

Wimpole Project – Metal Detecting Survey

Coin Assessment

Thirty-three coins found by the team while metal detecting in the fields at Wimpole have been assessed by Paul Lugg and Rodney Scarle. They were further examined at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge on 22 February 2013 in order to confirm or correct the initial assessments and to add further detail. Adrian Popescu tackled the Roman coins and Martin Allen tackled the post-Roman coins.

The attached spreadsheet provides a listing and description of the coins. There is a photograph of one of the medieval pennies at the end of the report. The coins can be grouped into the following broad periods:-

- Late Iron Age (1 coin)
- Roman (11 coins)
- Late Saxon/Medieval (9 coins)
- Post-Medieval (10 coins)
- Modern, post-Victorian (2 coins)

Some key points about this interesting assemblage are:-

- The coins span two millennia
- The Iron Age coin is a bronze issue of Cunobelinus, King of the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni, who held sway over this region before the Roman conquest of AD 43
- The Roman coins, all in poor condition, span the 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries and include the issues of two empresses. There is one particularly late coin of the House of Theodosius that may just have crept into the 5th century
- The coin of Aethelred II (“The Unready”) is a local issue of the Cambridge (GRANTE) mint
- Of the hammered silver issues of the medieval period, there is one notably rare coin (item 271). This is a penny (or sterling) of John Balliol, King of Scotland (1292-1296), whose nickname was “Toom Tabard”, Scottish dialect for “empty suit”. This nickname partly reflects his forced abdication in 1296
- And finally ... the 50p piece (item 084) minted in 2000 has deteriorated remarkably, reflecting the poor quality of present day coinage and the corrosive nature of agrochemicals sprayed onto fields



A silver penny of King Stephen (1135-1154) – item 364

Part of the king's name is highlighted in front of the right-facing bust

Part of the moneyer's name (DEREMAN) and the mint name (LVNDENE) are highlighted on the reverse, around the cross moline

Photograph by Paul Lugg