FOUR TENTH-CENTURY NOTES: UNFINISHED WORK OF C.E. BLUNT

Edited by LORD STEWARTBY

A few days before his death in November 1987 Christopher Blunt handed me a folder of papers containing work which he had intended to prepare for publication but had not yet completed. He asked me to make use of it myself, or make it available to others, in whatever way I thought best. Many scholars leave a Nachlass of unfinished work that is often not easy to manage. But Blunt was a most methodical person, and he had, during his last years, concentrated on editing the Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles and on the production of Coinage in Tenth-Century England, so that other outstanding items were relatively few and straightforward. They fall into two main categories, those where Blunt had produced a text which, with appropriate editing, could be printed more or less in its existing form, and those where he had left notes sufficiently full to be written up in the way he had intended. Three of the former and one of the latter are published here.

In the first category are the comments on three finds which he read to the February 1986 meeting of the Society. These have needed slight revision with the passage of time and some obvious modification to make them suitable for a printed rather than a spoken form, but wherever practicable I have retained Blunt’s actual words in the versions that follow. (Where I have introduced other comments, I have put them in brackets.) The fourth item printed here, on the pellet-marked dies of Eadred, I have reconstructed from Blunt’s detailed notes, and this has not caused difficulty since the material is basically factual. In another case, where Blunt left notes concerning Alwerd and certain other north-eastern moneyers of the period from Athelstan to Edgar, I have found it impossible to produce a text that could fairly be attributed to his authorship, since although we discussed some of the questions at issue in August 1987 we did not do so thoroughly enough for me to be sure that I could accurately represent his considered views. I have therefore published a note elsewhere incorporating Blunt’s material but with a discussion for which he is not responsible. Blunt also contributed significantly to some joint work which we did in the 1970s on the Norman hoard from Shillington, and this I have now completed. Again, however, there was no proper text and I have accordingly felt it better to publish the paper under my own name, particularly since subsequent work led me to conclude that some of Blunt’s original thoughts needed to be modified. One other Norman item, on two counterfeit pennies of William I found in Wiltshire, Blunt had promised to the County Society’s Magazine. This I have published under our joint names since we worked on the subject together, and he asked me to rewrite his draft notes in a way that we had discussed.

One further addition to the final bibliography of Blunt’s works should be noted. The Medieval Catalogue of the Salisbury & South Wiltshire Museum, part 1, edited by P. and E. Saunders, 1991, contains a section on ‘Coins’, pp. 140–68, most of which (except for two appendices of additional coins, pp. 154–9) was prepared by Blunt in the 1970s.

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1 I am grateful to Messrs. Mark Blackburn, Stewart Lyon and Hugh Pagan for helpful comments on the text.
All the coins illustrated on plate 7 are in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and, with the exception of no. 11, from the Blunt collection.

I. An Early-Tenth Century Group from the Thames

This little parcel consisted of six coins said to have been found together in the Thames mud. They have that black patina that one associates with finds from the Thames, and though at first blush the composition might make this provenance seem unlikely, I think, on consideration, that it is one that deserves acceptance. Unfortunately it has not proved possible to establish whereabouts on the banks of the Thames the coins were found. The black patina points to London rather than much higher up where the water is cleaner, but it would be of interest to know whether the find was made off the City or slightly further upstream, off the area around the Strand (by Aldwych) where the Anglo-Saxon centre is thought to have been up to the time of Alfred.6 (Another possibility is that the coins come from the lower Thames, to the east of the City of London, towards the estuary, as their eastern associations might suggest.)

Two of the coins are of the St. Edmund Memorial coinage.7 No. 1 is of the early (Cuerdale) group by a moneyer whose name appears in various, often corrupt, forms but whom Keary identifies tentatively as Onnonea, an identification accepted equally tentatively by Brooke and Dr. Smart.8 There is nothing special about this coin. It is comparable, but not exactly similar, to BMC 481 from the Cuerdale hoard. The second St. Edmund coin (no. 2) is of a slightly later, post-Cuerdale, issue. The obverse legend is, as so often in this issue, somewhat confused, but the reverse reads clearly +BEREINCIV. We are much less well informed on these later issues, compared with the earlier ones to which the Cuerdale hoard made such an outstanding contribution. So it is no surprise to find that nothing strictly comparable appears to be recorded. The ending CIV naturally prompts the thought that the earlier part might be a mint-name, but this must be resisted. No civitas can be found to which the name Berein might apply. It must in fact be the name of a moneyer and we may compare it with another late specimen (SCBI Copenhagen 125) where the reverse legends reads simply BERENC, no doubt Berengar, a name found on coins of the Cuerdale group (e.g. BMC 274–7). Beren is also found on a post-Cuerdale coin in the British Museum (BMA 274), and on another discussed hereafter (no. 11).

The next three coins are irregular pieces in the name of Edward the Elder. No. 3, the best of them, can be seen to read +:VDVEARD RX on the obverse, and a virtually unblundered moneyer’s name on the reverse, /·/AEDE /+++/IED IIIO+/. The only ‘mistake’ being the use of a D instead of an eth in the name. The other two, both damaged, are, no. 4 certainly, no. 5 possibly, with the same moneyer’s name and of similar type. They belong, Mr. Lyon has been kind enough to tell me,9 to a little group of which there was one example (and one only) among the many ‘irregular’ coins of this reign in the hoard from Morley St. Peter in Norfolk.10 Another is in the collection of Lord Stewartby and these two are by the same moneyer, Aethered, as the new Thames coins.11

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6 Here Blunt referred to the theory as put forward by Professor Martin Biddle (first published by him in ‘London on the Strand’, Popular Archaeology, July 1984, 23–7).
8 BMC I, pp. 122–3; English Coins, p. 32; SCBI 28 (Index), p. 60.
10 SCBI East Anglia, 120 (there included as a regular coin).
11 Blunt added 'Comparison might also possibly be made with a coin probably from the find at Bossall, Yorkshire. This coin, though stylistically comparable, has the name of a different moneyer, Iohan’ (see C.E. Blunt and B.H.I.H. Stewart, ‘The Coinage of Regnald I of York and the Bossall Hoard’, NC 1983, 146–63, pl. 23, N3). Mr. Lyon and I would be less inclined to associate the Iohan coin with the Aethereds, since it belongs to the heavy non-portrait group, related to NE I, of which there were several examples in the Morley St. Peter hoard (SCBI East Anglia, nos. 174–214; CTCE, pp. 53 and 207).
Aethered was a fairly prolific moneyer for Edward, working for most of the reign in Wessex. He would therefore be a ready target for the imitator. But where this little group was produced remains in doubt. Although it does not link into the major imitative series from Morley St. Peter, the fact that the odd specimen was found there, coupled with the presence of these three examples in a little purse that seems to have East Anglian connections, may now point in that general direction.

The sixth coin, a good deal damaged, is one unexpected in a southern context. It is a specimen of the early St. Peter coinage, reading +/SCIE/. ... / TIIIIO / + and +EBORACECIV. The weight, at slightly less than 19 gr., is not reliable evidence in view of the coin’s condition. It is not exactly similar to anything in BMC but belongs to the normal swordless series, which is now dated c. 905–c. 919. From its blundered obverse reading, it is probably not one of the earliest in this group, although the full and literate reverse reading and an original weight perhaps in the region of 20 gr. would place it relatively early.12

How does one account for a little parcel like this, found in the Thames, consisting of two certainly East Anglian coins, three others that might be from eastern England, and one certainly Northumbrian, from York, all of them of a date entirely consistent with the statement that they were found together? I would suggest that this is likely to have been the purse of someone on board a ship that had come down the east coast, either a merchant, a traveller or a seaman, and that it was lost when he was going ashore. It is certainly not the type of purse that a Londoner would have been carrying.

The presence of the St. Peter coin makes the date of loss no earlier than 905 and the post-Cuerdale St. Edmund coin conforms with this. The dating of the irregular coins in the name of Edward the Elder is more open to question, but a date of c. 910(+) for the loss would be a reasonable estimate on the evidence of the other coins.

II. A Group of St. Edmund Coins from Suffolk

Three St. Edmund Memorial coins (nos. 7–9 on plate 7) found some years ago in Suffolk with a metal-detector, and all apparently later in date than those from the Cuerdale hoard, may be described as follows:

7. Obv. +SDVREVI. In centre A, an annulet either side and a third between the arms of the A with a small pellet above it.
   Rev. +SDVREC/OT. In centre a large cross pattée over a smaller cross saltire with annulet ends to the arms.

   Rev. +ABONELCE. In centre cross pattée.

9. Obv. +NVRITCVI. In centre small A, with chevron bar.
   Rev. +I-OVI:IS. In centre small cross pattée.

The first coin provides an entirely new variant for the usually consistent type of the St. Edmund coinage. The obverse with three annulets round the letter A was already recorded from a single example in the British Museum (BMC 317). The reverse, however, has a large cross with on it a smaller cross in saltire with annulet ends. This type was previously unknown, and is, I would suggest, post-Cuerdale, though not much later.

No. 8 I would also regard as post-Cuerdale. It is by a moneyer called Abonel who is well known in the Cuerdale group13 and, what is important, the name is also found on coins of

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12 CTCE, pp. 103–5. In a subsequent study (I. Stewart and S. Lyon, 'Chronology of the St. Peter Coinage', The Yorkshire Numismatist 2 (1992), 45–73) it is suggested that the obverse, or lower die, was the one with the name of the mint and not that of St. Peter.
Athelstan struck at Hertford and Maldon.\textsuperscript{14} There would be a gap of perhaps some twenty years between the issue of the St. Edmund coins and those for Athelstan, and as the name, not a common one, is also found on coins of Edmund, which would be some thirty years later than the St. Edmunds, and again under Eadwig and Edgar, it looks as if there must have been at least two moneyers of this name, perhaps father and son. The association of Abonel with an area to the south of East Anglia implies that the issue of the St. Edmund coins, the places of mintage of which remain uncertain, may have extended to this area.

No. 9, undoubtedly post-Cuerdale, has on the obverse an inscription which by no stretch of the imagination could be regarded as a blundered form of the St. Edmund legend (as are frequently found). The fact that it ends CVI invites the thought that it might be attempting a mint-name, as has been suggested for a coin of this type found at Northampton that reads, also on the obverse, NORDVICO-, such a good reading that Norwich seems a distinct possibility.\textsuperscript{15} NVRIT is a less likely-looking form but is worth recording in case further evidence one day turns up.

By curious chance I had, a few years earlier, acquired a coin by a moneyer signing MARTINI which has a nearly similar obverse in type (if not in legend) to the first coin in the Suffolk parcel, no. 7. Both sides, in this case, resemble the type of BMC 317 with annulets by the letter A and in the quarters of the reverse cross. The B.M. coin, which is post-Cuerdale in style, was bought in 1869 from the dealer William Webster, without specific provenance, but may be identified as the piece illustrated by Sainthill in 1853 as having been bought by Major Moore, of the 54th Regt., in Limerick.\textsuperscript{16} The Martini coin was found, I understand, by a man living at Biggleswade, Beds., and was sold at Christie’s, 20 April 1971, lot 117. These three annulet-marked coins are all well-struck and can no doubt be associated with one another. The curious thing is to find coins of this stylistic quality with such confused legends – the only one of the six to appear to be correct is the Martini reverse. (Since the foregoing was written two further St. Edmund coins with annulets have come to light. One, found at Oxborough, Norfolk, has been acquired by the Fitzwilliam Museum and is illustrated here as no. 11. It has a clear reading BERNERA. The other, recently offered for sale by Spinks, NCirc, December 1994, no. 7884, has a St. Edmund reading on both sides. These two new specimens are stylistically similar to the other three annulet coins.)

Since I have been discussing a number of coins of the St. Edmund issue, I may perhaps be allowed to finish by placing on record one more (no. 10). It formed part of lot 724 in the Glendining sale of 25 May 1972, but it has, I fear, no find-spot. It is a late issue by a moneyer who signs ANSICA, a well-known moneyer in the Cuerdale group but not, as far as I know, previously recorded for the later one. (This coin is very similar in appearance to no. 9, from the Suffolk find. Note the small diameter of the inner circles, which are finely serrated.)

III. Three Strays from the Smarmore Hoard

In 1953 I published a short report on an important hoard of Anglo-Saxon coins found twenty-five years earlier at Smarmore, Co. Louth, in Ireland.\textsuperscript{17} Recently I was fortunate enough, through the good offices of Mr. Patrick Finn, to acquire three coins (nos. 13–15) said to be ‘strays’ from the same find, a provenance there seems no reason to question.


\textsuperscript{15} CTCE pl. 26, 2.

\textsuperscript{16} R. Sainthill, \textit{Olla Podrida}, II. pl. 28, 2.

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13. Athelstan, CR/CC type (BMC VIa), Chester mint, moneyer Wulfstan. Same dies as SCBI Chester 50.
   Obv. +EDELSTAN RE+TO BRT, rosette in centre.
   Rev. +WVLSTAN M'O LEIGECF, cross in centre, annulet in field.

14. Eadred, HT1 type (BMC I), moneyer Ingelberd. CTCE no. 274.
   Obv. +EADERD( sic) RE
   Rev. +HEALB/+GERD / MOT /

15. Edgar, CC type (BMC V), Wallingford mint, moneyer Beorhtric. CTCE no. 231a.
   Obv. +EADGAR RE TO BR" IZ1, cross in centre, another in field below initial cross.
   Rev. +BEORHTRIC M PEAL, irregular lettering, cross in centre, another in field below initial cross.

The Athelstan is already recorded (B.342), but the only other specimens from reverse dies with annulet in the field that I have noted are the CC/CR die-duplicate referred to and a true CC type coin by the same moneyer, Wulfstan. These Circumscription issues of Athelstan from the mint of Chester have several special marks in the field on one or other side and, as they have not been listed together before, it might be useful to set down here those that I have noted:

(i) Two annulets on obv. (all from same obv. die): CC type, Cnath (B.141; BMS 50), with S on rev. (see vii below); CC/CR, Cnath (B.328; SCBI Glasgow 636); CC, Maerten(n) (B.147; BMS 57).
(ii) Single annulet on obv.: CC, Wulfstan (B.158; SCBI Chester 32–3).
(iii) Single annulet on rev.: CC, Wulfstan (Dr. A. Campbell); CC/CR, Tot(es) (B.332; SCBI Chester 44); CR, Deorulf (B.350; BMS 183); CR, Tot(es) (B.359; SCBI Midlands 146); CR/CC, Wulfstan (B.342; SCBI Chester 50; Smarmore stray, no. 13).
(iv) Crescent attached to inner circle on obv.: CC, Wulfstan (B.158; Drabble lot 409).
(v) Pellet in rev. field: CC/CR, Paul (B.331; SCBI Chester 43).
(vi) S. in obv. field: CR, Beorard (B.346; BMS 182).
(vii) S in rev. field: CC, Aelfwine (B.137; SCBI Chester 6); CC, Cnath (B.141; BMS 250), with two annulets on obv. (see above); CC, Eadulf (B.144; BMS 54).
(viii) Extra cross in both fields: CC, Aelfwine (B.137; SCBI Chester 7).
(ix) Uncertain marks on rev.: CC, M(ae)ldomen (B.146; SCBI Chester 19), Miss Pirie comments 'Unusual work; blundered and possibly a contemporary imitation'.

The second Smarmore coin, no. 14, of Eadred by the moneyer Ingelberd, appears to have been unrecorded prior to CTCE. The name Englbred is found on a number of Eadred's coins of the HT1 type (CTCE no. 30; e.g. BMS 520-1, SCBI Copenhagen 738, St. Petersburg, Manx Museum, SCBI Merseyside 467, and another from the Smarmore hoard itself, no. 13 in the original list). But in every case the spelling is the same, the name is followed by MO and the style of the lettering points to a southern origin. The Ingelberd coin, slightly blundered as to its obverse legend, reads MOT, which points to a more northerly origin. So, though the two names are themselves no doubt the same, it is possible that two different moneyers are involved.

The third coin, no. 15, is the most interesting of the three. The lettering is somewhat irregular, compared with the neat coins normally produced by the mint of Wallingford for Edgar in this type, and the engraver has had to resort to some space-filling objects at the end of the obverse legend because he omitted the X in REX and so misjudged its length. Only one regular coin of Wallingford by Beorhtric is known (CTCE no. 231; Lockett lot 623, ill.) which, alone of the Wallingford coins, reads RE+TO"BR"I instead of the more usual title at

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19 The name Ingelbert also occurs on a coin of NE I style.
southern mints, REX ANGL(orum). It is clear that no. 15 is a copy of this. It follows the original virtually letter for letter, but adds an extra cross in the field on each side.

Irregular coins of this type of the mid-tenth century are not uncommon. They have been found for example in the Chester (1950) hoard (BMS 1233–4); the Iona hoard (SCBI Edinburgh 313–7); the Inchkenneth hoard (SCBI Edinburgh 311); an unidentified Irish find (Stewartby); and another from the Isle of Man\(^{20}\) – mostly from areas where the English king’s writ did not run. But few have legends from which a prototype can be identified; most have what Stevenson has pertinently called ‘nonsense legends’.\(^{21}\) It is in this respect that the new Smarmore coin, no. 15, differs so markedly and this raises the question as to its original source. Most of these irregular coins are much under weight.

The new ‘Wallingford’ coin itself weights only just over 17gr. which, even allowing for the edge chip, is lighter than one might expect of a genuine coin when compared with the original which weighs 23.7gr. Furthermore, its metal does not look at all good. I confess myself puzzled as to its nature. There seem to be three possibilities: 1) that it is an imitative piece, produced beyond the area of English control like so many other irregular coins, but the competence of the legends on both sides puts it in a category of its own in relation to these, and so perhaps makes this unlikely; 2) that it is an out and out contemporary forgery, in the manner of some of the better copies of Athelstan’s coins (although these may have been produced outside English control after 939); or 3) that it is a piece of private enterprise on the part of Beorhtric, official or otherwise, although if so he would appear to have been taking something of a risk in respect of its weight and metal for a piece carrying his own name.

IV. Pellet-marked and Flawed Obverse Dies of Eadred

On certain coins of Eadred of the HT1 type four pellets are found in the obverse field, or three pellets and a prominent flaw where a fourth could have been.\(^{22}\) Three of the four moneyers Blunt noted as using obverse dies showing three pellets and a flaw, Baldwin, Grim and Herewig, also struck coins of Eadwig of the HT3 type with the Bedford mint-signature. The fourth, Cilien, is possibly the same person as Cil(1)m, an Eadwig HT3 moneyer at Niwe/Newe, probably Newport (Pagnell). Two moneyers who used unflawed dies with four pellets, Husebald and Thurferth, were HT3 moneyers at Hampton (probably Northampton). So all appear to have been operating in the same general area.

As Blunt noted, ‘what seems clear is that the flawing of the obverse dies was deliberate: it is found on dies used by four moneyers, none of them duplicated between moneyers’. Possibly the flaw represents the removal of an earlier mark or symbol from the field of the die.\(^{23}\)

The relevant material is as follows:

Baldwin. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 10), with flaw and three pellets:
(a) BMS 502; (b) Bedford Museum; (c) Kirk Andreas find;\(^{24}\) and (d) Lindsay, Heptarchy, pl. 6, 145, in his collection – this according to the plate, has four pellets, but Blunt may have wondered whether this was an ‘improvement’ by the engraver, since he comments ‘I wish we could trace Lindsay’s Baldwin!’ All four are from different obverse dies. Another of Baldwin’s HT1 coins of Eadred has the strange reading \(D ‘A EADRED REX\) (BMS 501). Baldwin struck the H type for Athelstan (B.22), HT1 for Edmund (CTCE no. 14) (in which reign he was one of only two moneyers whose halfpence have survived), Eadred and Eadwig (CTCE no. 4). HT3 for


\(^{22}\) CTCE pp. 134 and 138–9.

\(^{23}\) As can be seen, for example, when annulets were removed from certain Stamford dies in the 970’s; see I. Stewart, ‘The Stamford Mint and the Connexion with the Abbot of Peterborough under Ethelred II’, BNJ 28 (1955–7), 106–10, and ‘Peterborough and Stamford’, SCMB 1970, 117–20.

\(^{24}\) See n. 20 above.
Eadwig at Bedford (CTCE no. 71), and BC (without mint name) for Edgar. Of this last type (CTCE no. 364), two coins have a group of three pellets in the reverse field (BMS 1162-3) and another a cross and three single pellets (Ryan lot 799).25

CILIEN. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 18), with flaw and three pellets:
(a) BMS 512; (b) SCBI Copenhagen 734, same dies as (a). If the name is a variant of Cilm or Cillum, he also struck HT3 of Eadwig at Newport (CTCE no. 92; BMS 813-4 and Grosvenor Museum, Chester ex Carlyon-Britton lot 1701), and HT1 of the same king (CTCE no. 9; BMS 726).

GRIM. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 35): (a) with flaw and three pellets, BMS 523; (b) with flaw but doubtful if any pellets, SCBI Oxford 359; (c) as (b), Manx Museum. All are from different obverse dies. There were at least two Grims in the third quarter of the century. One struck HR3 for Edgar at Derby (CTCE no. 196), other rosette types for Eadred (HR1; CTCE no. 142), and Eadwig (HR5; CTCE no. 140), and post-reform coins at Derby. There are also HT1 coins of Edmund (CTCE no. 279), Eadwig (CTCE no. 20) and Edgar (CTCE no. 9) which may be by the flawed die moneyer of Eadred, who also struck Eadwig's HT3 type at Bedford with a flawed obverse die (CTCE no. 74; BMS 800 and five in the Grosvenor Museum from the Chester hoard). The Grim who occurs after the reform at Lincoln and Stamford possibly represents a third moneyer of the name.

HEREWIG. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 39), with flaw and three pellets, CTCE no. 273 (pl. 12, no. 39/1 = 273), reading HEREVVIG. Another, without flaw or pellets (pl. 7, no. 16), reads HEREPVG. This moneyer struck HT3 at Bedford (CTCE no. 76; BMS 801, SCBI Cambridge 602 and Grosvenor Museum ex Chester 1950 hoard 275-6), and HT1 also for Edmund (CTCE no. 56).

HUSEBALD. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 42), with four pellets: (a) BMS 527; (b) SCBI Edinburgh 246; (c) possibly four, perhaps three, pellets, very differently placed, BMS 528. All are from different dies. The only other type recorded of Husebald is Eadwig's HT3, of Northampton (CTCE pl. 16, no. 83).

THURFERTH. Eadred, HT1 (CTCE no. 64), with four pellets, SCBI Edinburgh 266. A coin of the same type but with larger lettering, without the pellets, is BMS 540. Thurferth was a Northampton moneyer in Eadwig’s HT3 type (CTCE no. 84; BMS 807), in Edgar’s CC type (CTCE no. 262; BMS 1095), and post-reform. The name is also one of only two recorded for the extremely rare HR variant of Edgar with three annulets in the central line (BMC type le; BMS 1211), the geographical links of which are not clearly established.

Blunt also noted that an HR1 coin of Eadred by Oslac (CTCE no. 157; BMS 624) has four pellets at the ends of the obverse cross, within a beaded inner circle; but he thought this probably not relevant, since the type is north-western (the name is found at Chester under Athelstan). However, it is to be noted that another HR1 coin of Eadred by Oslac (CTCE no. 156) shares an obverse die with the north-eastern moneyer Humred (BMS 625 and SCBI Edinburgh 277).

KEY TO PLATE 7

Thames Group
1. St. Edmund, Onnonea. 1.38g.
2. -, Bereinciv. 1.23g.
3. Edward the Elder irregular, Aedered. 1.21g.
4. -, 0.89g., chipped.
5. -, 1.19g., chipped.
6. St. Peter, York. 1.20g., chipped and bent.

Suffolk Find (7–9) and Related Coins (10–12)
7. St. Edmund, Sdurec Not. 1.29g.
8. -, Abonel. 1.22g.
9. -, Iovicis. 1.31g.
10. -, Ansica. 1.21g.
11. -, Berner. 1.20g., chipped and bent.
12. -, Martini. 1.42g.

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25 For another BC type coin of Edgar by a Bedford moneyer with a cross and three pellets in the reverse field, see Lord Stewartby, ‘Brother, A Bedford Moneyer of Edgar’, NCirc, October 1994, 357.
Smarmore Hoard
13. Athelstan, Chester, Wulfstan, type CR/CC. 1.39g.
14. Eadred, Ingelberd, type HT1. 1.19g., chipped.
15. Edgar, Wallingford, Beorhtric, type CC. 1.11g., chipped.

Bedford moneyer, without flaw or pellets in field
16. Eadred, Herewig, type HT1. 1.19g., chipped.