A Cnut Die-Link Between the Mints of Salisbury and Wilton

At a time when obverse die-links between late Saxon mints are attracting a considerable degree of attention, it seems appropriate to put on record an example that seems completely uncontroversial in so far as one might have expected a moneyer who was working at two minor mints separated by only a few miles occasionally to have transferred an obverse die from one establishment to the other. The die-link in question is between the mints of Wilton and of Salisbury (Old Sarum), and the moneyer is Ælfred who is recorded in the 1881 edition of Bror Emil Hildebrand’s Anglosachsiska Mynt as having struck at Wilton one solitary coin of Cnut’s last substantive issue (Hild. 3643). At Salisbury, on the other hand, Ælfred is on record for one coin of Cnut’s first substantive issue (Hild. 3157), two of his last (Hild. 3158/9), and four of the two successive issues of Harold I (Hild. 839–43). The British Museum trays add nothing to this picture, but it may be noted that there attaches to BMC Cnut 559, a die-duplicate of Hild. Cnut 3643, the Wedmore hoard-provenance which is valuable in this context because it virtually compels acceptance of an English origin for the dies of Hild. Cnut 3158/9—pace Hildebrand from the same obverse die—and of Hild. Cnut 3643.
The critical die-link is illustrated by enlarged direct photographs in the accompanying text-block (Fig. 1), Hild. Cnut 3158, the coin of Salisbury, appearing on the left, and Hild. Cnut 3643, the coin of Wilton, on the right. The die-link is particularly clear, and the damage to the surface of the Salisbury coin offers a convincing explanation of Hildebrand's classification of the legend as 'b' (+Cnut TRECX) instead of as 'b, ir. 19' (+Cnut TRECX). This is believed to be the first time that an obverse die-link between mints has been published in respect of coins of Cnut's last substantive issue, and it is to be hoped that this note will stimulate a systematic search for others in a type where there is no obvious break-down into schools of die-cutting. It is hard, though, to read any deep significance into this particular instance. As far as can be judged the die was used with the two reverses at Salisbury before Wilton, but one should be very reluctant to suppose the Ælfred was motivated by anything more than personal convenience. Granted that Old Sarum was more secure than Wilton, there is not a scrap of evidence that Harold's reign was accompanied by the disturbances that would have made security a decisive factor when a moneyer was planning his operations. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the Old Sarum site was inconvenient for minting purposes in the way that the sites at Cadbury and Cissbury undoubtedly were, and in the event both Salisbury and Wilton continued to flourish as mints until the beginning of the Plantagenet period. It only remains for the author to express his thanks to Dr. N. L. Rasmusson and Bibliotekarie L. O. Lagerquist for the enlarged photographs that illustrate this note.

A PROBABLE REATTRIBUTION FROM LINCOLN TO LANGPORT

On p. 401 of the 1881 edition of Bror Emil Hildebrand's Anglosachsiska mynt there are described as no. 82 a Jewel Cross penny of Harthacnut with right-facing bust of which the reverse legend is read:

+ÆGELPINE . . LINC

and as no. 83 a cut halfpenny of the Arm-and-Sceptre issue of the same king with reverse legend:

. . . . PINE ON LI . .

Of no. 82 it is remarked that the reverse legend is in part indistinct, while no. 83 is assigned provisionally to Ægelwine on the strength of no. 82. In the 1932 edition of English Coins G. C. Brooke for once has failed to emulate Hildebrand's caution, and Ægelwine is given as a Lincoln moneyer of Harthacnut without reserve. The purpose of this note is to suggest that the attribution is one that can no longer be maintained.

To take first Hild. Harthacnut 83. That it is a coin of Lincoln need not be disputed, and Mrs. Ulla Westermark has been kind enough to confirm that the incomplete mint-signature does in fact read LI . . . What is to be questioned is the assumption that the missing prototheme is Ægel-. In the first place -wine is one of the commonest of all deuterothemes where the names of eleventh-century English moneyers are concerned. The Stockholm cut halfpenny is to be dated to the period 1040–2, and the numismatist can point to a Leofwine who was active at Lincoln in the period 1035–40 [Hild. Harold 398, 399, 404–6, 409 (?), 415, 416, &c.] and again in the period 1042–8 [Hild. Edw. Conf. 348–55 &c.]. Using 'Cnut' dies he was also active in the period 1040–2 [Hild. 'Cnut'
1624–8]. Of his fourteen colleagues who are recorded in Hildebrand as striking c. 1035–40 and c. 1042–8, only Manna and Swafa are not there listed as moneyers of the intervening Arm-and-Sceptre issue, while five are known with both ‘Cnut’ and ‘Harthacnut’ obverses. It is almost certain, then, that Hild. Harthacnut 83 is a coin of the moneyer Leofwine, and especially if it can once be shown that Hild. Harthacnut 82 has nothing whatever to do with the Lincoln mint.

As Fig. 2 there are illustrated side by side Hild. Harthacnut 82 and Hild. Harthacnut 11, a coin of the moneyer Ægelwine attributed by Hildebrand to Canterbury. It will be seen at once that they are die-duplicates, and that the second letter of the mint-signature is unquestionably an ‘A’. This being so there is no possibility whatever that the mint of the coins could be Lincoln, and forthwith we may expunge the name of Ægelwine from the roll of the late Saxon moneyers of the Lincoln mint—the Ælwine who strikes there c. 1049 (cf. Hild. Edw. Conf. 286 and 287) is clearly to be equated with Ælfwine (cf. Hild. Edw. Conf. 283), the spelling betraying dissimilation of medial ‘f’ of a kind well attested by the coins of this period.

There remains the question of the mint to which Hild. Harthacnut 11 and 82 should be assigned. The first letter of the mint-signature is clear on none of the specimens. On Hild. Harthacnut 11 it could be a square ‘c’, but, even if it were, Hildebrand’s Canterbury attribution founders. Not only is Ægelwine (Æthelwine) completely unattested as a Canterbury moneyer of the late Saxon kings—we may note that he is firmly excluded by Brooke from the canon—but the spelling can would have been impossible for Canterbury at this period when the digraph is invariable, even if cane had not been utterly unacceptable on other grounds. It is noteworthy, though, that on Hild. Harthacnut 82 the initial letter has already been read as ‘L’, and there can be little doubt that this in
fact is the correct reading. Equally the fourth letter of the mint-signature appears as an ‘E’ and not a square ‘C’. Almost certainly, therefore, the mint-signature of the three coins under discussion is to be reconstructed LANE.

To the best of the writer's knowledge LANE is unattested as a mint-signature in the late Saxon period, but there is one obvious emendation. As is well known, square ‘E’ and square ‘G’ were often confused by the engravers, and the suggestion of this note is that LANE be emended LANG, and that the coins under discussion be given to Langport—in view of the rarity of coins of this mint it should be stressed that only one pair of dies is involved. Langport is not recorded in Hildebrand as a Harthacnut mint for the period c. 1035–7, but it is possible to demonstrate that the mint was striking at that very period and that the moneyer was an Ægelwine. Hild. Harold 323 is an undoubted Langport coin of the very same issue with mint-signature LA(N)G, and in Cnut’s last type, the issue immediately preceding the joint issue of Harold and Harthacnut, there is Lockett 744 with the reverse legend reading unequivocally +ÆGELPINE ON LAN. To these coins we may add Hild. Edw. Conf. 3 with mint-signature LA(N)GEPOR and BMC Edw. Conf. 609 with mint-signature LANGP, and if further proof were needed that an Ægelwine was striking in east Somerset at the material time one would have only to cite the pattern of Ægelwine coins with the mint-signatures of Ilchester, Bath, and Bristol. There is, too, some evidence that Langport and Ilchester were frequented by the same moneyers—it is, for example, inconceivable that the Dunberd at Langport, a hapax c. 1041 (Hild. Harthacnut 72), is not the same man as the ‘Durberd’ at Ilchester, a hapax c. 1043 (Hild. Edw. Conf. 174). In the Jewel Cross issue itself, moreover, we find coins of Harold by Ægelwine with the impeccable mint-signature GIFE and LA(N)G (Hild. 233 and 323 respectively), and on this telling the attribution of Hild. Harthacnut 11, 82, and 83 to Langport (LANG) provides the perfect foil to Hild. Harthacnut 44 (GIFE).

If the above arguments should be found conclusive the following emendations are necessary where the 1881 edition of Anglosachsiska mynt are concerned:

- p. 397 No. 11 The mint is Langport (reads LANE for LANG)
- p. 401 No. 82 The mint is Langport (reads LANE for LANG)
- No. 83 The moneyer is probably Leofwine.

On p. 72 of G. C. Brooke’s English Coins the appropriate entry should begin:

LANGPORT Ægelwine (Cn to Ed) . . . .

and Eilwine should be deleted as being no more than a variant spelling, and on p. 73 Ægelwine should be removed from the list of Lincoln moneyers. It only remains for the writer once again to express to the authorities of the Royal Swedish Coin Cabinet his best thanks for the enlarged direct photographs that illustrate this note.