Among the miscellaneous inscriptions from Anglo-Saxon England there are perhaps ten inscribed on bone. Some of these are very formal as on the Franks (Auzon) casket, the Derby bone plaque, the Whitby comb, and perhaps the Southampton fragmentary plate. Others are more enigmatic such as the Royal Opera House handle, whilst on an antler tool handle from Brandon is a riddling inscription translated as 'I (It) grew on a wild beast'. It is only occasionally, however, that there is a completely casual inscription cut on a piece of unworked bone as at the National Portrait Gallery.

Comparable examples may be the Caistor-by-Norwich astragalus (but this was probably a formal object, used as a playing-piece) whilst more casual texts on unworked material are those on the *Hamwih* bone (which may be a Frisian import), and the Mote of Mark fragment, which seems to have the personal name or name element **a þ i l i**.[25]

Personal names are common in Anglo-Saxon inscriptions. Sometimes these are formal, used in inscriptions which commemorate a deceased person, or the maker or owner of the property. In some instances the name alone was cut, which again indicates a formal quality, namely the owner, maker or donor of the piece. Clear runic examples of personal names are the legends of the Llysfaen ring (part runic only), an inlaid name **b ea g n o þ** on a short sword from the Thames, **+ a l d r e d** on a pair of silver tweezers from Brandon, and part of a name, probably feminine, on a linking plate for a set of pins from Wardley. Rather different, but perhaps still relevant, are the travellers' graffiti that Anglo-Saxons left on pilgrimage routes. So far they are only reported in Italy, but it may be that the casual scratching of personal names on tourist monuments was fairly common in Anglo-Saxon times.

It is evident that the power of the written word, whether it was understood by all the populace or not, was active in negotiating relationships in the everyday lives of some of the people of Anglo-Saxon *Lundenwic* on a number of levels, from the sacred arena to the casual graffiti of two associates. The National Portrait Gallery runic inscriptions provide at least an indication that there was a more extensive use of the script for demotic purposes in Anglo-Saxon England than has hitherto been known. The inscriber of the fossil from Exeter Street (whether it is magical or meaningless) possibly sought to increase the potency of an amulet as a symbol of power and authority by its being directly associated with literacy.

GARY BROWN, ELISABETH OKASHA, RAY PAGE AND CHRIS PICKARD

# INSULAR METALWORK FROM FLIXBOROUGH, LINCOLNSHIRE

An Anglo-Saxon settlement near modern Flixborough is represented by a cemetery and a complex palimpsest of buildings and dumps which show occupation and activity on

[25] The Dublin inscriptions are recorded in M. P. Barnes, J. R. Hagland and R. I. Page, *The Runic Inscriptions of Viking Age Dublin* (Dublin, 1997), IR 5, IR 8 10 and IR 12–15. For bone inscriptions from Lincoln and from Orkney, see K. Holman, *Scandinavian Runic Inscriptions in the British Isles: their Historical Context* (Trondheim, 1996), 49 53, 237–9 and 243–5. As examples from Scandinavia we quote E. Svärdström, *Runfynden i Gamla Lödöse* (Stockholm, 1982), Vg 256, 261, 271, 282 and J. R. Hagland, *Runefunna: Eï Kjelde til Handelen sin Historia* (Trondheim, 1986), N28957, N-30844, N-37425, N-58258, N-93495. N-94415, N-94416, N-95829 and N-96784.

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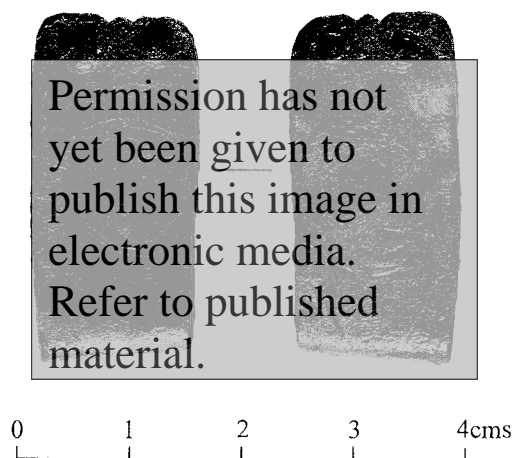0        1        2        3        4cms

FIG. 3
Middle Anglo-Saxon copper-alloy strap-end from Flixborough with fine incised ornament. Scale 3:2.
*Photo: British Museum.*

this hill-top site from the 7th to the 11th centuries.[1] The settlement has yielded a rich diversity of material including faunal remains, coins, pottery and metalwork of many types and is in the course of final evaluation with the preparation of specialist studies. A profusion of interesting individual items within the larger assemblages, however, precludes extended discussion and illustration of them all in the final volumes and some pieces, principally an inscribed lead plaque and finger ring have already appeared in print.[2] With the kind permission of Dr Loveluck, attention is drawn here to two pieces of metalwork which are evidence for the vitality of an indigenous Celtic decorative tradition in Insular art in the Early Middle Ages; first, decorated bronze sheeting re-used as a strap-end, and secondly, an enamelled fitting from a bowl.

RECYCLING: FROM BUCKET TO STRAP-END

A simple strap-end (Fig. 3) was made by cutting a strip 62.2 mm by 15.1 mm from a bronze sheet 1 to 2 mm thick, shaping two decorative notches on the narrow ends, folding it over and piercing the notched end with holes for two rivets. The rivets remain in position so that the piece was in use when lost. The simple form shows that this is a mid-Saxon type of 9th- to 10th-century date, and a find context of mid-10th- to 11th-century date is explained by its presence amongst material from a sequence of clearing and dumping on the site.[3]

The sheet from which this strap-end was cut was already decorated with fine incised lines, some compass-based, forming a flowing pattern of spirals and trumpets punctuated by vesicas (Fig. 4). All edges of the strap-end cut through this ornament. Although some of the detail is now unclear, the whole area of preserved decoration shows variations within the individual fields and in minor elements, and there appears to be no exact repetition between the spirals and other details. One distinctive feature of this controlled fine-line ornament is the use of hatching in the vesicas and on areas of the spirals and trumpets. Another distinctive trait is the use of alternating triangles of parallel lines set at right angles to each other within two of the panels.

[1] C. P. Loveluck, 'A high-status Anglo-Saxon settlement at Flixborough, Lincolnshire', *Antiquity*, 72 (1998), 146–61: further references in K. Ulmschneider, 'Settlement, economy and the 'productive' site: Middle Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire A.D. 650–780', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 44 (2000), 53–6, n.3.
[2] L. Webster and J. Backhouse (eds.), *The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon Art and Culture AD 600–900* (London, 1991), no. 69; Loveluck, op. cit. in note 1, fig. 9.
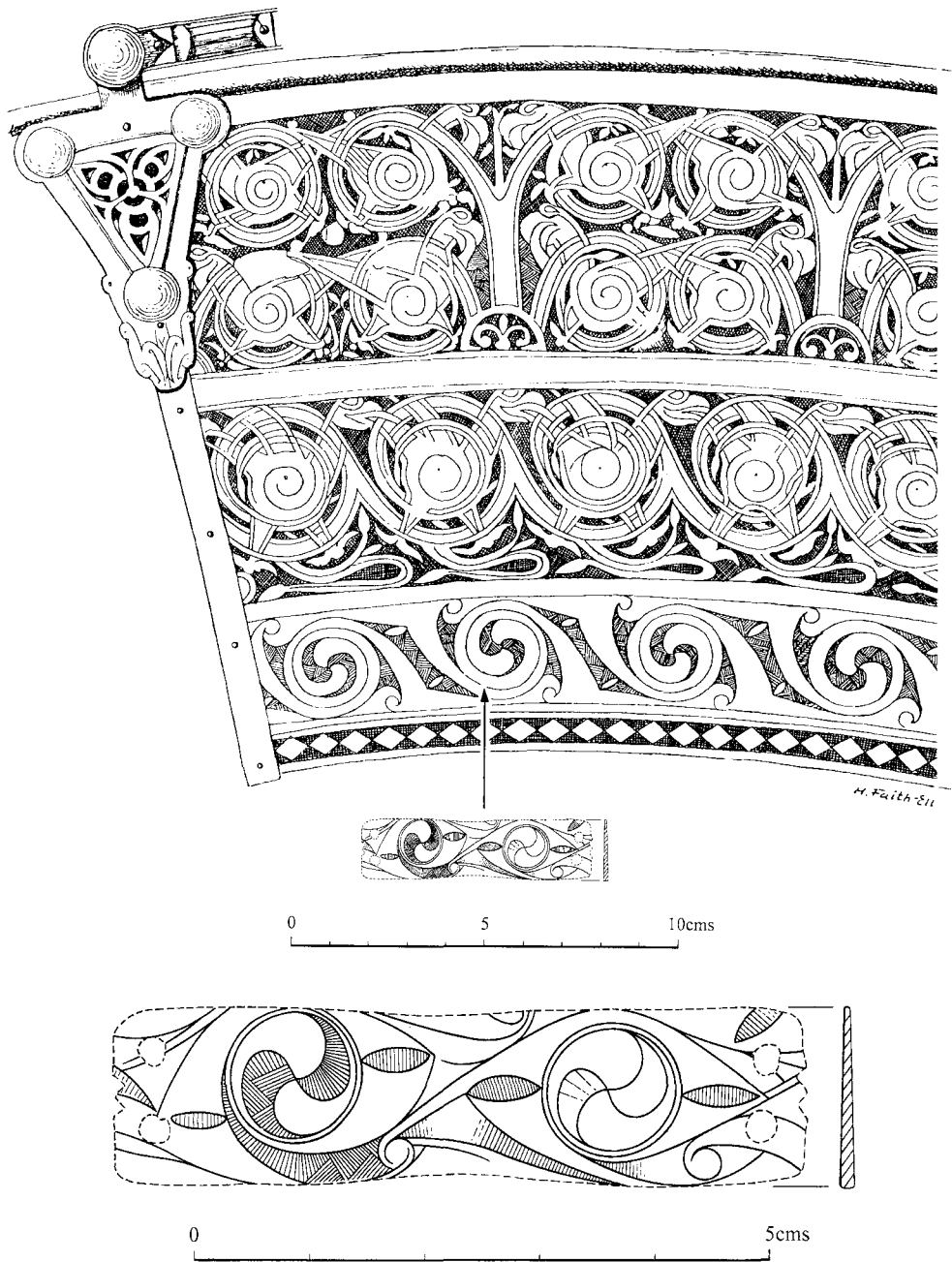[3] Loveluck, op. cit. in note 1, 147.

FIG. 4

Below: ornament on the Flixborough strap end. Scale 3:2. *Drawn by Lisa Reardon, British Museum*. Above: the decorative bronze sheeting and mounts on a bucket from Birka, Sweden. Scale 1:2. *From E. Bakka, 'Some English Decorated Metal Objects Found in Norwegian Viking Graves', Årb. Universitetet Bergen Humanist. ser.*, 1963 no. 1.

This fluid curvilinear ornament with fine internal hatching has close parallels on the bronze sheeting with bands of engraved ornament that was used to decorate elaborately mounted wooden buckets. These are rare and specialised vessels and the remains of only six others of this type are known. Three surviving complete buckets formed part of the furnishings of Viking-period burials in Scandinavia and were found, variously, in Sweden, at the trading centre of Birka on Lake Mälar, in Norway at Hopperstad, Vik, Sogn og Fjordane, and most recently in 1986 at Skei, Steinkjer, Nord-Trøndelag.[4] The buckets are small, their heights range from 165 mm (Skei), through 183 mm (Hopperstad), to 185 mm (Birka); all have decorative bronze handles and fittings and they are covered externally with engraved bronze sheeting attached by decorative bands.[5] The base wood is usually yew but birch was also used. It has been suggested that these small, highly decorated vessels may have had a liturgical function, perhaps being used for aspersion with water, and they would then have reached Scandinavia, along with other decorative but not intrinsically valuable booty from churches, such as small tomb-shaped shrines and detached shrine mounts.[6] The Flixborough Anglo-Saxon strap-end was cut from sheeting with the distinctive engraved spiral ornament peculiar to these bucket casings and had, therefore, originally come from a bucket of this type.

The original will have resembled the most complete surviving example of such a pail which is that from Birka. This was made from a cylinder of birch wood with a fitted base (now missing) with a handle, attachment fittings and decorated sheeting of bronze (Fig. 4). The sheeting is tinned and comprises two horizontal bands held in position by binding strips. The lower band is filled with an elegant running pattern of abstract ornament of the Flixborough type. Both of these examples of this pattern share the feature of internal areas of alternating hatching and a twisted ribbon effect at the centre of the running spirals (Fig. 4, arrowed). Spirals in three interlinked tiers decorate the lower sheet of the Skei bucket and the Flixborough off-cut may have been taken from the middle of a multiple spiral pattern of this kind. On the Hopperstad bucket running abstract ornament occupies the middle band of three (the lower one is now missing) and the pattern is heavily dependent on stiff, compass-drawn circles. It shares with the Flixborough scrap the use of hatched vesicas and the engraver used alternating hatching.[7] Hatched, deeply engraved curvilinear ornament was also used on its handle escutcheons.

It is characteristic of the other bands of ornament engraved on these buckets that hatching was used as a background texturing to the principal motifs and not internally. This is a technique found more widely on other types of Insular metalwork mainly of Irish origin, as Egil Bakka observed in 1963,[8] while the Donore, County Meath, hoard has added a significant number of further examples.[9] The use of purely abstract, curvilinear ornament of the kind seen on this off-cut and on the complete buckets, is a reminder of the continuing influence into the early medieval period of a Celtic artistic tradition with its roots in La Tène-style ornament of the Roman Iron Age.[10] It is loosely based on the more

[4] E. Bakka, *Some English Decorated Metal Objects Found in Norwegian Viking Graves*, Årb. Univ. Bergen Humanistisk Ser., 1963, no. 1, 28–33; for the Skei bucket, J. Graham-Campbell, ' "Glittering prizes": national and regional identities', in M. Redknap, N. Edwards, S. Youngs et al. (eds.), *Pattern and Purpose: Studies in Insular Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, forthcoming).

[5] Bakka, op. cit. in note 4, 27–33; J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Artefacts: A Select Catalogue* (London, 1980), no. 318; E. Bakka, 'Der Holzeimer aus Bj 507', 233–5 in G. Arwidsson, *Birka II:I. Systematiche Analysen der Gräberfunde* (Stockholm, 1984); Graham-Campbell, op. cit. in note 4.

[6] L. Webster in S. Youngs (ed.), *'The Work of Angels': Masterpieces of Celtic Metalwork, 6th–9th centuries A.D.* (London, 1989), no. 120; E. Wamers, 'Insular finds in Viking age Scandinavia and the state formation of Norway', 31–72 in H. B. Clarke, M. Ní Mhaonaigh and R. Ó Floinn (eds.), *Ireland and Scandinavia in the Early Viking Age* (Bodmin, 1998).

[7] Bakka, op. cit. in note 4, fig. 24.

[8] Bakka, op. cit. in note 4, 29–31.

[9] M. Ryan, 'The Donore hoard: early medieval metalwork from Moynalty, near Kells, Ireland', *Antiquity*, 61 (1987), 57–63.

[10] R. and V. Megaw, *Celtic Art from its Beginnings to the Book of Kells* (Toledo, 1989).

formal discipline of running spirals and triskeles which were part of the artistic repertoire
of craftsmen working in metal, paint and stone in the Insular style. While it is tempting to
see the stiff circles of the Hopperstad engraving as misunderstood and degenerate, this may
well be to judge this penny-farthing design in terms of archaic standards instead of seeing
it, potentially, as a development.

      There are three more examples of bucket sheeting without La Tène-derived
ornament; a bucket decorated with incised bronze sheet was found at Farmen, Hedrum,
Vestfold in Norway and two cut-down circular scraps of similar sheet have been recovered,
one from Torshov, Gjerdrum, Akershus, also in south-eastern Norway which is of much
less substantial sheeting than the Flixborough piece.[11] The other piece was associated with
a burial at Machrins on Colonsay, in the southern Hebrides.[12] The Machrins piece is of
interest because, as on the Birka bucket, the surface was found to have been tinned. The
presence of tin on the surface of a number of bucket mounts and bowl fragments was
carefully recorded by Petersen in his great survey of 1940.[13] This strengthens the possibility
that the Flixborough sheet may originally have been tinned. The Machrins example is also
puzzling because it is described as having been tinned *after* engraving, in direct contrast
with some Irish engraved pieces, notably the Donore door fittings, where the tinned
surfaces were engraved after tinning, thereby creating a deliberate colour contrast.[14]

      The buckets and bucket fragments are exotic finds from Viking-period contexts in
Scandinavia and beyond, and their dates of deposition give a broad *terminus ante quem* for
their manufacture: the Hopperstad burial is dated to the 10th century,[15] the Birka bucket
came from a rich Middle Viking-period grave at this trading centre, that is, dating from
the late 9th to the second half of the 10th century;[16] the Skei burial is dated to the 9th
century and the Machrins burial has been given the earliest date of deposition, c. 800,
confirming an 8th- to early 9th-century date for the manufacture of these vessels, working
with the assumption that they are all broadly contemporary. A grave containing a bronze-
clad small bucket of the same type from Orre, Klepp, Rogaland was dated to the 9th
century by Petersen, a date accepted by Wamers.[17] All this agrees with the 8th-century
comparanda for the other decorative elements of the buckets discussed by Bakka in his
1963 monograph.

      As to the origin of small buckets with decorative bronze sheeting, there is most
evidence for their manufacture and use in Ireland.[18] Irish finds typically use simple
engraved or openwork ornament and do not carry the vine-scroll ornament and interlaced
running animals found on the examples discussed above.[19] They have been found in
secular contexts and some dated on stylistic grounds to the 9th century. Egil Bakka argued
for a Northumbrian source for the vine-scroll ornament and hence for the highly decorated
Birka bucket group. This remains a powerful argument, allowing the term 'Northumbrian'
to be cultural rather than strictly geographical, and hence embracing aspects of Pictish
culture, as David Wilson argued in his publication of the St Ninian's Isle silver bowls.[20]
The Pictish use of vine scroll was further championed by Isabel Henderson in a seminal

[11] Bakka, op. cit. in note 4, 28–31, figs. 26–8.
[12] J. N. G. Ritchie, 'Excavations at Machrins, Colonsay', *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scotland*, 111 (1981), 268 9, 272 3, fig. 6.
[13] J. Petersen, *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland. Part V: British Antiquities of the Viking Period found in Norway* (Oslo, 1940).
[14] Ryan, op. cit. in note 9.
[15] E. Wamers, *Insularer Metallschmuck in wikingerzeitlichen Gräbern Nordeuropas* (Offa-Bücher, 56, Neumünster, 1985), cat. no. 64.
[16] J. Graham-Campbell, op. cit. in note 5, no. 318; E. Bakka, op. cit. in note 5, 223 5.
[17] Petersen, op. cit. in note 13, 91 2; Wamers, op. cit in note 15, 100, cat. no. 96.
[18] Petersen, op. cit. in note 13, 83 111.
[19] R. Ó Floinn in Youngs (ed.), op. cit. in note 6, no.119.
[20] D. M. Wilson, 'A stylistic consideration of the miscellaneous objects', 125 43 in A. Small, C. Thomas and D. M. Wilson, *St Ninian's Isle and its Treasure* (2 vols, Oxford, 1973).
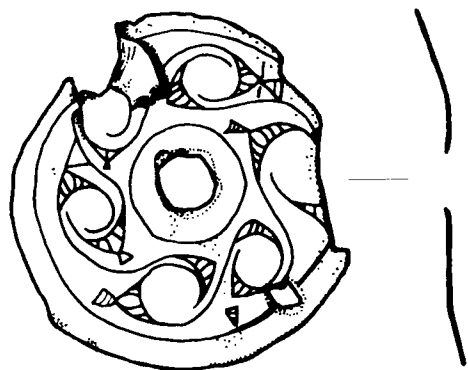
FIG. 5
An incised copper-alloy disc from North Lane,
Canterbury, Kent. Scale 2:1. *Canterbury Archaeological
Trust.*

paper and this study reminds us also of the adoption of the motif in the Columban scriptorium responsible for the production of the Book of Kells.[21] The combination of motifs found on contemporary buckets of the Birka type fits equally comfortably into a similar 'Insular' cultural context, one determined by tradition, wealth and politics as much as by geography and ethnicity.

In a British context it is worth drawing attention to an example of a different use of this technique of engraving, here with a running spiral design with hatched detail on bronze sheet which was excavated at North Lane, Canterbury, in 1960 (Fig. 5).[22] This is a thin disc of metal (under 1 mm thick) with a sub-rectangular hole at the centre and at least one smaller hole at the rim. The piece, 24 mm in diameter, resembles a decorative washer. The ornament is a six-spiral circle with one broad element where the design was not perfectly adjusted to complete the circle; each curl is augmented with a hatched tail forming a small trumpet pattern, echoing one element of the design on the Skei bucket. It was found immediately above a former Roman road surface. Unfortunately the disc is itself the only potentially datable item above a metalled hollow-way which remained in use well into the 4th century but with severe truncation of the layers immediately above. The find could be associated with some residual early Anglo-Saxon potsherds found nearby, but the next datable activity on the site took place in the 12th century. The North Lane disc has not been accepted within the canon of Romano-British artefacts.[23] My own view at the moment is that this running spiral, which is non-Anglo-Saxon in its treatment, is an early example of the technique used on the buckets, perhaps dating to the 7th century, but there is no firm contextual evidence to support this date, merely the background noise of a thin scatter of medieval Celtic or sub-Romano-British pieces from Kent, including an 8th-century Pictish brooch hoop from Canterbury itself, a massive stick pin with triskele of c. 400 from Ickham, a few British brooch hoops, and a substantial number of hanging-bowls in 6th- to 7th-century burial contexts.[24] Engraved hatching of incised vesicas is an unusual feature of an equally unusual open-work hanging-bowl mount excavated at Garton in the former North Humberside, in a context dated to c. 600.[25] With a common technique and shared artistic tradition, these excavated finds with engraved and internally

[21] I. Henderson, 'Pictish vine-scroll ornament', 243 68 in A. O'Connor and D. V. Clarke (eds.), *From the Stone Age to the 'Forty Five — Studies Presented to R. B. K. Stevenson* (Edinburgh, 1983).
[22] J. Rady, *Excavations at North Lane, Canterbury, 1996* (Canterbury Archaeological Trust, forthcoming).
[23] Pers. comm., Catherine Johns and Valerie Rigby.
[24] S. M. Youngs, 'The stick pin', in I. Riddler, M. Lyne and Q. Mould, *The Roman Watermills at Ickham, near Canterbury, Kent* (Canterbury Archaeological Trust, forthcoming); J. Brenan, *Hanging Bowls and their Contexts* (BAR Brit. Ser., 220, Oxford, 1991), for finds from Kent.
[25] Illustrated in Brenan, op. cit. in note 24, 220. Subsequent cleaning has exposed the fine execution of the engraving.

hatched curvilinear ornament hint at a native British element in the engraved ornament of the buckets.

On the basis of the associated decorative repertoire seen on the complete buckets, it is reasonable to date the making of the Flixborough sheet to somewhere in the 8th to 9th century. It is interesting to consider why it was there. The strap-end itself could have been brought into the community, the metal could have arrived as scrap with an itinerant smith, or, it could have been recycled, made from a bucket formerly in use at the settlement. Given the possible liturgical use of the small decorated pails with explicit Christian iconography, this modest strap-end may add to the present tally of metalwork with Christian association from this site.

AN ENAMELLED HANGING-BOWL MOUNT (Fig. 6)

This detached bronze plate is an almost complete casting, 24 x 35.5 mm, curving in two planes while the shortest edge at the apex is damaged, but part of the rim remains. The outer convex surface is recessed for enamel, leaving a pattern of open vesicas, or petals, in reserve. This is champlevé work, despite the cell shapes which give the impression of the separate walls of cloisonné enamel. Enamel remains in most of the setting, largely discoloured black but showing the original bright opaque red in places. The curvature, form, ornament and use of enamel confirm that this is a decorative appliqué mount originally made as part of a set of mounts for the body of a bronze hanging bowl.

These bowls are distinguished by being designed for suspension in a frame or tripod and often have richly decorated mounts both for the suspension hooks and purely for decoration. They must always have been prestige items. Complete examples, with one Scottish exception, have been recovered in eastern and southern England amongst the furnishings of Anglo-Saxon burials of the later 6th and 7th centuries.[26] It is clear from the evidence of repairs and the techniques of manufacture, which often include the extensive use of enamel, that these vessels were exotic imports and prized items in the Anglo-Saxon culture, like the Coptic and Frankish bowls found in the same contexts. They were not originally made for Anglo-Saxon patrons even though the ornament of the appliqués show increasing influence from the Germanic artistic repertoire. In the course of the 8th century hanging bowls certainly were made in the Anglo-Saxon idiom for local patrons, as the lost silver Witham bowl spectacularly demonstrated and the recent hook mount from Barningham in Suffolk confirms, but the Flixborough enamel is in an earlier tradition where enamel was used extensively.[27]

The Flixborough find is of interest because it comes from a settlement and not a cemetery. A circular hook mount was excavated in the Anglo-Saxon village of Chalton in Hampshire, a number of related items were found at the monastic complex at Whitby, N. Yorkshire, and an assemblage similar in range to the Whitby Celtic pieces was recovered more recently by metal detecting at a coastal site at Bawsey in North Norfolk.[28] Lincolnshire is exceptionally rich in hanging bowls as grave furnishings, including one in the church of St Paul-in-the-Bail, Lincoln, and the apparent ease of access to bowls in this region has implications for the economic, political and social life of the area. Eighteen complete hanging bowls have been recovered from Lincolnshire, more than from any

[26] Brenan, op. cit. in note 24, for a gazetteer, detailed descriptions and analyses of context; the finds from Lincolnshire up to 1990 are published by R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 45–70 in A. Vince (ed.), *Pre-Viking Lindsey* (Lincoln, 1993), with a further three bowls and several mounts recorded since then.
[27] For the River Witham bowl, Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 26, pl. 9; the Suffolk mount is in C. Martin, J. Plouviez and D. Wreathall, 'Archaeology in Suffolk: archaeological finds', *Proc. Suffolk Inst. Hist. Archaeol.*, 38 (1996), 457, fig. 99c.
[28] For the Chalton find, P. Addyman and D. Leigh, 'The Anglo-Saxon village at Chalton, Hampshire', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 17 (1973), 1–25 and pl. VI, and also R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'Hanging bowls', 30–9, in M. Ryan (ed.), *Ireland and Insular Art: A.D. 500–1200* (Dublin, 1987), pl. 11e.
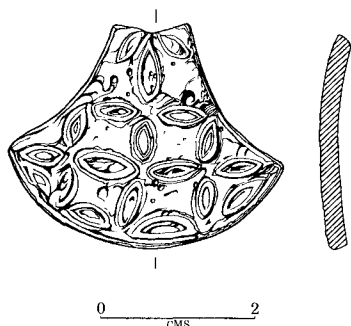
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FIG. 6
Champlevé enamelled copper-alloy mount from Flixborough,
Lincolnshire. Scale 1:1. *Drawn by Les Turner, Humber Field Archaeology.*
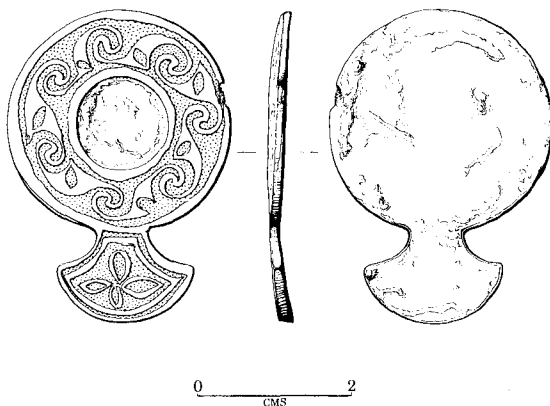


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FIG. 7
Bronze and enamelled hanging-bowl mount
from Kemsing, Kent. Scale 1:1. *Drawn by Lisa
Reardon, British Museum.*

other comparable region of Anglo-Saxon Britain, a peculiarly rich inheritance.[29] It is also
a rare find which helps to bridge the archaeological gap between the tranche of bowls
preserved because of Anglo-Saxon mortuary practices in the late 6th and first half of the
7th centuries, and the Irish bowls similarly preserved in Scandinavian Viking-period
burials of the 9th and 10th centuries.

The form and decoration are also of considerable interest. A bowl fitted with a suite
of hook mounts and decorative plates lavishly enamelled and decorated to match this piece
would have been a spectacular vessel. Appliqués of similar form were used in pairs on an
elaborately mounted bowl from a burial at Lullingstone, Kent, as part of a complex and
varied set of mounts. Panels of this shape are described as 'axe-shaped' and have been
related to Anglo-Saxon horse-bit fittings of this shape, an association which appears
obvious in the case of the Lullingstone bowl with its Germanic-style interlace, but given
the use of the pelta or 'mushroom-shape' in earlier and contemporary non-Germanic
metalwork, the form of the Flixborough find was not necessarily derived uniquely from a
recently imported model but is in the native La Tène tradition, both proposed models
being based on a pattern of arcs. The same 'axe' or fan shape appears in miniature as an
integral appendage to a circular bowl mount with spiral ornament found at Kemsing, Kent
(Fig. 7), a combination of shapes which is repeated on two 8th-century Irish studs.[30] The
curved apex of the Flixborough mount was presumably set against an ornamental disc,

[29] Bruce-Mitford, op. cit. in note 26.
[30] S. M. Youngs, ' "The Celtic Fringe": two enamelled mounts', in C. Entwistle (ed.), papers in honour of David
Buckton (forthcoming).

either as one of a flanking pair as on the Lullingstone bowl, or suspended below it in the design of the Kemsing mount.

The decoration on the Flixborough find is distinctive and falls within a strand of classicising ornament used by the smiths who decorated these bowls. While they are best known for the triskeles and peltas of the archaic Iron-age tradition, rule-and-compass derived motifs are also present in the extensive medieval repertoire. The slightly uneven pattern seen here is derived from a basic design of intersecting arcs, a pattern which has a varied range of applications, with some, as here, emphasising the intersecting arcs which form lentoid or petal shapes, while others used inlaid dots to emphasise the spaces left between. Such spaces were usually sub-triangular but were occasionally, as here, lozenge shaped, depending on whether the underlying geometric framework linked three or four petals (Figs. 6 and 9). Patterns based on intersecting arcs and circles were common in the applied arts of the romanised world, and were used by the mosaicist, ivory carver, silversmith and pewterers of Roman Britain amongst other craft-workers. It appears to be the case that on the metalwork of post-Roman Britain and of early-medieval Ireland three linked petal-shapes surrounding a concave-sided triangle is the preferred form of this pattern: it is found in miniature on 5th-century penannular brooches and pins and continued as a component of hanging-bowl decoration and as engraved six-petal 'marigold' ornament on later dress fasteners in the 6th and 7th centuries and beyond.

The switch from inlaid petal-shaped recesses to reserved lines against a solid enamel background, seen here, seems to have taken place during the later 6th or first half of the 7th century. It can be seen used in a similarly open arrangement on the tail of the Kemsing mount (Fig. 7). It is also a feature of an elaborately ornamented enamelled basal mount from a hanging-bowl found at Bekesbourne in Kent, where open petals were used in combination with other, innovative motifs including stylised birds' heads (Fig. 8).[31] The centre is in the style of the Flixborough find, but on the latter this motif is used exclusively as a carpet. Norfolk has provided a large circular disc completely filled with a linked pattern of rather stiff open petals of the Flixborough kind and a further variation is seen on a large enamelled mount from Bawsey in the North-East of the county where the pattern was created from lozenge-shaped elements which interlock to cover the entire surface (Fig. 9a, b). It is a gently tapering rectangle with a convex fourth side which looks like a component from a piece with complex mounts but apparently not a bowl, because the mount is flat.

This Bawsey piece is not a cemetery find but from as assemblage of largely middle- and late-Saxon material and this raises questions about the presence of such a mount in the community at Flixborough. It could have reached this affluent settlement on a complete bowl for use on site either as a dining accessory or acting as a lamp reflector in the church (two of the various uses proposed for these bowls in an Anglo-Saxon context). Material from the occupation of the site in the 7th century was recovered elsewhere. It could equally well have arrived later or separately as a curio, or as spolia for re-use in some way, like the metal for the strap-end discussed above. All that can be said is that there is no piercing for re-use as jewellery or for re-attachment, a feature of some detached bowl mounts.

This piece (RF5717) came from a dump in which the pottery indicates deposition in the late 9th and early 10th century but which included a number of residual finds of earlier material. The bowl mount is probably the earliest of the medieval items which included a Series G type 3a sceatt of early 8th-century date. This phase of use of the site also saw the deposition of the late 8th- or early 9th-century inscribed lead plaque. As to the original date of manufacture, the ornament and lavish use of red enamel suggest that this piece could have been made as late as 700 but not significantly later, but that it could have been

[31] G. Haseloff, 'Fragments of a hanging bowl from Bekesbourne, Kent', Medieval Archaeol., 2 (1958), 209–46; Brenan, op. cit. in note 24, 184–5.

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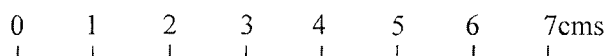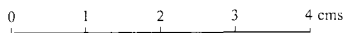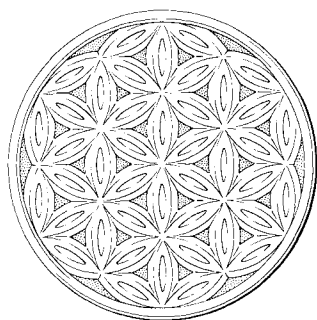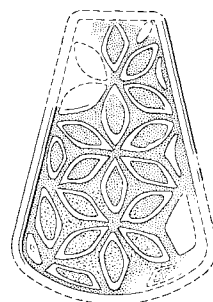
0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7cms

FIG. 8
Bronze and enamelled hanging-bowl mount from Bekesbourne, Kent. Scale 1:1.
*Photo: British Museum.*



0    1    2    3    4 cms

a



0    1    2    3cms

b

FIG. 9
a. Enamelled hanging bowl mount from Norfolk. *Drawn by James Farrant after material supplied by Norfolk Museums Service.* b. Bronze plaque inlaid with red enamel from Bawsey, Norfolk. *Drawn by James Farrant, British Museum.* Scale 1:1.

up to fifty years earlier in the 7th century. Our improved and improving evidence for the dates of deposition in Anglo-Saxon burials in Britain, together with the growing corpus of enamelled forms like this one, without parallel in contemporary Ireland, persuade me that this represents what was an elaborate, high-status piece of British table-ware made in the period 575–650. The present state of our knowledge about the absolute chronology of the

hanging-bowls found in Britain is such that this is very much a provisional opinion. The anchor-point remains the three very different and technically complex bowls found in the mound 1 burial at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, deposited in the 620s. What we do not know is how long the British tradition of enamelling in this style persisted up to and beyond 700, by which date the production of polychrome enamelling had also become established in Ireland.

CONCLUSION

The items discussed above were both formerly components of complex luxury vessels. They add to the interest and variety of the cultural components of this prosperous Anglo-Saxon settlement in northern Lincolnshire, a unique survival under layers of wind-blown sand. Apart from their contribution to artefactual knowledge they provide evidence for the continuing presence in the daily life of this community of culturally distinct artefacts, one a Northumbrian or Irish piece, the other a product reflecting the former taste and technology of a native aristocracy.

SUSAN YOUNGS

# BATTLE AND TRIAL: WEAPON INJURY BURIALS OF ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, FISHERGATE, YORK

In 1985–6, York Archaeological Trust excavated St Andrew's church in Fishergate. During the course of the excavation 402 articulated skeletons were discovered and assigned context numbers, along with a large amount of disarticulated bone.[1] One sub-group of twenty-nine skeletons was noticeable because they had evidence of trauma caused by interpersonal violence (hereafter referred to as 'weapon injuries') consistent with the effects of projectiles such as arrows and crossbow bolts, or blades. In the earliest archaeological phasing of the church, dated to the late 11th century, there were twelve males who had evidence of weapon injuries. The phasing, the evidence of weapon injuries, and the number of examples, have led to the conclusion that these men died as a result of a single event, such as a battle.[2] There were, however, a further seventeen burials, also with weapon injuries, within the church and cemetery that ranged in date from the 12th to the 14th centuries. These later burials are difficult to explain, but a strong possibility is that the weapon injuries occurred as a result of trial by combat.

The history of St Andrew's church provides no explanation for the high incidence of weapon injuries. Its early history is confused, although it is known it went through many

[1] R. L. Kemp and P. C. Graves, *The Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew, Fishergate* (The Archaeology of York, 11/2, York, 1998).
[2] G. Stroud and R. L. Kemp, *The Cemeteries of St Andrew, Fishergate* (The Archaeology of York, 12/2, York, 1993), 127.