A NEW ‘STANDARD’ TYPE FOR THE REIGN OF KING STEPHEN

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The purpose of this note is to place on record a new type of the so-called ‘York Group’ — a designation the writer would prefer to replace, at least for the time being, by the term ‘ornamented coinages’. The new coin is a chipped cut-half penny, or denier, found in a tray of uncertain and dubious medieval coins in a cabinet of Messrs A. H. Baldwin and Sons Ltd.; and it is likely to have been there for some twenty years or more, its original provenance quite uncertain. It was through the kindness of Mr Peter Mitchell, who knew of the writer’s interest in this series, that the coin passed temporarily into the writer’s possession. It is now in the national collection.

The fragment weighs 8.7 grains (0.565 gm) and, basing a reconstruction on the circumference and the remaining area, this would suggest a weight of approx. 17.1 grains (1.11 gm) for the complete coin, a figure well within the 16-20 grains range for the ‘ornamented’ series as a whole. Though incomplete, enough of the design is available to enable a reasoned guess to be made of the complete design (Fig. 1).

The central figure appears to be standing as no part of a throne is visible, and that this figure represents a royal personage is indicated by the crown which has a globular ornament at each extremity. The face is not entirely clear but the nose and eyebrows can be distinguished. A semi-circle to the right of the figure may be intended for a cloak and an arm extends horizontally with a barely visible hand which grasps the shaft of a standard. To the top left of the figure there is part of an object which may be the fleur of a sceptre-head or possibly a branch. Between the central figure and the standard are two uncertain objects: the upper may be a four-spoked wheel, while the lower seems to be a shield with irregular indentations, perhaps intended for roundels. A five-, six- and seven-spoked wheel occurs on some of Stephen’s Flag type pennies and on some of the Eustace Knight coins, and a four-spoked wheel appears on one of the Stephen Cross Moline variants reading WI-S-GNeta (Mack 215) and on one of the petits-deniers of Eustace of Boulogne struck at Lens. A shield with roundels occurs on the Flag pennies, on some of the Eustace Knight coins, and on a denier of Count Hugh II of St Pol, on certain of the petits-deniers of St Omer and on other unattributed coins of the Pas-de-Calais region of northern France.

On the reverse the central design is a cross pattée with a crescent in one of the visible angles and a quatrefoil of pellets in the other, and perhaps these two symbols alternate in the missing angles. There are two inner circles, the smaller having a number of pellets set around it, presumably sixteen on the complete coin. It is not clear if these are intended to be equidistant from each other or if they are set in four groups of three pellets, each group arranged opposite the extremities of the cross, and with additional pellets corres-

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1 This coin was exhibited by the writer at the Congress of the British Association of Numismatic Societies held at Cambridge in September 1981 in illustration of a short paper entitled ‘A new Anglo-Boulonnais coin type.’

2 Cf. P. d’Avant, Monnaies Féodales de France, 6753 and pl. CLVII, 20; but the specimen in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, has a wheel of four spokes in two angles of the cross.

3 C. Richebé, Les Monnaies Féodales d’Artois, 40.

4 Grierson coll., ex Lockett III 536 (Haeck 295); and E. Caron, Monnaies Féodales Françaises, 695 and pl. XXVII, 20.

5 Caron, 696 and 697, pl. XXVII, 21 and 22.
ponding to each angle. It may be of some significance that on the reverse of Stephen’s second substantive coinage, possibly to be dated c.1149–c.1151, three pellets are set at the end of each limb of the cross. It has been suggested that these may represent the red roundels (torteaux) that appear on the arms of the counts of Boulogne, but they may also serve as the symbol of Stephen’s name-saint, St Stephen Protomartyr, i.e., the stones associated with his martyrdom. A double inner circle is a feature that does not occur on undoubted English coins with the single exception of Henry I type 6. Double circles do occur on one variety of the Eustace Lion type and on a number of other twelfth-century issues of the Pas-de-Calais region, including a denier of Eustace III or IV of Boulogne.

The ornamentation between the middle and outer circles links the coin with one die-variety of Stephen’s Two-figure type. This is the unique die variety BMC 261 (Mack 220c) which is of neater style than coins from other Two-figure dies (Fig. 2). Though Brooke had traced its pedigree back to the Cuff collection (lot 764), sold in 1854, it would seem to be the coin illustrated by L. Deschamps in the *Revue Numismatique* of 1839. According to information supplied to Deschamps by Joachim Lelewel it was then in the possession of M. Ducas of Lille, but in Deschamps’s 1885 survey of the coinage of Boulogne he remarks that he did not know what had become of the coin. This, then, is the second Two-figure coin which appears to have originated in France, the other being Mack 220b, the Reynolds specimen (lot 84) which was described as having been ‘procured in France.’ There is no evidence that either of these coins came from a French hoard, though this must remain a possibility.

FIGS 1-3. 1 New Standard type (X4); 2 Stephen, Two-figure type (BMC 261); 3 Stephen, Flag type (BMC 255).

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6 On a denier of Bishop Adalberon IV of Metz (1103–15) the three stones of St Stephen, the patron saint of the city, are repeated four times around the inner circle (vide P. Ch. Robert, *Monnaies, Jetons et Médailles des Évêques de Metz*, 474).

7 P. d’Avant, 6515 and pl. CLIV, 18.

8 L. Deschamps, ‘Note sur deux monnoies inédites, se rattachant à l’histoire de Boulogne-sur-Mer’, *RN* 1st ser. 3 (1839), 284–94. In Lelewel’s *Numismatique de Moyen Âge* (1835) the name of Charles-Louis Ducas, of Lille, appears in the list of subscribers and his profession is given as agent-de-change.

9 L. Deschamps de Pas, ‘Etude sur les Monnaies de Boulogne’, *RN* 3rd ser. 3 (1885), 264–95, at 281, n. 1.
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The first visible device around the circumference is a shield with roundels, presumably the arms of the county of Boulogne. Only one roundel is visible but six are clearly intended on the Two-figure penny. The second device appears to be a rectangular figure divided by two incuse crossing lines, but by reference to the Two-figure coin it can be seen that it is a rather poor copy of a neat heraldic fret. This fret also appears on Stephen’s Masque-sceptre type but it has not been found on any other continental coin. The third ornament is a liver-shaped or purse-shaped object which also occurs on the Two-figure type, on the Flag coins, on some of the Eustace Knight pennies and on the Rodbertus ‘Horseman’ pennies as well as on some Flemish petits-deniers. Dividing the eight devices on the Two-figure penny are eight billets, each with three nail-holes. On the new coin these billets are more rounded at the corners; there seems to be a small depression visible on one billet, but the state of wear precludes a positive statement that all the billets originally had nail holes. It is likely that the missing ornaments on the cut-half penny reproduced and followed the same sequence as the remaining devices depicted on Stephen’s Two-figure penny, i.e., an uncertain device (doubtfully, a lock or shackle), a voided quatrefoil, a horseshoe-shaped device, a serpentine S-shaped object and a square cross with a central pellet. In view of the fact that the ornamentation on this new Standard type appears to be a relatively crude reproduction of the ornamentation on the Two-figure coin it is suggested that the latter is likely to have pre-dated the former.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the coin is the standard on the obverse. If it is compared with the banner on Stephen’s Flag pennies (Fig. 3) it will be seen that they are very similar in form; on both coins the shaft of the standard is surmounted by a spearhead below which is a triangular wedge, something which could easily be missed if examining the Flag pennies on their own. The banner on both types is triple-tailed and slopes away at the same angle. What does seem clear is that this is not just a knight’s lance pennon as the triangular wedge would preclude its use as a weapon. It is a gonfalon or battle-banner and its spearhead announces its military significance. In illustrations of the mosaics in the triclinium of the Lateran palace, made prior to their restoration, St Peter is depicted investing Pope Leo III with a pallium and Charlemagne with a triple-tailed banner having a protuberance below the spear-head, similar to that on the standard on Stephen’s pennies. What is the significance of this gonfalon?

Like the Eustace Knight coins, the Flag pennies can be divided into two series: a 16–18 grains issue, which from the reverse ornamentation and lettering seem to be linked with petits-deniers of the mint of St Omer in the Pas-de-Calais (though this does not constitute firm evidence that the pennies were also minted there) and an 18–20 grains issue with different ornamentation and inscriptions, probably from a second uncertain mint. The Flag type pennies have the uniform inscription STIEFNE R, except for three coins (two of which may be imitative pieces), and perhaps one can presume them to have been minted concurrently with the normal English Cross Moline coins, BMC i, with the same obverse inscription that Mr Seaman has tentatively dated to approximately 1145–47. If this was the case they can have had no possible connection with the Battle of the Standard in 1138 as was suggested by A. E. Packe. The years 1145–47 were precisely the period in which the Second Crusade was being prepared. The great Crusader fortress of Edessa had fallen to

10 L. Deschamps, ‘Etude sur les Monnaies de Boulogne’, 281. Deschamps also took the view that the shield on the Two-figure coin represented the arms of the counts of Boulogne, even though at a later date there were three torteaux on the Boulogne arms, not six, but he points out that at this period the rules of heraldry were imprecise.
11 Caron, 655 and pl. XXVI, 17.
12 P. E. Schramm, Die deutschen Kaiser und Köüne in Bilden ihrer Zeit (1928), I, 27–9 and pl. 4a-b; and the colour wash by Grimaldi in the Vatican Library (Codex Barberini, lat. 2062, fo. 61). Also, Le Blanc, Dissertation historique sur quelques Monnaies de Charlemagne . . . (Amsterdam 1692), p. 19. The protuberance below the spearhead has the appearance of a silken tassel.
15 A. E. Packe, ‘The Coins of Stephen’, NC 3rd ser. 16 (1896), 68; and others.
Zengi the Turk at Christmas 1144, and, following the preaching and promptings of Bernard of Clairvaux, two Crusader armies, one led by the German emperor Conrad III and the other by Louis VII of France, set out across Europe for the East in the spring of 1147. These were followed by an Anglo-Flemish armada of some 164 vessels under the command of Christian of Ghistelle which left the Channel ports for the Holy Land via Portugal in June. Does the standard represent a papal gonfalon, possibly one of a number sent by Pope Eugenius to leaders or potential leaders of the Crusader armies? Stephen did not join the crusade (his position in England was too insecure), but some of his earls and barons did go and they may have taken a papal battle-standard with them.

The presentation of gonfalons blessed by the pope, for military campaigns which had papal approval, had precedents going back for at least a century. Pope Benedict IX had presented a banner to Emperor Henry III as early as 1044, and in 1059 William of Montreuil, described by Orderic Vitalis as ‘the Good Norman’, received a banner from Nicholas II. Pope Alexander II presented banners, not only to William of Normandy for the invasion of England, but also to Erembald, captain of the army of Milan, and to Count Roger of Sicily. The armies fighting against Emperor Henry IV in 1086 and against the pirates of El Mahdiyya in 1087 both fought under papal banners, and it is known that Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy, the papal legate, was given a banner blessed by the pope to take on the First Crusade. It appears that Conrad III, and possibly Louis VII, received a gonfalon to take on the Second Crusade.

Stephen’s father-in-law, Count Eustace III of Boulogne, was the senior of the three brothers of the House of Boulogne who took such a major part in the First Crusade, though he did not intend to remain in the East. Godfrey de Bouillon, the middle brother, led the army in the Holy Land and after the successful assault on Jerusalem was to be acclaimed ‘Defender of the Holy Sepulchre’. He sent back to Boulogne the crown that he had been offered, and which he declined, to be placed at the feet of the revered Nôtre-Dame de Boulogne together with other relics. It is possible, though we have no evidence for it, that Count Eustace could have returned to Boulogne with the banner which had led the assault on Jerusalem. The youngest of the Boulogne brothers, Baldwin, became the first Christian king of Jerusalem on Godfrey’s premature death. Eustace (IV), Stephen’s elder son, succeeded to the county of Boulogne on coming of age in 1147, but it is not known whether he took an active part in the Second Crusade.

King Stephen’s banner does not appear on any of his four substantive English coinages nor on any of the local English types, which, with one exception, have a normal fleured sceptre. The exception is a variant of the Canterbury mint on which the sceptre is replaced by a spiky mace, possibly a distinguishing mark of William of Ypres who seems to have exercised comital powers in Kent even though he did not use the title of earl. It is suggested, though with no degree of certainty, that a papal standard presented to Stephen at the time of the Second Crusade, by virtue of his rank and his connection with the House of Boulogne, is the most likely explanation of the standard on the Flag type and on this new coin.

The ornamentation on this coin associates it with other types of Stephen’s ‘ornamented’ coinages. This series did not adhere to the strict rules of English minting practice which required the names of the moneyer and mint on every coin, rules which were observed even on the baronial issues. The evidence of hoards hardly advances the case for assuming

17 In one of the episodes depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry Duke William is shown holding a flag with four streamers blazoned with a cross and four roundels as he receives news of the approach of Harold’s army. This may well represent the gonfalon sent by Pope Alexander, but the banner is rendered more elaborately when it is carried by Count Eustace of Boulogne in the battle scene in which William raises his helmet in order to be recognized and Eustace points to him, shouting ‘HIC EST WILLEMVS DVX’. Eustace commanded the wing of Boulonnais, Flemish and French knights (other than Norman and Breton) at the Battle of Hastings, and his reward was the great accumulation of manors, chiefly in Essex and Hertfordshire, which became known as the Honor of Boulogne. Did he retain the papal banner as a battle trophy?
the series to be of English manufacture. If the shadowy and poorly recorded seventeenth-century Cattal hoard is excepted, the only Stephen hoard containing an 'ornamented' coin is the Winterslow (Wilts.) hoard with a single Flag penny. Numerically this is hardly more significant than the single Boulogne denier in the Lark Hill 'Tealby' hoard deposited some two decades later. The absence of the series in the five north midland Stephen hoards (South Kyme, Nottingham, Ashby Wouls, Sheldon and Prestwich) is particularly significant. Furthermore, there is an unexplained hiatus, during the period 1125–53, in the series of Boulogne deniers struck to the French standard, that is, during the countships of Stephen and Matilda and of their son Eustace, arguably the most powerful of all the Boulogne counts to that time. The Boulogne denier series recommences with the coins of William, Stephen's surviving son. Apart from the Boulogne shield which occurs on several of the 'ornamented' types and on other coins of the Pas-de-Calais region, some of the Stephen Flag pennies and some of the Eustace Knight coins exhibit the doubled s and omega (or inverted M) which appear as doubled s and m on petits-deniers of St Omer. A further pointer to probable continental manufacture is the mascle-topped sceptre used on Mack 218 (BMC 260), a coin closely linked to the Rodbertus 'Horseman' pennies, Mack 228 (BMC 271). This has no parallel in English regal iconography but appears to be derived from the new style French sceptre first used by Louis VII (1137–80). One major problem has still to be finally resolved, the elucidation of the inscriptions 'EBORACI TDEFL' and 'EBORACI EDTS' on the Knight pennies of Eustace which in the past have led to the understandable attribution to the city of York.

The writer takes the view that, whilst it would have been possible for coins of English weight and fineness to have been issued at Continental mints within Stephen's sphere of influence, it is highly unlikely that coinages of the complexity and variety of the 'ornamented' issues, which do not bear the names of both mint and moneyer, would have been manufactured in England. A comprehensive review of the ten types of the 'ornamented' coinages is in preparation, and the writer would be grateful for details of any specimens omitted from the listing published by Commander Mack in 1966.