THE FIRST SERIES OF SCEATTAS MINTED IN
SOUTHERN WESSEX: SERIES W

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The attribution of secondary-phase sceattas of Series H, BMC Types 39 and 49, to Hamwic (Southampton) was first proposed in the pages of this journal in 1954, by the late Christopher Blunt. Continued excavation of the wic, with the recovery of numerous sceattas, has only served to confirm his conclusion. There are now well over a hundred single finds of sceattas from Hamwic (not counting the Kingsland hoard), of which some forty-six per cent of those from the secondary phase are of Series H. (The hoard consists exclusively of Series H.) The other leg of the argument is to say that the corresponding percentage of Series H among single finds of secondary-phase date elsewhere, e.g. in the south-east or in London, or anywhere north of the Thames is far, far lower, e.g. one to three per cent. Evidence from the continent is in the same sense: among a thousand stray finds of sceattas from Domburg, on the island of Walcheren in the Rhine mouths area, there is just one example of Type 39 and one of Type 49. In a word, the outflows of Series H to destinations outside Wessex were remarkably limited, whereas inflows into Hamwic of sceattas minted elsewhere (the other fifty-four per cent) were varied and plentiful. Hamwic in the secondary phase, it seems, ran a very healthy balance-of-payments surplus.

Within southern Wessex, that is to say within the hinterland of the wic, Series H was again relatively plentiful. Figure 1, newly updated from the similar map presented at a BANS weekend about five years ago, uses regression analysis to demonstrate how the proportion of Series H, measured against other secondary series, declined as one went further away from Hamwic. The pattern is lop-sided. Westwards, the percentages remain virtually as high as they are in the wic itself, e.g. as much as forty per cent, right across the Hampshire Basin and up onto the chalk downlands. Eastwards and north-eastwards, on the other hand, the percentages very quickly fall off. This could either be because many fewer coins of Series H were carried in those directions, or because they soon came into competition with the products of other mints. Within a very few miles north-east of Winchester, for example, these already accounted for eighty to ninety per cent of the secondary-phase stray losses. That is, to some extent, the east-west pattern that one might have expected, because there were no mints west of Hamwic (or certainly none of any consequence), whereas the bulk of the sceatta coinages were minted in the south-east and in East Anglia and the North Sea coastslands, and diffused westwards as a matter of course. The more westerly parts of England were supplied with coinage by mints located in the east. Regression analysis can only tell us about proportions, not about how the absolute numbers of coins varied over a region. Nevertheless the contrast in percentages seen in Fig. 1, and the patterns of the contour-lines, strongly suggest that Hamwic's hinterland, in terms of trading activity, lay predominantly westward. Much the same regional pattern is repeated on regression analysis maps of Wessex for foreign sceattas of the secondary phase, namely Series E and X. Ben Palmer, in a recent paper, summarized the monetary evidence as follows: "the vast majority of specimens [of

Series H] have been found inside the wic [of Hamwic] – all it may represent is that this currency was primarily used as an internal token of exchange within the emporium and that monetary transactions had not spread into the hinterland. His conclusion is prejudiced and seriously flawed. The large numbers of finds of sceattas from Hamwic (about forty-six per cent of them of Series H) are a function, essentially, of prolonged excavation over nearly sixty years. Hamwic has been a major archaeological enterprise. In the Hampshire Basin at large, on the other hand, our evidence comes mainly from the activity of metal detectorists in recent years. The input of hours of searching effort, in relation to the area searched, is very different. Even so, there are now substantially more finds of sceattas shown on the lower part of Fig. 1, say from Marlborough southwards, than have been recovered within the wic – over 150, compared with 108 at Hamwic, and those are just the secondary-phase sceattas from Hamwic. Wessex is not an empty space. Of course, one may reasonably assume that monetary exchanges were concentrated in the wic. That is what wics were for. But one is not entitled to draw this conclusion from a contrast in the pattern of single finds. And it by no means follows that the silver sceattas were ‘internal tokens of exchange’, redeemable only in Hamwic. They had an intrinsic or bullion value which made them redeemable in any commercial centre, albeit perhaps at a discount equivalent to the cost of reminting. From the start, in c.675, sceattas throughout England crossed political frontiers and

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6 B. Palmer, 'The hinterlands of three southern English emporia: some common themes', in Pestell and Ulmschneider, as in n. 5, pp. 48-60.
circulated freely; and as we have seen, the majority of those in Hamwic had done just that. To speak of the coins of Series H as tokens was not a felicitous suggestion. Rather, the regularity of the contour lines, progressively outwards from Hamwic, should be seen as evidence (in combination with the substantial proportions that we are talking about, from twenty to forty per cent) for an actively circulating currency in the hinterland. If it had been otherwise, if for example Series H had turned up spottily here and there where the odd coin had been lost in a non-monetary context, the finds would be very unlikely to have generated the logical and quite tidy pattern which the map shows. A caveat: for the time being one should recognize that the gathering-circle (shown at the upper left of the map) is large enough in relation to the geographical pattern to have had a significant smoothing influence on the percentages and therefore on the contours. A smaller gathering-circle would support what has been said more forcefully, and eventually, when we have a larger random sample of stray finds, it will be possible to re-calculate the figures using a smaller circle. But sensible reflection, and experience with the regression analysis of sceattas in other regions of England, should encourage the student to accept the map as being broadly reliable. One ventures to predict that, in the future, the message of an updated map of Wessex will remain very much the same.

Moreover, the occurrence within the ambit of Series H of second-order productive sites – where ten or a dozen sceattas have been found in a single field – offers a clear indication of a hierarchy of places where monetary exchanges took place. These mini-‘productive sites’, such as Chickerell or Kingston Deverill, lie at a distance of 60–80 km from Hamwic.

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With that long preamble about south Wessex in the secondary phase, we are now in a better position to turn to Series W, in which BMC Type 54 is the sole type. Until the 1980s it was extremely scarce, and its mint-place was not known. Blackburn and Bonser in 1984 were able to construct a mini-corpus of just nine specimens (of which six were from England and three were in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France). Twenty years later, thanks largely to the discoveries of metal detectorists, it is possible to list over thirty specimens, the increase being wholly English. Not all the specimens have exact provenances, but, as our database of provenanced finds has continued to grow year by year, it has gradually become very clear, from looking at a map of the finds, that Series W generates a distribution-pattern focussed on south Wessex, showing many similarities with the distribution-pattern for Series H. We have not yet accumulated enough material for a full-blown regression-analysis of primary sceattas from Wessex to be worthwhile, but it is already beyond doubt that Series W likewise belongs to, and was minted in south Wessex. It seems, however, not to have been minted in Hamwic, from where there are hardly any finds of Series W. It is, indeed, rather doubtful whether Hamwic was yet in existence when Series W was first minted, or even in the years during which Series W was current in the region, and that is one of the ambiguities which make the detailed interpretation of Series W challenging.

The main conclusion, namely that Series W belongs to, and was minted in south Wessex can now be regarded as straightforward. A glance at the map (Fig. 2) should be sufficient, and all the rest of this article is what might be called the small print. At the same time there are some distant outliers on the map, namely primary-phase finds from near Repton (Derbyshire), near Grimsby (Lincolnshire), two from the south Lincolnshire productive site, and eastwards at Milton Regis (Kent) and Bentley (east Suffolk). Even further afield, there were two if not three specimens of Series W in the Cimiez hoard, from near Nice, on the French Riviera, t.p.q. c.715–20. Whether these are English coins, or Provençal imitations, is a delicate and difficult question which is examined at some length below. The conclusion is that they are Provençal. Either way, however,

7 The writer at one stage suggested Rochester, but it is now completely clear this was mistaken.
9 P. Grierson and M. Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage 1, The Early Middle Ages (Cambridge, 1986), at pp. 142 ff. and 146 ff., where previous estimates of the date of the Cimiez hoard are thoroughly dispatched. See also pp. 184 ff. for the early secondary-phase English series present in the hoard (G. J. N. U. and X), and of course Morel-Fatio’s description of the hoard, published by Chabouillet.
Fig. 2. Finds of Series W. Square symbols: secondary-phase coins.
the Cimiez coins would demonstrate that genuine examples of Series W had reached Marseilles, either to be hoarded, or to be noticed and copied locally. Coins of Series W were evidently carried across France by some pilgrim or traveller, who may have taken ship at Marseilles for Ostia, on his way to Rome. And conversely, there is a coin of Marseilles from the recent Stadium excavation in Hamwic. Also, we may understand the outlying finds of Series W from north of the Thames in the same general way, e.g. a pilgrim from the continent returning to Repton via the Solent. In considering the English find-evidence, we should not automatically assume that the stray losses in question reached their final resting-places from south Wessex in a single hop (nor, indeed, that the coin of Marseilles reached Hamwic in a single hop, as there is one in the Bais hoard from northern France). In principle, once the coins of Series W had moved northwards and had crossed the Thames, they might have become part of a miscellaneous currency in the Midlands—which was demonstrably being carried to and fro over considerable distances. But no specimens of Series W have so far been found in the upper Thames region, among a large body of single finds. That negative evidence certainly favours the idea of long-distance travellers; gradual diffusion would normally have resulted in a gradient, with a greater density of losses closer to home, thinning out as one went further away. Even with only the half-dozen finds just mentioned, one may be confident that gradual diffusion is not the explanation.

Recognizing that Series W had a dual function, circulating in its local region of the Hampshire Basin and also being carried over considerable distances both north and south by travellers who passed through that region, probably in order to take ship across the English Channel or having just done so, seems to offer a usefully secure insight into the uses of coinage in the late seventh and early eighth centuries in Wessex. On reflection, its significance may depend on, or be wrapped up with the question of how plentiful Series W was in Wessex. That should provoke the monetary historian to wish to know how many dies were used to strike Series W, a topic which again is explored below. The idea that coins from a particular mint may have had a dual function, meeting the needs of local circulation and also being used over long distances, is not new. Lafaurie had the same idea, many years ago, about various large Merovingian mints.10 In Wessex the conclusion is sharpened and made more intriguing, in so far as Series H (Types 39 and 49) shows no sign whatever of a dual function, whereas Type 48 (which Rigold assigned also to his Series H) clearly does. On the one hand Type 48 is relatively more plentiful in Hamwic than it is anywhere else, and on the other hand one would be extremely reluctant to think that it was minted in Hamwic, because its ‘behaviour’ is so different from that of Types 39 and 49 – with the latter of which it is roughly contemporary. Of all the single finds on record from England, a much higher proportion of those of Type 48 are from outside Hamwic and the Hampshire Basin, e.g. from north of the Thames or from the East Midlands, than is the case with Types 39 and 49.11 Assuming, as one probably should, that Type 48 was minted somewhere near Hamwic, it may be that that “somewhere” was a port of embarkation for the continent, on or near the Solent. One recalls St Willibald setting sail for Rome in c.720 from the mouth of the Hamble. Only three English sceattas have been recorded as stray finds from Italy, and it is surely significant that two of the three should be of Type 48 – one from Ostia, and the other from an alpine valley, at Aosta, where it was found during work on the cathedral.12 (There is also a Northumbrian Series Y from Aosta.) To sum up, Type 48 seems to have had a long-distance function in the same way as Series W, whereas Types 39 and 49 did not.

10 J. Lafaurie. ‘Les routes commerciales indiquées par les trésors et trouvailles monétaires merovingiens’, in Moneta e scambi nell’alto medievo, Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 8 (Spoleto, 1961), pp. 231–337, especially at pp. 267–9: ‘Ce sont là des émissions à l’origine étrangères mais, il serait possible de multiplier les exemples qui montrent une circulation monétaire locale associée à une fonction économique plus étendue, prouvée par les trouvailles de monnaies isolées, mais surtout par les trésors à la composition hétérogène’. One is dubious, however, about the methodology of comparing stray finds and hoards on the same footing.

11 D.M. Metcalf, ‘How sceattas are attributed to their mints: the case of Series H, Type 48’. Proc. of the 10th Intern. Congress of Numismatics, London: September 1986 (London, 1989), pp. 333–8. On the one hand, there are now five specimens from the Hamwic excavations, plus (within the orbit of the Hamwic mint) finds from ‘south Hampshire’, Easton, H.; the Isle of Wight; and Berwick St John, W. On the other hand there is a similar total of finds from further afield: Sutton Courtenay, Ox.; ‘east Oxfordshire’; Roxton, Bd; Dunstable (imitative?); East Tilbury, Ess; West Hythe, K; and St Nicholas-at-Wade, K.

When was Series W first minted? It was not present in the Aston Rowant (Oxfordshire) hoard, concealed shortly before the end of the primary phase, say c.710, but that does not necessarily mean that it was not yet in existence. Aston Rowant perhaps reflects a treasure belonging to a merchant, who was carrying it along the Thames valley. The absence of Series W from the hoard might be because it was only occasionally carried north, by travellers who did not pause as they crossed the Thames valley. The chances of Series W occurring in the hoard are also bound up with questions of the relative quantities in which the various series circulated in England.

Two specimens of the earliest variety of Series W have been chemically analysed. Both are of very pure silver, with a substantial trace of gold. Non-destructive electron probe microanalysis with wavelength dispersive spectrometry has shown that the Grimsby find has 96.2 per cent 'silver' (i.e. including 1.30 per cent gold), while the Hamwic find, analysed by energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence with Si(Li) detector, has 93.8 per cent silver (including 1.54 per cent gold). 13 These figures are well up to the alloy standard of Series A and B, and much better than anything one could point to in the early secondary phase. It seems very clear, therefore, that the early variety at least (Variety 1a below) belongs to the primary phase. The alloy offers confirmation that the type's absence from Aston Rowant is not because they are of intermediate date. In so far as there was a pause between the primary and secondary phases, followed by a new beginning and the use of different types, one may assume that Variety 1b is also primary. Varieties 2, a and b, have not been chemically analysed, and until they are (and perhaps even then), their date before or after the transition from primary to secondary will remain conjectural. Variety 3 is doubtless from the secondary phase, and from late in that phase, to judge by its style. The details of the obverse and reverse designs are all formally very much the same as on Variety 1, but the general appearance is much like lateish coins of Series L. Its alloy is severely debased. It seems likely that the minting of Series W was in abeyance between Variety 2 and Variety 3. Neither is represented in the large and quite mixed Woodham Walter (Essex) hoard. Again, distance and scarcity may be invoked.

If Series W was first minted at some date before the end of the primary phase (c.710–15?), and if the changeover from base gold thrymsas to silver sceattas occurred in east Kent in c.675–80, there is a rather wide space, of around thirty-five years, within which to locate its origin, and no numismatic evidence to help in any way, so far as one can see. Variety 1 is quite a small issue, all of which could easily have been struck within a couple of years. The best we can do is to look at the history of Wessex in those years, to see whether events make certain dates or date ranges appear historically more plausible than others. Any hypotheses that we come up with will not be numismatically verifiable, although one may live in hope that a newly discovered hoard or a new archaeological context will narrow the range of choice.

Before we come to the historical context, however, let us look in more detail at the evidence from the Hamwic excavations.

It seems that Series W was minted in a place within easy reach of the Solent, and yet not at Hamwic. The simplest argument for ruling out Hamwic, namely the virtual absence of Series W among the sceattas excavated there, needs to be refined by considering whether there was in fact a sufficient overlap of dates, between the date when Hamwic was founded and laid out as a wic and the date-span during which (primary) Series W, i.e. Variety 1, and possibly also Variety 2, remained in circulation. It will be advisable to dissect the evidence with care. The view of the archaeologists who have excavated and studied Hamwic is that its origins are to be sought in the

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13 Both analyses carried out by Dr J.P. Northover, the Grimsby figures published in D.M. Metcalf, Thrymsas and Sceattas in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, vol. 3 (1994), at pp. 664–5, and those for the Hamwic coin in D.M. Metcalf and Z. Stos-Gale, ‘Chemical analyses of some sceattas from the Southampton excavations’, NC 142 (1982), 142–8. The technical difficulties which may make the Hamwic analysis a little less reliable are discussed at p. 143.
first or even the second decade of the eighth century.\textsuperscript{14} If Series W began to be minted before Hamwic was in existence, then it seems obvious that it must have been minted somewhere else. But even so, if it was in use in south Wessex generally, one would have expected it to circulate in Hamwic, as soon as the \textit{wic} was laid out, unless it had already fallen out of use. That could be because Series W was substantially earlier than the origin of the \textit{wic}, or perhaps because the \textit{wic}'s origins are later than the end of the primary phase. Now, the view of the archaeologists, mentioned above, is heavily dependent on the numismatic evidence, namely that there are few finds of primary sceattas from Hamwic, and virtually none of Series A, B, or C1, and that such few as there are have arrived in Hamwic, and could have been lost, five or ten years later than the dates when they were minted. Morton correctly recognizes that a find of a coin of King Aldfrith of Northumbria (685–705) is of special interest. It is in all probability another of these coins carried over a long distance by a pilgrim or traveller, and its date of loss is likely to be earlier rather than later in relation to the dates of Aldfrith's reign. But his coins may well have remained in use in Northumbria for some years after his death. It is from a very good early context, which settles the correct attribution of the type, ruling out an attribution to Aldfrith of Lindsey (fl. c.786–96).\textsuperscript{15}

Where one would be inclined to quibble with the archaeologists, in the matter of the foundation date of Hamwic, is that they may have unduly depreciated the few primary-phase finds. If we include the earlier (pre-excavation) finds from Southampton, the tally is fourteen sceattas, as nearly as we can judge. That is not negligible. The fourteen are of Series A, B, CZ, Aldfrith, Æthelred, W, D (two), and six of E. In addition there is a grave find with two coins of Series B, from the Stadium excavation (quite near the Itchen waterfront, immediately NE of sites SOU 1 and 20). One should also take into account the finds of primary-phase sceattas from south Wessex generally, which follow a very similar chronological pattern. Some of the fourteen may well be early secondary-phase losses, but one doubts whether they all are. The strongest evidence, perhaps, comes from the recent Stadium excavation, SOU 1019, where two sceattas of Series B were found in a grave, and also a thin lamella of silver bearing the obverse impression of a third coin of the same type, namely Series B. The two coins are of variety BIB, possibly a copy, and BIA, weighing only 0.83 g and more probably a copy. Other grave-finds of just two coins are known, e.g. from the Buttermarket cemetery, Ipswich, whereas a little later eight or even twenty coins was usual. On numismatic grounds (just two coins, and both of Series B) one would prefer as early a date as possible for the Stadium grave-find, e.g. in the 690s. One would be inclined, therefore, to push the foundation date of Hamwic well back towards 700, or even a little earlier, on the basis of the new grave-find. We have no reason to assume that Hamwic achieved instant success from Day One: monetary circulation within the \textit{wic} may have begun on a smaller scale than was later reached. Perhaps one should recognize that, as between 695 and 705, the date of foundation is bound to remain a matter of opinion. Be that as it may, if Hamwic was in existence in even the closing years of the primary phase, then the arguments based on the paucity of Series W (one among fourteen) can be reinstated. Strictly speaking, even that one is not a single find in the regular sense of the term. It is a grave-find (and as such highly unusual among the many excavated graves at Hamwic) from Section SOU 32, i.e. at the northern end of the \textit{wic}, and some 500 m inland from the (present-day) Itchen water-front. The coin lay immediately to the south of the skull. Now, Series W, Variety 1 is scarce, but not that scarce: at least fifteen specimens are known. Its virtual absence from the excavation finds would seem to rule out its having been minted in the \textit{wic}. One ought to add that a coin of Variety 2, auctioned at Glendinings in 1993, was stated in the sale catalogue to have been found 'in Southampton'. Whether it was found within the ditch which demarcated Hamwic is not now known. Southampton today is six or eight times as extensive as Hamwic. If we give both coins the benefit of the doubt, and combine the evidence for Varieties 1 and 2 on the assumption that they are both primary, there are at best two


\textsuperscript{15} Phil Andrews kindly advised the writer about his assessment of the context of the Aldfrith coin, which was well stratified. There is a dendrochronological date of c.710 from the planks lining a nearby well. This is reported in D.M. Metcalf, 'Nyt om sceattas af typen Wodan/monster', Nordisk Numismatisk Unions Medlemsbjud 1986, 110–13, at p. 115.
finds out of fewer than twenty from the primary phase, from Southampton – roughly eight to ten per cent, subject to margins of statistical uncertainty. That is a very different picture from Series H, Type 39, of which a similar total number of specimens is known, among which there are five early finds from Southampton, plus seven single finds from the excavations (leaving aside three from the Kingsland hoard).

The only caveat is that the earliest phase of Hamwic might perhaps have been a smallish area on the Itchen waterfront, as yet completely unexcavated. The small beginnings of Ipswich on its waterfront offer a possible analogy. Series W might, hypothetically, have made up a larger proportion of the losses in this ‘proto-Hamwic’; but only if Series W fell out of circulation or alternatively was supplemented by inflows of other types, rather quickly. One may add that the caveat does not apply to the big productive site on the Isle of Wight (from where we have one specimen of Variety 1, among nine primary-phase single finds, or roughly eleven per cent.) Nor does it apply to the stray finds from southern Wessex generally.

There are just over fifty single-finds of primary date (including the fourteen from Hamwic) from the south Wessex circulation area defined by Series W, and among these there are ten of Series W, Varieties 1 and 2 (nineteen per cent). Some forty per cent are foreign coins from the Rhine mouths area, i.e. porcupines and continental runics. The other English types which have turned up at all regularly are Series F (five specimens), C and/or R2 (five) and CZ (a local imitation of C, two specimens). The rest of the single finds are miscellaneous. Thus, W is the dominant English series. In a previous volume of this journal the writer drew attention to the fact that Series F was relatively very plentiful in the upper Thames region, and that may well be the direction from which most of the five specimens arrived in south Wessex.

The figure of nineteen per cent is the most useful bench-mark available to us, and it is surprisingly high. One may back-track in order to remark that if Hamwic had been the mint-place of Series W, we might reasonably have expected Varieties 1 and 2 to make up at least nineteen per cent of the finds from Southampton, whereas what we have is at most ten per cent. The numbers are as yet too small for this argument to be altogether secure, but for what it is worth it suggests that Hamwic is not the mint-place of Series W. But the margins of statistical variation are such that the evidence still might be misleading.

Another, and possibly stronger argument relies on the assumption that Series W, Variety 3 (from the secondary phase) is from the same mint-place as Variety 1. It goes contrary to all our notions about sceatta typology to suppose that Series W and H were both minted at Hamwic concurrently. ‘One wic, one series’ seems to be the rule. If Variety 3 is not from Hamwic, then neither should we expect Variety 1 to be.

If not at Hamwic, where else might Series W have been minted – in both the primary and the secondary phase? Two possibilities suggest themselves. One is the Isle of Wight, and the other is Winchester. Neither commends itself very readily, and it may be that there are other unsuspected possibilities which are still a blank in our database of finds, e.g. Wareham. The few provenances eastwards of Hamwic, i.e. into Sussex, seem to mark a significant difference between the patterns generated by Series H and W. Finds from Bury (near Pulborough) and from West Marden (imitative) suggest that one might consider a mint-place nearer to Portsmouth for Series W. But one’s instincts are against it; and those two find-spots might equally well be explained by an attribution to Winchester.

The Isle of Wight would not until recently have been considered at all, as there was only one sceatta find on record from the island. The discovery of a productive site not very far from Carisbrooke has changed the picture completely. There are at least thirty-eight sceattas from the site, of which nine are of primary date. In the primary phase this site will have rivalled Hamwic, and may indeed have been in existence for a decade or more before the wic was established. Carisbrooke, on the site of a Roman fort, may be the Saxon Wihtgarabyrg. Its existence in the late seventh/early eighth


\[17\] Details in the data-base maintained by the writer, which he hopes to publish in the next revision of the ‘Check-list of finds’.
THE FIRST SERIES OF SCEATTAS IN WESSEX

It is shadowy, and it will have been at best a fortified place, not a town. Although the Isle of Wight was a newly conquered part of the West Saxon realm, rivalries within the royal house meant that, whereas Winchester was favoured by King Cenwalh (641/2–660), Caedwalla gave land to Bishop Wilfrid instead. Thus, although the Isle of Wight is peripheral, we should not completely rule it out as the mint-place of Series W, during Caedwalla’s short reign at least.

Winchester became the seat of the West Saxon bishop in c.660, that is, well before any likely date for the introduction of Series W. It would have offered the security that was desirable for minting, at a time when there can have been few other places in southern Wessex that did so. Against an attribution to Winchester, virtually no sceattas have been found in the course of prolonged excavations there. The Venta Icenorum gold triens, attributed to Winchester by Amécourt, has been shown by Grierson to be a modern forgery – and indeed it would be historically implausible even in 648 (the date implied by Bede), let alone c.660. One may mention a nineteenth-century find from Winchester, described from a drawing by Roach Smith which cannot now be found, as ‘Half-length figure with staff / decorated cross with annulets between the arms’. This has been tentatively identified as a coin of Series W, but the annulets on the reverse are an insurmountable obstacle. Half-length figures are very uncommon in the sceatta coinages; if the drawing were to turn up, all would probably become clear.

One might have been tempted to look further west, to e.g. Wareham, given the cluster of single finds of Series W in Dorset, if they were not for the comparable pattern in Series H, where the frequency of finds is high, well to the west of the mint-place. The same commodities which drew coinage of Series H westwards may have been produced and traded, a generation earlier, in the same parts of Dorset. But that argument is inconclusive; it merely says that Series W need not have been minted locally in Dorset. Against an attribution to Wareham, however, is the long-distance function of Series W, discussed above.

In c.686 the turbulent Caedwalla, king of the Gewissae, in the upper Thames region, conquered and annexed the Jutish province of south Hampshire, which lay around the Solent. Thereafter he called himself king of Wessex. In the previous year he had supported the attempt by his brother Mul to seize the Kentish throne. Mul was slain in 687. In 694 Wihtred, king of Kent, reached a statesmanlike agreement with Ine (Caedwalla’s successor as king of Wessex), agreeing to pay a massive wergild for Mul. The various manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle agree on the figure, 30,000, but whether this was 30,000 sceattas, or shillings, or base thrymsas is not made clear. This may have been a traditional figure for a king’s wergild.

One wonders whether the wergild of Mul may not have been used to initiate the minting of Series W. Die 1 in the catalogue below has an exceptionally high survival-rate, being known from at least five specimens, very different from the rest of Series W. Moreover, these coins have widely-scattered provenances. On both counts, die 1 is unusual. Its high survival-rate may be mainly because the die was heavily used, but perhaps also because of what happened to the coins after they were struck. If not the earliest die to be cut in Series W, it will presumably be almost the

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20 His successor Ine was from another branch of the royal family: his father was Cenred.
21 Among exactly 100 coins found in the excavations, 1961–73, there was only one sceatta, a secondary porcupine. It is illustrated in M. Dolley and C.E. Blunt, ‘Coins from the Winchester excavations, 1961–1973’, *BNJ* 47 (1977), 135–8 and pl. 4. See also Y. Harvey et al., *The Winchester Mint and Other Numismatic Studies* (Winchester Studies, 8), forthcoming.
23 The case against 648 is set out by Barbara Yorke, as in n. 19.
24 Blackburn and Bonser, as in n. 8.
25 Wareham is certainly pre-Alfredian. Under the year 784 [786], the Chronicle records that Beorhtric succeeded to the kingdom of Wessex and his body lies at Wareham, and his direct paternal ancestry goes back to Cerdic.
earliest. (There are a couple of dies with no pellets on the torso, which could be experimental.) Could the coins of die 1 reflect the wergild of Mul? A single obverse die could, after all, have produced the bulk of 30,000 sceattas; and it is not obligatory to suppose that the whole of the wergild was turned into coins.

To whom was the wergild paid? To the king. The writer is very willing to accept the idea that Series W was a coinage under royal control. The only serious alternative is that King Ine gave the right of coinage to the bishop of Winchester. (Is this figure with a long wispy beard in any sense a portrait? — not, however, the bishop: for canonical reasons, a priest could not have been shown bare-legged.) Subsequently, the output of the mint (wherever it was) perhaps dwindled and became sporadic. In particular, the secondary-phase variety 3 may reflect a resumption of activity after a considerable gap. Knowledge of the distinctive design of Series W remained available to the die-cutter, even though the primary-phase coins had almost certainly fallen out of circulation (cf. the Hamwic finds). One supposes that the design was deemed to belong to the mint-place.

The currency of southern Wessex in the primary phase was doubtless very small in relation to that circulating in the south-east of England, or even in the upper Thames region. Variety 1 of Series W, which made up roughly fifteen per cent of the single finds, is known from at least four obverse dies, which except for die 1 would seem to have been under-used or lightly used. More dies of Variety 1 will probably turn up. Let us assume that we are talking about an original total of seven or eight obverse dies. Part of their output left the region in the hands of long-distance travellers. If we say that seven or eight dies reflects fifteen per cent of the output, 100 per cent will be about fifty equivalent dies. This estimate should be at the upper end of the probable range. The writer is perfectly well aware that the margins of statistical uncertainty are wide, and that these are very rough 'ball-park' figures. (Rather than refusing to think about them at all, the constructive attitude is surely to ask how they could be made less rough. The answer is to enlarge our random sample by the faithful recording of all sceatta finds, the common types as well as the interesting ones.) The rough estimates may nevertheless be of use to help us to envisage the historical context. If we think of there being between a quarter of a million and three-quarters of a million sceattas in circulation in southern Wessex in the first years of the eighth century, it implies a good deal about the transformation of the regional economy.

For many regions of England, the availability of coinage preceded the introduction of sceattas. Merovingian gold tremisses, valuable as they must have been, occur as single finds on a significant scale, and over a much wider area than Anglo-Saxon thrymgesas. But from southern Wessex there is extremely little gold: the late primary phase really was the beginning.

The numismatist's message to the general historian is that southern Wessex was virtually without coinage until the sceattas of Types C2 and R2 and the early porcupines became available, that is, so far as we can judge, in the decade of the 690s or the 700s, and that by 710–15 a currency of some size was in use, from Hamwic westwards into Dorset. The locally minted Series W made up some fifteen per cent of this currency. Thus, within at most twenty years, a monetary economy had been established. If there was a political context for this sea-change, it is not far to seek: the extension of Caedwalla's power from the already monetized upper Thames region, to take in the south coast, and to take control of the Solent. If this happened in c.686, it antedated the minting of Types C2 and R2, and it antedated, so far as we can judge, the creation of Hamwic. If Series W was triggered by the wergild of Mul, in c.694, it antedated that too. When measured against the (very) rough figure of fifty dies, it should be clear that the bullion contributed by the wergild of Mul is very unlikely to have been decisive in facilitating the monetary integration of southern Wessex. Even allowing generous margins for uncertainty, the currency was much bigger than the wergild. And in any case, it was mostly of other types. The minting of Series W will, however, have helped to put power and prestige into royal hands.

26 The iconography is well discussed in A. Gannon, The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage, Sixth to Eighth Centuries (Oxford, 2003), at pp. 87–93. 'Single figure between crosses'.

10 THE FIRST SERIES OF SCEATTS IN WESSEX
For the monetary historian the main points about Variety 3 of Series W are that it includes specimens that are extremely debased; and yet that it seems to have enjoyed a similar regional circulation westwards, like Variety 1. There may have been some contraction in its area of circulation (finds from Hamwic, Hanford, and the Maiden Newton area). It has not been recorded from the Isle of Wight. Only one specimen has been chemically analysed.\(^{27}\) It was found to contain negligible amounts of silver, but enough zinc to make one suppose that quite a lot of scrap brass had gone into its alloy (doubtless in an attempt to improve the colour). Another specimen appears to be of poor alloy, or possibly even plated, on a base core.\(^{28}\) Extremely debased alloys are seen at the tail end of Series L, and also in East Anglia, at the tail end of Series R. It seems that in the middle of the eighth century silver ceased to be available in England in sufficient quantities, and that the debasement which had been in progress since very early in the secondary phase became precipitous. In Wessex Series H (which never fell much below fifty per cent silver) was probably over and done with some time before Variety 3 was minted. There are, incidentally, some rather conspicuously worn specimens of Series H from the hinterland, which hint at their having remained in use for a long time.

The motivation to strike sceattas in a time of commercial and monetary downturn hints at a political rather than a purely trading context for Variety 3. For what it is worth, that may be thought to encourage an attribution to Winchester.

VI

A scarce secondary variety which apparently copies the cross-and-crosslets and saltire reverse of Series W should be mentioned (Fig. 3). The obverse has a monster with head turned back, a germanic motif seen on numerous sceatta types.\(^{29}\) The copying of the reverse is not exact: instead of a plain saltire this type has an ornamented saltire, with trident ends. Also, the crosslets are each defined by five pellets, not three. One would hesitate to claim derivation from Series W, were it not for the fact that two of the three provenanced specimens are from Wessex, namely Rushall (Wilts.) and the Isle of Wight. A third specimen has recently come to light at West Winch, near Kings Lynn.\(^{30}\)

![Fig. 3.](image)

**CATALOGUE**

**Variety 1**

**Variety 1A.** The obverse shows a facing, standing figure, struck from a die larger than the flan and truncated so that on most specimens it appears only torso-length: more precisely, the legs cannot be seen; but on specimen 1c (Warnford) the tops of the thighs can just be seen. As this is a die-duplicate it proves that on other specimens the design is partly off the flan. The figure, with flexed arms, holds a long cross to left and right. The hands are exaggeratedly large, and are held open, rather than with the fingers curled to grasp the cross. The thumb is carefully shown pointing vertically, inside the staff of the cross (again, not grasping it), and the fingers outside. (Note the precedent of the ‘oath-taking’ thrymysas.) The head is turned to the right, and a beard juts out, almost horizontally. On the clearest specimens it is long, thin, and wispy. The torso is ornamented with several rows of pellets.

The reverse shows a cross-and-crosslets and a saltire, both springing from the same central pellet. Again, the design is larger than the flan, and no border is visible.

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\(^{27}\) Hamwic 114, by EPMA.

\(^{28}\) The Maiden Newton find, now in the Ashmolean Museum.

\(^{29}\) See Gannon, as in n. 26, at pp. 148–51.

1. Several specimens are from the same obverse die and probably also the same reverse (although the reverses are difficult to check).

(b) Near Grimsby, L (S. Humberside), 1983. 1.12 g. Ashmolean Museum. (From a site several miles inland, where four sceattas were found in one field, scattered over about 300 yds) Illus. in SEC, pl. 14, 10 and Thrymsas and Sceattas 155.
(c) Warnford, near Winchester, H. 1992. Metal-detector find reported as being to the east of Warnford Park, and to the west of the disused railway line, possibly within the environs of the late Anglo-Saxon church. More precise find-spot on record in Winchester Museum. 1.28 g. Illus. in Coin Register 1992, 245. Sold by Spinks.
(d) South Lincolnshire productive site, find CXX. August/September 2000. 1.24 g. The metal has a goldish tinge. (This happens, e.g. in Series A and B, and it should not be taken to signify raised gold contents, without analysis.) Squareish flan. A.I.J. Abramson collection, acquired November 2000. Enlarged illus. in Abramson, Sceatta Finder (publication pending).
(e) P. Finn, List 6, Winter 1996, no. 46. Weight not recorded. A well-struck specimen, well illustrated. On the obv., a small section of the outer (linear) border at 12-1 o’clock.

2. Instead of a single horizontal line across the shoulders, two short lines, out of alignment (and this is not double-striking, because both specimens show it). The upper arm, to the left, is held very close to the body, vertically, whereas the arm on the right is angled away from the body. No pellets are visible on the torso, and probably there never were any (experimental die?). The beard on the Hamwic specimen is long and wispy, and one can see that it consists of three fine lines.

(a) Hamwic excavations (Clifford Street), 1968. 1.01 g. Illus. in NC 1982, pl. 41, 18 (chemical analysis on p.147), and in Metcalf, 'The coins' (as in n.2 above), no. 113.
(b) W.L. Subjack collection (Iullo Vecchi Ltd, London, Nummorum Auctions, no. 11, 3 June 1998, no. 92. 1.23 g. Enlarged illus. in Vecchi.) There are technically interesting traces of an edge to the dies at 2 to 4 o’clock on both obv. and rev. (as illus.), and a weak patch at 8 to 10 o’clock on both obv. and rev. – flan of uneven thickness? There are a couple of scratches making an ‘x’ on the torso (to judge from the published photograph).

3. Gussage All Saints, Do. 2004 or earlier. Again, no pellets are visible on the torso. But as the pellets for the eye and the mouth are virtually invisible, one hesitates between wear on the die or weak striking. The upper and lower parts of each arm make a symmetrical Y, and this is a very easy way to distinguish the identity of the die. The palm of the hand is modelled more naturalistically.

(a) Found by Mr Martin Green during his field-work on Cranborne Chase.

Dies not checked for identity:
(-) Winterborne Whitechurch, Do.
(-) Bury, near Pulborough, Sx.
Counterfeit or modern forgery?
(-) Patrick Finn list 18 (2003), no. 36. One hesitates to say that this is a modern forgery not having set eyes on the piece itself, but from the photograph, everything about the style is wrong. Weight not recorded.

31 Numbering of the finds in the writer’s database.
Variety 1B. All as Variety 1A, except that the figure is smaller, allowing the legs to be included in the design. On the reverse the cross-bars of the crosslets are shorter. There is no abrupt change from 1A to 1B. No. 5 could be described as transitional. The same workman may well have produced the dies.

4. The obverse is extremely similar to die 1, and the Bentley find was indeed described as a die-duplicate, in the Coin Register. The writer made a × 2 enlargement onto a transparent sheet, in order to lay it on top of specimens from die 1, and examine the exact positioning of the pellets on the torso. From that it is clear that the die is definitely not the same. Moreover, the top of the left leg (to the observer’s right) is just visible. Other details, which one would have accepted in a die-duplicate as differences due to fuller striking or to die-wear, should be accepted at face value, namely the eye is more prominent, and the hair is carefully depicted, by fine, very neat lines with tiny pellets at the ends.

(a) Bentley, Sf. 1.13 g. Precise find-spot in Suffolk SMR. Illus. in Coin Register 1993, 181.

5. The hand, to the right, is smaller. The back of the head is decorated with five parallel lines (representing hair). These lines are unpelleted, see no. 4 above.

(a) Isle of Wight, productive site. 1.12 g. Three bold pellets for the tip of the nose and the lips are in a more or less straight vertical line. The pellets on the torso are in more of a honeycomb pattern rather than in rows. Below, the belly and thighs appear to be naked (can this be right?), and modelled. All the pellets are in high relief, and globular. The fingers are much smaller than hitherto. The hair is shown by five parallel lines, curling downwards slightly at the outer ends, and with tiny pellets at the roots. Pointed beard. The reverse includes a linear border, visible in part. The reverse die is considerably larger than the flan. Illus. in Coin Register 1992, no. 246. Shown at the British Museum by Mr B. White, but found in fact by his friend Mr J.W. Heath.

6. The torso seems not to be modelled, but to be indicated simply by four rows of four or three pellets, the bottom row compressed to resemble a solid horizontal line.

(a) Bournemouth area. Glendining, 11 October 1993, 223, where the catalogue states, ‘Found in the Bournemouth area’. Knowing the proclivities of some detectors, one suspects that this could mean ten or twenty miles away, e.g. into Dorset. The figure has long, straight hair, shown as five parallel strands sloping diagonally. A short beard is indicated, also diagonal.

7. The body is smaller and is ornamented with just four pairs of pellets. The reverse design is also smaller.

(a) Compton Dando, So (Avon), 1997. 1.08 g. Acquired from the finder by the Ashmolean Museum.

Dies not checked for identity:


Variety 1C. Provençal copies. In the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris there are four specimens of Series W (Prou, of which 1615–17 are ex Morel-Fatio, catalogue no. 92, and 1615–16 are stated by Prou to be ex-Cimiez. It is very possible that 1617 is also from Cimiez, although Prou does not say so). The four coins (and there are no others of Series

33 A. Chabouillet, Catalogue raisonné de la collection des deniers mérovingiens des VIIe et VIIIe siècles de la trouvaille de Cimiez (Paris, 1890).
W in Paris) have been disturbed in the tray, 1615 and 1618 having been switched. This is easily verified, from Prou, plate 24, 12. Further, under 1617 there is a ticket which reads ‘D’Amézourt 256’, and under 1618, ‘K2022’. This information is incorrect.\(^{34}\) Note that on no. 1618 the shoulder-joints are pelleted, a detail never seen on English coins. Also, the half-length figure recalls Variety 1A – with which this specimen most certainly does not belong.

There are also two further varieties with the cross-crosslet and saltire reverse of Series W, in combination with quite different obverses. One of them (Prou 1612 = pl. 24, 10) has as its obverse type a large letter M with crosslet above, while the other (Prou 1613 = plate 24, 11 and also 1614) has a rather more complicated monogram consisting of a large chevron-barred A with two very large annulets attached to the feet, and a crosslet attached above. To right and left are the letters R, B, facing downwards. All three coins are from the Cimiez hoard; they weigh 1.13 g, 1.12 g, and 0.94 g respectively. They are attributable to Marseilles.\(^{35}\)

(8a) Prou 1615. Annulet at centre. Feet turned outwards. 1.04 g.
(8b) Prou 1616. Both feet turned to right. 1.25 g.
(8c) Prou 1617. Larger, fatter body. 1.10 g.
(8d) Prou 1618. Pelleted shoulder joints. 1.26 g.

Of the three Morel-Fatio coins of Series W, two (1616–17) correspond with variety 1b, although of decidedly rough workmanship, and with smaller rather than large crosslets on the reverse. Neither is in particularly good condition. No. 1615 has a full length figure, with its feet visible, both pointing to the right. On 1617 the figure has a larger, fatter body; its legs and feet are indistinct. The two coins are certainly from different dies, although the reverses are of very similar workmanship. The third Morel-Fatio coin, 1615, has an annulet at the centre of the reverse, and the full-length figure has its feet turned outwards. The annulet links the Series W coin, 1615, with the mules, and thereby removes it from the English series. That is to say, there is a presumption that all the coins with a central annulet in the cross-crosslets and saltire (Prou 1615), or with a central annulet enclosing a pellet (Prou 1613 and 1614), or with a central annulet made up of pellets and enclosing a rather larger boss (Prou 1612) are Provençal copies, inspired wholly or partly by Series W, since the central annulet is very rarely seen on English varieties, other than Variety 2B. No specimen from this little cluster of related types has been found in Wessex. If they are Provençal in origin, as seems well-nigh certain, they tell us something about the mentality of the die-cutters in Marseilles, who were eclectic in their choice of designs, and who felt no restraint about copying (quite carefully) a West Saxon coin that had come their way and had, presumably, taken their fancy.

The coins with M and A as their types are certainly not English; and the straight Series W coins from the Cimiez hoard are connected with them by their use of a central annulet. To play the role of devil’s advocate for a moment: if Prou 1616–17 were English, they would have stood very late in the sequence of Variety 1 (but before Variety 2), and this would fit well enough with the date of the Cimiez hoard. If mint-output dwindled severely at the end of the primary phase, the non-appearance of Variety 1C in Wessex (until now) might be explicable simply in terms of the statistical improbability of a very small issue turning up among a restricted number of finds. The Cimiez hoard, on the other hand, just happens to capture the moment of their issue. All this is an argument with a limited shelf-life, but when one contemplates it even now, it will not do.

\(^{34}\) I am indebted to M. Michel Dhenin who kindly looked at the coins for me in May 2004, and sent photocopies.

\(^{35}\) See _MEC_ I, cat. nos 572–5 and commentary.
Finally, then, to put the cat among the pigeons, the finding of a very fine specimen of the A type (Prou 1613–14) at Watton, Norfolk, early in 2002 (Fig. 7) may be thought to challenge what has been said in the last few paragraphs. Although the downwards-facing letters R, B have degenerated, there should be no doubt whatever that the Watton coin is from the same workshop as Prou 1613–14. Could that workshop, after all, be English? If so, that whole cluster of coins in the Cimiez hoard would probably have to go with it. In the writer’s judgement, the weight of the evidence is heavily against that, and we just have to say that the Watton find is a Merovingian silver coin found in England. After all, it happens.

Variety 1D. An English imitative variety. Two specimens are known (Fig. 8), from different dies but manifestly the work of the same die-cutter, of an imitative variety which has affinities with Series U, Type 23b. The first was found at West Marden, in West Sussex, towards the end of February 1998. As the find-spot lies well within the circulation-area of Series W, one must consider the possibility that the dies were cut and used in south Wessex. That remains the case, even though the other specimen was recovered from the south Lincolnshire productive site, far away to the north – another traveller’s loss. It is in principle possible that Variety 1D was manufactured elsewhere, for example in the upper Thames region, and that the West Marden coin had been “repatriated” to south Wessex because some user recognized that that was where it belonged. But that is far-fetched. Nevertheless, the coins have been included in the numbered sequence, even though their official status is problematic. Two pairs of dies hardly amount to mass-production, but they do create the expectation of an output running into thousands of coins.

The imitations offer a most interesting example of a die-cutter’s perception of what was necessary and what was optional, in the copying of a design. The obverse shows a torso-length figure with exaggeratedly large hands, held open, i.e. based very closely on the hands of Variety 1A. The head, however, is in a totally different style, with a long, sweeping S-shaped curve of hair, a large oval enclosing the eye, a large sharply pointed nose, a normal chin with no beard, and two dots behind the neck (derived from wreath-ties?). The shoulders are rounded, not angular, and there are no pellets on the torso. On the reverse, the ends of the saltire are pelletted. Both sides have a dotted border.

The West Marden specimen, on a rather small flan, seems to have poorly-understood thumbs, and a scribbled or zig-zag shape where the left-hand cross should be. One wonders whether that could be because, on the model the die-cutter had in front of him, the left-hand cross was off the flan (as it often is in Variety 1A).

On both specimens there is a marginal inscription on the reverse, possibly beginning with a recumbent S on no. 9a. No. 9b has a reversed N, pellet, N.

The style of the head and the rounded shoulders are very strongly reminiscent of certain specimens in Series U. Was the die-cutter copying both W and U at the same time? Or, dare one speculate, was this coin produced by the die-cutter who subsequently went on to produce the stylistically similar coins in Series U? If that conjecture is correct, the date could be very early in the secondary phase, or even at the end of the primary phase, and its context could be the widespread dispersion of coins struck from die 1 (perhaps for political or prestige reasons). At any later date, Variety 1A would have been less likely to attract attention. Chemical analysis to establish the silver contents might help one in reaching a judgement on the date and/or status of Variety 1D.

(9b) South Lincolnshire productive site. 0.9 g. Abramson collection.

36 Coin Register 2002, no. 59. This historically interesting and desirable coin is now in the collection of Mr Tony Abramson, to whom I am indebted for details of the provenance and for an enlarged scan.
Variety 2

Variety 2A. Formally as Variety 1, but a full-length standing figure, within a dotted border. The long crosses have annulet terminals, and also an annulet at the foot. A similar annulet represents the eye, unnaturally high up in the head. At the foot of the standing figure there is a gently sloping rectangle delineated by a dozen small pellets, and possibly representing some sort of podium.

On the reverse the cross-crosslets and saltire are smaller and more compact, and are within a dotted border. The central pellet is square and quite large, with a pin-hole at the centre (upstanding in the die?).

![Fig. 9.](image)

(10a) BMC 200 = Type 54. Acquired before 1812. 1.26 g. Illus. in BMC pl. 4, 20 and SEC pl. 14, 11.
(10b) W.L. Subjack sale (Italo Vecchi, London, 11, 5 June 1998), lot 93 ex P. Finn, list 10 (1997), 44. 1.05 g. It is almost certain that this is from the same obverse die as BMC 200, although in a different state. Note that the obverse and reverse borders differ in style.
(10c?) ‘In Southampton’. Glendining, 20 January 1993, lot 5 (not illus., no weight). Stated there to be ‘from the same dies as BMC 54’. Could this be the same coin as b?

The Southampton provenance is welcome confirmation that Variety 2A is from south Wessex. No. 10a may be presumed to be of English provenance.

Variety 2B. All much the same as Variety 2A, and with annulets, but on the obverse, the head is more closely copied from Variety 1. The torso is hatched with three lines parallel to the upper arm. On the reverse there is an annulet at the centre of the design.

![Fig. 10.](image)

(11a) Patrick Finn list 9 (1997), 51. 14.7 gr. [0.95 g].
This coin, again, may be presumed to be of English provenance.

Variety 3

Variety 3 has the characteristic standing figure of Series W, with head turned to the right in a ‘nutcracker’ profile seen also in Variety 1. There is a single vertical row of three or four pellets on the tunic. The hem of the tunic is flared. Both feet are turned to the right. On the reverse, the ends of the saltire are pelleted. On both sides, there is a double (or triple) border comprising a grained border with delicate inner (and outer) wire border.

![Fig. 11.](image)
The Hamwic specimen contained only an estimated 3 per cent 'silver'.

(12b) Hanford, Do., 1983. 0.80g. Same dies. SEC, no. 9.
13. Hamwic 114. 0.82 g. Different dies. SOU 31, in upper layer of pit. The two long crosses slope inwards towards the top, to make an A-shape.
14. Maiden Newton, Do., area. 1994. 0.86 g. Different dies again (base metal or possibly even a plated flan). Ashmolean Museum, bought from finder.
15. Patrick Finn list 9 (1997), 52. 14.3 gr. [0.93 g]. One could imagine a pyramid of three pellets at the base of the left-hand cross. The detail at the base of the right-hand cross is obscure, and possibly misleading. Weathered (debased?).
16. Postscript. Another specimen is reported, very recently, from south Wessex.

Postscript. My comments on the origins of Hamwic (p. 7 and n. 14) have been overtaken by an important monograph, V. Birbeck et al., The Origins of Mid-Saxon Southampton, Salisbury (Wessex Archaeology), 2005, showing (pp. 192f.) that the 'mercantile settlement' had a long pre-history – possibly as a royal estate. This does not alter the conclusions about the mint-attribution of Series W.