

Two brooches from Cosgrove

Justine Bayley
Ancient Monuments Lab.

The first brooch (no. 217) was a Hod Hill brooch with a white metal plating on the front. XRF analysis showed that the white metal was tinning and that the bulk metal of the brooch was brass (copper + zinc) though traces of both lead and tin were also detected. A group of 41 Hod Hill brooches from Richborough, Kent have recently been analysed and three-quarters of them were shown to be brasses too.

The other brooch (no. 233) was a small applied plate brooch. The back plate, which was leaded bronze, was continued upwards to form a flat rim that slightly overhung the central depression. In this central space was a repousse plate of copper alloy which was gilded. The gold was probably applied as leaf as no mercury was detected by XRF. The space between the back plate and the applied plate was filled with a lead-rich material which suggests that the two parts of the brooch were 'soldered' together, either with pure lead or with a lead-tin alloy. The centre of the back plate has a hole drilled through it with traces of a copper alloy rivet. This may have held a decorative stud in the centre of the brooch or may have had some function in attaching the repousse plate (which unfortunately does not survive in the centre of the brooch).