

EXCAVATION REPORT



Finds identified by UKDN start an excavation near York

In July 2011 The Yorkshire Searchers MDC held a rally on a farm near York and the finds which appeared were of great interest; so much so that they prompted an excavation.

On July 22nd last year I organised a metal detecting rally for my club, the Yorkshire Searchers MDC on a farm near York.

This was our first dig at this new farm as I had been turned down twice before earlier in the year, but on approaching the farmer on the third occasion he said ok and we were given 100 acres of stubble to detect, on the understanding that any treasure found would be split 50/50 between the finder and the land owner.



Yorkie the dig organiser

I left the farmer with all my corresponding papers and leaflets explaining our F.I.D insurance and the Treasure Act so the farmer could read at a later date. The farmer signed the search agreement and I was then off looking forward to the coming Sunday.

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*(Continued from page 19)****Nothing had been found***

On Sunday July 24th around about 35 detectorists came to the dig and after about four hours nothing had been found except a few Victorian coins and a few broken parts from farm machinery. Towards the end of the day a lovely large medieval trade weight was found; an Edward hammered coin, and a roman coin had also been found on the edge of the field as someone was returning back to the car to set off home.



Lovely Terret Ring found on the dig

Found within ten feet

Later that night I posted the dig report on our Yorkshire Searchers club forum, complete with pictures of the finds and a short story. Around about 9.00pm that evening another member had posted some finds which

I had seen in the afternoon. I remember these five items as they had all been found in the same location within ten feet of each other but I didn't think much of it at the time. That is until a club member (a2toy) remarked these finds look like terret rings so I posted the finds on the UK Detector Net forum for a positive identification.



Four of the items found on the dig

Within ten minutes of them being posted up the interest on the forum was going crazy and then we got a positive identification of the items by Kev Woodward finds adviser on UKDN, here is his post -

"The two large items are definitely terret rings and the small item is a toggle fastener, all these finds are Iron Age of around first century BC to first century AD. The Yorkshire region (Wetwang is one) is known for Iron Age chariot burials so if these items

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Measurements are taken and the search begins

were all found close together then this is a possibility. Please ensure your local FLO is made aware of these finds, as they have historical interest. Great set of finds !! Kev Woodward"

I contacted our local Finds Liaison Officer straight away with pictures of the finds and they were sent straight to the British Museum for confirmation. We got a reply back within twelve hours; I was told that these were all prehistoric finds and will probably be classed as treasure and that it will be declared as a

prehistoric disturbed hoard. I was then informed by our Finds Liaison Officer, Amy Downs, that I had to let everyone know who attended the dig that the items found on site were possibly treasure and everything had to be sent to their local FLO within 14 days, this even included any iron or anything they picked up, even if it was going to be discarded as rubbish.

As most members take iron and metal home with them to clear the fields of rubbish this also had to be

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handed over to their FLO to be checked.

I now proceeded and contacted the farmer about what was found on his field. As we didn't know how important these finds were on the day the farmer was very shocked. As I showed him the finds and a picture of the terret rings on a chariot, to show him what they may have come off, the farmer replied he would allow any dig if the archaeologists needed to do one but not when crops were in the field.

Another eight items had been found and would be linked with the hoard. These included, lynch pins, terret rings, roman coins, and a Celtic toggle. One person in the club had discarded an iron item by throwing it in the bin, but after I requested all items, including rubbish, to be handed in this iron item was found to be a lynch pin when examined by our local FLO.

Later that week I informed Amy Downs that most items had been handed over to Finds Liaison Officers



Just setting up

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around the country. I was then informed that the Yorkshire FLO, Rebecca Morris, would like to see the finds and she wanted to contact Jon Kenny at the York Archaeology Trust at York as everyone was very excited about the finds.

Later in the week it was arranged for two local Finds Liaison Officers and the York Archaeology Trust to meet me and the landowner at the farm to check the find site on the field. It was confirmed that the York Archaeology Trust wished to carry out a research excavation of the site and they wanted to start on the 20th-21st September with the work being carried out in three phases.

1st Resistivity survey.... over area where finds came up.

2nd Magnetometer survey....over a bigger area along the ridges.

3rd Theodolite survey the grid we have used using a total station.



*Explanation of the Geophys
and how it works*

They asked if our club would like to help in the excavation of the site and we were very happy to be invited to help and work alongside a team of archaeologists, the date was set for 21st September 2011.

Ten members of the club were allowed to use detectors to search the area for any metal objects now crops have been taken out, on the understanding that the finder would not have ownership rights on anything found.

On Wednesday 21st Sept at 10:00am members of Yorkshire Searchers MDC, two Finds Liaison Officers, Jon Kenny, community archaeologist, and three other archaeologists met outside the farm and ventured down to the field to be researched.



*Dig Organiser Yorkie helping
scan the finds area*

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We carried lots of expensive equipment about 500 yards across the 100 acres field to the location of where the terret rings had been found four weeks previously. We found the location and started to make a grid reference on the field with ropes and pegs using 4 x 20 metre boxes with 2 metre rope intersections. This is the grid reference that the geophysics machines would use.

Three more prehistoric items

All the attending members of the YSMDC took turns in using the geophysics machines at different times of the day while the York archaeologists carried on with their work. Members of the club searched every inch of the grid reference with metal detectors. Three more prehistoric items were found using detectors, a Celtic toggle and another terret ring, these were pinpointed and recorded in-situ using a GPS receiver by the archaeologists.



Toggle found on day of Geophysics

Before we packed up we tried to read the results of the geophysics but we couldn't see the laptop screen because of bright daylight.



Terret found on day of Geophysics

On the 3rd November Amy Downs sent me the report and the pictures of the research carried out on the day, here is the letter -

"The geophysics day at [edited by UKDN to protect the site from hawkers] was very successful; we had two community volunteers helping with the survey and the metal detecting club members, who had made the finds, helping too. I have attached the results (a more formal report will follow). The results are promising, in that a rectangular feature in the area where the finds came from is showing in the earth resistance survey.

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There is also an interesting large circular feature showing. These anomalies may well prove to be archaeological features. This is an exciting result and we would be interested in taking it further."

The York Archaeology Trust and the York FLO have been in touch with the landowner and work to excavate the site will start the day after the crops are out in 2012. This is a great result for our club and this looks to be a site of some importance.

As this story unfolds throughout 2012 I will keep everyone posted with the details.

I would also like to thank UK Detector Net for their forum and great finds identification support that has made this story unfold.

Stuart
Yorkshire Searchers MDC

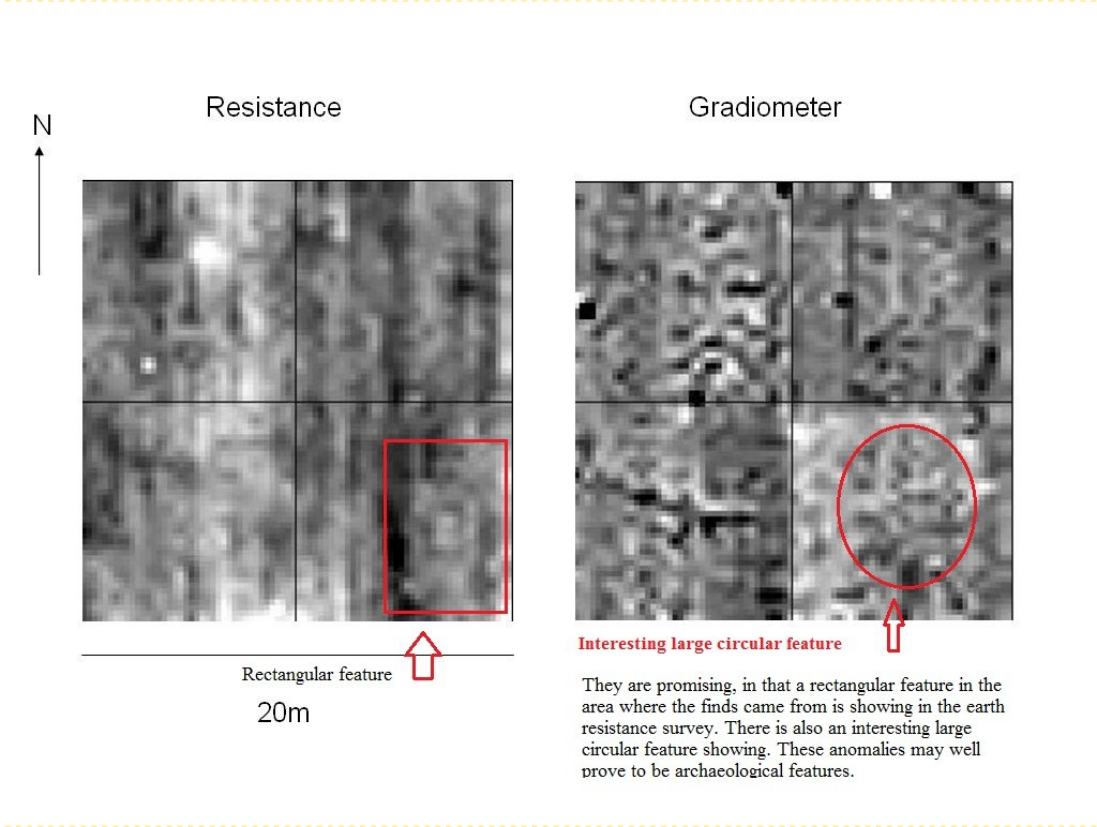


Finder of the terret rings doing Geophysics

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2nd Magnetometer survey....over a bigger area along the ridges



Chariot Burials

Very few chariot burials have been found in Britain. They have been found at Wetwang, Newbridge and Ferry Fryston.

The metallic finds they contain can if near the surface be found with metal detectors and should two or more such finds be found they are classed as treasure, defined as follows according to the [Treasure Act](#);

Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of pre historic date (Pre AD 43) that come from the same find - See*

**An object or coin is part of the 'same find' as another object or coin if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground.*

Should you make such a find, please stop digging right away as you might have located a burial which needs to be flagged up ASAP to the [FLO](#) who should be able to arrange for the site to be professionally excavated to recover as much of the history as possible.

Examples of chariot burial excavations and their metallic finds can be found on the following links;

[Wetwang grave diagram](#)
Further information

[Newbridge grave diagram](#)
Further information

[Ferry Fryston replica](#)
Further information

Thanks to the above websites for the excellent information they contain.

Typical chariot parts

Click on image for more examples



Terret ring



Linch pin



Strap union



Bridle bit fragment