

It would be interesting to know the circumstances under which it came to be missing from the Cotton collection and in whose hands it has been all the intervening years, but these details are not forthcoming. It is only to be hoped that most of the missing Cotton coins will eventually come to light and perhaps one day return to their rightful place in the British Museum.

R. P. MACK

AN ALLEGED *AGNUS DEI* PENNY OF THE WAREHAM MINT

RECENTLY the writer's attention has been drawn to a passage in Charles Warne's *Ancient Dorset* which seemed to provide good evidence for the existence of an *Agnus Dei* penny of the Wareham mint. The relevant passage occurs on p. 328 under the general heading "Anglo Saxon and Danish Coins struck by Dorset Mints and now in the following Foreign Collections. ADDITIONAL". It runs as follows:

LUNDEN

Ædelred II, A.D. 978-1016

✠ALFGAR MO FER Hildebrand, Type G.

On p. 320 we are told that information concerning the coins at Lund had been furnished by a Professor Thorberg of that University.

Warne's *Ancient Dorset* was published in 1872, and there is internal evidence that the correspondence with Professor Thorberg is to be dated to that year. Consequently the reference to a Hildebrand classification must allude either to the 1846 edition of *Anglosachsiska Mynt*, or to the same author's comparatively youthful disquisition on the Anglo-Saxon coins belonging to Lund University which was published in three successive fascicules in 1829. The latter possibility, however, seems precluded by the fact that the alphabetical type sequence there proposed does not extend beyond the letter "F". The reference must, therefore, be to the 1846 Stockholm Catalogue, where the classification adopted is the same as that followed in the 1881 edition. Consequently there is a strong *prima facie* case that we are here confronted with an unpublished coin of the celebrated *Agnus Dei* issue, a type so rare that fewer than a dozen specimens are known to the numismatist.

The existence or non-existence of this coin is critical for the serious student of the late Saxon series for the simple reason that it would be the first penny of this type to be associated with a mint from Wessex proper. The late W. C. Wells seems to have been the first to recognize the peculiarly "Mercian" flavour of the issue, but unfortunately had to resort quite unnecessarily to some very specious but not very convincing special pleading in order to include the two coins of Malmesbury. There is absolutely no need for the numismatist to speculate on whether this or that county came within Eadric's ealdormany, and certainly there are few numismatists today who would care to be

associated with the remarkable claim that "there can be no doubt but that the ealdormen held control of the coinage issued in their ealdormanry". Leaving aside, too, the question of the date of the *Agnus Dei* issue—and the present writer believes that a good case can be made for dating it five years earlier than Wells did—the coins of the period *c.* 1010–20 themselves make it abundantly clear that the territory north of the Bristol Avon was a sort of no-man's-land as far as the supply of dies was concerned, and that for some reason unknown to us the pattern of eleventh-century administration preserved in this matter at least a memory of the old sub-kingdom of Hwicce with its Mercian and not West Saxon associations. This is seen of course most clearly in the case of the geographical distribution of the variety of the *Quatrefoil* issue of Cnut which Hildebrand distinguishes as Type E, var. d, but even in the last years of Æthelræd II there is evidence that mints north of the Avon received some at least of their dies from the same centre that supplied Chester and Oxford. Consequently the fact that Malmesbury struck the *Agnus Dei* type is no argument against the "Mercian" character of the issue.

An *Agnus Dei* penny from Wareham, on the other hand, would fairly put the cat among the pigeons. A possible way out of the difficulty would be to suggest that the coin is wrongly attributed, and should be given to Warwick. Admittedly the most abbreviated mint-signatures are so similar that confusion is easy, FER and FÆR , but the unpleasant fact remains that the moneyer Ælfgar is known from undoubted Wareham coins of just this period. It is not simply a matter of readings such as $\text{FERH}\bar{\Lambda}$ and $\text{FERH}\bar{\Lambda}\text{M}$ which simply cannot be Warwick, but certain of the coins are of a style which is strictly confined to Wessex.

The answer must surely be sought in quite another direction. The first point to be borne in mind is that Bror Emil Hildebrand knew well the Lund Collection, and in fact added to it during his long career in the Stockholm Coin Cabinet. He was also personally very interested in the *Agnus Dei* type, and in the 1881 edition of *Anglosachsiska Mynt* drew up what was obviously intended to be a complete list of all the examples known to him, including for this purpose a coin in Copenhagen and another described in an early nineteenth-century German work. It is, therefore, improbable, to say the very least, that another specimen could have been acquired by the Lund Collection between 1829 and 1872 without being brought to his notice, while the normal operation of the Swedish law of treasure trove in any case should have ensured that the discovery of it came to his official cognizance.

The second consideration is that there is in the Systematic Collection at Lund a Wareham penny of the moneyer Ælfgar which there is reason to believe was there before 1872, and which Professor Thorberg did *not* bring to Warne's attention. The reading of the reverse legend approximates to that given by Warne, but the type is that of the *Cruz* issue. According to the Hildebrand classification of 1846 and 1881 this would have been described by Professor Thorberg as "Typ. C",

and it is easy to see how a confusion could arise in manuscript between a "C" and a "G". It is the suggestion of this note that the *Agnus Dei* penny of Wareham is mythical, and that the origin of its existence lies in an error of transcription or in a slip on the part of the printer. Warne obviously was not familiar with Hildebrand's 1846 catalogue, and still less with the classification there adopted. Indeed for most late Saxon coins he resorts to a rather clumsy system of references to Ruding's plates. Consequently it is very doubtful if he would have appreciated the vital import of the letter "G", and the mistake having once been passed in proof—if indeed it was not always present in Warne's copy—its perpetuation was inevitable.

The balance of probability, then, is that the *Agnus Dei* penny of Wareham does not and never did exist. It only remains for the present writer to extend his thanks to Mr. C. E. Blunt for drawing his attention to the Warne reference, Fil. lic. fru Brita Malmer of Lund for doing the same as regards the *Crux* coin otherwise so unaccountably passed over by Professor Thorberg, and to Mr. Elmore Jones who has supplied what may seem the final proof that the solution proposed is the right one. According to Warne the crucial coin reads:

‡ALFEAR MO PER

Perhaps the most characteristic epigraphical feature of coins of the *Agnus Dei* type is that the *monetarius* contraction is never used, the reverse legends invariably consisting of the moneyer's name and that of his mint *without* a copulative or with ON.

R. H. M. D.

THE SUPPOSED FINDS AT THWAITE AND CAMPSEY ASH, 1832

THERE are references in numismatic literature to two finds of Anglo-Saxon coins in Suffolk in the year 1832. One of these was at Thwaite and is referred to, for example, by Hawkins in his *Silver Coins of England* and in two sale catalogues;¹ the other find has been stated to have been at Campsey Ash and has been instanced by Burn in his *Catalogue of London Tradesmen's Tokens*, Akerman in *Pagan Saxonism*, and Lindsay in *Coinage of the Heptarchy*. Thompson in his *Inventory of British Coin Hoards A.D. 600-1500* has listed both finds (nos. 69 and 362). Accounts of both these finds state that the coins were of the eleventh century and included a number of cut half-pennies and farthings.

It would be a remarkable coincidence for two such hoards to be found in the same year and further investigation has shown that there was in fact only one find, namely that at Thwaite. It would seem that the misapprehension arose from a somewhat ambiguous account given

¹ Major Sheppard sale, 25 February 1864, lot nos. 86 and 87. Lady sale, 19 May 1885, lot no. 145.