

BRACTEATE

Unique ID: LEIC-1E63A8

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Published

Early Medieval gold Bracteate, 34mm long, 28mm wide and 1mm thick with a weight of 3.59 grams.

The bracteate is incompletely preserved, the loop has been ripped off and about one third of the stamped outer zone on the upper right part is missing. The gold foil is heavily buckled with several tears. The lower right part has been folded which may have been intentional whilst the other damages appear to be post-depositional. The gold foil was surrounded with a beaded wire set along the edge. It is heavily abraded. Underneath the (missing) loop is a beaded gold wire attachment (however with smaller beads than the framing wire) in the shape of a not quite symmetrical spiral. The spiral was soldered on the stamped outer zone of the pendant. Wire applications underneath the loop are quite rare on bracteates but have been observed on several finds from England, including two D-bracteates from Kent (IK 582 Dover Buckland grave 250 and IK 554 unknown provenance), two A-bracteates from St Giles' Field, Oxfordshire (IK 323) and Undley, Suffolk (IK 374) and three bracteates from the Binham hoard (IK 604,2, 630,1 and 630,3) (2011T657, 2009T657 and 2013T628) (Behr 2010; Behr and Pestell 2014).

In contrast to the bracteate from Scalford [LEIC-EDD980](#)(IK 635,1) that has a die-identical central image the new pendant is larger and has an outer zone that is separated by two concentric lines and decorated with a type of stamp not yet observed on any bracteate. It is round and formed of a central dot surrounded by radially arranged squares that are serrated and an outer ring of triangles and squares of which not all are well visible.

On the reverse a faint negative of the central image is visible. The surface of the reverse is partly quite 'pockmarked'.

The central image shows in the succession of the imperial head on Roman coins a male head in profile with a bust dressed in the imperial coat shown with stylised folds and three lines ending in semi-circular features, probably indicating *pendilia*. The hair is shown in vertical strands divided with two lines of dots indicating the imperial diadem ending in a central jewel in front of the forehead. Underneath the ear a dot indicates the hole of the compasses used for the die. The most unusual and so far unique feature of this bracteate design is the conical object with three horizontal lines that the man holds in his hand in front of his mouth and that may be best explained as glass drinking vessel (Behr 2011).

Surrounding the head is a series of shapes that imitate letters of the Latin inscriptions on Roman coins and medallions.

Approximate diameter: c. 36 mm; weight (before cleaning) 3.6 g.

Discussion: The pendant contributes to the still small number of gold bracteates from Leicestershire and Rutland. Its unusual design features suggest that they were locally designed and made but following the Scandinavian/Continental tradition.

Notes:

As the object is made of gold and is over 300 years old, it constitutes potential Treasure under the stipulations of The Treasure Act 1996.

Find of note status

This is a find of note and has been designated: County / local importance

Subsequent actions

Current location of find: Melton Carnegie Museum

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

Treasure details

Treasure case tracking number: 2014T301

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

Length: 34 mm

Width: 28 mm

Thickness: 1 mm

Weight: 3.59 g

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Wednesday 9th April 2014

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Treasure case number: 2014T301

Museum accession number: X.A36.2015

Materials and construction

Primary material: Gold

Completeness: Incomplete

Spatial metadata

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

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

District: [Melton](#) (District)

Parish or ward: [Hoby with Rotherby](#) (Civil Parish)

Spatial coordinates

4 Figure: SK6717

Four figure Latitude: 52.74647837

Four figure longitude: -1.00890385

1:25K map: SK6717

1:10K map: SK61NE

Grid reference source: From finder

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 1 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector

Current location: Melton Carnegie Museum