

A Find of Stuart Coins at Childrey Manor, Berks.

THE DISCOVERY

by

THE CURATOR OF READING MUSEUM.

IN April 1937 a hoard of gold coins was discovered by a workman in the grounds of Childrey Manor. The hoard was found in a mottled brown glazed earthenware cup, which had been buried about 18 inches below the present level, and covered by a flagstone of about 1 foot square. The spot is about 30 feet from the North wall of the Manor.

The cup was in practically new condition before being broken by the workman—A. Dawson, to whom the entire value of the Trove was given, in accordance with the new Treasure Trove Regulations. The owner of the Manor, W. G. Waldron, Esq., has kindly placed the cup on permanent loan in the Museum, where it can be seen together with a complete set of plaster casts of the coins.

It is a point of interest that the coins were found placed upon their edges, which possibly has some reference to an old West Country saying, when referring to saving money: "Putting them away on their edges."

DESCRIPTION OF THE COINS

by

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In the anxious years of the Civil War there were many who left their homes and never returned. Some of these victims of the war buried their savings before leaving. The hoard of 44 gold coins found in April 1937 at Childrey Manor, near Wantage, must have been buried under these circumstances. It is one of a large class of finds which occur in all parts of the country; sometimes the coins are, as here, of gold only, sometimes also of silver. As recently as 1935 a similar hoard of gold coins was found at Muckleford Farm, near Dorchester, Dorset.¹

¹ Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. & Arch. Soc. Vol. 37, pp. 18-38.

In the Wantage hoard the coins are all 20 shilling pieces of James I or Charles I. They cover more or less evenly the period from 1606 to 1640. The earliest type of coin is the 'Unite' of James I; on the obverse the King is shown in armour with the sceptre and the orb, while on the reverse are the new arms of Great Britain with the legend '*Faciam Eos In Gentem Unam.*' This type was struck between 1604 and 1619, though in 1612 its value in terms of silver was increased from 20 to 22 shillings. A 22 shilling piece being an inconvenient sum, in 1619 a new type of 20 shilling coin was introduced, lighter in weight than the unite. James appears wearing a laurel wreath instead of a crown and the coins were in consequence known as 'Laurels' (Pl. I No. 2). This ugly and unsatisfactory type lasted to the end of the reign. The unites of Charles I, more often known as 'Broads,' are of the same weight as the laurels, but show the King crowned, and read on the reverse '*Florent Concordia Regna*' (Pl. I No. 3). There are numerous varieties of bust and legend.

The dates of the coins can be told within a year although the coins actually bear no date. At the beginning of the legend on obverse and reverse there is always a heraldic sign. This mark was changed annually, and from various records the date of these marks is known.² These mint-marks are recorded in the list below.

In addition to the English coins of the first Stuarts the hoard included two Scotch unites or Twelve Pound pieces of James VI (Pl. I No. 1). Scotland as an independent kingdom had always had a coinage of its own; after the union with England it continued to strike its own money down to the reign of Anne. The denominations in Scotland had different names and twelve Scotch pounds corresponded to one English. The coins were, of course, current on both sides of the border. The Scotch Unites of James differ from the English coins chiefly in that the lion of Scotland appears in two quarters on the coat of arms instead of only in one. The coins were struck in 1612. Few dies were ever

² H. Symons, "Mint-marks and Denominations of James I." *B.N.J.* 1912, ix, p. 207 ff.

84 A FIND OF STUART COINS AT CHILDREY MANOR, BERKS.

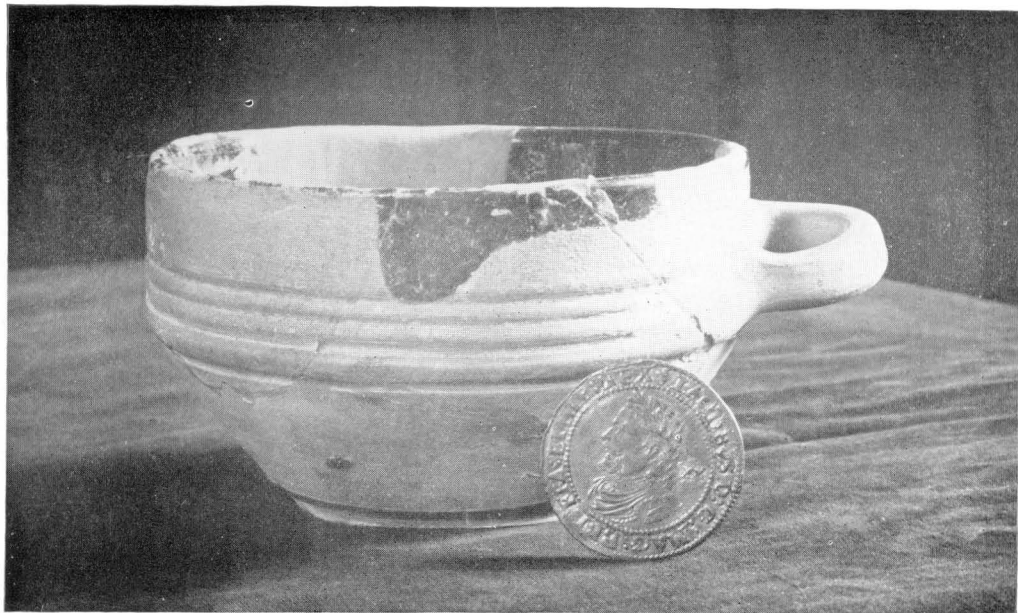
used at the Scotch mint ; it is nevertheless curious that both these Scotch coins should come from the same obverse die as one of the Scotch unites found in the Muckleford hoard (no. 52).

The value of the 44 coins when buried was £46 2s. od., since 21 of them were worth 22/-. In the 17th century this was a considerable sum.

The hoard was buried in a small earthenware pot, which is now in Reading Museum. A photograph is given on plate 2. Six coins from the hoard have been purchased by the British Museum, and three by the Reading Museum. The three coins illustrated are from those in the British Museum.

LIST OF THE HOARD.

James I : Unites ; mint-mark	escallop,	1606-07	1	
	coronet,	1607-09	1	
	tower,	1612-13	1	
	trefoil,	1613,	2	
	cinquefoil,	1613-15	3	
	ton,	1615-16	3	
	book,	1616-17	4	
	crescent,	1617-18	1	
	plain cross,	1618-19	3	
			<hr/>	
			19	19
James I : Laurels ; mint-mark	spur rowel,	1619-20	1	
	rose,	1620-21	4	
	thistle,	1621-23	2	
	lis,	1623-24	1	
	trefoil,	1624	3	
			<hr/>	
			11	30
James VI : Scotch 12 Pound pieces,				
	mint-mark thistle,	1612	2	
				<hr/>
				32
Charles I : Unites ; mint-mark	lis,	1625	1	
	cross on steps,	1625-26	1	
	anchor (i),	1628-29	3	
	heart,	1629-30	1	
	plumes,	1630-31	3	
	rose,	1631-32	1	
	anchor (ii),	1638-39	1	
triangle,	1639-40	1		
			<hr/>	
			12	
				<hr/>
			Total	<u>44</u>



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PLATE II.

EARTHENWARE POT WHICH CONTAINED THE CHILDREY HOARD.