Seal Matrix (find nr. 24-1031)

Front   Reverse

Lead seal matrix (almost circular), small piece missing, with suspension loop
Measurements: 39 – 42 mm diameter, thickness 3 mm
Both edges are different decorated and each edge has a different legend!

Legend front :   SIGIL' ROIS VXORI[S] RFRAC
Legend Reverse: SIGIL' ROBERTI FRALAIH

A double-sided matrix of the 13th century. Such matrices may have been made for siblings, as cases where a brother and sister used the two sides are known. It is also possible that they were made to seal a single document.

The legend on the first face reads "The seal of Rois (Rohese), the wife of ..." It is not clear what the husband's name was; it may have been intended for a version of Frank or Francis.

The legend on the second face appears to be a single name, "The seal of Robert Fralaih". The second word is an unusual one, perhaps the name of a village where Robert's ancestors lived.

Both faces appear to use a form of fleur-de-lys for the device. The fleur-de-lys was a symbol of the Virgin Mary, but it does not necessarily mean that the people named on the matrix were religious, or even particularly devout - they may have simply been using a popular symbol.

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