



UKDFD

BORROWED *times*

United Kingdom Detector Finds Database Newsletter - Issue Number 3 - July 2007

METAL DETECTING and its DETRACTORS

Read Rod Blunt's latest article on the UKDFD site on how the hobby of metal detecting is regarded by our detractors . . . plus the stark reality of the situation! <http://www.ukdfd.co.uk/pages/ukdfd-190607.pdf>



Introducing One Of Our Members

Mark Duell (MRED) is a 45 year old self-employed builder from Bitterne in Southampton and is married with one son.

Although he has what sounds like a German name, he is English, lives in an old house and drives an old car.

Mark is a very successful detectorist whose finds are usually uploaded to the database on a distinctive red background. (NB: ID staff prefer a white background - Editor)

In the late 1970's, before motorcycles and females caught his interest, Mark was a fisherman and bottle collector as well as a metal detectorist. In those days he wielded a C-Scope - the one with knobs on the dash, a swan-neck handle and an integral reset button.

He has always been interested in history, but as an adult he's not comfortable with killing fish, so has combined his history and hunting instincts to what he calls 'land fishing'. In late 2003 Mark started detecting again, this time with his father-in-law as partner.

In 2004, Mark found his first hammered coin, a Henry VI groat and his success has continued. In March this year he found his 109th hammered coin. Mark says that he just loves finding 'hammys' - his personal best is five in one day - but reckons he is 'rubbish' at finding Roman silver.

Although not a member of a club, Mark does occasionally attend rallies, sometimes with his friend 'KuppaSoup Kev'. Both have the same brand detector, a Tesoro Tejon. When looking for land, Mark usually does the research as well as asking landowners for permission. He says that he has a 75% success rate. Being six foot two and thirteen and a half stone cannot be a disadvantage!

Mark's 'hairiest moment' was when detecting alongside a hedgerow. He was suddenly confronted by a hooded face peeping out from a hide and brandishing a gun. Mark says. "I did a Flosbury Flop and triple salco backwards. The guy never said a word, didn't laugh or even speak, just stared ahead. I must have been scaring his birds, I guess!"

Mark says that he records his finds with the UKDFD because it is convenient, fast and very efficient. He also records with the PAS.



Henry VI farthing of London
The marks in the legend are not sufficiently clear to attribute the coin to a particular issue.



Edward the Confessor penny of Winchester, 'Small Flan' type.



The gold fob seal is one of Mark's favourite finds, not just because of the gold and ornate design, but also because of the personal nature of this lost artefact.



A post-medieval copper-alloy seal with rotating double-sided oval matrix. One side of the matrix has a bearded male bust. The other side has a lion rampant.

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Dear UKDFD . . .



ROD'S LATEST REFERENCE ARTICLE

Illustration shows a 13th-14th century copper-alloy crotal bell

New to the UKDFD database is the fifth reference article by Rod Blunt on the subject of crotal bells.

In addition to his historical introduction, Rod discusses the chronology and dating of English crotal bells, makers' marks, foundry details and much more.

We are told that crotal bells have served a number of purposes, from ritual, magical and religious, to musical, signalling and warning. Apart from their functional role, bells have served as decorative devices throughout the ages, and continue to be popular as harness embellishments to the present day.

I have seen bells being sold in Canada for upwards of \$80 CAD (about £40) and marked as *carried by people on their way to pilgrimages*. Some artistic licence being used there I reckon and one specific use Rod failed to mention!

The article came at just the right time for a member of the Central Searchers forum who commented:

"Isn't sometimes strange how coincidences occur in this hobby? I found an early looking crotal bell this morning and when I got home had the email from UKDFD telling me about the new reference article. I was able to date it to the 16th/17th century. It was a good idea to put the link on the forum. Many thanks."

The Home Page also features articles on Galley Halfpence, Thimbles, Button Makers and Nuremberg Jetons.

Where possible, the reference articles are illustrated with items recorded on the UKDFD database and the records can be accessed immediately by clicking the applicable illustrations. □



Early one-piece cast crotal bell - 16th to 17th century

Many of you may not be aware but the database is available to everyone who can use a computer. This includes the general public as well as metal detectorists, students and archaeologists. Just recently we had a request from Alan and Valerie Hunt representing the tiny South Nottinghamshire parish of Stanton -on-the-Wold. She had happened upon Rod's latest article on Crotal Bells . . .

"We are not detectorists, but after dug up part of a crotal bell in our garden and finding the maker's initials WG on it, we went to Google and found your marvellous site. Superb! Well done everyone. The section on crotal bells was brilliant and when we get time will definitely read all the other articles.

Alan is Webmaster of our local parish council website and would like to do a short write-up of our find for the *Latest News* section on our web page as the villagers are very interested in items of village past history.

The question is, would it be possible for us to use, with full acknowledgments to the author and UKDFD of course, the crotal bell with the WG initials of William Gwynn of Aldbourne?"

Permission was granted of course and the result can be seen on the council's website at www.stantononthewoldparishcouncil.gov.uk

In a letter of thanks received later, Alan asked if Rod Blunt worked for a museum and asked how he knew all the details. I was able to tell him that Rod 'worked' for a 21st century museum of United Kingdom detecting finds, with free admission and research facilities for visitors from around the world!

EMBROIDERY MAGAZINE

Another request was received from Ian Manfield asking for permission to use extracts from one of Rod's articles.

"... I was highly impressed with the crotal bell and Thimble information on the database. Well done! A friend of mine is Editor of an embroidery magazine and would like to use to use the information on thimbles in future article . . . would this be possible?"



The newsletter you are reading, *Borrowed Times*, is a quarterly production. We also have a regular column, *Just for the Record*, which promotes recording via articles in the detecting press. Although our terms of recording allow us to use the information and images provided by recorders, we always endeavour to ensure that individuals have no objections prior to doing so.

However, in some cases we are experiencing difficulties and delays in making contact with recorders, and would now like to streamline the process.

Accordingly, we would ask you to let us know if you **DO NOT WISH** your records to be published in UKDFD articles by contacting John Winter. We will still wish to contact consenting recorders for further details (in most cases) and we will only publish information publically available on the database.

JOAN ALLEN

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INCREDIBLE!

We've only had about 40 seventeenth century tokens uploaded to the database, but this would appear to be the second case of a type that had not previously been recorded!

M. Evans found this little beauty near Stratford and it was described thus:

A halfpenny token of Andrew Hill, apothecary of Banbury, Oxfordshire. The obverse has a pair of scales, and the legend, ANDREW HILL APOTHECA. The reverse has the inscription, HIS HALF PENY, in three lines, and the legend, IN BANBVRY IN OXON 16[6?]. This token is not listed in either Dickinson's revision of Williamson's standard work, or the Norweb volumes of the Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles. It would appear to be hitherto unrecorded.

ANDY APPELS



We are pleased to announce that Andy Appels has accepted an invitation to join the validation staff on our ID team.

Andy is a long-serving member of the UKDFD team and as a Finds Adviser he has made a considerable contribution to the identification effort, particularly in respect of Roman military artefacts.

He became interested in ancient cultures whilst at school and, living only a short distance away from Lincoln and York, it seemed only natural that he should take more than a keen interest in Roman Culture.

This subsequently led to a 30 year passion for collecting, studying and preserving antiquities, and for over the last 10 years he has specialised in collecting Roman military artefacts.

Andy has recently co-authored with Stuart Laycock, a book on Roman Buckles and Military Fittings from their (and other contributors) collections. This book is soon to be published by Greenlight and will illustrate 800+ Roman military artefacts.

COMPETITION TIME

The super prize this time, kindly donated by Crawfords Metal Detectors is a pair of **Predator Excelsior headphones worth £69.99**. They feature a larger more comfortable fold-down ear defender and new 80ohm super sensitive mylar cone speakers. The volume control is smooth action and fully waterproof (as used for marine intercom systems) Last but by no means least it has the now legendary mega strong Predator curly lead. The result: Simply the best headphones you can buy for your metal detector. The 'phones have a two-year guarantee.

These headphones could be yours simply by giving the name and purpose of the item shown below and sending your answer to me at the address shown in the panel on page 4. Please note - this item doesn't appear on the UKDFD database!



Many congratulations to Steve Gaunt (Cibalia), winner of the competition in our last issue, who guessed correctly that the picture was part of a steelyard balance.

The two videos winged their way to him courtesy of Mr Brun, but when I last enquired, I heard that they had probably been held at Croatia customs for Steve had not received them!

PLEASE HELP US to HELP YOU



If your coin is more worn than A, or more corroded than B, please post on the forum before uploading to check whether it will be eligible.

This is a plea from the ID team about the quality of coins that are uploaded straight to the database. They would like to remind you that if there is any doubt about the suitability of singly-found, poor condition coins and broken fragments of any condition, then you should really post them on the forum before uploading. You are reminded that poor condition coins:

- 1 are unlikely to be any value for research purposes, either numismatically or archaeologically
- 2 actually devalue the database, because they frustrate researchers' efforts to find quickly what they are seeking
- 3 are extremely time-consuming for staff to classify

Please note that the staff may make exceptions to record rare coins and those which are from hoards but, in future, unacceptable uploads will be removed without the prior notice that has usually been given. We apologise for these new measures and hope you understand why they have been implemented.

May we also remind you when uploading your coin pictures to observe the convention of heads left, tails right



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Alan Parry asked . . .

When I was a child in the 1960's I was as likely to find a Victorian or Edwardian penny in my pocket money as an Elizabeth II one. The shops seemed perfectly happy to accept these coins. This got me thinking about the coins I find when I'm out, if I find a Victorian penny it could just as easily have been lost in the 1950's as the 1850's so gives no real indication of the 'usage' of the field.

Does the same apply to earlier mintings? When were George III coins no longer accepted, same for earlier rulers? Is there a definitive list of when coins were spendable? Any help would be gratefully received.

The Answer . . .

The situation was different at different periods of history. In early Roman times, the lifespan of a coin was quite long. Once debasement of the silver set in however, Gresham's Law came into effect, and the bad money drove out the good, so the life span was shorter.

From the later Saxon period to the reign of Henry II, there was typically a three-year change in the design of the coinage. When the design was changed, the earlier issue was withdrawn. Although the exact arrangements are not clear, it is clear that the process was a means of providing revenue to the Crown. You will probably have noticed that virtually all coins of this period are unworn when found.

The Tealby coinage of Henry II was an experimental issue aiming for a longer life span, but was so poorly executed that it was withdrawn after 22 years and replaced by the short cross issue. The latter was in circulation from 1180 until 1247, but was withdrawn when the long cross series was issued.

The long cross issue lasted about 30 years before being replaced by the 'New' coinage of Edward I in 1279. From this time, coins circulated until they were either withdrawn and melted down for profit as the value of precious metal increased, or wore to the point that they would not be accepted due to weight loss.

Hammered coins continued in circulation after the introduction of milling, but were finally demonetised and withdrawn from circulation following the Great Re-coinage of William III.

The milled coins struck from 1662 onwards remained in circulation until they



were demonetised after the next major re-coinage of 1816, when steam power was employed for their production.

The silver coins of the 1816 re-coinage remained legal tender until decimalisation in the 1970's. The heavy copper coinage, however, was replaced by a lighter one in bronze in 1860.

NEW

We have added a new feature to the UKDFD forum. At the bottom of every post, you will find a 'Gallery' button. Clicking it will give you immediate access to the poster's records in the database, whether they are your own or those of any other recorder.



Amanda Last is new to detecting and when she posted this object for identification, apologised for posting pictures of possible 'junk' and mused on what it might be . . .

"I believed that it was originally attached to some kind of stem . . . that is, after I had moved on from the **Mr Potato Head* moustache theory! I then decided it was some kind of bail or toggle . . . it feels just right to hold as with a syringe when giving an injection. At this point Mandy hastily explained that she was speaking as an ex-nurse and not as a 'drug-taker.' It looked as though it was ridged all round for a good grip when pulling.

When Mandy heard that it was probably Circa 1000BC-200BC she said, I am amazed that it is apparently so old and can only attribute its fine state to the fact that it hasn't been subjected to pesticides or fertilising agents as it has been sitting in pasture for all those years - it's obviously never seen a plough! Other finds from the same field have also been in immaculate condition. It was found on an 'organic' farm that has been there since the early 1800's . . . perhaps the object just had ideal conditions.

I wouldn't be surprised if there are a lot more of these sitting around in drawers full of miscellaneous detecting finds, and they have just been written off as furniture fittings. It's only because I'm a 'newbie' to detecting and couldn't ID it that I decided to post on the forum. This site has proved to be an invaluable tool for identification of metal detecting finds and I hope to upload more in the future.

*A 1950's toy described by Bill Bryson as "majestically unamusing . . . a box of plastic parts that allowed children to confirm the fundamental truth that even with ears, limbs and a goofy smile a lifeless tuber is a lifeless tuber." *The Thunderbolt Kid*

Mandy's moustache-shaped object proved to be a bit of an enigma which led to long debate amongst the ID staff on what it might be. The general consensus of opinion believes it to be a sword-scabbard chape of a type first made circa 1000 BC. For just over half the length, and on each side, there are deep grooves running lengthwise. The ends are plain and taper to slender blunt points, both of which are worn or incomplete. The team said that it was probably the best preserved of all the known examples.

Only a few are known from Britain, are all distinctly moustache shaped, but some are of a more 'droopy' appearance than others. Barry Marsden in his April 2003 *Treasure Hunting* article entitled Prehistoric Objects, described a similar object. There are also similar examples recorded on the PAS database.



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.



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