A NUMISMATIC HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF STEPHEN.

A.D. 1135 TO 1154.

Continued from Volume VI.

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NOTE.

In contributing a treatise of this character by annual instalments it is impossible to revise the work as a whole, and errors and omissions must frequently occur. These I hope to rectify, so far as may be possible, in a Supplement.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUESTION OF THE SUCCESSION.

On the night of Sunday, December 1st, 1135, died Henry, King of the English and Duke of Normandy at the Castle of Lions, his hunting-seat near Rouen. Born on English soil in 1068, and by his first marriage husband of Maude of Scotland, the niece of Edgar Ætheling and descendant of Alfred, he had been welcomed by his Anglo-Saxon subjects with a popularity severely withheld from his father and brother. With the exception of the turmoil incident to his accession, he had ruled England for thirty-five years of unprecedented peace, and his grasp of the duchy of Normandy by the battle of Tinchebrai in 1106, had been clenched by the death of his brother, Duke Robert, in 1134. Thus Henry, the fourth son of the Conqueror and last of the male line, lived to inherit even de jure the whole of his father's dual possessions.

A fatal destiny dogged the lives of the first William and his heirs-male. He himself died from the effects of a fall from his horse. Duke Robert, his first-born, ended his life a prisoner at Cardiff after twenty-eight long years of captivity. Richard, his second son, was killed by an accident whilst hunting in the New Forest, and there also

1 In November, 1101.
an arrow terminated the life of his third son and successor, William Rufus. William Clito, Duke Robert's son and heir, predeceased his father, dying from a wound by the pike of a foot-soldier at the siege of Alost; whilst the wreck of the Blanche-Nef in 1120 deprived not merely Henry of his only son, William the Ætheing, but England of a direct heir to the throne. Henry alone, the youngest son and last male survivor of this proud Norman House, died in peace. A man who from his youth up never diverged from the goal of his ambition; a brother who, with his cabal, was at hand and significantly prepared to seize the crown, which that mysterious tragedy of the Forest so opportunely cast into his hands\(^1\); again, a brother who, not content with supplanting the elder Robert in his hereditary duchy, confined him a prisoner for life; a father who did not hesitate to sell his daughter in marriage for a political alliance against the wish of the nation; and, withal, a miser satiated with the inherent greed of gold. Yet these traits were but the black background of a character which combined with them many high and noble qualities. They served to mark the strong personality of the man which alone in Norman times could secure his stability on the throne, and rendered Henry, stern and implacable as he was, one of the greatest masters of kincraft in his era.

From the date of the loss of the White Ship, Henry seems to have anticipated the troubles which were likely to ensue upon his demise, in view of the open question of succession both in England and Normandy, and to have directed his great gifts of diplomacy towards their prevention. No thought of attempting to advance the claims of his only child, Matilda, was then possible to his mind, for she had been educated in Germany, since the age of eight, for the position she then held as the child-wife of the Emperor Henry V.; and the effect of succession on her part would have been the submergence of both England and Normandy in the great Roman Empire—a constitutional oblivion repugnant to all the traditions of the House of Rollo.

Henry was then fifty-two years of age and had been a widower

\(^1\) Thirty years later, namely, in the Pipe Roll of 1150, under Essex, “Adeliza uxor [probably here, as elsewhere, used for ‘widow’] Walteri Tirelli” was remitted by the king’s writ forty shillings of her forest dues of ten marks of silver.
The Status of Robert, Earl of Gloucester.

for nearly three years. His first expedient was therefore re-marriage in the hope of male issue, and on January 30th, 1121, his nuptials with Adeliza of Louvain were celebrated; but the union proved childless.

Illegitimacy was no bar to the succession of Normandy, as was evidenced by that of William the Bastard himself, nor had it invariably been prohibitive to that of England; hence it may be that Henry, in now advancing the status of his natural son Robert, was paving the way for him as a possible successor, and we know that during the troubles that ensued, the crown was at one time offered to him. But it would seem more likely that the King was merely strengthening the position of a member of his own family to act as guardian in the event of his leaving an infant male heir.

Robert fitz-Roy was born before his father's accession, and Henry had given him in marriage Mabel, the daughter and sole heiress of Robert Fitz-Hamon, with all her father's vast possessions in the west of England and South Wales. The date of this marriage I have failed to ascertain, but as their eldest son, William, witnessed a charter in 11281 I am inclined to assign it to 1109.2 "It is certain," says Dr. Round in *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 433, "that Robert fitz-Roy received the Earldom of Gloucester between April–May, 1121, and June, 1123," and I have argued elsewhere3 that the actual date was February 2nd, 1123, when Henry held his court at Gloucester.

If the King had ever entertained the idea of Robert as his successor it was soon dispelled, for his next step seems clearly to have indicated an intention to nominate his nephew Stephen as his heir. Adela, Henry's favourite sister and the only daughter of the Conqueror who left issue, had married Stephen, Count of Blois, Chartres and Champagne, who was killed on crusade before the walls of Ramah in 1101. William, their first-born, was passed over in consequence of incapacity in character and physique in favour of Theobald, the second son, who thus succeeded to his father's titles and estate. Stephen, the

1 *Documents of France*, No. 1410.
2 This would explain the error in Robert of Gloucester's rhyming chronicle attributing the creation of the earldom to that year.
3 *Henry I.*, p. 125.
third son, was brought up under the guardianship of his uncle, King Henry, almost as an adopted son, whilst Henry of Blois, the youngest of the four brothers, had entered a religious life, and in 1123 was under the Abbot of Cluny. Stephen had already been created Count of Mortain, and as such, ranked as the first baron of Normandy, but now, in 1124, when his own hopes of issue were waning, Henry arranged for his marriage with Matilda, the only child and sole heiress of Eustace, Count of Boulogne. Matilda was the niece of Henry's first queen and the descendant of Edmund Ironside, hence in selecting her for his nephew's consort, the King must have had in mind the advantages which such a marriage would give to an aspirant to the English throne, for much of his own popularity was due to his alliance with the same line. The date of Stephen's marriage does not appear to be definitely stated, but a charter\(^1\) of Eustace, "late Count of Boulogne, now a monk of Cluny," dated 1125, "with the approval of Stephen, Count of Boulogne, to whom he has given his inheritance with Matilda, his daughter," proves it to have been either earlier in 1125 or in 1124. I feel sure that it was before the death of the Emperor Henry V. in Whit-week, 1125, because the diplomatic Henry would never have thus advanced his nephew's cause if at that time he could have had any hope of the possible succession of his own daughter, which that event suddenly brought into the arena of practical politics.

It is possible that Henry had turned first to his elder nephew, Theobald, Count of Blois, as his heir-presumptive, because he spent the winter season of mourning, which followed the disaster of the White Ship at his hunting seat at Brampton alone with him. In any case if the matter arose at all it would probably have been confined to the question of the succession to the duchy, to which Theobald's claims were undoubtedly strong. But Theobald played no further part in English history until Stephen, on his accession, found it expedient to purchase his prior title to Normandy.

Stephen, though the third, was for all political purposes the second son, and it seems strange to us to-day to believe that the descent of the

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\(^1\) Documents of France, No. 1385.
The Descent of the Crown in Norman Times.

crown of England was ever to the second in preference to the first-born son. Yet this appears to have been the custom during the generation that followed the Conquest, and not only of the descent of the crown, but of that of the large English estates in Norman hands. The duchy was the fatherland, whilst England was looked upon as a conquest and colony liable to insurrection. The great seal of the Conqueror bore the insignia of Normandy for its obverse, and those of England as the counter seal. Naturally the hearts and traditions of the Normans were with their ancestral homes, and even the words of the Conqueror himself were "I have placed on my brow a royal diadem which none of my predecessors wore, having acquired it by the grace of God, not by hereditary right." Hence the ancestral titles and estates in Normandy devolved as a matter of right upon the heir, but the new titles and estates in England fell to the second son. Thus Duke Robert, the Conqueror's heir, succeeded to the duchy, whilst the crown of England descended to Rufus as the second surviving son, and again on his decease to his younger brother Henry. So with the barons: on the death of Roger de Montgomery his heir, Robert de Belèsmé, succeeded to his ancestral title and estates in Normandy, whilst his second son, Hugh, became Earl of Shrewsbury. When William fitz-Osbern, Earl of Hereford, died, the Conqueror "thus distributed his inheritance among his sons, William, the eldest son had Bréteuil, Pacy, and the rest of his patrimonial estates in Normandy . . . whilst Roger, the younger brother, had the earldom of Hereford, and his father's other possessions in England." Henry I. made a similar distribution of the titles and estates of Robert de Beaumont, Earl of Meulan and Leicester, giving the English earldom to the second son Robert. The same result followed the deaths of Roger de Beaumont, Hugh de Grantmesnil, and many others of less degree; so the custom would appear to have been general in those cases where the followers of the Conqueror had added English titles and estates to their hereditary possessions in Normandy. Probably the policy of this was to root a new and permanent nobility in English soil.

1 Ordericus Vitalis, B. iv, viii.  
2 Ibid., B. xii, xxxiii.
The Conqueror, by his will, certainly intended again and permanently to separate England from Normandy, for he devised the latter to Robert and "trusted" that William would succeed to the English throne.\(^1\) Henry, in 1124, when his daughter was still Empress of the Romans, and as such ineligible, under any circumstances, for the succession, may have contemplated similarly dividing his territories between the two brothers, by nominating Theobald of Blois as heir-presumptive to Normandy, and Stephen as his successor in England. Duke Robert of Normandy, the rightful heir, still lived, though aged and a prisoner, and failing him there was his only son William Clito, then engaged in a vain struggle to recover Normandy, but these were beyond the pale of Henry's policy. Neither survived him, the son dying on August 9th, 1128, and the father in 1134. The only other theoretical claimant to the English throne might have been David, King of Scotland, as heir-male of the old Saxon line, but he, to the Norman mind, was impossible. I therefore think it clear that, whatever disposition he intended to make for the descent of the duchy, Henry's choice of Matilda of Boulogne for Stephen's bride showed a deliberate intention to nominate him as his English successor. This was one of Henry's two fatal errors of policy, and England's misfortune.

Scarcely had Stephen's marriage been celebrated when the Emperor Henry V. died, on May 23rd, 1125,\(^2\) leaving his widow Matilda, not yet twenty-three years of age, free to return to her father's court; and Henry's whole policy was changed. At his request she reluctantly joined him in Normandy and accompanied him to England in September of the following year. The Emperor, who left no direct heir, had bequeathed his imperial sceptre to her,\(^3\) and William of Malmesbury tells us that "several princes of Lorraine and Lombardy visited England repeatedly during the succeeding years to demand her as their sovereign, but their labour was in vain, for the King designed by the marriage of his daughter to purchase peace between himself and the Earl of Anjou." Such was the irony of her fate—to reject an empire for the futile shadow of a crown.

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\(^1\) *Ordericus Vitalis*, B. vii, xv.


\(^3\) *Ibid.*, B. xii, xliii.
Looking backward as we do through the lustre of the reigns of Queens Victoria, Anne, and Elizabeth, and with the additional precedents of Mary I. and Mary II. it is difficult to believe that, until the lack of a male heir on the death of Edward VI. formed an excuse for accepting the limitations of the will of Henry VIII. in favour of his daughters Mary and Elizabeth successively, the Salic law was as firmly established in England as ever it was in France. The duty of a sovereign was personally to lead his army in the field and to bear the brunt of the battle—a custom which survived in our history until the year 1743, when George II. commanded at Dettingen. “No woman ever led northmen a-viking,” says Cobbe in his *History of the Norman Kings of England*, and in the martial age of feudalism to follow the distaff was to the proud Norman and to the Saxon thane alike a well-nigh impossible service. In the wars that followed it was a term of reproach to the party of the Empress and the sole cause of her failure.

Henry, when, in 1126, he formed the bold scheme of nominating his daughter as his successor to both England and Normandy, had a task before him which was not only unconstitutional but contrary to the traditions of his race. To the Norman barons he could offer no precedent; but to the ecclesiastical body in England—and perhaps to some extent at least it was representative of the old English nation—he could quote occasional instances in the history of this country in support of his case. In the latter half of the first century Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, as the widow of Prasutagus, headed an insurrection against the Roman power, and Cartismandua, the widow of Venusius, was Queen of the Brigantes. In A.D. 672, according to the Anglo-Saxon *Chronicle*, “King Coenwealh died and Seaxburh his queen reigned for one year after him,” but this was during a temporary disruption of the kingdom.1 History is silent, but her coins suggest that Cynethryth, whose name alone they bear, either survived her husband Offa, King of the Mercians, and reigned, perhaps for a short interval only, in A.D. 796, or issued them whilst acting as regent during her husband’s alleged2

1 *Bede*, B. iv, xii.
2 For my part, I prefer the graphic story recounted by Matthew of Westminster and Roger of Wendover to any academic argument of non proven.
visit to Rome. When, in the reign of Edward the Elder, Ethelred "sub-regulus" of Mercia died, in 912, his widow Ethelfleda, King Alfred's daughter, continued the struggle against the Danes as "Lady of the Mercians," but on her death in 918, Edward dispossessed her only daughter and heiress. It will be noticed, however, that, with the possible exception of Cynethryth, in every instance the reigning Queen or Lady was a widow, and seems merely to have continued the sovereignty as a regent or during troubled questions of succession.

There is every reason, I think, to infer that the last of these was the precedent relied upon, because when, in April, 1141, the Empress was elected at Winchester, the style she adopted and which was proclaimed in the cathedral was Domina Anglie. But, precedent or no precedent, Henry was not the man to be bound by either constitutional or sentimental precepts, and he summoned all the clergy and barons to his Christmas court at Windsor, which was adjourned to London on January 1st, 1127, to swear "that they would keep their fealty and would secure to his daughter, the Empress, the kingdom of England by hereditary right after himself, unless at his death he should leave behind him, as his heir, a son born in lawful wedlock." The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle adds the words "and Normandy" after "England," and William of Malmesbury explains that he urged her descent through her mother from the Saxon line of kings as an additional claim of right—yet this was in the presence of her uncle King David of Scotland, the male heir of that race! As would be expected under the rule of the despotic Henry, the oath was taken unanimously, and it is interesting to notice that after David, as Earl of Huntingdon, had in virtue of his royal precedence signed first of the laity, Stephen and Earl Robert of Gloucester vied for the second place of honour, the former as the King's nephew, the latter as his natural son, but the decision was in Stephen's favour. Thus early commenced that rivalry which was to disrupt England.

Having now, as he thought, established the succession and raised the status of his daughter to that of a royal heiress, the King secretly

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1 So far as possible I adopt the "New" or modern style in chronology.
2 Symeon of Durham, sub anno 1128.
opened negotiations with Fulk V., Count of Anjou, the hereditary foe of Normandy, for terms of peace and an alliance against the arms of William Clito, then supported by the French King; the inducement to Fulk being the offer of Matilda in marriage to his son and heir-apparent Geoffrey. The conditions were accepted, and so secret was the matter kept that William of Malmesbury quotes Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, as saying "that none of them advised the marriage, nor, indeed, knew of it save Robert, Earl of Gloucester, Brian Fitz-Count, and the Bishop of Louviers." This was Henry's second and fatal error of diplomacy.

Matilda herself was opposed to the match, but, nevertheless, Henry, at Whitsuntide, 1127, sent her to Rouen under the escort of Earl Robert and Brian Fitz-Count, her staunch henchmen of later days—for her betrothal, which was followed exactly a year later¹ by her marriage to Geoffrey Plantagenet, then but fifteen years of age, whilst his bride was twenty-five. As might be expected disagreements arose, and the lives of the two were spent more in separation than in union. Matilda returned to her father's court within a year of the marriage, and it was not until after Geoffrey had claimed his wife at the council held at Northampton on September the 8th, 1131, that they were re-united. Henry took that opportunity again to pledge the nation to her as his successor, so that, as Henry of Huntingdon explains, those who had not taken the previous oath might then do so. Matilda's first son, Henry, afterwards Henry II., was born on March 5th, 1133, and under the year 1135, Roger of Hoveden tells us that yet again, though this time in Normandy, the King summoned the archbishop [of Rouen?], bishops, earls, and barons to swear fealty to the Empress and to Henry, "her little son."²

In thus binding the nation by a triple oath, Henry discloses his nervousness as to its weight. At best it was morally, like Harold's promise to the Norman William, a pledge under duress, and no one knew better than he that the descent of the crown of England was not

¹ See England under the Angevin Kings, vol. i, pp. 258, 259.
² Then followed the words "to be king after him," but as the chronicler was not a contemporary, the word translated "him" was probably a slip for "her," because otherwise the sense is contradictory.
by devise nor promise, but by the election of the Witan after and not before the throne was vacant. Therefore the oath was worded as an individual tender of fealty, so that morally it might carry the future vote at the Witan.

Thus had Henry done all that man or king could do to ensure the peaceful succession of his daughter, yet he feared the result, for he died with the trouble upon his mind and lips.\textsuperscript{1} The throne was vacant. It was now a question of election.

\textsuperscript{1} William of Malmesbury, anno 1135.
CHAPTER II.

A Retrospect of the Coinage Prior to Stephen's Accession.

Fig. 1.—British gold money, circa B.C. 150, imitated from the Greek currency of the Phoenicians.—Carlyon-Britton.

The introduction of the art of minting into this country is assigned by the late Sir John Evans, in The Coins of the Ancient Britons, to the earlier half of the second century B.C., and the fabric and design of the currency then followed Greek prototypes. But before it was finally superseded by that of the Roman Empire in the first century A.D. the native money had become Roman in character, and comprised a large and varied series of gold, silver, and bronze, issued from the several tribal centres; yet, as a whole, it was remarkable for its sterling qualities as a commercial medium of exchange.

Fig. 2.—British coin in bronze of Cunobeline, A.D. 5-41.—Thomas Bliss.

Fig. 3.—Roman denarius of Tiberius, A.D. 14-37, the prototype of Cunobeline's coin.—Carlyon-Britton.

Under the rule of civilized Rome, Britain for nearly four centuries continued to enjoy the advantage of a standard circulating medium in the three precious metals, and it is a maxim of political economy that

1 There was also a currency in tin, but of local rather than general circulation.
the more varied the money-tokens of a nation are, the greater is its commercial prosperity.

With the advent of the Saxon in the fifth century came the inevitable set-back in both trade and the tokens of trade. The Roman money, in at least its lower denominations, was probably still continued in use for a time; but in southern Britain from the sixth to the eighth century, save for an early and temporary issue of a small gold piece—known to us as the Saxon triens—the sole currency was the silver sceatta which had gradually devolved from the Roman money, and

was, no doubt, the connecting link between it and the later penny. The term "sceatta" is of contemporary date, and occurs, for instance, in Beowulf, the Anglo-Saxon poem of the eighth century, as gift-sceattas for voluntary payments in money or money's worth; and, conversely, I think that the expression dates the poem as prior to the

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1 Line 378. See also 1686.
general introduction of the penny. It is similarly used to express money generally in LXXXIII of the Laws of Æthelberht of Kent, circa A.D. 605, as in sceat; in Widsith, the poem of the seventh century, as sceatta, and in XI of the Oaths ascribed to the time of Alfred in the passage, “I owe not to N. sceatt, or shilling, or penny, or penny’s worth.” But in the Laws of Æthelberht the word is also constantly used to express the coin itself, in such passages as, for example, XVI xxx sceatta. So far as I can trace it, the latest occurrence of its use is in the Wer-Gilds of Alfred’s time, but it is there now believed to be an error in transcription for the thrymsa, a money of account, value three pence.

When Britain first met the sway of Rome she required and enjoyed an ample currency in the three precious metals. When Rome left her to the invading Saxon the smallest silver piece was sufficient for the needs of her subsistence. This fact alone speaks more forcibly than pages of history of the denudation of her wealth under the then tributary system of colonization.

North of the Humber there are indications of still more impoverished conditions, for there the distance from the trade routes to the Continent and the ignorance of the latent mineral wealth, reduced the needs of barter to a minimum medium, and the small Roman brass coins seem to have been continued in use concurrently with the sceatta until late in the eighth century, when both media were superseded by the Northumbrian styca, a small copper coin peculiar to that province.
and probably composed of metal obtained by melting the general Roman currency.

The styca represented in exchange the eighth part of the Saxon penny, and in the Anglo-Saxon version, circa 950, of the Rushworth Gospels the word appears for *mite* in the passage, "two mites which make a farthing." Even so late as in the sixteenth century the term was not yet quite obsolete, for it was still used in Cranmer's version of the Bible, although the coin itself had given place to the penny under the Danish occupation of Northumbria which commenced in A.D. 867.

Meanwhile, in southern Britain, the silver penny had long been established as the standard currency. The sceatta's average weight was 17 or 18 grains, whilst the penny at its introduction weighed the same, and the latter was nothing more than a sceatta enlarged in diameter by about one-third and proportionately reduced in thickness. The sceatta therefore merged into the penny, and I will presently suggest the motives for the change in form. According to four several transcripts of the time of Alfred, the penny is mentioned consistently throughout the laws of Ine, A.D. 725, as, for example,

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twam pæningum, ii penegum, twegea pæninga (and peniga); iii peonega wurð; fīa penega, fif pæninga (and peonega wyrð); vi pæninga weorð, jyx penega wurð (and pæninga wurð); x pæninga weorð, and feowertyne pæninga wurð,²
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but our earliest specimens of it are of the time of Offa, who reigned as King of Mercia from A.D. 757 to 796. Of that period, however, we have examples issued in each of the four kingdoms of Mercia, East Anglia, Kent, and Wessex, and they differ so materially in both art and design that none of them can be proffered as the prototype for the others. The prototype must therefore be looked for in some other and

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¹ St. Mark, xii, 42. I am indebted to Mr. Falconer Madan, Bodley's Librarian, for references from the original manuscript.

² The Laws of King Alfred, ed. Benjamin Thorpe, Public Record Series. Mr. Alfred Anscombe, who has kindly referred to these quotations for me, writes: "These laws appear in the same manuscript as those of Alfred, but are subsequent to the latter, and numbered in succession thereto. Thorpe altered the numbering to "I" onwards. In, for example, XLIV, 'x pæninga weorð,' and LVIII, 'Oxan horn bed x pæninga weorð' = 'The horn of an ox is worth ten of pennies,' the word 'pæninga,' in each instance, is the genitive plural."
earlier penny, possibly that to which Ine's laws refer, but which has not been preserved to us. Such a coin must have borne the king's bust upon it, and I cannot therefore accept the theory that the British penny owed its origin to Frankish influences. On the contrary, it seems to have merely evolved from the Anglo-Saxon sceatta to meet the requirements of a more progressive age.


We know that in later times the penny was mechanically cut into halves for halfpennies and into quadrants for farthings. We also know that the cross, the emblem of Christianity, was in one form or another an almost integral feature of the reverse design, and that its arms formed the lines of guidance for such severance; indeed, on many of the types they were specially voided for that purpose; and we know that the custom was continued right through Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet times to the years 1279–1280, when Edward I. remodelled the coinage and issued round halfpennies and farthings. But we do not know precisely when that custom commenced.

Until very recent years little importance seems to have been attached to the preservation of the cut pieces disclosed in the numerous finds of coins. I have seen a unique cut halfpenny of Anlaf, King of

Northumbria, sold for a couple of shillings, and that of the martlet type of Stephen found at Ashby Wolds in 1778 has not been preserved.

When, in 1882, I saw the large hoard of coins of the reigns of Burgred, Æthelred, and Alfred, all of the "Mercian type,"—with one exception, a curious sceatta,—fresh from its discovery on the west side of the second pier from the Surrey shore of Waterloo Bridge and mixed with the mud of the Thames, it included a quantity of fragments of pennies of which, I believe, some were cut halfpennies; but when, later, I again saw the treasure, these pieces had been discarded with the mud as worthless. The cut coins in the Nottingham hoard of Stephen's money discovered in 1880 mysteriously disappeared, and three or four dozen unrecorded specimens were separated from the pennies of the same reign found at Linton, near Maidstone, in 1882, but came under my observation. These incidents show how rarely the severed fractions of the penny, even when contained in hoards of the most valuable and interesting of our series of coins, have received any preservative attention, and I believe that our predecessors in numismatics, with very few exceptions, would have none of them.

I have never seen the cut half of a sceatta, nor does the coin lend itself to mechanical severance by any guiding lines in its device. But in early times money passed by weight rather than by number, and there is great divergence in the weight of the later sceattas, some scaling as much as 20 grains and others as little as 10 grains, so in weight, at least, we get the whole and the half of the same coin, with

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1 Cf. British Museum Catalogue, types, vol. i, plate X, figs. 9, 10, 12, and 13; vol. ii, plate IV, fig. 3, and plate VI, fig. 1.
2 In Mr. Nathan Heywood's collection.
3 They included a halfpenny of Matilda of the *PERERIL* type and two reading on the obverse *ROBET* of Stephen's second type, Hawkins 269.
all the intermediate values. If therefore the sceatta, as I have suggested, merged into the penny, and there were light and heavy sceattas, it follows that there was a demand for a smaller denomination than the penny from its initiation, and in this I think we see one of the two causes which led to the spreading out of the sceatta into the thin penny. The sceatta was too thick and small in diameter to be conveniently severed into halves, and so it was, as it were, beaten out into the thin penny, which was easily cut with ordinary shears. The demand for the still smaller denomination—the farthing—must have arisen very gradually during the progress of readvancing civilization, for if the sceatta was all-sufficient in itself for a long period, the halfpenny alone would at first meet the requirements of smaller change, and it would only be as trade again advanced a further step in its niceties that a still smaller denomination would be demanded.

The documentary evidence of the use of the halfpenny in early times is very indefinite, so far as my researches have met with any success. The earliest reference to the coin would appear to be in the passage *spa wenig swa healfne*, in the *Judicia Civitatis Lundonie* of Athelstan. As our Anglo-Saxon versions of the Gospels only date from the middle of the tenth century, they also fail to throw light upon the question, although, as Mr. J. P. Gilson, Keeper of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, kindly informs me, the word occurs as *helfinge* in Luke xii, 6, of the Cotton Manuscript Otho, C.I. It is, however, a word not likely to occur often in early documents.

So far as existing specimens of the cut halfpenny help us we can only trace it backward to the days of Alfred, but as it was then common also to the Danish currency of Northumbria, it was probably no new

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**FIG. 17.—CUT HALFPENNY OF ALFRED, THE LINE OF SEVERANCE BISECTING THE CENTRAL CROSS.**—Carlyon-Britton.
thing. Indeed, glancing at the types of our earliest pennies, in particular at those of Offa, for example, which have a dotted or a voided line across the reverse exactly bisecting the coin and almost inviting severance, I have no hesitation in saying that the introduction of the cut halfpenny must have been contemporaneous with that of the penny. If further proof were needed it is to be found in a very interesting penny of Ecgbeorht, King of Wessex, 802–838, in Mr. Carlyon-Britton’s collection, which has clearly been intended to be severed into two halfpennies, but the moneyer’s shears have cut short and left about an eighth of an inch of metal untouched upon the outer edge. This was probably one of a large number of pennies being reduced to halfpence by the moneyer at the time, and he must either have omitted to notice that his shears clipped short, or have presumed that the coin would easily break into the two pieces, and it is indeed curious that it has not done so. The line of severance exactly bisects the coin, and it is a clean-cut incision showing the peculiar slanting edge, which is invariably present in genuinely cut pieces. In thus referring to the shears of the moneyer, I do so because I believe that then, as now, it was illegal for the money to be mutilated, even for halfpence, whilst in circulation, and that the moneyer alone was allowed to thus produce them, although probably others surreptitiously used the shears.

It is only by very gradual steps that a currency approaches its ultimate maximum or minimum denomination, and if we admit that one of the two reasons for the spreading of the thick sceatta into the thin penny was for its easy manipulation by the shears, we must also admit that the cut halfpenny is as old as the penny itself. But before the demand for a farthing arose in the natural step downwards in exchange more than a century must have passed away, and from the time of Offa to the day of Alfred the cut half of a penny remained the minimum coin current.

Asser in his *Annals of the Reign of Alfred* tells us that the energetic king found time to instruct his goldsmiths and artificers of all

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1 *British Museum Catalogue*, vol. i, plate VI, figs. 12, 13, 14, plate VII, figs. 1, 7, 8, 10, 16, plate XII, figs. 1 and 2.

2 See *Henry I.*, pp. 10–11.
The Purpose of the Round Halfpenny.

kinds, and in the same paragraph speaks of his inventions. Then it was, perhaps between 886 and 890, that he introduced two coins of an entirely new character, namely, the "great" penny and the round halfpenny. The former was nearly four hundred years in advance of the time when its successor and namesake, the groat or "great" penny of the same nominal value as the later Saxon shilling, came in to stay, and so its issue was almost immediately closed. The round halfpenny met with better fortune, although its circulation could never have been large, and it, too, seems to have fallen into disuse within half a century or so of its invention.

Just as I believe that the thin penny was invented for the purpose of its division into halfpennies, so I believe that the round halfpenny was invented for its division into farthings. That it was not intended to supersede and replace the cut halfpenny is clear, because cut halfpennies were continued in use and even appear as severed halves of pennies of the same types as the round coins. A cut quarter of a penny was a very tiny token of currency, and it was probably thought, when first its demand arose, to be too small for service, and so the round halfpenny was invented which, being thinner than the penny, gave larger sections when severed into farthings, and sections conforming in shape and design with the recognized cut money. It therefore, like the penny, served a double purpose. It was immediately imitated by the Danish rulers in Northumbria, East Anglia, and Mercia, and continued in currency until the reign of Eadred, 946–955. It is, however, of rare occurrence in our hoards, and I have not seen any specimen of it of either of the two intermediate reigns of Athelstan and Eadmund. It is, therefore, not surprising that only one farthing cut from a round halfpenny exists—so far as I am aware, in our collections to-day.
This with its fellow, the complete round halfpenny, is in the cabinet of Mr. Carlyon-Britton, and both are of the reign of Eadred, each being the only specimen of its kind known of that reign, and the former is also, I believe, the earliest known farthing of any reign.

If we had to rely upon our numismatic text-books, we should have to be content to credit the earliest farthings to the Confessor's reign; but I have just instanced an example of the middle of the tenth century, and Mr. A. H. Baldwin tells me that he has seen several cut fourths of a penny of the reign of Canute. It is unfortunate that the earliest of our Anglo-Saxon versions of the Gospels does not carry us back before Eadred's time, but then, in the Lindisfarne manuscript, we have feoræng penninges and feorængas, whilst the Rushworth Gospels give us feoræandcel and feoræung penninges. Mr. Falconer Madan, who has most kindly referred to the original of the latter manuscript, writes me that in Luke xii, 6, a hiatus is left for the word, thus:—"twoege . . ." This is curious, and were it not that, as we have seen, the term is freely used elsewhere in the same manuscript, we might be tempted to infer that the translator was at a loss to describe the fourth of a penny. It occurs to me as just possible that this portion of the Gospels may have been copied from a translation made prior to Alfred's introduction of the coin.

In theory the round halfpenny with its resulting segments as farthings was correct, but in practice it failed. The reason for this was that at the date of its introduction there were not more than nine or ten mints in the whole of Alfred's domains, and the duplication of the dies incident to its issue was not, therefore, a material expense or trouble; but when it was abandoned the number of mints had already increased to at least forty, and it was then quite obvious that within a very few years that number would be doubled. Hence the advantages to the public of a round halfpenny and a larger and better farthing severed from it, were far from compensating for the excessive cost in the dies and labour incurred in their production, and so the crown, abandoning the new, was content with the old practice of severing the penny for halfpence and, I believe, at the same time introduced the cut quarter-segment of the penny for the farthing. This system of issuing silver pennies, cut half-
The Origin of the Farthing.

pennies and cut farthings as the only denominations of currency was still subsisting at the date of Stephen’s accession and, with the exception of a brief attempt to popularize a gold penny in the reign of Henry III., was continued unchanged until the seventh and eighth years of Edward I., when, again, the groat or great penny, the penny, the round halfpenny, and a round farthing of silver were issued and remained almost permanently current. One fact is significant: at that date the number of working mints in England, which meanwhile had risen to nearly eighty, had again been reduced to the same number as existed when Alfred, four hundred years earlier, had uttered the "great" penny and round halfpenny as two of his "inventions."

Contemporaneously with these innovations Alfred appears to have raised the weight of the penny to 24 grains troy, whence our "penny-weight" which, save that in later Saxon times it was lowered to 24 grains tower—equal to 22½ grains troy—remained the standard until Edward I.'s reconstruction of the coinage. The assay of Alfred's time and, except during vicissitudes of debasement, throughout our annals of coinage from his day to ours, was and is 11.1 parts of silver and 0.9 of copper, or other alloy.

Originally the right of coinage was solely vested in the crown, but at a very early period of our history the archbishops of Canterbury and York enjoyed the privilege of issuing money by their own moneyers, and, down to the close of the ninth century, in their own names. We have sceattas of Ecgberht, Archbishop of York 732-766, and pennies of Jaenberht, Archbishop of Canterbury 765-792, but who can say

FIG. 19.—PENNY OF CEOLNOTH, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY 830-870.—Carlyon-Britton.

that their predecessors coined not before them? As time went on the privilege was extended to most of the bishops and mitred
A Numismatic History of the Reign of Stephen.

Abbots, but they coined the king’s money and merely reaped the profit thereof.

Under the so-called Heptarchy each king issued his money from his own capital, just as ours is to-day struck at the Mint, and therefore it was, as now, quite unnecessary to identify it by placing the name of that capital upon it. All that was necessary was that it should bear the name of the mint official who was responsible for its weight and purity. But during the constant wars for supremacy incident to that period, when from time to time two or more Heptarchic kingdoms fell under the sway of one king, he issued his own money from the capitals of each, and then it was that for fiscal reasons it often became necessary to identify the currency with its place of origin by the addition of the mint-name upon it. It was not, however, until the close of the reign of Eadgar, *circa* 975, that the rule became absolute that every coin must bear the names of both moneyer and mint upon it, a rule which with few exceptions, notably certain issues in the reign of Stephen, remained in force until Edward I.’s revision of the currency.

As the Saxons under Alfred, Eadweard the Elder, and Athelstan, gradually extended their power northward, driving the Danes before them, borough after borough fell into their hands, and an extension of the general monetary system became necessary, for when the circulation of currency was to a very great extent local, it could not be expected, for example, that York, Chester, Derby, or Shrewsbury, would be content to obtain their coin from mints upon or south of the Thames. No doubt, under Eadweard the Elder, dies had been granted to several of these boroughs, but it is to Athelstan that the credit is due for establishing the system of borough-coinage, which remained the constitutional principle right down to the accession of Henry II.

At the Synod of Greatanlege, to quote Mr. Carlyon-Britton’s words,¹ “held soon after 928, it was enacted that there should be one kind of money throughout the whole realm, and that no one should coin but in a town . . . . It was at the same time ordained that there should be in Canterbury seven moneyers—four belonging to the king,

two to the [arch]bishop, and one to the abbot; in Rochester, three—two for the king and one for the bishop; in London, eight; in Winchester, six; in Lewes, two; in Hastings, one; in Hampton, two; in Wareham, two; in Shaftesbury, two; and elsewhere one in the other burghs.” To the same writer is due the true exposition of the meaning and effect of the last sentence I have quoted, namely, that to every borough throughout Athelstan’s dominions the privilege of a moneyer was granted,¹ which continued to be the constitutional law of the coinage under the subsequent Saxon and Norman dynasties. In other words, Athelstan, after confirming or granting additional moneyers to certain privileged cities and towns, which he specified, provided that every other borough should be entitled to a single moneyer. The specific mention of “in Hastings one” seems therefore to be superfluous, but I suggest that the explanation is either that its status as a borough was then in doubt, or that some question had arisen whether it was not entitled to two moneyers. It did not, however, follow that every borough availed itself of this right; indeed, so far as we know, several appear never to have exercised it, and many that found it politic to issue their own money at one period, at another abandoned the privilege. Thus there was a constant flow and ebb in the number of mints issuing the king’s money, which was at the flood in the troubled reign of Æthelred II., when the Dane-geld drained England of coin and some four score mints were in operation to supply it, but gradually ebbed to fifty in the peaceful times of Henry I.

It will be readily understood that in the two centuries that passed between the Synod of Greetanlege and the accession of Stephen, many changes intervened. Rochester with its special grant of three moneyers had long ceased to coin, whilst “Hampton”—that is, Southampton—with its two had also abandoned the privilege. On the other hand, most of the cities and many of the boroughs had obtained an increase in the number of their moneyers. Thus the issue of the money, as compared with the later Saxon period, was more centralized, and, although the mints were fewer, their moneyers were more numerous.

¹ See Mr. Carlyon-Britton’s fuller consideration of the Law of Greetanlege in *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. vi, pp. 13 et seq.
Meanwhile, the custom was gradually becoming general in England for the cities and boroughs to consolidate their geld and crown dues of every kind into one firma, or annual rent paid to the king in relief. In a few cases the mint was excepted, but usually it was included in the charter, and thenceforward the burgesses either employed their own moneyers, subject to the limit in number under their statutory privileges, or sublet the mint to certain of themselves.

This custom of farming the dies to the burgesses in their general firma explains away the difficulty we should otherwise have in reconciling the comparatively few references contained in Domesday Book, to either mint or moneyer, with the fact that when it was compiled in the year 1086 there were at least sixty mints in operation in England and two in Wales.1 The purpose of the survey was solely fiscal, and its object, therefore, was to disclose at a glance what every city, borough, or holding had paid to the crown in the time of the Confessor, what it was paying in 1086, and what it ought to or could pay upon any reassessment. Hence, if the mint were already included within the firma of a city or borough there was nothing to be directly collected from it, so it altogether disappeared from fiscal statistics, and Domesday ignored its existence. A reference, for example, to two passages from the entries in Domesday, relating to Huntingdon, clearly explains that this was the custom. One of these tells us that there had previously been three moneyers in this borough who used to pay forty shillings, but “now they are not”; which means “that are not assessed,” for we know that at this very time the mint was in operation. The other passage explains why they were no longer assessed, for it tells us that Huntingdon, for the purposes of its firma, had been separated from its hundred “since King William placed the tax of the mint upon the borough.” What really had happened was that in the Confessor’s time Huntingdon was assessed, inter alia, at thirty pounds, which, however, included a quarter of the adjoining hundred, and the three moneyers paid a tax of forty shillings. King William had released it from its responsibility in respect of the hundred, but instead of

proportionately reducing its firma, had granted the mint, which was only worth forty shillings, to the borough, and retained the firma unaltered. He therefore ceased to have any direct interest in the moneyers and had, no doubt, indirectly increased his own revenue by the exchange.

Domesday does not contain the returns for either London or Winchester, probably because they were separately assessed, but by inference we may assume that their mints were still retained in the king's hands, for that was the custom at Lincoln, Ipswich, Colchester, Gloucester, Bath, and other principal cities and towns where the mints were separately assessed to the crown, that of Lincoln paying as much as seventy-five pounds a year, and that at Bath as little as five pounds. Such mints as these, therefore, remained royal institutions and their moneyers were officers of the crown. They were men of considerable status and often of great wealth. Some, as I have shown in Henry I., were aldermen, some, in later times, became mayors, several founded churches, and one was, I believe, the father of Archbishop Becket.

Mints, therefore, were of two distinct classes—one royal and only accountable to the king, the other civic and managed by the burgesses or their lessees. Thus, the rent of the former was a crown-asset, and so assessed in Domesday; but that of the latter was a civic asset included amongst the privileges paid for by the annual firma of the borough, and so outside the scope of Domesday's purpose. The effect of this distinction in feudal times was very marked, for whilst the royal moneyers acknowledged no other authority than the crown, the burgesses, who held the majority of the smaller mints, owed their allegiance primarily to their lord and followed his pennon, or closed their gates against the king whenever, whether earl or baron, he raised his banner in revolt—and this in Stephen's day was with most of them the rule rather than the exception. Then it was that the history of the times was written upon the coinage, because to continue to issue the king's money without a difference in its image or superscription was to admit the doctrine of "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and if that applied to the
money how much the more would it apply to the city or town in revolt.

Domesday tells us over and over again that whenever the money was changed—*quando moneta verteatur*, the moneyers paid fees, usually of twenty shillings, and a more communicative passage under Worcester explains that they were paid *ad lundoniâ p euneis monetê accipient*. This means that when the type was changed, fresh dies were needed, and every moneyer, whether royal or civic, paid twenty shillings, or thereabouts, for them to the king’s cuneator, whose office was at London, and at the same time he surrendered his old dies. Mr. Carlyon-Britton has repeatedly urged,¹ and I think rightly, that in theory if not in practice the money was changed every three years; or, in other words that it was customary to change the type at intervals of that period. If we divide the number of years of the reigns of the later Saxon and earlier Norman kings by that of the types they issued, the quotient so nearly tallies with the period that I think that any occasional variation may well be explained away by the necessary change upon a new king’s accession, which cut short the run of the current type, or by the demand for a revision of the currency by a change in the legal tender, which was, I contend, heralded by the issue, in Norman times, of a profile device, and may often by proclamation have been introduced before the current type had run its full term. Nevertheless, as will be presently explained, the triennial limit seems to have been abolished upon Henry I.’s accession by his charter of liberties.

The question naturally arises—why did the king change his types? Well, why do we date our coins? Before the introduction of dating coins it was necessary to so differentiate them in chronological order of issue that by proclamation on a change of the legal tender what—to quote the *Dialogus de Scaccario* of Henry II.’s time—was “present” or current money and what was not, could be determined at a glance. Nowadays we proclaim the limit of tender by reference to the dates which appear upon all our issues, and I await with interest an early revision of the tender which is certainly much overdue. But dates

were not introduced until the advent of the Tudors, so before that time, when the mass of the people could neither read nor write, it was necessary that the distinction should be optical. Under the Saxon rule I am inclined to think that the periods were marked in the earlier times by the introduction of the king’s bust instead of the types bearing the usual small cross, later, by the presence or absence of the sceptre, and finally, in the Confessor’s time, by the change from the profile to the full-faced bust. Our hoards of coins of that period, however, tell us that proclamations of change in the legal tender were almost as rare as they are now, for these distinctions were mere milestones in the run of the types, set up long before it could be known when, or if ever, they would be chosen to time the stages of the tender.

From the date of the Conquest to the reign of Henry II. there can be little question that the periodical introduction of a profile type, as opposed to the usual device of a full-faced head or bust, was solely for the purpose of marking the terms of legal tender. I have elsewhere shown that in the fourteen principal hoards of Norman money, which included twelve thousand coins, not more than a single profile type occurred in any one of them, and I could now quote several additional discoveries which adhere to the same rule. The proclamation, however it was worded, must have rendered obsolete the last issued profile type and all money preceding it. From the accession of William I. to that of Stephen there was a period of sixty-nine years, and a collective issue of twenty-eight types, of which eight are in profile. Although the latter are somewhat irregularly interspersed, I think that they disclose a general principle of marking distinct periods by which if desired the legal tender could at any future time be clearly defined.

I have already said that in Saxon times the legal tender, as now, allowed many types to remain current, or "present" money, and "when King William came into England" he found an established coinage so sterling in quality that he, for a time, refrained from interfering with it in any respect. The hoards which were deposited within the first few years of his reign therefore continue to include numerous types, as, for

\[\text{1 Henry I., p. 36.}\]
example, that at St. Mary Hill Church, London, deposited about the year 1077, which comprised seven Saxon and the first four Norman types, whilst another of the same date of deposit in the City of London yielded an even more varied assortment. But from that date (1077) to the close of the Norman period, with two exceptions, every hoard discovered, and they were very many, contained no more than one, two, three, or rarely four substantive types, representing a period probably limited to from six to twelve years. The two exceptions are the Bermondsey hoard, deposited in 1101 or 1102, which proved that four types of Rufus and one of Henry I. must have then been current, and the Shillington, deposited between 1106 and 1108, which disclosed a then legal tender embracing every type from the last of William I. to at least the fourth of Henry I., or ten in all.1

We are, therefore, faced with an interesting problem, the conditions of which are as follows:—1. Until at least the year 1077, the Saxon custom of an almost indefinite legal tender was continued. 2. From about that date until the accession of Henry I. the tender was narrowed down to three or four types, or a period never exceeding a dozen years. 3. Immediately after Henry's accession the tender is again thrown open. 4. Before 1112, the date of the deposit of our next recorded hoard, the tender was once more strictly reduced to two or three types, and remained so restricted until Henry II., in 1180, reformed the coinage.

With these four conditions before us we have the whole meaning and effect of the mysterious tax of *monetagium* exemplified. I raised the subject in *Henry I.*, but was careful, beyond associating it with the legal tender, to leave the question open.2 Mr. Carlyon-Britton followed and used it as a factor in arriving at the principle of the three years' duration of the types3; and in a recent and interesting contribution to the *Numismatic Chronicle*,4 Mr. G. C. Brooke proved that its effect in

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1 Only about one-third of the coins were ever critically examined, but as these included the extremes, the intermediate types must have been current. The same rule is applied to the Bermondsey hoard.  
Normandy was to abolish the debasement of the money, but was of opinion that in England it was a tax levied upon the boroughs and shires for their minting rights. In each of the three suggestions there was some substratum of fact.

The Feudal system was not run on philanthropic ethics, and the coinage was no exception to that rule. If the people needed money—the people must pay for it; if the moneyers required dies—the moneyers must pay for them; and if the citizens enjoyed the privilege of a mint—the citizens must pay for it. These payments were considerable, especially when we remember the relative value of money in Norman times. To coin bullion, or to recoin their obsolete money on a change of tender, cost the public sixteenpence-halfpenny in the pound. New dies, which were necessary whenever the type was changed—or quando moneta vertebatur, as Domesday has it—usually cost the moneyers twenty shillings; and the mint at Lincoln, for example, returned a rent of seventy-five pounds.

The tax of monetagium was first introduced into Normandy in 1079 or 1080, and was, in effect, a compact between Duke William and his duchy, that in return for a triennial hearth tax he undertook not to debase the money, a practice from which he and his predecessors had reaped a substantial profit. Thus far I am in accord with Mr. Brooke, and would refer to his paper for fuller details of the conditions and curious effect of the tax so far as Normandy was concerned; but now I must entirely diverge. We know that in England there was no such thing as authorised debasement of the coinage, but in view of that grasp of extortion, which was inherent in the character of the Conqueror, it is not likely that any such reason would deter him from levying a similar tax here. On the contrary, he had easily acquired an additional and regular tax in his own duchy, from a people who for years had been defrauded in the assay of their money, and the argument was unanswerable that the English nation, that had always enjoyed a sterling currency, could, therefore, the better afford to pay for it. What had he to offer in exchange—or, if you like, as an excuse for the tax? Obviously, there was only the crown-right of changing the legal tender. If the crown could change the type every three years, or oftener, it could also
change the legal tender with that type. True, it was not customary to change the tender, save at long intervals, but whenever it was changed the public had to pay sixteenpence-halfpenny for exchanging each pound of their obsolete money for the new and current issue. The right, whether rarely or frequently exercised, was there, and as such, was a theoretical asset for concession.

That the tax was triennial is strong evidence that the types were also triennial, and we get in effect a compact between king and people that, with the advent of each new type, if the tax of *monetagium* were levied, the tender would not be changed for the three years of its issue, and whenever a change in the legal tender was proclaimed the tax would not be collected. Thus the people, every third year, either paid the triennial hearth-tax or were put to the expense of renewing their money. This was a new and great hardship, and we can therefore quite understand why Henry I., in the crisis of his accession, when his tenure of the crown trembled in the balance, included its abolition in his charter of liberties of A.D. 1100. The wording of his reference to it in the charter is important, because he says, "Monetagium commune, quod capiebatur per civitates et per comitatus, quod non fuit tempore Edwardi Regis, hoc ne amodo fiat omnino defendo."1 If, therefore, the tax was levied upon the "cities and counties" it could have nothing to do with rents of the mints; for the mints, as we know by Athelstan's law, were confined to towns, and there is no instance in Domesday, or elsewhere, of a county as such being concerned with minting rights. Again, the statement that the tax was not known in the Confessor's time shuts out the suggestion that it represented any payment made for the right of issuing money, because Domesday in several instances mentions such payments, and explains that the firma paid by a particular mint in the time of King Edward had since been raised. For example, under Ipswich we read, "And the moneyers paid in the time of King Edward £4 per annum for the mint. Now they ought to pay £20, but in the course of four years they have only paid £27."

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1 *Defendo* is here used in its old legal sense of *prohibeo*, and similarly occurs in the laws of Edward the Confessor, chapter 37, and in 5 Richard II., chapter 7. A parallel case is the corruption of meaning in the word *prevent* since the Collects were written.
The expression that \textit{monetagium} was levied throughout the cities and counties means that it was levied upon the general public, and the remark that it was not levied in the Confessor's time admits that it was a hardship, and a hardship imposed since the Conquest. In Normandy, the concession offered as the excuse for \textit{monetagium} was the benefit derived by the public in the abolition of debased money; in England it was exemption from the heavy loss on taking old money to the mint to be re-issued as current. On the wording of Henry's charter it is essential to refer the hardship of \textit{monetagium} to the general public, and not to those comparatively few persons who were concerned with the minting rights. The only possible hardships concerning the money which could fall upon the public were debasement—which did not exist—and the right to change the tender—which did exist. In Normandy the tax was certainly collected from the people generally, and Henry's charter of 1100, which abolished it, clearly implies that it was similarly levied here.

We will now compare the effect of this interpretation of the tax with the four distinct conditions I have deduced from the evidence of our hoards, and which I will here repeat, but additional evidence will be forthcoming when we presently consider the "muled" and "over-struck" coins:—1. "Until at least the year 1077 the Saxon custom of an almost indefinite legal tender was continued." As the tax was not introduced even into Normandy before 1079 or 1080, it could not have affected any hoards deposited in England before that date, and therefore the finds deposited early in the Conqueror's reign, as in Saxon times, disclose many types.

2. "From about that date until the accession of Henry I. the tender was narrowed down to three or four types, or a period never exceeding a dozen years." From a passage in Domesday, under Lincoln, we know that \textit{monetagium} had already been imposed in England before 1086, and therefore it had come into law sometime between 1080 and 1086, but as the date of the deposit of our next recorded hoard, after 1077, is not until 1087, it does not help us to be more explicit. This was the great Beaworth hoard, and it discloses just that change of character which we should expect after the
introduction of *monetagium*, for accompanying the new law as its basis would naturally be a proclamation defining and closely limiting what was to be the legal tender for the time being under the now changed conditions. Oddly enough, according to Mr. Carlyon-Britton's chronological arrangement of the types, the earliest of the five types discovered at Beaworth dates back to the three years 1077 to 1080, or the very date of the invention of the tax. But as the type which, according to the same authority, was issued at Michaelmas, 1083, is in profile, I believe that it indicates the actual date of the introduction of the tax into England. The next type issued after the Beaworth coins were deposited was the first of Rufus, and it was a profile type. This was upon an accession, and no doubt with it would flow the attendant concessions to the public, one of which, I suggest, would be a proclamation limiting the tender instead of enforcing the unpopular collection of the tax, and that was why his first type was issued in profile, for I have already explained that the profile design was intended to mark such changes, and as such it would call in the profile type of 1083 and its predecessors, leaving only the last type of his father in circulation with itself. The Tamworth hoard, which is next in order of deposit, clearly shows how closely the tender was then kept up to the issues, for it only contained three types, namely, the last of the Conqueror, and the first two of Rufus, or a margin of from six to nine years.

3. "Immediately after Henry's accession the tender is again thrown open." Henry's charter of 1100 tells us that he restored the custom in respect to *monetagium* as it existed in the Confessor's time. This in practice meant no limit to the tender, but if Rufus had called in all the money before a certain type there was a necessary limit, and, as I have said, I believe that he had restricted the tender to the issues from, and including, the last type of the Conqueror; therefore the three hoards of Tamworth, Bermondsey, and Shillington exactly agree with that line of demarcation. The effect of Henry's abolition of *monetagium* is at once manifest, for both the Bermondsey and Shillington hoards, which were deposited in his first or second, and in his sixth, seventh, or eighth years contained almost as many types as the then conditions allowed.
Another incidental effect of the abolition of the tax was that with it ceased any necessity for running the types concurrently with a triennial tax, and so Henry does not appear to have followed the three-years' custom. To the Norman temperament the temptation to collect the fees from the mints payable on the introduction of a fresh type was always present, and when Henry had conceded the money-tax he appears to have felt himself at liberty to shorten the currency of the types to an average of only two years. But in 1125 he entirely reform ed the coinage and gradually lengthened the periods of issue, so that at his death the current type was already in its fifth year, whilst the period of Stephen's first type was even longer, and in the following reign the money ceased to be changed at all until necessity demanded a revision of the currency.

4. "Before 1112, the date of the deposit of our next recorded hoard, the tender was once more reduced to two or three types, and remained so restricted until Henry II., in 1180, reformed the coinage." The natural objection to an open tender was the depreciation of the money during circulation, for in practice it resulted that the longer a coin was current the oftener was it clipped, and the older it was the less was the chance of detection. Under William I. and William II. we do not hear of any complaints of the state of the money, but almost immediately after Henry ascended the throne and abolished monetagium they commenced on all sides, and finally, in 1108, he turned his personal attention to the matter and remedied the evil by increasing the penalties and regulating the methods of production. We may therefore, I think, safely assume that although he imposed no tax on the people he then returned to the recent custom of limiting the tender to the two or three types last issued; and that is why the Shillington hoard, deposited between 1106 and that year, was the last of the Norman period to contain more than three substantive types.

We will now consider the subject of the dies. So far as their manufacture was concerned, Mr. Shirley Fox has so clearly explained

the process that little more need be said. Shortly, the method was that of preparing a number of punches representing portions of the letters and design, and striking them into the soft metal of the die in their proper order; the surface of the die being then hardened by the simple expedient of the modern blacksmith, namely, that of dipping the hot iron into cold water. The result of this principle was that all dies of the same type issued from the cuneator's office at London, being struck from the same, or almost identical, punches, and being copied from the same design, were, save in the legend of the reverse, which was always varied according to the names of the moneyer and of his mint, practically identical. In nearly every period from the time of Alfred to the close of the provincial mint-system, it is therefore quite possible by careful comparison to determine whether the die of any particular coin emanated from the cuneator's office, whether it was made from punches supplied thence, or whether it was of purely local manufacture; and these will become questions of considerable moment when from time to time we shall have to determine the cause and date of the insurgent money issued at numerous mints during the troubles of the reign of Stephen.

Prior to the final supremacy of the House of Wessex, when each state supplied its own money, it had, naturally, its own cuneator who designed and furnished the dies; and afterwards it was only by a very gradual change that the dies became centralized under a single cuneator. Although the exchequer and royal treasury were still retained at Winchester until the accession of Stephen—a survival, no doubt, of its importance as the capital of Wessex—the cuneator's office was certainly at London in the reign of the Confessor,¹ and I believe

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¹ See Domesday under Worcester.
that Edward the Elder established it there when on the death of Ethelred, *sub-regulus* of Mercia in 912, he separated the city from the rest of Mercia and assumed its possession.

Nevertheless, even in Saxon times all the dies were not supplied from the cuneator's office, for I think that the old Heptarchic capitals of Lincoln and York, at least, retained the right to their own cuneators' staffs and to manufacture their own dies. Whether this custom was continuous or only a right revived from time to time who shall say? but the fact remains that occasionally their money is so distinct in

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**Figs. 22 and 23.**—Pennies of Canute of the same type, the first struck from official dies at London, the second from local dies at York.—Carlyon-Britton.

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**Figs. 24, 25 and 26.**—Pennies of William I. Fig. 24 from official dies at London; Figs. 25 and 26 from local dies at Lincoln and York.—Carlyon-Britton.

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**Figs. 27, 28 and 29.**—Pennies of William I. Figs. 27 and 28 from official dies at London and Wilton, Fig. 29 from local dies at St. David's.—Carlyon-Britton.
character that only the theory of local workmanship can account for it.

The question remains, were the dies themselves or only the punches for making the dies supplied by the king's cuneator to the general mints? Under the Conqueror, with the exception of that of the Welsh mints of Rhuddlan and St. David's, which places evidently had their own cuneators—and of certain ecclesiastical mints to which punches were probably supplied, the money is almost as uniform as ours is to-day, as a comparison of Figs. 27, 28, and 31, which were issued at mints so geographically separated as London, Wilton, and Winchester, will disclose, and therefore it is impossible to doubt that it had a common origin for its dies, namely, the London office. In Stephen's reign, however, a difficulty arises in accepting this view, because it is quite easy from the obverses alone of the coins to identify many of the mints. That this is not due to familiarity with particular dies is certain, because at Nottingham, for example, several dies were used, yet the coins of that mint can be picked out at a glance from the general money of the reign.

It may be that as we proceed to consider the coins of Stephen in detail this difficulty will be explained away, but meanwhile I can only suggest that possibly those mints which were leased to the civic authority received finished dies, whilst those which were still in the king's hands, and therefore royal mints with an official staff, merely obtained the necessary punches from the cuneator's office at London, and manufactured their own dies, for they could be trusted with the work.

I have already remarked that when the Conqueror came into England he made no change in the administration of the coinage, and it was probably the only institution under the crown that was left in Saxon hands. The late Mr. Frederick Spicer has shown that Theoderic, the goldsmith, and tenant in capite, of Kennington, Surrey, was the then royal cuneator, and from him the office passed, about 1080, to Otto or Otho, who, I have little doubt, was his heir. From

The Explanation of "Over-struck" Coins.

The latter it descended by hereditary succession in his family, known from him as Fitz-Otho, until the reign of Edward III.

The cuneator was not only an official of the mint but also an officer of the exchequer, and as such represented the interests of the crown as opposed to those of the moneyers. His duties were to issue the new dies, or punches for dies, on every change of type, when he collected both the fees paid for them, which he handed over to the exchequer, and in exchange for the new, the old or broken irons—namely, dies and punches, which a writ of 49 Henry III. tells us were his own perquisite. It will thus be seen that a moneyer could have only one pair of dies, or one set of punches, in his possession at a time, although it did not follow that it was always of the previous type, for often both mints and moneyers omitted to coin for intervals when money was not locally in demand, and so the old irons would not then be surrendered. This system of exchange accounts for the scarcity to-day of early dies.

The object of changing the types at comparatively frequent intervals was, of course, that of revenue, and it follows that immediately upon the proclamation of a new type, both the moneyers and the officials of the mint-exchanges were strictly prohibited from issuing any further money of the old type, or otherwise no fees for new dies would have been offered. The merchants and public alike would also have declined to accept from them any but the newest currency after the proclamation, and to so continue to coin the previous type was, I think, the offence which the Dialogus de Scaccario, referring to moneyers, describes as "falsely stamping."

This prohibition gives us a simple explanation of the pieces known as "over-struck coins," namely, money first issued as one type but re-struck, without melting, from the dies of a later type; the result being that flattened traces of the earlier design can still be traced upon them. The exchange in connection with every mint to a certain extent was the local bank, and must always have kept a stock of ready money. When, therefore, the issue of this was prohibited it had to be recoined before it could be exchanged. It does not follow that it was always of the previous type, as small stocks may have been allowed to
accumulate over several issues before they were sufficient in quantity to repay a special recoinage, but two conditions were essential: 1. That the coins had been struck by the moneyers of the same mint where they were to be recoined; and 2. That they had never been issued into circulation. The reason for these conditions was that, under the then dread responsibility for weight and purity of the money, no moneyer dare allow a coin to be re-struck with his name and mint upon it unless he was certain that its standard had been assayed by his own staff, and that it had never been in circulation, lest it might have been clipped, or imitated by a forger in base metal. These very obvious precautions, which were a necessary protection to the moneyer, prohibit acceptance of the usual suggestion that over-struck coins represent the money brought in by the public to be recoined upon a change of legal tender; for if they did, then perfectly bona fide moneyers would have accepted responsibility for money which, for all they knew to the contrary, might be spurious in quality, light in weight, or even merely plated with silver.

Another effect of the proclamations for the changes in the types was the issue of coins known to us as “mules.” These represent a combination of two pairs of dies of different types, being struck from the obverse die of one type and the reverse die of another. I have previously explained in detail the origin and cause of muled coins, and it is therefore only necessary for me to repeat here, that when a proclamation for the change of type was made it entailed so great a stress of work on the office of the cuneator in supplying dies, or punches for dies, to the general mints throughout the country, that months must have been required for their production. The expedient was therefore resorted to of saving half the time by supplying each moneyer with a reverse die, or irons for its manufacture, of the new type and authorizing him to issue the money meanwhile with it in combination with the latest obverse die still in his possession. The reverse die was chosen for this purpose because, as it bore his name and address, it not only acted as a receipt to prove that he had paid his

fees for the new dies, but also for the same reason it could not be used by any fellow moneyer at his mint; whereas an obverse or standard die, being common to all reverses, could be set in the anvil and used in common with the reverse or personal die of any other moneyer at the same mint.

We are indebted to Mr. Carlyon-Britton for calling our attention to the importance of “over-struck” coins in determining the chronological sequence of the types. Unfortunately, this was after I had prepared my notes of the coins of Henry I. and of most of those of Stephen. But since the question was first raised by him in 1902 I have failed to discover any example of an “over-struck” coin of either of those two reigns. With the exception of one particular period of our numismatic history “muled” and “over-struck” coins are either absent or very rare, for usually they are confined to single examples of one or two types during a particular reign.

It is by no mere accident or coincidence that the particular period of which, alone, both “muled” and “over-struck” coins are comparatively plentiful, was when the tax of monetagium was in vogue in England, namely, according to my case from 1083 to 1100. When, in the ordinary course it would be known months beforehand that a proclamation of change of type was about to ensue, we may take it for

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granted that to avoid the necessity of re-striking it, the mint-exchanges reduced their stock of ready money to a minimum; and to be in a position to exchange the coining irons throughout the country, the cuneator prepared his new dies and punches in advance of the proclamation. Hence, when we find an abundance of both "muled" and "over-struck" coins of any particular period, we must infer that the change of type came suddenly and unexpectedly upon both the cuneator and the mint-exchanges. According to the explanation of monetagium that I have proffered, it would sometimes be the case that not until the expiration of the full term of three years would the crown decide, according to the exigencies of the exchequer, whether to again collect the tax or to issue a profile type, and with it to change the legal tender; for I have endeavoured to prove that a profile type always accompanied any restriction of the tender. Hence, no preparation could be made beforehand by either cuneator or mint-exchanges. According to Mr. Carlyon-Britton’s chronology, the last two types of the Conqueror ran from 1083 to 1087, thus coinciding with the introduction of monetagium, and of these we have "muled" coins issued from no fewer than seven distinct mints, and numerous "over-struck" coins. Of the first two types of Rufus we have again "muled" coins from seven mints, and in the Tamworth hoard there were numerous examples of his first type, recoined or "over-struck" as his second. "Over-struck" or "muled" pieces also connect his three later types. The only other instance in the whole of our numismatic history known to me of a series of "muled" coins of the same type being preserved to us from more than an occasional mint is that of the "mule" combining the first and second types of the Conqueror.¹ But we must remember that when he came

into England he at first continued Harold's current type, so far as its obverse was concerned, unchanged save in name, and therefore it was only natural that so soon as he felt himself firmly established upon the throne he would, on scant notice, proclaim a new issue throughout the land. Also, it was during a period of political unrest, when make-shift expedients are therefore the general resort of all administrations. When Henry I. by his coronation charter abolished monetagium and restored the customs of the coinage to normal conditions, the number of "mules" also returns to the normal, and "over-struck" coins, so far as I am aware, almost disappear. Thus, again and yet again we find curious conditions in the constitution of the coinage, arising in 1083 and disappearing in 1100, which only the tax of monetagium, as I have endeavoured to interpret it, can explain.

There are few more interesting issues in the study of numismatics than the evidences of the constant state of warfare between the two contending parties—the combined attack of the forgers, the clippers, and the dishonest moneyers on the one side, against the often ingenious defence of the crown on the other. The nefarious inventions of the forger were almost coeval with the introduction of money, and so long as it remained thick in form it fell an easy prey to imitation by either casting or plating. The Greek and Roman coins are in consequence often discovered mixed with such imitations, and in England the fraud was extensively applied to our early British money. The small and thick sceatta, too, lent itself to easy fabrication and debasement.

I have already explained one of the two reasons why the sceatta was spread out into the broad and thin penny, namely, for its mechanical severance into half-pennies; but the other, and perhaps main object, was to prohibit its imitation or debasement. To cast so thin a flan as was that of our early penny would be a very difficult process to-day with all our delicate appliances; but then it must have been nigh to the impossible. To plate it would be almost profitless, for the necessary layers of silver on the two sides would very nearly equal the legitimate weight of the piece. Even the clipper was handicapped, for whereas he could despoil the thick coins, such as
the denarius, or even the sceatta, of at least a twentieth part of their weight without materially altering their appearance, a mere clip off the thin penny told its tale.

In the thin penny, however, lay a far more subtle protection. The common fraud of the forger or clipper was comparatively open, but the alloy of the dishonest moneyer or forger was insidious, difficult to prove, and only detectable by the trial of the pyx. It was against this form of debasement that I believe the thin penny was primarily directed; and I am only surprised that the ingenuity of its invention has passed unnoticed. Certainly, early in its history it was ascertained that the most suitable assay for the metal used in coining was in the proportion of 11:1 parts of silver to 0.9 of copper. This was, and is, standard silver, and the reason for its adoption was that it represented the combined maximum of both stability and durability. That being so, it follows that given an ingot of standard silver there must be a maximum diameter to which it can be beaten out, and yet remain neither too brittle nor too pliable for the purpose of currency. That margin for the penny-weight of silver, after gradual extension during its experimental stages of both assay and diameter, was finally fixed at seventeen-twentieths of an inch. Twenty-four grains of standard silver, therefore, spread into a disc of that diameter, remained a serviceable token of commerce, whilst a disc of the same weight and diameter, but of silver alloyed with a greater proportion of any of the inferior metals then known, would have been either too brittle or too pliable to have deceived even a novice. It must be remembered that the dies were designed and prepared by the cuneator who was an officer of the crown, and therefore, it was impossible for the moneyers to reduce their size, and, as the coins were struck in a collar to maintain an even thickness, they had perforce to fill the diameter of the die. The only method by which an excess of alloy could be introduced was to thicken the coin, and that would mean suspicion at a glance. Nevertheless, it was always possible to lighten a coin of standard silver by reducing its thickness, for although more pliable it was still serviceable, and when the custom, as over and over again referred to in Domesday, was to check the value of money-payments by weight
The Diameter of the Penny varied with its Weight.

depreciation in the scales was of far less consequence than debasement in the coin.

This is a new proposition, and it is either right or wrong, for it admits of no half-way compromise. Fortunately it is a proposition which the general history of our coinage must settle one way or the other without question; for if it is right, then whenever the penny was reduced in weight its diameter also must have been reduced in proportion, and whenever the coinage passed through a period of authorized debasement, unless the diameter was reduced, the coins then issued must either be brittle or soft. If, on the other hand, it is wrong, then neither reduction in weight nor debasement need have affected the size or stability of the money. We will follow the enquiry chronologically.

On its introduction in the eighth century the penny was in its experimental stage, both as to assay and diameter, and in consequence the coins are brittle, probably from too much alloy, and the diameter was gradually extended from twelve- to fifteen-twentieths of an inch.

In the ninth century, the English money, as opposed to the Danish, which was of less weight, attained the standard size of seventeen-twentieths of an inch in diameter for the penny of 24 grains. During this period there were intervals of very serious debasement, especially under the last kings of Mercia, and they are accentuated in our cabinets to-day by the extreme brittleness of the coins then issued; in particular I would refer to the pennies by Burgred, and point to the fact that: those that are base are brittle, and those that are pure are durable.

In the tenth century the diameter was fully maintained, but in its second half the coinage gradually assumed thinner and lighter proportions, and some of it is certainly debased. In Matthew of Westminster we read under the year 975 the first complaint against the money, namely, that Edgar ordered a new coinage because the old coins were so clipped that a piece of gold scarcely weighed a halfpenny in the scale. The chronicler lived in the fourteenth century, when gold was in circulation, so we may safely re-translate his piece of gold as “a penny.” The passage, however, refers to clipping, and therefore can
only be applied generally as an indication of the unsatisfactory state of the then money, which is corroborated by the extreme brittleness of the coins we have of that time.

In the eleventh century, when the Danish line succeeded to the throne in the person of Canute, the weight of the penny was reduced to 22½ grains, nominal, because, as I have already remarked, the Danish currency was always of a lighter weight. If my contention is right, and the diameter of seventeen-twentieths of an inch was the maximum tension for the penny of 24 grains, then the diameter for the new penny must be proportionately decreased to rather less than sixteen-twentieths, or four-fifths of an inch; and this is, in fact, the extreme limit of the dies of Canute and of all his successors, Danish, Saxon, or Norman, during the whole of which dynasties the 22½-grain standard was nominally maintained.

From the accession of Canute to the death of Rufus we do not hear of any more complaints against the money, and our coins representing the period are pure, stable, and almost uniform. During the reign of the Confessor an experiment was tried of reducing the diameter to three-fifths of an inch, but it was soon abandoned in favour of the old standard. Debasement had probably been thought an evil of the past, but I have little doubt that it then reappeared and caused the return to the preventive scale, for some of the coins are certainly debased.

It is, however, in the early years of the twelfth century that we find the most direct evidence upon this question. Henry I. ascended the throne in the last year of the eleventh century, and the dies for his first type, which ran from A.D. 1100-1102, were reduced to fourteen-twentieths of an inch, and those for his second, 1102-1104, and third, 1104-1106, were further reduced to an average of only three-fifths of

Figs. 34 and 35.—Pennies of Henry I. during the first period of debasement.—Carlyon-Britton.
Reduced Diameter of the Penny encouraged debasement. 131

an inch. The invariable result followed; and we immediately read, under the years 1103, 1105, and 1108, that the currency was so adulterated by the moneyers that three successive edicts were passed, each increasingly severe, imposing penalties of mutilation upon the delinquents. 1 The remedy came in the last-named year, when the dies were again restored to the old scale, and we hear of no more complaints at that time.

I cannot but think that there must have been collusion between the cuneator and the moneyers in this reign, because again, after barely a decade, Henry’s types were reduced to a diameter of from twelve-to thirteen-twentieths of an inch. Upon this followed the worst debasement of the coinage by dishonest moneyers that Britain has known. The Church in 1123 excommunicated them, Henry’s army objected to receive their money as pay, William Gemmecens described it as “so debased with tin that scarcely one-third part was silver, and the other chroniclers with one voice cried it down, until at last Henry, in 1125, held the famous inquisition of the moneyers, with the result that most of them suffered the extreme penalty of mutilation. Then the money was reformed and again restored to its standard diameter, and so far as debasement by Norman moneyers was concerned the matter ends.

That is my case, and I submit that it is abundantly proved. 1. That during the experimental stages, before the correct assay and diameter were determined, the coins were abnormally brittle. 2. That during authorized periods of debasement the money was necessarily brittle. 3. That when the money was reduced in weight to the nominal 22½ grains the dies had to be proportionately reduced in diameter. 4. That so

1 See Henry I, pp. 48-55, where the passages are quoted in full.
long as the full diameter of the dies was maintained debasement was not; and 5. Immediately that diameter was reduced, debasement became the curse of the coinage. The form, weight, and size of the penny, therefore, were no haphazard choice but had cause, method, and effect.

An expedient resorted to by Henry I. for prevention of clipping was so ingenious and subtle that Ruding passes it by as incomprehensible, merely quoting it as an order that all the money was to be cut to pieces, and although I arrived at the true effect of the edict, it was not until I had almost closed the pages of Henry I. that the real significance of its purpose dawned upon me; and then it was too late to do more than add a short supplementary note. It referred to the enquiry into the coinage of between 1103 and 1108, and rests upon the authority of William of Malmesbury, who tells us "when Henry heard that broken [that is cut] money, although of good silver, was not accepted by the merchants he ordered that all should be either broken [cut] or snicked [frangi vel incidi]."

I have already remarked that only the moneyers could lawfully sever the penny into halfpennies and farthings, but on the principle that "a slice off a cut loaf is never missed" the straight edge of the cut halfpenny offered an almost irresistible temptation to the would-be clipper, and no doubt the pennies were severed wholesale for the sole purpose of appropriating a strip of metal between the lines of severance, until the glut of light halfpennies and farthings on the market must have become so great a nuisance to the merchants that they were rejected. On such a question as this contemporary hoards are no criterion, because the depositor of treasure would always keep back, to pass again into circulation as best he could, the worst money, whether light, cut, base, clipped, obsolete, or forged, and only save that of the best quality.

It was therefore to put a stop to this unauthorized mutilation of the penny whilst in circulation that Henry issued this edict to the moneyers. Put into modern language, it is:—"When Henry heard that the cut money, as represented by halfpennies and farthings, was not accepted by the merchants, he ordered that all, which was not issued as cut money, should be snicked."
The ingenuity of this mechanical device was delightful. I have already explained that money cost sixteenpence-halfpenny in the pound to coin, and it was therefore always worth so much more than bullion; also that a genuine halfpenny must be severed along the arms of the cross on the reverse. It followed that if a whole penny were snicked for say a quarter of an inch in any other direction than that in line with the arms of the cross, and it was subsequently severed along those arms, the weakened half would break in two, or at least but hang together by a thread of silver. The result would be that the severer would find himself possessed of a good halfpenny and either two fragments of silver, or a pseudo-halfpenny countermarked by its snick as illegitimate. He would therefore not be likely to repeat the experiment! Of course, if the snick had been made in line with an arm of the cross he could have disposed of it by following its guidance—but this is never the case on the coins. Nothing of the sort had occurred in any previous coinage, and the snick contemporaneously appears for the first time on some, perhaps most, of Henry's fourth type, 1106-1108. From that date until the great inquisition of 1125, it is present upon almost every penny we have of the many intermediate types. After the inquisition, the penalties of which probably rendered it unnecessary, the practice seems to have been so firmly established that many moneyers continued it until even so late as the reign of Stephen.

This little snick alone, apart from the wording of Henry's two proclamations, which is equally definite, disposes once and for all of the hitherto general belief amongst historians and numismatists that the public were allowed to sever their own halfpennies and farthings.

During the second period of debasement in the same reign, namely, that which terminated in the drastic inquisition of 1125, there

1 Mr. H. W. Taffs called my attention to the latter fact.
is evidence of an attempt to frustrate a new expedient of the dishonest moneyer, by which he avoided detection on the trial of the pyx. Knowing that his money was debased, or light, he was well aware that if he could destroy his identity as disclosed by the reverse legend, he was comparatively safe. This could be effected by three methods, namely:

1. By causing the reverse, or hand die—the trussel—to be held at an angle during the actual striking, so that either the name of his mint, if at a provincial town, or his own name, if he were one of the numerous moneyers at London, would miss the impression.
2. By overlapping the dies in the striking so that the same portion of the legend came outside the face of the silver flan; and
3. By clipping off the same portion before issuing the coin. This explains why so many of the pennies of that period, and of the reign of Stephen are so difficult to identify with their mints, if provincial, or with their moneyers if of London. It also explains what is usually termed “careless striking,” for such money, if not actually debased, is almost invariably the lightest in weight.

To meet this fraud the cuneator prepared the dies for Henry's type current in 1125, upon an entirely new system, by placing the name of the mint within an inner concentric circle around the centre of the coin. In that position it defied obliteration by any of the three methods I have explained, and as the type was contemporary with the inquisition, it would seem to have been purposely introduced to facilitate the detection and conviction of the false moneyers at that impeachment. So far as the provincial mints were concerned this device was probably effective, but in practice, after the type had been current for a time, it was evidently discovered that in the mint of London, for example, where there were a dozen moneyers in office, it was not sufficient to bring home a debased or light coin to the mint if the
moneyer's name were still absent, for criminal proceedings then, as now, required proof of identity. True, comparison of the coin with the actual dies might have detected the criminal, but that was impossible after the coin questioned had been tested by the then method of melting; so a simpler expedient was resorted to in the case of London, and it may be elsewhere, by which the design of the subsequent dies of this type was varied so that the moneyer's name took the place of that of the mint in the centre, for a personal name in that position was probably more definite, because the mint of London would be implied. Such a coin I illustrated from Mr. Lawrence's collection as Fig. T on page 82 of *Henry I.*, and it is both base and brittle—but the one implied the other.

Following the verdict in the great inquisition of 1125, would be a proclamation calling in all the old money, and probably limiting the legal tender to the new coinage then forthcoming; and therefore this, as we should expect, was issued as a profile type, Henry's thirteenth, which is *Hawkins* 265. With it commenced a new and improved series which was continued until his death, ten years afterwards. During that period there were but three types, because from the date of the inquisition not only was the money improved but the issue of the types was gradually lengthened, and the public was thereby benefited by the corresponding extension of the legal tender.

Stephen's first type, however, was issued in profile, and that, according to the rule I have previously explained, meant that only the last two types of Henry's reign, namely, types fourteen and fifteen—*Hawkins* 262 and 255—were allowed to remain current with it as legal tender—a fact abundantly proved by the many hoards of this period.

The mints in operation during their issue, which extended from 1128 to some time, to be presently discussed, in 1136, so far as the accident of the spade has disclosed them, are set out in the following table, but it is necessary to remind my readers that I write of the coins we know—not of the unknown, for whenever an example is discovered which is not recorded in a numismatic history such as this, so seductive is the temptation in the human, as well as in the barn-door,
breast to crow, that it is produced by its fortunate purchaser with an exultation which would put to shame the maternal cackle of the domestic hen.

**MINTS OF THE LAST TWO TYPES OF HENRY I.**

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1 The coins bearing this reference are in Mr. Carlyon-Britton’s collection, and from a hoard as to which no information was obtainable when *Henry I.* was written.