



UKDFD

BORROWED

times

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PADGETT'S TALE

David Padgett relives the finding of his spectacular annular brooch



Some time later I found the UKDFD website - an excellent resource - and decided I would try to get a definitive identification of the Victorian brooch. Within twenty four hours it had been identified as a 13th/14th century silver (possibly) gilt brooch! Surprised? Well yes! The ID had changed everything for it was possible treasure and had to be recorded. I emailed an image to the county FLO who agreed with the identification, and forwarded the brooch to the

“It was one of those fantastic days for detecting that presents itself every now and then. During a late summer of drought and sun baked fields we had a couple of days of drizzly weather that softened up the ground just nicely. That day the sun was up, the birds were singing and there was gentle breeze.

I was covering a field of some 20 plus acres and working my way around the edge. I had already found a corroded Roman bronze and reasoned that any finds would have been pushed down towards the bottom.

Apart from the coin, I had found the usual bits of lead and was feeling just a little fed up. Other fields on the same farm had produced Celtic silver and belt sliders, Roman brooches and many hammered silver coins. So why not this one!

Mutter, mutter, mutter BLEEEEEEP! The noise nearly blew my ears off. This had happened before and it usually turned out to be a large bit of lead just under the surface, or a bit of plough the size of a barn door a few inches down. Not this time though! I broke open the clod of earth with my fingers and there it was - a gleaming gold brooch with two purple stones, slightly bent and one piece missing. Although I didn't realise it at the time it was my first annular brooch in three years of detecting.

Nice Victorian brooch I thought. Took it home, showed the wife. Nice Victorian brooch says she. Took it to the landowner and showed him. Nice Victorian brooch says he.

British Museum.

The actual process seemed incredibly fast and it wasn't long before I got a reply. It wasn't treasure. The latter part of the BM reports stated, *This fitting is not apparently made of silver and its decorative Art Nouveau style suggests a 19th Century date. As such, due to its age and lack of any precious metal content, this object does not qualify as Treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996.* Personally, I wasn't the least bit bothered as I'm not into this hobby for monetary gain. I'd much rather have it in my collection.

I shared the information with UKDFD, but the validators were not convinced and sent me a couple of images of very similar brooches recorded elsewhere. I forwarded them to my FLO pointing out the similarity.

Then I received an urgent email from the BM saying that their ID was incorrect. Due to a mix up in communication, the brooch was appraised by a post-medieval expert in the mistaken belief that the medieval expert had discounted it. In fact the medieval chap had not even seen it and an urgent appraisal had identified it as 14th century, silver gilt and therefore treasure . . . I would still prefer to have it in my collection!”

The Value of a Second Opinion

It must be pointed out that the identification of detecting finds frequently poses a challenge to all of us involved in the process, whether individual hobbyists, members of the UKDFD team or heritage professionals.

All parties will inevitably make mistakes, but just as with medical diagnoses, an independent 'second opinion' can be of considerable value in reaching the correct conclusion.

In recent months, the part played by the UKDFD in this respect has resulted in a number of positive outcomes, one being a complete reassessment of a BM identification, and another (shown below) the reporting of hitherto unrecognised 'Treasure'.

Wayne's Gold Chain



This rather unusual gold chain was found by Wayne Burton on a Coventry Moles dig, recorded on the UKDFD in October 2006 and identified as “A section of Roman gold chain from a necklace or bracelet, comprising a solar wheel fastener and two chain links.”

Wayne didn't realise that the object was ancient until he received the UKDFD identification and advice that it should be reported under the Treasure Act. As a result, it was reported and is currently at the British Museum going through the Treasure Act process.



UKDFD FUNDING

UKDFD is run by detectorists for detectorists and you may have wondered who pays for the running and maintaining of the database. Staff provide the server, time and expertise at no cost and on a voluntary basis. We also rely on donations from members and sponsorship from within the hobby.



Rod's Reference Articles

Those of you familiar with the site and who know their way around will be aware of the excellent and informative reference articles produced by Rod Blunt.

If you haven't come across these yet all you do to find them is click on [Home Page](#) which can be found at the top, right-hand side when you first log on to UKDFD. The reference articles can be found lower left of the Home Page.

Rod has completed four and is currently busy on the next one. Those available are: *Galley Halfpence, Thimbles, Button Makers and Nuremberg Jetons.*

From the late 14th to the 16th century, small silver coins known as 'galley halfpennies' circulated widely and are often found by detectorists. Learn more about them here.

Anybody finding a thimble and wishing to know more about it could well find the answer in the scholarly article produced by Rod. The illustrations are superb!

Buttons, despised as a find by many detectorists and revered by others, are discussed in the third article. Rod shows how 'backmarks' can provide useful information for dating and also the manufacturer. A must for 'buttonologists.'

I reckon (pun intended) you will also find Rod's article on Jetons very useful in providing an invaluable resource on Nuremberg jetons and their makers.



Alas, No Winners . . .

There were no successful guesses as to the identity of the boy struggling with the sheep in the first edition of *Borrowed Times*. I now reveal that it was none other than 'the man with the hat,' Mr Gary Brun. The Editor was inundated with calls and thanks both the three of you for your participation. (*sic*)

Unfortunately, there wasn't a prize for our very first competition but we are making amends for that oversight. See our new teaser above to see what's on offer . . .

The 'Headaches' of Identification

Item No. 6209 is described on the database thus:

An incomplete sub-triangular hooked tag (dress hook) of the Anglo-Saxon period. The tag has five ring-and-dot motifs (arranged 2-2-1), the centres of which are all pierced. The holes through the top two motifs are larger than the other three, and it is these that were probably used for stitching the tag to a garment. The same two motifs are also punched on both sides of the tag, whereas the others are punched only on the front. The hooked end of the tag has broken off.

Although described as a hooked tag, could this be something else? Incomplete objects (fragments) present a great challenge for the ID Team, but on balance and after examining as many similar artefacts as they could find, they

decided it was probably a hooked tag. There is, however, rarely absolute certainty in such cases. As mentioned in the lead article, the identification of finds can be a major challenge to all involved in the process. However, thanks to the hobby in general and the authors of many invaluable reference works based on detecting finds in particular, the task is not as formidable as it might otherwise have been.

It is a fact that many classes of artefact are now very well documented and a high proportion of the finds on the UKDFD are processed very quickly.

It is perhaps not generally appreciated, however, that members of the ID team often spend many hours endeavouring to identify some of the recorded items, with nothing to show for their efforts. From the recorder's perspective it may look as though nothing is happening and the finds remain in the 'Pending Validation' area. We ask you to be patient.

Incidentally, even though a small proportion of the recorded finds prove difficult to identify, they remain on the UKDFD database. We are always on the look-out for information that will lead to their identification, and they will be validated as soon as we are able to do so.



COMPETITION TIME



Here's your chance to try out your skill in identifying finds.

Joe, one of our Advisers, has taken an item from the database and asks if you can identify it from the detail he has selected. This time we **can** offer a prize. Gary Brun has kindly donated copies of the two best-selling DVD's, *Exploring the Explorer* and *Exploring the Explorer - Advanced Edition*. Thanks Gary! I will give the answer next time. Please send your answers to the Editor using the email address below. The winner will be drawn from the correct entries.

THANKS TO UKDFD

Just to say thanks for the new print-out facility - ideal for my find + data sheet storage system. Also the pictures make it perfect to give to the land owner. P.S. like the bilt in spel chequer too!

This site is like the cherry on the cake for me. It's nice to get expert opinions on the various finds as opposed to 'who left that junk on my kitchen sink?' from my wife.

The speed of the verification is very quick and the e mail reply if the find is not suitable for inclusion on the site is also very quick and a nice touch. The database and friendly print feature is also very professional and rounds off the whole detecting hobby nicely. Nice job team!

Just to say hello to everyone on the UKDFD team and all recorders who have uploaded finds for me to goggle at. This site is great and I wish everyone well. I cannot believe the speed at which finds are replied to after uploading, it really is appreciated. What's nice for me is that the team . . . has been very helpful and patient.

It is a great pleasure to upload my artefacts and coins onto the UK Detector Finds Database. The expertise that is on tap for each and every one of us is unsurpassed and cannot be beaten. It is incredible that a short while after the upload has been initiated then the artefact /coin has been validated.

I recently posted one of my finds . . . I was truly amazed at the lengths the team go to discover the history behind the items uploaded. They are a credit to themselves and historians . . . thank you for making my UKDFD experience a most interesting and very informative one.

Borrowed Times, the newsletter of the UKDFD, is produced by John Winter with the help of the UKDFD Team and distributed free to detectorists. The Editor welcomes **any kind** of feedback and you may contact him via email on john.winter@ukdfd.co.uk or by using the site's private messaging system.

THANK YOU FOR RECORDING WITH THE UKDFD