

## II.

A HOARD OF COINS, TWO SPOONS, AND A CANE TOP OF SILVER FROM IRVINE, AND A SPOON OF THE SAME METAL FROM HADDINGTON. BY J. GRAHAM CALLANDER, F.S.A. SCOT., DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

## THE IRVINE HOARD.

On 11th December 1923, while some workmen were digging for the foundations of a new building to be erected at 172 High Street, Irvine, they turned up a quantity of coins, two spoons, and a cane top of silver (fig. 1). These being recovered by the King's Remembrancer on behalf of the Crown as Treasure Trove, were submitted to the National Museum for examination.

According to the Procurator-Fiscal's report, the coins and other objects were found about 1 foot down in the ground, in the angle of two walls in the foundation of the building which was being demolished. Although the coins were distributed amongst the workmen at the time of the discovery, it is believed that the whole of the find was recovered. The two spoons were intact when found, but one was broken across the stem afterwards by one of the workmen; however, as it was a clean break, there was no difficulty in getting the parts rejoined.

The spoons are similar in shape and ornamentation. They have an elliptical bowl with a short tongue where the stem runs into the bowl at the back, and a flat stem which expands in width gradually for about the first half of its length, and more rapidly for the second half towards the top, which terminates in a flat circular disc with a small pentagonal projection at the end. Below the disc, which bears engraved initials within a single marginal line, is an oval transverse panel with no designs beyond an incised marginal line. Between this panel and the middle of the stem is a crude attempt at a foliaceous design, and at the junction of the stem and bowl a hatched triangular pattern.

One spoon, that which was broken and repaired, measures  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, the bowl being  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long and  $2\frac{1}{8}$  inches broad, and the stem 5 inches long; it weighs 1 oz. 12 dwt. 14 grs. Troy. On the circular disc at the top of the stem are the initials I C with a Y-shaped figure, an heraldic shake-fork, between them. On either side of the tongue at the back of the bowl are the initials D C. The other spoon, which measures  $7\frac{1}{8}$  inches in total length, with a bowl  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long and  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches broad, has the initials I F engraved on the front of the disc at the top of the

HOARD OF COINS, SILVER SPOONS, ETC., FROM IRVINE. 121

stem, and the initials B C on the back of the bowl. This spoon, which weighs 1 oz. 9 dwt. 1 gr. Troy, has a short crack on one side of the bowl. On the back of the stem of both spoons are the Edinburgh hall-marks I S (John Scott), a castle, and I F (John Fraser) (fig. 5, No. 1), and a

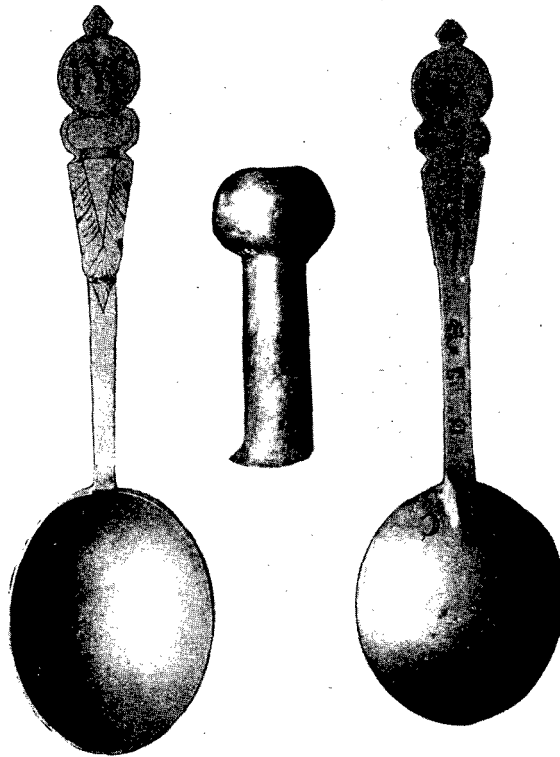


Fig. 1. Silver Spoons and Cane-top from Irvine. ( $\frac{1}{2}$ .)

longitudinal groove made by the rocking movement of a wriggling tool when testing the fineness of the metal.

The cane top is slightly dented on the end, and the mouth of the socket is split and rent outwards, evidently done by breaking the silver top off the cane. Part of the wood, which seems to be Malacca cane, remains in the cavity. The top is a flattened spheroid, measuring

$1\frac{5}{16}$  inch in diameter and 1 inch in height, and the socket, which has a regular diameter of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch, is  $2\frac{1}{8}$  inches in length. On the end is engraved a shield bearing the arms of Cuninghame of Cuninghamehead,<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Dreghorn, in Ayrshire, the arms being a shake-fork between two garbs and a mullet-in-chief, with the letters D E C (fig. 2).

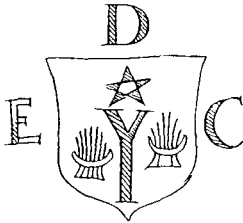


Fig. 2. Cuninghame Arms on Cane Top. (†.)

Dr George Macdonald, who examined the coins, has supplied the following report:—

“The coins from Irvine submitted to me for examination numbered 351, with two fragments—all being of silver. They may be classified as follows:—

<i>Edward VI.</i>	
Sixpence . . . . .	1
<i>Mary of England.</i>	
Groats . . . . .	21
<i>Philip and Mary.</i>	
Groats . . . . .	8
<i>Elizabeth.</i>	
(10 shillings, 114 sixpences, 25 groats, 8 threepenny-pieces)	157
<i>James I. and VI., English, Irish, and Scottish.</i>	
(8 English shillings and 14 English sixpences; 6 Irish shillings and 12 Irish sixpences; 1 thistle merk, 1 half thistle merk, and 8 quarter thistle merks)	50
<i>Charles I., English and Scottish.</i>	
(1 half-crown, 33 shillings, 23 sixpences, and 3 half-groats; 40 forty-penny-pieces)	100
Unidentified . . . . .	12
Spanish coins . . . . .	2
	351

“The hoard must have been concealed ten or fifteen years after the accession of Charles I. It can hardly be dated more precisely.

“None of the coins seem worth retaining for the Museum.”

<sup>1</sup> Nisbet's *Heraldry*, 1816, vol. i. p. 193.

The spoons and the cane top were retained for the National Collection, and a reward was sent to the finders along with the coins, all of which were returned.

As shown by the hall-marks, the spoons were made by John Scott, a goldsmith in Edinburgh, who was admitted to the Incorporation of Goldsmiths in 1621, and was deacon of the craft in 1637-9 and in 1646-8. The deacon's mark, by which we might be able to get the exact date of the spoons, is that of John Fraser, admitted in 1624. But in consequence of his name not being found in the official list of deacons, it has been presumed that he acted only as interim deacon at various times, his stamp appearing as the deacon's mark on several pieces of old Communion plate.<sup>1</sup> It is not known in which years Fraser was interim deacon, and thus we cannot tell the year in which the spoons were made. However, as we have seen that, from the evidence of the coins, Dr Macdonald considers the hoard to have been deposited between 1635 and 1640, we may take it that the spoons were made some time before the latter of these dates. As neither of the silversmiths were entitled to mark plate before 1621 and 1624 respectively, the spoons must have been made between 1621 at the earliest and 1640 at the latest.

At the first glance it seemed likely that it might be possible to find a closer date for the spoons by trying to identify the persons whose initials appear on them and on the cane top, but the results of this inquiry are not conclusive.

Taking the cane top first, there is no doubt that the arms engraved on it are those of Cuninghame of Cuninghamehead, and it is probable that the initials D E C are probably those of Lady Elizabeth Cuninghame, wife of Sir William Cuninghame, the first baronet.<sup>2</sup> As they were married in 1619, the date of the spoons would be quite suitable for this identification. However, there was another Lady Elizabeth Cuninghame about this time, a sister of Sir William, who married a Colonel Sir George Cuninghame in 1622; but it would have been an irregularity for her to have assumed her father's arms after her marriage. Coming to the spoons, we have seen that one bears the initials I C and D C, with the Cuninghame shake-fork between the first two; but I have not been able to trace any members of the Cuninghamehead family who, at this time, had these initials. As for the initials I F and B C on the other spoon, it may be suggested that they are those of James Fullarton of Fullarton and his wife Barbara Cuninghame, married in 1624, this Barbara being the sister of the last-mentioned Elizabeth Cuninghame and of Sir William also referred to. But there is another Barbara Cuninghame

<sup>1</sup> A. J. S. Brook in Burns' *Old Scottish Communion Plate*, p. 553.

<sup>2</sup> Paterson, *History of the County of Ayr*, vol. i. p. 451.

with whom one would have liked to have been able to associate the initials. She was the daughter of Sir William, and married William Mure of Caldwell. As Covenanters she and her husband suffered much

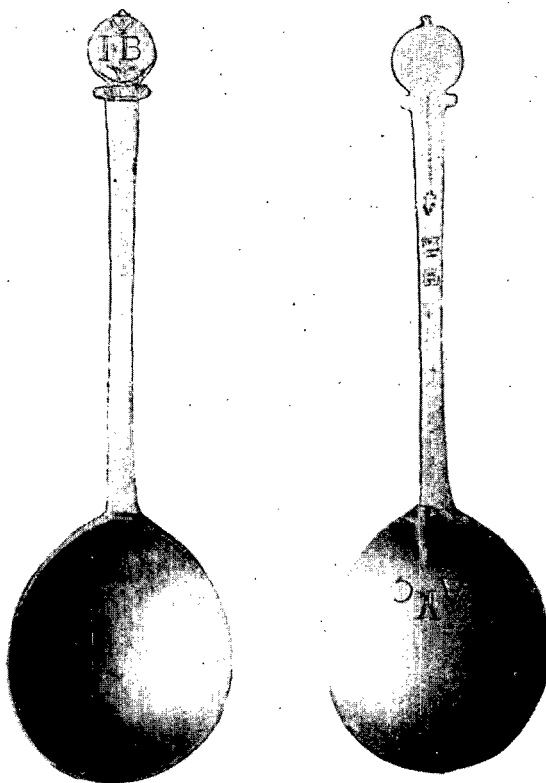


Fig. 3. Silver Spoons found in Irvine.

“for their adherence to the cause of civil and religious liberty.” Mure’s estates were forfeited and he died in exile, while his wife was thrown into Blackness Castle, and remained a close prisoner there for three years.<sup>1</sup> This lady must have been born within four or five years of

<sup>1</sup> Maitland Club, *Caldwell Papers*, part i. p. 141.

the earliest date for the spoon, and while the possibility of the initials on it being hers need not be dismissed altogether, the combination of the initials I F and B C on it seems to make it more probable that

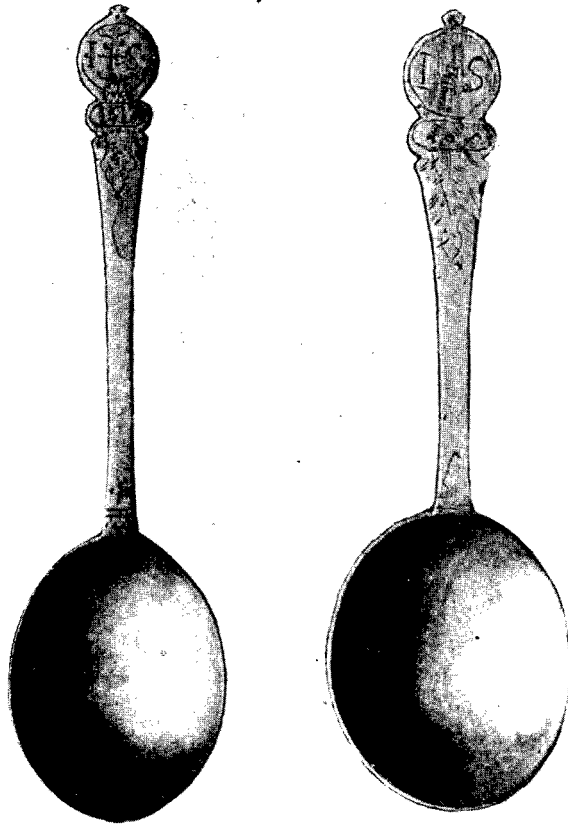


Fig. 4. Silver Spoons from the Hill of Culrain, Ross-shire.

they are those of her aunt Barbara Cuninghame and the latter's husband James Fullarton.

There are other two sets of silver spoons in the Museum which belong to the early part of the seventeenth century. One set, consisting of four perfect spoons and the bowl of another, was also found in

Irvine, while taking down an old house in the Townhead about 1865, and, what is more remarkable, belonged, as we shall see, to people of the same surname as those recently found. Two of these spoons are illustrated in fig. 3. The second set, consisting of six spoons in good condition, was found on the Hill of Culrain, in Ross-shire, about 1859. Fig. 4 shows two of this set. There is also another example bearing the Canongate hall-mark preserved in the Museum. It is of much the same shape as the others, but it is of a rather earlier make, as it bears the date 1589.

This set of Irvine spoons differs very slightly in form from the two found recently. They have the same shape of bowl and a similar disc at the top of the stem, but the transverse panel below the disc is smaller and the stem is narrower. On the front of the disc of the four complete spoons are engraved the initials I B. On the back of the



Fig. 5. Edinburgh Hall-marks on Spoons. (†.)

stem are the hall-marks E H (Edward Hairt), a castle, and G H in monogram (George Heriot, father of the more famous son of the same name)<sup>1</sup> (fig. 5, No. 2); on the back of the bowl of the whole five are the initials A C, with the Cuninghame shake-fork between. The name represented by the initials I B has not been identified, neither has that indicated by the initials A C, but these no doubt are those of a member of a family of the name of

Cunningham, of which there were many in the northern part of Ayrshire, from which they take their name.

The six Culrain spoons, of which three are rather smaller than the others (fig. 4), are almost identical in form and ornamentation with those recently found in Irvine. On the front of the disc at the top of the stem are the initials I S, and on the back of the stem the maker's stamp I H (fig. 5, No. 3), while on the back of the bowl are the initials C M. None of the owners of any of these initials has been identified. In addition to the initials on the front of the stem the three smaller spoons have the date 1617 incised on the panel below the disc bearing the initials.

#### THE SPOON FROM HADDINGTON.

While cutting a trench for water-pipes in Church Street, Haddington, in September last, one of the workmen found a silver spoon, the bowl of

<sup>1</sup> Hairt received the freedom of his Incorporation in 1575, and was deacon in 1579-81 and 1582-3, and George Heriot was deacon many times between 1565 and 1638.—*Old Scottish Communion Plate*, pp. 549, 550.

which was crushed and bent. The metal being in good condition, since being received at the Museum it has been straightened out, and now shows only a crack in the bowl (fig. 6). The total length of the spoon is  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches, the bowl, which is oval and shallow, measuring  $2\frac{5}{8}$  inches long and  $2\frac{7}{8}$  inches broad. The stem, which is flat, measures  $4\frac{5}{8}$  inches in length, and varies from  $\frac{9}{32}$  inch in breadth at its junction with the bowl to  $\frac{9}{16}$  inch at the top, which is cut off square. On the front of the top of the stem it is decorated with an engraved rude foliaceous design with a heart-shaped ornament below, and there is an incised triangle at the foot. On the back of the stem are the hall-marks D B (David Bog, maker), a castle, and I S (James Symonstoun, deacon of the incorporation, 1665-7) (fig. 5, No. 4), and the groove made in testing the quality of the metal. On the back of the bowl are the initials R M. The spoon was made in Edinburgh about 1666, and weighs 1 oz. 7 dwt. Troy.

As Scottish silver plate of the seventeenth century is not common, it is very gratifying that these two finds should have been secured for our National Museum. Of the type with the disc at the top of the stem there are now fourteen examples in the National Collection, which is the more satisfactory as this shape of spoon seems to have been popular in Scotland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, seeing that most, if not all, of them were made in Edinburgh, and they were found so far apart as Ayrshire and Ross-shire.

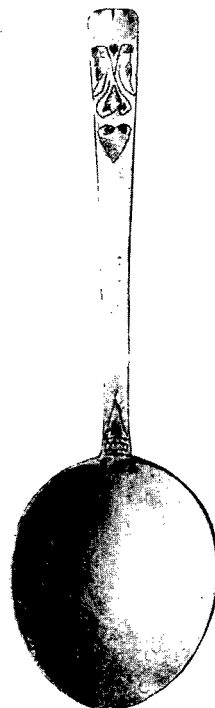


Fig. 6. Silver Spoon from Haddington. ( $\frac{1}{2}$ .)