



Some of the Artefacts from the Salisbury Hoard

### **The Salisbury Hoard Crime**

The now famous Salisbury Hoard which is in the British museum has a past, which may have not come to light apart from the detective work of Dr Ian Stead.

In February 1985 2 amateur detectorists, namely James Garriock and Terry Rossiter were searching in a field in Netherhampton with their metal detectors and came across a large haul of treasure. At the time this hoard composed of 535 bronze artefacts which had been there probably since 200BC. They had neglected to obtain permission from the owner of the field, so the fact that they had removed them was illegal, but even worse was the fact they had sold them on to an antiques dealer.

The name of the Lincolnshire dealer was John Cummings who passed on many of the items to other dealers. Dr Stead traced many of the items but they were not all recovered as they had gone to various parts of the world, Germany, France and USA. A lot of the artefacts also passed through the hands of reputable dealers who were unaware of their origin.

The 3 perpetrators of this crime were committed to trial in April 1995 at Knightsbridge Crown Court where they were accused of stealing £83,000 of antiques. They pleaded guilty and were sentenced to 9 months prison sentence, suspended for one year. Cummings was cleared of receiving stolen goods as he believed the other two, when they told him they had permission to metal detect on the land.

There are still many artefacts missing from the collection, as although around one third were traced through the dealer's book of sales, some were just untraceable.