

Gold Bracelet

Gold
Dorset
C. 1400-1100 B.C.

A worked gold bracelet crafted from a single rectangular shape of metal, curved into the shape of a wide penannular bangle. The bracelet has a convex outer surface and concave inner surface. Each end of the bracelet terminates with a clean line, that is slightly widened to form a small ridge.

Bronze Age bracelets of a similar thickness and cross section to this example have been found across Britain: in the Bexley Heath hoard, Kent; in Cottingham, Yorkshire; Colaton Raleigh, Devon; and Rosemorran Farm, Cornwall.

Between c. 2500 B.C. and c. 800 B.C., communities in Britain first began to work metal, crafting numerous items from gold, copper, and bronze. Approximately 1,500 gold objects dating to the Bronze Age are now in collections, around 1,000 of them from Ireland and 500 from Britain – making this bracelet a rare example of the many gold items that archaeologists believe were originally created during this period. Gold was a desirable metal, due to its colouration, rarity, and malleability, meaning it denoted the prestige and high status of its owner.

Literature:

P. Penfold et al., ‘There’s Gold in Them There Hills’, *Treasure Hunting*, September 2019, pp. 60-61.