

Assessment of the Finds from Castlegate, Grantham (CGG06)

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A small collection of non-ceramic finds was submitted for identification and assessment. Those that could be independently dated are of post-medieval or later date apart from a possible late Saxon bone object and a post-medieval or later date is likely for the remainder of the collection.

Description

Animal bone

A single object of bone was recovered from context 420. The object is similar in size and shape to one of the plates from a from a scale tang knife handle. However, the short ends of the plate are not well finished, both being sawn and then snapped with no subsequent finishing and the long sides are slightly bowed rather than being straight. The object is reminiscent of the connecting plates from a horn comb (Pritchard 1991, 199-200, Fig 3.80). Such plates often survive independently of the horn comb itself and it requires evidence of the saw marks from cutting the teeth of the comb to prove the identification. Examples from the City of London date between the 10th and the 12th centuries, although the earlier date reflects the lack of 9th-century and earlier occupation in the city.

Clay Tobacco Pipe

A collection of pipe fragments may come from a single pipe which from the bore diameter and tall spur may be of 18th century date.

Copper Alloy

Fragments of four pins with spiral wound heads were recovered. One was complete and the rest fragmentary. One of the latter was at least 95mm long and had been bent into a subrectangular shape reminiscent of a safety pin.

A circular washer, 36mm diameter, was made of thin sheet metal and appears to have a finished face and a rough face and may have been used on an item of furniture. No sign of rivet holes was present however.

A circular ring, distorted to an oval 27mm by 29mm in diameter, may have been a finger ring although it has little sign of polish through wear and filing/polishing scratches are visible over all surfaces at x20 magnification.

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Stone

A fragment of ironstone with calcite shell fossils were recovered. It has no signs of human use.

Assessment

The finds are probably all of post-medieval or recent date. However, it is just possible that the bone object is the connecting place of a horn comb, an artefact type which was used in the 10th/12th century. Should this item be stratified in a potentially late Saxon context then it should be drawn and photographed as a record.

Retention

All the finds are from stratified deposits and should therefore be retained for future re-examination.

Further work

The possible drawing and photography of the bone object has been noted above. None of the other objects require further work.

Bibliography

Pritchard, F. A. (1991) "Small Finds." in A. G. Vince, ed., *Aspects of Saxo-Norman London: 2, Finds and Environmental Evidence*, London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap 12 London Middlesex Archaeol Soc, London, 120-278

Appendix 1

| Context | cname | subfabric | Object | Nosh | NoV | Weight | Part | Description | diameter | L | B | TH |
|---------|----------|------------------------------------|--------|------|-----|--------|------------|--|----------|-----|----|----|
| 10-103 | STONE | FERRUGINOUS SST WITH FOSSIL SHELLS | GEO | 1 | 1 | 42 | BS | | 0 | | | |
| 420 | BONE | | COMB | 1 | 1 | 3 | | CONNECTING PLATE WITH CIRCULAR RIVET HOLES AT EITHER END;SAWN AT NARROW ENDS FILED AND POLISHED ON OUTER FACE AND LONG SIDES | | 107 | 12 | 2 |
| 534 | COPP | | PIN | 1 | 1 | 1 | BS | POINTED AT ONE END; BENT INTO SUBRECTANGULAR SHAPE CF SAFETY PIN | 0 | 95 | | 1 |
| 534 | COPP | | PIN | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | BS | WOUND HEAD | 0 | | | |
| 534 | COPP | | PIN | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | BS | WOUND HEAD | 0 | | | |
| 540 | COPP | | PIN | 1 | 1 | 1 | BS | WOUND HEAD | 0 | 27 | | |
| 214 | PIPECLAY | | PIPE | 3 | 1 | 7 | STEM | 18TH+ BORE DIAM | 0 | | | |
| 214 | PIPECLAY | | PIPE | 1 | 1 | 3 | BOWL | 18TH+ BORE DIAM;SPURRED FRAG | 0 | | | |
| 214 | PIPECLAY | | PIPE | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | MOUTHPIECE | 18TH+ BORE DIAM | 0 | | | |
| 714 | COPP | | RING | 1 | 1 | 2 | BS | OVAL SHAPE 26MM BY 29MM. FILED AND POLISHED WITH NO SIGN OF JOIN | 27 | | | |
| 534 | COPP | | WASHER | 1 | 1 | 1 | BS | THIN SHEET | 36 | | | |

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