

# Past Times

May A.D.2019

Chippenham & District Metal Detecting Club (CDMDC) Newsletter



## Planned Regional Rally

Weymouth & Portland Metal Detecting Club are holding a charity 2-day detecting event with an invitation kindly extended to the CDMDC. It will take place on 31st August and 1st September near Urchfont, Wiltshire. This is an excellent opportunity to meet members of the Dorset club whilst detecting on, hopefully, some productive land.



## Lead Tokens - A Common Detectorist Find

If there's one thing the vast majority of detectorists can claim to have found it's a lead token of one form or another. The practice of using tokens as a means of exchange came to Britain with the Romans. But it was the Babylonians who first cast lead around 3,000BC and moulded the pliable metal into statues. The Romans used lead to make large coin-like objects which acted as closures or seals on official documents. Smaller tokens were used as passes to bath-houses, for meal tickets and simply as money. The earliest English tokens were pewter. The Church had a monopoly on smelting pewter and by the beginning of the fourteenth century there were about 500 monasteries. Pilgrimages to sacred places such as Canterbury and Glastonbury were significant features of life and tokens were used on the journey as a ticket to hostleries on the way. After the Black Death tokens began to be used for secular purposes and lead replaced pewter.

Elizabeth 1 recognised that her subjects needed small change in order to go about their everyday lives but provided none. There was talk of halfpenny and farthing tokens being made but nothing came of it. Instead her subjects made their own tokens out of lead and the designs of a cross with or without pellets probably imitated the silver farthings issued by the Tudor monarchs.

Agricultural enclosures gained momentum in England in 1500. Inflation and poor harvests meant many tenants gave up a life on the land. More people worked for wages and some means of paying them was clearly needed. Tokens were the answer. So when you look at these tokens they are not merely interesting in themselves they encapsulate a dramatic change in the lifestyle of many.



## FINDS OF THE MONTH



Celtic Epaticcus Silver Unit

Jon led the field once more with his unusual find of a Celtic coin of the Catuvellauni tribe (see separate note bottom right). Graham added yet another penny from the reign of either king Edward I or II.



King Edward Penny

Even seasoned detectorists often struggle to differentiate. In the artefact category Jon brought in an ancient Bronze age socketed chisel.



Bronze Age Socketed Chisel

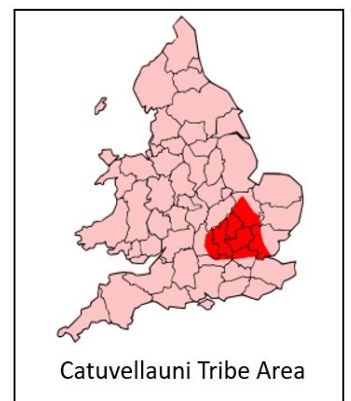
Finally, Terry added yet another gold item to his collection in the form of a pendant, age uncertain. Overall, and continuing the trend, some club members produced a very high standard of finds since the previous meeting.



Gold Pendant

## Researching the Finds – Celtic Epaticcus Silver Unit

Jon's coin was issued around 25-35AD under Epaticcus of the Catuvellauni tribe. Son of Tasciovanus, he was probably the younger brother of Cunobelin, and apparently a favoured uncle of Caratacus. He expanded the territory of his tribe at the expense of the Atrebatean king Verica, and installed himself at his capital, Calleva around 25 AD. He continued to take Verica's lands to west and south until his death, probably on campaign circa 35 AD. After this, his expansionistic policies were continued by his nephews Caratacus and Togodumnus, probably in the late 30s AD and ultimately led to the defence of Britain against the Roman invasion.



Catuvellauni Tribe Area

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