

**Post-Excavation Assessment of the Small Finds from The Hagg, Swaledale,
North Yorkshire (HFS17)**

January 2019

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ArchaeoGenie Report Number 2019/01



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Introduction

Archaeogenie were commissioned in 2018 to undertake a post-excavation assessment and analysis of thirty-nine small finds from the excavations of The Hagg by the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG). The range of objects included two Roman coins, a penannular brooch, a lead ingot, shale beads, a glass bangle fragment and a small collection of ironwork. The majority of the small finds appear to be Roman in date, but the ironwork includes post-medieval and even modern items like screws.

Methodology

The finds have been recorded in an *Excel Spreadsheet*. A copy of the spreadsheet is held in the archive and a hardcopy print is provided as a table at the end of this report. All of the metal items were x-rayed for this assessment and the coins were conserved.

The coins have been identified and recorded following received numismatic practice and the English Heritage guidelines (Brickstock 2004). The other finds have been identified using standard catalogues (Crummy 1983, Manning 1985) and functional categories have been assigned to each find using the scheme developed by Crummy (1983, v) (Table 1). This scheme is not without its difficulties (Cool and Baxter 2000, Crummy 2007). However, it is widely used and thus useful for inter-site comparisons of assemblages. The most important objects are discussed below.

The Coins

Two Roman coins were recovered. Both were late Roman issues as follows:

<36> [54] An extremely worn Constantinian *nummus*. *Gloria Exercitus*, two soldiers, 1 standard. AD 335-341. Reece Period 17.

<38> [84] An extremely worn and illegible (probably irregular) *nummus* or *antoninianus*. Late third or fourth century.

These coins provide a useful augmentation to the small and developing coin list from The Hagg. Upland sites rarely produce any coinage at all and the late Roman examples here point not only to activity at this date but also connections with coin-using elements of society.

The Small Finds

The majority of the small finds are indeterminate iron objects the date of which is difficult to ascertain. Full details of these objects are contained within the catalogue and they are not discussed further here. Instead, this assessment focuses on the identifiable and clearly Roman objects.

Personal Adornments

<41> [73] An iron penannular brooch of Fowler's (1960) Type D. This type is dated from AD60-AD400, but iron penannulars have a tendency to be later Roman in date. It lacks its pin and has turned back terminals, which appear undecorated (although decoration may have been destroyed by corrosion).

<16> O/B1 A small fragment of a blue glass bangle decorated with white trailed 'pothook' motifs. This fragment conforms to Kilbride-Jones' (1938) Type JI. Ivelva's (2018) recent research on bangles suggests that they should be dated from AD60-200. They have a clearly northern distribution and

production centres have been hypothesized at Thearne (E. Yorks), Corbridge (Northumberland) and Traprain Law (Scotland). They probably functioned as arm-rings (on the lower arm) but it has also been suggested that they may have been used to style hair and to dress the manes of horses.

<26> [62] A jet cylinder bead in two fragments. It has a slightly waisted centre and the ends are decorated with three transverse grooves. It has a central perforation (Allason Jones 1996, 23).

<32> [62] A shale or cannel coal spacer bead of circular form. The opposing sides at 3 and 9 o'clock are flattened and perforated by two transverse holes. The disc has a central lathe mounting hole. There are good parallels for this form of spacer bead from South Shields (Allason Jones and Miket 1984, 7.59).

Toilet instruments

<27> [US] A copper-alloy rod, broken at one end and with a spatulate expansion at the other. The item is quite crude and might possibly be a blank for manufacturing a needle or hairpin. However, the spatulate suggests it may have been intended as a spoon probe (Crummy 1983, Nos. 1926-1932).

Household objects

<no number> [South West] A folded over piece of iron sheet, which appears to form the rim of an iron vessel. Uncertain date.

Tools

<no number> [North West] An iron handle which tapers to a terminal which has been folded over to make a suspension loop. Almost certainly from a knife (or just possibly a key) (Manning 1985, Fig 28.11b).

Fixtures and Fittings

Four nails, of probable Roman date, and some nail shafts were recovered. The nails include examples of Manning's (1985) Types 1b and 4.

Objects associated with metalworking

<no number> [US] A bun-shaped lead ingot weighing 475g. Uncertain date.

Objects of unknown function

Fifteen iron objects of unknown function were recovered. Details of these are contained within the catalogue and many appear to be of relatively recent date.

Discussion

The finds are a modest contribution to the increasing assemblage from The Hagg. The objects arguably span the entire Roman period and point to the presence of people with an interest in their dress, structures and other activities such as metalworking.

Only complete analysis of all the finds from the various seasons of excavations, combined with spatial and stratigraphic information will be able to determine the nature of activity at the site more fully.

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