

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Treasure Annual Report 1998 - 1999

24 September 1998 - 31 December 1999

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Foreword



This is the second annual report to Parliament on the operation of the Treasure Act 1996. The Act came into force on 24 September 1997 and, so that future reports can follow a cycle that coincides with the calendar year, the present report covers all those finds discovered or reported between 24 September 1998 and 31 December 1999, a period of just over fifteen months.¹ This report also includes detailed entries on 83 finds that were listed only in summary in last year's annual report, together with a further 27 finds that were discovered during the previous year (24 September 1997–23 September 1998), but which were not included in the previous annual report. This means that the figure previously given for the number of treasure finds reported in

the first year needs to be revised upwards from 178 to 205. In the second year the number has increased further to 223. This compares with an average of 24.5 cases a year that were declared treasure trove during the ten years preceding the coming into force of the Treasure Act.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the Act has succeeded in its primary aim of ensuring that more finds of important archaeological objects are offered to museums for public benefit. However, the substantial increase in the caseload borne by the many different parties concerned with the operation of the Act has, from time to time, placed strains upon the system, leading to delays. For this reason, my department has commissioned an independent consultant to carry out a review of the Act, as required by the Code of Practice. The Review will concentrate on two issues: the definition of treasure and the system of administration. A consultation paper will be issued for wide consultation in December and the intention is that the Review should be complete in spring 2001.

As in previous years, I would like to acknowledge the role of finders in reporting their finds promptly, as required by the Treasure Act. Ninety per cent of the treasure cases reported here have been found by metal-detector users and without their active co-operation the Act would be ineffective.

I would also like to thank those who have statutory responsibilities under the Act, especially coroners and their officers and the staff of the British Museum, the National Museums & Galleries of Wales and the National Museums & Galleries of Northern Ireland. The network of regional museum curators and local government archaeological officers who have agreed to act as local reporting centres have also played an important part in the process. The eleven Finds Liaison officers established under the Portable Antiquities scheme are playing an increasingly important role in helping finders to report their finds and in ensuring the smooth running of the system.

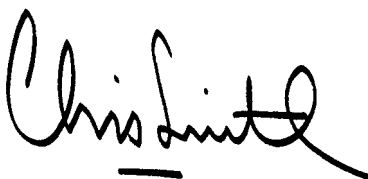
¹ This number includes all finds that were reported as potential treasure to the national museums, including some finds that on closer examination, or after scientific analysis, were found not to be treasure either because of their metal content or because they were less than 300 years old.

I am particularly grateful to the Treasure Valuation Committee and their panel of expert advisers for their work. The Committee, which provides Ministers with independent advice on the valuation of treasure finds that museums wish to acquire, has seen its caseload rise very significantly since the Act came into force. I would like to thank its Chairman, the Rt Hon. the Lord Stewartby, and its members, Mr John Casey, Mr Patrick Finn, Mr Dennis Jordan, Dr Jack Ogden and Professor Norman Palmer, for their hard work in recommending fair market values for treasure finds. I would also like to pay tribute to the members of the panel of expert advisers from whom the Committee commissions valuations: Mr Peter Clayton of Seaby's, Mr Thomas Curtis and Mr Michael Sharp of A H Baldwin and Sons Ltd, Mr James Ede of Charles Ede Ltd, Mr Tom Eden and Ms Elizabeth Mitchell of Sotheby's, Ms Joanna van der Lande of Bonham's and Ms Mary Fielden. I believe that the fairness of the valuations recommended by the Committee is now widely recognised and this is due in large part to the care and diligence with which the Committee discharges its duties.

I believe that this Report, like its predecessor, goes further than fulfilling my statutory obligation to report to Parliament on the operation of the Act. The Report also plays an important part in demonstrating the transparency of the treasure process which aims so far as possible to balance the interests of finders, landowners and the state. The accounts of the finds presented here also serve in most cases as their first publication and I am grateful to the fifty contributors listed overleaf for their detailed and scholarly contributions. Many of these finds are of the highest interest and would not have come to light had it not been for the Act.

The analysis of finds presented below draws out some other significant trends: 188 finds have been acquired by museums, in whole or in part, while 153 have been disclaimed or found not to be treasure. Ninety per cent of cases have been discovered by metal detector users, five per cent by chance finders and five per cent during the course of archaeological investigations. The geographical distribution of the finds is also highly significant and merits further analysis. Although cases have been reported from almost every part of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (the Act does not have force in Scotland), some areas, such as Norfolk and Suffolk, are notably richer in finds than others.

Together, the Portable Antiquities scheme and the Treasure Act have provided detector users and archaeologists alike with an opportunity to make a fresh start to everyone's benefit.



Chris Smith

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport December 2000

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Analysis of cases of treasure listed in this report

A. By period and type of object

Objects	Acquired	Disclaimed	Uncertain	Total
Prehistoric	10	5	2	17
Roman	9	13	7	29
Early medieval	33	15	9	57
Medieval	39	36	2	77
Post - medieval	27	43	8	78
Total	118	112	28	258

Coins	Acquired	Disclaimed	Uncertain	Total
Prehistoric	13	8	1	22
Roman	26	14	1	41
Early medieval	7	2	1	10
Medieval	13	9	1	23
Post - medieval	11	8	-	19
Total	70	41	5	115

B. By method of discovery

Metal detecting	324	86.9%
Chance find	17	4.6%
Archaeological find	19	5.1%
Not recorded	13	3.5%
Total	373	

C. By county

ENGLAND	Sept1997-98	Sept1998-99	Sept-Dec1999	Total
Bath and North East Somerset		1		1
Bedfordshire	1	5		6
Berkshire	5	3		8
Buckinghamshire	2	6		8
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	5	1		6
Cheshire	4			4
Derbyshire	3	1		4
Devon	5	4		9
Dorset	7	3	5	15
Durham	1			1
Essex	7	9	1	17
Gloucestershire	4	4	2	10
Gloucestershire, South	1	2		3
Hampshire	3	7	4	14
Herefordshire	1			1
Hertfordshire	6	4		10
Isle of Wight	1	2		3
Kent	12	18	1	31
Lancashire	1	1		2
Leicestershire	3	1		4
Lincolnshire	5	11		16
Lincolnshire, North	3	1		4
London, Greater	3	3		6
Norfolk	37	43	7	87
Northamptonshire	2	2		4
Northumberland		1		1
Nottinghamshire	4		3	7
Oxfordshire	2	1		3
Rutland	1	2		3
Shropshire		4	1	5
Somerset	2	4		6
Somerset, North	1			1
Staffordshire	3	2	1	6

ENGLAND	Sept1997-98	Sept1998-99	Sept-Dec1999	Total
Suffolk	18	15	5	38
Surrey	2	7	1	10
Sussex, East	2			2
Sussex, West	1	2		3
Warwickshire	3	8		11
West Midlands	2	3		5
Wiltshire	11	10	1	22
Worcestershire	2	3		5
Yorkshire, East	3	7	1	11
Yorkshire, North	14	6	4	24
Yorkshire, South	1	3	1	5
Yorkshire, West	1	1		2
Total, England	195	211	38	444
WALES	Sept1997-98	Sept1998-99	Sept-Dec1999	Total
Anglesey	4	2		6
Denbighshire		1		1
Ceredigion	1			1
Monmouthshire	2	2		4
Newport			1	1
Pembrokeshire	1	2		3
Port Talbot		1		1
Powys		1	1	2
Swansea		2		2
Vale of Glamorgan	1			1
Total, Wales	9	11	2	22
NORTHERN IRELAND	Sept1997-98	Sept1998-99	Sept-Dec1999	Total
County Armagh	1			1
County Down		1		1
Total, Northern Ireland	1	1		2
TOTAL	205	223	40	468

Catalogue



A. Artefacts

a) Prehistoric	10
b) Roman	16
c) Early Medieval	25
d) Medieval	54
e) Post - medieval	78