

Archeology notes



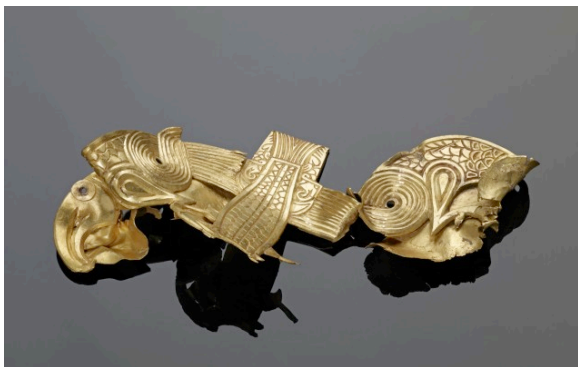
The folded cross

One of the few non-warfare related items found. Other than the loss of most of the stones, the folded cross is intact. The arms of the cross are covered with a design made up from interlaced animal forms. It is believed that the cross was folded up so that it could be packed easily into the hoard before burial.



Pectoral cross

The top arm is detached, torn rather than a deliberate cut. The central garnet is set in the gold, which has decorative twisted wire work. The garnet has a flat top which is showing general wear and worn smooth tiny chips. It would have been worn by senior clergy (bishops and abbots) as a sign of their office, or by wealthy Christian lay person.



Zoomorphic mount

The zoomorphic mount is a gold plate. Designed in the form of two style II eagles, facing each other and holding a fish vertically between them.

The exact use for the zoomorphic mount is not yet known, however it is likely that it was used as decoration on a shield.

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KEY FACTS

Weight: 80 grams with soil (before treatment)

Dimensions: 89.5 x 15.8 x 2.1 mm

Material: Silver gilt

Biblical inscription

The silver gilt strip bearing a Biblical inscription in Latin. Rivet holes show that it was originally fastened to another, larger object. We are not yet sure what this was but it might have been a bible.

Incised into each face of the strip is a verse from the Latin Bible: *"rise up, o Lord, and may thy enemies be scattered and those who hate thee be driven from thy face"*.



KEY FACTS

Weight: 13.22 grams

Dimensions: 27 mm (diameter) 8.7 mm

Material: Gold containing a glass gem with a black and white chequer design.

Millefiori stud

This small stud, surrounded by gold and garnets, Millefiori means 'One thousand flowers'.

It is likely that the millefiori stud would have decorated a larger item.



KEY FACTS

Weight: 82.8 grams

Dimensions: 82.2 x 74.9 x 2 mm

Material: Silver gilt, or a low gold alloy

Helmet cheek piece

A magnificently decorated cheek-piece, with four bands of running, interlaced, animals.

Interestingly, this piece has a relatively low gold content. This may be the result of being specially alloyed to make it more functional and able to withstand battle blows. The helmet cheek piece would have formed the side panel of a warrior's helmet.

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KEY FACTS

Weight: 1.51 grams

Dimensions: 41.14 x 18.56 x 0.79 mm

Material: Gold

Stylised seahorse

Decorated using filigree, a technique which creates patterns by soldering lengths of twisted wire to a base plate. This sea-horse mount is one of the most remarkable pieces in the hoard decorated using this technique. The filigree work on it is astonishingly fine – a grain of rice is longer than three of the spirals which make up the decoration. There is some discussion as to whether this mount really represents a seahorse or not.

The exact use for the stylised seahorse is not yet known, but it must have decorated some larger object.



KEY FACTS

Weight: 15.88 grams

Dimensions: 21.1 x 21.1 x 13.4 mm

Material: Gold, decorated with cloisonné garnets and blue glass.

Sword pyramid

Hoard is remarkable for the extraordinary quantity of sword fittings. Most are of gold and many are beautifully inlaid with garnets. The pyramids would have adorned a leather strap that would have been attached to a scabbard (which is a cover for a sword). Straps like this are mentioned in the Viking sagas, where they are called 'peace bands'. They could be tied around the handle of the sword, securing it in place in the scabbard so warriors were not able to draw their swords suddenly in anger.



KEY FACTS

Weight: 24.82 grams

Dimensions: 73.5 x 22.5 x 1.1 mm

Material: Gold

The Old English word seax is used to describe a wide variety of single-edged knives. These range from the small knives people wore at their belt and used for eating and other everyday purposes to long versions that were essentially short, single-edged swords. This hilt fitting from the Hoard must have belonged to a truly spectacular knife. It is made of solid gold and decorated with a beautifully worked pattern of interlaced animals, the animals' eyes are actually tiny little globules of red glass.