

## NCMD Executive Meeting

As reported in the last edition of Digging Deep, Dr Roger Bland had been invited to address the Executive Committee meeting on the 20 February.

Roger met with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer and President on the preceding Saturday afternoon, before outlining the impact of the cuts to PAS funding to the meeting the following day. The reduced funding has been secured for a further four years, which should enable PAS to retain all 40 Finds Liaison Officers, who are employed by 33 Museums and Local Councils.

Most of the roles have been secured for the next four years, but the PAS has been negotiating with the 33 local partner organisations to ensure all of the FLO contracts are secured by the end of March 2011. The funding of two posts in Wales however will cease to be funded centrally, and it is hoped that funding will be forthcoming from the Welsh National Assembly. The cuts will also mean that the PAS Annual Report will no longer be available in hard copy, however it is hoped that an online version will be made available, the

final report will be published in April 2011.

Roger also gave an update on the recently introduced 'Self Recording Scheme' which allows individuals to record finds directly onto the PAS database which had been previously piloted in the south and has now been introduced nationwide. The PAS team will have ultimate control over the records submitted. The facility exists to record basic information

only, or for the more experienced, more detailed information can be added.

There is a useful guide explaining how to enrol and input data which can be found on the PAS website at <http://finds.org.uk/documents/guide.pdf> anyone interested should ideally discuss the matter with their local Finds Liaison Officer. There followed a useful question and answer session.

Trevor Austin



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## 2011 Membership Subscription Details

For the membership year 2011-2012 we have introduced a couple of changes. Firstly, due to the ever rising costs of postage, insurance and travel, we have had no alternative but to increase the NCMD membership by £1. This is the first increase since 2005 and is necessary to ensure that we continue to actively pursue issues relating to the hobby and provide

you with the same level of service as we have done in the past.

Secondly, many of our individual members have for some time been asking for alternative ways of paying their subscription other than by cheque or Postal Order, bearing in mind the uncertainty of the future of cheques. We have therefore looked at several options and have now included on our

website an online payment facility. Payments can be made either by Credit/Debit card, or by PayPal.

At the moment this facility is only open to new or existing individual members, we will however be monitoring this facility in order to ascertain the need to expand it further.

Trevor Austin

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# BBC1 – Countryfile

*Most of you will by now have seen the 'Countryfile' programme broadcast on the 25 February, under the title 'John Craven Investigates'.*

The programme focussed on illegal metal detecting, no doubt as a bandwagon type response to the recent English Heritage press release dealing with *Heritage Crime*. Notwithstanding the fact that nighthawking was but one

issue amongst a plethora of other activities damaging to the heritage, it was singled out in the context of this piece for special treatment by way of association with responsible metal detecting.



The omission of reasoned and sensible comment as to why nighthawking is in decline despite English Heritage attempts to suggest otherwise, along with the use of a well known so called archaeological presenter guaranteed to repeat his own particular brand of anti-detecting rhetoric, allowed the production of a piece with content very far from the truth.

The programme showed metal detecting in a less than principled light, without giving any reasoned response. I was so incensed when

I watched the programme that the next morning I sent a *letter of complaint* to both the production team and the BBC complaints department. Perhaps the production and research staff at the BBC had a brief not to allow the truth to get in the way of a sensational story. This is not what is normally expected from the BBC or the previously very professional Countryfile team.

**Trevor Austin**

Here is a copy of the letter I sent and opposite is their reply.

21st February 2011

## Alun Beach, Teresa Bogan, Andrew Thorman

I write to you to express my deep disappointment over the content of the Countryfile programme screened on the 20th February in which I was a participant.

While I fully understand that as a researcher you have no editorial control I would like to make the following points of complaint.

The team made no effort to produce a balanced unbiased appraisal of a subject that was obviously not fully researched, and omitted footage of both myself and Mr Herbert's response to posed questions on legislation, licensing and nighthawking.

When questioned prior to filming as to who was taking part, and also when the same question put to yourself in a telephone conversation by me, no mention was made that Tony Robinson was to be a substantive contributor. Mr Robinson is a well-known and often favoured mouthpiece for the anti metal detecting lobby and regrettably lacks a proper understanding of the issues covered in the piece. I am left with the impression that a deliberate deception was intended by a selective presentation of the events for the day.

Furthermore, when I asked you about the reason for the piece, you informed me it was to report on the Staffordshire hoard, and while much of the programme featured images of the hoard the underlying emphasis was on nighthawking and the illicit use of metal detectors.

In reality it appears that the BBC were coerced into producing a kneejerk reaction piece to cover the recent press release from English Heritage on the issue of heritage crime where nighthawking is but a very small part of the problem.

Perhaps it would have been more illuminating, to ask why English Heritage spent over £150,000 of public money, on its nighthawking survey when all the information coming from many sources including the police, archaeological units and English Heritage's own records indicated that the problem was on the decline. If your team had bothered to read the report on the nighthawk survey, they would have discovered that, **"The number of reported attacks on scheduled monuments has decreased from 1.3% of the resource to 0.41% since the last survey in 1995"** furthermore, reported incidents from archaeological units **"was down from 37 out of 50 in 1995 to 15 out of 54 in 2007"**

It is my firm opinion that the piece represents a very poor attempt at an 'investigation' more akin to a piece of tabloid journalism of the worst kind.

**Trevor Austin**  
NCMD General Secretary  
51 Hilltop Gardens  
Denaby Main  
Doncaster  
DN12 4SA

## Dear Mr Austin,

Many thanks for your correspondence relating the Countryfile item on metal detecting which was broadcast on Sunday, February 20.

I am sorry you felt the item was unbalanced. I can assure you that the BBC takes complaints of this nature very seriously to uphold its reputation for delivering fair, balanced and accurate programming.

The film about metal detecting set out to examine the UK's most famous find - the Staffordshire Hoard. During this sequence John Craven spoke to both the metal detectorist responsible for the find and the owner of the land that the treasure was found on. He then went on to explore the archaeological significance of the find in some detail. It was made clear that had it not been for the work of this metal detectorist this valuable find might never have been discovered at all. Far from providing a negative picture of the hobby, this sequence clearly illustrated the vital part law-abiding metal detectorists can play in uncovering important pieces of history.

In addition the programme clearly outlined how the metal detectorist and land owner involved in this find went straight to the authorities to declare their find. The law was clearly outlined so that anyone involved in any future find could not be left in any doubt as to how to proceed.

I do apologise that we were unable to use all of your contribution. I am afraid it is very rarely possible to use complete interviews and I am sorry that some of your interview was left out of the programme. The sequence which dealt with the Staffordshire Hoard made up more than a third of the item - in excess of four minutes. Part one of the film went on to examine the growth in metal detecting and, by using your contribution, the technology employed by detectorists. This only made up a minute of the film. All of the aforementioned demonstrates that the emphasis of the film was wider than just nighthawking and the illicit use of metal detectors.

By contrast, part two of our film focussed on a rather more negative aspect of metal detecting. It was made quite clear that 'nighthawks,' as they are known, represent a rogue element in an otherwise law abiding community.

Archeologists at Bath Abbey told Countryfile that they had had problems with 'nighthawks' and explained why the site needed to be protected. Later in the film, John Craven said in commentary:

***Law abiding people who use metal detectors always have the permission of the landowner to search for treasure. But those that are more unscrupulous usually trespass and operate under the cover of darkness – which is why they're called 'nighthawks'. Well organised and prepared to sell onto the highest bidder, these mercenary gold diggers infuriate archaeologists and history enthusiasts like 'Time Team' presenter Tony Robinson.***

Clearly talking about this rogue element, Mr Robinson then said: ***'They're thieves. They're thieves like any other thieves. I've talked to a number of them and they think what they're doing is really sexy....but actually what they are doing is stealing my heritage, your heritage our children's heritage....Look I'm not having a pop at metal detectorists generally. A lot of them are an enormous help. It's not them I have an issue with it's the thieves.'***

There can be no doubt that any negative remarks in this film were clearly aimed at this criminal element and these remarks were clearly signposted as such. The law-abiding side of the metal detecting community was well represented and equal airtime was given to their positive contribution.

Can I also take this opportunity to address a couple of your other concerns. When you asked our researcher who was taking part in our film Mr Robinson was unconfirmed. There was no deliberate attempt to mislead you on this. Nor was the programme produced as a 'knee-jerk' reaction to the latest English Heritage campaign. This development only became known to Countryfile close to the end of production.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for contacting the Countryfile programme. I do hope this explanation goes some way to addressing your concerns and I hope you continue to enjoy the show in the future.

**Carl Johnston**

Assistant Producer  
BBC Countryfile

## BBC1 – Inside Out

The latest TV programme to feature metal detecting was shown on Monday 7 March on BBC 1 North East and Cumbria. The programme centred on the discovery and subsequent sale of the Crosby Garrett helmet but also focused on the upcoming review of the Treasure Act Code of Practice and any amendment which may be included to widen the definition of treasure to include Roman base metal assemblages; and in comparison with recent offerings the programme was quite neutral.

The programme featured, Lord Redesdale, Ed Vaizey MP, the farmer on whose land the helmet was found as well as a

representative of Tullie House Museum, who failed in their attempt to purchase the helmet at auction.

The field at the back of my house provided a suitable venue for my interview, I was not prepared to travel hundreds of miles with the results ending up on the cutting room floor as happened with *Countryfile*. However although much of the interview was cut, which almost invariably happens with TV, the resulting programme did indeed go generally as planned.

I also provided on loan to the production team a couple of detectors, a Minelab E-Trac and a



Teknetics T2, so they could get some shots around Cumbria. Those of you who are eagle-eyed will have noticed in the programme the search head on the T2 was on the wrong way round. However, I have since been reliably informed that this is a new

technique, known only to a select few and is for detecting those signals you would have missed had the search head been the other way round, unfortunately pinpointing is a bit tricky though...really.

**Trevor Austin**

# Detecting Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Land

*I thought that in this issue I would look at detecting on HLS land and as most of you will know, the number of hoops that have to be negotiated are usually enough to put off most people. So I was rather pleased to learn of the story below, where permission was actually granted to detect on HLS land, albeit after considerable negotiating, and may serve to encourage more landowners and detector users to challenge the perceived view that detecting on HLS land is not allowed.*

## Metal Detecting is good for you!

### Introduction

Located in the southeast of England on the Suffolk/Norfolk border, this 1,500 hectare site of mixed arable farmland is the modern form of an old estate. The site is in private ownership, and comprises scores of land parcels administered by an Estate Manager.

### Assessing the situation – potential for conflict



The site is both a mixed arable farm, and also a shooting estate, the entire area is under a High Level Stewardship (HLS). The site also provides a habitat for game animals. Shooting rights exist over the site and several shoots are held each year. A gamekeeper is employed to help manage the site for game.

The land has several public rights of way that run through the Estate.

A large number of archaeological sites, including Scheduled Monuments (SMs) are located on the land. Detecting had taken place in the past, but for unspecified reasons, the Estate had decided to bar further metal detecting, and was also concerned that metal detecting would jeopardise the conditions set out in the HLS Agreement (see Box right).

### (Higher Level Stewardship Section 7.1)

- Do not carry out or permit metal detecting on the archaeological sites on your holding identified in your Farm Environment Plan, unless agreed with your RDS adviser in writing. On Scheduled Monuments, a licence is required from English Heritage before metal detecting can take place. Detecting without such a licence is an offence. On SSSIs, where actions resulting from metal detecting (e.g. digging or vegetation disturbance) are listed as 'operations likely to damage the special interest' of your SSSI, you are required to give written notice to English Nature of these operations and can only proceed once you have received written consent.
- As you are required to protect and maintain archaeological sites and other features over the entire area under agreement, you must ensure that no damage is caused to these features wherever metal detecting takes place (authorised or otherwise).

### Starting points

#### Metal Detecting

The area is rich in archaeology, and there are many known sites within the Estate boundary. As a result, there was a long history of metal detecting on the Estate. Walkers have a right to use the public rights of way, but detecting on fields was considered as a problem regarding the HLS agreement and the potential for both disturbing nesting game birds and damage to crops and seeded fields. Therefore, the Estate actively discouraged any form of metal detecting on the entire area. So, metal detecting had not taken place for many years, despite the promise of significant finds.

### Meeting and Opening Communications

Adam Petts-Hannant, a hobby metal detectorist, was aware of the level of mistrust and opposition to detecting on the Estate. However, he decided to contact the Estate Manager directly to discuss the issue. The initial reaction was negative, highlighting the requirements of the HLS agreement, and the conditions this imposed on the Estate to protect the archaeological sites. In addition, the Estate considered that unfettered access to the land would adversely affect the conditions for game birds that play an essential part in the shoots



which take place on the site.

Undeterred, Adam suggested that to mitigate the time and effort that would be required to fill out the relevant documents and agreements, he was willing to carry out all the actions needed to achieve permissions from the relevant bodies. This led to an agreement that if he was willing to deal with all the relevant authorities and provide the relevant permissions, the Estate would consider the request to allow detecting to resume.

### Getting Down to Business

The first action was to ask for support from the local Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) Finds Liaison Officer (FLO), Archaeological Advisors and other metal detectorists to ascertain the requirements and steps to be taken to secure permissions, which would, in the end, be required from the Rural Development Service (RDS) (which from 1st October 2006 became part of Natural England).

Meetings were arranged with the local Historic Environment Records (HER) office in the relevant Council Archaeological Advisory Services and in close liaison with the FLO maps were drawn up to highlight areas that would be either out of bounds or available.

Advice was also sought and obtained from Natural England Historic Environment Advisors who provided the relevant forms required to comply with detecting on HLS land.

The permissions form requested evidence for the methodology that would be used during the activity and included a series of recommendations regarding expected behaviour.

This included details of the dates

on which metal detecting could be undertaken, a requirement on plotting finds either on a 1:10,000 map or as accurate GPS data. It was also a condition that all archaeological finds were recorded with both the PAS and HER and that any searching took place only within the plough-soil horizon. Adherence to both the Treasure Act 1996 and the statutory Code of Conduct produced under it, was also stipulated.

### Confronting Conflict

The main areas of conflicting views were that:

- metal detecting would adversely impact on the HLS Agreement;
- public access to the site was thought by the land managers to be incompatible with current land management practices;
- the farmland may be damaged and game birds would be disturbed.

A meeting with the Estate Manager was essential to allay these fears, by agreeing to the location of a limited number of fields that would be made available over specified time periods. The estate manager agreed to the provision of maps detailing exactly the fields that would be available and when they would be available.

It was also agreed that written permissions sought from Natural England regarding the detecting of land under HLS agreement would be essential.

A further agreement was made to report to the PAS and the local HERs.

Contact details were exchanged and the metal detectorist is informed by the Estate Manager of any changes to the availability of land, when new areas become available, or existing areas are closed to detectorists.

### Route to Consensus

The key to arriving at consensus with the Estate Manager and Natural England was as much about agreeing what not to do as much as what was allowed. For example, not detecting over SMs, not detecting in areas where game birds may be disturbed, not detecting during specified periods on certain areas. Conversely, there was agreement with Natural England to actively conduct searches in order to provide

further useful and valid data for the PAS and HERs.

An element of trust between all the relevant parties was essential, and in this case, the desire to act responsibly from the start, and a willingness to seek appropriate permissions played a vital role. This allowed for active support and guidance from relevant authorities to be more available, and time was taken to ensure consensus was reached.

Future reviews on a yearly basis are envisaged. These will allow flexibility to further developments, and allow for monitoring of the outcome.

The Estate Manager has also been assured that any discoveries will not adversely affect his HLS agreement, but may even lead to further benefits.

This was a clear win-win-win situation.

### Reaching Consensus and Sustaining It

Agreement has been reached about methodology, recording and land to be detected, this has allowed a large area to be subject to metal detecting, carried out in a responsible and methodical way.

Normally, such HLS agreement sites are beyond the reach of many hobby metal detectorists, with both misunderstanding by the land managers about the requirements set out in 7.1 of the HLS handbook, and an attitude from detectorists that it is not worth the effort, as they will be refused. However, this has shown that with support and guidance, all parties can look forward to a positive result.

The additions to the HER will be of great benefit to heritage professionals, and may indeed indirectly benefit the Estate, if new sites are located and added to the monument inventory.

Persistence, support and trust are the key elements involved in moving from conflict to consensus, and through these a positive outcome was achieved, opening the potential for further such agreements opening up previously unavailable land to hobby detectorists, with the resultant increase in our knowledge of the Historic Environment as a whole.

**Source:** David Connolly, British Archaeological Jobs Resource (contact: info@bajr.org)

### Notes

(Further information can be found at: <http://www.ourpasthistory.com/metal/?c=L-Standards-in-Detecting>)

It should be made clear that detecting on HLS land is allowed without written agreements, when undertaken with the landowner's permission, and the metal detectorist is made aware of the location of known archaeological sites, SSSI and other protected areas. The handbook explains there should be no damage to known sites (known sites being those mapped on the Farm Environment Plan). Damage is considered as disturbing stratified deposits, upstanding earthworks or structural remains. The area between known sites and also land where there are no known sites are already available for hobby detecting, although it is recommended that Codes of Practice are followed and that finds from the blank areas are recorded with FLOs and local HERs.

Further information about the Higher Level Stewardship (i.e. the handbook) can be found in: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/hls/handbook/default.htm>.



# Pierced Coins as Treasure

*There have been a number of questions raised recently about pierced coinage being classed as Treasure, particularly hammered coins. While it is understandable that some Finds Liaison Officers may feel assured by issuing a Treasure receipt for all pierced coins that finders report, it does leave some finders perplexed as to their intentions. It may well be worth therefore, taking a look at the recommendation regarding pierced coins on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website, which is reproduced below. Trevor Austin*

Under the Treasure Act, single precious metal coins are not considered to be Treasure, but single precious metal coins that have been modified into objects – that is, altered in some way as to make it likely that they were taken out of circulation - can, if older than 300 years old, qualify as Treasure.

This is usually seen in the form of a conversion of the coin into a brooch or pendant, or some other form of jewellery or dress accessory, evidence of which can include the addition of a suspension loop to the top, a pin (or the remains of one) at the back, or gilding. Additionally, piercings can be present.

We have in the past taken the line that a single piercing of a coin is not normally sufficient evidence to argue that the coin has definitely been modified. However, in discussions with the relevant curators at the British Museum, as well as the Finds Advisors, and with reference to records on the database for pierced coins, it



came to light that in some cases, depending on the age and type of coin and the position of the piercing, a piercing by itself could constitute sufficient evidence.

This is most likely to be the case in the Early Medieval period, up to

the date of 1180AD. Most known examples of pierced coins from this period are believed to have been removed from circulation. Consequently, if you are shown a pierced precious metal coin of this period, please report it as potential Treasure.

In the past, examples of pierced Iron Age and Roman coins have not been put through as Treasure, but a look at the database shows that only 3 examples from the Iron Age and 4 from the Roman period are of precious metal and would have been eligible for Treasure as objects. So, given this low number, it is advisable that if you are presented with a gold or silver pierced coin from either of these periods, please advise the finder that it may constitute Treasure and may need to be reported; send a photograph to the Treasure Department, who can liaise with the appropriate curator/finds advisor and provide further guidance.

After 1180AD, examples of pierced coins appearing amongst

other coins in hoards are known, and it is in this period where we are likely to need other features on the coin to convincingly argue that it was modified into an object. However, piercings along the edge, at the top or bottom of the coin (with respect to either obverse or reverse, or in such a way that any cross on the reverse would be upright) may indicate modification and removal from circulation. So, if you are shown a precious metal coin of this date pierced in the manner described above, advise the finder that it may constitute Treasure and may need to be reported; send a photograph to the Treasure Department, who can liaise with the appropriate curator/finds advisor and provide further guidance.

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## Log on and get updated

Log on to our website at [www.ncmd.co.uk](http://www.ncmd.co.uk) and view the latest hobby news.

You will also find information on the benefits that we offer our members; including the latest Insurance Certificate and together with its Terms and Conditions. Information on the Treasure Act and the Portable Antiquities Scheme and where to obtain your Beach or Foreshore Permit. You can also download a handy Landowner's Agreement form and many other NCMD documents in our archive.

We also have a 'Member's Only' forum, where you can log on and discuss the latest on a wide range of topics pertaining to the NCMD and the hobby of metal detecting. Catch up on the latest forum chat including back issues of *Digging Deep*.



# Review of the Treasure Act Code of Practice – **Part 3**

In the first two parts to this series we looked at some of the more contentious issues that have been proposed for the review. So I will now look at some of the less contentious, though no less important, areas which will be considered in the forthcoming review.

## Reporting of Treasure:

Section 8(1) of the Act states that: *a person who finds an object which he believes or has reasonable grounds for believing is treasure must notify the coroner for the district in which the object was found before the end of the notice period, which is 14 days beginning with the day after the find or, if later, the day on which the finder first believes or has reason to believe the object is treasure.*

While in practice this has usually been interpreted as reporting your find/s to the local Finds Liaison Officer (FLO), under section 8 (1) finders have a legal obligation to report the find to the coroner. The NCMD believes that this procedure needs to be clarified in the Code of Practice to avoid any legal repercussions which could arise if treasure finds go missing while in the possession of the FLO, but before being reported.

This 'tidying up' of the Code is largely dependent on the introduction of a 'Coroner for Treasure' under the Coroners and

Justice Act. Whereby 'provision for the designation by the Coroner for Treasure, in consultation with the British Museum, of persons to whom objects of treasure should be reported and delivered, and for the giving by the Coroner for Treasure of instructions relating to the conduct of those persons.'

The NCMD would welcome this change to establish a legal framework for FLO's to act as the reporting point for finders of treasure items and the introduction of the 'Coroner for Treasure'.

## Associated objects:

Under section 1(1)(d): *any object, of whatever composition, that is found in the same place as, or that had previously been together with, another object that is treasure. The object may have been found at the same time as, or later than, the item of treasure.*

Therefore if the finder discovers an item of treasure, or items which indicate that there may be further associated items of treasure which require expert removal, or may be of a delicate nature requiring further expert excavation; the finder will be entitled to a reward for any associated objects recovered by later archaeological excavation.

However what is not made clear is the nature of any find/s made during any subsequent excavation which may have been deposited from an earlier or later period. As

an example let us assume that a hoard of coins were excavated after initial coins were reported by the finder, but during the excavation finds from a separate deposition are discovered, which could be either from an earlier or later time period. These finds would not be considered to be associated with the initial find and therefore the finder would not be eligible for any reward for those items.

While the acknowledgement of the finders interest in associated finds from subsequent excavations is intended to ensure that finders do not lose out when reporting the discovery of archaeological deposits, and to encourage finders to enlist expert help in recovering finds that may contain fragile, stratified or contextual information. A finder may well feel aggrieved if they were excluded from any reward for subsequent treasure discovered after they had reported the initial find. The clarification and eligibility of treasure rewards payable to finders for material in votive deposits which contain deposition from differing periods needs to be made clear.

## Proposal to deduct a percentage of Treasure rewards to fund conservation of finds.

There have been suggestions in recent archaeological publications, that a percentage of treasure rewards should be deducted to fund the conservation, study and excavation of findspots.

The NCMD would not support such a move, and would suggest that any levy on the reward paid to finders would be difficult to implement under current legislation and prove unpopular, such a levy would also be unfair on finders of treasure who's find did not require either conservation or further investigation.

There is also the fact that any conservation work, either carried out before valuation or which may be required to enhance its value, is already factored in to the treasure process to some extent.

The proposal acts on the premise that all items of treasure will be acquired by museums, in fact under its current terms of reference the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC) values items of treasure based on what the find may realise when offered for sale on the open market.

Moreover items of treasure are valued in 'as found' condition, taking account of any uplift in value which could be expected should the prospective acquirer wish to undertake such action.

The committee will also take into account the cost of such work, and whether it would prove cost effective to do so.

Where items of treasure require conservation work prior to valuation, perhaps because the find is unstable or where, in the case of coins, identification is required, this will be reflected in the valuation.

The 'Chiseldon Cauldrons' are a good example. The cauldrons were in such a fragile state when discovered, that remedial work needed to be done prior to valuation in order to stabilise the find. While this was an obvious expense to the museum one could argue that because the finds were valued in their perceived 'as found' condition, the museum cost was offset by the valuation which took account of the work.

Similarly, in some 4th century Roman coin hoards, which may contain large quantities of 'fused' coins, the cost of cleaning and separating the coins, may well incur costs far in excess of their market value. In such cases the TVC will take this into consideration, as would any prospective purchaser, and reflected in the valuation.

The recent Staffordshire Hoard, which was valued in as found condition, will require many years of evaluation and cleaning, is an exceptional case, and one of the more recent discoveries arguably responsible for the proposal. However most of the work to be undertaken will benefit future study of Anglo Saxon metalwork



York club on excavation



Roman tombstone © Lancashire CC

and it is difficult to see how finders can be expected to fund the study of such material from an ex-gratia payment based on reward.

The case for a levy on treasure rewards in order to fund excavation of find spots may well prove counterproductive in the pursuit of encouraging finders to seek expert help in the recovery of large or delicate objects.

### Reward for finders engaged in archaeological work

The Code of Practice states that no reward will be paid to finders 'engaged' on archaeological work.

While this may seem pretty straight forward, there are a number of cases which have proved it to be the contrary.

The NCMD feels the word 'engaged' is too ambiguous for its purpose and needs to be clarified further. It is usually accepted that 'engaged' on archaeological excavations will mean that the finder will be either under the auspices of a museum, university or some other archaeological body, usually receiving remuneration for their work. However where a finder is participating in a search

at the request of either the landowner or the excavation team without any formal recognition of the fact, they should be considered as an interested party in any reward paid for items of treasure discovered.

Similarly, an amateur archaeologist/s conducting an excavation at the request of the landowner or simply as part of their chosen pursuit, with the permission of the landowner, should not be considered as being 'engaged' and therefore excluded from any reward.

Anyone partaking in an archaeological excavation, which is under the auspices of a professional organisation, should be asked to sign a waiver excluding them from any reward should items of treasure be discovered. Failure to do so should not result in their exclusion from any reward.

### Code of Conduct

The NCMD would welcome the inclusion of its latest 'Code of Conduct' into the Code of Practice.

However there is also the need for explanatory notes on 'best practice'. We would not advocate the acceptance of the 'Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting' as this is a voluntary Code, which could gain statutory status were it included in such a document.

### Non Metallic objects

The discovery of non-metallic objects which are not associated with other treasure material at present have no legal protection. Items such as, statues or other quality carved items found in isolation would not be treasure and there is the need to debate the issue as a contrast to the comments surrounding the recent discovery in isolation of the Crosby Garrett helmet. There have been incidences whereby high status non metallic archaeological objects have been

sold by their owners after their discovery during for example an archaeological excavation prior to building development. The most recent and perhaps controversial example concerned the discovery of a Roman tombstone during excavations carried out by Manchester University in 2006. This inscribed and elaborately carved tombstone of a high status cavalry officer was described at the time of its discovery as being of immense importance.

This find did not fall within the terms of the Treasure Act and ownership was claimed by the developers who were within their rights, as were the finders and owner of the Crosby Garrett helmet, to sell to the highest bidder. Although this find was dealt with by its owners in an appropriate way with its eventual purchase by Lancaster City Museum, a situation made



Cauldron © PAS

possible by a Heritage lottery Funds grant this anomaly remains of concern. It remains clear that all non metallic archaeological finds considered to be of national importance, either as single finds or in hoards do not have the benefits that would be afforded to them if such material were included within the Treasure Act and finders rewarded for their discovery.

**Trevor Austin**



©PAS. Excavation of cauldrons

## MEETING DATES

The Next NCMD Executive meeting will be on the 26 June 2011

The Next Treasure Valuation Meeting will be on the 5 May 2011

The Next Portable Antiquities Advisory Board meeting has been cancelled until after Easter.

## GET IN TOUCH

For membership enquiries contact the Membership Secretary: **John Rigby**  
6 Arkholme Avenue  
Blackpool, Lancs, FY1 6QJ  
Tel: 01253 692313  
jjrigby@sky.com

For all other enquiries please contact the General Secretary: **Trevor Austin**  
51 Hilltop Gardens  
Denaby, Doncaster, DN12 4SA  
Tel: 01709 868521  
trevor.austin@ncmd.co.uk



# Myth Busters

There has been much speculation recently, particularly from the media, egged on by archaeological bodies, of the depth that modern metal detectors can reach. Unsubstantiated claims that metal detector users are regularly recovering metal finds from within the archaeological layers are both fanciful and damaging to the responsible hobby.

The NCMD has therefore decided to put some 'meat on the bones' of these claims by publishing test results carried out recently on some of the more expensive machines on the market. The machines are all 'Induction Balanced' discriminators most commonly used by detectorists and the test does not include 'Pulse Induction' machines, which are specifically designed to locate deep targets particularly gold nuggets on uncontaminated land and also for beach hunting. As any experienced

detectorist will tell you, when these are used on UK habitation sites, such as Roman or medieval, the concentration of small iron contamination completely overwhelms this type machine. They remain best suited for nugget hunting in the Australian outback where they were developed and have perhaps been misinterpreted as being suitable for European ground conditions.

The tests were conducted by 'Gary's detecting website', and the NCMD would like to thank Gary for the opportunity to reproduce the results in these pages. The test can also be found on Gary's website at [http://www.garysdetecting.co.uk/hoard\\_test.htm](http://www.garysdetecting.co.uk/hoard_test.htm)

Trevor Austin

## The buried hoard test

I wanted to know how deep a discriminating metal detector could detect a small hoard, so was told to go and get some machines, a big spade and some coins.

These days we hear so many stories about new models going deeper than ever before, we read about people finding coins and artefacts over two feet in depth.

Georgi, the Nexus designer, has always insisted that finding a small hoard at two feet is a myth and indeed scientifically impossible using the metal detectors we are all searching with today, I have been told coins with a patina are electronically isolated from one another so in the ground a detector will not see the coins as a mass, more like several individual targets.

Georgi has always based his results on facts when testing machines this is why he dropped by to show me what a metal detector was really capable of and busting this myth once and for all.

**Note: We can only test machines available at the time.**

**We are not interested in testing a machine with no discrimination circuit as you would not search in all metal on a junky ancient site.**

**Also this test is to simulate coins buried in a non-metallic container which has almost certainly been destroyed, e.g.: leather pouch, clay pot, wicker basket wooden box.**

**We decided to carry out the test in my garden (while woman was at work).**

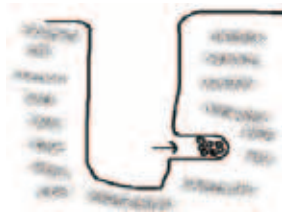
**Test:** To bury a small hoard of coins 1kg at 25" just over 2ft...64cms to be exact,

underneath undisturbed soil, as close as we could simulate.

### The Test

We dug the hole 70cms deep then burrowed a channel into the sidewall 20-25cms long at 55cms deep marked.

This was to ensure the target was placed underneath mostly undisturbed soil.



### The test diagram

Our earlier tests had proved that the halo effect of buried coins etc. played no real part in detection depth in fact the halo effect only applies to iron. To prove this fact next time you dig an ancient coin try to detect the soil in which it came out, if the halo effect was true the soil would give off a signal to it. The 1kg coin hoard in sidewall pocket (see diagram).

### Machines used

Minelab Explorer  
Minelab Sovereign Big coil  
Minelab Quattro  
Goldmaxx Mk1  
Whites XLT  
Whites MXT  
Nexus standard coil  
Nexus prototype coil  
Tejon with big coil

### Digging starts

It is surprising how hard it is to dig this deep... hell to pay when she sees it.



The test hole

I can't get my head around the Centimetres business.

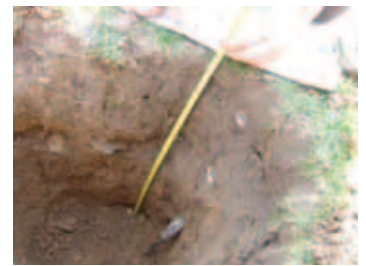


Measurements in inches and centimetres.



Before we carried out the full test we buried a highly conductive aluminium piece at the bottom of the hole and the filled it in with the earth, three machines picked this target up with a faint signal the Minelab's, Tejon (Big coil), Nexus with std 9" coils.

Then we dug the hole out and placed the aluminium piece in the sidewall pocket and filled the hole, now we could test it under undisturbed soil.



The pocket is next to the screwdriver.

### Test Result:

No machine could detect the target beneath the undisturbed soil.

### Conclusion

Loose earth in a freshly dug hole is not a fair test for a machines depth, all machines tested would indeed pick the hole up as part of the target giving a false depth impression.

Eventually we managed to get a digable signal from the Nexus fitted with the prototype ultra-low frequency 12" coils.

### The highly conductive Aluminium test piece



Placing the test piece in the sidewall pocket for the second test.



At 63.5cms deep only the Nexus with the 12" coils was the only machine that produced a smooth signal.

### The Hoard Test

1kg of mixed copper and silver coins some with the original soil still stuck to them.



The coins were then placed in the sidewall pocket and the hole was filled in.



Ready for the test.



### Test results

NO MACHINE COULD PICK UP THE BURIED HOARD IN DISCRIMINATION OR ALL METAL NOT EVEN THE MIGHTY NEXUS.

The test is now in place for ever, however it will be interesting to test new machines in the future.

Next time someone says they dug a hammered coin at nearly two feet simply give them a tape measure and a link to this page.

**Targets can possibly be detected this deep providing they are**

A: Bigger in mass than our test coins.

B: Higher in conductivity than the targets used.

Pulse induction machines and pipe locators have no discrimination (so not a fair test) I will post results if and when I get one.

### This myth is busted

I asked Georgi, "can machines that don't air test well, go deeper in the soil?"

He said "no absolute crap!" this is scientifically impossible if a machine air tests badly it will detect badly in the soil despite what you read on metal detecting forums and some manufacturers literature.

However some machines that air test better can lose a higher percentage of depth in the soil around 30% depending on what type of search coil is used.

If you suspect these results are wrong, please go out there and do the buried coins test for yourself.

**I think you will be amazed!!!!**

## An old army camp

By Des Dunne

*Many of you will know and have met Des Dunne, Minelab's Field Application Specialist; Des is based in Ireland and in a recent conversation I asked Des if he would like to write something for Digging Deep. Always willing to oblige Des has written about one of his many exploits.*

When I first set out on my metal detecting career, a lot of local history research was done at the town's library. One of those first sites to be investigated with a metal detector, turned out to be a place that, I always like to go back to time and time again.

Whether, for sentimental reasons or for the variety of finds, or the sheer peace and quiet the area enjoys is up for debate but, it's a place that never disappoints because it was the site of an old army camp and the surrounding countryside was used for training and practice and the variety of finds is very interesting. Not only that but, the area is steeped in local history and some of that history goes back a long way.

It was about a year since being there last and I wondered what it would look like? Would it be overgrown? Would there be new houses built? Recently one of my good sites was found to have a

new estate built on it. What were conditions going to be like? A number of thoughts swam around my head on the drive down. But, once parked up and a path was picked through the thin muddy path and a short steep climb up through the woods just above the flowing river beneath. While clambering over a fallen log and having just about a foot width in which to negotiate my way, I leaned to the right and my backpack loosened also in the same direction. The total weight pivoted me towards the edge and I just stopped myself from falling and grabbed onto another tree on my left which prevented my toppling the 20 or so feet to a rocky bottom. It was a great site but a tad dangerous to get into! Regaining my composure and walking on and seeing the land ahead it was just as I remembered. Wide open, cattle grazing, birds singing and the entire scene looked very



The place where I almost fell

reminiscent of a John Constable landscape painting.

I unpacked my E-Trac and set to work. Historically, the FBS detectors work very well here as it was one of the sites used for original prototype testing of the first Explorer models.

This is one of the best aspects of my job at Minelab as I'm essentially a detectorist at heart and always like to test any new products in the real world as it were. This guarantees that you, as a buyer of any of our detectors, would have confidence in knowing they have been rigorously trialed by myself and others in real-life situations comprising testing on all types of soils and conditions imaginable before you bought any of the model line-up.

The previous visit here was with the Safari and it was found to be very good on the rich dark brown soil conditions here. However, on this day I wanted to let the machine do a lot of the work so I took the E-Trac with its excellent meter information display. Turning on E-Trac, the Auto Sensitivity initially showed 19 – and soon after had ranged up to 23, decent enough for here, I thought, and it purred away merrily so this was a very good sign that it would be going deep for me today.

This was my day out and not a test day so I could enjoy the total experience and not be bothered with facts, figures, numbers, depth, charts, tape measures, voice recorders and camcorders!

It's amazing so many people say to me *"You have the perfect job Des!"* While yes, it is true – I am very lucky to do what I like to do for a living, there can be a very large difference between testing and detecting. When testing, I can make myself and others either,

happy and at times unhappy, especially if a piece of software doesn't perform as it should. When detecting I tend to be happy to be out in the great outdoors.

While mostly sunny, I still had to gear up with the usual waterproof jacket, hiking boots with a decent grip, overall trousers and of course spare batteries, water, a sandwich, digital camera and other 'essentials' stowed in what seemed to be a too heavy backpack on my back! The grass was also a bit long in places so it meant the coil would at times be travelling along on average between 6-8" off the actual ground level! Undeterred, I carried on. Signals began straight away and in the main, were deep (the field was in pasture). The first few finds were pieces of lead and one in particular, a long straight bit about 2" in length resembled a pot leg off something or other and had been very deep.

Not far away another piece of lead came up. Then, a coin and after that an army badge. I then got a glorious 'hammy' sound with a central cursor location and the meter showed FE 14 CO 03, and I was rewarded with a beautiful bunch of foil! Well, even farmers get to eat chocolate and smoke cigarettes! This pattern of junk targets continued for a while as the next few finds were discarded or just left behind by fishermen. They comprised of an empty roll your own tobacco tin, a beverage can end and the remnants of a sardine lunch! Adding insult to injury a few feet away the tin's key was dug...thankfully it had been shallow. The lead bits were also donated regularly by fishermen.

Just then a man out walking his dogs came along and we chatted for a while. He was local, knew



his area and offered to take me up a small wooded hill to look for the remains of what he stated was an ancient well. It was a steep climb and even the dogs were having trouble getting a grip on the slippery undergrowth. I had to stop to catch my breath and he (much fitter than I) kept going. A few minutes later a shout was heard, *"I found it!"* I soon came alongside him and indeed there was some sort of a structure lying partly exposed in the undergrowth. It was wide, cavernous, went down into blackness and did indeed look like a well. He departed and rounded up three of

the dogs – one, the oldest was missing! I felt a bit guilty about that but he assured me *"She will catch up!"*

OK I said to myself – if this was a well, people would have made daily journeys here and could have dropped a few coins on the way to fetch water. It wasn't long before I was again scanning the area and the signals did indeed start to happen. Several coins came up from a few inches, scrap 'partefacts' munitions in the form of Lee-Enfield bullets and casings and then a few musket balls, small ones and black with age all went into my finds bag. Walking





further up the hill I came into a clearing and it was liberally covered with last years fallen leaves.

It looked 'perfect' for scanning and I soon had my first signal slap bang in the centre of the clearing. It soon became clear this find was deeper than any other found in the area as I had by now a fairly deep hole exposed. There were roots present, mostly small and sinewy but a thick root blocked my fingers penetrating which made further progress slow. I resorted to a different digger, shorter but with a more pointed and serrated blade and this soon made short work of the roots.

Removing more soil and using my pin pointer the edge of a coin appeared and the target was found and out came a copper coin dated 1690. An old and decent looking coin as well.

About a foot away I had a repeat signal of the first copper and soon had an identical coin in my hand but had been well worn in comparison with the first coin. Thinking quietly to myself, the word 'hoard' crept into my thoughts and I began a systematic sweep of the area. Alas, only one more target came up and it was a large sounding one which raised my expectations only to instantly

deflate them when a modern soda can was recovered. Jeez...those damn cans turn up everywhere!

Now was a good time to sit down in the warmth of the sunshine, and eat the sandwich bought earlier from a local shop. The bottled water was very welcome and felt nice and cold as it travelled down and into my gullet! A little time was spent just drinking in the surroundings and I enjoyed the small birds hopping from tree to tree and branch to branch almost oblivious to my being there while they fed on any insects to be found. I couldn't recall seeing that particular breed in the city and discovered later they were wrens, very small birds indeed. During the winter months I carry birdseed specially if searching in the woods. I must admit that just then right there I felt complete and relaxed, free from the stresses of daily life, getting up, going to work, coming home, paying bills, paying taxes...I forgot the lot for a while and that was a good feeling. I really think this is what the hobby of metal detecting does – it refreshes and relaxes and reaches other parts of you that no other pastime can – very important in 21st century life which can at times encompass a person in too fast a pace.

Walking down to the river's edge, and looking back up the small hill, the thought hit me all of a sudden of an army trainer drilling his men in the methods of warfare and how to conduct an attack on a fortified structure as this area had been many years ago? I could envision men pressed to the cold ground, rifles and bayonets pointing ahead and trying to pick out the best way up which inevitably may have been crawling an inch or a few feet at a time on their stomachs. During a visit to Italy several years prior I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed with emotion when I was taken to visit Monte Cassino by my Italian host. How those boys managed to win out was a miracle.

I then took a step back in time and began to follow their maneuvers and hopefully I would be able to negotiate the steep climb and remain on my feet! Scanning the undergrowth was difficult as it was very tightly knit with low lying brush and brambles. However, once the first target was heard and recovered, a brass three pence, I saw just how soft and easy it was to dig here and this made it easier to remain upright and retain the proper angle to ground without falling backwards as the backpack I had strapped on was inclined to pull me backwards. Remember the fall I nearly had on the way in? Then, in a small concentrated area there were many signals heard. I though junk items for sure because prior to this, signals were very well spaced apart. But no, they were legitimate finds sure enough. More bullet casings, more worn copper coins, fragmented metal pieces, and what was to be my final dig of the day was the only silver coin to come up that



day – a very worn Geo II bull head sixpence (though many silver coins had previously been found here). Climbing back out and walking the muddy path back to the car it was just as I had left it thankfully.

That evening, arriving into my local the pint never tasted better. The 'lads' were engrossed in a soccer match, or a few games on different tellies and some had been there for several hours.

"Jeez Desi boy...you look very healthy there...you've got a great colour!" said one of the lads in a jocular fashion. "Yes, thanks" I replied... "I was away for a while!" I did have a colour, a bright red face from the day's exertions which felt very good. I had been away – away from the hum drum of daily life and I knew I could also look forward to a good night's sleep.

©Des Dunne



## Snow Chance!

During the first spell of snow last November, the Chairman of the Grantham Search Club Tony Lane, was contacted by a gentleman requesting the clubs assistance. His daughter had lost her engagement ring in her garden and he was hopeful that we could help.

After contacting his daughter, she explained the ring was lost after throwing snowballs for her pet Labrador and it must have slipped off due to the cold. Tony and myself (Chris) set off to see if we could find it. After about ten minutes of searching we had discovered many drain inspection covers, clothesline supports and some tempting signals under her concrete path (it wasn't looking

good for the lady). Then as I glanced over to Tony, he was dividing a clump of snow over his search head and there it was, a white gold solitaire ring.

When we showed her, she was clearly relieved and swiftly put it back on her finger with tears in her eyes. Tony has been the Chairman of the club for many years and has been called upon to find jewellery before, but this was my first time and it was a bit of a reality check. It put all the finds I have made into perspective, irrelevant of it being lost last week or last decade, whoever loses these items would have been devastated.

**Chris Winton**  
Grantham Search Club



## Reports Of Meetings

On 25 November 2010, Lesley Sleith, Chair of the Scottish Region and Alastair Hackett, Region Secretary, met with representatives of the Scottish Government and the Crown Office to discuss issues relating to ex-gratia award valuation appeals. In Scotland, the award determined by SAFAP (Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel) is deemed to be final and there is no right of appeal. Finders may however submit verifiable information to the Panel in support of a valuation for an object which is identical or very similar in type and condition to the one they are submitting, but *this must be done in advance of the date of the next Panel meeting*.

The two NCMD officials pressed for the basic principle of having a right of appeal (provided new evidence is put forward by the finder), similar to the current situation in England, but the other parties were of the opinion that this was unnecessary given that there has rarely (or possibly never) been an incidence of any such valuation challenge arising. It was then suggested to them that in the absence of an appeal, a short

explanation should be given to the finder if there was a difference between a finder's submitted valuation and the SAFAP valuation. This suggestion is to be given further consideration, but only time will tell if the Scottish Government and Crown Office are prepared to grant this request.

The remainder of the meeting was a general discussion regarding the perceived low level of funding for administering Scotland's Treasure Trove system, an issue that has been raised with the Scottish Government at ministerial level on more than one occasion in the past. The system falls within the overall remit of the Minister for Culture and External Affairs, and in ten years of devolved government, there have, unfortunately, also been just as many Ministers, a situation that has not helped the NCMD Scottish Region in its efforts to maintain continuity in its official links with the Government. Realistically, the NCMD can only expect its points be noted at best, particularly so in the current financial climate.

On 14 December 2010, a Committee meeting of the Scottish Region was held at which

Catherine Dyer, QLTR, and Andrew Brown, Crown Office solicitor, were in attendance. This was the first time that Scottish Region members had had the opportunity to meet with Mrs Dyer, who as Crown Agent in Scotland, is also head of the Treasure Trove system and has the role of taking all final decisions on the claiming (and disclaiming), valuation and allocation of portable antiquities.

The meeting focussed once again on ex-gratia award valuation appeals and was very positive. Mrs Dyer advised that there was no legal basis in Scotland for reviewing ex-gratia rewards, but she nevertheless agreed to consider further the Committee's request that a written explanation of any discrepancy between submitted valuations and SAFAP valuations should be given to finders. She also agreed that regular, formal contact between the QLTR Unit and the Scottish Region would be desirable to discuss any issues of mutual concern and should be maintained.

The Scottish Region is grateful to Mrs Dyer for the opportunity to establish regular contact with the



Crown Office and we hope that this will enhance our relationship in the future. Meanwhile, the key message to all finders of objects in Scotland is: **If you think that the object may be of significant value, make sure that you obtain a private, professional valuation and submit it to the Treasure Trove Unit before your object is assessed by the Panel.** If you leave it till after SAFAP has made its assessment, you will have no right of appeal.

**Alastair Hackett**

# Yorkshire Region AGM

The Yorkshire region held its usual Finds of the Year competition at its AGM on the 6 March and the finalists will be entered in Robin and Karolyn Hatt competition later in the year.

On hand to judge the competition was Amy Downes FLO for South and West Yorkshire, Kevin Leahy National Finds Advisor and his wife Dianne and assistant at North Lincolnshire Museum.

This year's winning showcase went to the York Club, while both the Best Coin and Best Artefact went to the Hoyland Club.

There was a full house, as is the norm at this event, with the ever popular prize raffle and a detecting outing provided afterwards for the members.

Trevor Austin



# Treasure Chest Exhibition

## Exhibition of Metal Detecting Discoveries

**Venue: Chester Town Hall**  
**Date: Saturday 6 August 2011**  
**Time: 10am to 4pm**  
**Admission: Free**

Metal detecting enthusiasts from across the Northwest will descend on Chester Town Hall in August for the Treasure Chest Exhibition – an Exhibition of Metal Detecting Discoveries.

Members of detecting clubs from as far north as Kendal and as far south as Wrexham will be setting up stalls to show off some of their most precious and most interesting finds at the one-day event on Saturday, August 6, from 10am to 4pm.

Popular TV historian and author Mark Olly will be present, decked out in his regalia, answering questions from enthusiasts.

Visitors can also take along any unidentified or interesting finds themselves, as the Portable Antiquities Scheme's Finds Liaison

Officers Peter Reavill, Dot Broughton and Vanessa Oakden will also be on hand to give advice, identify and record items.

The clubs will have lots of coins and artefacts on display, but each club will also have a special case, dedicated to this year's theme – 'Lead Items Through The Ages'. This specialist showcase will be entered in to a competition, to be judged by Mark Olly, Rob Philpott from Liverpool Museum, and Ken Willcox, the NCMD regional delegate from East Anglia.

There will be plenty of exciting finds for visitors to examine, and for younger visitors, there will be a 'touch trays' full of interesting coins and artefacts.

Co-organiser Dave Edwards said: "It should be a great day out. We've had tremendous support from lots of clubs and it's a great venue, full of history in its own right..." He went on to say: "There

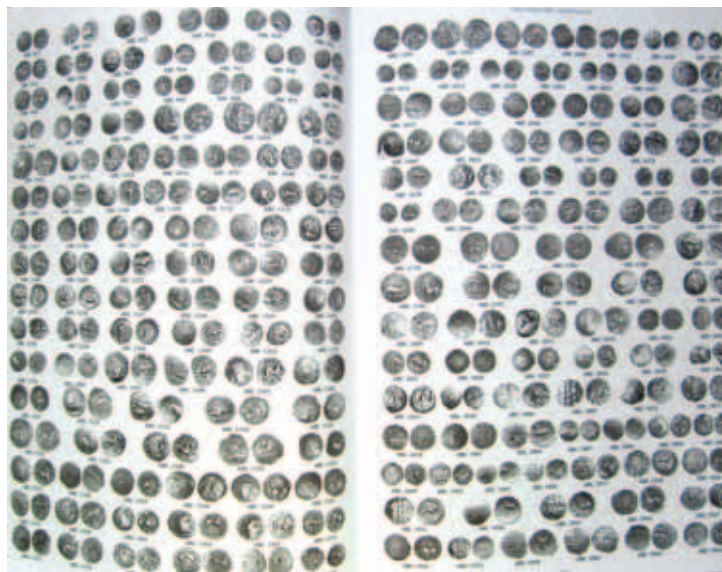
have been a lot of rare coins and unusual artefacts found since our last exhibition seven years ago, so there will be plenty of new pieces to look at. The theme of lead should throw up some interesting items too. We thought it would make a good theme, open to everyone, as most detectorists have found plenty of lead pursuing this wonderful hobby."

There will also be trade stands offering tips, advice and some great bargains. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Chester Town Hall is in the centre of the town, which is well served by public transport and has ample parking provision. For further details about the venue and how to get there, visit [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/visiting/heritage/chester\\_town\\_hall.aspx](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/visiting/heritage/chester_town_hall.aspx)



# Ancient British Coins (ABC)



Over the years Celtic coins have become increasingly collectable, mainly due to the fact that as more coins are discovered by metal detector enthusiasts they have become more readily available at affordable prices. *Ancient British Coins (ABC)* is therefore the ideal companion for collectors and finders alike.

Written by Elizabeth Cottam, Philip de Jersey, Chris Rudd and John Sills, ABC is a major contribution to the identification and study of Celtic coins and is intended to be a visual catalogue of ancient British coins. Compiled mostly from the 'Celtic coin index' the book is split into three distinct sections.

The first section is an introduction to the book, and pays tribute to Sir

John Evans, who it describes as the father of ancient British studies. It also pays tribute to the thousands of detector users who have contributed to the knowledge and understanding of these coins by their discovery. The aims of the book, as described in section one, are firstly to make ancient coins of this type easier to identify and date, secondly, to provide an illustrated compilation of the main Celtic coin types and thirdly to increase the popularity of the coin types.

Section two catalogues the Gallo-Belgic and other Gallic imports as well as tribes from Kent, Southern Region, East Anglia, Western and South West to name but a few. There are 999 illustrations some of which are twice life size, and

reference, where available, to Spink *Standard Catalogue of British Coins*.

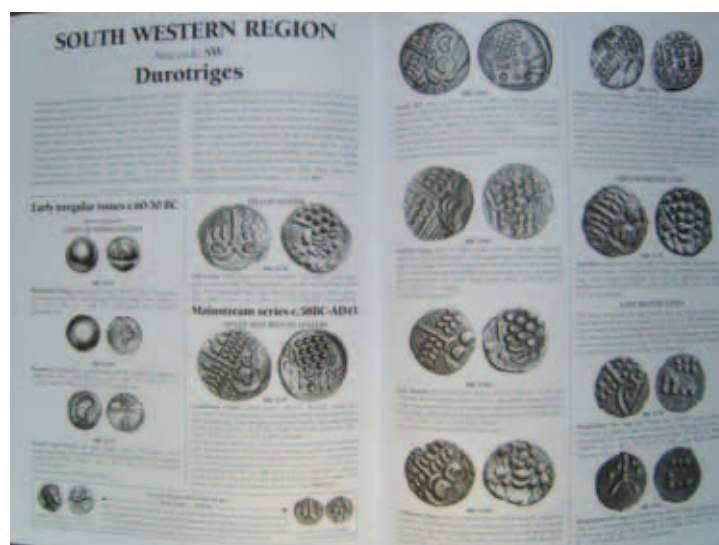
Section three is the ABC fast identifier, and contains all the coins in the ABC plus others from the Celtic Coin index, the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the British Museum. The coins are illustrated actual size and are catalogued in accordance with size. There is also a brief section on 'ring money' and 'currency bars'.

To help you navigate the catalogue, there is a 'four-way marriage maker', this is a quick way of accessing the coins in the catalogue by 'marrying' the four reference number from either 'ABC' (*Ancient British Coins*), 'VA' (Van Arsdell), 'BMC' (Iron Age Coins from the British Museum), or 'S' (Spink).



The book is priced at £75, which may sound expensive, but I would highly recommend this book to members who either find or simply wish to identify these types of coins and will be an invaluable aid to a club library.

**Trevor Austin**



# Spink Coins of England 2011

Regarded as the 'coin collectors' bible' *Spink Coins of England & the United Kingdom 2011* is in its 46th edition.

Although published annually there are enough new entries to make it a worthwhile purchase on an annual basis. It has been some time now since Spink introduced colour photographs of many of the coins, which serve to enhance the books appeal.

While many of you will undoubtedly have been eagerly

waiting this latest incarnation, there will be those new to the hobby, that have yet to experience its virtues.

Printed on good quality paper and bound in hard back it is the sort of book that would not look out of place on any coffee table, but will also stand up to the wear and tear of regular reference and being taken along to various coin auctions or club meetings.

*Spink Coins of England & the United Kingdom* Standard

*Catalogue of British Coins* is the only reference work to feature every major coin type from Celtic to the present day in a single volume and gives an accurate reflection of the retail prices based on current market conditions.

Priced at £25.00 it is an absolute must for anyone who finds or collects English coinage and is especially useful for identification, whether experienced and just starting out in the hobby.

**Trevor Austin**

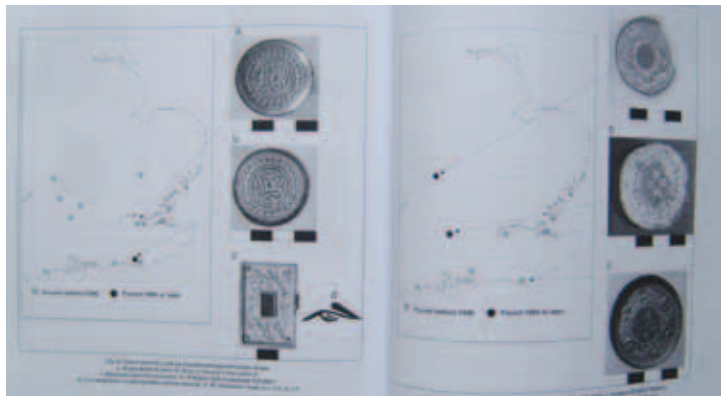


# A Decade of Discovery

## Proceedings of the Portable Antiquities Scheme Conference 2007

Edited by Sally Worrell, Geoff Egan, John Naylor, Kevin Leahy and Michael Lewis. ISBN 9781407307237. £47.00. 240 pages; illustrated throughout.

Hadrian Books, 122 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7BP.  
Tel: 01865 310431. E-mail: [bar@hadrianbooks.co.uk](mailto:bar@hadrianbooks.co.uk) or order [bar@archaeopress.com](mailto:bar@archaeopress.com)

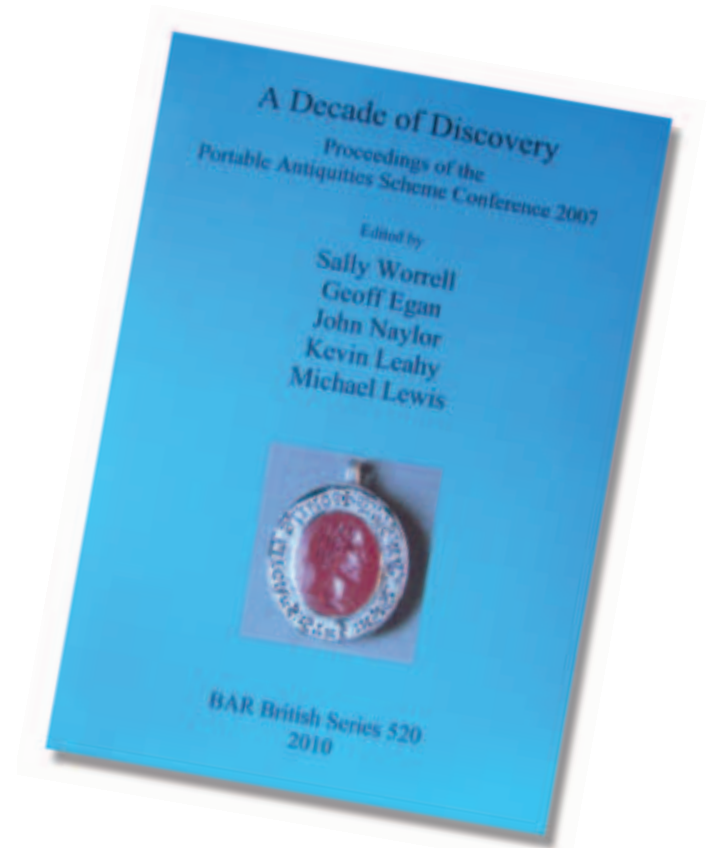


*"In 2007 the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) marked its tenth anniversary by holding a conference at which speakers, both from within the Scheme and outside gave a series of papers that demonstrated the research potential of recording finds of archaeological objects made by members of the public. This volume contains papers given at that conference together with a number of other contributions.*

*PAS started as six pilot schemes in 1997 and became a national network across England and Wales in 2003."*

Perhaps the above press release over simplifies the content of this book, which I found to be one of the most enjoyable I have read for a long time.

There are 20 chapters, or papers, in the book covering topics such as lithic scatters, dragonesque brooches, saucer brooches and

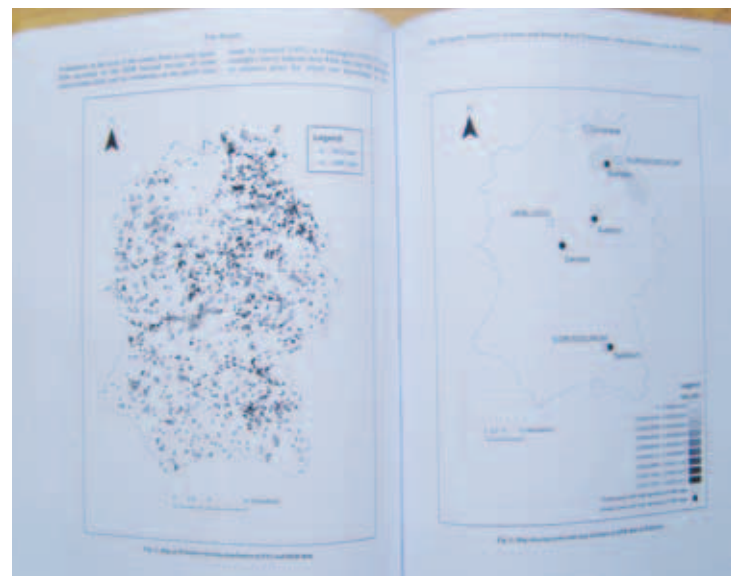
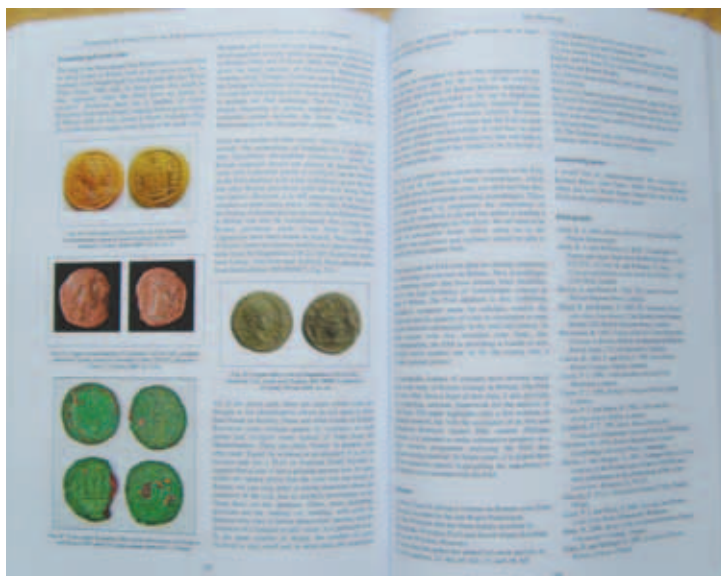


medieval seals. There is a forward by Roger Bland and an excellent insight into the development of the Portable Antiquities Scheme's database by Dan Pett, each with corresponding maps, graphs and photos, many of which are colour. It is difficult to single out individual papers for recognition, but I particularly liked Sam Moorhead's paper on Roman coin use in England and the late Geoff Egan's paper on medieval pilgrim

trinkets was fascinating. Tom Brindle gives an interesting insight into how the PAS has increased the knowledge of Roman rural settlements in Wiltshire, while Adam Daubney's 'The Cult of Totalis' is highly recommended reading for anyone interested in 'TOT' rings.

I found it an extremely enjoyable informative read, well worth the £47 price.

**Trevor Austin**



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