HOARD

Unique ID: LANCUM-0095B8

Object type certainty: Certain Workflow status: Published

This report concerns a hoard of copper alloy coins and associated items found in the Barrow area, Cumbria. The hoard was found by two men whilst searching with a metal detector in August 2011. The entire hoard consists of 107 coins, 1 fragment and the remains of a thread. None of the items in the hoard have yet been conserved. All of the weights given below are therefore for the objects in their uncleaned condition, and may vary slightly after cleaning.

I. Description of the find:

The 107 coins and 1 fragment are all copper alloy cast pieces with square holes in the middle, and are 'cash coins' of East Asia. The coins were reported to have been found tied together with a thread. In East Asia, it was customary to pass a thread through the central hole to create a 'string of coins', but the thread fell apart in this case as the coins were being lifted out of the ground. Some remains of the thread were collected and preserved in two plastic bags. The coins are all of the same denomination: 1-cash. 104 coins are from the Chinese Qing dynasty (1644-1911), ranging in date from 1659 to 1850. The earliest coin, of which there is only one example, has the inscription 'Shunzhi tongbao' and was cast between 1659 and 1661 at the Yunnan mint. The majority of the Qing coins (56) were produced during the Daoguang reign period (1821- 1850) at a variety of mints in China. 2 coins are Vietnamese coins issued during the Canh Hung reign period (1740- 1786) of the Restored Le dynasty (1592-1789) and the Canh Thinh reign period (1793- 1802) of the Tay Son dynasty (1778- 1802), respectively. Two groups comprising 3 and 2 coins were found corroded together. The coins on top of both of these corroded groups are Daoguang tongbao. The rest are illegible, along with 1 coin and a fragment from the main hoard.

Summary by reign and mint

- China Shunzhi (1644-1661) 1 coin
- Yunnan Kangxi (1662-1722) 5 coins: Board of Revenue (4), Board of Works (1)
- Qianlong (1736-1795) 17 coins: Board of Revenue (8), Chengdu (1), Guizhou (1), Suzhou (1), Guilin (1), Yunnan (1), uncertain (4)
- Jiaqing (1796-1820) 22 coins: Board of Revenue (1), Yunnan(3), Hangzhou(11), Guangdong (4), uncertain (3)
- Daoguang (1821-1850) 56 coins: Guangdong (42), Yunnan (6), Gongchang (1), uncertain (7)
- Vietnam Canh Hung (1740-1786) 1 coin
- Canh Thinh (1793-1801) 1 coin
- Illegible 5 coins

II. Discussion of the find and summary:

The find has been discussed with Joe Cribb, former Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, and Dr Helen Wang, Curator of East Asian Money within the Department. This string of coins was almost certainly taken out of circulation in China. It is not unusual to find coins from China and Vietnam in the same string. As there is no apparent spiritual/ritual reason to bury Chinese coins at this particular location, and as these coins would have no monetary value in

Cumbria, it is difficult to say why they were buried there, and who buried them. The owner may or may not have had a connection with China: possibly a Chinese person, or a Briton who had travelled to China. The date of the latest coin - a Daoguang tongbao coin, issued 1821-1850, gives a terminus ante quem non, but there are no other objects associated with the find to suggest a more precise date. It is my opinion that the cash coins in this find do not fulfil the criteria of 'Treasure' as set out in the terms of the Treasure Act 1996.

Qin Cao Trainee Curator: Asian Coins The Manchester Museum 9th December 2011

Find of note status

This is a find of note and has been designated: County / local importance

Class: Chinese

Subsequent actions

Subsequent action after recording: Returned to finder

Treasure details

Treasure case tracking number: 2011T1111

Chronology

Broad period: POST MEDIEVAL

Subperiod from: Late

Subperiod to: Early

Period from: POST MEDIEVAL

Period to: MODERN
Date from: Circa AD 1659
Date to: Circa AD 1850

Dimensions and weight

Quantity: 108

Discovery dates

Date(s) of discovery: Tuesday 20th September 2011 - Tuesday 20th September 2011

Personal details

This information is restricted for your access level.

Other reference numbers

Other reference: 50 Finds from Cumbria Treasure case number: 2011T1111

Materials and construction

Primary material: Copper alloy

Manufacture method: Cast Completeness: Complete

Spatial metadata

Region: North West (European Region)

County or Unitary authority: Cumbria (County)

District: <u>Barrow-in-Furness</u> (District) To be known as: Barrow-in-Furness

Spatial coordinates

Grid reference source: Centred on field

Unmasked grid reference accurate to a 0.01 metre square.

Discovery metadata

Method of discovery: Metal detector General landuse: Cultivated land

Specific landuse: Character undetermined