

Over 10,000 Celtic gold coins

(many you haven't seen before)

all in one colossal book

***Divided Kingdoms: the Iron Age gold coinage of southern England* by Dr John Sills (Chris Rudd, Aylsham, 2017) is a monumental new book. Monumental in size - 825 pages, 5cm thick, weighing 8lbs. Monumental in scope - catalogues more than 10,000 gold coins of the southern, north Thames and Kent regions (599 coins shown twice size). And monumental in scholarship - no British numismatist has ever tackled such a gigantic task in the Celtic field.**

- *Divided Kingdoms* is the first book that pulls together the past 50 years of coin finds to reconstruct the lost political history of southern Britain between Caesar and Claudius. The coins show how the various states merge, split apart and rise and fall under a series of leaders weak and strong, all set against the backdrop of a Roman empire that was now just across the Channel and which sometimes intervened directly in the affairs of the various kingdoms, and at other times was indifferent.

- At the heart of the book is a die study of the 10,306 gold coins of the core south-eastern states recorded up to 2016 by the Celtic Coin Index. The catalogue sections at the end of each chapter list every coin, together with its findspot where known, the die combination, its metal content where available and the weight, together with every recorded appearance. For collectors, students and museum professionals alike this allows the pedigree of every coin listed to be determined with confidence. No other single numismatic work catalogues anywhere near this number of coins at this level of precision and detail.

- *Divided Kingdoms* is arranged in 13 initial chapters that cover everything from the massive imports of Belgic gold during the Gallic War to the final coinages of Cunobelinus and Togodubnus, the last perhaps struck after the Roman army had landed in AD 43. Chapter 14 combines it all in an epic synthesis that is almost a book in itself.

- The coins now suggest that Caesar's campaign against Cassivellaunos in 54 BC centered on Essex rather than Hertfordshire, and that he may even have crossed the Thames much further east than previously suspected.

- After the Roman invasions of the mid 50s BC a horizon of tribute coinage is now clearly visible for the first time, bearing out Caesar's statement that he imposed an annual tribute on the British tribes, which some scholars in the past have doubted was ever paid.

- At the same time as tribute payments were sucking vast amounts of gold out of Britain, refugees and migrants were streaming into southern England as the Roman army tightened its grip on

Gaul. As a direct result of these two forces central authority buckled and then fragmented across the territory of the Regini and Atrebatas, and for several years almost every major settlement was forced to strike its own coinage. This is the first book that clearly separates out the myriad local issues from those of the major states.

- Commios, almost certainly the historical Commius of Caesar, reunited the southern tribes – probably by assembling an army of Gallic War veterans and Belgic migrants.

- North of the Thames Commios' contemporary, Addedomaros, united the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni under a single ruler for the first time. The north Thames region has been the source of endless controversy in the past, but the coins now put the complex sequence of events beyond doubt, with the two tribes at first separate, then merging under Addedomaros, splitting again under Tasciovanos and Dubnovellaunos before finally being reunited by Cunobelinus at the start of the first century AD.

- John Sills suggests several new dates within the 'missing history' period where coins can be tied to events in the Roman world, the first of which associates Augustus' planned invasions between 34 and 26 BC with the rise of Addedomaros' north Thames empire.

NEW!

DIVIDED KINGDOMS: THE IRON AGE GOLD COINAGE OF SOUTHERN ENGLAND

John Sills



Chris Rudd



Dr John Sills with his monumental work of scholarship. Hardback, 30x21 cm, 825 pages, 599 twice-size coin photos. Only 350 copies printed.



Gold plated stater inscribed *ALBIC* (Sills DK 598), one of many coins not in *ABC* that you've probably never seen before.

- Augustus quickly realised that the terms of Caesar's treaty with Cassivellaunos had been broken by Addedomaros. First of all he imposed an indemnity payment, probably paid in part with Addedomaros' huge final issue of Spiral staters, the biggest single issue covered in *Divided Kingdoms*. As soon as Addedomaros was out of the way Rome may have been instrumental in handing Essex to the pro-Roman Dubnovellaunos, who already controlled Kent.
- Kent had earlier sent colonists north of the Thames, some of whom struck the 'Essex Banded' issues, adding legitimacy to Dubnovellaunos' claim.
- A second reasonably secure date is between 16 and 13 BC, when Tincomarus' introduction of radical new classical designs on his coinage can probably be linked with Augustus' long stay in Gaul. The emperor may even have lent him an engraver, for Roman-style identification letters appear on the exquisite Medusa quarters.
- For many years Tasciovanos, ruler of the Catuvellauni, was hemmed in by pro-Roman states to his south and east, but rather than join them he arranged for his son, Cunobelinus, to inherit the kingdom of the Trinovantes after Dubnovellaunos. As soon as this happened the now elderly Tasciovanos proclaimed himself in the Celtic language *rigon*, 'great ruler', on his staters, a calculated snub to the Latin *rex* of his southern neighbour Eppillus. The long struggle for dominance in the south-east had been won by the Catuvellaunian dynasty.

'Brilliant'

SIR BARRY CUNLIFFE

- The reason for Eppillus' sudden move from *Calleva* (Silchester) to Kent has long been a mystery, but the coins now indicate that he was relocated by Augustus to ensure that the strategically vital region of *Cantion* continued to be ruled by a friendly king, protecting not only Roman trade routes but also the landing sites for any future invasion.
- Cunobelinus, Old King Cole, goes on to be one of England's greatest kings – on a par, say, with Alfred the Great – uniting the Trinovantes, Catuvellauni and Cantii under a single overlord. Each of his three provinces was allowed to retain its own identity on silver and bronze coinage, but

production of gold remained rigidly centralised at *Camulodunon* (Colchester), a measure of just how important it was in maintaining political control.

- Kent declined rapidly after the death or exile of Dubnovellaunos from being a strong, independent state to a proxy political battleground where the north and south Thames dynasties vied with each other for control. The north Thames kingdom had military might on tap but the south Thames rulers had the backing of Rome. Eppillus' shadowy successors, Anarevito and Touto, could have been ousted at any time by Cunobelinus but he seems to have left them in place to fulfil the letter, if not the spirit, of an agreement with Augustus.

- A further possible date is suggested when Verica suddenly puts the Roman title *rex* on his gold some way into his reign. It may have been bestowed on him by Tiberius if the British king went to pay court to the new emperor on his AD 14 accession, as was the custom.

'Astonishing'

DR PHILIP DE JERSEY

- Amminus, who was probably descended from Tasciovanos via the enigmatic Kentish king Segos, attempted to make *Cantion* independent again under Roman protection, but was banished by Cunobelinus and fled to Caligula, who in AD 40 was waiting at Boulogne with his army for Amminus to tell him it was safe to invade. After the coup failed Caligula announced to the world – wrongly – that he had Cunobelinus' son, that Britain had surrendered, and went home.

- Caligula's sham campaign was presented by later Roman commentators as a farce, but it was a valuable dress rehearsal for his uncle, Claudius, to mount a successful invasion three years later. Rome pretended that she had been invited over to restore the southern king Verica to power, but her generals were probably waiting for Cunobelinus to die and for the country to be racked once more by internal division before advising the emperor to invade. Togodubnus – probably Cunobelinus' designated successor, whose gold coinage Rainer Kretz has brilliantly identified for the first time – struck a handful of very rare quarter staters before being killed, and with him went the last great hope of the British resistance. After that the Roman empire – the inspiration for all modern-day fascist movements – eventually persuaded the British that wealth was preferable to liberty, a Faustian pact that has still has echoes today.

Divided Kingdoms is a mammoth gilt-stamped hardback, 30x21 cm, with 599 twice-size coin photos, 87 maps, 208 figures and tables. **Only 350 copies printed.** So don't delay. Buy today direct from the publisher, Chris Rudd. A big fat bargain at £95 + p&p.

Chris Rudd



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