W. Stow, Sk.	M 3aii	—	Suffolk Arch. Unit WS 585	WST 133
	M 3cii	—	Suffolk Arch. Unit WS 1666. WH4	WST 3

*This Spong stamp has not yet been cast for the Archive. It is, however, readily identifiable.[17]

TERESA BRISCOE[18]

NOTES

[1] J. N. L. Myres, *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Pottery of the Pagan Period* (Cambridge, 1977).
[2] T. Briscoe, 'Anglo-Saxon Pot Stamps', 1–15 in *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeol. Hist.* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. 92, 1981), 19.
[3] P. Mayes and M. J. Dean, *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Baston Lincs.* (Occasional Papers in Lincolnshire Hist. Archaeol. 3, 1976).
[4] N. Åberg, *The Anglo-Saxons in England* (Uppsala, 1926).
[5] J. N. L. Myres and B. Green, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of Caistor-by-Norwich and Markshall, Norfolk* (Oxford, 1973).
[6] K. Fennell and N. Kerr, *Loveden Hill* (forthcoming).
[7] C. Hills, *Spong Hill, Vol. I* (East Anglian Archaeol. Rep. 6, 1977).
[8] Ibid., pl. VI.
[9] N. Reynolds (forthcoming).
[10] M. Welch, *Early Anglo-Saxon Sussex* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. 112 (i and ii), 1983), 219, suggests that this cemetery may date from the early 5th century.
[11] T. C. Lethbridge, *A cemetery at Lackford, Suffolk* (Cambridge, 1951).
[12] S. E. West, publication forthcoming.
[13] K. Waller, *Die Urnenfriedhof in Wehden* (Hildesheim, 1961).
[14] I have to thank Herr Matthias Schön for sending me casts of the Wijster pot and for this information, prior to the publication of his own work on the cemeteries of the Elbe–Weser area.
[15] W. Hübener, *Absatzgebiete Fruhgeschichtliche Topfereien Nordlich der Alpen* (Bonn, 1969).
[16] Hills, op. cit. in note 7, Stamp Group 8 and pots 1174 and 1505, pl. VII; Briscoe, op. cit. in note 2, 21.
[17] Hills, op. cit. in note 7, Stamp Group 4, pl. VI.
[18] This note was produced as a result of an award from the Colt Fund of the Society for Medieval Archaeology, for which the writer is most grateful.

BUTTON BROOCHES, CLASP BUTTONS AND FACE MASKS (Fig. 4)

Detailed study of decorated metalwork still has an important role to play in the present and future interpretation of the migration to Britain made by Angles, Saxons and other Germanic peoples from Scandinavia, northern Germany and the Netherlands. The judgement as to whether any particular metal artefact represents an import worn or carried by a migrant, was the insular product of an immigrant smith, or an import reflecting trade contacts, can never be easy, but it should certainly be attempted.

This note is concerned with the button brooch, a miniature cast saucer brooch, usually though by no means always ornamented with a human mask design and found throughout much of southern England, with outliers in Frankish Gaul. It proposes that we can more satisfactorily explain the phenomenon of this brooch form if we view it as a contemporary regional response to the introduction of the clasp-wearing fashion from Scandinavia into eastern, central and north-eastern England. My debt to two recent publications, a corpus of 118 button brooches prepared by Dr R. Avent and Professor V. I. Evison[1] and a survey of Scandinavian and Anglian metalwork by Dr J. Hines, including a detailed discussion of the clasps found both in Scandinavia and England,[2] is happily acknowledged here. This note could not have been written without them, but the statement in the former of the two that the 'full-face mask was sometimes used on a wrist-clasp stud in Norway and Sweden but no real button brooch has been found in southern Scandinavia',[3] in my view dismisses too easily the potential connection between these two artefact types.

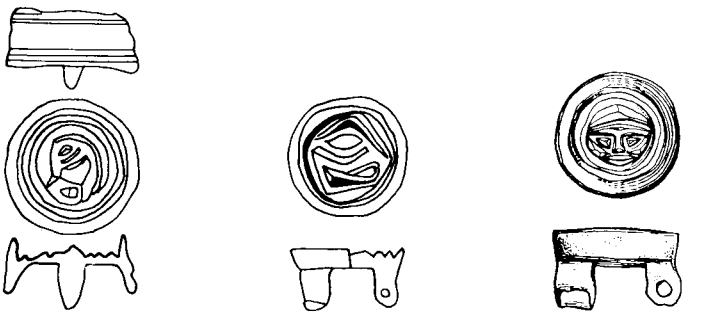

FIG. 4

BUTTON BROOCHES, CLASP BUTTONS AND FACE MASKS

From left to right: Clasp button, Kiiliä, Finland (after Erä-Esko); button brooch, Class L, Frénouville Grave 565, France (after Pilet); button brooch, Class Bii, Highdown, Sussex (drawing by Mrs P. Clarke). Scale 1 : 1

The manner in which both clasps and button brooches were used to fasten dress is the first aspect to require comment. In fact the term 'wrist-clasp' is a misnomer, as Hines has pointed out, for clasps were not fastened exclusively to sleeve cuffs at the wrist, though this was their most common use. Clasps also fastened trouser bottoms at the ankles in Scandinavian male dress[4] and at Eidsten (Norway) a woman apparently wore a garment fixed or joined by a row of clasps down her front from about the throat to about the waist.[5] This is comparable to the woman in Alfriston (Sussex) Grave 62, who had one button brooch to the left of the left thigh and the remaining four button brooches in pairs going up the body.[6] A similar function may be implied by the position of a pair near the centre of the grave in Pewsey (Wiltshire) Grave 67, a single brooch probably at the waist in Stowting (Kent) Grave 9, another pair on and around the left pelvis in Abingdon (Berkshire, now Oxfordshire) Grave B51 and a further pair above the thighs in Bifrons (Kent) Grave 5. Then at Worthy Park (Kingsworthy, Hampshire), Grave 80 has one brooch on the left clavicle and the other on the chest below the breast. Brooches were found on the breast or chest in Alton (Hampshire) Grave 35, Brighthampton (Oxfordshire) Grave 1, Harnham Hill (Wiltshire) Grave 40, Lyminge (Kent) Grave 16, Mucking (Essex) Graves 90, 99 and 546 and Pewsey Grave 44. One of the three brooches discovered in Petersfinger (Wiltshire) Grave 25 occurred on the left side of the breast, while the other two were found at the left wrist and a pair was recorded near the left hand in Chessell Down (Isle of Wight) Grave 5.[7] Of course it is possible that some of the brooches found by the wrists and the pelvis were deposited in purses and had not been attached directly to the dress of the deceased. In that sense indeed 'there is no unambiguous evidence for use at the wrist' of button brooches,[8] but nevertheless in some, perhaps all, of the relevant cases cited above, the brooches could have been worn as sleeve fastenings.

Slightly less than half of the button brooches for which we have information were placed in fact conventionally at the neck (three pairs and six singles), on the clavicle (two brooches), on the shoulder (four pairs and three singles) and near the head (one brooch). Certainly there is sufficient evidence here to suggest that button brooches were not always worn simply as miniature substitutes for cast saucer brooches and to ask future excavators to take even greater care in recording button brooch positions and indeed those of all brooches and dress fittings. At least some of their owners may therefore have utilized button brooches as a substitute for clasps, either as a long sleeve wrist fastening or to join a dress or blouse between the throat and the waist.

The second aspect which needs to be considered is the absolute chronology assigned to both button brooches and clasps. Hines dates the introduction of the clasp-wearing habit to Anglian England in the late 5th century,[9] while conventionally button brooches have been

dated between the last decades of the 5th and the middle of the 6th century.[10] A list of button brooches from sixteen graves datable to the first half of the 6th century is provided by Avent and Evison,[11] but there is also a second list of graves datable to the 5th century.[12] Evison argues for an early 5th-century origin in northern Germany, but her statement that 'a chipcarved saucer brooch with a mask design could certainly have existed in north Germany by A.D. 400', modelled on 4th-century repoussé ornamented disc brooches such as that from Immer,[13] can be countered on two points. Firstly no such cast saucer brooches have yet been found in Germany and secondly the earliest secure dating evidence for cast saucer brooches in northern Germany and England comes from Nesse (Lower Saxony) Grave 3[14] and Spong Hill (Norfolk) cremation 2376.[15] Both are associated with Nesse Type equal-arm brooches implying manufacture of five-spiral composite cast and fully cast saucer brooches no earlier than the middle decades of the 5th century. I cannot accept therefore Evison's claim that all five-spiral cast saucer brooches were manufactured within the first half of that century[16] and would point out that in England many five-spiral cast saucer brooches were not buried until the first half of the 6th century.[17] Burial in the 6th rather than the 5th century then is quite probable for the button brooch of Dover (Kent) Grave 48 (and incidentally the same may well be true in the case of the cast disc with a mask design of Beckford (Gloucestershire) Grave 12).[18] Until Evison's final report of her Alton excavation is published, it is impossible to judge whether the beads, copper-alloy pin, tweezers and knife from Grave 35 (or the Grave 37 assemblage) should be attributed to the 5th century. The third grave to which a certain 5th-century date is given may indeed have been buried in that century, though I suspect rather later within it than the date favoured by Evison. Mucking Grave 90 has a Sahlenburg Type equal-arm brooch cast in the early part of the 5th, but it is heavily worn and need not have been buried until much later.[19]

Even more open to debate are the graves which Evison regarded as only probably 5th-century. For example, the location of the relevant graves in the Frénouville (Calvados) cemetery does not rule out a late 5th- rather than an early 5th-century date for the button brooches.[20] Similarly the statement that at Collingbourne Ducis in Wiltshire 'all of the graves so far published belong to the fifth century'[21] seems to ignore the many 6th-century finds in the published report.[22] None of the reasons offered for redating Alfriston graves 29, 62 and C from the first half of the 6th to the 5th century convinces me[23] and much the same can be said of the remaining graves listed in Avent and Evison's Table 5.

Although no clasp buttons with face-masks have been found in England, the admittedly rather rare Scandinavian clasp buttons or studs with masks[24] do resemble button brooches both in form and size. A comparison of distribution maps[25] reveals virtually no overlap between those regions in Britain and Europe in which clasp-wearing was an integral part of dress and those in which button brooches were worn. There are the exceptions of two pairs of cast clasps of Class C refitted as brooches from Bifrons (Patrixbourne, Kent) and the cast half-clasp from Saxonbury (Kingston-by-Lewes, Sussex).[26] The re-use of the Bifrons clasps as brooches is particularly significant, for the button brooch face-mask designs closest to Scandinavian masks on clasp buttons and square-headed brooch bow discs and plate roundels[27] are on button brooches predominantly found in E. Kent (classes A and L).[28] Evison sees a further Scandinavian design on class J button brooches,[29] the mask between two animals, ultimately derived from the late Roman design of a mask between two dolphins. On the button brooch the animals have been reduced to the legs with paws of quadrupeds. If there is a direct Scandinavian influence here, rather than for example the adoption of this design from the kidney-shaped belt plates of late 5th-century NE. Gaul,[30] this is unlikely to antedate the emergence of Salin's Style I from the Nydam Style, dated by Haseloff to *c.* 475.[31] Only a single relief-decorated brooch in Nydam Style is known from England[32] and quadrupeds are the principal characteristic of Style I replacing the hippocamps and quadrupeds of the Nydam Style.[33]

In conclusion, there is no major discrepancy between the earliest probable date for the innovation of the button brooch in SE. England and the first probable importation of Scandinavian clasps into eastern and northern England. While square-headed brooches with

early Style I animal ornament imported from S. Scandinavia to E. Kent and Sussex[34] provide obvious models for many of the mask designs found on button brooches, the more distant inspiration of Scandinavian clasp buttons with face masks may well provide the explanation for the scale and function of the Anglo-Saxon button brooch. Kent's well-established metalwork connections with S. Scandinavia give us the most obvious routeway, and the discovery of only one clasp button with an atypical full-face mask from a Danish hoard[24] could be blamed, not entirely convincingly, on the *fundknapphed*, the shortage of finds from cemeteries in the 5th to 6th centuries there. If the clasp button is rejected as an explanation for the button brooch, we still have to explain the reasons for the emergence of such a simple and small version of the cast saucer brooch at a time when both applied and cast saucer brooches were becoming ever more elaborate and larger.

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NOTES

[1] R. Avent and V. I. Evison, 'Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches', *Archaeologia*, 107 (1982), 77–124.
[2] J. Hines, *The Scandinavian Character of Anglian England in the pre-Viking Period* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. 124, 1984).
[3] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 96.
[4] Hines, op. cit. in note 2, 63–64.
[5] Ibid., 47.
[6] A. F. Griffith and L. F. Salzmann, 'An Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Alfriston, Sussex', *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, 56 (1914), 44–45, pl. v.1–3A; M. G. Welch, *Early Anglo-Saxon Sussex* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Brit. Ser. 112, 1983), 54, figs. 28d, e, 29.
[7] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 102–17.
[8] Ibid., 101.
[9] Hines, op. cit. in note 2, 102.
[10] Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 52–55.
[11] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 121 table 4.
[12] Ibid., 121 table 5.
[13] Ibid., 97–98, pl. xviiig.
[14] H. W. Böhme, *Germanische Grabfunde des 4. bis 5. Jahrhunderts zwischen unterer Elbe und Loire* (Munich, 1974), 18, 27–28, 243, Taf. 31, 2–4.
[15] Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 43.
[16] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 93.
[17] Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 42–46.
[18] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 96.
[19] V. I. Evison, 'Supporting-arm brooches and equal-arm brooches in England', in H.-J. Hässler (ed.), *Studien zur Sachsenforschung*, 1 (Hildesheim, 1977), 130–31, 134–35, 138, figs. 2a, 3a; Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 53.
[20] C. Pilet, *La Nécropole de Frénouville* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Rep. Int. Ser. 83, 1980), 67–71; Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 93.
[21] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, 93.
[22] C. J. Gingell, 'The excavation of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Collingbourne Ducis', *Wiltshire Archaeol. Mag.*, 70–71 (1976), 61–98.
[23] Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 54 and 49.
[24] Dr J. Hines informs me that he knows of only three Class B clasp buttons with full-face masks from S. and W. Scandinavia, which are from the Høstentorp hoard (Denmark), Nordhus (Norway) and Hult (Sweden) respectively.
[25] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, figs. 3–11 and Hines, op. cit. in note 2, 343 map 2.1.
[26] Hines, op. cit. in note 2, 103, 96–97, 333–34.
[27] E.g. M. B. Mackeprang, *De Nordiske Guldbrakteater* (Aarhus, 1952), pl. 24, 6–11; A. Erä-Esko, *Germanic Animal Art of Salin's Style I in Finland* (Helsinki, 1965), pl. 1.6; G. Haseloff, *Die germanische Tierornamentik der Völkerwanderungszeit* (Berlin, 1981), Abb. 53–55.
[28] Avent and Evison, op. cit. in note 1, figs. 3 and 11.
[29] Ibid., 93–95, figs 9 and 12 c–f.
[30] J. Breuer and H. Roosens, 'Le cimetière franc de Haillot', *Archaeologia Belgica*, 34 (1957), 323–36, pl. x; Welch, op. cit. in note 6, 54.
[31] G. Haseloff, 'Salin's Style I', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 18 (1974), 14.
[32] E. Bakka, 'On the beginning of Salin's Style I in England', *Universitet i Bergen Årbok, Historisk-Antikvarisk rekke*, 3 (1958), 10 fig. 2; Haseloff, op. cit. in note 27, 140 Abb. 86.
[33] Haseloff, op. cit. in note 31, 7–8, pl. iv.
[34] Ibid., 11–15; A. Down and M. Welch, 'A Jutlandic square-headed brooch from Apple Down, West Sussex', *Antiq. J.*, 64, part 2 (1984), 408–13.