

# Notes and News

## SOME ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO J. D. A. THOMPSON, *INVENTORY OF BRITISH COIN HOARDS: A RECENSION*

Any corrections and additions to the archaeological part of my *Inventory of British Coin Hoards* are welcome and indeed overdue, since the book was published in 1956. I am very glad that Mr. Wilson has taken the matter in hand, and particularly that he has called attention to some of the hoards which I missed; it is, however, disappointing to find that his emendations are often incomplete, though undoubtedly he was working under a disadvantage owing to the lack of cross references between text and plates (one of the major faults of the book). But even so he does not give the impression of having studied the *Inventory* very closely.

Mr. Wilson's notes, however, themselves (see *Med. Archaeol.*, II (1958), 169 ff.) need the following revisions or modifications:

*Aberdeen 1 and 2.* The equation of these two hoards is open to question. It seems that *two* discoveries were made in 1807, while building St. Nicholas Street. The sites were almost identical, but the finds were separated in time by a week. The 'third' hoard (Union Street, 1810) was found not far away, but it is quite separate. I suspect that the two 1807 hoards were only sections of the same deposit. The containers were omitted in the *Inventory*, but inserted in the key to the plates: (1807) a wooden vessel and an earthen jar (*Brit. Numismatic J.*, III (1906), 330 ff.); (1810), a large wooden vessel (J. Lindsay, *A View of the Coinage of Scotland*, p. 266). Mr. Wilson's date of c. 1330 is better than mine of 'after 1320'.

*Aberdeen 5.* The container is described in full (key to pl. i) and illustrated (pl. i (a)). A scale is provided.

*Beaumont.* Mr. Wilson gives no reference for his description of the container, but his 'iron-bound wooden coffer' is a fair inference, as corroded fragments of iron were found with the coins (which were coated with iron rust), and the soil round them was discoloured (*Numismatic Chron.*<sup>3</sup> v (1885), 199 ff.).

*Canonbie.* I left out one brooch in my text, but described all four (key to pl. ix) and illustrated them (pl. ix, 4-7), together with other objects.

*Chester 4.* I described this container (key to pl. v) and illustrated it (pl. v(c)). The silver bullion was also covered, but not in detail (key to pl. x, pl. x(a)).

*Cray.* One brooch was left out in my text, but the complete example and two fragments were described (key to pl. xi) and illustrated (pl. xi, 2-4).

*Flaxton-Bossall.* My original note of 'R ornaments' needs expanding. Besides the armlet illustrated by Dolley, the earliest account of the find (by Robert Belt in 1807) mentions broken silver (probably from 'horse-trappings'), a silver ring, a twisted chain and a small crucifix (*Brit. Numismatic J.*<sup>3</sup> VIII (1955), 12). Shetelig (IV, 31, fig. 8) wrongly describes the armlet as from York. M. C. F. Morris (*Numismatic Chron.*, n.s. IX (1869), 15-16) notes a hoard from Yorkshire (between York and Malton, 1804), which is almost certainly the same as Flaxton.

*Heworth.* The container was described (key to pl. iii), and illustrated (pl. iii(a)).

*Higham (Higham-on-the-Hill).* Metcalf rightly gives the county as Leicestershire (*Numismatic Chron.*<sup>6</sup> XVII (1957), 192 ff.).

*Kinghorn.* The container was described (key to pl. vi) and illustrated (pl. vi(b)).

*Leicester.* This fragment of pottery was described (key to pl. iii) and illustrated (pl. iii(a)). It is clearly noted as being in the British Museum.

*London (Friday Street).* Though I forgot to list the coins in my text, the following note was appended to my description of the container (key to pl. iii): 'In my alphabetical list of hoards I omitted to describe the coins found with the jugs *f.* 1 and 2: details are lacking but they were apparently of Henry III-Edward I—see *AJ* i (1845), p. 253.' This reference should read '*AJ* lix (1902), p. 7'.

*Sutton, 1695.* In two respects Mr. Wilson's correction is absolutely justified. I did not know where the brooch was and I did question its description in my text. However, it was afterwards specifically described as a disc-brooch (key to pl. xxi) as well as being illustrated (pl. xxi(b)). It may not have been the only one found at Sutton, for S. Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of England*, IV (1845), 270, stated that in 1634 (1695?) some labourers discovered several coins and gold rings and three silver plates, one of which bore 'a curious inscription'. Lewis is perhaps not the most reliable of authorities, but his account is worth mentioning. Smith (*Antiq. J.*, v (1925), 138) cites Hickeys' *Thesaurus* (1705) for the information that the Sutton hoard contained this disc '(possibly a brooch)', 5 gold rings, 100 coins and a plain silver dish, deposited in sheet-lead (reference as given in the *Inventory*, p. 131). For the full history of the Sutton disc-brooch see *Dark-age Britain: studies presented to E. T. Leeds*, ed. Harden (1956), pp. 194-6.

*Trewhiddle.* Philip Rashleigh (*Archaeologia*, IX (1789), 187) notes that the silver cup was found in a heap of loose stones and covered with a common slate, and goes on to say that the cup was very thin

and brittle, and fell into so many pieces as to prevent it being united. Besides the articles represented in the drawing, it contained many of the most curious Saxon coins ever discovered at one time. J. J. Rogers (*J. Roy. Instit. Cornwall*, viii (Oct. 1867), 293) and Jonathan Rashleigh (*Numismatic Chron.*, n.s. viii (1868), 139), both say that the coins were found in the chalice, on the authority of C. S. Gilbert, *History of Cornwall*, ii, 869. Mr. Wilson's correction is perhaps based on one ambiguous sentence in the *Archaeologia* account: 'These [*sc.* the coins] with the other pieces of antiquity fell out in moving the ground.' Some of the objects, particularly the scourge, can hardly have been in the cup and must have been lying beside it under the stones: the coins themselves could have been in the cup.

I should like to supplement Mr. Wilson's list by mentioning a few other coin-hoards of archaeological interest:

*Dailly*, Ayrshire (no. 114). The container (*Inventory*, p. 42) is a bronze weight-box similar to that found with coins at Grey Abbey, Co. Down (W. A. Seaby, *Ulster J. Archaeol.*,<sup>3</sup> xxi (1958), 94). The Dailly box is in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland at Edinburgh.

*Donough Henry*, Co. Tyrone (no. 122). The date of this find was 1823 according to S. Lewis, *Topog. Dict. of Ireland*, i (1847), 463 and 552. He says that it was found in a bog at Dunaghy in Donough Henry parish, and that it was discovered while levelling a Danish fort. It included an 'urn', a small statue and a cross. The chalice is not mentioned—possibly it was the urn.

*Holtwell*, Leicestershire (no. 192). According to the *Leicester Journal*, the container was either a wooden box or a leather bag, which disintegrated when struck with a pick.

*Horsted Keynes*, Sussex (no. 194). The container was an earthenware pot (fragmentary). It went to the British Museum together with the coins, but was returned to the owner. Mr. G. C. Dunning failed to trace it in 1936.

*Lochnaben*, Dumfriesshire (no. 239). The container was a jug of red ware, similar in style to *Durham* 1 (*Inventory*, pl. ii(a)). Fragmentary (Nat. Mus. Antiq. Scot.).

Amongst the many hoards, old and new, which have come to my notice since the book was written, two pairs are of some importance. The first, at Bath (1755), has already been recorded in part by Metcalf (*Numismatic Chron.*,<sup>6</sup> xviii (1958), 77-9), but it seems that the tenth-century pennies listed by him are not the only Saxon coins from the Abbey House burial-ground. S. Lewis (*Topog. Dict. of Engl.*, i (1845), 169) says that in 1755 Anglo-Saxon silver coins were found in a small copper box inside a stone coffin. The exact site is not stated, but it appears to have been in the 1755 excavations. The upper part of the container was covered with a slide and was probably intended for perfume, while the lower half contained 'small silver coins resembling the early Saxon *sceattae*'. Provisionally this may be called *Bath, 1755 (A)*.

*Bath, 1755 (B)*. 50 Anglo-Saxon pennies of Aelfred-Eadred. Deposit *c.* 955 (Metcalf). Found in the Abbey House burial-ground. They had originally been in a wooden box which fell to pieces when touched. Metcalf quotes a manuscript letter in the British Museum which mentions the discovery of many stone coffins (a link between finds A and B), and the same find is noted in *V.C.H., Somerset*, i, 225, note 2, citing Lucas, *Essay on Waters*, iii, 224.

If Lewis's description of find (A) is right, the Abbey House burial-ground must have been used considerably earlier than is suggested by the coins in find (B). Those from (A) were small, and may have been either silver *sceattas* of the old southern and Mercian types dating from the late eighth century or base 'styca' issues from Northumbria, which modern authorities date to between *c.* 830 and 855 (C. S. S. Lyon, *Brit. Numismatic J.*,<sup>3</sup> viii (1956), 1 ff.).

*Tredington*, Warwickshire, *i. c.* 1914-30? Deposit: After 1471. About 40 silver coins of Edward I-IV (5 recorded in detail). Disposition: These coins are apparently survivors of a much larger hoard, discovered at intervals over a number of years in a field at Tredington cross-roads. Two of the coins are said to have been found with a skeleton. In the last few years the field has been carefully dug over by Mr. B. R. Osborne, who also used a mine-detector without result. It may reasonably be argued that all the coins have now been found and dispersed.

*Tredington, 2*. The date of discovery is uncertain, but may have been about 1900. Deposit: Probably late fifteenth century. Content: Unidentified gold coins. Disposition: There are two vague accounts of this find, both of which emerge from Mr. Osborne's enquiries. (a) Mr. F. Aldridge told him that his father had acquired from

the finder gold coins and ivory moulds discovered with a body. They were afterwards sold to a French dealer in London. (b) Mr. P. Hancocks said that an iron box full of gold was found by four men digging a trench. They broke it open and shared the contents, throwing the box back into the hole.

It seems likely that these accounts all refer to the same hoard, discovered about 1900 and possibly identical with my *Unknown Sites* 5-7 (*Inventory*, pp. 142-3); all these date from the late fifteenth century, and two include gold of Edward IV. All three reached London between c. 1899 and 1904. There is no record of the ivory moulds.

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## AN ANGLO-SAXON SITE AT HOLE FARM, BULMER TYE, ESSEX

(FIGS. 97-9)

In April, 1958, a field at Hole Farm, Bulmer (FIG. 97, 3, A), was ploughed to a depth of 12 to 14 in., producing patches of dark soil and black ash upon the surface, with pottery. Visiting the site M. R. Hull, Curator of Colchester and Essex Museum, identified fragments of late-bronze-age cinerary urns of Deverel-Rimbury type from two of the black patches and some sherds of Romano-British pottery and tile and a greater quantity of Anglo-Saxon pottery from a third area, which was larger. I investigated the site in May, 1958, with some assistance from the Colchester Archaeological Group and other local people.<sup>1</sup>

The field forms part of the summit and W. slope of a hill on the E. of a small valley draining into the Belchamp Brook, which itself joins the R. Stour (FIG. 97, 2-3) after four or five miles.<sup>2</sup> The top of the hill is oval and fairly flat, with its longer diameter of c. 1,000 ft. lying E.-W. It lies slightly above the 250 ft. contour. Across the valley, less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile to the N., may be seen the Romano-British, and possibly Anglo-Saxon, site at Hill Farm, Gestingthorpe (FIG. 97, 3, B).

Just on the crest of the slope, and at a point on the summit 300 ft. farther back, there are spreads of large flints and stones which might indicate the existence of structures. A cutting 200 ft. long was excavated to relate this feature to the points where the pottery had been found. No trace of structures was discovered, or anything to explain the spreads of large flints, but in one place there were more sherds of Deverel-Rimbury ware and in another a cremation-interment with no vessel.

The large area of dark soil revealed a shallow depression scooped into the natural sand, which lay at an average depth of 12-15 in. This hollow, 9 ft. by 12 ft., was filled with a dark occupation-soil containing many Anglo-Saxon sherds with some residual Romano-British pottery and tile fragments, and a few pieces of animal bone. The top of the layer had been much disturbed by the plough, while the activity of animals and worms, combined with the staining of the sand below the soil by water carrying soil with it made the bottom lack good definition. No structural remains, in the form, e.g., of post-holes or floor levels, were to be seen.

Ten ft. away from the rest of the Anglo-Saxon pottery, some sherds of a vessel (FIG. 99, no. 8) were found in a small intrusion into the sand hardly bigger than the pot itself. The hole was filled with dark soil and ash.

### *The Pottery*

The pottery is all hand-made and similar in character and fabric. It is mainly sixth-century in date.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the farmer, Mr. L. A. Minter, for permission to excavate and for his enthusiastic help; to Dr. J. N. L. Myres for his comments on the pottery and permission to use them in this report; but above all to Mr. M. R. Hull, whom I would thank most gratefully, for advice and constructive criticism, freely given, regarding the excavation and the preparation of this report.

<sup>2</sup> O.S. 1-in. map, sheet 52, Nat. Grid 834384.