

A Late Roman Coin-Hoard from Kiddington, Oxon.

By C. H. V. SUTHERLAND

DURING the excavation, in the summer of 1935, of the Roman villa in Watts Wells Field South near Ditchley (described above, pp. 24 ff.), it became known that Mr. H. M. Gaskell, of Kiddington Hall, was in possession of a hoard of bronze coins¹ which had been found at a previous date no more than a few hundred yards from the site of the villa. The actual find-spot is uncertain now, but it lay (as marked approximately on the foregoing map, above, p. 26) about 600-700 yards NNE. of the villa, and just north of the hedge between Box Wood and Out Wood,² on the property of Mr. Gaskell.

With the owner's kind consent the hoard was removed to the Ashmolean Museum for cleaning and examination. From the broken sherds which accompanied the hoard it may probably be inferred that the coins were contained in a pot and that this was broken at some time or other in the process of cultivation. The coins themselves formed a nearly solid mass of metal, moulded in parts to contours suitable to the inside of a pot (PLATE XV A). Mr. W. H. Young, by whose skill and patience the coins have been separated and cleaned, reports that their condition before cleaning was consistent with their having been subject for a considerable period to the chemical action of the soil; their original receptacle was probably shattered some long time ago, for the sherds which are here assumed to be the remains of the pot have their edges blunt and rounded. A proportion of the coins bear a partial coating of a tin-like deposit, for which there seems to be no obvious explanation.

The hoard comprises 1176 coins, and the summary list³ of them is as follows:

1 Claudius Gothicus	5 Constantine II
9 Radiate copies, etc.	2 Constantius II
12 Constantine I	7 Constans

¹ Summary report in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1936, pp. 82 ff.

² See 6" O.S. Oxon. 21 SW. The find of Roman coins near Out Wood which is already marked on the O.S. map should not be confused with the present hoard. It is of interest to note that yet a third Kiddington hoard is recorded in the Manning MSS. preserved in the Ashmolean; this was found near Out Wood in the 19th century, and consisted of 70 silver coins.

³ For details see full list below, pp. 75 ff.

LATE ROMAN COIN-HOARD

13 Constantius II or Constans	67 Valentinian II
14 House of Constantine I	88 Theodosius I
3 Julian	218 Arcadius
4 Valens	73 Honorius
6 Gratian	453 House of Theodosius I
12 House of Valentinian I	4 Copies of 'Theodosian' issues
12 Magnus Maximus	10 Blanks
3 Victor	140 Illegible, mostly 'Theodosian'
1 Magnus Maximus or Victor	12 Fragments
7 Eugenius	—
	1176 Total

It is of interest to observe the proportions in which a hoard buried at some date after the year A.D. 395, when Honorius (on the death of his father Theodosius) became co-Emperor with his brother Arcadius, preserves the coinage of earlier periods. The earliest datable coin is that bearing the 'Altar' type commemorating Claudius Gothicus, *circ.* A.D. 270; the coin is much worn and its size has been reduced, by wear or clipping or both, to 14 mm. Of the other radiate coins most, if not all, are irregular copies; these too are worn, and vary from 15 to 11.5 mm. in size, and they are to be assigned to the period *circ.* A.D. 270-300, during which the unofficial reproduction of the Gallic and other radiate issues was most prevalent. The subsequent period of Constantine the Great and his dynasty is represented by 56 coins. These, although they are in general fresher than the group of radiates, are nevertheless considerably worn, certain coins having been also reduced to $\text{Æ}4$ size.¹ About a dozen of this group are barbarous or semi-barbarous copies, which are chiefly based on the *Gloria Exercitus* and *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* types. Of the latter variety there are to be noted four $\text{Æ}4$ copies, all of somewhat rough execution and (like the other coins of this type) remarkably worn. The only exception is a notable little coin (PLATE XV B, 1-2) which, to judge from its comparative freshness of condition and from the peculiar style of its portraiture, wherein the style of the *sceatta* coinage (PLATE XV B, 3-4) is oddly foreshadowed, is probably to be recognised as a production of the late fourth or early fifth century when, as is known,² the *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* type attracted a number of busy imitators.

Of the reigns of Valentinian I, Valens, Gratian and Magnus Maximus there are 38 coins; these, with the exception of the issues of Maximus and of

¹ The conventional symbols $\text{Æ}3$ and $\text{Æ}4$ are used throughout for 'third' and 'fourth brass,' as an indication of size.

² Cf. the hoards of 'diademed' *minimi* from Lydney (Wheeler, *Research Rept. Soc. Antiquaries* IX, pp. 116 ff.), Richborough (*Journ. Rom. Stud.*, XXII (1932), pp. 223 ff.), and Bourton-on-the-Water (*Bristol and Glos. Arch. Soc. Transactions*, LVI (1934), pp. 133 ff.)

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his son Victor, are worn and battered to a condition almost as bad as that of the radiate group, and one coin has been reduced to $\text{Æ}4$ size.

The three preceding groups total 104 coins, *i.e.* between 8 and 9 *per cent.* of the whole hoard. The numbers of illegible coins and of fragments are 140 and 12 respectively, giving a combined total of just under 13 *per cent.* Apart from a little group of 10 blank flans, to be discussed later (p. 74), the residue of the hoard (910 coins = 78 *per cent.*) consists of coinage issued between A.D. 388 and 395. In its main proportions the hoard is closely analogous to other bronze hoards of the same general date, *e.g.*, those from Richborough,¹ Weymouth Bay,² Icklingham,³ and Nobottle;⁴ to his account of this last in the *Archaeological Journal* Mr. B. H. St. J. O'Neil added a useful conspectus of the Theodosian coin-hoards recorded in Britain, with an interesting analysis of their composition and distribution.

Throughout the fourth century the Roman imperial coinage had undergone a series of vicissitudes. The era of Constantine, in which little silver was circulated, witnessed a currency based on the gold *solidus* (of $\frac{1}{2}$ of a lb. of gold) and on copious issues of silvered bronze which, for all practical purposes, are nothing else than $\text{Æ}3$. A constant tendency for prices to rise appears to have been countered periodically by an attempt at stabilization through reducing the weight and size of the bronze issues; these reduced coins sank rapidly in weight, and inevitably necessitated the production, in their turn, of larger pieces. The dynasty of Valentinian I, which saw a much increased currency of genuine silver, coincided also with a temporary improvement in the bronze standard; but the House of Theodosius abandoned $\text{Æ}3$ for $\text{Æ}4$ finally, and thenceforth the bronze coinage was never far removed from minim size. It followed that whatever bronze coinage was locally produced in or after the Theodosian period was, as a matter of course, never larger (it was indeed often smaller) than $\text{Æ}4$.

An added difficulty which involved the western part of the Empire at the end of the fourth century was caused by the closing down of the Gallic mints. Since about A.D. 364, Arles and Lyons had replaced Trier as the chief source of Æ in Gaul; Trier had henceforth issued copious silver but (as the present hoard shows) scarcely any bronze. Britain, of course, had no regular mint of her own, for Magnus Maximus' operation of a mint in London was brief. After A.D. 388 the supplies of coinage in the West were partially curtailed by the restriction of the second *officina*, or mint-shop, of the Lyons mint,⁵ and about A.D. 395

¹ Bushe-Fox, *Richborough III (Research Rept. Soc. Antiquaries x)*, pp. 192 ff.

² *Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings*, II, pp. 158 ff.

³ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1929, pp. 319 ff.

⁴ *Archaeological Journal*, xc (1933), pp. 282 ff.; *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1930, pp. 275 ff.

⁵ The present hoard includes no coins of *Officina* II of Lyons.

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the Gallic mints were almost certainly closed for good. Thus, after a period in which the influx of bronze currency was remarkably strong, Britain, in common with Gaul, found herself cut off in a moment from further supplies. Her plight was, indeed, worse than that of Gaul, which remained connected in some degree with the mint-districts of N. Italy.

It may be presumed that sufficient currency, from one source or another, entered Britain for the maintenance of the civil and military staff until about A.D. 410; the amount of silver found in this country (and elsewhere than in Somerset) can only be explained, like the finds of gold, by some such circumstance. The Roman evacuation would, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reminds us, naturally result in the export of a considerable amount of coinage from Britain. The island was therefore left with a currency consisting of survivals,—a good deal of bronze, some of it old, but most of it recent, and probably much more silver and gold than men could find an economic use for. As the years of political and administrative severance from Rome lengthened, it must have become increasingly hard to keep up even a uniform bronze-standard, and in the hoards of *minimi*, some radiate and some diademed, which are now in many cases given a date well within the fifth century, we may probably see reflected the appreciation of bronze as metal, and the consequent restriction of currency, as token money, to more or less regional or urban limits. Such a process would be hastened by difficulty of communications on the one hand, and by the growth of a system of barter on the other.

In Mr. O'Neil's paper in the *Archaeological Journal* referred to above (p. 72) there is a list of over sixty coin-hoards of so-called 'Theodosian' date, *i.e.*, containing (as does the present hoard) issues of Theodosius, Arcadius or Honorius.¹ What date should be assigned to such of these hoards as possess no external evidence of date? The cessation of the Gallic mints cannot, of course, be used as a lower limit, for obviously coinage of the Theodosian type would continue to emanate from Gaul, and might therefore be hoarded in Britain, so long as Gaul and Britain were under the same administrative system. Indeed, the closing of these mints is more often an upper limit. Hoards of this type generally include a good proportion of coins of Honorius who, before his association with Arcadius in A.D. 395, had enjoyed the style of 'Augustus' for only two years previously. It is therefore not improbable that we should seek the occasion for burying 'Theodosian' hoards in the final decade of the occupation, A.D. 400-410. A glance at Mr. O'Neil's map will show that, a few stragglers

¹To this list (supplemented in *Arch. Journ.* xcii (1935), p. 74) may be added, besides the present hoard, one which was found some years ago at Orford Ness, Suffolk, for the information about which I am indebted to Mr. J. M. F. May, of Exeter College. See also the notice of a hoard from Laxton, near Stamford, in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1936, pp. 156 ff.

excepted, nearly all these hoards are included in the area south-east of the Fosse Way. The process of constriction and pressure which finally made Britain, in the eyes of the central government, an unprofitable province to preserve must in fact have concentrated the main centres of administrative and military activity more and more in this very SE. area. This granted, we are at liberty to attribute hoarding to the time which witnessed the evacuation, and to see in widespread concealment of money a means of guarding against the uncertainty of an unprotected future. But it is equally possible that, when that future actually supervened and became fact, there was then also a no less powerful encouragement to the hiding of what was not yet put safely away.

Hoards concealed at a time after, though not necessarily very long after, the traditional date of the evacuation, would have certain simple characteristics. The coins would show some wear—and the illegibility of some is not minimized by the freshness of others, which may have been hoarded at, or from, an earlier date; they would not normally comprise issues later than the last of those commonly struck in Gaul—though the Great Stanmore and Coleraine hoards exceptionally include coins of Constantine III (A.D. 408–11), of gold and silver respectively; and finally the bronze hoards might be expected to include anything which, as the epoch of currency-supply became ever more remote, could possibly pass for coin. Many 'Theodosian' hoards have their proportion of thin and battered radiates and their copies, and of imitations of the more popular Constantinian types. The Kiddington hoard shows clearly the beginning of a genuine 'bronze-hunger' by its including a group, as significant as it is small, of entirely blank flans; six of these are clipped from thin metal (one still retains quite painfully sharp edges) and four, all of small diameter, have possibly been chopped from a metal rod, as were certain of the Lydney *minimi*.¹ Nor should the remarkable *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* copy (PLATE XV B, 1–2) be forgotten; this type, which, like the radiate-crown series, was probably regarded as traditional for copyists, was resuscitated in the fifth century, and the present coin is remarkably unworn when compared with the twelve others of the same type which accompany it.

The suggestion is made by Mr. O'Neil² that the almost complete absence of 'Theodosian' coin-hoards from inhabited sites, considered with the fact of their usual proximity to Roman roads in Britain, indicates that these hoards 'were concealed by persons who were overtaken by fear of molestation on their way between towns, or whilst moving from the country to a town.' This may well be so. Nevertheless, many of these hoards have, as is admitted, been found

¹ See above, p. 71, note 2.

² *Archaeological Journal*, xc (1933), pp. 291–2.

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anything from two to four and even six miles from Roman roads ; the present hoard is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the Akeman Street. Fear of robbery and violence on highways should properly lead to concealment on the line of the highways. The Kiddington hoard is, moreover, one of a number, small though definite, known to have been buried in or near habitation-sites. Anyone occupying the Ditchley villa and fearing for the safety of his money could do no better than conceal it, away from the house, in the ground, marked by landmarks of no significance to any but himself. Such were the considerations that must have governed the concealment of many hoards.

The Kiddington hoard is the first of this period to be discovered along the line of the Akeman Street, and Mr. O'Neil's map thus receives an interesting addition. The history of the villa and of the hoard are, of course, somewhat inter-dependent ; but at least this can be said safely, that the hoard could very well have been concealed at a date later than the Roman evacuation. If the villa was left empty at the time of the evacuation, it might have received other occupants afterwards who, in a time of increasing lawlessness, preferred to keep their treasure at a safe but easy distance rather than run the risk of its early discovery in the villa—the obvious goal of the first resolute band of robbers or marauders.

DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF THE KIDDINGTON HOARD

- C. = Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'empire romain*, 2nd edition.
S. = Sabatier, *Description générale des monnaies byzantines*.

NOTE.—In the following list the mint-marks are recorded whenever it is possible to do so ; absence of mint-marks from the descriptions of coins in the list may be taken as implying absence or illegibility of the mint-marks on the coins themselves.

The bulk of the issues falling between A.D. 388 and 395 are, according to modern usage, tabulated by mints : see below, p. 80. Seniority of birth among the emperors of the 'Theodosian' group (Valentinian II, Theodosius, Arcadius, Honorius) was partially observed in the organization of their mints. Thus, although Arcadius possessed an exceptional seniority (reflected in the major proportion of coins of the first 'Officina' or mint-shop) at both Arles and Aquileia, the normal rule—also illustrated by the present hoard—shows Valentinian II predominant in Officina I at Arles, with Theodosius likewise predominant in Officina II and Honorius in Officina III. The partition of Officinæ in the mint of Rome is more obscure ; this hoard shows Valentinian II in Of. I and Of. III, Theodosius in Of. III and Of. V, Arcadius in Of. V and Honorius (usually assigned senior status at Rome) in Of. III only, whereas generally Valentinian II is given Of. I and Of. II, and Theodosius Of. III and Of. IV.

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No. of Coins

1

CLAUDIUS II GOTHICUS

1 'Consecratio' (Altar) type.

9

RADIATE COPIES

- 1 *Iovi Propugnatori* (?) type : poor work. 13 mm.
 1 *Mars Victor* type : poor. 11.5 mm.
 1 Uncertain male fig. stg. facing, arms raised : crude. 15 mm.
 1 *Hilaritas* (?) type : extremely crude and thin. 13 mm.
 1 *Pax* type : fair style. 13 mm.
 1 Uncertain female fig. stg. : poor. 14 mm.
 3 Doubtful or illegible coins (two of them broken).

12

CONSTANTINE I

- 2 *Gloria Exercitus* (1 standard) C. 246 (M on flag), +1 (exact variety uncertain).
 4 *Constantinopolis* C. 21, $\overline{\text{PLG}}$ (2, — one being of irregular fabric, with $\overline{\text{CONSTN-TINOP-}}$), +2 (one irregular).
 2 *Urbs Roma* C. 17, $\overline{\text{PLG}}$, +1 (probably barbarous).
 2 HELENA—*Pax Publica* C. 6, $\overline{\text{TRS}}$, +1 (exact variety uncertain).
 2 THEODORA—*Pietas Romana* C. 4, $\overline{\text{TRP}}$, +1 (of \mathbb{A}_4 size).

5

CONSTANTINE II

- 2 *Gloria Exercitus* (2 standards) C. 122 (irregular, with $\overline{\text{IIN}}$ and the soldiers each holding two spears $\uparrow\uparrow$), +1 (exact variety uncertain).
 3 *Gloria Exercitus* (1 standard) C. 115, $\overline{\text{TRS}}$, +2 (one \mathbb{A}_4 , and probably irregular, with $\overline{\text{PLG}}$).

2

CONSTANTIUS II

- 1 *Spes Reipublice* C. 188.
 1 *Victoriae Dd Augg q Nn* C. 293, $\frac{\text{M}}{\text{TR-}}$.

7

CONSTANS

- 2 *Gloria Exercitus* (1 standard) 2 (exact varieties unknown, but Constans as Augustus).
 5 *Victoriae Dd Augg q Nn* C. 179, $\frac{\heartsuit}{\text{TR-}}$ (?) (2), $\frac{\text{P}}{\text{TRP}}$, $\frac{\text{M}}{\text{TR-}}$ (?), $\frac{\text{M}}{\text{TRP}}$.

LATE ROMAN COIN-HOARD

No. of Coins

13

CONSTANTIUS II OR CONSTANS

- 12 *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* (horseman) Nearly all worn to illegibility; two mint-marks survive, ALE— and CPLG, —the latter on one of four semi-barbarous Æ4 coins.
- 1 ditto Barbarous copy of probably late date (*i.e.*, late 4th or early 5th century). The sceatta-like obv. is vigorous if crude: but the rev. design is breaking up stylistically. Fresh. Obverse slightly double-struck. (PLATE XV B, 1-2).

14

HOUSE OF CONSTANTINE I

- 5 *Gloria Exercitus* (1 standard) Two coins, semi-barbarous, are marked TR— and P II.
- 7 *Victoriae Dd. Augg q Nn* $\frac{D}{?}$, $\frac{M}{?}$ (2), $\frac{N}{?}$ (2) +2.
- 1 Broken fragment Obv., bust r., with (?) -NVS AVG; Rev., uncertain, with CON.
- 1 Probably Constantinian Much worn.

3

JULIAN

- 3 *Spes Reipublice* Exact varieties uncertain.

4

VALENS

- 1 *Restitutor Reip* C. 29.
- 2 *Securitas Reipublicae* C. 47, SMRQ, SCON.
- 1 With illegible rev.

6

GRATIAN

- 3 *Gloria Novi Saeculi* C. 13, SCON, TCON, SMN—.
- 1 *Gloria Romanorum* C. 23, $\frac{O | F II}{?}$.
- 2 *Vot xv Mult xx* C. 75, LVGP, LVGS.

12

HOUSE OF VALENTINIAN I

- 2 *Gloria Romanorum* $\frac{O | F II}{?}$, +1.
- 8 *Securitas Reipublicae* SM—R—, +7.
- 2 Uncertain (one a fragment)

12

MAGNUS MAXIMUS

- 12 *Spes Romanorum* C. 7, SCON, TCON, LVGP, (2), LVGS, LVG—, SMTR, —TR, +4.

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No. of Coins

3

3 *Spes Romanorum*

VICTOR

C. 3, $\overline{\text{LVG}}$ —, — $\overline{\text{TR}}$, +1.

1

1 *Spes Romanorum*

MAGNUS MAXIMUS OR VICTOR

$\overline{\text{SMAQP}}$.

7

1 *Salus Reipublicae*

2 *Spes Romanorum*

2 *Victoria Augg*

2 Uncertain

EUGENIUS

C. 3.

C. 5, $\overline{\text{AQS}}$, +1.

C. 8.

Either C. 5 or C. 8.

67

24 *Salus Reipublicae*

36 *Victoria Augg*

1 *Gloria Reipublice*

1 *Vot v Mult. xx (sic)*

1 *Vot x Mult xx*

1 *Vot xv Mult xx*

3 With illegible rev.

VALENTINIAN II

} See Table at end of list.

C. 12, $\overline{\text{AQS}}$ (?).

$\overline{\text{SMTR}}$.

C. 73.

C. 74, $\overline{\text{SMRB}}$ (or P ?).

88

43 *Salus Reipublicae*

41 *Victoria Augg*

1 *Victoria Augg*
(2 Victories)

1 *Vot x Mult. xx*

2 With illegible rev.

THEODOSIUS I

} See Table at end of list.

C. 43, $\overline{\text{RQ}}$.

C. 70.

One possibly semi-barbarous.

218

41 *Salus Reipublicae*

155 *Victoria Augg*

1 (?) *Vot v*

1 *Vot x Mult xx*

3 *Victoria Augg*
(2 Victories).

1 Uncertain

1 Overstruck

15 With illegible rev.

ARCADIUS

} See Table at end of list.

S. 47.

S. 48.

S. —.

Either *Victoria Augg* (1 Victory), or *Salus Reipublicae*.

Probably on Arcadius.

LATE ROMAN COIN-HOARD

No. of Coins

73

HONORIUS

- 34 *Salus Reipublicae*
- 31 *Victoria Auggg*
- 1 *Vot v Mult x*
- 7 With illegible rev.

} See Table at end of list.

C. —

Two are attributable to the mint of Rome by the unaspirated obv. legend (see p. 80, note*).

453

HOUSE OF THEODOSIUS I

- 196 *Salus Reipublicae*
- 243 *Victoria Auggg*
- 10 *Victoria Auggg*
(2 Victories)
- 1 *Vot x Mult xx*
- 3 *Vot xv Mult xx*

} See Table at end of list.

$\frac{5}{7}, \frac{1}{7} (3), \frac{1}{7}, +5.$

4

COPIES OF THEODOSIAN $\text{Æ}4$

- 3 *Victoria Auggg*
(1 Victory) type

$\overline{\text{AQ}9}, \overline{\text{NN}}, +1.$

- 1 *Salus Reipublicae* type

$\overline{\text{AO}}$; small and crude.

10

BLANKS

- 6 Clipped from thin metal,—one with edges still very sharp.
- 4 Possibly sliced from a metal rod (11, 10.5 (2), and 10 mm.).

140 ILLEGIBLE: mainly Theodosian.

12 FRAGMENTS.

KIDDINGTON Æ4 HOARD

Issues and mint-marks : A.D. 388-395

VICTORIA AVGGG
(Single Victory to left)

SALUS REIPUBLICAE
(Victory, with captive, to left)

	ARLES			LYONS		TRIER	MINT-MARK UNCERTAIN	AQUILEIA		ROME					ANTIOCH	THESSALONICA	MINT-MARK UNCERTAIN	TOTAL
	I	II	III	I	II			I	II	I	II	I	II	III				
VALENTINIAN II	14	—	I	2	—	—	17	3	2	I	—	2	—	—	—	—	11	60
	+2							+2		+3								
THEODOSIUS I	—	14	—	3	—	I	17	2	I	—	—	2	—	3	—	—	28	84
	+6							+2		+5								
ARCADIUS	11	2	11	10	—	7	93	7	3	—	—	—	—	I	2	—	22	196
	+20			+1				+4		+2								
HONORIUS	—	I	8	3	—	—	16	2	—	—	—	I	—	—	—	—	18	65
	+3							+1		+12*								
HOUSE OF THEODOSIUS I	17	6	13	5	—	4	148	2	2	3	—	—	—	I	—	—	174	439
	+39			+11				+6		+8								
OFFICIAL TOTALS	42	23	33	23	—			16	8	4	—	5	—	5				
GRAND TOTALS	168			35		12	291	39		44					2	—	253	844

* Included in this number are 11 coins assigned to the mint of Rome on account of the unaspirated legend DN ONOR— ; cf. F. S. Salisbury in the *Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings*, 1930, pp. 159 ff.

NOTE.—The sign + when followed by a number below the inverted horizontal brackets, indicates coins which, owing to wear or damage, can be assigned to mints only, and not to *officinæ*.

PLATE XV



A

PART OF THE KIDDINGTON HOARD BEFORE CLEANING.



1



2



3



4

B

1 and 2. OBVERSE AND REVERSE OF COIN FROM THE KIDDINGTON HOARD
(pp. 71, 77).

3 and 4. OBVERSES OF TWO ANGLO-SAXON *SCEATTAS* OF THE LONDON CLASS.
(Scale, $\frac{1}{4}$).