

Pic.5. Iron age boar's head and trefoil.

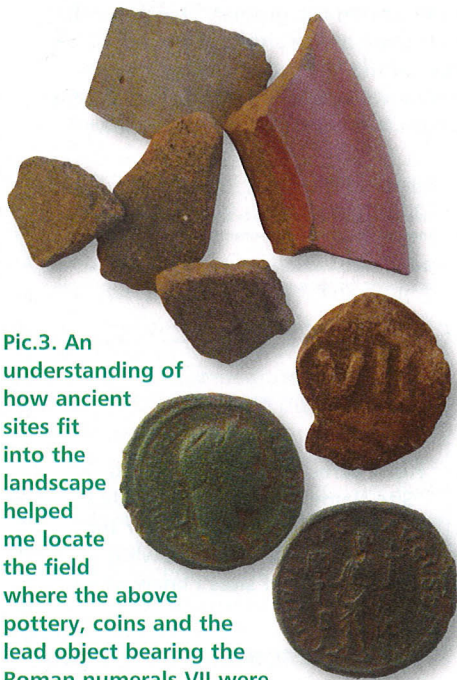


Pic.6. Roman clasp.

Pic.7. Saxon brooch.



Pics.5-7 were found by ARCHI subscribers.



Pic.3. An understanding of how ancient sites fit into the landscape helped me locate the field where the above pottery, coins and the lead object bearing the Roman numerals VII were found. The field was at the top of a hill with good views over the surrounding countryside overlooking a Roman road. I like to think that maybe the 7th Roman Legion was stationed there!



Pic.4. Finds from a field called Blacklands. Nearly all fields have names and sometimes the names can indicate historical activity. The field name element "black" has a strong association with Roman activity and these two lovely pieces came up from a field called Blacklands. I will be talking about fieldnames and how they can help you locate new sites in a forthcoming article.

increase the chances of finding those metallic historical records our ancestors gave to the ground many generations before I came to tread in their footsteps.

By this point my ARCHI database had more than 100,000 sites listed. However, it had become apparent to me that I would never find the time to walk over a fraction of the numerous sites listed. This is when I decided that the least I could do was to give my many years' work the light of day by making my research available via my ARCHI database on my Digital Documents (www.digital-documents.co.uk) website.

It was now left to others to make the discoveries I could not possibly make on my own. I had my critics, though. Some in the archaeological establishment suggested that I had opened up our heritage to hoards of marauders. I stuck to my view that these artefacts have a right to be found and that although there will be losses, these will be insignificant compared to the benefits. Since then, many beautiful objects have been found and reported with the help of ARCHI. However, for many others and myself, the real beauty is not in the material properties of the artefact, but how the artefact can remind us of our place in time.

I don't know whether the object I talked about at the start of this article is still lying in the ground waiting to be discovered. I hope not. Maybe you the reader has found it this very day. If it is official "Treasure", remember that before you declare your find and it enters a showcase in the British Museum, put it in a place of pride in your home and cherish it. For the short time that you are its guardian, show it to your family and friends so that they may also experience the magic you felt when lifted it from the darkness and brought back into existence. It has a story to tell and it has been waiting for you to give it a voice. Allow it to speak. Give it the chance to tell us of all it has witnessed while waiting mute all those years until the swing of your detector gave it a voice for you to hear and release it from the ground. TH

the early word "ceap" which means market, and is often associated with Saxon market towns. Ever wondered why you get cheap stuff at the market?

I don't know whether it was wishful thinking or sound reasoning, but I searched my database for all places called "Chipping" and set about getting permission for some fields around a village I knew that had Chipping in its name.

It took me two years, but my research was finally rewarded when I opened up that clump of earth from a field nearby one of those towns and saw a beautiful gold thrymsa – a coin dating back to about AD 620-640. These were the beginnings of the Dark Ages, the historically dark time which followed the

exodus of the Romans and preceded the time when particular tribal regions of this island were grouped together to form what we now know as the British Isles.

Finding this golden time capsule confirmed my view that it was more than wise to spend some of my limited amount of time seeking out the records of what had been found previously – and where it was found.

Now when I went out I would be searching in areas that were much likely to be fruitful. It was clear to me now that if our ancient ancestors chose a certain spot to live, work, grow their crops, keep their animals and form settlements and markets, then these would be the features in the land I should be searching for. This approach would infinitely