

FIELDWALKING AT SUTTERBY

The word 'Exciting' is not usually in our list of terms relevant to fieldwalking ... its usually just about pottery, flint and fragmentary field drains!

But our first survey session this year proved to be the exception as one of our walkers, (well done Ray!) spotted a coin on his transect ... This was no mere groat lost by a medieval peasant ... it was an Iron Age coin of the Corieltavi tribe (the Lincs/Leics lot) dating somewhere in the period AD 10 - 50 - Just before and into the Roman Invasion.

The following week I took the coin to Adam Daubney (Portable Antiquities Scheme, Finds Liaison Officer) for identification. Adam says it is a type of coin called a 'stater'. It has a crude wreath on its obverse and a stylised horse on the reverse with the legend 'VEP CORF'. (Thus these coins are generally known as *vep-corfs*.) It is thought that VEP might be the first part of the Corieltavi ruler's name. It might mean 'voice' or 'word'.

The coin was found in exceptionally clean condition (i.e. with no corrosion) and this is because its surface is gold alloy. Adam says many of these later staters are gold plated on a copper core, although this one (which weighs 5.28g) might even be made of the gold alloy called electrum. Electrum is a mix of gold, silver and copper.

Here are Mick Holmes's photos of the coin:



Adam says that the damage visible on the coin is more likely to be damage on the die from which the coin was struck, rather than damage to the coin.

We tend to think of coins being used for trading and exchange, but these early staters rarely show any signs of wear, leading the experts to speculate that they might have been produced purely for votive uses.

After further survey, we are pretty sure that this is an isolated loss and, sadly, not the tip of the Sutterby Hoard! William Price is delighted with the find and will; be keeping it in pride of place at Harrington as tangible evidence of the long history of settlement and land-use in the area.

Dave Start
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