

## Lambourn Treasure Trove.

By P. H. SELLWOOD.

**A**NOTHER hoard of Stuart Gold Coins has been unearthed in Berkshire at Woodlands St. Mary, near Lambourn. The previous find was at Childrey in 1937. A report of which was recorded in the Journal, Vol. 41, No. 2. Coins buried during the troublesome times of Charles 1st are continually coming to light.

The circumstance that brought about this latest discovery was the felling of trees on a bank dividing two fields at Lye Farm, Woodlands St. Mary, in 1948 (Nat. Grid. ref. 41/320747). Parts of the trees were dragged across the bank, so dislodging the soil. Some time afterwards a boy whilst playing on the bank found what were then thought to be American discs of metal. (During the last war large numbers of U.S.A. Forces were stationed at Membury Aerodrome, nearby.) The boy played with about half a dozen of these discs and eventually lost them. It was not until several months afterwards that the same boy, Thomas Arthur Smith, of Lye Farm Cottages, found many more and started digging. It became obvious these pieces were of some interest and the father took steps to ascertain what they were.

Fortunately through a bank manager at Hungerford, the coins were brought to the notice of Christopher E. Blunt (President of the British Numismatic Society). An immediate visit was made to the spot of the find, with the result that the father of the boy, Mr. Leslie E. Smith, made a further search and eventually 51 coins in all were recovered.

All the coins found are gold of the reigns of James 1st and Charles 1st, consisting of Laurels and Unites, with corresponding halves and quarters.

As the coins were found less than 12 inches below the present level of the bank, it can be assumed that the hoard was buried hurriedly. This view is strengthened from the statement that they were loosely together. The position of the find spot in relation to the surrounding area does not lend itself to the choice by the original owner as a suitable place for hiding treasure. During the Civil Wars, considerable fighting took place near here. About two miles to the west, 60 skeletons were found at Preston in 1815. In 1942 a similar coin to those now found was picked up about 100 yards away. It can be imagined that the coins might have been plundered by a trooper and buried in the dark whilst troops were resting for the night. The present Lye Farm House stands on the site of an earlier house which in the 17th century

belonged to the Loveden family (V.C.H. Berks, IV, p. 252), and the coins may on the other hand, have been concealed by the then occupier.

The latest date of the coins found is 1640-1641. It was in 1643 that Essex had left London to relieve the Parliamentary army being besieged at Gloucester. After the successful conclusion of the mission, the army was rapidly returning and whilst making for Newbury was overtaken unexpectedly in this area, by the cavalry of Rupert. So much for the historical background, which leaves much to be imagined.

#### COMPARISONS WITH THE CHILDREY HOARD.

*Similarity* (1) All the coins are gold of James 1st and Charles 1st.

(2) The latest date is approximately the same—1640.

(3) The period value of the 51 coins of this new hoard when buried was £47; and £46.2.6 for the Childrey ones.

*Disparity* (1) The coins appear to have been hurriedly buried, whereas the Childrey coins were carefully and methodically placed by the owner.

(2) There are no James 1st Unites and no Scotch coins.

(3) Small coins are included whereas the Childrey coins were all large.

#### LIST OF THE HOARD.

James I :	Laurels ;	mint-mark	spur rowel,	1619-20	1	
			thistle,	1621-23	2	
			lis,	1623-24	4	
			trefoil	1624	8	
			illegible (? rose)		1	
					<hr/> 16	16
$\frac{1}{2}$ Laurels ;	„		spur rowel,	1619-20	1	
			trefoil	1624	1	
			illegible,		1	
					<hr/> 3	3
$\frac{1}{4}$ Laurels ;	„		trefoil	1624	1	
					<hr/> 1	1

Charles I : Unites ; mint-mark	lis,	1625	7	
	cross calvary,	1625-26	1	
	negro's head	1626-27	2	
	castle,	1627-28	5	
	anchor (1)	1628-29	2	
	plume,	1630-31	2	
	rose,	1631-32	1	
	harp,	1632-33	1	
	crown,	1635-36	3	
	tun,	1636-38	1	
	anchor (2)	1638-39	2	
	star,	1640-41	1	
			28	28
$\frac{1}{2}$ Unites ; mint-mark	negro head,	1626-27	2	
			2	2
$\frac{1}{4}$ Unites ; mint-mark	cross calvary,	1625-26	1	
			1	1
			51	
		Total		

Since the above report on the Lye Farm Hoard was written, a piece of Tudor pottery was found at the find spot. This gave rise to the speculation that the coins were originally with a pot, and it was decided to excavate for further remains. After a thorough search no trace of another piece could be found, but two more Charles I Unites were unearthed. Owing to the hard nature of the soil it was impossible to sift it; the services of a mine detector expert were obtained, but no more coins were recovered. In this connection we are greatly indebted to the very willing co-operation of the Commanding Officer of the 4th Bn. The Royal Berkshire Regiment on the work, and particularly to Capt. W. V. C. Youde who took charge of the operations.

The two coins to be added to the original list are :

Charles I Unite. mint mark, plume (1630-31)  
bell (1634-35)

With the "addition of the last coin," bell (1634-35), every year of issue from 1619 to 1641 is now represented in the hoard.

A representative selection of the coins in the hoard is being deposited in the Newbury Museum.

P.H.S.