

Update February 2019

Coin and metal finds in the surroundings near Wirksworth

Historically, we know of Roman coin hoards from Wirksworth, Cromford and Parwich. Concentrations of Roman coins have also been found at Rainster Rocks (Brassington) and Carsington.

Carsington "Villa" is often implied as one place but is two sites: Shiningford (Brough's Nether Field) farm - lead processing site and Scow Brook farm house - villa site. During the digs at these sites, only one coin was found at each. In the case of Scow Brook, this was a Denarius of Balbus (about 238AD+) and in the case of Shiningford, this was an As of Antoninus Pius (about 139+). However, the Housleys of Middleton then metal detected the whole of Brough's Nether Field and found 20 Roman coins and other metal objects including lots of lead spindle whorls.

Metal detecting field days have been held in Ashleyhay in 2017-18 and I am waiting to see if anything from these appears in a database. More recently a small spread of Roman coins has been found locally at Hopton, by Neil Gilbert.

Within the last two weeks Neil has found a Roman fibula brooch at Hopton and this was amongst some really excellent finds including a lovely silver Denarius from Pikehall he brought to the Heritage Centre on Friday.

There are also the coins which Dean Smart found near the Chariot Way, these include a Sestertius of Hadrian (about 118), an As of Claudius (about 41-54) and a Denarius of Antoninus Pius (about 138).



Denarius from Hopton

There is the Wheeldon family's Antoninianus of Valerian (about 258-260) from Rainster Rocks, this is now in the Pase database.



Antoninianus found at Rainster Rocks

My attention has also been drawn to find WMID-2D3B07 on the PAS database, this item is a Roman "Furniture Fitting" and is the first Roman item ever to be found at Kirk Ireton, in 2017.



Kirk Ireton Roman Furniture Fitting

Coin and metal finds in Wirksworth itself

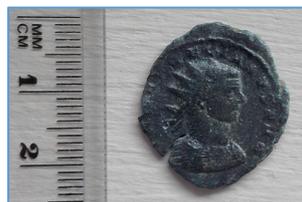
The most well-known Wirksworth coin discovery was the Northumbrian Sceat (about 750AD) found by Cath Housley in the Agricola House car park, close to our recent test pits at the Almshouses: its replica is in the Heritage Centre, the original went to Sheffield Museum.



Sceat found in Church Street 1986

There were allegedly two Roman coins found in the Hannages some time before 2006 (Barry Joyce pers comm) but these do not occur in any database, so are unproven. More recently, during the week of the 13th of April 2018, the mayor was taking the air at Gorse Bank when he encountered a couple of metal detectorists who had apparently found a Roman coin on the south side of Prathall Lane, I hope that this will turn up in a database soon.

A single Roman coin of Constantius II (about 337-361) was found when it was dug up in a garden at Cromford Hill, more recently: we have an Antoninianus of Aurelian (about 270-275) found at West End in 2018, another Roman coin and a little Roman plate brooch also from West End and a further Roman coin from Yokecliffe, all found by Neil Gilbert in the last few weeks, these are in the queue for identification.



Antoninianus found at West End 2018



Roman plate brooch found at West End 2019

In the Pas (Portable Antiquities Scheme) database is a Roman lead loom weight from Wirksworth:



Roman cast lead loom weight from Wirksworth 2017
Used for cloth weaving on a loom.

As with many things "Wirksworth" simply asking the question seems to draw out far more knowledge than we started with and adds tremendously to our understanding. It's also interesting that we have had a recent increase in finds in the town itself and this may reflect greater effort now being focussed here.