AN ANGEL OF EDWARD V IN THE HERENTALS (BELGIUM) TREASURE TROVE

By HERBERT SCHNEIDER

In October 1955 two workmen reported that they had dug up 83 gold and 22 silver coins at the corner of the Zandstraat at Herentals (Province of Antwerp, in Belgium). They had been engaged in foundation work for a new building to be erected on the site of an ancient house and had found the coins about 5 feet below street level. No container had, they said, been discovered.

This was the workmen's story which seemed highly improbable considering that the coins were far too clean to have been in contact with earth for some 375 years. The most recent coin was, in fact, a gold crown of Philip II of Spain, dated 1580, and struck in Holland for Dutch circulation. As we shall presently see, this was approximately the time the treasure trove was deposited.

Because of the usual ignorance of treasure-trove regulations on the part of the finders and of the owners of the property on which the coins were discovered, the workmen had in fact kept back the major part of the find as well as a broken vase which had contained the coins. A few coins were probably sold privately by the workmen, but the find was too important to be disposed of without arousing suspicion. It would appear that the workmen decided to keep the bulk of the treasure back until they could ascertain how well or how badly they did out of the coins they had officially reported.

The first Herentals sale was organized just over a year ago, and when the workmen had received their rightful share of the proceeds, they came forward with all the remaining coins in their possession, including the broken vase in which the coins had been hidden. They produced, in fact, another 142 gold pieces, so that the total known treasure consisted of 225 gold and 22 silver coins of no less than 36 different countries, provinces, seigneuries, or towns, including 20 English gold coins, among them a George Noble of Henry VIII and an Angel of Edward V.

Professor Paul Naster of Louvain listed and reviewed the find in the Revue Belge de Numismatique, tomes 101/2 (1955/6) and stressed the fact that, for a treasure deposited at Herentals in Brabant, an astonishing percentage of Philip II coins derived from Dutch mint establishments situated in regions which were in open revolt against Spain at the time, and not from one of the mints in Brabant or Flanders, as one would have expected. It is indeed noteworthy that there were only 4 Spanish coins as against 22 Portuguese, 20 English, and an

1 Treasure-trove regulations in Belgium differ basically from those in the United Kingdom: the Crown has no claim on treasure trove and the interested parties are the finder of the hoard and the owner of the ground on which the treasure was discovered.

2 After the defeat of Sebastian of Portugal and the incorporation of that country into
impressive number of German and Imperial gold pieces. Professor Naster suggested, therefore, with some reservations, that the hoard might have belonged to a Protestant.

Although the *trésor de protestant* theory is debatable, it is, in my opinion, by far the most plausible explanation for the somewhat unorthodox composition of the find. It looks like a gold reserve—possibly built up over a period of quite a few years—belonging originally to a merchant or a banker who had trade relations with Protestant and anti-Spanish countries. This would not necessarily make him a Protestant himself, but the history of Herentals points in that direction.

Herentals became Calvinistic in 1577 and a member of the "Union d’Utrecht" in 1579. Spanish troops took the town in spring, 1584. In my opinion, the hoard is likely to have been deposited at the approach of the Spanish soldiery.

Any merchant or banker in the Low Countries, whether a Protestant or a Roman Catholic, was liable to have hidden money and other valuables when units of the Spanish army were about to enter a town. But had the original owner of the hoard not been a Protestant, he would hardly have left his money buried after the so-called "order", which the forces of Philip II "restored" in the Low Lands in the interest of Spain and in the name of the Church of Rome, had been established. As it is, the chances are that he was killed or that he fled.

Professor Naster has recorded the Herentals find *in toto* in the *Revue Belge de Numismatique*, tomes 101/2, but since he is not specializing in English coins the descriptions lack certain particulars relevant for the student of English numismatics. In these circumstances it is, I think, of interest to list the English portion of the Herentals treasure afresh, and I would like to express my thanks to Messieurs W. Herssens and F. Van Heesvelde for their collaboration which made it possible for me to obtain full particulars of all the coins but one. I am equally grateful to Mademoiselle Jacqueline Lallemand of the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels for the trouble she has taken in connexion with the casts of the coins.

Apart from the obvious rarity of a rather crinkled and somewhat battered George Noble which has normal features and legends, only an Angel of Edward V (Pl. XXV, 19) is of outstanding importance and interest. This is the fifth known specimen and was struck from the same pair of dies as the British Museum coin, illustrated in Brooke’s *English Coins*, Pl. xxxv. 2, which had hitherto been on a plane of its own, for the other three Angels of Edward V are all from a different altered obverse die of Edward IV combined with a different reverse die of Blunt+Whitton’s Type XXII. On Whitton’s list, we find their the Spanish Empire in 1580, many Portuguese—and particularly Portuguese Jews—emigrated to the Low Countries provinces which were in revolt against Spain.


obverse under No. 7, and the reverse is Blunt + Whitton Type XXII, reverse of No. 6, whereas the British Museum and the Herentals specimens were struck from the dies listed by Whitton under No. 4, the reverse of which tallies with Blunt + Whitton Type XXII, reverse of No. 7.

THE COINS

Edward IV, Second Reign, 1471/83

1. ANGEL. Obv. Initial mark O to right of head. Plain in nimbus. Reads DEI and FRANC*. Saltire stops.
   Rev. No initial mark. Reads CR/VSEM and REDE+TOR. No stops, except possibly after TVA. B+W Type xv, No. 1.

   Rev. Initial mark Cinquefoil. Reads PER/CRVCEM and probably REDEMT. No stops. B+W Type xxi, No. 2.

Edward V (1483)

   Rev. Initial mark Sun + Rose. Reads /CRVCEM REDEMP%; otherwise no stops. Whitton No. 4. (Cf. Brooke’s English Coins, Pl. xxxv. 2.)

Henry VII (1485-1509)


5. ANGEL. Obv. New design, initial mark Greyhound’s Head. Small, square lettering. Reads FRA. Rosette stops.

   Rev. Initial mark Pheon. Reads XPE RED. Saltire stops. Brooke: Group V.


Henry VIII, First Coinage, 1509-26

8. ANGEL. Obv. Initial mark Castle (plain). King’s numerals dotted and divided by pellets. Reads FR. Saltire stops.

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2 There is a misprint in the Revue Belge de Numismatique, tome 102, p. 184: the weight of the Angel of Edward V (misdescribed as an Angel of Edward IV having the Cinquefoil initial mark, under No. 229) was given as 45,04 grammes instead of 5,04 grammes.
*Rev.* (ii) Castle, var. 1.

10. **ANGEL.** *Obv.* Initial mark Castle (plain?), King's numerals undotted. Reads FR.  
Saltire stops.  
*Rev.* (ii) Castle, var. 1.

11. **ANGEL.** *Obv.* Initial mark Portcullis with chains. King's numerals undotted. Reads FR. Has the usual saltire stops.  


**Wolsey Coinage, 1526-44**


14. **HALF-CROWN.** This is the only English coin in the Herentals find which I have not been able to inspect. Professor Naster has listed it in the *Revue Belge de Numismatique*, tome 101, p. 157, as follows:  
"Demi-couronne d'or: cf. Brooke, pl. XXXIX, 8. Imitation? HENRIC: (......); R (...)ANSIHOSA.SINE.SP'L. Petit morceau manque. —{1.43}"

If the reference to Dr. Brooke's illustration is correct, the coin belongs to the Wolsey Coinage, and if it really has a colon stop followed by a double annulet stop after HENRIC and single pellet stops on the reverse, Professor Naster's suspicions that the coin may be a forgery are more than justified. This punctuation is clearly impossible for the period and the half-crowns of the Wolsey Coinage are known with saltire stops only. However, the punctuation of some of the other English coins listed in the *Revue Belge de Numismatique* was recorded in rather a fanciful manner so that I would prefer not to express an opinion. The reverse of the coin has, of course, the RVTLANS ROSA SINE SPINA legend.

**Base Coinage (1544–7)**

15. **ANGEL.** *Obv.* Initial mark Lis. Annulet to left of angel's head. Standard legend with trefoil stops.  
*Rev.* Initial mark Lis. Annulet on ship. Standard legend with trefoil stops. Whitton: Base Coinage, as initial mark Lis.

*Rev.* Initial mark Lis. No annulet on ship. Reads RED. Saltire stops. Whitton: Base Coinage, initial mark Lis, var. 2.

**Mary Tudor, 1553–8**

17. **ANGEL.** (Before marriage, 1553/4) *Obv.* Privy mark Pomegranate after MARIA. Annulet before MARIA, annulet stops. Reads REGI'.  
*Rev.* Privy mark Pomegranate after ISTVD, annulet stops. Reads MIRABIL.
An Angel of Edward V

(Cf. Revue Belge de Numismatique, tome 101, p. 157. First Herentals sale. Published by courtesy of Monsieur François Van Heesvelde.)

18. ANGEL. (Before marriage, 1553/4.) Obv. From same die as before (No. 17).
   Rev. Privy mark Pomegranate after ISTVD, annulet stops. Reads MIRAB
defié.

Elizabeth I, 1558–1603

   Rev. Privy mark Crosslet. Reads MIRABE. E over Rose to left and Rose over E to right of mast. Pellet stops. (From the same dies as Lockett IV sale, item 1957, Pl. xxxii.)

   Pellet stops.
   Rev. Privy mark Coronet. Reads MIRAB
   Small E to left and Rose to right of mast. Pellet stops.