

Assessment of the metal finds from the Hamble to Botley Jetline Pipeline (HBJ01)

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Nineteen metal artefacts were recovered from the line of the Hamble to Botley Jetline pipeline (HBJ01). With the exception of a runnel of lead, recovered in a layer of hillwash producing only medieval finds, the finds are all likely to be of later 18th, 19th or 20th century date. They include two datable 20th-century artefacts, a teaspoon and a penny of George V.

Description

Lead alloy

A runnel of lead alloy was recovered from context 1304. The runnel may either indicate the working of metals (for example for soldering) or the accidental melting of a lead alloy artefact. Lead alloys had numerous uses in the medieval period, for example the repair of pottery vessels.

Copper alloy

A penny of George V, minted in 1929, was recovered from Plot 19/6. The coin has a large dent in the middle but shows little wear and was probably lost in the first half of the 20th century.

A strip of copper alloy from Plot 18/5 was cut to a trapezoidal shape but shows no sign either of finishing or wear. However, it does not seem to a shape one might expect from an offcut and it is presumably part of a composite artefact.

Iron

Iron artefacts were recovered from five plots: 7/2, 9/1, 11/1, 15/5 and 18/8.

Plot 7/2, context 701, produced two iron artefacts. One is possibly an exhaust pipe and the other the handle from a sheet metal vessel (such as a tin bath). Both are probably of later 19th or 20th-century date.

Plot 9/1, context 911, produced a steel teaspoon. The spoon is stamped 'RESILCO', 'RUSTLESS NICKEL SILVER' 'MADE IN SHEFFIELD ENGLAND'. The use of the term rustless as opposed to stainless suggests a date soon after the invention of stainless steel in 1913. The spoon is associated with a number of smashed 20th-century whiteware vessels.

Three unstratified iron objects from the same plot are an unidentified lump, a nail and a rectangular buckle. The buckle (Find No. 3244) is a plain large rectangular object with an iron pin. Such buckles were probably used with leather harness and with canvas strapping rather than clothing.

A large square nut, probably from a piece of machinery, was found in Plot 11/1. Other finds from this plot are mainly 19th/20th century and this is the likely date for this nut.

Five iron objects were recovered from Plot 15/5. Four are amorphous lumps and the fifth is a hinge, also with a thick coating of corrosion products. There are very few other finds from this plot but they include two sherds of Romano-British pottery, one of which is iron-stained. It is therefore possible that these fragments are of Roman date. The only modern find from the plot is a fragment of airbrick.

Four iron artefacts were recovered from Plot 18/8. Two of these are nails (3151), a third is probably the head from one of these nails (3148) and the fourth is a sub-rectangular loop. One side of the loop has broken and is lost and the remainder has been bent, as if something has been pulled out of the loop using considerable force. The loop is probably part of a piece of machinery of recent date. There are very few other artefacts from this plot, and these consist of small potsherds and a lump of flat roof tile. It is therefore likely that the loop (and nails?) come from a piece of agricultural machinery.

Assessment

Most of these finds require no immediate further treatment. The iron objects from Plot 15/5 should be x-rayed, since there is a possibility that they are of Roman date.

The lead alloy and the finds from Plot 15/5 should be retained for future study.