

<p>Institution: University of Cambridge</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UoA28</p>
<p>Title of case study: Numismatics and metal-detecting practices</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>In the past five years, the research of Dr Mark Blackburn and Dr Rory Naismith has been crucial to transforming the personal and professional development of amateur metal detectorists and collectors. Early medieval coins discovered by the latter have been integral to this research, and dissemination of research conclusions has led detectorists to search more responsibly and report their finds. Dr Blackburn and Dr Naismith's research has thus shaped attitudes towards the heritage value of coinage among the general public, metal-detector users and in the commercial sector. Their success in achieving this impact has been based on presentation of research through electronic databases, public outreach and printed publications.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The relevant research was carried out by Dr Blackburn (a member of the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic from 2001, holding the position of Reader from 2004) from the early 2000s until his death in September 2011; Dr Naismith collaborated on this research as a postdoctoral researcher from September 2009. Principal outputs have taken two forms: electronic databases and printed publications recording coin-finds; and books and articles interpreting this material.</p> <p>Publication of new finds has been on-going since the early 1980s. New coin-finds began to proliferate with the growth of amateur metal-detecting, bringing the risk that details of provenance might go unrecorded. Initial publications by Dr Blackburn gave rise to the 'Coin Register' in 1987. This continues to appear annually in the <i>British Numismatic Journal</i>, typically listing some 400 early medieval coin-finds, including over fifty contributed by Dr Blackburn and Dr Naismith personally in the period 2008–13. In 1997, Dr Blackburn established the Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds (EMC) with a three-year major research grant from the Leverhulme Trust, and subsequent funding from the British Academy. This national online database covers coin-finds from the period c. 410–1180, and now contains details and images of some 10,000 specimens. In 2000 Dr Blackburn expanded the project to incorporate coins in museum collections published in the British Academy's major research project 'Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles', resulting in a database of c. 50,000 coins in museum collections. This is the biggest on-line database of medieval coins in the world, and a major contribution to research into the early medieval coinage of the British Isles. The set-up and maintenance of these databases throughout the period to 2013 has in itself been a major research enterprise.</p> <p>The second component of the research has been interpretation of new material. The volume of coin-finds and the quality of their recording have grown so dramatically that they have revolutionised understanding of the Anglo-Saxon monetary economy. The EMC has provided material for reassessment of individual coinages and also for broader studies (e.g. Naismith 2012). Probably the most significant outcome has been a clearer picture of the overall distribution of coin-finds (Blackburn 2005). Thanks to these new discoveries, the contours of the monetary economy are now better known for England than for any other part of early medieval Europe. An important surprise came in the prominence of the period c. 680–740, which now stands out as a peak in coin-use: the richest between the end of Roman Britain and the thirteenth century (Blackburn 2003). Dr Blackburn has also played a major role in highlighting 'productive sites': specific locations which have produced numerous single-finds, presumably denoting a site of some significance (Blackburn 2003). One important example is Torksey, Lincolnshire, which is known to have been a Viking camp in 872/3, and which has produced one of the largest and most diagnostic assemblages of Scandinavian material from any British site (Blackburn 2002). In these ways, the efforts of amassing and publishing coin-finds have paid major dividends not only for numismatists, but for all scholars of Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian culture.</p>

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Blackburn, M., 2002. 'Finds from the Anglo-Scandinavian site of Torksey, Lincolnshire', in *Moneta Mediævalis. Studia numizmatyczne i historyczne ofiarowane Profesorowi Stanislawowi Suchodolskiemu w 65. rocznice urodzin*, ed. B. Paszkiewicz (Warsaw, 2002), 89–101

Blackburn, M., 2003. 'Productive sites and the pattern of coin loss in England, 600–1180', in *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650–850*, ed. T. Pestell and K. Ulmschneider (Macclesfield, 2003), 20–36

Blackburn, M., 2005. 'Coin Finds as primary historical evidence for medieval Europe', in *Kaheimiru Dynamism: Ou Chu Nichi Hikakuno Shitenkara (Dynamism in Coinage: Europe, China and Japan, Comparative Viewpoints)*, *Dai 12 kai Shutsudosenkakenkyukai Houkokuyoushi in Fukuoka 2005 (Proceedings of the 12th Conference of the Coin Finds Research Group held in Fukuoka 2005)*, ed. Shinichi Sakuraki (Fukuoka, 2005), 7–50 (in English and Japanese)

EMC: Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds, and electronic Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge): www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/coins/emc/

Naismith, R., 2012. *Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: the Southern English Kingdoms 757–865* (Cambridge, 2012)

All outputs can be supplied by the University of Cambridge on request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Contribution to economic impact and personal and professional development

Until relatively recently there was widespread antagonism between metal-detectorists and the academic community. But the dialogue between Anglo-Saxon numismatists and metal-detector users of non-academic background, spearheaded by Dr Blackburn, has been mutually beneficial: detectorists, collectors and dealers have learned how important their finds are and collaborated closely with scholars to generate significant impact.

A symbiotic involvement with the non-academic community has become integral to research on early medieval currency. Scholars have made use of detector finds, and finders have in turn gained appreciation of their coins' heritage significance, and hence also the importance of recording them. This has been accomplished by disseminating conclusions of the research outlined above at meetings of local societies and numerous popular talks and conferences. Dr Naismith delivered talks on relevant subjects to local numismatic and metal detecting societies in Cambridge on 21 May 2008 and 15 March 2010, in Nottingham on 11 September 2009 and in Worthing on 21 October 2010, each attended by 20–50 people. The impact of these initiatives is shown in the dozens of contacts initiated each year by individual finders, dealers and collectors; they are reflected in, among others, EMC, Blackburn 2011 and Naismith 2011.

The efforts of Dr Blackburn and Dr Naismith have created such impact among enthusiasts and the commercial sector that the value of recording single-find data that a reliable find-provenance now adds significantly to a coin's commercial value. It is commonplace to find data drawn from EMC and other research outputs quoted in auction catalogues (e.g., Spink auction 13 December 2011, lots 1–16, drawing on Naismith 2011; Time Line 14 December 2012, lot 108 and 19 March 2010, lot 195 drawing on EMC). These and many other legitimately discovered coins would never otherwise have come to scholarly attention were they not reported by commercial dealers such as Spink and Time Line, as well as numerous individual finders and collectors. The value of this symbiotic relationship was emphasized in a testimonial provided by Person 4 (a senior specialist at Spink and Son Ltd): 'I have used the Fitzwilliam Museum Corpus of Early Medieval coins database for some years. This resource ... has proved invaluable. It has provided us with a research tool when cataloguing coins for auction as it allows us to match and reference a coin with others from the same dies. Additionally its recording of new single finds, allows us to create a provenance for each coin which will remain with the coin into the future. This is something which is welcomed both

by finders as sellers and collectors as buyers. The work undertaken by Mark and his staff in building this database has been invaluable and reaches across both the scholastic and commercial arms of Numismatics as a research tool and record of coins' (personal communication, 8 June 2012).

Preserving and presenting cultural heritage

The systematic recording of thousands of early medieval coin finds by Dr Blackburn and Dr Naismith (as outlined above) in itself creates major impact through the preservation of cultural heritage. Moreover, an important counterpart to the economic and personal development of dealers and dedicated enthusiasts is presentation of the results of research to the general public. Museum exhibitions have been the principal means of doing so. An exhibition ('Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round') in the Fitzwilliam Museum, curated by Dr Blackburn, focused on the historical significance of Anglo-Saxon coinage (2008). It was arranged to showcase points and themes raised by the research of Dr Blackburn and Dr Naismith (e.g. in Blackburn 2003) about the economic role of the coinage and the insights it provides into the cultural history of eastern England in the eighth century. During three months in Cambridge this exhibition drew some 20,000 visitors and activities accompanying it included well-attended public lectures, handling sessions for disabled visitors and workshops for children (person 2). A similar range of activities at Ipswich involved 450 participants. It also set a precedent for regional collaboration, and (in the words of an oral testimonial given by Person 3) has left a 'significant legacy' of co-operation between the museums involved (the Fitzwilliam Museum, Norwich Castle Museum and Ipswich and Colchester Museum Services).

In this way productive engagement with finders and buyers of coins, and increased awareness among the general public, combine to show the range and depth of impact this research has achieved outside the academic world.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[1] Blackburn, M., 2011. 'The Viking Winter Camp at Torksey, 872–3', in his *Viking Coinage and Currency in the British Isles*, ed. R. Naismith and E. Screen, British Numismatic Society Special Publication 7 (London, 2011), pp. 221–64

[2] Naismith, R., 2011. *The Coinage of Southern England 796–865*, British Numismatic Society Special Publication 8, 2 vols. (London, 2011)

[3] Person 1 (President, Cambridgeshire Numismatic Society)

[4] Person 2 (Assistant Director, Fitzwilliam Museum)

[5] Person 3 (Curator, Ipswich and Colchester Museum Services)

[6] Spink (London coin dealer): with details of previous auctions at:
<http://www.spink.com/archive.aspx>

[7] Email from person 4 (Senior Specialist in British Coins, Spink)

[8] Time Line (a dealer promoting links with the EMC <http://www.time-lines.co.uk/saxon-coins-for-sale-5975-0.html> [including details of previous auctions])