

6. A PARCEL OF THIRTEENTH- AND FOURTEENTH-CENTURY STERLINGS
FOUND NEAR BIGGAR

THROUGH the courtesy of their present owner, Mrs M. A. P. Meiklejohn, Balerno, Midlothian, and of Mr A. E. Goodman of the History Department, University of Edinburgh, who communicated the information to me, I have been enabled to examine, and to publish this notice of, the following small parcel of sterlings:

List of Coins

[Classification, Scottish: B. - Burns, *The Coinage of Scotland*, 1(1887), pp. 163-86 (but see also comment in *B.N.J.*, xxvii (1955), p. 285f); S. - Stewart, *The Scottish Coinage* (1955), pp. 20-22 and 135. English: B. - Burns, op. cit., pp. 186-220; Fox - H. B. Earle Fox and J. Shirley Fox, 'Numismatic History of the Reigns of Edward I, II and III, *B.N.J.*, vi-x, (1910-14) (and for busts in Fox classes Xc-f as differentiated by Mr Dolley and Mr Tatler see 'Edwardian Sterlings in the Montrave Hoard' by Tatler and Stewart, *B.N.J.*, xxxi (1962), pp. 80-85.)]

Scottish - Alexander III, 2nd coinage, c. 1280-6 (+?); mints unidentified.

1. B. group I, class III (cf. fig. 151, No. 13); S. class C. Rev. 4 six-pointed mullets; O of Sco over ?
2. B. group II, class II/III mule (cf. fig. 177); S. class E/F mule. Rev. 3 six-pointed mullets and 1 seven-pointed star (in 1st heraldic quarter). Pierced.

English - Edward I and II.

3. (Edward I) B. class A38/A37 mule; Fox Xa/IXb. London.
4. —, B. class A38; Fox Xa. Canterbury.
5. —, —, Newcastle.
6. (Edward I or II) B. class A40; Fox Xc-f (1st bust). London.
7. —, B. class A41; Fox Xc-f (2nd bust). London.
8. (Edward II) B. class A47; Fox XIII. Canterbury.
9. —, B. class A48; Fox XIV (with broken E; initial cross of XIII). London.

These coins apparently represent a mid-nineteenth century find from Lanarkshire. The first member of Mrs Meiklejohn's family into whose possession they are known to have come was Mrs Margaret Wyld Miller, who died about 1893; it is thought likely that they originally belonged to her grandfather, Adam Wyld, who lived in Biggar. The tradition is that they were probably excavated about Culter, near Biggar. There is no information regarding the date or circumstances of discovery, of any container or associated objects, nor as to whether these nine coins comprised the whole or only part of the original hoard.

The composition of the group calls for little comment. The two Scots coins are much older than the English, the earliest of which can be dated about 1302. Apart from a possible posthumous continuation of Alexander's second coinage after 1286, and the relatively limited issues of John Balliol, there was no Scottish coinage issued from the date of the issue represented by the two coins in this find until probably late in the reign of Robert Bruce. The absence of Scots coins later than 1286 is not therefore surprising, although there might well have been some earlier English. The latest coin, which shows slight signs of wear, can be dated *c.* 1317+, and the penultimate coin, a year or two earlier, is considerably worn. A deposit date pre-1320 is unlikely. With a parcel of so few coins, they cannot necessarily be expected to be representative of current circulation at the time of burial, nor, if they are part of a larger hoard, to be a characteristic sample. They could in fact have been buried up to ten or twenty years after 1320, since they need not have included Scottish sterlings of that period, which are very limited in number (only Robert Bruce), nor English which, although more plentiful, did not travel northwards in such quantities as the earlier issues during Edward I and II's Scottish campaigns. The generally worn state of the coins, their spread of period, and the presence of a pierced coin, are consistent with their having been the property of a native owner in a non-urban area where money was not a plentiful commodity in continuous supply.

IAN STEWART