

## Roman Fashion, Leisure and Health

Roman-British women and men alike would include among their status symbols a wide collection of personal jewellery. The brooches, pins and fastenings were not only indicators of wealth and social status but essential fastenings for cloaks, gowns and tunics. Some of these brooches would be elegant as well as practical, others were made out of expensive materials and were highly decorated with enamel and gems, only to be worn on formal occasions. Other jewellery would include finger rings, bracelets, necklaces and even earrings.

Roman-British women also had elaborate hairstyles, following closely the fashions in Rome. Many of these hair styles required hairpieces and decorative hairpins. Examples of contemporary Roman hairstyles come from wall paintings, frescos and descriptions from texts; but also many of the decorative objects themselves such as the pins and terracotta heads on display, indicate fashionable hairstyles. As well as decorative hairstyles, many women would wear makeup. A pale complexion was fashionable, and this was achieved by applying powdered chalk or white lead.

The changing and evolving styles of many items of jewellery and other fashions, are not only the result of a changing Roman culture and technology imported from Rome, but often reflect the growing compromise and acclimatisation of Roman culture with local tribes and Britons.

These two types of brooches - T and Dragonesque - are some of the most popular Roman designs; being both functional with the potential for detailed decoration including the application of enamel, and use of precious metals.

### 1. T-Brooches

Bronze	Untraced	KMA 1994.134
Bronze	Arnside, Cumbria	KMA 1988.19
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.64
Bronze	Untraced	KMA 1994.133

### 2. Trumpet brooches

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.63
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.183
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA1979.286
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.62
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.195
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.187
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.285

### 3. Jewellery

This collection of jewellery shows the numerous types worn by the Romans including rings, bracelets, pendants and necklaces. It also highlights the range of materials and techniques used in jewellery making including glass and metalwork.

#### Beads

Glass	Low Borrowbridge	Unknown
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This selection of coloured glass and shale beads are from a necklace found at Low Borrowbridge. The gold-in-glass beads are particularly fine, and were probably imported from Egypt.

#### Armlets

Glass	Watercrook, Kendal	293, 341 & 437
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#### Acorn Pendant

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.238
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#### Rose Stud

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.65
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#### Bracelet

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.201
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#### Bronze

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.200
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#### Bronze

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.68
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#### Bead

Red Stone	El Jem, Tunisia	KMA 1994.39
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### 4. Brooches

This collection of brooches and fastenings are highly decorated with coloured enamel; they reflect the trend for stylised and shaped brooches, but also the fashion for decorative patterns.

#### Dragonesque brooch with quatrefoil and enamel decoration

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.197
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#### Dragonesque with a yellow, red and blue enamelled checkerboard central design

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.182
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#### Plaque with inlaid squares of millefiori enamel of red squares and white dots

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.199
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#### Brooch shaped like a duck, finished in silver with blue and green enamel

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.190
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#### Circular disc brooch, with deep blue enamel cells and raised central motif

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.188
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**Circular brooch, with outer blue ennable ring and a dotted inlaid inner ring**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.189

**Circular disc brooch, with blue and red colouring**

Bronze                    Arnside, Cumbria                    KMA 2015.1

**5. Vanity Objects**

**Mirror Fragments**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.216 & KMA 1979.215

**Comb**

Wood                    Low Barrowbridge Fort                    KMA 1978.15

**6. Collection of bronze fragments**

**Three Sheets of Bronze**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.234

**Lock**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.213

**Trumpet Brooch**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.202

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1980.67

**Fastening**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.197

**Circular Plaque**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.240

**Square Plaque**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.219

**Rondel**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1979.236

**Bracelet fragment**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1980.179

**Brooch fragment**

Bronze                    Watercrook, Kendal                    KMA 1980.66

## 7. Fastenings

This collection of fastenings show the wide variety of styles that were used; there are simple button and loops, hooks, richly embellished studs and simple pins. The materials also vary from bone, to bronze and iron work. All these fastenings would have different purposes, some would be used as dress and belt embellishments with as social significance, whilst others were utilitarian or for special costumes and uniforms.

These fastenings represent some of the plainer and more practical fastenings as opposed to the highly decorative brooches.

### **Hook fastening**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.205
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.211

### **Button and loop fastener**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.230
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### **Toggle fastenings**

Bone	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1980.58
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.243

### **Armour Strap**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.227
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### **Stud**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.228
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.199
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.235
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.237

### **Ring and staple fastening**

Iron	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1994.135
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### **Belt embellishment**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.220
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### **Belt prong**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.217
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### **Pin head**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.218
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## 8. Buckles

### Ring and pin fastening

Iron	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.252
Iron	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.261

## 9. Shoe

Leather	Ambleside, Cumbria	KMA 1979.156 & KMA 1979.155
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## Surgical Instruments

Serving troops were well cared for when it came to their health and fitness. The legionary forts would normally boast a purpose built hospital staffed with surgeons and orderlies. Treatment for injuries, wounds and illness included medication, poultices, splints and operations. Recovery time was spent on wards, some with verandas and courtyard gardens. Minor ailments could be dealt with in the smaller forts, and simple operations undertaken, by resident medics. Mobile field hospitals operated, when on campaign. The above would equate with the level of care received 1,600 years later by a British soldier in Victoria's army.

## 10. Handles for surgical instruments

### Handle

Bronze	Kirby Thore, Cumbria	KMA 1979.105
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.208
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.209

### Utensil

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.186
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## 11. Surgical Instruments

### Tweezers

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.239
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### Spatula

Bronze	UK	KMA 1992.11
Bronze	UK	KMA 1992.10

### Probe

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.214
Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.221

### Needle

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1994.111
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### **Spoon**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.185
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Bone	Tunisia	KMA 1994.50
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### **Probe**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.224
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### **Pin**

Bone	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1994.111
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### **Scoop**

Bronze	UK	KMA 1992.9
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### **Spatula**

Bronze	Watercrook, Kendal	KMA 1979.231
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## **12. Decoration**

### **Fluted bath tile fragment**

Stone	Untraced	Unknown
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### **Decorated Masonry**

Stone	Heliopolis, Lebanon	KMA 1994.52
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Communal baths played an important role, providing not only washing and bathing facilities but also hair cutting and massage services, along with a social gathering place. The bath house was in effect a club. Gambling and the availability of refreshments, as often as not, made for the ideal spot to relax at the end of a long day. To avoid risk from fire, bath houses were usually made of brick, stone and cement and located well away from flammable buildings. Both the bath house at Hardknott Fort and the larger complex at Ravenglass can be viewed. Here a niche along with cement rendered walls and drains are visible. Furnaces, used to heat the water and the buildings, are what caused a fire risk, that's why both bath houses are located just outside the forts they served.

Subsequently a supply of fresh water for hygiene, leisure and consumption was of the upmost importance to both forts and towns alike. Such access and care of the water supplies and drainage was not always taken in the civilian settlement that grew up outside the fort, the 'vicus'. But it is likely that the bath houses were made available to all, for a fee, and helped to reduce illness created by poor hygiene and sanitary arrangements. In larger town's public baths, toilets and public water supplies were the norm, and even sewers. Wells were sunk and reliable springs taken advantage of were available. Drains are often where small finds, such as jewellery, are made when excavated.