

THREE TUDOR HOARDS CONTAINING CONTINENTAL GOLD COINS

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The role of continental gold coins in the Tudor currency pool has been a subject of scholarly interest for nearly half a century. Pioneering contributions by Challis and Kent drew attention to the rich documentary record, while more recent work by Cook, Kelleher, Allen and Archibald has developed our understanding of the phenomenon through the study of a growing corpus of coin hoards and single finds.¹ This article presents some additions to the finds corpus, consisting of three previously unnoticed coin hoards described in nineteenth-century newspaper reports and museum catalogues.

1. Wickham Court, Southampton, Hampshire, 1854. 24 AV coins, *tpq* 1509

In June 1854 reports emerged of a hoard of gold coins found during sewage works at Southampton. An initial notice of the find, published in the *Hampshire Advertiser*, reads as follows:

DISCOVERY OF GOLD COIN IN SOUTHAMPTON. – During the past week some labourers in excavating for the sewers in progress in the town, discovered a quantity of ancient gold coin, in excellent preservation. Among them are Angels and half Angels of the reigns of Edward VI, Henry VII and VIII, and a variety of foreign coin. A large number were purchased by Mr Pegler, the goldsmith. We believe the Corporation claim them as Treasure Trove, and intend prosecuting the lucky (!) finders.²

The purchaser, Alfred Pegler (1821–92), was a Blandford-born goldsmith, jeweller, and watch-maker resident at 151 High Street.³ He bought the entire hoard, which consisted of twenty-four gold coins, at a cost of more than £10.⁴

Further details of the find were reported a week later in the *London Daily News*:

DISCOVERY OF VALUABLE COINS. – A large number of men are employed sewerage the Southampton streets. The sewer contractors are bound by their contract to deliver up to the corporation all coins and coffins found by them. Some of the workmen a few days since dug out some valuable coins of the reigns of Edward IV, Henry IV, VII, and VIII, Maximilian Emperor of Germany, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, St Martin the Pope of Rome, Sigismund Duke of Austria, Ludvic King of Bavaria, &c., all of them of the 14th and 15th centuries. These coins are in the possession of Mr Pegler, the goldsmith, of Southampton. The corporation claim them as treasure trove. But their right is disputed, as it is stated that treasure trove is what had been purposely hid, such as a crock of gold or silver. A lord of a manor has no right, it is said, to unclaimed coins accidentally dropped into the earth. The right to them would be with the finder. The coin of St Martin the Pope of Rome contains on the reverse side the figure of the Pope on horseback, dividing his cloak with a beggar. The coins are in excellent preservation, and are very valuable.⁵

Pegler's acquisition of the coins was clearly contentious. Under the common law of Treasure Trove, the default legal position held that all objects of gold and silver that had been hidden with the intent of future recovery, and whose owners could not be traced, were Crown property. Under the terms of its borough charter, however, Southampton town council could claim title to Treasure Trove as a royal franchisee. The labourers who found the hoard, for their part, had been instructed in their contracts of employment to surrender to the council any coins

¹ Challis 1978, 215–18; Kent 1985, 389–95; Cook 1999; Kent 2005, 36–8; Kelleher 2007; Allen 2012, 368; Archibald 2015, 152–4.

² *Hampshire Advertiser*, 24 June 1854, 6.

³ Hillier 1854.

⁴ *Hampshire Advertiser*, 22 July 1854, 3.

⁵ *London Daily News*, 1 July 1854, 5.

that they found; evidently, they did not do this, but instead sold the coins and fled the town to avoid prosecution.⁶ The council's claim to the coins as Treasure Trove, however, was contingent on *animus revocandi*, the demonstration that the individual who deposited the coins had done so with the intent of future recovery. In the event that this could not be proven, the coins would not qualify as Treasure Trove, but could instead constitute lost property: in this case, either the finder(s) or the landowner could claim the right of possession according to the common law of first-finding.⁷ Owing to these ambiguities, Pegler claimed legitimate title by merit of having lawfully purchased coins that could not be shown to have been deposited with *animus revocandi*, and which therefore were the legitimate property of the labourers on the basis of the law of first-finding; the anonymous landowner, meanwhile, could advance their own claim on the grounds that there were exceptions to first-finding in cases where lost property was discovered on private land, in this case on their property at Wickham Court.⁸

In its meeting of 18 July 1854 Southampton town council discussed the case, observing its legal complexities, and perhaps also the costs and time required to resolve it. The council consequently resolved to leave the matter in the hands of its lease committee.⁹ Having been handed something of a hot potato, the lease committee seems either to have abandoned the claim altogether, or perhaps alternatively to have come to some kind of informal agreement with Pegler and/or the landowner concerning the title to the coins. In any case, there is no evidence of legal escalation, and before too long Pegler was himself serving as a Liberal town councillor.¹⁰ The subsequent fate of the coins is entirely unclear, and it seems quite plausible that Pegler may have either kept them, sold them on privately, or otherwise melted them down for his jewellery business. In any case, no surviving specimens traceable to the Southampton hoard have yet been identified in public collections.

The descriptions of the coins in the newspaper reports nonetheless give some impression of the hoard's numismatic composition. It consisted of twenty-four gold coins, reportedly including angels and half-angels of Edward IV, Henry IV, Henry VII, and Henry VIII; since the angel was not introduced until 1464/5, nearly half a century after the death of Henry IV, presumably those angels attributed to this issuer were in fact coins of the restored Henry VI, or alternatively misidentified issues of the Tudor Henries. In either case, the description provided bears close resemblance to better-documented gold hoards deposited during the reign of Henry VIII, inviting direct comparison with the hoard of 210 angels and half-angels of Henry VI to Henry VIII from Asthall, Oxfordshire, and the hoard of 221 ryls, angels, and half-angels of Henry VI to Henry VIII from Park Street, Hertfordshire.¹¹

The Southampton find, however, is distinguished from these two hoards by the additional presence of continental gold. At least five specimens are reported, including gold coins of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain (1474–1504), Maximilian I, King of the Romans (1486–1519) and Holy Roman Emperor (1508–1519), Sigismund, Duke (1439–96) and Archduke (1477–96) of Austria, 'St Martin the Pope of Rome', and 'Ludvic King of Bavaria'. It is unclear whether these represent a single coin per issuer, or whether some issuers were represented by multiple coins. The quality of the identifications is probably variable. The most secure attribution is that of Ferdinand and Isabella, whose gold coinage employs a clear dual title and twin profile busts on the obverse: this coin, or these coins, could be an *excelente* or *double excelente*, two denominations known from well-documented sixteenth-century hoards found at Sherborne Old Castle, Dorset, Brompton, North Yorkshire and Streat, East Sussex.¹² The coin of Maximilian I is also probably correctly identified on the basis of titulature: presumably this coin is a *gulden*, although the issuing location is uncertain. A Frankfurt *gulden* of Maximilian I, dated 1505 and found in 1804/5 in Southgate, Kent, provides a lone parallel

⁶ *Coventry Standard*, 28 July 1854, 3.

⁷ Martin and Lushington 1908, 350.

⁸ *Hampshire Advertiser*, 22 July 1854, 3.

⁹ See n. 8.

¹⁰ *Hampshire Advertiser*, 22 December 1855, 6.

¹¹ Evans 1886, 178–9; Baker 2010, 441.

¹² Cook 1992, 194; Abdy *et al.* 2012, 243, no. 147; Archibald 2015, 155.

from the English and Welsh finds record.¹³ The coin attributed to Sigismund of Austria is also plausible, although it is possible that the Southampton specimen(s) belonged to a posthumous issue struck during the reign of Maximilian I.

The identifications of the coins of ‘St Martin the Pope of Rome’ and ‘Luvic King of Bavaria’, however, are more doubtful. The first is probably not a Papal coin, although a positive identification is not forthcoming. One possibility is that it represents a Lucchese *zecchino*, which were struck during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and depict a mounted St Martin cutting his cloak for a beggar on the reverse, as described in the *London Daily News* report. This coin would not be without parallel: a slightly later Lucchese ducat, issued in 1552 for Charles V, was present in the Streat hoard.¹⁴ The second coin is also uncertain: it may be a *gulden* of Wilhelm IV and Louis X of Bavaria (1508–45), which bear the obverse legend WILH ET LVDWIC DVC BVAVRIE.¹⁵ Without surviving coins or improved documentation, it is not possible to satisfactorily resolve these questions. In general, however, the more securely identified continental gold coins are contemporary with the English gold coins, and need not extend the *terminus post quem* of this hoard beyond the reign of Henry VIII.

The findspot of the hoard, Wickham Court (NGR SU 4190 1118), is depicted on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:1056 map of 1846 as an area of slum dwellings on the south side of Vyse Lane, a small routeway connecting Bugle Street on the west to French Street on the east. Wickham Court was destroyed during the Southampton Blitz (November to December 1940), and subsequent post-war redevelopment in the area has resulted in the widening and rerouting of Vyse Lane over the site (Figure 1). In advance of this redevelopment, however, an archaeological excavation was undertaken in 1956–8 on the site of Wickham



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Fig. 1. Location map of the findspot of the hoard from Wickham Court, Southampton (contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2021)

¹³ British Museum, accession no. SSB,75.158.

¹⁴ Cook 1992, 195, no. 9.

¹⁵ Hahn and Hahn-Zelleke 2007, 26. Medieval Bavaria was a duchy, not a kingdom, and consequently had no kings.

Court, revealing evidence for medieval and post-medieval gardens, yards, and cess pits.¹⁶ The 1454 Southampton Great Terrier, a survey of the contributions of property owners and occupiers to the maintenance of the town wall, associates these archaeological deposits with a townhouse on the corner of Bugle Street, whose rear curtilage extended eastwards along the south side of Vyse Lane.¹⁷ By 1507×11 ownership of this property had passed to Walter Baker, a merchant adventurer who would serve four terms as mayor of Southampton between 1522 and 1542.¹⁸ Given the coincidence of locations and dates, it is possible that the hoard represents an unrecovered sum of money concealed by Baker himself, perhaps containing the proceeds of his overseas commercial dealings.

2. River Thames, Lambeth, Greater London, 1842. Uncertain no. AV and AR coins, *tpq* 1547

On 1 April 1842 several London newspapers carried reports of a discovery of gold and silver coins made on the foreshore of the River Thames in Lambeth. An initial account, published in the *London Evening Standard*, reads as follows:

For the last two days some curiosity has been excited in Lambeth, by the discovery of a vast number of gold and silver coins, gold rings, ancient teaspoons, and a vast variety of other relics in the bed of the river opposite the Lollards' Tower of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Palace. The first discoverers of the buried gold were two lads of the names of Phelps and Ellis, residing in High-street, Lambeth, who assisted their parents in collecting the coals, old iron, and other things, which might have fallen overboard and be left on the shore at low water. On Tuesday morning they were so engaged at the place above stated, when one of them raked up a large silver coin. They were too elated to keep what might to them have turned out a very valuable secret, but ran to dispose of their prize, and the discovery soon spread in all directions. Other persons now eagerly joined in the search, and very soon several gold pieces were dug up, in addition to hundreds of silver coins. The search continued, as long as the tide would permit. It was found that when their labours were temporarily stopped one man had succeeded in obtaining as much as produced him 17*l.* 12*s.*; a lad got 5*l.* 2*s.* for his digging, and another 4*l.* 17*s.*; besides hundreds of others who were not so fortunate in the value of what they found, though many had as many as 50 or 60 small silver coins in their possession. Yesterday the work again commenced, and that part of the shore which extends from the pier in front of the wall of the archbishop's court-yard and garden had more the appearance of a ploughed field than the bed of a river. Nearly the first thing that was found was a very curious gold ring, of very ancient workmanship and very richly embossed, and very soon after another one of apparently the same date, but more elaborate workmanship. The coins were found at intervals, but not in such numbers as on the previous day, and when the earth had been dug out to about a foot, a very old-fashioned teaspoon was taken out. The tide again put a stop to the search. The coins comprise chiefly those of the reigns of the Edwards, Henry VIII., some of which are in very fine preservation, and many Spanish.¹⁹

A second account, published in the *Evening Chronicle*, reads as follows:

DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT COINS AT LAMBETH. – From an early hour yesterday morning about 150 persons, of both sexes and of all ages, were busily employed in digging up the mud and gravel of the banks of the Thames, opposite the whole line of beach from the Lambeth steam-boat pier, to the extremity of the east end of Lambeth Palace. The object of this extraordinary activity is the recovery of buried treasures, which, according to some reports, amounts to several thousands. It appears that a few days since, as a “Jack in the Water” was raking for coal, he found several old coins, which proved to be of the reigns of the monarchs of the House of Tudor. The party to whom they were shown gravely asserted that no doubt the money had been flung by the martyrs from the Lollards-tower, which stood near where the money was embedded. This obtained circulation, and accordingly, as soon as the tide receded, the shore became crowded; shovels, pokers, chisels, in fact, everything which would turn up the soil being in requisition. Amongst the rumours afloat, it was stated that on Wednesday one man was so fortunate as to find coins which produced him £5 6*s.*; this report has accordingly tended to increase the furor. That some old coins have been found is certain, but nothing to reward the treasure seekers for their labour. – A correspondent gives the following particulars: – The coins are of various reigns, including some of Edward IV. and Edward VI., but principally of Henry VIII., whose profile is in admirable preservation. The pieces are of various value in gold, silver, and copper. There were also in the collection various rare and curious gold, silver, and copper coins of foreign nations, including France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, &c. A variety of them are said to have been submitted for sale by the finders to his grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and remain in his grace's possession, subject to approval. They are chiefly of the description called

¹⁶ Wachter 1975, 149–72.

¹⁷ Burgess 1976, 95, no. 334.

¹⁸ Burgess 1976, 95, no. 334; Fairbrother 2018, 126.

¹⁹ *London Evening Standard*, 1 April 1842, 3.

“Hammer-coin”, and are thus distinguished from those of the present time, which are “milled”. A coin dealer purchased some of the collection, and amongst them a gold piece of large size and very beautiful die, and evidently of the time of the Crusaders, having the Grecian cross, surrounded with the motto “In hoc signo vinces”, which the Crusaders adopted on their labarum, on the one side, and the names “Arabia, Persia, Ethiopia”, on the other. It also exhibits the name of the Christian state of “Portugal”, which, with the various other Christian nations, took a part in the crusades. It is supposed, and with some probability, that the coins were deposited for safety and secrecy in the bed of the river, by some ecclesiastics apprehensive of confiscation of his property for his opinions; and this surmise is strengthened by so many of the coins being of the reign of Henry VIII., and the contiguity of the deposit to the archiepiscopal church.²⁰

A third account, published in the *Globe*, reads as follows:

ANCIENT COINS FOUND IN THE RIVER. – During the last two days a discovery has been accidentally made which has given rise to much curious speculation. On Wednesday afternoon, a young lad belonging to a class termed “mud larks”, who earn a scanty subsistence by collecting coal, fragments of wood, or other “waifs and strays” left by the receding tide on the banks of the Thames, was pursuing his occupation, when his attention was attracted by some shining metal, which on closer scrutiny proved to be a small gold coin. The discovery led to further search, and was rewarded by another coin of silver. The lad, elated by his good fortune, communicated the fact to his fellows, who, willing to share in the anticipated mine of wealth, commenced a vigorous attack upon the shoal of mud, and in a short time a great number of pieces of the precious metals were secured, the moiety of one of the explorers being ultimately bought by a jeweller in the Westminster-road, for 5*l.* 4*s.*, and that of another for 4*l.* 16*s.* One of the coins so found, though much defaced from long contact with the shingles, was pronounced to be a rose noble, intrinsically worth 3*l.* of our money. The silver coins were still more obliterated, and were excessively thin, although not much corroded. They are supposed to be shillings, and some are of the reign of Henry VIII. Some of the coins were taken to Lambeth palace, where they were readily purchased at prices very far beyond their real value. The search was continued with unabated ardour until the return of the tide compelled the gold-finders to quit their El Dorado; it was, however, resumed yesterday, but with indifferent success. This strange discovery was made on the shore in front of Lambeth Palace, directly opposite the Lollard’s Tower. How long these coins may have lain there, and how deposited, are problems for the antiquarian to solve.²¹

While the dates of publication could hint at an April Fool’s hoax, there are good reasons to treat these reports as at least broadly accurate accounts of a genuine nineteenth-century find. Firstly, they name specific verifiable individuals in relation to the discovery: these include the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Howley (1766–1848), who was reportedly offered the coins for sale, as well as the two local boys that first found the coins, Messrs Ellis and Phelps of Lambeth High Street. One of the boys, Henry Phelps (1827–82), can be identified in the 1841 census as a resident of Swan Yard, a slum located less than 100 m south of Lambeth Palace between Lambeth High Street and Fore Street that was demolished during the construction of Albert Embankment in 1866–9.²² Phelps and his father, Henry Phelps Snr (1806–48), both worked as Thames watermen, employment that would certainly have given cause to be on the foreshore at the time of the discovery. Secondly, the reports provide quite precise descriptions of at least some of the more unusual coins from the find, perhaps evidencing direct observation of specimens in hand, or at least secondary access to descriptions from people who had seen them in this manner. Thirdly, and most crucially, however, the reports were not only never retracted as a hoax, but were in fact supplemented in the days that followed by descriptions of additional coins and objects found by mudlarks drawn to the foreshore by the lure of treasure: these included ‘four small silver coins of the reign of Henry the Eighth’, probably addenda to the earlier find, as well as unrelated finds like ‘the bowl of an ancient gold spoon’ – probably untarnished brass – and ‘a small spiked wheel’, presumably a spur rowel.²³ Indeed, memory of the 1842 find lived on for some time: an account of the discovery of three silver coins, one dated 1672, on the foreshore in 1843 refers back to the ‘number of coins ... found in the mud opposite Lambeth Palace’ several months previously,

²⁰ *Evening Chronicle*, 1 April 1842, 2.

²¹ *Globe*, 1 April 1842, 4.

²² Kew, The National Archives (TNA), HO 107/1057/3, 50.

²³ *London Evening Standard*, 4 April 1842, 2; *The Atlas*, 9 April 1842, 6. Base metal dress accessories and household goods like spoons and spur rowels are commonly found on the Thames foreshore, and reflect episodic refuse disposal in the river during the medieval and post-medieval periods; see Noël Hume 1956.

and recalls the ‘numbers of men and boys [who] were employed in digging for more treasure’ in the days that followed.²⁴

The coins found at Lambeth in 1842 seem to have passed in at least two separate directions. Some were sold directly to local jewellers, while others were presented for sale to William Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury. Whether Howley actually purchased the coins, however, is unclear: no surviving examples are held in the collections at Lambeth Palace and Canterbury Cathedral, and no reference to the coins has been found among Howley’s papers at Lambeth and Canterbury.²⁵ It is possible, therefore, that Howley was simply uninterested, and that the portion offered to him was then sold on to jewellers or kept by the finders. In any case, no surviving coins are known to the author.

The newspaper accounts provide some general impression of the composition of the Lambeth find. Its numismatic element apparently consisted of a range of English and continental denominations in gold and silver: a passing reference to copper coins in the *Evening Chronicle* is ambiguous, and probably represents unrelated material found during the intensive digging that followed Ellis and Phelps’ discoveries. The English component was bimetallic, with the gold coins including a ‘rose noble’ – probably a ryal of Edward IV – and the silver coins including ‘large’ and ‘small’ denominations in the names of Henry VIII and Edward VI, presumably testoons and/or groats and pence.²⁶ The silver coins of Edward VI provide a *terminus post quem* of 1547 for the hoard as a whole, and the overall composition of the silver element is consistent with other English hoards buried during the ‘Great Debasement’ of 1544–51: a hoard of c. 1549 from the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, for example, consisted of thirty-seven testoons and pence of Henry VIII and Edward VI, while a contemporary find from Nynhead, Somerset, consisted of thirty-five testoons, groats, and a halfgroat of Henry VIII and Edward VI.²⁷

The continental element of the hoard was also bimetallic, and included coins from France, Spain, Portugal, and Germany, although only one – a gold coin bearing the obverse legend ARABIA PERSIA ETHIOPIA and the reverse legend IN HOC SIGNO VINCES – is described in any detail. This coin is evidently a gold portugês, and almost certainly belongs to the original, early sixteenth-century issues of Manuel I (1495–1521) or John III (1521–57) of Portugal, and not the imitative portugalöser series issued in Northern Europe during the mid-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁸ Struck from African gold, the portugês had an international circulation during the sixteenth century, but specimens with British findspots are rare: the only other example recorded to date occurred in a hoard of 218 gold coins found at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire, which closed with a halfpound of Elizabeth I issued in 1565.²⁹

Two gold rings of ‘elaborate workmanship’ found on the same stretch of foreshore at the same time were probably associated with the coins as a single hoard; the find of twenty gold and silver coins and a silver-gilt ring buried in South Warwickshire during the first quarter of the sixteenth century is a possible parallel.³⁰

The findspot of the hoard is localised by the newspaper accounts to a short stretch of foreshore opposite Lambeth Palace, bounded at its north end by the Lollard’s Tower and its south end by the Lambeth steamboat pier (NGR TQ 3051 7911; Figure 2). An early oblique plan of London, published by George Braun and Frans Hogenberg in 1572, shows this site to have formed part of the intertidal zone immediately north of the Lambeth horseferry, a key river crossing that connected the Archbishop of Canterbury’s palace to the royal palace of Westminster by at least the fourteenth century (Figure 3).³¹ While this is an unlikely place to

²⁴ *Saint James’s Chronicle*, 19 August 1843, 4.

²⁵ J. North, pers. comm., 26 July 2019; F. Todd, pers. comm., 2 August 2019.

²⁶ The reference to a portrait bust on one of the silver coins of Henry VIII could suggest that Second Coinage groats were present in the hoard.

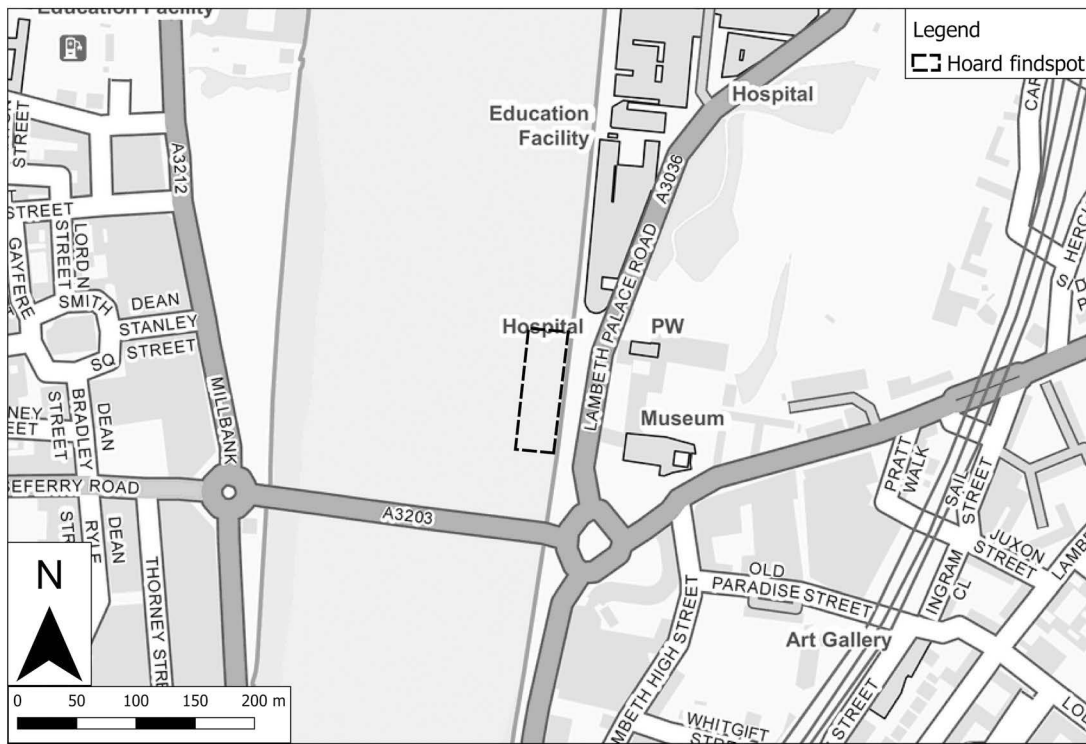
²⁷ Symons 1990.

²⁸ For example, Vaz 1969, 299, E1.01, or 323, J3.01. For imitative portugalöser, see Bahrfeldt 1914.

²⁹ Keary 1878, 306; Allen and Blackburn 2011. The Lambeth find therefore confirms the presence of the portugês in England at least a decade before the accession of Elizabeth I, a result consistent with documentary evidence: the 1538 will of Alice Lane of Ludlow, for example, requests that her executors use a portugês in her possession to provide alms for the poor, fulfilling a vow that she made before the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham (TNA, PROB 11/27/326).

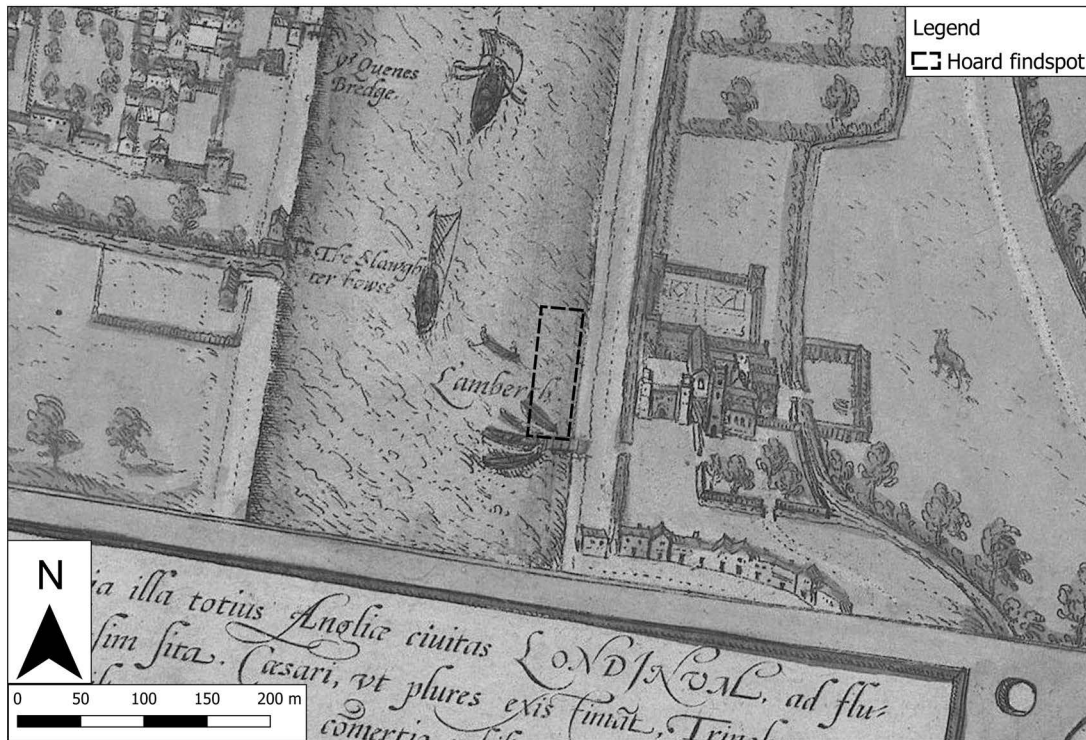
³⁰ Andrews 2019, SWA.

³¹ Roberts and Godfrey 1951, 118.



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Fig. 2. Location map of the findspot of the hoard from the River Thames, Lambeth (contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2021)



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Fig. 3. Location map of the findspot of the hoard from the River Thames, Lambeth, overlain on Braun and Hogenberg's oblique plan of 1572 (contains data from Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, public domain)

deliberately conceal a hoard of valuable objects – its location is hardly secluded, and the hope of easy recovery would diminish with each rising tide – it is an eminently likely place to lose one: the hoard could, therefore, represent the contents of a large purse or coffer lost by an individual making the crossing from Lambeth to Westminster, or vice versa. Similar instances of accidental loss may account for twenty-one other medieval and Tudor hoards known from the beds and banks of English and Welsh rivers, including a late fourteenth-century gold hoard found on the opposite side of the Thames during the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament in 1841.³²

3. Mayo's Farm, Pendock, Worcestershire, 1855. Uncertain no. AV and AR coins, *tpq* 1558

In July 1855 a hoard of gold and silver coins was discovered in a field in Pendock, Worcestershire. An account of the find, published in the *Worcestershire Chronicle*, reads as follows:

A number of gold and silver coins in a beautiful state of preservation were discovered last week in the parish of Pendock, in a field belonging to Mr. William Fisher. The gold pieces are Spanish and Portuguese, the silver coins are British and Dutch of the reigns of Philip and Mary and Elizabeth, one or two are also Spanish. They are now under the care of the president of the Malvern Field club for examination and description, and doubtless will add to the interest of the proceedings of the Field Club, connected as they are with the old "Malvern Chase". The coins were found near the site of the ancient Portway.³³

The President of the Malvern Field Club in 1855 was the Rev William Samuel Symonds FGS (1818–87), a Hereford-born geologist and cleric with direct personal links to Pendock: in 1845 he was appointed as parish rector, and in 1859 he became owner of the Pendock Court Estate on the death of his mother, Mary Anne Beale.³⁴ At least a portion of the find remained in Symonds' custody in 1862, when they were exhibited at the temporary museum formed for the Royal Archaeological Institute's meeting at Worcester on 22–29 July. The accompanying catalogue describes the coins in the following manner:

Gold and silver coins, part of a hoard found some years since at Pendock, Worcestershire. The gold coins exhibited were, one of John III., King of Portugal, 1524, 1557; two of the Emperor Charles V., and one of Philip II., King of Spain. Also silver coins of Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, and three silver coins of Ferdinand, King of Spain and Castille.³⁵

Before his death on 15 September 1887 Symonds had gifted some of his archaeological and geological collections to the museums at Malvern and Worcester.³⁶ Whether the Pendock coins were included in these donations is unclear. No coins with a Pendock provenance are recorded among the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century numismatic acquisitions of Worcester City Museum, although some of the unprovenanced English silver coins listed in a 1928 typescript catalogue of the collection could potentially derive from the find.³⁷ However, the catalogue does not describe any corresponding Spanish or Portuguese coins in gold or silver, and those specimens that remain in the collection today do not exhibit a shared patina suggestive of a common origin. On the balance of probabilities, therefore, it seems likely that these coins are entirely unrelated to Symonds and the Pendock find, and simply belong to a general multiperiod collection acquired from a variety of different sources. No corresponding early documentation exists for the collection of the Malvern Museum, which was transferred to Worcester in 1964 after the museum's dissolution in 1963. Fourteen of the 131 ex-Malvern Museum coins currently in the Worcester City Museum date to the Tudor period, although none have associated findspot records. Again, it is possible that some of these coins could derive from the Pendock find, but there is no evidence – circumstantial or otherwise – to support this; as before, Spanish and Portuguese coins are conspicuous by their absence, and the surviving coins have varied patinas and conditions suggestive of material acquired from unre-

³² Andrews 2019, 198–9.

³³ *Worcestershire Chronicle*, 1 August 1855, 4.

³⁴ *Gloucester Journal*, 21 April 1888, 8.

³⁵ Anon 1862, 101.

³⁶ *Gloucestershire Echo*, 17 November 1888, 3.

³⁷ Anon 1928.

lated sources.³⁸ It is possible, therefore, that the coins remained with Symonds until his death; in any case, their current whereabouts are unknown.

The descriptions in the *Worcestershire Chronicle* and temporary museum catalogue provide limited insights into the composition of this find. The hoard evidently consisted of gold and silver coins, the former exclusively Spanish and Portuguese and the latter a mixture of English, Spanish, and Dutch issues. The gold element consisted of at least four coins, two of which were issued for Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor (1519–56) and King of Spain (1516–56), one for Philip II of Spain (1556–98), and one for John III of Portugal (1521–57). The denominations of these coins are unclear. The curious reference to the dates 1524 and 1557 on the coin of John III may be relevant, since no dated gold coins of this issuer are recorded by Vaz; the first date, however, corresponds with the death of Vasco da Gama, while the latter is the terminal regnal date.³⁹ It is possible, therefore, that this alludes to a gold denomination with iconographic references to Portuguese maritime activity, such as the São Vicente or the português. Examples of the former are known from the wreck of the *Ann Francis*, which sank off the coast at Aberavon in West Glamorgan in 1583; examples of the latter, meanwhile, were present in the aforementioned hoards from Lambeth, Greater London, and Bisham Abbey, Berkshire.⁴⁰ However, it is equally possible that these coins were examples of the more common Portuguese cruzado.⁴¹ The Charles V coins, meanwhile, are likely to be Burgundian Carolus crowns, examples of which are known from the Streat hoard.⁴² The identity of the Philip coin is less clear, but is perhaps as likely to be Flemish or Brabantine as Spanish. The silver element included at least five English coins spanning the reigns of Henry VII to Elizabeth, alongside at least three Spanish coins of Ferdinand II of Aragon (1475–1516), perhaps reals or half-reals of the kind known in increasing numbers from metal-detector finds, as well as an indeterminate number of ‘Dutch’ coins, presumably issues of the Spanish Netherlands.⁴³ Taken as a whole, the overall composition of the Pendock find is not inconsistent with a hoard buried in the years running up to the Great Recoinage of 1560–1, which removed significant numbers of foreign coins and debased early Tudor silver coins from circulation; however, given the limited evidence, it would be unwise to dwell on this possibility.⁴⁴ The presence of coins of Elizabeth I nonetheless provides a *terminus post quem* of 1558 for the deposit as a whole.

The findspot of the hoard is described in the *Worcestershire Chronicle* as a field belonging to one William Fisher (1815–67), a farmer resident at Mayo’s Farm (NGR SO 7945 3339) at the time of the 1851 census.⁴⁵ An 1858 account of a field visit to Pendock led by the Malvern Naturalists Field Club notes that the coins had been found ‘in a field hard by’ the farmhouse; this corresponds with evidence from the parish tithe map of 1841, which shows that most of the fields belonging to Mayo’s Farm lay in its immediate surroundings on the north and south sides of the east-west road between the hamlets of Upper and Lower Pendock (Figure 4).⁴⁶ Two of these fields, Pill Field and Great Pill Field, are located immediately south of the farm, and represent late medieval or early post-medieval enclosures in the fourteenth-century field Pylfelde.⁴⁷ Little is known of the history of the farmhouse itself – the building was demolished in 1909–10 and replaced by a new Arts and Crafts house, Fisher’s Place – but its history as a landholding certainly extends into the late medieval and early post-medieval periods: its early owners, the eponymous Mayos, were a family of yeoman farmers recorded in Pendock and the neighbouring villages of Berrow, Eldersfield and Redmarley D’Abitot throughout the

³⁸ The Malvern coins in Worcester City Museum do not include any of the specimens found during the construction of the Malvern Abbey Hotel (cf. Dolley 1955–7).

³⁹ Vaz 1969, 323–30.

⁴⁰ Kelleher 2007, 223, no. 9; for the português, see discussion under the Lambeth hoard.

⁴¹ Kelleher 2007, 218.

⁴² Cook 1992, 194.

⁴³ Besly and Holmes 1997, 146, nos 244–7.

⁴⁴ Challis 1978, 229–31.

⁴⁵ TNA, HO 107/1974, 94v.

⁴⁶ *Worcestershire Chronicle*, 20 October 1858, 4; TNA, IR 30/39/107.

⁴⁷ Dyer 1990, 107.

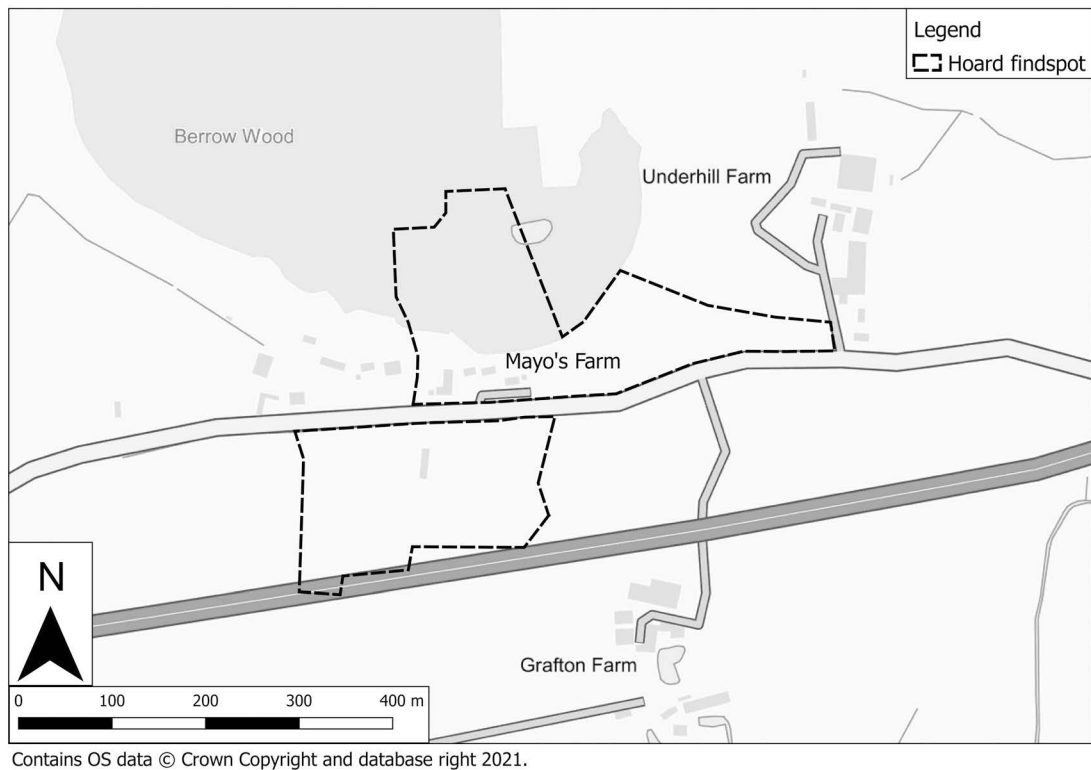


Fig. 4. Location map of the findspot of the hoard from Mayo's Farm, Pendock (contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2021)

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴⁸ The hoard may, therefore, represent a sum of money belonging to a member of the Mayo family, who chose to bury it in the immediate vicinity of their farmstead during the reign of Elizabeth I.

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⁴⁸ For Fisher's Place, see Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 518. For some sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Mayos, see Worcester, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, BA 2373 Ref 850 Berrow 1a/i; Gloucester, Gloucestershire Archives, P265 IN 1/1; TNA, PROB 11/334/572.

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