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The Cleveland History Hunters detect a bit of Saxon...

By Stuart Clements

Photos courtesy of Karl Devereux

Our small private metal detecting club – The Cleveland Hunters – met in the lay-by for our regular fortnightly expedition of discovery. We had the usual catch up chat and Steve collected our modest fees. Then we were on our way to an area that has always succeeded in bringing us happiness in varying degrees – hammered, Roman grots and brooches being the usual benchmark.

We proceeded in convoy for the final half hour of our journey and parked within the expected field. We learned that Steve had an area only searched once previously for us to explore. It was approximately a 20-minute walk, as safe parking wasn't possible. There were a few grumbles from the more senior members but we dutifully prepared our gear and off we marched down the lane ...

I was walking with old Nick ahead of Steve who was talking to lucky Baz and I remember overhearing them considering the options of

where someone might bury treasure. The low lying wooded area that we were fast approaching would afford an ideal spot as a place of concealment perhaps pacing out a certain distance from the trees – if only we knew just how right he really was!

We walked through the access field to our permission, unloaded our bags and were off to an area consisting of two good-sized old pasture fields bordered by a river, a beck and woodland. The sun was shining and the conditions were perfect. In the first hour not much was found with

only tiny bits of lead, the usual shotgun caps, pre-decimal coins and other dross.

I'd been discussing discrimination settings with my mate Karl who also has an XP Deus. He'd been running it a bit high so he decided to lower it right down (I run mine between 0 and 3.5). The decision paid dividends when he decided to dig an iffy target ID of 32 as out popped a lovely little bronze styca and along with it a whole new mood of determination to search really hard.

Less than 15 minutes later and with Karl's low numbered 'iffy signal' firmly set in the forefront of my mind I received a faint but very sweet mid tone with absolutely no screen ID at all. Now I pride myself in being a strict detectorist but I must admit I would normally have moved on, but this time there was something alluring about the Deus' tone that just MADE me dig it ...

From the type of signal produced I knew it was a smallish shallow target,



Styca



© PAS

hopefully another styca. I very carefully pinpointed the target using the 'backing away until signal disappears method' and gently dug a small hole and the signal disappeared!

It still signalled from the top of the plug but not the bottom so it was obviously just over halfway inside. I carefully started to crumble apart the plug and then my Deus showed a 53 reading that I knew was a good target. What appeared just looked like a small squashed bottle cap shining out at me – but it REALLY shone and then I noticed its twisted rope edge and in my heart I just knew that this was Saxon gold!

I calmly ushered Karl over and we gingerly washed the find off in the little beck and sure enough it was a VERY thin section of Saxon gold with a tiny delicate stunning rope design adorning its outer edge. My calmness was now replaced with some serious air punching and joyous words!

All the lads were informed and eager members soon surrounded the area – my Garrett Pro-Pointer was still beeping where I had left it marking the spot. I regained my

composure and proceeded to search the immediate area and instantly got a beautiful unmistakable fully repeatable 53 signal from my Deus and I just blurted out, "There's more!"

Sure enough, at just over 7" and in the back edge of the hole I pulled out what looked like a coin ball but was the central part of a stunning gold Saxon mount or brooch-like looking object complete with garnets. I was now feeling overwhelmed and the lads couldn't believe what was happening. I re-mustered my composure after running for my mobile phone and taking the obligatory clod shot.

I tried again and my trusty 'Elsie' (Deus) reported another 53 signal, which was more bejewelled gold. I now had four pieces of Saxon gold and a serious sweat on! The next two hours were spent carefully excavating the find spot with Dave painstakingly sifting the spoil looking for any missing parts but none came to light.

Karl carefully stowed the pieces in his special finds plastic container and we all reflected on what had just happened – Steve's earlier prediction being eerie to say

the least. I was now in serious need of a cuppa and a sit down after which normal detecting resumed. We continued for another three hours in which I pulled a cut quarter and a Saxon strap end, the second our group had found that day.

I would like to share my XP Deus settings and technique as I believe that this machine was so optimally set up that day that nobody else had as good a chance of finding the gold. The same area has previously had ten men on it for a day's session.

Stu's XP Deus Saxon Gold Settings

Modified GMP programme on a standard Deus v2 as follows:

- Sensitivity 95 with expert tab TX set to 3.
- Set TX BEFORE changing frequency as the option then disappears
- Discrimination 3.5 using 3 standard tones
- Iron Volume 2 as I like to hear a little of the iron so I can concentrate on the trashier areas
- Reactivity 3 expert tab Silencer zero
- Audio response 3. I prefer this to 5 as it gives a more true feeling of depth and size
- Frequency 17.857 kbz setting Expert

- Frequency tab position 3
- Ground balance on tracking

My ultimate tip would be to treat the Deus like one of the slower recovering machines – strictly diligent low, slow, and consistently parallel sweep overlapping as much as possible with a not too wide swing, taking time to listen to the signal and don't let the ID number or lack of it overly sway your decision to dig.

The Reactivity set to 3 only loses negligible depth and makes the Deus recover faster than any other machine available. I am convinced this approach is what uncovered my little find of a lifetime.

In keeping with the true spirit of the group I must mention that the landowner has been informed of the find and it has been correctly declared to the FLO and is now on its way to the coroner. The find spot is to be kept as quiet as possible for obvious reasons and the location to be published will be just a vague reference.

I hope that this beautiful golden artefact is kept by a museum for the public to enjoy as I have had my pleasure from it all in one amazing day of discovery that I will never forget. I am privileged to have shared it with such a good bunch of likeminded genuine fellows. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all my fellow members for helping me unearth this treasure and finally on behalf us all I wish *The Searcher* readers very good fortune.



Buckle found by John 'Windows'



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