

LOST AND FOUND: OBJECTS RECORDED ON THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME DATABASE

The following objects are some of the more spectacular finds reported to the Buckinghamshire Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) during 2012. Details of these and other finds reported to the PAS from England and Wales can be found on the PAS website, www.finds.org.uk.

QUOIT-HEADED PIN

A copper alloy quoit-headed pin of Middle Bronze Age date (Fig. 1) was found in the Haversham area of Milton Keynes. It is undecorated and has a crinkly, gold-coloured surface but is probably made of copper alloy that has been in anaerobic conditions, which have preserved the colour. There are patches of green corrosion products, so possibly the plough has pulled the pin out of its original deposition site.

The flat loop of the head has slightly rounded edges and is circular, with a central circular, perforation, 23mm in diameter. This has been slightly bent probably after burial as has the shaft. The shaft itself is a flattened oval in section, 5mm across, as it springs from the head, but tapers to a circular section 1.4mm across, at the break. The shaft is broken. Length: 52.28mm. Ext diameter of head: 30.15mm. Thickness: 1.14mm. Weight: 5.06g. PAS database reference: BUC-7C4708.

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FIGURE 1 The curve in the shaft of this quoit-headed pin may result from plough damage

A369A6, NMS549, NLM-15CFB4, BERK-00C588, SOMDOR-839ED2, SF-81BA51, SF9909, SF4979, SF-54D866 & SF-9EE5A3.

ENAMELLED BROOCH

An enamelled copper alloy, 2nd-century AD Roman brooch (Fig. 2) was found near Ravenstone. The brooch consists of a central disc surrounded symmetrically by four discs, each of which has three more discs spaced round their edges. The main part of the brooch has a raised circle with alternate wedges of turquoise blue and dark red enamel. These radiate from the central cell, the enamel of which is too poorly preserved to interpret the original colour. The outer lower section of this centre section has border of punched ring and dot design and short diagonal lines. Each of the four attached discs has blue and white millefiori enamel alternating with degraded possibly chequer-board enamel. Traces of red and green can be seen. The four centre cells, as the main centre, have material in them that is probably deteriorated enamel. One of the twelve smallest circular cells is missing, but clearly they would all have been decorated the same as the rest with what appears to be degraded enamel, which includes traces of red. The back of the brooch is flat but with a domed central area which the now missing pin would have crossed. A search for parallels from this country has only discovered a smaller slightly similar brooch (Hattatt 2000, 354, no.1610). The foreign parallels (pers. comm. Sally Worrell), Ettinger no 15 and August Riha 011, nos 1698–1699, are more similar in style. Length: 50.37mm. Width: 46.28mm. Thickness: 2.12mm. Centre dia: 19.86mm; centre blue area: 11.32mm; four outer discs dia 11.37mm, smallest discs dia 5.25mm. PAS database reference: BUC-FE7F61

GOLD PENDANT

A small gold pendant set with a piece of amber (Fig. 3) was found near Gawcott. The backplate is drop-shaped, with a broken extension at the top which originally continued up to form the corrugated or ribbed suspension loop. This has two broad longitudinal grooves and three ridges, and the far end is cut to a point and soldered to the backplate. The ends of the break are in quite different condition; the part contiguous with the backplate is crumpled and



FIGURE 2 While generally well preserved, some of the details of the millefiori enamel and engraved design of this Roman brooch are obscured by corrosion

squashed, perhaps torn, but the end contiguous with the rest of the loop appears to have been cut straight through. It is possible that the loop was made from a separate piece of strip, one end pointed and one end cut square, and then soldered both to the reverse and to a flattened platform made by squashing down one end of the backplate.

The pendant has an outer collar running all the

way round, consisting of two plain wires *c.*0.4mm in diameter, with a central beaded wire *c.*0.5mm in diameter. The beaded wire is unworn, and the beads are narrow and angular, in some places almost conical. Within this outer collar is an inner collar of gold strip set on edge and originally slightly curved to fit around the central setting; it is now bent a little out of shape. The central amber setting is substantially decayed and it is now impossible to tell whether it was originally flat or cabochon-cut, but the lower part was presumably domed as the strip collar preserves this shape. Length: 18.88mm. Width: 7.64mm. Thickness: 1.95mm. Weight: 0.74g. PAS database reference: BUC-A36DE2. Museum Accession: AYBCM 2013.48.1

Non-destructive X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis of the surface of the pendant indicated a gold content of 69-71%, silver content of 27-29%, the remainder being copper. The yellow gem proved difficult to identify non-destructively, especially as its shattered state does not allow sufficient contact for Fourier Transform Infra-Red analysis. XRF analysis, Raman spectrometry and optical examination were able to eliminate the possibilities that it is glass or a mineral. It does, however, show the visual characteristics of degraded amber and is therefore most probably amber or copal (J. Ambers

and S. La Niece, British Museum, Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, File No. 7500 8, 4.7.2012).

This pendant is a diminutive example of a type well paralleled among high-status Anglo-Saxon pendants and necklaces of the 7th century, except that it contains amber rather than garnet or glass. Amber settings in places where one would normally expect garnet or glass are extremely unusual. There is a slab of amber in the Ripon Jewel, an enigmatic flat circular gold object of 7th or 8th-century date (Hall *et al.* 1999) and a single decayed amber inlay, perhaps a replacement, in a garnet cloisonné grip-mount in the Staffordshire Hoard (StH 570). The garnets in StH 570 are ribbed, another extremely unusual technique, and its precise date (beyond 7th or very early 8th century) is uncertain.

Anglo-Saxon pendants of this type are based on classical prototypes, and therefore Dr Ralph Jackson of the British Museum was asked to examine it to assess the likelihood of its being Roman. His view was that there was a small but not negligible possibility that the pendant was of Roman date. The pendant is most likely therefore to belong to the 7th or very early 8th century, but there is also a small possibility that it is of Roman



FIGURE 3 An unusual early medieval gold pendant set with amber

date. Text from the report for HM Coroner by H. Geake, PAS Finds Advisor.

STIRRUP STRAP MOUNT

An incomplete 11th century copper-alloy stirrup-strap mount (Fig. 4), Williams Class B, no Type (Williams, 1997) was found in the Wing area. The artefact represents around half of what was originally a rectangular mount with angled flange. In openwork, the mount bears the hind leg and curled tail of a left facing beast. The top of the tail, the rear paw and an element that emerges from the rear of the beast connect with the thin frame. The upper and side strips of the frame are decorated with a median groove. These strips are also finely notched at their outer edges. The beast is decorated with grooves which delineate claws and the tail, as well as areas of possible fur on the body. At the top corner of the frame, set slightly along the upper strip, is a rivet hole filled with iron corrosion product from the rivet. A further rivet hole is present on this fragment, set along the flange, and abraded, through without any rivet present. As well as the old breaks, the object appears to have been bent back slightly at the break in the top frame. The metal has corroded to a red/brown colour, with

some patches of green corrosion product. Length: 40.62mm. Width: 28.56mm. Thickness: 3.21mm. Weight: 13.81g. PAS database reference: **BUC-1693A1**.

This type of stirrup-strap mount has been seen as an archetypally Danish form. This example is more highly decorated than pieces documented by Williams (1997, 106–107; refs. 6, 12) from Sweden and Denmark. Other Danish examples have been published by Pedersen (1996, 146; fig. 19). This note courtesy of R. Webley, Somerset Finds Liaison Officer.

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REFERENCES

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 Hattatt R 2000 *A Visual Catalogue of Richard Hattatt's Ancient Brooches* (Oxford)
 Pearce S 1983 *The Bronze Age Metalwork of South-western Britain, vol. 2*. Brit. Archaeol. Repts **120** (Oxford)
 Williams D 1997 *Late Saxon Stirrup-Strap Mounts: a Classification and Catalogue*. Counc. Brit. Archaeol. Res. Rep. **111** (York)



FIGURE 4 Stirrup strap mounts were part of the connection between the top of the metal stirrup and the leather from which it was suspended. These were often highly decorated