

# SHACKLE

**Unique ID:** HAMP-C45106

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Published

A corroded iron fetter probably from a set of Romano-British shackles. The object is of penannular form with recurving 'eyes' at the terminals (97 by 87.7mm). In profile the shackle is concave; a median band of rectangular section is enclosed within. Retained in each eye is a loop, one circular (ext. dia.: c. 73mm, int. dia.: c. 52mm), the other an elongated oval, bent at an obtuse angle (L.: c. 93mm, W.: c. 42mm). As such the artefact is similar in form to the Bavay-type as classified in Thompson (1994, 117ff.), and is therefore best classified as such. It is acknowledged that it is a variant on the Bavay-type in that such shackles tend to have a triangular loop rather than a circular one (cf. e.g. *ibid.*, 119; fig. 84). It is worth noting that the form of this object is similar to modern animal hobbles. However, the latter tend to have a flat tongue at one terminal, as opposed to eyes at both ends (*ibid.*, 139; fig. 113). Given the presence of eyes at both ends on this object and its typological similarity to Bavay-type shackles, the ancient identification is preferred. Such finds tend to be found in later Roman contexts; the wide date range offered here allows for retention and longevity of use.

## Notes:

As Thompson (1994, 117ff.) notes, 'in use, the shackles were placed round the captive's ankles, the bent loops passed through their [triangular] counterparts, and the protruding ends of the former then slipped over the padlock bar. It was evidently a device intended to give greater security in that it prevented the forcing apart of shackle terminals.' The Bavay-type was 'widespread in Gaul and Britain' with a 'predominantly rural distribution' (*ibid.*, 147). Adam Gwilt (pers. comm. 11th December 2008) has informed of numerous British examples, from: Great Chesterford, Essex, Wroxeter, Shropshire, Chester, Cheshire, Ware, Hertfordshire, Hockwold, Norfolk, Silchester, Berkshire, [Hoe, Norfolk] and London. One from Caistor-by-Norwich (Roman 'Venta Icenorum') can be found illustrated in de la Bedoyère (1989, 127; ref. 76b). It is considered plausible that some of the rural workforce would have been shackled (Thompson 1994, 149).

## Find of note status

This has been noted as an interesting find by the recorder.

**Class:** fetter **Sub class:** Bavay-type

## Chronology

Broad period: ROMAN

Period from: ROMAN

Date from: Circa AD 200

Date to: Circa AD 400

## Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Length: 176 mm

Width: 95 mm

Thickness: 34 mm

Weight: 356.65 g

### Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Wednesday 1st January 1992

### Personal details

Found by: This information is restricted for your login.

Recorded by: Mr Robert Webley

Identified by: Mr Robert Webley

Secondary identifier:

### Other reference numbers

Other reference: E2384

### Materials and construction

Primary material: Iron

Manufacture method: Wrought

Completeness: Complete

### Spatial metadata

Region: [South East](#) (European Region)

County or Unitary authority: [Hampshire](#) (County)

District: [Winchester](#) (District)

Parish or ward: [Headbourne Worthy](#) (Civil Parish)

### Spatial coordinates

4 Figure: SU4633

Four figure Latitude: 51.094471

Four figure longitude: -1.344504

1:25K map: SU4633

1:10K map: SU43SE

Grid reference source: From a paper map

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 10 metre square.

### Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector

General landuse: Cultivated land

Thompson, H., 1993 [Iron Age and Roman Slave-Shackles](#) Uncertain: Royal Archaeological Institute 117ff., 119, 139, 149 , 84, 113