

## Coin hoard data from South Yorkshire

Total number of South Yorkshire hoard find spots 79.

### 1. Landscape and topographic information

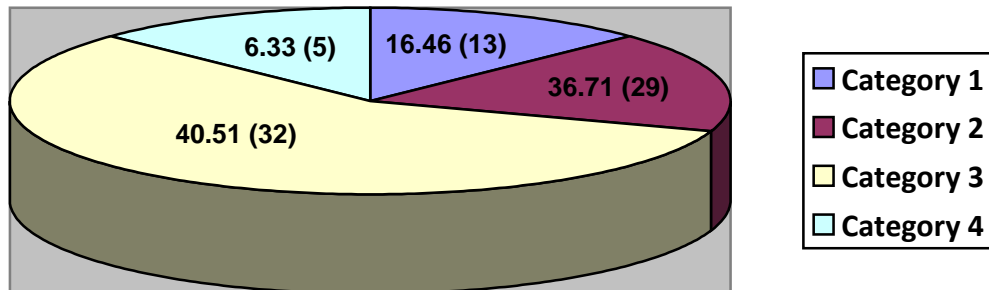


Figure 1. Percentages of sites according to grading of landscape and topographic information (no. = 79).

Out of 79 total hoard find spots for South Yorkshire, 13 or 16.46% are rated as Category 1 or Poor in terms of their locational and topographic information (Fig. 1). This number will change slightly when further details of more recent metal detecting finds are made available to me. A further 29 or 36.71% are rated Category 2 or Fair, 32 or 40.51% are rated Category 3 or Good, and five or 6.33% are rated Category 4 or Excellent. Category 2 and 3 sites are thus more numerous than in Somerset and Cambridgeshire, though the proportion of Category 4 sites is roughly the same. Potential reasons for this will be examined in the Analysis section.

### 2. Contextual and depositional information

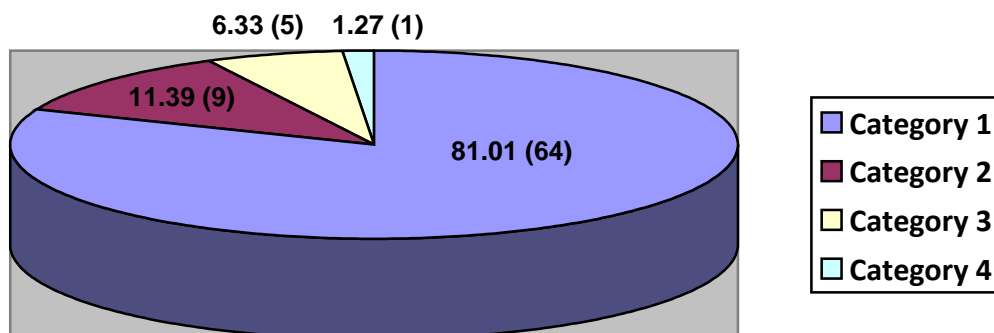


Figure 2. Percentages of sites according to grading of contextual and depositional information (no. = 79).

Out of 79 total find spots, 64 or 81.01% are rated Category 1 or Poor in terms of their contextual and depositional information (Fig. 2). An additional nine or 11.39% are rated Category 2 or Fair, five or 6.33% are rated Category 3 or Good, and only one or 1.27% is rated as Category 4 or Excellent. There is a greater proportion of Category 1s than in Somerset but less Category 2s, though the ratios of 3s and 4s are approximately the same.

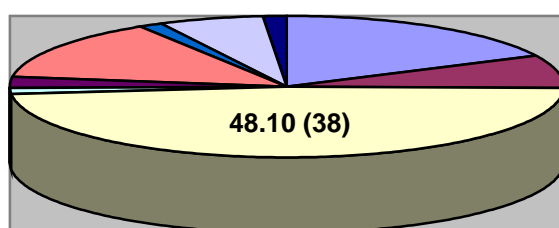
### 3. Landscape and topographic categories

Table 1. Landscape and topographic categories (no. = 79).

Landscape & topographic categories (79 find spots)	No.	%
No information	14	17.72
Hills/mountains (summits)	6	7.59
Hills/mountains (sides/slopes)	38	48.10
Hills/mountains (base)	1	1.27
Rock outcrops/tors	2	2.53
Valley bottom/floodplain	11	13.92
Rise in low ground (summit)	1	1.27
Rise in low ground (slope)	5	6.33
River bank	1	1.27

Out of 79 total hoard find spots, 14 or 17.72% have no suitable landscape or topographic information (Table 1, Fig. 3). This number will reduce slightly as recent metal detector sites are added. A further 6 or 7.59% of find spots are grouped as Hills/mountains (summits), 38 or 48.10% as Hills/mountains (sides/slopes), one or 1.27% as Hills/mountains (base), two or 2.53% as Rock outcrops/tors, 11 or 13.92% as Valley bottom/floodplain, one or 1.27% as Rise in low ground (summit), five or 6.33% as Rise in low ground (slope), and one or 1.27% as River bank.

Figure 3. Pie chart of percentages of sites according to landscape or topographic category (no. = 79).



The pattern becomes clearer if the 14 unsuitable sites are removed, leaving 65 sites for this form of analysis (Table 2, Fig. 4). Of these, six or 9.23% are grouped as Hills/mountains (summits), with 38 or 58.46% as Hills/mountains (sides/slopes), and one or 1.54% as Hills/mountains (base). The two sites from Rock outcrops/tors form 3.08% of the total, and the 11 sites from Valley bottom/floodplain locales 16.92%. The one Rise in low ground (summit) forms 1.54%, and the five Rise in low ground (slope) sites 7.69% of the find spots. Finally, the one River bank find forms 1.27% of the total.

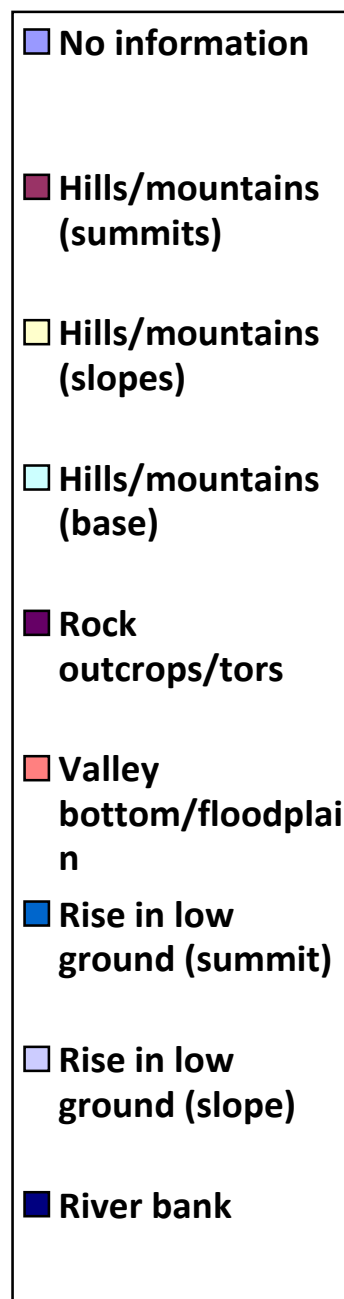


Table 2. Landscape and topographic categories (no. = 65).

<b>Landscape &amp; topographic categories (65 known find spots)</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Hills/mountains (summits)	6	9.23
Hills/mountains (sides/slopes)	38	58.46
Hills/mountains (base)	1	1.54
Rock outcrops/tors	2	3.08
Valley bottom/floodplain	11	16.92
Rise in low ground (summit)	1	1.54
Rise in low ground (slope)	5	7.69
River bank	1	1.54

Hill summits and slopes thus account for 67% of all known hoard find spots.

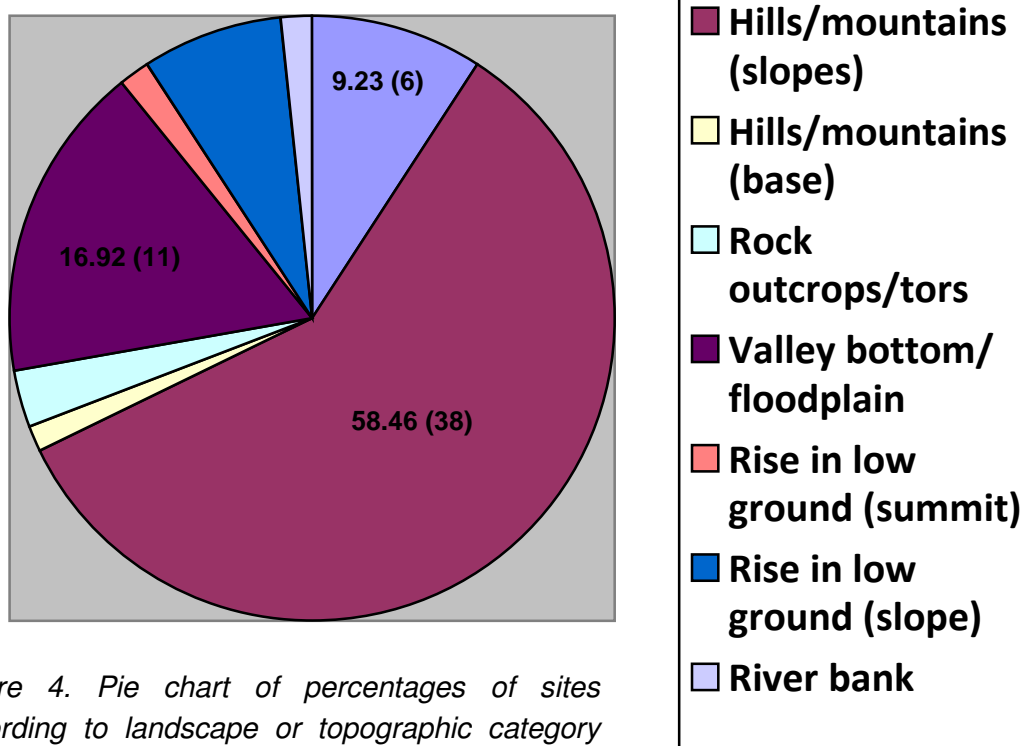


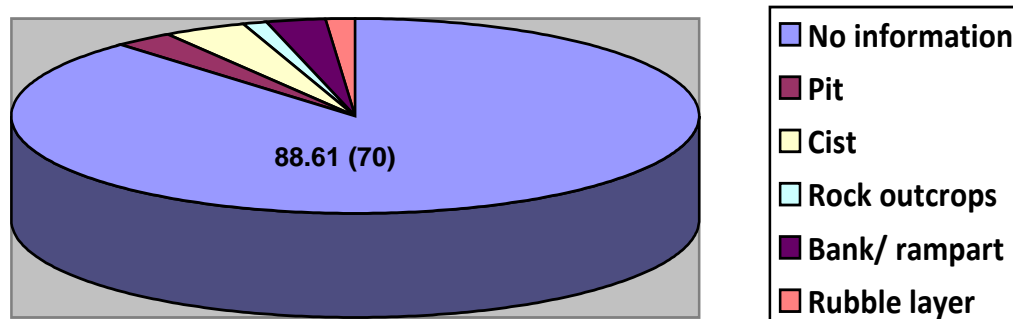
Figure 4. Pie chart of percentages of sites according to landscape or topographic category (no. = 65).

#### 4. Depositional and contextual categories

Table 3. Depositional and contextual categories (no. = 79).

Depositional & contextual categories (79 find spots)	No.	%
No Information	70	88.61
Pit	2	2.86
Cist	3	3.80
Rock outcrops	1	1.27
Bank/rampart	2	2.86
Rubble layer	1	1.27

Figure 5. Percentages of sites according to depositional or contextual category (no. = 79).



Out of 79 total find spots, 70 or 88.61% have no suitable contextual information (Table 3, Fig. 5). This number may reduce slightly once recent metal detector finds are added, but is slightly higher than in Somerset. Two or 2.86% were in Pits, three or 2.96% in Cists, and one or 1.27% from a Rock outcrop. Two or 2.86% were from Banks/ramparts, whilst one or 1.27% was in a Rubble layer.

The pattern is clearer if the 70 unsuitable sites with No information are removed (Table 4), though this leaves just nine sites which is hardly statistically viable. Out of the nine sites, two or 22.22% of find spots were in Pits, three or 33.33% in Cists, and one or 11.11% from a Rock outcrop. Two or 22.22% were from Banks/ramparts, with one or 11.11% from a Rubble layer.

Table 4. Depositional and contextual categories (no. = 9).

Depositional & contextual categories (9 find spots)	No.	%
Pit	2	22.22
Cist	3	33.33
Rock outcrops	1	11.11
Bank/rampart	2	22.22
Rubble layer	1	11.11

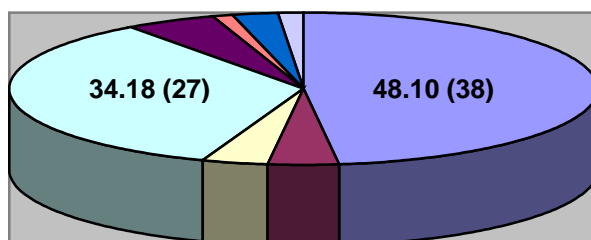
## 5. Associated material culture categories

Table 5. Associated material culture categories (no. = 79).

Landscape & topographic categories (79 find spots)	No.	%
No Information	38	48.10
Brooches	3	3.80
Other copper alloy objects	3	3.80
Ceramic vessels/sherds	27	34.18
Other silver objects	4	5.06
Stone objects	1	1.27
Iron objects	2	2.53
None	1	1.27

Totals will be higher than 100%, as some hoards were associated with more than one find type. Out of 79 total find spots, 38 or 48.10% have no suitable information concerning associated artefacts and materials (Table 5, Fig. 6). Three or 3.8% were associated with Brooches, three or 3.80% with Other cu alloy obj., and 27 or 34.18% hoard finds were associated with Ceramic vessels/sherds.

Figure 6. Percentages of sites according to associated artefacts and materials (no. = 79).



In addition, four or 5.06% were associated with Other silver objects, one or 1.27% with Stone objects, and one or 1.27% with Iron objects. Only one or 1.27% could be definitely categorised as having no other material culture associations. The low number for this category reflects the fact that the majority of South Yorkshire records are of old finds with poor contextual data, and it is normally only with recent well-excavated and recorded examples that other finds can be definitively ruled out.

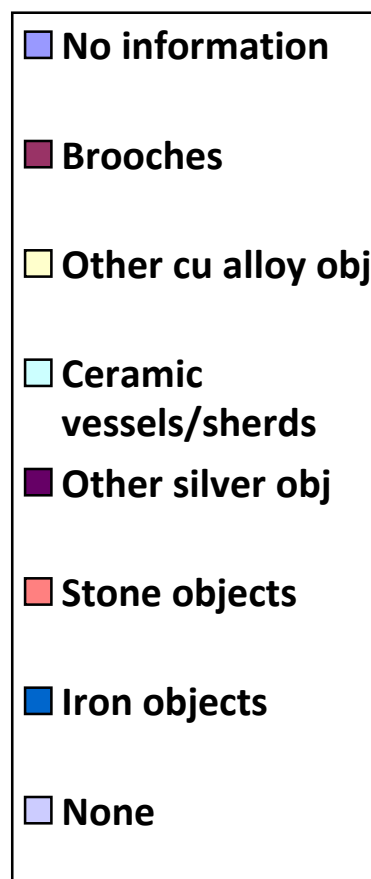
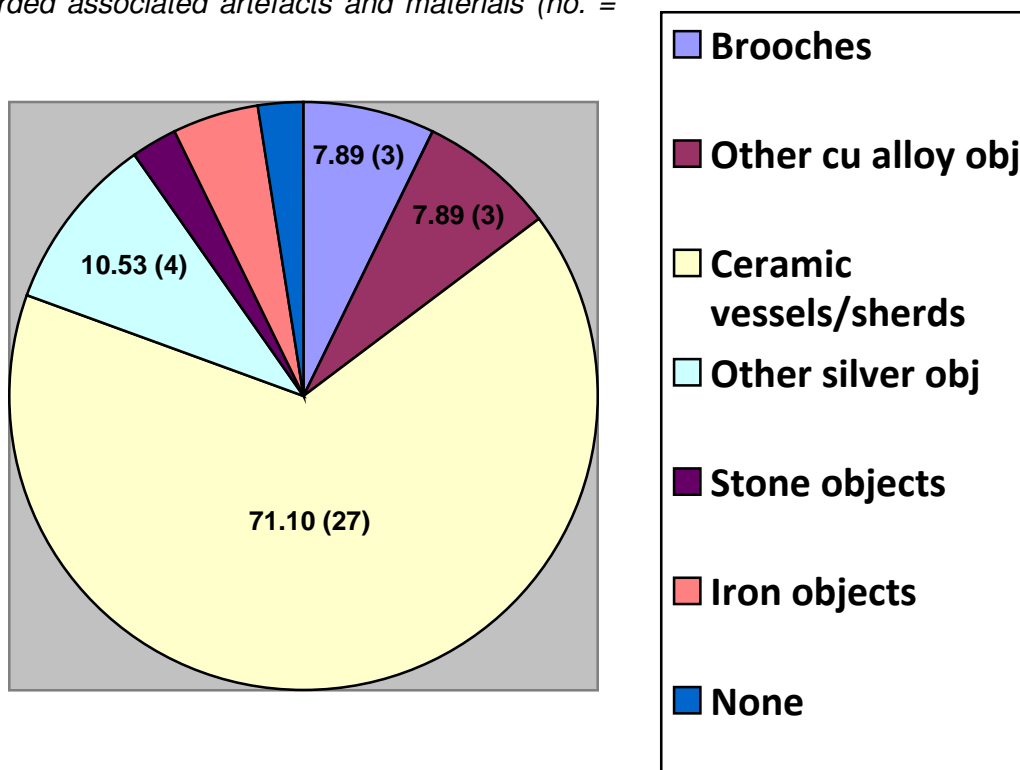


Table 6. Recorded associated material culture categories (no. = 38).

Landscape & topographic categories (38 recorded find spots)	No.	%
Brooches	3	7.89
Other copper alloy objects	3	7.89
Ceramic vessels/sherds	27	71.10
Other silver objects	4	10.53
Stone objects	1	2.63
Iron objects	2	5.26
None	1	2.63

Figure 7. Percentages of sites according to recorded associated artefacts and materials (no. = 38).



These figures become more meaningful when those hoard finds with No information regarding their contextual and artefactual associations are excluded from analysis, leaving 38 recorded find spots (Table 6, Fig. 7). Three or 7.89% were associated with Brooches, three or 7.89% with Other copper alloy objects, but the majority of 27 or 71.10% with Ceramic vessels/sherds. A further four or 10.53% were associated with Other silver objects, two or 5.26% with Iron objects, and one or 2.63% with Stone objects; whilst one or 2.63 had No associations.

Again, the totals amount to more than 100%, as several find spots were associated with more than one find type. The pie chart above is thus misleading in this regard, and the data are better presented as a histogram (see Fig. 8 below).

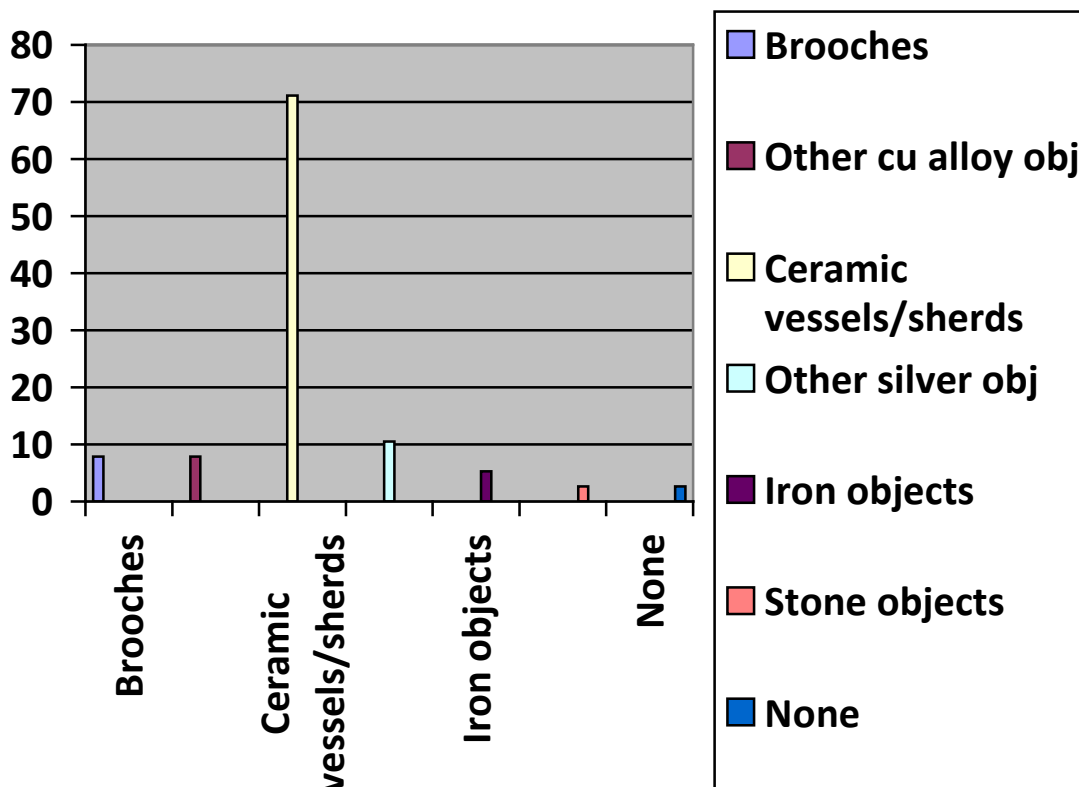


Figure 8. Histogram of percentages of sites according to recorded associated artefacts and materials (no. = 38).

Although analysis is slightly complicated by the fact that some hoard finds have several different categories of material culture associated with them, these results illustrate that the majority of hoards with recorded additional artefacts/materials were associated with ceramic vessels or sherds. There are a few records where coins and loose sherds found together could possibly be general artefact scatters, as with No. 2551 Sheffield and No. 2654 Bentley, where it is by no means clear if recorded sherds were from once complete pots. The Bentley hoard was a possible forger's hoard, and here the association with ceramics may be coincidental. The vast majority, however, seem to have been contained within ceramic vessels.

Of the 27 hoards within or associated with ceramic vessels, most were single vessels, with only five having two vessels present.

## 6. Analysis and preliminary interpretations

### 6.1 Landscape location and topography

In South Yorkshire, the majority of coin hoard finds have come from elevated summits of hills and ridges, or the slopes of hills, valleys and cloughs, both these groupings forming 67% or nearly two thirds of all known landscape locales. This is comparable to the 71% for Somerset.

South Yorkshire does have lots of hills, and so a higher proportion of its land will be slopes than, say, Cambridgeshire. Nevertheless, this evidence suggests that many coin hoard sites were deliberately chosen to be located as high up as possible and to have views out across particular valleys or cloughs. These sites may have been chosen as less prone to disturbance through ploughing and digging for marl, clay and stone; or simply because they represented the most prominent and memorable local landmarks. It might also have reflected pragmatic concerns with visibility, and wanting to see where strangers (or Roman tax collectors) were coming from. Nevertheless, as in Somerset, the majority of these elevated find spots were on slopes, which in many instances would have made those burying or retrieving hoards *more* visible to those looking from below and afar, except at night. Some of these find spots were also located close to narrow cloughs and other folds in the ground, where deposition and retrieval would have actually been less visible, yet hoards were not deposited there.

Alternatively, placing hoards as high up as possible may have reflected more ritualised practices, perhaps linked to 'sky deities' such as Taranis/Mars-Totatis or Jupiter. It is intriguing, for example, that places struck by lightning were considered sacred to Jupiter (Adkins and Adkins 1996: 119). Future GIS-based work involving viewshed analyses will have to explore such ideas, and Eleanor will have to examine any associated patterns or discrepancies in the coinage. That 9.23% of known find spots were from the summits or slopes of low rises in the landscape, as with the hoard at Skellow (No. 2512), may also be another manifestation of this pattern, as these locales were often in areas where the topography was generally flat and low-lying, suggesting that again this was a conscious choice. The Skellow hoard was approximately 1.2km south-west of the known Roman fortlet at Robin Hood's Well, Burghwallis (Buckland 1986, 8-9; Roberts, Deegan and Berg 2010, 67, 72).

Unlike Somerset, in South Yorkshire a significant proportion of find spots (16.92%) were in valley bottom locales, but to some extent this is because the majority of these sites (Hoard Nos 2528, 2529, 2530, 2532, 2535, 2648, 2651 and possibly 2531) were all found on the floodplain of the River Don in and around Roman *Danum* at Doncaster, and the recently discovered Roman fort at Kirk Sandall. Many of these hoards may reflect economic hoarding within a settled landscape, and although contextual details are lacking for some, excavated examples such as Hoard No. 2527 are likely to have been deposited for safekeeping with a 'cache' of other artefacts. Another hoard (No. 2516) was found at Bentley Ings, close to Doncaster and almost adjacent to the River Don, whilst Hoard No. 2522 was found on the Don floodplain at Sheffield. One hoard (No. 2513) may have been deposited within the largely flat landscape between the Rivers Don and Torne at Armthorpe, though as the coins were found in a secondary, re-deposited context the original provenance is uncertain. The hoard found near Hatfield (Hoard No. 2536) was probably also on low-lying ground, but this may have been a marshy or wetland context (see below).

## 6.2 Rock outcrops

Three hoards (Nos. 496 and 497) were directly associated with rock outcrops – the limestone crags in Edlington Wood. Hoard Nos 2634 and 2635 were also quite closely associated with the crags in Edlington Wood. It is possible that some coins from



Hoard No. 2635 were addenda to Hoard Nos 496 and 2634. These two hoards appear to have been separate, found above and below the crags respectively, and an unknown source suggested that a hoard may have been disturbed and spilled over the crags. Another possibility is that several individual hoards were deposited in roughly the same place, both above and below the crags, either over the same period of time or a more extended period. Eleanor will have to examine these hoards in detail to see if the coins suggest a greater date spread, and different levels of wear and/or preservation. Two of the Cadeby hoards (Nos 2519 and 2521) were probably also associated with a natural fissure in the limestone bedrock at the contextual level, but it was not clear if this was an upstanding outcrop, or if the hoard had been dug down into bedrock. A future field visit may resolve this question.

These find spots may reflect a wider local tradition of depositing coins and other objects in or around natural limestone outcrops. During excavations in 1992 by the South Yorkshire Archaeology Unit and in 1997-1998 by Sheffield University, Neolithic human remains and arrowheads, Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery were recovered from a limestone overhang in Scabba Wood, Sprotbrough (Buckland et al. 1998, 2002; Chadwick 1992). Five Roman coins, about 50 sherds of Romano-British pottery and a Viking pendant whetstone were also discovered by the Sheffield University investigations. The coins 'could conceivably derive from a small hoard' (Buckland et al 2002: 23), and this unusually shaped natural outcrop locale might have been periodically invested with spiritual or supernatural significance over many centuries.

Edlington Wood contains earthworks of several later Iron Age and Romano-British enclosures (Ramm 1973), and one hoard (Edlington Wood I, No. 499/2633) was found within an enclosure 30m south-west of the limestone crags where hoard Nos 496 and 497 were discovered. Philips (1973: 5) notes two trumpet brooches found near to the crags, whilst investigations in the 1950s and 1970s found additional brooches, a small bronze vessel decorated with incised circles, and a cosmetic grinder (Corder 1951: 66-69, 91, fig. 17; Sumpter 1973: 37-38). Metal detecting finds of later Iron Age and Romano-British brooches and decorative mounts from Edlington Wood, Pot Ridings Wood, Scabba Wood and other sites in the area have been recorded by the Portable Antiquities scheme, but several additional coin hoards and other metal objects have probably been illegally excavated without any recording (P. Robinson pers. comm.). The area has also produced early Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavia metalwork artefacts, which ties in with the place-name evidence for settlement of similar date. LiDAR data might be useful for this area.

In Scabba Wood, an Aucissa brooch of AD 40-60 with the maker's mark ATGIVIOS was recovered from the internal ditch of a small embanked enclosure several hundred metres away from the rock shelter site (Buckland et al. 2002: 19). This may all suggest one or more relatively high-status settlements in this area of Magnesian Limestone (Chadwick 2010: 1029-1030), and/or religious and votive activity focused on natural landscape features. The hoard find spots extending for c. 2-3km along the steep south-facing slope of the Don Gorge between Cadeby and Sprotbrough are also interesting in this regard (Hoard Nos. 2519, 2520, 2521, 2636, 2638, 2640, 2646 and 2647). Prosaic explanations are possible for some, however – one radiate hoard from Pot Ridings Wood (No. 2556) was associated with counterfeiting, as it included hammered blanks of bronze and cut sections of bronze rod.

### *6.3 Wetlands, peat marsh and bog*

As in Somerset, this category is a simplification of what would have been much more complex mosaic landscapes of alder and willow carr, peat bog, standing water, reed swamp, raised mires and seasonally inundated wet meadow. Unlike Somerset, however, no hoard find spots were attributed to this category. Although some of the valley bottom or floodplain sites noted above in section 6.1 might originally have been in wetland locations, modern urban development makes this impossible to ascertain.

Only two hoards might originally have been associated with such low-lying wetland, though in the end they were placed in different categories. Hoard No. 2536, though named as Doncaster area, is actually from low-lying ground east of Hatfield, 3km south-east of the River Don. This was categorised as valley bottom/floodplain, but the find spot may actually be just on the edge of a very shallow rise in ground (between 5-7m OD). I am awaiting further details of this recent metal detector find. The place names of Brierholme Carr and Brierholme Ings suggest that this area was liable to seasonal flooding and might have included willow and alder carr, and was probably not fully drained until the post-medieval period. It is criss-crossed by drainage ditches and there are windmills in the area. Nevertheless, the hoard does not actually seem to have been deposited directly within a wetland area, as with the Shapwick hoards in Somerset. Though technically the floodplain of the Don, this may have been part of the extensive mosaic of low-lying areas north, east and south of Doncaster. Hoard No. 2513 from Armthorpe, though unfortunately poorly documented, may have come from a low-lying area between the Rivers Don and Thorne. This area is 3.6km south-east of the River Don, at around 5m OD, and may have been on the northern edge of the partly wetland area which included Bessacarr and Cantley Common. Again however, this does not appear to have been clearly within wetland.

The areas north, east and south of the Don contain much land lower than 5m OD and which in some instances was not drained until the 17th and 18th centuries, and formed part of the much wider landscape mosaic known as the Humberhead Levels (Caulfield 1991; Van de Noort 2004; Van de Noort and Ellis 1997). This formed an extensive area extending across modern South Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and northwards into the Vale of York. It included raised mire areas such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors, where there have been finds of prehistoric trees and trackways of Neolithic to Bronze Age date, and some poorly recorded bog body finds made during the 18th and 19th centuries that may be Iron Age or Romano-British (Buckland 1979; Van de Noort 2001). Peat exploitation began as turbary rights but is now part of Fisons-owned industrial-scale extraction.

Although there have been significant Bronze Age and Iron Age metalwork finds, unlike the Somerset wetlands there are no recorded Iron Age or Roman coin hoards within this wetland area of South Yorkshire. This may reflect a regional variation in practice, and/or a relative paucity of Romano-British settlement immediately nearby (Van de Noort and Ellis 1997), although there is increasing archaeological evidence for later Iron Age and Roman period extensification into some areas of low-lying land during the Romano-British period, and several sites have been buried under alluvium

(Chadwick 2010: 458; Jones 2007; Richardson and Rose 2005; Roberts 2003). The Turnbridge Dyke may even be Roman in origin, the result of attempts to create a navigable channel from the Humber (Van de Noort and Ellis 1997: 57, 77). In a letter to the Royal Society, however, commenting on finds of prehistoric trees and artefacts, there is a reference to what might be an unrecorded Roman coin hoard near Hatfield:

It is very observable, and manifestly evident, that many of those trees of all sorts have been burnt, but especially the pitch of fir trees, some quite through, and some all on one side; some have been found chopped and squared, some bored through, others half split with large wooden wedges and stones in them, and broken axe-heads, somewhat like sacrificing axes in shape, and all this in such places, and at such depths, as could never be opened, since the destruction of the forest, till the time of drainage. Near a large root in the parish of Hatfield, was found 8 or 9 coins of some of the Roman emperors, but exceedingly consumed and defaced with time. (de la Pryne 1699, reproduced in Van de Noort 2001: 136-137).

### *6.3 River banks*

Only Hoard No. 2643 at Bawtry Bridge was deposited on a river bank immediately adjacent to water, perhaps along with an unlocated amphora mouth now in Doncaster Museum (Magilton 1977: 13). The Scaftworth Roman fortlet was located approximately 330m to the north-west, in modern Nottinghamshire. Although recorded in 1774 as a 'Roman camp', it was 'lost' but re-identified from the air during 1945-1953 by Keith St Joseph and Derrick Riley (St Joseph 1953). Bartlett and Riley subsequently excavated several sections across the ditches, suggesting that it was a 4th century fortlet protecting an unknown river crossing of the Roman road from Lincoln to Doncaster (Bartlett and Riley 1958: 35), and perhaps also guarding against raiders coming upstream. Bawtry was an important inland port and market town in the medieval period, as the River Idle was navigable to at least this point (Cumberpatch et al. 1996). This might have been the case during the study period too.

Ploughing of nearby reclaimed fields in 1982 uncovered preserved timbers, and several phases of archaeological work revealed the metallised surface of a Roman road, supported by brushwood and turves on a timber 'corduroy' raft of horizontal birch and alder logs (Dearne 1997; Head et al. 1997; Kennedy 1984; Van de Noort et al. 1997). This road, possibly built and rebuilt in several different phases, extended north-west of the fortlet, and may have crossed the River Idle by the modern railway viaduct, but it may be that there was another crossing to the south, at or near the post-medieval bridge. Further Romano-British pottery of 4th-century date was recovered from fieldwalking over the triple-ditched enclosure, but due to the lack of artefacts with obvious military associations its status as a fortlet has been questioned (Van de Noort et al. 1997: 427). Magnetometer and resistivity surveys of the possible fortlet have revealed a possible entrance to the north-east and some form of timber entrance structure (Fig. 9; Head et al. 1997: 288). In addition, in the south-east corner of the enclosure is a broadly circular dark anomaly, a hollow or circular structure, approximately 20m across. A rectangular structure c. 30m long and 12m wide was also detected, though at a different orientation to the enclosing ditches.

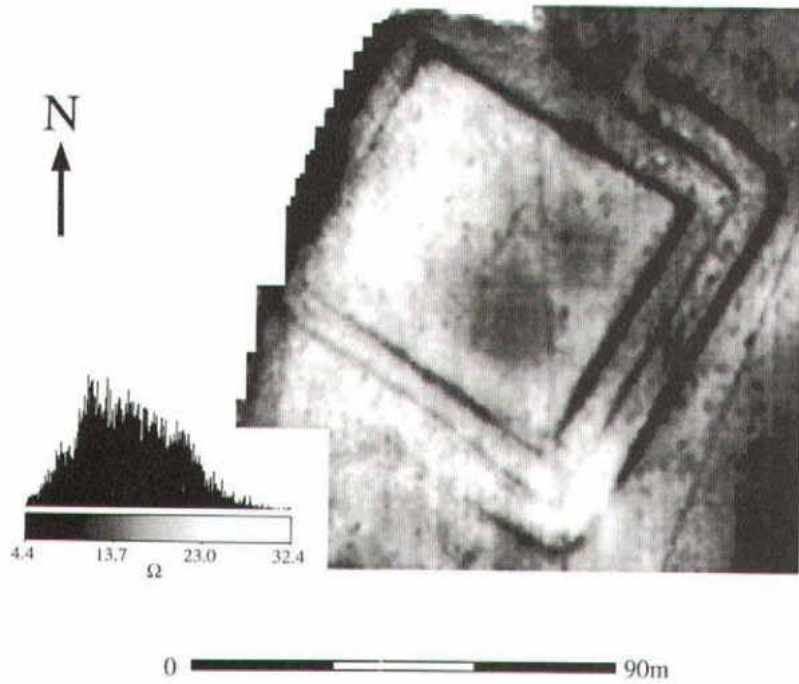


Figure 9. Geophysical survey of the Scaftworth site, undertaken as part of the Humberhead Levels Project. (Source: Head et al. 1997: 288).

In 2005, work by the Environment Agency on the floodplain of the River Idle near Bawtry necessitated a watching brief by Archaeological Services WYAS. Unexpectedly, a large concentration of Romano-British pottery was found, along with 71 Roman coins, and metalwork including a fibula and a lead disc with a 'curse' inscription (Berg and Major 2006: 5; D. Moretti pers. comm). Several dressed stone columns were also revealed. The pottery was mostly mid-3rd to mid-4th-century date (Leary 2006: 18). Bowls, dishes and beakers formed a high proportion of the assemblage, with many vessels sooted and burnt. The assemblage appeared civilian rather than military, but more characteristic of villa or small town assemblages, and included probable *tazze* or incense burners (Fig. 10). The coins were mostly mid-3rd to mid-4th century (Barclay 2006), but with indications of episodic deposition.



Figure 10. Finds from the possible shrine site at Bawtry, including pottery, tazze, coins and lead discs. (Source: Roberts, Deegan and Berg 2010: 77).



*Figure 10. Aerial photograph of the possible fortlet at Scaftworth, looking north-west across the floodplain of the River Idle towards Bawtry. (Source: Van de Noort et al. 1997: 410).*

A subsequent geophysical survey identified several ditches were identified, probably of recent date, but much of the area did not appear to have significant buried remains (Harrison and Webb 2006). Some anomalies were detected in the immediate vicinity of the artefact concentration, however.

#### *6.4 Springs and streams*

Several South Yorkshire hoards appear to have had quite close spatial associations with existing springs and streams in the landscape. The small hoard of five denarii at Plumbley (Hoard No. 1942) is on a slope near the summit of a hill within a slight clough or valley with a stream, and with springs and modern wells marked on Ordnance Survey mapping within 200m of the find spot. Hoard No. 2512 at Skellow was found on the flattish top of a low rise, with low lying ground and streams within 200m to the west and south.

Hoard No. 2537 at Hickleton was on a slope within 100m of a stream in a gentle clough with springs nearby. Hoard No. 2538 High Green was again on a slope, with springs and streams within 100m of the find spot. Hoard No. 2540 Roche Abbey, No. 2541 Maltby and No. 2548 Wortley were also within 100m of streams and/or springs. Future GIS work will have to explore these apparent associations.

## 7. Artefactual and contextual associations

### 7.1 Pot or not, and then what?

Where associated artefacts are recorded, the overwhelming majority of hoards (71.10%) again seem to have been placed in pots, though care should obviously be taken in interpreting this evidence due to inaccurate antiquarian accounts. Only a very small number (5 or 13.16%) of the recorded hoards are noted as being associated with more than one vessel – these comprise 18.52% of those found with pots. A much smaller numbers of hoards had additional material associations, and compared to Somerset and Cambridgeshire there was less variety, perhaps reflecting a more general conservatism in the region with regard to material culture (Chadwick 2010: 332). One exception is Hoard No. 2527 Doncaster, found in a pit during rescue excavations in the 1970s. This consisted of 12-15 2nd-century bronze coins (accounts vary), four intaglios, two of them set within silver rings, one in an iron ring and one in a copper-alloy brooch; five other brooches, and a bronze scalpel handle (Buckland and Magilton 1986: 57). This hoard clearly reflects one or more individuals with higher social status or access to higher-status items, and is an interesting mix of artefacts. It might well represent objects secreted for safekeeping by owners, or even by thieves.

The Marr hoard (No. 2542) consisted of at least 79 coins, originally within a pottery vessel, but also two rings of silver or silver-alloy, joined by a link of similar metal (Smedley 1951: 520). This find was possibly only 150-200m away from a later Iron Age or Romano-British enclosure complex and associated trackways that survived as an earthwork in woodland at Marr Thick, with depressions corresponding to lines of ditches, and upstanding banks formed by limestone-faced walls. In the early 1960s, however, the wood was grubbed up and the land ploughed (Fig. 11; Buckland 1986: 56-57), and the enclosure has appeared as a degrading cropmark since then.

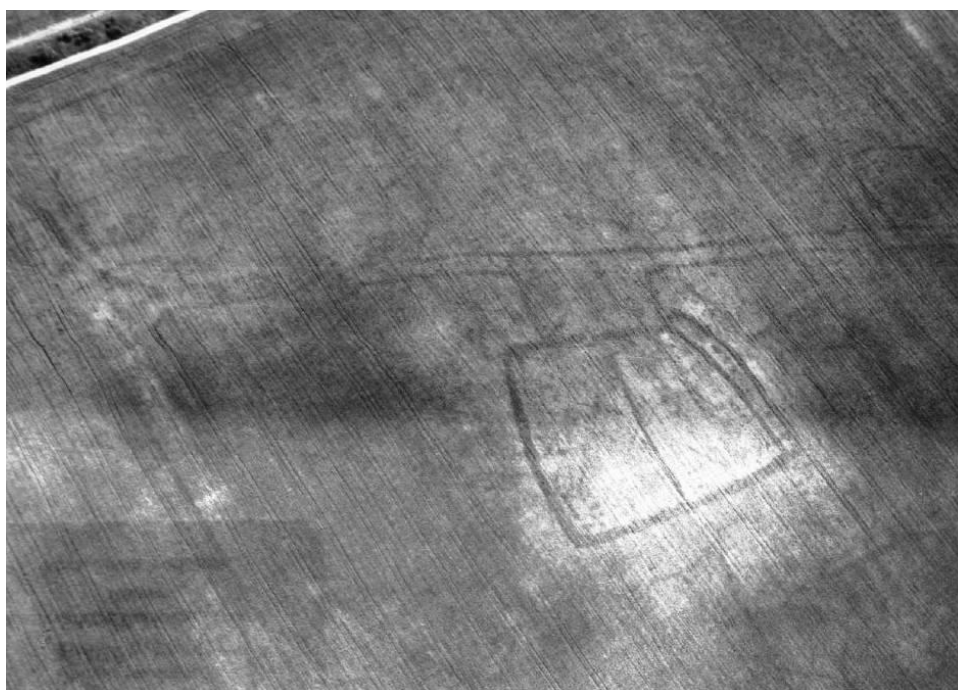
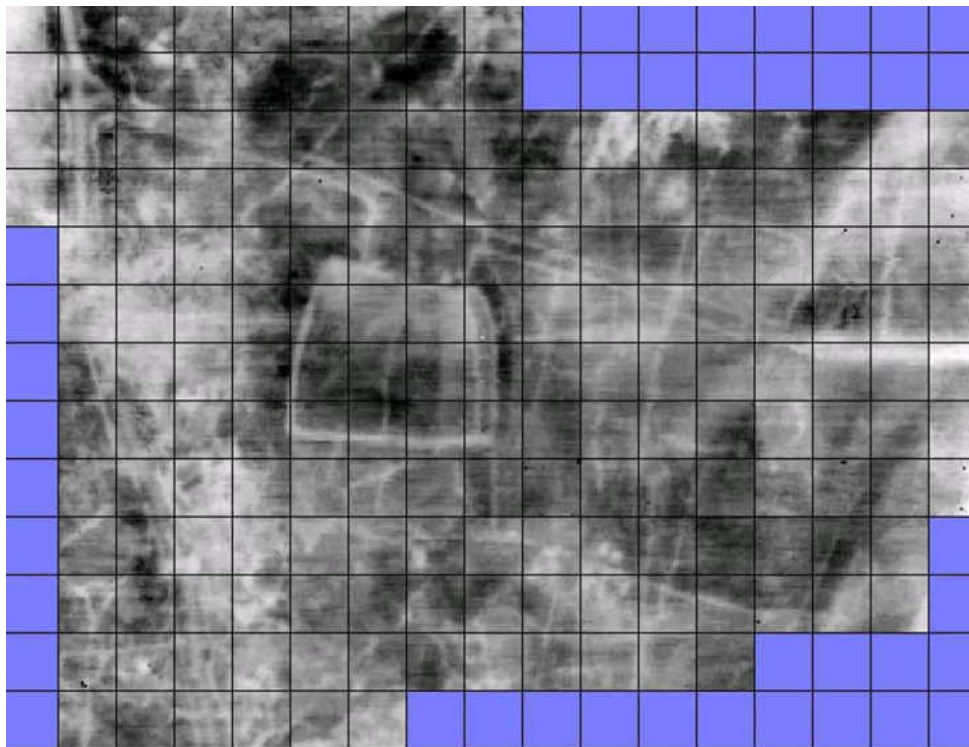


Figure 11. Cropmarks of the enclosure and trackway complex at Marr Thick. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 8421, University of Sheffield).

This cropmark complex was the subject of fieldwork by the Universities of Sheffield and Hull as part of the Brodsworth project. Geophysical survey located the two main enclosures and the trackway (Fig. 12), whilst trial trenches identified some of the enclosure ditches, but also a posthole suggesting internal features might survive despite deep ploughing. A large quantity of animal bone and Romano-British pottery of 2nd to 4th century AD date was found in ditch fills, and an early Roman bronze brooch fragment (Merrony, Hamilton and Kitchen 2006: 21). Fieldwalking recovered Romano-British pottery, but also a few sherds of possible Iron Age or Iron Age-tradition. Additional enclosures known from cropmarks and geophysical survey are situated c. 300-400m to the north. The Portable Antiquities Scheme has recorded several metalwork finds from the area, including a dragonsque brooch.



*Figure 12. Geophysical survey of the complex at Marr Thick, showing the main enclosure, a subsidiary enclosure, trackways and field system ditches. (Source: Brodsworth Community Archaeology Group 4).*

The possible counterfeiter's hoard No. 2556 found near Sprotbrough noted above was associated with copper-alloy blanks and rods, wire and strips. Sheffield Hoard No. 2551 consisted of 35 Roman silver coins and three base silver 'dumps'. The Blackburn Hoard No. 2549 found in Sheffield was possibly associated with an inlaid brooch. Accounts are confusing, but these objects were apparently found underneath a flat stone, either in the silted-up ditch or the bank of the linear earthwork known as the 'Roman Rig'. Despite several investigations this earthwork remains undated, but is likely to be Iron Age in origin, and was possibly an important social and territorial boundary (Boldrini 1999). The insertion of objects into this feature may have reflected local traditions of it as an 'ancestral' feature of perceived antiquity and considerable social, even mythic significance (q.v. Chadwick 2013: 295, 298-299).

## 7.2 The Cadeby Hoard

By far the most notable South Yorkshire hoard associated with other objects is the Cadeby Hoard No. 2521, found within Pot Ridings Wood by a metal detectorist in 1981, within a natural fissure in the limestone bedrock that had been capped with a limestone slab to form a small cist-like space. Within this was a small 'poppy' ceramic jar containing 112 denarii and antoniniani dating to AD 194-251, associated with four silver bracelets – two so-called 'snake' bracelets (Buckland 1986: 41; Cool 2000: 30), and two with hinged fastenings, set with carnelians (Figs 13-14). The hoard has never been fully described. Only one set of drawings has been published (Buckland 1986: 41), and the objects have not been analysed in detail (P. Robinson pers. comm.).



*Fig. 13. The Cadeby Hoard. (Source: A.M. Chadwick, courtesy of Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery).*

There are several intriguing aspects to the hoard. Firstly, the pottery vessel containing them is rather worn in appearance, and had spalled in several places. This might have been from frost action within the limestone fissure, but may also indicate that the pottery vessel was quite old and a curated item by the time of deposition. Despite minor differences in the settings, the silver bracelets with carnelians appear part of a pair, probably made by the same craftsperson. The degree of wear on both is similar. It is notable that both carnelians have white flaws within them. Rather than detracting from them, this attribute might conversely have been seen as highly attractive, and may even have had some kind of metaphorical or spiritual significance. No attempt seems to have been made to carve them as intaglios. The carnelians may have come from modern Cornwall or Germany, or more likely from much further afield in India, and although it is curious that they project so far above the surface of the bracelet, this does make them more visible and dramatic.



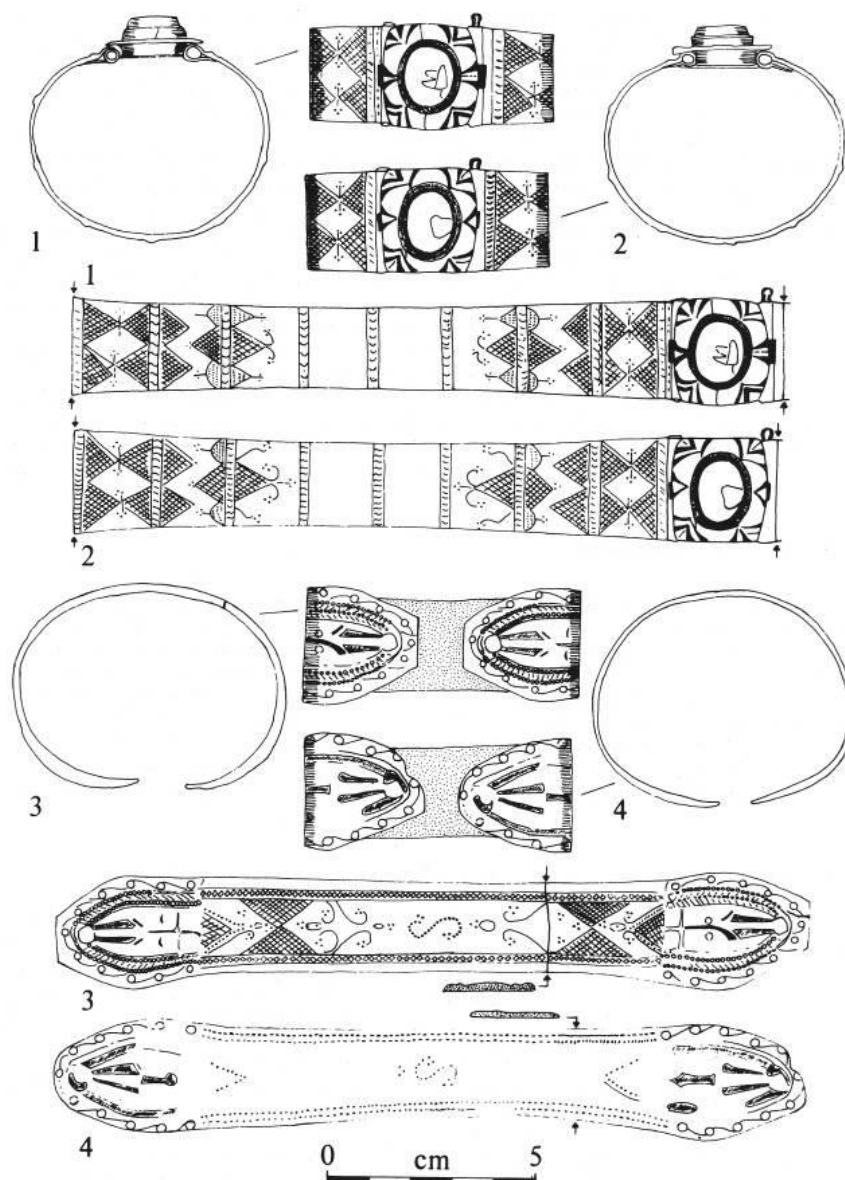
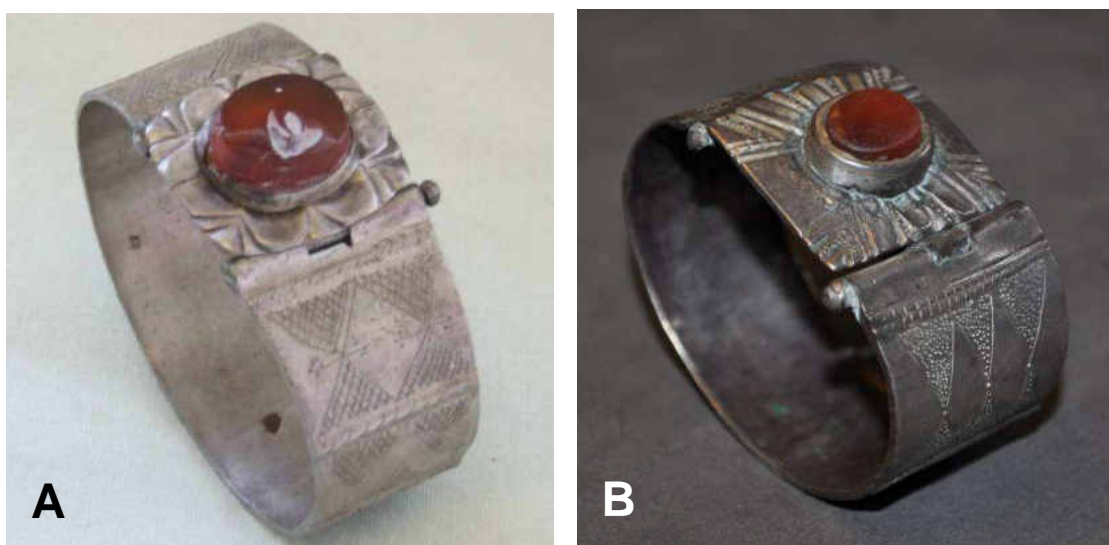


Figure 14. Illustrations of the four silver bracelets forming part of the Cadeby hoard. (Source: Buckland 1986: 41, fig. 24).



Figure 15. The two silver snake bracelets, showing the difference in wear between the two. (Source: A.M. Chadwick, courtesy of Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery).

In contrast, the silver snake bracelets have many interesting differences from one another. One is in comparatively good condition, with fine etching and lines of beaded decoration still present on the exterior surface. The inside of this bracelet, however, has been subjected to a lot of wear and scratching. There is even a possible graffito or symbol scratched on the inner surface (P. Robinson pers. comm.), but further detailed microscopic study is required to confirm this. It appears to have been snapped or broken in antiquity, perhaps deliberately. The second snake bracelet is superficially similar, but 'cruder' or simpler in execution. The second one may be a copy of the other, and/or made by a different individual. Although less worn and scratched on the inner surface than the first bracelet, it is notably much more worn on its external surface – some of the decoration has been removed altogether, as if it had been regularly rubbed or polished. The two bracelets thus seem to have had rather different biographies, despite being deposited together.



*Figure 16. A: One of the two 'original' carnelian bracelets from the Cadeby Hoard (left); compared to B: a third carnelian bracelet that recently appeared on the antiquities market, and currently in the British Museum. (Source: A.M. Chadwick, courtesy of Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery (A), and the British Museum (B)).*

In a recent development, a silver carnelian bracelet was purchased from Timeline Originals. It is similar in overall appearance to the two Cadeby carnelian bracelets, but with differences in decoration and stone setting – the carnelian stone is also smaller. Nonetheless, it could well have been made by the same workshop or craftsman. It has been through the Treasure process at the British Museum, and has been acquired by Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery. What is unfortunately unclear is if this was ever part of the original hoard, and sold separately by the finder, in which case there might well be a fourth such bracelet in existence; or if it was unrelated to the Cadeby Hoard. Interestingly, on the underside of the third bracelet, near the hinged catch, there are a series of scratches.

Cool (2000) discussed known Romano-British hoards containing snake jewellery that have been found in Britain, including the mid to later 3rd century Cadeby find but also mid-2nd century AD examples at Snettisham in Norfolk, Backworth in Northumberland and Castlethorpe in Buckinghamshire. The Lightwood hoard from Longton, Stoke-on-

Trent (Mattingley 1963; Mountford 1963), probably has a similar mid to late 3rd century provenance to the Cadeby artefacts. The two later hoards were deposited at a time when bracelets were uncommon, and Cool suggests that it is unlikely that they were deposited for safekeeping as personal wealth, or as silver bullion or 'scrap metal' for metalworkers (Cool 2008: 38). Instead, she explores the religious symbolism of snakes and snake bracelets including a possible association with Mercury, Asclepius, a god of healing, Glycon the hunter god, and/or with mother goddesses (ibid.: 34-35). It is possible that the bracelets were cult paraphernalia, used or worn by religious specialists in ceremonies, with apotropaic properties. This might even account for the wear or rubbing on the one snake bracelet, if this was perceived as having talismanic powers. If this was the social context for the Cadeby hoard, then its deposition on a steep, possibly still wooded slope overlooking a large river gorge 100m to the south might well have had votive significance.

Adrian M. Chadwick 3rd revised version February 2014.

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