

Largest-ever Anglo-Saxon treasure trove discovered in Britain

An amateur treasure hunter has unearthed the largest-ever amount of gold and silver from the Anglo-Saxon period found in Britain, archaeologists said Thursday.

Terry Herbert, 55, came across the hoard as he searched fields near his home in Staffordshire, central Britain, in July, using his trusted 14-year-old metal detector.

The hoard of 1,500 pieces, which includes five kg of gold and 2.5 kg of silver, is believed to date back to the 7th century and could have belonged to Saxon royalty.

'This is absolutely phenomenal. It is a hugely hugely important find ... the volume and size and range of material is amazing and there are things here that we have not seen before,' said Duncan Slarke, finds liaison officer for Staffordshire.

Many of the items in the hoard are weapons and armour, including sword pommel caps and hilt plates, often inlaid with precious stones.

'This is going to alter our perceptions of Anglo-Saxon England,' said Leslie Webster, former keeper at the British Museum's Department of Prehistory and Europe.

Experts of the British Museum have been called in to value the collection and prepare an exhibition of selected items in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery next month.

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