Some New Light on the Viking-Age Silver Hoard from Mungret

by R. H. M. DOLLEY

In the *Inventory of British Coin-Hoards A.D. 600-1500* published in 1956 by the Royal Numismatic Society, Mr. J. D. A. Thompson had described one Irish find in the following terms:

277. MUNGRETT, Co. Limerick, before 1841?
   2 AR Anglo-Saxon pennies with several AR ingots. Deposit: Xth century.
   KINGS OF ENGLAND. Edward the Elder and Æthelstan
   Lindsay (H), p. 125.
   Disposition: This hoard was found in a stone quarry.

The purpose of this paper is to bring together some additional evidence, very little of it strictly new, to illustrate—it is believed for the first time—nine coins and six ingots which are certainly from the find, and to relate the hoard as reconstructed to the wider pattern presented by finds of Viking Age coins from Munster as a whole.

Mr. Thompson’s reference “Lindsay (H) p. 125” is to John Lindsay’s *A View of the Coinage of the Heptarchy* published at Cork in 1842. The passage in question is quite brief, and runs as follows:

“A few years since two Anglo-Saxon coins of Edward the Elder and Athelstan, together with several pieces of ingots of silver, were found in a stone quarry near Mungrett, County Limerick.”

In numismatic writings by Irish antiquaries of the nineteenth century, “a few years since” is a phrase that is singularly elastic. Lindsay himself for example, employs it in both his preceding entries which relate to two major finds of coins from the west of the County Kilkenny and from Dalkey. Recent work has established that the former hoard had been discovered perhaps twenty years before, while the Dalkey hoard had come to light only in 1888.1 In 1868, moreover, George Smith can write of the Dalkey hoard that it had been “found several years since,” a turn of phrase that few today might care to apply to an interval of exactly thirty years.2 On the other hand, it is perhaps noteworthy that Lindsay ignores the Mungret hoard in his *View of the Coinage of Ireland* published at Cork in 1839. If it be objected that a hoard in

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which the only coins were English lay outside the scope of this earlier work, one need only observe that the relevant appendix is headed "Account of some of the principal hoards or parcels of coins discovered in Ireland within the last few years," and that the author—quite properly—did not scruple to include under this heading finds both large and small which contained no Irish coins at all. We may instance among others references to the tenth-century hoard from Dalkey (p. 135) and to the smaller find of the same period from Glendalough (p. 136). Residing at Cork, too, Lindsay was very well-placed to hear of discoveries in Munster, and he was particularly interested in the Limerick area because of his claim—now known to be without substance—to have identified a Limerick coinage of the ninth-century Viking prince "Imar or Ifars I." In support of this attribution he specifically alludes to the discovery of the coins in question "in and in the neighbourhood of Limerick." On balance, therefore, the evidence must point to the Munget find having been discovered between 1838 and 1842, and a date of discovery c. 1840 may seem not unreasonable. In passing it must also be remarked that the Inventory has erred in departing from its usual practice by describing Edward the Elder as "King of England." On the exceptional coins where Edward includes in his style an ethnic, it is Saxonvm ("of the (West) Saxons") and not ANGLORVM ("of the English"); on the other hand Æthelstan, who styles himself on many coins REX TO (tions) BRIT (anniae) ("King of the whole of Britain,") can legitimately be considered a "King of England," and is accepted as such elsewhere in the Inventory and also in the Hunter fascicule of the British Academy’s new Sylluge of Coins of the British Isles.

The principal printed source which Mr. Thompson has overlooked is the Memorials of Adare Manor compiled by Caroline, widow of the second Earl Dunraven, and privately printed at Oxford in 1866. On pp. 150-151 there occurs the following:

"Some years ago a considerable number of Anglo-Saxon coins and small ingots of silver were discovered by some workmen in opening a quarry in a field near the old churches of Munget . . . . Seven of the ingots of silver, and nine of the coins, in beautiful preservation, came into my possession: the weight of the former varies from 19½ dwt. to 4½ dwt. Dr. Aquila Smith kindly furnished me with the following description of these coins:

Eadweard the Elder, A.D. 901-924.

1. +EADWEARD. REX—Head to the left. Reverse, Blundered. This variety is mentioned in Ruding’s "Annals of the Coinage."

2. +EADWEARD. REX—Reverse, ÆTERED MO(Netarius).

3 Dalkey: supra, n. 1; Glendalough: Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, XC, i (1900), pp. 41-47 and works there cited.
4 Ireland, pp. 18-19.
5 ibid., p. 69.
6 There is as yet no definitive chronology for Æthelstan’s coins, but most numismatists would probably agree that the REX TO BRIT issues are to be dated after his 927-928 victories over the Hiberno-Norsemen of York, the Welsh and the Cornish.
3. +EADWEARD—Broken. Reverse, A Church. A Perfect coin of this type, is engraved in Ruding. Plate XVI, fig. 18.

4. (Ead)WEARD—Broken. Reverse, FRITHE(berht).

Reginald, King of Northumbria, A.D. 912-944.

5. (Regn)ALD. CUN(ul). Reverse, +AVRA. A perfect specimen of this type, which is of the highest rarity, is engraved in Ruding, Plate II.

Æthelstan, A.D. 924-940.

6. +ÆTHELSTAN. REX. Reverse, GALHSTAN. MO (monetarius). This moneyer is unpublished.

7. +(Æthel) TAN. REX. TO. (Br); (i.e. Totius Britanniae).

Eadred, A.D. 946-955.

8. +EADRED. REX. Reverse, HUNRED. MO (monetarius).


In the collection of coins is a Hyberno-Danish one, of the tenth or eleventh century, but where found I cannot at present make out.”

As we shall see, there is good reason to think that the fragment no. 9 was not of Eadred despite its apparent inclusion under that king in Lady Dunraven's transcript of Smith's listing, but we are in the fortunate position of knowing that it and eight other coins from the Mungret find had been examined by no less an authority than Aquilla Smith, without doubt the greatest of the Irish numismatists of the nineteenth century. Even if the coins were not in existence today, Smith's notes could be used with confidence as a basis for the reconstruction of that part of the hoard which came into the possession of the Earls of Dunraven, and it will be appreciated that the Inventory account of the Mungret find already is modified in several not unimportant particulars.

In the first place we now are given a very close indication of the actual find-spot, an indication that will perhaps be more welcome this side of the Irish Sea as there is a tendency for English antiquaries to leave out of their calculations the fact that Irish parishes are often much larger than their English counterparts. On the evidence of the Memorials of Adare Manor in fact there can be little doubt that the hoard came to light in Skehacreggaun townland 7 and the writer regrets that he has not yet had an

7 On the current 6" map of the area, a disused stone-quarry is shown in a field almost exactly 500 yards to the north of the ruined churches. A second such quarry occurs on the same shoot about 1,000 yards to the north-east of the churches but must be considered a much less plausible candidate.
opportunity of going over the actual ground in order to establish with certainty the exact site. Even more important for the numismatist—and for the historian—is the circumstance that the hoard is now known to have consisted not just of two coins and several ingots but of "a considerable number" of both. Although there are exceptions, it is generally safe to say that the larger the hoard the greater the precision with which it may be dated, and of course the larger the sample the more likelihood of its being representative. In any case the Inventory dating, granted its dependence on the Lindsay narrative alone, must strike the Viking Age specialist as quite unnecessarily wide. The presence of even a single coin of Æthelstan (924-939) of itself rules out the possibility of the hoard having been concealed before the end of the first quarter of the tenth century, and the absence of Kufic dirhams, their presence quite a feature of Irish coin-hoards deposited during the first three decades of the tenth century, might well have been thought to point in the same direction. Only less emphatically the presence of ingots, and especially of several, militates against any dating of the hoard much after c. 975. This line of argument is more than borne out by the complete absence of coins of Eadgar (959-975) which are relatively common in hoards from Ireland, and the balance of the evidence must be that the terminus ante quem should be shifted back a whole decade at least. On the basis of Lindsay's account alone, therefore, we would surely be entitled to date the Munget hoard c. 960+15, and the new evidence provided by Lady Dunraven's listing enables the specialist to essay even greater precision. Obviously the presence of a coin of Eadred (946-955) advances the absolute terminus post quem by rather more than two decades, and any suspicion that this particular coin might have been added to the find between its discovery and its submission to Aquilla Smith is dispelled by consideration of the coin of Regnald of Northumbria. As is now undisputed, history distinguishes two Regnalds in the period embraced by Aquilla Smith's "912-944," a Regnal I, the grandson of the famous Ivar the Boneless (Lindsay's "Imar or Ifars I"), who ruled York from 919 until his death in 921, and a Regnal II Guthrithsson, a second cousin or possibly a nephew, who disputed York with Anlaf Quaran Sihtricsson in the period 943-944. No coins

9 I have notes of Kufic coins in hoards from Drogheda (Inventory 129) deposited c. 910?, Nobber (Inventory 263) c. 920, Glasnevin (Inventory 89) c. 950, and uncertain places in the County Kildare (Inventory 205) c. 950, and the County Meath (Inventory—c. 975, but this list may not be complete. The reader should be warned, too, that the above datings are mine and often differ from Mr. Thompson's.

9 Infra p. 120. It should be stressed, too, that the form and weight of the Fourknocks ingot is quite untypical.

10 I have notes of the following hoards from Ireland which include one or more coins of Eadgar, Lough Lene (Inventory 280), Cartowne (Inventory 75 & 261), Smarmore (Inventory 333 but see British Numismatic Journal XXVII, ii (1953), pp. 161-166), Dalkey (Inventory 115 but see supra n.1), Derrykeighan (Inventory 119 but see British Numismatic Journal XXIX, 2 (1950) in the press), Glendale (Inventory 174 but see supra n. 3), Dungarvan (Inventory—but see Journal of the Waterford Archaeological Society, XV (1913), pp. 163-167), Killincoole (Inventory 212 but see British Numismatic Journal XXIX, 2 (1950) in the press), Armagh (Inventory 13 but see MS catalogue of Dean Dawson collection in Royal Irish Academy), Ballybunion (Inventory 29 but see MS letter from Petrie to Dawson in Royal Irish Academy) and uncertain places in the County Meath (Inventory—but see Glendale paper cited supra n. 3), and the County Kilkenny (Inventory 207 but supra n 1). There is also a hoard (Inventory—but see Numismatic Chronicle 1863, pp. 48-54) described simply as "from Ireland." With one exception I would date all these finds within the bracket c. 905-980. Again I have no reason to think that the above list is complete.

of the elder Regnal are known, though a few blundered coins of the very greatest rarity may perhaps be attributed to the period of his reign, and the Regnal coin from Munget can be shown to belong to the younger. On any telling it could not have arrived in Ireland much before 945.  

Obviously nine coins are a more representative sample of a hoard than two and “seven” ingots are for our purposes far more significant than “several.” The total absence of coins of Edgare must carry even greater weight, and it does not seem unreasonable to regard 960 as the latest possible terminus ante quem. In other words the probable limits for the date of deposit of the Munget find have been considerably narrowed. Absolute certainty is perhaps dangerous, but I would suggest that the balance of the evidence points to the hoard having been concealed just about the middle of the tenth century, and would regard a dating “c. 950(±5)” as quite legitimate for Inventory purposes, a slight improvement surely on the “Xth century” of the 1956 standard work on the coin-hoards of the British Isles.

It now remains to trace the present whereabouts of as many as possible of the coins and ingots from the find—it is after all very nearly a century since the appearance of the Memorials of Adare Manor. While there is a presumption that the two coins cited by Lindsay in his Heptarchy did not form part of the parcel acquired by Lord Dunraven, and even that they may have found their way with several of the ingots into the Cork collector’s rich cabinet, they cannot be identified among any of the lots described in the Lindsay Sale Catalogue (Sotheby, 14-17: viii: 1867). Concerning the Dunraven parcel, on the other hand, we are more fortunate. In his account of the Limerick Library and Museum published in Vol. 11 (1940-41) of the North Munster Antiquarian Journal the late Robert Herbert has written (p. 86) as follows:

“Some very interesting silver ingots were recently acquired on loan from Adare Manor. These were found “many years ago,” together with a collection of Anglo-Saxon coins on opening a quarry in a field near the old churches of Munget. The coins were of the reigns of Eadward the Elder (901-924 a.d.); Regnal, King of Northumbria (912-944 a.d.); Athstan [sic] (924-940 a.d.) and Eadred (946-955 a.d.). Possibly, these were the property of some Anglo-Saxon student at Munget.”

Elsewhere Mr. Herbert paid well-deserved tribute to the generosity of Lord Dunraven in loaning to the Limerick Museum objects of such unique importance for the history of tenth-century Thomond.

Today there are in the Library and Museum six coins and six ingots, labelled as from Munget and as the loan of Lord Dunraven, which must represent the bulk of the parcel described by Aquilla Smith in 1865. They agree perfectly with the descriptions in the Memorials of Adare Manor except that the six ingots range in weight between 7dwt. 18 grs. and 17 dwt. 15 grs. instead of between 4 dwt. 12 grs. and 19 dwt. 12 grs. It will be noticed, however, that the 1865 figures are given only to the half penny-weight, and one suspects that allowance must be made for a certain margin of error, and especially in the case of the largest ingots. As we shall see, it is the three smallest

12 The probable dates of Regnal’s “rule” in York are 943-944, but it is just possible that he was conceded a share in the coinage c. 942 at the same time as Sintric II.
coin-fragments which are not in the Limerick Museum, and in the same way it would seem most probable that it is the smallest of the seven ingots which has gone astray.

The six coins and the six ingots in the Limerick Museum seem to represent the whole extent of Lord Dunraven's loan, and it is easy to see why the balance would have been held back as quite unsuitable for public exhibition. It seems likely, too, that the three coin-fragments and the 4½ dwt. ingot had become separated from the more spectacular exhibits many years ago, quite possibly within decades of the 1865 publication. Unfortunately my attention was concentrated on the Munget find after Robert Herbert's death, and so it is impossible to state categorically that the missing fragments were never on exhibition in the Limerick Museum, but that is my considered view after a review of all the evidence. Enquiry at Adare Manor has established, moreover, that the fragments are no longer there, and the presumption must be that they have shared the fate of the famous "Clonmacnoise Pin." Thanks to an extraordinary coincidence, however, I am able here to illustrate two of the coins and a portion of the third, though not the missing ingot. Early in 1960, after I had begun to collect material for this paper, Mr. Emil Szauer of Drumcondra, Co. Dublin, who was at the time quite unaware of my interest in Viking Age coins found in Ireland, submitted for identification to the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum three fragmentary pence of the first half of the tenth century. Subsequent enquiry showed that he had purchased them from a local dealer in scrap-metal, and but for his intervention they would doubtless have gone to the melting-pot, almost certainly the fate of the ingot. A comparison of the coins in the Limerick Museum with the 1865 listing shows that the following had still to be accounted for:

(a) A non-portrait penny of Eadweard the Elder by a moneyer Frithberht. The coin was obviously very fragmentary, and Smith's description suggests that all that was visible on the obverse was the deuterotHEME of the royal name (.... WEARD ....), and on the reverse the prototHEME of the moneyer's name (FRITHE ....). At this period, however, 'TH' was never so written on coins, and it is a legitimate assumption that Smith had trans-literated 'D,' in other words that the fragment read FRIDE ....

(b) A fragment of a cross-moline penny of Reginald Guthfrithsson by the moneyer Avra. In Smith's time the coin seems to have read as regards the obverse .... ALD CVN ...., and as regards the reverse +AVRA ....

(c) A fragment too small to be thought of any consequence.

The three fragments submitted by Mr. Szauer are as follows:

(a) A non-portrait cut-halfpenny of Eadweard the Elder reading as regards the obverse .... VWEARD ...., and as regards the reverse FRIDE ....

13 In the nineteenth century there was considerable prejudice against broken coins however rare, and especially where the fragments were quite small. Certain pieces of this kind were even passed over in silence by the British Museum Catalogue, and a fragment of a coin of Archbishop Ceolnoth unique of the type was left out from the Montagu Sale!

14 Herbert, op. cit., p. 82.
(b) A fragment of a cross-moline penny reading as regards the obverse CVN... and as regards the reverse +A...

(c) A tiny fragment of a penny that only in the light of current research can be identified as of Æthelstan and by the (Chester) moneyer Abba.

For the numismatist the points of resemblance are too striking to be coincidental, but for the benefit of the non-numismatist the following observations should perhaps be made. In the Anglo-Saxon period there was no single fixed relationship of an obverse to a reverse die, and even after the reform of 973 four positions are quite normal. Consequently the fact that on both coins (a) the same six letters appear on the obverse and the same five letters on the reverse just cannot be disregarded. Only less significant is the circumstance that the letters visible on both sides of Mr. Szauer's coin (b) are precisely those which would appear on one of the halves if the 1865 fragment were to be divided. Incidentally the fracture along the relevant edge of Mr. Szauer's fragment appears to me to be the more recent. While on the subject of cross-moline coins, it should be remarked that they are all of the very greatest rarity. A recent paper has listed those in the public collections of the world, and it is thought that there are none in private cabinets—except for Mr. Szauer's fragment. Four exist in the name of Anlaf Quaran Siðtricsson (941-943/4), all by a moneyer Rathulf. Two are in Copenhagen, one at least from an Irish find, one in the British Museum, and one in the Museo Nazionale at Rome, this last from a hoard in the Forum. Three only exist in the name of Regnald II Guthfrithsson, one in the British Museum from the 1844 Lough Lene find (Inventory 260), and the others in the Hunterian Museum at Glasgow, one from the 1837 find from Ballytore (Inventory 19). All are by a moneyer, Avra, though as it happens none are from the same pair of dies as Mr. Szauer's fragment. Incidentally only two other coins of Regnald II Guthfrithsson are known. They are of quite a different type and by a moneyer Baldric, and as it happens, both are believed to be from an unpublished Irish hoard. When one is dealing with coins as rare as these, probabilities must become virtual certainties, and I have no doubt whatever that Mr. Szauer's three fragments were included in the nine submitted by Lady Dunraven to Aquilla Smith in 1865, and consequently that they are survivors from the Mungret hoard of c. 1840.

The nine coins are illustrated by direct photographs on the plate that accompanies this note (Plate 2, 1-9), nos. 1, 3-5, 7 & 8 being the coins now in the Limerick Museum, and nos. 2, 6 & 9 those in Mr. Szauer's possession.

The following are technical descriptions:

EADWEARD THE ELDER (899-924)

(A) Whole penny of "two line" type (Brooke Type 13 = B.M.C. Type II) by a moneyer Æthered (=Æthelræd). Weight 24.0 grains.

Coin (2) in Aquilla Smith's listing. [Plate 2, 1].

16 Cf. the paper cited in n. 11 and especially the table on p. 85.
17 As far as I can judge the Mungret coin shares one die with the British Museum specimen, while the Hunter coins are from different dies.
The coin belongs to a stylistic grouping associated with Southern England and with the beginning of the last decade of the reign. The moneyer is known at London under Æthelstan, and London must be the presumptive mint of this coin.

(B) Cut halfpenny of "two line" type (Brooke Type 13 = B.M.C. Type II) by a moneyer Frithe . . . (Fritheberht ?). Weight 11.25 grains.

Coin (4) in Aquilla Smith’s listing. [Plate 2, 2].

The coin belongs to a stylistic grouping associated with Southern England and with the very last years of the reign. A moneyer Frithberht is known at Southampton under Æthelstan, and Southampton or Winchester are the two places most likely to be the mint of this coin. Under Edward the Elder, incidentally, Frithberht was a prolific moneyer, and no other moneyer with protomtheme Frith—has been recorded.

(C) Broken penny of "church-tower" type (Brooke Type 11 = B.M.C. Type XII) by a moneyer (Ea)dmund. Weight 18.0 grains.

Coin (3) in Aquilla Smith’s listing. [Plate 2, 3].

The coin is of a type associated with the Chester area and with the last years of the reign. The moneyer is known at Chester under Æthelstan, and an attribution to that mint is virtually certain. The reverse type, beyond question a church-tower, has been identified as a burh, but this interpretation is no longer taken seriously. The ultimate prototype, however, is a Roman coin of the fourth century where the reverse does depict a fortified gateway.18

(D) Whole penny of "portrait" type (Brooke Type 12 = B.M.C. Type III) with blundered reverse. Weight 24.5 grains.

Coin (1) in Aquilla Smith’s listing. [Plate 2, 4].

Mainly as a consequence of the great Morley St. Peter hoard from Norfolk,19 this "anonymous" issues is now firmly associated with East Anglia, and with the very last years of Eadward’s reign.

ÆTHELSTAN (924-939).

(E) Whole penny of "two line" type (Brooke Type 1 = B.M.C. Type I) by a moneyer Ealhstan. Weight 23.0 grains.

Coin (6) in Aquilla Smith’s listing. [Plate 2, 5].

The style of the coin suggests a mint in south-eastern England, very probably London. It was probably struck early in the reign.

(F) Fragment of a penny of "two line" type (Brooke Type 1 = B.M.C. Type I) by a moneyer Abb(a). Weight 7.0 grains.

Coin (9) in Aquilla Smith's listing. [Plate 2, 6].

The fabric of the fragment is compatible with an attribution to the Chester area, and Abba is a Chester moneyer for the reign. Hence an attribution to the Chester mint may be considered certain. For this coin as well as a date fairly early in the reign seems indicated.

(G) Cut halfpenny of "rosette circular" type (Brooke Type 6 = B.M.C. Type VI) by the (Chester) moneyer Boigalet. Weight 11.0 grains.

Coin (7) in Aquilla Smith's listing. [Plate 2, 7].

The coin is clearly sheared from a penny on which appears the mint-signature of Chester, and this attribution is consistent with the presence on each side of the rosette of pellets which is now known to be an infallible criterion of a coin struck in Old Mercia. There is reason to date the coin to the fourth decade of the century.

EADRED (946-955).

(H) Whole penny of "two line" type (Brooke Type 1 = B.M.C. Type I) by a moneyer Hunred. Weight 20.0 grains (chipped)

Coin (8) in Aquilla Smith's listing. [Plate 2, 8].

The style of the coin makes it clear that it is from a mint in north-eastern England. A moneyer Hunred, moreover, struck coins for Eric Bloodaxe c. 948, and this must make it reasonably certain that the mint of the Eadred coin is York.¹⁰

REGNALD II GUTHFRITHSSON (943-944).

(I) Fragment of a penny of "cross moline" type (Brooke "Regnald vi Ivar" Type 1 = B.M.C. Type I) by a moneyer A(vra) Weight 4.2 grains.

Coin (5) in Aquilla Smith's listing. [Plate 2, 9].

The mint of this coin is indisputably York. Even without the record of the missing letters supplied by Smith, an attribution to Regnald and to the moneyer Avra would have been inevitable, since Anlaf's coins of this type are all by Rathulf.

¹⁰ Unfortunately it is not yet possible to date Eadred's coins closely, but the balance of the evidence must be that the Hunred coin at Mungret belongs to the early part of the reign.
The results arrived at above may be set out in tabular form thus:

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It will be noticed that more than half the coins, including the three latest, are from northern England, i.e. from territory which either marched with that of the Ostmen or was under their control. There can be little doubt indeed that the Mungrut hoard is a Viking hoard, and in fact its composition is typical of a whole chain of such finds extending in a great sweep through Dublin to York, archaeological evidence, were it needed, for the hardly contested tussle between the Norsemen and the English which was to decide the fate of Danish Northumbria. Reluctantly, therefore, we must abandon the hypothesis, implied by Lady Dunraven in 1865 and formulated with greater precision by Robert Herbert in 1940, that the Mungrut find could be associated with the presence of Anglo-Saxon students at the great monastery which seems to have stood five hundred yards to the south of the now disused quarry where the coins and ingots presumptively were found.

Also on the accompanying plate there are illustrated (Plate 2, 10-15) the six ingots which are today in the Limerick Museum on loan from Lord Dunraven. It is hoped that their inclusion in a purely numismatic note will be forgiven, and I must plead in extenuation the circumstance that the ingots were overlooked not only by Johannes Bœ in his account of Viking antiquities from Ireland⁶ but also by Seán Ó Ríordáin when discussing the comparable ingots found in the excavations at Lough Gur.⁷ Broadly speaking three principal types of Viking ingot may be distinguished, two common and one much more unusual. The common types are both present in the Mungrut find. They are to be distinguished both by size and fabric. The larger ones (CLASS A in the lists that follow) have a section that is roughly that of a trapeze, and intact may weigh anything up to three ozs. They have the appearance of having been cast in stone moulds, and an example of one of these moulds from a Hiberno-Norse context is illustrated by Bœ [op. cit. p. 68]. If in form these larger ingots inevitably recall bars of chocolate, the smaller may perhaps be likened to chipolata sausages! The section of the latter (CLASS B in the lists that follow) is usually square or triangular with very round corners. There is a third type of ingot (CLASS C) which is more wire-like, and in some cases it is difficult to be certain that we are not in fact dealing with "hacksilver" properly so-called, i.e. broken-up silver ornaments.

In his account of the Lough Gur silver hoard, which contained incidentally whole ornaments, "hacksilver" and ingots of both the common classes, Seán P. Ó Riordáin has claimed that "there is no recorded instance of the association of coins and Viking silver in Ireland."⁸ The statement stands in need of some modification. Accompanied

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⁶ Norse Antiquities in Ireland, Oslo, 1940.
⁸ op. cit. p. 64.
by coins, ingots of both the common classes have been found, as we have seen, at Mungret, of one or other kind together with hacksilver in Co. Dublin, and of the smaller kind at Killincoole, Monasterboice, in Offaly and at Fourknocks, the last three hoards ignored by the *Inventory.* One wonders too whether one should not add Smarmore on the basis of the *Inventory* entry but reference to the *Irish Archaeological Journal* makes it clear that the "broken bits of silver" of the newspaper reports were fragments of coins. Both intact ornaments and some sort of ingot figure in a hoard from "Marl Valley" near Mullingar which is described by Lindsay in his *Heptarchy* in the following terms:

1841.—June.—About the middle of this month in Marl Valley, (a bog surrounded by very high hills, lying between Collinstown and Turin, County Westmeath,) a young man being employed in clearing a green patch of island in length about fifty perches and fourteen at its greatest breadth, in the course of his work came on a skeleton, on or within which he discovered one hundred and fifty silver coins, two large silver pins with large heads, a ring of gold about an inch in diameter with a small opening, and two silver balls something about rifle size; the coins were sent by the finder to Dublin and sold for a few shillings, two only of them fell into the hands of Rev. Mr. Fitzgerald, of Castle Town Delvin, and proved to be Anglo-Saxon coins of Æthelred II.

The *Inventory* dates this hoard, of great importance for its inclusion of one of the controversial gold rings, "Deposit: Xth century?" but fortunately we are in a position to improve on this. What must be a reference to the same find occurs in Richard Sainthill's *Olla Podrida* on p. 184 of the first volume which appeared in 1844. From a scrutiny of the legends of a number of coins there cited and described as being with the exception of a solitary coin of Eadred, of one type, it is clear that they were all of the *First Hand* issue of Æthelred II which was current in England between Michaelmas 979 and Michaelmas 985. Welcome corroboration of this line of argument comes from the fact that there is in the coin-cabinet of the National Museum of Ireland a longish run of *First Hand* pennies of Æthelred II which are without provenance but clearly derive from an Irish hoard. In theory the Marl Valley hoard could be dated as early as 980, but in practice a date of deposit c. 985 should be near enough to satisfy numismatists and archaeologists alike.

Again it must be stressed that this paper makes no claim to archaeological science, but it may be useful for the archaeologist to have some idea of the dates which a numismatist of the "new school" would give to those hoards from the British Isles which are known to contain both coins and ingots from the Viking Age. They are here arranged roughly in their chronological order: and an indication is also given of their size and other contents. The letters (A), (B) and (C) immediately following the name of the find denote hoards of 120 coins or more, of less than 120 but 30 or more coins, and less than 30 coins respectively. In the same way the letter-combinations A/S, C, H/N and K indicate the presence of Anglo-Saxon, Continental, Hiberno-Norse and Kufic coins.

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24 *Monasterboice:* *Numismatic Chronicle* 1857, p. 165; *Offaly:* *Boe op. cit.*, p. 107; *Fourknocks:* information from Dr. Liam O'Sullivan who has been kind enough to give me permission to publish the hoard.

25 Also on the Smarmore hoard see the paper cited in n. 10 supra.”


27 Sainthill's description of the non-numismatic material also merits quotation and leaves little room for doubt but that the "silver balls" were cut ends of ingots—"There were also a few small bars of ingots of silver, and a very fine silver pin, with a polygonal head; it is about five inches long."

28 Again I am indebted to Dr. Liam O'Sullivan who placed at my disposal all the numismatic resources of the National Museum of Ireland.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Coins</th>
<th>Ingot Classes</th>
<th>Hacksilver</th>
<th>Whole R Ornaments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Croydon</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S, C, K</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuerdale</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S, C, K</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harkirke</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S, C</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangor</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>A/S, K</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co. Dublin</td>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skye</td>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>A/S, K</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mungret</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>A/S, K</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monasterboice</td>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killincoole</td>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S, C</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islay</td>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>A/S, K</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marl Valley</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iona</td>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>A/S, C</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourknocks</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>A/S, H/N</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 Inventory 112.
31 Inventory 184 but see also *Numismatic Chronicle* 1953, pp. 189-193.
32 Inventory 133 but see *British Numismatic Journal* XXVII, iii (1954) pp. 261-262.
33 Inventory 133 but there were two pieces of hacksilver as well as one sheared ingot.
34 Inventory 112.
35 The subject of this paper.
36 Inventory 322 but see J. G. Mitchell, *Messehwe*, Edinburgh, 1863.
37 Inventory—but see supra n. 24.
38 Inventory 211 but the ingot is not there mentioned and I owe the reference to Mr. W. A. Seabey of Belfast.
39 Inventory 127 but for additional bibliography see Bonser, *An Anglo-Saxon Bibliography*, items 9127, 11058 & 11662 (item: 11058 = 9127).
41 Inventory 198 but some of the transcriptions are inaccurate.
42 Inventory—but see supra n. 24.
Omitted from the above table because of uncertainty as to date is a seventeenth
hoard containing at least one ingot of CLASS B, the 1828 find from Co. Offaly.\textsuperscript{44} From the circumstance, however, that the coins are described as English, a tenth-
century dating seems indicated, and the provenance taken in conjunction with the
apparent absence of Kufic coins might even be thought to favour a dating about the
middle of the century. A seventeenth century hoard cited in the \textit{Inventory} as in-
cluding silver ingots, the 1858 find from Goldsborough in Yorkshire, is omitted for
the same reason as that from Smârmore, the ingots in this case proving all to be
"hacksilver."\textsuperscript{45}

Of the sixteen datable hoards from the British Isles which contain ingots and coins,
fourteen are from the tenth century. The solitary ingot of CLASS B in the Fourknocks
find, moreover, is quite untypical, being substantially smaller than the general run of
ingots of this type. Even if coins had not been present, therefore, the Mungrut hoard
could have been dated with some confidence to the tenth century, and it may be
thought that Séan P. Ó Riordáin was a little too cautious in his dating of the "coin-
less" hoard from Lough Gur.\textsuperscript{46} My own inclination would be to date the latter find in-
side the broad limits c. 900–950 with a predilection for a dating "early" rather than
"late" within this bracket. Any further work on Viking Age silver ingots found in
Ireland, however, will have to take account of one unsuspected difficulty, a difficulty,
moreover, that has one day to be faced by students of the "hacksilver" as well. Even
from the pages of Armstrong and Bæe it seems likely that some of the un-
provenanced material from the collections of the Royal Irish Academy was not "found in
Ireland" but represents a selection of "duplicate" material from Cuerdale in
Lancashire presented to one or more Irish institutions and/or individuals by Queen
Victoria.\textsuperscript{47} It is to be hoped that co-operation between Irish and English students will
enable this alien matter to be distinguished, but the task promises to be laborious and
is made none the easier by the fact that the Cuerdale treasure itself appears to contain
the high proportion of "Hiberno-Norse" material to be expected in a find from north-
western England deposited at the date in question.\textsuperscript{48}

The six survivors among the seven ingots in the portion of the Mungrut find which
came into the possession of Lady Dumraven may be described as follows:

\textbf{CLASS A}

("trapeze-like section")

\textbf{(a)} Weight 17 dwt. 15 grs. [423 grains = 27.4 grammes]. Sheared portion from
middle of narrow ingot.

\textbf{[Plate 2, 10]}

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Inventory}—but see supra n. 23.

\textsuperscript{45} I am grateful to my colleague Mr. D. M. Wilson for allowing me to inspect the portion of the
hoard preserved in the British Museum and also the Registers of the Department of British &
Mediaeval Antiquities.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{op. cit.} p. 64.

\textsuperscript{47} In the course of the next year or so I propose publishing a paper in demonstration of this
thesis.

\textsuperscript{48} Unfortunately no complete record exists of the Cuerdale \textit{hacksilver} before its dispersal.
(b) Weight 16 dwt. 5 grs. [389 grains = 25.2 grammes]. Sheared portion from middle of wider and flatter ingot.

[Plate 2, 11]

CLASS B

("sausage section")

(c) Weight 17 dwt. 1 gr. [403 grains = 26.1 grammes]. Apparently intact but curiously pitted (? sand-cast).

[Plate 2, 12]

(d) Weight 9 dwt. 10 grs. [226 grains = 14.6 grammes.] Sheared end from a smooth ingot with shaving taken from one face at rounded extremity.

[Plate 2, 13].

(e) Weight 8 dwt. 4 grs. [196 grains = 12.7 grammes]. Sheared end from a rougher ingot with shaving taken from one face.

[Plate 2, 14].

(f) Weight 7 dwt. 18 grs. [186 grains = 12.1 grammes]. Sheared end from a slender and smooth ingot.

[Plate 2, 15].

Irregular in weight, fabric and appearance as are these ingots it is a remarkable fact that the total weight of the three larger (1215 grains = 78.7 grammes) is double that of the three smaller (608 grains = 39.4 grammes) to within a grain! There can be little doubt, therefore, that the three larger are intended for units, and the three smaller for halves. This is not the place for a full-dress discussion of Viking metrology, but it may be observed that the standard of weight was the mark which was divided into eight oran. The weight of the mark seems to have varied, but there is some reason to think that the Danish mark may have weighed 3440 grains and the ora in consequence 430 grains. A traditional division of the ora was into 16 pence, and it is worth noting that under Edward the Elder the English penny seems to have approached a 27-grain standard, so that 16 pence would have weighed 432 grains (= 28.0 grammes). A 27- or 28-grain standard, moreover, would facilitate the interpretation of the ELIMosina "multiples" of Alfred the Great as "sixpences" intended for currency where the Carolingian denier circulated, the denier of this period being appreciably heavier than the normal English penny.49

The suggestion of this note, therefore, is that the larger ingots in the Mungret hoard should be interpreted as oran, and the smaller as halves. It will doubtless be objected that they are on the light side, but we must not forget that they had to be cut by eye from larger ingots—it was only very occasionally that an ingot such as (c) happened to fit into the system—and for obvious reasons it would have been better to err on the side of lightness. The owner when making a purchase could always make up the deficiency by adding a coin to the scales, whereas the vendor might be unable

49 Brooke, op. cit., p. 50.
or unwilling to give change. Moreover in practice the penny did not maintain any thing like a 27-grain standard, and it is not impossible that the Norsemen in Ireland were using a lighter or a based on the actual weights of the English coins at their disposal. In this context it may be noted that the only two sheared portions of ingots recorded by Böe as certainly found in Ireland (from Offaly and Leix respectively) weigh 409 grains (= 26.5 grammes) and 385 grains (= 24.9 grammes) and so fit very well into the framework which I have postulated. 31 It may also be remarked that the "missing" Muncret ingot with its alleged weight of 108 grains (= 7.0 grammes) fits perfectly into the above scheme as a quarter. 32

On the basis, therefore, of Lindsay's Hédiarchy, of Lady Dunraven's Memorials of Adare Manor, of the coins and ingots loaned by Lord Dunraven to the City Museum at Limerick, and of the three fragmentary coins in the possession of Mr. Szauer, the Inventory account of the Muncret find might be emended in any second edition to read as follows:

MUNCRET, Skehaacreggaun townland?, Co. Limerick, c. 1840?
AAn Anglo-Saxon pennies and Viking ingots in "a considerable quantity" (9 + 7 described). Deposit : c. 950.

KINGS OF WESSEX. Edward the Elder : BMC(A) type ii—no mint-name: 
Æthelred, 1. Frith(berht), 1. BMC(A) type iii—no mint-name: uncertain
moneyer, 1. BMC(A) type xii—no mint-name: Eadmund, 1.

KINGS OF ENGLAND. Æthelslstan : BMC(A) type i—no mint-name: Abba,
1; Ealhstan, 1. BMC(A) type vi—(Chester): Boigalet, 1. Eadred : BMC(A)
type i—no mint-name: Hunred, 1.

KINGS OF YORK. Regnald II Guthfrithsson : BMC(A) type i—no mint-name: 
Avra.

Lindsay (H), p. 125 : Memorials of Adare Manor, pp. 150-151 : NMAJ, N.S.

The hoard, composed of whole and fragmentary coins and ingots, was found when opening a quarry in a field near the Old Churches; Six coins and six ingots are on loan to the Limerick City Museum.

It is to be hoped, though, that publication of this paper may lead to the discovery of other parcels from this hoard, for in no circumstances can nine coins and seven ingots be described as "a considerable quantity," and it is very likely that other material from the find may still be preserved locally.

Finally we have to consider very briefly the relationship of the Muncret hoard to other tenth-century Viking coin hoards from Munster. They are not very numerous, and the Inventory records no more than one, a small find (Inventory 356) from an uncertain place in the County Tipperary which is described by Lindsay in the Numis-

32 If, as I suspect, the error in the scales used in the nineteenth century to weigh the Muncret ingots had a progressive error, the "quarter" may have weighed just under 108 grains, but this of course if anything would help the argument.
matics Chronicle for 1843-1844. The hoard contained 19 coins, 5 of them of Eadweard the Elder, 10 of Æthelstan and 4 of Eadmund. On this evidence the date of deposit must be put at c. 945 ± 5. In the case of eight of the coins we may be confident that we know the approximate place of minting, and the position is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>London?</th>
<th>Chester?</th>
<th>Derby?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eadweard the Elder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Æthelstan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadmund</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may safely disregard suggestions that one of the Eadmund coins was at York if only because of the inclusion in the reverse type of the rosettes that at this period are an infallible criterion of coins struck in the Chester area.\(^{53}\) As at Mungret, therefore, the hoard is dominated by coins from north-western England, and again the composition points to a Viking origin. It was in 944, incidentally, that Eadmund ousted the Hiberno-Norsemen from York, and Anlaf I Sihtriesson returned for the third time to Dublin.

A third Munster hoard (Inventory—) is in process of publication at this moment on the basis of drawings preserved in the National Museum of Ireland.\(^{54}\) It seems to have been discovered c.1840 near Macroom in the County Cork. Most of the coins seem to have gone to the melting-pot unrecorded, but Clibborn’s drawings have preserved details of nine which are perhaps representative of the whole. They may be broken down under reigns and approximate places of minting as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chester Area</th>
<th>York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eadweard the Elder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Æthelstan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadmund</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadred</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again the coins are not from the parts of England that might be thought to be the obvious source for English pence found in south-western Ireland, and the presumptive date of deposit c.950, identical with that of the Mungret hoard, again is suggestive of Viking origin. It was in 952, incidentally, that the last of the Hiberno-Norse kings finally abandoned York, and there must have been many among the Ostmen accompanying Anlaf back to Dublin for the fourth and, as it was to prove, the last time who found plenty to occupy them in the raids and counter-raids, largely

\(^{53}\) Cf. Spink’s Numismatic Circular, April 1959. p. 76.

\(^{54}\) Again I am indebted to Dr. Liam O’Sullivan.
internecine, that characterised the years between the death of Muircertagh of the Leather Cloaks and the rise of the sons of Cennetig.

This mention of Mathgamain and Brian prompts the reflection that to date there is no coin-hoard from Munster which would appear to be connected in any way with the expulsion of the Ostmen from Limerick. As we have seen, the three tenth-century hoards are all to be dated about the middle of the century, and it would be forcing the evidence quite unwarrantably to suggest that even the two latest, those from Mungret and Macroom, could possibly be brought down to within a decade, let alone a quinquennium, of the burning of Limerick by Mathgamain in 967. The remaining Viking Age coin-hoards from Munster are all too late. The 1912 find from near Dungarvan in Waterford (Inventory —) contains an Irish copy of an issue which did not begin until Michaelmas 997, and should perhaps be dated c.1000. Incidentally the find contains a number of the Eadgar pence which are such conspicuous absences from the hoards from Thomond, and also a number of French deniers of types which are not otherwise recorded from finds in the whole of the British Isles.

The Adare hoard of 1834 (Inventory 6) is quite vaguely dated by Mr. Thompson ("Xth-XIth century"), but the circumstance that it is described by Lindsay as containing "a few Hiberno-Danish" coins is sufficient to place it after c. 995 at the very earliest, and in all probability well into the eleventh century. The 1833 hoard from the more immediate vicinity of Limerick (Inventory 233) is dated by Mr. Thompson to the "XIth century." Again the dating is quite unnecessarily wide. The coins which Lindsay illustrates cannot well be earlier than c.1050, and the reverse type links them very closely with a facing-bust issue which it is hard to date more than a year or two before c.1065.

The Castlelyons find of 1887 (Inventory 160) dates obviously from the middle of the twelfth century, and likewise is completely unconnected with the ascendancy of the sons of Cennetig. Even finds of single coins from the Viking Age seem to occur but rarely in Munster, and I myself know only two which have been published, a coin of Eric Bloodaxe of York struck—significantly—c.948 and found at Cork in 1833 and a late eleventh-century coin of Dublin found near Fermoy c.1820. It is not, perhaps, always realised in Ireland how critical for the numismatist are all finds of coins, and it is hoped that this paper may have shown how inextricably such finds are caught up in the broader pattern of Ireland's history.

It remains for me to express my indebtedness to the following without whose ready co-operation—and generous encouragement—this paper could never have been completed. Lord Dunraven and Lady O'Connell of Adare, Professor M. J. O'Kelly of Cork, Mr. Emil Szauer of Drumcondra, Dr. Liam O'Sullivan and his ever helpful assistants in the National Museum of Ireland, and Miss M. Lanigan, City Librarian, and the Right Rev. Mons. M. Moloney, both of Limerick. For the gift of the photographs which are the basis of the Plate as well as for permission to reproduce them I am grateful to the authorities of the National Museum of Ireland (Plate 2, 1, 3-5, 7, 8 & 10-15) and of the British Museum (Plate 2, 2, 6 & 9). It should be clearly understood, however, that for the faults of the paper I alone must take all responsibility.

56 Cf. supra n. 10.
57 Unfortunately the coins are no longer in the Waterford Public Library, and I do appeal most urgently for anybody with information as to their present whereabouts to communicate either with me or with the National Museum of Ireland.
58 Information about this hoard is urgently required.
59 Coins identical with those described by Lindsay as found in 1833 are in the British Museum with tickets stating that they were presented by Lord Cole in 1838.