

SOME RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS FROM NORFOLK

An Anglo-Saxon Brooch Fragment from Shelfanger, near Diss (Fig. 1)

by Kenneth Penn and Andrew Rogerson

Recent routine observation of a building site (County number 25340) in Shelfanger by Mr. M. Noble has led to the discovery of a brooch fragment, unusual in an East Anglian context.

This cast, decorated, silver-gilt object is part of the head and bow of a 'round-headed' brooch, with trefoil lobes (originally with three, now with two remaining, one almost broken away, the other very worn). The incomplete head bears a mask motif, finely executed. The bow has a pronounced median rib and bears stamped decoration (a row of circles each side of the rib and 'V's along the rib), now somewhat obscured by the gilding. On the back of the head are two pin-lugs, one broken, and traces of an iron spring/pin.

In general form, the Shelfanger fragment may be compared with a complete round-headed brooch with trefoil lobes and lozenge-shaped foot from Bremen, and dated to the 6th century (Ahrens 1978, No. 240). Although this S. Norfolk piece may be an exotic import, the mask motif relates this piece to the series of button brooches (of cast bronze and gilded) which are found mostly in Southern England, especially Kent, and thought to be of 5th to mid-6th century date (Avent and Evison 1982).

The brooch has been given to Norwich Castle Museum.

Bibliography

Ahrens, C., 1978, *Sachsen und Angelsachsen*, Hamburg.

Avent, R. and Evison, V. I., 1982, 'Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches' *Archaeologia* CVII (1982), 77-124.

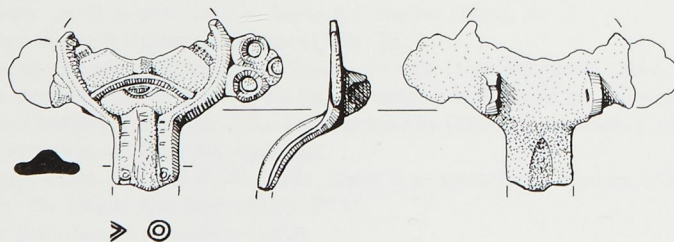


Fig. 1

A brooch fragment from Shelfanger. Scale brooch 1:1; stamps 2:1.

Drawing by Kenneth Penn.