

Easton Maudit VI, Northamptonshire - The Intaglio

Rev. Prof. Martin Henig

SF 554 (Fieldwalk find)

An intaglio of duo-chromatic Chalcedony, brownish with a blue-ish tinge to the upper surface. It is translucent when held to the light. It has been cut to an ovoid shape, flat with bevelled sides, type F2 and measures 17 x 13mm. The small size and crisp cutting suggest a date of late 1st into 2nd centuries.

The subject here is a youth standing in profile to the left, in relaxed pose, with right leg bent and crossed behind the left, (description taken from the stone, it would be reversed on the impression). He is nude apart from his cloak (*chlamys*) which hangs from his shoulders. In his right hand he holds a spear over his right shoulder. In his left hand he holds another spear. At his feet, there is a hound, springing up on its hind legs. Due to damage at this point, the latter is best seen on the Norwich Castle Museum example referred to below.

Hunting was a popular occupation amongst the gentry of Britain and the Easton Maudit find may be of importance as helping to confirm the interests of one of the principal inhabitants of the villa.

It is possible that the type was identified with the famous huntsman, Meleager who killed the Kalydonian boar (see Woodford S. in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae VI*. 1992:423, nos. 77-83) although no boar's head is shown. The gem is exactly paralleled on a nicolo, probably from Norfolk, in the Norwich Castle Museum (Henig M. 1974, no. 454).



We, the Bozeat Historical and Archaeological Society would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to Rev. Prof. Henig for donating his time and granting us the benefit of his formidable expertise.

The intaglio was found prior to the establishment of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Unpublished elsewhere, as yet, I make this report available to the Roman Finds Group membership. This artefact, all others and the site archive are now the property of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre. Hopefully a more detailed account of the site can be published in some form in due course.






The site – a brief summary

Located at NGR SP 895582, at Easton Top Low, part of the Compton Estates, it was recorded as site 'Easton Maudit 6' by David Hall in his 1966 Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal article, though subsequently referred to as EM 7 by the 1979 RCHM Inventory of Archaeological sites in Central Northamptonshire. Excavations of a RB structure by the Bozeat Historical & Archaeological Society was carried out between 1987 and 1994 with some investigation of the surrounding compound's boundary walls and other features continuing until 2001. The site appears to have been occupied continuously from at least a later Iron Age, to early Anglo-Saxon date, with the notable exception of much of the third century.

The excavated area revealed two stone-footed and two substantial stone-built roundhouses or towers, the former pre-dating, the latter becoming incorporated into and flanking a corridor villa. This structure included a cellar and also a large central room with a smaller heated room adjoining.

Easton Maudit VI

Interpretation of the villa at its most complete, possibly being reconfigured at the time of its destruction and abandonment

-  - Yard surface or other stonework.
-  - Clay berm.
-  - Substantially intact Tessellated floor surface.
-  - Stone subfloor, those in Rooms 10 & 13 are substantial enough to support a Tessellated floor, others are less so.
-  - Clay / Mortar floor, both subterranean

