

Case 4 Ballindalloch hoard (c. 1100 – 800 BC) TT 30/24

A hoard of Late Bronze Age copper-alloy artefacts, found during metal detecting in 2019. The hoard includes three large harness rings, two ring-shaped decorative fittings, at least one bracelet (three fragments) and a copper-alloy fragment. The function of the rings is uncertain. The ring-mounts have evidence of a tin-enriched surface. This could be intentional enriching through the casting process or could be due to the conditions in which the objects were buried, bringing the tin to the surface.

There are no exact parallels for this hoard, though similar objects have been found elsewhere in Scotland. These types of objects are very rare in Scotland and were perhaps once part of equipment for harnessing and decorating a horse. Horses were new to Britain during the Bronze Age and owning and dressing a horse was no doubt a sign of status.

1. A complete, broadly oval ring. (ELGNM: 2024.26.2)
2. An incomplete bulbous ring. (ELGNM: 2024.26.1)
3. A complete, broadly oval ring. (ELGNM: 2024.26.3)
4. Double-looped ring-mount. On the reverse, there are remains of a clay-like material which is from the casting process. The surface looks like it is tin-enriched. (ELGNM: 2024.26.4)
5. Single-looped ring-mount. (ELGNM: 2024.26.5)
6. Two fragments of a bracelet. The bracelet is faced with an expanded terminal, only one of which remains. (ELGNM: 2024.26.6)
7. Fragment of a possible second bracelet. (ELGNM: 2024.26.7)
8. Fragment of copper-alloy. Included in the hoard due to find proximity and consistent condition. It is unclear what this is but there is possibly some intention with the shape. (ELGNM: 2024.26.8)



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