THE ST. ANNES HOARD AND OTHER CIVIL WAR COIN HOARDS IN LANCASHIRE

ROBERT F. TAYLOR, B.A.

THE unsettled conditions during the civil wars of the seventeenth century are reflected in a series of coin hoards found throughout England. Hoards of the immediately preceding and following periods are rare, but caches of coins concealed during the 1640s are relatively numerous. Typically, they consist mainly of coins of Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I, with an occasional earlier coin or two, and sometimes also a foreign one. This gives us some idea of the nature of the coinage then in circulation, for the uniform composition of many of these hoards suggests that each hoard was formed during a comparatively short period rather than over several decades. These coin hoards vary as much in face value as they do in their places of concealment.

I THE ST. ANNES HOARD

The St. Annes hoard was found in Beauclerk Gardens, St. Annes, on 28 June 1961 by Mr. Douglas Jeffrey, a council workman, who was uprooting a large old sycamore tree. The hoard was about thirty inches below the modern ground surface, and was contained within a small chamber pot, most of which has survived. At an inquest held at St. Annes on 3 July 1961 the find was declared to be treasure trove and forfeit to the Queen as duke of Lancaster; subsequently both hoard and container were acquired by the Harris Museum, Preston. When found, the coins were badly corroded, but they were cleaned at the British Museum in an ultra-sonic tank which has removed all corrosion-products without impairing the legibility of the coins.

There were 383 coins in the hoard, of which 376 were of silver and seven of gold. Three, including one of the gold coins, are Scottish, and one is Irish. The Scottish coins had a higher nominal value than their exchange value in terms of contemporary English money, so that the total face value of the hoard by English standards was £19 5s. 2d. In date the coins range from the reigns of Edward VI to Charles I, from 1550 to 1643–44.

Plate 3.

CHARLES I FALSE SHILLINGS,
OBVERSES

Enlarged to $1\frac{3}{4}$ times the size

Plate 4.

CHARLES I FALSE SHILLINGS,
REVERSES

The coins of Elizabeth I are mainly sixpences and shillings, those of James I mainly shillings, while the Charles I coins are principally shillings and half-crowns. This pattern is seen in other hoards, and, apart from suggesting progressive inflation, it reflects the proportions of the different denominations of these reigns in circulation early in the second quarter of the seventeenth century.

Amongst the Charles I coins are two false shillings. These are crude imitations of the shillings struck at the Tower of London, the inscriptions being incorrect in detail and the heads merely caricatures of that on the official coinage. In size and thickness they are hardly smaller than the regular issue, and appear to have been intended as *bona fide* coins (not forgeries) to be used in lieu of the official coinage. This suggests that whoever was responsible for issuing these shillings was suffering from a comparative shortage of coin, though not necessarily of bullion silver. He was also able to command the services of a competent craftsman, for, although the work is clumsy, there is a certain sureness that suggests that the engraver was not altogether unfamiliar with his task, having perhaps been recruited from the ranks of some allied trade or craft. Indeed the two coins show such different styles that at least two engravers must have been employed. It would seem that these shillings were made at some as yet unidentified provincial emergency mint which was engaged in producing coin from plate or even from the clippings from other coins. The date of striking is also unknown, but the engraver was copying coins of 1636–38 (initial mark, a tun) and 1638–39 (initial mark, an anchor), and he simply copied the initial marks along with the rest of the inscription. A date after 1636 is also indicated by the use of the square shield on the reverse, and it seems almost certain that the coins are connected with the civil war of the 1640s, when Charles I himself established several provincial mints. As Parliament was in control of the Tower mint at this time, these shillings could be Royalist issues, but they could equally well be Parliamentarian. Other false coins of similar date have been found elsewhere—at Erdington, near Birmingham, for instance—where a half-crown copying the issue of 1641–43 was found in a small hoard.[1]

Most of the coins in the hoard have been clipped. The earliest coins, of Edward VI and Philip and Mary, are very badly worn, having been in circulation for nearly a century, and so are some of the Elizabeth I pieces. These earlier coins have not been

[1] Nicholas Thomas in *Birm. Arch. Soc. T.*, Vol. LXXV (1957), pp. 90–92 (with photograph).

Plate 5.
GOLD SWORD-AND-SCEPTRE PIECE, 1602

Enlarged to twice the size

clipped, nor have most of the Elizabeth I sixpences. The later shillings and half-crowns, perhaps because of their greater size and thickness, and consequently their greater potential yield of bullion for the clipper, have suffered most, some of the Charles I half-crowns having lost virtually all of their legend. This clipping, though an ancient and well-established malpractice, appears to have taken place mainly during the civil war—it is for the most part the later coins that are affected, and the Whittingham hoard, which was deposited several years later than the St. Annes Hoard, and whose coins were therefore in circulation through a longer period of the civil war, has suffered far greater damage at the hands of the coin clipper.

An interesting feature is the intrusion of two Scottish thirty-shilling pieces—each the equivalent of half-a-crown sterling—and one Irish shilling and a Scottish sword-and-sceptre piece, perhaps the best designed coin in circulation in Britain at that time, and worth about a pound sterling. Foreign coins occur from time to time in hoards of this period, but are unusual and generally found in the larger hoards only. Spanish coins are also found on occasion, as will be seen in the case of the Whittingham hoard. This is a reminder of the fact that at that time the important thing was not quite so much the head on the coin as the amount and fineness of the silver or gold of which it was made. It is perhaps this that made the false shillings acceptable currency.

An attempt to date the deposition of the hoard can only be based on an examination of the contents of the hoard itself. The latest coins in the hoard are the half-crown struck by Parliament at the Tower in the name of Charles I in 1643–44, and the half-crown struck by Charles I at his own mint at York between 1642 and 1644. This latter coin is almost unworn and quite unclipped. None of the coins could have been struck after 1644, and, in the complete absence of coins of the 1644–45 issue, it seems likely that the actual accumulation of the hoard ended no later than 1645. As it is most probable that the hoard was concealed very shortly after the addition of the last coins, one can conclude that 1645 is the most likely date for deposition—assuming that no coins were added to it after burial.

It is not possible to connect the hoard with any specific event in the area, if only because it is not possible to assign a date to it with any degree of certainty. It must suffice to point out that the general unrest and disturbance of the period, and the rumours of distant warfare, would be sufficient to cause a man to accumulate in one place and conceal carefully his savings.

Neither is it possible to tell who was responsible for assem-

bling this mass of coins, but one can surmise that he was not a small peasant. Inventories and wills of the period from the Fylde show that peasants, husbandmen and yeomen rarely possessed goods and property worth more than about £30. Craftsmen were better off as a rule, and, according to their probate inventories, frequently had cash about the house. This is to be expected when one realizes that these men would need more ready money for their cash transactions than their fellows, but the sums of money mentioned in the inventories rarely exceed £10; the amounts range from £3 2s. 0d. for a blacksmith, to £11 in gold for a joiner. One Wesham husbandman had £2 in ready cash—much less than the £19 of the St. Annes hoard. It seems certain, then, that this hoard was accumulated and buried by a well-to-do person, perhaps a tradesman or craftsman.

The hoard was contained in a chamber pot in hard red fabric with a mottled brown internal glaze, a single handle and a simple everted rim. The pot is only three inches high and barely seven inches in diameter, and may have been intended for a child.

II THE WHITTINGHAM HOARD

This hoard is now represented by 207 surviving coins in the Harris Museum, Preston. The museum label simply reads "The Whittingham Hoard, found in the thatch of a cottage at Whittingham, near Preston, in 1848" and there is no other documentation. No other references have been traced to coins found at Whittingham in 1848, but the *Preston Guardian* of Saturday, 18 January 1853, contains an account of the discovery of a hoard of 301 coins in the chimney of a cottage at Whittingham. As it is unlikely that there were two hoards of about the same date, in the same village, and found within six years of each other, one of which has survived without documentation and the other has vanished leaving only a newspaper item as its memorial, we may perhaps safely assume that these two hoards are really the same. The 207 coins in the Harris Museum therefore represent the much picked-over remains of this 1853 hoard. The account of the discovery in the *Preston Guardian* reads as follows:

"DISCOVERY OF UPWARDS OF 300 ANCIENT COINS

During the recent stormy weather the roof and chimney of a house at Tenter Hill, Whittingham (at present untenanted), shared the same fate as almost every other, and on Wednesday last some workmen were engaged in making the necessary repairs in the chimney. When clearing out what is called the soot-closet (which is left in many old houses) they found something a little heavier than usual

in the shape of a woollen cloth containing 301 specimens of very old silver coins. The cloth was rotten with age, and the coins came rattling down, to the great surprise of the workmen. . . . . .

The whole of the coins were silver and in a state of good preservation. It is supposed they must have been secreted in the troublesome times of the Commonwealth. The treasure was handed over to the Rev. I. Mossop, of Woodplumpton, who has an interest in the house as belonging to the church of which he is incumbent."

The coins were therefore found on 15 January 1853, and the storm was probably that on the night of Saturday 28 December 1852. The Rev. Isaac Mossop was vicar of Woodplumpton from 1836 to 1884, and we know that he gave 69 of these coins to the Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge[2] at Preston shortly after they were found. What subsequently happened to them is not known, but one fears the worst from the fact that a bequest of 1,302 valuable engravings to the Institution in 1874 was allowed to be used by the cleaners to keep the floors clean after scrubbing. The coins in the Harris Museum probably represent the remainder of those retained by the Rev. I. Mossop.

The face value of the 207 coins surviving is £10 15s. 0d., so that the original face value of the whole hoard must have been in the region of £15. There are 16 coins of 1645–46, and one shilling of 1646–48, very little worn and almost unclipped. The hoard was possibly deposited, therefore, about 1647, but in the absence of the whole hoard it is not possible to be as certain as with the St. Annes hoard.

Comparison of this hoard with that from St. Annes points to obvious similarities—in fact the composition is almost the same, as is the year-by-year distribution of coins. But there are certain differences, which may well be due to the selective removal of coins by the Rev. I. Mossop and others. There is a noticeable absence of groats—a very popular coin amongst collectors—and also coins of Mary, and Philip and Mary. The Spanish coins of Philip IV mentioned in the *Preston Guardian* have also vanished, as have any Charles I sixpences, though the St. Annes hoard suggests that there might not have been very many of them. The absence of Charles I provincial issues is also noteworthy, for the presence of two in the St. Annes hoard suggests that there may have been more in the later hoard from Whittingham.

Most of the coins, especially the later ones, have been well clipped. As mentioned above, the larger Charles I silver has suffered most, some of the half-crowns having lost all their legend, so that they are now little more than half their original

[2] Charles Hardwick, *History of Preston*, Vol. 1, p. 197.

size. Several of the Elizabeth I sixpences have been deliberately bent, as happened to a lesser extent in the St. Annes hoard. Whether this was to test the metal of the coin, or was connected with the value superstitiously ascribed to a bent or crooked sixpence, is not known. One of the sixpences in the St. Annes hoard has a small hole in it, having apparently been pierced for suspension and use for personal adornment—an interesting example of a practice which was to become common in the nineteenth century.

III THE FORMBY HOARD

This hoard was found early in February 1870, in the thatch of what was considered to be one of the oldest cottages in Formby. The thatch had become decayed and was being removed by the owner, whose family had lived there for at least a century, when the collection of 19 coins was discovered, contained in the bladder of a pig. The writer of the original report[3] considered that it had once been common to use a pig's bladder as a purse in this area.

The coins were all shillings, apart from one said to be a Charles II crown, dated 1660. Although this is not impossible, one wonders whether this coin was wrongly identified or was an intruder, perhaps found in the cottage roof at the same time but not in the bladder with the other coins. Certainly it was a very odd man out, especially when we are told that all the coins were clipped. One hardly expects to find a Charles II crown clipped. Of the 18 shillings, one was Elizabeth I, three were James I, and the remaining 14 were Charles I. On two of these the initial mark could not be read, and on another it was said to be "K in brackets"; obviously this was a misreading of the mark (R). The latest coins in the hoard, apart from the possibly intrusive crown, were three shillings of 1644–45, suggesting late 1645 or 1646 as a possible date for concealment. The face value of 18 shillings suggests that this hoard represented the savings of a relatively poor man, for it hardly bore comparison with the large sums from St. Annes and Whittingham. The coins are now lost.

IV THE FULWOOD HOARD

This hoard is known only from a note in Whittle's *History of Preston*.[4] The range of the hoard suggests that it was a fairly

[3] TRANSACTIONS, Vol. 22, p. 275.

[4] Vol. 1, p. 14. Whittle published this first volume of his history in 1821 under the pseudonym of Marmaduke Tulket. He was nothing if not a romantic.

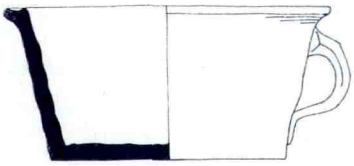

Plate 6.
CHAMBER POT, ST. ANNES HOARD
Reduced to ¼ size

large one, comparable to those from St. Annes and Whittingham, but there speculation must end. All we know is what Whittle cares to tell us—

"On the 11th. day of April, 1812, a gentleman, near Fulwood moor, was making a hole in the floor of his house, when to his surprise he discovered a little below the surface, a quantity of silver coins, of various sizes; they consisted of Edward the 6th, nearly defaced; Charles 1st, James 1st, and Elizabeth, in a fine state of preservation; also a crown piece of Philip the 4th of Spain".

V INVENTORY OF THE ST. ANNES HOARD

The number of coins in each group is given first, followed by the initial mark and the date or dates. Coins are silver unless stated otherwise.

EDWARD VI
Shillings (2) 1 Y 1550–51. 1 tun 1551–53.
Sixpence (1) 1 tun 1551–53.

MARY
Groats (5) 5 pomegranate 1553–54.

PHILIP AND MARY
Shillings (2) 1 1554, Spanish titles. 1 1555, Spanish titles.
Groats (3) 3 lis 1554–58.

ELIZABETH I
Groats (2) 1 cross crosslet 1560–61. 1 i.m. illegible.
Shillings (70) 1 lis 1558–60. 18 cross crosslet 1560–61. 11 martlet 1560–61. 4 bell 1582–83. 5 A 1583–85. 10 escallop 1584–87. 2 hand 1589–92. 6 tun 1591–94. 4 woolpack 1594–96. 3 key 1595–98. 1 1 1601. 3 2 1602. 2 illegible.
Sixpences (123) 9 pheon 1561. 4 pheon 1562. 3 pheon 1564. 1 pheon 1565. 3 rose 1565. 2 lion 1566. 4 portcullis 1566. 9 coronet 1569. 8 coronet 1568. 4 coronet 1569. 2 castle 1570. 1 castle 1571. 6 ermine 1572. 1 illegible 1572. 3 ermine 1573. 3 acorn 1573. 1 eglantine 1573. 4 eglantine 1574. 5 eglantine 1575. 1 eglantine 1576. 1 eglantine 1577. 5 plain cross 1578. 1 plain cross 1579. 3 long cross 1580. 4 long cross 1581. 2 sword 1582. 1 bell 1582. 2 bell 1583. 2 A 1583. 1 illegible 1583. 1 A 1584. 2 escallop 1584. 1 crescent 1587. 1 crescent 1588. 1 crescent 1589. 2 hand 1591. 3 tun 1592. 1 tun 1593. 4 woolpack 1594. 2 woolpack 1595. 1 anchor 1599. 1 2 1602. 2 pheon 1561–65. 2 ermine 1572–73. 1 eglantine 1574–78. 1 sword 1581–83. 1 woolpack 1594–96.

JAMES I
Laurel (£1) 2 slipped trefoil 1613 (gold).

Half-laurel. 1 trefoil 1613 (gold).
Quarter-laurel. 1 trefoil 1613 (gold).
Half-unite (10/–) 1 trefoil 1613 (gold).
Shillings (47) 2 thistle 1603–04 (first bust). 11 thistle 1603–04 (second bust). 4 lis 1604–05.
8 lis 1604–05 (third bust). 2 rose 1605–06, 6 rose 1605–06 (fourth bust). 4 escallop 1606–07. 1 coronet 1607–09. 1 coronet 1607–09 (fifth bust). 1 key 1609–10. 1 tun 1615–16. 2 thistle 1621–23 (sixth bust). 3 lis 1623–24, 1 trefoil 1624. 2 illegible.
Sixpences (19) 1 thistle 1603. 2 thistle 1604. 2 lis 1604. 1 illegible 1604. 6 rose 1605.
1 rose 1606. 1 escallop 1606. 1 coronet 1608. 1 key 1609. 1 thistle 1622. 2 trefoil 1624.

CHARLES I
Half-unite (10/–) 1 rose 1631–32 (gold).
Half-crowns (23) 1 blackamoor's head 1635–38. 1 plume 1630–31. 1 rose 1631–32. 5 harp 1632–33.
2 portcullis 1633–34. 1 bell 1634–35. 1 crown 1635—36. 4 tun 1636–38. 1 anchor 1638–39. 2 star 1640–41. 1 triangle in circle 1641–43. 1 (P) 1643–44. 1 i.m. clipped, type as 1640–44. 1 lion 1642–44, York mint type 3.
Shillings (66) 1 lis 1625. 1 harp 1632–33. 4 portcullis 1633–34. 4 bell 1634–35. 10 crown 1635–36.
13 tun 1636–38. 3 tun 1636–38 (fifth bust). 5 anchor 1638–39. 6 triangle 1639–40. 8 star 1640–41. 7 triangle in circle 1641–43. 2 illegible.
False Shillings (2). These have been struck from different dies and are imitations of the fifth bust of 1636–40 and the shield bearing the arms of England associated with that bust.

1. obverse: CARLVS · D G BR FRAN · ET HIB REX i.m. a tun. Crude head imitating fifth bust, with single arched crown.
   reverse: CHRISTO · · AVSPICE · · REGNO. Square shield over a cross fourchée.
2. obverse: CAROLVS · D G M BR FR ET HIBI REX i.m. an anchor. Very poor head similar to fifth bust.
   reverse: CHRISTO · AVSPICE · REGNO. Square shield over a cross fleury rather than fourchée.

Sixpences (9) 2 harp 1632–33. 2 crown 1635–36. 1 tun 1636–38. 1 anchor 1638–39. 2 triangle 1639–40. 1 illegible.
Groat (1) 1 book 1638–42. Aberystwyth mint.

SCOTLAND
James VI. 1 Sword-and-sceptre piece, 1602 (gold).
James 1. 1 thirty shillings, second coinage, 1610–22.
Charles 1. 1 thirty shillings, first issue, 1625–34.

IRELAND
James I. 1 shilling, i.m. bell, 1602–03.

VI ANALYSIS OF THE WHITTINGHAM HOARD

ELIZABETH I
Shillings – 16
Sixpences – 62

JAMES I
Shillings – 26
Sixpences – 1

CHARLES I
Half-crowns – 13
Shillings – 51

PARLIAMENT
Half-crowns – 14
Shillings – 16

VII INVENTORY OF THE FORMBY HOARD

ELIZABETH I		JAMES I	
1 woolpack	1594–95	2 fleur-de-lys	1604–05
		1 trefoil	1613

CHARLES I		PARLIAMENT	
4 crown	1635–36	1 (P)	1643–44
1 triangle	1639–40	3 (R)	1644–45
1 star	1640–41		
2 triangle in circle	1641–43		

2 uncertain Charles I or Parliament.