FINGER RING

Unique ID: SUSS-C64E31

Object type certainty: Certain Workflow status: Published

A medieval gold finger-ring set with a large opaque brown stone within a 7-cusped setting. Non-destructive X-ray fluorescence of the surface of the ring indicated a composition of 69-71% gold and 18-20% silver, the remainder being copper.

The exposed surface of the stone has a slightly worn appearance and it has not been possible to identify any characteristic features by optical examination, or to identify the stone unequivocally using non-destructive analytical methods. However, X-ray fluorescence shows the presence of large quantities of calcium, phosphorus and strontium, the proportions of which are similar to those found in skeletal elements, such as bone or ivory, and it seems probable that the material is biological in origin, possibly a bezoar. These are concretions generally found in the stomachs of ruminative animals and were considered antidotes to poison from around the 13th century onwards. The composition of such stones is variable but they are usually mixtures of grass, hair and calcium salts.

A parallel count be found in Thame Hoard Scarisbrick and Henig Plate 13 no.1 21.7

The external diameter, 5.6mm wide 1.6mm thick, bezel 16.2mm in diameter, stone 14.9mm, bezel and stone 8.1mm thick, 13.98 grams.

Notes:

The find therefore qualifies as Treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996 in terms of both age and precious metal content.

Beverley Nenk

Dept Prehistory and Europe

British Museum

26th April 2010

Subsequent actions

Current location of find: British Museum

Subsequent action after recording: Acquired by museum after being declared Treasure

Treasure details

Treasure case tracking number: 2009T381

Chronology

Broad period: MEDIEVAL Period from: MEDIEVAL

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Length: 26.5 mm Width: 22 mm Weight: 13.95 g

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Treasure case number: 2009T381

Materials and construction

Primary material: Gold Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

Region: South East (European Region)

County or Unitary authority: East Sussex (County)

District: Wealden (District)

Parish or ward: **Hellingly** (Civil Parish)

Henig, M., 1994. Classical Gems. Ancient and Modern Intaglios and Cameos in the Fitzwilliam

Museum, Cambridge Cambridge: 13