

SHORTER NOTICES

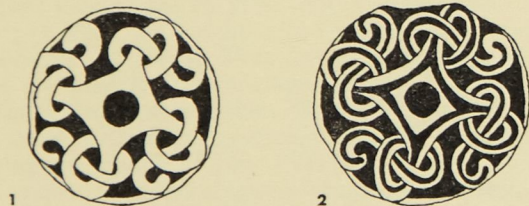
Late Saxon Bronze Disc Brooch

BY BARBARA GREEN, B.SC., A.M.A.

IN 1969 a Late Saxon bronze disc brooch was found in the garden of 11 Park Close, Hethersett.¹ Although very worn it was possible to determine most of the surface decoration (Fig. 1), and it was found to be very similar to a brooch from Threxton in the Norwich Museum collection² (Fig. 2). Its diameter is 1.025 in. (2.6 cm.). The central motif is a square with concave sides, in the centre of which is a circular hollow. Each corner of the square is produced to form a loose interlaced knot with a loop on one side and an upturned tendril on the other. It is now impossible to determine if the knot was double contoured, but the very close similarity between the decoration on this and comparable pieces suggests that it was. The back is plain; part of what was probably the catch pin remains.

This new brooch is an addition to a small group of bronze disc brooches and mounts whose distribution lies mainly in East Anglia. They are recorded from Threxton, Norfolk; Bottisham Lode, Cambridgeshire; Dunwich and Icklingham, Suffolk; perhaps the Leicester district; an unknown provenance, and Oxshott Wood, Surrey. This latter, though related to the main group, is more elaborate.

Their origin and date have been discussed by David Wilson³ and Miss Vera Evison.⁴ Both are agreed that these brooches were of English, probably of East Anglian, manufacture, although the decoration is close to contemporary Scandinavian art style. Miss Evison considers that the strong resemblance of these brooches to a brooch from a grave at Birka, Sweden, would indicate the production of the main series before the middle of the tenth century and perhaps as early as the ninth century. Mr. Wilson however feels that a comparison of the Oxshott Wood mount, and therefore the other objects, with the Winchester-Ringerike ornament of the late tenth and eleventh centuries is more acceptable.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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¹Found by Barbara and Stephen Smith who presented it to Norwich Castle Museum, registration no. 650.969.

²Registration no. 179.950 (8).

³Wilson, D. M., *Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork, 700-1100*, 1964, p. 48-49.

⁴Evison, V. L., "A group of late Saxon brooches", *Antiq. Journ.*, XXXVII, 1957, pp. 220-22 and pl. XXVI.