



COINS OF BURGRED, ÆTHELRED I., AND ALFRED, ILLUSTRATING
THE WATERLOO BRIDGE HOARD.

IX. CENTURY.

THE KINGDOM AND COINS OF BURGRED.

BY NATHAN HEYWOOD.

THE Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia became tributary to Egbert, King of Wessex, on the death of Ludica, A.D. 825, and was afterwards governed successively by Wiglaf, 825-839; Bertulf, 839-852; and Burgred, 852-874. Burgred married Aethelswith, a daughter of Ethelwlf, King of Wessex, granddaughter of Egbert, and the sister of Ethelred I. and Alfred the Great, successive kings of Wessex.¹

When Burgred came to the throne the Danes were in occupation of southern Mercia,² but during the first year of his reign they were driven out by Æthelwlf and the West Saxons, who thereupon joined the Mercian forces, under the personal command of Burgred, in subduing the Welsh.³ Having at length obtained complete possession of his dominions he ruled in peace until 866, when the Danes in overwhelming numbers invaded East Anglia and wintered there.⁴

In the following year, 867, the enemy commenced the campaign

¹ "And upon this [subjugation of North-Welsh] after Easter Ethelwlf, King of West Saxons, gave his daughter to Burgred, King of Mercia." *Sax. Ch.* 14.

² "And the same year (851) came three hundred and forty ships to Thames mouth and the crews landed and broke into Canterbury and London, and put to flight Beorhtwulf, King of the Mercians, with his army." *Sax. Ch.* 12.

³ "Here Burhred, King of the Mercians, and his witan begged of King Æthelwlf that he would assist him so that he might make the North-Welsh obedient to him. He then did so, and went with an army across Mercia among the North-Welsh and made them all obedient to him." *Sax. Ch.* 14.

⁴ "And the same year a great heathen army came to the land of the English Nation, and took up their winter quarters among the East Angles, and they were horseled, and the East Angles made peace with them." *Sax. Ch.* 30.

by marching into Northumbria, which was at that time divided and ruled by two kings, Osbercht and Ella, who were opposed to each other.

Osbercht held his court at York, and marched outside the city with all his forces in order to prevent the Danes taking possession under the cover of darkness. Although Osbercht and Ella were at differences they agreed to unite their forces to obstruct the designs of an enemy common to both, but before the forces of Ella could reach York, the Danes made a rapid march towards the city and gave battle to Osbercht's forces, which resulted in the defeat of the Northumbrians and the death of Osbercht.

York was immediately in the possession of the invaders who, without loss of time, evacuated the city and made an attack on Ella's army, which was of considerable dimensions. The struggle was severe, but Ella was mortally wounded and his army completely routed. The Danes were now masters of Northumbria, which they used as a base of operations for the invasion of Mercia.

Whilst the Danes were at war in Northumbria Burgred was not idle, fully expecting another Danish invasion in case of the defeat of the Northumbrians. He collected a considerable force and obtained further levies of men from his brother-in-law Ethelred.

In 868 the Danes took Nottingham, which was shortly afterwards besieged by the allied armies of Burgred and Ethelred. Whilst the Danes were in this precarious position, Burgred, although at least equal in strength, but not desiring to run the risk of an engagement, offered them a sum of money to retire out of Mercia, which they readily accepted and retired to York for a year.¹

Thwarted in their design of subjugating Mercia, the Danes directed

¹ "Here the army went into Mercia to Snotengaham (Nottingham), and there took up their winter settlement. And Burgraed, King of the Mercians, and his witan, begged of Ethelred, King of West Saxons, and Aelfred his brother, that they would help them, that they might fight against the army. And then they went with the West Saxon power into Mersia as far as Nottingham, and there met the army within the fortress, and besieged them therein: but there was no great battle; and the Mercians made peace with the army. Here the army again went to York, and sate there one year." *Sax. Ch.* 40.

their attention to the conquest of East Anglia, which they successfully accomplished in 870.¹

Whilst at war with the East Anglians they did not lose sight of the fact that the subjugation of Mercia had been prevented by Ethelred, and, therefore, took the first opportunity to commence a march on Wessex.² Ethelred had prepared a large force to oppose the Danes. He divided his army into two parts: one division he commanded in person and the other was entrusted to his brother, Alfred, but after nine severely contested engagements Ethelred was mortally wounded and died at Whittingham in 872.

Alfred, on the death of his brother, was proclaimed King of Wessex, and continued the war against the Danes. After an indecisive engagement at Wilton, a treaty of peace was signed, in which the Danes agreed to retire from Wessex so long as Alfred permitted them to make any expeditions they chose against other parts of the country. They thereupon withdrew from Wessex and renewed the invasion of Mercia, and took the capital, London.

Burgred, now finding he could obtain no further assistance from Wessex, again induced the Danes for a monetary consideration to retire, and they went to Torksey in Lincolnshire, and wintered there; but their provisions having fallen short, they broke the treaty, and commenced another invasion of Mercia, but agreed for a third time to retire on payment of a large sum of money, which they obtained. But having received this last-mentioned payment, they remained in possession, and threatened to murder the King.

Burgred, finding himself without money and unable to further defend his country from their ravages, fled to Rome in 874, after having defended his kingdom for twenty-two years. There he shortly

¹ "Here the army rode across Mercia into East Anglia and took up their winter quarters at Thetford. And the same winter King Eadmund fought against them and the Danes got the victory and slew the King, subdued all the land, and destroyed all the minsters which they came to. The names of the chiefs who slew the King were Ingwair and Ubba." *Sax. Ch.*

² "Here the army came to Reading in Wessex. And three days after this two of their Earls rode forth."

afterwards died and was buried at the church of St. Mary at the English School of that city. His Queen died at Pavia in 888.

The invaders being masters of the situation, and desiring to insure their permanent occupation, immediately appointed Ceolwlf, Burgred's late minister, as their tributary King. He held possession for three years, and during that time he devoted his attention to filling his private coffers, and entirely neglected the interests of the Danes, upon whom he looked as intruders.

The coins of Burgred are all pennies. They are silver, and have on the obverse the head of the King within a single or a double circle surrounded by his name, sometimes followed by RE, REX, RECX, RE-T or REX-T (or M), and on one coin by REX A, and on another his name is spelt BVRGRD. Sometimes the legend commences at the top of the coin, but more usually at the left side, behind the King's head; and on the reverse there are four distinct types, but their chronological order has yet to be ascertained :—



1. The moneyer's name between two lines curved outwards at the ends and sometimes engrailed. Above and below, his denomination. Plate, Nos. 1-8.



2. The moneyer's name between two lines curved outwards

at the ends, but a segment of a circle above and below the denomination. Plate, Nos. 9-12.



3. The moneyer's name between two semicircles enclosing his denomination and often ornamented with clusters of three pellets in the angles. Plate, Nos. 13-20.



4. The moneyer's name between two semicircles enclosing his denomination and sometimes ornamented as on type 3, but the arcs separated in the centre and the ends curved in. Plate, Nos. 21 and 22.

The moneyer's name invariably commences to read across the centre of the coin, sometimes continuing above, sometimes below, and is followed by "MONETĀ" in two lines, but in one instance by "MONID." The O in MONETĀ is generally represented by a plain circle, but occasionally radiated into four points, or by a lozenge, and in one instance by a cross. There have been four considerable finds of his pennies namely: at Trewhiddle, Cornwall, in 1744,¹ at Gravesend in 1838,² and at White-Horse near Croydon in 1862;³ in every case the find included a varied series of contemporary currency, and finally at London, which also included sceatta of a very late period, some specimens of Ethelred and of the early type of Alfred the Great. This

¹ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1868, p. 137.

² " " 1841, p. 14.

³ " " 1862, p. 302.

discovery was made whilst workmen were repairing the foundations on the west side of the second pier from the Surrey end of Waterloo Bridge, and nearly all the specimens were in a remarkably fine state of preservation.

The names of over 100 moneyers have been found on Burgred's coins, and it may therefore be conjectured that the coinage of this reign was plentiful, and probably required for the payment of war expenses rather than for commercial enterprise.

The following is a list of Burgred's moneyers and the types to which their names are attached :—

MONEYERS.

ADHELM	...	...	3	CEINRED	...	...	3
BEACILIA	...	...	1	CEÐELLVLF	...	...	2
BEAGITAN	...	...	3	CEÐELVΓ	...	...	2
BEAGLIA	...	...	3	CIALLA	...	...	1
BEAGSTA	...	...	3	CIALLA...	...	...	1. 2
BEAGSTAN	...	...	3	CIALLIAF	...	...	2
BEARNE	...	...	3	CVNEHE...	...	...	3
BEARNEA	...	...	3	CVNEHEL	...	...	1. 2. 3
BEARHEAM	...	...	3	CVNEHLC	...	...	1. 2
BERAHM ¹				CVNEHELM	...	...	1. 2. 3
BERANH...	...	...	3	CVNEHEML	...	...	2
BERHAM ¹				CVNEHL...	...	...	1. 2. 3. 4
BERHEAM	...	...	3	CVNEHLM	...	...	1. 2. 3. 4
BERNEA	...	...	3	CVNEHM	...	...	2
BERNEAN	...	...	3	CVÐBERHT	...	...	3
BERNRED	...	...	1	CVÐERE	...	...	3
BERHTEL ¹				CVÐHERE	...	...	3
BERHÐELM	...	...	3	CVÐMVND	...	...	3
BERLM	...	...	3	CVÐNEM			
BEVRNI	...	...	3	DADA	...	...	3
BHLGHLM	...	...	1	DAGELTE	...	...	3
BIARNVLF ¹				DEALGE...	...	...	3
BIORNOÐ	...	...	3	DEALINC	...	...	3
BLEHTICI ^{1 2}				DEALA	...	...	3
CEALLAF	...	...	2	DELA	...	...	3
CEDLIAF	...	...	2	DIA	...	...	3
CENRED	...	...	1. 2. 3	DIAINLE ¹			

¹ *Ruding*.² *Archæologia*, ix, p. 188.

DIARVFL	...	...	3
DIARVL ...	...	...	2
DIARVLF	...	...	1 . 2 . 3 . 4
DIARVLFI	...	...	1
DIARVALD ¹			
DIARVIL ¹			
DIARVVLF	...	...	3
DIGA ...	...	...	2 . 3
DVDA ...	...	...	1 . 2 . 3
DVDD ¹			
DVDDA ...	...	...	1 . 2 . 3 . 4
DVDEC ...	...	...	1
DVDECI ...	...	...	2
DVDECIL	...	...	1 . 2 . 3
DVDECL	...	...	1
DVDELM ¹			
DVDEMA	...	...	1
DVDEMAN	...	...	1
DVDEMTAN ¹			
DVDIVVNE	...	...	3
DVDNE ¹			
DVDVVINE	...	...	1 . 3
DVDVVNE	...	...	1
DVØDA ...	...	...	1 . 3
EADLVF	...	...	3
EADLVLF	...	...	3
EADNOD	...	...	3
EADNOØ	...	...	3
EADVLF	...	...	1 . 3
EALDOLF	...	...	3
EALDVLF	...	...	3
EANARL...	...	...	3
EANBED...	...	...	3
EANRED...	...	...	2 . 3
ELFEAR	...	...	3
EØELAFLI	...	...	2
EØELALL	...	...	2
EØELHEA	...	...	3
EØELHEAH	...	...	3
EØELLAF	...	...	3
EØELRED	...	...	3

EØELSTAN	...	...	3
EØELVFF	...	...	2
EØELVL	...	...	2
EØELVLF	...	...	1 . 2 . 3 . 4
EØERED ¹			
EØEVLF	...	...	3
FRAMRIC	...	...	2
GERNØE	...	...	3
GEVNØE	...	...	1
GVDHEM ¹			
GVDØMVND	...	...	3
GVDØERE	...	...	2 . 3
GVDØHELE	...	...	3
GVDØHERE	...	...	2 . 3
HASSA ...	...	...	3
HATWIC ²			
HEAGLE ¹			
HEAVVL	...	...	3
HEAVVLF	...	...	1 . 3
HEREFER	...	...	3
HEREFERØ	...	...	1 . 3
HEREFFRØ	...	...	1
HEREMELØ ¹			
HEVVG ...	...	...	1
HEVVLF	...	...	1 . 2
HVGERE	...	...	3
HVGERED	...	...	1 . 2 . 3
HVSSA ³ ...	...	...	1 . 2 . 3
HVØERE	...	...	2 . 3
HVØHERE	...	...	2 . 3
IDIGA ...	...	...	3
INCA (White-Horse find)			
LEFE ...	...	...	3
LEFLE ...	...	...	3
LIAFMA ...	...	...	1
LIAFMAN	...	...	2
LIAFVALD	...	...	3
LIFVALD	...	...	3
LVDE ...	...	...	3
LVDIG ...	...	...	1 2
LVLA ...	...	...	3

¹ Ruding.

² Lindsay.

³ In one instance, NYSSA, type 3.

LVLLA ...	...	...	3 . 4	TIDHELM ...	...	...	3
MAMMAN ¹				TIDHLEM ...	...	...	3
MESSA ...	...	...	3	VVLFBED ...	...	...	3
NVMA ...	...	...	3	VVLFEARD ...	...	...	1 . 3 . 4
OSMVND ...	...	...	1 . 3	VVLFERD ...	...	...	3
OSMVNE ¹				VVLFRED ...	...	...	3
OSMVVND ...	...	...	1 . 3	VVHNE ...	...	...	2
OSSIVND ...	...	...	1 . 3	VVINE ...	...	...	1 . 2 . 3 . 4
TATA ...	...	...	1 . 2 . 3	VVVLFEARD ...	...	...	1 . 3 . 4
TATEL ...	...	...	1 . 3	VVLFERD ...	...	...	3
TIDEHELM ...	...	...	3				

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATE.

The coins illustrated on the plate are now in the collection of Mr. Carlyon-Britton, and their fine state of preservation is typical of the condition of the bulk of the Waterloo find. The lettering is so clear that it is unnecessary to append a detailed list of the readings: attention, however, may be called to the following:—

Nos. 1-8. Burgred, type 1.

No. 1 and No. 5 Burgred, reverse design engraved.

„ 5 Burgred, the title reads **REXT**, for “King of the Mercians.”

„ 6 Burgred, double circle on the obverse and on the reverse a row of pellets above and below the curved lines.

„ 7 Burgred, similar obverse to No. 6.

Nos. 8 and 10 Burgred, the letter **O** in the reverse is radiated.

„ 9-12 Burgred, type 2.

No. 9 Burgred, the title reads **REX M**.

„ 12 Burgred, the legend on the obverse commences at the top of the coin and the letter **O** on the reverse is represented by a lozenge.

Nos. 13-20 Burgred, type 3.

No. 13 Burgred, the **X** in **REX** is duplicated.

„ 17 Burgred, as No. 12, except as to type, the title **REX M**, and workmanship, which last is of unusual character for this reign. Compare No. 20.

„ 18 Burgred, additional pellets on the reverse.

„ 20 Burgred, as No. 17, but the title is **REX TLO**, probably for *Rex Merciorum*.

Nos. 21-22 Burgred, type 4.

No. 21 Burgred, the legend on the obverse commences at the top of the coin.

„ 23 Æthelred.

„ 24 Alfred.

¹ Trewhiddle find