Recent medieval metalwork finds from East Fife

Adrian Cox and Michael King

During the last seven years a number of finds of medieval metalwork have been made by metal detectorists operating in East Fife. Having been duly reported for Treasure Trove assessment, the majority of these finds are now in the collections of East Fife Museum Service, either allocated through the Treasure Trove system or donated as a result of not being claimed by the Crown.

This paper outlines the context, nature and importance of 36 pieces of metalwork reported by seven finders from eleven different sites in East Fife over this period (Illus 1). All but one of the finds (no 26) were found by metal detectorists.

Most of the finds have been recovered from fields in the vicinity of medieval sites, including ecclesiastical centres (Lindores Abbey, Balmerino Abbey and Forgan Church), a castle (Ballinbreich), a town (Cupar) and two villages (Ceres and St Monans). Stray finds have also been made in a garden at St Andrews and in rural locations at Old Higham, Balmullo and Arros.

A number of factors may have contributed to the displacement of the finds from their place of use, including their deposition in fields with settlement midden material, and subsequent movement as a result of ploughing activity over many centuries.

Nevertheless, the context of the finds in fields neighbouring documented sites suggests contemporary use by their medieval inhabitants, and therefore some account is taken of the geographical locations and historical background of the discoveries, in addition to their descriptions and classification in the catalogue.

The finds published in this paper represent the fruits of seven years of liaison between museum curators and metal detectorists in East Fife. The benefits of effective cooperation are clear in terms of the information stray metal finds from nonsensitive sites can provide, both to complement historical and archaeological knowledge of known sites and to initiate research into new sites.

Such cooperation has resulted in combined field-walking and metal detecting projects under controlled conditions at Tulliallan and St Monans, and this approach will be pursued in the future, given its success in bringing professional and amateur researchers together under the TAFAC banner.

Liaison with metal detectorists and historical research for this paper have been carried out by Mike King, while the artefacts catalogue and drawings have been prepared by Adrian Cox.

The find spots

Lindores Abbey

The Tironension Abbey of Lindores was founded in 1191 by David, Earl of Huntingdon, situated by the Tay beside the forest of Ironside (NGR NO 2438 1846). Reformers sacked the abbey and temporarily expelled the monks in 1543, and finally overthrew the altars, and burned statues, books and vestments in 1559 (Cowan and Easson 1976, 69-70).

Several important finds of medieval metalwork were made in the vicinity of Lindores Abbey in the 19th century. A large gold ring with an amethyst intaglio said to depict a bearded head of Janus was turned up by the plough immediately north of the abbey wall in September 1839 (NGR NO 2435 1855). The black letter inscription around the ring is said to have included the words 'Johannes' and 'Sacer' (Leighton 1840, 169).

A second massive gold finger ring was found beneath Clatchard Craig when the railway was under construction c 1846 (NGR NO 244 178). The ring was identified as medieval from the inscription I H S (Laing 1876, 9). The find spot is not far removed from the site of the Abbot's Well, a natural spring in the hillside to the east (NGR NO 2407 1795).

Excavations carried out in the mid-19th century produced a number of finds, including a huge key for a door lock, found in clearing out the tower (Rea 1902, 122).

Seven metal artefacts have been recovered by metal detectorists from fields in the vicinity of the

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ruins of Lindores Abbey. Three were found in the pasture field lying between Lindores Abbey and the bank of the Tay. A lead spindle whorl (no 35) was found at the foot of Lindores Bank (NGR NO 2420 1860) near the reported location of St Andrew's Well, now lost (NGR NO 2420 1850).

A number of coins have also been metal detected and reported from the area NGR NO 242 186: i) English silver penny of Edward III (1351–2), ii) Scottish billon plack of James IV (1488–1510), iii-iv) two Scottish billon perunies of James IV (c 1500–10), v) English silver groat of Elizabeth I (1560–1), vi) Scottish billon plack of James VI (1583–90).

Near to the east end of the same field a fine copper-alloy ring buckle (no 6) was found at the foot of the bank (NGR NO 2440 1860) and a small copper-alloy casket key (no 24) at the top of the slope (NGR NO 2445 1855).

Two small buckles (nos 12 and 13) were recovered from the field behind Abbey Garage (NGR NO 2430 1830). Two artefacts have also been found in the field to the west of Old Parkhill, namely a copper-alloy mount or belt fitting (no 17) at NGR NO 2470 1850 and a copper-alloy ring (no 5) at NGR NO 2470 1805. An Edward I silver penny of the Dublin mint (1281–2) has also been reported from this field (NGR NO 2470 1830).

**Old Higham**

Two heraldic pendants (nos 20 and 21), probably from horse harnesses, were metal detected to the west of the deserted farmhouse and row of farm cottages at Old Higham (NGR NO 2720 1940), the precursor to the present day farm at Higham by Glenduckie.

The finds can be explained as losses on a medieval road which ran roughly parallel with the
south shore of the Tay and led to the Dundee ferry. Mention is made of a 'royal highway' (via regia) in a charter of 1328 x 32 regarding the concession of a piece of land to the west of Cauldry by John de Hay of Naughton to the monks of Balmerino (Abbotsford Club 1841, 39-40). It seems likely that the road which skirts Old Higham, still known locally as the old Dundee ferry road, linked up to the section of road mentioned in this charter.

In 16th-century charters contained in the Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, Old Higham, meaning 'high home', receives various mentions as part of the barony of Ballinbreich. In 1510 it is referred to as Heighame (Balfour Paul 1984, 75). Other mentions occur in 1548 (Heichane), 1558 (Heychame) and 1564 (Heichame) (Maitland Thomson 1984, 52, 279 and 358).

The use of fields to the north of Old Higham at some time during the 12th-15th centuries is attested by 29 sherds of White Gritty pottery including one fragment of a glazed jug handle, picked up by metal detectorists in recent years.

Ballinbreich Castle

The lands of Ballinbreich formed part of the lordship of Abernethy in the 12th century, and are recorded in the possession of Hugh de Abernethy, son of Orm, in the reign of Malcolm IV. The earliest buildings at Ballinbreich Castle date to the 14th century, and construction probably began soon after the marriage in 1312 of Mary de Abernethy to Sir Andrew de Lesly (MacGibbon and Ross 1887–92, 416).

The castle originally consisted of a small keep on the south wall of a great courtyard of roughly rectangular shape. On the upper floor there appears to have been a chapel suggested by the remains of a sedilia, concealed by later alterations, and a possible aumbry, later resited at a lower level.

By 1458 Ballinbreich had become part of a free barony held by George, Earl of Rothes and Lord Leslie. Major reconstruction took place in the early 16th century, and again c 1572 when Andrew, fifth Earl of Rothes is thought to have carried out alterations and rebuilding work. This conjecture is derived from the discovery of an iron plate with the initials 'A E R' and the date 1572 in the castle grounds, which was in the possession of the Rev John Thomson, minister of Balmerino from 1824 to 1857, but now lost (Central and North Fife Preservation Society 1990, 13–4). By the mid-17th century Leslie appears to have replaced Ballinbreich as the favoured residence of the Earls of Rothes and the castle was allowed to fall into disrepair.

Aerial photographs of crop marks in the field immediately to the south of the castle have shown clear indications of enclosures and outbuildings which relate to the site. In 1991 these features were plotted by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and located on the ground to facilitate a Council for Scottish Archaeology field-walking training day, which produced prehistoric flints, medieval and post-medieval pottery (Yeoman 1991).

Medieval finds recovered by metal detectorists include a Limoges enamelled mount found at NGR 2730 2020 (no 27). This was probably from an altar cross which may have been located in the original chapel on the upper floor of the keep, or perhaps in a chapel incorporated in an earlier building. There is also a tradition that a chapel formerly stood on Chapel Hill (NGR NO 2726 2052), east of Ballinbreich Castle (Millar 1895, 325), but no foundations are now visible.

From the same location a copper-alloy strap distributor fitting has been recovered (no 19) and a copper-alloy buckle with a hinged plate of the 14th or 15th century (no 10) and four lead-alloy spindle whorls (nos 29–32) have been located at NGR NO 2720 2040.

A number of coins have been recorded from the area NGR NO 272 204, including a silver half-groat of Elizabeth I (1589/90–1591/2), a copper duict of Overesel in the Netherlands (c 1629) and an early 17th-century copper or brass Dutch coin weight for a French Ecu au Soleil. From the area NGR NO 273 204 has come a copper turner or twopence of James VI or Charles I issued in 1614, 1623 or 1629.

Apart from medieval artefacts and coins, metal detecting in this area has also produced some unexpected material, including a Middle Bronze Age flanged axe (Yeoman 1991) and a Roman Iron Age button-and-loop fastener (Hunter 1996, 113).

Balmerino Abbey

The Cistercian Abbey of Balmerino was founded c 1227 by Ermengarde, widow of William the Lion, and her son Alexander II. The church, dedicated to St Mary and St Edward, was probably built in the period 1227–50, with a south aisle being added later, possibly c 1286. In 1547 the abbey was burned by the English, and in 1560 some destruction was done to the abbey by reformers. On the death of the last abbot in 1561, the commendatorship passed through several hands before the abbey was erected by charter into a temporal lordship for Sir James Elphinstone, created Lord Balmerino in 1603 (Cowen and Easson 1976, 72–3).

Excavations in 1896 revealed the foundations of the church, although only the lower parts of the northern walls are now standing. The remains of the east range of the cloister survive to the north of the church, with the Abbot's House and barn lying to the east and north.
Excavations of service trenches around the abbey barn and later farm buildings to the north of the church in 1996 revealed walls of monastic buildings, drains and a substantial cobbled road linking the abbey with the jetty on the shore of the Tay (Lewis 1996).

Finds of metalwork in the vicinity of the abbey include a lead-alloy papal bulla of Pope Gregory X (1271–76) found below the high water mark on the foreshore at Balmerino, donated to the National Museums of Scotland in 1966 (acc no NM 254).

Recent finds have been made by metal detectorists in the field to the south of the abbey, in particular in the northern half of the field. Two lead-alloy spindle whorls (nos 3 and 34) were found at NGR NO 3585 2460.

Three coins have been recorded nearby at NGR NO 3590 2460, namely a silver half-groat of Henry VI of England from the Calais mint (1422–35), a billon plack of James IV (1488–1513), and a silver threepence of Elizabeth I of England (1578–9).

In the same field but further from the Abbey at NGR NO 3580 2445 a copper-alloy die of unusual type was metal detected in 1992 (no 36).

A slight east-west ridge across the north part of the field, reported as marking the location of the southern precinct wall of the abbey, can still be seen in favourable conditions. This wall enclosed the cemetery immediately to the south of the church and the garden and orchard of the abbey to the south and east of the cemetery. South of the ridge and precinct wall in the 17th century were the ‘overyards’ on the west side, possibly the former monastic gardens, and further orchards or fruit yards on the east side (Campbell 1899, 301–2).

It is therefore likely that orchards and gardens provide the context either for spinning and gaming activities or the deposition of small items amongst midden material.

St Fillan’s church, Forgan

The church of Forgan, the mother church of the estate of Naughton, was given to St Andrews Priory between 1188 and 1202 by Alan, son of Alan de Lascelles, together with the ‘adjacent’ chapel of Naughton and a ploughgate of land next to the church. This grant was confirmed by Bishop Malvoisine of St Andrews (Campbell 1899, 63).

The ruins of St Fillan’s church are situated two miles south-east of Newport. The church walls, including the north aisle, stand almost complete to the wall head, with signs that the aisle and east end once had galleries. The wide semi-circular arch into the aisle probably dates to the late 16th or 17th century (RCAHMS 1933, 150).

Sixty fragments of medieval floor tiling were found while levelling soil outside the south wall of the chancel of the ruined church (Di Folco 1971).

Mention is also made of the excavation of wall foundations extending 15 feet beyond the west gable of the church in 1972 (Bogie 1974, 6–7).

A number of items of medieval metalwork have been metal detected in the field to the west of St Fillan’s church. These have been found individually at NGR NO 4445 2600 and include three buckles (nos 7–9), a pendant loop (no 18) and a pendant mount (no 22).

Balmullo

A number of stray finds of artefacts and coins have been made on Pusk Farm to the east of Balmullo. An S-shaped belt clasp (no 14) was found in 1994 at NGR NO 4310 2120. Further to the east near Pusk Farm a copper-alloy ring (no 4) was found at NGR NO 4380 2090, and in the same vicinity a fragment of a silver groat of James I of Scotland has also been reported.

The following coins have been reported from NGR NO 4405 2095: a billon Hardhead of Francis and Mary (1559), a billon Hardhead of James VI (1588) and a copper duit forgery of the Netherlands/Friesland (1677 or 1699).

A stone mould from Pusk Farm (NGR NO 435 205) was found in about 1883. This artefact, made of greenstone, had moulds for a button and a pin on one side and a scratched circular ‘clock’ or ‘sundial’ with Roman numerals on the reverse (Proudfoot 1991).

Metal detecting at Pusk Farm has previously been responsible for the discovery of two Roman Iron Age brooches (Hunter 1996, 114–6).

St Andrews

A papal bulla of Pope Clement IV (1265–1268) was found in a garden in Queens Gardens, St Andrews in 1992 (no 26). The hole in the centre suggests that it was reused as a spindle whorl in the late medieval or post-medieval period. Other spindle whorls made from lead alloy described here (nos 29–35) show the popularity of the material for weighting spindles in the medieval period.

Queens Gardens was opened up as a street between 1858 and 1864. Prior to this the find spot may have been located in the rig or backland of a South Street property. The papal bulla was probably a casual find, reused and adapted for the practical purpose of spinning. It was later dropped or thrown away on a second occasion, this time in a South Street rig.

Cupar

The town of Cupar is referred to in 1276 as the meeting place of an assembly held by Alexander III for discussing affairs of state. The castle of
Cupar, perhaps situated on Castle Hill, is first recorded when it was captured by Edward I in 1296. Although the first mention of the burgh of Cupar does not occur until 1327, it is very likely that Cupar had been made a burgh much earlier (Simpson and Stevenson 1981, 1).

St Michael’s parish church of Tarvit stood on an eminence to the south-east of the town (NGR NO 3896 1456) and was among those churches re-dedicated by Bishop de Bernham of St Andrews in 1245. When the railway line was being constructed great quantities of human bones, presumably from the graveyard of St Michael’s, were exposed. The eminence is no longer visible and the site is now occupied by modern buildings.

The finds detailed here were discovered individually on land lying to the south-west of the former site of St Michael’s Church (NGR NO 3780 1435). The area has been developed since the discoveries were made in 1993 (Illus 2).

The finds include a 17th-century gold posy ring (no 1), a 15th-century silver Fede ring (no 2), a copper-alloy buckle with zoomorphic decoration (no 11), and a belt clasp (no 15).

A notable group of early coin finds have been made in the same vicinity (NGR NO 378 142): i) Short Cross silver penny of John, Canterbury mint, moneyer Simon (c 1209–16), ii) Long Cross silver penny of Henry III, Canterbury mint, moneyer Gilbert (1248–50), iii) Long Cross silver penny of

The individual stray finds of artefacts and coins of 13th to 17th-century date from this area meet with no clear explanation. However, the frequency of silver coins in the reign of Edward I and Edward II may possibly relate to an English presence during the Wars of Independence.

Although the land lay within the parish of Tarvit during the medieval period, the proximity of the finds to the now lost site of St Michael’s of Tarvit may not be significant. Metal detecting on other sites has shown that valuable items were often lost by urban dwellers and subsequently deposited in nearby fields with hidden material in the medieval period. The disturbance of archaeology caused by the construction of the railway has also been noted and cannot be ruled out as a factor.

Ceres

Early references to Ceres from the reign of William the Lion are complemented by the discovery in Ceres churchyard of perhaps the most important item of medieval metalwork from Fife. An enamelled bronze crucifix of 12th-century Limoges workmanship was found three feet beneath the surface of the churchyard, presumably in digging a grave, and was presented to the NMAS in 1883 (acc no KE7; Peddie 1883).

In contrast, a belt clasp (no 16), perhaps of post-medieval date, represents a more recent metal find from Ceres (NGR NO 3960 1205), the result of metal detecting activity.

St Monans

A settlement at St Monans is first referred to in the reign of David I, when he gifted the lands of Inverin to the monks of the Isle of May. Other variants of the early name of the settlement are known, such as Inverie, Inverie and Inwearie (Turnbull 1894, 180–1).

The chapel of St Monan was founded anew (‘quam novo fundavitius’) by David II, and construction work was carried out between 1362 and 1370 under the stewardship of Sir William Dishington (RCAHMS 1933, 264).

In the medieval period the chapel of St Monan stood in the parish of Kilconquhar and did not succeed Abercrombie Church as the parish church of St Monans until after 1649, when it was disjoined from Kilconquhar parish and joined to Abercrombie to form the parish of St Monans.

Metal detecting and organised field-walking by the Tayside and Fife Archaeological Committee have produced finds from two fields to the west of St Monans. Few metal or pottery finds have been made in the field directly to the north of St Monans Church, except for a few sherds of White Gritty pottery, probably spread with hidden material. However, finds in the field to the west of St Monans Manse, and within the medieval parish of Abercrombie, have been particularly notable.

Metal finds from this field detailed here include a lead-alloy papal bulla of Pope Alexander IV dating to 1254–61 (no 25) and a silver Fede ring (no 3).

The papal bulla may possibly relate to the granting of papal permission for the construction of an earlier chapel on the site of that ‘founded anew’ by David II in c 1362. However, no evidence can be found to confirm the claim made by Walcott that the chapel of St Monan was founded by Sir Alan Durward (Walcott 1874, 342). The bulla may equally relate to Abercrombie church, the parish church of St Monans in the medieval period, or indeed it could have been dropped or displaced some distance from its original or intended destination.

Numismatic finds from this field have also been numerous. In the area NGR NO 522 017 were found: i) Long Cross silver penny of Henry III, London mint, moneyn Henri (1248–50), ii) silver farthing of Edward I, London mint (c 1279–81), iii) Scottish billon plack of James IV (c 1500–10), iv) Scottish billon plack of James V (1513–26), v) Scottish billon half bawbee of James V (1539–41). In the area NGR NO 522 018 was located: vi) French copper double tournais of the type current from the reign of Henri III to that of Louis XIII (1577–1643).

Field-walking was carried out using 20m squares in a sample north-south transect 40m wide across the centre of the same field in March 1997. Large amounts of White Gritty pottery dating from the 12th-15th centuries were collected in 16 squares, averaging 22 sherds per 20m square.

The explanation for the concentration of medieval finds in the field to the west of the Manse may lie in the existence of an Upper or Over Town to the north of Braehead from medieval times up until the late 18th century. Although the main fishing community clustered around the harbour in the Nether or Lower Town, a small farming community was located to the north, with its own
windmill, which burnt down in the late 17th century. By 1844 the Overtown was just a memory, the land on which it was situated having been returned to the plough (Martin 1991, 5-6).

Much of this area has since been developed, but it is possible that the farming settlement extended as far as the field in question during the medieval period, thus explaining the concentration of medieval finds located here as settlement debris rather than merely a spread of midden material.

Ardross

Two medieval finds have been made to the north-east of Ardross Castle, where construction work was probably begun by Sir Thomas Dishington after 1402 (RCAHMS 1933, 134).

A copper-alloy key (no 23) of the 13th-14th century was found at NGR NO 5100 0120 and a lead-alloy pilgrim’s badge (no 28) at NGR NO 5120 0130. While the former find is likely a local loss, the pilgrim’s badge had no doubt travelled further.

The scallop-shell badge was probably lost on the road to a pilgrimage centre, such as St Andrews, where relics of St Andrew attracted pilgrims from all over Europe during the medieval period. Pilgrims are known to have crossed the Forth estuary to Earlsferry from North Berwick, where the find of a mould for a lead-alloy pilgrim badge depicting St Andrew indicates a market for such items among pilgrims to the shrine of St Andrew (Richardson 1907).

The possibility that the badge was lost by a genuine pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela should not be ruled out, given the popularity of the pilgrimage to the shrine of St James in medieval times. The European dimension of pilgrimage is well illustrated by the St Andrews pilgrimage certificate preserved in Saint-Omer, which was granted to a cleric named William Bondolf of Dunkirk in June 1333, after his pilgrimage to St Andrews, to absolve him of the murder of one André d’Esquerdes (McRoberts 1976).

The artefacts

The artefacts represented here are of gold, silver, copper alloy and lead alloy. The latter two categories include gilded examples. The finds fall into a range of categories, including costume fittings, horse furniture, symbolic and decorative items and functional, household items. A majority is demonstrably of medieval date, and comparisons have been made with excavated finds from a range of sites. A small number of finds of slightly later date is included as their presence on particular sites and association with medieval material adds valuable information to the discussion.

The artefacts are discussed below within functional categories. Material type is noted in each catalogue entry. Dimensions are expressed to the nearest 1mm, and each entry includes information on the finder, the grid reference of the find spot and the East Fife Museums Service accession number where appropriate.

Rings (Illus 3)

Five finger rings (Catalogue nos 1-5) have been found. The first of these (no 1) is a posy ring of gold, with an inscription running around the inner surface. The posy ring is the most common type of love ring in use since the medieval period, the word ‘posy’ being contracted from ‘poesy’ or ‘poetry’. Medieval posy rings mostly have an amatory inscription engraved on the outside of the hoop (Oman 1993, 21), while in later times it was hidden on the inside, as in this example, which may be of 17th-century date. It is likely that most posy rings of this date were used as wedding rings.

‘Fede’ rings were often worn as betrothal or engagements rings, but sometimes merely as tokens of affection. The term ‘fede’, as applied to a ring with a representation of clasped hands, is derived from the Italian mani in fede (literally ‘hands in faith/trust’). This type of ring has a long currency: examples of Roman date are known, such as those in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum (Oman 1993), and the type enjoyed an unbroken popularity until the 19th century. Both nos 2 and 3 are probably of late medieval date, the decorative style of no 2 being broadly similar to 15th-century examples (ibid). Both rings have a moulded representation of clasped hands forming the bezel. In no 3, the bezel is particularly worn and little detail survives. As in these two examples, fede rings were usually made of silver, although some are of gold (Newman 1981, 122).

1. Ring. Max external diameter 20mm; max internal diameter 18mm.

Gold. A circular hoop of D-shaped cross-section, inscribed on the inner surface with the legend ‘Mor I cannot Les I will not’. (Not illustrated.)


Accession no CUPMS:1995,304
2. Ring. Max external diameter 23mm; max internal diameter 21mm; max thickness 6mm.
Silver. Fede ring with clasped hands at the apex and a slender, rectangular cross-sectioned hoop. The hoop bears a decorative inscription around the outer edge. Most of this has been worn away although part survives at the shoulders. The clasped hands design is also worn.
Accession no CUPMS:1995.303.1

3. Ring. Original max external diameter c 24mm; max internal diameter c 21mm; width of bezel 4mm.
Silver. Fede ring with clasped hands at the apex, the detail of this design almost entirely worn away. Several indentations around the outside edge of the hoop may represent remains of a design or inscription. The object has been distorted (estimated predistortion dimensions are given, above) and is corroded. (Not illustrated.)
Found by J Gosk, 1996, at St Monans (NGR NO 5220 0180).
Pending Treasure Trove decision.

4. Ring. Max external diameter 23mm; max internal diameter 17mm; bezel length 15mm; bezel width 13mm.
Copper alloy. Ring with an oval bezel with a chipped, shallow lip around the border, and a broad, circular hoop of circular cross-section, expanded at the shoulders. (Not illustrated.)
Found by B Watson, 1994, near Balmullo (NGR NO 4380 2090).
Accession no CUPMS:1995.301

5. Ring. Max external diameter 22mm; max internal diameter 19mm; bezel length 12mm; bezel width 8mm.
Copper alloy. Ring with a narrow, oval bezel with a crudely executed design of a bust within an incised, oval border. The ring has a slender, circular hoop of D-shaped cross-section. (Not illustrated.)
Found by D Drummond, 1993, at Parkhill Farm (NGR NO 2470 1805).
Accession no CUPMS:1997.40

Buckles (Illus 4)

Buckles are frequent finds on medieval sites. They were used on both male and female clothing, on belts, girdles, shoes and armour, and on spurs and horse harnesses. Examples were made from copper alloy, iron and alloys of lead and tin. The eight buckles represented here, all of copper alloy, exhibit a variety of different forms.

A large, annular buckle or brooch with a heavy, oval cross-sectioned frame (no 6) was found at Lindores. Circular items with a frame uninterrupted by a constriction for a pin are described by Egan and Pritchard (1991, 57) as buckles, whereas those with a constriction are interpreted as brooches. In no 6 there is no constriction; the pin is allowed to move freely around the frame, hence, it can be classified as a buckle. Large annular buckles of this form were probably used on broad straps and their wide distribution appears consistent with regular usage on waist belts. Buckles or brooches having blunt-ended pins with a projecting ridge at the shoulder, as in this example, appear to date from the 13th and 14th centuries (London Museum 1940, 276).

No 7 is a type of buckle with two loops and an integral plate, which is a specialised form, identified among excavated finds from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 109) and Exeter (Goodall 1984, 339, fig 190, no 79) of late 13th- to 14th-century date. Buckles of this type were presumably intended to connect two straps, possibly on horse harnesses, which perhaps lay parallel but a little offset from each other. One example from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 110, fig 70, no 488) is of very similar form to the Forgan example.

Two double-looped buckles were found at Forgan. No 8 is the larger of the two, with expanded, three-pointed sides to its frame, while no 9 is a much smaller buckle, probably used on a shoe or on a slender strap. No 10, from Ballinbreich, is particularly finely made, consisting of a D-shaped buckle attached to a hinged buckle plate. The latter has traces of gilding on its decorated face. Strap-end buckles of this type are mainly dated to the 14th or 15th centuries. No 11 is a relatively robust buckle, again of medieval date, incorporating zoomorphic decoration.

Nos 12 and 13 are small, double-looped buckles with circular frames and their pins made from beaten wires or strips. Both were found near Lindores Abbey. Of the two, no 12 is slightly the larger, but no 13 is more robust. Given their size and form, they may both have functioned as shoe buckles, although buckles of this form were also used on spur straps in the late medieval period. Similar forms, made from lead-tin alloy, with pins of iron wire, have been found in 15th-century deposits in London and are interpreted as shoe buckles (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 66). A buckle of similar form to no 12, from Goltho (Goodall 1975, 91, no 7), interpreted as a spur buckle, has a plate around the central bar for attachment to a strap.

6. Buckle or brooch. Diameter 44mm; length of pin 46mm; thickness (including pin) 11mm.
Copper alloy. Annular buckle or brooch with a roughly oval cross-sectioned frame and a tapering pin with a blunt end and a projecting ridge at its shoulder. The pin loops around the frame and is able to move freely around it. Both the frame and pin bear numerous file marks.
Found by R Blake, 1994, near Lindores Abbey (NGR NO 2440 1860).
Accession no CUPMS:1997.42
7. Buckle. Length 49mm; max width (frame) 17mm; thickness 4mm.
Copper alloy. Buckle with two loops or frames, only one of which survives, and an integral plate between them. The plate has three circular perforations, the broken one of which would probably have accommodated a buckle pin. The surviving buckle frame is roughly oval with a heavy end-bar.
Found by R Blake, 1993, at Forgan (NGR NO 4445 2600).
Accession no CUPMS:1994.98

8. Buckle. Length 38mm; max width 25mm; thickness 2mm.
Copper alloy. Double-looped buckle with expanded, three-pointed ends to its frame and a more slender pin bar. The buckle has a slight curvature.
Found by R Blake, 1993, at Forgan (NGR NO 4445 2600).
Accession no CUPMS:1994.96

9. Buckle. Length 27mm; max width 15mm; thickness 2mm.
Copper alloy. Double-looped buckle with rounded terminals. The outer part of the frame is considerably broader than the pin bar.
Found by R Blake, 1993, at Forgan (NGR NO 4445 2600).
Accession no CUPMS:1994.97

10. Buckle. Length 37mm; max width (frame) 17mm; thickness 4mm.
Copper alloy. Strap-end buckle with a D-shaped frame and an ornate, hinged buckle plate attached. The buckle plate is of roughly rectangular form, widening towards its junction with the buckle frame, and is perforated by three circular cross-sectioned rivets lying in a line along the central axis. The upper surface of the plate is bordered by a decorative, single wavy line and this surface of both the plate and the buckle frame bears traces of
gilding. The underside of the object is ungilded. 
Found by R Blake, 1994, at Ballinbreich 
(NGR NO 2720 2040) 
Accession no CUPMS:1997.43

11. Buckle. Length 37mm; max width 27mm; thickness 7mm. Copper alloy. Buckle with a broad, moulded, D-shaped frame of zoomorphic form. The main part of the frame is in the form of a mythical beast with a head at either end. The bar, which is held at either end in the beast’s two mouths, is narrower. Abraded. (Not illustrated.) 
Found by J O’Donnell, 1994, at Cupar 
(NGR NO 3780 1435) 
Accession no CUPMS:1995.303.3

12. Buckle. Diameter 23mm; length of pin 15mm, thickness (including pin) 4mm. Copper alloy. Double-looped buckle with a circular frame and a central bar, around which the pin is looped. 
Found by R Blake, 1994, near Lindores Abbey 
(NGR NO 2430 1830). 
Accession no CUPMS:1997.44

13. Buckle. Diameter 21mm; length of pin 12mm; thickness (including pin) 4mm. Copper alloy. Double-looped buckle with a circular frame and a central bar, around which the pin is looped. 
Found by R Blake, 1994, near Lindores Abbey 
(NGR NO 2430 1830). 
Accession no CUPMS:1997.45
Other belt or strap fittings (illus 5)

Three S-shaped belt clasps (nos 14–16) have been found, one near Balmullo, another in Cupar and a third at Ceres. The style of decoration on nos 14 and 15 is very similar, each having a zoomorphic head at either end of the S-shaped shank. Of these, no 15 is a larger and heavier form. No 16 is of a slightly different form, although it appears to be a variation on a similar theme, with the same type of zoomorphic head at one end but a pointed ‘tail’ at the other. Its shank is decorated by small interconnecting lozenges representative of serpentine scales or snake skin.

In each of these three clasps, one end of the shank is more closed than the other. This may indicate that the closed end fitted to the end of a belt or strap while the free end could be hooked through a loop or eyelet on another strap. A clasp similar to nos 14 and 15 from London is described and illustrated by Murdoch (1991, 109–10), who notes that such objects appear in many paintings by Friesian masters of the period 1598–1621. A slightly earlier depiction appears in a portrait of the first Earl of Leicester, dated 1575, in which the clasp is used in his sword belt (ibid). This form of clasp has continued to be used in ceremonial, for example masonic, costume into the present century (pers comm, M Hall) and further work is required to refine the dating of types in the series.

No 17, found near Newburgh, is a mount or belt fitting of elongated, leaf-shaped form with a raised central section. Traces of gilding are visible on this object.

Found at Forgan, no 18 is a pendent loop, which would have formed part of a belt fitting, attached to the belt by means of a bar mount. Bar mounts were normally attached transversely in a row on belts and straps. Contemporary depictions of these fittings show them on men’s waist belts or sword belts, as well as on horse harness straps.

When several were set together or used in combination with other types of mounts, they formed an effective decoration. A similar, but smaller, pendent loop incorporating a collared knop comes from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 219, fig 138, no 1192). As in no 18, this example has a constriction at the point of suspension. Another example of very similar form, attached to a bar mount and a decorative stud, was found at Goltho (Goodall 1975, 93, fig 44, no 28).

Bar mounts with pendent loops may in some cases have been used in pairs for the suspension of a purse or knife, as appears to have been the case with two examples surviving together on a leather strap from London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 219, fig 138). No 18 may also have been one of a pair, since its frame appears to have been worn thinner on one side than on the other, possibly by the object it had been used to suspend.

No 19 is an attachment from a strap distributor. A slightly larger example of very similar form was excavated at Sandal Castle (Goodall 1983, 232, fig 1, no 38) from a context dated to the late 13th to early 15th century. This type of fitting could be used on horse bits for the attachment of the reins, as illustrated, for example, by an iron snaffle bit from London (London Museum 1940, 84, fig 21, no 3).

14. Belt clasp. Length 37mm; width 15mm; thickness 4mm.
   Copper alloy. Moulded, S-shaped belt clasp, with zoomorphic terminals, approximately symmetrical in form and decoration. The shank is widest at its central part and bears possibly foliate decoration. It tapers gradually towards each of the terminals, which are slightly wider. An incomplete loop (diameter 11mm; thickness 2mm) encircles the shank.
   Traces of black paint survive on the shank, particularly where the decoration includes recesses. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1994, near Balmullo
   (NGR NO 4310 2120).
   Accession no CUPMS:1994.92

15. Belt clasp. Length 41mm; width 19mm; thickness 5mm.
   Copper alloy. Moulded, S-shaped belt clasp, with zoomorphic terminals, approximately symmetrical in form and decoration. The shank is widest at its central part and bears possibly foliate decoration. It tapers gradually towards each of the terminals, which are slightly wider. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by J O’Donnell, 1994, at Cupar
   (NGR NO 3780 1435).
   Accession no CUPMS:1995.303.4

16. Belt clasp. Length 40mm; width 22mm; thickness 5mm.
   Moulded S-shaped belt clasp of zoomorphic (serpentine) form. The ‘neck’ end of the serpentine is more tightly closed and is encircled by an incomplete, circular loop (diameter 12mm; thickness 3mm). The ‘tail’ end is wider and more open. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by J O’Donnell, 1994, at Ceres
   (NGR NO 3960 1205).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.52

17. Fitting. Length 40mm; max width 11mm, max thickness 5mm.
   Copper alloy. Elongated, leaf-shaped belt or strap fitting with pointed terminals. The object has a raised central spine on its upper surface, with a corresponding recess on its underside. The upper surface bears moulded decoration in the form of an interconnecting scroll-like pattern. Most of this is obscured by corrosion products. There are traces of gilding on the central spine and along the edges of the object. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by J Steel, 1990, at Parkhill Farm, Newburgh
   (NGR NO 2470 1850).
   Accession no CUPMS:1990.708
18. Pendent loop. Length 29mm; width 19mm; max thickness 4mm.
   Copper alloy. Cast pendent loop of D-shaped form, with a collared knop. File marks are visible on the edges and on the rear face.
   Found by R Blake, 1993, at Forgan (NGR NO 4445 2600).
   Accession no CUPMS:1994.100

19. Strap distributor fitting. Length 35mm; width 8mm; thickness 14mm.
   Copper alloy. Attachment from a strap distributor.
   Found by D Drummond at Ballinbreich (NGR NO 2730 2040).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.41

Harness fittings (Illus 5)

Decorative pendants of copper alloy were a feature of horse harness furniture from the 12th century onwards, becoming more numerous in the 13th century and then declining in number by the late 14th century. A number of different forms is recognised, a basic typology appearing in the London Museum Medieval Catalogue. Approximately one-third of known examples are in the form of a shield (Griffiths 1995, 62) as is no 21. No 20 is of sexfoil form with a relatively long vertical projection or neck, incorporating a suspension loop.

Pendants like nos 20 and 21, both found at Old Higham, would have swung from a pendant fitting similar to no 22, which would have been attached directly to the leather harness strap. The *peytrel* or breast-band might have carried as many as six pendants on either side. Pendants are frequently represented on this part of the harness on aquamaniles (London Museum 1940, 118). The rear strap of the harness may also have supported them. A single pendant could also be worn from the brow-band, a strap across the horse's forehead. A representation of a horseman on the Hereford Cathedral *Mappa Mundi*, dated from c 1300, shows a variety of pendants decorating the horse's harness (Griffiths 1995, 62, fig 46).

The pendant mount found at Forgan (no 22) is similar to examples from London, (eg Griffiths 1995, 69, fig 52, nos 73–4) and to examples from the large collection of non-heraldic pendants in the Musée de Cluny, Paris. The latter examples have pendants attached, which, like the mounts, are of lobate form. However, Griffiths (1995, 62) notes that among examples from London there appears to be no direct correlation between the various types of pendant and the mount.

Owing to the constant movement of the pendant when in use, pendants must have been lost frequently. The pin securing the pendant to its mount appears frequently to have been made of iron (ibid), hence the loop of the pendant may frequently have worn through. On no 22, the two prongs which once terminated the vertical bar and supported the associated pendant are now missing.

20. Pendant. Length 32mm; width 18mm; max thickness 6mm.
   Copper alloy. Pendant, probably from a horse harness, with a vertical bar incorporating a suspension loop. The face of the pendant is of sexfoil form; the vertical bar projects from the uppermost lobe, which is wider than the remaining five.
   Found by B Watson, 1994, at Old Higham (NGR NO 2720 1940).
   Accession no CUPMS:1995.302.2

21. Pendant. Length 26mm; width 17mm; thickness 3mm.
   Copper alloy. Shield-shaped pendant, decorated on its face by a chevron in applied, red enamel. A projection from the top edge of the object may represent the remains of a suspension loop.
   Found by B Watson, 1994, at Old Higham (NGR NO 2720 1940).
   Accession no CUPMS:1995.302.1

22. Pendant mount. Length 19mm; width (horizontally) 39mm; thickness 6mm.
   Copper alloy. Mount, consisting of a horizontal bar with a central, downward projection for the attachment of a pendant. The terminal of the downward projection is missing. The horizontal bar is decoratively moulded, with a saltire at its centre and lobate terminals. Circular perforations near to each end would have accommodated rivets for attachment to a leather strap.
   Found by R Blake, 1993, at Forgan (NGR NO 4445 2600).
   Accession no CUPMS:1994.99

Keys (Illus 5)

Keys with lozenge-shaped bows, like no 23 found in St Monans, appear to have been relatively common in the 13th and 14th centuries. The elaboration of the lozenges is an additional feature which appears as early as 1200, but is more frequent in the later 13th and 14th centuries. Contemporary representations of keys of this type, for example on the 13th-century coinage of Avignon, indicate that most of the lozenge-shaped bows with elaborated angles belong to the 13th and early 14th centuries (London Museum 1940, 139). A key of this type from Exeter, slightly smaller than no 23, was dated to c 1270–1350 (Goodall 1984, 345, fig 193, no 184).

No 24, from Lindores, is a much smaller key than the St Monans example and may have been used to open a casket or box.

23. Key. Length 98mm; width of bow 33mm; surviving depth of bit 13mm.
Copper alloy. Key with a lozenge-shaped bow and a hollow, circular cross-sectioned shaft. The asymmetrical, incomplete bit incorporates two parallel, horizontal grooves and two ward cuts. Part of the wall of the shaft has been lost through corrosion or damage.
Found by B Watson, 1994, near Ardoch
(NGR NO 5100 0120).
Accession no CUPMS:1995.300

24. Key. Length 39mm; width of bow 11mm; depth of bit 7mm.
Copper alloy. Small key with a five-sided bow with a circular aperture, and an oval cross-sectioned shaft with a hollow terminal. The bit is roughly rectangular, of simple form, and has a single, horizontal ward cut immediately below the shaft.
(Not illustrated.)
Found by R Blake, 1994, near Lindores Abbey
(NGR NO 2445 1855).
Accession no CUPMS:1997.46

Objects of religious significance (Illus 6 and Plates 2 and 3)

No 25 is a bulla of Pope Alexander IV, found at St Monans, and no 26 is a bulla of Pope Clement IV, found in St Andrews. From the Latin bulla, Papal bullae are circular, leaden seals, bearing on one side a representation of Saint Paul and Saint Peter and on the other the name of the reigning pope. A bulla was attached to a document by a cord, of silk if a 'Bull of Grace' and of hemp if a 'Bull of Justice', and gave authenticity to it.

25. Bulla. Diameter 37mm; thickness 4mm.
Approximately circular, with perforations through the edge, at the top and bottom of the object, which would have accommodated a cord. Both faces are decorated in relief and both are slightly damaged. The obverse face bears the legend A L E X A N D E R • P • P • 1111. The reverse face bears the legend S • P A S • P E above facing heads representing those of Saint Paul and Saint Peter with a cross pattée between them. Type as no 21,798 in De Gray Birch (1900, 275).
Found by J Gask, 1995, at St Monans
(NGR NO 5210 0170).
Accession no CUPMS:1995.299

26. Bulla. Max diameter 38mm; max thickness 6mm.
Lead alloy. Papal bulla of Clement IV (1265–8).
Oval in shape, the bulla shows wear on the reverse and is perforated in the centre, probably for re-use as a spindle whorl. The obverse face bears the legend C L E M E N S • P • 1111. The reverse face bears the legend S • P A S • P E above facing heads representing those of Saint Paul and Saint Peter. Type as no 21,810 in De Gray Birch (1900, 277).

Found by Dr Vines, 1993, in Queens Gardens,
St Andrews (NGR NO 5090 1650).
Accession no CUPMS:1993.442

Found to the East of Ballinbreich Castle, no 27 is a representation of a religious figure which probably formed part of the decoration on an altar cross. The decoration on this object includes both gilding and enamelling on a background plate of copper alloy. Its decorative style indicates that this piece is probably a product of the Limoges workshops of France or of a craftsman working in the Limoges style.

Gilt and enamelled reliquaries, croziers and altar crosses were produced in the workshops at Limoges in the late 12th and 13th centuries. Among the main products of the enamellers were altar crosses which often included a representation of Christ. The Limoges workshops produced a type of enamel work on copper alloy in the style of champlevé enamel (French: literally 'raised field'). Enamelling was usually carried out by filling hollowed-out compartments or cells in the copper-alloy background plate with a paste of coloured glass mixed with water and gently heating this until the paste fused and solidified. The Limoges workers first covered the metal in the cells with a dark enamel, and then the design was built up using more translucent enamels, usually lapis-lazuli blue or sea green (Newman 1981, 186). Unenamelled metal areas were generally gilded, as in this example.

The main period of production of this type of Limoges enamel work was around 1120–1350. On stylistic grounds, this piece can be dated to the period c 1180–1220. Its find spot indicates that it may possibly have come originally from the private chapel at Ballinbreich Castle.

27. Enamelled mount. Length 52mm; max width 21mm; thickness 6mm
Copper alloy. Mount depicting the head and upper body of a religious figure. The decorative elements are set upon a background plate of copper alloy. The background for the head is in the form of a disc, bearing turquoise or sea green enamel with white edging on the front, bordering the head, and gilded on the reverse side. The head itself was made as a separate component and is applied, and inclined to one side. Below this, the body area is concavo-convex, bearing enamel and gilt decoration. At each shoulder is an approximately triangular inlay of pale blue enamel with white edging. Below this, representing the clothing, are several cells containing deeper blue enamel. Two circular perforations lie along the figure's vertical axis; the upper one contains an iron rivet. The mount would probably have been riveted onto a wooden cross. The reverse side of the body area is ungilded.
Accession no CUPMS:1993.441

Found near St Monans, no 28 is a badge, moulded from lead alloy to the form of a scallop shell. The find can be interpreted as representing a pilgrim’s badge, perhaps lost by a traveller who had made the journey to Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain. The scallop-shell emblem is associated with Santiago de Compostela and with St James, the apostle, whose remains are reputed to have been interred in a tomb there, having supposedly been discovered at the site in the 9th century after being carried from the Holy Land (Coleman and Elsner 1995, 106). Santiago de Compostela subsequently emerged as a principal site of pilgrimage during the Middle Ages, and, after Jerusalem and Rome, it is still the third most important centre of pilgrimage of Christendom, its badge being the scallop shell.

28. Badge. Length 34mm; width 34mm; thickness 5mm
   Lead alloy. Moulded badge in the form of a scallop shell, with traces of possible gilding near the apex.
   A pin for securing the badge to clothing, probably made from copper-alloy wire, is attached to the undecorated rear face. This pin is broken and distorted. Also on the rear face, near the apex, is a small projection which may represent another component of the fastening device.
   Found by B Watson, 1996, near Ardross (NGR NO 5120 0130).
   Pending Treasure Trove decision.

Spindle whorls

Spindle whorls are used in the hand spinning of animal hair or vegetable fibres into yarn, mounted on a wooden spindle. The seven examples found are all of lead alloy and are of broadly similar size, though falling into at least two groups in terms of weight (10.8g – 16.5g and 29.4g – 32.7g). Different forms are represented: five of the group are of biconical form, with relatively broad central apertures, while one example is of a shallow, conical form, and another is discoid. All bear forms of radial decoration, the most complex forms of this occurring on nos 29, 30 (the illustrated example) and 34. A lead-alloy spindle whorl with radial decoration of a very similar style to that of no 30 was recovered from excavations at Leicester (Clay 1981, 139, fig 51, no 71).

A valuable insight into local spinning activities was provided by Alexander Laing, who, writing in the 1870s, noted that many older folk from Newburgh and in the country generally continued to use the spindle and distaff (known in some parts of Scotland as the ‘balk and rock’) until the beginning of the 19th century, despite the introduction of new technology elsewhere (Laing 1876, 305).

29. Spindle whorl. Diameter 24mm; diameter of central hole 8mm; thickness 5mm; weight 11.6g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of shallow, conical form with a central, circular hole. Moulded, asymmetrical decoration on the upper face consists of radiating triangles and lines. The lower face is flat. Slightly abraded. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1992, at Ballinbreich (NGR NO 2720 2040).
   Accession no CUPMS:1992.273
30. Spindle whorl. Diameter 24mm; diameter of central hole 10mm; thickness 11mm; weight 30.2g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of biconical form with complex, moulded decoration on both the upper and lower faces.
   Found by R Blake, 1994, at Ballinbreich (NGR NO 2720 2040).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.47

31. Spindle whorl. Diameter 26mm, diameter of central hole 10mm; thickness 10mm; weight 29.4g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of biconical form with decoration of radial lines and five equally spaced pellets on each face. One face is damaged.
   Abraded. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1994, at Ballinbreich (NGR NO 2720 2040).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.48

32. Spindle whorl. Diameter 28mm; diameter of central hole 6mm; thickness 2mm; weight 10.8g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of discoid form with a small, central hole. Both faces are decorated by a pattern of swirling, radial lines. Abraded. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1994, at Ballinbreich (NGR NO 2720 2040).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.49

33. Spindle whorl. Diameter 25mm; diameter of central hole 10mm; thickness 8mm; weight 16.5g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of shallow, biconical form with rather worn, moulded decoration of radial lines on both faces. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1992, at Balmerino (NGR NO 3585 2460).
   Accession no CUPMS:1992.274

34. Spindle whorl. Diameter 34mm; diameter of central hole 10mm; thickness 6mm; weight 32.7g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of shallow, biconical form with decoration of radial lines dividing each face into seven segments, each of which contains three equally spaced pellets. Abraded, particularly around the central hole and the edge. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1994, at Balmerino (NGR NO 3585 2460).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.50

35. Spindle whorl. Diameter 26mm; diameter of central hole 11mm; thickness 10mm; weight 30.5g.
   Lead alloy. Spindle whorl of biconical form, with a broad central hole. Both faces are decorated by alternating radial lines and pellets. Abraded. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1990, near Lindores Abbey (NGR NO 2420 1860).
   Accession no CUPMS:1997.51

Die

Found at Balmerino, no 36 is probably of post-medieval date. An unusual feature of this object is the lack of a number six on any face; instead, one face is plain. Dice appear to have been more commonly fashioned from bone than of metal, and both medieval and post-medieval examples have been excavated. A bone die was found in a 13th-century context at Wool House, Southampton (Harvey 1975, 271, fig 247, no 1927) while an example of possibly early 17th-century date was found at Cuckoo Lane in the same city (ibid, 274, fig 249, no 1945). Scottish examples include several recovered from the 1975-77 excavations at Perth High Street (Bogdan and MacGregor forthcoming) and one from Tantallon Castle, East Lothian (Caldwell 1991, 346, illus 6, no 130).

36. Die. Length 10mm; width 10mm; thickness 10mm. Copper alloy. Cuboid die with small, possibly bored, indentations on each face representing the numbers. The numbers 1 and 3, and 2 and 4 appear on opposing faces. The face opposing the number 5 is blank. The number 6 is not represented. Slightly abraded. (Not illustrated.)
   Found by R Blake, 1992, at Balmerino (NGR NO 3580 2445).
   Accession no CUPMS:1992.276

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Abstract
This paper describes and discusses a number of recent finds of medieval metalwork from East Fife, a majority of which are now in the collections of East Fife Museum Service. Mostly discovered by metal detectorists in fields in the vicinity of medieval sites, the artefacts are discussed in relation to the geographical locations of their find spots, the historical background of which is also considered.

Keywords: medieval, east Fife, artefacts, metal detectorists