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Gorhambury. Roman

3716.2020 3184 (Lab.no.811263)

Wool comb

?Part, or a whole wool-comb out from a flat piece of iron, present length 19.5 cm, width 5-7 cm across the beginning of the teeth, one prong handle with curved end, length 10.5 cm, with traces of replaced ?wood flakes; teeth, only 4 cm length left, originally perhaps 10-12 cm long, probably 24 when all present.

The comb is very small, compared with those of the East Anglian type, found in Norfolk and Suffolk, in which the teeth occupy nearly half of the 25-35 cm length; these generally have two prong handles, which are slotted into the top of a wooden post, so that the wool fibres can be drawn through the teeth (1). X-ray examination of the Gorhambury comb, showing the teeth close up to one edge, suggests that perhaps this comb is broken, though to the eye it appears a complete one-pronged example.

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- (1) J.P.Wild, Textile Manufacture in the Northern Roman Provinces (1970) 25,123 (Table C), Pl.1.b.