



North Hertfordshire District Council



*More Archaeological Finds
from the Gardens of 'The Steppes',
Springhead, Ashwell.*

Supplementary Catalogue

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Springhead, Ashwell, Hertfordshire.**

Additional Catalogue

by

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Supplementary Report 10a

North Hertfordshire District Council Museums

Field Archaeology Section

Department of Engineering and Leisure Services.

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ASH-3'90

CATALOGUE OF FURTHER FINDS FROM THE GARDEN OF MR. CRABTREE, 9TH NOVEMBER 1992.

COMPILED BY P. McCARROLL.

Refer to Report 10: A Catalogue of the Archaeological Finds from the Gardens of 'The Steppes', Springhead, Ashwell, Hertfordshire D A Went & C Colley NHDC. Dec. 1990

Animal Bone

3500g of assorted animal bone were recovered, most of which display no signs of butchery marks.

Clay Pipes

Altogether 18 portions of clay pipes were identified, comprising three bowl fragments and fifteen stem fragments. Of the bowls, one bears relief decoration of a pair of crossed keys beneath a milled rim and is apparently of eighteenth century date. The second bowl is complete though rather small, very crudely made and untrimmed and is not as easily dateable as the first. The third fragment is only just recognisable as a pipe bowl. It's walls are thick and this, together with it's parallel sides, suggests a date in the seventeenth century.

Of the stem fragments, two have 3mm diameter bore holes through thick stems indicating a seventeenth century date, five have thinner stems with bore holes of 2.4mm diameter indicating an eighteenth century date and the remaining eight seem to be of nineteenth century date, being thin-walled and with bores of 1.6mm in diameter.

Fossils

130g of assorted fossils were included in this collection.

Glass

Eight glass objects were recovered. These are as follows;

One pale greenish blue rim and marble stopper from a nineteenth century drinks bottle;

One colourless glass jar stopper, bearing the legend 'IMPROVED KILNER LID'. Diameter 66mm;

One shard of crizzled post-Medieval glass;

Two shards from what appears to be a fluorescent lighting tube;

One extensively crizzled bottle rim fragment of indeterminate date, the diameter at the lip being approximately 27mm;

One shard of window glass, clear with just a hint of green, trimmed into a lozenge shape 37 x 13 x 1mm. Possibly part of a leaded light;

One colourless glass vessel, straight-sided with a rounded shoulder and with a metal collar about it's lip. The vessel measures 68mm in

height with a base diameter of 42mm. The dark residue inside suggests that the object is an inkwell.

Iron Objects

Six iron objects are contained within this collection. They are as follows;

One rectangular buckle, probably for a belt, measuring 47 x 39 x 5mm. Date indeterminate;

One sub-rounded buckle measuring 30 x 27 x 3.5mm, possibly for a thin belt or a strap;

One ring, 28mm in diameter and 3mm thick, with its exterior surface worn flat at one point. Curtain ring? Harness ring?

One heavily corroded knife / razor, comprising a broad, almost leaf-shaped blade with a tang set at 135 degrees to it. The overall length of the object is 155mm with the blade measuring 80mm;

One probable nail, square in section, with the dimensions 32 x 3 x 2mm;

One possible lace chape, measuring 20 x 4 x 1mm.

Pottery

1780g of pottery were recovered. The majority of the sherds are of post-Medieval or modern date, but identifiable amongst them are several Roman fragments and a sherd which appears to be from a fourteenth to fifteenth century polychrome vessel.

Shell

A surprisingly wide range of sea shells were contained within this collection. 645g of oysters, 105g of whelks, 35g of limpets, 20g of mussels, 15g each of cockles and scallops, 5g of winkles, less than 5g each of conch, water

snail and garden snail and 35g of an as yet unidentified shellfish. Also recovered were 10g of coral.

Stone

There are a variety of stone objects in this collection, namely;

Sixteen whetstone fragments weighing a total of 1350g, one of which is fairly modern and inscribed '...[u]m' which presumably stands for carborundum from which the object is made;

Two fragments of polished stone, possibly marble, weighing 5g;

One piece of polished greenstone, possibly from a Neolithic artifact such as a hand axe (but the fragment is too small for identification at 58 x 21 x 8mm, and weighing only 15g);

One probable flint core measuring 60 x 35 x 15mm and weighing 45g;

Two small flints which are probably of natural origin, but which could be blade cores. They measure 40 x 15 x 15mm and 38 x 12 x 5mm and weigh 5g and less than 5g respectively.

Also included in this stoney assortment are nine spherical but wholly natural flint nodules.

Slag

45g of assorted slag has been identified in this assemblage.

Miscellaneous Non-ferrous Metal Objects

One modern trouser stud stamped 'NEWY PAT 201430' on the rear;

One ring, moderately corroded and distorted with a diameter of around 29mm and a thickness of 1-2mm;

One severely distorted ring, formed by rolling a

flat sheet of metal into a tube. Dimensions 40 x 28 by a variable depth. The metal may be silver and the object itself could be a collar from a bottle or vessel rim;

One Queen Elizabeth II half-pence piece dated 1976;

One modern ink pen nib, measuring 31 x 8 x 0.10mm. Appears to be made from copper alloy coated with stainless steel. The front is inscribed 'R. ESTERBROOK & CO. RELIEF MADE IN THE USA.', and the number 31[4] is stamped across the nib;

One possible copper alloy typewriter key, with the letter 'N' printed on a yellowed background, beneath a disc of glass;

Part of what appears to be the metal guard from a trowel or garden fork handle;

One copper alloy drawer handle, fashioned from a stud of diameter 22mm, pierced by a ring of diameter 35mm;

One small fragment of wire of obscure origin;

One spiral-shaped trimming from a silver-coloured sheet metal, now much distorted and of unknown purpose.

Miscellaneous

Listed below are the items which fall into the 'miscellaneous' category.

One bone brush head minus bristles, measuring 68 x 18 x 4mm. The back is inlaid with three parallel blue lines whilst the front is inscribed with the letters 'YHY';

One ram / goat horn with an iron rivet driven through it's base. Probably the handle for some obscure tool;

One plastic bottle stopper;

One decaying wine bottle cork;

One 95g lump of an as yet unidentified grey / green slag-like substance;

One 5g fragment of a pipeclay object;

One plastic garter loop;

One small, turquoise, faience-type blob.

One multi-faceted cut gemstone (glass/crystal/ paste);

Two clay pellets 17mm and 14mm in diameter, which are probably shot, marbles or gaming pieces;

One remnant of a turquoise and yellow plaster and scallop shell novelty duck.