

The King's School, Canterbury, Disc Brooch

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THE brooch which is the subject of this paper was found on 3 February, 1957, by a gardener in Palace Court, within the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral. It was unearthed in fragments in a foundation-trench of a new school hall on the site of the ancient archbishop's palace (demolished during the Civil War), and was promptly brought to the British Museum, where it was treated and restored by the staff of the Research Laboratory with great skill and care. The Headmaster and Governors of the King's School most generously gave it to the British Museum with the stipulation that it should be properly published and that it should be known as the King's School, Canterbury, brooch.

This paper fulfils the first condition of the gift. It attempts to show that the brooch is a tenth-century Anglo-Saxon piece, executed in a technique rarely encountered in this country, and that it was perhaps lost at the sack of Canterbury by the Vikings in 1011.¹

DESCRIPTION (PLS. V-VII)

The brooch, which is not quite complete, is 14.1 cm. in diameter and consists of two dished silver sheets nailed together, to clasp a number of gold sheets decorated with filigree ornament (see profile FIG. 1). The upper plate, in its original

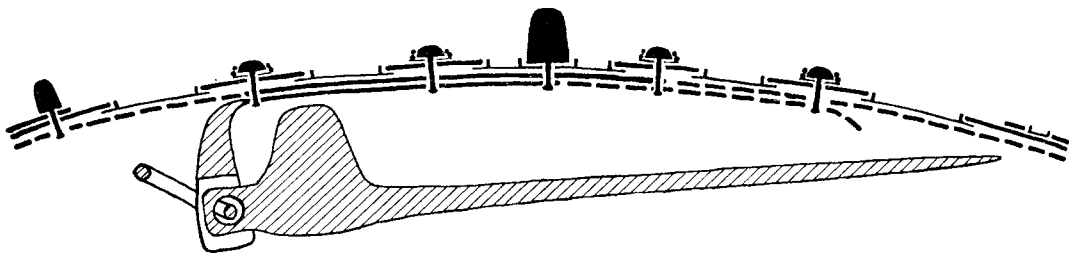


FIG. 1

KING'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, BROOCH. Sc. $\frac{1}{3}$

Section through the brooch, showing the method of clasping the gold sheets (pp. 16 ff.)

condition, was pierced by nine circular holes; these four holes in the shape of slightly convex-sided squares and eight comma-shaped fields disposed in a geometrical pattern, contain the gold plates bearing the filigree ornament. The area between these holes is filled with nielloed zoomorphic and interlace ornament

¹ I acknowledge with grateful thanks the help I have received from discussion with my colleague Mr. P. E. Lasko during the writing of this paper. I must also thank my wife for her drawings and my colleague Mr. R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford for reading the manuscript.

and the whole face of the brooch is embellished with a series of dome-headed rivets. A silver band is applied to the edge of the brooch and set with ten slightly curved sub-rectangular gold plates of filigree.

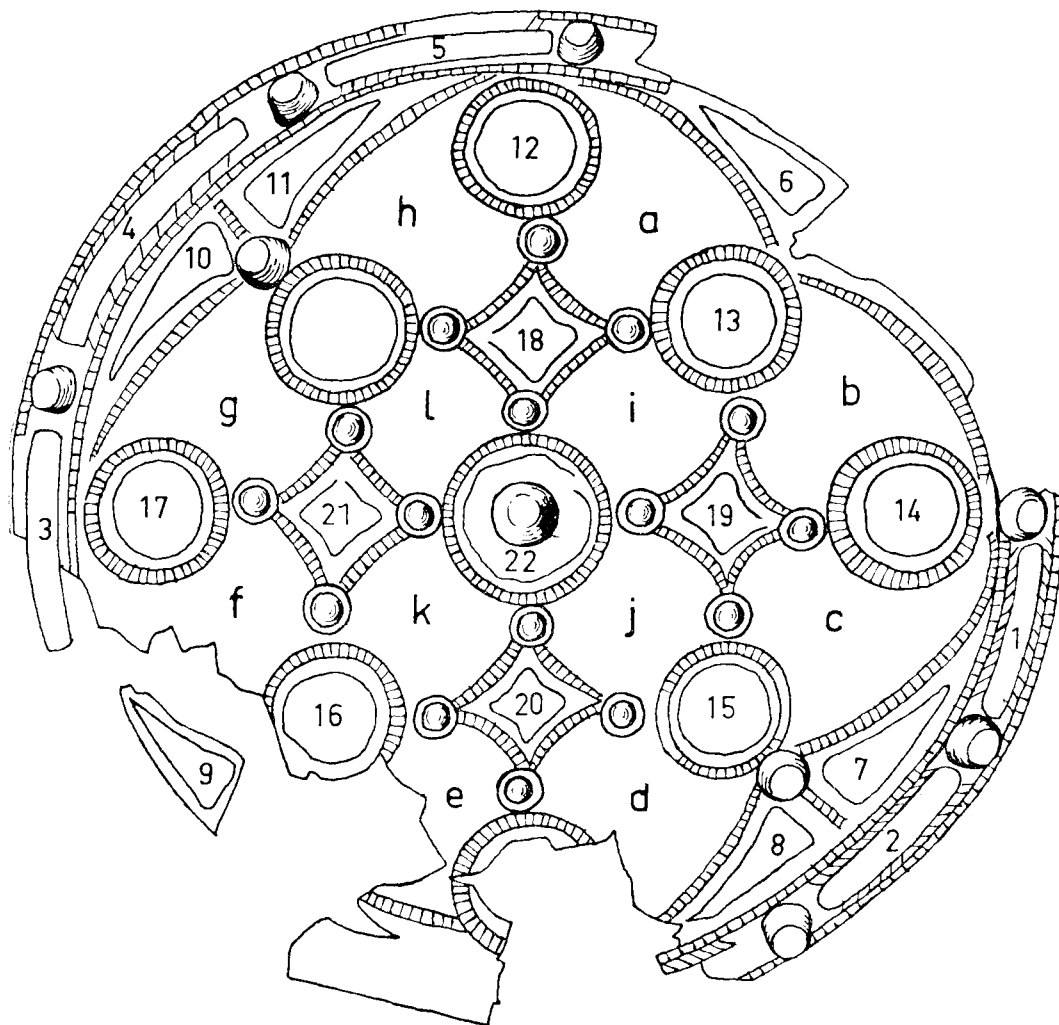


FIG. 2

KING'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, BROOCH

Numeration of the fields of the brooch, for use with FIGS. 3 and 4 (pp. 18 and 19)

In the middle of the brooch is a gold roundel with a central gold rivet head shaped like an inverted plant pot. The rivet is surrounded by a plain band of filigree, which is in turn surrounded by a running-scroll pattern of filigree, and each tendril of this scroll is linked to the next by a plain flat gold band. Small granules of gold were presumably originally placed in each of the terminals of the seven tendrils (one is now missing). Further granules occur (with one exception)

at the joints of the scroll pattern and the whole field is surrounded by a filigree border. The filigree decoration of this field and of the other fields of the brooch, except for the edges of the plates inlaid in the border, is made up of a serrated gold band stood on one edge. Spaced equally about the central roundel are four small dome-headed rivets of silver, collared by a band of twisted gold wire and set on small irregularly cut sheets of gold plate, which protrude slightly beyond the contour of the twisted wire. These rivets occur at one corner of the four concave-sided, pierced, square fields which are inset with further gold filigree plaques

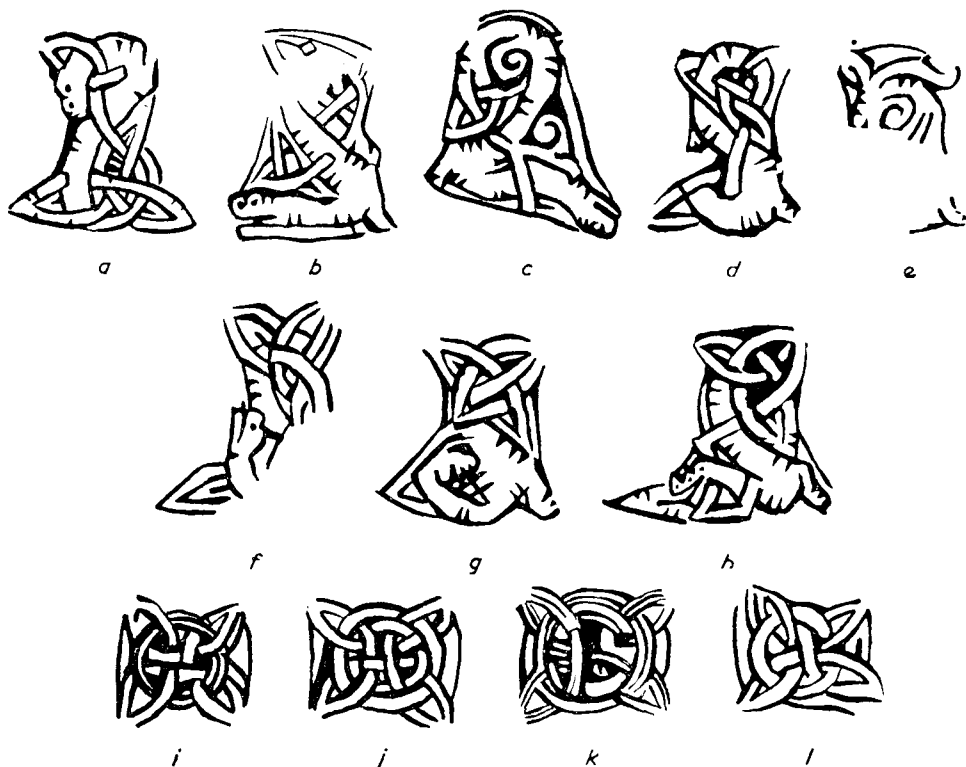


FIG. 3

KING'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, BROOCH

The incised and nielloed ornament of the brooch (for position of the field cf. FIG. 2)

(PL. VII) and bounded by an incised billeted border. At each corner of each square is a small silver rivet with collar and underlying gold plate, as described above. A four-element knot, interlacing with a circle and inlaid with niello, is incised in each of the fields (FIG. 3, *i-l*), between the gold plates. The gold plates are decorated with various filigree scroll designs, the design differing from field to field, each bounded by a border of filigree. Both the border and the ornament are soldered to a gold sheet, the sheet extending beyond the border to act as a flange which keeps the sheet in position (PL. V and FIG. 1). Nine circular fields inset with plates of gold filigree were disposed as a square round these central fields: two of

the gold plates are missing. The designs of the filigree patterns of these plates vary and are illustrated diagrammatically in FIG. 4. They are bounded by a filigree border and most of them are either backed semicircular scrolls, or tree-shaped motifs. Surrounding the pierced holes in which the gold plates are set are incised billeted borders. Degenerate animal ornament fills the space between the circular fields. Each field contains an incised and nielloed animal, which often degenerates into interlace (FIG. 3). It would be tedious to describe each animal in detail, but certain features should be noted. The main lines of the body are often embellished

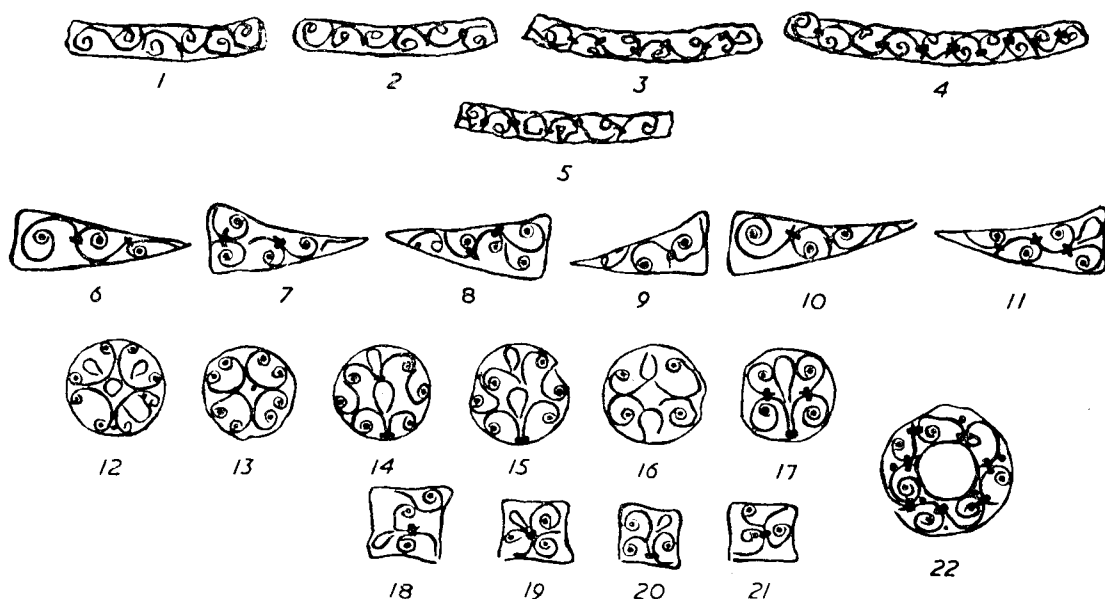


FIG. 4

KING'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, BROOCH

Diagrammatic representation of the filigree patterns of the brooch

with a double nick, two of the animals (*c* and *e*) have spiral hips and a number of animals degenerate into a three-element knot. The zoomorphic features of some of these animal are not easily seen, the heads, for instance, being amorphous and difficult to recognize. All the decoration so far described is confined within a hatched border of quatrefoil form with a large silver boss-headed rivet, in the shape of an inverted plant-pot, at the joint of each curve. The spaces between the quatrefoil and the border are taken up by comma-shaped fields, inlaid with gold plates bearing filigree scrolls, set in pairs and separated by a narrow billeted border of silver (FIG. 2). The border of the brooch is composed of a narrow applied band of sheet silver embellished with billeted borders. Originally ten gold plates, decorated with filigree scrolls, were inlaid in the border—each interspaced by large boss-headed silver rivets of the type described above. Only five of the plates and six of the rivets survive. These gold plates are constructed and affixed in a

different manner from that of the other plates. The edges of the gold sheets, which bear the filigree scrolls, are bent up and serrated to form a border. The edges of the holes pierced in the silver border are hammered over the edge of the gold border to hold the gold plates in position.

The back plate was very fragmentary when it reached the Museum and only part of it remains in position (PL. VI). The large pin was mounted on the back by means of a loop of silver wire, which passed through a hole in the flattened butt of the pin and the split, upturned end of a strip of silver which was riveted to the back of the brooch (which remains in position through about half its length). This strip presumably turned up at the other end to form a catch plate for the pin. A heel at the butt end presumably provided a fulcrum on which the pin could be bent into the catch.

DISCUSSION

General. The brooch belongs to a class of late Saxon disc brooches discussed at some length by Mr. Bruce-Mitford² and many of its details can be paralleled in that group of objects. Many of these brooches are of silver inlaid with niello, for instance the Stockholm³, Fuller⁴ and Beeston Tor⁵ disc brooches. The large rivet heads are paralleled, although in a slightly different form, on the Strickland,⁶ Sutton,⁷ Stockholm and Beeston Tor brooches, which vary in date from the ninth century (Beeston Tor) to the eleventh century (Sutton): I know, however, of no other example of a gold rivet of this form. The smaller rivet heads are nearer in shape to those of the Fuller brooch, but the twisted gold wire and the underlying gold plate are unparalleled in the Anglo-Saxon corpus of brooches, although collars of beaded silver wire occur round the bosses on the Strickland brooch as well as on a number of brooches of penannular form⁸. The division of the major part of the field into a quatrefoil is paralleled on the Strickland brooch, while the billeted borders of the fields of the King's School brooch are paralleled on nearly all the brooches so far mentioned, although it should be noticed, that the borders of the King's School brooch are very coarsely executed and are much nearer in quality to the similar borders on a pair of silver casket plates in the British Museum⁹: in fact the technical quality of the silver work of these plates is very close to that on the brooch and this significance will be examined below. The raised rim of the brooch is without parallel, while the pierced holes, with their

² R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'Late Saxon disc-brooches,' *Dark-age Britain* (ed. D. B. Harden, London, 1956), pp. 171 ff.

³ *Månadsbladet* (Stockholm, K. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien), 1892, pp. 197 ff. Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxxi, A.

⁴ Bruce Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xx.

⁵ R. A. Smith, 'The Beeston Tor hoard,' *Antiq. J.*, v (1925), fig. 1. Bruce-Mitford *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxvii, A.

⁶ Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxvi; *British Museum Quarterly*, xv (1941-50), pl. xxxiii a.

⁷ G. Hickes, *Dissertatio de linguarum veterum septentrionalium usu* (Oxford, 1705), p. 168; Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxviii.

⁸ D. M. Wilson, 'A group of penannular brooches of the Viking period,' *Árbók hins íslenska fornleifafélags* 1958, pp. 95-100.

⁹ D. M. Wilson, 'Two plates from a late Saxon casket,' *Antiq. J.*, xxxvi (1956), 31-39.

inlaid filigree plaques of gold, can only be paralleled on a sword-pommel from the Seine which may be of English workmanship¹⁰. Indeed, to my knowledge, only three other Anglo-Saxon objects, the Strickland brooch, a fragmentary strap-end from Kroken, Fjære, Aust Agder, Norway¹¹, and a fragment of a sword-pommel from Ingleton, Yorks,¹² are of silver inlaid with gold (but without filigree). A strap-end from Lansdown, Bath, Somerset,¹³ probably contained an inlaid gold plate, while the inlaying of bronze with silver plates occurs occasionally in the late Saxon period¹⁴.

The lamination of two sheets of silver is, as far as I am aware, only paralleled on the Stockholm disc brooch, where the bottom sheet has no apparent function and was apparently added before the design had been carved, for the marks of the chisel appear as pressure marks on the back of the brooch.

The form of the pin is unparalleled, as is its method of hinging, but the riveted strip across the back, bearing the catch-plate and hinge, occurs quite commonly in the disc brooch series.¹⁵ Like the Sutton, Strickland and Fuller brooches, the King's School brooch is dished. In size the brooch can be compared to the Sutton brooch, the diameter of which varies between 14.9 and 16.4 c.m.

It can be seen, therefore, that in general design the brooch is by no means an aberrant form; it has certain features which are unique or unfamiliar, namely the gold rivet-head, the gold wire and the plates around and beneath the rivets, the rim form, the method of inlay and the form and method of hinging the pin. Similarly the lamination of the Stockholm brooch is, I feel, a feature which bears no relation to the functional purpose of the two sheets of silver on the King's School brooch, so this can also be called a unique feature. It is not the largest, nor even (if we compare it with the Strickland brooch) the richest, Anglo-Saxon disc-brooch. The silver is very base and the incised designs are of an exceedingly low quality—a silversmith, unpractised in this technique, was apparently using a very base metal—but the quality of the gold work is quite high.

The incised and nielloed designs. The designs engraved into the surface of the brooch fall into three groups: the dividing lines, the interlaced knots and the animal ornament. The division of an area for decoration into a number of small fields by means of beaded and billeted borders is a common feature of late Saxon metalwork. It occurs on such eighth-century objects as the Källby harness-mounts¹⁶ and is frequent in the ninth century, e.g. on a number of objects in the Trewhiddle and Beeston Tor hoards, while its occurrence on tenth-century objects, such as the

¹⁰ British Museum, *Guide to Anglo-Saxon and Foreign Teutonic Antiquities* (London, 1923), p. 152, fig. 205.

¹¹ H. Shetelig (ed.), *Viking Antiquities*, pt. v (Oslo, 1940), p. 179, fig. 144.

¹² Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxx D.

¹³ *Archaeol. News Letter*, v (1955), 252.

¹⁴ Cf. especially two other objects from Canterbury—a censer cover (T. D. Kendrick, *Late Saxon and Viking Art* (London, 1949), pl. 36, 2), and a small cross (R. F. Jessup, *Anglo-Saxon Jewellery* (London, 1950), pl. xxxi, 2). Cf. also V. I. Evison, 'Early Anglo-Saxon inlaid metalwork,' *Antiq. J.*, xxxv (1955), 20-45, for a discussion of the practice in pagan Anglo-Saxon contexts.

¹⁵ Cf., e.g., the Sutton, Isle of Ely, brooch and the smaller Beeston Tor brooch (Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. xxix).

¹⁶ D. M. Wilson, 'An early Viking age grave from Källby near Lund,' *Meddelanden från Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum*, 1955, fig. 2.

British Museum casket-plates¹⁷ and on a group of Hiberno-Saxon pennanular brooches¹⁸ has already been mentioned.

This very common method of dividing the field is accompanied by another simple motif in the four fields which surround the centre, a four-element interlace pattern, the centre of which is surrounded by a ring. One of the patterns fails to achieve a complete design, but such bad drawing is typical of the generally shoddy decoration of the brooch. The motif does not occur, as far as I know, within the corpus of metalwork of the Christian Anglo-Saxon period, although its occurrence at this period is fairly well documented in other materials both in this country¹⁹ and on the continent²⁰. It is impossible to attach any chronological significance to this ornament, although the interlaced ring is a typical feature of the tenth-century, Anglo-Viking, Jellinge and Ringerike styles²¹.

A similar date is indicated by the animal ornament, the clumsy barbarity of which is closely paralleled by the animal ornament on one of the pair of casket-plates in the British Museum, previously mentioned²². The animal ornament of this plate, although very muddled and of a similarly low quality of craftsmanship, is more capable of art-historical analysis and reveals certain coherent features of Anglo-Saxon and Jellinge traditions. On the Canterbury brooch the Anglo-Saxon features are tenuous and the Jellinge features can only be seen with the eye of faith—or experience. It has been shown that the use of silver and niello in this manner is an Anglo-Saxon technique, though the only distinct features of these animals which can be identified as belonging to an earlier Anglo-Saxon tradition are the nicks which occur in their rather amorphous bodies and the spiral hook at the hip. The spiral hook often occurs in Anglo-Saxon art from the end of the seventh century²³ onwards and is a particularly marked feature of the Jellinge and Ringerike style in Scandinavia²⁴ and England²⁵. The nicks in the bodies of the animals are of less common occurrence and are mainly found in ninth-century contexts, as, for example, on the Talnotrie strap-end²⁶, found in a hoard the deposition of which is dated to c.905, and on the Ethelswith ring²⁷, which is associated by inscription with Queen Ethelswith of Mercia (55-89). The compact interlacing of the animals on the Canterbury brooch indicates a tenth-century

¹⁷ *Op. cit.* in note 9.

¹⁸ *Op. cit.* in note 8.

¹⁹ In a rather elaborate and developed form it can be seen on the Norbury cross-shaft, Kendrick, *op. cit.* in note 14, pl. 49, 2.

²⁰ Cf. MS. Rome Vat. Reg. Lat 482 fol. 13r; E. K. Rand, *A Survey of the Manuscripts of Tours* (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), pl. 74, 1.

²¹ Cf. the Jellinge stone, Kendrick *op. cit.* in note 14, pl. 58; the Kirkby Stephen cross-shaft, *ibid.*, pl. 61, 1; and the West Gilling cross-shaft, *ibid.*, pl. 48, 1.

²² *Op. cit.* in note 9.

²³ Cf. the Lindisfarne Gospels; T. D. Kendrick, *Anglo-Saxon Art to A.D. 900* (London, 1938), pl. 38, 3.

²⁴ Cf. the Jellinge stone, cited above (footnote 21); the Mammen axe, Kendrick, *op. cit.* in note 14, pl. 59, 1; the vane from Söderala church, S. Lindqvist, 'Yngre Vikingastilar,' *Nordisk Kultur, Kunst* (ed. Shetelig, 1931), fig. 24.

²⁵ Cf. the Sinnington cross-shaft, J. Brøndsted, *Early English Ornament* (London/Copenhagen, 1924), fig. 148; the anthropomorphic bone carving from the Thames, Kendrick *op. cit.* in note 14, pl. 59, 2; the stone from St. Paul's churchyard, *ibid.*, pl. 67.

²⁶ Brøndsted, *op. cit.* in note 25, fig. 108.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, fig. 110.

English origin, tainted with some Scandinavian features. There is a striking parallel between the animals on our brooch and those on some of the Anglo-Scandinavian stone-carving of northern England, especially the cross from Sinnington²⁸.

The Scandinavian parallels are equally interesting. An animal occurs, for example, on the Stenåsa stirrup²⁹, which, whether it was made in Scandinavia or England, is an interesting comparative piece; while the rich brooch from Austris, Gotland³⁰, which so closely imitates the Anglo-Saxon techniques of speckled niello zoomorphic ornament, has the same muddled amorphous quality that occurs on the brooch from Canterbury. In this respect the brooch demonstrates, as do the shrine-plates, the close contact between England and Scandinavia in the tenth century—not only in the political, but also in the artistic sphere. Previously, this influence has been mainly traced in the art of the sculptor and scribe, here it is to be seen in the metalworkers' art.

The filigree ornament. The open band-like scroll-work of the main inlaid fields of the King's School, Canterbury, brooch is difficult to parallel in Anglo-Saxon filigree. The closest parallels are to be seen on the continent, especially in the art of the post-Carolingian and Ottonian metalworker. Similar work can be seen on the early-eleventh-century reliquary of the nail at Essen³¹, on the Lothar cross, dating from about 1000, at Aachen³², and the cross of Duke Otto at Essen, which can be dated between 973 and 982³³. Unfortunately few pieces of filigree ornament of the period between 870 and 960 survive, but the examples that do remain indicate that the closely packed scrolls of the Carolingian period were being replaced on the continent towards the end of the ninth century by more open scrolls, as that on the Cross of Victory at Oviedo (dated to 908)³⁴, on the binding of the Psalter of Charles the Bald (said to have been written by Liuthard between 842 and 869)³⁵, on another bookbinding in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris³⁶ (which probably dates from the early tenth century), on the side plates of the so-called Ardennes Cross in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg (which probably dates from the late ninth or early tenth century)³⁷, and on the binding of the St. Gozelin Gospels in the cathedral at Nancy (which is dated to the middle of the tenth century)³⁸. Only one or two of these (e.g. the Victory Cross) have the serrated band filigree and few of them have any granulation.

This style of filigree does not occur in English contexts of the tenth and

²⁸ *Ibid.*, fig. 148.

²⁹ W. Holmqvist, 'Viking art in the eleventh century,' *Acta Archaeologica*, xxii (1951), fig. 40.

³⁰ M. Stenberger, *Die Schatzfunde Gotlands der Wikingerzeit*, II (Lund, 1947), fig. 140a.

³¹ H. Schnitzler, *Rheinische Schatzkammer* (Düsseldorf, 1957), pl. 134-5.

³² H. Jantzen, *Ottomische Kunst* (Munich, 1947), pl. 162-165.

³³ *Werdendes Abendland an Rhein und Ruhr* (ed. V. H. Elbern, Essen, 1956), pl. 49.

³⁴ H. Schlunk, 'The crosses of Oviedo,' *The Art Bulletin*, 1950, fig. 18, p. 101 f.

³⁵ A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen*, I (Berlin, 1914), 24, pl. xix; H. Arbmán, *Schweden und das Karolingische Reich* (Kgl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Handlingar, 43, Stockholm, 1937), fig. 27; V. Leroquais, *Les psautiers manuscrits latins des bibliothèques publiques de France* II (Macon, 1940-41), 67-70.

³⁶ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.* in note 35, p. 48, pl. xxxvi.

³⁷ T. Hampe, 'Ein Vortragskreuz aus dem 10. Jahrhundert,' *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums*, 1900, pp. 98-106.

³⁸ H. T. Bossert (ed.), *Geschichte des Kunstgewerbes*, v (Berlin, 1932), 217.

eleventh centuries. The only possible English examples occur on a crucifix in the Victoria and Albert Museum³⁹ and on a ring in the Ashmolean Museum⁴⁰. Professor Talbot Rice says of the former '... the ivory is probably to be assigned to a date around 950. The metal setting may be a little later; in any case it is Ottonian rather than English ...'⁴¹ This is a sound judgement and a trick of the filigree on this cross, where the tendril crosses over the main stem, is to be paralleled on some of the objects in the Essen treasury⁴² and on the Lothar cross⁴³, it seems to be a feature which occurs only on filigree from the Aachen/Essen area of Germany. The ring in the Ashmolean is without provenience and was bought by E. T. Leeds from an antique dealer in the High Street, Oxford, at which time it was said to have come from a Scandinavian collection. On the basis of this statement, which lacks any proof, it has been described as Scandinavian, but the form is not known among the numerous Viking treasures of Scandinavia. The filigree ornament of the ring is in the same scrolled open style as the continental pieces of the late ninth and early tenth century cited above; further, the filigree is executed in beaded wire and need not, therefore, be considered in this context. Unfortunately, owing to the lack of comparative English material, it is impossible to give the ring a firm Anglo-Saxon attribution.

The occurrence of serrated band filigree, other than on the border of a field, in Anglo-Saxon contexts is attested in two cases, on the lost hanging bowl from the Witham⁴⁴ and on the trefoil ornament from Kirkoswald⁴⁵, both of which are much earlier in date than the Canterbury brooch. The Kirkoswald ornament dates from the late eighth or early ninth century (it was found in a hoard of coins, the deposition of which is dated to c. 850), while the bowl is probably of eighth-century date. A third occurrence of the serrated band technique can be seen in the panels of the sword pommel from the Seine in the British Museum⁴⁶. The date of this object is unclear but it is presumably late ninth century and was probably made in England—although this identification is not entirely certain.

In his paper on disc brooches Mr. Bruce-Mitford drew attention to a gold pendant in the mid-ninth-century Norwegian hoard from Hon which he considered to be Anglo-Saxon⁴⁷. Certain features of this object are difficult to parallel. The rising of the filigree ears of the animal head over the border, for example, is a feature which is difficult to parallel in the ninth century, although it can be observed in later continental objects, as, for example, the raised tendrils of the

³⁹ D. Talbot Rice, *English Art 871-1100* (Oxford, 1952), pl. 31.

⁴⁰ C. C. Oman, 'Anglo-Saxon finger-rings,' *Apollo*, xiv (1931), fig. A7; Burlington Fine Arts Club, *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Art in the Dark Ages in Europe* (London, 1930), p. 84, pl. 20.

⁴¹ *Op. cit.* in note 39, p. 162.

⁴² Cf. Schnitzler, *op. cit.* in note 31, pl. 144.

⁴³ Jantzen, *op. cit.* in note 32, pls. 164-165.

⁴⁴ *Proc. Archaeol. Inst., Lincoln Meeting 1848*, p. xxxi; *National Exhibition of Works of Art* (Leeds, 1868), no. 19; T. D. Kendrick, 'A late Saxon hanging-bowl,' *Antiq. J.*, xxi (1941), pls., xxxiv-xxxv. The presence of this type of filigree is attested by a block (which, as far as is known, is unpublished) in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.* in note 10, fig. 122.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, fig. 205.

⁴⁷ Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, p. 192, pl. xxvii, D.

second processional cross of Mathilda at Essen⁴⁸. There may be a certain hesitation in ascribing this object to an English workshop, but the statement of Holmqvist concerning it reflects its Anglo-Saxon character: 'If the Hon pendant is counted as a Scandinavian product, it is sufficient to show us that the artist was strongly influenced by English art'⁴⁹. There is certainly an English flavour in the workmanship of this piece and we must consider, too, a series of four, rather smaller, pendants of similar form from the same hoard which have, unlike the large one which is decorated with beaded wire, serrated band filigree⁵⁰. If these could be identified as Anglo-Saxon it would be easier to provide technical and ornamental parallels for the Canterbury brooch: unfortunately we cannot, owing to lack of comparative material. The only circular pendant of the same form and roughly the same date found in an Anglo-Saxon context was that discovered in the Trewhiddle hoard⁵¹ and now lost. The filigree of this pendant, however, was of twisted wire and the coils were much less open. The nearest parallel to the Hon pendants are provided by a series of Swedish pendants from Birka, Gotland, etc.,⁵² and, as all the techniques are paralleled in the Scandinavian material⁵³, there is no evidence that the Hon pendants are English, particularly since a number of other pendants in the Hon hoard are undoubtedly Scandinavian⁵⁴. Any English elements here should probably be taken as English influence on a Scandinavian craftsman. The basic English object in the Hon hoard is a finger-ring decorated in the Trewhiddle style⁵⁵ and the hoard contains no other definitely English piece, although Holmqvist⁵⁶ has suggested that certain boss-shaped pendants in the hoard⁵⁷ are Anglo-Saxon: this cannot be so, as all four pendants must have been produced in the same workshop and one of them⁵⁸ is decorated with a degenerate 'gripping beast' style which is absolutely unknown outside Scandinavia. Here again it seems as though the pendants are not English, although they may possibly be influenced from England. The imported elements in the Hon hoard, therefore, of English origin are confined to one, and possibly two, pieces—no more than, say, the Carolingian or Mediterranean elements.

Another piece of metalwork with serrated band filigree is a trefoil brooch from Mosnæs, Norway⁵⁹; it has been described by Haseloff as 'one of the most beautiful

⁴⁸ Schnitzler, *op. cit.* in note 31, pl. 149.

⁴⁹ W. Holmqvist, 'The Syllöda silver pin—an English element in the art of the Viking age,' *Suomen Museo*, 1959, p. 54.

⁵⁰ S. Grieg, 'Vikingetidens Skattefund,' *Universitetets Oldsaksamlings Skrifter*, II (1929), figs. 24-26 and 28. The serrated band filigree on the last example is best seen in Arbman, *op. cit.* in note 35, pl. 59. An interesting feature of this pendant is that the binding strips at the joints of the tendrils are not soldered to the back plate, as is usual in this technique, but are fixed to the top of the bands and do not even touch the back plate.

⁵¹ P. Rashleigh, 'Account of antiquities discovered in Cornwall, 1774', *Archaeologia*, IX (1789), pl. viii, 2; *Op. cit.* in note 10, p. 100, fig. 120.

⁵² M. Stenberger, *op. cit.* in note 30, fig. 229, 1, 64; Arbman, *op. cit.* in note 35, pl. 62.

⁵³ M. Stenberger, *op. cit.* in note 30, 1 (Uppsala, 1958), pp. 297-306.

⁵⁴ Grieg, *op. cit.* in note 50, figs. 22-23.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, fig. 7.

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.* in note 49, pp. 47-8.

⁵⁷ Grieg, *op. cit.* in note 50, figs. 8, 9, 13 and 14.

⁵⁸ Holmqvist, *op. cit.* in note 49, fig. 13.

⁵⁹ G. Haseloff, 'An Anglo-Saxon openwork mount from Whitby abbey,' *Antiq. J.*, xxx (1950), pl. xx A.

specimens of Northumbrian filigree work in existence⁶⁰. This identification rests chiefly on the assignation of the vine-scroll pattern on the lobes to a Northumbrian workshop. Haseloff based his argument, partly, on an openwork lead plaque; but Dr. Zarnecki has recently republished this as dating from c.1200⁶¹, reverting to the opinion (denied by Haseloff) that was expressed in the original publication in 1931⁶². While such a vine scroll was certainly used in Northumbria, it must be emphasized that continental craftsmen were also using it⁶³. Although it is impossible to identify the origin of this brooch, it seems just possible that it was made in Scandinavia, where the trefoil form was very common, under continental or English influence, especially when it is compared with other trefoil brooches, made under continental influence in Scandinavia⁶⁴.

In relation to the Mosnæs brooch we must consider the tenth-century Hatteberg penannular brooch, which Shetelig⁶⁵ considered to be Hiberno-Scandinavian. This also has serrated band filigree inlaid in the silver. Shetelig's identification must be correct, for the stamped ornament on the ring and on the pin does not occur in Anglo-Saxon contexts, although the form of the brooch is certainly insular⁶⁶. We should probably class the Mosnæs and Hatteberg brooches together, as objects made, in an insular or continental tradition, in a Viking milieu, for the filigree technique on both objects is very closely related.

This, seemingly destructive, criticism of the identification of certain objects as Anglo-Saxon has been undertaken to show that no object definitely made in an Anglo-Saxon workshop after 850 and before 1000, other than the Canterbury brooch and, possibly, the Seine sword-pommel, has serrated tape filigree. It is *possible* that some of the objects I have mentioned above were made in Anglo-Saxon workshops, but this cannot, for the moment, be proved. Therefore no chronological judgements can be made on a technical basis.

The fragmentary state of the brooch demonstrates the method of inlaying the gold plates. The sheet gold base-plate beyond the soldered-on border forms a flange which retains the plate when it is inserted in the space cut for it. Exactly the same technique is to be seen on the Seine sword-pommel and the broken nature of certain finds in Scandinavia shows that it was not uncommon there. It occurs, for example, on a number of objects in the Eketorp hoard⁶⁷ although it is most plainly seen on one particular example, where half the retaining mount is missing⁶⁸.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁶¹ G. Zarnecki, *English Romanesque Lead Sculpture* (London, 1957), pl. 81.

⁶² *Antiq. J.*, xi (1931), 425, pl. 62.

⁶³ Cf., for example, the Cross of Victory in Oviedo, Schlunk, *op. cit.* in note 34, p. 103, fig. c (left). This figure is wrongly labelled; it is actually from the Cross of Victory, not the psalter of Charles the Bald. Notice that the small clusters of grapes which Haseloff, *op. cit.* in note 59, makes so much of as insular features can clearly be seen here; Schlunk, *op. cit.*, fig. 18.

⁶⁴ E.g. Arbman, *op. cit.* in note 35, pl. 52.

⁶⁵ H. Shetelig, 'The Norse style of ornamentation in the Viking settlements', *Acta Archaeologica*, xix (1948), fig. 2.

⁶⁶ Cf. Wilson, *op. cit.* in note 8.

⁶⁷ E.g. G. Ekelund, 'Silverskatten från Eketorp, *Från Bergslag och Bondebygd*, 1956, fig. 5; Holmqvist, *op. cit.* in note 49, fig. 4-5.

⁶⁸ Ekelund, *op. cit.* in note 67, fig. 4 and Holmqvist, *op. cit.* in note 49, fig. 28.

A similar feature can be seen on a mount from Birka⁶⁹. This technique was presumably widely used, but where an object is complete it is often difficult or impossible to see it. It is not a universal technique, however. In straight-sided fields the back plate is often turned up at right angles and the edge is serrated—a method which occurs but rarely on a circular field, or one with curved edges, because of the border crumpled if the edge is turned (as can be clearly seen on the border inlays of the Canterbury brooch, which are constructed in this manner and are unique in late Saxon contexts). Sometimes, instead of the edges of the base plate acting as a flange, a gold wire is soldered to the edge of the base plate and to the lower part of the applied border, as on the Windsor scramasax pommel⁷⁰.

As has been shown, the main parallels of the filigree of this brooch are with tenth-century continental material. The lack of tenth-century English material renders it impossible to make any closer comparisons. One of the fields (no. 13), with a series of backed circles, has a design known in insular filigree ornament from c.700 onwards. It occurs, for example, on the Tara brooch⁷¹. The single plant-like motif in fields nos. 14, 15 and 17 (FIG. 4). presumably has the same origins as the motifs which occur on the back of the Alfred Jewel⁷², on the Poslingford ring⁷³ and on the Abingdon (Wallingford) Sword⁷⁴. The loose regular scrolls of other fields (nos. 1-11, PL. VII, FIG. 4), and of the border panels can be compared with the precise discipline of the border of the 'donation' page of the Corpus Christi College *Vita Cuthberti* (cccc. 183, fol. 16) and particularly of the upper, right-hand panel of the border towards the spine⁷⁵. This manuscript has been identified as a copy of Bede's *Life of St. Cuthbert*, given, according to Symeon of Durham, by Æthelstan to the shrine of St. Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street in 931⁷⁶. There is no internal evidence in the manuscript to confirm this, beyond a 'donation' page showing a king offering a nimbed cleric a book. Whether this identification is correct or not, a date in the first half of the tenth century is palaeographically and art-historically correct for this manuscript. Such comparisons as these, however, are of no great value in placing the filigree ornament of the brooch and it would be useless to pursue them further.

DATING

Although the parallels between the filigree of this brooch and that of the comparative continental material would indicate a tenth-century date, the Canterbury brooch must be dated by means of the animal ornament of the nielloed panels. Animal ornament of this appallingly low quality is difficult to

⁶⁹ Arbman, *op. cit.* in note 35, pls. 62, 17 and 61, 2.

⁷⁰ G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England*, III (London, 1915), pl. lvi. This feature can just be seen in this photograph.

⁷¹ M. and L. de Paor, *Early Christian Ireland* (London, 1958), pl. 19.

⁷² J. R. Kirk, *The Alfred and Minster Lovel Jewels* (Ashmolean Museum, (Oxford, 1948), pl. 1.

⁷³ D. M. Wilson, 'The Poslingford ring,' *British Museum Quarterly*, xx (1955/6), pl. xxi, c.

⁷⁴ J. Evans, 'Notes on the Danish sword-hilt found near Wallingford,' *Archaeologia*, L (1897), pl. xxvii; Bruce-Mitford, *op. cit.* in note 2, pl. XII, B.

⁷⁵ Talbot Rice, *op. cit.* in note 39, pl. 47.

⁷⁶ C. Plummer, *Bedae Opera Historica*, I (Oxford, 1896), pl. cxlvii, note 1.

date for a number of reasons; we cannot be sure whether it was the work of an established craftsman struggling with a new idiom, whether it was made by a young man learning a trade, or whether it was the work of a craftsman who was lapsing into senility or blindness; any of these considerations could cause us to place the brooch at either the beginning or the end of any period of fifty years within the tenth century. The parallels I have drawn would, however, give an approximate central date towards the middle of the tenth century, for the manufacture of this brooch.

AN HISTORICAL HYPOTHESIS

A fair number of metal objects of late Saxon date have been found in Canterbury, including such well-known tenth-century pieces as the Canterbury Cross⁷⁷ and the Canterbury censer cover⁷⁸. A few hundred yards away from the find-spot of the brooch a portable sun-dial of the ninth or tenth century was found under the cloister-garth⁷⁹. It is an extremely well made object of silver and niello, embellished with beaded wire filigree and minute blue glass studs. A very fine silver brooch in the form of an imitation coin with a multiple border of beaded lines, now in the Ashmolean Museum, was also found in Canterbury⁸⁰. Its central medallion imitates a coin of Edgar (959-75), and it was certainly made towards the end of the tenth century. Other objects of late Saxon date were found at St. Augustine's abbey⁸¹. The presence of many of these objects not only reminds us of the importance of Canterbury in Anglo-Saxon times, but also of the Viking capture of the city in 1011⁸², when it was apparently very thoroughly sacked. It seems probable that a large object like this disc brooch might well have been lost in such a sack, and it is also possible that some of the other objects were lost at the same time.

⁷⁷ R. F. Jessup, *op. cit.* in note 14, pl. xxxi, 2.

⁷⁸ Kendrick, *loc. cit.* in note 14.

⁷⁹ 'A Saxon pocket watch,' *Country Life*, cvii (1950), 1890.

⁸⁰ *Proc. Soc. Antiq. London*, xix (1903), 210; Jessup, *op. cit.* in note 14, 112, pl. xx, 2; *Ashmolean Museum Report*, 1951, pl. v.

⁸¹ C. A. R. Radford, 'Small bronzes from St. Augustine's abbey, Canterbury,' *Antiq. J.*, xx, (1940), 506 ff.; R. V. Potts, 'Discoveries at St. Austin's abbey, Canterbury,' *Antiq. J.*, x, (1930), 167-169.

⁸² *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, sub anno 1011.