A CELTIC MISCELLANY

By D. F. ALLEN

This is not so much an article as a series of notes on Celtic coins, but some of them hang together. The common theme of most is the Coritani, about whose coins information grows apace, but the silver minim forms a subplot.

A. A new prototype stater

In my Sylloge volume on the Coritani I recorded as no. 226A on p. 39 a variant of the prototype stater with horse to left which had a wheel instead of a rosette below the horse. The coin was then with Messrs. Spink and Sons and was, I thought, unique. But Mr. H. R. Mossop has obtained another from the same dies as the first, weight 87 grains (5.64 grams) which he has kindly allowed me to publish. Again unfortunately it lacks a find spot, but it could be that both were found together. (Pl. XVI, 1).

B. A new South Ferriby type rarity

Among the rarer of the South Ferriby types were staters which have a lozenge-shaped panel above the horse's back, containing pellets (Sylloge no. 245-8). Others have instead a square panel (Sylloge no. 35, 242-4). Another specimen of Sylloge no. 245 (a South Ferriby hoard coin) and probably from the same dies was found during 1964 in Ministry of Works excavations at Old Winteringham, Lincolnshire, only a few miles away and at the terminus of Ermine Street on the Humber. The coin weighs 67.7 grains (4.39 grams) and has a specific gravity of 8.6, which means that the gold content is minimal; nevertheless it does not seem to be the core of a plated forgery. It shows the left hand side of the reverse, invisible on the previous specimen. (Pl. XVI, 2).

C. A reading confirmed

On p. 28 of the Sylloge volume, I speculated about the full legend on the coin in the Yorkshire Museum illustrated as no. 379, but better known from the block on Plate XVII, 4 of Sir J. Evans' Coins of the Ancient Britons. I finally agreed with Evans that the most likely reading was ΠΙΣΙΨ ΑΣΒ (i.e. Esup . . . Asu . . .). The coin weighs 83 grains (5.38 grams) (Pl. XVI, 3).

Although for more than 100 years the York specimen has remained unique, barring plated forgeries, recently no less than two more specimens have come to light. All three are from different dies. The first specimen, for which there is no find spot, was acquired in 1963 by the City Museum, Leeds. It weighs 80.6 grains (5.22 grams). It shows the ΑΣΒ below the horse clearly (Pl. XVI, 4). The second specimen was found in 1963 at Cowden Beach, Yorkshire, and has been acquired by Mr. H. R. Mossop. It weighs 82 grains (5.31 grams). It has the distinction that for the first time it demonstrates beyond doubt that the upper legend read what it has been supposed to read. It also shows the very curious form of the horse's head. (Pl. XVI, 5). I publish these two coins by the kindness of Miss E. Pirie, Curator of

2 Sir J. Evans, Coins of the Ancient Britons, 1864.
Coins at the City Museum, Leeds, and of Mr. Mossop. Since this was drafted, a coin found at Scunthorpe, described in Section F, has carried the story a stage further.

D. A strange variant of an inscribed Stater

Coritanian coins, as is well known, sometimes travelled. One, or rather the bronze core of a forgery of one, has now turned up during 1965 in the Roman camp of Claudian date at Waddon Hill, near Beaminster, Dorset, which is being excavated by Mr. Graham Webster. The coin is a variant of the normal Vep-Corf stater. On the obverse instead of the normal central bar to the design there is a diamond box with a pellet in the centre. On the reverse the horse is decomposed to a degree unusual even for Coritanian coins and faces right. For the head compare the previous coin. The legend above the horse is clear VELIG.P; one could not say if the I, which is incomplete, should be read as a p. Below the horse one can imagine that the top bar of f is present, but this is uncertain. The weight is 57.8 grains (3.75 grams). (Pl. XVI, 6).

E. Coins found at Thistleton, Rutland

11 silver coins were found by Mr. E. Greenfield in the Ministry of Works excavations at Thistleton, Rutland, in 1963, (Pl. XVI, 7-17). These are all half-denomination silver coins of the Coritani of an average weight of 5.46 grains (or 0.35 grams). None are from dies previously recorded. They confirm the impression that this minute coinage was more extensive than might be deduced from the small number of coins hitherto recorded. The smallness of the denomination, compared with the size of the coins elsewhere, seems to imply that the Coritani were relatively poor and that silver was in short supply; but silver coins of very small size were probably not as rare in Celtic Britain as is generally supposed.

The general period of the coins is probably confirmed by another coin from the same excavations, a well-preserved bronze of Cunobelinus of the type of Mack 260, with a winged sphinx on one side and a priestly figure carrying a severed head on the other, (Pl. XVI, 19). The second quarter of the first century A.D. would probably cover the whole group.

The Coritanian silver coins vary in detail but conform to a general type. Nine of them have blank obverses and on the reverse a formalised horse to left or right, accompanied by a rosette or sun ornament (Pl. XVI, 7-15). One of those with the ornament in the form of a diamond box with a central pellet is new (Pl. XVI, 15, cf. 14). Two have traces of a wreath pattern on the obverse and a legend or probable legend on the reverse (Pl. XVI, 10-11). The first two or three of the coins listed show some sign of wear; the remainder seem completely fresh. The last is unfortunately chipped. A few show traces of bronze corrosion, due to the poor composition of the silver alloy.

It is clear that this class of coin corresponds broadly with the gold stater of 'South Ferriby' type. An example of the core of a plated forgery of one of them was also found at Thistleton in the excavation. (Pl. XVI, 18).

Of the two inscribed coins, one reads very clearly VELIG.P CO (Pl. XVI, 16), thus confirming finally the reading surmised from Mack1 464 and hitherto supported only by a poor specimen from Ancaster which I believed to have this reading. It thus certainly corresponds with the gold stater reading VEP CORF. The second inscribed coin has what looks like an inverted B below the horse, but in fact it is probably a reversed R. If it were the letter B,

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it would be part of a legend not otherwise known either on silver or gold coins, but a re-
versed R is part of the legend COR or CORF retrograde, and this is with little doubt the correct
reading. (Pl. XVI, 17).

To complete the picture of Thistleton coins mention should also be made of two silver
Coritanian coins previously found here, one half-denomination coin, in fragments (Pl. XVI,
20), but generally similar to Pl. XVI, 11, which was found on the surface during the 1960
excavations at the site, and an inscribed whole denomination coin with the legend AVN AST
found casually in 1958 (Pl. XVI, 21). Both are published in the Sylloge volume as nos. 372b
and 376 respectively.

The Thistleton coins, of which the summarised details are given for convenience below,
thus represent a cross-section of the middle period of Coritanian coins. There are none of
the prototypes; there are, for instance, no silver coins where there is a boar or traces of a boar
on the obverse. Similarly there are no coins with the long double legends which come right
at the end of the series, possibly after the Roman conquest in the south of Britain.

COINS FROM THISTLETON, RUTLAND

(A) FOUND IN 1963 EXCAVATIONS

I. Coritanian Silver Half-denomination. Uninscribed, all obverses blank. (Pl. xvi, 7-15).
   1. JR 6-14 grains (0.398 grams) Horse right.
   2. JR 5-04 grains (0.326 grams) Horse right. Small chip.
   3. JR 5-07 grains (0.328 grams) Horse left. Corroded.
   4. JR 5.09 grains (0.329 grams) Horse left; cf. Sylloge Nos. 348-50, from Peterborough.
   5. JR 7-08 grains (0.459 grams) Horse left, added pellets below; cf. Sylloge Nos. 348-50, from
      Peterborough.
   6. JR 4-52 grains (0.293 grams) Horse left, added pellets below; cf. Sylloge Nos. 348-50, from
      Peterborough.
   7. JR 5-12 grains (0.332 grams) Horse left, added pellets behind; cf. Sylloge No. 372, from South
      Ferriby.
   8. JR 6-16 grains (0.399 grams) Horse left, rosette of hexagonal box. New variant.
   9. JR 4-54 grains (0.294 grams) Horse left, rosette of quadrilateral box. New variant.

II. Coritanian Silver Half-denomination—Inscribed, traces of wreath pattern on obverse. (Pl. xvi, 16-17).
  10. JR 6.26 grains (0.406 grams) Horse right; ve(lig.)p above, co below; cf. Sylloge Nos. 396, 396a.
  11. JR 2-31 grains (0.150 grams) Horse right; B or R (retrog.) below. Chipped. New type.

III. Coritanian Gold Stater—Uninscribed. Core of plated forgery. (Pl. xvi, 18).
  12. JE 45.7 grains (2.96 grams) after cleaning. Apollo pattern, bottom half; horse left, rosette in front;
      cf. Sylloge No. 53.

IV. Cunobelin Bronze of Camulodunum. (Pl. xvi, 19).
  13. ^E 28-9 grains (1.870 grams) Type of Mack 260. Sphinx right; priestly figure with severed
      head left.

(B) FOUND PREVIOUSLY. (Pl. xvi, 20-21).
  15. JR 14.9 grains (0.956 grams.) Coritanian Silver Whole-denomination. Horse left. AVN AST Sylloge
      No. 376.

F. Coins found at Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire

Dragonby coin field at Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, has previously yielded silver coins.
Rescue excavations are being conducted there by Mr. J. May, who in 1964 has added two
more to the number and in 1965 another.
The first of them is a silver prototype coin of full denomination (Pl. XVI, 22). It is generally similar to Sylloge no. 231, but has a mark below the obverse boar which recalls Sylloge no. 227. The weight is 17-6 grains (1-14 grams).

The second coin (Pl. XVI, 23) is yet another specimen of the small Vep. Corf. silver piece, unexpected before the Ancaster example came to light in 1961, and now known from four specimens found at three sites in Lincolnshire and Rutland. The legend above the horse is the usual ve(lig.) p, but below the horse is unquestionably to be read as COR retrograde. It is this Scunthorpe coin which makes the reading of the Thistleton coin (Pl. XVI, 17) virtually certain. The weight is 6-25 grains (0-41 grams).

The third coin is the most remarkable and fills another gap in the Coritanian series. It was found too late for inclusion in the Plate, but is illustrated [below]. It is another small silver coin, weighing 17-7 grains (1-15 grams), generally similar on both sides to the Vep. Corf. silver coins. The legend above the horse is, however, unquestionably isvp and it is probable that there is a part of an a between the strangely exaggerated forelegs and the hindlegs of the horse. It is plain that we have here for the first time the silver coin corresponding with the gold staters which read isvp aṣv; only one i is used on the silver, whereas two are used on the gold, but there are many examples on Celtic coins of the interchange of i with ꞌ or ꞌ. The juxtaposition in this name of v and p raises a doubt whether the reading ve(lig.) p is correct on all the coins I have described as Vep. Corf. silver pieces; on the very poor specimen from Ancaster, for instance, the right reading might have been the end of isvp. What is now certain is that both legends exist. The obverse shows more clearly than any other yet found the pattern common to the silver coins reading isup a, Vep. Corf. and Aun. Ast.

G. A Silver Minim of Tincommius

A silver minim of Tincommius, that is to say the quarter of the normal silver denomination, has been found during 1965 in excavations at Ouslebury, near Winchester, in a first century context. The excavations are being conducted by Mr. John Collis of Pembroke College, Cambridge, by whose kindness, as well as that of the farmer, Mr. Hellard, I am able to publish the coin (Pl. XVI, 24).

On the obverse there are two interlaced squares, the sides of which are slightly curved. In the central compartment there is the legend C.F. The design is contained within a beaded circle.

On the reverse there is a dog(? ) prancing to the right. The legend, divided above and below the dog, reads TC above and, inverted, NC below.

The coin is in good condition and weighs 5-8 grains (0-375 grams). There are traces of green corrosion on both sides, which indicate that the silver contains an admixture of copper.

Presented in this way the coin would appear to be a new one, but on investigation this proves not to be so. There is a well known hoard from Lancing Down, Sussex, 1838, which
consisted mainly of silver coins of Verica, though these were probably accompanied by a forgery of a gold coin of Verica, some uninscribed silver coins and two Gaulish bronze coins, one of them a Germanus Indutilli L. Evans illustrates four small silver coins of minim size and also what is perhaps a fifth, and implies that there were originally five others. These have disappeared and the only minims from the Lancing Down hoard which now survive are the four specimens illustrated by Evans on p. 185 and by Mack as nos. 117–120. These four minims have generally been attributed to, or associated with the name of, Verica; thus in Origins¹ I included them on p. 211. In fact, however, it has always been known that two of them, Mack 119 and 120, were uninscribed. Mack 117 (illustrated upside down) undoubtedly has an obverse legend Vīrī, and Mack 118 has always hitherto been read as having a reverse legend Vīrī too. But on re-examination the coin clearly has the same types as the new Ouslebury piece.

On looking back over old notes I see that nearly 30 years ago I had had my doubts over the reading of Mack 118 and had decided that there was probably a letter in the centre of the obverse. I now have no doubt that Mack 118 and the new coin, though from different dies, are of the same type. The obverse of Mack 118, (also reproduced upside down), has visible traces of CF, while the reverse appears only to have the legend TIN. The illustration in Mack may seem to show a convincing IN below the animal, but the first letter is illusory because it is really the animal’s hind leg. We have, therefore, two specimens of a hitherto unsuspected minim of Tincommius, and, if Evans is correct, there was another one originally in the Lancing hoard, making three in all. The dog on these coins may be compared with the animal, probably also a dog, on the reverse of the Tincommius quarter stater, Mack 99.

The silver minim of 4½–5 grains (0·29–0·32 grams), I suspect, played a larger part in the currency of Britain than is generally supposed. This is because the coins are so small that they are rarely found. (Minims of only slightly larger size are regularly found in parts of Gaul.) Amongst the Atrebates in Sussex minims normally took the place of bronze coinage as the smallest unit of currency. We at present know of at least 16 minims of ten types from seven sites on or near the south coast as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Minim Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Uninscribed</td>
<td>Mack 90–91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mack 119</td>
<td>Obv. Square with curved sides. Rev. Horse left; circles, etc. One only known, from Lancing Down Hoard, in B.M. 4·3 grains (0·31 grams).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mack 120</td>
<td>Obv. Cross of swords, severed heads in the angles? Rev. Unidentified design, based on bucranium? One in B.M., from Lancing Down hoard, which contained, according to Evans, 3 others. One found in Winchester Cathedral excavations.² 3·8 grains (frag.) and 2·61 grains (frag.); (0·25 and 0·17 grams).</td>
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Tincommius  Mack 118  Obv. Two interlaced squares; cf.
Rev. Dog right; τί/νε or τί/ν.
One from Ouslebury; one in B.M. from Lancing Down hoard, which,
according to Evans, contained another.
5-8 and 5-2 grains (0-375 and 0-34 grams).

Verica  Mack 117  Obv. viri between parallels; rosettes.
Rev. Unidentified design; animal head?
One in B.M. from Lancing Down hoard, which, contained, according
to Evans, another.
4-8 grams (0-31 grains).

Evans p. 184  Obv. Head right.
Rev. Horse right; vir.f co.
The coin, reproduced by Evans, is lost. It was presumably a minim.
It was in the Lancing Down hoard. No record of weight.

Head of Tiberius right; v[e(lig.)]n.t.
Found at East Challow, Berks, bef. 1900. In Ashmolean Museum.
3-5 grains (0-23 grams).

A?...  Mack 316  Obv. Two interlaced squares. A.
Rev. Bird right in tree.
Specimen destroyed, but preserved in an electrotype in B.M.;
found at East Harting, Sussex, 1938, between Harting Down and
Beacon Hill Camp.
3-8 grains (0-25 grams).

Crab  Mack 372  Obv. Hexagonal pattern; trefoils in angles.
Rev. CRAB in panel; o and e above and below.
Found at Hod Hill, Dorset.
4-5 grains (0-29 grams).

Epaticcu  Mack 264  Obv. EFATI between 2 circles-and-dots.
Rev. Lion’s head.
Surviving only in an electrotype in the British Museum. Find spot
and present whereabouts unknown. Weight not recorded.

Mack 316, surely wrongly placed by Mack under Kent, makes an interesting comparison
with the new coin. The obverse pattern is almost identical, but the legend A, which has been
taken to stand for Aminius, is not open to doubt. I have tried to read it the other way up
as a v for Verica, but the crossbar seems unmistakable. It may be recalled that there are
quarter-staters of Tincommius, Mack 97, which have on the obverse a legend TINC C A or TINC
C B. CA or CB are not yet understood; there may be a connection here. Otherwise we have
no explanation for the A; the use of A for Atrebates would be without parallel in this country.
The coin must, however, belong to the same general series as those of Tincommius and
Verica, the sons of Commius. The remaining son of Commius, Eppillus, did not, so far as we
know, strike minims; the place of the silver minims in Kent is generally taken by bronze
coins, but a fine uninscribed bronze minim, akin to coins of Eppillus, Mack 316f., is known
from three examples.

More silver minims will certainly turn up in excavations, especially if the excavators
are alive to their existence.\(^1\) The half-denomination of silver is well known amongst the

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\(^1\) This was written before I learned that the 1966 season of excavations at Ouslebury had produced
another silver minim, this time of Verica and of an unpublished type. This new coin will deserve a note
next year.
Coritani (as we have seen earlier in these notes), the Iceni (2 Antedi, 3 Ecen and 5 uninscribed are known) and very occasionally the Dobunni (3 or 4 only are known). It is, in fact, only in the centre of Britain, in the region of Tasciovanus and Cunobelinus, that the silver minim is, up to now, totally lacking.

H. A Dobunnic reading confirmed

A Dobunnic stater has hitherto been known only from the example in the British Museum found at Hod Hill. It is the bronze core of a forgery, and the legend on it is little more than a zigzag. Evans, *Coins of the Ancient Britons*, p. 149, read it as INARA, giving alternatives. I have read it, *Origins*, p. 254, as INAM. But there has always been doubt whether this was a true legend at all.

Mr. H. R. Mossop has now acquired a specimen, originally bought from a shop in Swindon, which is of gold and clearly shows that the legend INA is correct (Pl. XVI, 25). The remaining letter or letters are interfered with by a crack. The coin is of good reddish gold on the surface; though it weighs 58 grains (3.76 grams), it has a specific gravity of 9.3, which might imply a copper core. But one may compare the gold coin in Pl. XVI, 2 which has an even lower specific gravity. In any case the dies are absolutely normal for a Dobunnic inscribed stater of the middle period. We should now add INAM positively to the list of inscriptions.