

## K 1364 Condition Report

**Conservation Started:** 17/07/2012

**Conservation Finished:** 02/08/13

**Conservator:** Cymbeline Storey and Deborah Magnoler

**Time Taken:** 6.5 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

**Dimensions:** (L) 17mm (W) 13mm (D) ~6mm

**Weight before:** 2.52g

**Weight after:** 2.41g

**Weight with re-joined fragments:** 10.16g

**X-ray:** L126

**Catalogue number:** 187

### **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

Fragment of angular silver gilt hilt collar with raised zoomorphic interlace design on the front. The animal design resembles a snake, and there is niello inlay in the animal body areas. There is a linear border with niello inlay surrounding the animal design.

This fragment is a corner piece of the hilt collar consisting of a flat face with zoomorphic design, a steeply angled edge, and the truncated start of a second face. The shape of the fragment is an angled, truncated V. There is plain silver on the reverse.

**Associated Objects:** K160, K186, K595, K953, K1364

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

Front: ~70% covered with compact, sandy soil with no remarkable features or inclusions. The soil fills recessed areas and there is a large clump on the bottom edge and the steeply angled side. Much of the niello is missing; some remains in both the border and animal areas. Traces of gilding are visible on raised areas adjacent to the niello channels. A patch of green material (corrosion? paste?) is visible in one area of niello channel in the border near the pointed end. The top, bottom, and angled edges are finished, while the other edges are break edges. All breaks look old. Visible silver has a thin layer of silver chloride corrosion.

Back: Partly covered with a thick layer of soil. Plain silver has a consistent layer of dark grey tarnish, a thin layer of silver chloride corrosion, and general abrasion.

**Treatment:** Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

**Purpose:** Display / 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 surface and edges 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. A strip of Tyvek (spun bound polyethylene fibres) was used as a cushion for the object and to help lift it out of the foam.

02/08/13: the soil at the back of the object was removed and a new label attached. Some of the remaining soil within the channels at the front was also removed, paying attention not to destabilise the surviving niello. The same method and materials were used as in the first phase of conservation. There were no new discoveries to report. DM

#### **Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:**

Removal of soil from the front revealed gilding in recessed areas surrounding the raised zoomorphic design. The gilding is worn in spots and has many holes in it. Tool marks in these areas suggest that the design was chased. Soil removal from the severely truncated side revealed a surface in poorer condition, with a thicker layer of silver chloride corrosion and less surviving gilding. Some niello has survived in situ in channels on this side.

The top edge has a rough finish and there appear to be several fragments of unknown material (corroded silver? niello?) at the point of the bend.

Silver chloride corrosion is present on much of the ungolded silver. There is one area of green deposit in a niello channel (border area) where the niello is missing. In other areas of missing niello soil was left in situ in the channels to preserve any residues or niello fragments that remain.

#### **Key Features:**

- Silver gilt hilt collar fragment
- Zoomorphic decoration
- Niello inlay
- Silver chloride corrosion

**Samples:**

1. soil – front and edges
2. niello fragment from soil on bottom edge
3. silver fragment from right break edge
4. gilding fragment from front