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NOTE ON TWO HOARDS OF COINS BURIED ABOUT 1800. BY
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On 5th August, 1915, when the Berwickshire County Council's road-roller was at work between Moorhouse and Cockburnspath, one of the workmen, who was engaged in digging for "blinding" by the side of the road at a point known as Juniperbush, about half a mile north of Moorhouse, unearthed two silver coins. Systematic search by himself and his companions increased the number to a total of 28, all of which were handed over to the Crown authorities and transmitted for examination to the National Museum. The most striking feature about them was their extraordinarily worn condition. The great majority had been rubbed so smooth that no conjecture as to their identity was possible. A few seemed to have suffered through clipping, and one or two had been countermarked, apparently with initial letters. After a careful scrutiny they were classified as follows:—

SHILLINGS.	
William III.	3
George II.	2
Illegible	10
SIXPENCES.	
William III.	3
Illegible	10
	—
	28

Taken by itself, this small find from a lonely woodside in the Eastern Lammermuirs would have had little significance. But the interest attaching to it was very materially enhanced by another discovery, which was made seven or eight weeks later in quite a different part of the country. On the afternoon of 30th September, 1915, the wife of a hand employed on the farm of Corskie, near Banff, was walking along the road which leads from the Banff and Turriff turnpike-road to Montcoffer House, when she observed a silver coin lying at the foot of a sunk fence, close to the entrance of a rabbit burrow. Scraping at the burrow, first by herself, and afterwards with the help of a neighbour, she secured quite a large number of what were evidently old sixpences and shillings. Subsequently her husband and another man cleared the whole spot

thoroughly with a spade, uncovering a good many additional coins as well as a gin-bottle, in which the hoard had originally been concealed. The find was handed over to the Crown authorities, who forwarded the coins to the National Museum for a report. They numbered 387 in all, 215 being of silver and 172 of bronze.

The silver, which it will be convenient to deal with first, fell into the following groups:—

HALF-CROWNS.	
Charles II.	2
Anne	1
	—
	3
SHILLINGS.	
Charles II.	2
William III.	62
Anne	11
George I.	1
George II.	2
Illegible	56
	—
	134
SIXPENCES.	
Charles II.	1
William III.	13
George II.	1
Illegible	62
	—
	77
FOREIGN COIN.	
France (Louis XV.)	1

The close analogy with the Berwickshire hoard was apparent at a glance. The half-crowns, though considerably worn, were still fairly legible. With the smaller denominations it was otherwise. All of the shillings were much rubbed. Those that are classified as "illegible" were worn absolutely smooth, while of the remainder many owed their identification to the chance preservation of a mere fragment of type or inscription. Some had been countermarked with initials, and twenty-two had been "crooked," doubtless to test the metal. The sixpences, as is clear from the list, were in even worse case. The great majority were worn not only smooth but thin. All save two had been "crooked," and a few had been countermarked like the shillings.

The condition of the bronze coins, though slightly better than that

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of the silver, was for the most part deplorable enough. Apart from a blank which did not seem ever to have been struck, and which was rather smaller than one of the broad-rimmed pennies of George II., the following is a list of the regular issues:—

BAWBEE.	
Charles II.	1
HALFPENNIES.	
William III.	7
George II.	42
George III. (British)	51
George III. (Irish)	7
Illegible	31
	138
FARTHINGS.	
George II.	1
George III.	5
Illegible	9
	15
FOREIGN COIN.	
Holland (1720)	1

As with the silver, so with the bronze, the pieces classed as illegible had been literally rubbed smooth, while nearly the whole of the rest were seriously damaged by usage. This, coupled with the motley crowd of sovereigns represented, conveyed a vivid impression of the miserable state to which the currency had been reduced, in silver and in bronze alike, at the time when the hoards were buried. And the Banffshire find provided a valuable clue to the approximate date of concealment. In addition to the coins already enumerated, it contained the following sixteen trade-tokens of bronze:—

SCOTLAND.	
Edinburgh	3
Glasgow	3
Inverness	3
Leith	1
Montrose	1
Joseph Archibald, Seedsman, Edinburgh	1

	ENGLAND.	
Rochdale		1
	WALES.	
North Wales		1
	IRELAND.	
Cronebane		1
Sise Lane		1
		— 16

On the whole, the trade-tokens were in much better condition than the regular issues. But even the latest of them, which was dated 1796, had seen some little service, and must have been in circulation for a few years before the bottle was deposited. Burial probably took place in the early years of the nineteenth century. The fact that the hoards came from different parts of the country justifies us in regarding them as typical of the money which, in Scotland at least, had perforce to be handled by the generation that saw the victory of Trafalgar.