TWO ANGLO-SAXON NOTES
By R. H. M. DOLLEY

AN ENIGMATIC PENNY OF EDWARD THE MARTYR

The purpose of this note is not to claim that there was a late Saxon mint at Louth in Lincolnshire—the evidence is quite insufficient—but simply to draw attention to a broken and hitherto neglected coin from the 1914 Pemberton’s Parlour hoard from Chester. The fragment in question (below) appears as no. 42 in Sir George Hill’s masterly publication of the hoard, and is now in the British Museum. It is hoped that the enlarged photographs will enable the reader to judge for himself the essential accuracy of Hill’s readings which were as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Obv.} & \quad [J\text{RE+AHC} \\
\text{Rev.} & \quad [ALD\text{N-OLVN}] 
\end{align*}
\]

The dots that appear beneath the initial cross on the obverse and the second N of the reverse legend were to indicate that Hill himself considered his interpretation of the letter doubtful. As regards the initial cross there can be little doubt but that it was correctly read, but in the case of the second N on the reverse examination of the actual coin confirms that all that can be stated with any confidence is that it is a letter which has for its first element an upright stroke. As far as the numismatic alphabet of the tenth century is concerned, the letter could as well be a B, C, D, E, F, G, H, L, M, P, R, or P.

Although not one letter of the king’s name has been preserved, Hill listed the coin under Edward the Martyr, adding a note that the identification of the king was “not certain”. Recent research serves only to confirm this attribution. The “Small Cross” issue to which the coin belongs was initiated by Eadgar, most probably in the early autumn of 973. As far as the numismatist can tell the great majority of the dies were cut at one centre if not indeed by one hand, though there is in the British Museum a York coin which does give the impression of having been struck from dies prepared locally. What is significant is that there appears to be no coin of Eadgar on which the

\[1 \text{ N.C. 1920, p. 151, no. 42.}\]
bust even approximates to that on the fragment with which we are here concerned, and the whole weight of the evidence must be that the fragment is later, and especially when the bust can be exactly paralleled on coins of Edward the Martyr. Under this king most of the dies continued to be cut at one centre, but in the Northern Danelaw we find two local styles, one associated with York and one with Lincoln. It is to the second of these that the fragment in question belongs—though in fairness it must be remarked at once that this local style does continue into the reign of Æthelræd II, albeit normally with a deliberate "difference". "First Small Cross" coins of Æthelræd are so rare that it is very hard to generalize, but broadly speaking the policy of decentralization initiated under his half-brother is carried one step farther.¹ A third local style emerges in Kent, and in the north-east the two local styles already existing are perpetuated. In the case of the "central" school of die-cutting, the source of almost every die used at a mint south and west of Lindsey and west of the Medway, the obverse dies are invariably "differenced" by the addition of three pellets arranged in an arc before the face of the king and joined by converging stems to the traditional pellet that represents the fastening of his cloak.² In Kent, too, three pellets are used as a "difference", but here they are arranged in a trefoil and a single stroke added to form a rudimentary sceptre.³ The "York" and "Lincoln" styles also are continued, and as far as is known all coins of the former are "differenced" in the same way as those from the "central" school. On "Lincoln" style coins, on the other hand, the three pellets are not normally joined to the shoulder-brooch, and may even lie on instead of inside the inner circle.⁴ On a very few dies, too, the "difference" appears to have been omitted. Thus, although the probability is that the fragment under consideration is to be attributed to Edward the Martyr, there remains the outside chance that a better-preserved die-duplicate will one day be discovered and prove it to be an anomalous coin of the first issue of Æthelræd II. However this may be, the absolute bracket already established (July 975—September 979) is so narrow that few will wish to essay any greater precision, and especially when such an attempt must involve its author in the controversy concerning the dates of Edward's murder and of Æthelræd's coronation.

The real problem confronting the numismatist, however, is the mint to which the coin should be attributed. Hill suggested London, and quite rightly pointed out that there is a known London moneyer of the period with a name that fits the three letters legible upon the coin in question, the moneyer being one Æthelwold or Æthelwald who strikes coins of "Small Cross" type for Eadgar (cf. B.M.C. 38), Edward the Martyr (cf. Hild. 18), and Æthelræd (cf. Hild. 2794). Against this attribution the present writer would set the fact that he has still to see a London coin of Edward the Martyr or of Æthelræd of

² Ibid., p. 89, fig. b—for the cloak-ties cf. Stowe MS. 944, f. 6.
³ Ibid., fig. a.
⁴ Ibid., fig. c.
“Lincoln” style. To date the British Museum possesses coins of this style from the following mints only, Caistor, Lincoln, Stamford, Torksey, and York, and the following table sets out the position as regards coins of those mints in the National Collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Edward the Martyr</th>
<th>Aethelraed II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Lincoln” style</td>
<td>Other styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caistor</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamford</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torksey</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mention should also be made, however, of two pennies, one of Edward (B.M.C. 9) and one of Aethelraed (Lockett I, lot 642, now in the British Museum), which in the past have usually been given to Northampton. Of these it may fairly be remarked that their style is inconsistent with that of all other coins of “Hampton”, including a number that are indisputably of Northampton, and that the traditional interpretation demands not merely the disappearance of all trace of the monetarius copulative but also that we read N successively as M, H, and N to suit the case. Nevertheless this traditional attribution is not impossible, and those familiar with Stainer’s plates will remember two Oxford coins which may suggest that the limits of the “Lincoln” style extended at least as far as the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Dorchester.

What the above table does seem to indicate is that the “Lincoln” style is appropriately so named, and there can be little doubt that the dies were cut at Lincoln and supplied in the main to mints in the immediate vicinity. A striking parallel is afforded in Cnut’s second substantive or “Pointed Helmet” type where we find a similar local style, on a smaller scale but with a wider distribution, recognition of which has been largely instrumental in securing acceptance of Newark as a late Saxon mint.¹ Lest it be thought that the identification of this “Lincoln” style on “Small Cross” coins of Edward the Martyr and of Aethelraed is something unduly subjective, it may be as well briefly to recapitulate the essential criteria. As regards the lettering, N is almost invariably retrograde, and M is often replaced by N. Other letters also may be retrograde: one need cite only the S of the mint-signature of the Aethelraed coin of Caistor in the 1914 Chester hoard. Perhaps the most reliable criterion, however, is the use of + for X, a feature apparently never found on dies from other centres. There is also a characteristic epigraphy, but this need not concern us here. As regards the bust, the following criteria seem absolute. The large eye lacks a pupil, and there is no “back” to the shoulders, the curves of the drapery stopping short, as it were, in mid-air. Normally there is

no eyebrow and little or no forehead, while nose, lips, and chin approximate to a straight line and a vertical one at that. On the great majority of the coins, moreover, there is clearly discernible a small pellet on the side of the face where the engraver has not troubled to touch out on his die the mark of the "centre-bit" which sketched in the inner and outer circles. On Æthelræd coins, too, the pellets before the bust—where they are not just omitted—are not joined by converging arcs to the pellet that represents the king's shoulder-brooch.

Reference to the enlarged direct photographs at the head of this note should establish that almost all of the essential criteria of the "Lincoln" style are present on the coin with which we are here concerned. In the present state of our knowledge this fragment simply does not fit at London, and there are three possibilities that the numismatist should consider very carefully. The first is that the mint-signature was wrongly engraved, say, for argument's sake, LVND for LINDcol. Such an error would be very plausible if London and Lincoln dies were being cut together—the present writer has a suspicion that a certain die of Æthelræd II (Hild. 84) with mint-signature BYDFO may be an error for LYDFO on the part of a die-engraver who had just cut a number of dies for Barnstaple¹—but the evidence is that the die with which we are concerned was cut at a centre which was not supplying London with dies. Moreover, one could much more easily understand a metropolitan London engraver cutting LVND for LIND, than a native of Lincoln who would seem never to have had occasion to cut anything but LINDcol. An even more serious objection to the LVND for LIND theory is that it demands that we suppose an otherwise unknown ( . . . )ALD moneyer of Lincoln to whom this "freak" die was supplied.

The second possibility is that we are confronted with a coin of an otherwise unrecorded mint, in other words that the mint-signature LV . . is not to be reconstructed LVND. As we have seen, the third letter could be almost any consonant except S, T, and D, and it is interesting to cast around Lindsey to see whether there is any place that would meet the requirements of the coin. Louth, in Domesday LVD and a borough, seems the obvious candidate, and it is indeed tempting to postulate yet another addition to the canon of late Saxon mints on the strength of the fragment from the Pemberton's Parlour hoard. That there should be apparently only the one coin is no real objection in the case of a subsidiary mint to the east of the Trent. Caistor seems now to be generally accepted on the evidence of two coins,² while one pair of dies under Æthelræd and one pair under Cnut would appear to account for the entire production of coin at Newark in the whole of the late Saxon period.³ In the case of Torksey, too, there are only two coins that are indisputably of that borough,⁴ and,

² Cf. supra, p. 500, n. 1.
³ Cf. supra, p. 501, n. 1.
admittedly moving much farther south, we have only one or at most two coins for the abbatial mint at Peterborough for which we happen to have specific documentary evidence. Moreover, it could be argued that there are other coins that could speciously be associated with a mint at Louth. Mr. F. Elmore Jones, for example, has kindly drawn the present writer's attention to Hild. 2857 of Æthelræd II where the unique "London" coin of a prolific Lincoln moneyer has a mint-signature that in fact reads not LVND but LVD—though Mr. Elmore Jones would be the first to stress how unsatisfactory is such a line of argument in the absence of further evidence. All that the numismatist can claim is that there are one or two pieces which could be attributed to Louth, but that in the present state of our knowledge the evidence is quite inconclusive.

The third possibility, and in many ways the most attractive, is that the Pemberton's Parlour fragment is, as Hill supposed, a coin of London, but one of quite anomalous style. During the last two or three years a close study has been made of Æthelræd II's "Last Small Cross" type, and a pattern established of regional die-cutting centres which is by no means invalidated by a degree of overlapping. Was there perhaps under Edward the Martyr a comparable use of the odd "London" die at Lincoln and vice versa? Against this theory it can be argued that we possess so many Lincoln coins of "Lincoln" style and so many London coins of "London" style that one would have expected any anomalous coin to have been discovered long ago, and to have been a little less ambiguous as regards the mint-signature. It is easy, too, to think of reasons why dies might have passed from London to Lincoln and from Lincoln to London in the troubled times when Æthelræd was engaged in mortal combat with the Danish invaders, but not so easy to find a convincing explanation of the same phenomenon in the context of the comparatively undisturbed reign of Edward the Martyr. If, therefore, the numismatist awaits with impatience the discovery of a new coin which will clinch an attribution to Louth, the historian will not be disappointed if the new evidence should point in quite the other direction and demand acceptance of the use, albeit on a very limited scale, of the odd "Lincoln" die at London as early as c. 978. As we have seen, at first glance the evidence does seem very strongly to favour the hypothesis of a mint at Louth, but there are in fact no less cogent arguments in support of the view that the "Lincoln" die-cutter may have been brought to London towards the end of the "Small Cross" issue. There are, for example, a number of "First Hand" coins of London and of Canterbury that have features evocative of his work in the previous issue. A typical example, a

2 The same can be said for two pennies of the Confessor by the known Lincoln moneyer Thurcytel (Hild. 555/6) which have the ambiguous mint-signatures LV and LVD.
3 Cf. supra, p. 502, n. 1, op. cit., pp. 1–47.
4 The emphasis, however, must be on the "comparatively", cf. the anonymous Vita Sancti Oswaldi.
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recent British Museum acquisition at the Taffs sale, is illustrated here:

In particular one may draw attention to the occasional use of the retrograde letter and to the “frontless” right-facing bust so reminiscent of the “backless” left-facing bust of the coins of Caistor, Lincoln, and Torksey. In the same way, too, the transfer to London of the die-cutters established at York and Lincoln might help to explain why those major mints appear to have been unable to defy what seems to have been a total ban on minting-operations in the period c. 985-91.¹

In the present state of the problem, however, there are so many imponderables that it would be foolish to speculate at any greater length on the implications of the Pemberton’s Parlour fragment with which this note has been principally concerned. What does seem important is that the anomalies that this coin presents should be clearly recognized, and it is to be hoped that the prominence here accorded them may lead to early reconsideration of the c. 973-9 “Small Cross” issue as a whole, and in particular of the different styles associated with different regions under Edward and Æthelræd. This diversity is in such marked contrast to the amazing degree of uniformity achieved by Eadgar that one may perhaps see in the latter the imprint of the extraordinary personality of the king himself. In this case the coins may be considered new and independent witnesses to the genius of Alfred’s great-grandson of whom it was to be written wistfully in a later generation that there was not “fleef so proud nor host so strong that it got itself prey in England as long as the noble king held the throne”.²

THE MYSTERIOUS MINT OF “FRO”

This note is concerned with a small group of late Saxon pence on which the mint-signature is frankly enigmatic. In each case the moneyer is the same, a certain Brihtwine, and his products may be arranged in chronological sequence as follows:

¹ Hildebrand records no B. 2 coin of Lincoln, and the only coin of that type given to York is misattributed. The question is discussed at greater length in a forthcoming paper by Mr. F. Elmore Jones and the present writer.
² Cf. A.S.C., s.a. 975 (D).
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Cnut (1017–35)

“Short Cross” issue (Hild. H = Brooke 4 = B.M.C. xvi)

? September 1029–September 1035

1. Obv. +CNVT RECX Rev. +BRHTPN OFRO
   Hild. 249 (“Cricklade”)

Harthacnut (with Harold)

“Jewel Cross” issue (with right-facing bust) (Hild. A = Brooke i = B.M.C. i)

? January 1036–September 1037

2. Obv. +HARBA CNVTRE Rev. +BRHTPN OFRO
   A.H.F. Baldwin collection (unpublished)

Edward the Confessor (1042–66)

Pax issue (Hild. D = Brooke 4 = B.M.C. iv)

? September 1042–September 1044

3. Obv. +EDPER DREX • Rev. +BRHTPN OFRO
   Hild. 116 (“York”)

Trefoil Quadrilateral issue (Hild. C = Brooke i = B.M.C. iii)

? September 1046–September 1048

4. Obv. +EDPER *DREX* Rev. +BRHTPN OFRO
   British Museum (ex H. A. Parsons 1954), lot 191
Coin 1 is slightly doublestruck at the critical point of the reverse legend, but it seems fair to say that the first letter of the mint-signature is at least as likely to be F as E, and especially when the coin is considered in the context of other pennies of Brihtwine which were not known to Hildebrand. In reading the mint-name ERO the great Swedish numismatist was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that there are genuine Cricklade coins which do read exactly that, but for the attribution to be maintained today one would have to find some convincing explanation of the phenomenon that Brihtwine seems always to have been sent down dies which not only read invariably F for E but also avoided the longer forms of mint-signature that occasionally found their way on to the dies of the other Cricklade moneyers. Coin 2, the superb and quite unpublished penny of Harthacnut in Mr. Baldwin's private collection, is beyond doubt the most convincing of them all. The reading FRO is quite indisputable, and the type is one where blunderings are conspicuous by their absence. On coin 3 the mint-signature was read by Hildebrand as EO, but even in an actual-size photograph the E appears curiously distorted with the bottom stroke running downwards rather like the tail of an R. Examination of the actual coin has confirmed the evidence of a photographic enlargement, and the first letter of the mint-signature is in fact F, the bottom stroke of the apparent E in fact being one of the many “pecks” that disfigure the whole surface of the coin. Support for this interpretation comes from the absence from the reverse field of any annulet. If the mint-signature were EO, the mint could only be York, the attribution proposed by Hildebrand. Brihtwine, however, is not otherwise known as a York moneyer, and all York coins of the type in question are distinguished by the occurrence of an annulet in one of the quarters of the reverse field. On coin 4 the obvious reading of the mint-signature is FRO, and to attempt to read it ERO is to strain the evidence.

In the period c. 1020-c. 1050 a Brihtwine is also found striking at a number of mints in the Thames valley. Very early in the reign of Cnut there is a Brihtwine at Oxford (cf. Hild. 3013/14), but a moneyer of the name has still to be recorded in the “Pointed Helmet” type, or indeed—the FRO coin apart—in the “Short Cross” type which represents Cnut’s last substantive issue. Early in the reign of Harold Harefoot, however, we find a Brihtwine at Buckingham (cf. Hild. 37), and it would seem that he continued there into Harthacnut’s effective reign (cf. Hild. 10). Perhaps the same individual begins to strike at this time at London (cf. Hild., Cnut 2063/4), and continues there for a year or so into the reign of the Confessor (cf. Hild. 432/3). At just this time a Brihtwine strikes at Wallingford (cf. Hild. 747/8), and again it would seem likely that we are dealing with the products of one and the same man, though unfortunately it has not yet proved possible to supply a valid nexus in the shape of die-links between the three mints concerned. Further to complicate the matter a Brihtwine also strikes at Malmesbury (cf. Hild. 591 and two unpublished coins in the collection of Mr. F. Elmore Jones), and it is just possible that we are dealing
with more coins of the same person. On balance, however, it seems preferable to draw a distinction between the Brihtwine of Oxford (c. 1020), the Brihtwine of Buckingham, London, and Wallingford (c. 1035–c. 1055), and the Brihtwine of Malmesbury (c. 1040–c. 1050).

There are then at least two moneyers of the name of Brihtwine who were striking within the period spanned by the FRO coins, but in neither case is one known at a mint or mints of which the signature could possibly be blundered to give those three letters. Indeed the first elements of the four mints concerned do not normally include even one of the letters in question. Cricklade admittedly is also a Thames valley mint,¹ and sits neatly between Malmesbury and Wallingford, but already we have seen that there are very valid arguments against the hypothesis that FRO is a consistent error for ERO which for some reason is confined to the dies supplied to only one of the moneyers of the mint. Incidentally it is only when one has to consider problems of this order, that one begins to realize just how vital is the question of “the extent to which the business of die-cutting was centralized in London”, and how destructive it would be of the modern school of Anglo-Saxon numismatics if any real case could be made out in support of irresponsible assertions that dies normally would be engraved by local goldsmiths. Unfortunately, too, the most careful search has failed to bring to light any use at Buckingham, Cricklade, London, Malmesbury, or Wallingford of one or more of the four obverse dies associated with the FRO group of reverses.

On this evidence there would seem to be a prima facie case for considering FRO to be the mint-signature of a mint not hitherto recognized by the numismatist. The identification of this mint, however, presents formidable difficulties, and a number of these will doubtless occur at once to those who rightly consider that “monetae non sunt multiplicandae praeter necessitatem”. In the first place there is long overdue a systematic collation of Domesday and the coins to establish the apparent Domesday status of all those places which the numismatist is justified in claiming to have been mints in the late Saxon period. At present such a collation is readily accessible only in the pages of Ballard who was writing at a time when, for example, coins of Barnstaple were given to Bardney, and no coins were attributed to Bridport. In the second place, the numismatist and the historian will have to ponder together very carefully the question of those texts which seem to indicate that minting-rights were confined to boroughs. In this connexion repeated legislation by Æthelræd may suggest that a ruling was being honoured more in the breach than in the observance, while it could be pleaded that controls necessary in the troubled days of the great Danish attacks might well have been relaxed if not repealed when the reign of Cnut seemed to usher in a new period of

¹ A die-link under Cnut has been claimed between Oxford and Cricklade (Oxoniensia, vol. x (1945), p. 90, cf. Wilts. Arch. Mag., vol. lii (1949), p. 393), but a forthcoming note in the same journal will suggest that the critical coin is a doublestruck and misread coin of Harthacnut.

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stability and peace. Of course new hoards may produce coins which confer on certain mints quite unsuspected antiquity—a recent visit to Bergen has convinced the present writer that Bruton was a mint as early as the end of the tenth century¹—but there are a number of mints which do seem to have come into being comparatively late, for example Bedwyn, Berkeley, Bury St. Edmunds, Hythe, Pershore, Petherton, Reading, Sandwich, and Steyning; and others, notably Horndon and Newport Pagnell, which may have been revived after half a century of desuetude.

This is not the place to suggest a positive identification for FRO, but in justice to Mr. R. A. Kinsey we must put on record the fact that he was the first tentatively to suggest Frome on the basis of the Parsons coin alone. At present such an attribution is still perhaps premature, but it must be admitted that there are few stronger candidates than a royal manor if the numismatist shall be forced one day to concede that in practice if not in theory a mint could exist in a place that did not enjoy the full status of a borough.

¹ R. H. M. Dolley, *Antikvariskt Arkiv* 9, p. 34, n. 52.