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NOTES

1. A PHANTOM HOARD FROM HADRIAN'S WALL?

IN 1932 Gilbert Askew reported on a quantity of coins that had been acquired for the cabinet of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle.¹ They had, previous to this, formed part of the collection amassed by John Clayton of Chesters. Contained in this series was a group of fourth-century bronze coins which exhibited similar corrosion products and in some cases were actually adhering together. When cleaned and separated they were found to consist of 47 coins of Constantius II, 17 of Constantius Gallus and one of Magnentius. Nine others of Constans and Decentius could not be securely identified as having formed part of the same group at the time and so have been excluded from the present consideration. Askew suggested that the 65 coins formed all, or part, of a hoard.² This statement is not contested. However, he went further in associating the hoard with Hadrian's Wall and linking it with a particular find made at Chesters in the 1830s from which it was supposed that Clayton might have acquired coins.^{3,4} In the light of developments since the 1930s this conclusion can be demonstrated to be incorrect.

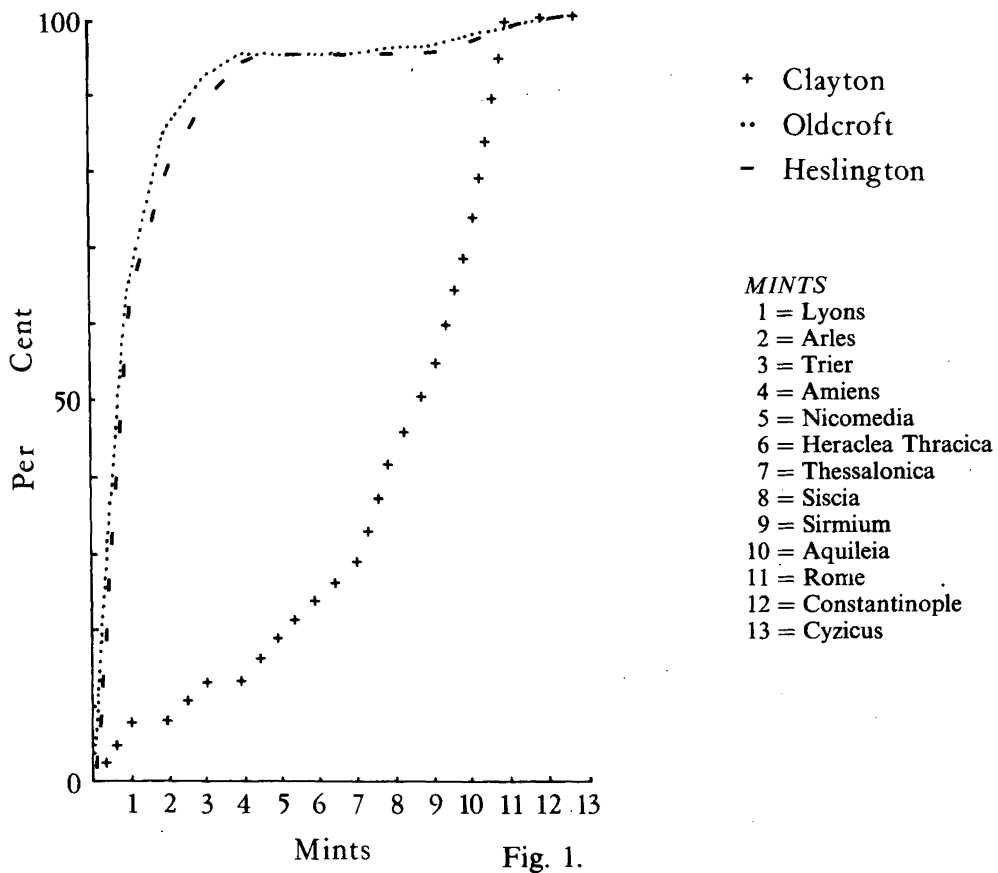
The coins form part of a fairly common series of hoards deposited in the 350s AD which contain coins of Magnentius, Constantius and his caesar Gallus, and as such they would not be out of place in a British context. An analysis of the place of origin of each coin by an examination of their mintmarks, however, shows it to be most unlikely that the hoard originated in Britain at all.

Few hoards of this period survive which have been well enough published to enable comparison with Clayton's group. Two assemblages fairly recently discovered can be easily utilized if the copy element in each is excluded; from Heslington near York,⁵ and Oldcroft, Gloucs.⁶ When the mintmarks from each are charted on a cumulative percentage basis (fig. 1), a very close correlation between the two can be noted, to an extent that one is almost superimposable on the other. This clearly indicates that these two areas of Britain were drawing their coin supplies from the same mints and in very similar proportions. As is common for British finds of this date, coins from the mints of Lyons, Arles and Trier predominate. When the Clayton coins are similarly graphed a very different picture emerges. Here the coins are mainly from Rome, Aquileia and Siscia, with a few issues from the Balkan mints—not at all what might be expected from a hoard formed in Britain, and clearly showing that the hoard derived from an area with a different pattern of mint supply. No directly comparable hoard has been noted in any modern publication, but the proportions of the various mints strongly suggest that the coins were accumulated in northern Italy.⁷



Statue of the Trinity, Bearpark, Durham.

Photograph: T. Middlemass: Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham



How a hoard originating in northern Italy came to be mixed up in a collection in Northumberland is not too difficult to explain. Clayton himself travelled in Europe and at least one trip is recorded in published letters in which he visited southern France and northern Italy.⁸ It is not improbable that, as a man already interested in Roman antiquities, he purchased the coins during this visit in September 1858 and incorporated them in his collection at Chesters, part of which was later acquired by the Society of Antiquaries at Newcastle. There seems little evidence to support the proposition that this hoard was part of a find from Hadrian's Wall.

Michael Sekulla

A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY CARVING OF THE TRINITY FROM BEARPARK, DURHAM

A MUTILATED figure sculpture was found by Mr. H. M. Roberts in a stone heap (NZ 243 439) at the north-west end of the field immediately west of the remains of the Prior's manor house at Beaurepaire.⁹ The material comprising the heap had been derived from two main sources, the more substantial of which was a pair of stone

buildings demolished at some point between 1972 and 1977. The other source is stone ploughed up in the field in the area of the possible outer court of the manor which included the chapel as well as sundry gardens, courts and buildings in 1684.¹⁰ The chapel seems to have survived to the mid nineteenth century and may, perhaps, be seen as the source of the sculpture as well as other architectural fragments, though the collapse of the manorial buildings forming the western boundary of the field may be an alternative source. The sculpture has been conserved by the Archaeology Department of Durham University and is now displayed in the Old Fulling Mill Museum.

The carving is cut from a single block of coarse grained sandstone of the type commonly found in the cathedral and city of Durham. It is 52.0 cm high and 37.5 cm by 32.0 cm at the base. It is badly weathered and the heads of both figures are lost, but it can be seen to represent a seated, draped figure who holds an erect smaller figure between its open knees. At the back of the sculpture is a deep vertical groove or mortise which evidently fitted on to a protruding tongue, or over a slender shaft, when the carving was *in situ* on a wall. Its most probable function was either to serve as the central motif of a tympanum, or as a bracket sculpture, perhaps mounted on one of the pedestals, described by Hutchinson, which once flanked the east window of the chapel. Such semi-free standing statues were common in the thirteenth century, contrasting with the lower relief carvings of the Romanesque period, and though the most famous examples are at Wells the style extended well into the North, certainly as far as Rievaulx Abbey where a comparable seated Christ is preserved in the site museum.

The sculpture depicts in symbolic terms the Holy Trinity, the Three Persons of God. God the Father is the large seated figure who holds the upright, smaller scale figure of the Son in front of Him. The top of the carving is unfortunately broken away but from surviving parallels in stone and in manuscript painting we can supply the heads of both figures as well as the Dove which often appears between the Father's mouth and the Son's head to represent the Holy Spirit. Depictions of the Holy Trinity as composite designs of two human figures and a dove grew in popularity in England during the thirteenth century, though its origins are found in the twelfth¹¹ and the tradition continued up to the Reformation in two major forms. The first shows the Son naked and hanging upon the Cross which is held by the Father at each end of the arms; an example from the first half of the thirteenth century is the initial to a psalm in the Trinity College Cambridge psalter, MS B.II.4, and a later carving from Holy Trinity Priory, Micklegate, York demonstrates the length of this continuing tradition.¹² The second version of the iconography shows the Father and Son dressed similarly with the dove between them. The relative sizes of the figures tend to vary. The Lothian Bible of the early thirteenth century depicts such a Trinity creating the world,¹³ the robed Son enfolded in the drapery of the seated Father. The frequency of Trinity scenes at this period must to some extent have been stimulated by psalter initials, since there was a custom of indicating the divisions of the psalter by decorating particular psalms at the beginning of a section.¹⁴ One of these was Ps. 109 (*Dixit Domino Meo; Sede a dextris meis*) whose first line was echoed

in a picture either of Christ in Majesty or of the Trinity. The older numbering of the Vulgate is the one followed.

The Bearpark Christ is so weathered that it is now impossible to determine whether or not He was robed, but the position of the Father's hands suggests that the original iconography was the version without the Cross. There were, however, many variations which must have existed concurrently in the Middle Ages. For example, in Holy Trinity Goodramgate, York, the centre light of the fifteenth-century east window has a full-length naked Christ sustained by the Father and immediately below is a small panel showing the Trinity as three old kings.¹⁵ It is perhaps significant that so many of the analogues quoted are found in churches dedicated to the Trinity, though there is no evidence to suggest such a dedication at Bearpark. In *The Rites of Durham* two windows in the cathedral are described, one in the south aisle and the other in the Chapel of the Nine Altars, as having contained the image, interestingly without any reference to the Dove.¹⁶

The temptation to interpret the Bearpark carving as a Virgin and Child can be resisted in the light of the thirteenth-century development of the more human, tender treatment of that subject, with the Christchild held on Mary's knee or arm rather than being "suspended" in the older manner. It is very unlikely that a sculptor who was up to date in the latest drapery styles would have adopted an outmoded, antique model of the Virgin, which would also have run counter to contemporary theological thinking.

It is the drapery of the Bearpark carving that indicates the date most surely. In the late twelfth century drapery clung closely to the anatomy, with periodic damp folds dividing it into zones; this style is seen locally on the fragment of the pulpitum screen from Durham Cathedral, now in the Treasury.¹⁷ After c. 1200 a new style emerged in which the drapery hung lightly from the figure in shallow rippling folds that gave a strong vertical line to the design; this is a distinctive feature of many of the Wells statues. The hem of the robe falls in a series of triangular folds as though it were too long for the wearer. This feature is clear on the left side of the Bearpark figure and compares well with the Rievaulx piece. The parallels for the drapery treatment are all dated to the thirteenth century and from Hutchinson's account of the interior decoration of the Bearpark chapel, which refers to 'Early English' architectural features (like the trefoil head of an arcade also found with the carving), the statue would belong to the phase of building begun by Prior Bertram de Middleton soon after 1258.

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¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Newc.*⁴ V, 1932. Note and Descriptive List of Coins from the Clayton Collection. G. Askew. pp. 215-25.

² *Ibid.* pp. 215-16.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 216-17.

⁴ *History of Northumberland* part II vol III.

J. Hodgson. Newcastle 1840, p. 196.

⁵ *Num. Chron.*⁷ XI 1971. A Hoard of Roman Fourth Century Bronze Coins from Heslington, York. R. A. G. Carson and J. P. C. Kent. pp. 207-25.

⁶ *Num. Chron.*⁷ XIV 1974. The Oldcroft (1971-2)

Hoard of Bronze Coins and Silver Objects. J. F. Rhodes. pp. 65–74.

⁷ I owe this suggestion to P. J. Casey.

⁸ *AA²*, III 1858. Letters of John Clayton to Dr. Bruce. pp. 176–81.

⁹ I am most grateful to Mr. P. A. G. Clack for drawing my attention to this carving and for furnishing these details of its discovery. I also greatly appreciate the kind assistance of Mr. Roberts and Mr. Scott of the Durham City Planning Office who have facilitated the study of the stone.

¹⁰ W. Hutchinson, *The History & Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (1781), II, 336–7.

¹¹ G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art* (London 1971), trans. J. Seligman, I, pls 1 & 4.

¹² P. Brieger, *English Art 1216–1307* (Oxford 1957–68), 92–4, pl. 25; R.C.H.M., *The City of York* (1972), III, pl. 9; W. Heneage Legge, “The Trinity in Medieval Art”, *The Reliquary* XIII, no. 4 (1907), 233–43.

¹³ Brieger (1957–68), 79–80, pl. 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 84–5.

¹⁵ F. Harrison, *The Painted Glass of York* (London 1927), 152–3.

¹⁶ J. T. Fowler (ed.), *The Rites of Durham* (1903–64), Surtees Society 107, 290 & 292.

¹⁷ G. Zarnecki, *Later English Romanesque Sculpture* (London 1953), pl. 67.