

A KEYSTONE GARNET DISC BROOCH FROM AMPFIELD

The brooch (Fig 4) was found with a metal detector at Sandpit Copse, Ampfield (SU 4148 2295) in March 1980 and brought to Winchester City Museum for identification in May of the same year. The reported site of the find was examined by museum staff who noted a small, local discoloration in the underlying sand but no sign of any burial. The brooch was donated jointly to the City Museum by the landowner, D A H Wilkie Cooper, and the finder Martin Vear (accession number 3116).

Such brooches have been studied by Leeds (1936, 115–124) and more recently by Avent (1975). It may be classified, following Avent, as

a Class 3.1 keystone garnet disc brooch (the equivalent of Leed's Class 1b).

The brooch is 38mm in diameter and was cast in one piece in silver. The front is gilded and decorated with a central circular setting, now missing, which may originally have been a garnet or red coloured glass or white paste. Three keystone settings of Garnet or red-coloured glass (not determined) radiate from the centre divided by intermediate settings and cast panels of animal ornament. The animal ornament is highly stylised, the two heads in each panel being joined by a single line symbolizing the two bodies. The rim was probably nielloed



Fig 4. The brooch, front (above) and back (opposite).

in small triangles, with a zigzag band between them, though no trace of niello remains. The fastening on the back of the brooch would have consisted of a simple iron pin with a spring hinge and a catchplate, of which little now survives. These brooches are dated to the late

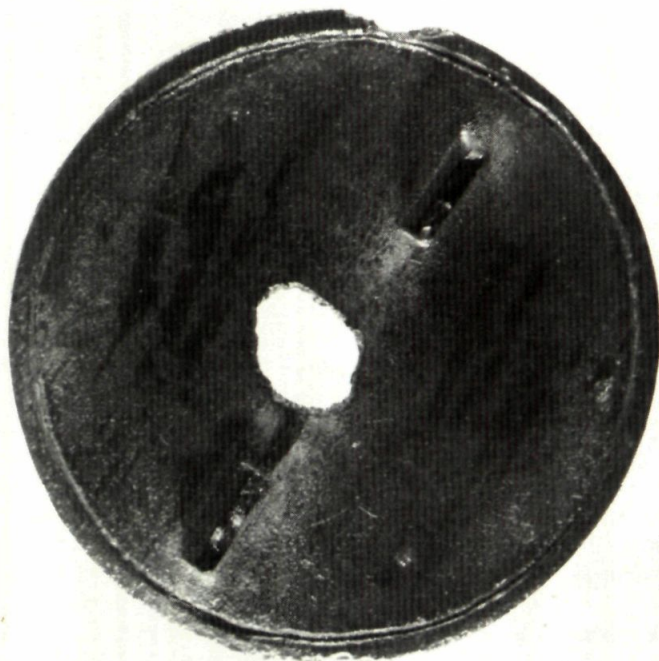
6th-early 7th century AD. Of the twenty-seven Class 3 brooches listed by Avent, all but one were discovered in Kent, the exception coming from Cambridgeshire. The discovery of this example in Ampfield then, is of some interest.

REFERENCES

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