

corrected the old order of supposed sequence by transferring the sceptred type to the last of the long-cross series, this dated burial would have suggested that inference. The two short-cross pennies bear out the complaint of the chroniclers, for they show evidence of clipping, and their metal seems to be far from pure. Treating the evidence generally, we have the fact of three coins lying in contact with the soil, unprotected by any vessel, or even the usual compact mass of numerous specimens. The soil was the same, yet its action upon the three pieces seems to have been quite dissimilar. Evidently it was very deleterious to all, for its effect upon the best of them, the long-cross coin, seems to have rendered it brittle; but one of the three is pitted all over and through with tiny holes. This I think is evidence that the coin was originally debased with an excess—a considerable excess—of soft alloy, which has disintegrated. Nor could the other two have been of pure metal.

A Note on the Mint of Rhuddlan.

It seems to me that this little story of Dyserth Castle is a factor in the mystery of the coins of Rhuddlan. In volume II, pages 43 to 46 of this *Journal*, Major P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton, F.S.A., attributed the whole series of the short-cross coinage that bears the mint-name of Rhuddlan to the period between A.D. 1189 and 1214, in the reigns of Richard I and John; and to me the details of the designs always seemed convincing of that conclusion. But in volume XI, pages 87 and 90, Mr. Lawrence includes these coins in his Classes VII and VIII, and assigns them to the period A.D. 1240 to 1247, in the middle of the reign of Henry III. As to Class VIII itself I have grave doubts, and would replace its varied coins where the late Sir John Evans left them.

The Castle of Rhuddlan, in which was the English mint for North Wales—a branch of that of Chester—belonged at the time of Domesday to the Earl of Chester and his cousin, Robert de Rhuddlan. In 1164, as the *Brut-y-Tywysogion* tells us, Henry II spent three nights here, and declared his intention of building a castle, meaning, I assume, the usual stone keep in addition to or upon the Norman

mount, which is still to be seen. This seems to have aroused the Welsh who, after a siege of three months under Owain and Cadwalader, broke in and burnt the castle in 1166. But from the Pipe Rolls of 1167 we find that the Earl of Chester was again in possession and strengthening it; and so it remained until the dawn of the next century.

In 1211, the castles of Deganwy and Rhuddlan alone stood out in North Wales against the Welsh until King John "with a vast army" came in person to their relief; but in 1213, "Llywelyn, son of Iorwerth, reduced¹ the castle of Deganwy and the castle of Rhuddlan."

No doubt the Barons' Wars in England diverted attention from Rhuddlan for a time, and it would seem that the castle remained in the possession of the Welsh until the year 1277, when Edward I invaded North Wales, made Rhuddlan his headquarters, received the submission of Llywelyn, son of Owain, there, and commenced the building of the great castle, which still remains, a work which occupied several years. Deganwy was recovered and refortified, A.D. 1241-45.

Meanwhile, therefore, from A.D. 1213 to 1277, we must assume that Rhuddlan Castle was in Welsh possession, and unless we are prepared to admit that the coins, which bear the title **HENRICVS REX**, were Welsh, and issued by David, the son of Llywelyn son of Iorweth, Mr. Lawrence's date, 1240 to 1247, for them must fail.

I had thought² it possible that David surrendered Rhuddlan when he paid his homage to Henry III at Gloucester, as claimant to the succession of North Wales on the death of his father, Llywelyn, in 1240, but I find that it is not mentioned in the charter of treaty between them, and now the story of Dyserth alone will show that Rhuddlan Castle must have remained Welsh throughout the whole of the period, after 1213, during which the short-cross coinage ran.

Rhuddlan was formerly a seaport, and so long as it was open to access to the sea it was a formidable stronghold, for its relief from Chester was assured; but as an inland fortress it was far from impregnable for an English garrison, and no attempt seems to have

¹ *darestygawd* is the word used.

² *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xi, p. 88.

been made to recover it from the Welsh. But, instead, when Henry III, in 1241, at the very beginning of Mr. Lawrence's suggested date for the coins, retired from Wales after his very questionable successes, he built the "strong castle" of Dyserth and garrisoned it upon the rock two and a half miles only away and five hundred feet high, which commands Rhuddlan, and so hoped to keep the Welsh in check. If, therefore, Rhuddlan had been still the English outpost, there could have been no strategic use for Dyserth. On the other hand, if Rhuddlan Castle was then a stronghold of the Welsh, or even a ruin in their possession, Dyserth Castle on its English side was just that *malvoisin* of the Normans, or the watch-dog so dear to English strategy ever since Edward the Elder had devised the method of checking the Danes by building a burgh of his own over against theirs. Certainly Dyserth, so long as it lasted, played the part of its predecessor Rhuddlan, for whilst Rhuddlan is never mentioned, we read that in 1256 and 1257, Llywelyn, son of Gruffudd, carried everything before him save the two sorely beleaguered castles of Deganwy and Dyserth, and only by a temporary truce was the latter allowed to be reprovisioned. Early in 1263, Dyserth was again in dire distress, and had to be relieved, and in August of that year it was captured by Llywelyn, as I have already explained, and our own chronicler, Mathew of Westminster, adds that he levelled it with the ground.

It may be a little thing to judge a soldier's pay, even in the year 1263, by three coins in his pocket, but if the mint of Rhuddlan was then, or had been, in operation so recently as from 1240 to 1247, one would not expect to find them represented by a penny from Canterbury of about 1205, and two from London of about 1240 and 1250 respectively. On the other hand, if the Rhuddlan mint had ceased for ever in 1213, no money from it could be expected at Dyserth in 1263, and it seems to me that the latest coins of the short-cross series preserved to us of the Rhuddlan mint exactly tally with the type in issue when King John with his "vast army" made the Castle his headquarters in 1211.