THE WINCHCOMBE MINT.

By P. W. P. CARLYON-BRITTON, F.S.A.

WINCHCOMBE, in Domesday called Winelcumbe, Wicelcumbe, and Wicecombe, is a market town and parish in the lower division of the hundred of Kiftsgate, in the county of Gloucester, fifteen and a-half miles N.E. by E. from Gloucester, and ninety-five W.N.W. from London. It is situate in a beautiful valley at the northern base of the Cotswold hills on the River Isbourne, which flows close to the town on the south-east. In 1831 there were 2,240 inhabitants, and now the number is about 2,700.

Winchcombe was a place of importance early in the ninth century and a residence of Coenwulf, King of Mercia, who on November 11th, 811, granted its charter of foundation to Winchcombe Abbey. This charter is subscribed not only by Coenwulf himself, but by Cuthred, King of Kent and Sired, King of the East Saxons; also by Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury, twelve bishops and eleven dukes.

Coenwulf was, on his death in 821, buried within the Abbey, where subsequently were interred the remains of his murdered son and successor Coenhelm or Kenelm, afterwards canonised as St. Kenelm.

In Coenwulf's charter the name of the place is written Winelcumba, which appears to be the more usual form, but in a lease for three lives granted by Oswold, Bishop of Worcester, in A.D. 963, the alternative rendering Winces cumbe is in evidence.

Lewis, in his Topographical Dictionary of England, 1831, vol. iv, p. 492, states that previously to the time of Cnut, Winchcombe, with

1 See Birch’s Cartularium Saxonum, No. 338.
2 Ibid., No. 1105.
a small surrounding district, was a county of itself, but that in the
reign of that monarch, according to an ancient manuscript in the
cathedral church of Worcester, Edric, who governed under him as
viceroy, "joined the sheriffdom of Winchelscomb, which was entire
within itself, to the county of Gloucester."

It will be noticed that in quoting this ancient manuscript the
place-name is rendered Winchelscomb. Bosworth, in his Anglo-Saxon
and English Dictionary, 1868, gives as the derivation of Winchcombe,
wincel, a corner, comb, a low place; in angulo vicus. By the same
writer Winchelsea, Winceles-eá, is derived from wincel, a corner, eá,
water; aqua angularis.

Now winceles is the genitive singular of wincel, and, if properly
used in Winceles-eá, may, with equal propriety, appear in Winceles-
comb. I, however, offer the suggestion that Wincel, in both cases, is a
personal name, and accordingly Winceles-comb is the comb, or valley,
of Wincel; and Winceles-eá, the water or river of, or named after, a
person of the same name. Winkel and Winkle are surnames that still

Mr. Andrew informs me that in the Peak of Derbyshire the place-
name combe is retained, in what was probably its original sense, to
describe a broad, basin-shaped area surrounded by precipitous hills, as
opposed to the narrower and winding valley or dale.

My reason for having dealt somewhat fully with the forms and
derivations of the place-names now borne by Winchcombe, in
Gloucestershire, and Winchelsea, in Sussex, is that hitherto coins,
which I hope to show all belong in reality to Winchcombe, have been
assigned indifferently to Winchelsea or to Winchcombe, according to
the fancy of the writer, and apparently without attempt to consider
either the Anglo-Saxon equivalents to the existing names or the
histories of the two places.

In particular I desire to emphasise the fact that the presence of
the letter S in the rendering of the mint-name on an Anglo-Saxon
coin that may be assigned to Winchelsea or to Winchcombe, does not
of necessity fix it to the former, as appears to have been assumed by
those who have thought only of the modern designations, or have at
least disregarded those variants of the ancient name of Winchcombe wherein the letter S is present.

Some facts relating to the antiquity and importance of Winchcombe have already been alluded to, and on turning to our most important national record, Domesday, we find the account of the Borough of Winchcombe, Burgū de Wincelcūbe, placed at the commencement of the survey of Gloucestershire, before the list of the tenants in chief and the schedule of the King's own lands.

The following is a translation of the entry:

"The Borough of Wincelcumbe rendered in the time of King Edward six pounds for rent. From these Earl Harold ['Heralaus'] had the third penny, that is, forty shillings. Afterwards it rendered twenty pounds with the whole Hundred of the same town. Durand the sheriff superadded one hundred shillings and Roger de Jurei sixty shillings. Now, with the three adjoining hundreds, it renders twenty-eight pounds of twenty [pence] to the ora."

We have here the criteria which in my opinion are requisite for the possession of a mint, as Winchcombe was in the fullest sense a county borough. That no mention is made of the mint or of moneyers shows that the king received nothing directly from the profits derived therefrom. The mint was in all probability rented or farmed to the burgesses with the town.

Now of Winchelsea there is no record in early Anglo-Saxon times, nor is it specifically mentioned in Domesday. Dr. J. Horace Round, in his Feudal England, while dealing with the subject of the Cinque Ports Charters, p. 568, note, remarks, "We must after all look for the novus burgus of Domesday at Winchelsea or Rye." From the same article we learn that Winchelsea and Rye belonged to the manor of Brede, granted by Edward the Confessor to the Abbey of Fécamp, but that Godwin and Harold had been successful in keeping the abbot out of possession, a matter rectified by William I. after his conquest of England. Dr. Round shows conclusively that the earliest charter of which mention is made is, in the case of Rye and Winchelsea, of the reign of Henry II. (op. cit., p. 565).

We are therefore without evidence that Winchelsea was a
The Winchcombe Mint.

borough in Anglo-Saxon times. On the other hand if Winchelsea, and not Rye, was the novus burgus of Domesday we should then have evidence of its establishment as a borough at a time shortly prior to the year 1086.

It is therefore, I think, reasonable to assign all the coins which have hitherto been given to Winchcombe and Winchelsea to the first-named place, which was a borough from early Saxon times.

As the known specimens of the coins of this mint are not numerous, I have appended a list of them. It will be noticed that some heretofore attributed in error to Winchester, help to increase the number.

**EADGAR.**

Hildebrand, type C 2. British Museum, type vi.

\[+ \text{EADGAR REX ANGLOV} + \text{ÆLFNO} \text{D M}^{-0} \text{ PENCELES}\]

Plate, Fig. 1. (British Museum.)

**ÆTHELRAED II.**

Hildebrand, type C.

\[+ \text{ÆDELRAED REX ANGLOX} + \text{BODELEOF M}^{-0} \text{ ÆCEL}\]

(Stockholm.)

Hildebrand, type D.

\[+ \text{ÆDELRAED REX ANGLOX} + \text{ÆLFELM M}^{\circ} \text{ O ÆCEL}\]

(Stockholm.)

\[+ \text{ÆDELRAED REX ANGLOX} + \text{ÆLFGAR M}^{\circ} \text{ O ÆCEL}\]

(Stockholm.)

Hildebrand, type E.

\[+ \text{ÆDELRAED REX ANGEL} + \text{ÆLFGAR M}^{\circ} \text{ O ÆCEL}\]

(Stockholm and †Carlyon-Britton.)

†Plate, Fig. 2.

**Cnut.**

Hildebrand, type E.

\[+ \text{CNVT REX ANGLORYVM} + \text{ÆDELMAN ON ÆCEL}\]

(Stockholm.)
THE WINCHCOMBE MINT.
Coins of Winchcombe.

+ CNVT REX ANGLOR + DROPA ON MCE
(Stockholm.)

Hildebrand, type E, variety a.

+ CNVT R'EX AN&LOR + DROPA ON MCEL:
(Stockholm and *British Museum.)
*Plate, Fig. 3.

Hildebrand, type G.

+ ENVT REX ANG + DROPA ON PINCEL
(Stockholm, two varieties.)

HARTHACNUT.

Hildebrand, type B.

+ HAR&DENVT + DRACA ONN MCE :::
(Stockholm, under Winchester, and †Carlyon-Britton.)
†Plate, Fig. 4.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

Hildebrand, type B.

+ EDWARD REX + GOLDEINE ON H
(Stockholm.)

Hildebrand, type E.

+ EDÆE ::= · RD REX::{
+ GOLDEINE ON PIN
(Carlyon-Britton.)
Plate, Fig. 5.

Hildebrand, type G.

+ EADÆARD RE + GOLDEINE ONPINCEL
(British Museum.)
Plate, Fig. 6.

Hildebrand, type I.

+ EADÆARD REX + GOLDEIN PINCEL:
(Carlyon-Britton.)
Plate, Fig. 7.
The Winchcombe Mint.

Harold II.

Hildebrand, type A.

+ HAROLD REX ANLO + GOLDPN HNEELI
(British Museum.)
Plate, Fig. 8.

William I.

Type V.

* PILLEM REX ANI * GOLDPINE ON PIEL
(British Museum.)
Plate, Fig. 9.

(Unrecorded.)

* GOLDPINE ON PIN
(Durrant, Lot 177.)

Type VIII.

* PILLELM REX * GOLDPINE ON PIN
(Carlyon-Britton.)
Plate, Fig. 10.

* PILLELMREX * GOLDPINE ON PINCL
Var., a pellet above the king's forearm.
(British Museum.)
Plate, Fig. 11.