

Part 2: Finds Reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme

by **Vanessa Oakden**

Introduction

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a DCMS-funded project to encourage the voluntary recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales. Every year many thousands of objects are discovered, many of these by metal-detector users but also by people whilst out walking, gardening or going about their daily work.

Overview

82,680 artefacts (represented by 66,798 records) were recorded on the PAS database, www.finds.org.uk/database, in 2015. Of these, 8,044 (1,296 records; a hoard of multiple finds equates to one record) were from the North-West, 306 objects relating to the pre-1974 county of Cheshire (excluding the ‘panhandle’ but including Warrington). These objects were all found within the ploughsoil by metal-detector users. Grateful thanks are due to them for reporting these important finds to the PAS and to Dr John Davis, Roland Schewe and Brian Spencer for their comments. The numbers of records are summarised below by modern local authority area, period and function in Tables X.2.1–2. The functional categories used and their alphabetical designation are standard within the national Portable Antiquities Scheme. Reference numbers 2015 TXX are the Treasure case numbers used to track objects submitted as potential treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act.

Finds of note

The entries below set out some of the highlights of the discoveries reported in 2015. They are organised alphabetically by findspot within broad historical periods.

Prehistoric

Agden, Cheshire West and Chester (NMGW-FDAA11)

An early Bronze Age developed flat axe of Aylesford type (Ill X.2.1). The axe is nearly complete but is heavily corroded. The butt is narrow and is moderately straight. The sides are straight as far as the midpoint, below which they are concave and expand to the eroded blade tips. The original blade edge is missing. The faces are comparatively flat with no surviving evidence for flanges on either side. One face has a horizontal median bevel and the suggestion of a blade facet 8mm from the edge. The other face has suffered more surface

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Table X.2.1 PAS finds from Cheshire in 2015 quantified by local authority area and period

| <i>Period</i> | <i>Cheshire East</i> | <i>Cheshire West and Chester</i> | <i>Halton</i> | <i>Warrington</i> | <i>Wirral</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Palaeolithic | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Mesolithic | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Neolithic | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 |
| Bronze Age | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 11 |
| Iron Age | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Roman | 18 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 54 |
| Early medieval | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Medieval | 41 | 60 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 108 |
| Post-medieval | 32 | 52 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 95 |
| Unknown | 6 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 17 |
| Modern | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| <i>Total</i> | 108 | 167 | 2 | 3 | 27 | 307 |

Table X.2.2 PAS finds from Cheshire in 2015 quantified by local authority area and function

| <i>Area</i> | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|----|----|---|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|----|---|-----|---|--------------|
| Cheshire East | 4 | 12 | 2 | 19 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 15 | 4 | 1 | 30 | 1 | 108 |
| Cheshire West and Chester | 10 | 23 | 0 | 35 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 59 | 2 | 167 |
| Halton | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Warrington | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Wirral | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 12 | 0 | 27 |
| <i>Total</i> | 15 | 38 | 2 | 57 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 15 | | 5 | 40 | 10 | 5 | 102 | 3 | 307 |

KEY

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| A Brooches | G Studs, mounts |
| B Other objects of dress and personal adornment | H Weapons, spears, axes and tools |
| C Toilet and medical equipment | I Bells |
| D Household utensils, furniture fittings, copper alloy vessels, keys, weights, textile equipment | J Figurines and toys |
| E Objects associated with religious beliefs and practices | K Miscellaneous objects |
| F Harness equipment | L Objects of unknown function |
| | M Tokens |
| | N Coins |
| | O Hoard |

corrosion and neither of these features is visible. The better preserved face has remnant traces of a pale grey to dark brown patina; elsewhere the surface is heavily pitted and has pale green to dark green corrosion. The discernible median bevel suggests some developed features on the axe. It is possible that hammered flanges were present but do not now survive.



III X.2.1 Early Bronze Age flat axe from Agden. © Liverpool Museum

Hulme Walfield, Cheshire East (LVPL-5BD134)

A late Bronze Age leaf-shaped and pegged spearhead, probably from the Penard-Ewart Park phases/industries (*c* 1100–800 BC) (III X.2.2). The spearhead has an elongated leaf-shaped blade that is lozenge-shaped in cross-section with a prominent midrib. The blade tapers to a rounded point, the tip of which is damaged. The majority of the socket is missing and the ancient breaks are patinated. Both faces of the object have been damaged. One face at the socketed end has been compressed. When complete the socket would have been oval in cross-section with holes for pegs to attach the spearhead to the shaft. The edges of the blade are undulating and damaged because of abrasion in the ploughsoil. The object has a mid-brown patina with occasional patches of light green corrosion on each face.

Hulme Walfield, Cheshire East (LVPL-23E5CF)

A copper alloy early Iron Age socketed heeled sickle of transitional Ewart Park–Llyn Fawr type, *c* 800–600 BC (III X.2.3). It consists of an oval socket and a decorated curved blade that is almost complete with a downward-facing point. The sickle was broken irregularly in antiquity and is now in three pieces. A large wedge is missing between the central part of the blade and the internal face of the socket. The socket mouth is marked by a decorative circumferential moulded ridge. On each face of the socket, 4.25mm above the mouth, is a circular rivet hole. The sickle expands above the mouth to form the heel, which curves outwards before arching up and around to form the length of the blade. One face of the heel is decorated with a circlet. Three ridges expand from this circlet along the length of



III X.2.2 Late Bronze Age spearhead from Hulme Walfield. © Liverpool Museum



III X.2.3 Early Iron Age sickle from Hulme Walfield. © Liverpool Museum

the blade, becoming more worn and flattened towards the point. The opposite face has an oval depression which may likewise have been a decorative circlet but is now worn and damaged. Traces of three ridges can again be seen in places on this face along the blade but are much more worn; it can be assumed that the decoration mirrored that of the other side. There are no visible casting seams. The upper and lower edges of the blade along with the point have been damaged, probably through abrasion in the ploughsoil and corrosion. The object has a mid-brown patina with patches of light green corrosion in places and adhering traces of iron corrosion, which indicates that at one time it lay in a waterlogged deposit or one with iron panning.

Lower Withington, Cheshire East (LVPL-C60C6D)

A copper alloy stud of possible Iron Age date (III X.2.4). The object has a hemispherical cup with a square-sectioned integral spike projecting from its base. There is a dimple inside the base of the cup in line with the spike. On the outer edge of the cup at one side is an incomplete projection, semi-circular in section. The cup may have been filled with enamel, none of which survives. It can be dated from *c* 700 BC to *c* 100 BC.

Roman

Chester, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-68E924)

A copper alloy Greek provincial coin of Severus Alexander, dating to AD 222–35 (III X.2.5). The obverse depicts the laureate head of the emperor facing right surrounded by a legend which reads [...]*VR AΛEZ* [...]. The reverse which is worn depicts three standards. The legend is illegible because of wear. The coin is in poor condition.



left: III X.2.4 Possible Iron Age stud from Lower Withington. © Liverpool Museum

above: III X.2.5 Copper alloy provincial Greek coin of Severus Alexander from Chester. © Liverpool Museum

Farndon, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-B4BC19)

Head of a copper alloy hairpin (Ill X.2.6). The object depicts a lion, or possibly a dog, mounted on an oval platform. The animal has a narrow face with pellet eyes and lentoid ears flat against the head. The mouth is open with the snout projecting beyond the lower lip. Surrounding the animal's neck is a thick collar, representing a rope or chain, with a rectangular projection below the neck to the front of the collar. The top of the head and the shoulders below the collar are decorated with deep grooves intended to represent a mane. The centre of the back is waisted, emphasising muscular hips, and the back legs are standing but bent forward slightly. The animal is resting on its forelegs and appears to be in a 'pouncing' position. The tail curls up and forward over the animal before falling to one side. Below the oval platform the object narrows into a circular-sectioned stem below which are two circumferential collars. Below the lower collar is an ancient break. The object has a dark greenish brown patina and is in good condition.



Ill X.2.6 Roman copper alloy hairpin from Farndon.
© Liverpool Museum

Peover Superior, Cheshire East (LVPL-E332C6; 2015 T46)

The Peover hoard consists of over 6960 Roman radiates in a ceramic vessel. The hoard was excavated as a block and transported to the British Museum where the conservation team cleaned and separated the coins, excavating them from the vessel (Ills X.2.7–8). The coins range in date from AD 251 to 273 with the exception of a single worn *sestertius* of Commodus (AD 180–92). One of the less common types of radiate coin in the hoard is of Gallienus (AD 260–8). The latest coin is of Tetricus II (AD 270–73). In composition the hoard is broadly similar to the many Romano-British coin hoards buried in the aftermath of the breakaway 'Gallic Empire'.



Ills X.2.7–8 Roman coin hoard from Peover Superior during excavation at the British Museum. Images by Katarzyna Weglowska. © The Trustees of the British Museum

*Early medieval***Foulk Stapleford, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-E6C6A0)**

A copper alloy openwork strap end of early medieval date (*c* AD 900–*c* 1100) (III X.2.9). The object is sub-triangular in plan and can be classified as Thomas (2004) Class E, Type 1. It is decorated with nine perforations. Three perforations are complete, one in the centre of the object and two either side below the central perforation. Projecting from the top of the object is a possible stylised *fleur-de-lis*, although this may be the result of breaks. Below the *fleur-de-lis* further perforations, which are incomplete, form a crescent at each edge. The object may be intending to represent a stylised tree, as is often found on strap ends of this type. The object has a light green patina and is corroded.



III X.2.9 Early medieval copper alloy strap end from Foulk Stapleford.
© Liverpool Museum

Hulme Walfield, Cheshire East (LVPL-C6EC87)

An incomplete early medieval copper alloy ornamental cross-staff head mount (*c* AD 1000–*c* 1200) (III X.2.10). The spherical head has an openwork design decorated with five surviving knobs. One complete sub-oval hole survives. The broken edges are rough. Projecting from the base of the object is an integrally cast cylindrical socket with circumferential collars top and bottom. The socket contains four holes, each at 90° to the other, probably for attachment to a shaft. Two opposed holes just above the lower collar are empty; the two other holes are infilled with corrosion but are possibly incomplete. The object has a mid-green patina and is corroded in places.

Somerford, Cheshire East (LVPL-EC8F2F)

An incomplete copper alloy early medieval/Anglo-Scandinavian openwork stirrup-strap mount of Williams (1997) Class A, Type 10D, dating *c* AD 1050–*c* 1100 (III X.2.11). The mount is subrectangular in form with a convex upper surface and terminates in a wide triangular apex decorated with three rounded bosses and containing a central circular rivet hole. The mount has a small projecting lobe on each side halfway down its length. There are two circular rivet holes in the corners of the base and traces of a projecting flange on its reverse; one of the rivet holes is almost filled with iron corrosion. The surface is decorated with a coiled snake whose body is represented by an openwork Urnes-style interlace roundel. The snake has a large head with two triangular indented eyes emerging from the roundel and pointing towards the apex. On the other side of the snake a centrally placed raised line runs to the base. One rivet hole at the base is enclosed by coiled raised tendrils; decoration



III X.2.10 Early medieval copper alloy cross-staff head mount from Hulme Walfield. © Liverpool Museum



III X.2.11 Early medieval copper alloy stirrup-strap mount from Somerford. © Liverpool Museum

surrounding the other rivet hole is obscured by the iron corrosion but is likely to have been similar. The decoration continues from the rivet holes towards the apex, where the tendrils move inwards, framing the head and linking together in a union knot; they then turn outwards to form rounded terminals that almost echo the circles at the base. The reverse, which has a slightly concave surface, is undecorated with a mid-brown patina and a rough surface. Iron corrosion stains the rear of the infilled rivet hole. The outer face has a dark green patina and is in good condition.

Medieval

Baddiley, Cheshire East (LVPL-DEA190)

A complete lead alloy medieval pilgrim's ampulla, dating from *c* 1350 to *c* 1530 (III X.2.12). In plan the bowl is semi-circular and the neck sub-rectangular, flaring outwards at the top. The flask is decorated on one face with a flower with a central pellet and eleven petals, of which those on the lower half are very worn. Surrounding the flower the edge of the bowl on this face is decorated with a zig-zag band within a curvilinear border. Either side of the zig-zag is decorated with diagonal grooves giving the impression of a series of decorated triangles. The opposite face of the object is decorated with a shield which is worn. Within the shield is a central rectangle that appears to contain the letter *h* in lower case lombardic style. Below the letter on the lower edge of the rectangle is a pellet from which two thickened lines extend downwards. This gives the impression of a stamped seal and ribbon. Outside of the shield on either side are four pellets arranged in a lozenge formation. The pellets and shield are surrounded by an oval band. There is possibly further decoration above the shield but there is too much wear to be certain. The edge of the bowl on this face of the object is decorated with a series of diagonal lines. Two handles connect the neck to the body of the vessel and are complete. At the top of the neck on the face decorated with a flower are some horizontal nicks which appear to be deliberate and are not recent damage. On the opposite face a linear cut or groove runs from within the rectangle inside the shield up to the top of the object. This appears to be ancient damage rather than related to the design. The top of the ampulla is complete and is sealed; iron corrosion can be seen within of the mouth. When moved a tinkling sound, like that of a bell, can be heard from within the object. The vessel has a light white patina and is in good condition.

Barrow, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-ECC81D)

A silver voided long cross penny of Henry III (1216–72) (III X.2.13). The obverse of the coin reads HENRICVS REX and depicts a crowned bust facing which is double-struck with a reverse long cross on top of the bust. [S REX III] is illegible because of jumbled lettering. The reverse reads NICOLE ON SROS, indicating that it was minted by Nicole in Shrewsbury, and depicts a voided long cross with pellets in each quarter. The reverse is also double-struck with pellets from the obverse crown visible amongst the three pellets in two quarters and HENRIC stamped over NICOLE. The coin can be classified as Class 3c, North no 988 and dates to 1248–50. The coin has not been clipped and is in very good condition.



III X.2.12 Medieval lead alloy ampulla from Baddiley. © Liverpool Museum



III X.2.13 Penny of Henry III from Barrow. © Liverpool Museum

Neston, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-A12A19)

An incomplete metal vessel fragment of medieval to post-medieval date (Ill X.2.14). Only the copper alloy handle and a small fragment of the lead alloy wall remain. The handle is V-shaped and undecorated with a circular cross-section and a flat-topped terminal at the end where it would have been fitted to the vessel; the other end is also flattened. The lead alloy vessel fragment is likewise undecorated. The vessel has a dark blackish-green patina and is worn with adhering traces of an unidentified black substance, which is probably a sooty/carbon deposit.



Ill X.2.14 Medieval metal vessel fragment from Neston. © Liverpool Museum

Swettenham, Cheshire East (LVPL-F98C93)

A copper alloy seal matrix, probably dating to the thirteenth century (Ill X.2.15). The matrix is circular in plan with an integral pierced attachment loop projecting from the rear. This loop is semicircular in profile and rectangular in cross-section. The poorly engraved legend on the front reads CREDE MICHI (Believe in me). The letter Es in the legend are rounded (lombardic) and there are three dots and two space-filling Xs after the end of the legend.



Ill X.2.15 Medieval copper alloy seal matrix from Swettenham. © Liverpool Museum

The central device depicts two birds either side of a chalice with a flared foot and a bulge in the centre of the stem. The birds appear to be leaning into the chalice as if drinking. Their tails interrupt the legend after the M, with the first I between the tails and the C immediately after the second tail.

Post-medieval

Buerton, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-08F250; 2015 T545)

A coin hoard consisting of one silver groat of Mary (1553–4) and eleven silver coins of Elizabeth I (1558–1603), the latter comprising three sixpence, four groats, three threepences and one halfgroat, together with fragments of wood. (This hoard will be published by C Ball and M Savage in a paper to appear in *J Chester Archaeol Soc* new ser vol **87**) (Ills X.2.16–17).

The hoard was found in association with three fragments of an incomplete wooden pocket sundial, consisting of a fragment of the lid and two case fragments (Ill X.2.18–19). In the centre of the case is a carved circular pit 11mm in diameter and 5mm deep with a central hole for a pin; the walls of the pit are stepped to accommodate a brass ring and then a sheet of glass to protect the dial. A small amount of orange iron corrosion or staining adheres to the base of the pit. Between the two halves at the break below the pit is a possible hole for the pin that would have tethered the string gnomon attached to the lid and cast a shadow when the lid was raised, allowing the user to tell the time. There is a double circular engraved border around the central pit which is divided by diagonal grooves, the hour lines, six of which are visible. The Roman numerals IX and X are visible just above two of the hour lines. Above and to the left of the X is an engraved small circular sun formed of eight lines representing the sun's rays radiating from the central circle. A thin piece of wood resting on top of the left side of the object is likely to have been the lid; it has a curve that mirrors that of the pit, possibly to allow the dial to rise above the edge of the case.

Photographs of similar sundials with the glass remaining, albeit a little later in date, can be seen at <https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=nuremberg+pocket+sundial&client=firefox-b&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjN28fqva3RAhXBVxoKHSAFDgQQAUICSgC&biw=1280&bih=913#imgrc=V7oCyCQYRaU1zM%3A>

Great Boughton, Cheshire West and Chester (LVPL-ECAD33)

A lead alloy and iron dress hook dating from *c* 1500 to *c* 1700 (Ill X.2.20). The object is decorated with three domed bosses separated by bars radiating from a central smaller domed boss. At the rear of the object is an oval-section bar beneath which is a casting seam. Projecting from the opposite end of the rear of the hook is a length of iron covered in lead. The object has a light white patina.

Lower Withington, Cheshire East (LVPL-C7CD93; 2015 T597)

A silver toothpick/ear scoop of post-medieval date (Ill X.2.21). The object has a sickle-shaped pick, bent out of shape. The incomplete pick emerges from the body of a stylised dragon, shaped so as to serve as a handle and marked with scales. Mid-way along the upper side of the dragon's body is an incomplete suspension loop. From the dragon's open mouth, as if it were the tongue, emerges a strip of silver which terminates with a recent break and would have had an ear scoop at the end when complete.



Ills X.2.16 (top) and .17 (above) Obverse and reverse of Tudor coins in hoard from Buerton. © Liverpool Museum



Ills X.2.18 (*left*) and .19 (*below*)
Wooden sundial found with Tudor
coin hoard at Buerton, showing case
with (*left*) and without lid (*below*).
© Liverpool Museum





III X.2.20 Post-medieval lead alloy and iron dress hook from Great Boughton. © Liverpool Museum

III X.2.21 Post-medieval silver toothpick/ear scoop from Lower Withington. © Liverpool Museum



Discussion

Just seven objects dating from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic periods were recorded on the PAS database for Cheshire and the Wirral during 2015. This may be a matter of chance but biases are also a factor. The more frequent reporting of metal objects is the result of improving liaison between the PAS and metal-detecting groups. By contrast, hard-to-spot flints may be picked up by chance by walkers who do not realise their significance or by field-walking groups who record their finds independently. Consequently the majority of finds reported to PAS are metal objects.

The early Bronze Age flat axe is one of five recorded from Cheshire during 2015. In total 556 Bronze Age objects were recorded on the database during 2015 across England and Wales. Flat axes are the earliest type of metal axehead used during the Bronze Age and the developed type (where the axe has become narrower with straighter sides in order to fit the newly developed ‘knee handle’ with a forked, angled end) is found throughout the United Kingdom.

Just fifty leaf-shaped and pegged spearheads have been recorded on the national database in total. The example published above is the only one recorded from Cheshire. In the surrounding counties five have been recorded from Staffordshire, four from Shropshire and one from Flintshire. A similar example which can be found on the database is A Brown 2012. SF-161BF3: A Bronze Age spear, available at: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/487312>.

Decorated socketed sickles are unusual finds. A very close parallel to the find described here is in Norwich Castle Museum (1959.38), perhaps created in the same mould. Another close parallel in National Museums Ireland is W6 from County Westmeath and catalogued by Wilde 1862, 527. It is also illustrated in Joyce 1900, 14

Several studs similar to the example above are recorded on the PAS database: DENO-410643 (Hazelwood, Derbyshire), DENO-C68707 (South Wingfield, Derbyshire), DENO-3344F6 (Derbyshire – no parish) and NARC111 (Bishop Auckland, Co Durham). DENO-3344F6 contains the remains of colourless enamel/glass inside the cup, and it is likely that the example from Lower Withington would also have held enamel. Objects such as this have been found stratified in Iron Age contexts, with parallels from Dinorben, Denbighshire (Savory 1976, fig 35, 8–10).

Roman hairpins were produced with a variety of decorative terminals, from simple rounded knobs to more elaborate zoomorphic terminals such as we have here. Sixteen Roman pins have been recorded from Cheshire, all of which have a simple rounded terminal. This is the only zoomorphic example from the area, while there are no pins or hairpins recorded on the PAS database from Wirral. Similar examples of zoomorphic hairpins from Augst are illustrated in Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 28.

The Peover hoard was reported in January 2015 and subsequently excavated by staff from the Department of Archaeology at the Museum of Liverpool, led by Rob Philpott. Forty-six Roman radiate coins were initially discovered by a metal-detectorist who, realising he had discovered a hoard, contacted the Portable Antiquities Scheme. A further 280 copper alloy radiates and one copper alloy *sestertius* were recovered through a controlled metal-detecting survey and were plotted with GPS and EDM. These coins had been scattered as a result of the plough hitting the vessel containing the hoard. The vessel is Cheshire Plain ware. It has not yet been determined if the *sestertius* was buried with the hoard or was a chance loss. The excavation took place over three days with the removal of the hoard on the final day within a block of soil to maintain its stability. It was then transported to the British Museum where it has been excavated in the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research led by Pippa Pearce. A total of 6960 coins have been cleaned and separated. Although originally containing 50% silver, by the AD 270s the figure had dropped to about 1%. Mints in Gaul and Germany struck millions of these coins each week.

The coin of Severus Alexander is a significant find. Just thirteen Greek and Roman provincial coins have been recorded on the database from the North-West. Previously believed to be antiquarian losses, their rising number supports the view that these losses are ancient. This

coin adds further support because of its unusual find spot. The coin was discovered sticking out of the bottom of the eastern gate post in the city walls following heavy rain.

Just four early medieval finds were reported during 2015 from Cheshire and the Wirral. Stirrup-strap mounts are unusual finds in the North-West, with only nine recorded on the database, one from Wirral and eight from Cheshire. There are only two other examples of Class A type 10D in David William's corpus of late Saxon stirrup strap mounts, neither of which were openwork, and this is therefore an unusual example.

Strap ends are a common type of object, particularly in the medieval period. The example from Foulk Stapleford is one of a growing number of early medieval examples from the North-West, of which there are currently thirty-four.

Staff heads are another uncommon type of object. Sixty-three are recorded on the database nationally, with the above being the only example from Cheshire. Comparable examples have been found, mostly notably two in the Warwickshire Museum collections, found at Walton Hall, Wellesbourne, and at Wixford. The Walton Hall example is particularly close and is illustrated in Bailey 1994, 172, fig 3. Bailey notes that further examples have been found at Dublin, Canterbury, London, Nottingham and in Cambridgeshire. The Dublin example was dated to *c* 1020–30 by its archaeological context. The Canterbury example (PAS database GLO-B49841) was dated to the end of the eleventh century,

Voided long cross pennies of Henry III are not unusual, with 3726 recorded on the database, although just twenty-seven of those are from Cheshire. The example from Barrow is in very good condition showing little signs of wear or clipping. It is possible that the coin was discarded as a result of having been double-struck and that this is the reason for its fine state of preservation.

Seal matrices are another common metal-detector find and can be personal or impersonal. The legend on this example, CREDE MICH I (Believe in Me), is an anonymous inscription commonly found in the fourteenth century.

Ampullae are an interesting artefact type which can speak of the religious belief of the owner or simply be a souvenir. Brian Spencer, formerly Senior Keeper at the Museum of London, who made a lifetime study of ampullae, has written:

Ampullae or miniature phials were an important kind of souvenir. Generally flask-shaped, but with a narrow, flattish section, they were designed to contain a dose of the thaumaturgic water that was dispensed to pilgrims at many shrines and holy wells. Ampullae were made of tin, lead or tin-lead alloy and were provided with a pair of handles or loops so that they could be suspended from a cord or chain around the wearer's neck. Coming into use in the last quarter of the twelfth century, they were, in England, almost the only kind of pilgrim souvenir to be had during the thirteenth century. They were nevertheless available at a number of shrines, and thanks to returning pilgrims or to local entrepreneurs, probably featured as secondary relics in virtually every thirteenth-century English parish church.

The vessel handle is likely to be from a large cooking vessel such as a cauldron and dates from *c* 1100 to *c* 1850, by which time the use of cast-iron cooking vessels predominated. A parallel is illustrated in Egan 1998, 163, and numerous similar examples have been recorded on the PAS database; for examples *see* YORYM-856185, WAW-3D60B8, SWYOR-89CC21 and YORYM-BD7D03.

Coins of Elizabeth I and Mary are found both in hoards and as single losses. The earliest coin in this hoard is of Mary, dating from 1553 to 1554 and is considerably worn on the obverse face. The coins of Elizabeth I have a fair amount of wear, with the groat being considerably corroded. No evidence of a container was found with the hoard. As the hoard consists of more than two coins over 300 years old, in terms of age and percentage of precious metal (>10%) it qualifies as treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996. The wooden sundial, although not precious metal, was found in association with the hoard and therefore is also considered to qualify as treasure.

Pocket sundials similar to that found with the hoard are recorded on the PAS database: LON-8C12E6 and LON-84ADD8. The Buerton example has no maker's mark but may have been made in Nuremberg because of the similarities of the sun emblem to one on the Nuremberg Reinmann dial.

Dr John Davis of the British Sundial Society comments:

The offset of the meridian line in the bottom of the compass bowl appears to be just less than 10° east of north. The magnetic variation in London in 1580 was 11° 15' east and gradually reducing (reaching zero in 1657), fitting quite well with the dial being mid-sixteenth century in date. The earliest known diptych dial (in boxwood) is 1511 by Erhard Etzlaub of Nuremberg. His dials were quite complicated (they included a map of Europe) and they had Arabic numerals for the hours. The Mary Rose dials are all circular and use Arabic numerals so are not a direct equivalent.

Roland Schewe, the curator at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg states:

We have next to the Etzlaub dial from 1511 a further three early wooden sundials. But all dials have a larger size than your [Buerton hoard] fragment. It is worth noting that the decorative borders on our four wooden dials are very similar. But more interesting is the ornament punch in the upper left corner – a circle with a bundle of eight small rays. This punch is not seen very often. It is very similar to the one from WI 267. Jacob Karner (master 1613–*c* 1648) has a similar punch, but with bundle of ten small rays. I think that it is quite possible that the fragment dates from the sixteenth century and comes from Nuremberg, maybe even from the Reinmann workshop.

A more modest find is the lead alloy dress hook from Great Boughton. Dress hooks are commonly made of copper alloy although lead examples are known, such as LANCUM-D917B9 and SWYOR-3260C8 on the PAS database. These dress hooks may have been designed to imitate filigree decorated silver gilt examples. Similar copper alloy examples can be found in Read 2008, 75–6 which have been classified as early post-medieval, Class D, Type 6.

The vessel handle is likely to be from a large cooking vessel such as a cauldron and dates from *c* 1100 to *c* 1850, by which time the use of cast-iron cooking vessels predominated. A parallel is illustrated in Egan 1998, 163, and numerous similar examples have been recorded on the PAS database; for examples *see* YORYM-856185, WAW-3D60B8, SWYOR-89CC21 and YORYM-BD7D03.

Coins of Elizabeth I and Mary are found both in hoards and as single losses. The earliest coin in this hoard is of Mary, dating from 1553 to 1554 and is considerably worn on the obverse face. The coins of Elizabeth I have a fair amount of wear, with the groat being considerably corroded. No evidence of a container was found with the hoard. As the hoard consists of more than two coins over 300 years old, in terms of age and percentage of precious metal (>10%) it qualifies as treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996. The wooden sundial, although not precious metal, was found in association with the hoard and therefore is also considered to qualify as treasure.

Pocket sundials similar to that found with the hoard are recorded on the PAS database: LON-8C12E6 and LON-84ADD8. The Buerton example has no maker's mark but may have been made in Nuremberg because of the similarities of the sun emblem to one on the Nuremberg Reinmann dial.

Dr John Davis of the British Sundial Society comments:

The offset of the meridian line in the bottom of the compass bowl appears to be just less than 10° east of north. The magnetic variation in London in 1580 was 11° 15' east and gradually reducing (reaching zero in 1657), fitting quite well with the dial being mid-sixteenth century in date. The earliest known diptych dial (in boxwood) is 1511 by Erhard Etzlaub of Nuremberg. His dials were quite complicated (they included a map of Europe) and they had Arabic numerals for the hours. The Mary Rose dials are all circular and use Arabic numerals so are not a direct equivalent.

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The final object discussed is the silver toothpick from Lower Withington, Treasure Case 2015 T597. The sickle shape suggests a sixteenth-century date; an example in gold, from the tomb of the Count Palatine Philip Ludwig (died 1614), is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum; *see* Egan & Pritchard 1991, 378–80. The toothpick pendant had become a fashionable accessory in northern Europe by 1562, when engraved designs were published by the goldsmith Erasmus Hornick. Similar examples which can be found on the PAS database include 2004 T190 (YORYM-5874B1) and 2004 T238, (DENO-E6E8D8). Again on grounds of age and percentage of precious metal the object qualifies as treasure under the stipulations of the Treasure Act 1996.

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