SOME NOTES ON A COIN OF ANLAF FROM THE
DERBY MINT.

BY GRANT R. FRANCIS, President.

In a paper on "Some coins of the tenth century found in the Isle of Man," printed in vol. v of this Journal, by the then learned President, Mr., now Major, P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton, F.S.A., the author made some very interesting references to a fragment of a penny of Anlaf, King of Northumbria, which he illustrated as figure 1 of plate I and figure A of plate II of his paper.

On the incomplete evidence of the fragment, which is almost exactly one-half of the original coin, he attributed it to the moneyer Sigar of Derby by comparison with another coin by that moneyer, illustrated as figure B, which bears many similar characteristics. But the subsequent discovery of another coin enables me to correct Major Carlyon-Britton's attribution, and to show that the inscription on the fragment must have contained more letters than the name SIGAR, even when written in its possessive case, SIGARES, as on his figure B.

A.—FRAGMENT OF A PENNY OF ANLAF, KING OF NORTHUMBRIA, STRUCK AT DERBY.
FOUND IN THE ISLE OF MAN.

His reading of the erratic lettering of the mint-name on this fragment, our figure A, in which inverted L's are used for the R and B of DEOREB, for DEORABY the contemporary rendering of "Derby," as, for instance, in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under the
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year 917, is claimed by him to be proved by a coin of Athelstan of that mint by Sigar in the National Museum at Rome. Whilst there would appear to be no doubt that Derby is the mint from which this fragmentary specimen of Anlaf emanated, as is indicated by the mint-name and Mercian M in the field, his attribution to the Derby

B.—PENNY OF ANLAF READING SIGARES MOT.
BRITISH MUSEUM.

mint on the sole authority of the fragment A of the specimen in the British Museum here illustrated as figure B, merely rests upon the logic of probability.

On a coin of Athelstan, our figure C, which I acquired some time ago, the moneyer’s name and title are given as +SIGFOLDES MOT ON DEOFER, and the two letters of the mint-name are identical with those which Major Carlyon-Britton described on the Anlaf fragment as “incompletely punched and representing R and B

C.—PENNY OF ATHELSTAN OF THE DERBY MINT, BY THE SAME MONEYER AS THE ANLAF FRAGMENT.—A. GRANT R. FRANCIS.

respectively,” so that I am now able to correct the former attribution of that reading to the moneyer Sigar, and to identify it with the same moneyer as on my coin, namely, Sigfold. But my correction does not rest on the mere similarity of the spelling of the mint-name, for there is no doubt that the reverse of my coin and the reverse of Major Carlyon-Britton’s fragment were actually struck from the same die; and further, that the lettering on the reverse
of the fragment is of quite different execution from that of the obverse. The latter is much more like the work of the second Anlaf coin by Sigar, our figure B, which he also illustrates as B, than the reverse appears to be.

Now Major Carlyon-Britton contended that this type of Athelstan was current "a little before and after" the year 928, and "that the coins of Æthelstan and Anlaf struck at Derby belong to the period of disturbance which prevailed between the death of Sihtric in 926, and the raid undertaken by Æthelstan against the king of the Scots in 933." He also believed that Derby was debatable ground held alternately by Athelstan and Anlaf; and he referred to Mr. Andrew's belief that the Battle of Brunanburgh took place in Derbyshire, and hoped that his claims might strengthen that view. They certainly would appear to do so, and I venture to think that my contentions will take us a step further in that direction, for they will probably fix the currency of this type of Athelstan's money at least eight or ten years nearer to the actual date of the battle.

We know that in 933 Athelstan made his raid against the Danes settled in the Lothians, and that history tells us little or nothing about Anlaf, the son-in-law of the Scottish king Constantine III, until the Battle of Brunanburgh in 937, when he was utterly defeated by the united forces of Athelstan and his brother Edmund. In further support of Mr. Andrew's contention that Brunanburgh was fought in Derbyshire, I would point out that not only were these two coins, the fragment of Anlaf and my penny of Athelstan, undoubtedly struck in Derby, but also that the same reverse die was used for both. Hawkins refers to a similar instance to this as happening in conjunction with Edmund's coinage, but it has not previously been noted in the case of Athelstan. It is natural to assume that after Athelstan's raid into Scotland, and not before it, his retiring army would be pursued, or at least followed in strength through Northumbria so far as Derby by the son-in-law of the Scottish King, whom Major Carlyon-Britton assumes to have succeeded to the Northumbrian throne in A.D. 926, though most of the other authorities give his reign there as much later, about 941.
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would then become the "debatable ground" previously mentioned, and was temporarily in the possession of Anlaf, who struck coins there, using such tools as he found in the mint suitable to his purpose. He would certainly not use an obverse die bearing his enemy's name and titles; but the reverse die being ready to his hand, was used with a new obverse, made, as is shown by the less careful formation of the letters of the obverse of the fragment, by an inferior workman whom he may have brought with him or pressed into his service.

Except, perhaps, during the events which preceded and immediately followed the great fight at Brunanburgh, Derby would appear to have remained in Anlaf's possession till about 943, when it was recaptured; and Anlaf's precedent of borrowing the reverse die of a coin previously used by his opponent would then seem to have been followed by King Edmund. If my theory is correct, this must place Anlaf's coins of the Derby mint later than Athelstan's coins at that mint, and I venture to think that the date of Anlaf's would be between Athelstan's raid into Scotland in 933, and a retaliatory raid through Derby in 937, which ended in the famous Battle of Brunanburgh, and not a date "very close to 928," as was claimed by Major Carlyon-Britton.

It is quite likely that Anlaf struck a considerable issue of coins in Derby, and anything of the kind would necessarily be accepted by Athelstan as a direct challenge of his regal authority and claim to the title REX TOTIUS BRITANNIÆ which he had adopted upon his coinage, even at Derby itself. Anlaf's money as it came into the Saxon King's hands would, of course, be re-melted after Brunanburgh but Derby's walled town evidently remained in his possession. Probably this fact and the use by Anlaf of Athelstan's previous type, would lead to a general recoinage by the latter quite different in type from that adopted by Anlaf, and this may well have brought in the coins bearing Athelstan's bust, instead of the less pronounced and recently discredited type with his name alone. If so, we should place type V of the British Museum Catalogue later than type VI, and these types, reversed, should in sequence be followed by type VII.