A series of excavations were carried out by York Archaeological Trust in the mid-1980s, and again in 2012 and 2014, in the area of the church and churchyard of All Saints, Peasholme Green (alternatively known as the Haymarket), situated close by the Black Swan inn. During the excavations in 2012, two particularly interesting copper-alloy objects were recovered; following investigation by conservators in the Trust’s Conservation Laboratory, both objects have been identified as medieval decorative pendants, and both feature heraldic emblems, indicating that they originally belonged to noble families. On both pendants, the backgrounds are composed of coloured enamels against which the gold-coloured emblems – or ‘charges’ – have been set, and both are attached to fittings which indicate that they would originally have been affixed to the leather straps of the horse harness. Unfortunately, the current condition of both pendants is fairly poor, although it has been possible to identify the likely original appearance of both; the drawings show the pendants as they currently appear, and the reconstructions show how they would probably have looked originally.

**Pendant SF265 (Fig. 1)** was found in an area comprising graves at the eastern end of the church, although it was not actually recovered from a grave. It is diamond-shaped, and the heraldry can be described as: ‘azure, a griffin segreant or’, i.e. **blue ground, a griffin rearing up on its hind legs, wings addorsed, gold**. The conservator Mags Felter noted the use of gold-coloured metal – which was probably gilding – to pick out the griffin on the blue enamel background, as plating on the hinged join with the attachment lug, and in the decorative border around the pendant. The griffin was a mythological creature comprising the head, breast, claws and wings of an eagle plus the hind parts of a lion.

![Figure 1: Horse harness pendant SF265, drawing by Lesley Collett, reconstruction of griffin (not to scale) by Irene Szymanski](image)
The arms on this pendant have been identified as likely to be those of Simon de Montague of Somerset who was born c.1250 and died in 1316. Simon de Montague was a notable military figure of his day. He was summoned by King Edward I to serve against the Welsh in 1277 and 1282; in 1296 he commanded a ship which broke the French siege of Bordeaux, and he also received a number of summonses to serve against the Scots.

**Pendant SF3 (Fig. 2)** must have been disturbed from the original spot where it was lost, as it was recovered from an 18th–19th-century deposit on the site. It is shield-shaped with three identical motifs arranged with two at the top and one below. The background is a little unclear and the heraldic description is either: ‘gules flory, three plumed tournament helmets or’, or the same with flory omitted. The meaning is *a red ground scattered with flowers* (or not) *and 3 golden tournament helmets*. The conservator noted that the helmet emblems had been inlaid with copper alloy into the red enamel background. The identification of the arms on this pendant is more tentative, but a strong possibility is that they relate to the Mynnot (or Mynott) family: a Roger Mynnot of Norfolk, a knight who held lands in Cumbria, Yorkshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, was summoned by Edward I to fight against the Scots in 1298. As noted above, the flowers illustrated on the recreated arms above are not certain, but if they are present, they may suggest that these particular arms were being used by someone like a younger son of Roger Mynnot rather than Roger himself (only his eldest son and heir would be entitled to bear his father’s exact arms). Roger Mynnot is listed as ‘of Norfolk’, suggesting that was his ancestral home. He was involved in various land transactions at the end of the 13th century, and he also appears to have been Sheriff of Northumberland at about the same time.

*Figure 2: Horse harness pendant SF3, drawing by Lesley Collett, reconstruction (not to scale) by Irene Szymanski*
Research suggests that horse harnesses were first decorated with pendants of copper alloy in the 12th century; they subsequently became more numerous in the 13th century, with enamelling on such pendants starting to appear during the reign of Edward I (ruled 1272–1307). The use of coloured enamels enabled heraldic displays on pendants and other horse-related objects, at a time when the use of heraldry was becoming increasingly widespread, appearing on objects such as caskets and books, on clothing, and being painted on the walls of churches and incorporated into the window glass, as seen at York Minster. Heraldic pendants on harness acted as marks of ownership, of the lord or magnate who provided support and livery to their retainers, who in return would offer services as armed supporters; it is therefore not surprising that such badges became increasingly common at the time of the Welsh and Scottish wars of Edward I. Although now corroded, with much of the enamel and gilding lost, the original quality of these pendants appears to have been reasonably high. As such, they may have adorned the horse of the man who used the arms displayed on them, or perhaps those of his retainers or servants.

Both these pendants may be directly connected to Edward I’s wars with the Scots in the 1290s; as we know, Roger Mynott – the probable owner of the arms on SF3 – was summoned to serve against the Scots in 1298, while the owner of the arms on SF265 – Simon de Montague – also received a number of summons to serve against the Scots. York acted as a base for Edward’s army during the Scottish campaigns, and the recovery of at least seven different heraldic pendants in a fairly small area of Poppleton through metal-detecting, has led to the suggestion that that area was one of the muster grounds. It seems quite possible that the loss of these two pendants on the site of the church of All Saints resulted from visits to the church in the days when the army was gathering prior to one of these Scottish campaigns.
This series of *Insights* has been contributed by York Archaeological Trust staff members and external specialists for Finding the Future. They aim to frame an understanding of aspects of the Trust's collection of artefacts and their archaeological context; and also to enhance staff involvement. The authors represent a broad range of experience and knowledge.

*Insights* are not presented as YAT publications, they have not been peer reviewed or edited to full publication standard. Rather they should be seen as statements reflecting the research, ideas, knowledge and interests of the individual authors. They are not necessarily designed to be the definitive word, may not always agree with the Trust’s previous publications, and some of their content may be subject to debate or different interpretation. All within the spirit of Finding the Future.