

TREASURE ACT 1996

SILVER RING FROM ST DAVID'S COMMUNITY, PEMBROKESHIRE [Treasure ref. no. 20.03]

Introduction

On 5th October 2018 Mr Vaughan Williams of Castlemorris, Pembrokeshire discovered a silver finger ring in St David's Community, Pembrokeshire whilst metal detecting. The find was reported to H.M Coroner for Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire on 23rd April 2020 and was subsequently handed to Adam Gwilt at Amgueddfa Cymru: National Museum Wales for reporting.

Circumstances and context of discovery

The object was discovered by Mr Vaughan Williams whilst metal detecting in a stubble field, at a depth of 6 inches. Further details including landowner details and find spot co-ordinates can be found on the Treasure receipt.

Description

The reported object is a silver finger ring. It has a quatrefoil bezel in the form of a flower comprising four equally spaces foils or petals with rounded tips, surrounding a large engraved central circular pistil. The surface of the foils and pistil are plain, except for three small, incised dashes at the apex of the pistil and some of the foils are damaged along the edges. The circular band is D-shaped in cross-section with a flattened panel externally, onto which the bezel has been soldered. There is a vertical solder line behind the bezel. The shoulders are defined by two vertical incised lines flanking the bezel and a possible incised cross is engraved on one shoulder, now heavily worn. There is evidence of gilding on the flattened section of the hoop and in the engraved lines of the quatrefoil. The surfaces of the ring are considerably worn, with likely decorative detail and gilding now lost.

The object has not undergone any cleaning or conservation.

Measurements

Weight: 3.7g

Hoop

Width: 5.3 mm

Thickness: 0.9mm-0.2mm

External diameter: 19.4 mm

External diameter inc. bezel: 19.2 mm

Internal diameter: 16.0 mm

Bezel

Height/width: 9.7 x 8.2 mm

Thickness: 0.4 mm

Metal Content

To judge from its colour and weight and visual comparison with silver finger rings and other silver jewellery items in the collections of the Department of History & Archaeology, the alloy is well in excess of 10% silver.

Summary and conclusions

In terms of form and design, this ring is medieval in date. Rings of a broadly similar form, usually in silver, sometimes gilded with soldered quatrefoil bezels are recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme and as treasure finds. These include rings from Newbiggin, North Yorkshire (LANCUM-0E7C1A), Yanworth, Gloucestershire (GLO-69827D), Henrhyd, Wales (NMGW-C76188) and an elaborately engraved ring from Thrussington, Leicestershire (LEIC-C4F333). All above examples date from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.

A silver ring found in Scrooby, Nottinghamshire (SWYOR-708B31) is a close parallel to the St. David's ring, in terms of its construction and appearance. Another, from Tendring, Essex (ESS-D2E6A5) bears small, incised crosses on the band shoulders

It is my opinion that this ring is an object which has at least 10 per cent by weight precious metal, and, on the balance of probability is over 300 years old, and therefore is treasure under Section 1 (1) (a) of the Treasure Act 1996.

Scolton Manor Museum have expressed an interest in acquiring this item.

Bibliography

Adams, K (2014) *GLO-69827D: A MEDIEVAL FINGER RING* Web page available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/628122>

Boughton, D (2016) *LANCUM-0E7C1A: A MEDIEVAL FINGER RING* Web page available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/779026>

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Redknap, M (2017) *NMGW-C76188: A MEDIEVAL FINGER RING* Web page available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/860588>

Woolnough, E (2011) *LEIC-C4F333: A MEDIEVAL FINGER RING* Web page available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/439152>

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