



Two hacksilver hoards and other finds discovered in Preedi village, Järvamaa County

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DISCOVERY

On 22 April 2023, the National Heritage Board (MA) was informed that metal detecting had revealed broken silver jewellery on the lands of the Sauna property in Preedi village in Järvamaa County, with more to be found still buried in the soil. Archaeologist Nele Kangert from the MA collected the finds the next day, and dug two small trenches at the location of the discovered silver jewellery. More pieces of silver were found in both, and it was evident that two silver hoards had been discovered. The search with the metal detector was allowed to continue, on the condition that new finds would be immediately reported to the MA. All finds from both the Sauna and the neighbouring property were received by the MA in Tallinn on 11 May 2023 (Kangert 2023).

GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SAUNA CADASTRAL UNIT

The Sauna cadastral unit is a 12.2 ha densely ditched wet meadow in the northern part of Preedi village. In the west it extends to the Preedi – Vahuküla road and it is bordered by the Preedi (Varangu) River from the south and east, and in the north by the forest, which was still a field about 50 years ago. The ruins of the Preedi manor (Fig. 1) stand to the south across the river.

The earliest written notice about Preedi dates from 1442, mentioning a manor that



Fig. 1. Location plan of the cadastral unit of Sauna (green line) and the discovery sites of the two hacksilver hoards (I, II), and the distribution areas of individual finds (red circles). Blue dot – findspot of eye fibula.

Jn 1. Sauna katastriüksuse asendiplaan (rohelise joonega tähistatud ala) ja sellele tähistatud kahe hõbeearde avastamiskohad (I, II) ning üksikleidude areaalid (punased sõõrid). Sinine mumm – silmiksõle leiukoht. Cadastral map by Estonian Land Board / Maa-ameti katastrikaart, drawing / joonis: Mairi Kaseorg, Ülle Tamla

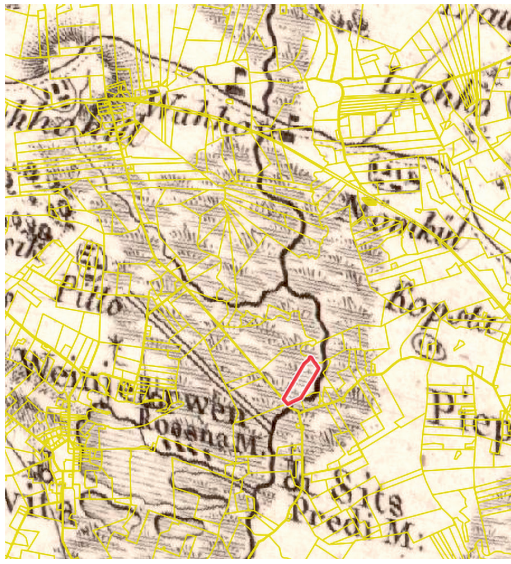


Fig. 2. A plan from the end of the 18th century. The location of the cadastral unit of Sauna is marked with a red line.

Jn 2. 18. sajandi lõpus joonistatud plaan, kuhu on punase joonega tähistatud Sauna katastriüksuse asukoht.

Estonian Land Board, Historical Map Collection / Maameti ajaloolised kaardid, drawing / joonis: Ülle Tamla

belonged to the bishop of Tallinn. From 1608, the manor passed to the Wrede family, and the Estonian place name Preedi was derived from their name (KNR, 498). The earlier maps of the place are also connected with the Preedi manor (in German also called as Sitz and Wredensitz), of which the plan of the manor drawn in approximately 1700 is quite informative about the site. It depicts a small building on a clearing across the river to the north of the manor, described as *Badstugan* in Swedish, meaning sauna in Estonian (RA, EAA.2072.9.51, 1). The current name Sauna for the plot may have a connection with this historical fact.

On a map drawn at the end of the 18th century (Fig. 2), the Sauna plot and the extensive area to the north, west and south of it are marked as wetland. On the plan of the Preedi manor from the second half of the 19th century (Fig. 3), it is already partially ditched, and on the Sauna plot several ditches are marked running in the south-west-northeast direction and one in the

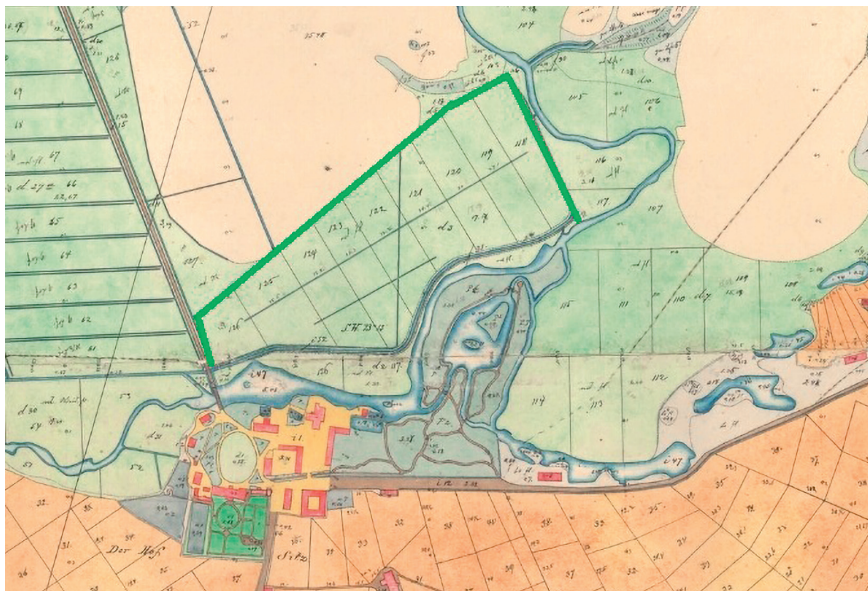


Fig. 3. A plan of the Preedi manor from the second half of the 19th century. The location of the cadastral unit of Sauna is marked with a green line.

Jn 3. Preedi mõisa plaan 19. sajandi teisest poolest, kuhu on rohelse joonega märgitud Sauna katastriüksuse asukoht. (RA, EAA. 3724.4.457, 1.)

north-south direction. In addition, there is a wider ditch along the southern and eastern edges of the plot. A different picture emerges on the land use plan from the 1930s, a wide ditch has been dug around the property (Fig. 4). This ditch was blocked in the 1960s by land reclamation during the kolkhoz period, and new ones were dug again in the southwest-northeast direction (Udeva 1968). They are still in use today, and apparently have not been cleaned or dug deeper in the meantime. Nowadays, bushes and trees that are about half a century old are growing on the banks of the ditch. The Sauna plot is also used for access to the river, and car wheels have left deep ruts in the west-southwest part of the property, which has become a parking area. This is the same area where the hobby searcher came across fragments of cut silver items in two locations in the spring of 2023 (Fig. 1: I, II).



Fig. 4. A land use plan from the 1930s. The location of the cadastral unit of Sauna is marked with a red line.

Jn 4. 1930. aastatel koostatud maakasutusplaan, kuhu on punase joonega märgitud Sauna katastriüksuse asukoht.

Estonian Land Board, Historical Map Collection / Maameti ajaloolised kaardid, drawing / joonis: Ülle Tamla

TWO TRENCHES AND TWO HACKSILVER HOARDS

In the two small trenches (60 × 100 cm and 100 × 100 cm) dug in the area where the silver objects were found, the aim was to study the stratigraphy of the site and to determine the presence of a cultural layer. In the first trench (Fig. 1: I), moist peat was mixed with decayed branches and wood chips. Fresh digging marks were observed up to a depth of 30 cm and some small silver fragments were found at a depth of 25–30 cm. No cultural layer was identified, but the soil was more friable up to 30 cm. The second trench (Fig. 1: II) was made 10 m northwest of the first one, where the hobby searcher had dug out two small neck ring fragments from a depth of ca. 20 cm. This trench also contained moist peat, but at a depth of 20 cm, the soil became clayey. Compared to the first trench, there were more pieces of waste wood and charcoal, but no cultural layer was observed. Some small fragments of neck rings were found at the depth of 20–25 cm, and three more, larger fragments at the depth of ca. 30 cm. It seemed that smaller fragments were placed on top of the larger ones (Kangert 2023, 3–5).

In all, 135 silver fragments of different sizes were obtained from the area of the first trench, weighing a total of 200.63 g. The heaviest fragment weighs 74 g and the lightest 0.09 g. Artefacts are chipped and broken into pieces and as the fragments have no traces of silver testing, it can be assumed that they were not used for trade. When the pieces were matched, it turned out that 18 or 19 penannular brooches of fairly similar size (bow diameter 5.5–7.5 cm) and appearance had been cut up (Tamla 2023, 22–23). They have a 0.7–1 mm high crest on the front side of a 1–1.2 cm wide flat bow, the tapered ends are rolled up, with a diameter of ca. 1 cm and the length of 1–1.6 cm. The pins have 2–2.3 cm wide feet with rounded front corners. All the feet of the pins and rolled ends are decorated, but the bows are ornamented on only six brooches. Wolf tooth ornaments, zigzags and wafer patterns have been formed with

different stamps (Fig. 5). One foot of a pin has an exceptional decoration, resembling a coin imitation (Fig. 5: 2).

The 14 fragments from the second trench belong to three neck rings weighing a total of 237.34 g. The heaviest fragment weighs 83.4 g and the lightest 0.14 g. The straight fracture marks suggest that they have been deliberately hacked. Like the fragments of brooches, the neck rings do not show traces of silver testing (Tamla 2023, 21–22). All three neck rings are typologically similar ornaments, with a middle plait of several wires and flat oval end plates with fastening hooks. The plait of two neck rings is loosely twisted together from two thicker wires (Fig. 6: 1, 2) and one is tightly braided from six thinner wires (Fig. 6: 3). All have the front and end plates joined by soldering, and the two neck rings have a strip of tin wrapped around the solder joint. Stamped circles and wolf tooth ornaments are used to decorate the end plates, but all three have a different pattern.



Fig. 5. Examples of chopped brooches from hoard I.
Jn 5. Näiteid I aardes sisalduvatest purustatud sõlgedest.
 (AI 8742: 1–10.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome



Fig. 6. Chopped neck rings from hoard II.

Jn 6. II aardes sisalduvad purustatud kaelavõrud.

(AI 8742: 37–39.)

Photo / Fotod: Tarvi Toome

DATING OF THE HOARDS

The two hacksilver hoards found at Preedi included no coins that would allow them to be dated more precisely. Therefore, artefact typology and parallels were considered to determine them indirectly relying upon external features, e.g. the kind and type of artefact, its material and technological peculiarities.

The penannular brooches with ridged flat bows and rolled ends in the first hoard are an item type that is common in Northern Fennoscandia, South and South-West Finland, Karelia, Ingermanland and Estonia (Kivikoski 1939, 141–142, plate XXXI: 2; Kivikoski 1973, 95, fig. 692; Salmo 1956, 72–75, fig. 35; Lehtosalo 1973, 113, table p. 106; Bäcksbäcka 1975, 70–71, figs 6–8, 51; Lehtosalo-Hilander 1982, 100–101; Katiskoski 1992, 81, fig. 4; Rapakko 2017, 7, fig. 4; Tamla 2022, 3–8, fig. 3). Some are also known from Northern and Central Russia (Korzuhina 1954, 98, table XXIII: 7; Malm 1967, 153–155, figs 22: 2, 3). Scholars seem to agree that the penannular brooches with rolled ends occurred between the Migration and the Viking period, but silver brooches were not made until the 10th century. In most cases, the dating of silver brooches with ridged flat bows and rolled ends ranges from the second half of the 10th century to the end of the 11th century. Only some larger specimens are also dated to the 12th century.

There were nearly twenty such brooches in Estonian archaeological collections before the discovery in Preedi, all mainly fragments. One of the three more complete brooches originates from the Väike-Rõude hoard (*tpq* 1017; Leimus 1991, 151, plate XIX: 2) and the other two were obtained from stone graves in Raiste and Viltina (Kustin 1962, 362). In the Varja II hoard (*tpq* 1029) and the Voorepera hoard (*tpq* 1056) they are represented as individual fragments (three fragments in both hoards) and all have traces of silver testing (Leimus & Kiudsoo 2016, 45;

Kiudsoo 2019, fig. 140; Leimus 2024). The Valingu hoard (*tpq* 967) has fragments of five or six brooches and, like the Preedi brooches, does not have silver testing marks (Tamla 2022, 10). The determination of Preedi's I hacksilver hoard to the 11th century is also confirmed by the image imitating a coin stamp struck on the foot of a pin of one of the brooches (Fig. 5: 2), which is similar to the coins minted in England during the reign of Aethelred II (968–1016).¹

The second hoard consists of neck rings with plaited ring bodies and plate ends, which belong to a Viking Age artefact type that was widespread in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe. They were usually made of precious metals (mostly silver, gold was rare), bronze specimens were less frequent. The oldest specimens are found from West and East Slavonic territories and they can be dated to the 9th century; such finds in Scandinavia, Finland, Karelia, and Northwest Russia are usually dated approximately to the 10th–11/12th centuries. The neck rings found there are mostly made of silver (e.g. Korzuhina 1954, plates XI: 2, XIII: 1, XIV: 4, XV: 2; Stenberger 1958, 83 ff; Duczko 1986, 8–9 and literature cited there; Hårdh 1996, 41 ff; Tomanterä 2008, 63 ff). The oldest of the Estonian finds is the hacksilver specimen from the Paunküla II hoard, which can be dated to the beginning of the 11th century (*tpq* 1009; Tamla & Kiudsoo 2005, 32, no. 14). It is worth noting that both the neck ring in the Paunküla and Preedi II hoard were made by highly skilled craftsmen who used the same technological method of attaching end plates to the plait by soldering. Such a connection is not characteristic of neck rings made by local craftsmen who used a simpler technique where the ends of the plait were pressed into the ends of the plates, which were made thinner and twisted together in a cone shape. Neck rings made in such method started to appear here at the end of the 11th century (Tamla 2016, 116–117) and continued to be used longer than anywhere else, at least until the 15th–16th centuries (Linnus 1938, fig. 26; Tõnisson 1962, 211 ff). Hence, it may be assumed that the neck rings in the Preedi II hoard were not made locally.

OTHER FINDS

Altogether 31 objects were handed over in May 2023, and they were mostly obtained as individual finds from the Sauna property (Fig. 1). Fragments of silver brooches and neck rings were considered separately. On the Sauna property, the digging of drainage ditches and the accompanying levelling of the soil took place at least three times from the 19th century to the 1970s, and therefore it is likely that several objects found individually were originally part of a group. Of these finds, six round pewter pendants (Fig. 7) and a silver coin (Fig. 8: a, b)



Fig. 7. Pewter pendants.

Jn 7. Tinaripatsid.

(AI 8742: 48–50.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome

¹ Oral comment by Mauri Kiudsoo (TLÜ AT).

deserve special attention. Similar pewter pendants are known in several hoards of the 11th century found in Estonia, e.g. Varja III, VI and VII, Kõue I and Mustla (see Kiudsoo 2016, figs 98, 101; Kiudsoo 2019, 120–121, figs 110, 111). The coin is a Quatrefoil-type penny minted in Winchester during the reign of King Cnut (1017/8–1023/4).² The second silver coin was found at the depth of 1–2 cm about a metre from the location of hoard II consisting of neck rings, but this one had certainly not been part of a hoard. It is a small bracteate with a crown image minted in Tallinn between 1265 and 1332,³ which is also the only 13th–14th-century coin obtained from Preedi in 2023.

The rest of the finds were obtained approximately 10–200 m from the place where the silver hoards were discovered, from the east and south-east sides and near the ruins of the Preedi manor (Fig. 1). These are early modern and modern items (16th–17th-century signet rings, a 18th-century pendant (Russow 2023) and a jewellery button, a brass candlestick, half of a machine for making candle wicks, a large pewter bead used to decorate horses and a clamp for a copper kettle handle), which are probably related to the Preedi manor. The earliest find is an eye fibula from the 4th or 5th century (Fig. 9; cf. Lang 2007, 207, fig. 125) and it refers to an older settlement in the area, possibly a grave destroyed by the construction of Preedi manor buildings. Along with the metal finds, there were two cattle bones.⁴ Their exact find location is unknown (Fig.1, blue dot), but their blackish-brown colour and traces of old fractures suggest that they have been in moist peat for a long time.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2023, a hobby searcher came across two hacksilver hoards in a wet meadow in the northern part of Preedi village. The first hoard consists of fragments of penannular brooches and the second one of neck rings. None of the fragments display traces of silver testing. Depositing broken pieces of jewellery of various sizes and weights to the former wetland may have been a ritual act, such as sacrifice. No cultural layer was observed in the two small trenches made at the site of the discovery of the hoards. At the same time, it was not clear whether the



Fig. 8. A penny minted in Winchester during the reign of King Cnut (1017–1023).

Jn 8. Kuningas Cnuti valitsemisajal (1017–1023) Winchesteris vermitud penn.
(AI 8742: 40.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome



Fig. 9. An eye fibula.

Jn 9. Silmiksõlg.

(AI 8742: 51.)

Photo / Foto: Tarvi Toome

² Dating confirmed by Mauri Kiudsoo.

³ AI 8742: 41. Dating confirmed by Mauri Kiudsoo.

⁴ The bones were identified by Lembi Lõugas, TLÜ AT (Tamla 2023, 21, table 1: 60).

charcoal contained in the peaty soil came from a previous fire where the second hoard was left behind, or whether there had once been a bog fire there. Based on the typology of the objects, the peculiarities of the manufacturing technology, and parallel finds with more specific dates, both hoards can be dated to the first half of the 11th century. Pewter pendants and a silver coin from the vicinity of the two silver hoard sites may have been left there at the same time and for the same reason as the hoards. Early modern and recent finds discovered in the area may be related to the people who lived and worked in the Preedi manor. An eye fibula found near the ruins of manor buildings belongs to the 4th–5th centuries and can point to a grave once located there and now destroyed.

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JÄRVAMAAL PREEDI KÜLAS AVASTATUD KAKS HAKKHÕBEDA AARET JA TEISED LEIUD

Ülle Tamla

2023. aasta aprillis teavitati Muinsuskaitseametit, et metallidetektoriga tehtud otsingutel leiti Järvamaal Preedi külas Sauna kinnistul kahest kohast katkisi hõbeeheteid. Kohale sõitnud Muinsuskaitseameti arheoloogianõunik Nele Kangert tegi hõbeehete avastamisalale kaks väikest kaevandit (jn 1: I, II), leidis mõlemast hõbeehete tükke ja tões, et satunud on aardele. Otsinguid lubati metallidetektoriga jätkata ja lisandunud leiud toodi Muinsuskaitseametisse 2023. aasta mais. Nende hulgas on nii Sauna kinnistult kui ka lähinaabrusest kogutud esemeid.

Sauna kinnistu oli 18. sajandil veel märgala (jn 2). Kuivendamine algas seal 19. sajandil ja kuivenduskraave on kaevatud korduvalt, viimati 1960. aastatel (jn 1–4). Teadaolevalt ei ole sinna uusi kraave hiljem tehtud ega vanu süvendatud. Kinnistu lääne-loodesosas, teineteisest u 10 m kaugusel paiknenud kaks aaret olid jäänud kraavide kaevamisest puutumata (jn 1). Mõlemad koosnevad tahtlikult tükeldatud hõbeehetest, nn hakkhõbedast, kus ühes on 135 fragmenti sõlgedest ja teises 14 fragmenti kaelavõrudest. Hõbede ehtsuse kontrollimisele osutavaid tükke ega kriimustusi neil ei ole ja seega võib arvata, et kauplemiseks pole neid kasutatud.

Esimeses aardes sisalduvate fragmentide kokkubitamisel selgus, et tükeldatud on 18 või 19 hoburaud-sõlge, mille kaare läbimõõt on olnud 5,5–7,5 cm. Kõik sõled on ühte tüüpi: lamedad kaare esiküljel on madal hari ja otsad on keeratud rulli (jn 5). Otsarullidele ja sõlenõelte laiadele kandadele on tembeldatud mustrid, kuid kaared on kaunistatud vaid kuuel sõlel. Erandlik ja ainulaadne on ühe nõelakanna kaunistus, mis sarnaneb münditempli jäljendiga (jn 5: 2). Teises aardes sisalduvad kaelavõru katked pärinevad kolmest ühte tüüpi ehtest (jn 6). Nende keskosas on traatidest punutis ja otstes haakidega lõppevad ovaalsed plaadid, mida kaunistab tempelmuster. Punutise moodustav traatide hulk ja otsaplaatide mustrikombinatsioon on võruti erinev. Kõigi kolme ühiseks tunnuseks on punutise ja otsaplaatide ühendamine jootmise teel.

Preedi aarded ei sisalda täpsemat dateerimist võimaldavaid münste ja seetõttu lähtuti nende vanuse määramisel esemete tüpoloogiast, konkreetsemate dateeringutega paralleelleidudest ja valmistamistehtoloogilistest iseärasustest. Esimesse aardesse kuuluvad harikaare ja rullotstega hoburaudsõled on arvukamalt levinud Põhja-Fennoskandias, Lõuna- ja Edela-Soomes, Karjalas, Ingerimaal ning Eestis; üksikud leiud on teada ka Põhja- ja Kesk-Venemaal. Vanimad rullotstega hoburaudsõled on dateeritud

rahvasterännuaega ja viikingiaja algusesse, kuid hõbedast hakati neid valmistama alles 10. sajandi paiku. Harikaare ja rullotstega hõbesõled on dateeritud põhiliselt 10. sajandi teisest poolest kuni 11. sajandini, vaid üksikud ka 12. sajandi algusesse. Enne Preedi leiudu oli selliseid sõlgi Eestis teada paarikümne ringis ja enamasti on need hakkhõbedad fragmentid 11. sajandi algupoole aaretel (Varja II (*tpq* 1029), Voorepera (*tpq* 1056) ja Valingu). Tervemaid sõlgi on kolm: üks Väike-Rõude aardes (*tpq* 1017), teine Raiste ja kolmas Viltina kivikalimest. Samast ajast võivad pärineda ka Preedi I aarde sõled, mille vanuse määramiseks annab täiendava pidepunkti ühe sõle nõelakanna kaunistamine muustriga, mis jäljendab Ethelred II valitsemisajal (968–1016) vermitud rahade münditemplit (jn 5: 2).

Teise aarde moodustavad ühte tüüpi kaelavõrud on Põhja-, Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopas laialt levinud hilis-viikingiaegne esemevorm, mida valmistati põhiliselt hõbedast. Enne Preedi II aarde avastamist peeti Eesti leidudest kõige vanemaks ja valmistamisviisi põhjal importtooteks Paunküla II aardes (*tpq* 1009) sisalduvat tükkeks raiutud kaelavõru, mille otsaplaadi katke on ühendatud punutisega jootmise teel. Seda tüüpi kaelavõrusid hakati kohapeal valmistama 11. sajandi lõpus ja nende eripära on punutise ning otsaplaatide lihtsam ühendamise moodus, kus punutise otsad on surutud otsaplaatide torbikujuliselt kokku keeratud otstes. Samasugust võtet kasutasid siinsed ehtesepad veel 15.–16. sajandil valmistatud kaelavõrude juures. Kuna Preedilt leitud kaelavõrudel on esiosa ja otsaplaadid ühendatud joodisega, siis võib arvata, et need ei ole valmistatud kohapeal. Võimalik, et need valmisid Paunküla II aardes sisalduvate kaelavõrutükkidega samas piirkonnas ja enam-vähem samal ajal. Seega võib arvata, et mõlemad Preedi hakkhõbedad aarded jäid omanikust maha kui mitte ühel ja samal, siis vähemalt lähedasel ajal ning samal põhjusel. Nende avastamine omaaegselt märgalalt lubab oletada, et neil oli sakraalne tähendus.

2023. aasta mais üle antud leiud on enamasti üksikleid Sauna kinnistult (jn 1). Tükeldatud hõbeesemeid nende hulgas ei ole. Kuna Sauna kinnistule on kuivenduskraave kaevatud korduvalt, siis võisid mõned üksikult leitud esemed kuuluda algselt kokku. Selles seoses pälvivad tähelepanu 6 tinast ripatsit ja üks hõbemünt (jn 7–8). Samasuguseid tinaripatseid sisaldavad mitmed 11. sajandi aarded, nt Varja III, VI, VII, Kõue I ja Mustla ning samasse aega kuulub ka hõbemünt, mis on kuningas Cnuti valitsemisajal

(1017/8–1023/4) Winchesteris vermitud penn. Teine üksikult leitud hõbemünt saadi pinnaleiuna kaela-võrukatkeid sisaldavast aardest u meetri kauguselt ja võis sinna sattuda kraavide kaevamisel pinna tasandamisega ka kaugemalt. See on vahemikus 1265–1332 Tallinnas vermitud kroonikujutisega brakteaat ja ühtlasi Preedi leidudest ainus, mis pärineb 13.–14. sajandist.

Sauna kinnistu ida- ja kaguosast ning mõned naaber-kinnistult saadud varauusaegsed ja uusaegsed

leiud võib seostada Preedi mõisas elanud, seal töötanud või mõisat külastanud inimestega. Sellisteks esemeteks on vasesulamist 16.–17. sajandi pitsat-sõrmused, 18. sajandi ripats ja ilunööp, purunenud küünlajalg, küünalde valmistamise masina pool, tinast kröll ja vaskkatla sanga kinnitusklamber. Üle antud leidudest kõige vanem on Preedi mõisa varemete juurest saadud 4.–5. sajandi silmiksõlg (jn 9), mis võib osutada seal kunagi paiknenud ja nüüdseks hävinud kalmele.