

Archaeology in Hampshire



Annual Report 2013

FINDS REPORTED TO THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME IN 2013

By Katie Hinds

During 2013 a total of 2,474 Hampshire finds were added to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database in 2,327 records.

- The finds were from all periods from the Palaeolithic to c. 1800, with the following breakdown: Stone Age (2.5%), Bronze Age (1%), Iron Age (2.5%), Roman (45%), Early-Medieval (3%), Medieval (24.5%), Post-Medieval and Modern (19%) and Uncertain (2.5%).
- They were made from a range of materials: metal (93.5%, of which copper alloys, 77%), ceramics (2.5%) and worked stone (4%).
- Most finds were discovered whilst metal-detecting (99%), some as 'eyes only' surface finds; the others were found through a variety of means including gardening and chance finding (1%).

A proportion of finds examined by the Hampshire Finds Liaison Officer and colleagues were not recorded – generally finds that post-date 1700. The artefacts described below are considered to be particularly interesting examples reported to the Scheme during 2013. The PAS database number (Find ID) is included in each description. The public online database contains detailed information and colour photographs for each object recorded by the Scheme, including those below: see finds.org.uk/database

Principal finds

A Palaeolithic handaxe from near Hill Head (WILT-90EA74)



A thick butted handaxe of lower Palaeolithic date (500,000 – 250,000 BC), discovered on the beach close to Hill Head at Titchfield. As a beach find, the handaxe has been typically heavily rolled and the flint is characteristically (for the Palaeolithic period) a toffee colour. The handaxe measures 150 x 96.43 x 57.72mm and weighs 702g, and may originally have been sub-cordate or sub-pointed, with the tip broken prior to patination. This is one of about 70 Palaeolithic artefacts recorded on the PAS database from the Hill Head area.

A Neolithic polished axehead from St Mary Bourne (HAMP-008C86)



This incomplete Neolithic (3500-2100 BC) polished axehead is made of a stone rather than flint, probably granite and sourced from Cornwall or Wales. The cutting edge is damaged and incomplete but otherwise the axehead is triangular in shape, measuring 15.99 x 11.14mm at the butt end and widening to 66.18 x 32.92mm just before the cutting edge. It has a maximum thickness of 38.57mm at the centre, is 138.99mm in length and weighs 494g. Such non-flint stone axes are discovered reasonably frequently but are far less common than their flint contemporaries. Without petrological analysis the axehead's origin cannot be identified.

An incomplete Middle Bronze Age gold ribbon torc and two fragments of copper alloy ingot from Durley (HAMP-1AE583; 2013 T386)



This rather distorted but probable Middle Bronze Age gold torc fragment, found close to two fragments of copper alloy ingot/metalworking waste (not pictured), was apparently untwisted prior to deposition with the exception of a single 'twist' approximately at the centre of the fragment. It probably belongs to the ribbon torc type and may have served as either a necklace or bracelet/armlet. Gold ribbon torcs are commonly found in both Ireland and Scotland but are rare in Southern England (Eogan 1983, fig. 25;

1994, 47-79), although four examples are known from Somerset (*ibid.*; Minnitt & Payne 2012; 2005 T523). The damage and distortion to the torc is not unprecedented. In the Priddy Hoard (Somerset) many of the gold pieces, including the ribbon torc, were distorted and/or twisted prior to deposition (Minnitt & Payne 2012; 2005 T523). Indeed, the 19 objects that made up the hoard were apparently deposited in a 'tight ball' (*ibid.*). Although gold ribbon torcs date to the Middle Bronze Age, the damage and distortion of this object must be taken into account and may indicate that the object had a relatively long 'life-span' during the Bronze Age. The two pieces of copper alloy ingot/metalworking waste cannot be dated any more precisely within the Bronze Age, but their proximity to the torc fragment (about 5m) suggests that, on the balance of probabilities, they were associated with it and should be treated as a single find. The torc fragment measures 224mm in length, has a maximum width of 4.3mm and weighs 9.39g. One ingot measures 24 x 16 x 13mm and weighs 27.3g; while the other measures 26 x 16 x 13mm and weighs 17.1g.

An Early Bronze Age flat axe from Ropley (HAMP-8CCCA4)

An Early Bronze Age copper-alloy flat axe of Aylesford or Arretton Down tradition (c. 1700-1500 BC) with damage to the butt end and at the corners of the cutting edge. The long side-edges of the axe are slightly flanged (being c.0.5mm thicker at the very edge than just inside it), with the stop ridge on the surface being just off centre to the widest section of the flanged sides, 48.2mm from the butt and 59.0mm from the blade. In plan, the blade flares outwards to a crescent shaped cutting edge. It measures 109.1mm in length, 50.2mm in max. width and 8.9mm in max. thickness. It weighs 152g.



A fragment of Bronze Age spearhead from Chilcomb (SUR-0FB443)



This intriguing object is a fragment of Bronze Age spear, possibly cut-down intentionally. To one side its blade edge is rounded while the other has seven nicks creating seven 'barbs'. However, due to its incomplete nature, it is unclear whether this was originally a Middle or Late Bronze Age spear, and whether it was pegged or had loops at the socket. Cuts in the blade edges are normally the result of combat damage or an intentional "killing" of the spearhead prior to votive deposition. However, intentional cuts in blade edges are normally found in spearheads that are deposited when complete or with a large part remaining, not just as a fragment as in this case. This is probably a fragment of a Late Bronze Age pegged spearhead, because the incidence of intentional fragments was far greater in this period.

An Iron Age chape from Ropley (HAMP-0219F8)

A copper alloy (with a high tin content) La Tène type chape dating to the Early Iron Age (800-300 BC). The chape is anchor-shaped, the arms turning in to touch the central socket and each terminating in a bulbous knob. Around the open wider end are several grooved bands. Iron corrosion is visible both at the open end and from a perforation in the base of the object. It measures 24.2 x 24.9 x 6.6mm and weighs 10.3g. Similar La Tène I chapes dating to the 6th century BC can be found in Stead & Rigby (1999, 102-3, pl.142-4, nos. 2401, 2947 and 1515).



An Iron Age horse harness pendant from Chawton (HAMP-8ACB14)

This unusual copper alloy object is probably a harness pendant dating to the Iron Age or Roman Period (800 BC - AD 410). It is formed from a horseshoe-shaped arch terminating in two roundels. Across the centre and joining each edge are two curved arches, the space between being open. Set in the same plane as the object is a loop that extends from the apex. Decoration is in the form of circumferential grooves along the sides and ends of the artefact. The object measures 21.45 x 16.45 x 5.80mm and weighs 5.09g. There are no known parallels for the object and the dating evidence is based on its style and decoration.



A Late Iron Age bowl found with beakers and cremated bone from Ropley (SUR-8EA776)

This discovery of a Late Iron Age copper alloy bowl associated with a fragmentary pair of ceramic pedestal beakers and cremated bones was initially made by a metal detectorist, with the follow-up excavation carried out by David Williams, Finds Liaison Officer for Surrey and East Berkshire. The bowl is about 148mm in diameter externally and is estimated to have been about 45mm deep. The rim remains intact but is separated from the majority of the rounded lower part of the bowl. A band of notching between two grooves runs around the upper surface of the rim. The flat outer face of the rim is similarly decorated. The rounded but shallow base profile is typical of the Rose Ash type bowls of southern Britain, rather than the deeper rounded bowls of northern British tradition termed Lamberton Moor bowls (Macgregor 1976, 149-50 & 168-70).



A Roman plate brooch from Hursley (HAMP-18CAB3)



An incomplete copper-alloy Roman plate brooch (AD c.80-250) exhibiting enamel decoration. It is missing its pin and one of its arms. It measures 33.92 x 27.70 x 13.03mm and weighs 4.73g. The 'plate'

is 1.73mm thick. The brooch originally had four triangular projections/arms at the cardinal points. Each surviving arm terminates in a circular projection; two contain red enamel, the third is apparently empty. The arms are filled with turquoise enamel. Between each triangular projection is a smaller circular projection with a concentric double-ring stamp. At the centre of the brooch is a separate riveted knob surrounded by a ring of enamel decoration of red squares alternating with white and dark blue. This is only the second of this brooch type recorded on the PAS database, the other also being a Hampshire find (HAMP-253B76). Hattatt has another from Dorset (1985, 165; ref. 589) and mentions a similar example from the Rhineland.

A Roman copy of a solidus of Valentinian I from Rockbourne (WILT-5305B0)



A gold plated copper alloy contemporary copy of a Roman solidus of Valentinian I dating to the period c. AD 364-367 (Reece period 19). The reverse depicts the Emperor standing and facing right and holding a labarum and a Victory globe. The inscription reads RESTITVTOR REIPVBLICAE. The coin is copying one minted in Milan (RIC vol. IX, 75, no. 2(a)). The copper alloy core is visible at 12 o'clock on the obverse and 6 o'clock on the reverse.

A Roman plate brooch from Preston Candover (HAMP-58BF76)

An unusual gilded copper-alloy plate brooch, circular in shape and probably missing five settings from the recesses. The brooch measures 36.09mm in diameter, and with the (bent) pin is 39.74mm in length. It records a maximum thickness of 10.43mm at the spring mechanism, otherwise the plate itself is 4.26mm thick. The artefact weighs 22.11g. At the centre of the plate is a square cell flanked by a pair of ridges decorated with elongated grooved S-shapes, alternating in direction for each row. Surrounding this is a plain wall with a circular cell at each corner, between which are two horn-like shapes, curving outwards from each other. Similarity in decoration with the 'glass-centre boss' plate brooch type (in particular the 'elongated S' grooves) is indicative of a later Roman date.



An Early Medieval mount from St Mary Bourne (HAMP-FFCDF4)



This near-complete Early Medieval (early Anglo-Saxon) copper alloy mount is decorated with red enamel and was possibly attached to a piece of furniture or a strap. The finder reports that there was a small amount of iron on the reverse when he lifted it out of the ground. The mount has a central rivet hole around which (on the decorated face) is a hexagon, decorated with a sexfoil and pellets between the 'foils'. Around this are three pairs of confronted animals, their heads turned backwards, biting their tails which curve upwards over the rump and along their backs. Each animal has two visible limbs, each with three toes. Outside these is a ring of narrow, elongated isosceles triangles, while flanking the edge of the mount the decoration comprises a pattern of annulets and X shapes. The object measures 78.40mm in diameter, is 2.11mm in thickness and weighs 55.61g and is related to the 'Quoit Brooch Style' group of objects, most notably a belt-plate from Meonstoke (Ager 1996, 111-114) which has similarly arranged animals. This is however the first example of an enamelled Quoit Brooch Style object, which hints at a sub-Roman/Celtic influence. On stylistic grounds alone a date of c. mid-5th to early 6th century seems likely.

A fragment of Early Medieval scabbard mount from Cheriton (SUR-029B13)



A fragment of Early Medieval (early Anglo Saxon) 5th century copper alloy scabbard mount with silver inlay, decorated in the Quoit Brooch Style. Just over half of the artefact survives, but it is clear that it had been made to fit the mouth of the scabbard. The main decorative element is a band containing three (of probably originally five) roundels, the central one of which has been inlaid with a silver foil. Roundel 1 has a simple central pit; Roundel 2 is decorated with an 8-petalled rosette (also seen on a strap-end from Corhampton and Meonstoke (HAMP1966), while Roundel 3 has a cross with running spiral terminals, each with a projecting hook. Roundels 4 and 5 are missing. Above this are the remains of what were originally a pair of crouching and facing openwork beasts. The left beast survives along with the front paw of the right. The surviving beast is also inlaid with silver foil and is infilled with arcing and spiral forms. Between the two beasts was probably a single roundel of which only part survives. On the edge of the mount, below the original central roundel, are two stubs of a projecting attachment loop. On the back of the mount is a separate fitting of uncertain extent which appears to have been soldered in place. The upper part of this fitting is shaped to form a pierced loop which almost corresponds with the aperture through the roundel between the two beasts.

An incomplete Early Medieval possible die stamp from Crawley (HAMP-B292C2)



An incomplete Early Medieval (early Anglo-Saxon) unidentified copper-alloy object, possibly a die stamp, rectangular in shape with a very worn transverse break at one end. The upper surface depicts a central stylised figure with oval face and elongated narrow torso, wearing a helmet with two large curved horns above. The oval face of the figure is raised from the body and appears convex in cross-section. In the centre of the oval are two small incised lines representing eyes, while a series of linear striations in the upper left portion of the head indicate hair. The torso has a central rectangular panel decorated with a plaited design and a curved arm on each side. Several early Anglo-Saxon objects depict a figure wearing a horned helmet, the best known of which are the Pressblech mounts on the Sutton Hoo helmet. The object measures 31.3mm in length, with a width of 18.1mm and a thickness of 3.1mm. It weighs 6.47 grams.

An Early Medieval silver penny of Offa from Whitchurch (HAMP-8D55A3)



This Early Medieval (Anglo-Saxon) silver penny of Offa of Mercia (757-96) was struck during his light coinage (c.765-92) by Withnoth at London. It measures 16.38mm in diameter and weighs 0.99g and has a rather jagged flan. The obverse reads OFFA REX in two lines divided by a beaded bar with fleurs at each end. There are various pellets around and within the letters. The reverse reads UI/N/O/d (O lozenge-shaped; d=theta) in the angles of a lozenge-cross fleury with single fleurs. In the centre is a lozenge containing four pellets arranged in a cross shape.

An Early Medieval seal matrix from 'Hampshire' (SF-BE7CB0)

A copper-alloy seal matrix of the Early-Medieval (late Anglo-Saxon) period. It is cast and formed of a circular matrix with an openwork handle of scrolling foliage at the top. The matrix has been gilded and most of what remains are in the depressed sections of the decoration. At the centre of the main field is a bareheaded bust facing left, with short, close-cropped hair and drapery arranged in seven folds attached to the wearer's left shoulder. The legend reads +SIGILLVM ÆLFRICVS, meaning 'the seal [of] Ælfric'. To the reverse is an extensive Winchester-style Acanthus filling much of the field with three stems sprouting from the base, developing into five fan-shaped acanthus flowers. At the terminal of the handle is a perpendicular circular hole for suspension, enabling the seal to be worn. This is one of only four known late Anglo-Saxon seal matrices, and the use of Winchester-style acanthus and numismatic parallels suggests a date c.980s - 990s (Kershaw & Naismith 2013).



A Medieval seal matrix from Horndean (HAMP-7DDF74)

A Medieval (1200-1300) copper alloy pointed oval seal matrix with a pierced lug to the reverse. It probably depicts a secular building of four storeys and a triangular pointed roof with a turret to either side. It measures 46.87mm in length, 29.12mm max. width, 11.12mm max. depth and weighs 25.81g. The ground floor of the building has an arched doorway flanked by mouldings and columns, the two floors above having arched and/or quatrefoil windows. Directly below the roof is a row of vertical mouldings representing wooden supports. Around edge of the artefact is the inscription + SIGILL' CONVENT D' CORNEWRTI (the seal of the convent of Cornworthy) with triple stops between the words. The context for the object may be the establishment of a small Augustinian priory convent in the parish of Cornworthy, Devon, around 1238. A 13th-century date for the seal matrix seems appropriate on the similarity of the legend style to coin inscriptions of similar date.



An incomplete Post-Medieval gold bracelet slide from Kingsclere (HAMP-841BC0, 2013 T918)

The slide dates to 1706. The slide is oval and set with a now damaged rock crystal. A scalloped pattern has been cast on the lower half of the cell wall. Behind the rock crystal can be seen gold thread and a small area of red; there may originally have been other colours which suggests that in common with similar examples it may have held a picture, probably of the deceased. On the reverse are two integral loops and a hinge on the upper edge with traces of an oval projection, perhaps a catchplate or clasp

indicating that originally the slide was held in place by a pin. The reverse is inscribed between the loops E B / Dyed aprill / 21 1706 / aged 38. The slide measures 20.60mm long, 17.90mm wide and 5.65mm thick. It weighs 3.63g. Similar examples (Museum of London, accession numbers A7509, A7517, A7511) were designed to be worn on a ribbon as a 'Memento Mori' bracelet and span the date range c.1670-1710 and in the compartment on the front of each is an enamelled pattern, or portrait, on a silk background.



Acknowledgements

With thanks to Barry Ager, Sue Brunning, Laura Burnett, John Cherry, Lucy Ellis, Richard Henry, John Naylor, Philippa Walton, Neil Wilkin, David Williams and Sally Worrell for aid in the identification and analysis of the finds discussed above.

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