

TWO ANGLO-SAXON NOTES

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THE COINAGE OF ÆTHELRED, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, 870-89

THE primacy of Æthelred, Archbishop of Canterbury, lasted nineteen years, from 870 to 889, yet until recently only three of his coins were known to have survived. It is now possible to add a fourth which has for many years been in the Maidstone Museum. Its provenance is unknown. The coins may be described as follows:

1. **EDERED/ARCHIEPI** Diademed bust to right; no inner circle.
+ **ED/EL/MV/ND** in the quarters of a quatrefoil, filling the field, the centre voided with a lozenge containing a cross and pellets.
Wt. 20½ gr.
Maidstone Museum. (Pl. III A)
2. + **EDELRED/ARCHIEPI** Generally similar type.
+ **TO/RHT** (ligulated) /**MV/ND** in the quarters of a cross extending to the edge, the centre voided with a lozenge across the sides of which are bars; a cross in the centre.
Wt. 20.5 gr.
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, *Sylloge* 446, ex Young 1936, ex Carlyon-Britton (1913), 303, ex Murdoch (1903), 44. Found near Tetbury, Glos. (Pl. III B)
3. + **EDERED/ARCHIEPI** Diademed bust to right of different style, within inner circle.
ED/ER/ED/MO in the quarters of a quatrefoil divided by a cross, in centre a smaller circle containing a cross saltire. The legend is completed in the spaces outside the quatrefoil with the letters **NETA**.
Wt. 21.9 gr.
British Museum, *BMC* 61, ex Hollis (1817), 70. (Pl. III C)
4. + **EDERED ARCHIP** circular legend between two circles. In centre a small cross.
ELFSTA/NMO in two lines, a pellet above and below. The letter **o** is of a form specially associated with the Canterbury mint.
Wt. not recorded.
The Hon. Ralph Assheton, ex Cuerdale hoard. (Pl. III D)

Other coins have at different times been attributed to Archbishop Æthelred. Some, with the bust, are modern imitations of the British Museum coin;¹ others are blundered coins, Danish imitations of coins of Alfred or of Æthelred's successor Plegmund.²

The four authentic coins of Æthelred conform to three types of Alfred. Nos. 1 and 2 are similar to the latter's *BMC* type V; no. 3 to *BMC* II, and no. 4 to *BMC* XIV. Three of the four moneyers worked for Alfred, Ethelmund on *BMC* type I and V; Torhtmund on *BMC* I and V; Æthe(l)red on *BMC* V and (probably) II (the latter is known from a single fragment, on which only the last two letters of the moneyer's name appear). Elfstan's name is found on imitative coins of Canterbury type, e.g. *BMC* 69. The name also occurs on coins of Edward the Elder³ but in neither case do the coins seem to be issues of the Canterbury mint and the moneyer may therefore be another person.

¹ A specimen is illustrated in the *British Numismatic Journal*, xxviii, pl. i (facing p. 24), 13.

² Specimens are *BMC* (Alfred) 37; Ryan sale (1952) 605; the Hon. Ralph Assheton. All three are

from the same dies.

³ e.g. Rome hoard, Glendinings 16.5.1929, 83 (ill.); another is in Edinburgh.

Alfred's types II and V are attributed within the years 875–86, his type XIV at Canterbury to c. 887–c. 894.¹ There appear therefore to be no coins known of the first years of Æthelred's primacy. If such a coin is found one would expect it to be similar to the latest of his predecessor, Archbishop Ceolnoth, and to the earliest issue of Alfred, *BMC I*.

It will be noted that the weight of the British Museum specimen is recorded here as 21.9 gr. against the 31.1 gr. given in the *British Museum Catalogue*. The latter weight would be surprisingly high and a check has shown that a mistake was made in the *Catalogue*.

It will also be noted that on three of his coins the archbishop spells his name Ethered. On the Fitzwilliam specimen, however, the fuller form Ethelred is found.

It must be a matter of surprise that so few coins of this archbishop have come down to us. That his issues may well have been on a larger scale than surviving specimens would suggest seems probable from the fact that four moneyers worked for him, even if not exclusively. Elfstan must only have begun working in the last years of his primacy; the others, however, may well have operated over a period of some years. That there was in progress some curtailment of the archbishop's coining privileges is clear from the fact that in the last years of Ceolnoth's time the royal bust replaced the archbishop's, a feature continued on Æthelred's first coins. The disappearance of the bust altogether was probably due to nothing more than a desire to make his later coins conform in type with other contemporary Canterbury issues. The final disappearance of the archbishop's name on the coinage occurred on the death of his successor.

I am very much indebted to Mr. L. R. A. Grove of the Maidstone Museum for kindly bringing this important new coin of Æthelred to my attention and for allowing it to be published here.

TENTH-CENTURY HALF-PENNIES AND C. ROACH SMITH'S PLATE OF COINS FOUND IN LONDON

IN our report on the Chester (1950) hoard Mr. Dolley and I commented on a lost half-penny of Edgar of the mint of Winchester and reproduced, by courtesy of Mr. J. D. A. Thompson, a drawing of it in a manuscript volume in his possession, the work of the Rev. T. F. Dymock. We hazarded the suggestion that, although in certain points it differed from the description of a specimen exhibited by Roach Smith to the Numismatic Society in 1841, the fact that no specimen was known today made it possible that Dymock's drawing might be an attempt to reproduce Roach Smith's coin.²

Since our paper was written, I have acquired an engraving of the latter coin which makes it clear that the two are quite distinct specimens. The two pieces are reproduced here, Dymock's drawing Pl. III. 15, Roach Smith's engraving Pl. III. 14. The differences between the two will be readily apparent. Roach Smith's coin appears to have disintegrated³ but we may now hope that the specimen drawn by Dymock will one day turn up.

The plate on which Roach Smith's coin appears was drawn by him and is entitled 'Found in London'. Where, if anywhere, it was published I have not been able to ascertain. It is not in such copies of his *Catalogue of the Museum of London Antiquities* as I have seen nor is it in his *Collectanea Antiqua*. The other coins on the plate are:

¹ *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (Methuen, 1961), pp. 80 ff.

² *BNJ* xxvii. 135.

³ *Ibid.*

1. An Alfred penny of the London monogram type (*BMC* VI). This is likely to be the coin exhibited by Roach Smith at the same meeting at which he exhibited the Edgar halfpenny. It is satisfactory to note that this is a 'true' London coin and not one of the many imitative pieces. It is stated to have been found 'between Old Broad Street and the site of the French Protestant Church'.¹ This coin is in the British Museum.

2. The celebrated lead trial-piece of Alfred, discussed by Mr. Dolley in a paper read some years ago and exhibited at the same meeting in 1841 by E. B. Price.²

3. A Merovingian tremissis of Cormes, Sarthe, by the moneyer Gunricus, now in the British Museum (Pl. III E).

4. An uncertain tremissis the whereabouts of which it has not been possible to trace (Pl. III F).

5. What would appear to be an Ancient British tin coin, Mack 9 ff., (perhaps from the St. James's Park find?) (Pl. III G).

At the June 1962 meeting of the Society Mr. Dolley exhibited on behalf of Mr. Philip Rahtz, the second known specimen of a halfpenny of Eadmund and, in view of this and of the interest aroused by Mr. Grierson's suggestion that most of the small denominations in the name of Alfred may be one-third rather than half-pennies, it may be of value to list here, with illustrations and weights where available, the few known half-pennies of the tenth century. With the exception of no. 9, the present whereabouts of which are not known, all are illustrated on Pl. III.

EDWARD THE ELDER, all *BMC* II

1. Moneyer Biornwald. *BMC* 71, ex Tyssen Wt. 9.3 gr.
2. Moneyer Biornwald. Blunt, ex Ryan 736, &c. Wt. 9 gr.
3. Moneyer Ciolulf. Ashmolean, bequeathed Ballard, 1755. Wt. 8.0 gr.
4. Moneyer Wynberht. *BMC* 72, ex Cuerdale hoard. Chipped.

ÆTHELSTAN. None recorded.

EADMUND. Both *BMC* I.

5. Moneyer Baldwin. *BM Acqns.* 545. Pres. H. A. Grueber, 1907. Reads +EADMVN-DREO+. Wt. 9.1 gr.
6. Moneyer Biorhtulf. Taunton Museum from the Cheddar excavations 1962. Wt. 8.4 gr.

EADRED

BMC I.

7. Moneyer Biorhtulf. A. E. Bagnall, ex Carlyon-Britton 426, &c. Found at Tewkesbury. Wt. 8.7 gr.

BMC I (North-western variant)

8. Moneyer Gilys. BM, ex Chester (1950) T.T., no. 260. Wt. 8.6 gr. This is the variant of *BMC* I which, under Edgar, is designated *Id.*

¹ *Proc. Num. Soc.* 23 Dec. 1841.

² *Ibid.* and *BNJ* xxvii. 175-8.

9. Moneyer uncertain. O'Hagan sale (1907) 341 ex Montagu (1895) 694. Not illustrated in either case. This coin is described by Montagu as 'bisected for the purpose of creating two farthings'¹ but the O'Hagan catalogue says 'the piece is apparently broken and *not cut* as stated in the Montagu catalogue'. The present whereabouts of this fragment are not known and no illustration is available, but the type from the description appears to be similar to the last coin. The only letters visible on the reverse are, according to Montagu's account, 'AFMÖ and according to the Montagu sale catalogue ADMO. The O'Hagan catalogue does not give the reading. It is possible that the moneyer is Wilaf who struck pennies of this type for Eadred (e.g. *BMC* 84). The weight is given by Montagu as 4½ gr.²

10. *BMC*—Moneyer Mangod. Blunt, ex Sothebys sale 17.3.1955, lot 30. Wt. 8.9 gr. The type is generally that of *BMC* I but instead of the cross on the obverse there is a star-like object of twelve points. This coin has been fully discussed by Mr. Dolley in vol. xxviii of this journal, pp. 182–4.

11. *BMC*—Moneyer Hildulf. BM, ex Chester (1950) T.T., no. 261. Wt. 3.8 gr. This has been cut for use as a farthing. The obverse type has the usual small cross of *BMC* I but the reverse presents us with a type otherwise unknown for Eadred; the moneyer's name is in one line across the field with a rosette below. The top half of the reverse type is off the coin, but the fact that the whole of the moneyer's name is visible on half the coin suggests that it may be similar to the halfpenny by the same moneyer struck for Edgar (no. 16 below). Alternatively it is possible that it has a rosette above the moneyer's name in which case it would be comparable to Eadwig's type *BMC* III.

EADWIG *BMC*—

12. Moneyer Eadwine. BM, ex Chester (1950) T.T., no. 374. Wt. 9.7 gr. The obverse has the usual small cross of *BMC* I; the reverse presents us with a type otherwise unknown for Eadwig, the moneyer's name is in one line with a floral design above and a rosette below.

EDGAR. All of types not recorded in *BMC*.

13. London. No moneyer. *Obv.* crowned bust to r.; *rev.* monogram of London as on coins of Alfred. BM ex Chester (1950) T.T., no. 515. Wt. 10.8 gr. This coin is fully discussed in vol. xxvii of this journal, pp. 135–6.

14. Winchester. No moneyer. Wt. ? The disintegrated coin found at St. Bartholomew's Church, London, discussed above.

15. Winchester. No moneyer. Wt. ? The coin in the Dymock manuscript, discussed above.

16. Moneyer Hildulf. BM, bought Spink 1899. Wt. 8.4 gr. The obverse type has the usual small cross of *BMC* I; the reverse is generally similar to the unique halfpenny of Eadwig, but has a letter either side of the 'flower'. The significance of this is discussed in vol. xxvii of this journal, p. 136.

17. Moneyer Oswine. BM, ex Chester (1950) T.T., no. 514. Wt. 7.0 gr. Type similar to no. 16.

¹ *NC* 1884, 350.

² *Op. cit.*

A point of interest that emerges from a study of these halfpennies is that, whereas in Edward's, Eadmund's, and part of Eadred's reign the halfpennies were struck of types used for the penny, Eadred's no. 10 and quite possibly no. 11, and all the subsequent halfpennies are of types never found on the penny.

We are fortunate in having two mint names on Edgar's halfpennies, London and Winchester. Biorhtulf, found on Eadmund no. 6 and the Eadred no. 7 is a moneyer under Æthelstan and Eadwig at Bath and, under the former, at the uncertain mint of *Darent*.¹ At *Darent* he spells his name Beorhtulf. On the Bath coins of Æthelstan he used the inverted F that is also found on Eadmund's halfpenny and we may reasonably associate both these halfpennies, one of which was found at Tewkesbury, the other at Cheddar, with the Bath mint. About the Edward coins there must be more uncertainty. Wynberht was a well-known moneyer in Alfred's type *BMC XIV*, producing sometimes coins of unusual style. Bernwald (= ? Biornwald) was also an Alfred moneyer in this type. Ciolulf is, apparently, not found in Alfred's type *XIV*, but is known in his type *V*. None of these moneyers is recorded for Æthelstan and it may well be that Edward's halfpennies, one of which it will be noted came from the Cuerdale hoard, dep. c. 903-5, were all issued early in his reign. Their place of issue must remain uncertain but the fact that fractions of the penny seem in the ninth century to have found particular favour in the Danelaw may point to their having a Midland origin. An early issue could account for the absence of any halfpennies of Æthelstan's.

A number of the later coins have a distinct north-western flavour. Eadred, nos. 8 and 9, if the type of the latter be as described, are certainly to be associated with that area. The rosette on the reverses of Eadred, no. 11, Hildulf; Eadwig, no. 12, Eadwine; Edgar, nos. 16 and 17, Hildulf and Oswine all point in that direction as do the floral designs.

Eadmund, no. 5, by the moneyer Baldwin, Mr. Dolley attributes 'with considerable reserve' to an East Anglian mint.² He does not go into reasons but appears to be judging on stylistic grounds. Baldwin was a Bedford moneyer of Eadwig's and we may reasonably associate this halfpenny with that mint.

Mangod, found on Eadred, no. 10, was, as Mr. Dolley has pointed out,³ a moneyer at *Hamton* and Winchester, under Eadwig. He discussed the identification of *Hamton* in this context and attributes the coins to Northampton, but gives good reason for associating the halfpenny with the Winchester moneyer of that name.

The pattern which emerges is thus as follows:

Edward the Elder issued early in the reign, perhaps in the Midlands.

Æthelstan. No halfpennies known.

Eadmund. Issued at Bath and Bedford.

Eadred. Issued at Bath and Winchester, and in north-west England (Chester?).

Eadwig. Issued in north-west England (Chester?).

Edgar. Issued at London and Winchester and in north-west England (Chester?).

There remains the question of the denomination these fractional coins were intended to represent. Mr. Grierson has pointed out the low weight of the bulk of the fractional coins struck in the name of Alfred and has put forward the suggestion that these may

¹ Mr. Dolley, in an as yet unpublished note, has suggested that *Darent Vrbs* could signify Totnes, which lies on the Dart river.

² *BNJ* xxviii, 184.

³ *Ibid.*

be third-pennies.¹ In the case of the tenth-century coins the weights, though low for half a penny, seem to preclude any suggestion that they were thirds. That the small denominations were proportionately more expensive to produce must have been the case as much in Anglo-Saxon times as when William de Turnemire under Edward I successfully claimed that he should be allowed to put more alloy in them 'because of the great expense of making the said small money'.² A similar result would be achieved by lowering their weight.

The weights given above for whole coins may be summarized as follows:

Edward the Elder	9·3, 9, 8·0 gr.
Eadmund	9·1, 8·4 gr.
Eadred	8·9, 8·7, 8·6 gr.
Eadwig	9·7 gr.
Edgar	10·8, 8·4, 7·0 gr.

Without going into the complicated question of the varying weight standard of the penny at different times in the tenth century, it can with reasonable confidence be asserted that in the five reigns mentioned above, up to the time of Edgar's reform coinage, it never reached 27 grains, which would seem the minimum figure required to warrant further consideration of the question whether these tenth-century fractional pieces might be third pennies.

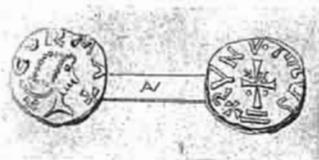
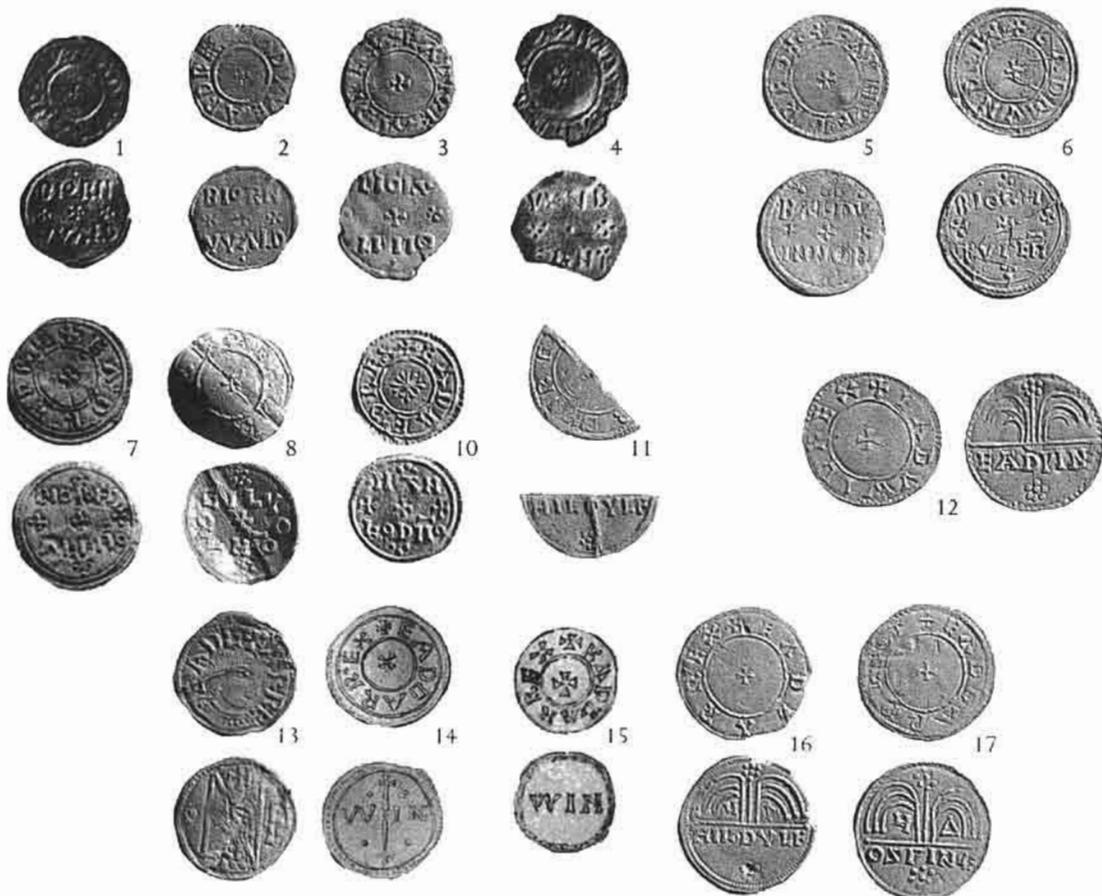
¹ *BNJ* xxviii. 477 ff. See also *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (Methuens, 1961), 89. The comment made in the latter reference that Henry I's legislation mentioning a third penny (a coin clearly not existing at that time) was suggestive evidence that too much reliance should not

be placed on a similar reference in Alfred's laws probably failed to take adequate account of the fact that Henry was, here, reciting earlier laws.

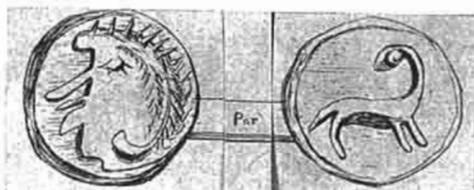
² *BNJ* vii. 112.



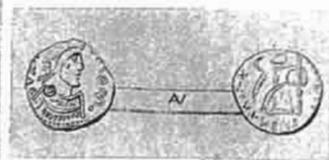
COINS OF ARCHBISHOP AETHELRED



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