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Varietas delectat: towards a classification of mixed-media sculpture in the Middle Ages

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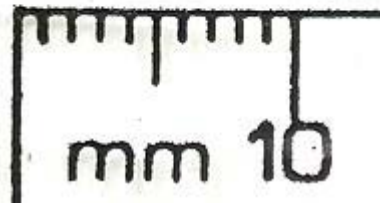
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Late Gothic Art

Intriguing Finds of Metal Detectorist



A small plaque discovered by a metal detectorist was brought to Finds Day at the Chesterfield Museum in Derby, England. Derby University scientists scanned the piece and found that it is gilt silver. Featuring the head of a man with a pointed hat and two rather illegible designs on either side, it has not yet been identified. Could it be a pilgrim badge honoring St. Thomas Becket, Canterbury Cathedral?

Seventy-Five Pilgrim Souvenirs Discovered in Leicestershire



Metal detectorists over the past few years (especially since 2003) have discovered a range of pilgrim souvenirs that reveal the wide travels of people who lived in medieval Leicestershire. Pilgrim souvenirs show that these travelers went as far afield as Canterbury, Windsor, and Walsingham in England and St. Andrews in Scotland.

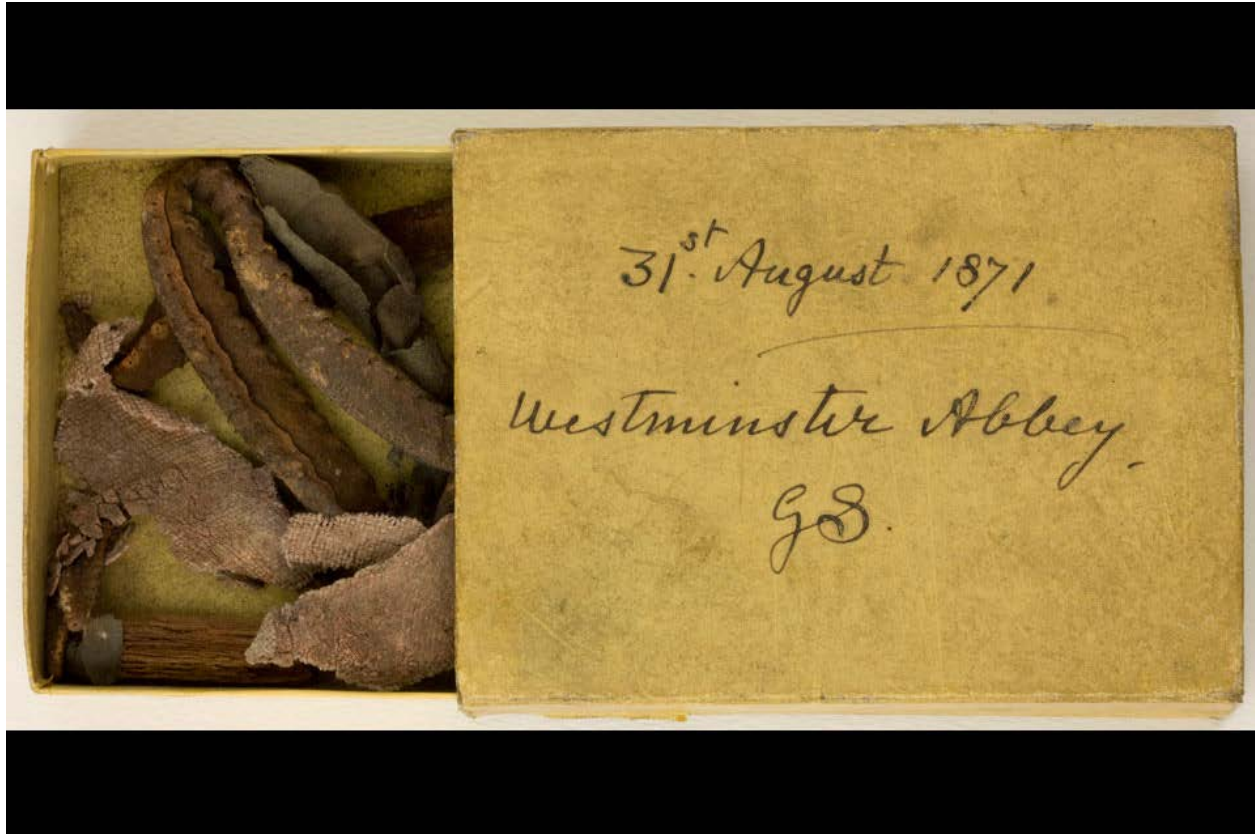
These include ampullae, vials which contained holy water or oil (depending on the originating shrine), which were used for home-based healing and blessings, including protection of the fields.¹ Ampullae found in Leicestershire date from the 13th-15th centuries. Perhaps the most significant of these finds is the ampullae devoted to the Black Madonna of Doncaster seen in the center in the image above.

Adapted from <http://www.culture24.org.uk/history+%26+heritage/archaeology/art22693> and <http://medievalnews.blogspot.com/2010/02/relics-from-pilgrimages-found-from.html>

¹ See William Anderson, "Blessing the Fields? A Study of Late-medieval Ampullae from England and Wales," *Medieval Archaeology* 54/1(2010), pp. 182-203; Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim souvenirs and secular badges* (London : Stationery Office, 1998).

Relic remains of Richard II discovered in the basement of the National Portrait Gallery in London

A matchbox with the labeled remains were discovered when researchers began to catalog the papers of the Gallery's first Director Sir George Scharf (1820-1895) who was a witness of the opening of Richard's grave in Westminster Abbey on August 30, 1871. The box contained wooden fragments (perhaps from the original coffin) and some strips of textiles and a piece of leather that corresponds with Scharf's sketch of a glove found in the tomb.



Adapted from http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=42588