

UKDN WORD

WORLD OF RESPONSIBLE DETECTING

ISSUE NO.61
September 2012



PAPAL BULLAE BY KEV WOODWARD



SCEATS AND TRADE BY JOHN NAYLOR



INSIDE:

NEWS, VIEWS, COMPETITION RESULTS AND MORE

UKDN Word Table of Contents

Click on the title to go to the page

Regulars

3 - A message from Admin

6 - Did you see

7 - PAS Find of Note

32 - News and Views

33- Useful websites

34 - August New Members

35 - About us

Competition Results

8 - Coin of the Month

11 - Artefact of the Month

14 - UKDN fun DSLR camera competition

15 - UKDN fun point, press and pray camera competition

Features

17 - Contaminated Green Waste

***19 - Papal Bullae by
Kev Woodward***

***23 - Sceatta's & trade in early
Anglo Saxon England by
John Naylor***



Page 17



Page 19

UKDN would like to thank Tom Redmayne for the cover page image
and members for their contributions



A Message from Admin

Hi Everyone

Finally, the harvest is underway and a start has been made on the wheat in most areas. The weather, however, is still a cause for concern in the farming community and the rest of the wheat harvest is being delayed and will be very late. One big problem for farmers this year has been blackgrass, a weed of arable crops which is very persistent and hard to get rid of. Farmers are being advised to use the 'stale seedbed' system to get rid of it. This means preparing the seed bed and leaving it for the weeds to germinate then spraying them off. What is good for us is that it gives a bit more time between harvest and drilling for getting some detecting in.

Please remember though folks that it is a difficult year for farmers and they may not be very receptive to people asking for permissions at the moment. Just worth bearing in mind and use a little discretion where needed. This is their livelihood after all.

On a positive note, it's great to see the finds beginning to appear on the forum again as the detecting season gets back into full swing. Please remember that we have a superb team of finds advisors and a wealth of knowledge on the forum so post up anything that you need ID'ing.

Good Hunting to you all from The Admin Team

The Admin Team



Brian & Mo'

Founded UKDN in
Sept 2002, Detecting
since 1978.



Puffin

Here since Nov 2007,
Detecting since 2007



Coreservers

Techy Admin
Here since 2003,
Detecting since 2003



Petethedig

Here since Nov
2002. Detecting
since 1980.



Kev Woodward

Here since 2005.
Detecting since 1990.



Tomredmayne

Here since Sept
2006, Detecting
since 2005



Kevmar

Here since Sept
2002. Detecting
since 1978.



Karv

Techy Admin. Here
since March 2004.
Detecting since 2004

10th Anniversary Deus Raffle

Finished on 31st August 2012



On September 1st the Deus Raffle tickets will be sent to Regions for the draw to take place. We thank you all for your tremendous support for we have not only raised the cost of the detector but its looking like you have raised over £400 for your chosen charity ie Cancer Research UK. Well done !!

UK DETECTOR NET CLOTH BADGES



Design is as the photo complete with your username. Cost is £7.50 including postage. If you require one then click the Paypal "Buy Now" button on the UKDN Shop page or send cheque/PO made out to UK DETECTOR NET, to Mr B Cross, 52 Stonehills Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 5UL

Badge creation is now very fast.

[UKDN Shop](#)

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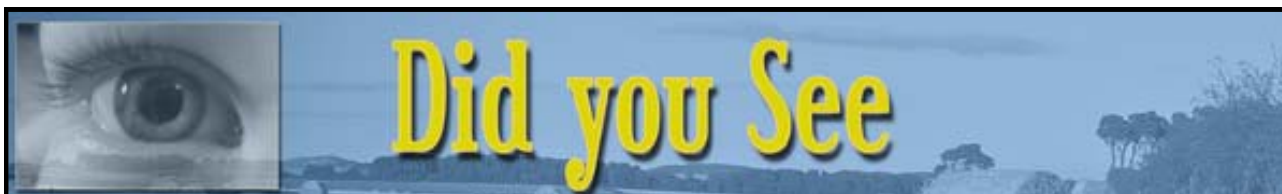
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1000 small bags - £13.99 inc. postage*

*100 medium bags - £3.20 inc. postage
500 medium bags - £9.90 inc. postage
1000 medium bags - £15.50 inc. postage*

*100 large bags - £4.99 inc. postage
500 large bags - £14.50 inc. postage
1000 large bags - £23.00 inc. postage*

[Link to UKDN Shop](#)



With almost 500 members visiting every single day and 100's of new posts every day it is so easy for you, the members of UKDN, to miss out on some very interesting posts. So, each month in the magazine we will bring to your attention some posts that you might have missed like.....click on the link

<u>Silver Gilt hatpin and a piece of yellow stuff</u>	<u>A Ring too good to be true ?.</u>
<u>LEAD</u>	<u>Cracker</u>
<u>2nd harness pendant in a week for us</u>	<u>seal for id please</u>
<u>Digging Spades.</u>	<u>80mph on UK Motorways</u>
<u>Lead shield weight</u>	<u>Yesterdays treasure find</u>
<u>Oh Norman</u>	<u>Just a letter opener ?</u>
<u>Jimmy Saville Dies</u>	<u>Gold Bracelet</u>
<u>Roman Brooch?</u>	<u>Do you like Cricket?</u>
<u>Have i found my first Hammerd</u>	<u>large bird ring.....or tat?</u>
<u>Saxon?</u>	<u>Gold ring....woooohooooo</u>

PAS Find of Note of Regional Importance Found by Hedgehunter

PAS Record

DAGGER

Unique ID: DENO-1D2B92

Incomplete and broken cast copper alloy dagger of middle Bronze Age date. The dagger, which is in two parts, has a single mid-rib running the length of the blade flanked by a line of three slight ridges to either side forming part of the bevelled edge of the blade. The lower slopes of the central mid-rib are decorated with impressed points arranged in approximately four lines but the centre of the mid rib is undecorated. Although considerably worn the traces of two circular rivet holes can still be seen at the butt of the blade. The surface of the blade is pitted.

The middle Bronze Age period is dated 1500-1150 BC.

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Returned to finder

Chronology

Broad period: BRONZE AGE

Subperiod from: Middle

Period from: BRONZE AGE [[scope notes](#) | [view all attributed records](#)]

Subperiod to: Middle

Period to: BRONZE AGE [[scope notes](#) | [view all attributed records](#)]

Date from: Circa 1500 BC

Date to: Circa 1150 BC

Dimensions and weight

Length: 97.8 mm

Width: 32.9 mm

Thickness: 6.2 mm

Weight: 46.9 g

Quantity: 2

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Friday 1st January 2010 - Friday 30th April 2010

Personal details

Found by: This information is restricted for your login.

Recorded by: Ms Charlotte Burrill - [[view all attributed records](#)]

Identified by: Ms Charlotte Burrill - [[view all attributed records](#)]

Other reference numbers

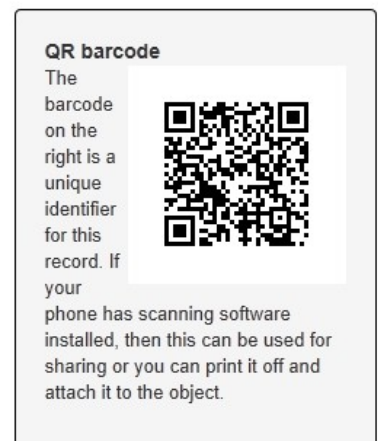
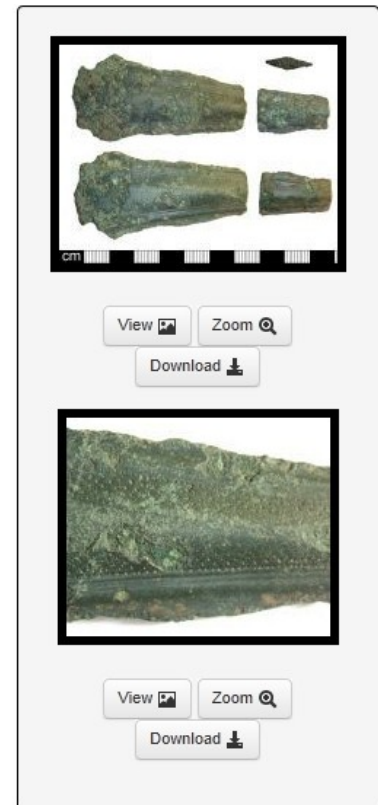
Other reference: Derby E6929

Materials and construction

Primary material: Copper alloy [[scope notes](#) | [view all attributed records](#)]

Manufacture method: Cast [[scope notes](#) | [view all attributed records](#)]

Completeness: Incomplete [[scope notes](#) | [view all attributed records](#)]



Spatial metadata

Region: East Midlands

County: Nottinghamshire

District: Newark And Sherwood

To be known as: Farnsfield

Spatial coordinates

Grid reference source: From a paper map

Grid reference accurate to a 100 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector [[scope notes](#)]

General landuse: Cultivated land [[scope notes](#)]

Specific landuse: Character undetermined [[scope notes](#)]

References cited

No references cited so far.

Coin of The Month

Mary 1st Groat - Spink 2492 - by Godfrey



I was meant to go detecting every week this year. Instead, I've been stuck indoors in the rain more times than I can count. The rain even made sure that a first mowing of pasture back in May seem like it had never happened literally a week later, with the grass shooting up nearly a couple of feet in that time.

So, in July, as soon as a hot and sunny day coincided with a day off work, I headed out to see what land was available. Despite a hunch that some mowing might have happened, I had no idea if anywhere was in a detectable state, but to be honest I just didn't care anymore.

The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and I would have detected a tarmac pavement just to be outdoors on a day like that. I chose one of my newer areas to head out to, and initially my heart sank a little as I saw triffid like stands of meadow grass left, right and centre. After a bit of a hunt though, I found one field that had been partially mown. I'd never really detected it much before, and whenever I had I'd found it full to the brim with scrap iron and modern rubbish.

Still, it was land that could be detected, and after months stuck indoors that was good enough for me.

I took a nice steady pace up one side of the field, and pretty soon had a reasonable selection of bits. A thimble, some lead pistol balls and some of those silver grey buttons that make you think for a second that you've found a hammered coin.

I had stuck my Deus in GMP mode for a change, based on the recommendation of Popsandme on the forums, and to my surprise was getting on with it better than I had done before. Being able to listen to the iron as I went over it was helping a good deal, and kept my pace nice and slow too.

After about half an hour or so I had a nice signal, a consistent reading of 76 on the display. It didn't come out in the first shallow spade full, but when I took another small scoop out I had whatever it was in my hands, hidden away in a clod of earth.

It didn't take long to see that it was a hammered coin, but I must confess it took a little longer to believe that it actually was one from this field full of scrap! I gave it a gentle clean, and, somewhat geekily, recognised that it was Queen Mary from the portrait alone. The nice bold 'Maria' next to the portrait confirmed it.

Initially I thought it was quite damaged, but after a bit more gentle cleaning I noticed one bit that looked like damage was actually a hole made for suspending the coin from something. Someone had presumably worn it as a pendant!

By that point my mind was racing. Was it made into a pendant by a catholic, looking to prove their faith in public or in secret in a time of religious turmoil?



Was it a touch piece, touched by Mary herself to make a charm to cure Swine Fever? I'll wait for the FLO's thoughts, but personally I prefer the catholic theory. Either way, it was clearly an important object to someone at some point, which is presumably why it has remained in such good condition.

I still had many hours of detecting left, but the thought of that coin in the 'very special finds' pouch around my neck certainly put a spring in my step for the rest of the day, and meant I investigated every signal thoroughly. This paid off too, with an

unexpected roman coin in good condition, and what I suspect to be a roman pin head as well.

I'm going to get the coin mounted in a special case, and hang it on the wall, to see if it still brings good fortune to its owner. If the weather holds for the rest of the summer, I'll also be giving this 'rubbish' field a good going over a few more times before the plough gets brought in, that's for sure.

Godfrey

Runners up

Henry VI 1st reign Half Penny, Annulet Issue - by Tinner



Henry III Voided Long Cross Penny - by obby



Artefact of the Month

Pilgrim's Ampulla - by Tinner



After what seemed forever for the crops to start coming off, we finally had some spring barley stubble on which to detect. It was towards the end of July and there had been a lot of rain the week before harvest, so although the barley stubble was dry, the ground beneath was still soft.

The field was huge, as they tend to be in Wiltshire (or the "prairie lands" as it is otherwise known), but we have been working these fields for several years now and generally

know the hot spots. Anybody that thinks that they have cleared a field by going over it once, really needs to re-think their strategy as we have detected the same fields for 12 years and new finds are coming up each year. Maybe not as regularly as when we first started, but they are still there to be found.

This was a typical Saturday hunt, with a couple of hours spare, so I grabbed my detector and set off. Father was otherwise engaged so I was on my own for a couple of hours. The field itself is on quite a steep bank with a few ridges and bumps and normally where the combine cuts uphill, it cuts tighter to the dirt providing better detecting areas.

Working the shallower stubble, I started on an area that had produced before, getting a few odds and sods (the usual cartridge caps, buttons and small pieces of lead) which is always a good sign as it means we may have missed a patch.

A few steps into one of the clearer patches, I received a really sweet signal and having scraped the stubble off the surface and waved my pin point probe around, I realised it was a little bit deeper than I had originally thought. Again, this is frequently a

Treasure
hunting

BRITAIN'S BEST SELLING
METAL DETECTING MAGAZINE



sign of a better find. The spade went in, giving me plenty of room from the centre of the signal.

Clearing away the first shovel full, I then used my probe again to identify the precise location of the find. This time, I got a signal from my probe and as the soil was nice and damp I was able to carefully push away the soil, at which point it looked

like just a piece of lead as I could see the oxidised white colour as I brushed away the soil.

Once I had done this I realised that there were some markings on the lead and carefully removed the rest of the soil. To my delight I worked out exactly what it was, a pilgrim's ampulla. This had been on my "Wish List" for some years, and earlier this

year I had found one that had sadly been cut in half, either by someone intentionally or by the plough. So after 12 years of detecting I have found two in one year, the latter being a really excellent example. I was over the moon to say the least.

Pilgrims would have gone to sacred shrines to gather holy water in these ampulas and upon their return they would have slashed them to release the holy water as a blessing or they would have buried them whole, which

looks like happened in my case, to bring good fortune and to bless the crops.

I have subsequently shown the farmer and explained this to him. He is more than interested in the history. It is a shame it hadn't worked for him this year as he tells me it is a terrible harvest. I can now cross this one off my "Wish List" and dream of something else to find.

Chris.

Runners up

Bronze Ring of uncertain age - by Georgian Tim



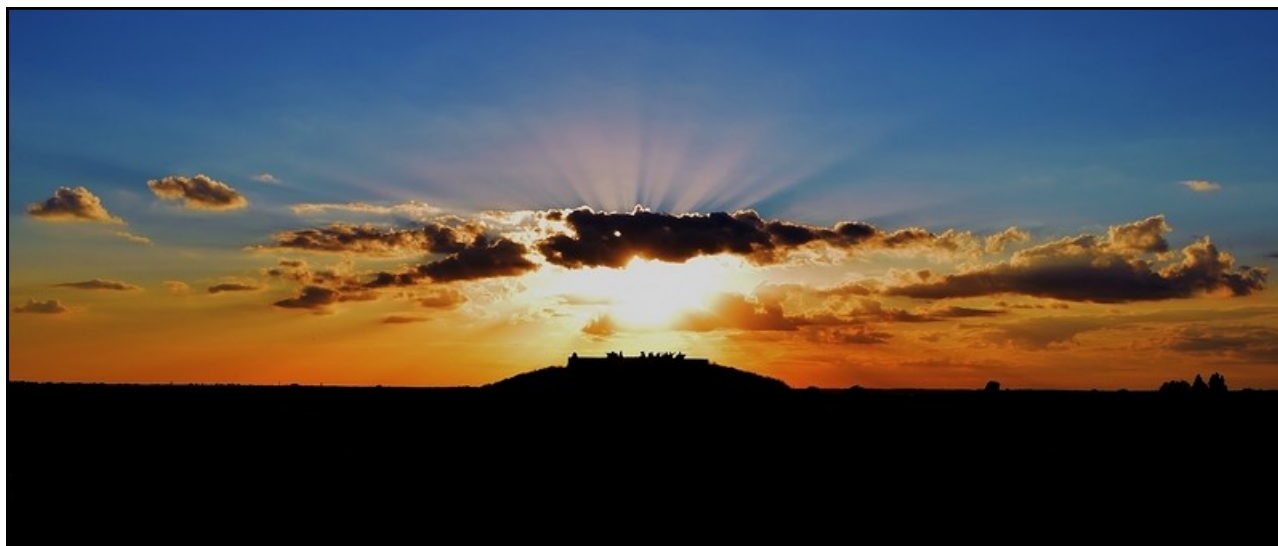
Pipe Tamper 17th/18th Century - by obby



UKDN FUN DSLR - Camera PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Winner
slapeddicus

Sunset in West London - Nikon d5100 with 18-58mm lens



Runners up

Cod Fangler - Juvenile Grey Heron at Fairburn Inngs - Nikon D7000



Tinner - Brown Hare - Nikon D60



UKDN FUN POINT, PRESS & PRAY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



Runners up



**the barnacle - Ring in Hedge -
Fujifinepix a805**



**Casa Dos - Goldfinch on Feeder -
Sonycybershoot**



**Puffin - Canon Ixus 107 Hung
off Kite, Brean Somerset**



HERITAGE CRIME

What are heritage crimes?

Heritage crimes are, first of all, offences that damage the historic environment – so things like vandalism, graffiti, arson and theft.

Why should the public care about heritage crimes?

Heritage crimes are criminal activities, which can have serious effect on neighbourhoods and society.

Things like arson, graffiti, and criminal damage scar beautiful buildings. Anti-social behaviour such as substance misuse debase the places we live and enjoy visiting; theft and illegal metal detecting take away the physical evidence valuable to our understanding of the past. On top of that, all of these can incur financial loss on property owners.

If heritage crimes are not tackled better we all stand to lose something of our history and well-being.

How serious are these crimes?

There is **no national statistics on heritage crime** by the police so the true extent is difficult to ascertain. Through our work in the regions and our experience with many sites across the country, we know the crimes are widespread and they tend to be under-reported by victims.

A recent assessment identified that arson, architectural theft, removal of artifacts from protected sites and vehicle nuisance pose the greatest threat.

Illegal metal detecting in Lincolnshire is growing and reported cases are only the tip of the iceberg.

The level of **metal theft** is also of great concern.

- In 2005, there were 84 metal theft claims from churches totalling £325,326. In 2010, this has soared to 1763 claims costing £3,310,488 (data from Ecclesiastical)
- In 2010 Manchester diocese tops the list of metal theft claims with more than 90 claims recorded up to the end of November. It is closely followed by Lincoln, with more than 70 claims

Our understanding of the volume and extent of crime in the historic environment continues to develop. Neighbourhood Policing and local involvement will contribute considerably to gathering intelligence and data on the ground. We will also be developing systems that will allow us to accurately record crimes and ASB and thereby place our resources in the right place at the right time.

For crimes in progress - call 999

More action, less crime. It all adds up.

For crimes that have happened - report to your local Police
[click here for the non emergency reporting number](#)

LINCOLNSHIRE POLICE

[Click here to take part in the English Heritage Crime Survey](#)

policing with PRIDE



"Green Waste" at St Albans

Contaminated Green Waste Issue? AN UPDATE By Steve Rice

**PLEASE TRY TO GET INVOLVED THIS REALLY
SHOULD CONCERN YOU !!**

It has been nearly 5 months, since myself and The Barnacle (Steve Wright) started the campaign again Contaminated Green Waste. (C.G.W) and I felt it was time for an update. There has been a mixed response from detectorists and outside bodies, and I'll try and cover as many points as I can.

Petition: There still appears to be a general attitude amongst metal detectorists, that whilst it is not on their doorstep, they are unwilling to get involved. I find this disappointing, as it will affect every one of us, in due course. Just because your favourite fields are safe now, doesn't mean they will be tomorrow. This has resulted in just over 1100 signatures on the e-petition. Bearing in mind that all ages and families can sign, I think we could have done much better. It isn't too late though, so please consider asking family and friends to sign today.

The link is <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/30392> or if you have already signed, why not make a comment on the 38 degrees site, who may help us on our campaign if there is enough interest. <http://www.38degrees.org.uk/>

MP's: Some MP's have been willing to get involved, but there are also reports of MP's not even having the decency to reply.

Even my own MP has not replied to my enquiry, even though I have contacted her on numerous occasions.

(Continued from page 17)

NCMD: The NCMD (National Council for Metal Detecting) have been excellent in their support, and have even allowed us a couple of very large articles in their 'Digging Deep' magazine. As well as this they have formed a group to target this issue, and have also made representation to the Government via the NCMD's membership of the Sports & Recreation Alliance (SARA).

F.I.D: The F.I.D (Federation of Independent Detectorists) have sadly failed to get involved at all, and I've had no response to my communication sent to them.

Environmental Health: Both myself and 'The Barnacle' have had communication back from the Environmental Health, and they require information on individual issues, rather than tackling the matter as a whole. However it is in all our interests that we keep the farming community on our side, as they are the ones being misled and not in the wrong, and giving isolated reports against individual farmers, will get us nowhere and would only alienate us from them.

UKDN: UK Detector Net have also added a forum to keep all the posts together, so those interested please feel free to have a look around.

In summing up, it is going to be a long battle ahead. But it appears a way forward may be to try and contact the Farmers and possibly the National Farmers Union, to show them leaflets and photographs of what is being dumped on their fields. However nothing has yet been designed, and is still in the infancy stage.

Steve Rice

LATEST NEWS:

**Company fined £75,000 after
knives and plastic discovered in
compost**

See [Here](#)



Photo of waste material prior to pulping

Papal Bullae



Many detectorists have been lucky enough to find a Papal Bulla during their searches and a few have been posted up on the forum for all to enjoy. The design is fairly standardised but what does the design mean and why are they made of lead and not wax like other seals?

Known from 6th century

These seals are commonly called bulla or bullae (if more than one) as they were attached to Papal documents called Bulls by various coloured strips of silk, red and yellow being the most popular. Although they have been known from the 6th century the earliest found so far in the UK is an 11th century example of Pope Innocent II (1130-1143), but I am sure that soon someone will find an earlier one, or that they already have and it is laying in a finds box somewhere, unrecorded!

At around 35mm in diameter the standard design shows two heads facing each other; these represent Saint Peter and Saint Paul which is sometimes backed up by having the letters S'PA S'PE above them. Most have a beaded border around these faces which can be interpreted as a halo or nimbus. A cross is also usually depicted between the faces.

The reverse side is where you can find out which Pope issued it and therefore able to date it. As well as the Popes name, written in two lines, there are also the letters PP which stands for pastor pastorum, which translates as 'Shepherd of the Shepherds'. Very occasionally the Popes family emblem or crest will feature somewhere in the design, usually below the name. To find out which Pope your Bulla was issued by I find this website very useful

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12272b.htm>

(Continued on page 20)



Papal Bull complete with a Bulla attached

(Continued from page 19)

Many Bullae are found as only one half of the complete item. This is because the hole down the middle that the silk strips went through causes a weak area. Some also show signs of what looks like a nail hole through the main body and there is a school of thought that they were nailed to church doors along with the documents they were attached to. This may be true but it assumes that most people could read and read Latin (the language of the church) at that.

Used to dump such items

The Dissolution of the Monasteries

put an end to the influx of Bull documents into England and Wales and therefore the Bullae that were attached to them. However, it is probably the reason why so many are now found by detectorists as many of the old Roman Catholic documents were destroyed in the 1530's and discarded. The one my wife Jenn found (Pope Gregory the tenth 1271-76) was almost opposite our home in a field that was the pinfold of the village for many centuries. The pinfold was the area where stray animals were kept until the owners paid the fine to get them released so it makes sense that this parish-owned land was used to dump such items as old church documents.

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

We have found other interesting items there in what is now only the corner of a much larger field. If you can trace your parish pinfold and if it hasn't been built on, it has excellent potential for good finds.

Saving your soul

The generally accepted reason that Bullae were made of lead is that it is malleable and would not melt in the hotter lands of the Popes influence. This may be so but I would like to add another possible reason. Religion in those days was about making wealth and gaining power and influence. One way of doing this was being granted land and money in return for saving your soul so that you would go to a 'better place' after you popped your clogs

Landowners, merchants and a whole array of other trades people would pay the local church or Priory to say prayers for their souls and the more you paid the more 'powerful' your prayer would be. Richer people even had the option of appealing direct to the Pope for salvation through the church writing to the Pope requesting such a service, all at a price of course.

Now call me cynical but it was probably a lot easier to take the money or grant of land/property, do nothing for a few weeks, then manufacture a reply with a 'sealed' parchment 'direct' from the Vatican and give it to the originator. This way he thinks he has been blessed by God's representative on earth, whilst the church has made some cash or gained some land or property for very little effort!



Innocent VI 1352-62

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

Made a small fortune

The reason I think the Bullae were standardised for so many centuries and made from easily obtained lead is that the church could use their own dies to stamp the Bulla. In reality this system would have been centrally controlled by the Pope through the Bishops and would have made a small fortune for little effort. But, unless a Bulla die is found in a church, Priory or Bishops Palace this will probably only remain a theory.

As the detecting season starts for this year why not put the humble Papal Bulla on your wanted list and if you are lucky enough to walk over one I hope that this small article will help you work out who issued it and may be how it got to where you found it. All I ask is that for the sake of other generations please get the find spot recorded.

Written words copyright of Kev Woodward July 2012

All images courtesy of PAS and Wikipedia



Boniface VIII (1294-1303)



A holed Bulla of Nicolas III 1277-80

Sceattas and Trade in Early Anglo-Saxon England

John Naylor

In 410, the legions left Britain and the islands fell outside of the Roman world. The widespread monetary economy of Roman Britain collapsed, and coins became little used. We know some were pierced, used as jewellery or amulets, and buried with the dead, and a few new coins entered western Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries through trade with Byzantium. By the later 6th century, a standardised gold coinage, the tremissis (Fig. 1), was being produced across France and these have been found in England. The first English issues, thymssas (Fig. 2), were based on these and were minted from about 620 but the gold content declined over the next half century and they were replaced by a silver coinage from around 670. Numismatists call these coins sceattas, (pronounced 'shatters', singular sceat, pronounced 'skeet').

(Continued on page 24)



Fig. 1 Merovingian gold tremissis (source: PAS, database no. LEIC-6BAA60)



Fig. 2 Early English thrymsa of Wuneetton type (source: PAS, database no. LIND82D76).

(Continued from page 23)

They were produced at a time of great change. Christianity was sweeping through England, monasteries were founded across the country, old Roman towns were re-occupied as the seats of bishops and the Church was gaining a powerful place in Anglo-Saxon society. Alongside this, the economy of the lands around the North Sea was also moving up a gear. Archaeology has shown us that during the later years of the 7th century, a number of large ports were founded on coasts and rivers which acted as major places for craft production and the import and export of both ordinary and luxury goods.

Places such as Southampton, London and Ipswich housed populations of several thousand, and were much bigger than typical settlements of the time. The archaeology of the countryside is less well understood but it has shown that during the later 7th-8th centuries many places underwent profound changes, moving from subsistence farming to deliberately producing surpluses, in such items as cereals and wool. These surpluses fed into the economy of the time. However, exploring how trade worked in the countryside has proven very difficult as the number of excavated 7th-8th-century settlements is still relatively low. Luckily, the work of detectorists has helped to fill the gaps, and has given us a massive amount of material to study.

(Continued on page 25)

(Continued from page 24)

It gives us a solid background into which archaeologists can place their excavations and understand the Anglo-Saxons a little better.

In this article, I'm going to explore how the study of sceattas has revolutionised our perceptions of the 7th-8th centuries, and what they tell us about how trade was organised. First, though, we'll briefly look at the coins themselves.

What is a sceat?

Sceattas are small, hammered coins, generally about 11-13mm in diameter, and were issued at a weight standard of around 1.3g, declining to about 1g by 740. There are a very wide variety of designs, influenced both by local art styles and by Roman and Byzantine coinage. These widely varied types have been further classified into Series, and these into three phases based on their style, silver content and weight. The various Series need not worry us too much here, but a brief explanation of the phases, dubbed Primary, Intermediate and Secondary, is important.

The Primary phase consists of English coins containing about 90-95% silver (**Fig. 3**), mostly minted in south-east England between c.680-710. The Secondary phase dates from c.710-760 (790 or so in Northumbria), and included a very wide range of types minted across the eastern and southern England (**Fig. 4**). Early issues were of about 80% silver gradually dropping to 20%.

(Continued on page 26)



Fig. 3 Examples of Primary phase sceattas: a) Series A (SUR-FEE233), (source:PAS).



Fig. 3 Examples of Primary phase sceattas: b) Series BII (GLO9BD812) (source: PAS).



Fig. 4 Examples of Secondary phase sceattas: a) Series H, type 49 (WILT-D3B061)(source: PAS)



Fig. 4 Examples of Secondary phase sceattas: b) Series N, type 41b (HAMP-963F86) (source: PAS)



Fig. 5 Examples of Continental Intermediate phase sceattas: a) Frisian Series E, variety K (LANCUM-9E9461) (source: PAS)

(Continued from page 26)

Spanning the two is the Intermediate phase consisting entirely of Continental coins minted in Denmark and the Netherlands (**Fig. 5**). They were initially of about 90% silver, but this drops away with time, and were minted from c.695 to around 750, although it now seems Danish types continued until the end of the 8th century at least. Intermediate phase coins are some of the most common English finds.

(Continued on page 28)



Fig. 5 Examples of Continental Intermediate phase sceattas: a) Frisian Series E, variety K (LANCUM-9E9461) (source: PAS)



Fig. 5 Examples of Continental Intermediate phase sceattasb) Danish Series X, variety 3e (BERK-220523) (source: PAS)

Sceattas and trade

As with most types of ancient coin, sceattas are very useful to use when considering trade. We've already seen that archaeologists have excavated large ports around the North Sea, and like ports today these places were hubs for trade and travel, and sceattas have been found at them all, sometimes in their hundreds. However, they are not the main focus of this article.

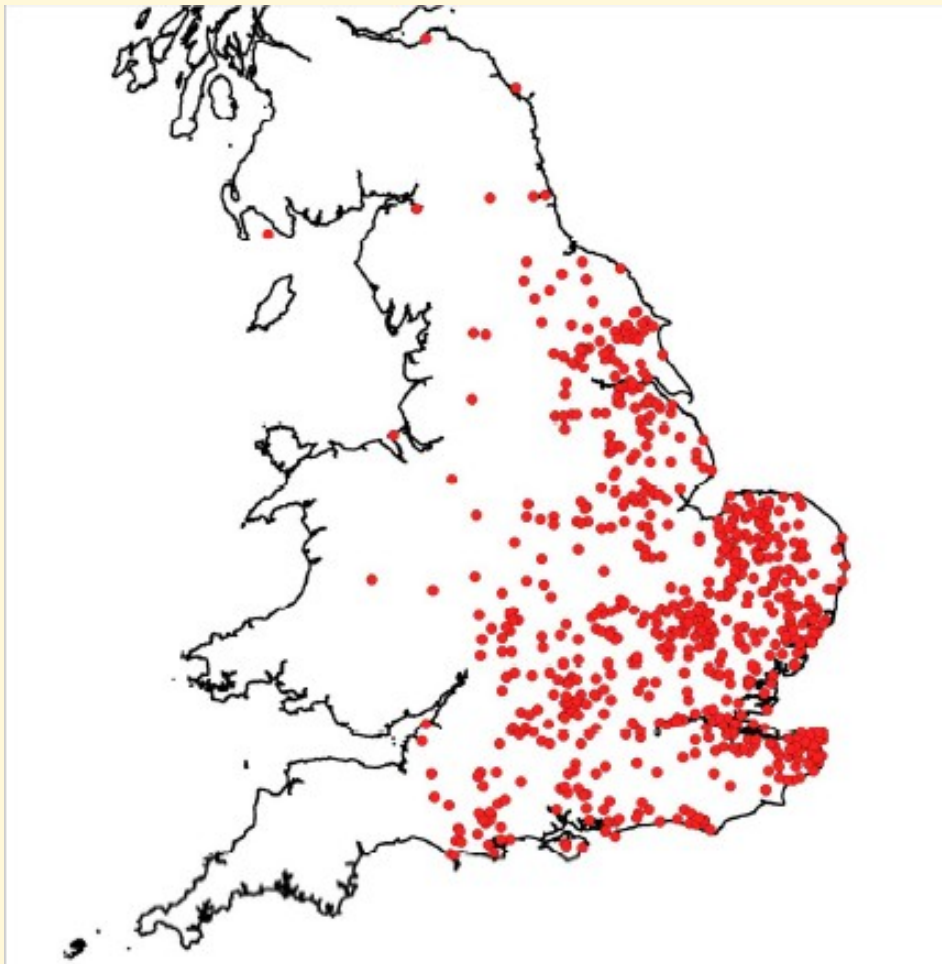


Fig. 6 The distribution of sceattas in Britain (source: PAS/EMC).
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(Continued from page 28)

What has proved of real importance are those thousands of finds made by detectorists and reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Corpus of Early Medieval Coins. **Fig 6** shows the general distribution of over 2,500 sceattas across the country. You'll notice the concentration towards areas which border the southern North Sea encompassing eastern England, France, the Low Countries and Denmark, where most of the larger ports are to be found. Quite often sceattas are found only in ones or twos, and probably just reflect the odd loss of a coin either at home or whilst travelling. There are, though, some sites which are on a different scale. Archaeologists and numismatists have adopted the detecting term 'productive site' for this group, especially in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, for representing sites of the 7th-10th centuries. They are generally found from the Yorkshire Wolds to Kent, with a few others further west. One of the major questions for archaeologists and historians is what kind of places were these?

(Continued on page 30)

(Continued from page 29)

Study of 'productive sites' around the country has shown that there are similarities in their geography with many found on old Roman roads or well-used prehistoric trackways, near rivers or the coast, or, importantly, at the junctions between these. It suggests that they either took advantage of passing traffic, or were part of the economic organisation of each kingdom, and it's certainly likely that sites with large numbers of sceattas will be economically important. Historical documents tell us that some are on Anglo-Saxon royal estates and others on the sites of later medieval monasteries showing, unsurprisingly, that the state and Church were important economic players. Most, though, have no history and may have been toll stops or fairs.

A good example for how important sceatta studies are can be seen in part of the kingdom of Northumbria, made up from the area of Yorkshire between the Rivers Humber and Tees. In the Primary phase, coins are concentrated on routes northwards towards York, and on a few sites on the Yorkshire Wolds, some quite productive. Given their locations, it seems likely that the 'productive sites' were located with the idea of controlling traffic heading to York, either by cart or boat. Combining the archaeology and metal detector finds then gets really interesting.

(Continued on page 31)



Fig. 7 Series Y sceat of King Eadberht, 737-58 (YORYM-4E54C7) (source: PAS)

We know from archaeology that things were coming up from Lincolnshire to York, and foreign goods were coming into the region via the Humber estuary. We also know that at this time there was a new port at Fishergate in York where, like the other big ports in England, lots of imported goods were found, as well as buildings and craft-working debris, so it is not unlikely that traffic was perhaps being channelled into this port. Oddly enough, when the Fishergate was founded, the finds along the routes to York dry up, and instead virtually all of the rural finds are made further away on the Wolds. It seems that apart from a couple of likely toll stops other monetary trade in the York area stopped, or was stopped.

However, the archaeology and analysis of the coins from the region, tells us that by 740 the port was probably in decline. Northumbria's first major coinage began to be issued at this time, and turns up all over the region, except at Fishergate where only a couple were found. Again, the detector finds add to this. Around the region, sites which had produced lots of earlier sceattas, don't proportionally produce so many of the new ones, and some new 'productive sites' also appear. It seems as if long-distance trade declined and any attempts to tightly control trade by having one major port at York and a couple of other sites simply didn't work, so a new network was organised to control local and longer distance trade across the region. This system continued until the Viking take-over of York in 867.

From this short example, the value of studying detector finds and their locations becomes clear. Without them we still wouldn't have much idea how trade was organised in the countryside and we'd certainly not suspect the changes which went on in the 7th-8th centuries. The combination of archaeology and detecting is a powerful one which has revolutionised our understanding of Anglo-Saxon trade and the fascinating coins we call sceattas.

John Naylor is the Portable Antiquities Scheme National Advisor for Medieval and Post-Medieval Coinage, based at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The PAS website can be found at <http://www.finds.org.uk/> and the Corpus of Early Medieval Coins at <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins/emc/>

This article has been reproduced from an earlier edition of Word magazine dating to July 2008 (Issue 11) and has been reproduced to bring your attention to this type of coinage.

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New members in August 2012

Brian and Mo and the team would like to thank and extend a warm welcome to all the new members listed below who have joined UKDN in August. Please introduce yourselves so that the members can welcome you aboard and make you feel at home. [Click here to introduce yourself](#)

If you are not already registered with UKDN you can register by clicking on this link and see what you are missing [Click here to register](#)

lancastrian73	IHRG01	nagnick
Pifukas	kathleen25	elmtree
andyking	marcusplumb	lorryman
WhitesUKLtd	zippy72	woodyNL
themighty	blaster	420aaron
parki17	bugrlugs	warrior01
grahamallo	gazz55	47mel47
kevan3312	chris-the-dig	seanf
ogpog	Motorcycleman	gazzatron81
andy610	AndyA	dauphinois
hunter2012	basil brush	billslade
sim	Ian Bisset	m00nscanner
-ian-	LucyJade	Slkbn
timharding	Brenda Orme	darrenwilson
hainin	oldgitstu	grid2liner
yzr100	karpman	gunn_fret
moses33	Downunder8	russfree
freshisbest12	gvarf	deno
timlkaz	Quozzy	drivingcornetman
Iceni	Joe Blenkinsopp	meggy
tiler	KAWOLSKI2012	rainbow19c
treasuremntndetectors	bsgee	MAS1664
Golddigga	paganplasma	Hawyoo
muddy-feet	sizzle	Wilhelm
+tut+	bobthebuilder3	
JohnSM	roberto1956	
zxadi	ezzaneale	
Peasgoosd	chic	
	alan_holland	
	Magnetyx	

About us

UK DETECTOR NET was created on September 28th 2002 to bring together responsible metal detectorists everywhere to discuss the hobby, their finds, the machines they use and a million and one other detecting related subjects.

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UKDN aims

UKDN is a forum for people who are interested in the hobby of metal detecting. UKDN is an online community where members can exchange and share knowledge, their views, discuss the hobby, their finds, the machines they use and a million and one other detecting related subjects. UKDN actively works towards the following aims:

1. Develop a greater understanding of the hobby and some of the wider issues through healthy pro-active debate within the forum and through the monthly magazine, which is distributed to, and read by, our membership and beyond. The magazine includes UKDN based news and articles, as well as wider news, debate, and issues of heritage interest.
2. Provide a platform to inform beginners in the hobby of the basic principles in the use of a metal detector, gaining permission, site research, basic heritage law, farming scheme rules and in the 'best practice' for conservation, recording and co-operation.
3. Actively promotes the 'Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting' to all members of the UKDN online forum and beyond.
4. Encourage all UKDN detectorists to record their finds with the appropriate bodies (depending where they detect); In England and Wales, this is with the Portable Antiquities Scheme, in Scotland this is the Treasure Trove Unit.
5. UKDN will actively work towards ensuring the future security of the hobby. We will liaise and co-operate with heritage professionals in a way which is mutually beneficial to all parties whilst maintaining our independence, and we encourage their active participation, either in the UKDN online community or through our on-line magazine.