



Ipswich & District Detector Club

(Affiliated to the National Council for Metal Detecting)

Monthly Newsletter by e-mail

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Club Web site www.ipswichdetector.net

Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at the Whitehouse Community Centre, Limerick Close, Ipswich starting at 7.30pm.

Next meeting is on Tuesday 27th May 2008.

April meeting

We had a very interesting talk given to us by John Sadler on auctions and coins, especially the Ipswich minted ones. John knows his subject so well that it comes across to all who listens. Vey interesting – well done John.

May meeting

For the May meeting we will have David our chairman talking about Anglo Saxon finds from Coddendam. I am looking forward to that. David always gives an informative and entertaining talk. Don't miss it!

Find of the month

Lots to look at on the table last month and we had a new photographer taking pictures for us. Chris Behn said he would take on the job which he did and he has sent them to me so that I can reproduce some of them in this newsletter.

1. Charles I halfcrown. Tower mint.
2. Charles II Crown 1677.
3. Denarius of Hadrian.

4. Saxon penny Canute.
5. Roman Fibula Brooch 1st century.
6. Small crotal bell. 16th – 17th century.
7. Henry VIII Groat. 1526 – 44.
8. 1943 Ammunition from American Flying Fortress Bomber.
9. Seal Matrix.
10. Cunobelin Silver Stater. Colchester mint. Horse & rider type.
11. Mary I groat.
12. Roman dog's head pouring spout.
13. Gold quarter stater.
14. Bronze rapier blade.
15. Gold quarter stater Insular BelegC/Kentish Tribe?
16. Stair rod holder.
17. Elizabeth I three pence.

The winners were judged to be; Best Coin was number 13 the Gold Stater found by Jenny Wilding. And the best artefact was number 12 the Roman dog's head pouring spout, found by Mark Wilding. Mother and Son. Talk about "Keep it in the family!"



The Queen of Hearts

Dave from Gressgrava and Pete the Dane chanced their arm in the shadow of Iklingham Castle. Silver groats and pennies were in great abundance. All that was needed was to rake over the cultivated land and the coins would gleam in the sunshine just waiting to be picked up. However, on this particular day, the sheriff's men were hidden in the blithe oak trees and it wasn't long before the two friends were caught.

"Fancy us getting caught here, of all places" said Dave, with a look of resignation on his face.

“Don’t worry, you’ll be in good company,” sneered the Sheriff of Iklingham, before turning to his men and commanding, “Throw these two miserable serfs into the dungeon with the others.”

“Serfs?” echoed Dave, with a tone of utter disbelief.

“Silence,” thundered Gibson. “Do you serfs know who you’re talking to? This is the High Sheriff of Iklingham. Address him as ‘My Lord’ or I’ll have your tongues cut out. Wait until the circuit judge comes around next quarter, and then we’ll see your miserable bodies dangle from the gallows”.

The cell was damp and smelly.

“I’m Dave of Gressgrava and this is my partner Pete the Dane”, said Dave to his new found room mates.

“I’m Little John and this is Mickey the miller’s son from Hadleigh”, came the reply.

“What’s the hospitality like?” asked Pete.

“Stale bread and water once a day,” said Little John. “The ablutions consist of a hole in the ground, with a bucket of water and a wooden stick with a piece of rag on it.....which we all have to share.”

“No expense spared then,” said Dave.

“We’ve still got our purses full of silver groats and pennies,” said Dave.

“So have we,” said Mickey. “It seems the sheriff needs us to keep the coins on our persons, as evidence”.

“That’s very strange,” said Dave. “It seems odd to me that the sheriff has all this silver on his land and is not allowed to dig it up himself because it’s classed as a treasonable act. Yet, we can come along and help ourselves. But, such is the law, I suppose.”

“Anyway, anyone for a game of cards?” asked Little John.

“What game do you play” enquired Dave.

“The black bitch” said Little John,”

“That’ll do very nicely,” agreed the others, and put a groat each into the kitty.

“This looks an interesting pack of cards,” said Pete.

“They are”, said Mickey, “I made them from very thin slices of stale bread and used the blood of a dead rat to mark out the hearts and diamonds”.

“What did you use to mark out the clubs and spades, then?” asked Pete.

“Don’t ask” said Mickey.

“I must say that they smell a bit whiffy,” said Pete.”

“Well, I did tell you not to ask,” said Mickey with a nod and a wink.

The cards were dealt, and Little John, not amused at his lot, said “If I didn’t know different I’d have said the Sheriff had had a hand in the deal”. The first purse eventually went to Pete the Dane.

“Lets up the wager”, said Little John. “How about two groats, each?”.

“Two groats it is then” said Dave, and the game continued.....for a while.

“Now look what you’ve done, Dave. You’ve broken off the corner of the queen of hearts, and it took two weeks to make that card,” complained Mickey sadly.

“That’s it” said Dave, with a cunning glint in his eye “You’re a genius Mickey. “You’ve just found the way out of ‘ere”. Then, with a sly look at the others, he shouted....”Guard!”

“Now what?” asked the Sergeant at Arms, annoyed at being dragged away from his game of Hunt The Cockroach.

Dave whispered to him, in a very confidential tone, “I ‘ave ‘ere a wondrous love potion that I bought and saved to use on Loose Lillian and Sweaty Betty. Once the potion has been taken by any man, he becomes irresistible to all women. They’ll do anything to please him. It’s no good to me now, in this place, so I’ll sell it to you for a few more pennies for the card game.”

“You’ll have to hand it over to me first,” said the Sergeant. The potion first....and then the cash. I’m a bit smarter than you, see.”

It does seem that way,” said Dave, with a strange grin on his face.

The guard thought for a minute, then said, “You did say Sweaty Betty; didn’t you? Isn’t she that blond buxom wench who sometimes comes in the castle?”

“She’ll come anywhere you like, once you’ve taken that potion,” said Dave. “I warn you, get caught up in her thornbush and you’ll never get out.”

With that the guard’s imagination started to work in overdrive and he wasted no time in downing the potion. Within five short seconds he had collapsed in a heap in front of the cell gates.

“That’ll keep him asleep for a few hours, said Dave to the others. It was a sleeping draft I’d collected from the apothecary for my old Uncle Jake. He’s had chronic insomnia for the past month, poor old sod.” Then, he turned to his partner in crime....

“Right Pete, can you reach through the bars and win the keys?”

Nimble as Pete was, he only just managed to get them. But he did succeed, and in a trice they were all out of the cell. Little John, being the largest, donned the Sergeant at Arms’ body armour and helmet.

“There are no more guards until we reach the portcullis” said Dave.

“Then leave this to me” said Little John, and he marched up to the castle guard leaving his companions hiding in the dark shadow of the wall. “I’m taking command now” he said.

“You tell the sheriff the prisoners are escaping, and be quick about it otherwise it’ll be you in permanent charge of ablutions”.

“Yes Sir,” said the guard and he marched off at the double to the great hall where the sheriff and his guests were feasting.

While this was happening, the portcullis was raised and the four felons made their escape leaving a sword pushed through the great chain, just as a small offering for the Sheriffs hospitality.

“You say the prisoners are escaping, said the Sheriff, in a fury. “And who is in charge of the gate?”

“Well my Lord, the Sergeant at Arms in charge of your guests,” said the guard.

“You blithering idiot” blurted out the Sheriff. “Did you not think the so-called Sergeant at Arms might be one of the escaping prisoners?” “Call out the garrison, I want them apprehended immediately. Gibson, take as many horseman as you need and round those miserable felons up”.

Gibson blanched then whispered “Very well my lord, but it seems the portcullis has been tampered with and it can’t be raised.”

“1000,Curses said the Sheriff, and a 1000 marks for the capture of Dave of Gressgrava, Pete the Dane, Little John, and Mickey the miller’s son from Hadleigh. They’re a real tricky bunch!”

Best wishes,
Dave Cummings.

Treasure trove found in 500-year-old shipwreck off Africa

The ship was laden with tons of copper ingots, elephant tusks, gold coins — and cannons to fend off pirates.

But it had nothing to protect it from the fierce weather off a particularly bleak stretch of inhospitable African coast, and it sank 500 years ago.

Now it has been found, stumbled upon by De Beers geologists prospecting for diamonds off Namibia.

“If you're mining on the coast, sooner or later you'll find a wreck,” archaeologist Dieter Noli said in an interview Thursday.

Namdeb Diamond Corp., a joint venture of the government of Namibia and De Beers, first reported the April 1 find in a statement Wednesday, and planned a news conference in the Namibian capital next week.

The company had cleared and drained a stretch of seabed, building an earthen wall to keep the water out so geologists could work. Noli said one of the geologists saw a few ingots, but had no idea what they were. Then the team found what looked like cannon barrels.

The geologists stopped the brutal earth-moving work of searching for diamonds and sent photos to Noli, who had done research in the Namibian desert since the mid-1980s and has advised De Beers since 1996 on the archaeological impact of its operations in Namibia.

The find “was what I'd been waiting for, for 20 years,” Noli said. “Understandably, I was pretty excited. I still am.”

Noli's original specialty was the desert, but because of Namdeb's offshore explorations, he had been preparing for the possibility of a wreck, even learning to dive.

After the discovery, he brought in Bruno Werz, an expert in the field, to help research the wreck. Noli has studied maritime artifacts with Werz, who was one of his instructors at the University of Cape Town.

Judging from the notables depicted on the hoard of Spanish and Portuguese coins, and the type of cannons and navigational equipment, the ship went down in the late 1400s or early 1500s, around the time Vasco de Gama and Columbus were plying the waters of the New World.

“Based on the goods they were carrying, it's almost certain that it dates from that time,” said John Broadwater, chief archaeologist at the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“This find is very exciting because very few vessels from that period have been discovered,” he said, adding that many early ships were thought to have wrecked in that area.

It was, Noli said, “a period when Africa was just being opened up, when the whole world was being opened up.”

He compared the remnants — ingots, ivory, coins, coffin-sized timber fragments — to evidence at a crime scene.

“The surf would have pounded that wreck to smithereens,” he said. “It's not like 'Pirates of the Caribbean,' with a ship more or less intact.”

He and Werz are trying to fit the pieces into a story. They divide their time between inventorying the find in Namibia and doing research in museums and libraries in Cape Town, South Africa, from where Noli spoke by phone Thursday.

Eventually, they will go to Portugal or Spain to search for records of a vessel with similar cargo that went missing.

“You don't turn a skipper loose with a cargo of that value and have no record of it,” Noli said.

The wealth on board is intriguing. Noli said the large amount of copper could mean the ship had been sent by a government looking for material to build cannons. Trade in ivory was usually controlled by royal families, another indication the ship was on official business.

On the other hand, why did the captain have so many coins? Shouldn't they have been traded for the ivory and copper?

“Either he did a very, very good deal. Or he was a pirate,” Noli said. “I'm convinced we'll find out what the ship was and who the captain was.”

What brought the vessel down may remain a mystery. But Noli has theories, noting the stretch of coast was notorious for fierce storms and disorienting fogs.

In later years, sailors with sophisticated navigational tools avoided it. The only tools found on the wreck were astrolabes, which can be used to determine only how far north or south you have sailed.

“Sending a ship toward Africa in that period, that was venture capital in the extreme,” Noli said. “These chaps were very much on the edge as far as navigation. It was still very difficult for them to know where they were.”

Noli has found signs that worms were at work on the ship's timber, and sheets of lead used to patch holes, indications the ship was old when it went down.

Imagine a leaky, over laden ship caught in a storm. The copper ingots, shaped like sections of a sphere, would have sat snug, he said. But the tusks — some 50 have been found — could have shifted, tipping the ship.

“And down you go,” Noli said, “weighed down by your treasure.”

Bejeweled Anglo-Saxon Burial Suggests Cult

April 11, 2008 -- In seventh century England, a woman's jewellery-draped body was laid out on a specially constructed bed and buried in a grave that formed the center of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, according to British archaeologists who recently excavated the site in Yorkshire.

Her jewellery, which included a large shield-shaped pendant, the layout and location of the cemetery as well as excavated weaponry, such as knives and a fine langseax (a single-edged Anglo-Saxon sword), lead the scientists to believe she might have been a member of royalty who led a pagan [cult](#) at a time when Christianity was just starting to take root in the region.



“I believe it is a cult because of the arrangement of graves, the short period of the cemetery's use and the bed burial and burial mound that is almost in the centre of the very regular cemetery,” archaeologist Stephen Sherlock, who directed the project, told Discovery News.

“The whole focus of the cemetery is based upon the bed burial -- it is our view that this was erected first and the other graves were dug around it,” added Sherlock, who worked with the [Teesside Archaeological Society](#),

which recently published a report on the research.

A summary of the finds also appears in the latest issue of *British Archaeology*.

The cemetery, named Street House, consists of 109 graves, most of which were dug in a square around the bed burial.

“This square formation is unparalleled in Anglo-Saxon England,” Sherlock said.



Remains of a sunken-floored building, possibly used as a mortuary chapel where the body might have been laid to rest prior to her funeral, exist near the cemetery's entrance. A roundhouse and the burial mound also stand within the square.

The bed burial itself consists of a wooden bed held together, and decorated with, iron. Artefacts within the grave included two gemstone pendants, gold and glass beads, a jet pin or hairpiece, and the shield pendant that was unique for the time, according to Sherlock and colleague Mark Simmons.

Mounted by a central blue gemstone, the piece has scalloped-shaped carving with 11 separate lobes and a scalloped lower edge. Small red gems resting on gold foil, which would have reflected light when the piece was worn, surround the central stone.

Although the site's acidic soil eroded the woman's remains, the age of the cemetery and its location provide clues to her identity. Sherlock believes "likely suspects" include Ethelburga, the wife of King Edwin of Northumbria, who converted to Christianity and was made a saint. Other possibilities are Eanflaed, the wife of King Oswiu, or Oswiu's daughter, Aelflaed.

Treasure ship found in diamond mine

ORANJEMUND, Namibia, May 4 (UPI) -- The DeBeers company found a different treasure in a diamond mining operation along the coast of Namibia -- the remains of a ship laden with gold coins.

Dieter Noli, the archaeologist who has been examining the wreck, told The Times of South Africa the site is the richest gold find on the continent since a major ancient Egyptian discovery in the Valley of the Kings.

"I told them sooner or later you'll find a wreck; and I've been waiting patiently for the last 20 years ... but now: jackpot," he said.

The 500-year-old ship was carrying at least 2,500 gold coins from Spain and 50 elephant tusks. The vessel was heavily armed, but some of the weapons were out of date.

Noli thinks the cargo suggests a European pirate or rogue captain may have been trying to sell arms to African rulers.

The ship's timbers have long since decayed, but a few human bones have turned up.

A DeBeers geologist spotted copper ingots on April 1, suggesting that the mine 600 feet off a beach, contained more than diamonds.

Ancient Nazi-looted religious cross returned

A priceless medieval religious cross stolen by the Nazis in Poland during World War Two was returned on Tuesday to the heirs of the rightful owners after it was found in a rubbish skip.

The enamelled cross, 47.5 centimetres (18.7 inches) high and 29 centimetres (11.42 inches) wide, originally from Limoges in France, was discovered in a container full of junk from a house clearance in the Austrian ski resort of Zell am See.

Limoges is famed for its medieval enamels as well as for its 19th century porcelain.

Acquired in 1865, the cross featured among the thousands of works of art in the collection built up by Countess Isabella Dzialynska who displayed it in her castle at Goluchow for many decades.

The collection also included printings as well as Egyptian, Etruscan, Phoenician, Greek and Roman antiquities and medieval and Renaissance enamels, jewellery and silver.

“I am delighted by the recovery of a precious piece from this once magnificent collection, which we hope to re-constitute in its own building in Poland one day”, Count Adam Zamoyski, one of the heirs, who lives in London, said in a statement.

The statement was issued by the London-based Commission for Looted Art which specialises in returning art works stolen by the Nazis to their rightful owners.

With the war imminent, some of the gems in the Dzialynska collection were buried on the castle grounds where they were found by the Nazis in 1941.

Three years later with the tide of war turning, the looted items were moved on the orders of Adolf Hitler to Castle Fischhorn in Zell am See from where they were again looted in the chaos around the end of the conflict.

Efforts by heirs of the owners to find them after the war met with no success.

After verification and lengthy negotiations with the finder involving the Commission for Looted Art in Europe, the cross was returned on Tuesday to Count Zamoyski at a ceremony at the Mining Museum in Leogang near Salzburg.

“We very much hope that the people of Zell am See and the surrounding area will be moved to consider whether they have not come across pieces of antique jewellery, glass, enamel, and similar items that might be from this collection,” he said.

“Any action that led to the recovery of further pieces would not go unrewarded,” he added.

Julius Caesar bust found in Rhone River

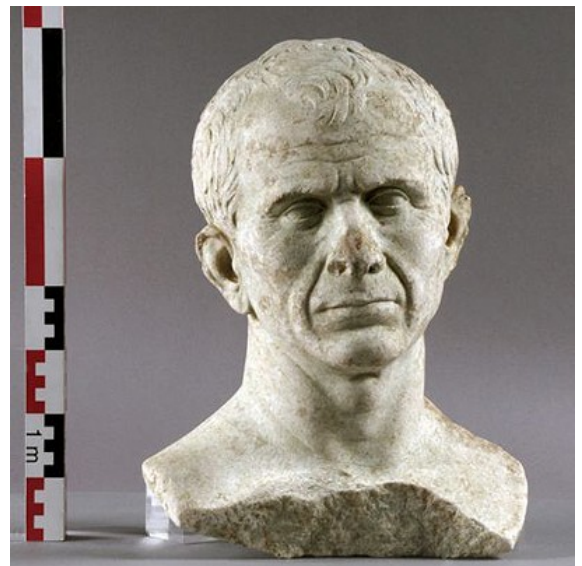
French archaeologists have discovered a marble bust of Julius Caesar, believed to be the oldest found, at the bottom of the Rhone in Arles - a town founded by the Roman emperor.

They believe the life-sized representation, showing a balding man in his fifties, dates from about 46BC, two years before his assassination.

A spokesman for the French culture ministry said it was "the oldest representation yet known of Caesar" and "typical of a series of realistic portraits from the period of the (Roman) republic".

Luc Long, who directed excavations at the underwater site, said: "I suspect the bust was thrown in the river after he was assassinated because it would not have been good at that time to be considered a follower of his."

In all, 100 objects were excavated from the river bottom in southern France, including a life-sized statue of the god Neptune and a bronze satyr.



They will be displayed in Arles's museum in September next year.

Coin dealers examining gold find off La. Coast

A steamship that sank off the Louisiana coast during an 1846 storm has produced a trove of rare gold coins, including some produced at two largely forgotten U.S. Mints in the South, coin experts say.

Last year, four Louisiana residents salvaged hundreds of gold coins and thousands of silver coins from the wreckage of the SS New York in about 60 feet of water in the Gulf of Mexico, said David Bowers, co-chairman of New York-based Stack's Rare Coins.

"Some of these are in uncirculated or mint condition," Bowers said, predicting the best could bring \$50,000 to \$100,000 apiece at auction.

Of particular interest to coin experts are gold pieces known as quarter eagles and half eagles, which carried face values of \$2.50 and \$5 in the days before the United States printed paper currency.

Those coins were struck at Mints in New Orleans; Charlotte, N.C.; and Dahlonega, Ga. The Charlotte and Dahlonega Mints operated from 1838, when the first significant U.S. gold deposits were found in those areas, until the start of the Civil War in 1861, said Douglas Mudd, curator of the American Numismatic Association's Money Museum in Denver. Neither reopened.

The Dahlonega Mint produced 1.38 million gold coins, while 1.2 million were minted in Charlotte. Tens of millions of gold coins were minted in the United States before the federal government confiscated those held by individuals, banks and the U.S. Treasury in 1933 and melted them into gold bars as the country abandoned the gold standard.

"Relatively speaking, they are rare," he said of the Charlotte- and Dahlonega-minted coins.

"The Mints were set up to take advantage of the resources there."

The treasure also includes \$10 gold pieces, known as eagles, that were minted in Philadelphia and New Orleans, Mudd said.

The New York was a 165-foot sidewheel steamer built in its namesake city in 1837. By 1846, it was making regular commercial runs between Galveston, Texas, and New Orleans. Seventeen of the 53 people aboard were killed when the ship sank in the Gulf; the others were rescued.

Four hobbyists who enjoyed looking for sunken vessels discovered what was left of the SS New York around 1990. After making several trips and bringing up a handful of coins at a time from mud that nearly covered the ship, they invested in a full-scale salvage operation in 2007.

"What we've found is varied, a little of everything," said Craig DeRouen, who is on a leave from his job as a mechanical engineer in the oil industry. "There are different denominations from different years, silver and gold."

DeRouen, along with fellow New Iberia residents Avery Munson and Gary and Renee Hebert, have ownership of the coins after obtaining title to the wreck from a federal court.

Mudd said that although the coins are worth much more today because of current gold prices around \$900 an ounce, that's only part of their value.

"The collector value may be three, five, eight thousand dollars more, depending upon their condition," he said. "It depends upon the individual piece and its individual rarity."

John Albanese, a rare coin dealer in Far Hills, N.J., since 1978, appraised about 200 of the gold coins. "This is the most impressive Southern-minted gold I've seen in my lifetime," he said.

Mudd said \$100,000 might be possible for an exceptional coin, and that \$8,000 to \$16,000 wouldn't be unusual for a coin in high-grade condition.

"Historically, they are interesting. These are the first coins produced by gold from the United States," he said. "The California gold rush didn't occur until about 1850."

Gold resists saltwater corrosion, and mud that had collected on the coins was removed with a chemical compound that does not affect the metal, Bowers said. The silver coins are etched by the seawater, giving them a "shipwreck effect" that is popular with collectors, he said.

This month's cover picture

This month's picture is of a rather worn Henry VIII testoon that was entered into the Find of the month competition but unfortunately failed to win.

