

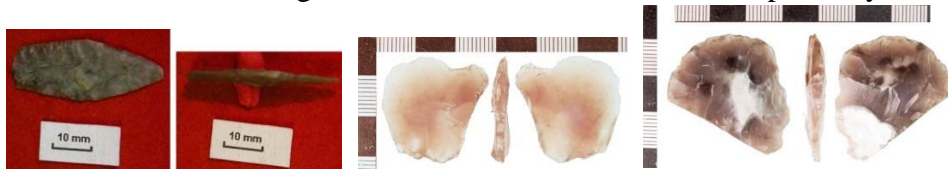
Finds on your Doorstep – 6000 years of life in Thornton Curtis - finds recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (search for finds.org.uk) – by Martin Foreman, Finds Liaison Officer for North Lincolnshire

The Prehistoric and Roman periods (2500 BC – AD 410) 9 records

A sparse scattering of earlier objects is perhaps most meaningfully viewed against the adventitious background of cropmarks available from satellite mapping imagery. These show a network of mingled palaeochannels and possible rectilinear enclosures. Late Neolithic flints (2500-2350 BC) may relate to the former, and Roman finds to the latter.

An arrowhead might suggest a Neolithic hunting trip, while other flints point more specifically to the later Neolithic (2500-2350 BC). A few Roman finds provide a surprisingly comprehensive date range between the early 1st and late 4th centuries, which seems apt to development of once-marginal land from a possible 'ladder settlement'.

A rhomboid point was identified as an arrowhead, though it might rather be a member of a late class of projectile point whose excellent finishing stands at odds with suggested function. An oblique arrowhead illustrates economical flint-working, while a knife is Late Neolithic, as probably are accompanying finds.



Flint objects present a representative suite of Late Neolithic forms

NLM-9F3FF1

NLM-BC9ED5

NLM-D0CAC8

Roman objects were scattered across an area of rectilinear cropmarks, and their dating suggests local activity throughout the period. The number and nature of the finds does not permit closer definition of its character.



Brooch fragment and pot mend

Coins of the period AD 175-378

NLM-D18585

NLM-D0D63E

NLM-FB5FD9

NLM-D0E9AA

NLM-FB95CB

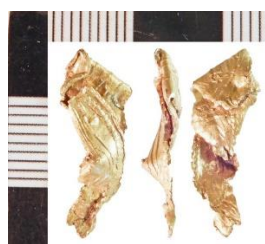
NLM-7535CB

The Early Medieval period (AD 410-1066) 4 records

The presence of a late Roman Valentinian-period occupation often seems precursor to a subsequent Early Anglo-Saxon (AD 410-700) presence, and this is the case at Thornton Curtis. A farm at Burnham seems to have been focal to such slight activity as is evidenced up to 1066.

A gold bracteate pendant is a distressed example of an important object type of which several examples are recently reported from northern Lincolnshire. A brooch and a lead whorl suggest occupation – as perhaps opposed to whatever activity bracteates may represent – of Middle Saxon date, while another whorl hints at its continuation under Viking or Anglo-Scandinavian management.

A bracteate is from Early Anglo-Saxon pagandom, and designs on such pendants are often associated with the cult of Woden. A middle Saxon brooch marks Christian English occupation, along with a whorl of unusual weight. Another whorl deemed of Viking-Age date is more likely to have been used to spin a yarn.



Crumpled pendant

NLM-26C036



Lozenge-shaped brooch and whorl

NLM-FB5746



NLM-751DB4



Viking spindle whorl

NLM-74FDD7

The Medieval period (1066-1500) 38 records

Medieval finds are distributed in a manner which appears to indicate their origin from a shrunken or lost village now marked by a later farm at Burnham. A single object comes from formal excavation of late medieval deposits at Thornton Abbey, a wealthy monastic house at the eastern corner of the parish. The village assemblage is dated by coins to the period 1154-1377, with other objects confirming its continuation through the 14th and 15th centuries. There is scant evidence for medieval activity around the modern village of Thornton Curtis, though this may merely indicate the focus of searching to date.

Medieval coins reflect a normal level of economic activity for North Lincolnshire. Though an Edwardian profile is lower than usual, two Scottish coins of the period – both folded – compensate for the deficit.



Silver fractions from earlier times and whole Edwardian pennies show a typical medieval sequence

NLM-4DE342 NLM-D0F667 NLM-F4504B NLM-FB87F5 NLM-4DC241 NLM-FBB7F6 NLM-D12D21 NLM-BCABBD NLM-D103AA

Buckles extend the date-range offered by coins. There was a particular Burnham preference for the D-shaped knopped frames, but all were of simply cast one-piece forms which could have been made locally.



Single looped buckles of forms dated from 1250 to 1550

NLM-4D311C NLM-508495 NLM-FB0691 NLM-26EAB5 NLM-D0E095 NLM-FBA495 NLM-D18F96 NLM-A58B86 NLM-7D0912

Domestic pottery is occasionally reported, but not the more expensive metal cooking pots. Other finds are typical of domestic assemblages. A late medieval silver-gilt Tau-cross pendant comes from the Abbey.



Cooking pot and tableware

NLM-7CDEC5 NLM-7CCE17 NLM-7CB3C5

Weights

NLM-D19974

Key

NLM-752785

Ring

NLM-26F628 NLM-A58098

Badge & Tau-cross

NLM667

LIN-D1EFDA

The Post-Medieval period (1500-1900) 27 records

Coins, or the lack of them along with other diagnostic artefact types, might suggest abandonment of the medieval village had taken place by about 1550. Most objects point to the later history of the present farm at Burnham, which may have begun in the later 17th century. Only a couple of objects come from locations which might hint at their origin at Thornton Curtis or the Abbey.

A truncated post-medieval sequence might suggest the Burnham village to have disappeared at much the same time that Thornton Abbey was finally dissolved – though it survived longer than most monasteries.

