A NINTH-CENTURY hoard of the first importance was dug up in 1834 on a farm at Sevington, North Wiltshire. Besides 70 coins there were a number of silver objects including a spoon and fork, and other objects in bronze, some gilt. In a paper read to the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1837 Edward Hawkins gave what, by current standards, can only be described as a tantalizingly slight account of the coins (though fortunately he illustrated ten of the most important) and some account of the associated objects, of which he illustrated nine, though he did not give a complete list of them.¹

The greater part (perhaps even the whole) of the hoard passed into the hands of Mr. C. W. Loscombe² of Pickwick House, Corsham. Thirteen of the associated objects (which was certainly not the total though probably the more important items) were acquired by the British Museum at the sale of Lord Londesborough’s collections and are fully described and illustrated in D. M. Wilson’s Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork 700–1100 in the British Museum.³

The account of the coins has been less complete, though J. Rashleigh recorded, by reigns, 3⁷ and M. Dolley and K. Skaare broke down those of Æthelwulf into types and raised Rashleigh’s total of 14 for that reign to 22. They also discussed in some detail the significance of the find for the dating of Æthelwulf’s various issues and reached the conclusion that the hoard was lost c. 850.⁵ It was no part of their object to list the coins and it is felt that this could now usefully be done, to the extent that the surviving evidence permits.

Hawkins’s original account gives a total figure of seventy of which he says ‘many were much defaced and some taken up in fragments’. Thirty, however, were in good preservation and the ten he illustrates can virtually all be identified today. There were coins, he says, of the following: Archbishops of Canterbury Wulfred and Ceolnoth; kings of Mercia Coenwulf, Ceolwulf, and Berhtwulf; kings of Wessex Egbert and Æthelwulf; king of East Anglia Athelstan. With the exception of those he illustrates the greater part were, he says, of types well known.

Loscombe’s coin collection was dispersed in 1855⁶ and the sale catalogue of it shows that it included a general series of Anglo-Saxon coins, with emphasis on the ninth-century group that was typical of Sevington. The number of coins of the kings and archbishops given by Rashleigh in his summary agrees exactly with those in Loscombe’s sale and this might be thought to confirm that all came from Sevington. But Rashleigh does not say how he made up his summary and there is evidence to show that the accuracy of his attempt to reconstruct the Trewhiddle hoard, though undoubtedly honest, is open to serious question.⁷ In the case of the Sevington hoard there is reason

¹ Archaeologia, xxvii (1838), pp. 301–5 and pls. xxiii–xxiv.
² That he pronounced his name Luscombe is suggested by the fact that Hawkins uses this spelling in his Silver Coins of England.
⁴ NC 1868, p. 150.
⁵ Anglo-Saxon Coins, ed. R. H. M. Dolley, 1961, pp. 64 and 68–70.
⁶ Sotheby, 30 Mar. and 12 Apr. 1855 (nine days in all).
to think that he may have made his reconstruction purely from the sale catalogue, in which case its value as corroborative evidence clearly vanishes. The main ground for this belief is that one of the coins of Archbishop Ceolnoth in Loscombe's sale (lot 1057) was of the type that shows the moneyer's name on the arms of a cross (Brooke 5, North 245). This type, which is plentiful for Æthelwulf and demonstrably came towards the end of his reign, is not represented among his coins in the Sevington hoard and its very absence has been one of the factors in dating the deposit.\(^1\) If in fact there had been an archiepiscopal coin of this type in the hoard, one would have expected at least one specimen of the far more plentiful regal issue and, since it would, on Dolley's and Skaare's dating,\(^2\) move the date of deposit to c. 855 at the earliest, one might also have looked for a coin of Athelstan's successor on the East Anglian throne, Æthelweard, whose reign numismatic evidence suggests began c. 850.

Until, therefore, it is possible to produce reliable evidence, such as a contemporary list of the coins found,\(^3\) it seems wiser to regard this coin of Ceolnoth's as one that Loscombe acquired from some other source. It has accordingly been omitted from the list that follows.

Nevertheless, with the reservation that Loscombe may have had a coin or two in the series independent of what he acquired from Sevington, it is reasonable to assume that the bulk of the relevant coins in the sale came from this source. There is nothing else that makes such an assumption inherently unlikely and indeed in the case of two coins of Athelstan there is independent evidence, dating from 1845, that they did so. Haigh illustrates them and says specifically that they are from Sevington.\(^4\) The reconstruction set out below is made on the basis of Rashleigh's summary, with the one exception mentioned, being correct. It also includes 13 further coins which, as Dolley and Skaare have pointed out, may confidently be regarded as from Sevington. These were in lot 1103 of the Loscombe sale where they are described as follows 'A parcel of fragments of the coins of Æthelwulf, with various Brass and Silver Ornaments, all found together.' The place of finding is not mentioned, but there can hardly be doubt, in this context, that it was Sevington. The lot was purchased at the sale by the British Museum, but it is possible that the ornaments are not now identified as being from that hoard. All the objects described by Wilson as from Sevington\(^5\) were bought at the Londesborough sale and there is no item in his volume that stems from the Loscombe sale.

The coin element of the hoard, as reconstructed here, may be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kings of Mercia</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coenwulf (796–821)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceolwulf I (821–3)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berhtwulf (840–52)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archbishops of Canterbury</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wulfred (805–32)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceolnoth (833–70)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King of East Anglia</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athelstan I (c. 827–c. 850)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Anglo-Saxon Coins, pp. 69–70.  
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 73.  
\(^3\) Mrs. Martin tells me that she has no knowledge of any manuscript list by Hawkins and I have failed to trace any of Loscombe's numismatic papers.  
\(^4\) D. H. Haigh, Numismatic History of the Ancient Kingdom of the East Angles, 1845, pl. ii, 4 and 5 and pp. 7–8.  
A number of the coins in the hoard are of considerable interest. Of Berhtwulf No. 7, by the moneyer Eanred, is the only one of this type by this moneyer that is known; No. 14 is a slight variant, hitherto recorded seemingly on the authority of another fragment, this time from the ‘Hampshire’ hoard.¹ No. 26 of Egbert is unique as to type.² But the main interest lies in the coins of Æthelwulf, 11 of whose 23 types, according to the BMC classification, occurred in this hoard. In this respect it is only outdone by the great Dorking hoard which contained no less than 265 coins of this king.³ No. 33, the coin by Eanwald with the SAXO monogram, remains unique as to type and may well be the only surviving coin of this reign to have been struck at a Wessex mint. Of BMC type vii there was only one example in the Dorking hoard and only two appear to be known today. It is possible therefore that No. 36 is this second specimen which was lot 460 in the Lockett sale. The general similarity of the types of BMC xiii and xiv makes a distinction between them not easy when no illustration is available. Surviving specimens are, however, sufficiently rare to make it reasonable to believe that No. 42 is likely to be xiii of which two or three specimens by Osmund (without hoard provenance) are known, as against a single one (other than No. 44) of xiv, which is specifically recorded as being from the Dorking hoard. Equally, in the case of No. 43 by Herebeald, xiv is more likely; the only recorded specimen of xiii by this moneyer is from the Dorking hoard, whereas there is at least one other known of type xiv (Montagu 481) and it is without hoard provenance. The single specimen of type xv (No. 45) is intriguing. The moneyer Welheard is not otherwise recorded for this type though he is known of type xxiii which has a similar reverse. Dymock bought the coin in the Loscombe sale, but it does not appear in the catalogue of his own sale three years later and it cannot now be traced. On the other hand he records in his manuscript work on Anglo-Saxon coins⁴ a moneyer WELH for this type which he reasonably equates with Welheard. Quite recently I acquired a large fragment of this same type on which the end part of the moneyer’s name HEARD appears. I too had equated this with Welheard. The break looks an old one and the two fragments cannot be part of the same coin: mine shows the entire reverse type, without some part of which Dymock could not have identified it as type xv. At the same time it may well not be the Sevington coin as there is no mention of this being broken.

Type xvi of Æthelwulf was not represented in the British Museum collection when the catalogue was made, but the specimen illustrated BMC p. 12 has since been acquired by

¹ Lindsay, Heptarchy, pl. 2, 45. This is a curious ‘hoard’. Contemporary correspondence suggests that its component parts came to hand in the Southampton area in three or more groups in 1836 and 1837. It may not be that all the coins derived from the same find and it is just conceivable that the parcel of twelve coins of ‘Berhtulf, Cialnoth, Egbert, and Ethelwulf’ mentioned by Richard Sainthill in a letter printed GM 1838, vol. 2, pp. 374–5, and subsequently treated as being from the Hampshire find, could have been a group of ‘strays’ from Sevington. This cannot be established at present but seems worth recording as a possibility in case further evidence pointing in the same direction should turn up. I am much indebted to Mr. Pagan for this information and reference which he gave when he was kind enough to read this paper in draft.

² Note that forgeries of this piece exist.

³ Archaeologia, xix (1818), pp. 109–19.

⁴ Manuscript volume entitled ‘Saxon Coins’ formerly in the possession of J. D. A. Thompson and now in the writer’s.
The Sevington hoard of 1834

10 THE SEVINGTON HOARD OF 1834

it (BMA 428). It has a pedigree going back to the Shorthouse (1886) sale. It appears to be the only one known today and it may be the Sevington coin (No. 46) but the engraving in Archaeologia differs from it in detail. It too was bought by Dymock at the Loscombe sale but was not in his sale of 1858.

BMC type xxiii is another of Æthelwulf's very rare types. There were two coins of the type by the moneyer Ethelhere in the Dorking hoard, one of which is in the British Museum (BMC 89). Montagu 496 may be the second Dorking coin or equally the Sevington specimen (No. 47).

The absence of any coins of type xvii has been commented on above.

Hoard provenances for the coins of the last English kings of East Anglia are scarce, as the following table shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deposit</th>
<th>Athelstan I</th>
<th>Æthelweard</th>
<th>Eadmund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk (2)</td>
<td>c. 830</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Temple (5)</td>
<td>c. 842</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sevington (7)</td>
<td>c. 850</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorking (11)</td>
<td>c. 861</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (25)</td>
<td>c. 870</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon (40)</td>
<td>c. 875</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravesend (43)</td>
<td>c. 875</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There have been isolated finds of Athelstan I at Bulwick, Northants., at Garboldisham, Norfolk, and near Rochester; of Æthelweard at Southampton and Ipswich. The occurrence of coins of Athelstan in the Sevington hoard marks the most westerly findspot that I have noted. There were none in the Trewhiddle hoard from Cornwall, deposited c. 875.

The weights of the coins of Athelstan and of the contemporary kings Berhtwulf and Æthelwulf, as recorded in BMC and in BMA, suggest the possibility that the East Anglian mint(s) might be aiming at a slightly higher weight standard than the other two kingdoms. 48-8 per cent of the 43 coins of Athelstan weigh over 20 gr. compared with 23-8 in the case of the 21 of Berhtwulf and 28-2 of the 78 of Æthelwulf. This is something that might be worth further study, particularly in view of the remarks in Mr. Lyon's presidential address to this Society in which he notes that the weight of the St. Edmund Memorial coinage appears to have been barely five-sixths that of the mints in the area under English control. Certainly the metal used in East Anglia proved more suitable for coining; in any collection in which coins of the Mercian and Wessex kings are to be found there will normally be several that are more or less fragmented, whereas this is unusual in Athelstan's coins—a point borne out by the Sevington hoard.

A few corrections fall to be made to the list of Æthelwulf coins in the hoard recorded by Dolley and Skaare. There are thirteen, not twelve, more or less fragmentary pieces in the British Museum from lot 1103 of the Loscombe sale. There was a specimen of BMC type v, moneyer Dian (No. 34), the apparent absence of which they put down to its being an early issue; but I can find no trace of any of the much rarer type va; they

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1 The numbers in brackets refer to Dolley's hoard list, published in SCBI Hiberno-Norse, 1966. The deposit dates are from the same source.
2 NC 1864, p. 190.
record four specimens of type xi whereas there appear to have been five; they give a total
of six for the rare type xiv, when it seems likely, for the reasons already given, that there
were only two of this type and one of the hardly less rare type xiii. The balance of three
arises, one suspects, from their having included in their total two coins (Nos. 48–9)
of which no particulars are given and perhaps one of those of type xi. These changes,
however, do nothing to affect the conclusions as to dating at which the authors arrive.

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE COINS IN THE HOARD

References and abbreviations:

Hks. References are to the coins as numbered on plate xxiii accompanying E. Hawkins’s original
report of the hoard in Archaeologia, xxvii, 1838.
L. = lot numbers in the Loscombe sale, 1855.
‘Not identifiable’ means that the Sevington specimen cannot be identified with confidence today.
SNC. Spink’s Numismatic Circular.

KINGS OF MERCIA

Coenwulf (796–821)
Type: Pincer cross. North 347; Brooke group ii.
2. Diormod. L. 1033. BLS 37 or 44. Not identifiable.

Type: Cross and crescents. North 357; Brooke group iii.

Type and moneyer not recorded.

Ceolwulf I (821–3)
Type: Moneyer’s name in three lines. North 387; Brooke group iii.

Berhtwulf (840–52)
Type: Cross crosslet. North 406.
   Others recorded read YONETA.

Type: Cross with two arms crosslet, two moline. North 408.

Type: Cross with annulet in each angle. North 410.
Type: Cross crosslet with annulet centre (sometimes enclosing a pellet). North 414.

10. Deneheah. L. 1037b. Catalogue description leaves some doubt as to the type, but this seems most likely. Not identifiable.

Type: Cross crosslet with cross saltire in centre. North 413.

14. (Bu)rn(v)vald. L. 1103 = BM. Fragment.

ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY

Wulfred (805–32)

Type: Early; bust contained in circle; rev. transitional monogram. North —; Brooke 5.


Type: Late; rev. DRVR CITS in two lines. North 239; Brooke 1.


Ceolnoth (833–70)

Type: Rev. degraded monogram. North 241; Brooke 1.


Type: Chi-rho. North 242; Brooke 2.


KING OF EAST ANGLIA

Athelstan I (c. 827–c. 850)

Type: Obv. A (without inner circle?); rev. cross with pellet in each angle. North 440.

21. Thorþhelm. L. 1041, where the unusual obverse reading EPELTSAE is noted. Perhaps = Montagu i, 342 (ill.) which has this reading.

Type: Obv. and rev. cross with or without a pellet in each angle. North 446.


KINGS OF WESSEX

Egbert (802–39)

Type: Early. Head within circle; rev. trirach boline. BMC ix; North 561; Brooke 17.


Æthelwulf (839–58)

Type: DORIB/CANT. BMC i; North 614; Brooke 5.

29. Hunbeaht. Small lettering. L. 1103 = BM.
31. Maninc. Large lettering. L. 1103 = BM.

Type: CANT/DORIB. BMC ia; North 616; Brooke 5.

32. Hunbeaht. L. 1103 = BM.

Type: SAXON monogram/cross and wedges. BMC iv; North 598; Brooke 9.

Type: Cross over saltire / Saxoniorum. BMC v; North 596; Brooke 10.
34. Diar. L. 1067b. Not identifiable.

Type: Bust / chi-rho. BMC vi; North 608; Brooke 7.
35. Deiheah. Fragment. L. 1103 = BM.

Type: Bust / A. BMC vii; North 609; Brooke 7.

Type: bust / cross crosslet. BMC xi; North 610; Brooke 7.
38. Diar. L. 1103 = BM.
40. Man(na). Obv. legend appears to be retrograde. L. 1103 = BM.
41. Unidentifiable moneyer. Fragment. L. 1103 = BM.

Type: Bust / cross over saltire. BMC xiii; North 612; Brooke 7.

Type: Bust / cross over saltire pommée. BMC xiv; North 613; Brooke 7.
44. Osmund. Two fragments. L. 1103 = BM.

Type: Large bust / cross, two arms moline. BMC xv; North 600; Brooke 2.

Type: Large bust / cross, two arms crosslet. BMC xvi; North 601; Brooke 2.

Type: Cross over saltire / cross, two arms moline. BMC xxiii; North 607; Brooke 4.

Type and moneyers not stated.
48. L. 1063b.
49. L. 1064b.