

# North Worcestershire Archaeology Group



Metal detector finds from Shrawley Wood, Worcestershire.

Ferrous and non-ferrous Buckles found at The Forge Mill, Astley,  
and in the vicinity.

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# **Metal detector finds from Shrawley Wood, Worcestershire**

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## **1. Summary**

A total of 40 Fe, Pb and Cu alloy objects were recovered by metal detector surveys conducted over an indeterminate number of years in Shrawley Wood, Worcestershire. These are overwhelmingly shoe and belt buckles of Medieval to post-Medieval/Modern date, although likely post-Medieval furniture fittings are also included. An absence of secure provenance greatly hinders the interpretation of the assemblage, but it is suggested that the objects represent casual losses accumulated over centuries through documented activity in the vicinity of the wood. All objects have been photographed and included in an attached catalogue, to be returned to the landowner.

## **2. Introduction**

### **2.1 The site**

Shrawley Wood (SO8066) is a 450-acre expanse of woodland located roughly 1km northeast of the village of Shrawley, Worcestershire, overlying a geology composed of the Triassic Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation.

### **2.2 Artefact recovery policy**

The finds recorded here were passed on to the North Worcestershire Archaeology Group (NWAG) with little record of findspots or recovery policy, beyond the recognition that they were recovered by metal detector survey conducted over an indeterminate number of years in Shrawley Wood.

## **3. Method of analysis**

All finds were examined and recorded on a Microsoft Access 2007 database. All have been identified, quantified and, where possible, dated. Buckle dating is based on Whitehead (2003).

## **4. Artefact analysis**

The assemblage consists of 40 metal objects weighing a total 857g. 20 of the objects (432g) were made of Fe, 18 (309g) of Cu alloy, and 2 (116g) of Pb (Table 1). Levels of

preservation vary between metals, with Cu alloy and Pb finds in a fair condition whereas Fe objects are often highly corroded and broken.

Material	Quantity	Total weight (g)
All Fe objects	20	432
Fe buckles	13	350
Fe furniture fittings	1	12
Unidentified Fe objects	6	70
All Cu alloy objects	18	309
Cu alloy buckles	15	274
Cu alloy furniture fittings	3	35
All Pb objects	2	116
Pb furniture fittings	2	116
All objects	40	857

**Table 1: Quantification**

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 The buckles

Buckles and strap fittings make up the largest part of this assemblage, representing 70% of total finds. Given the lack of information about artefact recovery, this may represent a subjective bias on behalf of the surveyor towards such objects. They are known in both Fe and Cu alloy varieties, and potentially span a date range from the Medieval to post-Medieval/Modern periods. The overwhelming majority, however, seem to date from the late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> to the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries; those attributed such dates are usually done so noticeably more securely than many of the other examples. Nevertheless chronological precision is hindered by the tendency towards conservatism in buckle forms, so it is possible that many date considerably later than their catalogue dates would suggest.

Of particular note are several examples of later-style Fe shoe buckles, likely dating from c.1760-1790. These are of interest due to strong stylistic similarities with Whitehead (2003) nos. 705-707, suggesting that they represent efforts at producing more 'upmarket' styles in cheaper materials; they may have been worn by less well-off locals.

### 5.2 The furniture fittings

Furniture fittings make up 15% of the assemblage. At least 3 appear to be handles, of which 2 are probably drawer handles and 1 a door handle. While comparative material is not particularly forthcoming, stylistically all seem to be later post-Medieval/Modern in date.

### **5.3 Unidentified objects**

6 Fe objects could not be identified. On the basis of morphology they are likely to represent buckles, although they are either too small or too corroded to be identified or dated with reasonable security. However, there are no immediately striking features which would suggest a date outside of the range already given.

### **5.4 Conclusions**

Given the absence of secure provenance, it is hard to infer much from this assemblage. In general the finds would suggest that Shrawley Wood was the site of activity predominantly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with a predominance of belt and shoe buckles reasonably interpreted as casual losses – although it may simply be a reflection of recovery biases. On the basis of Fe shoe buckles 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 21 in particular, it may be reasonably suggested that the activities taking place may have involved middle to lower class people. When combined with the furniture fittings, the finds are generally suggestive of some kind of settlement, although absence of provenance data makes this relatively difficult to verify.





Many of the objects recovered from Shrawley Wood may have been locally produced. It has been suggested that the nearby furnace at Dick Brook was producing iron and tin-glazed products (Comley 2007, p 20); it is not unreasonable to suppose that buckles and other fittings may have been part of the repertoire produced there.





## **6. Bibliography**





Comley, S. 2007. Dick Brook and Andrew Yarranton. In J Mills, ed. *Shrawley through the ages*. [e-book]. Available through: <[http://www.shrawley.org.uk/Shrawley\\_Website/Shrawley\\_thro\\_the\\_Ages\\_files/Section%20Two.pdf](http://www.shrawley.org.uk/Shrawley_Website/Shrawley_thro_the_Ages_files/Section%20Two.pdf)> [Accessed 30 May 2013].

Whitehead, R. 2003. *Buckles: 1250-1800*. Witham: Greenlight Publishing.


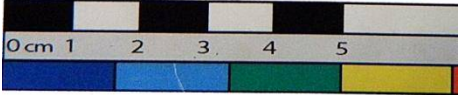




## 7. Catalogue

001.		<p><b>Garter buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1720-1790)</b></p> <p><b>Height 29mm</b>  <b>Width 22mm</b>  <b>Thickness 1mm</b>  <b>Weight 5g</b></p>
002.		<p><b>Trapezoidal buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1570-1700)</b></p> <p><b>Height 22mm</b>  <b>Width 21mm</b>  <b>Thickness 1mm</b>  <b>Weight 5g</b></p>
003.		<p><b>Spectacle buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c.1350-1650)</b></p> <p><b>Height 25mm</b>  <b>Width 18mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 3g</b></p>
004.		<p><b>Spectacle buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1600-1720)</b></p> <p><b>Height 42mm</b>  <b>Width 75mm</b>  <b>Thickness 5mm</b>  <b>Weight 48g</b></p>




005.		<p><b>Spectacle buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1550-1650)</b></p> <p><b>Height 35mm</b>  <b>Width 24mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 4g</b></p>
006.		<p><b>Annular buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c.1350-1720)</b></p> <p><b>Height 65mm</b>  <b>Width 66mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 53mm</b></p>
007.		<p><b>Subrectangular buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1600-1700)</b></p> <p><b>Height 35mm</b>  <b>Width 58mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 22g</b></p>
008.		<p><b>Asymmetrical buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c. 1350-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 36mm</b>  <b>Width 43mm</b>  <b>Thickness 5mm</b>  <b>Weight 21g</b></p>




009.		<p><b>Asymmetrical buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c. 1350-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 34mm</b>  <b>Width 41mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 21g</b></p>
010.		<p><b>Single looped buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c. 1250-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 44mm</b>  <b>Width 44mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 22g</b></p>
011.		<p><b>Single looped buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval (c. 1250-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 47mm</b>  <b>Width 46mm</b>  <b>Thickness 5mm</b>  <b>Weight 32g</b></p>
012.		<p><b>Single looped buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c. 1660-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 34mm</b>  <b>Width 29mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 8g</b></p>









<p><b>013.</b></p>	 	<p><b>Annular buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval</b>  <b>(c.1350-1720)</b></p> <p><b>Height 53mm</b>  <b>Width 49mm</b>  <b>Thickness 1mm</b>  <b>Weight 7g</b></p>
<p><b>014.</b></p>	 	<p><b>Shoe buckle</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</b></p> <p><b>Height 65mm</b>  <b>Width 78mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 29g</b></p>
<p><b>015.</b></p>	 	<p><b>Shoe buckle</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</b></p> <p><b>Height 54mm</b>  <b>Width 71mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 35g</b></p>







016.		<p>Shoe buckle Cast Fe Shrawley Wood Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</p> <p>Height 54mm Width 83mm Thickness 4mm Weight 55g</p>
017.		<p>Shoe buckle Cast Fe Shrawley Wood Post-Medieval (c.1720-1790)</p> <p>Height 49mm Width 65mm Thickness 3mm Weight 18g</p>
018.		<p>Asymmetrical buckle Cast Cu alloy Shrawley Wood Post-Medieval (c.1660-1800)</p> <p>Height 33mm Width 22mm Thickness 3mm Weight 11g</p>




<p>019.</p>		<p>Shoe buckle  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</p> <p>Height 58mm  Width 73mm  Thickness 3mm  Weight 42g</p>
<p>020.</p>		<p>Shoe buckle  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</p> <p>Height 74mm  Width 94mm  Thickness 5mm  Weight 39g</p>
<p>021.</p>		<p>Shoe buckle  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval (c.1760-1790)</p> <p>Height 40mm  Width 83mm  Thickness 4mm  Weight 14g</p>





<p><b>022.</b></p>		<p><b>Shoe buckle</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1720-1790)</b></p> <p><b>Height 52mm</b>  <b>Width 63mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 12g</b></p>
<p><b>023.</b></p>		<p><b>Asymmetrical buckle</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1660-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 46mm</b>  <b>Width 37mm</b>  <b>Thickness 6mm</b>  <b>Weight 13g</b></p>
<p><b>024.</b></p>		<p><b>Shoe buckle</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval (c.1690-1720)</b></p> <p><b>Height 48mm</b>  <b>Width 36mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 14g</b></p>

<p>025.</p>		<p>Shoe buckle  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval (c.1720-1790)</p> <p>Height 47mm  Width 46mm  Thickness 5mm  Weight 10g</p>
<p>026.</p>		<p>Buckle/strap fastening  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval/Modern (c.1720-2000)</p> <p>Height 89mm  Width 48mm  Thickness 3mm  Weight 25g</p>
<p>027.</p>		<p>Buckle/strap fastening  Cast Fe  Shrawley Wood  Post-Medieval/Modern (c.1720-2000)</p> <p>Height 94mm  Width 54mm  Thickness 4mm  Weight 44g</p>

028.		<p><b>Asymmetrical buckle</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Medieval/Post-Medieval</b>  <b>(c.1350-1800)</b></p> <p><b>Height 28mm</b>  <b>Width 37mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 12g</b></p>
029.		<p><b>Furniture fitting</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern</b>  <b>(c.1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 26mm</b>  <b>Width 29mm</b>  <b>Thickness 1mm</b>  <b>Weight 19g</b></p>
030.		<p><b>Furniture fitting</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern</b>  <b>(c. 1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 34mm</b>  <b>Width 14mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 4g</b></p>
031.		<p><b>Furniture fitting</b>  <b>Cast Cu alloy</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern</b>  <b>(c. 1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 37mm</b>  <b>Width 57mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 12g</b></p>



<p>032.</p>		<p><b>Furniture fitting</b>  <b>Wrought Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern</b>  <b>(c.1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 52mm</b>  <b>Width 22mm</b>  <b>Thickness 4mm</b>  <b>Weight 12g</b></p>
<p>033.</p>		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 55mm</b>  <b>Width 44mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 18g</b></p>
<p>034.</p>		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 22mm</b>  <b>Width 19mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 2g</b></p>

035.		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 33mm</b>  <b>Width 29mm</b>  <b>Thickness 3mm</b>  <b>Weight 4g</b></p>
036.		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 48mm</b>  <b>Width 29mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 5g</b></p>
037.		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 78mm</b>  <b>Width 20mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 26g</b></p>
038.		<p><b>Unknown object</b>  <b>Cast Fe</b>  <b>Shrawley Wood</b>  <b>Post-Medieval/Modern?</b></p> <p><b>Height 65mm</b>  <b>Width 45mm</b>  <b>Thickness 2mm</b>  <b>Weight 15g</b></p>



<p><b>039.</b></p>		<p><b>Furniture fitting Cast Pb Shrawley Wood Post-Medieval/Modern (c. 1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 53mm Width 30mm Thickness 6mm Weight 40g</b></p>
<p><b>040.</b></p>		<p><b>Furniture fitting Cast Pb Shrawley Wood Post-Medieval/Modern (c.1700-2000)</b></p> <p><b>Height 87mm Width 41mm Thickness 14mm Weight 76g</b></p>