

# “MCHBI” – A BNS Online Map Application for Medieval Coin Hoards in Britain and Ireland

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From two cut fractions of a penny dropped by a peasant toiling in a field, to a deliberately concealed chest brimming with gold and silver coins, the term “hoards” encompass a whole spectrum of interesting discoveries. The British Numismatic Society is pleased to announce the availability of a new feature on its website which allows users to explore Medieval Coin Hoards in Britain and Ireland (“MCHBI”). “Medieval” is here defined as the time period from approximately AD 450 to Henry VIII’s silver debasement in 1544, and “hoard” is described as two or more coins believed to have been deposited, or lost, at the same time. Excluded from the database are “productive sites” where many single coins have been dropped over a long period of time.

This brief article shows how to access the website and some examples of the products that can be generated. The facility should prove of interest to numismatists, historians, archaeologists and metal detectorists. With nearly 1900 hoards uploaded and increasing daily it is already the largest compilation of Medieval hoard data from Britain and Ireland, and will be continuously added to in order to keep it as up-to-date as possible.

Following an initial proposal by Martin Allen, a small team was put together in early 2022 to develop and populate the database which is now available online. To access it please go the MCHBI tab in the BNS website main menu ([link](#)).

The database can be filtered in various ways to display relevant hoards on the map, and the filtered hoards may be printed out as a PDF report. Hoards are shown on a map which can be zoomed in/out, and can be displayed with a variety of different base-maps. The user can use the built-in screen capture utilities to save maps they have prepared using their chosen search filters. Such filtered maps can be saved and shared with others by means of a web address that is created by the application software.

**The website contains a useful [USER GUIDE](#) which explains how to use MCHBI, and users are encouraged to read this section in order to get the most value out of the application, and to understand the scope of its capabilities.**

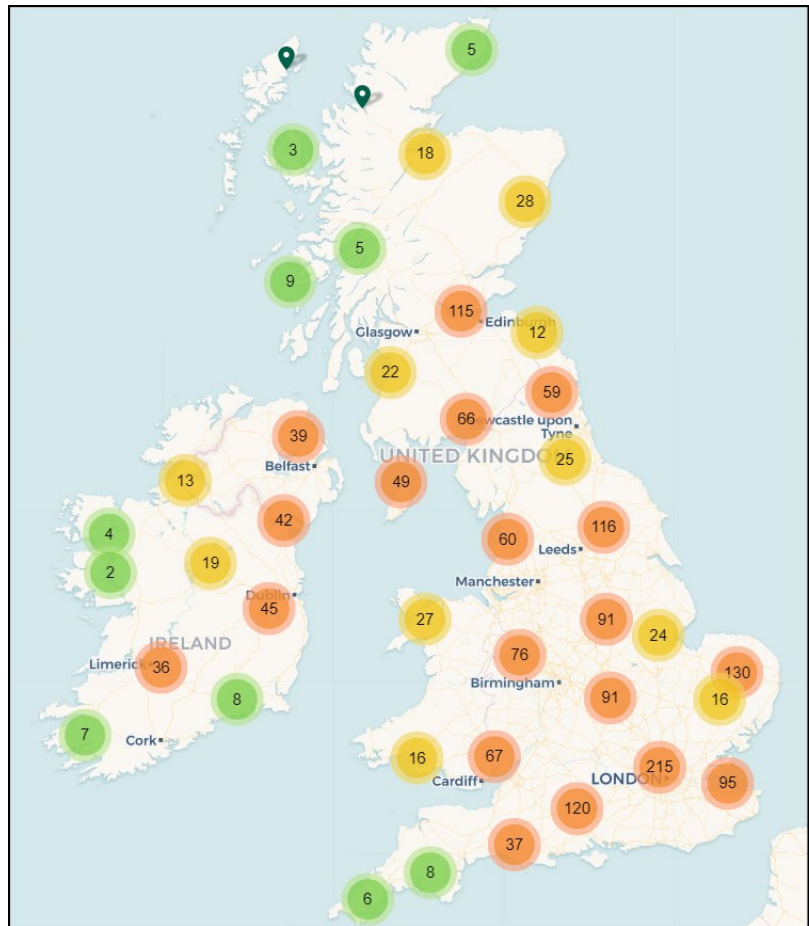
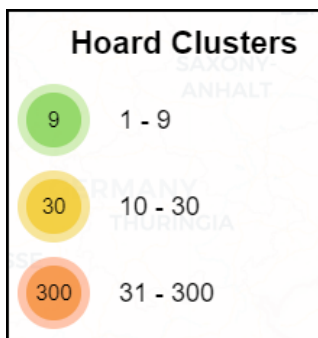
It is hoped that users will provide feedback on any issues that emerge. The use of the Chrome browser is recommended, and early problems with the Safari browser have been addressed, but other processor/browser issues may remain. The application should work well on tablets as well as PCs, and under Windows and Mac operating systems. Although not designed for, it can even be used on some mobile phones, and works best if the phone screen is turned sideways.

We will be continuously adding further hoards and updating hoard descriptions and references, but do please let us know if you are aware of any additional hoards or any errors in the description of existing ones, or if you have information on any new discoveries. If you were involved in the discovery of a hoard and can provide more accurate data then that would be very helpful.

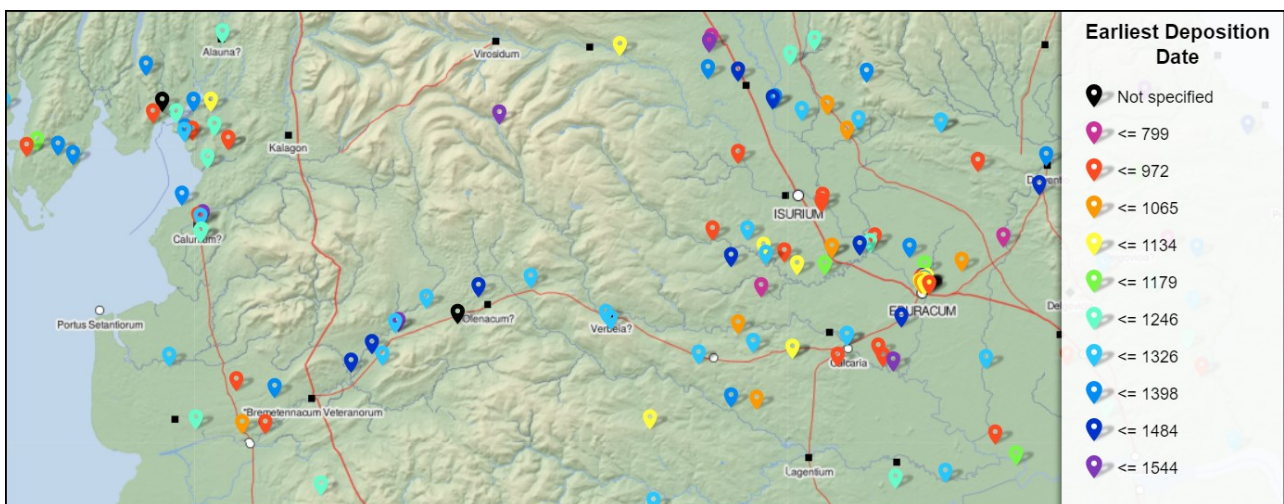
Below I am showing a number of maps produced from the database to whet your appetite for exploring this exciting new facility.

## 1) Hoard Clusters

When first entering the mapping application a user will normally see coloured circles representing a cluster of hoards. Hoard density is colour-coded as shown in the legend below. Looking at the map one notices straight away where hoards are concentrated. A few individual hoards in Scotland are shown with dark green markers; the hoard clusters can be separated out into their individual hoards by making the appropriate change in the Settings panel.

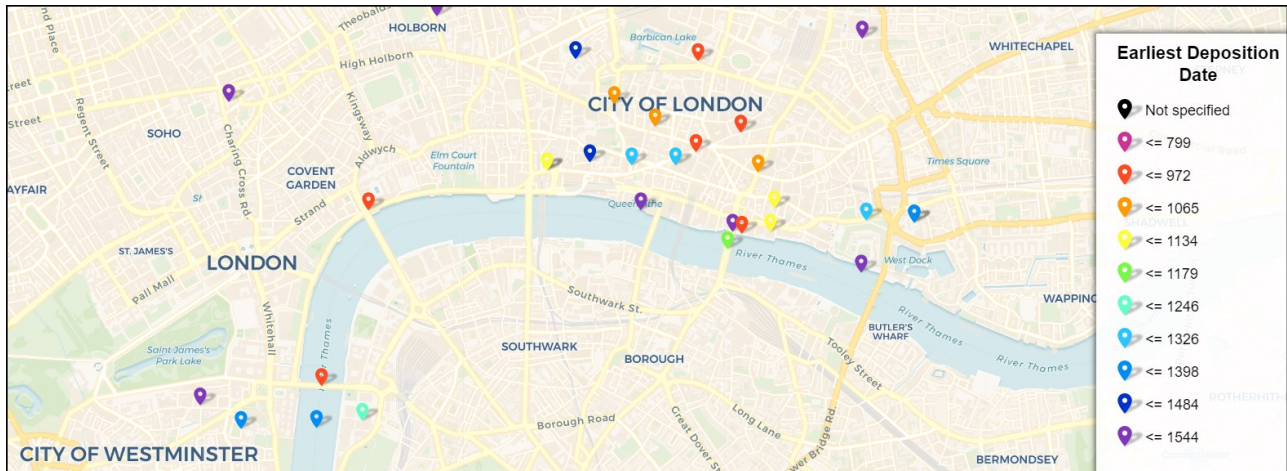


## 2) Concentration of hoards along ancient communication routes



The map above shows major Roman roads whose routes were utilised long after the Romans had departed. Hoard locations are colour-coded by their earliest deposition date, and a concentration of later Medieval hoards in the vicinity of the ancient route through the Pennines west of York ("Eboracum") is clear.

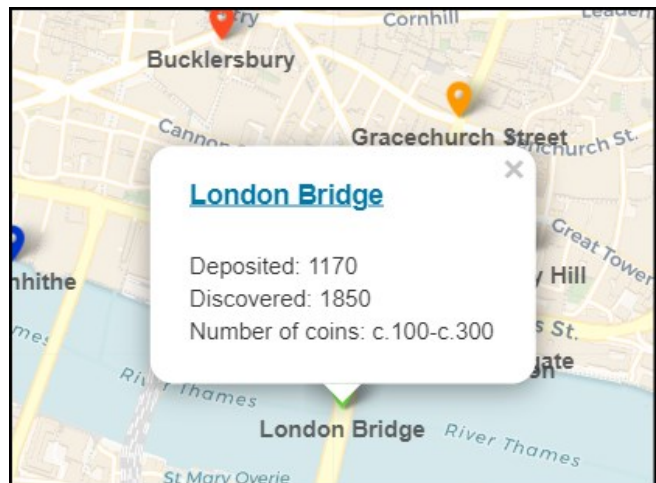
### 3) Hoards in/around Central London:



This next map above shows the location of medieval hoards in central London, colour-coded by their earliest date of deposition. Hoards are concentrated around the City of London and the City of Westminster, with the majority being located north of the Thames.

Clicking on any of the markers brings up a short summary, as shown on the right, and clicking on the blue hyperlink will bring up the hoard summary as shown below.

The hoard reports usually provide a number of references for users to review if they wish to delve deeper. Where a reference is freely available online a hyperlink has been added at the end of the reference text.



MCHBI Ref: **BNJ218**

[← Back to map](#)   [Download PDF](#)

## London Bridge

**LOCATION AND SETTING**

Region: England  
 County: City of London  
 Mapped location accuracy: > 1000 meters  
 Context: Uncertain  
 Feature: Unknown

**TIMING**

Deposited: 1170  
 Discovered: 1850  
 Circumstances: Unknown

**CONTAINER AND CONTENTS**

Container: Unknown  
 Hoard Type: Coins only

**SUMMARY NOTES**

A hoard of Stephen (represented by 1 cut halfpenny of type III) and Henry II (Tealby) pennies discovered in unknown circumstances near London Bridge in 1850. The total amount of coins seems to be uncertain, with many sources quoting different amounts. News of two Scottish cut half pennies of David I were pictured in an auction with the Stephen, listed as being found in the same hoard. The date of the Scottish coins does coincide with the English coins discovered.

**REFERENCES**

Blunt, C. E. et al. (1968), 'On some hoards of the time of Stephen' [London Bridge, p.41], BNJ vol. 37 pp. 35-42 ([link](#))  
 Thompson, J.D.A., (1956), Inventory of British coin hoards, A.D.600-1500, RNS Special Publication #1  
 Sotheby, sale catalogue of the Rashleigh collection, 28th June 1909, lot 636 and 637.

**COINS**

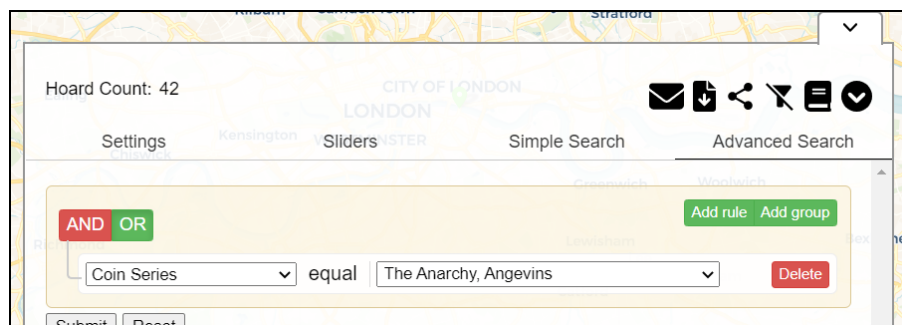
Num. of coins: c.100-c.300  
 Latest Coin: Data req'd.  
 Coins issued by: Stephen, Henry II - Tealby, David I

**DISPOSITION**

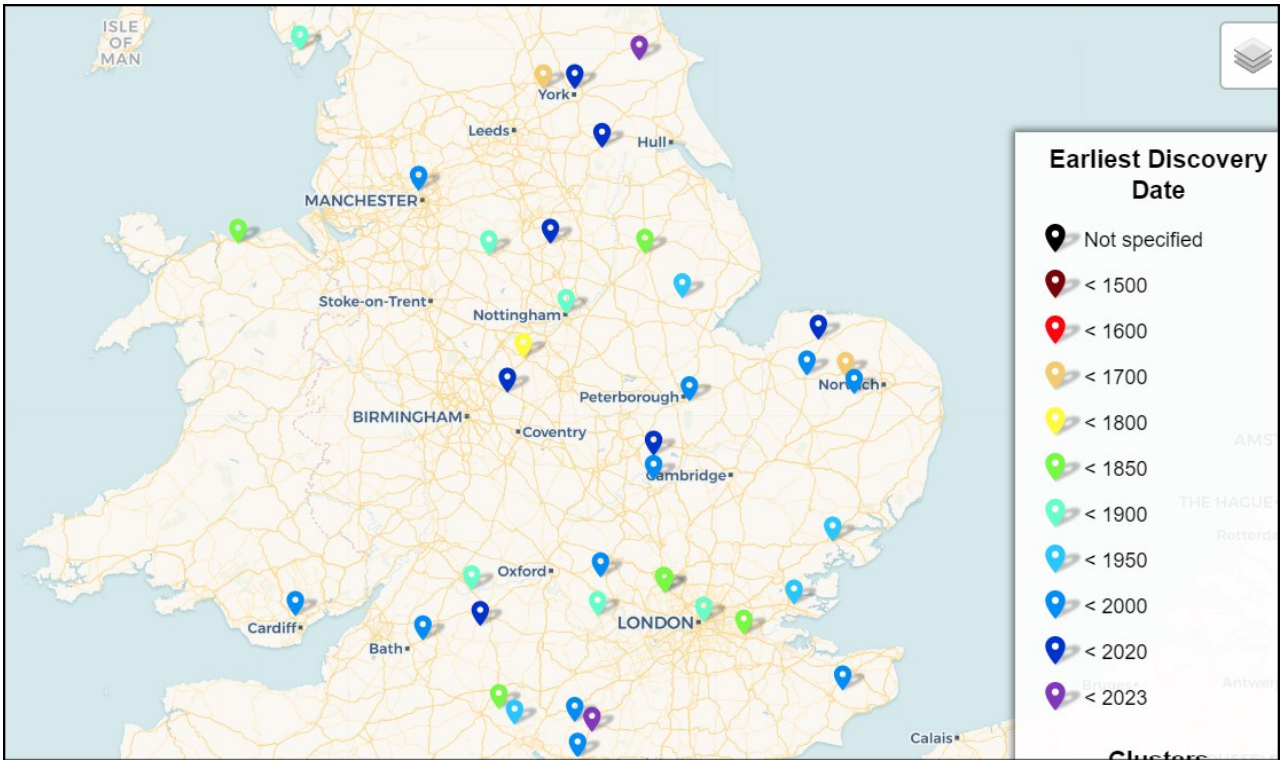
The Stephen was sold as lot 612 in the Rashleigh sale (1853).

## 4) Hoards of “The Anarchy” Period

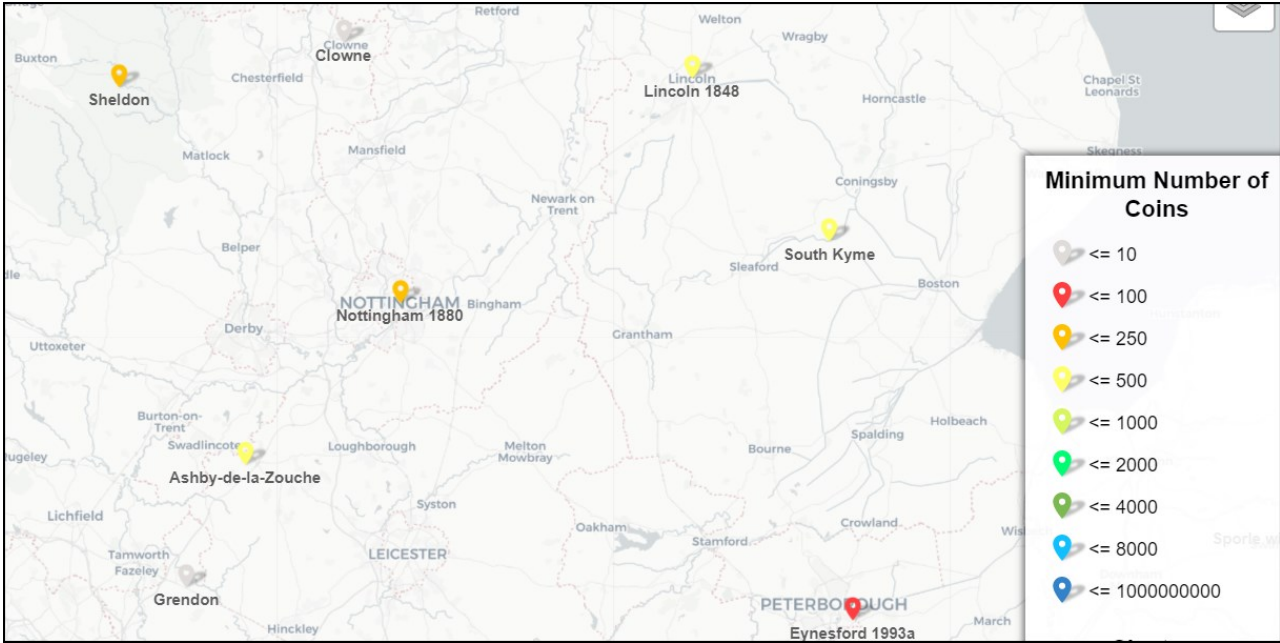
The act of filtering hoards by use of the slider bars and/or by the Simple or Advanced Search functions will result in applicable hoards remaining on the map display and it is then easily possible to download the PDF summary sheets for each of those hoards. For example, illustrated here is an Advanced Search setup to show hoards containing coins issued during the “Anarchy” period. Having selected this coin series one can see at top left that there are 42 relevant hoards.



Below is a map showing most of these hoards from the Anarchy period discovered in England, colour-coded by discovery date.



Quite a number of these hoards are the result of metal detecting activities in the last twenty years or so. One can select different base-maps upon which to plot the hoards, and adjust various other settings including the display of hoard names. Below is part of the same map, focussing on Central England and plotted on a different base map, and with hoard names switched on. Additionally, the hoards have now been colour-coded to show the minimum number of coins in the hoard, and we immediately see that the three largest hoards in the displayed area are those of Lincoln, Ashby and South Kyme, all with at least 250 coins.



The [MCHBI app](#) is very flexible in terms of searching and filtering; users are encouraged to “play” with the system to discover the power of its capabilities.

*Acknowledgements – Thanks are due firstly to Murray Andrews, Josh Cattermole, Luke Mundy and Will Wilson who all assisted with data collection and input. Secondly, the advice of the other members of the MCHBI [team](#) is gratefully acknowledged, particularly Martin Allen who kept me on the “straight and narrow”, and Gary Oddie who was able to efficiently supply copies of many obscure references.*

