Five coins are known of an early-tenth-century type from the Danelaw which has on one side a sword and on the other a hammer, each surrounded by an inarticulate inscription. Two of the hoards in which coins of this type have been found also contained a specimen of the extremely rare coinage in the name of Sitric I. A detailed listing of Sitric's coins was published by Professor Michael Dolley and Mr C.N. Moore in 1973, together with an extensive bibliography, but although there have been many references to the anonymous type it has not previously been the subject of a study in its own right. Part 1 of this paper therefore deals with the attribution of the anonymous type, while some further consideration that now seems necessary of the coinage of Sitric and its relationship to the other Viking coinages of the period is contained in part 2.

1. The Anonymous (CS) Type

In apparent order of discovery the five specimens (illustrated) of this type are:

1. Blunt collection, ex Glasnevin hoard.
2. Fragment from the Bangor hoard.
3. Stewart collection, ex Grantley 958b, fragment found near Cambridge.
4. British Museum, from the Morley St Peter hoard.
5. Fragment from Dunmore Cave.

All four hoards in which coins of this type have been present were buried in the 920s and contained other Viking coins with the sword or hammer type, or both. On the St Peter, St Martin and Sitric coins the sword is placed horizontally between a two-line inscription, and this is the only type to depict a small sword contained within a circle and inscription. It may therefore be termed the circumscription-sword type (CS). The hammer on the other side of the CS type may be compared with that on some of the coins of Regnald, St Peter and Sitric.

That the CS type was not included in the standard works on English coinage before J. J. North's English Hammered Coinage (1963) is probably in large part due to the fact that there was no example of it in the British Museum before the discovery of the Morley St Peter hoard in 1958. Lindsay had described the Glasnevin specimen as a St Peter, but Haigh saw it as a connecting link between the coinages of Regnald and Sitric. Otherwise
the CS type does not seem to have attracted much attention until 1954 when Mr Blunt published the small find from Bangor in North Wales that had lain in the local museum little noticed by numismatists since its discovery in 1894.

Various opinions have been expressed in recent years about the coins of this type. In 1954 it was still not generally recognised that the St Peter coinage of York belonged to the first quarter of the tenth century and Mr Blunt had remarked of the Bangor specimen that it constituted a new type for the Viking coinage and might have 'preceded the introduction of the St Peter's issue'. The Morley St Peter specimen was noted by Professor Dolley as being 'a rarity of the very highest order, a secular coin of York struck it would seem immediately before the advent of the Hiberno-Norse invaders, and probably c.915'. In a summary listing of the hoard he recorded it as a late type of the Rænalt coinage and in this he was followed by North, who listed the type (no.533) under Rænalt, c.910. In 1965 Dolley described it as an 'extremely rare transitional type...struck at York c.920'. This view, restated by Dolley on a number of occasions, has been followed by some of those who have written more recently such as Dr Smyth in 1979 and Miss Archibald in 1980. Describing the Dunmore specimen in 1973 as a 'penny of the York Vikings', Dolley wrote of the coins of this type that it was 'problematical whether they are to be dated just before or just after the year 920'. In 1978 he suggested associating the type (as Grantley had done on his ticket) with Ragnald's reign at York in 919-21, although the joint paper on the coinage of Sitric which he had published with Mr C.N. Moore in 1973 had observed 'the assumption that York is the mint is one that may have been made too lightly'.

In attempting to find a place for the CS coins in the Viking series we have useful evidence in their types and provenances. The earliest occurrence of this form of the hammer, presumably Thor's hammer, in the Anglo-Viking coinage is apparently on the obverse of the last of the three types that may be attributed to Ragnald I of York. It also occurs on a few of the St Peter coins with sword and on some of the coins of Sitric that are probably copied from the St Peters. All these types seem to belong to the early or middle years of the 920s. This period of issue for the CS type is confirmed by the four hoards in which examples of it have been found - Glasnevin (near Dublin), Bangor (Caernarvonshire), Morley St Peter (near Norwich) and Dunmore (near Kilkenny). None of these can have been buried earlier than 920 and probably none later than 930. Athelstan's recovery of York in 927 was celebrated on his coinage by the use of the title Rex Totius Britanniae and it is unlikely that Viking coinage would have taken place in Northumbria or elsewhere in the Danelaw after that date.

The absence of the CS type from the Bossall hoard is remarkable in view of its representation by a single specimen in each of the four other relevant hoards of the 920s that contain examples of the sword coinages. Most of
the total of some two hundred and seventy coins from Bossall were St Peters, but there were also probably about twenty (the great majority of the surviving specimens) of the three types of Regnald I of York, which were struck around 920 and carry an unmistakable, albeit often blundered, version of the York mint signature. There were a few other coins in the Bossall hoard, including English coins of Alfred, Edward and Athelstan and Kufic dirhams, but the preponderance of York coins of the first quarter of the tenth century was overwhelming. Since Bossall lies only about seven miles from York, on the road to Malton, this is not surprising. But it raises very substantial doubts about whether the CS type can have been struck in the same city as the coinages in the names of St Peter and Regnald.

It was suggested in 1967 that the St Martin coins of Lincoln, a sword type copied from the sword St Peters, had been struck in the 920s and not, as had previously been supposed, in or before 918 when Edward had apparently advanced the English boundary to the Humber. This conclusion, based on the concentration of the sword types in the hoards of the 920s, was supported by the occurrence of a fragmentary St Martin in the Dunmore Cave find of 1973. If correct, it must mean that at least one Viking coinage took place south of the Humber after 918, even though there is no evidence in the written records to indicate the exercise of Viking rule in eastern Mercia in the last years of Edward or the earliest of Athelstan. This therefore opens the possibility that other Viking coinages of the 920s may also have been struck in the same region.

The accompanying table shows the composition of the pre-sword find from Geashill, County Offaly (the only known hoard apart from Bossall to have included a coin of Regnald I) and of the five hoards of the 920s that contained examples of the Viking sword coinages. The strong representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOARDS CONTAINING COINS OF REGNALD I OF YORK</th>
<th>Morley</th>
<th>Bangor</th>
<th>St Peter</th>
<th>Glasnevin</th>
<th>Bossall*</th>
<th>Dunmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGLISH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-899</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward, 899-924</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athelstan, 924-39</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIKING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier issues</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter swordless</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regnald, c.919-21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter, with sword</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitric, d.927</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Martin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS type</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic and other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>c.270</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: The numbers of coins recorded for the various rulers or issues in the Bossall hoard are based on samples that can be associated with the find; the totals for most of the categories would have been much higher. See Blunt and Stewart, NC forthcoming.
of coins of Regnald in Bossall contrasts with their absence from the other four sword hoards of the same period. Conversely, none of the recorded specimens of the coinage of St Martin or Sitric is known to derive from the Bossall hoard but three of the other four sword hoards contained a specimen of one or other of them. As with the CS type, therefore, there is an apparently significant contrast in distribution between the York coinage of Regnald and the coins of St Martin and Sitric, both of which are derived in type from the sword St Peter coinage of York. Doubts have been expressed by Allen and subsequent writers about attributing all the coins of Sitric to York, and this question is further considered in the second part of this paper.

Despite the lack of reference in the historical sources to control by the Vikings of areas to the south of the Humber at this period, the St Martin coins certainly and the Sitric coins probably point to such a situation. It is against this background that the origin of the CS type should be considered. Its absence from the Bossall hoard is more certain than in the case of the Sitric and St Martin coinages, since the provenances of the five recorded specimens, most fortunately and unusually for an issue of this period, are all known. While the four hoards cannot of themselves locate it, the presence of a CS coin but not a Sitric or a St Martin in Morley St Peter may be indicative, especially since the only specimen without a hoard context was probably found in Cambridgeshire, also well to the south. As can be seen from the verso of Lord Grantley's ticket, he acquired this coin (no.3) from Sadd, the Cambridge coin dealer, who presumably supplied the information that it was a local find. Like most collectors, Grantley was capable of error in recording provenance, but there is no reason to doubt a find-spot in the vicinity of Cambridge (where one of the Danish armies of the early tenth century was centred) for an Anglo-Viking coin of the 920s; and Sadd would not have had to invent it in order to sell such a coin to Lord Grantley, who had no other specimen of the type.

The evidence therefore seems to point to the CS type having been struck not in Northumbria but in the east midlands, where imitation of an inscription in Edward's name would be natural. If not attributed to York, the CS type no longer complicates the arrangement of the Northumbrian series, and the same appears to be true of the coins in Sitric's name, strange though it may seem that his coinage was not struck at the capital of his Northumbrian kingdom. But this is certainly more compatible with the numismatic character of the York series itself, between the burial of the Cuerdale hoard (c.905) and 927 which, apart from the three types of Regnald, seems to have consisted entirely of coins with the name of St Peter, without sword before Regnald's coinage and with sword after. While Thor's hammer, the other main type on the Anglo-Viking coinages struck between the death of Regnald
and 927, was omitted from some of the coins of Sitric, the sword is common
to all the issues and must have been a device of significance for the Norse
rulers of this period.  

2. The Coinage of Sitric I

Dolley and Moore listed nine coins with the name of Sitric. All have a hori-
Zontal sword on the obverse, but there are three different types of reverse:
A, a T-hammer; B, a hammer in the shape of a mallet with a triangular or
pentagonal head; and C, a cross with two pellets and two crescents in the
quarters. All these reverse designs, like the sword obverse, were also used
on the late St Peter coinage and there can be little doubt that the Sitric
coins are copied from the sword St Peters. Evidence that this was the case
can be found in type C, where only one of the three known coins (no.7) re-
produces the small, inverted, mallet-shaped hammer on the obverse from the
sword St Peters of the cross type (on which the shaft of the mallet serves
as the letter I in PETRI).

The three coins of type A all have literate inscriptions, SITR/ICRE(X)
on the obverse and the names of moneyers on the reverse, Adel—d (no.3),
Are (no.l) and Sibrant (no.2).

The three coins of type B described by Dolley and Moore all have garbled
inscriptions on one side or both. The only clear reading is that on the ob-
verse of no.4 which is as on type A except that the R of REX is inverted.
Nos.5 and 6 lack the S and have REX blundered. The reverses of nos.4 and
5 have readings consisting of letters A,E,I,N,O and V, but that on no.6,
IIEVCI(MOT), seems to hint at a moneyer's name (? Levicr) with the word
MOT. Two other coins (here nos.10 and 11, to continue Dolley and Moore's
numbering) may be considered along with these. No.10, from the York
Coppergate excavation of 1980, has a single-shafted mallet with a trefoil of
pellets each side, as on no.4, and a not entirely dissimilar reading,
IIEBIAIIOEIX. But its lettering has more in common with nos.5 and 6, to
which it seems to be closely related. The obverse reads partly retrograde
and upside down, XICIOR/SITEI. No.11 (SCBI Edinburgh 71) was mentioned
but not listed by Dolley and Moore in view of its obverse inscription which,
if read retrograde and backwards from bottom right to top left (EDIV/
IDIED), seems to suggest the name Edmund more than Sitric, although there
may be no significance in this. The reverse of no.11, with the T-hammer,
is much more literate, reading HANA MO.T., and presumably indicating a
moneyer Mana. Apart from this coin, the only reverse dies with the T-
hammer and moneyer's name belong to Sitric's type A, which suggests a
connection between them.

One of the coins of type C, no.7, also has a moneyer's name with Mot-
- ERIC MOTI. Its obverse has the enigmatic inscription LVDO/SITRC, with
the inverted mallet. The other two (nos.8-9), without the mallet, both read
SITR/ICREX, and are from the same reverse die. It has the retrograde in-
scription CASTDAEQ(?)RT.

When and where the coins of Sitric were struck are questions that pose
considerable difficulties. Apart from the historical circumstance there is
nothing to associate them with York. In type and detail they seem to copy
the St Peters, not to progress alongside them. If both had been minted con-
currently in the Northumbrian capital it would be surprising to find the
relatively plentiful St Peters (whether struck under civic or ecclesiastical
authority) outnumbering so significantly the extremely rare coins of com-
parable design in the king's own name. Could the coins of Sitric then have
replaced the sword St Peter coinage at York, say in 925 or 926? In theory
this is a possibility, and it might be used as an argument for explaining the absence of Sitric's coins (like the CS type) from the Bossall hoard. But, even if Birchall's church type York coin of Athelstan is assumed not to have come from Bossall (if it did, then a date for Bossall earlier than 927 is ruled out), the structure of the contents of the Bossall hoard does not suggest a date of burial significantly earlier than Bangor, Morley St Peter or Glasnevin, each of which contained a specimen of the CS type and two of them a coin of Sitric also. Furthermore, the York coins in a hoard lost so near their mint would be expected to run, if anything, later than in hoards of equivalent date from Wales, East Anglia or Ireland. If there were numismatic links between the coins of Sitric and the known coinage of York in the 920s (apart from the somewhat inaccurate copying of types, which in the nature of things is more likely to have taken place elsewhere), the idea that the last pre-927 Viking coinage of York might have been in Sitric's name would need serious consideration. But such clues as there are point elsewhere.

In considering provenance a distinction should perhaps be drawn between those coins of Sitric with entirely orthodox readings and those with degenerate inscriptions which are not necessarily official issues. Regular coins of Sitric are only known from the Bangor (no.3) and Glasnevin (no.7 and ? no.1) hoards, although single finds are recorded from Threecinking in Lincolnshire (no.4) and a grave at Birka in Sweden (no.2). Another (no.9) first appeared in an Italian collection. Two specimens of the irregular group (nos.6 and 10) were in the 1891 hoard from Trotternish on the Isle of Skye and there is the single find from York (no.10). Except for the apparent absence of Sitric's coins from Bossall - to which, as Dolley and Moore point out, their omission from the works of Ruding (1840) and Hawkins (1841) bears testimony - this distribution offers little guidance to their origin.

Allen drew attention to the use by Are and Eric on nos.1 and 7, as well as on coins struck for the English kings, of forms of the letters A and M that also occur on the St Martin coins of Lincoln. He therefore suggested that Lincoln could have been the mint of Sitric's coins. Dolley and Moore wondered whether Sitric's dies were made at Lincoln, but some of them were used at York. They also accepted that the reverse inscription of nos.8 and 9 represents a mint-signature, and the consequent possibility that a third mint might have worked for Sitric.

These points may be taken further. Although Dolley and Moore reject the suggestion, there can be little doubt that the first element of the reading on nos.8 and 9, lacking only a wedge after D to provide the tail of R, is Castra (or perhaps Castrae). The third letter has the lower curve of S disappearing into the grained circle, and it is clearly not a C. The last three or four letters presumably constitute a place-name, and one other than the Civitas of York. If not represented by a modern name like Caistor or Caster, it is difficult to guess its identity, especially as the letter after E could be either Q or G, or even perhaps O, and readings such as EORT, GRT, QRT etc. are amongst the possibilities. The mint of these coins is likely to have been to the south of the Humber, since York apparently had a monopoly of coinage in Northumbria before the Conquest. The Cuerdale coins of earl Sitric from Shelford are evidence that the Vikings did not only coin at great places. The Castra coins need not therefore have been struck at one of the major centres. Type A, with three different moneyers on three coins (no.11 would make a fourth), seems unlikely to be a coinage of York where before Edgar's reform the number of moneyers was generally very limited. Indeed there was often apparently a single or dominant master-
moneyer, like Regnald under Athelstan. A coinage in the name of several moneyers for Sitric at York would thus be at odds with the pattern at this mint not long afterwards, and the point is reinforced by the Southumbrian associations of the actual names found. Are, Eric and Mana are all names found in the NE I series of Athelstan-Edmund which is likely to have been centred in the north-east midlands, and Are uses a Lincoln mint signature on coins of Eadred with the crowned bust type. 

The evidence of Sitric's moneyers therefore points not to York but to north-east Mercia, with Lincoln itself a serious candidate for some of the coins. The St Martin coinage shows that a mint at Lincoln was active at some point during Sitric's reign and if he put his own name on its issues it seems more likely that his autonomous coinage would have replaced the St Martins than have given way to them (they do not have the appearance of parallel issues). This would mean a date relatively late in his reign for Sitric's coinage which in any case appears to have been too limited to have been struck over a period of five or six years.

Little is known in detail of Sitric's career. He raided Davenport in Cheshire in 920 (?) and Smyth argues that his departure from Dublin in that year was occasioned by news of the death of Regnald. He is assumed then to have succeeded to Regnald's kingdom of Northumbria, but nothing is recorded of his reign until, having 'scoffed at the power of preceding kings', he met Athelstan at Tamworth in January 926. This meeting resulted, amongst other things, in the baptism of Sitric and his marriage to Athelstan's sister Eadgyth. We do not know whether Sitric's coinage dates from the early 920s, from after the death of Edward the Elder, with whom he never came to terms, or from the time of his acceptance by Athelstan. The word LVDO on the obverse of no.7 was thought by Allen to be a title, but other interpretations are possible. Theoretically it could indicate a mint, but the position on the coin is against this. Miss Archibald has made the attractive but unverifiable suggestion that it could represent the baptismal name Ludovicus, reminiscent of the Christian name Athelstan in which the Danish king Guthrum had coined in the time of Alfred. Sitric soon renounced both his new wife and his Christianity; and he was dead before the summer of 927 when Athelstan drove out his successors from York and concluded a peace at Eamont, near Penrith, with various northern rulers. A possible occasion for Sitric's coinage would be the period immediately after his treaty with Athelstan, in 926, when an issue in his own name might have served to fortify his prestige without giving offence to his powerful new brother-in-law. On the other hand, the variety exhibited by the small surviving sample of Sitric's coinage might be taken to indicate that it began somewhat earlier.

NOTES

2. J.Lindsay, View of the Coinage of the Heptarchy (Cork, 1842), Pl.2, no.52.
4. For an enlarged illustration see M.Dolley, Viking Coins of the Danelaw and of Dublin (1965), fig.29.
5. I am indebted to Mr Michael Kenny of the National Museum of Ireland for the photograph of this coin. M. Dolley, 'The 1973 Viking-age Coin-find from Dunmore Cave', Old Kilkenny Review, new ser.1 (1975), 70-79, fig.5b.

6. Lindsay, p.128.


8. The early dating was argued by R.H.M. Dolley, 'An Unpublished Irish Hoard of 'St Peter' Pence', NC 6th ser.17 (1957), 123-32 (Geashill hoard).


11. Viking Coins, p.22 and Pl.VIII.


15. Dolley and Moore, p.53.


18. In BNJ 36 (1967), 54 (cf. BNJ 42 (1974), 90-1) it was suggested that the sword St Peter coinage might have outlasted Viking rule at York. But if neither the coins of Sitric nor those of the CS type were struck there, the York series in the 920s becomes less crowded and much of the case for an extension of the St Peter coinage beyond 927 evaporates.

19. Stewart, 'The St Martin Coins of Lincoln'.

20. C.E. Blunt and H.E. Pagan, 'Three Tenth-Century Hoards: Bath (1755), Kintbury (1761), Threadneedle Street (before 1924)', BNJ 45 (1975), 20. The doubts expressed by Dolley and Moore (p.52) about the find-spot were made without sight of the ticket and apparently based on a misunderstanding of information offered verbally.

21. The code for numbers 0-9 used by Grantley to record the cost of his coins was Z, B, D, T, F, L, S, K, P, N. The CS coin would thus have cost him 5s.6d.

22. Haigh offered the interesting conjecture that the sword type represented the Sword of Carlus, apparently an heirloom of the Hiberno-Norse dynasty, that figures in three entries in the annals of the Four Masters some generations later.

23. I am indebted to Miss Elizabeth Pirie for information about this coin, which she will be publishing in The Archaeology of York, vol.18 (Coin Finds), part I ('Post-Roman Finds, 1972-81').
24. The coin is illustrated in Blunt and Stewart.

25. Most of the early Anglo-Saxon coins in the Borghesi collection may have been Italian finds, since none of them is identifiable in an earlier English collection.

26. Dolley and Moore, p.50.


29. C.E. Blunt, 'The Coinage of Athelstan, 924-929, A Survey', BNJ 42 (1974), 81-83; Lindsay, Pl.4, 112, for one of the Are coins of Lincoln (cf. BM Syllage forthcoming, no.686). Adel—d might be the same name as Aethelred, found on some York coins of Athelstan (Blunt 307-8) but his coins come late in the reign and a chronologically more suitable Athelstan moneyer's name would be Adalbert, who struck the relatively early church type (Blunt 439; attributed to York, but possibly struck elsewhere). The nearest name to Sibrant in Athelstan's coinage is Sigebrand in BMC type I (unlocalized, but of southern style).

30. Dolley and Moore have suggested the possibility that the reverse inscriptions of nos.4 and 5, with their jumbles of A, E, I, N, O and V, could reflect Lincolia Civit of the St Martins. Mr Blunt has also pointed out to me that the CS coin no.1 has inscriptions consisting of h, C, I, O and V which, whether read retrograde or outwards, bear some resemblance to the blundered form of Lincolia Civit found on the crowned bust coin of Eadred by Are in the Douglas Museum (AREIIICOI11IVIT).


32. The contraction mark above LVDO could denote a missing N, but this does not make a mint interpretation any more likely.

33. In a paper entitled 'Some Thoughts on the St Peter Coinage of York', read to the British Numismatic Society on 25 September 1979.