

haunds, Northants

(revised note)

Textiles

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Fibres: H.A. Appleyard, F.R.I.

All the possible textile matter from the haunds excavation was carbonised. Fragments of two different of this could be recognised, in one part mixed with vegetable matter, ? grass or straw; other fibrous pieces may have been animal ?hair. A carbonised leather fragment could have come from part of a shoe or bag.

The fibre of the textiles could not be identified, but their appearance, with a very clear surface and Z-spinning, suggests flax. Both weaves are tabby (plain weave), originally of good medium to fine quality, linen suitable for garments such as shirts, women's caps or kerchiefs. The finer weave (textile 1, 3595.171, 6314.982) lies in closely pressed layers or folds, suggesting it may have been gathered or tied at one end. The one tiny fragment of a rather coarser tabby (Textile 2) lay on 982.

Tabby weave of this type has been in general use for so many centuries that dating of undecorated fragments is impossible; but these pieces are consistent with the 14th century date suggested for the destruction of the room. English medieval flax spinning is always Z, and fragments of very similar quality and appearance to these have frequently been found in shrouds from medieval burials, wrapping coins or metal objects, and in town excavations, including Winchester, Norwich, and the City of London, from the 11th to 16th centuries.

Catalogue

- 3595.171. Textile 1 carbonised fragments (a) two probably adjoining, (611625) 6.1 x 4.3, 2.7 x 2.8 cm. Appearance suggests flax; spin Z both systems, weave tabby, count c.20-22/22-24 threads per cm; close-pressed layers or folds. (b) c.0.6 x 0.7 cm, count c. 12/13 on 5 mm; one weft? paired; fragment mixed with ?grass. H.A. Appleyard (b) Only structure visible flat and ribbon-like; in the thinner pieces it is possible to see spiral structures associated with grasses and straws. Possibly some type of grass or splinters of thin-walled straw.
- 6314.982. Textile 1 carbonised lump, 2.5 x 2.0 cm, similar to above, (840267) again in folds; count c.11/12 on 5 mm.
- Textile 2 adhering to 1, scrap 7 x 5 mm; 4/2, tabby, count 8/6 on 5 mm.
- 6271.1080. Lump carbonised ?leather, with marks from fine threads of a (840268) weave, probably Textile 1.
- 6801.1088. carbonised area 2.0 x 2.2 cm, 4.5 mm thick, fibrous surface, (821857) ?leather. One very coarse 2-spun thread caught in a fold, ? from bag or shoe.
- 6400.1039. small fragment carbonised ?leather.
Carbonised fragments, best c.3.0 x 1.5 cm, ?hair.
H.A. Appleyard: these fibres appear to be fused together, probably animal, but detail obscured by blackness and deposits.