

The Coins of the Amsterdam Hoard (1897)

by Paul Torongo

© 2018

Hoard **Deposited**: 1387 or later (?)

Found: Mariaconvent, Oude Zijds Voorburgwal in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Currently in the collection of the Amsterdam Museum.

The find consisted of the following 11 coins: **[3]**

- 5 Flanders, Louis of Male (1346-1384), *leeuwengroot*, Gaillard 219
- 2 Flanders, Louis of Male (1346-1384), *plak*, Gaillard 224
- 1 Brabant, Jeanne and Philip (1384-1389), *groot*, issue 1384, de Witte 414
- 1 Cleves, John I (1448-1481), *braspenning* 1479, Noss 149
- 1 City of Hamburg, *wit*, issue 1387, Gaedechens 1132-40
- 1 Dorpat, Dietrich III Damerov (1379-1400), *schilling*, Federov 6

The find was not apparently not reported (published) until some 90 years after it was made:

“In 1978, the [Koninklijk] Penningkabinet made it known that in 1897, 11 silver coins were found during the dismantling of the Mariaconvent on the Oude Zijds Voorburgwal in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Further information about the find and the surrounding circumstances are unknown. The coins are kept in the Museum Amstelkring in Amsterdam.

Ten of the coins were struck in the last quarter of the 14th century and most likely belong together. The *braspenning* of Cleves is a century younger than the other coins, and must surely be seen as a loose find. The coins from Hamburg and Dorpat, less common in circulation in our area, can be explained by the Amsterdam trade in the Baltic Sea.

Flanders, Louis of Male (1346-1384), *leeuwengroot*, Gaillard 219-221 [*sic*]: 5 coins
Flanders, Louis of Male (1346-1384), *plak*, Gaillard 223-225: 2 coins
Brabant, Jeanne and Philip (1384-1389), *groot*, issue 1384, de Witte 414: 1 coin
Cleves, John I (1448-1481), *braspenning* 1479, Noss 149: 1 coin
City of Hamburg, *wit*, issue 1387, Gaedechens 1132-40: 1 coin
Dorpat, Dietrich III Damerov (1379-1400), *schilling*, Federov 6: 1 coin”

– Jacobi, pp. 116-117 (ref. **3**)

On 26 November. 1979, all 11 coins from the find were purchased from the Stichting Museum Amstelkring by the Amsterdam Museum **[8]**, in whose collection the coins can currently be found. This is, therefore, one of the very few hoards containing *leeuwengroten* that is still intact today.

Jacobi's declaration that "The coins from Hamburg and Dorpat, less common in circulation in our area, can be explained by the Amsterdam trade in the Baltic Sea." is open to discussion. Presumably, Jacobi feels that he "knows" what coins were in circulation based upon available hoard evidence. I would not dare to say one way or the other if Jacobi's assertion is true or not, but I immediately wonder if Jacobi knew what he was talking about. Can the "unusual" (?) coins be "explained by the Amsterdam trade in the Baltic Sea"? Perhaps, but Jacobi does not provide any kind of substantiating evidence in his short article, so who knows?.

Jacobi feels that the 1479 *braspenning* of Cleves can be discounted as an unrelated coin because it is at least 92 years younger than any other coin in the find. This is a large conclusion based upon small evidence, however. As Jacobi himself admits, the exact circumstances of the find are unknown, and without further information we cannot be certain either way. It certainly seems plausible that the *braspenning* does not belong with the other coins, based solely upon the dates, but to simply dismiss it without further evidence solely because of what one "feels" is hardly scientific method. The *braspenning* does not **seem** to belong with the others, but we cannot be certain based upon the information available, nor could Jacobi.


Based upon Jacobi's identifications, and subject to a more detailed identification of some of the coins (if possible), the hoard was either deposited 1479 or after (with the *braspenning*) or 1387 or after (without the *braspenning*).

CATALOG

Flanders

Louis of Male (1346-1384)

Leeuwengroten

Gaillard 219 

It is the *leeuwengroten* of this hoard that are my primary interest. By coincidence, they are the coins that Jacobi described first (I am following his order in the present catalog). The hoard was deposited at least 20 years after the minting of *leeuwengroten* ceased in Flanders in 1364, and yet they take up the lion's share of the hoard when viewed by individual types.

The "correct" reference number is Gaillard 219. Gaillard 220-221 are counterfeits and should never be used as reference numbers, although they often are. This is an immediate indication that Jacobi was not really paying all that much attention to what he was doing.

All of the *leeuwengroten* in the hoard has the same reverse, outer legend:

✠ BNDICTV : SIT : NOMES : DNI : NRI : IHV : XPI

No coins from Louis of Male's Issues I – IV were present in the find.

Issue V:

20 Dec., 1354 - 18 Oct., 1359

Issue V coins are the most common issue seen today. There were so many of them minted that several “sub-types” can be identified, based on certain identifying characteristics (see ref. 5).



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17219 / 2.7 g.

**. ✠ MONETA ✠ FLAND'
 LVD OVI QDO MES**

Issue V, “refined style” sub-type (?)



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17222

**. ✠ MONETA ✠ FLAND'
 LVD OVI QDO MES**

Issue V, “refined style” sub-type (?)



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17218

.✠ MONETA [...] FLAND'
LDV OVI QDO MES

Issue V, “rough” or “refined” style sub-type (?)



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17220

Issue VI:
 22 Oct., 1359 - 4 Dec., 1361

.✠ MONETA ✠ FLAND'
LDV OVI QDO MES

Issue VI coins are, for some reason, fairly rare today. They are for more rare than they should be, based on the numbers struck. See ref. 6 for further information.



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17221

• ✠ MONET ✠ ♣ FLAND' ✠
LVD OVI QDO MES

Issue VII:

4 Dec., 1361 - 27 Sep., 1362



The *leeuwengroten* of Issue VII are rather different than those of the previous issues, with their pellet L's, obverse border leaves with 3 lobes instead of 5. The Amsterdam Hoard coin has bow A's (as opposed to the 'normal' A's of some Issue VII coins). See ref. 6 for further information.

Plaks

Gaillard 224 ^[1]

Goddeeris, p. 77 ^[2]

The "lion with helm" series were the coins struck in Flanders (beginning 1365) directly after striking of the *leeuwengroot* ended (1364). They were minted in a number of denominations,

including double *grooten* (*plaks*) and $\frac{1}{2}$ *plaks* (*grooten*). *Leeuwengrooten* were never struck again in Flanders, although they continued to circulate throughout the Low Countries for many decades.



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17223

**LVDOVICVS : DEI : GRA : COMES : F : DNS : FLANDRIÆ
 ✠ MOHETX ✠ DE ✠ FLANDRIÆ
 ✠ BENEICTVS : QVI : VENIT : IN : HOMINE : DOMINI**

This coin has the “point-back” **Æ**’s. There is no initial mark on the obverse for this type because of the plumage on the central lion’s headdress. On this piece, the little lion head that is part of the headdress is clearly visible.

According to Goddeeris (ref. [2](#)), this coin is from Issue E (30 January, 1380?) [\[9\]](#).



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17224

**LVDOVICVS : DEI : GRA : COMES : F : DNS : FLANDRIE
 ✠ MONETA ✠ DE ✠ FLANDRIA
 ✠ BENEDICTVS : QVI : VENIT : IN : HOMINE : DOMINI**

According to Goddeeris (ref. 2), this coin is from Issue D (18 June, 1373?)^[9].

Jacobi's "Gaillard 223-225" reference shows that Jacobi was not really putting all that much effort into what he was doing (describing a previously-unreported coin hoard from 90 years earlier).

Gaillard 225 is incorrect because the Amsterdam coins under discussion have double pellet (colon) stop marks on the obverse, not single pellets (as Gaillard 225). The difference between Gaillard 223 and G. 224 are the stops in the reverse, inner legend: "branches de buis" (G. 223) or "trèfles" (G. 224). Both of the Amsterdam Hoard coins have "trèfles" so Gaillard 223 is simply incorrect as well.

My area of expertise ended with the *leeuwengroten*, with a bit of "spill over" into the *plaks*, if you will. As the reader has seen, even the slightest dip into the literature of numismatics can result in an enormous amount of work being created for the researcher seeking detailed but correct information. During the years that I have been studying the *leeuwengroten* (of all regions), it has become clear that the current state of medieval numismatic literature can, at times (but all too often), be labeled as "less than fantastic".

My own experience has shown me just how many problems there are regarding one, single type of medieval coin. It does not take much imagination to extend the problem out into the realms of other types: how many other types of medieval coins are improperly described in the extant literature? And yet, subsequent researchers seem to rely blindly on their numismatic books, often without questioning their content in the least. Is that really science?

I know next to nothing about the following coins other than my basic knowledge of medieval European coins in general. I do not possess the books need to properly research them, and said books may or may not be available on the Internet (and may or may not be accurate). I shall therefore, like so many of my fellow numismatists before me, simply restate what other authors (Jacobi and de Witte) have said about these coin types, for as far as I can determine with my limited resources on the subject. I prefer to spend my time investigating the *leeuwengroten* (my only real interest in the Amsterdam Hoard), and leave the other types to some other researcher.

According to Jacobi:

Brabant

Jeanne and Philip (1384-1389)

Groot [*roosebeker*]

issue of 1384 [see de Witte, p. 165]

de Witte 414 [p. 175] [7]



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17225

City of Hamburg

wit

issue of 1387

Gaedeckens 1132-40



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17226

Dorpat

Dietrich III Damerov (1379-1400)

schilling

Federov 6



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17227

Duchy of Cleves

John I (1448-1481)

braspenning

issue of 1479

Noss 149



Amsterdam Museum, KA-17228

Conclusion

The Amsterdam Hoard of 1897 consisted of 10 or 11 silver coins, most of which were Flemish *leeuwengroten* of Louis of Male. These are consistent with a typical, late hoard, being Issue V-VII coins (including 1 fairly rare Issue VI coin), and no Issue I-IV coins.

A *braspenning* of Cleves was one of the other coins, and it bears a date that appears to read 1479, making it almost a century younger than any of the other coins in the find, which caused Jacobi to conclude that the coin was likely to be a loose find unassociated with the rest.

Based upon Jacobi's identifications and information, the hoard was either deposited 1479 or after (with the Cleves *braspenning*) or 1387 or after (without the *braspenning*).

Unfortunately, weight information about the coins is unavailable at this time.

Acknowledgements

The author would very much like to thank the following people and institutions for their kind assistance: Joyce Edwards, Judith van Gent, Theodoor Goddeeris, Maarten Jansen, the Amsterdam Museum.

Literature

[1]

Recherches sur les Monnaies des Comtes de Flandre

Victor Gaillard

Ghent, 1852 & 1857

[2]

Les Plaques de Louis de Male (1346-1384)

Theodoor Goddeeris

in ***RBN*** 144 (1998), p. 63-78

[3]

Amsterdam 1897

H. W. Jacobi

in ***JMP*** 75 (1988)

pp. 116-117

[4]

Het Munthuis in Gent

Deel I Karel de Grote – Lodewijk van Mâle (768 –1384)

Jean-Claude Martiny

Uitgeverij Snoeck

2014

ISBN: 978-94-6161-135-2

[5]

A Preliminary Look at the Leeuwengroten of Louis of Mâle (1346-1384): Issues IV and V

Paul Torongo & Raymond van Oosterhout

Rotterdam, 2015

Academia.edu

[6]

A Preliminary Look at the Leeuwengroten of Louis of Mâle (1346-1384): Issues VI – VIII

Paul A. Torongo

Rotterdam, 2017

Academia.edu

[7]

Histoire monétaire des comtes de Louvain, ducs de Brabant et marquis de Saint Empire Romain

Alphonse De Witte

Veuve de Backer, 1894

[8]

Personal correspondence

Paul Torongo – Judith van Gent

2018

[9]

Personal correspondence

Paul Torongo – Theodoor Goddeeris

2018