

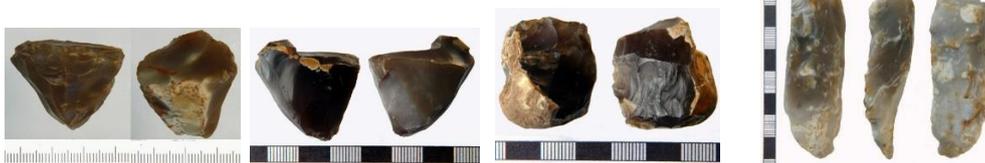
Finds on your Doorstep – 12,000 years of life in Barton-upon-Humber - finds recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (search for finds.org.uk) – by Martin Foreman, Finds Liaison Officer for North Lincolnshire

Prehistory, Mesolithic to Bronze Age (10,000-800 BC) 76 records

Stone Age finds from Barton parish come mainly from the Wolds which overlook the town. Most date from the end of Mesolithic hunter-gatherer days and the start of a Neolithic revolution which introduced settled farming life to Britain. The light soils permitted early farmers to scratch furrows to plant their crops, whilst the Wolds chalk includes pale grey flint which was used by the flint-knapper to make tools.

Flints have been found particularly between the Burnham and Caistor Roads. This find-spot links early traces of human activity and settlement to the course of Barton Street, an ancient upland route.

Flint cores are left from the striking of blades - pyramid-shaped cores are an earlier type. Dark glassy flint is better to make tools than the Wolds' flint: people were already seeking better materials from further afield.



Dark flint, perhaps collected from the East Coast

NLM-317FA0

NLM-E58702

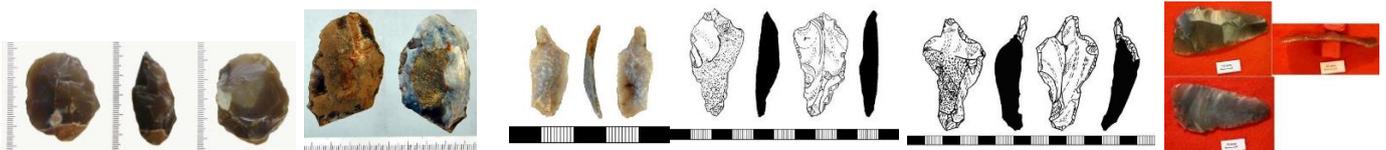
NLM-E5B4E5

Paler flint cores of the local Wolds flint

NLM-C28298

NLM-8FAF32

Scrapers and piercers were used to clean hides and make holes in them so they could be stitched together. A flint knife was a general-purpose tool, often robustly made to withstand frequent use without losing its edge.



Mesolithic scrapers

NLM-F0E4D4

NLM-3F8783

Piercing tools – a drawing highlights the working

NLM-C1CD96

NLM-E373F1

NLM-CB0FE2

Flint knife

NLM-E38B45

Neolithic flints are more common, though the tools often look similar. An arrowhead from near the Humber marks a hunting trip to the marshes; a hollow scraper was a specialised tool to trim the wooden arrow-shaft.



Neolithic scraper, piercer and flint knife fragment

NLM-BFAD57

NLM-BFBA93

NLM-361952



Arrowhead & hollow scraper

NLM-01BE01

NLM-CB4460

Bronze Age flints were even more quickly-made versions of the same tools for much the same jobs. Metal was at first used only for prestige objects, but woodworking tools and metal weapons were soon to follow.



Old fashioned – Bronze Age flint scrapers

NLM-71DA73

NLM-711304

NLM-8FC573



Miniature axe, awl and mis-cast axe fragment

NLM-E39931

NLM-F31725

NLM-3FD436

What's the point of metal?

The miniature axe above imitates the form of early copper axes, which may have been for religious use or just for show – stone axes might cut down trees or hurt people just as well! Metal tools were different, as they increased the range of large complex objects which could be constructed. The Humber produced Europe's oldest sea-going boats, and a boatyard lay just across the river at North Ferriby. Bronze weapons might arm a warband, but boats meant they could now project their power as never before.

The Iron Age (800 BC- AD 43) 16 records

Iron Age finds date from the late part of this period. Extended families and clans had merged into tribes: the Corieltavi of the eastern Midlands centred on Lincolnshire. They issued coins of gold and silver from about 50 BC, though it is most improbable these were used like modern money.

Britons were now aware of the Romans, and local warriors may have fought against them alongside their cousins in Gaul. Some Celtic coin designs copy those dedicated to the Greek sun god Apollo, with a wreath that looks like a corn-ear. Corieltavi coins also feature horses, perhaps drawing the chariot of sun or moon.

Some gold coins feature horses; later types bear Celtic names but written in Roman letters. Silver coins of the Corieltavi were common: their horse and boar motifs were both copied from Greek and Roman coins.



Warrior's wage? - Gold Celtic coins from Gaul

CCI-962856

CCI-930704

CCI-962859

CCI-981527



Corieltavi coins of gold and bronze

CCI-971763



NLM-D84D06

The Roman period (AD 43-410) 261 records

Between AD 43 and AD 70, Barton was at the edge of the Roman Empire, with free Britain always in sight just across the Humber. This was a militarised zone with an army base at Winteringham.

The legions marched North in AD 70, pushing the frontier northwards. The Roman presence does not initially seem to have dislocated local life, so perhaps peaceful agreement was reached with the Corieltavi. Celtic costume fittings actually become more common than before, with a new market-style economy driving their manufacture and distribution, and with the army as eager customers for food and supplies.

Roman coins date from Titus (AD 79-81) onwards, a series only starting after the advance into Yorkshire. The first are silver - soldiers were paid in silver. Base metal coins appear in the 2nd century AD, and may point to a local use of coinage more closely resembling what we would expect to see in a money economy.



Silver Denarii to pay troops – no. 3 is a forgery

NLM-1BCD67

NLM-E578A4

NLM-29B843

NLM-00BD07

Copper alloy low denomination coins

NLM-1A7741

NLM-6C6B60

‘Celtic’ brooches were made and developed mainly under Roman rule, so more people could now own things previously reserved for their rulers. Was this *levelling up* or *levelling down*? And *cui bono*?*



Colchester derivative brooches

NLM-0B8472

NLM-F2CF98

NLM-DBF574

NLM-0247A4

Headstud brooches and a trumpet brooch

NLM-44A463

NLM-88FA70

NLM-D7DFC1

Law'n'Order

**Cui Bono* is Latin for *who benefits?* – a legal test lawyers still use today. The Romans brought both writing and the idea of written law, which limits what individuals may do to others and what their government may do to them. The Army put military might behind the law, giving it teeth. And also behind traditional rulers who chose to make their accommodation with the new regime.

The Roman period (AD 43-410 - continued)

Roman finds come from the Wolds, but also from the Humber bank. The latter are perhaps from low-lying settlements now lost to the river. Iron Age landscapes comprised a scatter of small farmsteads, perhaps one every 500 metres or so in densely occupied regions, as still seen in western Ireland today. Roman occupation promoted demand for commodities, and hides and grain to supply both the Army and a wider Roman world. The late Roman period saw naval convoys bear British grain over the North Sea to feed garrisons on the Rhine. Coins struck at Continental mints made the return journey – but to pay the farmers or their minders?

Copper alloy coins circulated by the million across the later Empire, promoting a corporate image of Roman rule. An idealised image of the ruler was backed by lively cartoons implying his invincibility and virtue.



Coins of Constantine and Co. (306-364): the reverses feature altars, soldiers, battles and jolly jubilees

FASAM-4B7E98

NLM-D6EB03

NLM-6DC718

NLM-01F8A0

NLM-D6FE42

Rulers in uniform, and soldiers parading their standards or bashing barbarians were favourite topics. Some coins show the marching emperor dragging a captive under a banner bearing the Christian *Chi Rho* emblem.



Coin reverses of the House of Valentinian (364-383) feature Victory or emperors dressed as soldiers

NLM-C177D6

NLM-01C553

NLM-D5FCD4

NLM-3F7905

NLM-019CA1

NLM-2A6866

The Early Anglo-Saxon period (AD 410-700) 4 records

Roman rule was effectively a military dictatorship. But, local cronies of Empire were vulnerable, not just to barbarian raids, but to internal threats: changes in management, local rivals, or discontented underlings. Especially when adventurers stripped Britain of troops – soldiers were the nearest thing to a police force. One solution was to hire in barbarian muscle. But Anglo-Saxon mercenaries proved fickle friends to sub-Roman paymasters. Their guard-posts at first controlled access to centres of local rule, but within decades they were contesting ownership of lands they had been hired to ‘protect’.

Early Anglo-Saxon settlement in Barton was along a terrace overlooking the Humber. Their cemetery, at the north end of the Barton Street, lay within an already-ancient banked monument, and was used for 200 years.



Girdle hangers and object from beside Barton Street

NLM-89C144

NLM-FF0EB4

NLM-AF5483



Gold pendant from beside the Brigg road

SWYOR-293CB4

We remain outside...

Girdle hangers may mark the graves of women buried in Anglo-Saxon dress outside Barton in the early to mid 500s. Though on the highway to the Castledyke South cemetery, for some reason their family did not choose to use that place. A gold pendant probably comes from an upper class lady's grave of the later 600s; from its design she was perhaps a Christian. Again, she was not laid in the long-established cemetery, but in an outlying position overlooking the Humber.

The Middle Anglo-Saxon period (AD 700-850) 7 records

The conversion of England to Christianity was promoted from monasteries established by missionaries. The first came from Ireland, where Celtic Christianity had gained ground. Later missions came from Rome: though no longer an imperial capital, its impressive heritage was still deployed to support a *Roman Catholic* Church under the Pope as Bishop of Rome.

A Celtic-style monastery-on-sea was established *Ad Barueu* [at Barrow] in AD 678. Irish monks looked to waterways to maintain links with their founding saints and co-religionists, to trade, and to advance the faith. Barton was part of a landed endowment to support and feed the monastery, its *Beretun* or barley farm.

Monasteries attracted traders, and craftsmen too, meeting worldly and spiritual aims. Middle Saxon finds all come from fields west of modern Barton; that is, between the Barrow monastery and its dependent *Beretun*.



Gold Frankish Tremissis

NLM-7504A2



Buckle, strap end and dress fastening pin

NLM-F3C144

NLM-BD5082



NLM-E1F121



Lead writing lead or pencil

NLM-685DD6

The Viking Age (850-1066) 16 records

Monastic wealth and the population gathered around Christian monasteries were irresistible to Vikings with their sights set on stealing, silver, and slaves. The Irish preference for waterside settings was fatal when the threat came in longships, and the Barrow estate proved easy pickings.

Looted silver was *hacked* to circulate as change among Vikings who used no coins. A bullion economy based on precious scrap required everyone to have weights to check the payments they made or received. Lead weights and a Viking strap end come from near the Humber bridge - perhaps where pirates camped.

Viking systems of measurement have been calculated from the many weights and *hacksilver* fragments found at Dublin in Ireland, and Kaupang, Sweden. There were two parallel systems: Danish, and Norwegian.



Finds suggest Viking women joined the menfolk to settle – or perhaps that English widows or slaves were promptly put to work. Lead spindle whorls may have plied cord – it takes lots of rope to rig a longship.



A mixed bunch of thugs?...

Of the weights above found near the Humber Bridge, the first two appear to observe the Danish system of measurement, and the second pair the Norwegian or Norse system. Was this a multinational task force – Viking was ‘a job description not a nationality’ – or was there somewhere close at hand which was handy for pulling up longships; a mud beach or haven used by different gangs at different times?

The Medieval Period (1066-1500) 334 records

The central streets of Barton form a rectilinear grid typical of medieval towns. St Peter’s, a pre-Conquest church, fits into the pattern. This could suggest Viking or even Middle Saxon origins. Suburbs downslope from this ancient core were later planned to serve the medieval port.

Medieval finds come from outside the town, again, most from between Caister and Burnham Roads. This might indicate the site of a town midden, to which rubbish swept from homes was carted, and from where it could then be spread every winter to fertilise the fields. Finds rarely walked to their find-spots, and few were probably lost there!

Lost coins suggest times of local prosperity – especially between the reigns of Henry III and Edward III (1216-1377). An influx of silver may point to local shipmen being paid for their service in royal ‘navies’.



Small change: pennies of Henry III were often cut to enable silver coins to be used for daily purchases

NLM-F4A192

NLM-2CBF92

NLM-69A2F7

NLM-986182

NLM-DB0B95

NLM-EE08B2

Edward I fought wars of aggression in Wales and Scotland. He called up masses of craftsmen, engineers, builders, and labourers, as well as soldiers and sailors, for combined operations to subdue his neighbours.



Edwardian pennies: no. 2 may be a Continental copy, no. 4 is from Dublin

NLM-DBF114

NLM-30ADD4

NLM-2156E1

LIN-FDF061

NLM-FD2134

Halfpenny & farthing

NLM-0BB225

NLM-FFCCD2

Edward III's wars were fought in Europe, and efficient mercenary armies led by the Black Prince and other captains scoured rural France in destructive raids. Overseas adventures required the hired help of shipmen.



Pennies of Edward III: sixpence was the daily wage of an archer Silver groats: 1 groat = 4 pennies

NLM-D6C5A2

NLM-D679C5

NLM-E56E30

NLM-350184

NLM-129CF0

NLM-348357

NLM-E6FF62

Nearly one third of the objects found are from clothing, mostly belt fittings. They come from all round Barton. Some may point to soiled, worn or outmoded clothing being discarded, ending up on the fields.



Belt buckles, earlier to later styles of the same single-looped form, the last discarded with its strap

NLM-160813

NLM-741D61

NLM-DB7312

NLM-291FC5

NLM-F354B5

NLM-2A7A45

NLM-6972E4

NLM-F48F34

The Medieval Period (1066-1500 - continued)

A horse was perhaps like a car, a step towards respectability as well as a convenience. Military success made heraldry fashionable; armorial accessories might be worn by people with no lordly connections whatsoever.



Horse harness pendants, three displaying religious images; the third and fourth show heraldic Arms

NLM-D8E523

NLM-72EA85

NLM-964BD8

NLM-31EC33

NLM-DCE937

Barton had a market as well as a port. Weights shaped like a shield or bearing emblems gave an impression of official sanction, though lead weights would later be outlawed as anyone could cast their own at home!



Lead weights, mostly fractions of a pound, some with 'official' lion motifs: all were used from c.1350

NLM-7C00A7

NLM-2CB406

NLM-5C9941

NLM-1EB386

NLM-6F0476

Fishermen used weights on nets and lines; medieval herring fisheries were controlled by the Low Countries.



Lead weights: nos 2 and 3 perhaps moulded from fingertips; no. 4 is a reused whorl with tying notches

NLM-BE17C5

NLM-10C0A5

NLM-10B6C6

NLM-2BBF56

NLM-FFF027

NLM-FFE054

NLM-713A81

A seal matrix was a personalised stamp used to sign documents, especially to confirm deals. These were perhaps owned by a Frenchman (no. 1) and a Dutchman (no. 2), merchants or seamen, as well as by locals.



Better matrixes were of copper alloy. Lead seals were made up for a single use from a blank like no. 6

NLM-0D7F47

NLM-0BF561

NLM-69DE0C

NLM-898C55

NLM-DB66D7

NLM-39FDF8

NLM6960

Not coins but counters: jettons were moved across a *chequer board* to do sums; often made abroad, these include examples from France and the Low Countries. Only the one at the end is English: a *sterling* jetton.



Jettons suggest the work of a counting house or a business which regularly dealt with cash payments

NLM-5C4D96

NLM-D2BC4C

NLM-786AC4

NLM-D93A32

NLM-216025