 71–1986) and has recently been discussed by Richardson (1990, 40–41). It is ornamented with Trewhiddle-style decoration, and is probably of ninth-century date.

LIST B:

B.1. Brough-under-Stainmore: copper-alloy buckle (Pl 11).

The buckle is part of a collection of finds from Brough-under-Stainmore deposited in the Craven Museum, Skipton before 1931. Its precise circumstances of discovery are unknown.

The buckle is flat, and cast in one piece. It has a curved tongue, and a narrow catchplate with a backward projection; the plate is pierced by a hole for the back of the tongue. The upper surface of the plate is decorated with ring and dot ornament.

This buckle was singled out by R.G. Collingwood (1931, 83) from the other Roman finds in the group by virtue of the fact that it has a curved tongue. Largely on this basis he identified it as an Anglo-Saxon object, but also questioned its provenance. It is true that Anglo-Saxon buckles generally do have curved tongues, but close parallels for the shape of the flat backplate are not forthcoming. Anglo-Saxon examples of these tend to be square, rectangular or triangular. The decoration of the buckle is hardly diagnostic: ring and dot ornament is common on Roman bronzes but is also found on numerous Anglo-Saxon objects.

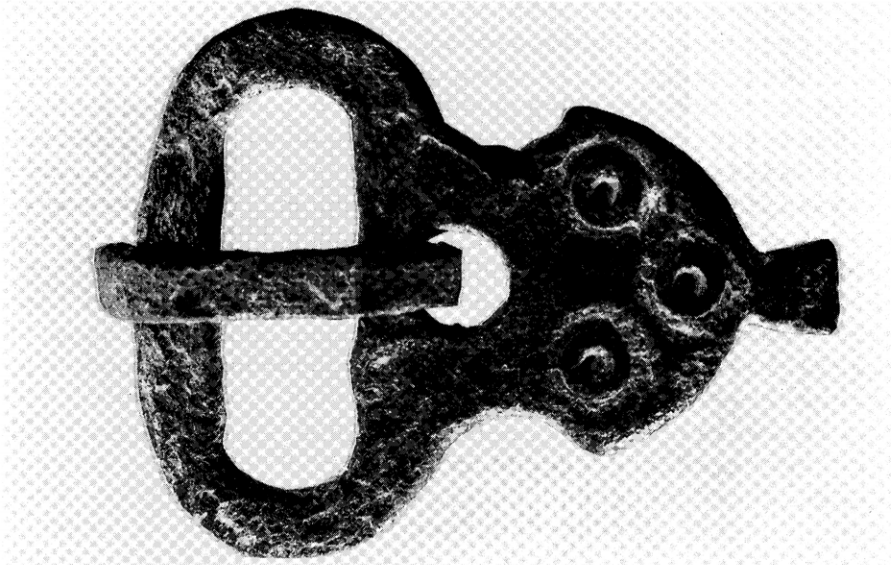


PLATE 11. Copper alloy buckle, Brough-under-Stainmore (Length: 3.4 cm. Photo: DOS)

B.2. "Near Carlisle": gold-plated penannular ring.

This object was displayed in the temporary museum set up in Carlisle in 1859 by the Reverend Tullie Cornthwaite and is thus described in the catalogue:

Massive ring, pennannular, formerly in possession of the Rev. Dr John Waugh, and supposed to have been found near Carlisle. It appears to have been of copper or some other base metal, thickly plated with gold. . . . Diameter about 3/4 inch (Anon 1859, 14).

Its find-spot, circumstances of discovery and present whereabouts are unknown. Later it was identified as a penannular brooch and a specifically post-Roman, Anglo-Saxon date claimed for it (*V.C.H.* 1901, 282). It has never been illustrated, and on the basis of surviving information it could equally be of Roman or more recent origin.

B.3. "near Kirkoswald": iron axe.

In the Addenda Antiquaria of these *Transactions* for 1902 reference is made to the discovery of "a good specimen of the Anglo-Saxon or Danish Battle Axe" at High Barn a ?disused farmhouse near Kirkoswald, before 1902. The object is now in Tullie House Museum (Acc. No. 109-1949.39); its date is uncertain.

B.4. Haverbrack, Dog Holes Cave: group of glass beads.

The group consists of thirty complete and seven fragmentary glass beads found in a probably unstratified context in the course of excavation. They are now in Lancaster

Museum, together with other material from the site. The beads were of three types. Type A, of which there were nineteen complete and six fragmentary examples, were of opaque blue glass and had been made by a core-wound process. Type B was represented by ten and a half beads, of translucent blue-green glass of varying shades. There was only one example of Type C, a segmented yellow glass bead with longitudinal striations. It appears to have been originally gilded.

In the original publication (Benson and Bland 1963, 64–5, 74–5) the beads were dated to the period from the fifth to the ninth centuries. However, the type C bead has more recently been identified as a Roman type (Boon 1977, 199) and the other finds from the cave would support this revision for the group as a whole. These were quite abundant, and included the remains of at least twenty-three humans, a large quantity of animal bone and several bracelets, two finger rings and some jet beads. The metalwork and stone beads were dated by Fowler to a period from the first century BC to the third century AD and are all of Roman type. One of the beads was found in direct association with the bracelets.

B.5. Kirkbride: "Saxon" glass beads.

These beads make their first appearance in Whellan's *Directory* (1868, 248) and all subsequent reports seem to be based on this original note (Ferguson and Swainson Cowper 1893, 509; Birley and Bellhouse 1963). Whellan simply refers to "Saxon beads of glass and other ornaments which may be seen at the Rectory" of Kirkbride. This is the only authority for the "Saxon" nature of the site, which is clearly of Roman origin, with finds, occupation and industrial levels of the first and second centuries AD, and it seems very probable that this is the date of the "Saxon" material, the present whereabouts of which is unknown.

LIST C:

C.1. Carlisle Castle: "Anglo-Saxon" brooch.

This object was found before 1813, and is now in the Black Gate Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The initial description of it in the literature, as "An ancient Buckle or Brooch . . . bearing a worn inscription in Saxo-Gothic characters" is doubtless responsible for its occasional resurrection as an Anglo-Saxon find (Ferguson and Swainson Cowper 1893, 501; *V.C.H.* 1901, 282; Gosling 1976, 172). Cowen has shown quite clearly however that it is in fact a small medieval ring-brooch of fourteenth-century date, with an inscription in Lombardic capitals (1937, 203–6).

C.2. Netherhall: Anglo-Saxon Cremation Urn.

In 1956 attention was drawn to the presence, in the Senhouse Collection at Netherhall, of an undecorated Anglo-Saxon cremation urn. Most of the objects in

this collection are from the Roman fort at Maryport, but there is no specific record of the provenance of this particular pot. It is more than likely that it does not come from Maryport at all, but from Northamptonshire: in the late eighteenth century the Senhouse family also owned land at Welton in Northamptonshire and the Anglo-Saxon cemetery of Welton was on their land. Several finds of Anglo-Saxon burials are recorded from Welton at this time (Hodgson 1956).

Discussion

The location map (Fig. 1.) indicates the actual find-spots of material. There is, however, little point in attaching great significance to the distribution of finds when so many of the find-spots are unknown or uncertain, quite apart from the purely arbitrary factors of survival or discovery. Nevertheless it seems relevant to expand slightly on one or two general points which deserve comment.

In the accepted view of Cumbrian history in this period, the area was essentially a part of the British North until at least the seventh century. It was incorporated into the kingdom of Northumbria at some stage in the course of that century although it is widely believed that this did not necessarily involve any substantial invasion of peoples. Colonisation by Scandinavian peoples began on a fairly substantial scale at the end of the ninth century. It would be unwise to use the evidence of stray finds as a major prop of this overview, but it is fair to say that there is nothing in the material presented here which contradicts it. A first point is the presence of a few objects which are stylistically linked with the Celtic rather than the Anglo-Saxon world. The Mealsgate brooch, Moresby pin, Furness head and the enamelled escutcheon from the Crosthwaite Museum are not products of Anglo-Saxon metalworkers, although this is not to say that they were of necessity made by Celts in Cumbria, or were not the property of Anglo-Saxons, for objects made under "Celtic" influence are by no means unknown in Anglo-Saxon contexts elsewhere in England. It is not possible to date these finds with great precision but they are not all necessarily assignable to the period before the Anglo-Saxon settlement in the North-West. The Crosthwaite gilt-bronze mount is particularly interesting in this respect. Whether or not the piece (and the comparable material from the Mote of Mark) can be assigned to a date before the Anglo-Saxon takeover of Cumbria and Dumfriesshire, it is not unreasonable to postulate some kind of local/regional workshop, operating in the area in the seventh century, through which new styles were dispersed. The assimilation and integration of Anglo-Saxon and Late Celtic styles associated with the Northumbrian Renaissance is usually seen in a monastic context. However, the evidence from the Mote of Mark itself suggests that this diffusion was not taking place in an exclusively monastic or ecclesiastical milieu.

It is convenient to suppose that any object which finds its closest parallels in another area is an import, hence the view that the Furness head, Mealsgate brooch and Moresby pin are imports from Ireland. However, in view of the fact that we have so little other material from Cumbria itself, this temptation should be kept at bay, unless there are very good and specific reasons. There is nothing which serves as a background against which possible imports might be identified. In a non-market economy such objects could only be exchanged by gift or theft, and only the Furness

head could really qualify as a prestige gift. Indeed, we have no clear perception of the extent to which regional or local style was an important feature of the material culture of the period. Some types of artefact are of widespread occurrence within Britain and (relatively) common, such as the Crosthwaite Museum enamelled mount. The Moresby handpin is representative of a type of clothes fastening which was widely used throughout Britain and Ireland; examples of virtually identical form are found in many different areas. On the other hand, it would appear that new decorative fashions might be taken up by local craft-workers with surprising speed. It is fascinating to note the presence and indeed, manufacture in Cumbria in the ninth century, of strap-ends in the current Trewhiddle style, at the opposite end of the country to the type site which gave the style its name.

It is possible that some of the objects of Anglo-Saxon type come from burials, and complement the small group in the Upper Eden Valley; the "Cumberland" sword-handle is undoubtedly an enigmatic object, and it is particularly unfortunate that the circumstances of its discovery are unknown.

The overall quantity of material is not large, but there is a perhaps rather surprising quantity of "high-status" objects of late eighth or ninth century date. It seems most unlikely that such items as the Kingmoor ring or the Ormside bowl were casually lost and it is known that the Kirkoswald mount was from a hoard. Contemporary failure to retrieve these items may perhaps be seen as a direct reflection of the troubled years of the ninth century. Viking attacks on Cumbrian sites are not specifically documented, but it is hard to believe that the region was unaffected, given the evidence for extensive raiding in both north-east Ireland and north-east England.

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