

K1087 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 22/10/2012

Conservation Finished: 24/10/2012

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 5.5 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Fragment A:

Dimensions: (L) 14mm (W) 8mm (D) 8mm

Weight before: 1.36g

Weight after: 1.17g

Fragment B:

Dimensions: (L) 15mm (W) 15mm (D) 6mm

Weight before: 1.38g

Weight after: 0.91g

Catalogue number: 76

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 and after.

Annotation on any of the storage bags or boxes: None noted.

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

Two associated (i.e., from the same object) fragments of rounded silver gilt fitting. Fragment A is a curved fragment with three strands of twisted filigree wire soldered to a plain gold base and set into a recessed channel along the edge. It also has a recessed area with a two-ridged cast or incised interlace design. The fragment is gilded along the decorated edges and ungilded on the flat/plain (undecorated) edges. Fragment B is a curved silver gilt fragment with three strands of twisted filigree wire soldered to a plain gold base and set into a recessed channel along the edge. A long section of the filigree extends beyond the body of the object.

Associated Objects: TBC

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

Fragment A is tarnished and has multiple surface abrasions. Part of the filigree is missing by the break edge. The remaining strands of filigree are splayed out slightly but appear to be

secure. The exterior is ~70% covered with soil that has no remarkable features or inclusions but obscures much surface detail. There are a few flecks of green corrosion on the rim adjacent to the filigree. All break edges look old. The interior of the fragment is ungilded and ~95% covered with a thick layer of soil that has no remarkable features or inclusions. On visible metal there is a whitish-purple deposit, likely silver chloride corrosion. A clump of soil from inside Fragment A has detached and sits in the packaging. A second small vial with soil is included.

Fragment B is a curved silver gilt fragment. The form of the fragment is unclear because of very thick soil coverage of ~90% of the object, but it appears to be a fragment similar to Fragment A, with three strands of twisted filigree set into a recessed channel along the edge. The filigree strip extends beyond the body of the object. Although embedded in soil, it flexes when touched. Visible metal is tarnished and has multiple surface abrasions. The gold base onto which the filigree is soldered has an open crack across it at one point; see photographs. There is a dark film on the underside of this gold strip that might be some remnant of solder or other affixing agent used to secure the strip into the channel. Purplish corrosion (likely silver chloride corrosion) is seen on the body of the object. There are some black inclusions in the soil, including a patch of charcoal-like black deposit.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Study / Analysis

Aim: Partial cleaning / Stabilisation

Materials: Soft natural/synthetic brushes, thorn in pin vice/holder, IMS on metals, 50:50 water/IMS on metals, cotton wool swabs, cocktail stick, Paraloid B72

The granular soil on the exterior 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.

The soil on the back of both fragments was reduced so that the condition of the metal could be determined.

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

The paper K numbers were adhered to the interior of both fragments (labelled K1087a and K1087b) with HMG brand Paraloid B72 (ethyl methacrylate copolymer) from the tube, applied with a cocktail stick.

A storage box padded with white polyethylene foam was made for housing the objects. A strip of Tyvek (spun bound polyethylene fibres) was used as a cushion for the objects and to help lift them out of the foam.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

Soil removal has enabled the form and decoration of the objects to be seen.

Close examination of the break edges leads shows that the two fragments join at the filigree strands, with a gap in between the two fragments where material is missing; see photographs of the objects together to see how they fit.

This object is a pair with K242, which is an intact fitting with a curved shape and hole in the centre; see photographs. K242 also has an area with niello inlay on the side, though this area is unfortunately missing on K1087. The two objects appear to be a pair, with the same shape, the same two-ridged interlace design and three twisted filigree wires set into the edge.

The interior of both fragments has large patches of a whitish material (corrosion product?). Gilded areas have heavy, patchy tarnish and surface abrasions. Gilded areas have many small patches of waxy, purple silver chloride corrosion product on the surface; these were left in situ.

The two-ridge interlace design is unusual; three-ridged interlace is seen far more commonly.

The remnant of a round hole can be seen on the break edge of Fragment B. Compare this with the round hole seen in K242.

Fragment B has a large section of filigree wire that extends beyond the body of the object. It is fragile and flexes when touched. HANDLE WITH PARTICULAR CARE to avoid bending or detaching the wires.

Key Features:

- Two fragments of rounded fitting
- Silver gilt with two-ridge interlace area and three twisted filigree wires set into recessed channel
- Pair with K242

Samples:

1. K1087a - soil, exterior
2. K1087a - soil, interior **ADDED TO SAMPLE 1**
3. K1087a - silver fragments
4. K1087a - powdery white deposits in soil, interior **DISPOSE**
5. K1087b - soil, exterior **ADDED TO SAMPLE 1**
6. K1087b - soil, interior