

FOUR SEVENTEENTH CENTURY COIN HOARDS FROM CONGLETON, CHESHIRE.

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WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY ROBERT PHILPOTT, SUSAN NICHOLSON AND JULIE EDWARDS

Introduction

FOUR pottery vessels, each containing silver coins, were found in April and May 1992 on the outskirts of Congleton, which is situated in southwest Cheshire close to the border with Staffordshire. The hoards were found by metal detector users in a steep natural bank forming the western side of the valley of the Howty Brook and were promptly reported to the Cheshire Coroner's office by the finders, Keith Pay, Donald Oxley and Philip Broadley, all local residents. The face value of the four hoards was £172 8s. and the total of coins found (3,409) represents one of the largest finds from the seventeenth century ever recorded in this country (there were 5,098 silver coins in the Middleham Hoard found in 1993). What really marks the Congleton Hoards out, however, is the amount of historical information that has been discovered relating to their possible owner (Appendix 1).

In August 1992 Cheshire County Council's Principal Archaeologist, Adrian Tindall, commissioned research from the Field Archaeology section of the National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside to place the hoards in their historical and archaeological context.¹ Robert Philpott carried out the field survey (see below) and produced an unpublished report incorporating Susan Nicholson's documentary research (summarised in Appendix 1). Julie Edwards of Chester Archaeological Service prepared a report on the pottery vessels (Appendix 2), and the author undertook the identification of the coins.² An inquest was held in Congleton on 26 February 1993 at which the coins were declared to be treasure trove. The hoards were subsequently acquired by the Cheshire Museums Service based in Northwich, thanks to grant aid from the Museums and Galleries Commission/Victoria and Albert Museum Local Museums Purchase Fund. The pottery containers were kindly donated to Cheshire Museums by John Barber, the owner of the field in which they were found.

The hoards were contained in pots that appear to have been deliberately inserted into the side and near the top of a steep ten metre high valley bank at a depth of around 450 mm. For a detailed discussion of the pots by Julie Edwards please see Appendix 2. A number of features link the pots together. Two of the pots (Hoards 3 and 4) were almost touching and may represent a single deposit; Hoard 1 was about 2.5 metres away, and Hoard 2 was about 24.5 metres to the north. Two of the hoard pots (Hoards 1 and 3) were almost identical. The pots used for Hoards 2 and 4 were both bottles, sealed using pieces of lead, and deposited on their sides. All four pots have been dated to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. All four are relatively uncommon for this period in the northwest, and the sets of initials on two of them are uncommon on wares of this type.

Acknowledgements: I am grateful to the following: Gwyneth Jones, Ruth McKew and Cheshire County Council for permission to study and publish the coins; Peter Alebon, Chester City Council Archaeological Service, for drawing the pots; Edward Besly, National Museum of Wales, for help, advice and much patience; Barrie Cook, The British Museum; Julie Edwards, Chester City Council Archaeological Service for Appendix 2; Chris Johnson, Cheshire County Council for photographing the coins; Susan Nicholson and Rob Philpott of the National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside for the research, Appendix 1 and the coin graphs; Maureen Smith of the National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside for producing the tables; Adrian Tindall and Jill Collens of Environmental Planning, Cheshire County Council, for advice and supplying the pottery drawings; Lynn Fewster, Jon Marrow, Sandy Campbell and Julie Vint for help in identifying and cataloguing the coins, and Catrina Appleby for weighing them.

¹ R.A. Philpott, *Coin Hoards from Priestly Fields, Congleton: Survey and Documentary Research*, unpublished report, National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside (1992).

² Full listings of the hoards, along with detailed reports on the pottery, the field survey and the documentary research are held in the County Sites and Monuments Record, record number CSMR 2373.

As the containers were lidded or sealed with lead all the coins were clean, with the majority in a stable condition when found and only a few requiring conservation. There is reason to believe (see below) that the four hoards form a group deposited by the same individual in the second half of the seventeenth century, before 1675. The earliest coins in the hoards date from the reign of Edward VI, while the most recent were halfcrowns of Charles II dated 1670. As is usual many of the sixteenth century coins were very worn and/or clipped, in stark contrast to one halfcrown of 1670 which still retained its mint bloom. There were fourteen coins from Royalist Civil War mints, eight Scottish coins, one from Ireland and a counterfeit Charles I shilling. The denominations range from crowns to sixpences but were mainly shillings and sixpences dating from the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I.

Hoard 1: 1,144 coins with a face value of £41 5s.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| England | Philip & Mary | | | Shillings (6) | |
| | Elizabeth I | | | Shillings (216) | Sixpences (629) |
| | James I | | Halfcrown (1) | Shillings (81) | Sixpences (71) |
| | Charles I | Tower | Halfcrowns (20) | Shillings (119) | Sixpence (1) |

Hoard 2: 791 coins with a face value of £40

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| England | Philip & Mary | | | Shilling (1) | |
| | Elizabeth I | | | Shillings (106) | Sixpences (231) |
| | James I | | Halfcrowns (5) | Shillings (128) | Sixpences (46) |
| | Charles I | Tower | Halfcrowns (68) | Shillings (169) | Sixpences (4) |
| | | Oxford | Halfcrowns (3) | | |
| | | Exeter | Halfcrowns (2) | | |
| | | W, SA, etc | Halfcrown (1) | | |
| | Charles II | | Halfcrowns (12) | Shillings (4) | |
| | | | Milled Halfcrowns (6) | | |
| Scotland | James I | | Thirty Shillings (3) | Twelve Shillings (1) | |
| | Charles I | | | | Six Shillings (1) |

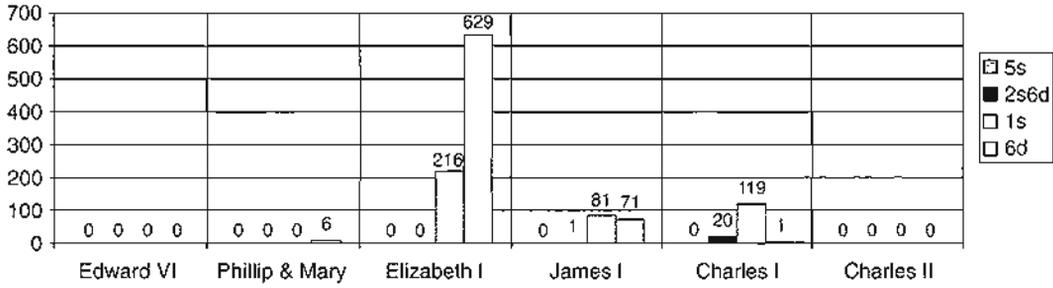
Hoard 3: 833 coins with a face value of £64 19s. 6d.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| England | Edward VI | | | Shillings (3) | |
| | Philip & Mary | | | Shilling (1) | |
| | Elizabeth I | | | Shillings (105) | Sixpences (231) |
| | James I | | Halfcrowns (7) | Shillings (65) | Sixpences (36) |
| | Charles I | Tower | Halfcrowns (354) | Shillings (4) | Sixpence (1) |
| | | Oxford | Halfcrowns (3) | | |
| | | Bristol | Halfcrowns (2) | | |
| | | Exeter | Halfcrowns (2) | | |
| | Charles II | | Halfcrowns (4) | | |
| | | | Milled Crowns (7) | Halfcrowns (4) | |
| Scotland | James I | | Thirty Shillings (1) | | |
| | Charles I | | Thirty Shillings (2) | | |
| Ireland | Charles I | Lords Justices | | | |
| | | Crown (1) | | | |

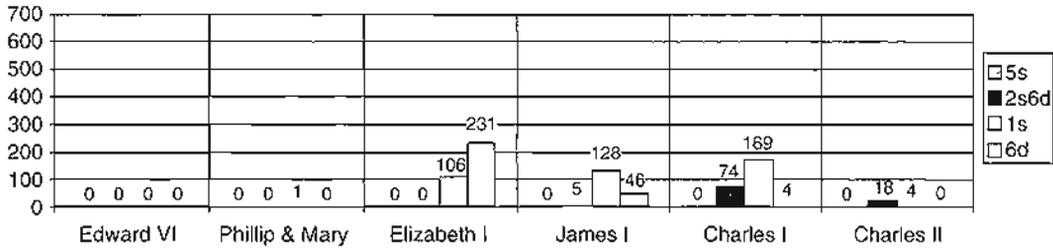
Hoard 4: 641 coins with a face value of £26 3s. 6d.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| England | Edward VI | | | | Sixpences (2) |
| | Philip & Mary | | | Shilling (1) | |
| | Elizabeth I | | | Shillings (65) | Sixpences (225) |
| | James I | | | Shillings (40) | Sixpences (30) |
| | Charles I | Tower | Halfcrowns (17) | Shillings (221) | Sixpences (28) |
| | | Aberystwyth | | Shillings (3) | Sixpence (1) |
| | | Oxford | | Shilling (1) | |
| | Counterfeit | | | Shilling (1) | |
| | 'Charles I' | | | | |
| | Charles II | | | Shillings (6) | |

Congleton Hoard 1: Total 1144 Coins



Congleton Hoard 2: Total 791 Coins
(5 Scottish coins not plotted)



Congleton Hoard 3: Total 833 Coins
(1 Irish and 3 Scottish coins not plotted)



Congleton Hoard 4: Total 641 Coins

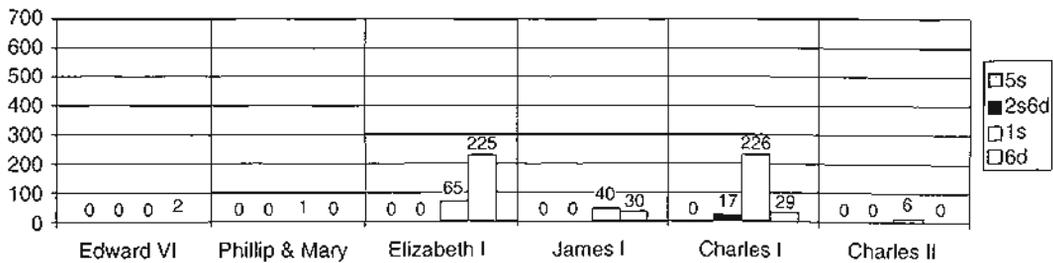


Fig. 1.

Summary of the Field Survey

A topographical survey of the area was carried out in August and September 1992 to identify the precise location of each hoard and record any relict features in the landscape, including trackways, field boundaries and earthworks. The general topography is likely to have altered little since the seventeenth century because the valley slope is too steep for the ground ever to have been cultivated or occupied. The findspots are not readily overlooked and, if it was as densely wooded then as it is now, the coins could have been buried or examined without fear of being seen. An initial visit with two of the finders, Keith Pay and Donald Oxley, located the precise findspots of the four hoards, still visible as small patches of disturbed ground. Without archaeological excavation it was not possible to determine whether the pots were placed in separate pits dug by hand or were placed within existing natural cavities such as rabbit burrows, of which many exist in the bank today.

Summary of the Documentary Evidence

A study of published and unpublished documentary and cartographic evidence relating to the site was carried out to identify landholdings in the area during the latter half of the seventeenth century.³ The aim was to try to clarify the circumstances under which the hoards were deposited, and the identity and motivation of those responsible. This study has established that the field in which the hoards were found was known as Shawfield from as early as 1342. The owner of the field at the time the hoards were deposited is indicated by the inventory of a John Walker dated 24 April 1675. He may also have owned the coins. The initials J:CW on the pot from Hoard 2 may be his and those of his wife: such vessels were sometimes given as personalised gifts. John Walker, a skinner by profession, was a prominent member of Congleton Town Council, three times mayor, an ardent Royalist, and one of the wealthiest people in the town. The 1675 inventory, for example, valued his goods at £453 1s. 8d. If the coins did belong to one person it was to someone very well off like John Walker. In his will dated 29 March 1675 he was described as 'aged and declining of health in body', so it may be that he died without telling anyone of the locations of the hoards.

At least one coin from each of the hoards has the letter 'W' scratched on it, which may help link all of them to John Walker despite the initials 'FR' which the pot from Hoard 4 bears. The dates of all the coins deposited fall within his lifetime, the latest dating to five years before his death in 1675. The different initials on the Hoard 2 and Hoard 4 bottles may suggest different owners, although they may also indicate re-use of the vessels, a payment to the landowner by a third party, or even a deposit for safe keeping. It seems likely, however, that all four hoards were the property of a single individual or family.

Discussion of the Coins and their Deposition

The composition of the four hoards is broadly typical of the patterns of coin circulation and hoards of the period 1640 to 1670 in England and Wales, with large numbers of well-circulated sixpences and shillings of Elizabeth I and James I, increasing numbers of relatively unworn halfcrowns from the 1640s onwards, and a few Scottish coins (five in Hoard 2 and three in Hoard 3). Many of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century coins are clipped. A considerable number are also very worn and have been bent or scratched, presumably to check on their silver content (but see below for further discussion on this aspect).

There are no coins from the period 1649 to 1660 in the deposit, which is not surprising considering the 1661 recall of Commonwealth issues, and the royalist allegiance of John Walker, who was probably the owner of the hoards. There are only forty-three coins of Charles II's reign. Of these six from Hoard 2 and eleven from Hoard 3 are of the 'milled' coinage and date between 1662 and 1670. Three factors probably contribute to this: the large amounts of silver minted

³ For a detailed discussion of this historical research please see Appendix 1.

between 1551 and 1649 which remained legal tender until the great recoinage of 1696, the remoteness of Congleton from the royal mint in London, and the likely date(s) of deposition of the hoards (i.e. before 1675).

As usual in hoards deposited in the seventeenth century, the bulk of coins are from the Tower mint (99 per cent). The following die-cutting legend errors were noted: HI on a shilling of Elizabeth I (Hoard 1, 54); PSVI on a sixpence of Elizabeth I (Hoard 1, 811); SEPRAT on a sixpence of James I (Hoard 1, 1003); DGG MAR on a shilling of Charles I (Hoard 4, 467); CHHILSTO AVSPHIC on a shilling of Charles I (Hoard 4, 587). Five sixpences of 1562 had Z for 2 (Hoard 3, 122–3 and Hoard 4, 77–9); two sixpences of 1572 had 2 inverted (Hoard 2, 187 and Hoard 3, 210). Nine examples of altered dies were noted: three sixpences were overstruck 8 on 1567 (Hoard 1, 370–2); a sixpence 4 on 1575 (Hoard 4, 183); two shillings of Charles I had a sun privy mark struck over an eye on the obverse (Hoard 4, 556–7) and one had a sun privy mark struck over an eye on the reverse (Hoard 4, 558). Hoard 1 includes two sixpences (484–5) dated 1569 with the castle privy mark (1570–2).

The hoards included a few interesting and rare coins. Hoard 3 includes the first recorded example of 'Ormonde Money' from an English hoard.⁴ This issue was made legal tender in England and Wales in 1643. Their local circulation in Cheshire probably resulted from the advent of Anglo-Irish troops. John Walker came into contact with some of these at the siege of Nantwich in January 1643/4. As well as the four coins from the Aberystwyth mint in Hoard 4 (three shillings and a sixpence), there are eight Tower mint coins bearing feathers to denote use of silver mined in Wales. Hoard 2 has a halfcrown (privy mark Trefoil) and a shilling (privy mark Thistle) of James I, and a shilling of Charles I (privy mark Castle). Hoard 3 has two halfcrowns of James I (privy marks Thistle and Lis respectively), and a shilling of Charles I (privy mark Cross Calvary). Hoard 4 has a shilling of James I (privy mark Trefoil) and one of Charles I (privy mark Crown). Two West Country halfcrowns from Hoard 3 have both been attributed to Exeter.⁵ There are six halfcrowns and five shillings of Charles I from the four hoards with the sceptre initial mark of 1646–9, all showing considerable signs of wear.

Scratchings have been noted on a number of the coins from all four hoards (9 per cent). The majority occur on shillings (83 per cent), on obverse (82 per cent), and on coins of Elizabeth I (69 per cent). Most of the marks consist of only single or random lines, and can be interpreted, for example, as checking on the silver content. There may be other reasons behind some of the marks, however, as they are not confined to very worn coins, old coins, or those outside the normal weight range.⁶ Some of the marks are very worn and difficult to decipher and a few consist of doodles, but others appear to be specific letters such as 'W'/'M', 'R' or 'H'. The obverses of 19 coins, and the reverse of one, are marked with what appears to be a 'W' (Hoard 1 has 9, Hoard 2 has 1, Hoard 3 has 2 and Hoard 4 has 8). These vary in size and neatness of execution. A shilling of Elizabeth I (Hoard 1, 174) has two small, neat 'W's. A shilling of Charles I (Hoard 4, 395) has a 'W' and an 'A'. A halfcrown of Charles I (Hoard 2, 596) has a neat 'RF'. In contrast a crudely scratched 'RF' was noted on a shilling of James I (Hoard 3, 372). Another shilling of James I from the same hoard carries a roughly scratched 'RC' (Hoard 3, 352).

Of thirty eight coins noted as pierced, all are either sixpences or shillings, and twenty one are from Hoard 1. There are twenty two sixpences, twenty of Elizabeth I and two of James I, and sixteen shillings, ten of Elizabeth I, three of James I and three of Charles I. Twenty three different privy marks are represented, with the majority (15) occurring only once. However, eight coins have various forms of a cross as privy mark and six have a coronet or crown. The piercings themselves vary from apparently randomly placed and relatively large, crude holes to tiny, neat pin-pricks which respect the design of the coin. A shilling of Elizabeth I from Hoard 1 has two small piercings placed within the central area of the flan just clear of the beading.

⁴ For a discussion of the Lords Justices issue of 1643 and the first recorded Welsh find see E. Besly, *Coins and Medals of the English Civil War* (London, 1990), p. 87; and E. Besly, 'A Civil War Hoard from Tregwynt, Pembrokeshire,' *BNJ* 68 (1998), p. 125.

⁵ By Edward Besly, pers. comm.

⁶ Coins were used until relatively recently to protect a table top when cutting slots in legal documents for threading a sealing. Edward Besly, pers. comm.

Only one forgery was noted in the hoards. This suggests that considerable care was exercised in the selection of the coins deposited. Two examples of this forgery from the same dies were included in the 1645 Penybryn (Ruabon) hoard.⁷ The latest coin from Hoard 1 dates to 1646–9 but is so well worn that deposition around that time (Charles I was executed in 1649) is unlikely. The hoard is dominated by sixpences and shillings with a particularly high proportion of sixpences from the reign of Elizabeth I and has virtually no halfcrowns, but it may be that for some reason the newer high value coins were deliberately excluded from the assemblage, giving an artificially early closing date. The hoard could have been put together when sixteenth century silver returned to general circulation after the Civil War fighting stopped⁸ or the bulk was assembled before 1642 and topped up in the period after 1646–9 with 30 coins (£2 3s. 6d.). However, in view of the close similarity between the Hoard 1 and 3 jars, Hoard 1 may have been buried somewhat later at around 1670, the time when Hoard 3 appears to have been buried. The two jars clearly form a pair and the chances of two virtually identical containers being used as hoard containers over twenty years apart appear rather unlikely. One of the finders, Mr Pay, observed in relation to Hoard 3 that some larger coins, including some of the latest in the hoard, had been inserted at the top of the vessel.⁹ While this may indicate that coins were added as they became available, it could equally have resulted from careful counting out of the exact sum into piles by denomination. Hoard 3 is the only one of the four to include crowns and also contains a high proportion of halfcrowns. A possible separation of the larger denominations from the smaller has been suggested for two Civil War hoard pots found at Wyke, West Yorkshire with closing dates of 1643–4 and 1647–9 respectively.¹⁰ The latest coins in both Hoards 2 and 3 date to 1670 and, since a halfcrown in each retains its mint bloom, it is likely they were deposited in, or shortly after, 1670. Virtually all the coins would have been in general circulation in the early years of Charles II. All four hoards fall within the lifetime of John Walker, and the latest two within five years of his death in 1675.

Hoards 2, 3 and 4 most probably represent the concealment of private wealth in a secluded place. Hoard 1 may represent the same or have been concealed to prevent its seizure by the Commonwealth. Hoards 1, 2 and 3 are nearly rounded sums, unlikely to happen by chance, and may, therefore, represent payments in coin. Hoard 4, however, appears to contain a more random accumulation of coins of a non specific amount. The presence of four separate, though clearly related, deposits of coins buried in domestic pots makes it more likely that the hoards are part of the same individual's private wealth. The risk involved in burying separate caches of coins on land belonging to someone else makes it likely that the landowner was either the depositor, or that he was involved in the deposition. In addition, as discussed above, a number of features link the four hoard pots, adding weight to the likelihood that the same person owned or deposited them. The documentary research identifies John Walker of Congleton as owner of the land where the coins were concealed and, therefore, the most likely depositor of the hoards.

⁷ G.C. Boon, 'A Civil War hoard from the Ruabon neighbourhood and its royalist coins,' *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 29(1) (1981), 368–71.

⁸ E. Besly, 'A Civil War Hoard from Tregwynt, Pembrokeshire', *BNJ* 68 (1998), 119–36.

⁹ Philpott, as n. 1, p. 3.

¹⁰ E. Besly, *English Civil War Coin Hoards*, BM Occasional Paper 51 (1987).

SCHEDULE OF THE CONGLETON COIN HOARDS¹¹

| | | Pot 1 | Pot 2 | Pot 3 | Pot 4 |
|--|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| ENGLAND (3400) | | | | | |
| Edward VI (5) | | | | | |
| <i>Shillings N.1937</i> | Y (1549-51) | - | - | 2 | - |
| | Tun (1551-3) | - | - | 1 | - |
| <i>Sixpences N.1938</i> | Tun (1551-3) | - | - | - | 2 |
| Philip & Mary (9) | | | | | |
| <i>Shillings N.1967</i> | 1554 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| | 1554-8 | - | 1 | - | - |
| | Undated | 1 | - | - | - |
| <i>N.1968</i> | 1555 | 3 | - | - | - |
| Elizabeth I (1,808) | | | | | |
| <i>Shillings, First Issue, N.1985 (188)</i> | | | | | |
| | Lis (1558-60) | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| | Cross crosslet (1560-1) | 48 | 9 | 12 | 11 |
| | Martlet (1560-1) | 50 | 12 | 22 | 8 |
| | Uncertain (1558-61) | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| <i>Shillings, Third Issue, N.2014 (304)</i> | | | | | |
| | Bell (1582-3) | 7 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| | A (1582-4) | 20 | 11 | 9 | 5 |
| | Escallop (1584-6) | 23 | 8 | 11 | 4 |
| | Crescent/escallop (1584-90) | - | 3 | - | - |
| | Crescent (1589-90) | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| | Hand (1589-92) | 5 | 6 | 6 | 1 |
| | Tun (1591-4) | 12 | 19 | 16 | 10 |
| | Tun/woolpack (1591-6) | - | 1 | - | - |
| | Woolpack/tun (1591-6) | - | 2 | - | - |
| | Woolpack (1594-6) | 13 | 13 | 7 | 5 |
| | Key (1595-8) | 2 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| | Anchor (1597-1600) | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| | 1 (1601-2) | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | 2 (1602-3) | 18 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| | Uncertain (1583-1603) | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| <i>Sixpences, Second Issue, N.1997 (993)</i> | | | | | |
| | Pheon: 1561 | 18 | 3 | 10 | 7 |
| | : 1562 | 12 | - | 6 | 6 |
| | : 1563 | 4 | - | 1 | - |
| | : 1564 | 18 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| | : 1565 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| | : ? | 14 | 4 | - | 3 |
| | Rose: 1565 | 12 | 1 | 6 | 1 |
| | : 1566 | 2 | - | - | - |
| | : ? | 1 | - | - | - |
| | Portcullis: 1566 | 24 | 1 | 4 | 10 |
| | : 1567 | 1 | - | - | - |
| | : ? | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| | Lion: 1566 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | : 1567 | 12 | 2 | 6 | 2 |

¹¹ References: N = J.J. North, *English Hammered Coinage Volume 2*, 3rd Edition (1991); Seaby = P. Seaby and P.F. Purvey, *Standard Catalogue of British Coins, Volume 2: Coins of Scotland, Ireland & the Islands* (1984); Brooker = J.J. North & P.J. Morley, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles, 33: The John G. Brooker Collection, Coins of Charles I* (1984); Lockett = *The R.C. Lockett Collection, Glendinning sale catalogue, 1955-74*; Allen = D. Allen, 'The "Weymouth" and "Salisbury" mints of Charles I', *BNJ* 23 (1938-41), 96-118.

FOUR SEVENTEENTH CENTURY COIN HOARDS

| | <i>Pot 1</i> | <i>Pot 2</i> | <i>Pot 3</i> | <i>Pot 4</i> |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Coronet: 1567 | 16 | 10 | 5 | 7 |
| : 1568 | 59 | 7 | 10 | 11 |
| : 1569 | 36 | 10 | 17 | 17 |
| : 156? | 3 | — | — | — |
| : 1570 | 15 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| : ? | 2 | — | — | 1 |
| Castle: 1569 | 2 | — | — | — |
| : 1570 | 6 | 6 | 4 | — |
| : 1571 | 18 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| : 1572 | 1 | — | — | — |
| Ermine: 1572 | 26 | 17 | 19 | 7 |
| : 1573 | 10 | 3 | 7 | 7 |
| : ? | 3 | — | — | — |
| Acorn: 1573 | 16 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| : 1574 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| : ? | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Eglantine: 1574 | 22 | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| : 1575 | 20 | 17 | 12 | 12 |
| : 1576 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| : 1577 | 1 | 3 | — | — |
| : 1578 | — | — | 1 | 1 |
| : ? | 8 | — | 1 | — |
| Plain cross: 1578 | 21 | 7 | 14 | 8 |
| : 1579 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| : 157? | 4 | 1 | — | — |
| : 1580 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| : ? | 3 | — | — | 1 |
| Long cross: 1580 | 13 | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| : 1581 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| : ? | — | — | — | 1 |
| Sword: 1582 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| : ? | — | — | — | 1 |
| Uncertain: 1567 | 2 | — | — | — |
| : 156? | 3 | — | — | — |
| : 1570 | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| : 1571 | 1 | — | — | — |
| : 1572 | — | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| : 1573 | — | — | 1 | — |
| : 157? | 2 | — | — | — |
| : 1580 | 2 | 2 | — | — |
| : 1581 | 1 | — | 1 | 1 |
| : 1582 | 1 | — | — | — |
| : 1561-82 | 4 | — | 1 | — |
| <i>Sixpences, Third Issue, N.2015 (323)</i> | | | | |
| Bell: 1582 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| : 1583 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| : ? | — | — | 1 | — |
| A: 1583 | 13 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| : 1584 | 17 | — | 1 | 4 |
| Escallop: 1584 | 4 | 2 | — | 2 |
| : 1585 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| : 1586 | 3 | — | — | 1 |
| : ? | 1 | 1 | — | — |
| Crescent: 1587 | 6 | — | 2 | 5 |
| : 1588 | 1 | 1 | — | 1 |
| : 1589 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| Hand: 1590 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| : 1591 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| : 1592 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Tun: 1591 | 2 | — | — | 1 |
| : 1592 | 5 | 8 | — | 7 |
| : 1593 | 8 | 13 | 3 | 5 |
| : 1594 | 1 | — | — | — |

| | <i>Pot 1</i> | <i>Pot 2</i> | <i>Pot 3</i> | <i>Pot 4</i> |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Woolpack: 1594 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| : 1595 | - | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| : 1596 | 1 | - | 2 | - |
| : ? | - | - | 1 | - |
| Key: 1595 | 1 | 3 | - | - |
| : 1596 | 5 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| : 1598 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Anchor: 1599 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Cypher: 1600 | - | 2 | 1 | - |
| : 1601 | - | 3 | - | - |
| 1: 1601 | 2 | - | - | 3 |
| : 1602 | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| : ? | 1 | - | - | - |
| 2: 1602 | 11 | - | 3 | 3 |
| : ? | - | 1 | - | - |
| Uncertain: 1584 | 1 | - | - | - |
| : 1602 | 2 | - | - | - |
| : 1583-1603 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

James I (510)*Halfcrowns, Third Coinage (13)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <i>N.2122</i> Thistle (1621-3) | 1 | 1 | 3 | - |
| Lis (1623-4) | - | 1 | - | - |
| Trefoil (1624) | - | 2 | 1 | - |
| ? (1603-25) | - | - | 1 | - |
| <i>N.2123</i> Thistle (1621-3) | - | - | 1 | - |
| Lis (1623-4) | - | - | 1 | - |
| Trefoil (1624) | - | 1 | - | - |

Shillings, First Coinage (82)

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|---|
| <i>N.2072</i> Thistle (1603-4) | 5 | - | 3 | - |
| ? (1603-4) | - | 1 | - | - |
| <i>N.2072/73</i> Thistle (1603-4) | - | - | 2 | - |
| <i>N.2073</i> Thistle (1603-4) | 9 | 12 | 2 | 8 |
| Lis (1604) | 15 | 9 | 10 | 3 |
| ? (1603-4) | - | 1 | 2 | - |

Shillings, Second coinage (195)

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----|----|---|---|
| <i>N.2099</i> Lis (1604-5) | 9 | 19 | 7 | 6 |
| Rose (1605-6) | 5 | 10 | 3 | 1 |
| <i>N.2100</i> Rose (1605-6) | 10 | 18 | 8 | 2 |
| Escallop (1606-7) | 9 | 11 | 8 | 3 |
| Grapes (1607) | - | 6 | - | 1 |
| Coronet (1607-9) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| ? (1604-19) | - | - | 1 | - |
| <i>N.2101</i> Coronet (1607-9) | 3 | 15 | 4 | 4 |
| Key (1609-10) | - | 2 | 1 | - |
| Bell (1610-1) | - | 2 | - | 1 |
| Mullet (1611-2) | 1 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Trefoil (1613) | - | 8 | - | - |
| Cinquefoil (1613-5) | - | 1 | 1 | - |
| Tun (1615-6) | - | - | - | 1 |
| ? (1604-19) | 2 | - | - | - |

Shillings, Third Coinage (37)

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <i>N.2124</i> Rose (1620-1) | 3 | 1 | - | - |
| Thistle (1621-3) | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Lis (1623-4) | 7 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Trefoil (1624) | - | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| ? (1619-25) | 1 | - | - | - |
| <i>N.2125</i> Thistle (1621-3) | - | 1 | - | - |
| Trefoil (1624) | - | - | - | 1 |

| | <i>Pot 1</i> | <i>Pot 2</i> | <i>Pot 3</i> | <i>Pot</i> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| <i>Sixpences, First Coinage (64)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2074</i> Thistle 1603 | 6 | 2 | 3 | |
| <i>N.2074/5</i> 1603 | 7 | — | 3 | |
| ? | — | — | — | |
| <i>N.2075</i> Thistle 1603 | 8 | 4 | 1 | |
| 1604 | 2 | — | — | |
| Lis 1604 | 7 | 1 | 5 | |
| ? 1604 | 1 | — | 1 | |
| <i>Sixpences, Second Coinage (99)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2102</i> Lis 1604 | 11 | 7 | 1 | |
| 1605 | 4 | — | 2 | |
| ? 1605 | — | 1 | — | |
| Rose 1605 | 6 | 4 | 3 | |
| ? ? | — | — | 2 | |
| <i>N.2102/3</i> Rose 1605 | 4 | — | — | |
| <i>N.2103</i> Rose 1605 | 1 | 4 | 1 | |
| 1606 | — | 4 | 1 | |
| ? 1606 | 1 | — | — | |
| Escallop 1606 | 3 | 5 | 2 | |
| 1607 | — | — | 2 | |
| Grapes 1607 | 1 | 1 | — | |
| Coronet 1607 | 2 | — | 2 | |
| 1608 | 3 | 1 | — | |
| 1609 | — | — | 1 | |
| ? | 1 | 1 | — | |
| Key 1609 | — | 1 | — | |
| Mullet 1610 | — | 1 | — | |
| Tower 1612 | — | 1 | — | |
| Trefoil 1613 | — | 1 | — | |
| Cinquefoil 1614 | — | 1 | — | |
| <i>Sixpences, Third Coinage (20)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2126</i> Rose 1620 | — | — | 1 | |
| 1621 | 2 | — | — | |
| Thistle 1621 | — | 1 | — | |
| 1622 | 1 | 2 | 2 | |
| Lis 1623 | — | 1 | 1 | |
| 1624 | — | 1 | 1 | |
| Trefoil 1624 | — | 1 | 1 | |
| Charles I, Tower Mint (1,006) | | | | |
| <i>Halfcrowns (459)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2201</i> Lis | — | — | 2 | |
| <i>N.2202</i> | — | — | 1 | |
| <i>N.2205</i> Plume | — | 2 | 1 | |
| <i>N.2207</i> Harp | — | — | 6 | |
| Portcullis | — | — | 6 | |
| <i>N.2209</i> Bell | — | 1 | 6 | |
| Crown | — | 3 | 17 | |
| Tun | 1 | 5 | 24 | |
| <i>N.2211</i> Crown | 1 | — | — | |
| Tun | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| Anchor | 2 | 2 | 12 | |
| Triangle | 1 | 1 | 7 | |
| Star | — | 3 | 3 | |
| <i>N.2212</i> Triangle | 1 | 4 | 21 | |
| <i>N.2213</i> (P) | 2 | 6 | 24 | |
| (R) | 4 | 7 | 42 | |
| (P) or (R) | — | — | 4 | |
| Eye | 1 | 2 | 27 | |
| Eye/sun | — | — | 1 | |
| Sun | 2 | 10 | 36 | |
| ? | — | — | — | |

| | <i>Pot 1</i> | <i>Pot 2</i> | <i>Pot 3</i> | <i>Pot 4</i> |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>N.2214</i> Star | — | — | 15 | — |
| Triangle in circle | 2 | 16 | 67 | 4 |
| (P) | — | — | — | 1 |
| (?) | — | — | 5 | — |
| <i>N.2215</i> Sun | — | 3 | 19 | 1 |
| Sceptre | — | — | 5 | — |
| <i>N.2209–13</i> ? | 2 | 1 | 2 | — |
| <i>Shillings (513)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2216</i> Lis | 1 | 3 | 2 | — |
| Cross calvary | — | 1 | — | — |
| <i>N.2217</i> | — | — | 1 | — |
| <i>N.2218</i> | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2220</i> Castle | — | 1 | — | — |
| <i>N.2221</i> Plume | — | 1 | — | 1 |
| Rose | — | 2 | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2223</i> Harp | — | 4 | — | 9 |
| Portcullis | 2 | 6 | — | 8 |
| <i>N.2225</i> Bell | 7 | 12 | — | 11 |
| Crown | 18 | 14 | — | 11 |
| Tun | 16 | 19 | — | 18 |
| ? | — | — | — | 2 |
| <i>N.2226</i> Crown | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2227</i> Tun | 3 | 1 | — | — |
| <i>N.2228</i> | — | 4 | — | 2 |
| <i>N.2229</i> | 2 | 1 | — | 5 |
| Anchor | 8 | 10 | — | — |
| Triangle | — | 2 | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2229/30</i> Anchor | — | — | — | 19 |
| <i>N.2230</i> | 7 | — | — | — |
| Triangle | 6 | — | — | 6 |
| <i>N.2230/31</i> | 4 | — | — | — |
| <i>N.2231</i> | 12 | 13 | — | 16 |
| Star | 12 | 8 | — | 14 |
| Triangle in circle | — | 31 | — | 21 |
| <i>N.2231/32</i> ? | — | — | — | 12 |
| <i>N.2232</i> (P) | 7 | 4 | — | 11 |
| (R) | 5 | 5 | — | 10 |
| (P) or (R) | 1 | — | — | — |
| Eye | 5 | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| Sun over eye | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| Sun | 1 | 14 | — | 23 |
| <i>N.2233</i> | — | 3 | — | 6 |
| Sceptre | — | 3 | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2233/34</i> ? | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2234</i> | 1 | — | — | 1 |
| <i>Sixpences (34)</i> | | | | |
| <i>N.2235</i> Lis 1625 | — | 1 | — | — |
| Cross calvary 1626 | — | 1 | — | — |
| <i>N.2236</i> Castle 1627 | — | 1 | — | — |
| <i>N.2238</i> Plume | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2230</i> Portcullis | — | — | 1 | — |
| <i>N.2241</i> Bell | — | — | — | 2 |
| Crown | — | — | — | 5 |
| Tun | — | — | — | 15 |
| <i>N.2242/43</i> | 1 | — | — | — |
| <i>N.2243</i> | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2244</i> Anchor | — | 1 | — | 2 |
| Triangle | — | — | — | 1 |
| <i>N.2245</i> | — | — | — | 1 |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Crown</i> .Seaby 6544 | <i>Pot 1</i> | <i>Pot 2</i> | <i>Pot 3</i> | <i>Pot 4</i> |
| | – | – | 1 | – |

SCOTLAND (8)

James VI

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 30 <i>Shillings</i> , Seaby 5503 | – | 1 | – | – |
| Seaby 5504 | – | 2 | 1 | – |
| 12 <i>Shillings</i> , Seaby 5506 | – | 1 | – | – |

Charles I

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30 <i>Shillings</i> , <i>First coinage, 1625–34</i> , Seaby 5541 | – | – | 2 | – |
| 6 <i>Shillings</i> , <i>First coinage, thistle, 1625</i> , Seaby 5543 | – | 1 | – | – |

Summary of Weights

The figures follow the format developed by Besly¹²: for each denomination, three figures give the average weight in grammes, the number of coins (in brackets), and the percentage of the standard in use from 1601 represented by the average weight.

ENGLAND

| Tower | | <i>Hoard 1</i> | <i>Hoard 2</i> | <i>Hoard 3</i> | <i>Hoard 4</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Edward VI | <i>Sixpences</i> | | | 4.71 (3) 78.2 | 2.56 (2) 85 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | | | | |
| Philip & Mary | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.51 (6) 91.5 | 5.52 (1) 91.6 | 5.14 (1) 85.3 | 5.70 (1) 94.7 |
| Elizabeth 1558–61 | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.34 (102) 88.7 | 5.49 (25) 91.2 | 5.39 (39) 89.5 | 5.38 (22) 89.4 |
| 1561–82 | <i>Sixpences</i> | 2.58 (510) 85.7 | 2.64 (151) 87.7 | 2.62 (178) 87 | 2.60 (161) 86.4 |
| 1582–1603 | <i>Sixpences</i> | 2.64 (133) 87.7 | 2.70 (80) 89.7 | 2.65 (53) 88 | 2.69 (64) 89.3 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.54 (114) 92 | 5.65 (81) 93.8 | 5.62 (66) 93.3 | 5.59 (43) 92.8 |
| James I | <i>Sixpences</i> | 2.67 (71) 88.7 | 2.72 (46) 90.4 | 2.67 (36) 88.7 | 2.57 (30) 85.4 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.58 (81) 92.7 | 5.61 (129) 93.2 | 5.55 (65) 92.2 | 5.53 (40) 91.9 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 14.48 (1) 96.2 | 14.67 (1) 97.5 | 14.40 (7) 95.7 | |
| Charles I Lys–Tun | <i>Sixpences</i> | 2.79 (1) 92.7 | 2.69 (3) 89.3 | 2.85 (1) 94.7 | 2.84 (24) 94.4 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.80 (49) 96.3 | 5.80 (69) 96.3 | 5.34 (3) 88.7 | 5.76 (68) 95.7 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 13.95 (3) 92.7 | 14.62 (13) 97.1 | 14.74 (64) 97.9 | 14.76 (2) 98.1 |
| Anchor–Star | <i>Sixpences</i> | | 2.87 (1) 95.3 | | 2.90 (4) 96.3 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.81 (49) 96.5 | 5.85 (33) 97.2 | | 5.97 (56) 99.2 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 14.34 (4) 95.3 | 14.68 (10) 97.5 | 14.77 (58) 98.1 | 14.90 (2) 99 |
| Triangle-in-circle | <i>Shillings</i> | | 5.85 (31) 97.2 | | |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 14.90 (2) 99 | 14.67 (16) 97.5 | 14.67 (4) 97.5 | |
| (P)–(R) | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.72 (13) 95 | 5.63 (9) 93.5 | | 5.85 (21) 97.2 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 14.48 (6) 96.5 | 14.53 (13) 96.5 | 14.74 (70) 97.9 | 14.96 (4) 99.4 |
| Eye–Sceptre | <i>Shillings</i> | 5.88 (8) 97.7 | 5.83 (27) 96.8 | 6.51 (1) 108 | 5.82 (40) 96.7 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | 14.53 (3) 96.5 | 14.61 (15) 97.1 | 14.65 (88) 97.3 | 14.48 (3) 96.2 |
| Charles II | <i>Shillings</i> | | 6.00 (4) 99.7 | | 5.88 (6) 97.9 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | | 14.91 (12) 99.1 | 14.98 (4) 99.5 | |
| Aberystwyth | | | | | |
| Charles I | <i>Sixpence</i> | | | | 2.94 (1) 97.4 |
| | <i>Shillings</i> | | | | 5.78 (3) 96 |
| <i>Charles I Royalist Issues</i> | | | | | |
| Oxford | <i>Shilling</i> | | | | 5.85 (1) 97.2 |
| | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | | 14.15 (3) 94 | 14.62 (3) 97.1 | |
| Bristol | <i>Halfcrown</i> | | | 14.76 (2) 98.1 | |
| Exeter | <i>Halfcrowns</i> | | 14.23 (2) 94.6 | 14.35 (2) 95.3 | |
| ‘W’ & ‘SA’ | <i>Halfcrown</i> | | 14.62 (1) 97.1 | | |
| <i>Irregular Issue</i> | | | | | |
| Charles I | <i>Shilling</i> | | | | 4.95 (1) 82.2 |

¹² See Besly, as n. 10.

| | | <i>Hoard 1</i> | <i>Hoard 2</i> | <i>Hoard 3</i> | <i>Hoard 4</i> |
|--|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| SCOTLAND | | | | | |
| James VI | <i>12 Shillings</i> | | 5.76 (1) 95.7 | | |
| | <i>30 Shillings</i> | | 14.51 (3) 96.4 | 12.78 (1) 84.9 | |
| Charles I | <i>30 Shillings</i> | | | 14.72 (2) 97.8 | |
| | <i>6 Shillings</i> | | 2.79 (1) 92.7 | | |
| IRELAND | | | | | |
| Lord Justices (‘Ormonde Money’) Crown | | | | 29.22 (1) 97.1 | |

APPENDIX 1: HISTORICAL RESEARCH¹³

ROBERT PHILPOTT AND SUSAN NICHOLSON

Map and Documentary Evidence¹⁴

Examination of the historic documents and maps for the area in which the coins were deposited has revealed patchy and incomplete information from the present day back to the seventeenth century about the ownership and layout of the land where the hoards were found. The Tithe Award map shows that all the findspots lie in the eastern margin of a plot that in 1843 was called Upper Shaw Field. That this was an early clearance, probably from woodland on the township margin, is suggested by the occurrence of the name Shawfield as early as 1342.¹⁵ The earliest cartographic evidence for the layout and ownership of the fields is provided by a 1775 survey where they are named as Shawfields.

There is one piece of crucial evidence for the owner of the land in the mid-seventeenth century. The inventory of one John Walker drawn up on 24 April 1675 after his death, but not proved until 10 April 1676, contains a reference to ‘In corn upon the ground, in Shaw Feild [*sic*] £2-00-00’. Walker made a will on 29 March 1675 when he was ‘aged and declining of health in body’, and his death occurred between then and 24 April. The particular interest of this reference is that it provides a link between the known landowner of the land where the coins were deposited and the initials J: C W on one of the vessels.

It has not been possible to discover the name of John Walker’s wife; there is no record of his marriage, either because his wife came from another parish or because the registers were defective at this period. In the period 1642 to 1660 no christenings, weddings or burials took place in the chapels in Congleton because of plague and the Civil War¹⁶, although a few entries were made retrospectively in the Parish Registers. Cicely, John’s eldest daughter according to his will of 1675, is probably to be identified with the Cicely christened 17 January 1640/1, while the John baptised 26 May 1631 may be his eldest son. If Walker followed the custom of bestowing family forenames on his daughters as well as his sons (there being a long succession of John Walkers!), then it is possible that Cicely was named after her mother, John’s wife. This would fit neatly with the C of the initials on the pot. However, confirmation of this is required.

Further slight corroboration of the identity of the owner may be suggested by the ‘W’ graffito on some of the coins in Hoard 4. The coins may have been marked as an indication of ownership.

¹³ Grateful thanks are due to Mr A.J. Condliffe, editor of the *Congleton Chronicle* for his kindness in making the 1775 Survey available. Thanks are due also to Alexandra March and Peter Wright who kindly drew various sources to our attention.

¹⁴ *A Survey and Valuation of all the Lands, Houses and Tenements of the Township of Congleton made and taken in the year 1775*; P.P. Burdett’s *Map of Cheshire*, (1777); 1882 First edition 6” Ordnance Survey map, Cheshire sheet L1; 1873 First edition 25” Ordnance Survey Cheshire sheets L1.1, 2, 5, 6. The following sources were consulted at the Cheshire Record Office: 1818 Map of the Borough & Lordship of Congleton copied by J. Moorhouse (Cheshire RO: D4552/1); 1843 Tithe Map & Apportionment (CRO: EDT J23/1 and 2); Land Tax Congleton 1773–1832 (MF 208/19 & 20); Astbury Baptisms etc., 1572–1641; Will & Inventory of George Ford, 1646/7; Will & Inventory of George Ford, Mercer, 1666/7; Will of Henry Faulkner, Yeoman, 1803; Admon. & Inventory of John Whittaker, Clerk, 1689; Will of John Wright, Husbandman of Astbury, 1683; Will & Inventory of John Hobson, Tanner, 1667; Admon. & Inventory of John Hobson, 1686; Admon. & Inventory of Robert Hobson, Tanner, 1702/3; Will of Francis Hobson of Eaton, Yeoman, 1771; Will & Inventory of John Walker, Alderman, 1568; Will & Inventory of John Walker (no occupation), 1604; Admon. & Inventory of John Walker, Carrier, 1616; Will & Inventory of John Walker, Gentleman, 1676; Admon. & Inventory of John Walker, Alderman 1689.

¹⁵ J.B. Blake, ‘Medieval Congleton’ in W.B. Stephens (ed.) *History of Congleton* (1970), pp. 18–44.

¹⁶ J.E.G. Cartlidge, H. Barlow and E. Hitchens, *Newbold Astbury and its History* (1915), pp. 107–8.

John Walker (died 1675)

Documents provide some evidence for the life and status of John Walker. He belonged to a prominent family in Congleton who had, since the mid-sixteenth century, played an important role in the town's affairs. An antecedent (possibly his great-grandfather), also John (I), was an alderman who died in 1568 and conceivably the same man was mayor in 1520–1.¹⁷ His son, John II, died in 1604, leaving the estate, which included £11 in gold and silver and a quantity of land and livestock, to his son, John III. This latter John III was himself a person of substance; the inventory on his death in 1616 totalled £203 4s. 10d.

John Walker IV who owned Shaw Field on his death in 1675 was, like his forebears, an important member of the town elite. He had been mayor in 1634–5, 1640–1 and again, after the Restoration, in 1661–2. One of eight aldermen of the borough by 1637, Walker was one of the important Royalist aldermen who had been excluded during the Commonwealth period. He was ordered to return to the council within weeks of the king's restoration. A skinner by profession he had been compounded as a Royalist for disaffection to the parliament in 1645, resulting in a fine of £37; he pleaded concession due to his wife and seven children. The Royalist Composition Papers indicate that he had raised a company of men in Congleton to relieve the siege of Nantwich by Parliamentarians in January 1643/4, and that he had borne arms in Congleton for the Royalist cause, as well as joining with the enemy on Knutsford Heath, where he had also borne arms.¹⁸ Walker was one of the wealthiest men in Congleton. The Congleton poll tax of 1660 was levied on the townspeople according to their ability to pay. Walker was one of only twelve men who paid 10s or more out of a total of 506 inhabitants who qualified for contributions; this indicates an ability to 'dispend in lands, leases, money, stock' and so on over £25 per annum. Walker was sufficiently affluent to lend £20 to the Corporation for relief of the poor during the severe plague that struck the town in 1641–2.¹⁹ On his death, an inventory valued his goods at the very considerable sum of £453 1s. 8d., including £240 in money owing and bonds. His inventory indicates that, in common with many townspeople in the seventeenth century, he was a part-time farmer as well as a skinner.

The scale of Walker's wealth can be measured against other rich merchants of Congleton in the seventeenth century, as reflected in the inventories taken at their deaths. John Hobson, a tanner and mayor in 1660–1, left household goods valued at £96, including professional tools worth £10. George Ford (died 1666), mercer and mayor in 1660, had £121 in stock and another £65 in household goods. Alexander Green, a tanner, (died 1667) left goods valued at £268, while John Rode (died 1640), alderman and farmer, left £86.²⁰

The largest source of income for the borough of Congleton was the mills. In a good year, such as 1684, these might raise nearly £47 in one quarter but more typical were amounts ranging between £25 and £35 a quarter. In the 1660s the annual salary of Congleton's schoolmaster was £16 and its minister £25.²¹

The troubled circumstances in Congleton in the period immediately after the Civil War provide a suitable context for the burial of private wealth. The uncertainty and social disorder is well exemplified by the story that the mayor of Congleton was taken prisoner by Parliamentary supporters among the officers of Macclesfield who were quartered in the town. The same men also broke open the study of a William Drakeford, 'an eminent professor. Clarke, and a gent of greate employment in Congleton' (taken from an examination of witnesses at Gawsorth in 1657).²² The town council was divided into two factions, and Royalists such as Walker, were subjected to fines and sequestrations for their royalist sympathies. The town suffered with others the additional taxation and levies of the crown and later of parliament²³, and the wealthy such as Walker may have been led to conceal their wealth rather than see it fall into the hands of their opponents. By the 1660s and 1670s, when Hoards 2, 3 and 4 (and possibly Hoard 1 as well) were buried, there is no evidence of civil strife. Instead it is likely that the secluded valley side had by then proved itself a convenient safe place for the substantial quantities of coin that on occasion passed into Walker's hands. Ultimately, however, he was unable to recover them through death, infirmity or carelessness.

¹⁷ R. Head, *Congleton – Past and Present* (1887).

¹⁸ See Head, as n. 17.

¹⁹ W.B. Stephens and N. Fudge, 'Tudor and Stuart Congleton' in W.B. Stephens (ed.), *History of Congleton* (1970), pp. 45–81.

²⁰ See Stephens and Fudge, as n. 19.

²¹ See Stephens and Fudge, as n. 19.

²² See Head, as n. 17.

²³ See Stephens and Fudge, as n. 19.

APPENDIX 2: THE CONGLETON HOARD POTS²⁴

JULIE EDWARDS

Introduction

This report describes the four pottery vessels used as containers for the Congleton coin hoards. The group consists of two jars, each with a lid, a jug and a bottle. All are in wares and forms generally datable to the late seventeenth century or first half of the eighteenth century.

CATALOGUE*Hoard 1 pot (CSMR 2373/1)***Description**

Fragments of a black-glazed ware jar with a lid; rim diameter = 100 mm, base diameter = 127 mm, height = 132 mm without the lid, 165 mm with lid in place.

A rounded jar with a small vertical strap handle at the shoulder. The vessel has a flat-topped slightly everted rim with a short neck above a wide rounded body that curves down into a slightly flaring rounded foot; the base is flat. The jar has a flanged lid, which is conical in shape with an upwards flaring flange above the rim and a knob handle. It has been thrown and then trimmed, probably by turning on the wheel, to fit the rim of the jar. The vessel was smashed on removal from the ground but most of the pieces seem to have been retrieved except part of the handle.

The outside of the lid and both surfaces of the jar are covered by a thick black glossy glaze. The glaze has run down the outside of the vessel and gathered as drips underneath the base.

The jar has several faults that appear to have been made during its manufacture. There are depressions in either side of the body, probably caused by the vessel being lifted off the wheel or moved while the clay was still soft. A crack in the rim has been covered by glaze. A crack also runs through one side of the base and a little way up the vessel wall, it is noticeably wide inside the base despite being covered in glaze. The lid appears to have stuck to something in the kiln as there is a large 'blob' of glaze on its underside. The scars of four kiln spacers/separators can be seen in the glaze under the base. Scratched into the unglazed surface of the base are two parallel lines made before the pot was fired.

The vessel has been highly fired resulting in a fabric that is hard and dark red in colour, although the unglazed areas under the base vary from dark red to purple. The fabric is fine and sandy with inclusions of dark red iron-rich pellets, occasional dark red iron rich rock fragments and fragments of white quartz and sandstone. It is comparable to the fabric of wares found in Chester.

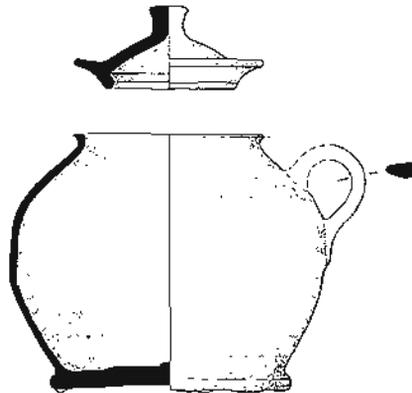


Fig. 2: Hoard 1 pot (1:4).

Discussion

Black-glazed wares were produced over a wide area from the early seventeenth century onwards.²⁵ In the northwest of Britain the ware was produced at Buckley, North Wales and Prescott, Lancashire (historic county boundary) as well as in Staffordshire, where clays with similar firing properties occur.²⁶ Similar forms were made at each place, so it is difficult to assign a provenance to blackwares found away from kiln sites and it is usually only possible to give a fairly broad date-range.

²⁴ Thanks are due to David Barker who kindly read and commented on this report.

²⁵ P.C.D. Brears, *The English Country Pottery, Its History and Techniques* (1971), p. 37.

²⁶ P.J. Davey, 'Further Observations on a post medieval kiln group from Pinfold' in B. Vyner & S. Wrathmell (eds), *Studies in medieval and later pottery in Wales presented to J.M. Lewis* (1987), pp. 98–103.

The lidded jar form is unusual in black-glazed wares, but is very similar to Staffordshire slipware honey pots dated to the late seventeenth century/early eighteenth century.²⁷ However, a smaller but similarly shaped black glazed jar, without a lid, has been found in a pit group dated c.1660–90 in Chester.²⁸ A narrower slip decorated jar with the same type of lid was also found at Brookhill, Buckley but dated c.1640–60.²⁹ Early types of Staffordshire slipware honey pot/jar have been found in a group at Burslem dated 1640–70³⁰ but these differ in details of form and size from this black-glazed jar. On this evidence it would seem appropriate to suggest a date in the second half of the seventeenth century or possibly the early seventeenth century for this vessel.

Hoard 3 pot (CSMR 2373/3)

Description

Black-glazed ware jar with a lid; rim diameter = 127 mm, base diameter = 125 mm, height = 138 mm, 173 mm with the lid in place. The vessel is complete although the lid is broken in half and chipped.

A rounded jar with one small vertical strap handle set high on the shoulder, the vessel is very similar although not identical to CSMR 2373/1. The jar has a short slightly everted rim and a rounded body that narrows towards a flat base without a foot. The flanged lid differs only slightly in shape from the lid of vessel CSMR 2373/1 by having a rounded, instead of a flattened, knob handle. It has been thrown and turned to fit the rim of the jar. A thick black glossy lead glaze covers the interior and exterior of the jar; the glaze has run down to form large drips underneath the edge of the base so making the base uneven. The lid has only been glazed on the outside but much of this has worn away.

As with the Hoard 1 pot (CSMR 2373/1) the jar has several faults that probably occurred during the manufacturing process. There is a crack in the rim, a second one runs along one side of the body and the base is partly cracked through. In each case the faults are covered by glaze, suggesting that they occurred during or before firing. The scars of three evenly spaced kiln spacers can be seen in the glaze underneath the base.

The jar is made of a medium hard fine red sandy fabric containing dark red iron-rich pellets, occasional dark red iron-rich rock fragments and fragments of white quartz and sandstone. The fabric is similar to that of CSMR 2373/1 and thus also comparable to that of black-glazed wares found in Chester.

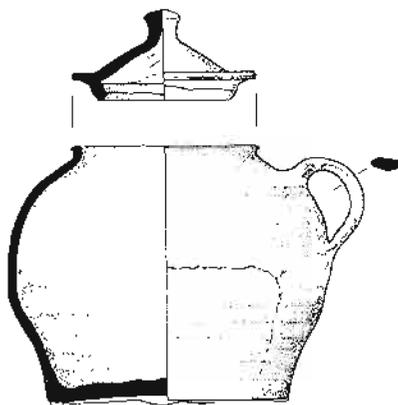


Fig. 3: Hoard 3 pot (1:4).

Discussion

As for Hoard 1 pot (2373/1).

Hoard 4 pot (CSMR 2373/4)

Description

Jug in a buff ware with a streaked/mottled glaze; base diameter = 69 mm, remaining height = 155 mm.

The vessel has a rounded slightly pear-shaped body with a narrow neck that has broken away just above the join with the body. The base of a single strap handle remains applied to the shoulder of the vessel; the handle probably broke at the same time as the neck. The foot is rounded and flaring and the base slightly kicked.

²⁷ E. Gooder, 'The finds from the cellar of the Old Hall, Temple Balsall, Warwickshire', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 18 (1984), p. 206 fig. 30, 223; and a vessel in Stoke-on-Trent Museum no. 2P31.

²⁸ From the 1974 unpublished Crook Street excavations.

²⁹ A. Amery and P.J. Davey, 'Post medieval pottery from Brookhill, Buckley, Clywd' in *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales*, 2 (1979), p. 60 fig. 5, 31.

³⁰ J.H. Kelly, 'Post-medieval pottery from Newcastle St, Burslem Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs SJ867498', *City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum Archaeological Society Report* 8 (1975), pp. 18–19, nos 11, 14 & 16.

On the front of the vessel, just above the girth, the letters 'FR' surmounted by a dot have been applied in a dark (red?) coloured slip which appears black under the glaze.

The interior and exterior surfaces are glazed but on the exterior the glaze stops short of the foot. Externally the glaze is heavily streaked or mottled in a darker brown probably due to manganese or iron being added to the glaze.³¹ The general term for wares of this type is taken from the glaze ie mottled ware. On the inside the glaze is slightly speckled and has flaked away in places.

The vessel is made of a hard sandy buff fabric with black and red iron rich inclusions, short streaks and lenses of iron-rich compounds and hard creamy white unidentified inclusions. It compares well with the fabrics of wares of this type found in Chester.

The top of the vessel has been sealed with a roughly rectangular piece of lead that has been pushed down around the stump of the neck to form a crude lid.

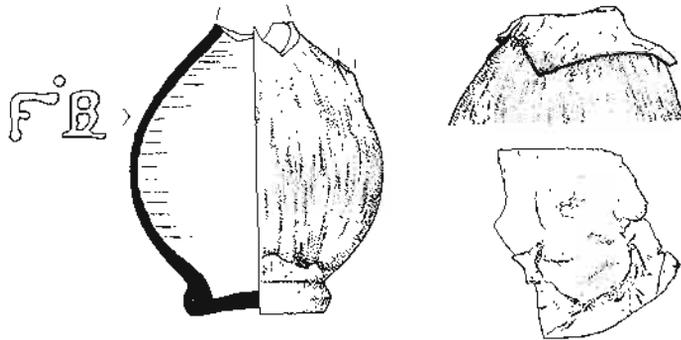


Fig. 4: Hoard 4 pot (1:4).

Discussion

Mottled wares were produced in a variety of places in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In Staffordshire there is evidence for production c.1680 at a kiln site in Hanley.³² It appears to have been popular until the middle of the 18th century (*ibid*) although it has been found in domestic assemblages of the second half of the eighteenth century, for example in a large pit group of c.1775 from Stafford.³³ The ware is referred to in a late seventeenth century account of pottery production suggesting that the ware may have been produced as early as the 1670s.³⁴ Mottled ware was also produced at Buckley, Clwyd where it is placed in the later phase of activity at the Brookhill site c.1690–1720.³⁵ Prescot is another source: these wares appeared there in the late seventeenth century.³⁶

Mottled wares were made in a variety of forms but jugs/bottles do not appear to be common, although fragments are occasionally found e.g. in Staffordshire at Burslem³⁷ and Hanley.³⁸ In Cheshire jugs/bottles have been published from Beeston Castle³⁹ and they have also been found on various sites in Chester. The form is similar to the Rhenish stoneware bottles/jugs of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which were copied in a variety of wares, most obviously in London stoneware of the late seventeenth century but also in tin-glazed ware and various types of earthenware.⁴⁰ The letters on the front of the vessel probably represent the owners' or possibly the maker's initials. The initials or names of the owners or royalty are common on slip-decorated and tin-glazed ware vessels from the early seventeenth

³¹ R.A. Philpott, 'Mottled Ware' in P.J. Davey & R. McNeil (eds), 'Excavations in South Castle Street, Liverpool 1976 & 1977', *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society* 4 (1985), p. 54.

³² J.H. Kelly & S.J. Greaves, 'The excavation of a kiln base in Old Hall Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs SJ885475', *City of Stoke-on-Trent Museums Archaeological Society Report* 6 (1974), p. 3.

³³ M.J. Kershaw, 'An 18th century pit group from Stafford', *Staffordshire Archaeological Studies* 4 (1987), 60–85.

³⁴ See Philpott, as n. 31, p. 52.

³⁵ See Amery and Davey, as n. 29, p. 81.

³⁶ R. Philpott & P.J. Davey, 'Sampling excavations in Prescot, 1983–4 sites 6–26', *Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society* 5 (1989), p. 47.

³⁷ S.J. Greaves, 'A post-medieval excavation in Woodbank Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs SJ866497', *City of Stoke-on-Trent Museum Archaeological Society Report* 10, (1976), p. 30 fig. 9, 63.

³⁸ See Kelly and Greaves, as n. 32, p. 21, fig. 8.61.

³⁹ P. Noake, 'The post-medieval pottery' in P. Ellis (ed.), *Beeston Castle, Cheshire, excavations by Laurence Keen & Peter Hough 1968–85* (1993), p. 208, fig. 144, 234–5.

⁴⁰ For examples see L. Lipski & M. Archer, *Dated English Delftware* (1984), pp. 305–38; and C. Platt & R. Coleman-Smith, *Excavations in Medieval Southampton 1953–1969, 2: The Finds*, (1975), p. 104, nos 663 & 668.

century. Such inscriptions were sometimes used in conjunction with dates to commemorate a particular occasion, e.g. a marriage, christening or coronation, and the vessels may have been given as gifts (see CSMR 2373/2). Royal initials also appear as stamps from 1700 and were used on mottled glazed mugs as ale-measure marks.⁴¹ A second initial 'R' is an abbreviation of 'Rex' or 'Regina' when preceded by the initial of the reigning monarch. In this case, however, 'R' is unlikely to indicate the monarch. Mottled ware vessels with slip decoration are not common and few bottles or jugs with slip-trailed inscriptions are known. One jug inscribed 'CR' has been found in Chester⁴² in a late seventeenth century group. A similarly shaped bottle to the Congleton example with slip-trailed initials has also been found in Nottingham;⁴³ the material with which it was found is dated c.1650–1730.

The bottle is, therefore, in a ware manufactured over a wide area of the northwest in the late seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth century. The bottle/jug form does not seem to be a common one in this ware but where it does occur it is in deposits with the same general date range as other more common products of the ware. It is difficult to reconcile the date of the latest coins contained in this pot (i.e. 1662) with the known documentary and excavated evidence for its date of production and use (i.e. not earlier than the 1670s). Given this wide discrepancy in date and the different character of the hoard contained in this pot it seems inadvisable to use it to infer an earlier date for the pot. However, the facts that Hoards 2 and 3 appear to have been deposited close to 1670 and that Hoard 4 was buried very close to Hoard 3 may indicate that mottled wares were being used at this time and, therefore, somewhat earlier than present archaeological evidence might suggest.

Hoard 2 pot (CSMR 2373/2)

Description

Earthenware bottle with a slightly marbled appearance and three letters written in trailed slip; base diameter varies between 104 mm–98 mm; remaining height = 168 mm.

A roughly biconical-shaped bottle with a narrow cylindrical neck that has been broken away just above the join with the body. An incised line just below the base of the neck gives the effect of a cordon around the neck/body join and softens the quite sharp angle with the neck. There appears to have been no handle although it is possible that a handle may have been set high on the neck. One side of the body is dented at the girth. The damaged area is well covered by glaze, which is not disturbed, suggesting that the damage occurred before the pot was glazed and placed in the kiln for firing. The rounded slightly splayed foot is uneven and rather crudely finished. There are also nicks and scratches in the surface of the clay just above the foot. The base is slightly kicked.

Three letters have been applied in white slip at the shoulder of the vessel – an 'I' and a 'C' separated by two dots and surmounted by a 'W'. The 'I' has been crossed through the centre with a short horizontal line. Part of the letter 'C' has fallen away. The lettering appears yellow under the glaze. The vessel is glazed inside and out but this has been unevenly applied so that some areas are sparsely covered. The glaze stops short of the foot but some has dribbled down to beneath the base. In places the glaze is badly crazed or totally worn away.

The vessel is made of a hard red firing clay within which are streaks and lenses of a darker red iron-rich clay as well as streaks and pellets of white clay. The coloured streaks in the clay give the glazed surface of the vessel a marbled appearance similar to agate ware.

Fragments of lead found with the bottle suggest that it had a similar lead cover to the Hoard 4 pot (CSMR 2373/4).

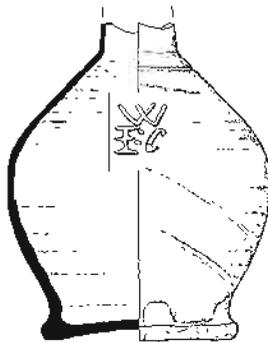


Fig. 5: Hoard 2 pot (1:4).

⁴¹ M. Bimson, 'The significance of 'ale-measure' marks', *Post Medieval Archaeology* 4 (1970), pp. 165–6.

⁴² From an unpublished watching brief in Weaver Street, 1994.

⁴³ R.C. Alvey, 'A cesspit excavation at 26–28 High Pavement, Nottingham', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society* (1973), p. 62, fig. 6.10.

Discussion

One way of creating pottery with a marbled appearance is to mix clays of differing colours by layering and folding them together before throwing the pottery. The products of this technique are known as 'agate' ware. However, this bottle is altogether coarser in fabric and finish than the finely made and often decorative agate wares produced on a large scale from the mid eighteenth century in Staffordshire and elsewhere. Different clays are also mixed together in order to achieve a better consistency for throwing or firing. Potters at Buckley, Prescot and also in Staffordshire often mixed red and white clays together for this reason. Depending on how well the clays were mixed this could result in a marbled or streaked clay fabric. The variegated surface this process produced was usually concealed by the use of slips or coloured glazes but under a clear colourless glaze, as in this case, a marbled appearance could be achieved. It is difficult, however, to point to a precise provenance for the vessel because such wares may have been produced over a wide area. The shape of the bottle suggests a date in the 17th century. Agate type wares appear to have been produced c.1690–1720 at Buckley⁴⁴ while vessels in mixed red and white firing clays occur on sites in Chester in the second half of the 17th century.

The three letters on the front of the pot are its most intriguing aspect and they probably relate to the owner of the vessel. The 'W' represents the surname and the lower letters the forenames of the owner and his wife, or perhaps just the owner. In the seventeenth/eighteenth century a crossed 'l' was sometimes used to represent either a capital 'J' or 'I'.⁴⁵ Similarly shaped bottles/jugs with initials have occurred elsewhere (see no 2373/4 above). The function of these vessels is unclear. Wine bottles and jugs occur in tin-glazed ware often bearing inscriptions including dates, initials and the contents of the bottle. It has been suggested that these were made as Christmas or New Year gifts 'among the less prosperous folk' and were given containing wine which was expensive and thus often only affordable in small amounts.⁴⁶ The personalised container enhanced the gift. This bottle may have served a similar purpose on a slightly humbler scale. It is possible that the initials may refer to the maker⁴⁷ although it would seem unlikely given the prominent position of the lettering on the vessel.

The vessel is thus of a ware probably produced in the midlands or northwest Britain in the late 17th or 18th centuries. As the bottle contained a coin of 1670 in mint condition, and if the initials 'ICW' are those of John Walker, the landowner, this would suggest that the bottle was made before his death in 1675 and buried close to 1670; there is nothing about the vessel to refute this suggestion.

General Discussion

The four vessels can be broadly dated to the late seventeenth century/first half eighteenth century on form and fabric type. They are wares that were common to several areas of northwest England and North Wales. None of the vessels is particularly finely made, being either poorly finished or with faults such as cracks and dented sides. However, although imperfect, all the vessels would have been functional as containers and suitable for household use, but it is also possible that they had been discarded as seconds. The initials on the jug and the bottle suggest that they have been specifically made, in particular the one with initials matching that of the landowner John Walker. The jug and bottle had been broken before burial. This may have been accidental but may have been done purposely in order to make a larger opening through which to put the coins, the top of the necks being too narrow to take some of the coins. Considering the broad date ranges assigned to the wares and forms represented by the vessels, the coin hoards may be expected to provide a clearer indication of when these particular vessels were in use. This may be applicable to Hoards 2 and 3 that contain coins in mint condition dated 1670. However, the two earlier hoards pose questions for which there are no clear answers. The pot containing Hoard 1 is in a very similar jar to that containing Hoard 3 yet the latest coin was substantially earlier, which would suggest that either this precise type of pot was being made for a long period of time, or that the Hoard 3 pot was over 20 years old when it was buried. Hoard 4 also contains coins with an earlier closing date but the pot is of a type generally regarded to be later in date. As this hoard was buried very close to Hoard 3 it could be speculated that the coins were stored elsewhere before being placed in the pots.

If, as the evidence suggests, the hoards belonged to John Walker and were buried in his lifetime, they can all be placed somewhere between 1670 and 1675, implying the pots were in use at that time. If this is correct, it provides a clearer indication of when these types of wares and forms were in use than has hitherto existed.

KEY TO PLATE 8

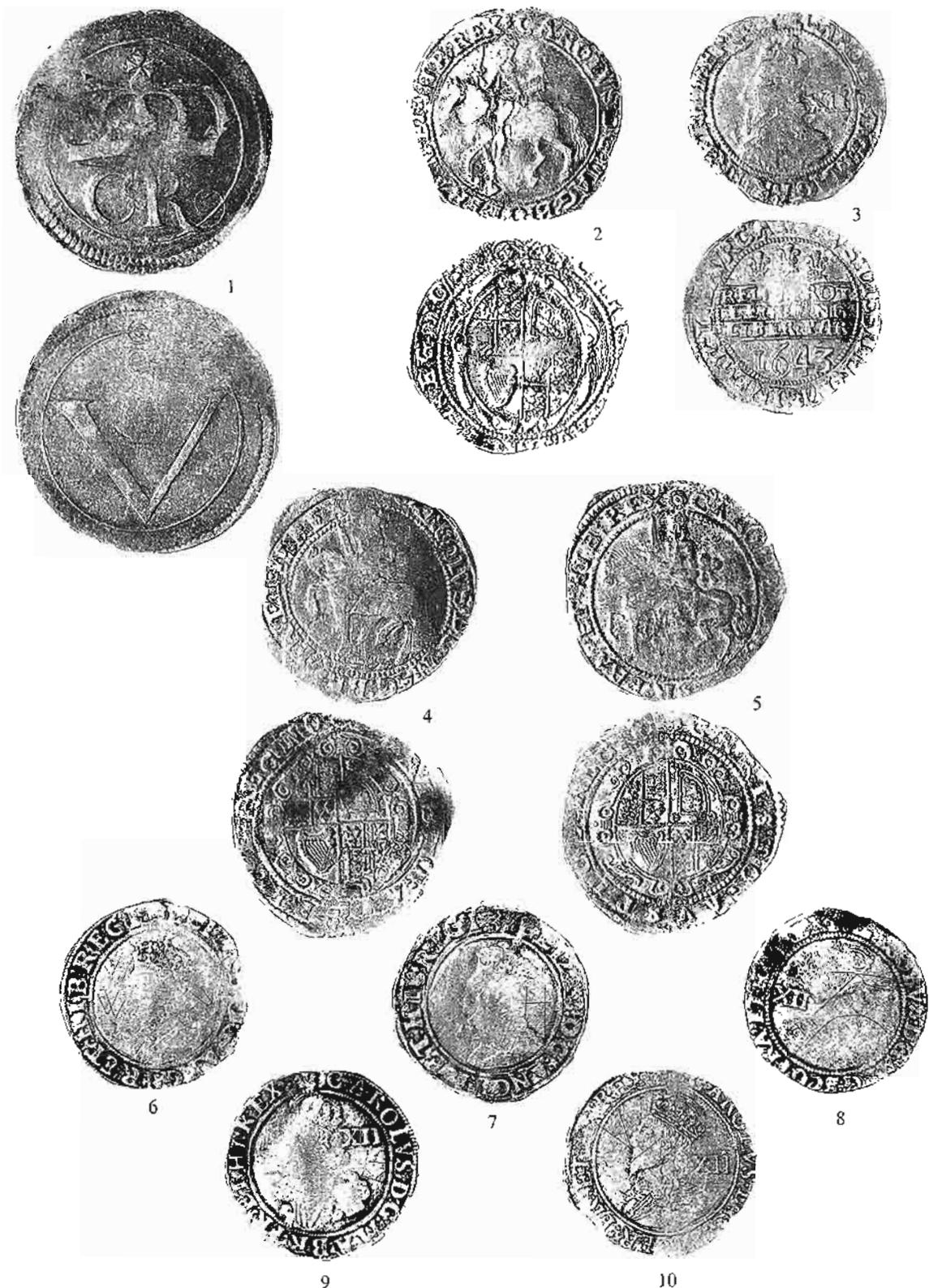
1. Ormonde Crown, 3:833
2. Charles I halfcrown, 'W' & 'SA' mints, 2:769
3. Charles I shilling, Oxford mint, 4:634
4. Charles I halfcrown, Exeter mint, 2:523
5. Charles I halfcrown, Exeter mint, 3:814
6. Elizabeth I shilling, 1:174
7. Elizabeth I shilling, 1:195
8. James I shilling, 3:352
9. Charles I shilling, 2:596
10. Charles I shilling, 4:395

⁴⁴ See Amery and Davey, as n. 29, p. 81.

⁴⁵ For examples see R.G. Cooper, *English Slipware Dishes 1650–1850* (1968), pls. 117, 194 and 196.

⁴⁶ See Lipski and Archer, as n. 40, p. 307.

⁴⁷ L. Allason-Jones, 'The Inscriptions on Donyatt Pottery', in R. Coleman-Smith & T. Pearson (eds), *Excavations in the Donyatt Pottery* (1988), p. 381.



WARHURST: FOUR SEVENTEENTH CENTURY COIN HOARDS