

Textile fragments on grave goods, Late Roman

Grave 279

731336. Spear ferrule

Plate of coarse replaced textile all over the surface, and traces of 2,2 threads, deteriorated. As the ferrule lay beyond the feet, this perhaps comes from a blanket or cloak laid over the body.

731383. Buckle

Remains of leather belt in position across buckle pin. From top, area rather deteriorated textile, 5.0 x 2.5 cm, 2,3, twill, count 14/12 (on 5 mm;) ~~have unfortunately not clear, but probably not a simple diagonal 2/2, a broken diamond, but insufficient clear to say on how many threads it repeats, or which centre.~~

731384. Belt hanger

Traces 2 threads front, leather round studs.

731385. Belt stiffener

From underneath, areas of leather with mark of stud, and between studs area of deteriorated 2,3, twill c.1.7 x 1.8 cm overall, count 6/6 on 5 mm, again impossible to see type of twill. This piece was against the back of the metal, under the leather; possibly the belt was old and broken, so that the fabric somehow got between it and the metal. Another textile fragment, loose, has a stud mark.

Fibre, HIA Animal fibre, no pigment.

731386. Tweezers, 731342. Furze mount

These fibres are leather.

Grave 287

731387. Buckle and plate

Inside plate, leather. Top surface of plate, over area c.1.8 x 1.1 cm, partially replaced, 2,2, twill, count 8-9/7, at one point finer threads in pairs; all yarns have noticeably coarse fibres.

Underneath and on pin, replaced 2 threads, and fragments ?flax

HMA Vegetable fibre, markings very similar to flax.

731398. Small long brooch

Large patch replaced on the back round the pin under probable bone and skin, rather coarse 2,2 twill, see 731399.

731399. Luton type brooch

On back, mass of replaced textile round pin, lying in folds over area c.3.0 x 3.0 cm, twill, 2,2, count 10/8 per cm (taken as 5/4 on 5 mm clear)

Grave 289

731365. With beads

Mass replaced textile, 4.5 x 1.4 cm, 2,2, surface poor (see 731376).

731374. Bronze fragment

leather.

731375. A. Pin and bronze ring from brooch

Deteriorated twill along pin (see 731376) 2,2, and ~~le~~ fragments.

B. Pin

replaced deteriorated 2,3, twill, fine.

731376. Brooch, ?Luton variant

On front, patch deteriorated textile, 2,3. On back, mass of replaced textile and detached adjoining fragments, 2,2, broken diamond twill with similar centre to that from Grave 553, 715262, bucket, count c.7/7 on 5 mm. In places where the fabric has a folded edge one system of threads seems to pass over three or four, but the long threads lie in twill (not plain weave, as in a tubular edge), and the effect may be due to broken threads.

731377. Brooch with links

On back end, 2,3 twill, deteriorated; on front, replaced traces with ~~very~~ surface, suggesting a nap,

All the identifiable weaves from these three Late Roman graves were twills, though a replaced plain weave, probably from its appearance flax, was used to wrap the bronze eagle staff-top, found earlier in Grave .

Of two twills with Z spinning in one system and S in the other - i.e. probably wool - ^{both} ~~one~~ was ^{be} certainly ~~of~~ diamond twills (Grave 989, dolphin buckle), ~~the other (Grave 979). also probably not a simple diagonal.~~ Diamond twills with Z,S spinning have been found at Balmaclellan, Verulamium and Corbridge, the first being closest in count and style to that from Grave 989 (1). A completely Z spun diamond twill from the same grave may from its appearance have been flax.

On the front of one brooch, again in Grave 989, hairy traces suggest a napped fabric, but as they are both small and replaced they may simply be threads which were breaking up before replacement. Dr.J.P.Wild has however described napped fabrics made in Roman Britain (2) and a clearly napped replaced weave was found in a cemetery with Romano-British features at Stretton-on-Fosse, Warwickshire.

The evidence of garments from the position of fabric remains is slight. In Grave 987 a medium coarse twill was preserved at the back of two brooches and the front of the buckle plate, suggesting a dress pinned by the brooches and hanging over the belt, and in Grave 989 the Z spun diamond twill behind the brooches could be dress fabric, with the Z,S twill on the front and the buckle as a cloak.

(1) J.P.Wild, Textile Manufacture in the Northern Roman Provinces, Cambridge, 1970, pp.98-100.

(2) *ibid.* p.84.

Elisabeth Cowfat.

(Mucking, Late Roman)

(Gr.989)

731378. Dolphin buckle

On front, area leather from belt. Over this, under fibres from grass or ?wood, lump c.1.5 X 1.5 cm, replaced textile, Z,S, fine very regular close twill, count 14(Z)/12(S), obviously a diamond, as diagonals can be seen in both directions in both systems, but not clear enough to draw. Other detached deteriorated fragments with leather attached.

Elisabeth Crowfoot

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b. Marta Hoffmann in The Warp weighted Loom
p.285 and note 26, which she seems to suggest
may be a flax hackle rather than a wool comb.

If you can tell me if the frame
is all metal or not; I'll take it up
with Vera Evison -

All good wishes

Yours

Elizabeth

The Old House,
Geldeston,
Beccles,
Suffolk

Jan 7th 1974

J.R.Musty, Esq.,
Ancient Monuments Laboratory,
Fortress House, 23, Savile Row, W.1

Dear John,

I am sorry this note on the latest
Mucking lot has taken so long to get written down -
I am sending it direct to you, as I am not sure
whether to send it to you, Alec or Glynis.
I have had a very full house, varying from nine
to sixteen of us for 2½ weeks, apart from stray
friends and relations dropping in to meals, so
have been in the kitchen all the time. I have
already sent a copy of this to Tom Jones, as he
needed it before the 6th, so did not wait for
H.M.Appleyard's fibre results, which arrived later;
I take it he (H.M.A.) has sent these to you also?

I have not enclosed a note on the Wicken
Bonhunt comb (731780) as I am not sure if Vera
Evison wanted one, or was going to deal with it
herself. When I was in the lab I was more concerned
to finish the Mucking pieces, and did not spend
as long as I would have liked on this very interest-
ing object, and when I looked at my notes I found
I could not remember for certain if the frame in
which the 2 rows of teeth were set was really all
of metal, as my notes suggest, or wood covered with
metal. Can you tell me this? If it is all metal
this, combined with the double row of teeth, is
unusual, and sounds like the odd example quoted

London on Wicken
Bonhunt file