



# The 'giant' hoard: A Corieltavi war-hoard from the land of the Parisi

By Chris Rudd

1. The Hotham Hoard is the first to include more than one silver coin of Volisios Dumnocoveros.

In 2012-13 two seasoned Yorkshire detectorists, Chris Hannard (67) and Roy Doughty (73), unearthed a hoard of twelve Ancient British silver coins, all minted shortly before the mid 1st century AD. Three are of Dumnocoveros Tigirseno, nine of Volisios Dumnocoveros ('giant of the world') – some of the last independent rulers of the northern Corieltavi ('army of the broad land') who lived in north Lincolnshire. It was found near Hotham, East Yorkshire, just north of the Humber Estuary, in the land of the Parisi ('cauldron people') whose Gallic ancestors gave their name to Paris. The British Museum acquired one coin, we bought the other eleven. We were thrilled to get this small hoard for three reasons:

1. All the coins without exception are extremely rare, with only a few examples of each previously recorded.
2. The Hotham Hoard is the first to contain more than one silver coin of Volisios Dumnocoveros. The Honley

Hoard (1893) had only one. The huge Hallaton Hoards (2000-09), totalling almost 5,000 mainly silver coins of the Corieltavi, had only one.

3. The fact that the Hotham Hoard, like other late hoards



2. Roy Doughty, left, and Chris Hannard, finders of the Hotham Hoard. Both are members of East Yorkshire Metal Detecting Society and East Riding Archaeological Society.

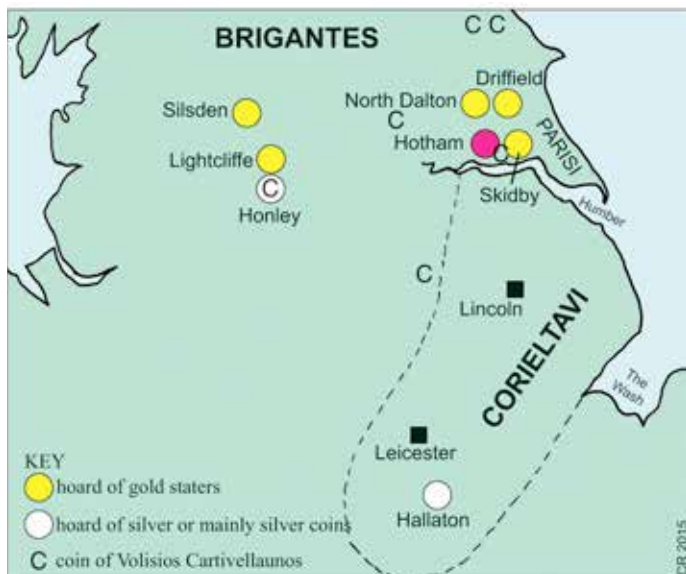


3. Extremely rare silver unit of Dumnocoveros Tigirseno, ABC 1974, acquired by the British Museum, with silver unit of Volisios Dumnocoveros, ABC 1983, before and after professional conservation.

of the northern Corieltavi – all but one linked to Volisios – wasn't found in the land of the Corieltavi makes it trebly intriguing and poses problematic questions:

Who was Volisios? Why does his name always appear in tandem on the coins of three different rulers – Dumnocoveros, Cartivellaunos, Dumnovellaunos – but never solo on coins of his own? What was his relationship to these other rulers? Their father, their associate, their overlord? Why do all Volisios-branded coins, whether gold or silver, look so alike? Were they all issued around the same time and, if so, for what purpose? Why are hoards containing coins of Volisios almost invariably found outside the land of the Corieltavi? If Volisios wasn't a Corieltavian ruler, what was he? A king of the Brigantes or Parisi? Who was Tigirseno? And how did he relate to Dumnocoveros? Indeed, was the DVMNOC on the front of Tigirseno coins the same person as the DVMNOCOVEROS on the back of Volisios-branded coins?

In 2010, when I was wondering why no coins of Volisios Cartivellaunos – none at all – had been found in Lincolnshire, I put these questions to the Celtic numismatist Dr John Sills who lives in Lincolnshire. His answers, given in the light of the Hallaton Hoards, are illuminating. He says: "The Dumnoc Tigr Seno (or Tigirseno) issues show clearly that Dumnocoveros was the earliest of the three and Tigirseno may well be a patronym, in which case Tigirsenos and not Volisios was the father of Dumnocoveros. After that we get the Volisios issues, which must be very late. It appears from the Hallaton Hoards that the Corieltavi continued to resist the Romans after the AD 43 invasion, but they could not have done so on their own and must have gone into coalition with other northern tribes, almost certainly the Brigantes and probably the Parisi also. Putting all the evidence together I now think that Volisios, who appears from nowhere halfway through the coinage of Dumnocoveros, was a ruler of the Brigantes or Parisi and that the Volisios issues as a whole are



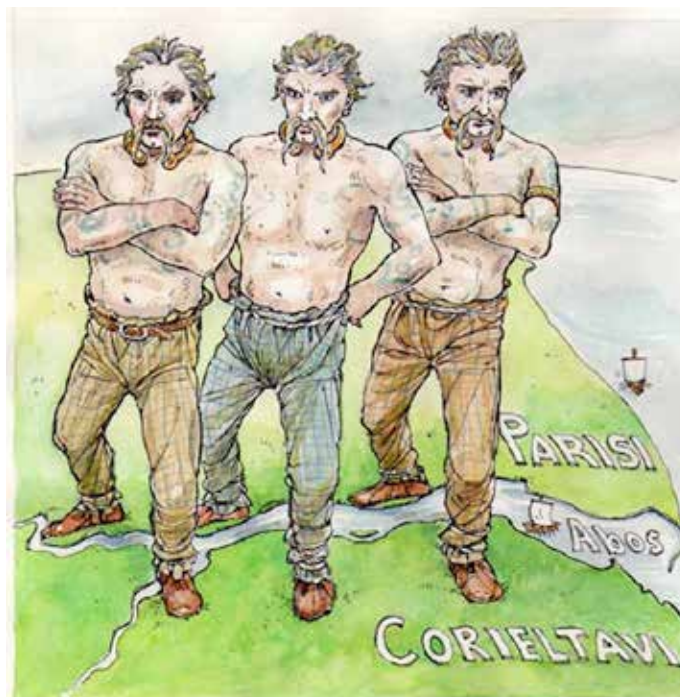
4. The Hotham Hoard, like all other late coin hoards of the northern Corieltavi, deposited c.AD 43-50, was found outside the land of the Corieltavi. No coins of Volisios Cartivellaunos (C) have been found in Corieltavian territory.

	Skidby	North Dalton	Driffield	Silsden	Lightcliffe	Honley	Hotham
Volisios Dumnocoveros gold stater							
KEY: ● gold stater ○ silver coin							
Dumnocoveros Tigirseno	1				5		3
Volisios Dumnocoveros		1	1		35	1	9
Volisios Cartivellaunos						1	
Volisios Dumnovellaunos			7	1	3	3	

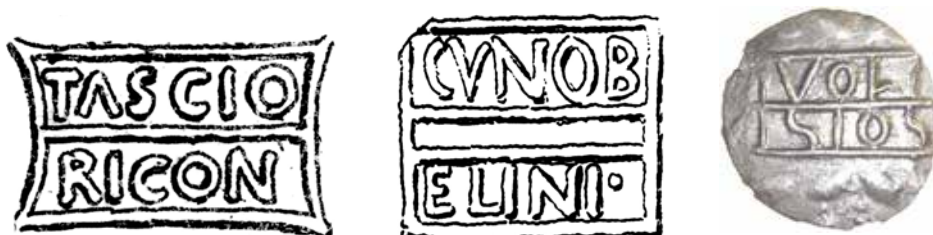
5. Whereas coins of Tigirseno may have been issued c.AD 30-40, Volisios-branded coins were possibly struck c.AD 43-47, many as 'war money'. Their inclusion in these seven late Corieltavi hoards, all deposited beyond the (supposed) borders of the Corieltavi, some perhaps by retreating British warriors, seems to support this idea.



7. Gold stater of Volisios Cartivellaunos (ABC 1989), c.AD 43-47, found by metdet Barry White near Bawtry, N Notts. Only one other recorded. Auctioned by Liz Cottam of Chris Rudd for £9,400.



8. Did three 'big men' of the northern Corieltavi - Dumnocoveros ('giant of the world'), Cartivellaunos ('strong ruler'), Dumnovellaunos ('world commander') – defend the Humber region against the Roman army? Or were they princes of the Parisi or Brigantes encroaching on the territory of the Corieltavi? I think the former scenario is more plausible.



6. The two-line Volisios name-panel, common to all coins – gold and silver – of Dumnocoveros, Cartivellaunos and Dumnovellaunos (with the exception of the earlier Tigirseno types) was probably copied from Tasciovanos (see ABC 2577-80) or, more likely, from his son Cunobelinus (see ABC 2858, 2918, 2924). 19 of the 27 gold staters in the Silsden Hoard, W.Yorkshire, 1998, were of Cunobelinus. I think he had close ties with the Corieltavi.





9. History records no 'Battle of the Humber' between Britons and Romans. But late Corieltavian hoards and single coin finds across Parisian and Brigantian territory may testify to native resistance to the northward advance of Roman forces, perhaps even to a military coalition under the command of Volisios. In my view, the Hotham Hoard adds yet more colour to this picture.

the coinage of a northern coalition put together to resist the Roman advance between c.43 and c.47 AD. So Dumnocoveros, Cartivellaunos and Dumnovellaunos were rulers of a (northern) section of the Corieltavi but Volisios, as you suggest, belonged to a different tribe, probably the Brigantes. This is controversial but it solves the Dumnoc Tigr Seno legend problem, the 'who was Volisios?' problem and the northern distribution problem simultaneously. A variation on this would be that Dumnoc/Cartivel/Dumno ruled over the territory of the Parisi, who by then may have been incorporated into the Corieltavi given the style of the coins, which would make Volisios almost certainly a ruler of the Brigantes, perhaps the father of Cartimandua?"

The Brigantes ('the high ones') were the biggest and most powerful tribe in the north of England. Ptolemy, writing in the 2nd century, described the lands of the northern Brigantes as "extending to both seas" (*The Geography* 2.2). The Humber was their main gateway to the southern tribes and to the peoples of Gaul. It must therefore have been of crucial importance that they took control of the Humber and helped their neighbours, the Corieltavi and the Parisi, to resist the northern advance of the Roman army. Indeed many of the coins of Dumnocoveros, Cartivellaunos and Dumnovellaunos, especially their gold staters, may have been struck specifically as 'war money' to finance the fight against Rome. I think that the Hotham Hoard, perhaps buried in a hurry – certainly not reclaimed by its owner – could be evidence of that conflict.

Was Volisios the father of Cartimandua ('strong pony'), as John

Sills speculates? Maybe. If Volisios was involved in the Brigantian revolt of AD 47-8, described by Tacitus as '*discordiae*' (*Annals* 12.32), he may have been executed by Britain's new governor, Ostorius Scapula, in the "execution of a few" who had taken up arms, and his daughter Cartimandua (if that's who she was) could have been appointed queen of the entire Brigantian federation of tribes, which may have stretched 150 miles from Derby to Carlisle. Certainly by AD 51 she was powerful enough and pro-Roman enough to surrender the freedom-fighter Caratacus to Rome. For over 60 years a silver half-unit inscribed CARTI, from the Honley Hoard of 1893, was thought to have been issued by Cartimandua; in 1960 it was reassigned to Cartivellaunos ('strong ruler') of the Coritani, now known as Corieltavi. That's the thrill of Ancient British coins. The story keeps changing as new coins and coin hoards, like the Hotham Hoard, keep coming out of the ground, thanks to all-weather fieldworkers like Chris Hannard and Roy Doughty.

For their help with this report I thank Dr John Sills, Elizabeth Cottam, Chris and Roy. Dr Philip de Jersey's new book, *Coin Hoards in Iron Age Britain* (The British Numismatic Society/Spink 2014), also proved invaluable.

#### Picture credits

1 Carol Rudd. 2 Chris Hannard. 3 Roy Doughty/Liz Cottam. 4,5,6,7 Chris Rudd. 8 Jane Bottomley. 9 'Battle of the Sambre' by Peter Connolly, photo by Dr Simon James.

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Brighstone hoard, Isle of Wight, found by Albert Snell, 19 October 2005.

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