THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME IN DERBYSHIRE

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INTRODUCTION

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a national project across England and Wales to record finds discovered by members of the public. Originally, the PAS was funded directly by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, but is now funded through the British Museum's grant. Run by a central office at the British Museum and supported by local partners across the country, the PAS comprises a network of about 40 Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) and National Finds Advisers. Each FLO is responsible for one or more counties, except for East Anglia, where each county has two FLOs (due to the large quantity of objects discovered in the area). In Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, the FLO is employed by Derby Museums Trust and supported by Nottingham City Museums and Art Galleries and the University of Nottingham Museum.

Initially formed as a pilot scheme in 1997, the PAS was gradually rolled out across the whole of England and Wales. The first objects on the PAS database from Derbyshire were recorded in 1998, but the first FLO for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire was not appointed until 2004.

Most of the finders that the PAS deals with are metal detectorists, but people also discover objects while gardening, building, walking etc. Recording objects with the PAS is voluntary except when someone has discovered potential "Treasure". There are five categories of Treasure: precious metal objects over 300 years old; hoards of pre-Roman metalwork; hoards of coins over 300 years old; objects discovered with items of Treasure (e.g. the pot containing a hoard); objects covered by the previous legislation (Treasure Trove) such as more recent precious metal objects that were buried with the intention of recovery. It must be reported to the local coroner and this is usually done through the PAS. This process ensures that important finds are recorded and gives local and national museums the opportunity to acquire them for their collections and keep the objects in the public domain. If a museum wants to acquire an item of Treasure, it must raise funds to buy the object from the finder and landowner unless they wish to donate it. The market value of the object is decided by the Treasure Valuation Committee, an independent board of experts, and normally the money is divided equally between the finder and landowner. If a museum is not interested or is unable to acquire the find, the object is returned to the finder with the landowner's consent. While it is only a legal requirement to report finds of potential Treasure, finders are strongly encouraged to show all their finds to their local FLO and get them recorded. FLOs will normally record all manmade objects more than 300 years old, including artefacts made of metal, ceramic, flint and stone. If a more recent artefact is considered of local importance, the FLO may choose to record that too. The records created by the FLOs and their volunteers are placed on the PAS database (https://finds.org.uk/database), which is accessible to both researchers and the public. Findspot information is restricted, but researchers can request higher level access from the PAS that will enable them to see precise grid references. Once an object has been recorded, it is returned to its finder, unless the finder wishes to donate the object.

METAL DETECTING

From the start of metal detecting as a hobby there had been animosity and distrust between archaeologists and metal detectorists. Metal-detected finds were dismissed as being of little value without the all-important context and, as a result, all but a few finds went unrecorded. Pioneering archaeologists, like Roger Bland (founder and former head of the PAS), realised that potentially important information was being lost forever. Part of the PAS's mission has been to bridge the gap between archaeologists and detectorists and, when successful, this relationship has been extremely productive. Metal detecting, when carried out responsibly, can provide a vital source of data for researchers studying the past, filling in many of the gaps in the archaeological record. Many excavations and other forms of archaeological fieldwork focus on urban areas and elite sites. By contrast, metal detecting normally occurs in rural areas, away from known archaeological sites (access to known sites is often restricted by scheduling or countryside stewardship schemes). Furthermore, the Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting advises that detecting should only occur on cultivated land, within the plough soil, where objects have been disturbed already and where digging them up will not damage their archaeological context. It is here that responsible metal detecting becomes a vital archaeological tool. When finds are recorded with accurate grid references, distribution maps can be created to help identify settlements and other sites and show settlement shift. Artefact specialists also have a much larger quantity of information available to them on one centralised database, enabling them to carry out wider research at a local and national level.

Derbyshire's topography means that much of the county's farmland is pastoral rather than arable. As a result, sites in Derbyshire are often in better condition than in neighbouring Nottinghamshire where arable farming is widespread and many sites have been destroyed over the centuries. The relative lack of arable fields in Derbyshire, especially in the north and west parts of the county, means that many areas are unsuitable for responsible metal detecting. Fewer objects, therefore, are recorded from the north-western parts of the county and most of the Derbyshire finds recorded on the database are from the south and east.

PAS RECORDS IN DERBYSHIRE

Between 1998 and the end of 2016, the PAS recorded 7,286 objects from Derbyshire in 2,920 records. Nationally, as of October 2017, a total of over 1.3 million objects within 830,000 records have been entered. Between 1 May 2015 and 31 December 2016, 797 objects were recorded from the county. Objecwwwwwts recorded on the database are set to increase as a result of the PASt Explorers Project, a drive to recruit and train new volunteers to support the work of the FLOs, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Period	Number of objects recorded
Palaeolithic	8
Mesolithic	123
Neolithic	105
Prehistoric	6
Bronze Age	79

Iron Age	82
Greek and Roman Provincial	2
Roman	4490
Byzantine	1
Early Medieval	111
Medieval	1089
Post Medieval	976
Modern	38
Unknown	152

Table 1: Number of objects recorded from Derbyshire between 1998 and 2016 by period (figures include all items found, some of which are from the same find: e.g. 3,631 coins in the Amber Valley Hoard).

Treasure finds are the most well-known objects to have been recorded on the PAS database because they tend to get more media attention than other objects and are also more likely to end up in museum collections. More information on these and other objects is available on the PAS database, in the Treasure Annual Reports or in the author's book (Willis 2016), but highlights include two Roman coin hoards and a medieval brooch

The Amber Valley Hoard of 3631 third-century copper-alloy radiates discovered in Ripley in 2010 (DENO-A6AE06) has already been published in DAJ (Palfreyman and Ebbins 2015; Palfreyman and Ebbins 2013). Another important Roman coin hoard is the Ashbourne Hoard, discovered in 2007 (DENO-64DAE1 and DENO-651C91; Plates 1 and 2) which consists of two gold aurei of Carausius (AD 286-293). The first is from early in Carausius's reign, probably minted in Rouen, where he was proclaimed emperor. It depicts Maximian on the obverse (the moneyers had not yet been provided with a portrait of Carausius) and the emperor shaking hands with Concordia on the reverse. The other coin, minted in London, is a previously unknown variant and depicts a helmeted Carausius on the obverse and Pax on the reverse. A tiny gold annular brooch from the early 14th century, discovered in Breadsall in 2006 (DENO-1AF752; Plate 3), features a pair of hands projecting from one edge, which are thought to have originally been clasping a pearl. The frame bears an inscription, poorly executed and initially appearing garbled, but on closer inspection reads "LOV I WIL YOI ONLI" – Love, I want you only.

SIGNIFICANT RECENT FINDS

The rest of the article is dedicated to important objects that have been recorded on the PAS database between May 2015 (when the author started in the role as FLO) and December 2016. Future PAS articles in *DAJ* will be roundups of the previous year's finds. All images are shown with a standard 3cm scale, except for Plate 14 which has a 6cm scale.

Palaeolithic and Mesolithic finds
Lithics are less commonly recorded than later metal artefacts, but there are dedicated field walkers who are generally only looking for flint. One such field walker has discovered large

Plates 1 (Top) and 2 (Below): Roman coins from Ashbourne.

Plate 3: Medieval brooch from Breadsall.

Plate 4: Mesolithic chert from near Elmton.

Plate 5: Neolithic arrowhead from near Baslow.

Plate 6: Neolithic flint knife from Rosliston.

Plate 7: Bronze Age arrowhead from Alvaston.

Plate 8: Bronze Age arrowhead from Church Broughton.

quantities of Mesolithic chert and flint objects near Elmton, including a relatively high number of cores (e.g. DENO-7AD544; Plate 4) compared to worked and unworked blades (long, narrow flakes) or tools made from blades. These will appear in their own dedicated report for the Derbyshire HER.

Neolithic

A leaf-shaped arrowhead was found on a footpath in Baslow and Bubnell in 2007 (SWYOR-7857C8; Plate 5). It has a 'crazed' surface suggesting that it was burnt.

Metal detectorists occasionally bring in pieces of flint they discovered by chance. One such find was a plano-convex knife found in Rosliston in South Derbyshire in 2015 (WAW-B38D56; Plate 6). Plano-convex knives were made during the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age (*c.*2700 – *c.*1000 BC) and would have been hafted into a handle.

Bronze Age

Most of the Bronze Age objects recorded since 2015 are flint tools, such as scrapers. These include two barbed and tanged arrowheads from Alvaston (DENO-76ED57; Plate 7) and Church Broughton (DENO-297033; Plate 8). Three bronze axe heads, however, have also been discovered: an Early Bronze Age 'Migdale' flat axe from Wormhill, by a metal detectorist in 2015 (DENO-4F12EB; Plate 9); a Middle to Late Bronze Age socketed axe from Weston Upon Trent, in a gravel pit during mineral extraction in 2002 (CORN-5FDC66; Plate 10); and a Late Bronze Age socketed axe from Corbar Woods near Buxton discovered at the mouth of a badger sett by a dog walker in 2016 (DENO-71082C; Plate 11). 'Migdale' axes are found mainly in the highlands of Scotland, North West England and Wales, but rarely elsewhere. This example is decorated with a 'rain pattern' of diagonal grooves. The axe head

Plate 9: Bronze Age axe from Wormhill.

Plate 10: Bronze Age axe from Weston Upon Trent.

Plate 11: Bronze Age axe from near Buxton.

from Weston Upon Trent shares features with the Taunton-Hademarschen type axe of the Taunton metalwork phase (*c*.1400-1275 BC) or a Meldreth type of the Wilburton metalwork phase (c.1150-1000 BC). The axe from Corbar Woods is a Class B socketed axe, the most common socketed axe type in the Midlands.

Iron Age

Coins

Eleven individual Iron Age coins and one hoard have been discovered in Derbyshire and recorded on the PAS database. Derbyshire sits on the edge of areas associated with the Corieltavi (or Corietauvi) and the Brigantes tribes. The Brigantes did not mint their own coinage and all the coins found in Derbyshire are of the Corieltavi. One gold coin, discovered by a detectorist in 2015 near Belper (DENO-D9B7E3; Plate 12), is of an unusual but easily recognisable type known as a North Eastern "Lindsey Scyphate", quarter stater. They are so named because of their unusual dished appearance and because they are most common in Lindsey, Lincolnshire; they are almost exclusively found east of the River Trent.

Other objects

The most significant recent Iron Age find in Derbyshire was the discovery of two pieces of a horn cap by a metal detectorist near Buxton in 2015 (DENO-4D7D2F; Plate 13). These enigmatic objects are unique to Britain and were originally thought to have been chariot fittings, but certainly would not have fitted on the end of a chariot's axle and none of the chariots found in Iron Age graves have been found with a horn cap. Therefore, it has been suggested that they may have been used as a cart fitting or possibly as an elaborate finial for a staff.

A potentially significant 'pillar stone' was discovered in the River Derwent near Duffield (DENO-B69D3A; Plate 14). The object is carved with a variety of motifs that appear very like the Kermaria Stone, a fourth century BC 'pillar stone' discovered in Brittany, France. This object has been acquired by Derby Museums and is undergoing further analysis.

Plate 12: Iron Age coin from near Belper.

Plate 13a: Iron Age 'horn cap' from near Buxton.

Plate 13b: Iron Age 'horn cap' from near Buxton.

Plate 13c: Iron Age 'horn cap' from near Buxton.

Plate 14: Probable Iron Age 'pillar stone' from near Duffield (cm scale).

Roman

Nationally, Roman coins and artefacts are the most common objects on the PAS database. In Derbyshire, however, medieval and post-medieval finds are slightly more common.

Coins

A high proportion of the coins found in Derbyshire are early coins of the Augustan system (denarii, sestertii, dupondii and asses of the first to mid-third century AD), whereas nationally there is a much higher proportion of fourth century nummi. Roman coins entered circulation through the army and there were many Roman forts and marching camps in Derbyshire.

A few individual Roman coins are worthy of note. A metal detectorist found a silver Republican denarius in Kniveton in 2016, minted by Publius Clodius Marcus Filius Turrinus in 42 BC (DENO-397064; Plate 15). Although Republican denarii were still in circulation after the Roman conquest of Britain, these coins are uncommon finds because they were removed from circulation during Nero's coinage reforms (AD 64) due to their high silver content.

A later denarius of Caracalla (AD 198-217) was discovered in Longford in 2015 (DENO-BF7C8D; Plate 16). This example appears to be a contemporary copy (a Roman forgery) made of copper alloy or base silver. The coin is a very good copy and it is likely that it was disguised by a thin silver wash.

A silver radiate of Gordian III dating to AD 241-243 was discovered in 2015 by a detectorist in North Wingfield (DENO-AC15BF; Plate 17). Radiates (also known as *Antoniniani*) are thought to have been originally worth two denarii, but only had one and a half times the silver of a denarius. Radiates quickly became very debased and by AD 268 they contained only 6% silver. Later radiates were almost worthless and were produced in very large quantities, so they are frequently found by detectorists. Earlier radiates like this example are much less common.

Other objects

Most of the non-coin finds are brooches, mainly common bow brooch types. Two exceptions are plate brooches found by a detectorist in 2015. The first is an enamelled disc brooch from North Wingfield (DENO-836848; Plate 18) with almost all its green and red enamel still intact. The second is highly unusual, resembling an *Ankerfibel* (anchor-shaped brooch), a

Plate 18: Roman brooch from North Wingfield.

Plate 15: Roman coin from Kniveton.

Plate 16: Roman coin from Langford.

Plate 17: Roman coin from North Wingfield.

Plate 19: Roman brooch from South Darley.

Plate 20: Medieval Islamic coin from Catton.

type previously unknown in Britain and often found in the areas between North Eastern Italy and the Black Sea (Pearce and Worrell 2016). This example was discovered in South Darley (DENO-6E647A; Plate 19).

Twelve lead Roman slingshots were discovered in a scatter near Catton (e.g. PUBLIC-07BA1C) (see note by Roger Thomas in this *DAJ* p. 73-75).

Early Medieval

Early medieval objects are rare finds in Derbyshire; only 109 had been recorded on the PAS database by the end of 2016. One of the most interesting is a silver dirham of the Umayyad Caliphate (PUBLIC-458D27; Plate 20), found at Catton in South Derbyshire in 2016. At its greatest extent, the Umayad Caliphate controlled the area from the Iberian Peninsula, through North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and Syria to Pakistan. This coin was minted in Iraq in AD 741-742. Possibly it came to Derbyshire with the 'Great Viking Army', which camped at Repton during the winter of AD 873/4. Only eight similar coins have been recorded on the database as single finds (e.g. LEIC-94D4D2, ESS-205772). However, contemporary Islamic coins have been discovered in Viking hoards (e.g. The Vale of York Hoard – SWYOR-AECB53) and demonstrate the extent of the Vikings' trade network.

Medieval

A silver groat of Edward IV's first reign from Brampton near Chesterfield (DENO-DB6FEB; Plate 21). This coin was minted in Coventry and dates from the period AD 1464-1466. The Coventry mint was only briefly active and only five coins from the mint have been recorded on the PAS database.

Two Scottish pennies of Alexander III were discovered by metal detectorists in 2016, one in Catton dating to AD 1250-1280 (PUBLIC-52D8D7; Plate 22) and one in Wormhill dating to AD 1280-1292 (DENO-95D05C; Plate 23). Medieval Scottish coinage imitated English coinage, which was widely recognised for its quality and success (Kelleher 2015, 112 and 122). The Catton coin imitates a voided long cross type used in England until AD 1278. The Wormhill coin is from later in Alexander III's reign and imitates a new design of English coin using a solid long cross. The stars within the angles of Scottish pennies can help identify the mint; the total number of the stars' points was specific to a mint.

A 14th century copper alloy sword pommel discovered in Longford in 2015 (DENO-8D81E0; Plate 24) is a Type VIII 'wheel-pommel' (Ward-Perkins 1940, 22, fig. 1). It is decorated with incised dots, arranged in concentric circles. This is one of only two so far recorded by the PAS in Derbyshire.

Post Medieval

A chance find of an 18th or 19th century gold finger ring with a stone or glass intaglio was discovered in Corbar Woods in 2016 (DENO-CFD8C1; Plate 25). The intaglio is a reused Roman intaglio showing the Graeco-Egyptian god Harpocrates (Walters 1926, 192, pl. xxiii no.1799; also nos 1800-1804). The ring has been donated to Buxton Museum.
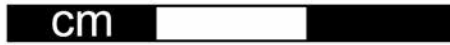
Plate 21: Medieval coin from Brampton.
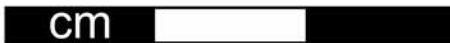

Plate 22: Medieval coin from Catton.

Plate 23: Medieval coin from Wormhill.

Plate 24: Medieval sword pommel from Longford.

Plate 25: Post Medieval finger ring from near Buxton.

ENDNOTE

All images are courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The FLO is normally available to take in finds at Derby Museums but also regularly holds finds surgeries in Nottingham, attends metal detecting club meetings and holds finds days in local museums, enabling finders to have their objects recorded.

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