

## K152 Condition Report

**Conservation Started:**03/08/2011

**Conservation Finished:** 05/08/2011

**Conservator:** Josh Burrell

**Time Taken:** 9hrs

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

**Dimensions:** (L) 22.5mm (H) 12.5mm (Th) beaded wire edge 1.5mm

**Dimensions with K398, K726:** (L) 68mm (W) 12.5mm (Th) 1.5mm

**Weight before:** 2.64g

**Weight after:** 2.30g

**Weight with K398, K726:** 7.77g

**X-ray:** L24, L44

**Catalogue number:** 85

### **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:**

K152

24/07/09

(unstrat)

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

A small piece of Gold with filigree detail and signs of damage ( see images) , possibly caused during forcible removal.

The front of this object appears to have filigree detail across the surface, but this is uncertain as around 80-90% of this face is obscured with earth with occasional pieces of wire visible through the soil.

The reverse of the object is largely clean, with a few areas of apparently superficial dirt.

**Associated Objects:** K398, K726

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

Neither side suggest any evidence of active or inactive corrosion. The metal is heavily scratched when viewed under microscope but otherwise appears structurally sound with no apparent brittle areas.

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

**Purpose:** Display/ Analysis/ Storage/ Study/

**Aim:** Partial cleaning/Total cleaning/ Stabilisation

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

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.

The paper K number was adhered to the interior surface with HMG brand Paraloid B72 (ethyl methacrylate copolymer) from the tube, applied with a fine paint brush.

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

When I began cleaning the object, it soon became clear that the surface that was mostly obscured with earth was clearly decorated with filigree. I focussed on one area to get down to the base material to investigate if there was any corrosion evident. There was not. What did emerge was a small bead of gold that appeared to be made using the “granulation technique”. After further cleaning it became clear that the bead was the “eye” of a delicately formed “snake head” -the out line of the snake head being made from exceptionally fine gold wire applied to the base layer. This differs in style to the way that other “snake” filigree panels, so far cleaned from this hoard, have presented the “snake” motif (The usual way being to flatten the terminal of larger filigree wire and split it, to suggest an open mouth).

After further cleaning of the left side of the object, it soon emerged that the filigree was representing the snakes body, wrapped in a knot, finishing definitely with the snakes tail. This is one of the clearest, least ambiguous, zoomorphic motifs that I have seen.

Satisfied that I had found no corrosion on the filigree surface, I continued to remove loose soil particles with the dry method, working across the whole surface of the piece. After removing the initial surface earth a small piece of filigree that I had assumed to have been attached (to the still earth obscured layer underneath, came away and was collected in a sample tube and labelled. Whilst this piece is presumably associated with the object, I do not believe it has come directly from the object itself, as there is no “missing Piece” that the filigree might fit.

Further cleaning showed that the object consisted of two separate cells, each with their own filigree knot. Once the surface was largely cleaned using thorn and water brush to gently free the material, the right cell was shown to also contain a snake, of similar construction (fine wire profile head, bead eye) but was heavily damaged with detail largely abraded away. The form of the right hand snake was different also, being more meandering and taking up more space than the example on the right.

All soil that was removed was collected into sample tubes and labelled with its’ association to the object.

A series of images and measurements were taken using the 3D microscope especially focussing on the object's granulated eye as an example of this technique had not previously been noted.

The overall condition of the object after cleaning was good, the left hand cell appearing largely undamaged, with its design clearly evident- a suggestion that additional panels are missing from the trailing piece of filigree leading to the left of the object. The right hand panel was, however, more damaged with detail being lost, material torn, bent and folded over, obscuring material from view.

**Analysis undertaken**

XRF analysis of the object was performed. See document 'K152 XRF Report'.

**Samples:**

1. Soil from exterior
2. Filigree piece- uncleaned.