STRAP END

Unique ID: DEV-264F62

Object type certainty: Certain Workflow status: Published

An early-medieval copper-alloy strap-end of Thomas' Class E, Type 1, decorated in the Winchester Style, probably dating to c. 900-1100.

The strap-end is tongue shaped, with a slightly pointed terminal. At the attachment end the strap-end bifurcates (splits) transversely, with two parallel cast projections to retain the strap, undecorated, but with a slightly recessed rectangular transverse band on the front, and three roughly equally spaced circular rivet holes; none of the rivets survive.

Below the attachment end the strap-end is cast into a symmetrical openwork design depicting two confronted quadrupeds viewed in profile. The animals have extended necks which project forward and cross, terminating in a relatively simplistic head, on which the details of the snout and eyes are suggested by slight facets and the ears by a small sub-triangular punch. Each animal clasps the tail of its partner in its mouth. The lower bodies of the animals are rotated and viewed from above, their hind legs meeting in a point at the terminal and their tails extending into interlace, broadly forming a pair of figure-of-eights; with the backs of the animals forming the outside edges of the lower loops and which intertwine on the inside edge of both loops. The animals' tails overlap first their own neck, arch around through the jaws of its partner, before overlapping with the other animal's neck in the other direction and then crossing itself, prior to terminating in a piriform lobe which touches its own back and forms the edge of the strap end, perhaps simplified acanthus foliage. The foreleg is held bent forward in front of the animal, terminating in a pad-like foot with three toes defined by incised lines, a pair of incised lines are positioned behind and help define each shoulder. The reverse is plain and flat.

Dimensions: length 32.5 mm; width 18.9 mm; thickness 4.5 mm; weight 13.47 g.

Broadly similar openwork strap ends can be seen illustrated by Thomas (2000: *figs.* 3.24-3.25), although their designs typically display inhabited vinescrolls rather than zoomorphic interlace. Whilst no immediate parallels for this decoration have been identified, similar zoomorphic interlace as well as processions of biting animals both feature in contemporary Winchester-style manuscript illustrations, many of which date to between the second half of the tenth and eleventh centuries, cf. decorated initials such as Webster 2012: *fig.* 133; Wilson 1984: *figs.* 195, 212-215; British Library, Royal 5 E XI, f. 7v.

Dr Gabor Thomas has viewed a photograph of this strap end and confirms its attribution to the Winchester style, remarking upon its exceptionally fine workmanship and noting that the broad 10th-11th century date range could possibly be refined by comparison to manuscript illustration (pers. comm. 10/10/2017).

Find of note status

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

Class: Thomas Class E, Type 1

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Returned to finder

Chronology

Broad period: EARLY MEDIEVAL

Subperiod from: Late

Period from: EARLY MEDIEVAL

Subperiod to: Early Period to: MEDIEVAL Date from: Circa AD 900 Date to: Circa AD 1100

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Length: 32.5 mm Width: 18.9 mm Thickness: 4.5 mm Weight: 13.47 g

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Sunday 12th February 2017 - Sunday 12th February 2017

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Other reference: SCC receipt: 019324

Materials and construction

Primary material: Copper alloy Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

Region: South West (European Region)

County or Unitary authority: Dorset (County)

District: West Dorset (District)
Parish or ward: Folke (Civil Parish)

Spatial coordinates

4 Figure: ST6613

Four figure Latitude: 50.91545414 Four figure longitude: -2.48502011

1:25K map: ST6613

1:10K map: ST61SE

Grid reference source: From finder

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 1000 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector General landuse: Grassland, Heathland

Webster, L., 2012 Anglo-Saxon Art: A new history London: The British Museum Press