

A NEW DUROTRIGIC HOARD FROM GODSHILL, HAMPSHIRE

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IN the summer of 1959, during excavations by Mr. John Musty on a pre-Roman and Romano-British site on the east bank of the Avon at Armsley in the parish of Godshill, Hants, a small hoard of four Durotrigic coins was discovered together with a bronze fibula (Pl. I, 1) of La Tène III type, comparable in size and form with a fibula from Old Sarum¹ except that the bow-section of the Old Sarum example is lozengewise, while this is square. The Old Sarum fibula was dated to the first century A.D. which could be the date of this one, though the coins may be somewhat older. Three of the coins are latter-day bronze copies of the Westerham staters varying considerably in style and weight, but all showing evident signs of silver plating (Pl. I, 2-4). They weigh 48.6, 42.9, and 40.5 gr. respectively. The fourth (Pl. I, 5) weighing 4.7 gr., is a small base silver coin of the type (Evans M 13, 14, Mack 319) usually considered to derive from the Sussex gold quarter-stater (Evans E 9, &c., Mack 40, &c.) though in some respects the silver coins seem less devolved than the gold. They have been recorded, from Hengistbury Head,² about a dozen; from Holdenhurst (South Hants hoard),³ nine specimens; Maiden Castle,⁴ six specimens; Jersey,⁵ one or possibly six specimens; and single examples from Badbury Rings⁶ and Broadwindsor⁷ in Dorset, Bapton⁸ and Hanging Langford Camp⁹ in Wiltshire, and Portsmouth,¹⁰ as well as the present specimen in Hampshire. Sir John Evans possessed another unlocated specimen which he believed came from Dorset or Devon.¹¹ A different silver coin (Mack 320) with obverse a star of five curved rays and a reverse design clearly based on the Durotrigic silver quarter-stater, is an even rarer type. Specimens have been recorded from the 1875 Jersey hoard,¹² the Holdenhurst hoard,¹³ and two from Hengistbury Head.¹⁴

Both these types, having occurred in Jersey hoards, must have been in production before 50 B.C. when Caesar finished the war in Gaul. Mlle Monique Mainjonet of the *Cabinet des Médailles* kindly showed me the coin from the Jersey hoard of 1875, which Muret¹⁵ and de la Tour¹⁶ had recognized as

¹ *Arch. Journ.* civ (1948), p. 131 fig. 3d.

² J. P. Bushe-Fox, *Excavations at Hengistbury Head, Hampshire in 1911-12*, 1915, p. 68.

³ *Num. Chron.* 1911, p. 53, pl. iii, 9, 10.

⁴ R. E. M. Wheeler, *Maiden Castle, Dorset*, 1943, p. 331, pl. xxxviii, nos. 6-12.

⁵ *Rev. Belg. de Num.* ciii (1957), pp. 65, 71, pl. vi, 605, 606 and cv, 1959, p. 55, pl. vi, 1619. I am inclined to regard all the five specimens listed in vol. ciii, though silver, as being debased Sussex coins (Mack 43, 44).

⁶ R. P. Mack, *The Coinage of Ancient Britain*, 1953, p. 102.

⁷ J. Evans, *Coins of the Ancient Britons*, supplement 1890, p. 470.

⁸ *Wilt. Arch. Mag.* xliii (1927), p. 140, *V.C.H. Wilt.* i, part I (1957), p. 129. Now in Salisbury Museum.

⁹ *V.C.H. Wilt.* i, part I (1957), p. 108.

¹¹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 470.

¹² *Rev. Belg. de Num.* 3rd ser., ii (1884), pl. v, 7. H. de la Tour *Atlas*, 1892, pl. xxvii, 10407.

¹³ *Num. Chron.* 1911, p. 53, pl. v, 15.

¹⁴ Bushe-Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 67, pl. xxxii, 24.

¹⁵ E. Muret, *Catalogue des Monnaies Gauloises*, 1889, p. 253, 10407.

¹⁶ De la Tour, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

having a *profil barbare* on the reverse. The flan is thicker and larger, and the design better executed and better struck than in the case of the Dorset coins. There is an inscription between 3 and 5 o'clock on the reverse, represented in de la Tour's fig. 10407, which has not as yet been read. More precise dating of the Durotrigic silver issues (Mack 319) is almost impossible to discover. Admittedly they are found in late contexts, but never in sufficient numbers to give reliable statistics. Furthermore, in many cases their condition has been very poor, denoting long circulation, and their variation in weight, size, and degeneration also points to a long period of issue. Presumably this overlaps the issues of their golden Sussex parallels—coins which by their presence in the Carn Brea hoard¹ must be dated to the earliest period of gold currency in the British Isles, as that hoard was rich in 'Bellovacian' staters and quarter-staters. No staters of the Sussex type exist, so that it is tempting to think of them and the Durotrigic coins as separate currencies of which the so-called quarter stater and drachma were the units. Possibly this coastal currency is a two phase affair, gold coins being copied in Sussex and silver coins in Dorset, where with Somerset, Gloucester, and Wiltshire there was always a tendency towards the cheaper metal.

The design and prototypes neither of the Sussex nor the Dorset coinage have ever been satisfactorily explained. The obverse has been interpreted as a boar, a wolf and twins, or a ship under sail, according to the direction of vision. The reverse, of which the dominant feature is a line with a step in it, has, apart from Muret's rather vague description '*profil barbare*', defied interpretation altogether. It is usually illustrated horizontally, but if seen vertically it becomes the essential shape of a seated figure, and this is surely what in fact it is, the figure of Zeus enthroned, on the drachmas of Alexander III (Pl. I, 12), in the case of the silver coins, and the seated figure of Athene or rather her seat, on the gold staters of Lysimachus of Thrace (Pl. I, 6) in the case of some of the Sussex coins, while the rest seem to take the Zeus figure from the silver coins. Copies of both types were made by the Celts of the Lower Danube.² An example of the Lysimachus copy has even been found in the Rhineland³ (Pl. I, 7), while coins often typologically indistinguishable from the Sussex quarter-staters are found in the Boulogne area.⁴ The geographical gaps are therefore small, while the typological links, though they may have to be stretched, seem nevertheless to hold. Various details tended to gain in importance in the eyes of different barbarian die-sinkers, even to the exclusion of the throne, and so we find the circular and square monograms in front of Zeus (Pl. I, 13) duplicated as ornaments on certain late (?) Sussex coins (e.g. Mack 38, Evans M 12 and *B.N.J.* xxviii. 446, fig. 8) though the central ornament is traceable to the Athene figure (cf. Pl. I, 18 with 10) and not to Zeus. On the Dorset silver coins the seated figure is invariably preserved, the throne being indicated by parallel dotted lines. Several Sussex gold coins which owe more to Lysimachus than to Alexander illustrate the figure, often resembling a dagger handle, taking precedence over the throne, which becomes a mere crooked line in the base (Mack 39,

¹ W. Borlase, *Antiquities of Cornwall*, 1769, p. 259, pl. xxiii, 1, 2.

² L. Lengyel, *L'Art Gaulois dans les Médailles*, 1954, pl. xlv, 538 and 540-3.

³ *Ibidem*, pl. xlv, 537.

⁴ De la Tour, *op. cit.* 8538, 8611, 8722, 8729, 8731, and 8732.

with schematized obverse; **Pl. I, 8**), and sometimes it appears to be the winged Victory held by Athene rather than Athene herself, which becomes the central feature, as suggested by Derek Allen¹ (Mack 41 and 42; **Pl. I, 11**). Having postulated a seated figure for the reverse, the obverse, unless obviously schematized, ought to represent the head of Alexander the Great, either as Heracles wearing a lion-scalp, or as horned Zeus, but though this is not such a far cry as might at first appear it may not be the correct interpretation. In the coin illustrated by Mack (319; **Pl. I, 15**) a head facing left is easily recognized, while on the reverse, taking the right-hand side as the top, even the circular and square monograms are visible to the right of the knees of Zeus. In fact, unless quite an early date can be given to the heavier Dorset specimens it is difficult to understand how they often preserve the Alexander type considerably better and more consistently than the Sussex gold series preserves the type of Lysimachus. There are at least eight main varieties of the Sussex coins of this class (e.g. Mack 38, 39, 40, 41 and 44, B.M. 753 and 762 (both unpublished) and *B.N.J.* xxviii, 446, fig. 8; **Pl. I, 8, 10, 11, 16-21**; figs. 20 and 21 show only minor variations).

To return to the obverse and its possible representation of a head; on many of the gold coins and all the silver there is a central oblong feature, smooth on the right and serrated on the left (**Pl. I, 16**). This may represent the upper contours of a face as seen looking to the left. A parallel form of devolution towards a purely geometric figure took place with the silver dirhems of the Hephthalite kings in north-west India. The result (**Pl. I, 24**) was not unlike the figure in the centre of the British coins, but in the Indian series the whole process of degradation can be traced. Certain Sussex gold coins seem to duplicate the serrated oblong figure, so that two saw-like objects, back to back, face outwards (Mack 40; **Pl. I, 17**). It has already been noticed that duplication occasionally took place on the reverse (Mack 38, Evans M 12, &c.; **Pl. I, 18-21**), and whether or not the artist of these obverses knew he was making a janiform head, that seems to be what in fact he achieved. It had already been done by the Danubian Celts to the tetradrachms of Philip II.²

The clues for dating the earlier links in the chain are rather more plentiful but hardly more conclusive. There is a well-known series of semi-barbarous tetradrachms, bearing the name of Philip Aridaeus (323-316 B.C.) with the monograms \otimes \otimes in front of Zeus and I beneath his throne (**Pl. I, 13**). Müller gives³ \otimes \otimes , also combined with I , as a more orthodox version on tetradrachms of Philip III, but neither the coins nor their mint have been traced. Nevertheless it is from this source, as mentioned above (p. 2) that all British silver and some of the later gold coins under discussion are likely to stem.

The barbarous gold staters which copy those of Lysimachus have been dated by Schwabacher⁴ to the first half of the third century B.C. A similar coin in the British Museum is surprisingly dated on the reverse $\epsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon\ \text{IB}$,

¹ *B.N.J.* xxviii (1957), pp. 444-5.

² Cf. R. Forrer, *Keltische Numismatik*, 1908, tafel xxxvi, 328.

³ L. Müller, *Numismatique d'Alexandre le Grand*, Copenhagen, 1855, pl. xxviii, 93.

⁴ W. Schwabacher, *Antik Barbarmyntning Belyst av Svenskt Material from Fornvännan*, 1952, summary, p. 275.

while on the obverse the monogram AP under the head seems to point to the Chersonese mint (PI. I, 22). Another Chersonese gold stater in the British Museum, of Roman inspiration, is dated in the same manner (PI. I, 23), and if the Chersonese era is to be inferred, the twelfth year indicates 24 B.C., a date too late to be easily acceptable.

This conflict of dating evidence is perhaps emphasized in the case of a small gold coin from Armorica, illustrated by Lengyel¹ (PI. I, 26). There can be little doubt that this coin is copied almost at first hand from the silver coins of Pharnabazus in Cilicia (413–374 B.C.; PI. I, 25).² The head of Arethusa, facing, has hardly changed, but on the reverse the helmet of Ares has become a boar with the front leg forming his nose, while his chin and mouth are formed by a dolphin-like animal. His eye is drawn between the boar's legs, and a second sea-monster balances the new pattern. The devolution of the Ares-head may possibly be traced in the reverse of a billon coin in the 1875 Jersey hoard, illustrated by de la Tour³ (PI. I, 27) but here the boar takes precedence over the other features of the design, and if the head of Arethusa is represented by the symmetrical equine design of the obverse it is not a flattering portrait.

The common origin of the British gold and silver coins from Sussex and Dorset has been assumed largely because of the persistent crooked line on the reverse and also because of the enigmatic obverse design, here suggested as being a head, which occurs on so many of both the gold and silver series. Yet the connexion as shown above may well be illusory and an examination of the gold series, particularly those from the French side of the Channel, provides further evidence to the contrary. We find for instance that the upright seated figure of the silver coins, recognized by Muret as such, and here considered to be Zeus enthroned, is never present on the gold coins from across the Channel. Instead we find that the earliest of the gold coins is likely to be Mack 39 (PI. I, 8) which in its reverse compares very closely with Lengyel 537 (PI. I, 7) and also with de la Tour 8731 (PI. I, 9). Mack 39 is of extreme rarity, which may excuse it for having been found in England and not, so far as I am aware, in France. The French-found coins of this early group are illustrated by de la Tour⁴ and are connected with Mack 39 by various arrangements of circles on the obverse and no sign of the figure which later appears on both Sussex and Dorset coins. This fact would agree with an early date for the silver coins (Mack 320; PI. I, 14) with a star-fish design on the obverse. We come then to the conclusion that the design which occurs on all the later silver and many of the later gold coins is an intrusion which, though possibly inspired by a human head, need not be closely related to the true prototypes of these coins.

To summarize, it may be said that the gold Sussex coins are copies of the staters of Lysimachus though 'Zeus' appears on certain issues, while the silver Dorset coins come from the silver coinage of Philip Aridaeus. The silver coins were in circulation before 50 B.C. and the gold considerably earlier. Closer dating is not yet possible. They may represent local currencies of which the 'quarter-stater' and the 'drachma' were units. The date 50 B.C. is

¹ Lengyel, op. cit., pl. xviii, 207.

² De la Tour, op. cit., pl. xxvii, 10390.

³ *Num. Chron.*, 1922, p. 171, no. 57, pl. vii, 12.

⁴ See p. 2, n. 4 *supra*.

also appropriate for the Godshill hoard, since a Durotrigic stater 'of billon or even perhaps copper' dipped in silver and weighing 5.7 gm.¹ was found in the Jersey hoard of January 1957.²

PLATE I

Nos.

- 1-5 The Godshill fibula and hoard.
 6 and 7 Lysimachus stater (B.M.) and copy from the Rhineland (Paris 9603a, Lengyel 537).
 8-11 Sussex and Gallic derivatives: ((8) B.M. 763, Mack 39; (9) Paris 8731; (10) B.M. 762; (11) B.M. 784, Mack 41).
 12 and 13 Alexander III drachma (B.M.) and Philip Aridaeus barbarous tetradrachm (B.M.)
 14-17 Dorset silver derivatives, ((14) Paris 10407; (15) B.M. 1135, Mack 319 and Sussex gold derivatives; (16) B.M. 800, Mack 44; (17) B.M. 803, Mack 40).
 18-21 More Sussex gold derivatives; 'facing figure and monograms'; ((18) B.M. 753; (19) B.M. 754, Mack 38; (20) Canterbury Mus., B.M. electrotype, *B.N.J.* xxviii, 446 fig. 8; (21) B.M. 761, Evans M 12).
 22-24 Tauric Chersonese staters: ((22) B.M.; (23) B.M.); and N.W. Indian coin with 'geometric' head, obv. only: ((24) B.M.).
 25-27 Pharnabazus tetradrachm (B.M. *Num. Chron.* 1922, pl. vii, 12, Weber 7616) with Armorican gold (Paris 6921a, Lengyel 207) and Jersey hoard (Paris 10390) silver derivatives.

The reverses of 20 and 21 and the obverse of 27 are placed to show suggested derivation rather than the supposed interpretation of the die-sinker.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. H. S. W. Edwardes the owner and Mr. J. W. G. Musty the excavator for allowing me to publish the Godshill coins; also to the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale for providing casts for the plate and other assistance.

Mr. Edwardes has now presented the coins and the fibula to the Salisbury and South Wilts Museum.

¹ 88.6 gr.

² *Rev. Belg. de Num.* ciii (1957), p. 65, pl. vi, 604.