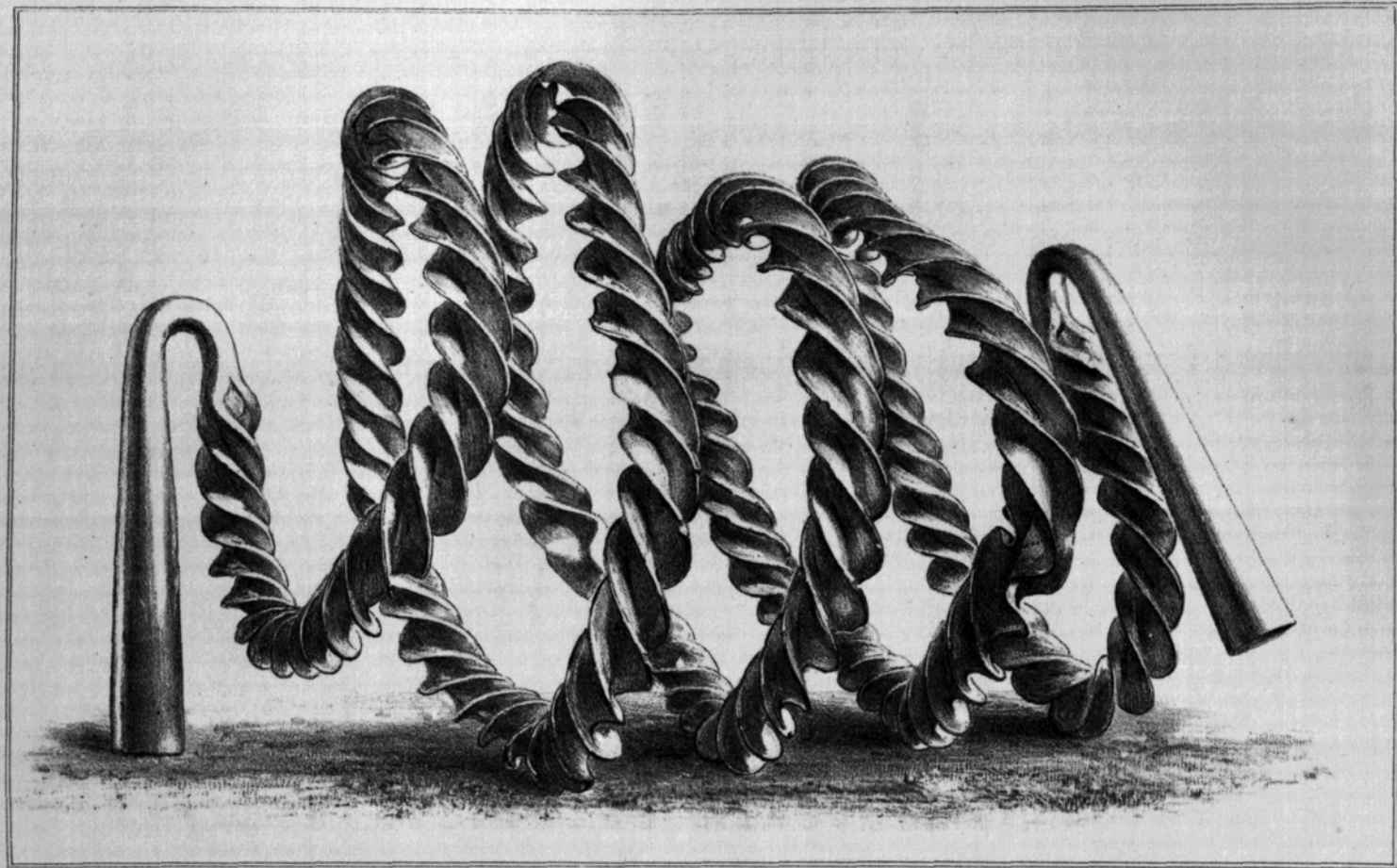




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Lambert Weston, Photo:

Thos. Kell, Lithographer,
40, King St. Covent Garden.

GOLDEN TORC FOUND AT DOVER, N.W. OF THE CASTLE, IN FEBRUARY, 1878.

GOLD TORQUES FROM DOVER.

THE splendid example of a golden torques, shewn at full size, in the annexed plate, was found in the grounds of Mr. Chignell's residence, Castle Mount, Dover, in February, 1878. It weighs about twelve ounces, forms an armlet of five coils, and is in perfect preservation, although it was buried about six feet deep in the soil. For the photographs from which our plate is taken, we are indebted to the generous kindness and skill of Mr. Lambert Weston, of Dover. Mr. Chignell's courtesy enabled all persons, interested in such examples of primitive art, to see this torques at Dover, and it will ultimately be deposited in the national collection, at the British Museum.

It is well known that the ancient Celtic chieftains and warriors, of Gaul and of Britain, wore armlets, and collars, of gold; but the more general and earlier types of these ornaments consisted each of but one single band of metal, whether twisted (whence the name *torquis* or torques) or round, or flat or angular. Admirable representations of such *armillæ* found in Kent, are given in *Archæologia Cantiana* (Vol. V., pp. 42, 43, and Vol. IX., pp. 2, 11.) Of such simple character was an example found at Dover, in a ploughed field, about A.D. 1772. It was of pure gold, nine ounces in weight, forming one band, flat inside, but rounded on its outer surface, and just sixteen inches long; broad in the centre, it diminished in width towards its extremities. The papers written by Mr. Pretty (in Vol. V., 41), and by Mr. C. Roach Smith (in Vol. IX., 1), contain much information respecting such primitive ornaments of ancient notables.

The torques recently found at Castle Mount, Dover, differs from these simpler examples, in its spiral form. The twisted bar of gold, instead of forming one band around the arm, is coiled into a spiral which forms five coils around the

arm. It terminates, at either end, in a long narrow round cone, which is bent back, hook-like; perhaps its effect was to press upon the arm so as to keep the armlet firmly fixed. An example, almost exactly similar to this, but of six coils, was found many years ago in Cheshire, and became the property of Sir Philip de Grey Egerton. It is engraved in Dr. Wm. Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, (article *Armilla*), and in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. v., p. 342, where mention is made of another armlet, exactly similar in form and metal, found in the Fens, near Cambridge, thirty years ago. A still more elaborate example, forming no less than twelve coils around the arm, was found near Carrickfergus, in June, 1846. It was melted up, although its weight, 6 oz. 15 cwt. 6 gr., was little more than half that of our Dover example. Fortunately an engraving of it in the *Journal of the British Archæological Association*, vol. ii., 357, preserves a record of its appearance. Mr. Petrie's examples of the Irish torques, found at Tara Hill,* in Meath, were of similar type to this which Mr. Chignell found at Dover.

The remarks of Dr. Samuel Birch respecting this spiral form of the twisted armillæ are worthy of quotation. He says:—"A much rarer variety of this type is when the torques was adapted for the thick of the arm, by twisting it into a spiral, with one hook at each end. It seems a later adaptation, as if by a race wearing *armillæ*, or making their torques for the neck, into a *trophy*. This species of torques was given as a military honour.† Similar armlets occur among the Scandinavian remains."‡

Polybius (*Hist.* xi., quoted by Mr. J. B. Deane§), in describing the battle of Telamon, says that all the Celtic Gauls who occupied the first ranks were adorned with golden *manaks* and bracelets; *manaks* (*μανάκης*) being the golden rings which the Gauls wore on their necks and wrists. The custom of wearing these *manaks* or collars was probably derived by the Celts from the Persians, who adopted it from

* *Journal of British Archæological Association*, vol. ii., 379.

† Vopiscus, *Vit. Aurelianus*, c. 7.

‡ *Journal of British Archæological Association*, vol. iii., 29.

§ *Archæologia*, vol. xxvii.

the Chaldeans. The Druids, or priests of the Gauls and Germans, are said to have worn these golden marks of honour.* Dio Cassius (lib. lxii. 1) mentions large torques worn by Boadicea. The Welsh (Cymry) likewise wore the golden torques, as we learn from the poems of Aneurin. The Chaldee word *menēka* (מנעקה in the Septuagint) is used in Daniel v. 7, 16, 29, for the golden collar or chain which was promised by Belshazzar as a royal reward and mark of honour. The Rev. Daniel Haigh speaks of many traces of early connection between the primitive Chaldeans and our own Teutonic forefathers.† He has likewise quoted, in *Archæologia Cantiana* (Vol. X., p. 34), a passage from *The Traveller's Tale*, in which Widsith the traveller relates that Eormannic King of the Goths (father of Æthelbert King of Kent) raised him to the rank of a *rad-cnight*, and gave to him a golden collar, on which were scored 600 divisions, as the valuation of that rank in *scillings*. No doubt the ancient custom, derived by our forefathers from the Chaldeans, still survives, and such collars as those of the Order of the Garter, or of the Bath, are the modern representatives of the primitive neck-torques.

The ancient arm-torques, or bracelet, although not now used as a manly mark of distinction by European nations, is nevertheless still in demand as a decoration for African warriors and chiefs. Mr. Stern, who was for many years a resident and a captive in Abyssinia, informs me that the custom of bestowing armlets as a royal mark of honour and distinction is still observed there. The recipients are generally potent chiefs, or distinguished military leaders. Thus, as with the ancient Celts and Persians, so with the modern Abyssinians, the armlet of gold, or of silver-gilt, six or seven inches wide, engraved, or ornamented with flowers in relief, is a mark of distinction and honour, and its unauthorized assumption would cost an Abyssinian his life. Probably Judah's "bracelets," mentioned in Genesis xxxviii. 18, 25, must be accounted as a mark of rank, almost as distinctive as his signet; but Gesenius is most likely correct, in saying

* Pliny, xxxiii. 1, c. 2.; Strabo, lib. vi.; Diodorus, *De Gallis*, v.

† *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. X., p. 36.

that Judah wore that decoration around his neck, not upon his arms. The Septuagint renders it *ὀμφακος*, thus agreeing with Gesenius,* who speaks of it as the cord, or chain, by which Judah's signet was suspended from his neck, between his inner and outer garments, as used by the Persians to this day.

Most probably, as Dr. Birch has wisely suggested the spiral form of the twisted bar of gold was a late type of the armillæ, or arm-torques, and we may perhaps refer this splendid example, found at Dover, to the third or fourth century, or later. It seems to be formed from four plates of gold, twisted together into a screw-like appearance, the curvature being very regular and extremely elegant. A vertical section of this torques would be cruciform.

* Gesenius, *Hebrew and English Lexicon* (London, 1832), pp. 185, 453.