

VESSEL

Unique ID: SOM-AF24A6

Object type certainty: Possibly

Workflow status: Awaiting validation

A solid-cast lead-alloy figurine in the form of a seated dog, possibly representing a handle from the lid of a Medieval vessel.

The animal is moulded and realistic in proportions, if slightly abraded; the head in particular has been damaged. The animal is seated in an upright, somewhat cramped position, its feet resting upon a roughly oval base, the underside of which is flat allowing it to stand freely. However the piece is top-heavy and rests on a narrow base such that it is easily toppled.

The rounded chest and upper arms of the dog extend smoothly into its back, the width of which gradually declines only slightly towards the rump, from where a short, rounded tail projects over the dog's back. The animal's backlegs angle outwards from the body, with the lower legs tucked beneath. The forelegs are more poorly carved with the region between them solid. The backs of the forefeet touch the fronts of the hind feet and also point forwards. Like the hind feet, they have no surface detail and the toes, for example, have not been defined.

The ruff of the dog is intimated by a raised moulded ridge after which the piece narrows towards the dog's neck, around which is another raised band representing a collar from which the neck flares into the back of the head. The width and height of the head gradually decrease from the back to the front. The animal has a narrow, flat skull. The ears consist of two sub-triangular mouldings, one on either side of the head, and extend halfway down the side of the skull. The eyes, mouth and details on the nose are no longer identifiable but may have originally been moulded in place. The extended and slightly turned down end of the muzzle gives the impression of a hooked beak.

On either side of the body, the area between the hindquarters and forequarters is solid. On the reverse of the object the region between the hind legs is recessed within which is a lump of iron corrosion.

The dog is 38.5mm high, 45.2mm long (from the front of the muzzle to the tail) 19.1mm wide (at its hindquarters) weighs 100.61 grams.

The position of the dog, which might be interpreted as squatting, is very similar to that of a copper alloy dog already recorded on the database BH-EEE305 which is more clearly in a seated position. This and other dogs in similar sitting positions made of lead and copper alloy have been suggested as being used as handles (Egan 1998: pp. 191-193, nos. 537 and 538, Lewis, 1987: 5, fig. 8C). Similarly, A comparable artefact, this time in the form of an ewer spout, is NCL-448C88, from Raskelf, North Yorkshire. It is possible that this figure was used for a similar purpose and that the position is intended to have forgone anatomical accuracy to allow the object to be attached to another item. The iron material between the dog's hindquarters may therefore represent an attachment point. Alternatively, as the object is free standing it may have been intended as a gaming piece the presence of the iron therefore representing an addition by someone with a sense of humour.

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 1300

Date to: Circa AD 1500

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 1

Length: 45.2 mm

Height: 38.5 mm

Width: 19.1 mm

Weight: 100.61 g

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Sunday 7th October 2018 - Monday 7th January 2019

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Other reference: SCC Receipt 017848

Materials and construction

Primary material: Lead Alloy

Secondary material: Iron

Completeness: Incomplete

Spatial metadata

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

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

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

To be known as: Norton Sub Hamdon CP

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

Lewis, J.M., 1987 [Bronze Aquamaniles and Ewers](#) York: Finds Research Group 700-1700 Datasheet 7