

VI.

ANCIENT BRITISH COINS FOUND IN SURREY.

THE eleven coins engraved in the accompanying plate claim the attention of the Surrey Archæological Society on the ground that nearly all of them have been discovered within the limits of the county. The first seven were found on Farley Heath, a locality in which many interesting relics have been brought to light. No. 8 is stated to have been found on Croydon Downs; No. 9 in Hampshire, on the borders of Surrey; No. 10 at Leatherhead, and No. 11 at Godalming.

No. 1 (by mistake represented upside down) resembles several of those found by a peasant boy near Albury in the year 1848, and described and engraved in the "Numismatic Chronicle," vol. xi. p. 92. The type was already known to Numismatists, but these are the first records of their place of finding, a matter of great weight and significance in any attempt to appropriate ancient British coins. There appears to be little doubt that these coins may at least be assigned to the southern counties of England, and their proper location is perhaps the district in which examples have hitherto been discovered. It is not easy to describe the type, which bears no analogy to that of any other ancient British coin.

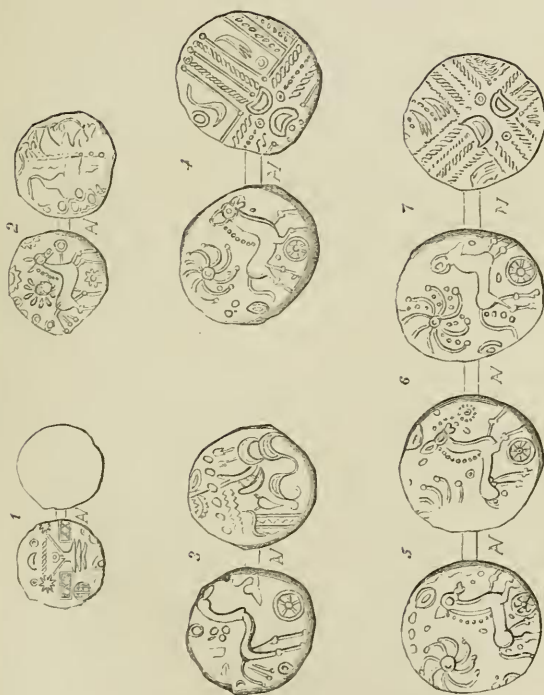
No. 2, from its resemblance to other types found in the south of England, may probably be ascribed to the district of Britain comprised within the counties of Surrey, Hants, and Middlesex.

Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, are types assimilating to those of coins more frequently discovered in Essex, Herts, and westward as far as Wallingford and Abingdon, in Berkshire. They are undoubtedly the result of successive copies of pieces of better execution, until the original devices—a horse and a laureated head—are corrupted almost beyond identification. A reference to Ruding's first and second plate of British coins, and to the various volumes of the "Numismatic Chronicle," will make this apparent.

Nos. 8 and 9 may be also compared with the first plate of Ruding, particularly with figures 4 and 9, the former being struck on one side only.

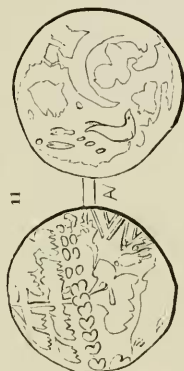
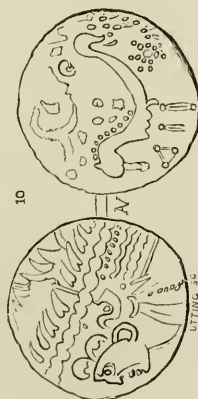
Nos. 10 and 11 are types which have been discovered, at various times, in different and widely-distant parts of England. To whatever country they may be assigned, it is evident that they are barbarous copies of the Gaulish coins of better execution, engraved in Ruding's second plate, Nos. 22—25.

All these pieces being uninscribed increases the difficulty of their appropriation; but they are doubtless examples of the ancient currency of Britain, and not tokens or talismans, as has been supposed by some writers; among others, by Davies, who, in his work on the Mythology of the Ancient Druids, has indulged in the wildest conjecture regarding the origin of pieces which are now universally allowed to have been the first attempts of our primitive forefathers at a coinage of their own. These coins belong to the collection of Mr. R. Whitbourn, of Godalming.



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From a Drawing by Miss Whitcomb



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