

XIII

Archaeological Finds from the Tweed Valley in 2002–2003

Roger Miket

SUMMARY

A note of recent finds by the Border Reivers Search Society of archaeological material from the border area.

Every year the soils of the north-east offer up additional fragments of our material past. Each – like the individual tessera of a mosaic – is an important part of a complex and highly distinctive pattern of regional history. The condition of survival and value of each fragment varies; some perhaps are of a stronger hue and occupy a prominent part of the design; others are only a part of the background colouring. Yet, whatever their position, the value of each lies in their contribution to the whole. Our full understanding depends upon every piece being in its proper place. It goes without saying that little remains intact from this vast mosaic. The majority of it, indeed, is still hidden from view and what survives gives us only tantalising glimpses of the overall pattern.

In September 1997 the Treasure Act (1996) came into force in England and Wales, replacing the common law of Treasure Trove with a crisper legal definition of what constitutes treasure and giving greater clarity and guidance as to the legal obligations upon those who discover it. Following a review of the operation of the Act, the Treasure (Designation) Order 2002 slightly extended the definition of treasure and, from the consultation between all interested parties, a Code of Practice has been accepted which greatly simplifies the process of reporting treasure trove discoveries. Yet treasure comprises only a small proportion of the countless discoveries made annually, either

through controlled archaeological investigation, or arising from serendipitous discovery. The latter may be taken to include the activities of metal-detectorists, a group whose underlying influence upon the current changes in legislation is plainly evident. Indeed, since the implementation of the Treasure Act the number of reported finds of treasure has increased annually nine-fold, of which the majority were found by metal-detector users. As a complement to the Treasure Act, the Portable Antiquities Scheme was designed to promote and coordinate the voluntary recording of chance finds in England and Wales through the appointment of 37 regionally-based Finds Liaison Officers (FLO's).¹

Between the establishment of the scheme in 1997 and April 2003, over 150,000 archaeological objects were submitted to the FLO's for identification. This was an unprecedented volume of material, over 60% of which arose as a direct result of metal-detectorist activity. This was a group viewed by the majority of the archaeological establishment in the 1970's and 80's with blanket hostility. But this response failed to distinguish between those detectorists who demonstrate, by their actions in bringing finds forward for recording and working in partnership with the archaeological profession, a genuine desire to act in a responsible fashion, from those whose practices of night-hawking and unlawful non-declaration would incur condemnation from any responsible metal-detecting club. Without the contribution of responsible detectorists working with archaeologists and museums, our knowledge would be much impoverished. A pragmatic accommodation between archaeologists and metal-detectorists is inevitable, and with it, hopefully

the marginalisation and eventual erosion of the more anti-social aspects of the hobby. With current practices of engagement, exchanges of information regarding new discoveries and working partnerships between archaeologists and detectorists in site evaluation, the interface between the two is currently a far more fluid 'frontier.' However, acknowledging it as a frontier is to recognise the different genesis, structures, methods of working and aspirations of each. Even these simplistic divisions conceal more complex motivations and methodologies which require recognition and analysis as an important tool towards improved working relationships. There are currently around eight detectorist clubs active in the area between Tees and Tweed that are collectively responsible for the discovery of well over 70% of new non-excavation finds from the North East each year.² How enduring the phenomenon will be is unclear but, if it proves to endure, many aspects of its character will assuredly change over time, either through a process of natural evolution or arising from legislative action. It is certainly time for the existence of such groups to be acknowledged in the local archaeological literature, and some information about their activities be noted if they are to be understood and meaningfully assisted.

This note of recent portable antiquities from the north-east and Berwickshire considers material recovered by just one of the area's detecting clubs over the previous 12 months. The Border Reivers Search Society, based upon Berwick upon Tweed, was founded in 2000 and with a small membership of 30, has an area of activity straddling the border between two jurisdictions with widely differing attitudes and laws relating to what constitutes Treasure Trove. The discoveries made by just this one club between November 2002 and October 2003 serve only to highlight the advantages to be derived from working in partnership with clubs over a wider geographical area. This is an opportunity now being addressed through the appointment of P. Walton as Finds Liaison Officer for the north-east of England, with a remit to record new discoveries of portable

archaeological material. Accordingly, the present note is intended as only the first in what is hoped will become an annual record of recent discoveries from the north-east.

Entries take the following form:

Period.

Entry Number: Object number/Year

Object: Class of Object. (e.g. Roman Coin; Axehead; etc.); [fig] if illustrated.

Descriptive

Place of Discovery: (accompanied either by a general area grid reference derived from a more detailed findspot information held by the FLO, or more detailed NGR by agreement with the finder)

Finder & Club affiliation (if any).

Location: This will indicate if the object is in a museum and, if so, identify the museum and Accession/Treasure Trove (*TT*) number. Otherwise it will record the item as in private possession but indicate a location for the record archive.

Abbreviations:

[BR]	<i>The Border Reivers Search Society, Berwick.</i>
Bw	Berwickshire
MAN	Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle
Nd	Northumberland
NMS	National Museums of Scotland
TT	Treasure Trove number

INVENTORY

Prehistoric

1/03 Copper Alloy Figurine. [fig. 1] Figurine (length 55 mm, max. width 24 mm, thickness 6 mm). The figure has lost the lower legs and only the stumps of the arms remain. It has a large bulbous head with facial features now only indicated by depressions representing the eyes. Below a thick neck a slightly elongated torso exhibits male genitalia and a prominent raised boss approximately at midriff level. The stumps of

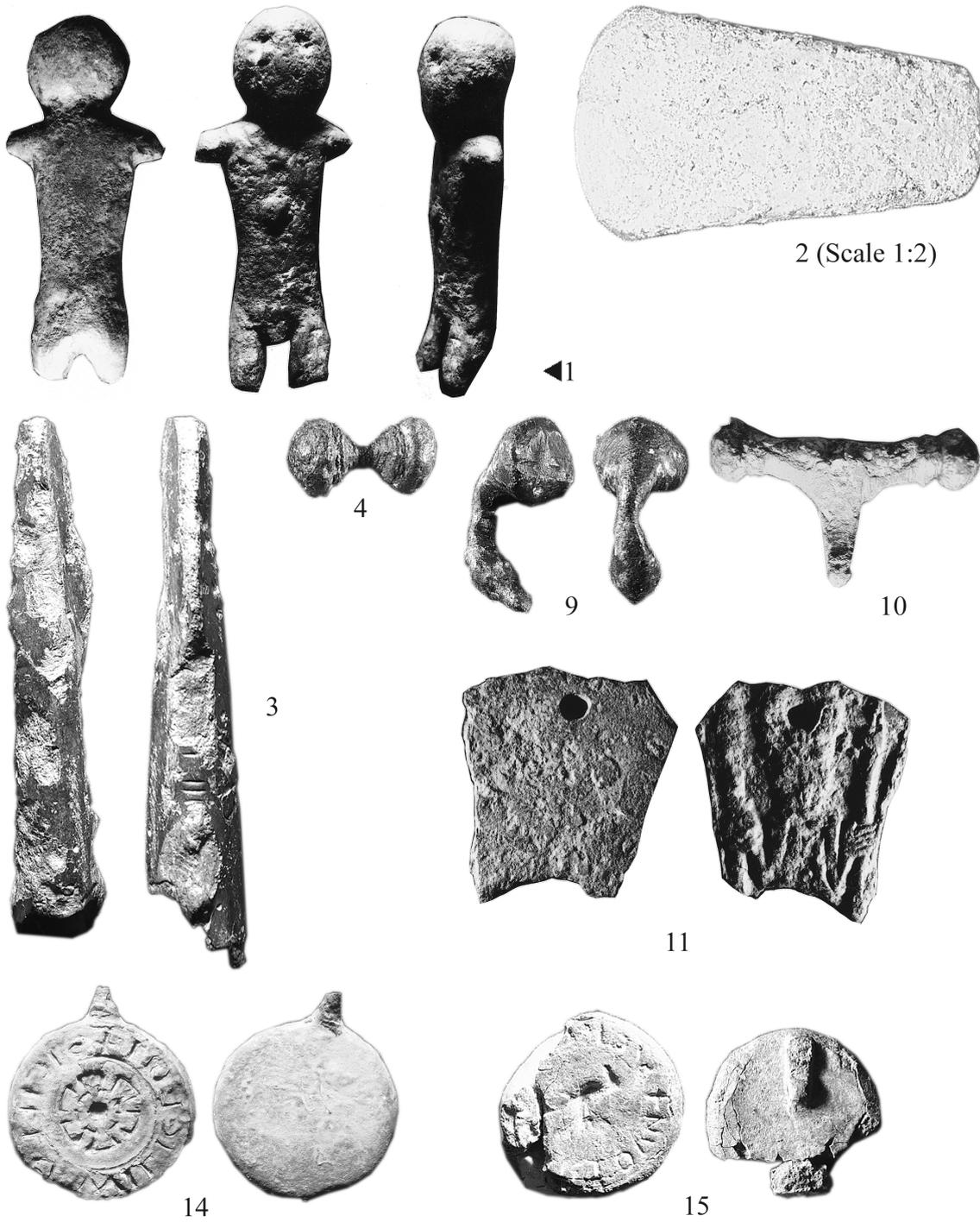


Fig. 1 Tweed Valley finds, nos. 1–15. The item numbers correspond to accession numbers in the Inventory (e.g. '15' means '15/03'). Scale approximately 1:1 (item 2 is at 1:2; item 9 is of uncertain scale).

- the arms indicate that they were, initially at least, widespread; the legs are slightly flexed. Somewhat belying its findspot, the image does not have the *gravitas* of a crucifixion portrayal. Uncertain date but possibly Iron Age. *Found* at Holy Island/Lindisfarne (Nd; NU 12 42) by R. Marshall [BR]. *In the possession of the finder. Record:* MAN.
- 2/03 Bronze Age Axehead. [fig. 1]** Copper alloy flat axehead (length 122 mm, width of the blade 71 mm, width of the butt 40 mm, max. thickness 11 mm). Flat copper alloy axe-head with light green patination and slight pitting which is more marked on one face. Slightly expanded, asymmetrical blade with a gently arched butt. It is of Migdale type, (P. K. Schmidt and C. B. Burgess, *The Axes of Scotland and Northern England* 1980) currently assigned to a date range of c. 2300–1650 BC. *Found* at West Loanend (Nd; NT 93 51) by C. Richardson [BR]. *In the possession of the finder. Record:* MAN.
- 3/03 Bronze Age Side-Looped Spearhead. [fig. 1]** Copper alloy side-looped spearhead (max. surviving length 83 mm, max. surviving diam. of socket 14 mm). Badly corroded and missing its loops though their former position is plain. Of Middle Bronze Age date, c. 1500 – 1000 BC. *Found* at Netherbyres, nr. Anmouth (Bw; NT 94 63) by M. Young [BR]. *In NMS. Still to be processed through Treasure Trove.*
- 4/03 Iron Age Toggle Fastener. [fig. 1]** Barbell shaped stud in copper alloy (length 20 mm, diam. of terminals 10 mm, length of linking shank 5 mm). *Found* at Edrington (Bw; NT 94 53) by P. Nunez [BR]. *In NMS, TT 29/03.*
- Roman**
- 5/03 Roman Coin.** Very worn sestertius(?). *Obv.* Head facing right; *Rev.* illegible. *Found* at Springhill, Scremerston, (Nd; NU 00 51) by R. Miller [BR]. *In MAN, Accn. No.* 2003/4.
- 6/03 Roman Coin.** Constantinopolis AE4 *Rev.* Victory on prow. AD 330–335. *Found* at Howell Farm, Norham (Nd; centred NT 89 46) by R. Miller [BR]. *In MAN, Accn. No.* 2003/9.
- 7/03 Roman Coin.** Constantius AE4. *Rev.* VICTORIAE DD AVG G QNN. Copy, claiming to be from Trier mint. AD 343–348. *Found* at Howell Farm, Norham (Nd; centred NT 89 46) by R. Miller [BR]. *In MAN, Accn. No.* 2003/9.
- 8/03 Roman Coin.** Crude copy of Constantinopolis AE4 *Rev.* Emperor shown facing l. rather than r. *Found* at Howell Farm, Norham (Nd; centred NT 89 46) by R. Miller [BR]. *In MAN, Accn. No.* 2003/9.
- 9/03 Trumpet Brooch Fragment. [fig. 1]** Small copper alloy brooch with ‘trumpet’ form head. The lower half of the brooch is missing, as are the catchplate and pin. *Found* at Foulden (Bw; NT 93 58) by P. Nunez [BR]. *In NMS, TT 25/03.*
- 10/03 Brooch. [fig. 1]** Fragment of a headstud brooch of crossbow form, now missing its pin, part of the bow and the footplate (width across the arms, 37 mm). *Found* at Uppsettlington, Ladykirk Estate (Bw; NT 88 46) by A. P. Mossop [BR]. *In NMS, TT 89/02.*
- Early Medieval**
- 11/03 Anglo Saxon Copper Alloy Plate. [fig. 1]** Copper alloy plate fragment (max. surviving length 38 mm, max. width 33 mm, max. thickness 2 mm). The plate is pierced with a single rivet hole at the head and narrows towards the now absent foot. It portrays a warrior in relief, holding a spear in each hand and wearing a tall headdress

of incurving pelleted horns tipped with opposed birds heads. The part of the plate presumably portraying the lower half of the body is missing. This rare representation is known from Sweden, and a few contexts in England, the latter including the helmet from Sutton Hoo and a buckle plate from Faversham, all in an early seventh-century context.

Found at Ayton (Bw; NT 92 61) by M. Young [BR]. In NMS, TT 23/03.

- 12/03 Brooch Terminal.** Copper alloy brooch terminal. Small expanded 'heart-shaped' terminal with interlace decoration in relief (width 16 mm).

Found at Fogo nr. Greenlaw (Bw; NT 77 49) by C. Allacker [BR]. In NMS, TT 27/03.

- 13/03 Faceted Pin Head.** Copper alloy faceted pin head (length, incomplete, 1 mm, width of head 11 mm). Only the head and part of the shank remains.

Found at Eyemouth (Bw; NG 93 64) by M. Young [BR]. In NMS, TT 28/03.

Later Medieval

- 14/03 Seal Matrix. [fig. 1]** Copper alloy seal matrix (diameter 28 mm, thickness 5 mm), circular with projecting circular loop for cord attachment (now broken and only stump remaining). Cast from a clay mould and with a plain convex reverse. The face contains a flower with six truncated petals (a rose?) around a central sunken hollow. Between an incised circle and the rim of the matrix is the legend: + SIGILLI V WILIGLOD. Probably later sixteenth century.²

Found a little to the east of Norham Castle (Nd; NT 90 47) by R. Hek [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.

- 15/03 Seal Matrix. [fig. 1]** Fragmentary copper alloy seal matrix, broken and with

the lower third missing (diameter 25 mm, thickness 4 mm). The central element is a bird in sunken relief.

Found at Foulden (Bw; NT 93 56) by R. Carson [BR]. In NMS, TT 34/03.

- 16/03 David I Silver Penny. [fig. 2]** c. AD 1150. St. Andrew's mint.

Found at Preston (Bw; NT 79 57) by M. Young [BR]. In NMS, TT 37/03

- 17/03 Medieval Penny.** Fragmentary medieval silver penny of Edward III (4th coinage. AD 1351–77).

Found at Bowell Farm (Nd; NT 89 46) by R. Hek [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.³

- 18/03 Lead Spindle Whorl.** Plain flat disc (ave. diam 36 mm, thickness 6.5 mm, hole diam. 9 mm Weight 45 gms)

Found at Bowell Farm (Nd; NT 89 46) by R. Hek [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.

- 19/03 Lead Spindle Whorl.** Flat base and convex decorated upper face (Av. dmn 32 mm, max. thickness 8 mm, hole dmn. 10 mm. Weight 53gms). The decoration is very worn but appears to have consisted of radiating raised ribs forming panels containing raised dots.

Found at Bowell Farm (Nd; NT 89 46) by R. Hek [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.

- 20/03 Medieval Penny.** Silver Penny of Edward I. Canterbury mint (Class 10cf 2b. AD 1276–1307).⁴

Found near Norham Castle (Nd; NT 90 47) by Ronnie Marshall [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.

- 21/03 Medieval Pommel. [fig. 2]** Copper alloy pommel from a small sword or dagger (max. height. 22 mm, max. width 45 mm, thickness 2 mm, width of hole for tang 3 mm, length of hole for tang 7 mm). Twelfth – fourteenth century?

Found near Ancroft (Nd; NT 95 45) by S. Robertson [BR]. In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.

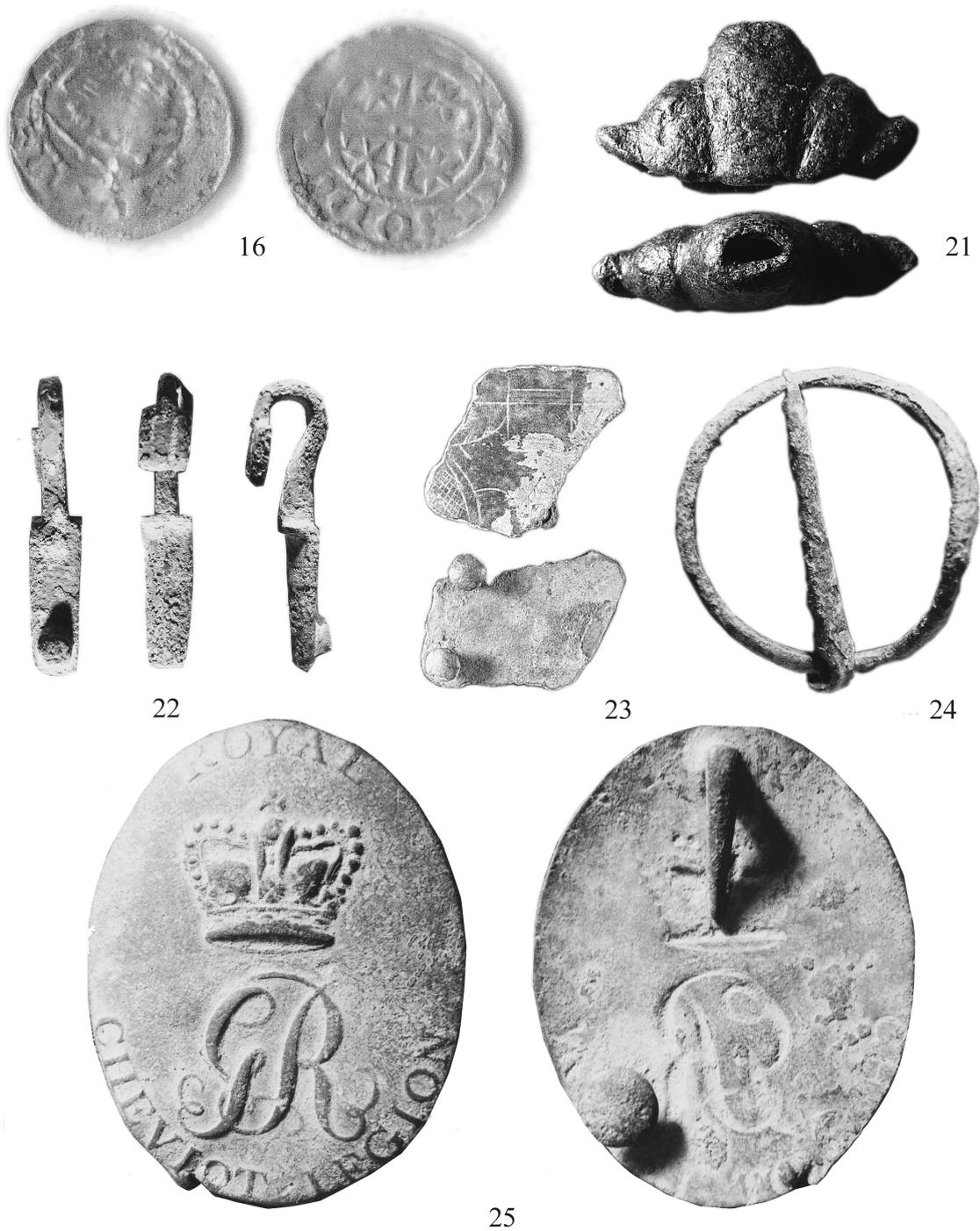


Fig.2 Tweed Valley finds, nos. 16–25. The item numbers correspond to accession numbers in the Inventory (e.g. '15' means '15/03'). Scale approximately 1:1.

- 22/03 Gilded Copper Alloy Purse-Hanger.** [fig. 2] Gilded purse-hanger, complete, with rear-projecting stud (length 40 mm).

Found at Uppsettlington, Ladykirk Estate (Bw; NT 88 46) by A. P. Mossop [BR]. *In NMS, TT 95/02.*

- 23/03 Decorated Book-Plate Fragment.** [fig. 2] Small copper alloy fragment with incised decoration (max. surviving length 30 mm).

Found at Ayton (Bw; NT 93 61) by J. Rutherford [BR]. *In NMS, TT49/03.*

- 24/03 Gilt Bronze Buckle.** [fig. 2] Annular copper alloy buckle retaining traces of gilding (max. diam. 44 mm, diam. of ring 4 mm, length of pin 45 mm).

Found at Uppsettlington, Ladykirk Estate (Bw; NT 88 46) by A. P. Mossop [BR]. *In NMS, 95/02.*

Post-Medieval

- 25/03 Eighteenth-Century Military Badge.** [fig. 2] Oval copper alloy badge (max. length 73 mm, max. width 57 mm, max. thickness 2 mm).

The obverse has a crown above [G(eorgius) R(ex)] and the inscription, [ROYAL CHEVIOT LEGION] around the margin. The reverse retains the pin and stud fastening by which it was formerly attached to the strap across the chest. The Cheviot Legion was raised in November 1798 and assumed the appellation 'Royal' in

1801. It fell into abeyance on the signing of the Peace of Amiens in March 1802, but was brought back into service on the resumption of hostilities in spring 1803. The Legion was abolished on 24th Sept. 1808. Surviving insignia of this local volunteer force consist of the lower portion of a similar badge (in private possession), and a single button found at Wooler and presented by Mr Orange, to Berwick upon Tweed Borough Museum in 2002.

Found near Kirknewton (Nd; centred NT 90 29) by Steven Robertson [BR]. *In the possession of the finder. Record: MAN.*

NOTES

¹ The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) general website is www.finds.org.uk. Finds recorded with the PAS can be seen at www.findsdatabase.org.uk. The email contact for regional finds is: p.j.walton@newcastle.ac.uk

² Ashington and Bedlington Metal Detecting Club (*Ashington*); Northern Archaeological Search Association (*Bedlington*); Border Reivers Search Society; Tyneside Metal Detector Association; Blaydon and District Search and Recovery Association; North East Search Society (*Gateshead*); Dunelme Metal Detector Group (*Durham*); Northumbria Search Society.

³ Thanks to A.E. Gilmour, Keeper of Coins & Medals, Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, for comments.

⁴ Thanks to N. Holmes, National Museums of Scotland, for comments.

⁵ Thanks to N. Holmes, National Museums of Scotland, for comments.