

MEDIEVAL SEAL MATRICES FROM NORFOLK, 2004

by Andrew Rogerson and Steven Ashley

This paper is the seventh part in a consecutive annual catalogue of medieval seal matrices to be published in this journal. As usual, impressions of all the matrices contained in this catalogue are available for study at Norwich Castle Museum.

The catalogue is divided into sections headed thus: official secular, official religious; personal seals with arms; personal seals with names; personal seals with mottoes; with initials only; without inscription; illegible. As far as possible entries are in alphabetical order.

The organisation of the catalogue entries is as follows. Material, overall shape of matrix. Shape of die, and size. Central motif. Surrounding inscription (and translation). Any reference or supporting information. Parish name and HER number.

The inscriptions of the impressions have been rendered as faithfully as possible, with illegible letters thus: Inferred letters have been placed in square brackets. Some spaces have been added to make the reading clearer. There is no full stop added after the inscription to avoid confusion with any dot contained within the inscription itself.

Official secular seals

No seal matrices in this category were reported during 2004.

Official religious seals

1. Copper-alloy, flat, transverse pierced lug in centre on reverse. Circular, 23mm. Octofoil. S' VO* SCI : EDMVNDI : CAMERAM : (I serve the chamber of St Edmund). The manor of Netherhall in Caistor was held by the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds from before 1066. It was administered by a chamberlain or chamberer, a monastic officer or obedientary. One such office holder must have owned this matrix (Blomefield 1806, 426–7). Caistor St Edmund 12307.

Personal seals with arms

2. Copper-alloy signet ring, D-shaped section with oblique incised grooves around curved face of band to create cable effect, internal dia. 23mm. oval bezel, 14 x 13mm. *A chevron Ermine between three pheons* on a shield surmounted by a staff with cross-shaped terminal and two streamers. The arms are those of the family of ARNOLD, *Gules a chevron Ermines [or Ermine] between three pheons Or* (Corder 1965, 189–90 and Woodcock, Grant and Graham 1996, 394–5). Elmswell 39269. Fig. 1.
3. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with triple-collared pierced trefoil terminal. Circular, 24mm. *Three lozenges per fess a trefoil in chief* on a shield surmounted by a staff with *cross patée* terminal and three streamers, beneath an arch emerging from a circular border with openwork cusped arches in base and tiny ball-flower mouldings. S' · WILLI · DE · MVLTON · (Seal of William de Multon. The foil *in chief* is perhaps a mark of difference for a younger son. The family of de Multon were associated with the manor of Surlingham from c.1250 until sometime before 1345 (Blomefield 1805, 467–8)). Surlingham 31656. Fig. 1.
4. Copper alloy, pierced rounded lug rising from median rib on reverse. Shield shaped, 29 x 20mm. *A lion rampant*. * x S' RICARDI FIL : hENRICI (Seal of Richard son of Henry). Bawdeswell 40845. Fig. 1.
5. Silver, finely cast hexagonally faceted conical handle with small dot near outer edge to indicate orientation and pierced, triple-collared terminal with U-shaped silver chain-loop with flattened ends secured by silver rivet. Circular, 17mm. Four almond-shaped shields with points together forming quatrefoil shape, a slipped quatrefoil between the shoulders of each. The shields bear alternate arms of *A fess between two chevrons* and *Three bends*. These simple arms are shared, with different colours, by a number of families and are therefore difficult to ascribe with any certainty. Hempsall 25183. Fig. 1. Plate 1.

Personal seals with names

6. Lead, flat, baluster-like longitudinal rib with missing loop between fine herringbone ribs on reverse. Pointed oval, 31 x 18mm, ends damaged. Quatrefoil, the longer foils resembling ears of wheat. + S':ADE : SPVRVN (Seal of Adam Spurun, the V and R ligatured, the second V enclosing a dot, and the N ligatured with the initial cross). 'Spurun' is a substitute for 'Spurrier', spur-maker (Reaney 1991, 422). Kenninghall/Quidenham 32254.
7. Lead, flat, raised border and longitudinal median rib flanked by two narrower and ending in un-pierced lug on reverse. Pointed oval, 36 x 22mm. Flower with sixteen foils or star with sixteen points. * S' AGNETE DE GELINGHAI (Seal of Agnes of Gillingham). The outside edge of the seal is damaged and the inscribed I could perhaps be a contraction mark. Postwick 34967.
8. Lead, pierced lug at top and elaborate naturalistic, symmetrical, foliar ornament in relief on reverse. Pointed oval, 37 x 23mm. Elaborate quatrefoil. *S' AGNETIS DE SVHEMER (Seal of Agnes of Southmere). Southmere is now called Summerfield in Docking parish. East Walton 40572.
9. Lead, flat, over half surviving. Pointed oval, 40 (reconstructed) x 29mm. Fleur-de-lis. + S' : ALA[NI FIL JEMME (Seal of Alan son of Emma). Wereham 35357.
10. Copper alloy, pierced rounded lug rising from median rib on reverse. Pointed oval, 32 x 18mm. Virgin and Child enthroned, above kneeling supplicant. * S' ALEIS DE COSInTON (Seal of Alice de Cossington; there is a small horizontal crescent after the end of the legend). There are places called Cossington in Kent, Leicestershire and Somerset, the latter two called *Cosintone* in Domesday Book (Ekwall 1960, 123). Langham 40490.
11. Lead, flat, approximately half surviving, break at surviving end where ?lug broken-off. Pointed oval, 34 (reconstructed) x 25mm. ?Crescent (horns only remain). + S' ARN[.....]LEt (Seal of Arnold ?). Narford 40016.
12. Lead, flat, median rib on reverse. Fragment of pointed oval, approximately a quarter surviving, c. 26 x 40mm (reconstructed). Foliate motif. J] BAVID[(Most of inscription missing). Bawburgh 37461.
13. Lead, flat, pierced lug projects from upper end. Pointed oval, 36 x 22mm. Fleur-de-lis between two pellets. +



Plate 1 Silver seal matrix from Hempnall (5), with u-shaped silver chain loop with flattened ends secured by silver rivet. Scale 1:1



Fig. 1 Impressions taken from seal matrices. 2: Elsing. 3: Surlingham. 4: Bawdeswell. 5: Hempnall. 14: Blakeney/Wiveton. 15: Quidenham. 47: Stoke Holy Cross. Scale 1:1

- SIGILL' CLERICIE LE PAW (Seal of Clarice le Paw). Paw is derived from Middle English *pô* for peacock, used as both a personal name and a nickname (Reaney and Wilson 1991, 342). Suffield 39305.
14. Copper alloy, pierced rounded lug rising from median rib on reverse. Circular, 19 mm. Crossbow, nicely engraved and detailed depiction. + S' COLIN · LE · F' hENRI (Seal of Colin the son of Henry [in French]. Col-in is a diminutive of Col, a pet form of Nicholas (Reaney and Wilson 1991, 105)). Blakeney/Wiveton 33819. Fig. 1.
 15. Lead, flat, parts of edge missing, incised incuse cross and concentric saltire on triangular base (12 x 8mm) on reverse. Circular, 37mm. Stylised lion passant (or possibly rampant) to sinister. X SIGILLVM GALFRIDVS DA[(Seal of Geoffrey Da... (legend prograde on matrix, therefore retrograde on impression)). Quidenham 39287. Fig. 1.
 16. Lead, flat, parts of edge missing. Fragment of pointed oval, just over half surviving in worn and abraded condition, 38 x 23mm (reconstructed). Fleur-de-lis or ear of corn.] : GALFRI.....B[(Seal of Geoffrey ?). Mattishall 39727.
 17. Lead, flat, cruciform rib and central lug on reverse. Fragment of pointed oval, approximately half surviving in abraded condition, 45 x 21mm (reconstructed). ?Foliar motif. JMABIL FIL WIL[((Seal of) Mabel daughter of ?William). Shipdham 37201.
 18. Lead, flat, longitudinal median rib ending in pierced lug on reverse. Pointed oval, 36 x 26mm. Fleur-de-lis. + S' MARIORIE : FIL' : RICARDI (Seal of Marioria daughter of Richard. Marioria is a variation of Margeria/Margery. Inscription begins at foot of fleur-de-lis). Raynham 40247.
 19. Lead, flat, in abraded condition, edge damaged. Circular, 27–9mm. Octofoil. + S' · MICHaHEL · FROST (Seal of Michael Frost). Shipdham 37201.
 20. Lead, flat with sub-triangular extension at top in place of lug. Circular, 26mm. Quatrefoil. + S' · RAD' · FIL' · hENR' (Seal of Ralph son of Henry). Ormesby St Margaret with Scratby 24047.
 21. Copper alloy, flat with median rib ending in pierced lug on reverse. Circular, 28mm. Two running hounds seizing a running hare against a background with bush or tree and trefoils. + S' · REGINALDI · DE · SCHOTESHAM (Seal of Reginald of Shotesham; C and h ligatured). Kelling 29807.
 22. Lead, flat, rectangular un-pierced lug at top. Circular, 29mm. Elaborate quatrefoil with radiating sprigs formed by lines ending in pellets. + S' · RICARDI · FIL' · FELICIS (Seal of Richard son of Felix). Burlingham/Beighton 40021.
 23. Lead, flat, transverse pierced lug at upper edge on reverse decorated with central dot and dots between three concentric circles in relief. Circular, 30mm. Octofoil. + S' ROBERTI RIGEVARE (Seal of Robert Ridgeway). West Winch 3374.
 24. Lead, flat, un-pierced lug projects from upper end, bent in half when discovered, now in two pieces. Pointed oval, 51 x 63mm. Ear of wheat between curling leaves, stalk with short pointed transverse rib. + S' ROBERTI FIL' WIL'I · (Seal of Robert son of William. Downward-pointing arrow-shaped device in inscription between the letters I and F). Bedingham 23316.
 25. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with collared pierced trefoil terminal, three punched dots on the reverse mark the beginning of the legend. Ovoid, 26 x 21mm. Within a cusped octofoil decorated around the inner edge with tiny quatrefoils a standing Virgin and Child, with kneeling tonsured supplicant to her right, legend within outer border of fine pellets. * MATER ORA FIL V PRO ME DEVOTO · ROBERTO : (Mother, pray to your Son for me the devout Robert.). Field Dalling 37265.
 26. Lead, flat, with squashed pierced lug at top of median rib flanked by stylised plant ornament in relief on reverse. Pointed oval, 37 x 24mm. Fleur-de-lis. S · SARE · HODE · CROT (Seal of Sara Hode 'the clod'). Hode, or Hood, is a common surname 'meaning maker of hoods' (Reaney and Wilson 1991, 234). Crot, which also appears as a surname Crote or Croot, is a nickname from the Middle English *crut* 'lump or clod' (ibid. 118). An alternative translation may be Seal of Sara, heir of Oda (= Odo) Crot. However, this is perhaps a less convincing reading as there is no spacing between the H and O, while the words are well-spaced and alternate with pellets. Quidenham 31327.
 27. Lead, flat, un-pierced lug projects from top. Circular, 32mm. Octofoil. + SIGILL' TOME FIL' : IOHIS (Seal of Thomas son of John; zig-zag line as filler at end of inscription). Watlington 40438.
 28. Lead, flat, pierced lug projects from top. Oval, 41 x 35mm. Lion passant to sinister. + SIGILL' TOME FIL' ROBERTI (Seal of Thomas son of Robert). Snettisham 1503.
 29. Copper alloy, pierced rounded lug rising from median rib on reverse. Circular, 19mm. Bird walking to dexter. * S' · WALTERI LE BARRE (Seal of Walter le Barre; there are a number of derivations for this surname (Reaney and Wilson 1991, 29)). Cawston 33889.
 30. Copper alloy, pierced rounded lug rising from median rib on reverse. Pointed oval 40 x 25mm. Six-pointed star above septfoil above horizontal crescent. S' · WILL'I RTOR · ECCE · DE · KYRKEBI · SP · BVN (Seal of William

Rector of the church of Kirkby on Bain. There is a small crescentic initial mark, and there are contraction marks above the first R and the P). Kirkby on Bain *Kyrkeby super Bein* in 1226 (Ekwall 1960, 279) is north-east of Sleaford, Lincolnshire. Foulton 40489.

Personal seals with mottoes

31. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with triple-collared pierced quatrefoil terminal. Circular, 19mm. Grotesque creature, perhaps a hare, riding a donkey. * ALON I RIDE hAV NO SVA' (Alone I ride have no sway). Trowse with Newton 29100.
32. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced, collared terminal. Circular, 16mm. Cock walking left. * CROVW EDAI (Crow at day). The W appears as IVI. Merton 40118.
33. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced terminal. Circular, 17mm. Monkey with tail and very anthropomorphic face facing left. * I CRARC NOTIS (I crack nuts). Fincham 38089.
34. Copper-alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced terminal. Circular, 14mm. TNC below gable (T and N ligatured, garbled, probably for sacred monogram IHC). * IE SV SEL (I am a seal). Quidenham 37284.
35. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with collared pierced terminal. Circular, 18mm. Head of John the Baptist lying horizontally on a platter, crown of head to sinister, palm of martyrdom above. * I VAS A MAN (I was a man). The inscription starts above crown of head. Quidenham 32007.
36. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted handle with pointed pierced terminal. Circular, 13.5mm. Bird, with enormous head and beak, facing to dexter. * LEGE TEGE (Read and conceal). Norfolk unprovenanced 40486.
37. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted handle with pierced terminal. Shield-shaped with rounded base, 16 x 14mm. Bird standing with back-turned head and open wing. In chief: LELSV (I am loyal). Quidenham 35733.
38. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced pointed terminal. Circular, 14mm. Head of John the Baptist lying horizontally on a platter, crown of head to dexter. * PRIVE SV (I am private). The inscription starts above crown of the head. Mattishall 36629.
39. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced collared terminal. Circular, 20mm. Ih-C below gable from which projects the initial cross (with very slight upper arm) in the inscription. + PRIVE SV ICI (Here, I am private). There is an incised trefoil as filler at the end of the inscription. Merton 37113.
40. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with pierced terminal. Circular, 16mm. IIC below gable (probably for sacred monogram IHC). + PRIVE S'V /• (I am private). The engraving of the letters is rather coarse, the P and R being very similar and not very different to the I. Merton 40118.
41. Copper alloy, flat with very short median rib ending in pierced lug at top on reverse. Pointed oval, 29 x 19mm. Bird (?goose) walking to dexter with two small curling tendrils above body. * SIGILLVM SECRETI : (Secret seal). Horstead with Stanninghall 39676.
42. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with triple collared pierced trefoil terminal. Circular, 18mm. Lion rampant. * SUM LEO FORTIS (I am a strong lion). Emneth 31235.

With initials

43. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted handle with pointed pierced terminal. Circular 8mm. ?crowned I with branch to either side (very abraded). Long Stratton 40566.
44. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted conical handle with broken pierced terminal. Circular 15mm. Ih'S (Sacred monogram in black-letter script, no legend around). Fincham 38089.
45. Silver signet ring, very worn, traces of pairs of curving incised grooves on both sides of shoulders and transverse rib on both sides of flattened D-sectioned band, transverse lines visible at joins where separate section has been inserted to widen band, internal diameter 22mm. Circular bezel, 14mm. Black-letter r between tiny tear-shaped pendant leaves. A close parallel to the form of the r can be found on a memorial brass at Aldborough, Norfolk, dating to 1485 (Greenwood and Norris 1976, 27, N.3a, A). Elsing 40010.
46. Copper alloy signet ring, broken band, internal diameter approximately 21mm. Oval bezel, 12 x 9mm. Crowned R. Bawburgh 40532.

Without inscription

47. Gold signet ring, hoop with very worn engraved floral panel on both shoulders and oblique bands of beading around remainder of hoop, internal diam. 16mm. The panels of floral decoration are similar to those on a signet ring illustrated in Taylor and Scarisbrick (1978) no. 336. Circular bezel, 11mm. *A heraldic antelope sejant on a*

grassy mound with a vertical frond to dexter, above which are six openwork cusped arches within upper half of cable border (deep, fine engraving). Stoke Holy Cross 41093. Fig. 1.

48. Lead, flat, broken lug at top on reverse. Shield-shaped, 13 x 15mm. Line of five short and broad vertical lines in chief above a horned prancing devil with tail and hands outstretched. East Rudham 40787.
49. Lead, flat, broken lug at top. Circular, 21mm. Symmetrical plant motif, an elaborate and well executed fleur-de-lis. Harling 40338.
50. Copper alloy, hexagonally faceted handle with pointed pierced terminal, punched dot on reverse at top to indicate alignment. Circular, 14mm. Bird walking to sinister. Norfolk unprovenanced 40486.
51. Copper alloy signet ring, very worn, bezel and broken tapering shoulders only, most of flat-sectioned hoop missing, approx. internal dia. 20mm. Oval bezel, 16 x 13mm. Fleur-de-lis. North Walsham 40281.
52. Copper alloy, flat, non-pierced lug at one end on reverse. Pointed oval, 31 x 20mm. Non-inscribed, non-engraved, the front entirely flat. West Rudham 32133.

Illegible

53. Copper alloy, flat with median rib ending in pierced lug on reverse. Pointed oval, 28 x 16mm. Star over ?plant motif. · A..... (Inscription almost totally illegible through wear). Howe 30401.
54. Lead, flat, longitudinal groove on reverse. Approximately half surviving with damaged edge at top where ?lug is missing. Circular, 39mm. Elaborate quatrefoil. + SIGILL' S[.....]LEIS (Seal of ?). Watlington 31072.
55. Lead, flat. Approximately quarter surviving with small fragment of outside edge. Circular, c. 32mm (reconstructed). Cross-crosslet between four radiating crosses (reconstructed).][?G] · W[(most of inscription missing). Ormesby St Margaret with Scratby 37120.
56. Lead, flat. Less than half surviving with pierced lug projecting from top. Circular, c. 25–6mm (reconstructed). Incomplete unidentified central motif. + S'[.....]P (Seal of ?). Little Barningham 40242.
57. Copper alloy, flat with pierced lug at one end on reverse. Pointed oval, 28 x 17mm. Seated Virgin and Child, with kneeling tonsured supplicant below arch beneath. Inscription illegible (worn and corroded). Cawston 30455.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN NORFOLK IN 2004

edited by David Gurney

This is a selection of important finds from an estimated total of around 17,000 objects seen and recorded by the Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service's Identification and Recording Service for Archaeological Finds, details of which have been entered on to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (formerly the Norfolk Sites and Monuments Record) during 2004. The Norfolk HER is maintained by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology at Gressenhall and may be consulted by appointment (tel. 01362 869281/2 or email smr.mus@norfolk.gov.uk).

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