

Identifying Your Small Finds

Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)

The Portable Antiquities Scheme encourages the voluntary recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales. There are 863,000+ objects recorded so far.

You can **search for finds** recorded by the PAS for your own research:

<http://finds.org.uk/database>

You can filter or **refine** your search using the links on the right-hand side of the results page.

Often artefact records will refer to a book or article that lists detailed identifications.

Also useful is the **advanced** search:

<http://finds.org.uk/database/search/advanced>

You can also search in an area, by drawing a box around it on a **map**:

<http://finds.org.uk/database/search/spatial>

And you can search by **postcode**:

<http://finds.org.uk/database/search/postcode>

There is a useful volunteer **recording guide** available for many **common objects** including general information on materials, methods of manufacture, decorative styles and how to measure and photograph objects properly:

<http://finds.org.uk/guide>

Your local PAS Liaison Officer records finds in your area. If you are conducting an *archaeological dig* they may *not* be able to identify your finds for you because they don't have the resources available to take on such a large task. But they may be able to *advise* on how best to identify your finds yourself, or where to seek expert help. You can find your local contact here:

<http://finds.org.uk/contacts>

Websites & Online Resources

Searching online for websites and documents will assist you in identifying your finds. There are far too many different types of artefacts to give references for them all, but here are some websites to get you started:

Buckles AD 1250-1800

<http://www.reenactor.ru/ARH/PDF/Whitehead.pdf>

Crotal Bells by Rod Blunt

<http://www.ukdfd.co.uk/pages/crotal-bells.html>

Online Database of British Military Buttons

<http://asahelena.wix.com/militarybuttons>

Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information Website

<http://www.sha.org/bottle/>

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Evolution of Clay Pipes Tobacco Pipes in England
by Cambridge Archaeology Field Group!
<http://www.cafg.net/docs/articles/claypipes.pdf>

An Atlas of Medieval Combs from Northern Europe by Steven Ashby
http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue30/ashby_index.html

Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Brooches
[http://www.academia.edu/315585/Culture and Gender In the Danelaw Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian Brooches](http://www.academia.edu/315585/Culture_and_Gender_In_the_Danelaw_Scandinavian_and_Anglo-Scandinavian_Brooches)

Archaeometallurgy Datasheets (introductions to metalworking residues)
<http://www.hist-met.org/datasheets.html>

York Archaeological Trust – free out-of-print publications of York finds
http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/resources/pubs_archive.htm

A Basic Bibliography for Studying Romano-British Small Finds
[http://www.barbicanra.co.uk/shopimages/Documents/A Basic Bibliography.doc](http://www.barbicanra.co.uk/shopimages/Documents/A_Basic_Bibliography.doc)

Books & Articles

You might have trouble getting hold of some of these yourself, so it's worth asking your Researcher to help you, if needed.

Benet's *Artefacts of England and the United Kingdom*
A good all round volume for flicking through and getting some ideas, but not all the identifications are perfectly accurate. Widely available to buy.

Egan, G., 1994. *Lead Cloth Seals and related items in the British Museum* London: British Museum Occasional Papers.

Egan, G., 1998. *Medieval Households* London: Museum of London.

Egan, G. and Pritchard, F., 2002. *Dress Accessories 1150-1450: Medieval finds from excavations in London (4th edition)* London : The Stationary Office.

Harvey, P D A and McGuinness, A., 1996. *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* London: The British Library and Public Record Office.

Margeson, S., 1993. *Norwich Households. Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-78* Norwich: East Anglian Archaeology 58.

Read, B., 2005. *Metal Buttons c.900 BC - c.AD 1700* Portcullis Publishing.

Finds Research Group (AD 700-1700)

If you would like to get more involved in learning how to identify finds, you can join this group that is for people interested in or researching artefacts of the Anglo-Saxon, Viking, medieval and post-medieval periods.

<https://sites.google.com/site/frg7001700/>