

TREASURE ACT 1996
SILVER CLOTHES FASTENER FROM DYFFRYN ARTH COMMUNITY,
CEREDIGION
[Treasure Case 17.15]

Introduction

A small clasp was found in Dyffryn Arth Community, Ceredigion, by Mr H. Tranter of Bromsgrove, while metal detecting in June 2017. The object was reported H. M. Coroner for Ceredigion, and to Angie Bolton Finds Liaison Officer for Warwickshire and Worcestershire, who referred the case to the Department of History & Archaeology, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.

The item has been retained on behalf of H.M. Coroner for Ceredigion for reporting.

Circumstances and context of discovery

The item was found at a depth of about 8cm (3 inches) with the aid of a metal detector by Mr Tranter at the edge of a field near a gully. Details of the findspot and land owner are provided on the Treasure Receipt Form.

This item has not undergone any cleaning or conservation. It is complete.

Description

Silver clothes fastener (resembling a small book clasp). Made of sheet silver, with an integral lug with small rectangular slot. There is a repousse tear-drop boss, flanked by three small circular lugs for attachment.

Surviving height 21.4mm; max. 12.7mm; thickness 0.5mm; weight 1.02g.

Metal Content

To judge from its colour and weight, and visual comparison with other silver items in the collections of the Department of History & Archaeology, the item is silver (over 10%).

Discussion

Dating is reliant on the form and size, and most such finds have been identified as the receiving plate for hooks of various forms to fasten clothing, particularly dresses. The teardrop boss resembles a reversed 'raised heart' design, and many similar objects have

been attributed to the seventeenth century. The method on manufacture for the Dyffryn Arth Community item is consistent with such as date.

One from North Hertfordshire (BH-E07F07) has the same overall form, and the teardrop has incised lines to create the appearance of a scallop shell, while another from south Oxfordshire has a chequer-board pattern resembling a cone (PAS database BERK-C486C6). It is possible that some such clasps could be small book clasps.

Summary and conclusions

It is my opinion that as an object which has at least 10 per cent by weight precious metal, but which is at least 300 years old, the item is treasure under Section 1 (1) (a) of the Treasure Act 1996. Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales wishes to acquire this item for its collection.

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