

## MISCELLANEA

### A COIN OF THE DOBUNI

I AM grateful to Mr. John Gardner, F.S.A., for permission to publish a debased silver coin of the Dobuni, found while excavating a Romano-British site at Brockham End, O.S. 6-inch, Somerset VII, *NE.* and *SE.*, 2.2 inches from the top edge and 6 inches from the right edge, marked *Roman villa, site of.* Digging took place in 1939 and from 1946 to 1948. The coin was unstratified. Pottery dated from the Flavian period to the fourth century, but two small sherds of Early Iron Age "A" were also found.

The coin is of small module, 12 mm. maximum diameter, weight 9.75 grains. It appears to be uninscribed, and to contain very little, if any, silver. *Obverse:* Remains of a head showing the eye, nose, and mouth to the right, and before the face a crescent and other ornamental marks. *Reverse:* A horse galloping right in natural style, above it a retrograde s flanked by two inverted crescents, and behind the horse another s, not retrograde but more elongated. A fairly close parallel is Evans, Pl. N. 6 for the reverse, and for the obverse Evans, Pl. F. 9. Neither parallel is exact. The s ornament, which should not be taken as an inscription, may be seen in an earlier example of the Dobunic silver coinage, Evans, Pl. F. 5. The naturalistic style of the horse probably derives from Belgic influence, and the coin may perhaps be dated to the first half of the first century A.D. It is considerably worn, and while it may be a stray loss, would not be out of place on an early Roman site.

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### A NEW TYPE FOR ALFRED



A NEW type for the coinage of Alfred is something of a numismatic event—one, I believe, that has not occurred since the discovery of the great Cuerdale hoard in 1840. In this instance the new coin is also significant because it offers evidence for the relationship—one must not arbitrarily assume sequence, for the types do not always appear to have been issued consecutively—of Alfred's types.

The coin, a penny, was found in the course of the excavation of an Anglo-Saxon site at Southampton in 1949 and has been acquired by the British Museum. I owe it to the courtesy of Mr. Carson that it was brought to my notice. It is unfortunately so corroded that a cast of it cannot safely be taken and the moneyer's name, even, is

doubtful. But the type of both obverse and reverse is clear. Commander Mack has kindly done a drawing of the coin.

The obverse shows the King's head diademed, facing right, the bust reaching to the edge of the coin. The inscription so far as it is visible reads —L FERD REX,  $\nabla$  beginning to the left of the head.

The reverse shows a cross reaching to the edge of the coin and voided in the centre with a large lozenge containing a cross saltire. In the quarters are traces of the letters of the moneyer's name, made the more difficult to read by the fact that the coin is chipped as well as corroded. The word MON|ET $\nabla$  is clear; the only letters of the moneyer's name that one can read with a fair degree of certainty are the initial E and an E beginning the second half of the name. The second letter might be D or  $\mathfrak{D}$ , the third I or L; the fifth is undecipherable, and the sixth (and last) appears to be  $\square$  but might be E.

The weight, in view of the condition of the coin, has little significance.

To deal first with the obverse, it will be seen that the type is that of Alfred's first issue according to the *British Museum Catalogue* and Brooke's classification. This is the type that was also struck by Alfred's predecessor Æthilred I, by Burgred of Mercia, and by Archbishop Ceolnoth of Canterbury, and which was significantly absent from the Cuerdale hoard. It is often found of apparently base silver, as are the Burgred coins, and may on that account have gained an ill reputation that resulted in its withdrawal when the quality of the current issue had improved. The reading (E)lferth is unusual, indeed I do not remember to have seen it elsewhere, but ELFERED occurs occasionally.<sup>1</sup> The Saxon title, for such one must assume the word beginning with  $\nabla$  to be, is not normally found on coins of Alfred's first type, but occurs on *B.M.C.* type 5 (Brooke 5).

The reverse is of this rare type, *B.M.C.* 5, and it remains only to attempt to identify the moneyer. The range is restricted by our having the initial letter reasonably certainly established. Of the moneyers beginning with E who struck both types (1 and 5) we have Eadwulf and Ethelred. The first can clearly be ruled out and the second does not well fit the letters that can be seen. But a moneyer Ethelere occurred on two coins in the Beeston Tor hoard of type 1, and it seems likely that this is the man we have to do with here. If the second letter is, as is possible, a  $\mathfrak{D}$  and the third an L, we may complete the name E $\mathfrak{D}$ LERE. This cannot be regarded as certain, but appears the most likely interpretation on the slender evidence available.

In later series, one would call this coin a "mule" and use it as evidence in building up a sequence of types. Generally in the early Anglo-Saxon series this would be a false premiss as it is quite clear that a variety of types was often issued concurrently. The seventeen (or more) types issued in the short reign of Ceolwulf I (821-3) prove this. By the time of Alfred's accession, however, the types had become stabilized—his predecessor in his five years' reign issued but one type—and although later in Alfred's reign there appears to have

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *B.M.C.* ii, p. 57, no. 172.

been a reversion to some extent to the older practice, it may well be that *B.M.C.* type 1 was, for a short time, his only type and that later it was superseded by type 5 and a variety of other types, many represented today by single specimens, as is the case with Brooke types 2, 3, and 4.

In this instance, therefore, the word "mule" would seem justified.

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#### THE MEDALLIC JETTON OF PERKIN WARBECK



THE purpose of this note is to place on record one or two further facts regarding the rare silver pieces sometimes, though it would seem erroneously, called groats, a detailed description of which is given in *Medallic Illustrations of the History of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. i, p. 21. In considering whether they should rather be called jettons or medals, it is worth noting that Barnard<sup>1</sup> points out that it was in the Burgundian Low Countries, whence it is generally accepted that these pieces emanate, that the historical jetton originated. He cites two struck in the 1430's and draws attention to the vogue they enjoyed there in the sixteenth century. We may perhaps best employ his own phrase of medallic jettons for these Warbeck pieces.

The pieces are anonymous, but have generally been accepted as being associated with Perkin Warbeck on account of the date they bear, 1494, and of the fact that they carry the royal arms of England and, as legend on one side, a version of the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast, a seeming threat to Henry VII, and on the other the Latin equivalent of 'O Lord, save the King', which may be assumed to refer to the pretender.

The association of these pieces with Warbeck is considerably strengthened by a description that James Gairdner gives in his *Richard III*<sup>2</sup> (p. 290) of a seal of Warbeck's. This, it will be seen, bears a general resemblance to the obverse of the jettons; it shows, says Gairdner, a shield quartered, bearing in the first and fourth quarters the lilies of France, and in the second and third three leopards, the whole covered with a crown closed-in. Within the

<sup>1</sup> Barnard, *The Casting Counter*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Published by the Cambridge University Press.