

BLADE

Unique ID: NMGW-F0B7C3

Object type certainty: Certain

Workflow status: Published

Middle Bronze Age bronze blade, possibly a dirk of Group II or III blade with a damaged butt

The dirk is incomplete with some peripheral damage to the butt and upper part of the blade (with a length of 135.2mm and a weight of 32.6 g). The top edge of the butt is damaged and irregular, with a number of arcs, possibly related to rivet holes but none of which may now be identified with any certainty. The dirk is thinnest at the butt (with a thickness of 0.8mm) and is widest across the eroded shoulders (with a surviving width of 38.7mm). The original form of the hilt is now uncertain but there is a clear midrib on the blade, which begins comparatively near the end of the dirk (at approximately 12mm), possibly suggesting that most of the butt has been lost or possibly that the blade is reworked. The blade gradually narrows from the shoulders, giving the dirk something of a triangular form, rather than the wide-butted and slender-bladed types. The blade edges appear to have been more sharply convergent (for c. 32mm from the butt), before being more gently convergent but still straight and then converging with an arc to the tip (for c. 19mm). Both faces are very heavily-corroded, masking the detail but the midrib is evident on both faces (giving the dirk a maximum thickness of 3.0mm below the shoulders) and there is the suggestion of blade facets. The pitting on the surface has penetrated the bronze in areas and the surviving surface has a dark-brown to black patina and with an area of brown and grey corrosion. There is no surviving evidence for a hilt mark on the surface

The corrosion and fragmentary, eroded butt makes it difficult to confidently identify the blade typologically within the scheme as outlined by Burgess and Gerloff (1981) but would seem to best fit the Group II to III weapons. It is also very possible that the blade has been reworked. Group II to III blades belong to Acton Park II and Taunton Metalworking industry of the Middle Bronze Age, corresponding with Needham's (1996) Period 5, dated to 1500 - 1150BC.

1. Burgess C.B. & Gerloff S., 1981; The Dirks and Rapiers of Great Britain and Ireland, *Praähistorische Bronzefunde Abteilung IV. Band 7*.
2. Needham, S. 1996; Chronology and Periodisation in the British Bronze Age, *Acta Archaeologica* 67, p. 121-140

Class: blade, possibly a dirk of Group II or III blade with a damaged butt

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Returned to finder

Chronology

Broad period: BRONZE AGE

Subperiod from: Middle

Period from: BRONZE AGE

Subperiod to: Middle

Period to: BRONZE AGE
Date from: Circa 1500 BC
Date to: Circa 1150 BC

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1
Length: 135.2 mm
Weight: 32.6 g

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Other reference: NMWPA 2014.128.1

Materials and construction

Primary material: Copper alloy
Manufacture method: Cast
Completeness: Incomplete

Spatial metadata

Region: [Wales](#) (European Region)
County or Unitary authority: [Swansea](#) (Unitary Authority)
District: [Swansea](#) (Unitary Authority)

Spatial coordinates

4 Figure: SS6290
Four figure Latitude: 51.59189924
Four figure longitude: -3.99354509
1:25K map: SS6290
1:10K map: SS69SW
Grid reference source: From finder
Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 1000 metre square.