

other areas,⁷ with other Anglo-Saxon artefacts⁸ or with contemporary material from the Continent and Scandinavia.⁹ Evidence so far collated indicates significant regional and chronological variations, in both the types of alloys present and the frequency of alloy type usage. It seems likely that future research will require different alloy classifications or a modification of the present one, particularly in the areas of high-zinc and high-tin copper alloys.

This note represents only a preliminary outline, and forms a working classification for this archaeological dataset. The simple method of selecting constraints is open to criticism, but it does at least provide a sub-division of the dataset which is comprehensible. I await the opinions of other interested parties.

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NOTES

¹ Information from Peter Northover, Dept of Materials, University of Oxford.

² The data was compiled for research on early medieval copper-alloy technology (C. Mortimer, *Some aspects of early medieval copper-alloy technology, as illustrated by a study of the Anglian cruciform brooch*, unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1990). Analyses performed by atomic absorption and electron micro-probe analysis. Thanks are due to Helen Hatcher (Research Laboratory for Archaeology, Oxford), Peter Northover and Chris Salter (Department of Material Sciences, Oxford) and many curators for access to collections here and abroad.

³ Amongst alloys with high zinc levels, very low concentrations of tin are found (and vice versa).

⁴ More complex procedures, such as cluster analysis did not seem necessary.

⁵ This classification does not provide detailed information on brasses, as there were few high-zinc alloys in the dataset.

⁶ Mortimer, *op. cit.* in note 1, 362–71.

⁷ For the analyses of 135 other cruciform brooches from Scandinavia and the Continent see Mortimer, *op. cit.* in note 1, 390–96.

⁸ See for example, R. Brownswold, T. Ciuffini and R. Carey, 'Metallurgical analyses of Anglo-Saxon jewellery from the Avon Valley', *West Midland Archaeology* 29 (1986), 101–12; the unpublished paper by P. Northover, 'Analysis of cast saucer brooches from the Upper Thames'; C. Mortimer, M. Pollard and C. Scull, 'X-ray fluorescence analysis of some Anglo-Saxon copper alloy finds from Watchfield, Oxon', *Journal of Historical Metallurgy* 20.1 (1986), 36–42.

⁹ For example, in Sweden the metalworking debris at Helgö (K. Lamm, 'The Manufacture of Jewellery during the Migration Period at Helgö, Sweden', *Journal of Historical Metallurgy* 7.2 (1973), 1–7) and brooches from Öland (B. Arrhenius, 'Die technischen Voraussetzungen für die Entwicklung der Germanischen Tierornamentik', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 9 (1975), 93–109), in Denmark various brooches (U. Näsman, 'Metal supply in Eketorp', *Early Medieval Studies* 6 (1973), 97–103) and in France pioneering analyses on Merovingian artefacts (E. Salin, *La Civilisation Mérovingienne* (1957), vol. 3, 169 ff.). Research is also currently underway on Roman imports to Denmark (H. Bollingberg, National Museum, Copenhagen) and on French material (C. Mortimer).

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A TREWHIDDLE-STYLE HOOKED TAG FROM HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (Fig. 2, Pl. II, A)

A fine example of a decorated late Saxon silver hooked tag was discovered with a metal detector by Mr W. Parkin at High Wycombe in 1989. There were no associated finds, nor are any known in the immediate area. The find was made on land belonging to Sir Francis Dashwood and, following a coroner's decision not to hold an inquest, was purchased by Buckinghamshire County Museum at Aylesbury.¹

The circular disc of the piece has two protruding stitch loops and a complete hook with an overall length of 44 mm. The disc, diameter 21 mm, is defined by a band of 35 beads at the periphery and contains a circle divided axially into four equal segments. Within each segment is a single stylized animal with head facing over its shoulder; three of these proceed anticlockwise around the disc, whilst the remaining animal faces the other way. Inspection under a binocular microscope reveals slight traces of a crystalline substance, which is likely to be niello, at a few points in the recessed areas. Along the arm of the hook is a simple trapezoidal incised shape reflecting the taper of the hook. The rear of the plate is plain. The

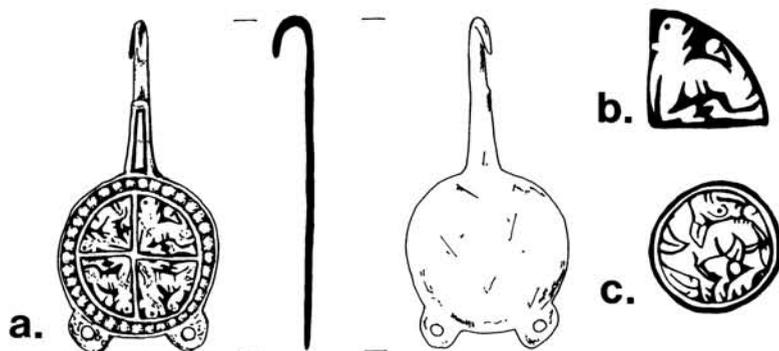


FIG. 2

- a. Hooked tag from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Scale 1:1
 b. Detail of animal from top left segment. Scale 2:1
 c. Animal from the Fuller Brooch. Scale 2:1

whole has been formed from one sheet of silver with a thickness at the hook end of *c.* 1.5 mm and at the looped end of 0.8 mm. The design has apparently been cut with a graver and working marks are clear. In places stress cracks in the metal are visible. Some use-wear is present but it is still possible to detect file marks on the surface of the plate.

The four animals are very similar in form, small variations arising from differences in tool cut. They may be briefly described numbering clockwise from the segment adjacent to the upper stitch loop as follows:

1. Quadruped in position of rest with fore and hind limbs folded inwards beneath the body, head looking back over shoulder, tail raised towards head (Fig. 2 b). Both limbs end in cloven feet which almost touch and there is a hint of a second forelimb behind the first. The rear limb is separated from the body. The head is defined principally by a protuberant eye whose centre is indicated by a dot; the mouth is open, the snout being square-ended, the lower jaw pointed. One ear is indicated by a protuberance similar to that forming the eye but without the dot. The body shape is roughly a rounded triangle with nicks indicating either junctions with limbs, or perhaps hair or fur. There are two in the neck region, two under the belly, one behind the tail and one at the rear end which may indicate a joint. The tail has a segmented end, almost detached.
2. Similar in most details to No. 1 except that the rear limb is joined to the body, and this animal faces clockwise.
3. As No. 1 except that the tail has an additional segment and it lacks the two nicks at the neck junction.
4. As No. 1 except that there are two nicks at the rear end instead of one and the rear limb is joined to the body.

Although the bodies of the beasts are not speckled, in all other respects such as body shape, square snout and protuberant eye they are characteristic animals of the Trewhiddle style, named after the hoard discovered in 1744 near St Austell in Cornwall² whose associated coins give a date of *c.* A.D. 868.³

The animals from Trewhiddle itself on some occasions look forward and on others over their shoulders. Individual limb elements sometimes give way to self-interlace such as is also seen on the Beeston Tor, Derbyshire brooch and the largest of the Pentney, Norfolk brooches. The animals on the High Wycombe piece contain no hint of interlace but are strongly segmented. It is worth noting that although the simple workmanship on the High Wycombe piece is clearly of a different order, there is a family resemblance between these quadrupeds and the more naturalistic backward-looking quadrupeds on the Fuller brooch, all of which have divided feet and two also have a segmented tail.

Recent publications of hooked tags⁴ have demonstrated their significance as minor pieces of late Saxon art. Hooks of silver remain less common than those of copper alloy but as

more come to light it is likely that regional schools of manufacture for these more expensive pieces will emerge. Design elements apart, for instance, it is interesting that the diameter of the circular lobed plate of the Canterbury tag illustrated by James Graham-Campbell is to within a millimetre the same as that from High Wycombe and this can scarcely be a coincidence. It may be noted that this is only the third tag to be recorded from Buckinghamshire, the other two being a simple ring and dot decorated disc from Walton, Aylesbury⁵ and a decorated triangular hook from Shenley Church End.⁶

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NOTES

¹ Buckinghamshire County Museum, Accession Number 64.1989, ref. CAS 5720. The writer is grateful to both parties for their assistance over the acquisition, to Mr Peter Trenfield for bringing it to the Museum's attention, and to Leslie Webster, British Museum, for commenting on the content of this note.

² D. M. Wilson and C. E. Blunt, 'The Trehiddle Hoard', *Archaeologia*, 98 (1961), 75-122.

³ M. Blackburn and H. Pagan, 'A revised check-list of coin hoards from the British Isles, c. 500-1100' in M. A. S. Blackburn (ed.) *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History* (Leicester, 1986).

⁴ D. W. Griffiths, 'A group of Late Anglo-Saxon hooked tags from Cheshire', *Journal of the Chester Archaeol. Society*, 70 (1987-88), 39-49, and James Graham-Campbell, 'Some new and neglected finds of 9th century Anglo-Saxon ornamental metalwork' *Medieval Archaeol.*, 26 (1982), 144-51. It should be noted that a stray zero has apparently attached itself to measurements in the latter article, e.g. 3.10 mm should be 31 mm.

⁵ M. E. Farley, 'Saxon & Medieval Walton: excavations 1973-4', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 20 (1976), 215.

⁶ Information from R. J. Williams, Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit.

TOMEN LLANSANTFFRAID: A MOTTE NEAR RHAADR, POWYS (Figs. 3, 4, Pl. II, B)

Set in the Radnorshire hills close to the border with Brecknockshire, the compact mid-Wales town of Rhacadr and the small settlement of Llansantffraid Cwmdeuddwr face each other across the R. Wye. The river in its upper reaches runs in a valley whose precipitous sides alternate with more gentle slopes that offer easier access and crossing places. Rhacadr has grown up at a natural crossing; the predecessor of the bridge now linking it to Cwmdeuddwr was a ford below the rapids whose location can still be determined from the track that runs down the Rhacadr bank.

Rhacadr incorporates a castle constructed in 1177, of which almost nothing now remains,¹ while Llansantffraid has a small earthwork which forms the subject of this note.² Whilst the history of Rhacadr castle is documented, at least in outline, nothing is known of Tomen Llansantffraid, though it has been surmised that it was thrown up earlier in the 12th century and was placed to command the ford across the Wye.³ Indeed, there is a possibility that Cwmdeuddwr is an earlier settlement than its larger neighbour. St Bridget's church in Cwmdeuddwr has a longer history than St Clement's in Rhacadr which until 1735 was no more than a chapel in the parish of Nantmel, perhaps the castle chapel.⁴ Rhacadr itself may have been a planned town of the 13th century.⁵

The motte is now a sad reflection of the earthwork that once commanded the ford across the Wye. Surrounded by houses, it is almost invisible from the road, the slopes have been cut back to accommodate dwellings and stone walls; its encircling ditch and putative bailey have disappeared, leaving no trace (Fig. 3). The gradual envelopment of the motte seems to have occurred over the last two hundred years. The Radnorshire historian, the Reverend J. Williams, writing about 1818, commented that the mound was deeply ditched with a high rampart,⁶ implying that the earthwork's appearance has changed considerably since the beginning of the 19th century. Lewis noted that the mound was surrounded by cottages and that in 1830 'part of this entrenchment was demolished . . . but an artificial mound is still remaining . . .'.⁷ By the time the Royal Commission compiled the inventory of ancient monuments in Radnorshire a hundred years later, the mound was 'completely built in on all sides'.⁸