

STEELYARD WEIGHT

Unique ID: SOM-FDCC33

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Awaiting validation

Complete copper alloy steelyard weight with lead interior and heraldic decoration. The weight is globular in form, but with a flattened top. Extending from the top is a thick sub-triangular suspension loop with a sub-triangular hole through its centre. The sides of loop are decorated with parallel grooves arranged at regular intervals with two grooves crossing in the section between each one. Both faces of the loop are undecorated. Below this, around the circumference of the flattened section at the top of the weight, are two parallel grooves containing a zig zag pattern formed from two further parallel grooves. Arranged at regular intervals around the sides of the weight are three shield-shaped mouldings containing heraldic devices. As these devices appear to be cast in relief they are likely to be of the Drury Class I (Drury 1920:4) described in *The London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (Ward Perkins 1940, p.172) or the Brownsword and Pitt Class A described in part 1 of the *Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum Medieval Catalogue* (Saunders and Saunders 1991, p.47). This is further confirmed by the arms displayed on the weight - a lion rampant, a lion rampant sinister, and an imperial double headed eagle. These are the arms of Richard Earl of Cornwall and Poitou, or of his son Edmund, the second Earl (*ibid.*), who appeared to have a monopoly over the production of this official type of weight during the later 13th century. We can therefore also date the weight to post-1257, when the first Earl adopted the double-headed eagle, the symbol of the Holy Roman Empire, following his election as King of the Romans (*ibid.*). The second Earl married Margaret de Clare in 1272 and began using her arms in conjunction with his own (*ibid.*). As this particular weight does not bear her arms it is therefore likely to have been produced prior to 1272. However, it would probably have been in use for a much longer period as they remained popular into the 14th century (Cherry 1991, p.47). A very similar weight, although no two are ever identical due to the lost wax casting method used in their production (Ward Perkins 1940, p.147), can be seen in *The London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (*ibid.*, pl.XXXVIII, no.2).

The weight survives in generally very good condition with a shiny green patina and only a small amount of damage to the base. Length: 77mm, Diameter: 68mm, Weight: 1750g

Published in Burnett (2013:196-7, fig. 8).

Notes:

Recorded at finds day - identified from photo.

Find of note status

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

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Returned to finder

Chronology

Broad period: MEDIEVAL

Period from: MEDIEVAL

Period to: MEDIEVAL

Date from: Circa AD 1257

Date to: Circa AD 1350

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Length: 77 mm

Weight: 1750 g

Diameter: 68 mm

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Wednesday 10th February 2010

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Other reference: Recorded at finds day (Wells 10-02-10)

Materials and construction

Primary material: Copper alloy

Secondary material: Lead

Manufacture method: Cast

Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

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

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

District: [South Somerset](#) (District)

To be known as: Shepton Montague

Spatial coordinates

Grid reference source: From finder

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 0.01 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector

General landuse: Cultivated land

Specific landuse: Character undetermined

London Museum, 1940 [London Museum Medieval Catalogue](#) London: HMSO 172 , pl.XXXVIII, no.2