# Burton Dassett Southend

Part 2 Section 8.8

# Bone, Jet, Glass and miscellaneous objects

by
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The results of the excavations conducted at Burton Dassett Southend 1986-88, together with subsequent fieldwork (fieldwalking, and recording of the Chapel and Priest's House) are disseminated in two parts.

Part 1 is the printed volume *Burton Dassett Southend, Warwickshire: A Medieval Market Village* by Nicholas Palmer and Jonathan Parkhouse, Society-for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 44 (2022). The printed volume contains the following sections:

1. Introduction and background (aims and origin of the project, key issues, archaeological and historical contexts, fieldwork scope and methodology, summaries of earthwork survey and fieldwalking)
2. The archaeological sequence (summary of the structural evidence, ordered by phase)
3 Spatial organisation and the buildings at Southend
4 Daily life and economy at Southend
5 Conclusion
Bibliography

Part 2 consists of a series of digital files in .pdf and .xlsx format, available via the Archaeological Data Service at https://doi.org/10.5284/1083492. Whilst Part 1 is a free-standing narrative, Part 2 includes the detailed descriptions and specialist analyses underpinning the printed volume. It consists of the following sections:

6.1 Geology by John Crossling
6.2 Soils by Magdalen Snape
6.3 Earthwork survey by Nicholas Palmer
6.4 Excavation methods by Nicholas Palmer
6.5 Dovehouse Close fieldwalking 1987 & Chapel Ground fieldwalking 1991 by Nicholas Palmer
7. Fieldwork (detailed description of the structural evidence at individual context level, ordered by area/tenement and phase) by Nicholas Palmer
8.1 Medieval pottery by Stephanie Rátkai
8.2 Coins and jettons by Wilfred Seaby
8.3 Copper alloy objects by Alison R Goodall with contribution by Dr John Blair
8.4 Analyses of copper alloy objects by Dr Roger Brownsword and E E H Pitt
8.5 Pewter objects by Brian Spencer and Nicholas Palmer, with analyses of pewter spoons by Dr Roger Brownsword and E E H Pitt
8.6 Lead objects by Nicholas Palmer
8.7 Ironwork by Dr Ian H Goodall, with spurs by Blanche Ellis
8.8 Bone, jet, glass and miscellaneous by Iain Soden and Nicholas Palmer
8.9 Domestic stonework by Iain Soden, John Crossling and Nicholas Palmer
8.10 Architectural stonework by Iain Soden
8.11 Stone roofing material by Nicholas Palmer
8.12 Roof tiles and ceramic artefacts by Susan Lisk
8.13 Archaeometallurgical investigation of the smithy and other evidence by Dr J G McDonnell and Alison Mills
8.14 Coal by Dr A H V Smith
8.15 Human remains by Ann Stirland
8.16 Clay tobacco pipe by Nicholas Palmer
8.17 Flint by Dr L H Barfield
8.18 Late Bronze Age pottery by Alistair Barclay
8.19 Roman and Saxon pottery by Paul Booth
8.20 Faunal remains by Julie Hamilton
8.21 Plant economy by Lisa Moffett
8.22 Radiocarbon dating of spelt wheat by Rupert Housley
8.23 Archaeomagnetic dating of hearths by Paul Linford
9. Miscellaneous data tables

The bibliography, incorporating all the works cited in Part 1 and Part 2, is also available digitally.

# BONE, JET, GLASS AND MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS

*by Iain Soden and Nicholas Palmer*

## ***1-21 Bone Objects*** *(Figure 8.8.1)*

*1-2 Tuning Pegs*

Bone tuning pegs are the most commonly excavated evidence for medieval stringed musical instruments. These examples are both of Cambridge Type A, with head and perforation at opposite ends, made for instruments with open superstructures into which they could be inserted and tuned from behind (Lawson 1990). They probably derive from a harp or perhaps a simple fiddle type instrument. The crudeness of their manufacture with visible knife and file marks is typical. The Burton Dassett pegs are relatively early, other known examples dating from *c*1300 to the 17th century. A group possibly made by a recorded harpmaker in Oxford are dated to the period 1453-*c*1467 (Henig 1977, 165-6) and two examples from Coventry have a date of *c*1480 (Bateman and Rednap 1986, 153, fig 46 nos 6-7).

1. Tuning peg, Cambridge Type A, with rectangular head and single perforation at opposite end. Crudely made with prominent knife marks. Overall L 72.7mm, L from shoulder to perforation 48mm; perforation diam 1.95mm. (2119/1, ph W1, early 14c).

2. Tuning peg, Cambridge Type A, incomplete, with rectangular head and single perforation at opposite end, broken across perforation. Crudely made with prominent knife marks; diagonal file marks on shaft from secondary working to fit peg into socket. Surviving L 60mm, from shoulder to perforation 45mm; perforation diam 2.25mm. (2376, ph I2, early/mid-late 13c).

*3-5 Dice*

3. Die, solid. Single ring and dot symbols, opposing sides add up to seven. 5mm x 5mm x 4.5mm. (2264, ph K5, early 15c demolition).

4. Die, solid. Double ring and dot symbols, opposing numbers add up to seven. 7.5mm x 8mm x 8mm. (310/3, ph D17, topsoil).

5. Die fragment, hollow with loose plug. Double ring and dot symbols. Ht 12mm. (1940, ph H8, topsoil).

6. Bodkin or peg with pierced head. L 36mm. (2057, ph I6, topsoil).

7. Ring with protruding lug, rounded upper surface and flat back. Possibly a handle plate for a looped handle. L 39mm, Th 5mm, central hole diam 13mm. (1399, ph F3, early 14c).

8. Knife handle, decorated with two bands of incised scrolls and hatched foliage, containing iron tang of whittle tang knife. L 69mm, W 15mm. (2522, Y1, fieldwalking).

*9-12 Beads*

In the later middle ages beads were little worn in necklaces; some were used as elaborate dress fittings or pin heads, but most found probably came from rosaries (Biddle and Creasey 1990, 660; Egan and Pritchard 1991, 305). No 10 was found with one of a number of jet beads (no 24 below)

and it, and the similar no 11, may have formed part of a rosary in two materials. A similar bead to no 12 came from a late 13th-century context at Hangleton, Sussex (Holden 1963, 176, fig 39 no 2).

9. Bead, cylindrical with central rib and protruding collars on either end. L 6mm, Diam 9mm, piercing 3.5mm. (822/1, ph E7, late 15c demolition).

10. Bead, disc-shaped with slightly convex edge. Polished. L 3.5mm, Diam 10.5mm, piercing 3.5mm. (368/4, ph D28, topsoil).

11. Bead, disc-shaped with slightly convex edge. L 3mm, Diam 10mm, piercing 3mm. (810/1, ph D24, early/mid 15c).

12. Bead, spherical/biconical. Polished. L 6mm, Diam 7mm, piercing 3mm. (1468/1, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

13. Bone fragment (cattle metatarsal) with curved side and rough point. Water worn. L 95.5mm. (1242/2, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

14. Bone fragment (cattle metapodial) with curved side and rough point. Water worn. L. 70mm. (898, ph E6, late 15c).

Similar objects to nos 13 and 14 from Lyveden, Northants are described as bone tools (Bryant and Steane 1971, 65-6, fig 18, f, g and h). A Roman example from Gorhambury was possibly used as a grip for a rope handle (Neal, Wardle and Hunn 1990, 157, fig 140 no 968), but these seem too flat for this. Their smooth, worn finish is distinctive and suggests use for an activity involving water.

15. Pin fragment, roughly trimmed. L 55mm. (810/1, ph D24, early/mid 15c).

16. Pin fragment, roughly trimmed. L 60mm. (310/1, ph D17, topsoil).

17. Point, roughly trimmed. L 40mm. (1202, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

18. Possible antler fragment with notch in end, worn on two sides. L 37.5mm. (2010, ph W4, topsoil).

19. Red deer antler fragments with cut marks. Working waste. (2063, ph J5, early 15c demolition).

20. Long bone fragment, sawn at both ends. Working waste. L 42mm. (31, ph A6, late 15c demolition).

21. Long bone fragment (sheep/goat tibia), sawn around ends. Working waste. L 35mm. (805, ph D27, late 15c demolition).

### ***22-29 Jet beads*** *(Figure 8.8.1)*

A group of eight jet beads (nos 22-29) came from the D2 tenement, originating in the east room of the D24 house. Jet was a material particularly used for devotional objects (Hinton 1990, 644) and these, in spite of having a variety of forms, probably came from a single rosary. A bone bead (no 11 above) found with no 24 may suggest that the rosary was of two materials. Rosaries could contain between 10 and 150 beads and it is uncertain what proportion of the whole these finds represent (Biddle and Creasey 1990, 660; Egan and Pritchard 1991, 305). A fine rosary of 24 beads (10 jet and 14 amber) came from a possible prioress' grave at Rusper Priory, Sussex (Gilchrist 2008, table 4; Way 1857, 304).

Jet beads seem to be a fairly rare find on rural sites, particularly in the south; there is one from Great Linford (Mynard and Zeepvat 1992, 138, fig 49 no 5), a mid-15th/early 16th example from Wharram Percy (Andrews and Milne 1979, 128, fig 68 no 19) and one from Thrislington (Austin 1989, 146, fig 63 no 1). They are slightly commoner on urban sites with examples known from Winchester, Oxford and Coventry (Biddle and Creasey 1990, 661, fig 181 nos 2109-17; Palmer 1980, fig 35, fiche 2 D05 no 7; Bateman and Rednap 1986, 153, fig 46 no 10). Jet bead working waste has been found in Coventry (Forster *et al* 2013) and it is probable that the Burton Dassett rosary came from there.

22. Hemispherical bead. L 7.9mm, Diam 16.8mm, piercing 3mm. (1134, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

23. Hemispherical bead, with secondary working around edge. L 8.4mm, Diam 15.5mm, piercing 2mm. (1202, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

24. Spherical bead fragment. L. 6.1mm max, Diam 11.9mm, piercing 2.5mm. (810, ph D24, early/mid 15c).

25. Ovoid bead. L 11.1mm, Diam 6.5mm, piercing 2mm. (1200, ph D24, early/mid 15c).

26. Ovoid bead fragment. Diam 9.5mm, piercing 2mm. (1134, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

27. Half ovoid bead. L 9.6mm, Diam 11.2mm, piercing 2mm. (666, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

28. Half ovoid bead. L. 8.55mm, Diam 11.9mm, piercing 2mm. (368/5, ph D28, topsoil).

29. Bead fragment. L. 5.1mm max, Diam 10.8mm, piercing 2mm. (1222/4, ph D25, mid/late 15c).

### ***30-39 Glass*** *(Figure 8.8.1)*

The excavated tenements produced two fragments of medieval window glass and three beads. There were also three fragments of Roman vessel glass, one from a pre-medieval context, the others residual. The fieldwalking produced another bead (no 35) and quantities of post- medieval and modern material amongst which was a 17th-century bottle stamp (no 39).

#### *30-31 Window glass*

30. Fragment of green window glass. Th 2mm. (150, ph A5, mid/late 15c).

31. Fragments of decomposed window glass. (515/1, ph D15, mid/late 15c).

#### *32-35 Beads*

Medieval glass beads seem to have been relatively rare (Egan and Pritchard 1991, 316) but do occur on village sites (Andrews and Milne 1979, 131, fig 71 nos 39-40). No 33 is medieval, but no 32, and possibly no 35, could have been residual Roman.

32. Bead, clear blue/green glass, looped off centre. Diam 4mm, Th 4mm. (828, ph E7, late 15c demolition).

33. Bead, decayed clear/orange glass. Diam. 4mm, Th 3mm. (368/2, ph D28, topsoil).

34. Bead, white glass. Diam 4mm, Th 3mm. (2058, ph J7, topsoil).

35. Bead, deep blue glass. Diam 9.5mm, Th 6.75mm, piercing 2.8mm. (2604, Y2, fieldwalking).

*36-38 Roman vessel glass*

36. Blue body fragment. (113/1, ph A1, pre-medieval).

37. Pale green body fragment. (310/3, ph D17, topsoil).

38. Blue/green body fragment. (1882, ph E3, early 14c).

39. 17th-century bottle stamp fragment bearing the initials RI, RJ or RT. Probably the initials of a private individual, possibly an alehouse keeper (Oakley 1985, 248-9, fig 48 no 13). (1101, Z4, fieldwalking).

***40-43 Miscellaneous*** *(Figure 8.8.1, 40-1; 42-3 unillustrated)*

40. Rough stone bead made from small pebble, off-centre piercing. Diam 7mm, Th 2mm. (811, ph E7, late 15c demolition).

41. Strip of mother-of-pearl inlay, perhaps from a knife handle. L 10.2mm, W 2.1mm, Th 1.2mm. (1132, ph E6, late 15c).

42-43. *Susan Lisk writes*: two pottery balls, in Tile Fabric J, probably used as marbles or counters. 42. Diam 16mm; 43. Diam 14mm. (2483, ph L3, topsoil).

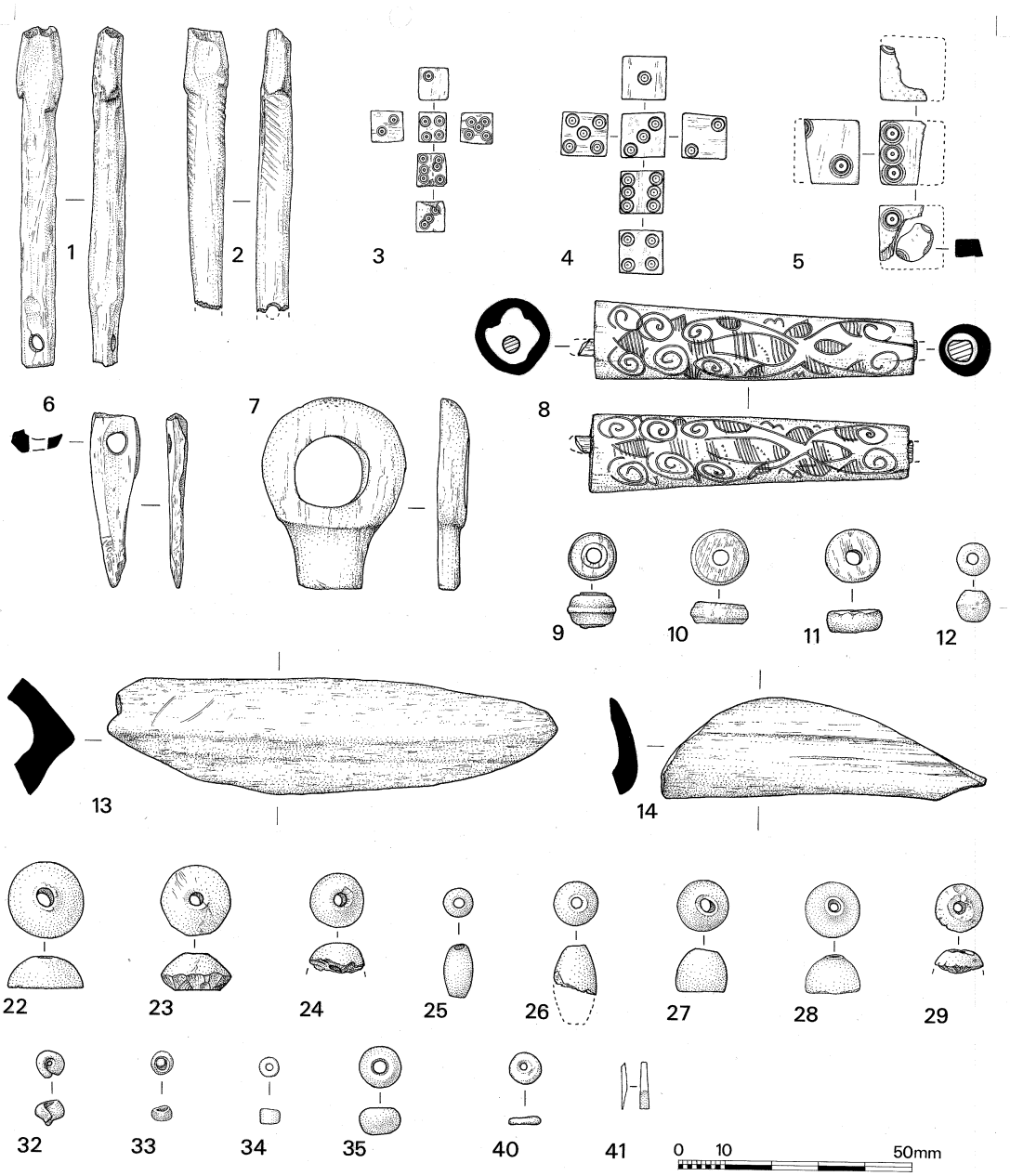


**Figure 8.8.1**

Miscellaneous objects: Bone 1-14, Jet 22-29, Glass 32-35, Stone bead 40, Mother-of-pearl inlay 41