

# TROUBLED TIMES

Gordon Bailey



Musketeer of the English Civil War period.

Sword belt with buckle and loop

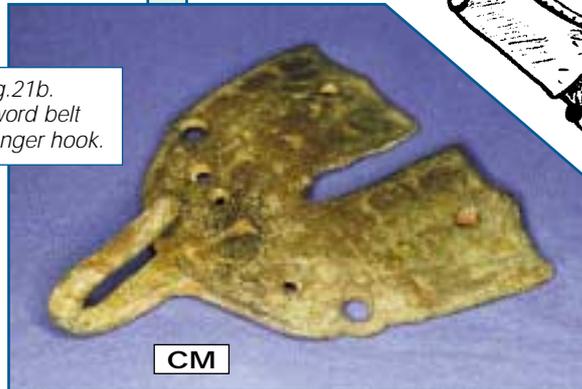


Fig.21a. Sketch of a sword belt hanger with two large buckles.



Sword scabbard

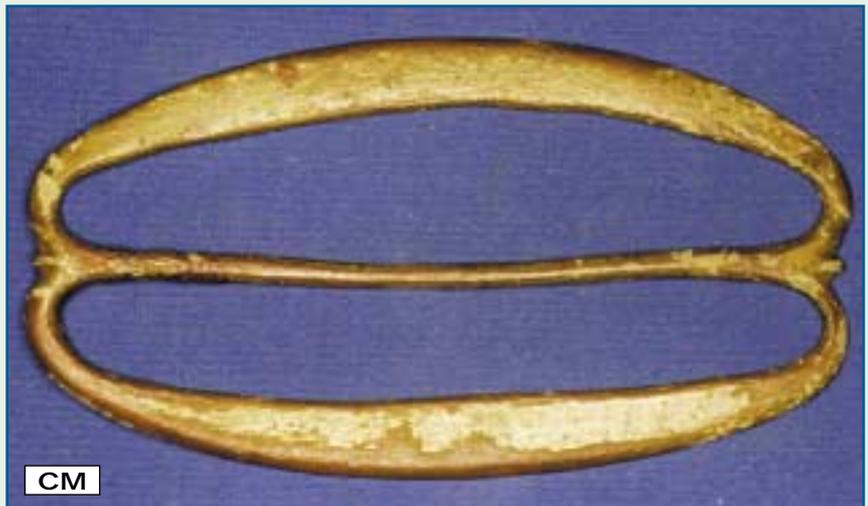
Fig.21b. Sword belt hanger hook.



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Continuing from the May issue of **Treasure Hunting**, the other piece of sword furniture was the hanger (see Fig.21a.). At the top of the hanger was a hook (see Fig.21b.) that mated with the suspension loop of the sword belt buckle. The hanger could have had anything between two and 12 buckles attached to it. The larger examples of these buckles could easily be mistaken for the baldric buckle, such as that shown in Fig.22., although it is possible they were used for both purposes. The smaller types of buckles, such as that shown in Fig.23., could have been used for securing the hanger but were also multipurpose.

Some buckles from this period can be readily identified such as the spur buckles shown as Fig.24a., 24b., and 24c. Fig.24a. has its chape terminating in a small loop. Belt buckles of the period vary greatly in size. Some are very decorative (see Fig.25.), while others are plain (see Fig.26.).



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Fig.22. Large buckles such as this would have been used on the baldric or sword hanger.

It is perhaps not surprising that the various buttons used in this period are also recovered, although obviously not in such great numbers as those from the 18th century. When studying paintings from this period, it is noticeable how large an amount of buttons could

be used on the costume of just one individual. These were not only attached to the front of the doublet, but also down the sleeves of it. Even more buttons were used along the sides of the breeches. Of course, not everyone could afford to wear such finery. How-



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Fig. 23. Another type of buckle that could have been used on either the baldric or hanger.



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Fig. 24c. This appears to have been the most common type of spur buckle used in the Civil War period.



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Fig. 27. Pewter pimple buttons.



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Fig. 28. A silver pimple button. Such items would only have been worn by wealthy gentleman.



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Fig. 24a. Spur buckle with a chape that terminates in a loop.



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Fig. 25. A decorative belt buckle.



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Fig. 26. A plain belt buckle.



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Fig. 29a&b. The obverses and reverses of two decorative 17th century buttons.



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Fig. 30. A very large and ornate 17th century button. It is unusual for buttons from this period to be so large.



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Fig. 31. A scarce 17th century enamel button

ever, for the individuals who could, the loss of some buttons would have been inevitable.

Many readers will instantly recognise the pewter pimple buttons of this period as shown in Fig. 27. Not all of the buttons of this type were made of pewter, some were made of precious metal such as silver (see Fig. 28.). Needless to say, this silver button would have belonged to a person of some wealth.

The two 17th century copper-alloy

buttons shown in Fig. 29a. would also have belonged to somebody of reasonable standing. They are much larger than the pimple types and have been decorated with interwoven lines. On the reverse of these large buttons the remains of the iron securing pins can still be seen (Fig. 29b). These would have allowed the buttons to be removed from a garment when it needed washing.

Another button from this period, which is in my own collection, is

unusually large (see Fig. 30.). The design is of a six-pointed star with a small central circle, surrounded by point dots and swirls. If it were not for the loop on the back of this button, I may well have thought it to be a decoration for leather. Another 17th century button (see Fig. 31.) still has much of its enamel remaining. Such buttons are very scarce and again would have been worn by somebody of wealth.

Horses, like their riders, also had various decorations attached to their

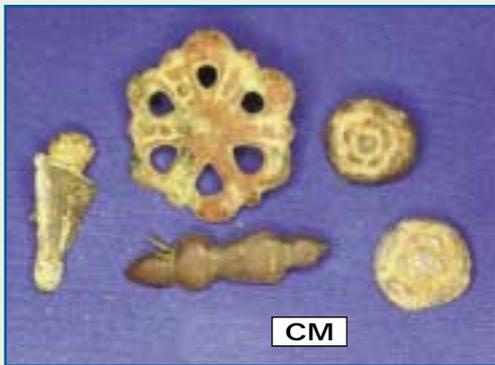
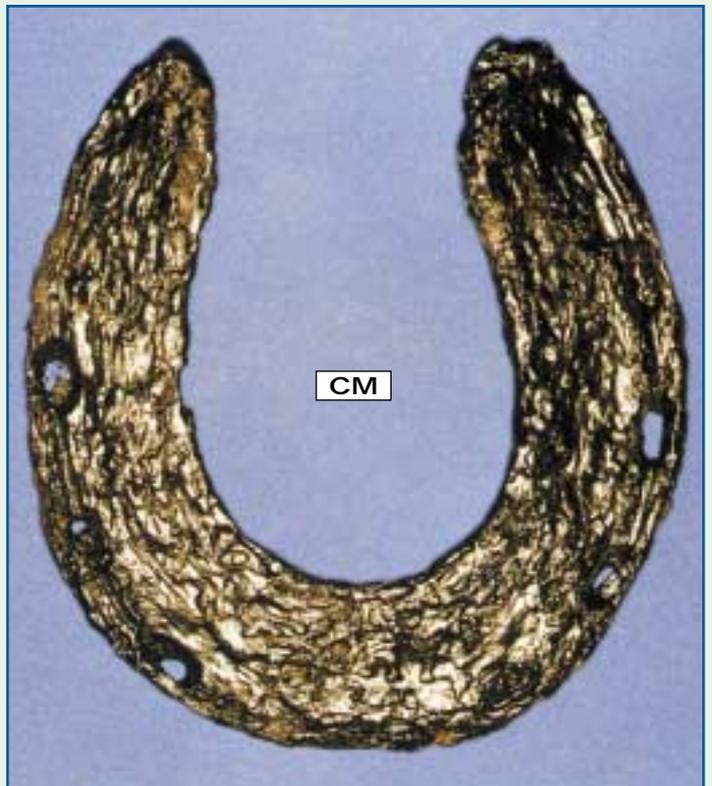


Fig. 32. Decorative studs from leather. It is hard to tell if these were made for human or horse use (or both).

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Fig. 34. 17th century horseshoes are common finds, although they are not always in such good condition as this example.



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Fig. 33. A 17th century horse boss with a fleur-de-lis design.

Fig. 35. 17th century clay pipe fragments recovered from the Royalist site.



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leather harness, and these could easily have become dislodged and lost during a battle. Potential finds would include decorative studs such as those shown in Fig. 32., and occasionally the horse boss that covered the snaffle bit (see Fig. 33.). The other item that many detectorists seem to discard is the horseshoe (see Fig. 34.). However, these can prove to be just as interesting as any other artefact, for the poor horse who lost the shoe could well

have just taken part in one of the major battles.

Tracing Civil War campsites can prove just as rewarding as searching skirmish sites, for they contained many camp followers as well as soldiers. These areas can yield numerous finds, and even small hoards. Not all campsites are located near battles, for they were often established on the way to or on the way back from, engagements.

Some time ago I managed to locate

two such campsites. The first yielded numerous 17th century coins, buttons, buckles, sword belt accessories and the odd lead cap. The second site was used by Royalists as a retreat position during the latter part of the war. From here they travelled to a local town, which was then put under siege by the Roundheads. There were visible surface signs of the camp which I picked up, these being pieces of clay pipes (see Fig. 35.). All came from within a concentrated



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Fig.36. A 17th century pipe tamper incorporating a seal finger ring.



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Figs.37a. and 37b. A Royalist pipe tamper showing Charles I on one side, and on the other the Royal Coat of Arms.



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Fig.38. One of the many lead cups recovered from the Royalist position.

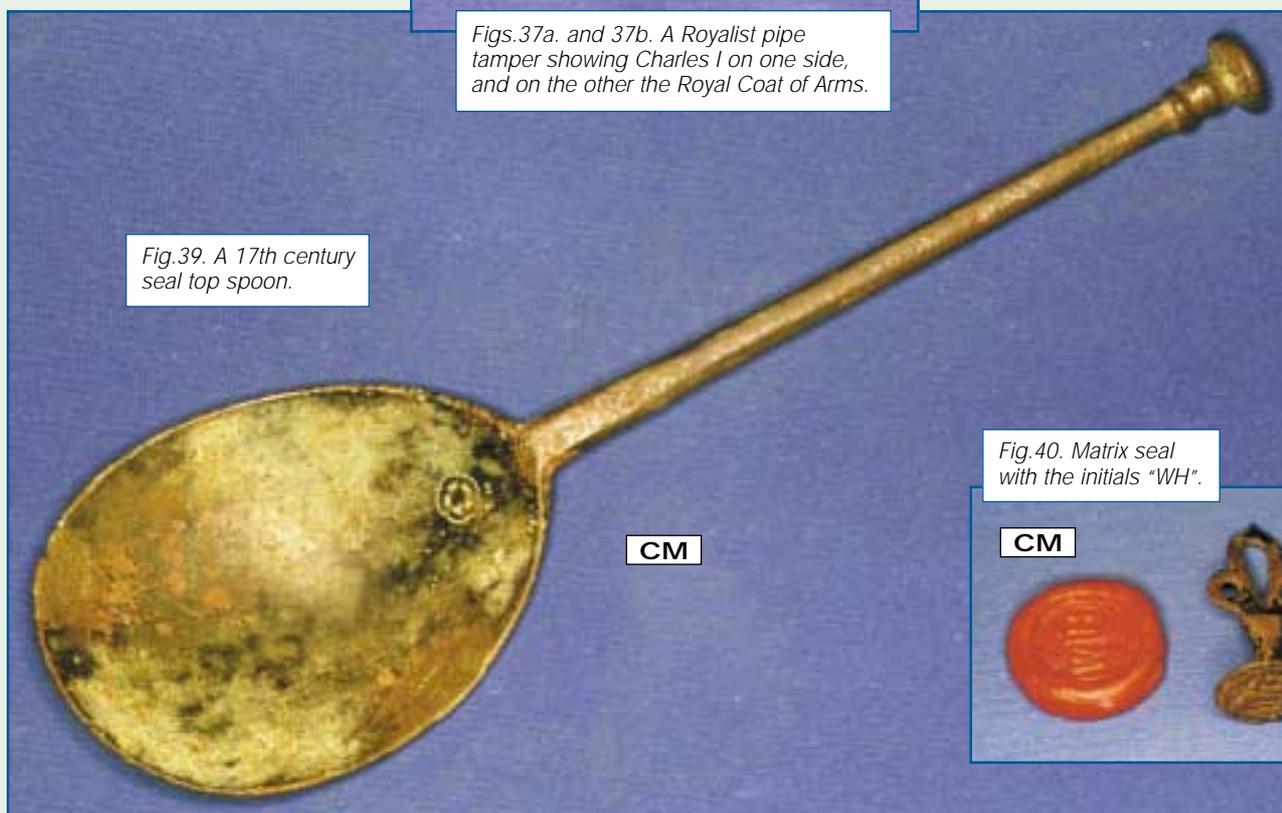


Fig.39. A 17th century seal top spoon.

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Fig.40. Matrix seal with the initials "WH".



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area. Although pieces of 17th century clay pipes are common finds, the purpose made tampers used for compacting the tobacco in their bowls are not.

Emphasis must be placed on purpose made tampers, as many smokers would have used the nearest piece of twig etc to achieve the same aim. A purchased purpose made pipe tamper can be seen in Fig.36. This item not only served to compact the tobacco, but also incorporates a finger ring seal with the initials "IT".

Some of these tampers also acted as a badge of loyalty. The example shown in Figs.37a. and 37b., carries the effigy of Charles I on one side and on the

other the royal coat of arms. At one time there would have been a suspension loop at the top so that it could be worn around the neck.

My search of the Royalist camp site also yielded 12 cup shaped measures made from lead, an example of which is shown in Fig.38. These all came from a small area, some being flattened while others remained in their original condition. What has always perplexed me, is their use. Were they cups, measures, protectors, or something else? I have not seen anything like them to date, but I am certain they were lost or discarded by the Royalists who camped on the site.

Two other items that are not common finds, but would have been used during this period are the seal top spoon (see Fig.39.) and the seal matrix. The example shown in Fig.40. carries the initials "WH". **TH**

**PLEASE NOTE**

Most, if not all, of the major battle-field sites of the English Civil War are protected monuments and should not be searched with a metal detector. However, if you can gain permission to search the fields surrounding the battlefields - outside of the protected zones - Civil War finds might be made.