



CASTLE HILL, WIVELISCOMBE, 1946
Beaker which contained Part of the Hoard of Roman Coins,
and Stone Spindle-whorl (*see* p. 67)

From a Photograph by Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A.

PART II

PAPERS, ETC.

A Hoard of Late Roman Coins found on Castle Hill, Wiveliscombe, 1946

BY H. ST. GEORGE GRAY, F.S.A., AND HAROLD MATTINGLY, F.S.A.

PART I.—THE ARCHÆOLOGY OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, BY
H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

(1) King's Castle, Castle Hill, Wiveliscombe.

This earthwork apparently occupied nearly all the area known as Castle Hill, situated about a mile north-east of the town of Wiveliscombe, and except for the central area, which is to-day arable land, it is considerably wooded (the southern part being known as Hyden or Hydon Wood). The 6-inch Ordnance Survey, Sheet LXIX, N.W. (revised in 1902-3), inscribes the ground enclosed by the inner ramparts, 'Roman Camp'. That the Romans occupied the place there is no doubt, but the hill was in all probability fortified at an earlier period.

It is impossible to define its exact design, for the place has been mutilated and defaced by quarrying on a large scale; and a house and farm, known as 'Castle', have for a great many years attached themselves to the fortifications on the south-west.

As far as it is possible to ascertain there was originally an inner rampart several feet in height above the central area of the camp; below this a considerable scarp followed by a ditch and bank and a second scarp below.

The camp has been briefly described elsewhere,¹ but no

¹ *V.C.H. Som.*, ii, 505 (with plan); *Ancient Earthworks and Camps of Somerset*, by E. J. Burrow (1924), 98, where a small plan and sketch are given; *Wifela's Combe*, by F. Hancock (1911), 5-6.

complete survey of the area has ever been made. From the ordnance sheet it appears to be about 600 yards in length, and the inner bank enclosed about 12 acres,² now reduced somewhat by quarrying. This piece of land is divided into three fields; and it is in the north-east quarter of the south field that the hoard of coins, here described, was found by the owner of the property, Mr. Charles E. Hancock, when ploughing the land on 4 March 1946.^{2a}

(2) Nunnington Park Camp.

The small square-shaped camp at Nunnington Park is situated two-thirds of a mile south-east of the centre of Wiveliscombe in two fields called 'Dry Aubreys',³ at the east end of Quaker's Lane—probably an ancient trackway.

It is an enclosure with rounded corners, about 140 yds. across. The only defence is a simple scarp, 5 ft. to 7 ft. high, with a gradient for the most part about 1 in 3.⁴ The late E. J. Burrow describes the little camp in similar terms and gives a wash-drawing.⁵

The writer visited the site on 9 May 1947 and found the camp forming the greater part of an arable field, with a modern hedge running along the crest of the scarp on the south and southern half of the west side just within the next field (grass). Here there are distinct traces of a silted-up ditch.⁶

² In Kelly's *Directory of Somerset*, 1939, it is stated that the *whole* area of the camp covers about 77 acres. Of course that includes the whole of Hyden Wood and much more.

^{2a} This piece of land, up to c. 1892, was divided by stone-faced banks into three fields, all arable. All except Field 852 was then planted with larch and the banks were allowed to fall, their levelling being completed when the plantation was cleared in 1944-5 by means of bull-dozer and deep-ploughing tackle. The hoard of coins was found approximately in the position occupied by the figures '852' on the 25-in. ordnance map.

³ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xxix, i, 19. For the Nonington or de Nunnington family, who appear to have had their principal residence at Nunnington, see Hancock's *Wifela's Combe*, 214-15. For position of Nunnington Park, see 6-in. ordnance sheet, LXIX, N.W.

⁴ *V.C.H. Som.*, ii, 513, where the name is given as 'Minnington' instead of 'Nunnington'. A plan accompanies the description.

⁵ *Ancient Earthworks and Camps of Somerset*, 116, where 'Nunnington' has also been wrongly rendered as 'Minnington'.

⁶ C. H. Bothamley (*V.C.H. Som.*, ii, 513) said there were no traces of a ditch.

(3) Ancient Remains previously found at 'Castle'.

(a) *Human Remains*.—About 1914, the late C. A. Lovegrove found the heads of three human femora—one very straight—lying on the surface of the rampart slopes and ditch. They were much weathered (Som. Co. Mus., No. A. 704–6).

(b) *Roman Coins*.—Collinson records the finding, in 1711, of coins within the camp. They were chiefly of Trajan, Antoninus Pius, Tacitus and Gallienus, it is said.⁷

A hoard of 1,600 large brass ('size of a half-penny') coins was found in an urn near Wiveliscombe, in the 'neighbouring valley' by 'Castle'. They belonged to Diocletian, Maximianus, Constantius I, Maximinus, Fl. Val. Severus, Constantinus I, 'and are said all to have borne the figure of Mars and the legend "Genio Populi Romani"'.⁸

(c) *Spindle-whorl* (figured in Plate V).—This spindle-whorl of red sandstone was found in ploughing in the camp at 'Castle'. It has flat surfaces and rounded edges; maximum diameter $1\frac{1}{16}$ in.; maximum thickness nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ in., with perforation, drilled from both sides, having a minimum diameter of $\frac{1}{4}$ in. It is ornamented with seven radial incised lines on one face, and eight on the other. The interspaces are filled by circular depressions, eight on one face, nine on the other. A line of indented dots, twenty in number, encircles the whorl.

Such a specimen—half a small stone spindle-whorl—was found on Ham Hill, South Somerset, in 1921; it is ornamented on one face with radial lines, with a small round depression between each (Som. Co. Mus., No. A. 1801). Allusions to this type of ornament are made in the writer's chapter on Spindle-whorls in Vol. I, *Meare Lake Village*.

(d) *Flint*.—Chippings of flint have been found in fields 905, 906, 911 and 912, by members of the Hancock family.

(4) Ancient Remains found in the Neighbourhood.

(a) *Implement, Neolithic or Bronze Age*.—This implement was given to the Somerset County Museum by W. S. Langdon

⁷ Collinson, *History of Somerset*, ii, 488; *V.C.H. Som.*, i, 369; Hancock, *Wifela's Combe*, 6.

⁸ Haverfield in *V.C.H. Som.*, i, 369, gives the following references: Musgrave, *Antiq. Brit. Belg.*, i, 20; Gibson's *Camden* (1772), i, 74, confusing the two hoards; Collinson, ii, 488; Gough, *Adds. to Camden*, i, 95–6, following Gibson.

in 1879.⁹ It was found on Mr. Langdon's farm at Whitefield, in the parish of Wiveliscombe, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north of the town.

This very large implement is of fine grained granite, of dark colour; length $14\frac{5}{8}$ in., maximum width $4\frac{3}{8}$ in., maximum thickness 2 in., weight 7 lb. 3 oz. (avoirdupois).

Owing to its large size and weight it cannot be regarded as a celt or axe, although worked to that form, being wider at the cutting-edge than at the fairly sharp butt-end. It may have been intended for ceremonial purposes; on the other hand it may perhaps have been used as a club, being held by the small end, and employed for warfare or possibly for stunning fish.

Bronze implements are also said to have been found in the neighbourhood.¹⁰

(b) *Cinerary Urn, Bronze Age*.—A part of a large urn, with overhanging rim, was found in a field west of Whitefield and near Jews Farm,¹¹ and was given to the Somerset County Museum (No. A. 952) in 1862¹² by W. W. Munckton. About two-thirds of the ornamented rim has survived. The base of the vessel is missing, but a part of the body remains in fragments. The urn was probably buried in an inverted position and the base destroyed by the plough. It contained fragmentary cremated human bones.

Other pottery (period unknown) was found against the foundations of the old parish church when it was pulled down in 1827.

(c) *Remains of a Lead Coffin*.—On 30 August 1870 three pieces of a coffin of lead, presumably Roman, were found in constructing the Devon and Somerset Railway¹⁴ opposite the

⁹ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xxv, i, 21; xxix, i, 19; *Some Account of the Town and Parish of Wiveliscombe*, by Clement Waldron, Cardiff, 1883, p. 3; Hancock, *Wifela's Combe*, 5.

The implement was, it is believed, found several years before 1879. It is exhibited in the Somerset County Museum (No. A. 2188).

¹⁰ See C. Waldron's pamphlet (1883), p. 3.

¹¹ For the family of Jewe see Hancock's *Wifela's Combe*, 217.

¹² Jews Farm, in Wiveliscombe Without, is one-third of a mile north of Maundown (6-in. O.S. sheet LIX, S.W.).

¹³ *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, xi, i, 56.

¹⁴ The railway from Norton Fitzwarren to Wiveliscombe was opened in 1871.

first milestone out of Wiveliscombe (on the east side), half-way between the Manor Farm and Coxborough (Croford). According to 'J. H. Ball', whose notes have been published by the writer,¹⁵ the coffin was discovered at a depth of about 8 feet from the surface. The workmen found the metal much corroded and it broke up; they threw the pieces aside.¹⁶ The coffin contained a human skeleton. The presence of decayed wood was noted—evidence that the leaden coffin had been enclosed in an external wooden structure, as was the case with the Marnhull (Dorset) burial.¹⁷

Several other leaden coffins have been found in the county.¹⁸

Mr. C. Waldron stated in 1883 (*op. cit.*) that a large barrow, 'which does not appear to have been recently opened', stood close to the railway at Croford, at a place called 'Coxborough'—that is where the Wiveliscombe-Milverton and the Fitzhead roads join, close to the cottage at the road-junction which was once a smithy.¹⁹

(5) **Coin Hoard, 1946 ; Vessel which contained some of the Coins (Plate V).**

Beaker or vase²⁰ with bulbous body and everted rim (rounded); of pale red paste, surfaced with a rather darker light-red dull paint or glaze. The body is 10 in. in circumference, although the height of the vessel is barely 4 in. The maximum diameter at the rim is barely 2 in.; small base, only $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. in diameter. The jar has no ornamentation nor inscription. It was filled with a large proportion of the coins—the remainder being placed in close contact with the vessel.

The form of the jar is fairly common, but this specimen has

¹⁵ H. St. George Gray in *Som. & Dor. Notes and Queries*, ix, 8; see also *V.C.H. Som.*, i, 369, and Hancock, *Wifela's Combe*, 6-7.

¹⁶ The remains of the Wiveliscombe coffin are preserved in the Somerset County Museum (No. A. 703).

¹⁷ *Som. & Dor. Notes and Queries*, ix, 7.

¹⁸ H. St. George Gray in: *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxviii, 87-92; lxxii, 91; *Antiq. Journ.*, ii, 371-5; *Som. & Dor. Notes and Queries*, ix, 58, 230; xiv, 335; *Proc. Dor. Field Club*, xxxviii, 68-73 (chiefly Dorset).

¹⁹ The site is presumably on the hillock immediately to the south-west of the cottage and across the road. An archæological eye should be kept on this site—now an arable field.

²⁰ These small vessels are described as 'jars' in the *Brit. Mus. Cat. of Roman Pottery* (1908), Plate XVIII, M.141 and 143.

an unusually small base which makes the vessel decidedly top-heavy.

It is closely comparable with similar vessels, one larger, one smaller, found on Shapwick Heath (Som.) in 1936 and 1937 with pewter vessels, in conjunction with two hoards of late Roman coins—all fully described by the present writer in *Proceedings*.²¹

A bulbous beaker of the same form is figured in *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*, by R. G. Collingwood (1930), Fig. 58, no. 85. The author states that on the Continent this form begins before the middle of the third century, but though Britain has third-century examples, most of the dated specimens belong to the fourth century (Wroxeter, type 69, 81; Richborough, type 96). Margidunum furnishes an example of this form of the third century.²²

(6) The Discovery of the Coin Hoard in 1946.

A short report appeared in the local press in March 1946 to the effect that a large hoard of small bronze Roman coins had been found at 'Castle' by Mr. Charles Hancock, when ploughing within the camp (see p. 66). This Western hoard of *aes*, numbering 1,139 coins (including one *siliqua* of Julian II), were buried at a depth of rather less than 1 foot, and the greater number of them filled the pottery beaker (Plate V), the remainder having been spread in close contact with the vase.

Mr. Harold Mattingly, of the British Museum, at my invitation, kindly undertook to have these coins cleaned and listed in detail. He found that they covered the period A.D. 270–4 to c. A.D. 388. We append his interesting report and some of his lists.²³

²¹ Vol. lxxxii (1936), 163–70, and Plate VI; Vol. lxxxiii (1937), 152, and Plate XXIII.

²² *Journ. Roman Studies*, xvi (1926), Plate V, no. 8. Similar forms from places including Colchester, may be seen in *The Roman Era in Britain*, by John Ward, plate facing p. 158, and Fig. 46, p. 167. The form is also to be seen in some of the figures in the *Guildhall Mus. Cat.*, 1903, Plate XLII.

A jar of similar type and size, of Rhenish ware, painted red-brown, may be seen in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (R. 226); it has a painted inscription, and is datable to the third century; it was found at Cologne. There are two similar 'drinking-vessels' from Cologne, but with wider pedestal base, in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford.

²³ The hoards of *siliquæ* found at Shapwick Heath, Somerset, are described in *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vols. lxxxii and lxxxiii.

This recent discovery again emphasizes the fact that Somerset has revealed a rather surprising number of hoards of the late Roman Empire.²⁴

PART II.—DESCRIPTION OF THE COINS,

BY HAROLD MATTINGLY.

THIS is a typically Western hoard of *aes* (we can hardly call it a 'mixed' hoard in view of only one silver coin—a very rare *siliqua* of Julian II). The Gallic mints of Arelate and Lugdunum predominate and Treveri too is prominent in the early period while it was striking bronze. Aquileia, Rome and Siscia are fairly represented, while other mints show only one or two odd specimens.

The earliest coins of the hoard are of A.D. 270–4, the latest of c. A.D. 388. There are a couple of coins of Flavius Victor, who only became colleague of his father, Magnus Maximus, at the end of his reign. But there are no coins either of Eugenius, A.D. 393–4, or of Honorius, who succeeded in A.D. 393. The curious feature of the hoard, however, is the fact that it is massed (to the extent of something like three-quarters) on the reigns of Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian. It almost looks as if our whole hoard were a set of scattered accumulations containing in itself a 'Valentinian' hoard of a more normal character. It cannot have gone into the ground before c. A.D. 388, the date of its latest dateable coin. Whether its burial was actually delayed beyond that date cannot be determined. The one argument for a possibly later date is the presence of a few imitations of the late 'Salus Reipublicae' and 'Victoria Auggg.' types. Little is known of these imitations at present, but we might guess that they were late to appear.

Occasional barbarous imitations appear along the whole length of the hoard, but their number is small (46—only 4 per cent. of the total) which may be accounted for by the fact that the hoard itself is massed on the House of Valentinian,

²⁴ See an annotated list of some of these discoveries in the writer's first Shapwick paper (*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, lxxxii, 164–5).

of the coins of which barbarous imitations are extremely scarce. A special frequency (exactly half of the total number of copies) is to be noted for the 'Fel. Temp. Reparatio' type—Warrior spearing Horseman reverse. These pieces include a hybrid of Magnentius (D N MAGN . . . VS F VC; *Rev.* FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO, Warrior spearing Horseman), and a number overstruck on the earlier 'Gloria Exercitus' (two standards or one standard) type; the conclusion already reached that these overstrikes took place not long after the issue of the original coins is here abundantly confirmed.

A curious piece is an overstruck (?) barbarous 'Gloria Romanorum' (Emperor and Captive) of Gratian, reading D N GNATIANVS (*sic*) P F AVG. Both obverse and reverse have been disfigured by short oblique marks, apparently made by a chisel or similar instrument and presumably obliterating the original legends: the barbarous legend appears partly within these marks on the obverse. It would seem that the disfigurement took place after the barbarous type was struck, since the latter part of the barbarous legend and a part of the emperor's features have not escaped the chisel. The reverse legend and type have been defaced by the same means almost beyond recognition.

Another interesting piece is a 'Securitas Reipublicae' of Valentinian I. The obverse seems quite regular, but the reverse shows signs of a slight irregularity, which is noticeable in the figure of the Victory—particularly in the thickness and attitude of the arms and in the dress. It can hardly be called barbarous in the usual sense of the word, therefore, and so may be merely an irregular issue by a regular mint.

The hoard contains only one barbarous of uncertain prototype—a *minimus* with the bare (?) head of an emperor on the obverse, and on the reverse a figure in a short smock-like tunic, holding a sceptre. On both obverse and reverse any attempt at a legend is non-existent, only theremains of letters appearing.

A fuller description of this hoard is being kept in the files of the Coin Room in the British Museum. I have to thank Mr. J. W. E. Pearce, F.S.A., of Tunbridge Wells, and Mr. P. V. Hill of the Coin Room for much help in the preparation of the report on this hoard.

EMPERORS, ETC., REPRESENTED IN THE HOARD.

						<i>Number found.</i>
Tetricus I	..	..	..	..	..	7
Tetricus II	..	..	..	..	..	3
Constantine I	..	..	..	..	..	6
Helena	..	..	..	..	..	2
Theodora	..	..	..	..	..	1
Constantinopolis	..	..	..	..	..	5
Urbs Roma	..	..	..	..	..	3
Constantine II	..	..	..	..	..	4
Constans	..	..	..	..	..	30
Constantius II	..	..	..	..	..	63
Magnentius	..	..	..	..	..	6
Julian II	..	..	..	..	..	6
Jovian	..	..	..	..	..	1
Valentinian I	..	..	..	..	..	216
Valens	..	..	..	..	..	394
Gratian	..	..	..	..	..	235
Valentinian II	..	..	..	..	..	19
Theodosius I	..	..	..	..	..	28
Arcadius	..	..	..	..	..	21
Magnus Maximus	..	..	..	..	..	5
Flavius Victor	..	..	..	..	..	2
Uncertain	..	..	..	..	..	76
Uncertain Barbarous	..	..	..	..	..	6
						<hr/>
				Total	..	1,139

MINTS REPRESENTED.

						<i>Quantity.</i>
Alexandria	..	..	..	..	..	1
Antioch	..	..	..	..	..	1
Aquileia	..	..	..	..	..	76
Arelate	..	..	..	..	..	342
Cyzicus	..	..	..	..	..	1
Lugdunum	..	..	..	..	..	188
Nicomedia	..	..	..	..	..	1
Rome	..	..	..	..	..	65
Siscia	..	..	..	..	..	48
Thessalonica	..	..	..	..	..	2
Treviri	..	..	..	..	..	57
Uncertain	..	..	..	..	..	347
						<hr/>
						1,129
				Radiates	..	10
						<hr/>
						1,139

REVERSES REPRESENTED IN THE HOARD.

	<i>Quantity.</i>
Cæsarum Nostrorum Vot. X	1
Concordia Auggg. (Constantinople)	2
Concordia Auggg. (Roma)	2
Constantinopolis	5
Fel. Temp. Reparatio (Legionary)	47
Fel. Temp. Reparatio (Phoenix)	1
Fel. Temp. Reparatio (Galley)	1
Felicitas Reipublice (<i>sic</i>)	3
Fides Militum	1
Gloria Exercitus (two standards)	5
Gloria Exercitus (one standard)	18
Gloria Novi Saeculi	97
Gloria Romanorum (Emperor)	294
Gloria Romanorum (Victory)	3
Laetitia Aug. N.	1
Pax Aug.	1
Pax Publica	2
Pietas Romana	1
Providentiae Augg.	1
Providentiae Caess	1
Restitutor Reipublicae	2
Salus Reipublicae	18
Securitas Reipublicae	467
Spes Publica	4
Spes Reipublice (<i>sic</i>)	4
Spes Romanorum	7
Urbs Roma	3
Victoria Auggg.	53
Victoriae Dd. Augg. Q. Nn.	39
Victoriae Dd. Nn. Aug. et Caes.	2
Virtus (Auggg. Nn. ?)	1
Virtus Romanorum	3
Vot. V. Mult. X.	1
Vot. X. Mult. XX.	2
Vot. XV. Mult. XX.	13
No legend (Divus Constantinus)	1
Uncertain	28
Uncertain Barbarous	4
Total ..	<u>1,139</u>

SYNOPSIS OF MINTS IN PERIODS.

						<i>Quantity.</i>
1.	RADIATES	..	..	..	..	10
2.	CONSTANTINIAN, A.D. 320-40	..	..	..	..	38
	Arelate	.	.	.	.	5
	Lugdunum	..	.	.	.	5
	Nicomedia	.	.	.	.	1
	Treviri	.	.	.	.	8
	Uncertain	.	.	.	.	19
3.	SONS OF CONSTANTINE, ETC., A.D. 340-64	..	..	..	..	101
	Alexandria	.	.	.	.	1
	Antioch	.	.	.	.	1
	Arelate	.	.	.	.	6
	Cyzicus	.	.	.	.	1
	Lugdunum	.	.	.	.	4
	Rome	.	.	.	.	1
	Treviri	.	.	.	.	39
	Uncertain	.	.	.	.	48
4.	HOUSE OF VALENTINIAN I, A.D. 364-78	..	..	..	..	863
	Aquileia	.	.	.	.	73
	Arelate	.	.	.	.	310
	Lugdunum	.	.	.	.	159
	Rome	.	.	.	.	57
	Siscia	.	.	.	.	48
	Thessalonica	.	.	.	.	2
	Treviri	.	.	.	.	5
	Uncertain	.	.	.	.	209
5.	LATER PERIOD, A.D. 378-88 (or later)	..	..	..	..	98
	Aquileia	.	.	.	.	3
	Arelate	.	.	.	.	21
	Lugdunum	.	.	.	.	20
	Rome	.	.	.	.	6
	Treviri	.	.	.	.	5
	Uncertain	.	.	.	.	43
6.	UNCLASSIFIED	..	..	..	..	29
	Total	..	..	..	..	<u>1,139</u>