

ON A HOARD OF ROMAN COINS  
DISCOVERED IN COBHAM PARK.

BY C. ROACH SMITH.

IN the spring of the year 1883, as some labourers were grubbing the roots of a tree in Cobham Park they exhumed an earthen pot which was found to contain over 800 brass Roman coins. They were forthwith placed in the hands of Lord Darnley, by whose permission and desire a description of the coins is thus early laid before the Kent Archæological Society. This kind and prompt contribution to the stores of the *Archæologia Cantiana*, so contrary to the secretiveness which often, in similar discoveries, obstructs scientific research, will be appreciated not only by the Kent Society, but by all kindred institutions, numismatists, and antiquaries.

The finding of buried hoards of Roman coins from times immemorial is a well-known fact; but not generally considered in its historical signification as it deserves to be. In our own time, and in the last two centuries, the records of discoveries of hoards of Roman coins are very numerous, though seldom or never satisfactory. The Numismatic Society, and its organs, *The Numismatic Journal* and *The Numismatic Chronicle*, have helped to place upon reliable record full accounts of discoveries such as the zeal of practical numismatists have succeeded in getting access to. In previous years, however, it is tantalizing to

read the bare fact of the discoveries only; as if science and curiosity were satisfied and cared to make no further inquiry. Through the long Dark and Middle Ages such discoveries must have been made yearly, but regarded only for their intrinsic worth; and they must often have been made even in the time of the Romans.

The frequent movement of military forces in the province of Britain itself must often have necessitated the burying of coins which were not portable. Some of these hoards were doubtless recovered by the owners; but, in time of war, a return to the places of deposit could never be calculated on; and especially when large forces in particular emergencies were sent into Gaul, the chances of return must have been few indeed; and the hoards were left to astonish the ignorant ploughman and unlettered churl in after ages; and, more rarely, to exercise the patience and reward the labour of the numismatist of the present day.

Beda states that when the Romans were finally withdrawn from Britain they buried their money. The historian had probably seen many discoveries made during the excavation of the remains of Roman buildings and the land adjoining for ecclesiastical purposes.

In Volume XIV. of the *Archæologia Cantiana*, p. 368, I have made a few observations on the historical evidence often afforded by hoards of Roman coins. To this I refer my readers, and proceed to describe the Cobham collection.

With the exception of a single specimen of Constantine the Great, it is confined to coins of Constantius the Second, Constans, Gallus, Magnen-

tius, and Decentius. As there is not one of Julianus, who was created Cæsar by Constantius in A.D. 355, when his coins were first struck, we may conclude that the hoard was deposited in A.D. 353, not long before the overthrow of Magnentius and Decentius by Constantius. This important event took place near Mursa in Lower Pannonia. Magnentius, who in A.D. 350 had usurped the imperial dignity and reigned successfully over the Western Provinces, had drawn together an immense army of legionaries and auxiliaries, and among the levies from Britain we may enrol the owner of the Cobham hoard, now under our examination. It is probable that his dwelling was near the spot where he buried what money he could not carry upon his person. Though accident may bring to light the remains of his house, we shall certainly learn nothing more of the man himself.

The following will shew the very limited range of the coins as regards time :—

	<i>No. of Specimens.</i>	<i>A.D.</i>
Constantine the Great .....	1	..... 306 to 337
Constantius II. ....	148	..... 337 to 361
Constans .....	256	..... 333 to 350
Constantius III., Gallus .....	1	..... 351 to 354
Magnentius .....	419	..... 350 to 353
Decentius .....	11	..... 350 to 353
Total	<u>836</u>	

From their good preservation and the absence of attrition from circulation these coins must have formed part of the vast stores sent by Magnentius from Gaul, and probably not long anterior to his overthrow.

The cities in which these coins of Constantius and Constans were minted were *Rome*, indicated by R, R.P., R.S., etc.; *Arelatum*, Arles, P.ARL. and S.ARL.; *Aquileia*, AQ, AQP., etc.; and *Lugdunum*, Lyons, L.P., PLC., etc. *Londinium*, London, is not represented in a single instance, though it is to be recognised in the earlier days of the Constantine family. In addition to the above towns, Rome excepted, we find on the coins of Magnentius and Decentius in the Cobham hoard, *Ambianum*, Amiens, AMB; and *Siscia*, in Pannonia, now Sissek, F.SIS., RSIS., etc.; of the latter a few only.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

- Obverse*.—CONSTANTINVS. P. F. AVG. Laureated head; bust in the paludamentum, to the right. No.
- Reverse*.—SOLI INVICTO COMITI. The Sun standing to the left; the right hand raised; the left holding a globe. In the field TR. In the exergue PTR. 1

CONSTANTIUS THE SECOND.

- Obv.*—D N CONSTANTIVS P. F. AVG. Diademed head to the left; hand holding a globe.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. A soldier, with javelin, dragging a barbarian from a hut over which is a tree.
- Mint marks: TRP and TRS, 12; P.ARL, 3; AQT, 1; SLC, 1 ..... 17
- Obv.*—D. N. FL. CONSTANTIVS NOB. C. Diademed head to the right; bust in the paludamentum over a cuirass.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. Constantius, standing in a galley steered by a winged Genius or Victory, holding in his right hand a Phoenix upon a globe; in his left hand a labarum with the monogram of Christ. Some with the letter A on obverse and reverse.
- Mint marks: TRP and TRS, 49; one illegible..... 50
- The same, obverse and reverse.
- Mint marks: R.P., R.S., R.T., R.Q., 8; L.P., SLC., PLC., 10; AQ, AQP., AQT, AQS, 4; P.ARL., 5; illegible, 27 ..... 54

- Obv.*—DN CONSTANTIVS P.F. AVG.; OR, ON A FEW, CONSTANTIVS P.F. AVG. Diademed head to the right; bust in the paludamentum over a cuirass. Behind the head of some the letter A. No.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. A foot soldier spearing a fallen horseman. On some the letter A.
- Mint marks: P.ARL. and S.ARL, 17; SLC., 2; LC\*, 1; illegible, 7 27
- The illegibility of the above coins is not from bad preservation, but from the pieces of metal not being sufficiently large to receive the entire impression of the die.

## CONSTANS.

- Obv.*—CONSTANS AVGVSTVS. Diademed head to the right; bust in the paludamentum.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. Constans in a galley steered by a winged Victory. In his right hand he holds a Phœnix upon a globe; in his left a labarum with the monogram of Christ. In the exergue TRS. 1
- Obv.*—DN CONSTANS P.F. AVG. As the preceding.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. A Phœnix standing upon a globe. In the exergue TRS. 1
- The same, obverse and reverse. A Phœnix standing upon a mount. In the exergue TRS. 1
- Obv.*—The same, with A behind the head.
- Rev.*—The same, with the letter A in the field. A foot soldier standing over a fallen horse and the rider, and spearing the latter. In the exergue LSC. 1
- Obv.*—D.N. CONSTANS P.F. AVG. Diademed head; bust in paludamentum over a cuirass to the left; hand holding a globe.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. A foot soldier with javelin, dragging a captive from a hut under a tree.
- Mint marks: R.P., R.S., R.Q., R.T., R\*, R\*E, 36; TRP., TRS., 15; PLC., SLC., 11; AQP., AQS., AQT., 4; SABL., 2; SIS., BSISRII ?, 2; illegible, 8 ..... 78
- Obv.*—DN CONSTANS P.F. AVG. Head and bust as on the preceding, but to the right; behind the head on some the letter A.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. Constans standing upon a galley steered by a winged Victory, holding in his right hand a Phœnix upon a globe; or a Victory extending a wreath towards the head of Constans, who in his left hand holds a labarum with the monogram of Christ. Upon some the letter A.

Mint marks : TRP., TRS., 87 ; R., R.E., R.Q., RQP., R.S., R\*8, RQT, RT, 27 ; PRT, 2 ; SARL., 9 ; AQP., 2 ; PLC, SLC, TL.P., 18 ; ESISEB, 2 ; illegible, owing chiefly to the metal being too small for the dies, 27..... 174

## CONSTANTIUS GALLUS.

*Obv.*—D.N. FL. CONS . . . . . S. NOB. CAES. Naked head to the right ; bust in the paludamentum over a cuirass.

*Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. A soldier spearing a fallen horse-man, as on the coins of Constantius II. and Constans.

The mint mark and some letters on the obverse are wanting from the coin not having fully caught the stamping of the dies ..... 1

## MAGNENTIUS.

*Obv.*—DN. MAGNENTIO PERPETVO AVG. Wreathed head to the right ; bust in the paludamentum over armour.

*Rev.*—FELICITAS REIPUBLICE (*sic*). Magnentius standing to the left ; in his right hand he holds a Victory upon a globe, extending a wreath towards his head ; in his left hand a labarum without the usual monogram of Christ. In the exergue SAR. 1

*Obv.*—IMCAEMAGNENTIVS AVG. Bare head to the right.

*Rev.*—As the preceding ; in the field A ; letters in the exergue indistinct. 1

*Obv.*—DN MAGNENTIVS P.F. AVG. Diademed head to the right ; bust in the paludamentum over armour.

*Rev.*—FELICITAS REIPUBLICE (*sic*). Magnentius standing, as on the preceding, with Victory, and labarum in which (those of Arles excepted) is the monogram of Christ.

Mint marks : S.AR, in the field of two, F., 21 ; SLC, PLC, RSLC, RPLC, PSLC (one), 86. Of these, minted at Lugdunum, about one quarter have the head, on the obverse, bare ; these are of inferior work. PTR and PTS, in equal numbers, 112 ; P.T., PPT, PRT., 7 ; F.SIS, RSIS, 2. Mint marks illegible from defective striking, 10..... 238

*Obv.*—DN MAGNENTIVS. P.F. AVG. Diademed head to the right ; bust in the paludamentum.

*Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. In the exergue RLC. A military figure standing to the left, and holding a standard of an hexagonal shape.

- No.
- This coin, which is well struck and of larger module than most in this hoard, is apparently a new variety. It is remarkable for the form of the standard. The exergual letters denote the mint of *Lugdunum*, now Lyons. 1
- Obv.*—IM. CAE. MAGNENTIVS AVG. Bare head to the right; behind it the letter A; bust as in the preceding varieties.
- Rev.*—FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO. Magnentius in a galley steered by a seated Victory; in his right hand he holds a Victory upon a globe extending a wreath towards his head; in the field A. In the exergue TRP or TRS. 15
- Obv.*—DN. MAGNENTIVS. P.F. AVG. Bare head to the right; bust as on the preceding; A behind the head.
- Rev.*—GLORIA ROMANORVM. A horse soldier spearing a disarmed footman who is on his knees in an imploring attitude, his shield and broken spear lying before him.
- Mint marks: TRP., TRS., 52; RPL, RPLC, RSLC., 30; AMB., 17; SAR, SARL, 6; wanting from imperfect striking, 9..... 114
- Obv.*—DN MAGNENTIVS P.F. AVG. Bare head to the right; bust as on the preceding.
- Rev.*—SALVS DD NN. AVG. ET CAES. The monogram of Christ, which fills the field of the coins; between the letters *Alpha* and *Omega*.
- Mint marks: AMB, LSL, PLC, PPLS, 10; illegible, 3 ..... 13
- Some are of larger module.
- Obv.*—DN MAGNENTIVS P.F. AVG. Bare head to the right; behind it the letter A.
- Rev.*—VICTORIAE DD. NN. AVG. ET CAES. Two winged Victories holding a wreath or circular shield within which is
- VOT
- inscribed  $\begin{matrix} \text{V} \\ \text{MVLTV} \\ \text{X.} \end{matrix}$  In two instances the wreath is upon a *cippus* or column.
- Mint marks: AMB; TRP and TRS..... 36
- DECENTIVS.
- Obv.*—DN DECENTIVS NOB. CAES. Naked head to the right; bust in armour.
- Rev.*—VICTORIAE DD. NN. AVG. ET CAES. Two winged Victories
- VOT
- holding upon a *cippus* a wreath enclosing  $\begin{matrix} \text{V} \\ \text{MVLTV} \\ \text{X.} \end{matrix}$
- In the exergue AMB. 1

	No.
Similar, with the cippus.	
Mint marks: AMB, ABP, PSAB, RPL, TRP .....	6
<i>Obv.</i> — . . . . . FORT. CAES. As the above.	
<i>Rev.</i> —As the foregoing, but with monogram of Christ above the wreath—S.L. ?	1
<i>Obv.</i> —D.N. DECENTIVS CAESAR. Bare head; bust in armour to the right.	
<i>Rev.</i> —SALVS DD. NN. AVG. ET CAES. Monogram of Christ, with the <i>Alpha</i> and <i>Omega</i> , STR.	1
<i>Obv.</i> —DN. DECENTI . . . . . Bare head; bust in the paludamentum over armour.	
<i>Rev.</i> —As the preceding.	
Mint mark: AMB .....	2

The coins have afforded but little novelty. The title of *Perpetuus*, assumed by Magnentius, appeared, at first, to be new on coins, as it is not recorded in Banduri, Tanini, or Akerman; but M. Cohen, in his more recently published work,\* cites an example in the museum at Copenhagen. It is rather remarkable that Mr. Akerman, who, in his *Descriptive Catalogue*, cites some of the pompous titles of Magnentius, should not have seen the meaning of the TR. on the obverse of some of his coins. There can be no doubt of its meaning *Triumphator*. A milestone in the Verona Museum† is inscribed, *Liberatori Orbis Romani Restitutori Libertatis et R.P. Conservatori Militum et Provincialium D.N. Magnentio Invicto Principi Victori (et) Trium(phatori) . . . .*

I note that on the reverse of this coin the usual monogram of Christ is wanting. The mint mark shews it was struck at Arelate, now Arles. It is also wanting on all of the coins struck in this city. I do not see that any theory can be founded on this

\* *Médailles Impériales*. Paris.

† *Museum Veronense*, p. cv, No. 2.



exceptional omission; but the fact is worth remarking, and it does not appear to have been noticed in print before.

The coin from the mint of Lugdunum of the *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* type, as I have already remarked, is worth notice from the hexagonal standard, which, like those of Arelate, has not the monogram of Christ. The coins are what are technically termed second and small brass; generally well engraved and in good preservation. Some few, however, shew inferior and even rude workmanship, such as may be expected from the large number of engravers employed. They present almost infinite variety in minute details, the quantity of dies used being extremely numerous, so much so, that it is difficult to find two coins so alike that they may be said to come from the same pair of dies.

The portraits present great individuality, and are without doubt to be accepted as good likenesses. That of Magnentius, although in all easily recognised, varies so much, that while in some the features and expressions are vulgar and unintellectual, in others they are animated and agreeable. Yet the predominant character is animal. He must have had brilliant military abilities; and, in spite of his wading through slaughter to a throne by the murder of Constans, he might have retained dominion over the Western Provinces had his prudence and moderation been equal to his courage and ambition.

It has not been thought necessary to give engravings of these coins, as illustrated numismatic works are now very accessible. To those entering upon the study of Roman coins I can recommend Mr. Fred. W. Madden's *Handbook of Roman Numismatics*,

and the late Seth Stevenson's *Dictionary of Roman Numismatics*, now being completed by Mr. Madden. They are both well illustrated. For the portraits on Roman coins enlarged and most faithfully etched, the *Roman Imperial Profiles*, by J. E. Lee, F.S.A. (Longmans and Co.), should be by the side of the historical student.