

Catalogue of textile remains from West Heslerton cemetery

(1977 and 1978 excavations)

All of these remains have been replaced by the corrosion products of the metal artifacts with which they were found: it is therefore not possible to identify the fibre. In the catalogue, the following information is recorded for each system (i.e. warp and weft): thread-counts are given as a number per centimetre; direction of spin of the yarn is indicated by S, Z or I; the amount of twist is given in degrees, and an approximate yarn diameter in millimetres.

WH 77 Grave 2

AA small bronze annular brooch with iron pin.

On top edge of pin, 1.5 x 0.7cms of textile replacement with another piece the same, 1.0 x 0.4cms, loose in the box. tabby

18-20/Z/40°/0.5mm

16/Z/70°/0.4mm

Other objects in grave: iron knife and wood with bronze binding.

WH 77 Grave 3

Corroded iron buckle

On one side of buckle (possibly the front), 2.5 x 1.2cms of textile remains, lapping round outer edges.

2/2 twill

14/Z/50°/0.4-0.6

12/Z/60°/0.6

No other objects in grave

WH 77 Grave 4

AT iron knife

In corrosion in box with knife, 1.5 x 0.8cms

tabby

20/Z/60°/0.3

16/Z/50-60°/0.4

No other objects in grave

WH 78 Grave 10

BE Bronze annular brooch with bronze pin

Textile remains from brooch, 0.8 x 0.4cms, apparently separated from brooch during conservation.

Badly decayed ZZ fabric, possibly tabby

BJ bronze wrist clasp

Textile remains, covering an area 3.5 x 2.5cms, now detached from clasp.

Most of the remains are very decayed, but in some places there are visible some fine 2-ply yarns, approximately 0.3mm diameter, S-twisted from Z-spuns; in one case two of these yarns have been cabled (Z) together. It is possible that this is the remains of tablet weaving.

Other objects in grave: two other bronze brooches, one a pair to BE, an amber necklace, another wrist clasp the same as BJ.

WH 78 Grave 11

BZ bronze annular brooch

On back of brooch in iron corrosion at hinge end of pin (which is no longer present), 1.0 x 0.5cms of textile remains.

Weave not clear

?/Z/70°/0.8

?/S/70°/0.7

Similar threads on front of brooch

Other objects in grave: another annular brooch, pair to BZ, and a necklace of amber and bronze beads.

WH 78 Grave 12

CI bronze annular brooch with iron pin

On front of pin, two threads, one Z/60°/0.5mm, the other, at right angles, S/60°/0.5mm.

CE bronze annular brooch with iron pin, now separate.

On one side of pin 1.5 x 0.8cms of textile remains, consisting of two groups of parallel S-twist cords. One group of nine are at an angle to the other group of three or four. These may be the remains of a tablet-woven braid wrapped round the pin, but no weft is visible. Each cord appears to be 2-ply, 0.8mm, S-twisted at 60° from Z-spuns.

Other objects in grave: iron pin, iron buckle, iron ring, small bronze rings and a bronze ?purse mount with leather .

WH 78 Grave 14

CS iron buckle with bronze stud

On what appears to be the back of the buckle 1.5 x 1.5cms of textile remains

twill 2/2

20/Z/70°/0.7mm

14/Z/50°/0.8

Also ?leather between stud and buckle

CO bronze wrist clasp

Amongst the organic debris separated from the wrist clasp during conservation are some 2-ply S-twist cords 0.5mm diameter, plied from Z-spuns.

Other objects in grave: another matching wrist clasp, two annular brooches. Also, labelled ?14, an iron buckle with bronze belt plate with leather in it, an iron knife and an iron ?key-ring.

WH 78 Grave 16

DP bronze annular brooch with iron pin

On back of brooch at hinge end of pin, 1.0 x 0.5cms of textile remains.

2/2 twill

10/Z/50°/0.8

10/Z/50°/0.6

Also, on pin, 1.8 x 1.8cms of a different 2/2 twill

20/Z/60°/0.3

18/Z/60°/0.3

DN bronze annular brooch

Now detached from brooch, but originally from its upper surface,
a fold of textile measuring 0.8 x 0.6cms.

2/2 twill

20/Z/60°/0.3

18/Z/60°/0.3

D0 wrist clasp

Separated from clasp during conservation, but originally on
the back of the 'male' wrist clasp, 4.0 x 2.0cms of textile
remains and other organic matter.

Tablet weaving, the tablets being probably 4-hole, threaded
alternately front and back.

13 cords and approximately 12 wefts per square centimetre,
yarn 2-ply, 0.5mm diameter, S-twisted at 60° from Z-spuns.

?DM wrist clasp

Unlabelled, but probably originally from wrist clasp DM, 3.5
x 0.9cms of textile remains.

A brocaded tablet woven braid, 3cms wide, overlies a fine
twill similar to that found on the annular brooches. The twill
is stained with green corrosion products on the side away from
the braid and presumably this was the side which was adhering
to the wrist clasp. 0.6cms of the twill juts out from one edge
of the braid and one crossways edge of the braid itself is
folded towards the twill.

Twill - 2/2

18 /Z/60°/0.3

18/Z/60°/0.3

The braid consists of narrow bands of tablet woven cords at
the outer edges, with a brocaded area, 1.3cms wide in the middle.
The corded bands are woven with tablets, probably 4-hole, threaded
alternately front and back. There are approximately six cords
at either side, but the exact number is not clear. The brocading
has been worked over what may be patterned tablet weaving, but
there is not a large enough area to identify the motif in either.

Warp: 13 tablets per cm/2-ply, S-twisted from Z's

Weft: 12 per cm/2-ply, S-twisted from Z's

Brocading weft: 12 per cm/I (no twist).

Other finds from Grave 16: iron ring, bronze buckle, iron knife.

WH78 Grave 20

EH necklace of bronze objects

On the back of one of the bronze objects, a broken wrist clasp
with two holes towards one edge, are the remains of three cords
running between the two holes. Each cord is 2-ply, 0.5mm, S-twisted
from Z's.

Also in grave an amber and glass necklace.

WH 78 Grave 22

EE small bronze buckle

Leather between bronze belt-plates.

WH 78 Grave 24

EL bronze annular brooch with iron pin

In iron corrosion, presumably originally with brooch pin,
a fold, 1.5 x 1.5cms of textile remains.

2/2 twill

11/Z/50°/0.5

10/Z/50°/0.8

No other finds in grave

WH 78 Grave 25

On lower jaw, 1.0 x 1.0cms of textile remains with impression
of an annular brooch.

tabby

10/Z/60°/0.7

10/Z/60°/0.8

WH78 Grave 43

FS bronze annular brooch, with iron pin, now separate.

In corrosion with pin, some fine Z-spun threads, 80°, 0.3mm

FT bronze annular brooch

In amongst organic debris found in association with brooch,
0.8 x 0.8cms of textile remains.

tabby

13/Z/60°/0.7

13/Z/60°/0.7

FO gilded wrist clasp

Two fragments of textile remains, apparently separated from the
wrist clasp during conservation:-

0.4 x 0.7cms

tabby

20/Z/60°/0.3-0.4mm

16/Z/60°/0.1-0.5mm

1.6 x 0.5cms

4-hole tablet weaving threaded alternately front and back.

warp: 9 cords per cm/Z/80°/0.2mm

weft: 10 per cm/2-ply, 0.4mm, S-twisted from Z's.

Other objects in grave: a matching pair of wrist clasps,
beads, iron knife, bronze pin.

WH 78 surface find from sandpit

Bronze annular brooch

Over the outside edge of brooch, 1.0 x 0.8cms and 1.0 x 0.3cms
of textile remains.

Weave not clear

?/Z/55°/0.2

?/Z/55°/0.2

Not entirely mineralised and fibre identifiable as vegetable
bast. Other similar Z-spun threads at brooch.

Penelope Walton
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