

From the *Transactions* of the  
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**A Burial at Kingscote, Gloucestershire**

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1963, Vol. 82, 205-207

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## BURIAL AT KINGSCOTE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

In January 1955 Paul Downey, a schoolboy of Horsley, was walking in a field to the south of Kingscote Wood in the parish of Kingscote O.S. Ref. ST 820969. On the north side of the field boundary there had been a land slip from the higher field above. Such land slips are a frequent occurrence in the Cotswolds and in the Stroud area Witchell<sup>1</sup> records several examples. During the winter of 1880 at Cowcombe there was a land slip of 200 yards along the hill-side and another near Lilly Horn, Bisley, which covered three acres, carrying away a larch plantation with trees 20 feet high. Another of the large ones being in Nailsworth Valley when the railway was built. There a large house was split and had to be taken down and three cottages were destroyed. A more recent one occurred in 1938 at Cooper's Hill, Brockworth, when part of the Stroud-Cheltenham road was carried down the hill-slope.

At Kingscote Paul Downey saw a deep crack in the tumbled earth and protruding from the side there was a bronze brooch and some bones. Paul picked up the brooch and wisely took it to the Stroud Museum and the writer was informed. Because of illness she was unable to visit the site immediately but requested Mrs M. E. Lee, then of Woodchester, and the late Miss C. A. Simpson to do this. This they did and recovered from the tumbled mass, bones which proved to be both human and animal.

It is of interest to observe that this is an inhumation and not a cremation burial. In the E.I.A. burials at Birdlip<sup>2</sup> and Hailes<sup>3</sup> skeletons were in stone coffins formed of slabs of stone placed on edge, but at Kingscote, because of the nature of the discovery, there is no evidence of such a construction. The only dating evidence for the Kingscote burial is that of the brooch which is the second half of the 1st century or early 2nd century.

The land belonged to the late Mr F. E. Workman of Ebworth House, near Stroud and with agreement between him and Paul Downey, the brooch was placed on permanent loan to Stroud Museum. The brooch is described by Mr M. R. Hull to whom thanks are due, also to Mr L. F. J. Walrond, Curator of Stroud Museum, Miss Rosemary Powers and Miss King, both of British Museum (Natural History) for reports and to Mrs Lee and the late Miss Simpson for visiting the site in the most inclement weather.

<sup>1</sup> *Geology of Stroud* (1882), pp. 89 and 90.

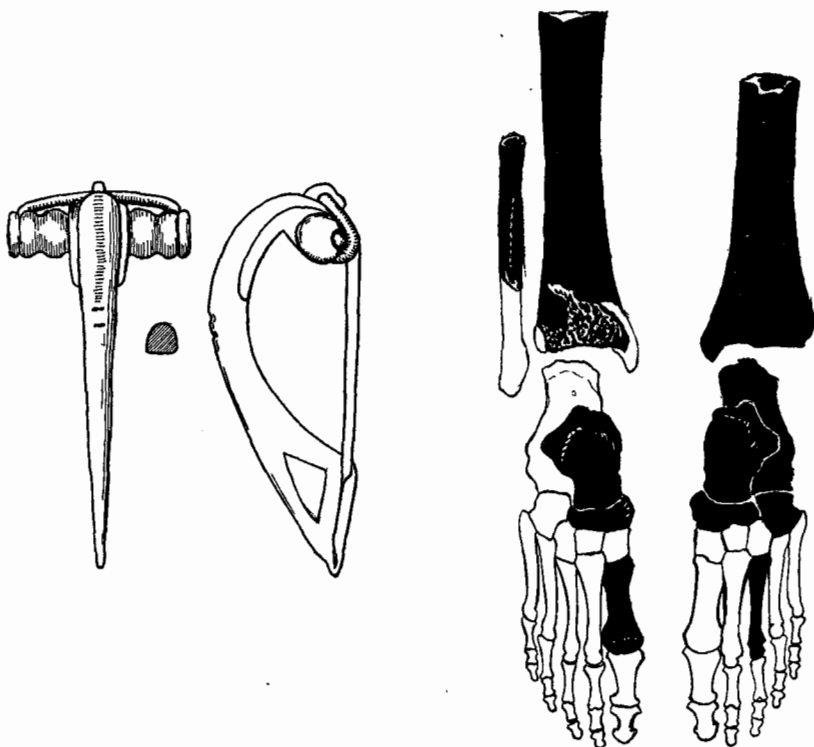
<sup>2</sup> *Trans. BGAS*, vol. 5, pp. 137 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Trans. BGAS*, vol. 65, pl. ii, pp. 187 ff.

*Kingscote*

Broach of 'Polden Hill' Type; excellently preserved, with dark patina. Length 56 millimetres. Found in 1955.

The spring of eleven turns is held on an axial bar which is anchored in the rounded, returned ends of the crossbar. The chord is passed through a lug which stands at the upper end of a low, knurled crest, and at the end of the latter are two transverse incised lines. The long triangular catchplate has one triangular opening, and the bow is no wider than the thickness of the catchplate.



The crossbar bears a series of up-and-down mouldings, with a raised terminal beading; there are long, narrow appendages, one on each side of the head of the bow.

To be quoted as parallels brooches must be of similar proportions, i.e. not too long or too short, nor too light or heavy, and there are not many such available.

The continuous up and down moulding is unusual; indeed, usually the arms are too short for it to be done; there is an example from Richborough (unpublished, 4010) which has a *long* bow and knurled crest, with triangular hole in the foot. Another from Barnwood<sup>1</sup> (Cheltenham Museum) may be quoted, but it is *long*, with a spring of sixteen turns. A moderately close parallel from Browstowe (Nottingham Museum) would be very close if the mouldings on the arms were not astragaloid and the appendages knurled.

On general principles, the brooch being sprung, of two-piece construction and having the opening in the foot, it may be attributed confidently to the second half of the 1st century or early 2nd century.

### *Human Bones*

Miss Powers writes:

The bones are those of an adult, probably male, and form the feet and lower leg skeleton of a single individual.

*Left:* Distal end of tibia.

Astragalus, calcaneum, navicular, cuboid.

Third metatarsal.

*Right:* Distal end of tibia (in two pieces, crumbling).

Astragalus, navicular (slightly imperfect).

First metatarsal.

Right?: Piece of fibula shaft.

No pathology or metal stains.

With them were two animal bones, identified by Miss King of the Osteology section as Bos, metacarpal and astragalus.

I attach a diagram in which the parts represented are shaded black.

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<sup>1</sup> *Trans. BGAS*, vol. 52, fig. 26, pl. x.