

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
Report 74/91

IDENTIFICATION OF MATERIAL OF THREE
INTAGLII FROM BIRDOSWALD, CUMBRIA.
AML SITE NO 2028, CEU SITE CODE 420

Mrs M E Hutchinson

AML reports are interim reports which make available the results of specialist investigations in advance of full publication. They are not subject to external refereeing and their conclusions may sometimes have to be modified in the light of archaeological information that was not available at the time of the investigation. Readers are therefore asked to consult the author before citing the report in any publication and to consult the final excavation report when available.

Opinions expressed in AML reports are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England.

Ancient Monuments Laboratory Report 74/91

IDENTIFICATION OF MATERIAL OF THREE
INTAGLII FROM BIRDOSWALD, CUMBRIA.
AML SITE NO 2028, CEU SITE CODE 420

Mrs M E Hutchinson

Summary

Three intaglii were submitted for identification. They were identified as cornelian, red jasper and glass imitating onxy (colour banded chalcedony).
Keywords: Roman, gemstone, glass, intaglio.

Author's address :-

Mrs M E Hutchinson

Ancient Monuments Laboratory
English Heritage
23 Savile Row
London
W1X 2HE

© Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England

IDENTIFICATION OF MATERIAL OF THREE INTAGLII FROM BIRDOSWALD,
CUMBRIA. AML Site No 2028, CEU Site Code 420.

M E Hutchinson, FGA

Three intaglii were submitted for identification of the materials from which they were made. One was glass, one cornelian and the third red jasper. Neither of the stone intaglii is signed, but they are both very professional products, being well engraved and highly polished.

<u>AML No</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Grid</u>	<u>AOR</u>	<u>Material</u>
9014095	3906: phase I-IV = surface of weathered top of natural. Hadrianic.	082.05 229.27	2336	cornelian

Comment

Shape - a shallow oval cabochon with a wide, deep bevel round the edge of the flat back. The front surface shows considerable signs of wear, which, taking into account the hardness of the stone, suggests that the stone was worn for a fairly long time.

length 19.5mm
width 15.3mm
depth 4.4mm

<u>AML No</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Grid</u>	<u>AOR</u>	<u>Material</u>
9014097	3771: phase VI. Early third century; backfill of scoop for insertion of fine masonry on berm between fort wall and ditch.	057.34 214.35	2338	red jasper

Comment

Shape - oval, flat front and back with the sides cut as deep wide bevel round the edge of the back. The contrast between the brilliantly polished back and the much duller face indicates considerable wear.

length 12.7mm
width 10.5mm
depth 2.6mm

<u>AML No</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Grid</u>	<u>AOR</u>	<u>Material</u>
9101052	236: backfill of South Granary subfloor. Second half of fourth century.	089.40 207.10	669	glass, imitating onyx.

Comment

Shape - oval, flat back and front with the sides cut as a deep narrow bevel round the front. A layer of blue-grey glass has been fused onto a layer of black glass to imitate the pale blue-on-black appearance of white-on-black onyx. A scar round the side of the stone probably indicates the position of the top of the setting. All surfaces are worn, but that is to be expected with glass.

length 12.2mm
width 9.9mm
depth 3.5mm