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Dress accessories of love and a plough of hope? Emotions, materiality and ‘emotants’ in later medieval Britain, c. AD 1250–1500

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Abstract

This paper presents new research in the field of archaeology of emotion, with a focus on later medieval objects. The current state of the study of emotions of the past in archaeology, and in history, is reflected upon; I then propose a new methodology for the archaeology of emotion. Archaeological evidence that can communicate, create, or intensify emotion(s) is identified as ‘emotants’. I explore later medieval finger rings and brooches inscribed with affective words, and iron plough-coulters as such emotants. It is hoped that by introducing the neologism we can advance this challenging, but yet, untapped field of study.

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to introduce a concept and method to investigate emotions of the past through archaeological evidence, specifically objects. The subject of past emotions has been developing in the discipline of history for over 25 years, but archaeology has been slow to make any meaningful contribution. I argue that by studying the physical remains of the past we can further our understanding of the personal, emotional experiences that were shaped and mediated through the practices of the material world, and *vice versa*. 'Emotion' has become the dominant word in our modern vocabulary, but during the period under consideration here it was not in use (Leys 2011; Frevert *et al.* 2014; OED Online). 'Affect' and 'feeling' were used synonymously, and 'passion' was an intense emotion or feeling, therefore I use the words emotion, affect, feeling, and passion interchangeably in this paper.

Emotion is a vast subject that is of interest to a wide range of academic disciplines (see Tarlow 2000, 713–8; 2012, 170–2; Wierzbicka 2010; Rosenwein 2016, 1–10; Rosenwein & Cristiani 2018, 9–25). Debate has often focused on what an emotion is, the evolutionary origin of such feelings, questions of universality or constructionism, and definitions of emotions. This paper will not enter into such debates, nevertheless, I take a social constructivist standpoint, in as much as agreeing with the premise that emotional experiences are socially constructed, but that feelings are experienced and sensed within the mind and by the body. Emotions are affected by social expectations and norms, and they can be learned. They can be an action and therefore can become a form of practice or performance. It is the later medieval social expectations of emotions and emotional-practices/performances that I wish to uncover by investigating material evidence.

Materiality has become a standard axiom in archaeology (e.g. DeMarrais 2004; Meskell 2005; Overholtzer & Robin 2015). The volume *Materiality* (Miller 2005) has shown that the immaterial is not easily separated from the material, and while materiality may be shown to be active and reflexive (DeMarrais 2004, 12), it is certainly not without emotion. Material things are dynamic and vibrant, and their interactions through practices and shared qualities can generate material

relationships (Alberti *et al.* 2013). Fowler & Harris (2015) argue that material things can enter relations *and* emerge from them: they are both being and becoming, and we can study them at specific moments and trace their relationships. In a similar vein, Johnson uses the term 'materiality' "to insist that the human world does not have an existence that is somehow prior to or independent of the material world." (2015, 30). He argues that humans and the material (and natural) world are inseparable and one does not and cannot create or modify the other in a linear or isolated manner. Material practices and interactions include immaterial emotions, therefore, alongside Johnson's "ideas, beliefs, and cultural attitudes", I posit that emotions are also "continually shaped and mediated through the practices of the material world" (2015, 31), and the material world is continually shaped and mediated through emotions.

In the rest of this paper I consider the study of emotion in archaeology, and how historical approaches have influenced the direction of exploration. Taking cues from historians' methods I go on to propose a new method for investigating emotions of the past through material things, by the identification of 'emotants'. This approach is then tested using two case studies that reveal material-emotional practices and relations.

The archaeology of emotion?

In 2000 Tarlow asked the question, "What are the relationships between spaces, architectures, artefacts, and emotions? How do things become emotionally meaningful?" (2000, 729), thus sparking the interest in the materiality of emotional practices. Gosden (2004) soon followed with an article on emotion and aesthetics. In his anthropological study on the return of a carving to its ancestral home of the Te Arawa people of New Zealand, he concluded that "emotions are materially constituted and material culture is emotionally constituted", and there is an affective relationship between humans and material. Harris & Sørensen (2010) attempted to investigate such a relationship in their interpretations of the Neolithic henge monument at Mount Pleasant (Dorset), and proposed a vocabulary in order to

incorporate emotions into archaeological interpretations, and to spur discussion on the subject.

More than a decade after her first paper, Tarlow's (2012) review of 'The archaeology of emotion and affect' showed that archaeological studies were beginning to consider the emotions of the past, but that more work was needed (and still is) to focus on the variability of emotion in the past. There is no need to repeat such a review here, but three points are worth highlighting. First, the later medieval period (c. AD 1066–1600) was not a focus of any archaeological emotion study. Secondly, since 2012 archaeology has still been relatively neglectful of the subject. The edited volume, *The Archaeology of Anxiety* (Fleisher & Norman 2016) is an exception to this. Here the editors attempted an "experimental and exploratory effort into thinking about the place of concern, worry and fear in archaeological interpretations" (Fleisher & Norman 2016, 1). Again, medieval topics were scarce, with only one paper on the Late Pre-Hispanic Fortress of Acaray, Perú (Brown Vega 2016); and some papers failed to satisfactorily move beyond the pairing of a site or object group with a general feeling of fear or anxiety. And finally, Tarlow's (2012, 181) demand for more than "the basic identification of fear or joy in the past" may have proved too much of a challenge to archaeologists, or perhaps there is an unwillingness to try that pervades. Is the study of emotion deemed too frivolous and subjective, and is 'emotion and archaeology' to be treated like 'aesthetics and archaeology' once was (see Skeates 2017)? It is clear that with proposals for new methodologies and further study, emotion and archaeology does have the potential to make sense of the past.

It must be made clear that researchers are not ignoring material culture in emotion studies (e.g. Richardson 2010; Moran & O'Brien 2014; Dolan & Holloway 2016; Ilmakunnas 2016; Toivo 2016). It is just that archaeologists are not the ones advancing it, which is incongruous given the premise of archaeological enquiry. It is no surprise that historians of emotion are embracing objects as the last decade has seen a 'material turn' in history.

Rosenwein and Reddy are leading historians in the field of the history of emotions who have both advanced the methodology and understanding of feelings using documentary sources. Rosenwein's most promulgating approach is that of identifying and exploring feelings in what she has defined as 'emotional communities' in pre- and early-modern Western Europe (e.g. 2006; 2010; 2016). Her standpoint is that of an historian amassing textual evidence from, and about, an identified 'emotional community' (similar to social communities of people), and interrogating the sources "to establish what these communities ... define and assess as valuable or harmful to them...; the emotions that they value, devalue, or ignore; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognise; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore" (2010, 11). Reddy (an anthropologist and historian) has been equally influential. He created the term emotives, and identified emotional refuges created in the face of emotional regimes and control in his studies of medieval and post-medieval Europe (2001; 2012). He asserted that the French Revolution was an emotional revolution (2001), and that the development of courtly love in Europe was a result of the attitudes towards, and opposition against, sexual desire by the Christian Church in the high Middle Ages (2012).

It is the method of focusing on emotional communities that seems to have influenced Tarlow's concluding remarks in 2012 when she stated that there is a need to recognise the environment of fear, for example, that was then manipulated to promote group cohesion or social practices, rather than simply identifying the emotion (2012, 181). But it is the basic step of identifying emotion and visceral aspects of life that is often missing from archaeological literature.

The emotional communities approach, as with many historical methods, leads to conclusions being drawn on a massed and general level, to the detriment of the individual. I argue that in medieval archaeology because of the nature of the evidence, we should also aim to explore the personal emotional experiences however idiosyncratic (*contra* Tarlow 2012, 169), as well as the broader social patterns. All people will have felt an emotional response to an object or event in

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3 their own unique way (a criticism of universality) — attempting to see these as
4 generalisations can leave us with a bland conclusion that hides the individual and
5 their emotional response(s). To be comprehensive we should look for the layers of
6 individuals, things and the immaterial that make up these conclusions, and not be
7 dismissive of the finer human and object stories from which they are constituted.
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14 To that end, I present two case studies that illustrate a new approach and
15 terminology that can be used in future studies of the archaeology of emotion. The
16 first is a preliminary investigation into thirteenth- to early sixteenth-century,
17 inscribed finger rings and brooches. While this material culture is inscribed with
18 emotional words, the second study moves on to a more challenging object that has
19 no inscription — part of a fifteenth-century plough from Northumberland. I show
20 how this can also be identified as an emotant, and an emotional-practice that is both
21 individual and communal with parallels identified elsewhere in later medieval
22 Europe. Both studies focus on more positive emotions of hope and love, rather than
23 fear or anxiety that have dominated the archaeological research to date.
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35 **Emotants**

36 To advance our study of emotions I propose the neologism: 'emotant'. I define an
37 emotant as a physical agent that is characterised by or serves in the capacity of
38 emotion. The agent can be affected by human emotion and/or it can influence the
39 emotion felt by a person. Therefore, emotants may be any feature, material culture
40 or thing that we study in archaeology, from objects, to buildings or structures, to
41 landscapes. They all may communicate, change, create, hide or intensify emotions,
42 or be used in some manner that was instigated by human feeling. Using Gosden's
43 (2004) phrase, they can be identified as being 'emotionally constituted', and part of
44 emotional practices. Contextualisation and investigation into the things' materials
45 and relationships is required to understand how a thing acted as an emotant in the
46 past, how it was characterised by emotion, and how it was used in practice.
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58 The neologism is loosely influenced by the term 'emotive' used by Reddy (2001). In
59 its most basic form, Reddy defined emotives as verbal or written expressions that
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could change, create, hide or intensify emotions. They had the power to do things, and simultaneously changed the person uttering the expressions, and those to whom they were addressed. Although not defined as emotives, Rosenwein (2016) also identified and collated emotional words used by past communities. This allowed her to quantify and deduce the form and expressions of emotions that communities expected, tolerated and valued. In archaeology the emotants can aid our understanding of emotions in the same way.

We may also be able to recognise webs of feelings and emotants. These webs differ from the sequences of feeling that Rosenwein (2016, 8) proposes, as it is understood that there is no simple, linear progression from an emotion felt, to the action of expression using an object, to a new emotion. Nor can they be easily compared with Harris & Sørensen's (2010, 150–1, 153) 'affective fields' as they are not only what generate emotions. Instead, the feelings and emotants are connected in webs, and as with a spider web, the connections may break, be renewed, or catch and incorporate new elements (emotants/ feelings/ people/landscapes). The webs may also grow, be recreated, decline, or even resonate over short or long periods of time. Similarities or differences in materials, emotional-practices, and relations over time can be explored.

Dress accessories of 'love'

As routinely used in history, words are evidence used to discover emotions of the past. In archaeology there are few forms of material decorated with words, but in the later medieval period dress accessories are a relatively common and quotidian inscribed object type. These include finger rings, brooches and pendants, made of gold, silver, silver-gilt or copper alloy. Almost 90 years ago, Evans pre-empted our interest in feelings, and wrote "of all these inscriptions [on finger rings] none brings us more closely into contact with the thoughts and feelings of their former wearers than the amatory inscriptions" (1931, xi). Many such finger rings were most likely given as courtship gifts (Standley 2013, 32–6), and they can provide evidence of the 'ideal' emotional feelings and practices from the period when chivalry and courtly romances were flourishing.

Analysis of 251 inscribed finger rings and brooches with Lombardic or Black Letter scripts recorded by Evans (1931), and 530 inscribed examples from England and Wales recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) dated to the 'medieval' period, shows 160 (21 per cent) of the total were inscribed with phrases that included an affective word, i.e. an emotional word or feeling (fig. 1; table 1) (PAS data downloaded 16 August 2018, and included two pendants). The remainder were inscribed with either invocations to Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the Magi, or the inscriptions were illegible. Of these, finger rings were the most commonly inscribed, and love was the most common passion expressed. But we discover that other emotions were embedded into the jewellery such as, joy, hope and desire; on the whole there was a range of affective words used to communicate feelings. These represent the feelings that were socially encouraged and expected to be felt by people in courtships or established relationships.

The results change significantly when we include the word 'heart' or ♥ as an affective word (chart 1; fig. 2). While 'heart' was not a feeling in itself, contemporaries understood it as the seat of emotions, and where a person's innermost thoughts and feelings were held (OED Online). When heart is added into the data the total number of objects inscribed with an affective increases to 29 per cent (229), with heart becoming the most common. But there are a mere six occurrences when 'heart' is used in conjunction with another affective word, and these are love, joy and desire. This suggests that the heart was an all-encompassing entity for all the emotions that were borne in the rings and brooches, and felt by the giver, and presumably, the wearer. The accessories indicate that by the late Middle Ages, the heart was well understood as the centre of the passions in popular culture. The frequent use of it over other affective words reveals its importance in changing, creating, or intensifying feelings that the emotant objects contained and conveyed, and potentially stimulated. It was not just symbolic – the heart was part of the matter of the rings.

The emotions communicated through the rings could have been quite literally followed. We see this in an example found in East Bridgford (Nottinghamshire) (fig. 3). The fifteenth-century ring inscribed with *amer et celer* (to love and to conceal), had been hidden and worn as an inner lining to a larger iconographic ring. This was decorated with the image of St Christopher carrying the Christ Child and inscribed with the word *loyalte*. If the first ring was given in perhaps a secret courtship, we can imagine that the recipient followed the instructions, to love but to keep such passion hidden, and to do the same with the physical emotant that served in the capacity of love. They chose to conceal the ring within a devotional ring that was also characterised by feelings of loyalty to the saint — but also loyalty to the lover in their hidden, romantic relationship. This example forms a web of emotions incorporating: feelings of love and loyalty; two emotant rings; two romantic partners; and the wearer's religious devotion and associated meditative feelings.

While many of these objects were most likely used in secular relationships, some could have their primary role as Christian, devotional emotants. Similarly, rings inscribed with 'remembering' words have been identified as acting as *memento mori*, rather than simply instructions for remembering living romantic partners (Standley 2013, 98). Only four per cent (21) of the PAS objects inscribed with an affective (including 'heart') were decorated with images or phrases that referenced Christ, God, the Trinity, the Virgin or a saint. Here the most commonly used affectives were 'love' (six), 'heart' (five), and 'joy' (four). Accessories from Evans (1931) have not been included in the count because details of imagery were not recorded in her catalogue; however, there were three examples where 'love' was associated with Christ in some form. These particular emotants provide a material-based indication of the feelings that the faithful in Western Europe were expected to experience and feel in their affective meditations in the late medieval period.

This preliminary analysis of the inscribed affective words on rings and brooches shows the potential of such emotants, and how they can contribute to our understanding of medieval passions.

A tool of hope

The second case study focuses on an object that has no revealing inscription: a plough-coulter. Nevertheless, it is identified as an emotant that created, intensified and strengthened feelings of hope. The emotant was recovered during the excavation of Alnhamsheles (Northumberland), a deserted medieval hamlet (fig. 1) (Dixon 2014, 205–6). This object initially roused interest because it is one of four post-Conquest plough-coulters found in Britain, and was recovered from a settlement site on the edge of moorland in the North-East, rather than in the country's medieval, arable heartland — the Midlands (Dixon 2014, 205; Dyer 2018, 196). Alnhamsheles was a small hamlet, which is first documented in 1265, had 11 tenants in 1314/15, and was abandoned by the mid-sixteenth century. Its name suggests its beginnings were as a shieling. Excavations have taken place on only two houses at the site (fig. 4). The iron plough-coulter was found sealed underneath paving stones in a late fifteenth-century home (fig. 5 & 6). While the coulter was missing part of its blade, which would have cut vertically into the soil when used on a mould-board plough (fig. 7), it was still a sizable piece of good quality iron that could have been recycled.

Ploughs were often shared amongst a community, or perhaps a wealthy villager may have owned one, and lent or rented it out. In the case at Alnhamsheles the community, or single owner of the agricultural tool, chose not to recycle or sell the iron and instead chose to incorporate it into their building. It is the unusual action of purposeful deposition, the agricultural function of the object, its material, and the social context that allow us to interpret the plough-coulter as an emotant.

In the 1480s it was deposited in a drain, under paving during the rebuilding of the house that had recently been destroyed by fire. The destruction has been attributed to an attack by the Scots, which was documented in an estate record dated 1472 (Dixon 2014, 217). The tenants must have invested heavily in the rebuilding, but chose not to benefit financially from the defunct iron tool. An explanation for its context cannot be convincingly argued as accidental, or as a convenient way to dispose of an unwanted item either — this was intentional, and there was

significance to the place and object. The plough-coulter made of iron was ceremonially placed in the heart of the building and would have been part of the inhabitants' and community's hope for prosperity and future harvests.

The practice of hoarding and depositing ironwork, including coulters, is recognised in early medieval contexts in Europe, with the material itself also bearing magical properties (Evans 1966, 55-58; 140; Leahy 2013; Klápště 2016, table 1; Thomas *et al.* 2016). Examples of plough remains from secure, later medieval contexts are rare, but hoarded plough-irons have been found elsewhere in Europe (see Lerche 1994, 226-27, tab. XXXV and XXXVII). A closely comparable find to that from Alnhamshales is a coulter pushed into an iron ploughshare excavated from a deep boundary ditch outside the west end of the church of Massereene Friary (Antrim, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland) (Lynn n.d.). The ploughshare was also used on a mould-board plough, and following the coulter, cut the earth horizontally. These plough-irons from the friary were found along with a hoard of 11 coins at the bottom of the ditch, and excavators suggested all had been deposited soon after the ditch was cut in the early sixteenth century when the friary was founded. The deposition of the items would not have been taken lightly and the boundary location was also significant – purposeful deposits at boundaries related to religious houses is a practice found elsewhere (see Standley 2013, 82–83; 2016).

The magnitude of the medieval plough and its role in social life and agricultural production cannot be underestimated, and is evident in plough-related ceremonies that were undertaken by medieval communities. Plough-irons were used in trials by ordeal to test for adultery and paternity between the ninth and twelfth centuries, and the memory of such use continued into at least the seventeenth century (Morey 1995). Ploughs even offered legal sanctuary in medieval England and France (Morey 1998). But other communal ceremonies were carried out to ensure a good agricultural year, and to raise parish funds for associated feasts and shrine candles (Hutton 2001, 124–6; Duffy 2005, 13).

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3 In *Dives and Pauper* (1405–10) (Parker 1493, Chapter xxxiiij) there is a reference to
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In *Dives and Pauper* (1405–10) (Parker 1493, Chapter xxxiiij) there is a reference to the superstition of leading a plough around a fire at the beginning of the year to “fare the better all the yere folowyng”. Shared or borrowed ploughs, often kept in churches, would be blessed and lights lit for them on Plough Sunday. An early fifteenth-century record shows that on the day after Epiphany (Plough Monday), parish funds were raised during the dragging of a plough through a community in Old Elvet in Durham (Co. Durham) (fig. 1) (Fowler 1898, 224). It was perhaps for such events that the fifteenth-century badges in the form of crowned ploughs were sold and worn (or even purposefully deposited) in the hope for the vital crops to ‘fare better’ (see Spencer 1990, 110–11). Such badges would also be emotants. Practices involving plough-irons were still in use in the 19th century – a coulter placed in a fire, or a stone which had become stuck between a coulter and share thrown over the house ensured the successful churning of milk for butter and cream in Wexford (Ireland) and Aberdeenshire, respectively (Gregor 1884, 330).

A coulter also makes a loaded appearance in Chaucer’s *Miller’s Tale* – it is the choice of weapon for burning or penetrating Nicholas’ arse (instead of Alison’s – the intended recipient). As Morey (1995) has argued the choice of tool echoes the use of the coulter for trial by iron, the *Tristan* legend, and forms a pun on *cul* (arse) and coulter (/ˈkəʊltə/), and the phallic tool’s function of penetrating the earth. In the Luttrell Psalter (fig. 7) and Langland’s *Piers Plowman* (late fourteenth-century) the subject of communal, agricultural labour, especially ploughing, is yoked to concepts of penance, spiritual salvation, and communal worship and devotion (Rentz 2010; Rhodes 2014). Such later medieval associations support the analysis of the plough-irons as emotants, and how their material properties operated within the relationships with their owners and the wider society.

The period of deposition of the plough-coulters at Alnhamsholes, and Massereene, was one of social instability. There were poor agricultural and demographic conditions with especially poor harvests in the 1470s, 1480s and in the early 16th century, leaving people facing hardship and poverty (Campbell 2011; McIntosh 2012, 17–19). The conditions, exacerbated by the lack of formal, parish-based or central

government-aid at this time, meant the small communities would have had to rely on other forms of charity and the emotional-material practices which incorporated the community-owned ploughs.

The ceremonies and archaeological examples reveal the emotions entwined with the coulter from Alnhamsholes, and its reuse in an extraordinary way, were not an isolated or linear result of the destructive Scottish attacks; there was instead a mutual creation and re-creation of emotion and a wider social practice.

A final comparison of such depositions can be made to the commonly 'concealed deposits' in buildings, post-sixteenth-century. These are most often shoes, articles of clothing and bottles (Hutton 2015), but less commonly tools; therefore it seems as if communal coulters lost their resonance, and were no longer given prominence in emotional-practices in post-Reformation Britain. Instead the chosen emotants became more personal and individual articles. We are perhaps seeing a temporal shift in the type of material emotants, and a decline in communal-centred emotional-practices – or at least in their elaborateness and breadth of their potential effect. This shift is also seen in other aspects of communal life in Britain after the Reformation, for example, communal memory and events relating to the dead were devalued, and guilds and the shared identity and feelings of solidarity felt by their members declined (Duffy 2001, 106; Standley 2013, 101; Rosser 2015).

Conclusions

Using the new concept of 'emotants' I have attempted to further our understanding of emotions in the later medieval period. The case studies have investigated emotion as practice with material evidence to explore emotional expectations, experiences, and webs, at both a broad and individual level.

The emotant rings and their affective words direct our attention to the emotions that were expected and valued in contemporary romantic relationships. They were part of the emotional performances of courting couples but also of pious devotees. Unlike the use of plough-irons as emotants, the inscribed jewellery continued its

emotant role into the present, as part of personal, rather than communal, emotional experiences. As emotants, the rings were characterised by, and imbued with, their inscribed emotions and could affect those who received them. They did not simply represent emotion, but they changed or intensified feelings through their presence and maintained relationships. These emotants were prosopopoetic; the rings ‘spoke’ the embedded emotions (without the need for their wearer to read the posy aloud). Studying them in this way, also allows them to ‘speak’ today and inform our understanding of emotion in the past.

The broken plough-coulter was an emotant that was used in Alnhamsheles’ hope for the future and the fertility of the land on which the tool had once been used and was now embedded into. This allowed its matter to penetrate the buildings, landscapes and occupants (Standley in press). We may suggest that the instability and risk of failed harvests created an environment of anxiety that was a feature of the emotional practice in the hamlet and Massereene Friary, along with the feeling of hope. The plough-irons were part of wider webs of the physical house and friary; the people in the communities; the iron material; the frugal environment and landscapes; the crops; the animals who pulled the plough; feelings of hope and security; and even joy at the survival and improvement of the communities. While we recognise the importance of ploughs from medieval literature, the archaeological finds provide a new source of evidence. They allow us to investigate their use as emotants by communities and the wider society in general, and how religious upheavals contributed to a change in communal-emotional practices.

My aim has been to provide a new method by which to advance our study of emotions and develop how we can incorporate feeling into our interpretations. For instances, periods or societies where we have no relevant documents or no form of written record, the approach is still applicable. Archaeology of emotion has the potential to make sense of the past, and we can advance our enquiry by investigating how emotions were shaped and mediated through material practices, and *vice versa*. Enquiry into materials, relationships and patterns of practice allow

proposals to be made for how ‘things’ were emotants, and how emotional-material relations endured or changed over time.

While we have considered how objects could be ‘read’ in archaeology, we now have to embrace the idea that material could be, and can be, emotionally ‘felt’.

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Table 1 The affective words inscribed on medieval dress accessories, recorded by the PAS (n = 75) and Evans (1931) (n = 85).

Affective word(s)	Brooch	Finger ring	Pendant	Total
Adore		1		1
Desire	1	11		12
Desire & hope		1		1
Fear		1		1
Friendship	1	1		2
Grace		1		1
Hope	4	10		14
Joy	3	26	1	30
Like		3		3
Love	26	53	1	80
Love & joy		3		3
Love, solace & joy	1	1		2
Loving	1			1
Loyalty		4		4
Pleasure		1		1
Trust		2		2
Willingly		1		1
Wish		1		1
Total	37	121	2	160

Figure 1 Locations mentioned in the text (★), and find spots of 101 of the medieval finger rings, brooches and pendants inscribed with an affective recorded on the PAS (●) (N.B. not all PAS records contain location details).

134x178mm (600 x 600 DPI)

Chart 1 The frequency of affective words including 'heart' / ♥ found on inscribed medieval dress accessories recorded by the PAS and Evans (1931) (n = 229).

937x573mm (72 x 72 DPI)

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Figure 2 Ruby and emerald set gold finger ring, inscribed with bon ♥ ne ment [or meut], 'the good heart does not lie [or move]'. From Green Hammerton (North Yorkshire) (PAS SWYOR-61ADFC). ('Medieval Finger Ring', West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service, licensed under CC BY 4.0).

134x86mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Figure 3 Gold finger ring inscribed with *amer et celer*, found inside an iconographic ring at East Bridgford (PAS DENO-5082A6). ('Medieval Finger Ring', Derby Museums Trust, licensed under CC BY 4.0).

Figure 4 Plan of the village of Alnhamsheles. The coulter was found in House Site One – the building in the south of the excavated area. (Drawn by Piers Dixon, reproduced with permission).

192x138mm (300 x 300 DPI)

194x110mm (600 x 600 DPI)

Figure 6 Photograph of the coulter from Alnhamsheles *in situ*. (Photograph by Piers Dixon, reproduced with permission).

129x88mm (600 x 600 DPI)

Figure 7 Detail from the Luttrell Psalter. The coulter cuts the soil in advance of the ploughshare of the mould-board. (Add MS 42130 f.170r © British Library).

134x41mm (300 x 300 DPI)