

Objects for Adoption 2012/2013

Part 1: Ancient and Medieval History, Fine Art and Ceramics



Ancient and Medieval History

Object Name
(museum object number)

Description

Where to see it



Handaxe from McIlroy's Pit
(REDMG:1945.\$13.1)

This Lower Palaeolithic flint handaxe is as sharp now as when it was originally made. It was found in a clay pit in Tilehurst in 1903.

Green Space



Dog from Blewburton
(REDMG:1953.192.1)

Skeleton of a dog found buried with a woman, a horse, sherds of pottery and an iron axehead during excavation of an Iron Age hillfort at Blewburton Hill in 1948.

Green Space



Canopic jar lid from Abydos
(REDMG:1958.40.1)

Limestone canopic jar lid in the form of a baboon's head. This represents Hapy, one of the sons of Horus. The canopic jar with this lid would have contained the lungs of the deceased.

Town Hall Reception



Ibis from Memphis, about 580BC
(REDMG:1951.17.1)

The ibis represented Thoth, Egyptian god of writing and wisdom. Historically Memphis was the administrative capital of Egypt.

Town Hall Reception

Ancient and Medieval History



Object Name
(museum object number)

Feeding bottle from Silchester
(REDMG:1992.1.1496)

Description

Small Roman pottery bottle, known as a tettina, which would have been used to feed an infant or an invalid.

Where to see it

Silchester Gallery



Tile game board
(REDMG:1995.1.186)

A floor tile from Silchester, inscribed for use as a game board.

Silchester Gallery



Blue glass bowl
(REDMG:1995.5.4)

Roman ribbed glass bowl made in Italy in the 1st century AD. It was in sixteen pieces when it was excavated at Silchester in 1895.

Silchester Gallery



Child footprint tile
(REDMG:1995.98.1)

Roman tile from Silchester with the impression of a child's footprint. Tiles were left to dry before firing and many bear the footprints of people and animals who walked over them.

Silchester Gallery

Ancient and Medieval History



Object Name
(museum object number)

**Viking sword from
the Thames**
(REDMG:1947.285.1)

Description

This sword is signed 'Ulfberht', a name that appears on the blades of some of the finest Viking swords in northern Europe. However, other less skilled makers used the name on their swords too.

Where to see it

Bayeux
Gallery



**Gargoyle from
Reading Abbey**
(REDMG:1929.102.1)

This gargoyle was given to the Museum in 1929 by Mr H.T.Morley, who was an active supporter of the Museum throughout his life.

Town Hall
Reception



Dragon fight capital
(REDMG:1977.100.1)

Each of the four faces of this Reading Abbey stone shows two winged dragons and two youths pulling out their tongues. These scenes might represent the victory of Christianity over sin or a Norse saga, or they may just be decorative.

Window
Gallery



Head of bishop
(REDMG:1991.1.569)

Sculptured head of a saint who was a bishop or a mitred abbot, re-used in Reading Abbey's Plummery Wall.

Reading:
People &
Place
Gallery

Fine Art & Ceramics



Object Name
(museum object number)

Delftware charger, about 1694
(REDMG:1972.187.1)

Description

An early tin-glazed earthenware plate decorated with an image of William III (William of Orange) as a king and a chivalrous knight.

Where to see it

Window Gallery



'Miss Mary R Mitford' by Benjamin Robert Haydon, 1824, oil on canvas
(REDMG:1931.305.1)

Mary Russell Mitford was just becoming famous for writing *Our Village*, a series of sketches about Three Mile Cross, when her friend Benjamin Haydon painted this (unflattering!) portrait. She also wrote *Sketches of a Country Town*, based on Reading where she lived for a time.

Reading: People & Place Gallery



'A Reaper' by Isaac Henzell, 1865, oil on canvas
(REDMG:1931.322.1)

This romanticised rural image combines elements loved by the Victorians – picturesque scenery, a dog, a pretty but hardworking girl – and the flowers, ivy and scythe would remind them of the transience of life. However, in this landscape a shepherdess might be more appropriate than a reaper!

Victorian Gallery

Fine Art & Ceramics



Object Name
(museum object number)

'A pupil of Green Girl's School, Reading' by Annie Margaret Bradley, 1898, oil on canvas
(REDMG:1946.94.1)

Description

The setting for this painting is the north side of the chancel at St Mary the Virgin Reading, in front of the vestry entrance and John Kendrick monument. The scale of the memorial has been changed by the artist - it is far larger in reality.

Where to see it

Reading: People & Place Gallery



'Imperial Volunteers Taking Cover in a Farmyard' by Major George C. Roller, early 1900s, oil on canvas.
(REDMG:1946.58.1)

This Boer War scene depicts the action at Senekal Kopje, South Africa, on 25 May 1900, for which Major Roller was recommended for a Victoria Cross medal. It was painted by Roller on his return from duty.

Victorian Gallery



'Druscilla' by John Tweed, about 1902, white marble
(REDMG:1963.83.1)

A marble study of a studio model by John Tweed, known as 'The Empire Sculptor' during his lifetime because of the many public sculptures by him around the world.

Window Gallery

Fine Art & Ceramics



Object Name
(museum object number)

Abbey Painting
(REDMG:1931.276.1)

Description

'Sumer is Icumen in' (Abbey Series No 5) by Earnest Board, 1920, oil on canvas. The famous 'round' was written down at Reading Abbey in 1240.

Where to see it

Bayeux Gallery



Abbey Painting
(REDMG:1931.280.1)

'Burial of King Henry I at Reading Abbey, Jan 4 1136' (Abbey Series No 1) by Harry Morley, 1916, oil on canvas.

Bayeux Gallery



'Rebecca' by Jacob Epstein, about 1930, bronze
(REDMG:1987.63.1)

Epstein, one of the most important sculptors of the early 20th century, made this portrait for his own pleasure. Rebecca was one of two sisters who were well-known performers in London and Paris revues at the time.

Window Gallery



'Baby Ann's Breakfast' by Mark Symons, 1933, oil on canvas
(REDMG:1936.40.1)

Mark Symons was both a local artist and one of the most exciting and controversial British artists around 1930. Here he depicts his daughter Ann in their home the year before his early death.

Box Room

Fine Art & Ceramics



Object Name
(museum object number)

**'Demeter Pregnant'
by Michael Ayrton,
about 1966, bronze**
(REDMG:1974.644.1)

Description

Ayrton, a leading British sculptor, has depicted Demeter, Greek god of fertility, not as a classical figure but with an angular body and face derived from African sculpture.

Where to see it

Window Gallery



**Black-decorated jar
by Alan Caiger-Smith,
1967**
(REDMG:1998.205.2)

This near-spherical jar, made at The Aldermaston Pottery, was one of Caiger-Smith's favourite pots which he kept at his home until he gave it to the Museum in the late 1990s.

Atrium



**Two lustreware
chalices by Alan
Caiger-Smith, 1980s**
(REDMG: 1997.153.24/25)

Two tall chalices, in cobalt copper blue and dark reddish lustre glaze. These fine examples of tin-glazed earthenware were made at The Aldermaston Pottery and decorated in Caiger-Smith's unique painterly style.

Atrium



**Platter 'Girl with a
Sunflower' painted
by John Piper, about
1982**
(REDMG:1997.166.25)

In 1982 Piper collaborated with Jean-Paul Landreau from the Fulham pottery for an exhibition, John Piper: New Ceramics, working at Fawley Bottom Farmhouse. The pieces were intended as decorative objects for home interiors and indicate Piper's wider concern for taste and craftsmanship in everyday objects.

Window Gallery