

# SCEATTAS FOUND AT THE IRON-AGE HILL FORT OF WALBURY CAMP, BERKSHIRE

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THE recorded finds of sceattas from Hampshire and the adjoining areas are heavily concentrated in and around Southampton, where there was a very active trading emporium, and a currency supplied by a local mint in the second quarter of the eighth century.<sup>1</sup> Northwards, it has seemed until recently that there was an almost 'empty quarter' on the map. The recorded sceatta finds were very few until one reached the Thames at Abingdon, Dorchester-on-Thames, and Oxford. Those from the intervening area can still be counted on the fingers of one hand: there is one from 'near Marlborough', another from Clatford (just on the western outskirts of Marlborough), a third probably from Old Sarum, and two, one doubtfully a sceat, from Winchester.<sup>2</sup> Since the total number of provenanced sceattas for the whole of England exceeds 200, not counting the Aston Rowant hoard, nor the eighty or so finds from Southampton, the 'Wessex' tally is surprisingly small. It is in any case remarkable that two specimens should have been found quite by chance and separately, in 1972 and 1974, at Walbury Camp, some seven miles south-west of Newbury, Berkshire.

As this locality is roughly half-way between Southampton and Oxford, and is some miles from any village or hamlet, in a very bare and exposed situation, the question comes to mind whether the coins found there might not have been lost by travellers making the north-south journey (or vice versa)—especially as one of the recent finds is of a type (*BMC* Type 42) which has been recorded at Southampton and also near Oxford, but nowhere else in England except Reculver (Thanet). There is, however, no major or obvious north-south route which would have passed through or near the hill fort.<sup>3</sup>

Another possibility is that the loss of the coins might be connected with some brief phase of reuse of the hill fort for military purposes in the eighth century. There is a good deal of scattered evidence for the reuse of various hill forts in the time of Offa,<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> P. V. Addyman and D. H. Hill, 'Saxon Southampton: a Review of the Evidence, I', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, xxv (1968), pp. 61-93.

<sup>2</sup> C. H. V. Sutherland, 'Anglo-Saxon Sceattas in England: Their Origin, Chronology, and Distribution', *NC* 1942, pp. 42-70, with map. The two coins listed there from Marlborough are probably one and the same. I have been unable to locate the Roach Smith drawing of the Winchester find. A more up-to-date map, but without check-list, appears in D. M. Metcalf, 'The "Bird and Branch" Sceattas in the Light of a Find from Abingdon', *Oxoniensia*, xxxvii (1972), pp. 51-65. Old Sarum should be added, for which see [E. Ledwich], *Antiquitates Sarisburienses*, 1771, part I, p. 15. I am indebted to Mr. H. de S. Shortt for

his discovery that what seems to be the selfsame coin is now in the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum. For the Clatford find, see *Marlborough College Natural History Society Report*, xxxix (1891), p. 114 and pl. ii, 5. There is a 'porcupine' from the recent excavations at Winchester.

<sup>3</sup> H. W. Timperley and E. Brill, *Ancient Trackways of Wessex*, 1965 makes a very thorough survey, and summarizes the findings of C. Burne, 'Old Track from Walbury Camp to Tidbury Ring', *Papers and Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, viii (1917), pp. 104-6.

<sup>4</sup> I am indebted to Dr. David Hill who pointed this out to me. For details see his forthcoming book on the subject.

Walbury is an obvious stronghold in the area contested between Wessex and Mercia at the date to which the coins belong. Stenton wrote that in 735, the traditional date of St. Frideswide's death [and very close to the date of both the recent sceatta finds],

the land on each side of the Thames at Oxford seems to have been under the direct rule of Æthelbald . . . During the next 100 years every powerful West Saxon king asserted a claim to this territory, but the Mercian kings more than held their ground until their dynasty came to an end, and it was not until the middle of the ninth century that the debateable land was finally divided between them, Berkshire and northern Wiltshire becoming West Saxon, and the plain of central Oxfordshire remaining Mercian.<sup>1</sup>

The second of the recent sceatta finds is of a type (*BMC* Type 41b) which has also been recorded from other hill forts—a distribution which may be merely a matter of chance, but which is certainly intriguing in the context of a possibly military use of one sort or another.

To bring the topography down to a more local scale: Walbury Camp lies about six miles east of Bedwyn, a place which is described in the Abingdon Chronicle as the 'metropolis' of a West Saxon ruler Cissa, whom the Abingdon monks knew as the uncle of their founder and first abbot. Stenton has shown that Cissa is likely to have been a *sub-regulus* in Wessex in the late seventh or early eighth century. He is recorded as having built a defensive earthwork, which is, no doubt, the Bedwyn Dyke visible today, stretching for 1½–2 miles across the Harandene valley and protecting Bedwyn from incursions from the north-east.<sup>2</sup>

Walbury Camp is an exceptionally large hill fort, some 1,700 feet (500 m.) by 2,100 feet (600 m.) in extent, defining an area of 72 acres (29 hectares) within its ramparts. It is on the crest of the downs, at the highest point in southern England, 959 feet (292 m.) above ordnance datum. The Inkpen or North Hampshire Ridgeway runs through the camp from east to west. Until a nineteenth-century boundary adjustment, the county boundary between Hampshire and Berkshire followed the same line, bisecting the hill fort. (County boundaries used to run through the middle of other hill forts similarly.) Stevens, in his *Parochial History of St. Mary Bourne* (1888), asserts that the trackway 'has been for centuries used by drovers with their flocks travelling from the west of England'. In comment upon this, it should be said that many of the drove roads are relatively modern, e.g. they were used from the seventeenth century only. The length of folk-memory can be exaggerated, and from that point of view the eighth century is an immensely remote period. Nevertheless, Stevens's information is suggestive of a third possible explanation for the finding of coins at so isolated a spot as Walbury Camp. There are other modern instances in Wessex, in particular Yarnbury Castle (between Warminster and Amesbury) of the use of chalk forts for regular sheep fairs.<sup>3</sup> Their value would be obvious as a stopping place in a journey along the ridgeway, where the sheep could be folded or kept safely together—and the ramparts would afford some degree of protection against the keen winds that blow across the downs at night.

<sup>1</sup> F. M. Stenton, 'St. Frideswide and her Times', *Oxoniensia*, i (1936), pp. 103–12, reprinted in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England* (ed. D. M. Stenton) (1970), pp. 224–33, at pp. 229–31, and id., 'The Supremacy of the Mercian Kings', *ibid.*, pp. 48–66, at pp. 52–4.

<sup>2</sup> A. and C. Fox, 'Wansdyke Reconsidered', *Archaeological Journal*, cxv (1958), pp. 1–48, at pp. 18–20, and references cited there.

<sup>3</sup> Yarnbury Castle sheep fair is described in W. H. Hudson, *A Shepherd's Life*, 1910, ch. xix.

Walbury Camp, like most other hill forts, has not been systematically excavated.<sup>1</sup> Even if it had, any archaeological traces whether of military or agricultural use in the eighth century might be expected to be sparse and difficult to recover. The evidence of the coin finds thus unfortunately stands very much on its own.

It remains to be seen whether the two coins found in 1972 and 1974 are strays from a hoard. Meanwhile, the exact findspot of the two coins is being withheld, in order to minimize the risk of illicit 'treasure-hunting'.

The first find was published in the *CBA Archaeological Review* for 1972.<sup>2</sup> It is of Type 41b. From the information supplied by the finder, the coin's exact findspot is reliably known: it appears to have been picked up on the surface within a few yards of the line of the ridgeway.<sup>3</sup>

The coin (Pl. I, 3) shows on one side a mythical creature with head turned back. This is part of the stock of Germanic art-motifs of the dark ages, and Salin has written in detail about its religious significance.<sup>4</sup> On the other side are two standing figures holding crosses, in what is very probably Christian political symbolism. Type 41b is certainly English, rather than Frisian or Merovingian, and it was minted in the second quarter of the eighth century. Its designs were widely copied and imitated, and specimens of derivative style have been found, for example, in Thanet, at Whitby, and in the Low Countries. But the Walbury Camp specimen is in the best official style. Its weight is 1.18 g./18.2 gr. The issuing authority is unknown: there are one or two hints—no more than that—pointing to a West Saxon origin. These will be set in perspective below, in the context of a thorough survey of Type 41b.

The second Walbury Camp sceat was discovered, fortunately, by an experienced archaeologist and was promptly reported to the South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group. It was picked up on the surface of the chalk in August 1974 at what appears to be the same spot as the first coin.<sup>5</sup> It is of *BMC* Type 42, and shows on one side (not very distinctly, because of weathering) a draped, wreathed bust facing right, and in front of the face a falcon on a perch. The reverse shows a dog or wolf, with a plant of some kind behind. The animal seems to be biting a berry from the plant. Again, the coin is certainly English, and its style places it firmly as part of an official series. Other provenances for the style suggest a more easterly source—probably east Kent. The coin (Pl. I, A) weighs 0.99 g./15.3 gr., which is close to the average for Type 42,<sup>6</sup> in spite of being chipped.

<sup>1</sup> M. Aylwin Cotton, 'Berkshire Hill Forts', *Berkshire Archaeological Journal*, lx (1962), pp. 30–52.

<sup>2</sup> CBA Group XII (Wessex) and Group XIII (South West). *Archaeological Review for 1972*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Mr. A. M. Burchard, Keeper of Archaeology in the Hampshire County Museums Service, who kindly made the coin and its documentation available for study.

<sup>4</sup> E. Salin, *La Civilisation mérovingienne d'après les sépultures, les textes, et le laboratoire*, iv, 1959, pp. 209–22 discusses the widespread occurrence of 'le monstre regardant en arrière', which he describes as a 'griffon-lion aux pattes griffues (la patte antérieure ramenée vers le ventre, pose que nous retrouvons sur les figurations sarmates)'; the griffin is an animal of the sun, and the turning away is a religious gesture.

<sup>5</sup> P. A. Turner, 'Saxon Silver Sceat: Walbury

(Inkpen), Berkshire', *South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group Newsletter*, no. 13, 1975, pp. 5–6. I am indebted to Mr. Turner for allowing me to study and write about the coin, and for a great deal of stimulating and fruitful discussion of the topography. I must also thank Mrs. Sylvia Bremner, Secretary of the South Hampshire Archaeological Rescue Group, who made the preliminary identification of the coin, and carefully cleaned it, using the SHARG conservation facilities. Thanks are due, too, to Mr. David Hinton, of the University of Southampton; the authorities of Reading Museum; and Mr. S. E. Rigold and other members of the staff of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, for their friendly help.

<sup>6</sup> D. M. Metcalf and D. R. Walker, 'The "Wolf" Sceattas', *BNJ* xxxvi (1967), pp. 11–28.

One obvious line of inquiry suggested by the Walbury Camp finds is to ask whether there are any other sceattas from the vicinity of hill forts, or found along the ancient trackways across the chalk and limestone downlands which for so long remained in use as the 'green roads of England'. There is ample evidence from charters for the use of 'green ways' and 'ridge ways' in Anglo-Saxon times. Boundaries were defined by means of them: 'on thane Grenan Weg'; 'on thone Hricg Weg'; and so forth. There are in fact very few sceatta finds which can be associated with the trackways, and they are peripheral to the monetary problems of the period, in the sense that the circulation of coinage in the eighth century was linked primarily to the cross-channel trade, with its main centres in east Kent, London, and Southampton (Hamwih).

The Crondall hoard of thrymsas was found close to the line of the Pilgrim Way, near a small circular fort called 'Caesar's Camp'. It is on the direct route to and from the North Downs.<sup>1</sup> The Aston Rowant hoard of sceattas<sup>2</sup> was found on the steep slope of the Chilterns just off the Icknield Way, although not near a hill fort.

Old Sarum, which is the findspot of another coin of Type 41b, is of course a large fort, and has a history of use in medieval times probably going back to the ninth century, for the *Monasticon* records that it was a favourite resort of king Ecgbeorht of Wessex. Ledwich records the finding of a sceat there, in his *Antiquitates Sarisburienses* (1771), which from the illustration is obviously of Type 41b. A difficulty, however, is that the line-drawing seems not to have been made from the local find, but rather to have been reproduced from the almost identical drawing in Battely's *Antiquitates Rutupinae* (1745). The coin now in the Salisbury Museum (Pl. I, 5), which may well be the Old Sarum find, was in the cabinet of Dr. H. P. Blackmore, a well-known local collector, as long as a hundred years ago. It is therefore very likely that it is, at the least, a local find.<sup>3</sup>

At Totternhoe, on the downs near Dunstable, yet another sceat of Type 41b was found, in 1971 (Pl. II, 14). The Ridgeway here crosses the Icknield Way and, after continuing for two miles as a green road along a promontory of the chalk, and passing the smaller plateau fort of Maiden Bower, reaches the great camp of Totternhoe, most of which has now been destroyed by quarrying.<sup>4</sup>

The recent Portishead find,<sup>5</sup> from the Bristol Channel coast, lies further west than almost any other sceatta provenance, and one may note that the Wansdyke reaches the sea near Portishead.<sup>6</sup>

Other finds have not been so accurately described, and it is therefore all the more uncertain whether their proximity to trackways is a matter of coincidence. The Pyecombe find, for example, comes from a little village six miles north of Brighton (whereas most other finds from Sussex are coastal).<sup>7</sup> Again, one may note that the ridgeway climbs up to the downs by way of Pyecombe Golf Links.<sup>8</sup> But since there is no record of where precisely in Pyecombe the find was made, the connection remains speculative.

<sup>1</sup> R. Hoppisley Cox, *The Green Roads of England*, 1923, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> J. P. C. Kent, in *Oxoniensia*, xxxvii (1972), pp. 243-4.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Mr. H. de S. Shortt, who kindly told me the results of his researches into the Old Sarum find-record and the Salisbury specimen.

<sup>4</sup> *Medieval Archaeology*, xvi (1972), p. 148; Cox, op. cit., pp. 162-5. I am most grateful to Mr. C. L. Matthews, Site Director of the Manshead Archaeological Society of Dunstable, for the readiness with which he made the coin available for study.

<sup>5</sup> L. V. Grinsell, 'A Sceatta from Portishead, Somerset', *BNJ* xl (1970), pp. 163 f.

<sup>6</sup> Cox, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Sutherland, op. cit. The Dale Hill find of 1947 (*Cinobelin*, xii, 1966, p. 28; coin in Brighton Museum) is also from the outskirts of Pyecombe.

<sup>8</sup> Cox, op. cit., p. 130.



The style of the Walbury Camp and 'Old Sarum' specimens is indisputably the same, whereas that from Totternhoe is slightly different and shows affinities with a pair of die-linked coins from Richborough and Cimiez, with a Reculver find, and with an eighteenth-century Thanet find. This still very short list of provenances prompts the question whether there may not be a geographical pattern in the finds, the 'Walbury' style (Pl. I, 1-5) tending to show a westerly or 'Wessex' distribution, in contrast with an essentially east Kentish distribution of coins of Type 41b in more variable styles, and of Types 41a and 41b/41a (Pl. I, 8-12, and II, 14-20). The hypothesis might be made stronger by even one or two additions to the list of findspots, and it is gratifying, therefore, that another recent specimen of Type 41b, found at Reculver in 1969, and published without illustration or details of weight,<sup>1</sup> should have been rescued from oblivion. The location of the coin was unknown, as explained in a letter from the secretary of the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit: 'We are very sorry to inform you that Mr Bateman sold the coin—as you can imagine we tried our hardest to persuade him not to do this . . . Mr Bateman has since moved from Reculver and we do not know his whereabouts.' There the sorry tale might have ended, if it had not been for the vigilance of Mr. Rigold, who had made casts of the coin when it was submitted to him for identification, from which one can establish that it turned up again in 1974 (unprovenanced) in the collection of Dr. Brian Bird of Cleveland, Ohio.

If there is a moral to be drawn, it is that both the provenance and the style of every sceatta find deserve to be recorded as fully as possible. A *BMC* type is an insufficient description, in a series in which copying was rife. The correct numismatic interpretation of a coin will often depend on an assessment of its style, weight, and alloy; and similarly its correct historical interpretation may eventually depend on its topographical context. Where a coin's possible association with an ancient trackway or camp is in question one wishes to know where it was found to the nearest few yards, not to within a mile or so. To be told 'near Marlborough', or even 'near Clatford' is merely tantalizing. And the local topography of eighth-century finds—both sceattas and coins of Offa—from the Dunstable-Totternhoe-Houghton Regis area might well turn out to be suggestive of ways in which coinage was then being used.

To return to the Walbury Camp finds: little need be said about the specimen of Type 42, since a miniature *corpus* of that type has already been published.<sup>2</sup> There are two main obverse varieties within the type, namely one with a cross in front of the bust, and one with a falcon. There is also a variant with a (?)flower in front of the bust (*SCBI* Copenhagen 44). The Walbury Camp find has a falcon, but the obverse is close in style to the cross variety, the head being small and high on the flan, with large ties to the wreath (cf. Walker and Metcalf 16). The drapery of the bust is matched on W-M 24. One may also compare a coin in the British Museum (Barnett bequest 273, 15.0 gr.) (Pl. I, B). The reverse has a tree not exactly matched on any of the listed specimens, but which may be compared with W-M 24-5. W-M 25 has now been republished as *SCBI* Mack 353; and Mack 354 (from the same dies as W-M 19) should be added to the list.

Interpreting the style of Type 41b is a more delicate task, to which we must now turn. The problem is to identify the original (and by implication official) issues among a welter of imitations, forgeries, 'design-borrowings', etc., some of which are palpably inferior and will occasion no dispute (Pl. II, 21-5). Others are so close to the originals,

<sup>1</sup> *Kent Archaeological Review*, no. 17 (1969), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Metcalf and Walker, *op. cit.*

and of good weight, that one's view of them can hardly escape being subjective. On the assumption that the official series was struck in some quantity, one will look in the first instance for a group of very similar dies with the criteria of quality and consistency. There are three varieties which are each the nucleus or starting-point for a little run of coins, and a fourth (41b/41a) which seems to be merely a group of eclectic imitations. They have been classified<sup>1</sup> as:

*BMC* 41b. Two standing figures, facing forward. (Pl. I, 3.)

*BMC* 41a. Two standing figures, facing each other. (Pl. I, C.)

Hill 41b/41a. Two standing facing figures, but with heads turned towards each other. (Pl. I, D.)

*BMC* 40. One standing figure, facing forward. (Pl. II, F-G.)

The monster on the obverse of these varieties is in each case fairly distinct in style (which suggests that they are essentially separate in terms of minting—either in time or place). In particular, the beast of Type 40 is very consistent and simplified, having lost its foreleg and crest. The obverses of 41a and 41b/41a show no overlap of style with the better specimens of 41b, but there are close links between an imitative 41b and a 41b/41a (see nos. 18–19 in the Catalogue below).

Arguments concerning the derivation of one design from another can be treacherous, and, while it seems very probable that Type 40 is derivative from 41b, because of the loss of the foreleg and the simplification of the toes into a mere pattern, there is no need to enter upon the question of the priority or otherwise of the Frisian *BMC* Type 31, which uses the same 'monster looking over its shoulder'. The Frisian type enjoyed a considerable vogue in Scandinavia, as five recent finds from Dankirke and eight from Ribe help to show, and it was copied in the much later 'Hedeby' coinage.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting, to see, here as elsewhere, that certain elements in the design were evidently regarded by the die-cutters as essential—even though their significance is unknown to us at the present day. The boat-like curve within which the man stands, on some of the 'London' and the 'bird and branch' sceattas, is a case in point. On Type 41 one should note the long crest or comb hanging down at the back of the monster's head. It appears also in the Frisian and Scandinavian versions; and it even survives, quite inappropriately and as a tell-tale sign of borrowing, when the griffin's head has been replaced by that of a wolf (Pl. II, 21).

Hoards offer few clues to dating. A derivative specimen of Type 41b occurred in the Morel-Fatio collection with a presumed Cimiez provenance.<sup>3</sup> The Cimiez hoard has been variously dated to *c.* 737 or 741, which is too late to provide a significant *terminus* for Type 41b.<sup>4</sup> An imitative coin in the Hallum hoard ('734 or soon after') mules two standing figures with a 'porcupine' obverse,<sup>5</sup> but it may well derive from the Frisian *BMC* Type 30 rather than from Type 41b.

<sup>1</sup> In *BMC*, and, in continuation and with the same system of numbering, in P. V. Hill, 'Uncatalogued Sceattas in the National and other Collections', *NC* 1953, pp. 92–114.

<sup>2</sup> K. Bendixen, 'The First Merovingian Coin-treasure from Denmark', *Medieval Scandinavia*, vii (1974), pp. 85–101. For the dating of the Hedeby type, see M. Dolley and T. Talvio, 'An Unpublished Hoard-provenance for the Ninth-century Coinage of Hedeby',

*NC* 1974, pp. 190–2.

<sup>3</sup> It is thought that there were a few intrusive coins in the collection, and one cannot be certain of the provenance in any particular case.

<sup>4</sup> For references and a discussion, see Walker and Metcalf, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Dirks, pl. C, 13. A photographic illustration of the same coin is published by Hill in *JMP* xli (1954), pl. i, 16.

No specimens of Type 41 have been chemically analysed. The Hemel Hempstead specimen of Type 40 was found to contain between 62 and 74 per cent silver. This shows that it belongs early in the Secondary Phase (c. 730 onwards)—as indeed the negative evidence of hoards from the Primary Phase already suggests. The alloy is still much better than that of many coins in the 'London' series.<sup>1</sup> If Type 40 derives from Type 41, the latter must be even earlier. The silver contents of the two types may be expected eventually to throw some additional light on their dating and classification.

All four varieties of Types 40 and 41 are presumably English, and the provenances for them (including imitative 'mules', e.g. from Whitby) are widespread. But they have not been found in the Low Countries. The question whether the different varieties are localized can be answered only tentatively, because there are too few finds, and of those few, some are incomplete, there being no photograph of the coin to show its style. The only find in the check-list which is definitely of Type 40 is from Hemel Hempstead.<sup>2</sup> To this should now be added a specimen dug up in a hop ground near Canterbury in or before 1747, and also an imitative Type 40 probably from the Isle of Thanet (see Appendix). A crude imitative Type 41b/41a has been found at London,<sup>3</sup> and one if not two of the Battely coins from Reculver (Pl. I, D-E) are of the same variety. From the same source there is a fine specimen of Type 41a (Pl. I, C).<sup>4</sup> The provenances for Type 41b have been enumerated above.

A dual distribution-pattern appears to be characteristic of several of the sceatta types. On the one hand, there are numerous finds from the ports of the Wantsum Channel in east Kent, and then there are others from a more westerly or northerly district—for example, 'wolf' sceattas and related types from the area around Oxford—but with few or no finds of those particular types recorded from the intervening regions. This suggests that a local use of coinage was allied to a long-distance trade for which it was necessary to travel to the Channel ports.

But the picture which has emerged from a survey of Types 40 and 41 is more complex. There seem to be two main stylistic groups of Type 41b, one of which is, on the available evidence, western, and the other eastern. It has been suggested elsewhere that the 'wolf' and 'bird and branch' sceattas can be divided into western and eastern groups, the use of the same design at two different mints and in different combinations elsewhere (e.g. at Southampton) hinting at a monetary agreement between the issuing authorities.<sup>5</sup> It is too soon to say whether a similar arrangement may be detected in Type 41b, or whether the two main styles should be conflated into a single sequence. Types 41a and 41b/41a are much more imitative in character and have so far been recorded only with easterly provenances. Type 40 has more the appearance of a substantive type, and one might guess at a 'Middle Anglian' origin.

The weights of the coins are too few and scattered to support any firm conclusions, but they hint at metrological differences between the main groupings, the 'eastern' dies of 41b being noticeably heavy and regular in weight:

<sup>1</sup> D. M. Metcalf, J. M. Merrick, and L. K. Hamblin, *Studies in the Composition of Early Medieval Coins* (Minerva Numismatic Handbooks, III), 1968, pp. 26 and 45; and *ibid.*, analyses of the 'London' series.

<sup>2</sup> See the Appendix for comments on the other

alleged provenances of the type.

<sup>3</sup> C. Roach Smith, *Collectanea Antiqua*, pl. xlv, 6.

<sup>4</sup> *SCBI* Fitzwilliam 264-5, and 263, reproduced here from direct photographs.

<sup>5</sup> This is discussed in Metcalf, *op. cit.*, *Oxoniensia*, 1972.

41b ('western')	18·2, 17·8, 15·3, 13·3, 12·9 (worn).
— ('eastern')	19·6, 19·5, 19·1, 18·5, 17·5, 17·0, 15·5.
— (rosettes)	18·8, 17·3, 16·1.
— (more obvious imitations)	20·2, 17·7, 16·6, 15·1.

The coins themselves offer certain clues when the design is blundered through having been misunderstood—and when the blunder on one die is repeated on another, or even is accepted and becomes part of the regular design. Thus, the standing cross held between the two figures quickly loses its staff, and in its place the men's arms become elongated, reaching to ground level. This seems to be a case of stylistic devolution, and if so it is an important fixed point for the whole scheme of classification. One cannot be absolutely certain that the standing cross is not a logical and later 'improvement', and that the sequence should not accordingly be reversed; but the coins which mark the change (nos. 1–4 below) are part of a group of consistently high quality, and show other signs of being early. Those that have been interpreted as the earliest are unusually worn.

The monster's head is round, with a large, centrally placed eye. Its griffin's beak is longer at the top than the bottom. In an interesting example of imitation (Pl. II, 21) (*SCBI* Hunter 123, Type 41b/41a) the griffin's head is replaced by a wolf's head, copied one may suppose from the 'wolf' sceattas. (And the criss-cross hatching on the torso of one of the standing figures on this coin suggests a link with the London series.) In the regular design, the foreleg of the monster is turned back under the body, and the toes point upwards towards the belly. These details are a source of confusion in several of the imitations.

The tip of the tail also betrays the die-cutter's uncertainty. The tail should end in a bold dot or a group of bold dots, contrasting with the finer dots which outline the body and neck. Through lack of space, these two elements in the design sometimes tend to merge together. In one little sequence of die-related coins a curved line of dots around the angle of the neck combines with the tip of the tail to suggest a rosette. On a die-linked reverse (Pl. II, 17–18) the rosette has been transferred to the space behind the neck. One wonders whether there is any connection with other imitative sceattas incorporating rosettes, such as *SCBI* Hunter 91. It is debatable whether all the coins of Type 41 in question are by the same hand, but if they were, they would serve to link a crude 41b/41a obverse with the Totternhoe find, and would confirm that the little group to which the latter belongs is imitative.

With such clues as these for guidance, the coins should be studied one by one and in an empirical spirit. There are no hard and fast criteria such as would apply throughout the series. Close similarities of style constitute an argument that coins belong closely together in terms of their die-cutting. Differences of style, on the other hand, do not necessarily prove the opposite, as has been well shown by Stewart.<sup>1</sup> And positive evidence of the proximity of very different styles is adduced by at least one of the die-links catalogued below (nos. 10–11), between a coin from the Cimiez hoard, and another from Richborough. Metrology may eventually help to show that two groups of sceattas of the same type but of divergent style are in fact separate, but provenances may be expected to remain the sovereign proof. Not enough specimens of Type 41b are at present available to deploy either argument fully.

The following list of specimens should be studied in conjunction with the illustrations

<sup>1</sup> I. Stewart, 'Style in Medieval Coinage', *NC* 1969, pp. 269–89.

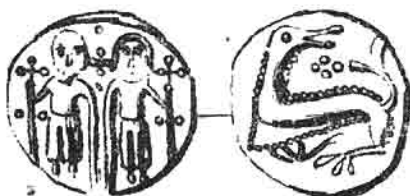


on Pl. I-II. The notes are intended to draw attention to significant details rather than to describe the designs fully. The illustrated coins are marked by an asterisk.

- \*1. —. L. A. Lawrence collection (casts in Ashmolean Museum). *Obv.* High relief. Faces with prominent eyes. Both figures hold a central staff, on which a cross is superimposed at shoulder level. They also hold similar crosses on staffs to left and right. Pleated or divided skirts (military dress?). Feet shown as dots joined to a base-line. *Rev.* The dots outlining the monster's body are few and large. The crest ends, perhaps, in two dots.
- \*2. 12·9/0·84 (worn). BM, ex Barnett 271. *Obv.* Very similar to no. 1. *Rev.* From the same die as no. 1. The tail seems to end with a finely engraved < around the dotted end.
- \*3. 18·2/1·18. Walbury Camp, 1972. Hampshire County Museums Service. *Obv.* High relief, and prominent eyes, as no. 1. The central staff is omitted, but the men's arms, in the centre of the design, are elongated to ground length. *Rev.* The monster's crest ends with a line of two or three fine dots. The dotted tip of the tail appears as if outlined by an arrowhead of five smaller dots.
- \*4. 15·3/0·99. BMC 178 (presented by Dr. Dalton, 1862). *Obv.* Similar to no. 3, but in bolder style. *Rev.* Diamond of four dots at end of tail.
- \*5. —. Salisbury Museum, possibly found at Old Sarum. *Obv.* Similar. *Rev.* Crest ends in three widely spaced dots. One large dot at end of tail?
- 6. —. Spink's *Circular*, October 1969, no. 64. Photograph indistinct, but generally similar to no. 5.
- \*7. 13·3/0·86. SCBI Hunter 124. Simplified style. By the same hand as nos. 1-6?

#### *Imitative Coins*

- \*8. 17·8/1·15. SCBI Hunter 125 (Coats collection). Very close copy, could be part of the main series. Smaller and more numerous dots in the outer borders. *Obv.* Similar to no. 3, but central cross is omitted. Central arms elongated to ground length. Longer skirts. *Rev.* Similar to no. 3? Tail ends in a row of dots.
- \*9. 19·5/1·26. BMC 175. This is very probably the same coin as one illustrated as no. 5 on John White's plate of *Nummi Argentei*, 'lately found near and in the Isle of Thanet', which is prefixed as frontispiece to some copies of R. Wither and J. Ryall,

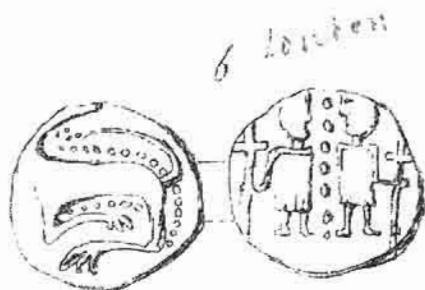


*Twelve Plates of English Silver Coins*, 1756. These coins were copied in Camden's *Britannia* (see NC 1957, 204), from which the accompanying line-block is reproduced. *Obv.* The figure on the left has long moustaches and beard, on the model

- of the Frisian type, *BMC* Type 30. Central arms elongated, as on nos. 3 ff. The figure on the right appears to be nimbate, but this is probably not intended. Prominently pleated skirts. No base-line for the feet. *Rev.* The line of fine dots continues around the monster's forequarters, i.e. the foreleg is not properly joined to the body. The style of the feet is unsure.
- \*10. 19·1/1·24. BM, excavated at Richborough, 1922–3. *Obv.* Similar to no. 9. Both figures are moustached. The central cross is linear and finely drawn. *Rev.* Triangle of three dots at tip of tail.
11. 19·6/1·27. Bibliothèque Nationale, ex Morel–Fatio 330, = Legentilhomme, Cimiez 70. *Obv.* Much simplified, 'match-stick' figures. *Rev.* Same die as no. 10.
- \*12. 18·5/1·20. *BMC* 177 (purchased Mr. Eastwood, 1862). *Obv.* Small heads, without prominent eyes. Longer skirts; thin legs close together. Dots either side of each outer cross, arranged symmetrically. *Rev.* Monster of good style. By the same hand as no. 10? (Bold, widely spaced dots in outer border.)
13. 17·0/1·10. *SCBI* Copenhagen 46 ex Bergsøe, 1877. *Obv.* Very similar to no. 12. *Rev.* Similar to no. 12.
- \*14. 17·5/1·13. Totternhoe, 1971. Manshead Archaeological Society of Dunstable. *Obv.* Near-duplicate of no. 12. Note dots by outer crosses arranged symmetrically. *Rev.* By the same hand as no. 12? Note the detached toe (sexual member?) as on no. 10. Four bolder dots at tip of tail merge with a *curve* of small dots around angle of neck, to suggest a rosette. There is an extra line above the tail. Crest ends in three dots.
- \*15. 15·5/1·00. Reculver, 1969 (casts in collection of S. E. Rigold). *Obv.* Near-duplicate of no. 14. *Rev.* Obscure, but cf. no. 20—the 'thumb' toes are reversed. B. Bird collection (Glendining, 20 Nov. 1974, 18).
- \*16. —. A. Hess, Frankfurt sale cat. 14 June 1922, 309. *Obv.* Very similar to no. 14. Note flat necklines, and all details of shoulders and arms, symmetrical dots, etc. *Rev.* Deep gape, and crest with three dots, as no. 14.
- \*17. 17·3/1·12. BM, ex Roach Smith. *Obv.* Type 41b/41a. Crude style. *Rev.* Several features suggest that this may be by the same hand as no. 14, in particular the 'rosette' and the rounded outline of the flank.
- \*18. 16·1/1·04. *SCBI* Mack 350, ex Lawrence 194. *Obv.* From the same die as no. 17. *Rev.* Rosette behind neck. Recurving tail.
- \*19. —. Lockett sale, lot 257a (British Numismatic Society photographs). *Obv.* Thinner figures. Elongated central arms extend below base-line. Group of three dots at bases of outer crosses. *Rev.* By the same hand as no. 18. Note recurving tail, dot behind head.
- \*20. 18·8/1·22. *BMC* 176. *Obv.* Type 41b, otherwise very similar to no. 17. *Rev.* Laterally reversed type, somewhat flatter and more nearly linear than the prototype. The tail ends *above* the beak. The 'thumb' toes are reversed.

*More Obvious Imitations*

- \*21. 16-6/1-08. *SCBI* Hunter 123. *Obv.* Type 41b/41a. Note cross-hatching on torso. *Rev.* Griffin's head replaced by wolf's head—which has, however, a crest ending in three dots.
- \*22. 20-2/1-31. BM ex Barnett ex Carlyon-Britton 173. *Obv.* Crude style. Central cross. *Rev.* Laterally reversed type. 'East Anglian' style. Crest ends in group of four dots. Tail ends above beak.
23. 15-1/0-98. *SCBI* Norweb 61. *Obv.* Very similar to no. 22. *Rev.* Exceptionally fanciful copy, laterally reversed. Ex Lockett 257b, ex Grantley 719; ex Rashleigh 33 (authenticity not entirely beyond dispute).



- \*24. 17-7/1-15. *BMC* 179. *Obv.* Sketchy, linear (Frisian) style. Central cross on long staff. Outer crosses replaced by three dots. There is no base-line for the feet. *Rev.* Tail ends in or close to the beak.
25. —. London find, Roach Smith, *Coll. Antiq.* pl. xlv, 6. *Obv.* Type 41b/41a in very crude style. *Rev.* The style is difficult to assess from the drawing.

*Some Related Types*

- Type 23a/51. Hill, pl. vi, 17. The monster is laterally reversed.
- Type 31. BM, ex Barnett 260 is perhaps an English copy of this type. The tail ends above the beak, cf. no. 20.
- Type 41b/23e. On the Whitby find (Hill, pl. vi, 20) the monster's tail ends above the beak, cf. no. 20. The general style is much as no. 20.
- Type 51. The obverse of the BM coin is a copy of Type 41b/41a. Note the feet turned sideways.
- Type 57. The monster is in some cases in the same style as Type 40.
- Type 58. *SCBI* Hunter 112 combines the Southampton type 39 with an imitative 41b—note the treatment of the feet, cf. Type 51.
- Type 62. The 'hound' is certainly derivative from the monster—note the upturned forepaw and the dots of the crest.

## APPENDIX

A SCEAT OF *BMC* TYPE 40 FOUND NEAR CANTERBURY, AND ANOTHER FROM THANET

The engraving of a sceat reproduced on Pl. II, H was originally published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1747, with the following brief explanatory text (p. 322): 'Fig. IV. A silver coin of that size dug up in a hop ground near *Canterbury*'. The coin is clearly of *BMC* Type 40, and, to judge from the drawing, is in the characteristic style of that variety. The only certain provenance for the type in Sutherland's check-list (*NC* 1942) is Hemel Hempstead,<sup>1</sup> and even one addition may therefore be welcomed.

A second coin was published as no. 19 on John White's plate of *Nummi Argentei*, 'lately found near and in the Isle of Thanet'. It has been identified with *BMC* 171,<sup>2</sup> but I would venture to doubt whether this is correct. Camden's drawing, reproduced on Pl. II, J is perhaps not so faithful to the style of the original as is that of the Canterbury find, but the irregularities of the outer dotted borders show clearly enough that a different specimen is in question. The rows of three dots on each side of the standing figure are matched on, for example, *SCBI* Mack 345 (Pl. II, F), but the group of four dots under the griffin's beak suggests that this is not the Mack coin. They are an unusual feature, most closely matched on *BMC* 112 (Pl. II, K), which may well be from the same die. Keary listed this as *BMC* Type 23a. The close link with a 'straight' Type 40 suggests that it would be more accurately described as a 23b/40 imitative 'mule'.

<sup>1</sup> The Framlingham find listed by Sutherland appears from the description in the sale catalogue to be an East Anglian issue similar to those in the Cambridge hoard. The Dorchester (Oxon.) find, listed *ibid.* as Type 40/41b, is Hill's 23a var., and is the same coin as Lockett 234. Hill, pl. vi, 33, is *not* from Dorchester, but from the Thames. It is from the same dies. The Whitby find listed by Sutherland as Type 40 is Hill's

Type 41b/23e. The Saxby find is cf. *SCBI* Hunter 127, but the provenance is unconfirmed. I am indebted to Mr. R. A. Rutland, Keeper of Antiquities in the Leicestershire Museums, for checking local records.

<sup>2</sup> R. H. M. Dolley and J. S. Strudwick, 'The Provenances of the Anglo-Saxon Coins Recorded in the Two Volumes of the British Museum Catalogue', *BNJ* xxviii (1955-7), pp. 26-59, at p. 36.





A



B



C



D



E



1



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10



12







14



15



16



17



18



19



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22



24



F



G



H



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