

K1005 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 17/11/2011

Conservation Finished: 9/1/2012

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 8.5 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) 47mm (W) 28mm (D) 10mm

Weight before: 7.88g

Weight after: 7.66g

Catalogue number: 569

Digital photography:

Taken with a Nikon Coolpix 4500 digital camera, under daylight or bulbs and Meiji Techno RZ Stereo microscope with an Infinity 1 camera (with analyses capture software) and fibre optic lights, 7-75x magnification. Taken before, during and after.

Annotation on any of the storage bags or boxes: SSH 09, PN 1971, 75 (in a triangle), 24/07/09

Description: Visual and microscopic examination using Meiji stereo microscope 7-75x magnification

Fragment of silver strip with niello inlay decoration in a linear and mushroom-shaped design on one side. The top border is solid/undecorated silver gilt containing three intact fastening holes and one partial fastening hole. Two dome-headed silver gilt nails with pointed ends are in situ.

Associated Objects: K251? K182?

Pre-Conservation Condition: Visual and microscopic examination using Meiji stereo microscope 7-75x magnification

The object is bent so that its profile is slightly concave when viewed from the front. The front and back of the object are ~30% covered with compact soil. All break edges are covered with soil, though under 10x magnification a shiny, granular metal break edge can be seen under the soil in some areas.

The two nails are mobile in their holes, bent, and have a dark spot of tarnish on their heads.

Some areas of niello inlay are missing; these areas are now filled with soil. The remaining niello appears to be stable but juts up proud of the surface in some areas.

The silver gilt border on the front is slightly tarnished and has multiple superficial scratches. There is an open crack running through the border from the edge inwards. It appears to be stable.

The ungilt silver areas (around the niello) are tarnished and lightly scratched.

The back of the object is tarnished, ungilt silver with several long, deep, old-looking (deliberate?) scratches.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Analysis/Study

Aim: Partial cleaning

Materials: Soft natural/synthetic brushes, cotton swab, cocktail stick, thorn in pin vice/holder, water/IMS on metals

The granular soil on the exterior/interior surface was mechanically removed or reduced where possible using a fine thorn tip secured in a pin vice and a small pure bristle brush. IMS or water was used to soften the soil to facilitate removal. Loose particles of soil were then removed with a small swab of IMS.

Corrosion products were left in situ; corrosion was not active and can be further cleaned or stabilised at a later date.

The paper K number was adhered to the back with HMG brand Paraloid B72 (ethyl methacrylate copolymer) from the tube, applied with a cocktail stick.

A new storage box padded with white polyethylene foam was constructed to house the object.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

The ungilt silver has uneven surface colour ranging from light grey to whitish/purplish (possible silver chloride corrosion) to areas dark with tarnish.

There are several deep, old-looking scratches on the back that might be intentional. At least one of these scratches has an even, rectangular shape, indicating that it was not, for instance, scratched with a pointed blade.

There are three cracks in the silver gilt rim radiating from the edge inward. All are stable.

The nails are cracked in multiple places and bent. Part of the side of one nail appears to have sheared off at some stage.

Bright, granular silver metal is visible on break edges. Most of the break edges appear bright and may be recent. The break edges around the upper right corner (when viewed from the front with the border at the top) look dull/older.

WARNING: Both nails are mobile in their holes and could become dislodged with handling. Handle with care. The nails should be secured with adhesive if this object is sent out on loan or selected for display.

Analysis undertaken

XRF analysis of the object was performed. See document 'K1005 XRF Report'.

Samples:

1. soil - front
2. soil - back **ADDED TO SAMPLE 1**
3. soil - break edges **ADDED TO SAMPLE 1**
4. small fragment of silver from bottom break edge (centre)