Recent Roman Iron Age metalwork finds from Fife and Tayside

Fraser Hunter

In the last few years several metal artefacts of Roman Iron Age date have been discovered in Fife and Tayside, largely through the activities of metal-detectorists. This paper aims to put these on record, with a discussion ranging through other Roman finds from Fife in an attempt to tease out some wider conclusions. Hopefully, this will also indicate the value of co-operation with metal-detectorists and the benefits of Scotland's Treasure Trove law, which enables such material to be safeguarded in museums (Sheridan 1995).

The Artefacts

Although three of the artefacts discussed below are Iron Age types in origin (the penannular brooch, button-and-loop fastener and tankard handle), all are Roman period in date: the presence of zinc in the alloys shows they were made from remelted Roman metal, as zinc is only found at trace levels in the pre-Roman period (Bayley 1990,13). Find spots are mapped in Illus 1. Alloy types are based on qualitative X-ray fluorescence analysis, mainly by Dr Katherine Eremin of the NMS Analytical Research section. Surface corrosion will have affected the results, and hence the alloy types are quoted as broad groups only (see Bayley 1990, 8 for terminology).

Tankard handle fragment, Ballinbreich Castle (illus 2.1)
L 20 mm; W 18 mm; H 22 mm. Alloy: leaded bronze, some zinc
Terminal and part of the handgrip of a tankard handle. The hand-grip expands into a trumpet head which steps down into a flat sub-oval terminal, damaged in one area. A broken lug on the reverse would have slotted through the wood of the tankard: part of a transverse rivet hole is preserved at the fracture, indicating the staves were 5 mm thick.

Metal-detector find; NGR NO 272 204. Air photographs in the National Monuments Record show extensive cropmarks in the field south of the castle, largely of medieval origin (DES 1991, 22), but two perpendicular pit-alignments could represent Iron Age land boundaries. There are no earlier settlement traces visible, although the fragmentary nature of this find suggests it derives from settlement rubbish. Donated to East Fife Museum Service (EFMS) by David Drummond.

Tankard handles are an Iron Age type which continued into the Roman period. This is only the fifth from Scotland (MacGregor 1976, nos 287-288, 290-291; no 289 from Culbin is suspect). It belongs to Corcorari s group V (1952), although his typology has flaws (cf Jackson 1990, 44). There are close parallels from Okstrow broch, in Orkney (MacGregor 1976, no 291) and Caerleon Roman fort, in southern Wales (Evans and Metcalf 1992, 152, no 328), although the Ballinbreich example lacks their strut joining the terminals. The Caerleon example is dated to the 1st - early 2nd century AD, while MacGregor suggests Okstrow is 2nd century AD. From this, the Ballinbreich fragment is probably late 1st - 2nd century AD.

Button-and-loop fastener, Ballinbreich Castle (illus 2.2)
L 40 mm; button L 22 mm, W 16 mm, H 8 mm; loop L 25 mm, W 13 mm, H 9 mm. Alloy: leaded bronze, some zinc
Metal-detector find; NGR NO 272 204. See previous entry for context. Donated to EFMS by David Drummond.

Class III (petal-shaped) button-and-loop fastener (Wild 1970). One edge of the button is broken; otherwise in good condition, with some adhering soil corrosion.

Wild (1970) provides the most thorough discussion of the type, arguing for a late 1st - 2nd century AD date. Their function was to join straps, particularly in horse harness. Class III is the commonest type, found predominantly in southern Scotland and northern England: the bossed decoration is typical of Celtic-style metalwork
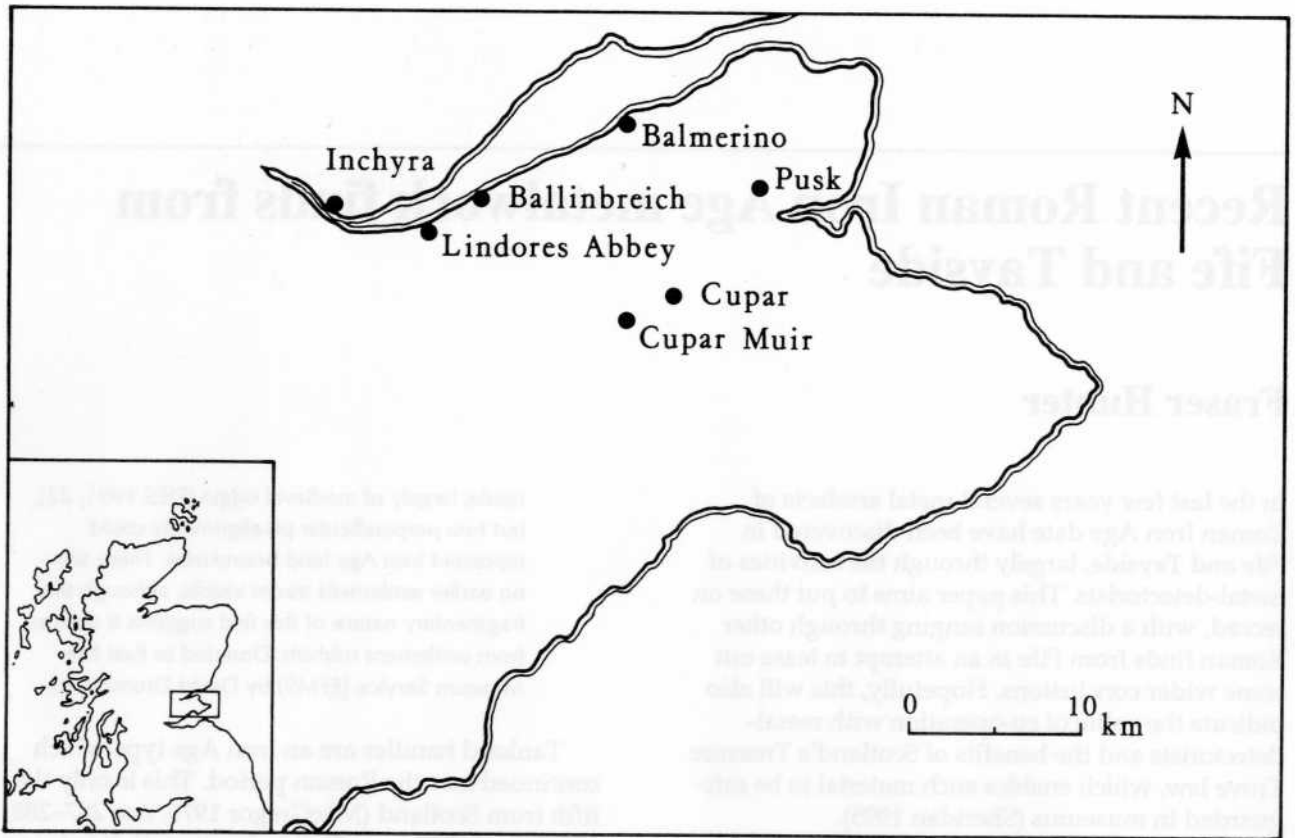
Illus 1. Find spots of the recent discoveries (drawn by Marion O'Neil).

in the area (Leeds 1933, 110). They occur in both native and Roman contexts, and some at least were made on Roman sites: there is an unfinished example with an unperforated loop from New-stead, not previously noted as such (Curle 1911, plate LXXV, 7; NMS FRA 668). As with much Roman Iron Age or Romano-British material, it is not clear who is making what for whom.

Penannular brooch, Lindores Abbey (illus 2.3)

> External diameter 26 x 28.5 mm; hoop thickness 2.5 mm; terminal diameter 3 mm. Alloy: gunmetal
> Hoop of a small penannular brooch of type A3(i) (Fowler 1960), with knob-and-collar terminals. The slightly irregular knobs are squared off at the aper-ture; the pin is lost. Severe corrosion has stripped the original surface, but there is no sign of milling on the terminals. Circumferential corrosion lines follow stress-lines from hammering the object to shape.
>
> Found casually by Mr K McKenzie-Smith in exposed soil by the entrance to Lindores Abbey, NO 2434 1849. There are no known pre-Medieval sites in the immediate vicinity. Acquired by EFMS through Treasure Trove.

Penannular brooches were a pre-Roman Iron Age type which became popular during the Roman period on both native and Roman sites.

Fowler (1960, 174-5) dates type A3 to 1st - 3rd century AD, with some residual ones in Anglo-Saxon graves (see also Mackreth 1989, 98).

Headstud brooch, Pusk (illus 2.4)

> L 95 mm; W (wings) 30 mm. Alloy: body - low-zinc brass; headstud - gunmetal
> The bow and pin are of one-piece construction, with the chord of the spring held by a hook originally retained by the riveted headstud. The brooch is flattened and distorted: the pin and part of the catchplate are missing, as is the wire head loop apart from the portion forming the spring's axis. The headstud was riveted on separately and has a rifled edge and two concentric enamelled circles, the outer red, the inner now empty. The bow has a central spine and raised edges and terminates in a circular foot-knob, which appears to be separately attached. Faint decorative ridges survive on the wings.
>
> Found by John Sutherland with a metal detector: NGR NO 4405 2095. The find spot is in the area around Leuchars which is rich in cropmark settlement sites, some of Iron Age date. A ring ditch and several enclosures lie only 250 m to the E (NMRS NO 42 SW 25), while the fields some 500 m to the N have a dense scatter of ring-ditches and enclosures (St Joseph 1967). Acquired by EFMS through Treasure Trove.

be dated any closer than late 1st - late 2nd century AD (Snape 1993,14-15).

Fragmentary plate-and-fantail brooch, Cupar Muir (illus 3.1)
    L 28 mm; W 16 mm; T 6.5 mm. Alloy: leaded bronze, some zinc
    Foot and lower part of bow brooch, comprising the triangular fantail, broken catchplate, and part of a 'plate' on the bow. The fantail is decorated with three lenticular recesses forming a T-shape. A narrow bar separates it from the plate, most of which is lost: its original shape is unknown, but featured a raised perimeter around a central circle with recessed decoration, of which a tear-drop motif survives. There is no sign that the recesses ever held enamel. Nothing survives of the head, making exact classification impossible: it could be either a fantail brooch or a variant trumpet brooch, both of which can bear such decoration (Snape 1993, groups 6 and 4.3; cf. Hattatt 1989, 315, 329-30). It dates broadly to the late 1st - 2nd century AD.

    Found by John O'Donnell with a metal-detector: NGR NO 365 134. No sites are known in the immediate area. Acquired by EFMS through Treasure Trove.

Fragmentary headstud brooch, Balmerino (illus 3.2)
    L 28 mm; W 24 mm. Alloy: leaded gunmetal
    Head of an enamelled headstud brooch. The bow is fractured just below the cast headstud, and the hinged pin is lost. The headstud retains some pale residual enamel of uncertain colour and form. There are hints that the flattened tops of the wings may originally have borne an enamelled square, although the degree of wear makes this uncertain. A ridge forward of the stud is a decorative feature derived from the functional pierced plate or hook in brooches with springs. Type 3.1 Ciii (Snape 1993, 15); late 1st - late 2nd century AD.

    Metal-detector find: NGR NO 3590 2460, from the field SE of the Abbey. No pre-Medieval sites are recorded from the area. Donated to EFMS by David Drummond.

Enamelled trumpet brooch, Inchyra (illus 3.3)
    L 68 mm; W 23 mm; H 27 mm. Alloy: all components are gunmetal
    Enamelled trumpet brooch of type Rii (Collingwood and Richmond 1969, 296-7) with a continuous acanthus moulding round the bow. Only blue enamel survives; its arrangement implies one other colour was originally present, but is now totally lost. The hinged pin is missing; the wire head loop fits into the ends of the axis and is held by a collar decorated with alternating enamelled triangles. The bow has a similar design either side of the central

ridge, and ends in a footknob with an incised wavy line on the moulding. The head bears Celtic-style decoration. Each side is arranged as an S-scroll of blue enamel with an additional scroll attached to one end, cast in the metal and bounded originally by the second enamel colour. When viewed as a whole, the head is based on the lyre-palmette common in Celtic art (for terminology see MacGregor 1976, xvii-xix).

    Found by Ricky Blake with a metal-detector in silt deposits on the foreshore of the Tay: NGR NO 1825 2025. Acquired by Perth Museum through Treasure Trove, PMAG 1992.600.

Such brooches are known both with a variety of Celtic designs, as here, and with more geometric motifs (Bateson 1981, 26-8; MacGregor 1976, 123-4; Hattatt 1987,124-5; Bohme 1970, 10, Abb 4), although to see a 'degeneration from Celtic to geometric is probably over-simple (cf MacGregor, op cit). A broad date range of late 1st - 2nd century AD can be suggested.

Discussion

Having described these objects in some detail, what can they tell us? Are they just arid dots on the map to be labelled 'yet more brooches' and forgotten? This would be an injustice: they are interesting objects in their own right, and the Ballinbreich tankard handle and Pusk headstud brooch in particular are significant additions to their types. Yet these 'stray finds' can tell us much more, if only they are asked the right questions.

The first question is what is the nature of their find spots. There are three main possibilities: rubbish from settlements; votive offerings; or casual losses. It is reasonable to see fragmentary objects as derived from settlement. Hence the finds from Ballinbreich, Balmerino, Cupar Muir and Pusk probably derive from unrecognised settlements. For those brooches lacking only the pin, the most economical hypothesis would be casual loss. However, the Inchyra brooch perhaps warns against this pragmatic stance. Its context suggests it was a votive offering: the site, a liminal location near water, is typical, and personal ornaments were favoured sacrifices at the time (Hunter forthcoming; cf Coventina's Well, Northumberland, Allason-Jones and McKay 1985). Such use of brooches is well paralleled: in Scotland, Roman brooches were incorporated in the native votive hoard from Lamberton Moor (Anderson 1905), and other 'stray finds' of intact brooches could plausibly be votive gifts (eg from Ayrshire and Polmaise; Curle 1932, fig 32, fig 36.2-3); more generally, brooches were common offerings in Roman-Celtic temples (eg Harlow; France and
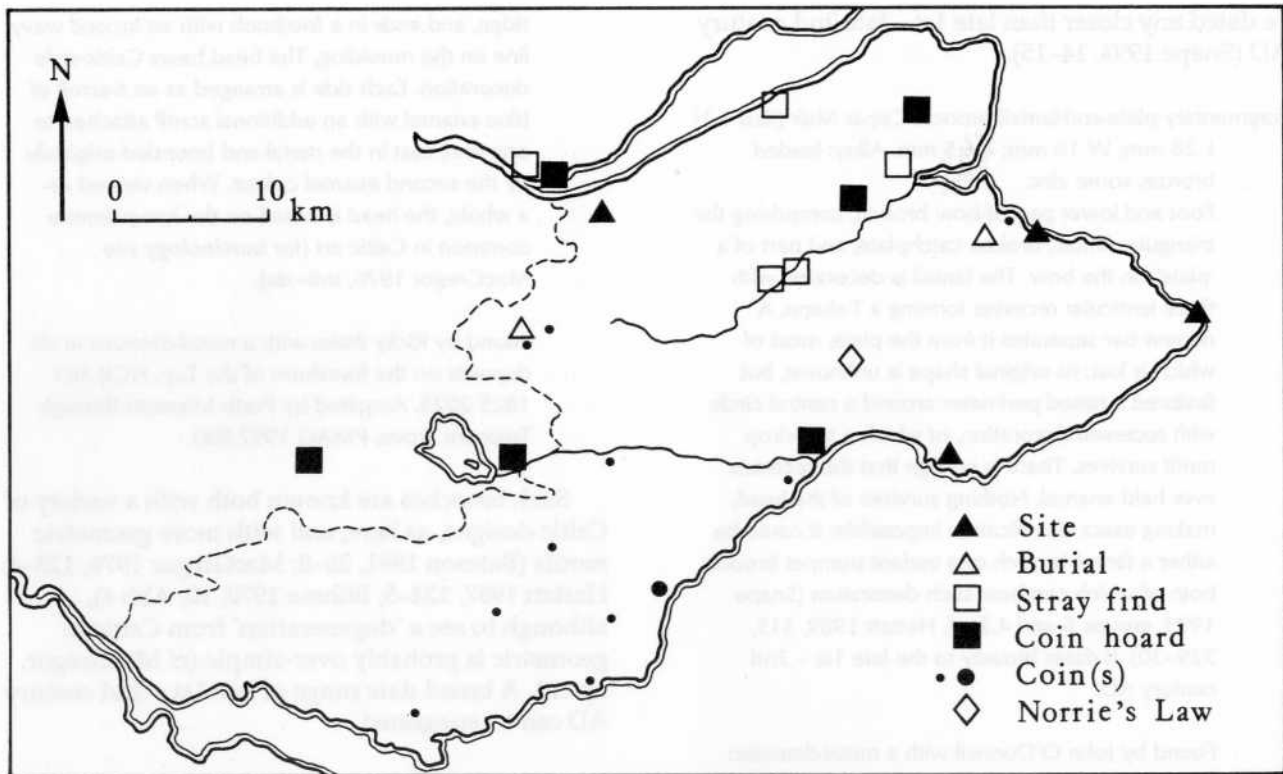
Illus 4. Roman finds from Fife. Note that coin hoards are also plotted from Kinross and Inchyra to give a better idea of their distribution: the Leven hoard is of uncertain date, but the remainder are late 2nd - early 3rd century AD (drawn by Marion O'Neil).

Gobel 1985, 70, 137). The earlier votive use of the Tay is seen in the Late Bronze Age swords thrown into it (Coles 1960, 85), and it is no surprise that such a major river had continuing ritual significance; such long-term votive use is attested elsewhere in Scotland (Hunter forthcoming). The small hoard of late-2nd-century *denarii* also from the Inchyra foreshore is likely to be another votive deposit, presumably by native hand given its date (DES 1994, 90).

All the find spots considered here merit further work, particularly a field-walking programme. With the postulated settlement sites, the question must be, are they Roman or native? The artefacts would be equally at home in either. The context, however, points to a native origin. There is currently no evidence of a permanent Roman presence in Fife, although the Severan legionary base at Carpow is close by - the series of marching camps running west-east through the peninsula represents campaigning, not permanent occupation (Keppie 1986,153-5). Forts may yet be found, and Keppie (1990, 3-5) has noted the unrealised potential of 'stray finds' as site indicators. In our present state of knowledge, however, we shall take a more sceptical view than earlier antiquarians, who saw Romans in every hillock (Small 1823; Miller 1857), and assume instead that these brooches are most likely to be Roman finds from non-Roman sites.

There is not the evidence to attempt a comprehensive portrayal of Roman-native relations in the area. Instead, discussion will focus more closely on selected aspects of the Fife evidence, which hopefully will throw some light on the general picture. The scatter of Roman artefacts in Fife (Illus 4) is markedly augmented by these new finds, and here the significance of metal-detecting discoveries within a professionally monitored programme is apparent. Given the generally small number of Roman artefacts from Iron Age excavations, and the models of restricted access to Roman material which are developed from this, such an increase carries implications that Roman goods may have been reaching Scotland in greater numbers than normally realised. Excavation may not be the ideal strategy to recover this evidence, and a broader approach including metal-detecting 'stray finds' is needed to develop our views of Roman-native contact. An initial attempt at this is made below for brooch finds.

Interpretation of the Roman material is hindered by our poor understanding of Iron Age settlement in the area. The general picture shows both open settlement and hillforts, the latter perhaps declining by the Roman period (Macinnes 1982), but excavations have been few and far between. However, the range of objects matches that from elsewhere: Samian and other pottery, brooches, glass, a bronze vessel and a scatter of

coins and coin hoards (Robertson 1970).

What the Fife material does elegantly demonstrate is the shift in Roman-native relationships in the late 2nd - 3rd century, when there was a concentration of silver coin hoards from Lanarkshire up the east coast to Kincardineshire, with several from Fife and Kinross (illus 4; Robertson 1975). Unrest on the frontier at this time is attested in the written sources, and the series of putatively Severan marching camps indicate that Fife was part of the problem. The hoards point to the new Roman policy of appeasement or bribery - buying peaceful neighbours (Todd 1985, 230-1) - which is hinted at again in the fragmentary Late Roman silver spoon in the Norrie's Law hoard (Stevenson 1956).

Subsequent discussion will look at three areas: the context of certain Roman finds; burials with Roman grave goods; and the broader interpretation of brooch finds.

Roman finds from Constantine's Cave and Kinkell Cave

There are few site finds of Roman material in Fife: the hillfort of Clatchard Craig, a 'kitchen midden' at Lower Largo, two burial sites (discussed below), and Constantine's Cave and Kinkell Cave (Robertson 1970; Close-Brooks 1986). Here the somewhat enigmatic cave finds will be considered. From the published account, both were relatively rich in Roman finds, with Samian, coarse ware and a bronze jug handle from Kinkell cave and coarse ware, substantial portions of several amphorae and part of a cylindrical glass bottle from Constantine's Cave (Wace and Jehu 1915). Unfortunately, all appear to be lost apart from two sherds of Dressel 20 Spanish olive oil amphorae from Constantine's Cave, now held by East Fife Museum Service. This quantity is unusual - generally only high-status sites boast such assemblages (cf Robertson 1970), but few would see caves as high status.

It is a hard task to attempt any reinterpretation when the finds are lost and the records few. In addition, the quantity of material recovered and the presence of later incised crosses indicates the sites saw use over some considerable time, further complicating the analysis. Yet it is worth speculating a little, if only to open up some new possibilities.

There are a number of clues to the caves' use. The depth of cultural deposits suggests more than casual occupation. Constantine's Cave preserved what was identified as an iron-smelting furnace, while the fragmentary nature of much of the faunal material at Kinkell Cave suggested bone-working debris rather than butchery (Wace and Jehu 1915, 245-6); there was also antler-working

debris from Constantine's Cave (ibid, 254). The extensive faunal material included a wide representation of skeletal parts, implying whole carcasses were brought to the sites, primarily the normal domesticates with some wild species and shellfish. Crosses were incised on the walls at both caves, part of a widespread devotional use of such sites in early historic and medieval Fife (Stuart 1867, lxxxvii-xciv). The walls of both also bore simple animal carvings (Wace and Jehu 1915, 236, 242, fig 7; Stuart 1867, p129): such undetailed depictions are best seen as part of a scattered, broadly Iron Age tradition in southern Scotland (Van Hoek and Smith 1988, 33-4) rather than as Pictish carvings, which are generally more diagnostic (contra Wace and Jehu 1915, 242).

We may draw certain interpretative strands out of this. There is evidence of craft processes: iron-smelting and bone- and antler-working. Both caves saw later Christian ritual use, and both have probable Iron Age animal carvings. It seems on balance unlikely that we are dealing with normal domestic occupation: rather, the caves were the foci for more specialised activities, perhaps regarded as too unpleasant or inappropriate for the settlement itself (cf Shepherd 1983, 335 for caves and Pictish metal-working).

There is a further interpretative level we can proceed to, albeit tentatively. While modern excavations of caves are rare, work at the Sculptor's Cave, Covesea, Moray identified a Roman Iron Age / Pictish phase of ritual use, involving the deposition of artefacts (including a rich Roman assemblage) and perhaps bones, and the carving of Pictish symbols on the walls (Shepherd 1993, 80-81). This gives us a model to test against the Fife caves. The animal figures here may relate to ritual use of the cave, as may the wider range of carvings, some clearly Pictish, in other Fife caves at Wemyss and Caiplie (Ritchie and Stevenson 1993; Murray 1961). The Christian use of the caves may then be following an older tradition, again as at Covesea (Shepherd 1993, 80-81). This in no way contradicts the role of the caves in craft activities, as these themselves were probably bound up with ritual - the magical associations of metal-working, for instance, are commonplace in pre-industrial societies (Budd and Taylor 1995; Hingley forthcoming), and caves are common locations for such activity (Ritchie and Stevenson 1993, 205). This may then give us a context for the rich Roman material - as at Covesea, it could be offerings, with exotic and powerful material being used in local rituals. The occurrence of a few caves elsewhere with similarly rich Roman assemblages (eg Bomess Cave, Kirkcudbrightshire; Curle 1932, 372-3) suggests this model may have wider applicability.
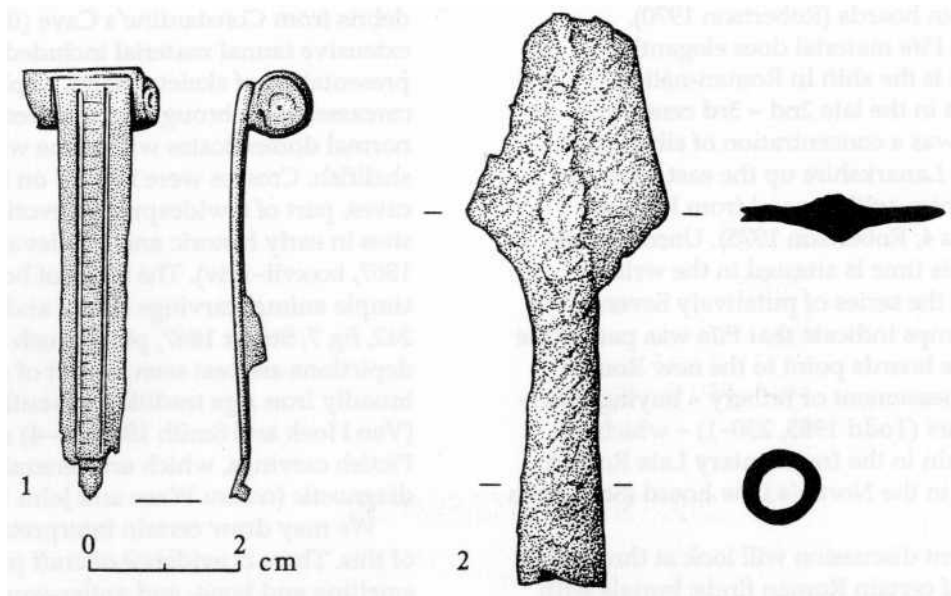
Illus 5. *Brooch and spear- or javelin-head from Merlsford, Fife (drawn by Marion O'Neil).*

A probable 'warrior burial' with Roman brooch from Merlsford (Illus 5)

Another interesting phenomenon is the presence in Fife of two burial sites with Roman grave-goods. The Hallow Hill burials (Proudfoot 1976) will shortly be published. Less well known is the probable burial from Merlsford, which produced a small iron spearhead and an early Roman brooch. The context is far from perfect, as Stevenson has noted: the original account is vague and the early museum records confused (Stevenson 1966, 25, 40). However, a plausible interpretation is that during the excavation of a cairn an iron spearhead and Roman brooch were found: it is inferred that they were associated (which is supported by similar adhering soil traces), most probably in a burial. This is of some significance, as Stevenson recognised, but has subsequently been little commented on. The opportunity is taken here to publish the finds fully and to discuss the discovery a little further.

Roman brooch of Langton Down type (NMS FG 1)
> L *57* mm; W *17* mm; H 11 mm. Alloy: body - brass; spring - gunmetal
> The bow is squared at the head, virtually flat, straight sided, and reeded with two incised grooves; the central rib is decorated with lateral incisions, much worn. The foot is slightly damaged, but the full length is preserved. Surviving stubs of the catchplate indicate it had a single large perforation. A cylindrical housing encases the spring; the pin is lost.

Langton Down brooches are a Gallic type, starting in the late first century BC and running through the Claudian period, with few surviving after 60 AD (Wheeler and Wheeler 1932, 71-4;

Stead and Rigby 1989, 91-3, 101; Feug6re 1985, 265-6; Mackreth 1989, 97). This example corresponds to Augst type 4.4.4 (Riha 1979, 100, Taf 19), but the typology cannot discern between pre- and post-conquest arrivals in Britain. Of interest here is the British distribution: markedly south and east English, with only a scatter of outliers, and no others from Scotland or the Tyne-Solway frontier (Mackreth 1989, 97; Snape 1993). This brooch clearly reached Scotland before the actual Roman invasion, which is very unusual (Stevenson 1966, 25).

Fragmentary iron spearhead (NMS FG *2)*
> L *76* mm; W (blade) *26* mm; socket diameter 12 mm
> Iron spearhead with kite-shaped blade, midrib and closed socket, lacking the tip and part of one edge of the blade. The socket is slightly damaged, and there is no trace of the weld-line, or of any perforation for a rivet.

There is no meaningful typology for Iron Age spearheads (Stead 1991, 74-5), although both angular blades and midribs can be matched in the series from Traprain (Burley 1956, nos. 384-395). This example is important as a dated example to add to the sparse Scottish corpus. The small diameter of its socket suggests it is a javelin rather than a spear.

It is assumed here that these finds do indeed represent a burial of the early first century AD. Interpretation is far from simple: burials are rare in Iron Age Scotland (Whimster 1981, 410-16), and the unusual nature of this one, with its exotic early

PERCENTAGE
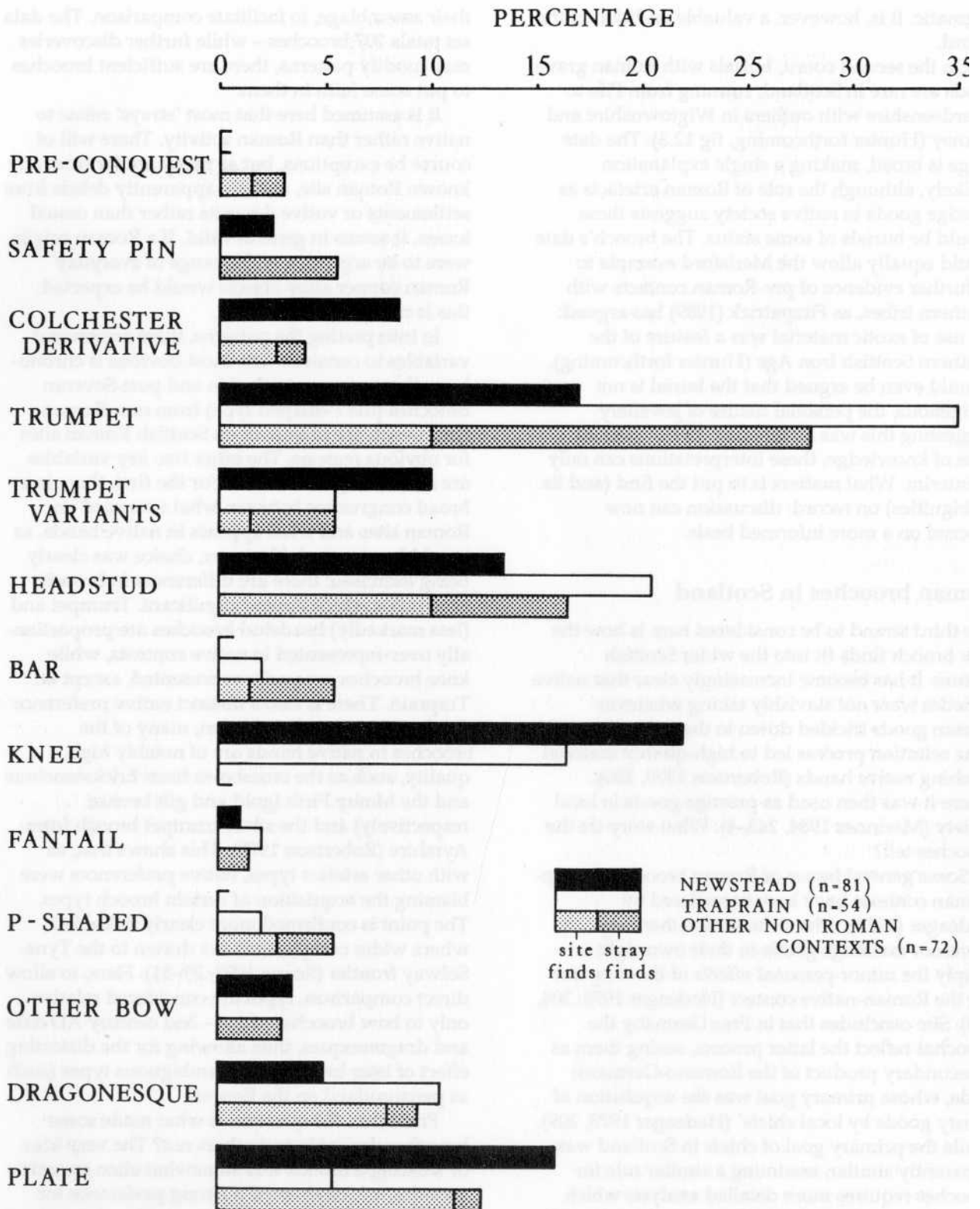
Illus 6. Relative proportions of brooch types from Newstead, Traprain, and other non-Roman contexts. Polden Hill and Dolphin brooches are incorporated in Colchester Derivatives. The safety pin category includes brooches which could be either La Tene 3 types or Roman period. Unidentifiable and uncertain material is excluded (drawn by Marion O'Neil).

brooch, makes it particularly hard to understand. However, it is significant on two counts: as a 'warrior burial', and as a burial with Roman grave goods. On the first count, the only Scottish parallel is from Camelon, probably of late first century AD date (Breeze et al 1976). This may augment the case for Camelon as a native burial, although the unusual nature of both makes it foolhardy to be

dogmatic. It is, however, a valuable addition to the record.

On the second count, burials with Roman grave goods are rare in Scotland, running from Fife to Aberdeenshire with outliers in Wigtownshire and Orkney (Hunter forthcoming, fig 12.3). The date range is broad, making a single explanation unlikely, although the role of Roman artefacts as prestige goods in native society suggests these should be burials of some status. The brooch's date would equally allow the Merlsford example to be further evidence of pre-Roman contacts with southern tribes, as Fitzpatrick (1989) has argued: the use of exotic material was a feature of the southern Scottish Iron Age (Hunter forthcoming). It could even be argued that the burial is not indigenous, the personal nature of jewellery suggesting this was an incomer. In our current state of knowledge, these interpretations can only be interim. What matters is to put the find (and its ambiguities) on record: discussion can now proceed on a more informed basis.

Roman brooches in Scotland

The third strand to be considered here is how the new brooch finds fit into the wider Scottish picture. It has become increasingly clear that native societies were not slavishly taking whatever Roman goods trickled down to them, but that a clear selection process led to high-quality material reaching native hands (Robertson 1970, 200), where it was then used as prestige goods in local society (Macinnes 1984, 243-4). What story do the brooches tell?

Some general issues of Roman brooches in non-Roman contexts have been considered by Hedeager (1978), who debates whether they represent exchange goods in their own right or simply the minor personal effects of those operating the Roman-native contact (Hedeager 1978, 204, 208). She concludes that in Free Germany the brooches reflect the latter process, seeing them as 'a secondary product of the Romano-Germanic trade, whose primary goal was the acquisition of luxury goods by local chiefs' (Hedeager 1978, 209). While the primary goal of chiefs in Scotland was apparently similar, assuming a similar role for brooches requires more detailed analysis which cannot be attempted here. However, the material can be approached from a different angle, by comparing the frequency of different brooch types. Illus 6 presents this information for Newstead (the largest Scottish Roman assemblage), Traprain Law (the largest native assemblage), and the rest of the non-Roman finds (subdivided into definite site finds and 'strays'), using data from McNaught (1993), Burley (1956) and Robertson (1970) with additions. Types are given as the percentage of

their assemblage, to facilitate comparison. The data set totals 207 brooches - while further discoveries may modify patterns, there are sufficient brooches to put some faith in them.

It is assumed here that most 'strays' relate to native rather than Roman activity. There will of course be exceptions, but as many are far from any known Roman site, and are apparently debris from settlements or votive deposits rather than casual losses, it seems in general valid. If a Roman origin were to be argued, a wider range of everyday Roman copper alloy objects would be expected: this is rarely the case.

In interpreting the patterns, there are several variables to consider. The most obvious is chronology; there are pre-Agricolan and post-Severan brooches (the P-shaped type) from non-Roman sites which are unknown on Scottish Roman sites for obvious reasons. The other two key variables are availability and choice. For the first, there is a broad congruence between what was used on Roman sites and what appears in native hands, as would be expected. However, choice was clearly being exercised: there are differences in brooch type ratios which appear significant. Trumpet and (less markedly) headstud brooches are proportionally over-represented in native contexts, while knee brooches are under-represented, except at Traprain. There is also a distinct native preference for dragonesques. In addition, many of the brooches in native hands are of notably high quality, such as the crossbows from Erickstanebrae and the Moray Firth (gold and gilt bronze respectively) and the silver trumpet brooch from Ayrshire (Robertson 1970). This shows that, as with other artefact types, native preferences were biassing the acquisition of certain brooch types. The point is confirmed more clearly in Table 1, where wider comparanda are drawn to the Tyne-Solway frontier (Snape 1993, 29-31). Here, to allow direct comparison, types are considered relative only to bow brooches of 1st - 2nd century AD date and dragonesques, thus allowing for the distorting effect of later brooches and ambiguous types (such as penannulars) on the figures.

From this, the question is what made some brooches desirable and others not? The very idea of wearing a brooch was somewhat alien to native societies, which showed a strong preference for pins in the pre-Roman Iron Age with only a scatter of early penannulars and a marked sparsity of imported La Tune bow brooches (Stevenson 1955, 1966; Fowler 1960, fig 8). By contrast, Roman brooches clearly enjoyed considerable popularity. This in itself suggests they had a role beyond that of Hedeager's 'everyday necessities' (1978, 208); while perhaps not carrying the social cachet of a Samian bowl or a patera, their apparent popularity suggests they found a social niche as status

Table 1. Relative proportions of major brooch types in northern Britain, expressed as a percentage of the total 1st - 2nd century bow brooches and dragonesques in each assemblage. Raw data from Snape (1993), McNaught (1993), Burley (1956) and Robertson (1970) with additions.

	Tyne-Solway	*Newstead*	*Traprain*	Scottish non-Roman
Headstud and *variants*	11%	*16%*	*22%*	*20%*
Trumpet and variants	37%	*32%*	*44%*	*41%*
Knee	28%	*27%*	*18%*	*0%*
Dragonesque	5%	*6%*	*12%*	*12%*
	n = 326	*n=68*	*n=50*	*n=59*

symbols or identifiers. Seen in this way, the preferences are interesting, as they show a bias towards brooches with clear echoes of previous native decorative traditions: the dragonesque with its highly 'Celtic' shape and ornament; the trumpet, perhaps because of similarities between its head shape and the trumpet motifs popular in local metalwork; and the headstud, which was often enamelled, an indigenous tradition (Bateson 1981, 7). In contrast, the knee brooch, found only at Traprain, is a Germanic military type with British variants (Snape 1993, 20). The Traprain material in general is harder to understand, with a marked bias to a restricted range, no early brooches and only one late one. The presence of knee brooches is perhaps symptomatic of the high degree of contact with and assimilation of Roman culture on Traprain.

Here, in conclusion, may be an interesting insight into native uses of the Roman presence. While alien objects such as Samian and glass vessels were willingly adopted as status symbols for certain display purposes, dress and appearance (key factors in displaying identity) show a greater conservatism, and it was the brooches with familiar native overtones, not the exotic, which were favoured. Whether this reflects the preferences of a different social stratum for the familiar, or whether it is symptomatic of a pick-and-mix attitude to Roman culture, remains to be discussed.

It is readily recognised that these conclusions are speculative, and further finds may alter the figures and the interpretation. A deeper study, encompassing all brooches from Scottish Roman sites, is needed, along with reappraisal of the whole corpus of Roman finds on non-Roman sites. However, this preliminary work does stress again the complexity of Roman / native interactions, and the potential of artefactual material to illuminate them. It is into such a context that 'stray finds', as reported here, must be set.

References

Allason-Jones, L and McKay, B 1985 *Coventina's Well,* (Gloucester).

Anderson, J 1905 'Notes on a Romano-British hoard of bronze vessels and personal ornaments found in a moss on Lamberton Moor, Berwickshire', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 39 (1904-5), 367-376.

Bateson, J D 1981 *Enamel-working in Iron Age, Roman and Sub-Roman Britain,* (Oxford).

Bayley, J 1990 'The production of brass in antiquity with special reference to Roman Britain', in Craddock, P (ed), *2000 Years of Zinc and Brass,* 7-27, (London).

Bohme, A 1970 'Englische Fibeln aus den Kastellen Saalburg und Zugmantel', *Saalburg Jahrbuch 27,* (1970), 5-20.

Breeze, D J, Close-Brooks, J and Ritchie, J N G 1976 'Soldiers' burials at Camelon, Stirlingshire, 1922 and 1975', *Britannia 7* (1976), 73-95.

Budd, P and Taylor, T 1995 'The faerie smith meets the bronze industry: magic versus science in the interpretation of prehistoric metal-making', *World Archaeology 27/1* (1995),133-143.

Burley, E 1956 'A catalogue and survey of the metal-work from Traprain Law', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 89 (1955-6),118-226.

Close-Brooks, J 1986 'Excavations at Clatchard Craig, Fife, *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 116 (1986), 117-184.

Coles, J M 1960 'Scottish Late Bronze Age metalwork: typology, distributions and chronology', *ProcSocAntiq Scot* 93 (1959-60),16-134.

Collingwood, R G 1930 'Roman-Celtic art in Northumbria', *Archaeologia* 80 (1930), 37-58.

Collingwood, R G and Richmond, I 1969 *The Archaeology of Roman Britain,* (London).

Corcoran, J X W P 1952 'Tankards and tankard handles of the British Early Iron Age', *Proc Prehist Soc* 18 (1952), 85-102.

Curie, J 1911 *A Roman Frontier Post and Its People,* (Glasgow).

Curle, J 1932 'An inventory of objects of Roman and provincial Roman origin found on sites in Scotland not definitely associated with Roman constructions', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot 66* (1931-32), *277-397.*

DES *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland,* (Edinburgh).

Evans, D R and Metcalf, V M 1992 *Roman Gates Caerleon,* (Oxford).

Feugere, M 1985 *Les Fibules en Gaule Meridionale,* (Paris).

Fitzpatrick, A P 1989 'The submission of the Orkney islands to Claudius: new evidence?', *Scottish Archaeological Review 8* (1989), 123-129.

Fowler, E 1960 'The origins and development of the penannular brooch in Europe', *Proc Prehist Soc* 26 (1960), 149-177.

France, N E and Gobel, B M 1985 *The Romano-British Temple at Harlow,* (Gloucester).

Hattatt, R 1987 *Brooches of Antiquity,* (Oxford).

Hattatt, R 1989 *Ancient Brooches and Other Artefacts,* (Oxford).

Hedeager, L 1978 'A quantitative analysis of Roman imports in Europe north of the limes (0-400 AD), and the question of Roman-Germanic exchange', in Kristiansen, K and Paludan-Miiller, C (eds), *New Directions in Scandinavian Archaeology,* 191-216, (Copenhagen).

Hingley, R forthcoming 'Iron, iron-working and regeneration - a study of the symbolic meaning of metal-working in Iron Age Britain', in Gwilt, A and Haselgrove, C C (eds), *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies,* (Oxford).

Hunter, F forthcoming 'Iron Age hoarding in Scotland and northern England', in Gwilt, A and Haselgrove, C C (eds), *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies,* (Oxford).

Jackson, R 1990 *Camerton: The Late Iron Age and Early Roman Metalwork,* (London).

Keppie, L 1986 *Scotland's Roman Remains,* (Edinburgh).

Keppie, L 1990 'The Romans in southern Scotland: future discoveries', *Glasgow Archaeol J 16* (1989-90), 1-27.

Leeds, E T 1933 *Celtic Ornament in the British Isles down to A.D. 700,* (Oxford).

MacGregor, M 1976 *Early Celtic Art in North Britain,* (Leicester).

Macinnes, L 1982 'Pattern and purpose: the settlement evidence', in Harding, D W (ed), *Later Prehistoric Settlement in South-East Scotland,* 57-73, (Edinburgh).

Macinnes, L 1984 'Brochs and the Roman occupation of lowland Scotland', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 114 (1984), 235-249.

Mackreth, D 1973 *Roman Brooches,* (Salisbury).

Mackreth, D 1989 'Brooches', in Brockley, K, *Prestatyn 1984-5,* 87-99, (Oxford).

Mackreth, D 1994 'Copper alloy and iron brooches', in Cracknell, S and Mahany, C (ed), *Roman Alcester: Southern Extramural Area,* 162-177, (York).

McNaught, R B 1993 A catalogue and study of the Roman copper alloy brooches from the fort of Newstead, unpublished BSc dissertation, Dept of Archaeological Sciences, Bradford University.

Miller, G 1857 'An inquiry respecting the site of the battle of Mons Grampius', *Archaeologia Scotica 4* (1857), 19-52.

Murray, J E L 1961 'Rock-cut symbols in Caiplie Caves, *Proc Soc Antiq Scot 94* (1960-61), 324-325.

Painter, K and Sax, M 1970 'The British Museum collection of Roman head-stud brooches, *British Museum Quarterly* 34 (1970), 153-174.

Proudfoot, E V W 1976 'Hallowhill', *DES* 1976, 33-34.

Riha, E 1979 *Die romischen Fibeln aus Augst and Kaiseraugst,* (Augst).

Ritchie, J N G, and Stevenson, J N 1993 'Pictish cave art at East Wemyss, Fife', in Spearman, R M and Higgitt, J (eds), *The Age of Migrating Ideas,* 203-208, (Edinburgh).

Robertson, A 1970 'Roman finds from non-Roman sites in Scotland', *Britannia 1* (1970), 198-226.

Robertson, A S 1975 'The Romans in North Britain: the coin evidence', in Temporini, H (ed), *Aufstieg and Niedergang der Romisches Welt* 11.3, 364-426, (Berlin).

St Joseph, J K 1967 'Air reconnaissance: recent results, *10', Antiquity 41* (1967), 148-149.

Shepherd, I A G 1983 'Pictish settlement problems in N.E. Scotland' in Chapman, J C and Mytum, H C (eds), *Settlement in North Britain 1000 BC - 1000 AD,* 327-356, (Oxford).

Shepherd, I A G 1993 'The Picts in Moray, in Sellar, W D H (ed), *Moray: Province and People,* 75-90, (Edinburgh).

Sheridan, A 1995 'Portable antiquities legislation in Scotland: what is it, and how well does it work?', in Tubb, K W (ed), *Antiquities: Trade or Betrayed?,* 193-204, (London).

Small, A 1823 *Interesting Roman Antiquities Recently Discovered in Fife,* (Edinburgh).

Snape, M 1987 'Museum note, 1987, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5th ser.) 15 (1987), 309-312.

Snape, M E 1993 *Roman Brooches from North Britain,* (Oxford).

Stead, I M 1991 *Iron Age Cemeteries in East Yorkshire,* (London).

Stead, I M, and Rigby, V 1989 *Verulamium: The King Harry Lane Site,* (London).

Stevenson, R B K 1955 'Pins and the chronology of brochs', *Proc Prehist Soc* 21 (1955), 282-294.

Stevenson, R B K 1956 'Pictish chain, Roman silver and bauxite beads', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 88 (1954-56), 228-230.

Stevenson, R B K 1966 'Metal-work and some other objects in Scotland and their cultural affinities', in Rivet, A L F (ed), *The Iron Age in Northern Britain,* 17-44, (Edinburgh).

Stuart, J 1867 *Sculptured Stones of Scotland, vol* 2, (Edinburgh).

Todd, M 1985 'The Falkirk hoard of *denarii:* trade or subsidy?', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 115 (1985), 229-232.

Van Hoek, M A M, and Smith, C 1988 'Rock carvings at Goatscrag rock shelters, Northumberland', *Archaeol Aeliana* (5th series) 16 (1988), 29-35.

Wace, A J B and Jehu, Prof 1915 'Cave excavations in East Fife', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot* 49 (1914-15), 233-255.

Wheeler, R E M and Wheeler, T V 1932 *Report on the Excavation of the Prehistoric, Roman and Post-Roman Site in Lydney Park, Gloucester-shire,* (Oxford).

Whimster, R 1981 *Burial Practices in Iron Age Britain,* (Oxford).

Wild, J P 1970 'Button-and-loop fasteners in the Roman provinces', *Britannia 1* (1970), 137-155.

Abstract

Nine recently-discovered metalwork objects of Roman Iron Age date from Fife and Tayside are discussed. To set them in context, Roman finds from Fife are reviewed, particularly those from Constantine's Cave and Kinkell Cave and a probable burial from Merlsford. A final section puts the brooch finds in the broader Scottish context of native use of Roman brooches.

Keywords: Roman brooches, button-and-loop fastener, tankards, Roman-native contact, Iron Age burial, cave use