FORGERY IN RELATION TO NUMISMATICS.

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Perhaps the word forgery might be well defined as a concrete falsehood, for the suggestion of falseness is involved in the whole idea. Imitations may or may not be forgeries according to the intention of the maker to deceive or not. The five-shilling pieces made by Tanner, the mint engraver, in imitation of the Cromwell crown, must be looked upon as an attempt to copy a great master rather than an endeavour to satisfy the appetite of the coin collector. Another example of a false article without the element of forgery, is the money of a country which deliberately and openly issues a debased coinage.

Numismatic forgeries may be divided into two classes; firstly, those intended to deceive the whole world, in other words, forgeries of money intended to pass as money; secondly, those made with particular reference to ourselves as numismatologists. By general consent the name contemporary forgery has been applied to the first class, which is an interesting series. As a rule the coins do not deceive the expert, and generally they are quite easy to identify. In nearly every case they are base, being either made of entirely base metal, or consisting for the large part of this, with a thin coating of the proper metal on the outside. Sometimes they are struck, but more often they are cast.

The processes by which a forgery of the second class is made generally help towards its detection.

There are four, or perhaps five methods:—

(1) Electrotyping.
(2) Casting
(3) Fabrication of false dies.
(4) The use of genuine dies for striking base metal, or put to some unauthorised purpose, such as restriking
(5) Alteration of a genuine coin.
(1) Electrotyping.—For a production by this means, a mould in a suitable medium, such as sealing wax, is required. As the whole object cannot be moulded in one piece, more impressions than one must be used. These are covered with a substance capable of retaining a metallic deposit, and then placed within an electric circuit in a fluid containing the metal to be deposited. When a coating of sufficient thickness has been produced, the pieces are removed from the bath, washed and detached from the moulds, and then joined together. The edges where the joining is made are carefully closed, and then the now solid reproduction is coated, usually electrically, with the same metal as that of the original. This hides both the joining and the deposited metal if it be different from the outside. Careful polishing completes the process.

The character of the process at once reveals the features by which it may be discovered. Small and thin coins are usually made in two pieces and joined together. If the surface of the edge be gently scraped both the line of the joining and the composition of the metal will be revealed. If the coin be large or thick, the rim is put on separately, and the juncture is just where the face touches the edge. The surface of an electrotype is usually granular as compared with the smooth surface of a struck piece. To the unwary, an electrotype is a dangerous forgery, as the style of the ancient work is, of course, exactly reproduced. An electrotype weighs less than an original coin, unless this matter has been taken into consideration and allowed for in the thickness of the component parts. Although the ring of a coin is a common test by the public of its genuineness, there is no reliance to be placed on it for the purposes of detecting such forgeries as are being considered here. Electrotypes, however, as a rule, have no ring, but there are exceptions. The same unfortunately applies to genuine pieces. Saxon coins often emit no musical note when struck, and a crack or flaw in any coin usually destroys the ring.

(2) Casting.—This is a common method of forgery. Like electrotyping, it entirely preserves the style of the original work. Casts are made from moulds and the character of the substance of which the mould is made largely influences the resulting copy. As a rule the
The Processes of Forgery.

finest possible sand is used. The coin to be copied is placed in a suitable bed of this material, which is packed round it as tightly as possible by hammering. Each side is impressed in a separate mould and grooves are cut in which to run the molten metal. After removal of the original, the two sides are placed together and the metal is poured in. This fills the space left by the coin and also the groove. When cold, the mould is opened and the resulting cast of the coin and groove goes through a process of trimming to remove the excess of metal. The cast when taken from the mould shows around the middle of the edge a thin layer of metal, representing the joining of the mould. It also has excess of metal at the entrance of the groove. All this has to be removed or flattened down, and very often the implements used for such purposes, files, chisels, hammers, etc., leave their marks. The surface of a cast often reveals a number of minute holes. These are due either to the medium used for the mould, or to air-bubbles which could not escape. It must also be remembered, in examining silver castings, that at the moment of solidifying, molten silver gives off oxygen which, bubbling through the surface, produces irregularities.

There is no great difficulty in identifying an ordinarily good cast. The coin looks as if it had been struck with a layer of tissue paper between the flan and the die. All the edges, whether of the letters or devices or the rims of the coin, are softened down. There is no sharpness of detail. The sharp juncture of the flat ground with the raised design in the struck coin is missing on the cast; everything is rounded.

A cast piece if of exactly the same dimensions as the original is of less weight. The amount of pressure brought to bear on the metal in preparation of flans for striking coins is considerable, and the particles get very tightly packed in the process, thus accounting for the extra weight of the struck piece.

In judging a cast it is necessary to remember that the two common features noticed in them, viz., the presence of holes and the rounding of all the edges, are both to be found on genuine and struck pieces as the result of bad usage. Anyone examining a coin which has been worn on a watch-chain for a length of time will at once
recognise how rounded the edges have become. Small holes are also occasionally noticed in coins which have been lying deposited either in water or earth, or have been subjected to some chemical process, acid or otherwise. The coin itself will often account for its origin. A spade guinea in gold is not likely to have been forged and, therefore, the rounded edges tell the tale of wear. A pitted Saxon coin with sharp edges may be put down as the result of burial or bad cleaning.

Casts are said to have a soapy and smooth feel, but this is a very indefinite characteristic. Some have it and some have not, and an opinion based solely upon the feel is often fallacious. With all care, however, in examining and weighing, a fine cast is occasionally a serious puzzle even to the expert, and it is only experience and training that constitutes one man a better judge than his neighbour.

(3) Fabrication of false dies.—This process is happily the most difficult, but unfortunately in certain cases its results are equally difficult to detect. In the majority of cases, however, the criminal leaves his traces by not knowing quite all there is to know about the piece he is proposing to copy. One class of coins from false dies can at once be declared as false, because they are too good and regular in workmanship for the period proffered. Another class is false because it is not good and regular enough for its kind. The edge on one coin should be sharp and square, and it is false because its edge is not of the period; whilst its neighbour with a square edge is equally false when it should have been more rounded. Some false coins struck from dies have been copied from illustrations of genuine coins, and look no more like the originals than do the pictures. They of course do not deceive when the illustrations would not. Other coins copied from rare or unique originals happily bear on them marks which were accidental in the originals, and these can be at once condemned by the repetition of the mark.

Some clever people conceived the idea of using genuine coins as flans on which to strike their wicked inventions. Unfortunately for them the truth peeps out of these things in the shape of letters, ornaments, etc., of the original coin to condemn them, although the edge
FORGERIES OF ANGLO-SAXON COINS.
and the weight of the original add lustre to the forgery. One example of this process may be mentioned here. It is a forged coin of Offa struck upon a piece with four groups of three pellets, probably of Edward III.'s time. It seems but little known that it is almost impossible to remove the impression of a struck coin by over-striking. In this respect, however, care must be exercised not to confuse a genuine "over-struck" coin with these forged examples, but the sequence of types is usually the test to determine the question.

(4) The unauthorised use of genuine dies.—As this method of fabrication is necessarily confined to a more modern series than that under discussion we may pass on to :

(5) Alteration of genuine coins.—This, the last process for discussion, is the use of a graver to alter or embellish a genuine coin, such things are done, but they are not equally useful as money-making pursuits, for the graving marks are below the surface-level of the die and the process is as a rule easily recognised. The removal of a flaw is a frequent device.

After all has been said about these matters of forgery, it is regrettable to have to admit that many false pieces still defy absolute proof of detection and occasionally a genuine piece is given a bad name. Nevertheless, the fact remains that whilst a critical examination of one hundred genuine coins may result in one or two being passed as doubtful, the same examination of one hundred forgeries would, at the best, result in but one or two being even classed as doubtful.

Illustrations of Forgeries of Anglo-Saxon Coins.

In order to warn the unwary it is considered desirable to illustrate as fully as possible all the forgeries in the English series. The task is not easy as no list of these disgraceful inventions has ever been made, but if a beginning is not attempted many of these false pieces will continue to deceive.

Forgeries of Anglo-Saxon coins claim the first place, and as they are unfortunately largely represented, they are dealt with to the exclusion of forgeries of ancient British money. These latter exist...
but happily not in such numbers. The series, too, is of such different fabric that a special knowledge of them is requisite before being able to decide on the authenticity or otherwise of any individual specimen.

The method adopted in describing the Anglo-Saxon forgeries and those of the later periods, requires perhaps a little explanation. Plates of the forgeries are first given and then plates containing illustrations of genuine coins which have been copied for the purpose of producing false pieces. A comparison of the genuine with the false is thus possible, and an examination of the workmanship and style can be made without much difficulty. In dealing with a subject such as this, the greatest care has to be exercised to prevent a would-be forger obtaining information which would help him to continue a successful career in this form of vice. The verbal descriptions have been carefully framed with a view to such a purpose. Many of the forgeries would not deceive anybody, as a glance at the illustrations will show, and therefore the remark that the "lettering is not of the period" can do no harm.

An accurate comparison, however, of the lettering of the forgery with that of the original would only help to correct such faults, and would thus tend to continue rather than prevent the fabrication of these coins. For these reasons the descriptions may appear meagre and unsatisfactory, but the plates will convey to the real student most of the information he may require. Nearly all the Anglo-Saxon forgeries are in silver, the metal of the originals. Exceptions only will therefore be mentioned in the descriptions.

**The Sceatta Series.**

Several forgeries of this series, chiefly in lead and cast, are known. The originals are struck silver coins.

**Plate I.**

No. 1 represents a piece in some hard reddish metal. It is concave and convex, and bears on the reverse a very poor attempt at a legend
FORGERIES OF ANGLO-SAXON COINS. Pl. III.
Illustrations of False Coins.

in Runes. The original is represented on Plate IV, No. 1, and reads Aethiliraed (King of Mercia, A.D. 675–A.D. 704).

No. 2. A forgery of the same series. The obverse has the same design as the preceding coin. The reverse is an invention.

The Penny Series.

No. 3. Penny of Offa, moneyerBOTRED (in Runic characters), a concoction.

No. 4. Penny of Offa, moneyerCIOLHARD, false dies and clever forgery.

The original is represented on Plate IV, No. 2.

No. 5. Penny of Offa, moneyerEALRED, false dies, a very deceptive piece.

An original coin is figured on Plate IV, No. 3.

No. 6. Penny of Offa, moneyer IBBA, a large leaden piece probably copied from an old engraving. A better forgery of the same coin is represented as No. 8.

No. 7. Penny of Offa, moneyer LVLLA, a poor attempt.

Original shown on Plate IV, No. 4.

No. 8. Penny of Offa, moneyer IBBA, referred to under No. 6, a cast.

The original is figured as Plate IV, No. 5.

No. 9. Penny of Offa, moneyer TIRVVALD.

No. 10. Penny of Offa, moneyer BABA, false dies, struck on another coin, probably an Edwardian penny, very well done.

An original is shown on Plate IV, No. 6, with a reverse of slightly different type.

No. 11. Penny of Cynethryth, Offa’s Queen, moneyer EOBA false dies.

Original, Plate IV, No. 7.

No. 12. Penny of Cynethryth, another forgery of the same coin.

No. 13. Penny of Cynethryth, a cast.

No. 14. Penny of Coenwulf, moneyer LVL, a large leaden piece probably copied from an old engraving.

An original is on Plate IV, No. 8.

No. 15. Penny of Coenwulf, moneyer EDELNOD, a leaden cast from an original coin such as that shown on Plate IV, No. 9.

No. 16. Penny of Coenwulf, moneyer PODEL, a poor attempt at copying the coin shown on Plate IV, No. 10.

No. 17. Penny of Coenwulf, moneyer DVN, cast, but probably not from an original. The lettering is very poor.
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No. 18. Penny of Coenwulf, moneyer DVNN, cast from an original which had been much double-struck on the reverse.

Compare Plate IV, No. 11, for a genuine specimen.

No. 19. Penny of Ceolwulf I., moneyer HEREBERHT, probably cast from the specimen shown as Plate IV, No. 12. The same reverse is used as a penny of Edmund of East Anglia, No. 35.

No. 20. Penny of Beornwulf, moneyer MONNA, a cast, probably also an invention. A genuine coin with the same obverse is shown on Plate IV, No. 13.

No. 21. Another specimen of the same forgery.

No. 22. Penny of Wiglaf, moneyer REDVALD, a poor forgery.

No. 23. Penny of Burgred, moneyer BERAN? a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 24. Penny of Ceolwulf II., moneyer EALDOVVLF. This is a cast from the unique original found at Cuerdale. At the late Mr. Montagu's sale it realised £50. Thence it passed to Mr. Mudoch and when his cabinet was sold it was unhesitatingly condemned. The original coin is still in possession of the family of its first owner.

No. 25. Penny of Cuthred, King of Kent, moneyer EABA, false dies.

Plate IV, No. 14 is included as slightly resembling this piece, it is a genuine penny of Cuthred's successor, Baldred.

PLATE II.

No. 26. Penny of Jaenberht, Archbishop of Canterbury, reverse OFFA REX, a very fine copy of the original, Plate IV, No. 15.

No. 27. Penny of Jaenberht, cast from an original, as Plate IV, No. 16.


No. 29. Penny of Aethilheard, reverse COENVVLF REX, cast from a genuine coin such as that shown on Plate V, No. 17.

No. 30. Penny of Aethilheard, reverse OFFA REX, false dies, a poor attempt.

No. 31. Penny of Ethelred, Archbishop of Canterbury, moneyer EDERED, false dies, a very good forgery.

An original is shown on Plate V, No. 18.

No. 32. Penny, obverse PINENBEART, reverse DOROBERNIA CIVITAS, an invention.

No. 33. Penny of Eadvald of East Anglia, moneyer EADNOO, false dies.

A genuine coin is shown on Plate V, No. 19.
ANGLO-SAXON COINS FROM WHICH FORGERIES HAVE BEEN COPIED.

VII.—VIII. CENTURIES.

Pl. IV.
Illustrations of False Coins.

No. 34. The same coin, another forgery of slightly different fabric.

No. 35. Penny of Eadmund of East Anglia, moneyer HEREBERHT, a concoction, referred to under No. 19, false dies.
A genuine coin of Eadmund is shown on Plate V, No. 20.

No. 36. Penny of St. Eadmund, moneyer ODYLBER, cast from a genuine coin such as that shown on Plate V, No. 21.

No. 37. Penny of St. Eadmund, moneyer EVVRAM, false dies.
No. 38. Penny of Regnald, false dies.
Original shown on Plate V, No. 22.

Compare the genuine coin, Plate V, No. 23.

Original on Plate V, No. 24.

No. 41. Penny of Eanbald, Archbishop of York, an invention.
No. 42. Penny of Eanbald, an invention, a different design.

No. 43. Penny of Eanbald with a different reverse, an invention.
No. 44. Penny of Vigmund, Archbishop of York, a concoction.
No. 45. Penny of Vigmund with reverse of No. 41.
No. 46. Penny of Vigmund with reverse of No. 43.
No. 47. Penny of Ecgbeorht, moneyer EDELMOD, false dies.
An original is figured on Plate V, No. 25.

No. 48. Penny of Ecgbeorht, from the same dies as No. 47, but exhibiting some differences due to striking.
No. 50. Penny of Aethelwulf, moneyer DVNN, false dies.
No. 51. Penny of Aethelwulf, moneyer TORHTVLF, false dies.
An original is shown on Plate V, No. 26.

No. 52. Penny of Aethelbald, moneyer TORHTVLF, from the same dies as No. 51. These pieces, Nos. 51–52, are dealt with at a later stage.

PLATE III.

No. 53. Penny of Aethelbald, moneyer VERMVND, a cast from an apparently genuine but unknown original.

No. 54. Penny of Aethelbald, moneyer BEAMVND, false dies.
Penny of Aethelbald received too late to illustrate. Obverse +ETHELBALD REX, the letters AL in monogram, a crown, below, a bow-like object, all within an inner dotted circle. Reverse IFE - M R, in the angles of a voided cross, pellet in centre, two pellets within each limb, one pellet opposite each end. A concoction.

No. 55. Penny of Aelfred, London monogram type, a poor cast.
No. 56. Penny of Aelfred, moneyer ÅEDELVF, a cast.
No. 57. Penny of Eadweard the elder, moneyer EADMVND, a cast. An original specimen of the same type is figured on Plate V, No. 28.

No. 58. Penny of Eadweard the elder, moneyer HEREMOD, probably a fine cast improved by a graver.

No. 59. Penny of Eadmund, moneyer BYRNVALD, a very poor attempt at deception.

No. 60. Penny of Eadmund, moneyer's name not clear, the obverse apparently from the same die as that of No. 59.

No. 61. Penny of Eadred, moneyer lVE, a cast.

No. 62. Penny of Eadwig, moneyer's name unrecognisable, a cast concoction.

Penny of Eadwig, received too late to illustrate. Obverse EADPIG REX ANELOX, bust to left diademed, around, inscription between two circles. Reverse LEVIG ─ ONDECO, small cross within linear inner circle. False dies copied from a coin of Eadweard the martyr struck at Lincoln by the moneyer LEVIG.

No. 63. Penny of Eadgar, moneyer PIRIM, a large leaden piece probably copied from an old engraving.

A genuine coin shown on Plate V, No. 29.

No. 64. Penny of Aethelred II., reverse legend STYREAR MO EOF, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 65. Penny of Aethelred II., reverse legend SIGE MOO EAXE, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 66. Penny of Aethelred II., reverse legend SPILEMAN MO HAM, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 67. Penny of Aethelred II., reverse legend EADPOLD MO CANTPA, false dies.

An original is shown on Plate V, No. 30.

No. 68. Penny of Cnut, reverse legend apparently EDREDONLVDN, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 69. Penny of Cnut, reverse legend not clear, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 70. Penny of Eadweard the Confessor, reverse legend ELESIIE ON LIGES, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 71. Penny of Eadweard the Confessor, moneyer's name illegible, York Mint. A large leaden piece probably copied from an old engraving.

No. 72. Penny of Eadweard the Confessor, reverse legend BRAND ON PALI, a cast from a genuine coin.

No. 73. Penny of Eadweard the Confessor reverse legend not clear, a cast from a genuine coin.
ANGLO-SAXON COINS FROM WHICH FORGERIES HAVE BEEN COPIED.

VIII.—XI. CENTURIES.
Some Clever Forgeries.

No. 74. Penny of a type of Edward the Confessor, but reading EDPIN, a concoction.
No. 75. Penny of Eadward the Confessor, reverse legend EOLSPEGEN ON HIES, a cast from a genuine coin.
No. 76. Penny of Harold II., reverse legend LEOFVILD ON LEPE, false dies. Reference to this coin will follow later.
No. 77. Penny of Harold II., reverse legend EODRIC ON BEOTI, a large leaden piece probably copied from an old engraving.
A genuine example of this type is given on Plate V, No. 31.

The majority of the forgeries depicted and described happily possess little or no interest, and it is satisfactory to think that none but the quite uninstructed could possibly be taken in by such poor attempts. Unfortunately such is not the case with all these pieces. Many of the coins of the period of Offa are distinctly deceptive, and it is to be regretted that the reproductions do not and cannot show the slight differences between the false and genuine coins which serve as a distinction. Nos. 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 look very like originals, and most of them have been mistaken for such at one time or another. No. 19 when compared with the genuine coin No. 12 on Plate IV is almost indistinguishable, but the identical reverse of No. 19 has been used for production of No. 35 thus concocting a mule between the Kingdoms of East Anglia and Mercia. The exhibition of different styles of work on the two sides is alone sufficient to condemn both. Moreover, a period of fifty years separates the dates of the two Kings, Ceolwulf I. of Mercia reigned in 823, Edmund of East Anglia in 873.

The forgeries Nos. 51 and 52 require more detailed reference. No. 51 is a coin of Æthelwulf by the moneyer Torhtulf. No. 52 is a coin of Æthelbald his son and successor. The same moneyer's name appears on the reverse. Both pieces are from the same dies and the name Æthelwulf has been altered from the name Æthelbald by changing the four letters BALD into VVLF. The workmanship of both coins is unassailable, the striking is equally so. The weights are correct and the edges are perfect. In view of the fact that no coins of Æthelbald known to be genuine at present exist, the question of
originality is of much importance. There are four specimens now known of No. 52. The first appeared in the sale room in 1888 at the disposal of the late Mr. Montagu's duplicates. Mr. Montagu retained a second specimen which was sold at his decease in 1895. The former realised £46, the latter £26. A third specimen was sold in the ordinary course of business for £26. The figured specimen may possibly be one of Mr. Montagu's two coins. It was submitted for public sale within the last two years and failed to realise a bid.

Two papers appeared in the Numismatic Chronicle, third series, vols. vii. and xiii., referring to these coins. The first by Mr. Montagu, where the coin was considered undoubtedly genuine. The second by myself, in which I took the same view as Mr. Montagu. It should be added that one feature in all these coins was unnoticed at the time of writing the papers referred to, namely, the fact of their all being over-struck. Later studies of another series of coins, many members of which have been over-struck, have introduced a fresh feeling about these.

The series referred to is a numerous one commencing with Harold II., the coin figured as No. 76 in these plates, and ending with some late coins of William II. The arguments in connection with this Norman series will be reserved for full treatment when the forgeries of the Norman coins are discussed. It may be enough to remark here that they were largely over-struck, and that alterations had been extensively made in very many of the dies. One moneyer's name was changed by alteration of one letter, others had a sword altered from a sceptre; some, while retaining the original legends, had new heads and new reverse designs placed in the centre of these legends.

The reverse die of No. 76 was used for the purpose of concocting a coin of William I., the obverse of which was of the style figured in Hawkins as 239, almost the last of William I.'s coinage. The whole series is now accepted as undoubtedly false. The majority of the coins defied detection for fifty years. They have appeared repeatedly at the sales and have brought very high prices. As lately as 1895 when Mr. Montagu's collection was sold amounts ranging from £5 to £15 were realised for them. It was only when they came to be critically examined that suspicion arose.
Now, exactly the same features occur on this series of Æthelbald and Æthelwulf. 1. Fine and apparently original work. 2. Alterations in the dies. 3. Over-striking. It is for these reasons that the coins are now condemned. As already remarked it must not be understood that every coin showing an altered die is false; far from it. Over-striking, too, was quite common in Saxon and later times. Where, however, a very rare coin is found altered and over-struck it should be looked at with care and, perhaps, with suspicion.