

BRACTEATE

Unique ID: LEIC-EDD980

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Published

Early Medieval gold A-bracteate pendant, 24mm in diameter, 1mm thick and weighing 2.48 grams. The pendant has a simple gold attachment loop and shows a male bust, left, with a possible drinking horn to mouth.

See full description by Dr Charlotte Behr, Roehampton University:

Description: The pendant is made of a disc of gold sheet that is scratched, torn and bent in several places. A simple gold strip serves as loop. The gold underneath the loop is far more reddish than the remainder of the pendant. The centre is decorated with the design of an male head with bust. In the tradition of the image of the emperor on late Roman coins and medallions that served as model, the head is shown in profile, looking left. The hairstyle is decorated with a diadem ending in a framed triangle of three dots with a spiral in front above the forehead and in cross-shaped double lines behind the head. The coat is lined by two dotted borders and consists of four parts with stylized folds, the upper two ending in two mirror-image spirals. The three lines ending in open semi-circles on the back of the coat reflect the three pendilia, pendants ending in a precious stone or pearl, hanging off the imperial brooch (Sebaste & Bonfante 2001, 244). The bent feature in front of the coat may be discussed hypothetically as an arm with a hand holding a conical drinking vessel decorated with three bands at its upper end in front of the mouth. In front and behind the head are several symbols and imitations of Latin letters. Along the edge of the flan are incisions imitating a beaded framing wire.

Discussion: The find is only the sixth known A-bracteate (defined as a pendant with an anthropomorphic head in profile) from early Anglo-Saxon England (Behr 2010; Behr & Marzinzik 2011). Whereas the find and its iconography have close links with Scandinavian bracteates, it was most probably made in England as it is possible to tell from some technical idiosyncrasies, like the absence of a framing wire and the undecorated loop. If the identification of the drinking vessel is correct, this would be a unique element within bracteate iconography (update: see identical motif on another A-bracteate at LEIC-1E63A8)

Date: Late 5th -6th century.

Literature:

Behr, C 2010, 'New Bracteate Finds from early Anglo-Saxon England', *Medieval Archaeology* 54.

Behr, C and Marzinzik, S 20**, 'Near Holt, Norfolk: Anglo-Saxon gold bracteate (2009T657)', TAR 2009, **.

Sebaste, J L and Bonfante, L 2001, *The world of Roman costume*, London

Notes:

13/1/11 TVC valuation: £2300

Find of note status

This is a find of note and has been designated: Regional importance

Subsequent actions

Current location of find: Melton Carnegie Museum Melton Mowbray

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

Treasure details

Treasure case tracking number: 2010T414

Chronology

Broad period: EARLY MEDIEVAL

Subperiod from: Early

Period from: EARLY MEDIEVAL

Subperiod to: Early

Period to: EARLY MEDIEVAL

Date from: Circa AD 450

Date to: Circa AD 600

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Thickness: 1 mm

Weight: 2.48 g

Diameter: 24 mm

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Wednesday 14th July 2010

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

SMR reference number: FLE14265

Treasure case number: 2010T414

Museum accession number: X.A107.2011

Materials and construction

Primary material: Gold

Manufacture method: Hand made

Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

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

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

District: [Melton](#) (District)

To be known as: Melton

Spatial coordinates

Grid reference source: From a paper map

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 0.01 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector

Current location: Melton Carnegie Museum Melton Mowbray