

TREASURE TALK

FIRST QUARTER / EERSTE KWARTAAL 2000



NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH AFRICAN METAL DETECTING ENTHUSIASTS
NUUSBRIEF VIR SUID AFRIKAANSE METAALVERKLIKKER ENTOESIASTE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR / BRIEF VAN DIE REDAKTEUR

Hierdie nuusbrieff is ons eerste vir die jaar 2000. Ek hoop ons lesers het sukses gehad met hul skattejag oor die feesdae - veral dié wat bevoorreg was om by die kus te kon gaan vakansie hou. Laat asseblief weet van die suksesse met vondse wat gevind is!

Julle sal ook oplet dat hierdie uitgawe nie soveel artikels as die vorige bevat nie. Die rede hiervoor is dat oor die feesseisoen minder bydraes van lesers ontvang is, maar dit is seker verstaanbaar - baie herstel seker nog na die millenium-feesvieringe! Hoe ook al sy, ek doen weer eens 'n GROOT beroep op julle om vir die volgende uitgawe bydraes te stuur, al is dit slegs 'n briefie of 'n foto of twee. Soos ek al voorheen gesê het, hierdie nuusbrieff behoort aan ons almal en die sukses daarvan hang van julle bydraes af. Waarom nie nog sommer vandag vir my 'n ietsie in die pos gooi nie? - 'n GROOT ASSEBLIEF!

Geniet hierdie uitgawe en alle voorspoed vir die nuwe jaar.

Vriendelike groete

Pierre Nortje
(Redakteur)

This newsletter is our first for the year 2000. I hope that our readers had some success with their finds over the festive season - especially those who were fortunate enough to visit some coastal beaches. Please let me know of the finds you may have made.

You will notice that this edition has fewer articles as our previous edition. The reason for this is that not many contributions were received from readers, but I presume (some) readers are still recouping after the millenium celebrations! However, PLEASE send in those contributions for our next issue. As I have said before - the success of our newsletter depends on the co-operation of all our readers. Why not drop off a letter (or what have you?) to the Treasure Talk post bag today - A VERY BIG PLEASE!

Enjoy this issue and may you have great finds this year.

Kind Regards

Pierre Nortje
(Editor)

Address: Treasure Talk. PO Box 816, Durbanville 7551. Telephone / Fax: (021) 96-2260: E-Mail nortjem@iafrica.co.za



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LETTERS FROM OUR READERS / BRIEWE VAN ONS LESERS

Beste Pierre

Baie dankie vir die nuusbrieff van die afgelope tyd. Ons vind dit baie interessant en het al dikwels gewonder wanneer so iets in Suid Afrika beskikbaar sou wees. Oorsee het lankal reeds sulke klubs ontstaan. Ons plaaslike inligting vul 'n groot leemte.

Met ons soektogte langs die strande te Waenhuiskrans, Struisbaai en verder wes het ons op interessante artikels afgekom en ontdek dat talle voorwerpe uit die Ooste nie suiwer goud, soos talle reken, was nie. Hulle het rooikoper gebruik en met goud oorgeblaas. Baie porselein is in hierdie omgewing beskikbaar, maar sommige kan nie gedateer word nie; seker voor 1670. Ek sal dit waardeer indien 'n kundige hier plaaslik opgespoor kan word.

Ek het die metaalverklikker, 'n Fisher 1225X etlike jare gelede van Mnr W. Roux gekoop en wil hom hiermee bedank vir 'n instrument wat ons ure se genot verskaf.

Baie dankie vir die uitstekende bydrae - hou asseblief vol daarmee.

Groetend

Andries Smith
Bredasdorp

Beste Pierre

Dankie vir jou nuusbriewe. Hierby ook 'n lys met skaars jare van SA munte. Uit die aard van die saak is munte in 'n beter kondisie meer werd, maar die lys gee darem 'n indikasing. Dit is miskien vir jou lesers van belang.

Vriendelike groete

Cliff van Rensburg
Randburg Munt

(Lesers wat 'n afskrif van die muntlys wil bekom, moet asseblief 'n selfgeadresseerde/gefrankeerde koevert aan Treasure Talk stuur - RED)

FINDERS CASH IN ON £100,000 HOARD

A HOARD of almost 500 Anglo-Saxon silver pennies, discovered by detectorists on the Kent coast, has been declared treasure trove. The coins, dating from the reign of Edward the Confessor, were unearthed in September 1997 in a field at Appledore.

Gareth Williams of the British Museum (which hopes to buy the hoard) described it as "the most significant fine of late Anglo-Saxon coins to be made in England this century". He added, "its size and the large number of mints represented will enable a serious study of coin circulation in the mid-11th century. What's very unusual is how well preserved they are".

The hoard was discovered by Bert Douch, a retired train driver, Phil Collins, a retired garage owner and their friend Laura Dickinson. Dealers estimate that the find might be worth £100,000.

The earliest coins date from 1030 but the majority are from the period 1051-52. It is believed that the hoard was buried at the time of the rebellion of Earl Godwin who landed at Dungeness in 1052 after being outlawed by King Edward the previous year.

Mel Fisher Dies

MEL Fisher, the chicken farmer who became the most successful of the marine treasure-seekers, died of cancer at his home in Key West, Florida on December 19, 1998 at the age of 76.

He will be best remembered for discovering the Spanish treasure ship *Atocha* in 1985, yielding a bonanza estimated at over \$400 million. This was followed by an epic legal battle to retain the value of his find, Fisher successfully arguing his case based on Admiralty law. As a result, however, Congress passed the Abandoned Shipwreck Act in 1987, giving the states the title to wrecks within three miles of the coastline.

From : Coin News : Token Publishing Ltd. Honiton, Devon GB

VOC skeepswrak met volle vrag by Agulhas gevind

KAAPSTAD. Opgewondenheid heers onder mariene argeoloë oor die ontdekking van moontlik die eerste wrak ter wêreld van 'n skip van die Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie wat met 'n onaangeraakte vrag kosbaarhede uit die Ooste vir wetenskaplike studie beskikbaar is. Die Raad vir Nasionale Gedenkwaardighede en die Suid-Afrikaanse Maritieme Museum het bevestig hulle is genader om betrokke te raak by die berging van die wrak waarskynlik dié van die **Breederode**, 'n sestiende-eeuse handelskip. As dit wel die **Breederode** is, is dit 'n vonds van onskatbare historiese en argeologiese en dalk ook geldelike waarde vir die wêreld, meen mariene argeoloë met wie Die Burger gesels het. "Nog nêrens ter wêreld kon behoorlike opgraving gedoen word van 'n VOC skip wat (met 'n vol vrag) op pad terug van die Ooste gesink het nie," het mnr. Jaco Boshof van die Suid-Afrikaanse Maritieme Museum in die Waterfront gesê. "Die meeste van dié wat in vlak water lê, is reeds versteur. Artefakte is daarvan verwyder voordat wetenskaplikes dit kon bestudeer." Sedert dié skip met 'n kosbare vrag porselein, tin, speserye en sy van China op 3 Mei 1785 naby Kaap Agulhas op die rotse geloop en gesink het, was die presiese ligging daarvan 'n raaisel. Nou het 'n bekende plaaslike duiker, mnr. Charlie Shapiro, aangedui hy gaan by die RNG om 'n bergingspermit aansoek doen vir 'n wrak wat verlede jaar in dié omgewing in diep water gevind is. Hy wou gister nie uitwei nie, maar het gesê 'n aankondiging aan die wêreldmedia is op pad. Twaalf bemanningslede het meer as 200 jaar gelede in die ramp gesterf en tagtig is gered. Volgens mnr. John Gribble van die RNG het die skip gesink in die laaste sukkeljare voor die VOC in 1798 ondergegaan het, wat oorweldigende historiese belang daaraan verleen. Uit die inhoud van die vrag kan afgelei word hoe mense destyds gelewe het en wat toe in Europa gesog was. Baie is ook te leer oor skeepsbouwerk van die tyd.

Skip het te na aan kus gevaar

Dat daar geen duidelikheid was oor waar die skip gesink het nie, is moontlik deels te wyte aan die vraagteken wat gehang het oor die kaptein se optrede voor die ramp. Volgens Gribble is destyds beweer die skip het onwettig te naby die kus gevaar. Toe dit 'n rots tref, het die kaptein dit dieper see-in gestuur, waar dit gesink het. Die kaptein en oorlewendes sou later beweer dit het 'n ongekarteerde rots op die erkende skeepsroete getref. Ingevolge die Wet op Nasionale Gedenkwaardighede, soos in 1986 gewysig, word alle skeepswrakke 50 jaar nadat dit gesink het, nasionale gedenkwaardighede. Om skatvinders egter aan te moedig om hulle vondste te verklaar is 'n regulasie uitgevaardig waarvolgens 50% daarvan aan hulle afgestaan word.

STAMP IN A MILLION SELL A RECORD PRICE

(From : The Sunday Times 3/10/99)

IN THE BLACK: This Cape triangular stamp fetched a world-record price of R1 060 000 at a Spinks auction in London recently. The collector's treasure, an 1861 vermilion fourpenny stamp with errors of colour, is the only unused example known to be in private hands. It was part of Ad Indhusophon's collection of postage stamps of the Cape of Good Hope. The rare specimen was previously sold at the Sir Maxwell Joseph sale in London in 1982 for £25 300



HOW COLLECTORS WILL BE COINING IT AT THE AUCTION OF HISTORICAL SA CURRENCY (From : The Sunday Times 3/10/99 by Antony Wiley)

I MUST admit to only a passing interest in coins but, when I recently received a Spink's catalogue for its auction of South African coins and studied it with some care, I got really excited.

The auction, being held in London this month, is part of the company's contribution to commemorate the Boer War centenary.

It is interesting to find that there is an association between coins and the war. Up to the middle of the last century, currency used in South Africa was of either Dutch or English origin. The first coin specially minted for local use came about when the Rev John Campbell, a missionary with the London Missionary Society, decided that the Griqua people needed a currency of their own. So he had a set of coins minted in London - in four values - which were sent to South Africa and used between 1814 and 1816. They had on them the words "Griqua Town" and a dove.

The coins never really caught on and, after two years, those still in circulation were withdrawn and melted down. The auction includes an example of a five pence struck in silver (estimated between R6 000 and R8 000) and a pattern half pence and quarter pence. The word "pattern" means the coins were designs which were actually produced as examples but never issued to the public.

Also from the Griquas are two pattern one pence coins dated 1890. The Orange Free State wanted its own coinage and again patterns were made, but never issued. The sale includes a one pence pattern from 1874 and four from 1880. These are expected to fetch between R1 200 and R1 600 each.

The Cape of Good Hope likewise produced patterns - there will be three 1889 pennies on auction.

The Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek was the only state in the 19th century to have its own coins - it even had its own mint, where the coins were produced. Obviously, the discovery of gold helped this process along.

When General Schalk Burger became president of the republic, he purchased gold without telling members of the Volksraad and had coins minted in England. The coins bore his portrait and the date 1874.

The die produced 695 coins and then broke, so a second had to be made and a further 140 coins were struck with the remaining gold he had purchased.

Obviously, those made with the second die are rarer than those from the first. The sale includes two examples of each in various conditions. The best example of the more valuable type is expected to fetch between R100 000 and R120 000 and the best of the less valuable type between R50 000 and R60 000.

When the Volksraad was shown the first of these coins, it was furious that it had not been consulted on the matter. Poor Burger was mortified and no further coins were issued during his term of office. Patterns for further coins were made but never issued.

Also on auction is an 1874 half crown, a two pence, two pennies and a "mule" penny, which is expected to fetch between R7 000 and R9 000.

When Paul Kruger took office, the Boer republic's coins came into their own and were minted annually between 1892 and 1902. One of the great rarities of this period is the famous gold "Sammy Marks ticky".

Marks was Kruger's financial adviser and, for his help, was allowed use of the mint for a day, according to tradition.

The 1898 silver ticky had not yet been minted and so, on Marks's day at the mint, 215 of these were produced - not in silver, but gold. An example at the auction is expected to fetch between R60 000 and R70 000.

The outbreak of war caused problems for the mint. First, the 1899 die was seized in Delagoa Bay and never reached Pretoria. To solve the problem, the 1898 gold pound was over-stamped with the figures "99". Only 130 pounds were struck in this way and the example at the auction can be yours for between R70 000 and R80 000.

In June 1900, Pretoria fell to the British and the mint moved temporarily to Middelburg, in what would become the Transvaal. In the move, large quantities of gold bars and coins disappeared - the famous Kruger millions.

Among these were blank, circular gold discs. Original examples of these are found with and without a rim and there are examples of both types at the auction. But one must be careful of forgeries

Having no currency was becoming more and more of a problem for the Boers as local tribes had to be paid in gold for the food the Boers bought from them.

General Ben Viljoen took over the gold claims in the Pilgrim's Rest area and soon, with the help of old machinery and an out-of-view smelting furnace, gold "veldponde" were struck in the veld. Great problems were experienced in producing these coins, which were dated 1902, as the gold content was much higher than in the average pound of the period. Eventually, 986 were minted. Three will be sold at the auction and the best example is expected to fetch between R25 000 and R35 000.

While these coins were being minted in the veld, someone involved in the process had two joined together and inscribed with "Staats munt tevelde van Lucas aan Nellie 1902". The auctioneers expect this coin to fetch between R40 000 and R60 000.

It is not the only such piece in circulation. Perhaps the Kruger millions were made into jewellery for soldiers' loved ones.

Also being auctioned are other Kruger coins, coins of the union and republic and some examples relating to Rhodesia. More information can be obtained from Christie's in Johannesburg or Cape Town.



Die silwermunte van die Zuid Afrikaanache Republiek
 Eerste ry: Voorkant van kroon, die dubbel- en enkeldisselboomkroon
 Tweede ry: voorkant en keersy van halfkroon en floryn
 Derde ry: Voorkant en keersy van sjieling, sikspens en tiekie

READING HISTORY WITH THE METAL DETECTOR

by Owen Timmermans

Seldom do history books furnish accurate accounts of military battles.

The story usually reflects the author's personal attitude or it is written to please a certain type of reader. The metal detector can be an efficient instrument to check the truth.

To U.S.A. citizens, the American Civil War (1861-1865) would be a fruitful source of study, -- to the writer the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) afforded interesting research.

In 1904, a book was published -- The Times History of the War in South Africa -- edited by Leo Amery. This monumental work in six volumes became the standard reference.

Pages 344-355 give the following information:

*On the 11th. July 1900, General Smith-Dorrien started out north with the Gordons and Shropshires, two guns of the 78th Battery and half the 50th Company Imperial Yeomanry ----
At Dwarsvlei, the General found Boers holding a ridge ----
They soon found themselves exposed to a deadly fire ----
The gunners displayed great bravery ---- but all were very soon put out of action ----
Several gallant attempts were made by the Gordons to bring the guns back to cover ----
Captain Younger would have been recommended for a Victoria Cross ----
The force was now covering a front of 4000 yards, and was being attacked on the right flank and right rear as well as in front ---- etc. etc.*

A force commanded by a General and a staff of at least two captains and carrying two pieces of field artillery must have been well over 100 men strong.

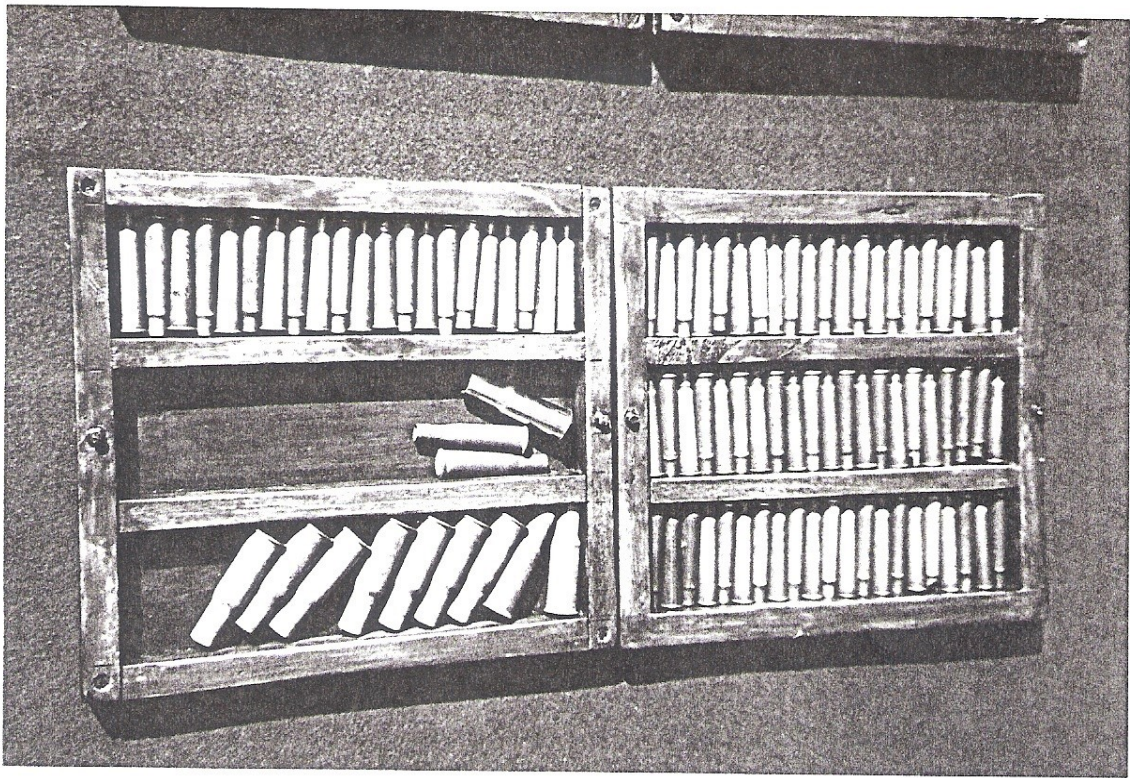
This force was 83 years ago locked in fierce battle with a large Boer commando. This is the impression we get by reading the above lines.

Checking all this proved very interesting!

The area "Dwarsvlei" was soon located on the 1 :50 000 maps issued by the Government Survey Office -- but a search of the actual area indicated, proved most disappointing.

While searching we met an old African who introduced himself as 'Ou Frans'. At the time of meeting, in 1984, he claimed to be 94 years old.

"Yes!", he said, "as a child I heard the crackle of rifles and the booming of guns. I also saw and smelled the dark clouds of battle. My boss was killed in that very battle".



Cartridge cases --- Mauser and Martini-Henry --- ex Anglo-Boer War.



Reading history with the metal detector.

He then pointed to a far distant chain of hills. *"there, that's where it happened"*.

It was hard to believe, for according to the map that area was called "Weltevreden", certainly not "Dwarsvlei".

A trip to the old map room at the local library followed -- and there it was. In 1900 Dwarsvlei extended many miles to the west. "Old France" could well be right.

A visit to the area followed. The hills form a high ridge strewn with rocks. Searching around we soon found a low, horse-shoe shaped wall built of rocks piled on top of each other. It had all been done in a great hurry, yet afforded good protection for one or two men firing rifles at the enemy. The British positions were about 800 yards down in the valley. These make-shift strong points were absolutely ideal for defending the ridge!

A search with the metal detector followed. Mauser and Martini-Henry cartridge casings and badly rusted metal clips were dug up. The steel clips were used to load six cartridges a time into the mauser rifle magazine. The Boers carried these fully loaded clips in their bandoliers.

In all, sixteen of these low rock wall structures were located, scattered over a large area. One of these yielded two completely undamaged mauser cartridges, a rare find in these areas for the Boers were already very short of ammunition when fighting took place there.

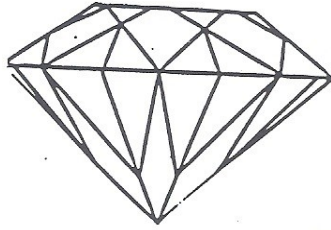
The metal detector also located 15 pounder shells and lead shrapnel from the British field guns. And of course there were the Lee-Enfield bullets flattened by impact against the rocks.

What surprised us was the low number of rock structures located. It meant that only about 30 Boers were actively engaged in the action that stopped the British force. It just did not sound possible -- they only had their rifles, many of which such as the Martini-Henry which still used black powder cartridges were already outdated in 1900. The Boers would be outnumbered by at least 4 to 1 should our calculations prove right.

Months afterwards we met the grandson of one of the Boers who had taken part in the action.

"You are almost right", he said. *"there were only 23 Boers. By spreading their positions and maintaining a fast rate of continuous firing they tricked the British in believing that they were surrounded by a superior force"*.

So we see, the truth is quite different from the impression created by reading lines overflowing with notions of "Victoria crosses for great bravery", "being surrounded by enemy forces", etc., etc.



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BOWESDORP : SPOOKDORP IN NAMAKWALAND

(Die volgende artikel het in Die Burger van 11/11/1989 verskyn – Ek en 'n paar van my metaalverklikker vriende het gedurende Oktober 1999 die ou spookdorp gaan besoek – sien my artikel verder aan in hierdie nuusbrieff : Pierre Nortje)

NA aan die grootpad, slegs 'n paar kilometer van Kamieskroon, lê **Bowesdorp** - of wat daarvan oorgebly het. Waar 'n mens die spookdorpie in die nou vallei binnegaan, staan daar nog 'n erg verweerde ou naambord: **BOWESDORP** ..

Afgesien van 'n bewoonde plaaswoning is daar verder net ruïnes. Die ou kerk, destyds met sy misvloer die trots van die dorp en die eerste NG kerk in Namakwaland, bestaan vandag net uit 'n paar mure en is oorgroei deur kraalbos. Maar soos in die ou dae is dit nog steeds die prominentste baken.

Die dorpie had 'n kort, dog relatief besige bestaan van slegs sowat sestig jaar. Dit het alles eintlik in 1850 begin, toe die NG gemeente **Bowesdorp** van die Clanwilliamse gemeente afgestig het en 'n nuwe kerk vir die Namakwalanders gebou moes word.

Vier weldoeners het 'n standplaas op die plaas Wilgenhouts-kloof aan die westelike voet van die Kamiesberg vir ø140 gekoop en vir die nuwe kerk geskenk. Destyds is in Die Kerkbode berig: "Er is op de plaats water genoeg tot onderhoud van een klein dorpje."

In 1861 is toe begin met die bou van die kerk onder toesig van ene C. van Nieuwkerk. Die gebou was 96 voet lank, 33 voet breed en die mure 17 voet hoog, met 'n hoë spitsdak en boogvensters en -ingange. Vir die mure is klip gebruik, terwyl die argitrawe van rousteen gebou is.

Die kerk is teen 'n koste van ø2 300 voltooi en op 23 Januarie 1864 deur konsulent-eerwaarde C. Murray ingewy.

Hierna is erwe opgemeet en verkoop en in die jare daarna sou 'n dorpie om die kerk groei. Dit het aanvanklik Bowesville geheet en is genoem na Dr. Henry Bowe, indertydse distriksgeneesheer van Namakwaland.

Hy het in 1856 weens gesondheidsredes uit Brittanje na die Kaap gekom en het hom later op Springbok (destyds Springbokfontein) gevestig. Sy broer, Thomas, was ook in die mediese professie en was van 1857 tot 1864 apteker asook waarnemende superintendent van die Somerset-Hospitaal in Groenpunt, Kaapstad.

'n Ander interessante stukkie familiegeskiedenis was dat sy seun, Allan, vanaf 1889 vir negentien jaar die vennoot was van die beroemde goudsmid Peter Carl Faberge, wat in St. Petersburg, (nou Moskou) in Rusland, asook oor die hele Europa roem verwerf het.

Die ontwikkeling van **Bowesdorp** , soos dit ná 1886 bekend gestaan het, het aanvanklik stadig geskied. In 1870 was daar die kerk, een blanke gesin, 'n "Zondagshuisie" en 'n winkeltjie waar die eerste predikant op **Bowesdorp** , ds. J.S. Hauman, sy etes moes koop. Twee jaar later is daar deur die bemiddeling van ds. Hauman 'n skooltjie vir die kinders van die streek geopen met ene mnr. Hutchinson as skoolmeester.

Die besigste tye was beslis Sondag wanneer die gemeentelike kerk toe gekom het. Só is byvoorbeeld in die Die Kerkbode van 1873 berig van "tagtig tot negentig karren" wat vir een van die eredienste (waarskynlik Nagmaal) saamgetrek was.

In 1897 het 'n sakeman mnr. Moses Schur 'n winkel en hotel laat bou. Spoedig is 'n polisiestatie, tronk en poskantoor ook op die dorp opgerig.

Teen 1907 was daar reeds vier algemene handelaars, insluitende Schur se winkel, sowel as 'n ystersmid, ene Jan de Waal. Slegs vier jaar later het reeds soveel as ses algemene handelaars, asook 'n "Boer Handel Maatschappij", in die dorp handel gedryf.

Op een van die interessante ou fotos in die Kaapse Staatsargief sien 'n mens juis spanne donkies met volgelaide waens voor 'n winkel op die dorp.

Die toekomstige groei van **Bowesdorp** is egter voortdurend bedreig deur die toenemende belangrikheid van Springbok, wat in 1863 gestig is. Uit die staanspoor het die predikante verkies om op Springbok te woon.

Dr. W.P. Steenkamp, wat in 1919 beroep is, het sommer met die intrapslag daarop gewys dat eredienste op Springbok in 'n danssaal gehou word - "God zal u hierom straffen..." - en slegs twee jaar later is die nuwe kerk op dié dorp ingewy.

In 1922 het ds. Steenkamp boonop aanbeveel dat pleks daarvan dat herstelwerk aan die kerk op **Bowesdorp** gedoen word, 'n nuwe kerk nader aan Garies gebou moes word op 'n plek waar meer ruimte was vir toekomstige uitbreiding, sowel as 'n groter watervoorraad.

'n Nuwe kerk is toe wel in 1924 op Koest voltooi, in daardie dae sowat vyf myl nader aan Garies. Die winkels, poskantoor, polisiestatie en almal het agterna getrek - en só het die dorpie Kamiesberg, wat spoedig Kamieskroon geword het, tot stand gekom.

Hierdie verskuiwing het die einde van **Bowesdorp** 'ngelui. Erwe is goedkoop aan gebied, maar slegs ene Adriaan Visser, wat reeds voor die Eerste Wêreldoorlog na **Bowesdorp** gekom het, het eiendom gekoop. Die dorp van vroeër het uiteindelik deel van sy plaas geword. Hoewel daar vandag weinig oorbly, bly dit steeds 'n historiese

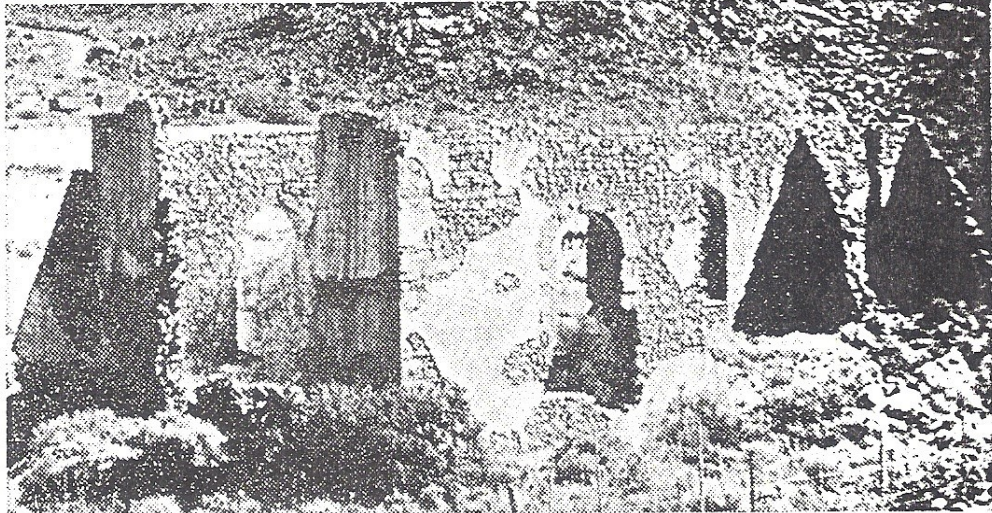
terrein. In die lig van die historiese belang van **Bowesdorp** in die vroeë Namakwalandse kerk-geskiedenis kan die N.G.Kerk dit miskien oorweeg om in samewerking met die Raad vir Nasionale Gedenkwaardighede 'n gedenkplaat hier op te rig.

Daar is steeds 'n groot rots op die spookdorp waarteen Dr. Bowe destyds volgens tradisie 'n bottel sjampanje tydens die naamgewingplegtigheid gebreek het. Hierdie rots is sekerlik die mees aangewese plek vir so 'n gedenkplaat.

EKSPIDISIE NA BOWESDORP

Deur Pierre Nortje

Nadat ons te hore gekom het van die spookdorp "Bowesdorp", het ek en drie metaalverklikker vriende besluit om 'n naweek daar in die verre noordwes Namakwaland te gaan kuier. Ek het vroegtydig die nodige toestemming verkry van die huidige plaaseienaar waarop die murasies nog staan. Met alle verdere logistieke reëlings agter die rug, is ons vier opgewonde vriende die Vrydagoggend douvoordag met Andy Naudé se Nissan Sani uit die kaap weg.



Ruins of Ned. Geref. church at Bowesdorp.

Van opgewonde gepraat... tydens die meer as vyf ure se rit na Bowesdorp was die onderwerp van bespreking natuurlik skattejag, en meer spesifiek die skatte wat ons te wagte kon wees tussen die ruines van die ou dorp. Andy Naudé, is soos lesers van Treasure Talk sal weet, eintlik 'n skuba-skattejagter, maar het ons mooi laat verstaan dat hy daardie naweek dié "Relic Hunter" gaan wees. Wolfgang Roux, my gereelde metaalverklikker vriend, het egter min ag op Andy se bravade geslaan, en ons amptelik in kennis gestel dat die eerste goue pond in sy sakkie sal beland. Die vierde lid van ons groep was Peter Stoklas, 'n Tjieg wat in die sestiger jare na Suid Afrika geïmigreer het. Ek dink nie ek is verkeerd as ek sou sê dat Peter meer ondervinding van metaalverklikking het as ons ander drie saam nie - 'n veteraan skattejagter as daar ooit een was.

Die middag net na twaalf het ons op Kammieskroon aangekom en dadelik by die hotel ons tasse gaan afgelaai - die afwagting was op daardie stadium so groot dat ons nie 'n minuut langer wou vertoef nie, en is dadelik vort na Bowesdorp - so 10 kilometer van Kammieskroon.

Met 'n klein kronkel bergpaadjie is ons deur die klofies van die Kammiesberg en skielik voor ons het Bowesdorp gelê in 'n skilderagtige valleittjie met 'n murasie hier en daar - slegs die ou kerk was nog herkenbaar, alhoewel die jare se wind en weer ook maar min daarvan agtergelaat het.

Toe die voertuig tot stilstand kom, kon jy die kloppende harte byna hoor en binne minute is ons in alle rigtings vort met metaalverklikkers wat links en regs swiep - tyd vir verder gesels was daar beslis nie! Vir die volgende vyf ure het die tyd vir al vier van ons stilgestaan - alle moontlike bekommernisse en stres wat daar kon wees het plek gemaak vir skattejagterskoors! Vir my was daardie paar uur soos 'n droom - ek herinner my dat ek nou en dan opgekyk het om vir Wolf of Peter te sien grawe, en dan weer vir Andy waar hy 'n vonds in sy hand staan en beskou - maar dan het ek weer vir die volgende uur of wat totaal en al van my vriende vergeet...

Laat die middag het ons moeg onder 'n ou peperboom langs die kerkmurasie bymekaar gekom om tot verhaal te kom en ons vondse te bespreek. Geen opspraakwekkende vondse is gevind nie, maar baie interresante items het tog aan die lig gekom. Ons grootste teleurstelling was dat, afgesien van een of twee meer moderne munte, geen ouer munte gevind is nie. Wat het ons uitgegrawe? Almal van ons het ons verwagte kwota van patrone, doppies, ou sleutels, stukke van bekfluitjies en ander kleiner metaalitems opgegrawe.

Van die meer interresante items was twee knope van Britse kakies wat ek gekry het - 'n soortgelyke, maar veel groter knoop is ook deur Peter Stoklas gevind en wel in 'n uitstekende toestand (Ter inligting: Gedurende die Anglo Boere oorlog was Britse troepe ook op Bowesdorp gestasioneer om die Kaapkolonie teen 'n Boere inval te beskerm). Naby die ou tronk het Andy ook 'n baie mooi ou polisieknop gekry waarvan die ouderdom nog bepaal moet word - moontlik kan een van ons lesers hom hiermee help. Ten slotte het Wolf 'n ou vingerring uitgegrawe: ook die ouderdom van hierdie item kon nie bepaal word nie.

Op die keper beskou het ons soektog nie skoupspelagtige vondse opgelewer nie, maar soos enige metaalverklikker entoemas sal weet, behels ons stokperdjie baie meer as net die opgrawe van 'n item of twee wat duisende rande werd is. Almal van ons was die aand om die braaivleisvuur dit eens dat dit 'n heerlike dag was met herinneringe wat ons nog vir jare sal bybly. Daar was nie 'n sweempie van teleurstelling te bespeur nie, en ek sal my nie verbaas as ons in die komende jare weer daar in Namakwaland 'n draai gaan maak nie.

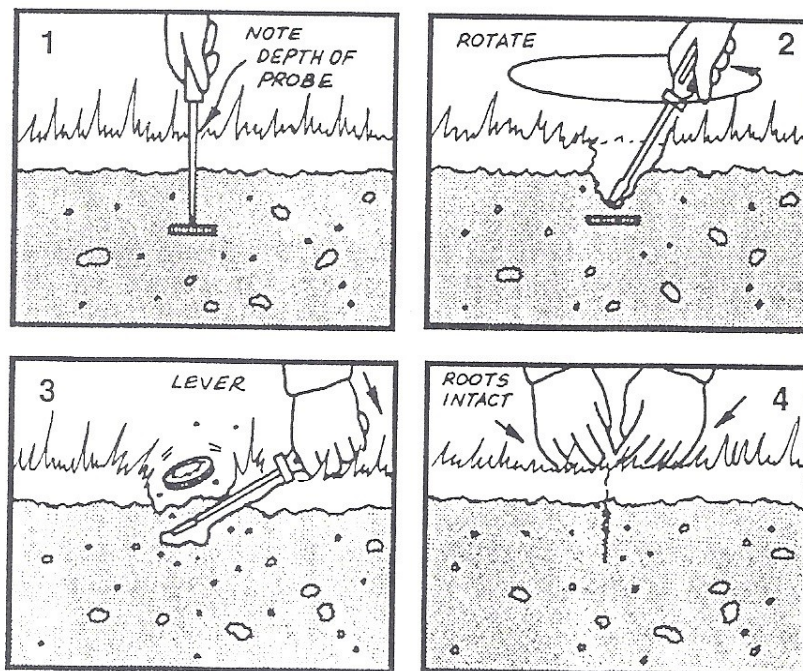
Die volgende oggend het ons vroeg vertrek na Strandfontein, een van die weinige kusdorpe aan die Namakwalandse kus, om ons skattejagtersvaardighede as kapenaars op 'n meer bekende terrein te gaan beproef, maar dit is 'n storie wat een van die ander drie maar kan oorvertel...

PROPER TARGET RECOVERY TECHNIQUES

(From : *Advanced Treasure Hunting with the Fisher QuickSilver Series Metal Detectors* by Andy Sabich. Published by Fisher Research Laboratory, 200 W. Willmot Rd., Dept ATH Los Banos, CA 93635 USA) Reprinted with full permission

Learning proper target recovery techniques is important for several reasons. First, careless recovery of an older coin can quickly render it virtually worthless. Many coin hunters have spent a considerable amount of time finding sites to search yet are unwilling to take the time needed to recover a target without damaging it. A few years ago I was hunting an old park in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and received a signal indicating a deeply buried target. Without thinking, I pressed my knife into the damp soil and cut a plug. Bending the plug back, I saw a silver coin lying in the bottom of the hole. The coin, an 1892 Barber dime, would have graded AU except for the three deep scratches my knife blade had put on the face of the coin. My carelessness had turned a \$150 coin into a "filler piece" worth simply what the silver content would bring.

The second reason proper recovery techniques are so important is that many areas have been closed to metal detecting after damage was caused by coin hunters. By utilizing the correct recovery method for the ground conditions present when you search an area, you can recover literally dozens of targets without leaving any sign of having been there. Not only will this make the owners of the property happy, but other treasure hunters will not see your holes. I have often hunted an area simply because I could see signs of someone else who hunted it and had obviously recovered a number of targets.



The Probe and Driver method of target recovery uses a probe to locate the target and a screw driver as a knife and a recovery tool.

Probe & Driver

This technique should be used in areas where the ground is not that moist or where cutting a plug is not acceptable. While requiring more practice than the plugging method, it results in virtually no damage to the lawn. After pinpointing the target, use a probe to locate the target. Next, insert an 8-inch screwdriver just above the target and rotate it slowly to spread the grass roots. Now insert the screwdriver just under the target at an angle and work the target to the surface. After the target has been removed, brush the loose dirt back into the hole and press the roots back together.

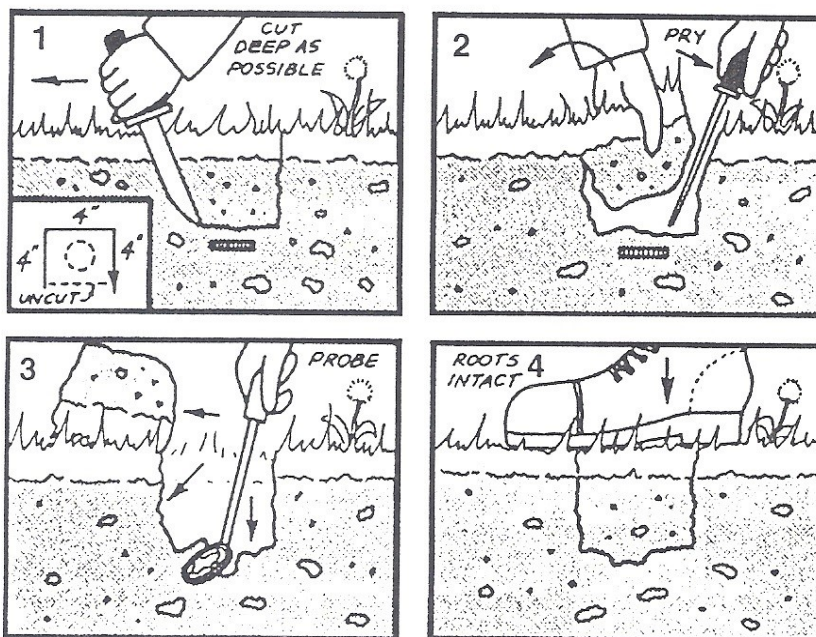
Plugging

This method should only be used in wooded areas or in lawns that are moist. Plugging in dry, hard ground can damage the grass, leaving yellow "dead spots" after you leave. After pinpointing the target, cut a plug three-quarters of the way around using a large hunting knife.

Cutting a complete plug will usually result in the grass dying within a few days time. Using the blade of the knife as a lever, fold back the plug. Sweep the search coil over the hole and the plug to determine where the target is located. Use a probe to locate the target and recover it.

NOTE: Do not use a knife with a folding blade as it may inadvertently close, resulting in injury.

A trick that many experienced coin hunters use to further help reduce the possibility of leaving any evidence of their having recovered a target is to bring along a 12-inch square piece of vinyl and put all of the loose dirt from the hole on it. Once the target has been recovered, simply pour the loose dirt back in the hole, fold the plug back in place, and step it down.



The Plugging method of target recovery, when appropriate, leaves virtually no evidence of digging. To avoid killing the grass, this method should not be used during the summer months.

AN OLD FRIEND REVISITED

By Steve Raiguel

It was a tiny field, small even for this part of Flanders, measuring probably 10 metres wide and less than fifty long. Nonetheless, it was special to me because, seven years ago, I'd come here, assembled the brand-new White's Silver Eagle my parents had brought from America, and had found my very first coin at this spot. Today I had come back to give it another try, to see if experience and better equipment could find anything I might have missed the first time around.

For a long time, I had known only that the coin I had found was old, but I had no idea how old, where it had been minted, or what circumstances might have brought it to the little field by the Zenna. A couple of years ago, I managed to acquire a photocopy of a thick, out-of-print book, with several thousand illustrations of almost every coin that had ever been used during Belgium's complex history. With the aid of this book, I had learned that the thin, chipped, and heavily patinated disk I'd found with my initial amateurish efforts was a coin called a "brûle" of Cornelis van Berghes, and had been minted in Hasslet in the period 1538-1544. I'd also learned a few things about what made for likely places to find coins and other artefacts. Any place where there had been a lot of human activity was always good for small metallic items. A slight slope was also good, since erosion tended to keep artefacts near the surface, within detector range. Even better, this particular sloping field tilted toward the Zenna, which forms the Eastern boundary of our village. Up until the 18th century, when manmade canals superseded rivers as conduits of trade, boats had sailed up and down this winding stream, stopping and trading in the many small villages along the way. On two previous occasions, I've found "hot spots" near the river which probably represent sites where wharves had been located along the banks. Here, villagers and boatmen must have met to haggle and trade, coins would be dropped into the mud and buttons and buckles would be lost from the handmade boots and crude felt hats of the traders.

The site I had in mind for the day was only about a half a kilometre from our house, so, enjoying the fine weather, I tossed my extra batteries, digger and Tinytech into a duffel bag, selected my White's Spectrum - there was likely to be too much trash for the Fisher CZ-7 to handle - and shortly arrived at the field. The patch of land where I had found my first coin had changed little in the intervening seven years, there was still the small tree-lined tractor path running along the side closest to the river and the same cows - or probably descendents of the same cows - eying me from the neighbouring field with dull bovine curiosity. This year, it was a stubble field, and to my delight, the stubble consisted of soft oat straw, rather than the hard, almost impenetrable wheat stubble which usually left my shoulders aching after a day of forcing the detector head through it. I set up the machine, stuck my digger in my back pocket and set off to work. The first couple of targets proved to be shrapnel balls from the first war. No surprise here! It's a rare field in our parts that doesn't have a couple of dozen of these - which always makes me wonder at the effect of all this lead entering the food supply through the roots of the crops, and perhaps explains some of the idiosyncrasies of the Flemish! About midway through my first pass across the length of the field, I got a good, strong signal up in the copper part of the meter range. It proved to be a copper-alloy buckle with an integral plate, of a type used before the 15th century. Unfortunately, the buckle ring itself was missing from the bolster which still bore a box-and-cross design. On my next trip across the field, a copper coin emerged with an irregular edge and barely readable legend. Later cleaning would reveal that this was a penning of Albrech and Isabella, with the barely-decipherable date of 1608. I was certainly off to a good start!

Within an hour or two, I'd almost completely covered the field. A tractor pulled up into the adjoining field with two young farmers at the helm, and I recognised the Van Haesendonk brothers, old friends of the family and distant relatives of my wife. I stopped and we exchanged brief hellos as they tossed freshly-cut maize stalks to the cattle. As the tractor growled off to other pastures full of hungry bovinds, I returned to the field. I had about two passes left, and reflected that the hunting had been good, but not spectacular, short of what I might call a "hot spot. I'd made several finds, all of them rather shallow, as I'd decided to use a fairly high level of discrimination, the "Jewellery and Beach program of the Spectrum, but with the Preamp gain and Sensitivity settings tweaked just a bit. I'd found another belt bolster, a couple of 16th-century "spectacle" buckles, an ornate 18th or 19th century brass button, a 19th-century brass thimble, a couple of Belgian bullets from the first war. In addition to the penning, I'd also found a relatively rare pre-war one-centime of king Albert, dated 1912, and a small copper coin, probably 16th or 17th century, that was too corroded to identify. Then, of course, there was the inevitable pile of shrapnel balls. Not bad for a couple of hours' hunting, but not really what I'd call a great afternoon. Higher up the slope, an empty potato field was beckoning, and I was tempted to forgo the last couple of meters of the width of the field for a crack at that other field. The urge to finish something that I had begun prevailed, however, and so I went ahead and made my last two passes over the field. Halfway through the last pass, I got a very solid beep. I quickly recovered a green disk whose thickness - nearly 3 mm - meant that this could only be a Roman coin, and whose size indicated a follis, or possibly an Antoninianus with all the original silver plating worn off, but at any rate, certainly a late, probably 4th-century Roman coin. I was ecstatic! One of the things my detecting efforts tended to indicate is that the Roman colony on the right bank of the Zenna had bloomed and expanded by the 4th century - shortly before being overrun by invading Franks - to include the left bank. This was the sixth late-Roman coin to turn up in our village, and helps to clinch my hypothesis that there were Romans living here in Weerde by the fourth century - but not for long, for by the end of the 4th century, the Franks had arrived from across the Rhine, and the Romans who had lived here for generations had been forced to flee Southward to what is now Wallonian Belgium. Whoever had lost this late coin had almost certainly lived to see his cottage burned and his neighbours killed or run out of the region by the Frankish tribes.

As I stood there, at the edge of the field, holding my new-found prize, it suddenly occurred to me that this was the exact spot in the field where I'd found my other coin, seven long years ago. I must have swung the detector right over this follis then, but it had been buried too deeply to give a signal. Over the years chance, and the plough, had brought it closer to the surface. Having now had time to reflect on that coincidence, I realise that it's probably a good thing I didn't find this Roman coin that first time out. At that time, I wouldn't have appreciated its significance as a piece of archaeological evidence showing the growth of the Roman colony at Elewijt. Worse than that, it would have falsely raised my expectations, for it would have been more than two years until I found my next Roman coin. Before going home, I couldn't resist going over and making a couple of passes over that potato field which had looked so tempting, and had almost lured me away from those fateful last couple of meters of the stubblefield. It quickly became apparent that the other field held nothing but trash. Somewhere, there must be a god of village idiots who takes a special shine to those of his children who celebrate their faith by swinging metal detectors.

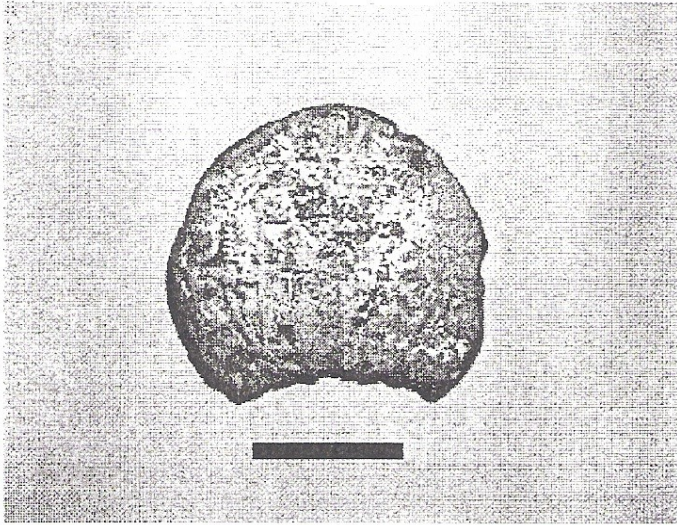


Fig 1. My very first coin, a 16th-century "brûle" of Cornelis van Berghes. My first fumbling attempts at cleaning the coin probably did more damage than good, but enough of the design remains for identification. I've since learned that the primary rule for cleaning coins is "don't". On this and all figures, scale bar is about 1 cm.



Fig 2. Strapends. Top is a mere fragment, impossible to date, but possibly from the 16th-17th century, like the lower example. Sadly, the buckle or ring itself was not to be found from the lower bolster, although I searched the immediate area very thoroughly, hoping it had been relatively recently detached.

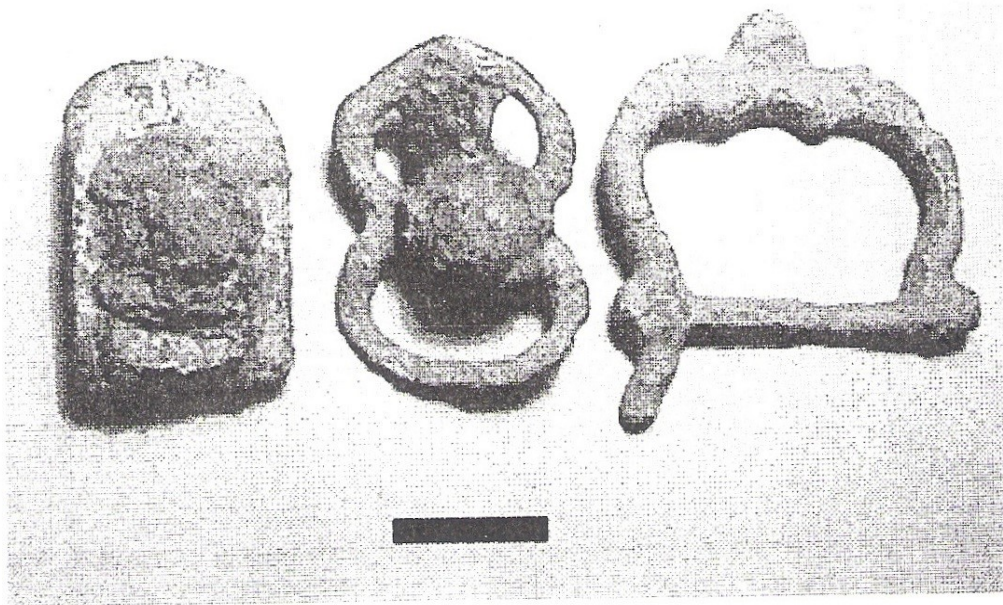


Fig. 3. Buckles. The silvered example to the left is similar to those popular between 1400 and 1500, probably from a hat or possibly from knee-breeches. "Spectacle" buckles, consisting of two loops like a pair of spectacles enjoyed popularity between 1350 and 1750. These two examples on the right are probably from the later part of that period, smaller was most likely used as a hat buckle, the other, larger but broken example is probably from a shoe.

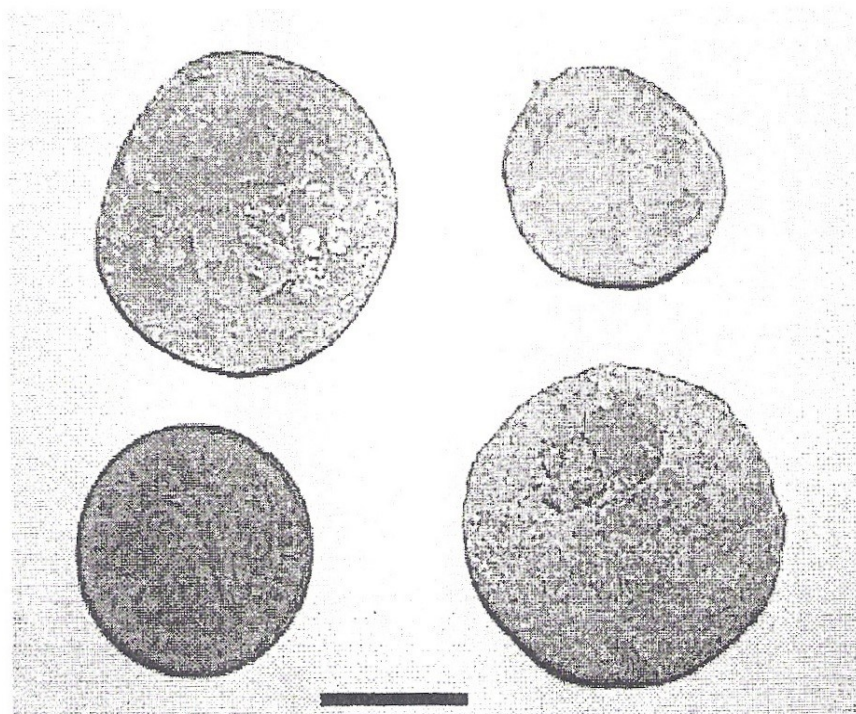


Fig. 4. Coins from all ages. Top, left: A copper penning of Alrecht and Isabella. The date, 16 - 08 is just discernable flanking the shield. Right, an unidentifiable copper coin, most likely one of the small coppers of Philip II, 16th century. Bottom, left: A one-centime of Albert, king of Belgium, dated 1912. These coins were recalled during the war so that the copper could be used in the war effort, and are relatively rare. Right, a late Roman coin, probably a follis, but possibly an antoninianus that has lost it's silver platin

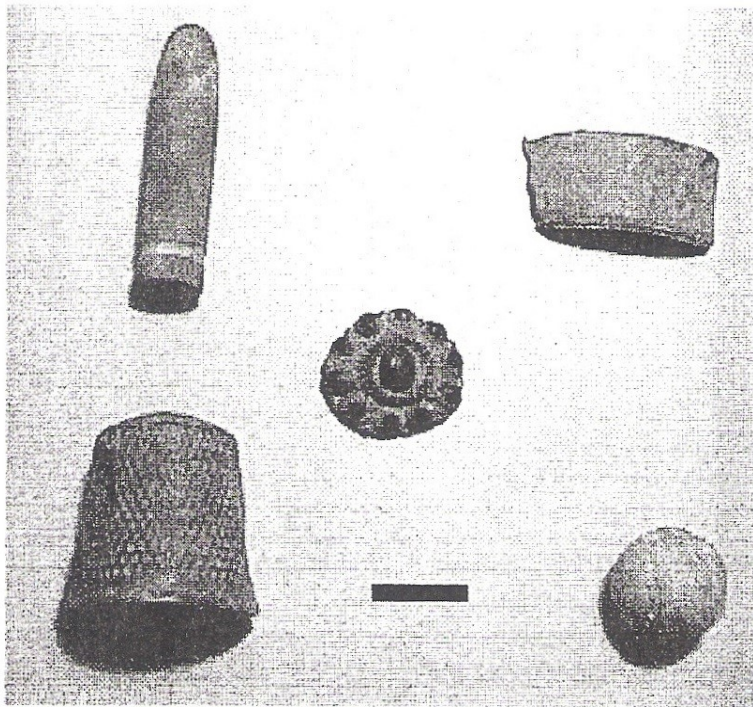
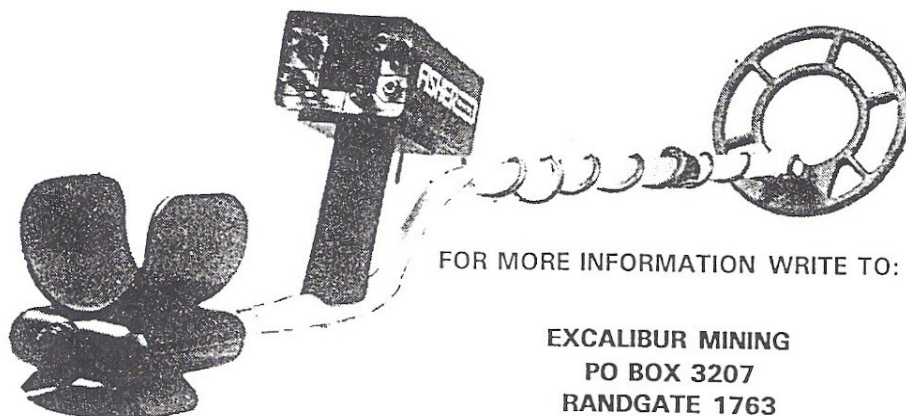


Fig. 5 Sundry, typical finds. Upper left a Belgian bullet from WWI; Right, a piece of the nose of an anti-aircraft artillery round. Center, 19th century copper button, missing its back. Below, left, a brass thimble, no earlier than 18th century. Right, One of the two thousand shrapnel balls I've found in the area in the last 5 years.

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