THE COINAGE OF OFFA REVISITED

RORY NAISMITH

OFFA, king of the Mercians, came to the throne in 757 – an eventful year, which began with the murder of the long-lived King Æthelbald (716–57), and the succession to the Mercian throne of an obscure king named Beornred. But Beornred, as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle put it, ‘held [the kingdom] for but a little while and unhappily’,¹ and was put to flight by Offa before the end of the year. The events of Offa’s reign between then and his death on 29 July 796 can be reconstructed on the basis of some forty charters, a series of entries in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and related historical texts and from an important group of letters associated with the expatriate Northumbrian scholar Alcuin (d. 804).² From these a great deal can be learned: about the expansion of Mercian power across all England south of the Humber save Wessex; about the displacement of old local dynasties which this process necessitated; about interaction between the Mercian court and that of Charlemagne (768–814); and about the practical and ideological foundations of kingship within Offa’s kingdom.

In all this the coinage of Offa’s reign looms unusually large as an historical source, above all because of its departure from earlier monetary norms and its artistic richness,³ but also because of the relative scarcity of written sources pertaining to southern England at this time. Where charters, chronicles and archaeological sources fail, Offa’s pennies potentially provide an important window onto a dynamic and elaborate aspect of the regime.

A major step forward in the understanding of Offa’s coinage has recently been taken with the publication of Derek Chick’s volume The Coinage of Offa and His Contemporaries.⁴ This benefits from Mr Chick’s detailed knowledge of the series and offers important insights, including a new typology which covers all surviving specimens known down to late 2006, and will allow future analyses to proceed with considerable confidence. This paper is intended to complement Chick’s volume in two ways. First, it publishes sixty-three new coins of Offa. These are listed (with Chick type numbers) in an Appendix to this article that includes all new specimens which came to light after the Chick catalogue was closed in 2006 (see Pls 7–8). Second, it presents the state of knowledge of Offa’s coinage from a numismatic point of view, highlighting certain areas in which the availability of Chick’s catalogue has already allowed new conclusions to be reached or fresh questions put forward, particularly with regard to the Light coinage. After a brief outline of the current understanding of Offa’s coinage, the debates surrounding mint and moneyer attribution will be examined, followed by an exploration of the different types and presentation of some stylistic subgroups which can be identified within the Light coinage. Finally, the relative and absolute chronology of the coinage will be examined in detail.

Numismatic and chronological outline

The coinage of Offa is distinguished from that of the preceding period in two major respects. Most obviously, his silver pennies are substantially broader and thinner than the early pennies

Acknowledgements. Gareth Williams generously provided scans of no. 7 in the Appendix (p. 98), and details of further new finds and acquisitions were given by Keith Chapman, John Cross, Stewart Lyon, William MacKay and others, to all of whom I extend my thanks.

² Keynes 2005 provides an up-to-date survey of Offa’s reign and the sources behind it; also important are Campbell et al. 1982, 101–28; Stenton 1971, 206–24, Kirby 2000, 134–50 and Story 2003.
³ On the artistic dimensions of Offa’s coinage see Gannon 2003.
⁴ Chick 2010. All type-references to this catalogue here take the form ‘Chick’.
or sceattas of the early eighth century, and were modelled on the reformed coinages of Pippin III (751–68) in the kingdom of the Franks and of Beonna (c.749–760?) in East Anglia.5 The increased surface area of the new pennies fostered the other key development of Offa’s reign: the standard adoption of legends naming king and moneyer. This new information allows much more confident and precise attributions of the coinage than was possible for the largely uninscribed earlier sceattas or pennies.

Minting probably took place at three locations under Offa: London, Canterbury and somewhere in East Anglia, possibly Ipswich.6 None of these, however, is named, and the emphasis rather seems to have been on the moneyer responsible for production. About forty moneyers are named on the first broad silver pennies struck in the decades down to Offa’s death in 796. Most of these worked solely for Offa, but a few other rulers are named on the first new pennies, among them Egbert II (c.764–784?) and Heaberht (fl. c.765), two of the last independent kings of Kent; Æthelberht II (d. 794), king of East Anglia; two archbishops of Canterbury (Jænberht (765–92) and Æthelheard (792–805)); one bishop of London (Eadberht (772×82–787×89)) and, perhaps most surprisingly, Offa’s queen, Cynethryth (d. after 798).7

The extant output of these kings and moneyers comprises about 800 southern English pennies produced before 796;8 a surprisingly high figure given that only one small hoard deposited in Britain during the reign of Offa has ever been recorded.9 These 800 include a high proportion of coins which have come to light as single-finds, most of them quite recently thanks to the expansion of metal-detecting. This wealth of single-finds is invaluable material for the study of monetary history,10 and demonstrates that, through fits and starts, a large and dynamic currency, approaching that of the earlier eighth century in scale, revived in southern England under Offa.11 This data has also provided the raw material for fresh assessment of the numismatic background to the coinage. Answers to such questions as when and where certain types were produced are naturally fundamental to the interpretation of the coinage by other specialists, but are elusive and often debatable in the case of Offa’s coinage. In many particulars this and all other outlines must be taken as provisional rather than definitive.

Offa’s coinage began in the 760s and 770s with the ‘Light coinage’,11a based probably on a target weight of c.1.30 g: the same as that of contemporary Frankish coinage. The Light coinage can be sub-divided into two main phases (early and substantive – here designated phases I and II: see Figs 1a and b) and five sub-phases. A second major reform occurred in 792/3 which established a uniform design at all three mints and a new weight standard of c.1.45 g.12 This last phase of the coinage is consequently known as the ‘Heavy coinage’; it constituted the third main phase of Offa’s coinage (here designated phase III: see Fig. 1c).

Fig. 1a–c. Chick 6a, 10p and 203a. The three main phases of Offa’s coinage: the early issues (c.760/75–c.784/5), the substantive Light coinage (c.784/5–792/3) and the Heavy coinage (792/3–6).

1 See Archibald 1985 and MEC I, 190–266. On the new physical technique used to make Pippin and Offa’s pennies, see Blackburn 1995, 548.
6 On the mints of Offa’s reign, and alternative suggestions as to their number, see below, pp. 78–80.
8 There are also three associated gold coins: Chick 2010, types 1–3 and Blackburn 2007.
9 This hoard was found over several years at Aiskew, North Yorkshire, in the 1990s and 2000s, and comprised fourteen pennies of Offa and his contemporaries. Its deposition probably occurred a little after the inception of the substantive Light coinage in c.784/5. Some ‘mini-hoards’ of two or three pennies of Offa may also have been found in modern times, though these can be difficult to identify with certainty: Metcalf 2009, 10 and 27. It is probable that at least one further hoard of pennies of Offa was discovered at some point before the eighteenth century: Blunt 1961, 52.
10 On these aspects of the coinage see especially Chick 2005 and Metcalf 2009.
11a It has been proposed that Offa’s coinage began with sceattas in his name, though these should probably be seen as late Merovingian issues: see Chick 2010.
12 See below, pp. 88–9.
The earliest part of Offa’s coinage was very small in scale, and has only come to prominence in the last two decades (phase Ia). Yet thanks largely to the research of Derek Chick and Michael Metcalf it has come to provide a relatively fixed point of clarity which, with the Heavy coinage (phase III), serves to sandwich the much more problematic substantive Light coinage. This first segment of the Light coinage was followed by an obscure phase of ‘intermediate’ coinage (phase Ib) struck probably in the late 770s and early 780s. At some point after this initial stage of small-scale production the coinage expanded, probably quite swiftly (if not overnight), into a much more considerable enterprise which, following Derek Chick’s usage, I shall term the ‘substantive’ Light coinage (phase II).

The advent of the famous and attractive portrait issues marked the beginning of this substantive Light coinage (though these were produced alongside non-portrait coins throughout phase II). Its emergence is difficult to date and, as will be argued below, probably occurred roughly simultaneously at Canterbury and London in the mid-780s. It can be tentatively divided into three sub-phases: a small initial group characterised by the placement of the moneyer’s name on the obverse alongside the portrait (with the king’s name, often in abbreviated form, on the reverse) (phase Ia); a more substantial group (represented by the Aiskew hoard) which combined the striking artistic quality of the first phase with the placement of the king’s name alongside the bust and the relocation of the moneyer’s to the reverse (phase IIb); and finally a more obscure later phase in which more diverse and often poorer-quality die-cutting styles emerged (phase IIc). This threefold division applies in full only to Canterbury and London; the East Anglian mint probably began to produce the substantive Light coinage slightly later, and its products cannot be confidently sub-divided within the substantive Light coinage.

Moneys and mints in the coinage of Offa

Mints in late eighth-century England

No mints are named on Offa’s pennies, but the widely accepted outline of minting under Offa is that his coins belong to three centres: London, Canterbury and somewhere in East Anglia. This bald statement papers over a number of uncertainties, however, the most fundamental of which is what one actually means by ‘mint’ in the context of eighth-century England. ‘Mint’ at this stage should be understood as shorthand for ‘minting town’ – a location at which one or more moneyers were based. To all intents and purposes it appears that each of these moneyers was essentially a mint unto himself. There was probably no centralised mint-building in any of these towns, and every moneyer operated his own separate forge and minting workshop. Although this arrangement is not documented until the eleventh century, it seems to have been widely used in earlier Anglo-Saxon England, and explains many features of the coinage. Just one inter-moneyer die-link has been noted from Offa’s reign, for example, and the complex manner in which moneyers interacted with die-cutters suggests that the moneyer – not the mint – was the key unit on which production was based in late eighth-century England.

Nonetheless, it still appears probable that the three minting centres named above were home to most or all of Offa’s moneyers. The location of mints at Canterbury and London under Offa is attested by coins naming the bishops of those cities, but dividing Offa’s money-
ers between them is difficult, and it cannot be ruled out that there were additional mints located elsewhere in the kingdom. Pinning these down is exceedingly problematic, if they existed at all. One might compare the situation in the decades after Offa’s death, by which time the pattern of minting activity at a small number of comparatively large east-coast centres is somewhat clearer, thanks in part to occasional mint-signed issues which reveal the locations of mints and the numerous moneyers associated with them. By the early ninth century Canterbury, London and the East Anglian mint had been joined by subsidiary new mints at Rochester and in Wessex, all of which are distinguishable in style and typology. Smaller mints, if they existed, cannot be traced as easily in the time of Offa. This could be explained if their dies were being supplied from workshops elsewhere, and there are certainly precedents for die-cutters from London sometimes supplying moneyers in Canterbury. But dies made within the local mint-town remained the norm for most moneyers, and the inconsistency of inter-mint die-movement in Offa’s Light coinage meant that dies from London never became a universal feature at Canterbury: locally-made dies of distinct style often had to be used. Occasional local production might have been expected at other mints, but strong traces of this cannot be found.

In the case of the East Anglian mint, however, there are no known episcopal or mint-signed coins, and so even the location or locations of minting remain debatable. In the preceding coinages of early pennies or sceattas and of the reign of Beonna (749–c.760) there had been multiple mints in East Anglia – one, the largest, was probably at Ipswich, and two or three smaller ones were in the vicinity of Thetford, northwest Norfolk and on the Norfolk coast. The diverse East Anglian coinage of Offa may preserve traces of the last gasps of one or more of these subsidiary mints, though these were probably in the process of being phased out in favour of a single bigger mint (Ipswich?) around this time. Even quite early in Offa’s reign links were already emerging between the styles and designs used by most East Anglian moneyers, which on the model of London and Canterbury probably suggests a single relatively large mint. There may have been a subsidiary mint-place associated with the moneyer Lul, who was solely responsible for Æthelberht II’s coinage. Yet Lul was generally associated with a prolific East Anglian die-cutter, and there are precedents for complex power-sharing arrangements within larger mint-towns. The circumstances of Æthelberht’s reign and the coinage by Lul must therefore remain obscure.

By 796 the number of East Anglian moneyers seems to have shrunk slightly, and greater homogeneity prevailed among them in the coinages of Eadwald, Coenwulf and later kings. The East Anglian moneyers at this stage were consistently being supplied by one die-cutter and followed one weight and metal standard, and so were most probably based in a single location. There was already substantial consistency between East Anglian moneyers in the (cf. Page 1966, 3–7). It has not apparently been noted that a second bishop named Eadberht was active at this time, of Leicester (764–781). But Leicester was remote from other known centres of minting and coin-use at this time, and while of considerable prominence (Keynes 1993, 24–5) the see was associated with and secondary to that of Lichfield, for which no coins are known. The presence of a mint at London in the early ninth century and the relatively strong southern distribution of the nine known single-finds of Eadberht pennies (seven from Essex or further south) also point towards a more southerly minting place.


23 It should be noted that the one moneyer to survive from Beonna’s reign into Offa’s was associated in the earlier reign with the larger southeastern mint (Ipswich?).

24 For Lul’s coinage for Offa and Æthelberht see Chick 171–3 and 186. He survived through the reign of Eadwald into the reign of Coenwulf. For discussion see Blunt 1961, 49–50; and MEC I, 281.

25 Metcalf 2009, 3 n.9 suggested that Botræd, Eadnoth and Ecbald might represent the moneyers of a second East Anglian mint. The average weight of these moneyers’ coins is slightly below average for Offa’s Light coinage (a mean and median of 1.14 g and 1.12 g respectively), but the workable sample is extremely small – just five suitable coins, including none of Botræd. For stylistic connections which link these moneyers to other East Anglian moneyers, see below, pp. 86–8; and for further discussion of metrology, p. 82.

26 Naismith forthcoming b.
physical features of weight and fineness under Offa, though these standards were also adhered to by the moneyers of contemporary Canterbury and London.27

In short, definitive conclusions are still lacking on important questions surrounding the number, nature and location of minting towns in Offa’s kingdom. The basic problem is reconciling the substantially larger number of mints active earlier in the eighth century with the smaller number – probably just five, including two recently opened mints – evident by c.810.28 Offa’s coinage lies at the crux of this transition, and emerged from the aftermath of a major monetary recession in the middle of the eighth century.29 This temporarily decimated the currency, especially in southern England, and helped precipitate several important developments in the form and organisation of minting.30 A contraction in the number of mints to only the leading centres would be more consistent with these changes than with silent re-expansion and closure between c.765–96 as the coinage went from strength to strength.

After c.765, minting was based probably on production in just a few major mint-towns along the eastern seaboard of England, taking full advantage of incoming foreign bullion (the likely source of most silver under Offa).31 It was in part for this reason that coinage in general had a relatively slight impact on the western heartland of Mercia itself: its production and circulation were dictated primarily by economic forces rather than the concentration of political power, and hence most coin-use and apparently all mints were situated in the east.32 No coins exist, for example, in the name of Hygeberht, archbishop of Lichfield between 787 and 803,33 whereas pennies were produced in the names of Bishop Eadberht at London and Offa’s erstwhile enemy Archbishop Jænberht at Canterbury, who were presumably reaping the benefit of their cities’ importance in economic life.

Mint attributions under Offa

The next and more treacherous step is the division of Offa’s moneyers between these three mints. Until the early 1960s all the coins of Offa were thought to have been struck at Canterbury.34 Christopher Blunt then identified the East Anglian group by its distinctive stylistic features and the presence of moneyers who were securely attributed to East Anglia under other rulers.35 It was this moneyer-based approach which would, in the 1980s, allow Lord Stewartby to distinguish the coins of London from those of Canterbury.36 In an important article on the mint attribution of Offa’s moneyers,37 he saw that the way forward was to begin by isolating those individuals who could be decisively linked to a specific mint by activity under other rulers whose power was restricted to just one known mint. The moneyers who can be attributed in this way are provisionally listed as ‘very probable’ in Table 1 below. These, however, only account for a portion of Offa’s moneyers, and other moneyers must be attributed by different means. In the case of East Anglia, strong characteristics such as more localised circulation and the use of runes make attribution of the relevant moneyers comparatively straightforward.38

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27 See below, p. 82.
28 Metcalf 1993 III, 300 suggests twenty mints for the sceattas. However, it should be noted that a small group of leading mints probably accounted for a high proportion of the currency, among them the mints which can be traced with confidence after Offa’s reform (Metcalf 2009, 4).
29 Metcalf 2009, 12–22.
32 Naismith forthcoming d.
33 Notwithstanding some earlier efforts to identify the issues of the moneyer Heaberht as his: Blunt 1961, 46. For a possible explanation of Bishop Eadberht’s exceptional coinage from around this time as an attempt by Offa to win his favour, see Metcalf 1963, 39.
34 E.g., Lockett 1920, 66–7 and BMC II, xxii.
37 Stewart 1986.
38 Others besides the five linked moneyers who can be associated with East Anglia include Eadberht, Ecbald, Ecg dun and Oethelred (Chick 163, 166–7, 168–70, 174–7 and 250).
At London and Canterbury, however, it is not so easy to separate the products of the two mints, which share many affinities of circulation as well as weight and fineness.39 Consequently, in assigning moneyers to London and Canterbury, one must rely almost solely on the evidence of type and style, with all their concomitant ambiguities. These are very pronounced in the Light coinage, where close correspondences sometimes exist between moneyers who were probably active at different mints.40 Some apparently diagnostic types and features have been suggested, but few can be made to stick in every case. For example, Lord Stewartby pointed out an unusual form of R that seemed to be associated with London moneyers in the Heavy coinage, and thus added Beaghard, Ealhmund and Wulfhath to the London complement.41 However, the appearance of new coins in subsequent years has altered the situation. Not only did several London moneyers also use a regular R, but some specimens of the Heavy coinage of the moneyer Osmod (who is strongly associated with Canterbury by other evidence) also use the unusual form of R, while Beaghard, one of the moneyers who struck coins of this variety of Heavy coinage, shared an identical Light obverse design with a coin of Archbishop Ænberht.42 Hence he was very probably a Canterbury moneyer, or at least in very close contact with minting at Canterbury.

It is easier to perceive stronger stylistic and typological links binding small groups of moneyers together than universal trends at each mint-town; Figs 2–12 present eleven such groups of moneyers (Groups A–J, pp. 86–8 below). Fig. 5, for example, illustrates an identical light obverse type which was shared by Ealred, Eoba, Osmod and Udd (Fig. 5, Group D).43 Eoba and Udd were very probably Canterbury moneyers, and so it is reasonable to associate Ealred and Osmod with Canterbury as well. Eadhun and Ealhmund are also closely associated: they used an identical design on certain coins (Group C, Fig. 4), and are the only two moneyers of Offa to share an inter-moneyer die link.44 Although their attribution cannot be described as secure, Ealhmund was the only moneyer besides Bishop Æadberht of London to use the obverse legend OFFA,45 which suggests that Ealhmund and Eadhun were possibly associated with London. Æthelwald and Dud are very closely linked to each other but do not betray any features to attribute them decisively to either mint.46 The most that can be said is that Dud was one of a small group of moneyers who used the extended form of ethnic on the obverse (MERCIORVM or similar), among them Ealhmund and Eadhun, so the balance of probability suggests London.

By processes of this kind, most of the moneyers of Offa can be tentatively attributed to one mint or another. There remain only a few for whom there is no appreciable evidence either way. Tirwald, for example, used a ‘serpent torque’ reverse very similar to that of Ealhmund and also another reverse type shared only by Dud (Group J, Fig. 11),47 suggesting London; but he also employed a ‘celtic cross’ obverse design and other reverse designs more akin to those used by Archbishop Ænberht and other secure Canterbury moneyers.48 All the moneyers have been arranged in Table 1 below to show roughly how likely the attributions to each mint are: ‘very probable’ moneyers struck in other periods, allowing fairly secure attributions; ‘probable’ moneyers can be convincingly linked to them and thus to a mint; ‘possible’ moneyers are more likely to be linked to the mint in question, but the attribution remains flexible; and ‘uncertain’ moneyers cannot be confidently attributed to London or

39 See below, pp. 82–4.
40 Stewart 1988, 40–1.
41 Ibid., 36–8.
42 Chick 16 and 158. A similar (but not identical) type was also used by Eoba, Heaberht and Pehtwald (Chick 116–18, 122–4 and 130).
43 Chick 99–100, 115, 125 and 137.
44 Chick 31–3 and 43.
45 Chick 39–41 and 83. Metcalf 1963, 40–1 saw the moneyer ‘Ealhmund/Alhmund’ as distinct from another moneyer named ‘Ealmund’. Since this difference seems to coincide with the work of different die-cutters, it is also possible that this reflects the different orthographical preferences of two individuals or workshops charged with composing and inscribing coin inscriptions for the same moneyer. For further discussion see Naismith forthcoming d.
47 Chick 37 and 132 for the serpent torque types and group J, below.
Canterbury. It should be noted that this table differs in some respects from the attributions in Derek Chick’s recent volume.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mint attributions of Offa’s moneyers.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LONDON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very probable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Eadberht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciolhard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludoman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilhun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winoth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadhun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealhmund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfhath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Æthelwald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuthberht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lulla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **CANTERBURY**                        |
| Very probable                        |
| Archbishop Ænberht                   |
| Babba                                |
| Eoba                                 |
| Ethelmod                             |
| Ethelnoth                            |
| Udd                                  |
| Probable                             |
| Osmod                                |
| Ealred                               |
| Deimund                              |
| Heaberht                             |
| Beagheard                            |
| Pehtwald                             |

| **EAST ANGLIA**                       |
| Very probable                        |
| Botred                               |
| Eadnoth                              |
| Lul                                  |
| Wilred                               |
| Probable                             |
| Eadberht                             |
| Ecbald                               |
| Eghun                                |
| Oethelred                            |

| **Uncertain**                         |
| Pendred                              |
| Ealdnod                              |

Attempts to differentiate Canterbury, London and other mints on the basis of moneyers’ careers, typology and stylistic affiliations are not helped by the coinage’s relatively homogeneous metal content and metrology. Metallurgical analysis has so far been carried out on too few coins to offer the detail necessary to distinguish the different practices of individual mints or moneyers, if these existed at all.49 In terms of metrology, comparative consistency prevailed even in the Light coinage, and working on the mint attributions suggested above, all three probable mints produce extremely similar overall average weights of approximately 1.18 g. These figures, as well as the average weights for each individual moneyer’s products, are laid out in Table 2. Most moneyers thus correspond closely to the averages of the coinage as a whole, and many of the outliers (Heaberht, Lul, Osmod, Pendred and Tirwald) are known from so few usable weights that the results are not conclusive. This is less true in the case of one moneyer: Babba. The average weight of his coins is lower than usual, but is based on a relatively large sample. This might indicate a different minting location – certainly somewhere within Kent, as Babba struck coins for Egbert II and later Eadberht ‘Præn’ (796–8) as well as Offa – but, in light of the general consistency between known mints, could just as readily be explained as a peculiarity of Babba’s own workshop: another manifestation of the individual moneyer being the basis of production. It should also be noted that in the Heavy coinage and thereafter the weights of Babba’s coins conform much more closely to the overall mean and median for the coinage.50

Find-distributions can be used effectively to distinguish only the East Anglian mint (or mints). Among 39 known single-finds associated with moneyers of ‘very probable’ or ‘probable’ East Anglian attribution, 17 (44%) were found within modern East Anglia.51 London

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49 Metcalf and Northover 1989.
50 I.e., 1.31 g mean and 1.30 g median based on six specimens in Offa’s Heavy coinage, when the overall mean and median (at Canterbury and for the coinage as a whole) were both 1.30 g.
51 Within the reign of Offa the finds of each moneyer within East Anglia are too few to permit confident discussion of possible mint location(s) within the region. Most moneyers are known from a fairly even mix of Norfolk and Suffolk finds (e.g., three from each in the case of Wilred), though East Anglian finds of Lul from the reign of Offa come entirely from Suffolk.
and Canterbury show much less variation. Even several decades of new finds have failed to break the status quo. This remains the case even if one examines only finds of coins associated with the moneyers of ‘very probable’ attribution. Table 3 shows the proportional breakdown of these finds into ten regions, with East Anglia included for comparative purposes.

The similarity of the find-distributions associated with London and Canterbury reiterates the conclusions of other studies, although there have been some more promising results of unexpected concentrations of finds associated with specific moneyers. For example, the possible London moneys Æthelwald and Dud are both unusually well represented by finds from Kent and Surrey (8 out of 25 (32%) and 12 out of 28 (43%) respectively). Presumably these moneyers had especially good connections among traders or travellers from specific areas. But such concentrations occur in only a few cases and the results cannot be mapped on to the mint as a whole: they again serve to emphasise that moneys, even within the same mint-town, could work in quite different ways.

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TABLE 2. Metrology of the light coinage by moneyer and mint.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of specimens</th>
<th>Mean (g)</th>
<th>Median (g)</th>
<th>No. of specimens</th>
<th>Mean (g)</th>
<th>Median (g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LONDON</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>CANTERBURY</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Æthelwald</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>Babba</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dud</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Beaghard</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealhmund</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Ealred</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winoth</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>Eoba</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciolhard</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Ethelnoth</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bp Eadberht</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>Heaberht</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eadhun</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Osmod</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibbba</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Pehtwald</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lulla</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>Udd</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Abp Jænberht</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCERTAIN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EAST ANGLIA</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealdnod</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Eadberht</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pendred</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Eadnoth</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirwald</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>Ecbald</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ecg hun</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lul</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oethelred</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wilred</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wilhred</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The similarity of the find-distributions associated with London and Canterbury reiterates the conclusions of other studies, although there have been some more promising results of unexpected concentrations of finds associated with specific moneyers. For example, the possible London moneys Æthelwald and Dud are both unusually well represented by finds from Kent and Surrey (8 out of 25 (32%) and 12 out of 28 (43%) respectively). Presumably these moneyers had especially good connections among traders or travellers from specific areas. But such concentrations occur in only a few cases and the results cannot be mapped on to the mint as a whole: they again serve to emphasise that moneys, even within the same mint-town, could work in quite different ways.

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54 To these might be added coins of the East Anglian moneyer Eadnoth, which (taking into account coins of him minted for later kings) include a high proportion of finds from western Mercia. For further discussion see Naismith forthcoming d.
In sum, the fact that a coin was minted by a moneyer associated with Canterbury or London had no substantial effect on its likely trajectory of circulation. Even major barriers such as the Thames had little impact: some 40% of pennies minted by ‘very probable’ London moneyers were found south of the Thames, in comparison with 44% of those minted by ‘very probable’ Canterbury moneyers. On one level this speaks volumes for the integrated and dynamic monetary economy which revived over the course of Offa’s reign. But it also means that, even in those few cases of moneyers who are known from a substantial number of finds, one can only follow their evidence back to southeast England: Canterbury and London cannot be distinguished with confidence.

Despite the Gordian knot of problems presented by the issue of mint attributions under Offa a few general conclusions may be ventured. Prime among them is the closeness of Canterbury and London. Economically they seem to have worked in harmony, the style and designs used at both mints were similar and at times it looks as though dies were actually transferred from London to Canterbury, especially high-quality portrait dies. A troubling corollary of this is that even die-links or exact typological connections might not always confirm the mint-attribution of a moneyer to London or Canterbury: repeated connections are probably still reliable, but on the whole the associations made above which are not ‘very probable’ or ‘probable’ should be considered very tentative and provisional.

The underlying difficulty is that the pattern of die-production in Offa’s Light coinage was complex, and was not normally based on anything so straightforward as standardised types or monopolistic die-cutting workshops dominating all the moneyers at Canterbury or London. Moneyers within each mint-town moved in and out of association with different local and sometimes non-local die-cutting workshops. This mirrors the generally devolved nature of mint organisation in early and middle Anglo-Saxon England. Both moneyers and die-cutters could be entrusted with a relatively high degree of initiative and independence, especially at this formative stage in the Anglo-Saxon broad penny coinage. Die-cutters clearly enjoyed an important say in the selection of new designs, and moneyers sometimes received dies of a specific ‘house style’ from die-cutters over an extended period, implying that moneyers had some involvement in the process of die-production. Even kings may have dealt with specific moneyers rather than mints as a whole. In many ways, therefore, it is more helpful to focus on the die-cutters and their short- or long-term affiliations with moneyers as the basis of the coinage, rather than on mints as a whole. This will be the approach taken here.

Moneyers, die-cutters and common types in the Light coinage

A central problem of the Light coinage is determining what significance should be assigned to the many permutations in design and style among the surviving coins. Some must be the result of chronological developments, others of differences in organisation at the level of moneyer, die-cutter or perhaps mint-town. This is particularly contentious with the famous portrait coinage associated with London and Canterbury, which offers broad scope for examination of style and type. However, these issues remain highly complex and the portrait coinage resists the easy imposition of well-defined styles or phases. Even the two die-cutters of the finest portrait dies discerned by Derek Chick (in phase IIa and to a lesser extent IIb) are very similar in several ways, and it is probably best to view their products as the work of one larger workshop rather than of individuals with entirely distinct styles. Several features were common to both die-cutters, and even dies which have some typological or stylistic differences can usually be linked by very close similarities in other areas, such as the design of the drapery, the sunken

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55 Twenty of Offa’s moneyers are known from fewer than six English single-finds, and only eleven from fifteen or more.
56 See below, p. 85.
57 For further exploration of this topic see Naismith forthcoming d.
58 Naismith 2008, 221; and Naismith 2010a.
59 Cf. Metcalf 2009, 9 n.35; and Naismith forthcoming d.
60 Naismith 2010a and b.
61 Naismith 2010a.
eye or distinctive execution of the ear or hair. Likewise in the epigraphy of the inscriptions, it should be noted that the exact layout, arrangement of pellets (normally between OFFA and REX, and between the R and E of REX) and even some unusual letter forms (such as the curved-limbed X and the pelleted and/or lozenge-shaped O) are found more or less throughout the portrait dies of the Light coinage, and delicate serifs are also very common.

This large die-cutting workshop should probably be associated with London, as portrait dies from other sources are predominantly (though not exclusively) found in the hands of Canterbury moneyers. Why London dies were only used by some Canterbury moneyers is unclear, though the prominence among them of Æoba, who was uniquely favoured by the royal house, hints that preferment and/or initiative associated with specific individuals may lie behind this phenomenon. Some local portrait dies of distinctive style were made in Canterbury (sometimes probably as substitutes for unavailable London dies), and most non-portrait Canterbury dies seem to be local, with a few possible exceptions.

London-school portrait dies of fine style shade into a large group of similar but less accomplished workmanship. Among these are some dies close to those of the London school in style though with somewhat thicker lettering, which should probably be seen as issues of phase IIc. A number of new hands and practices can be discerned among these later portrait dies, but separating them out into the work of specific individuals with consistent and definable styles is much more problematic. Also, the appearance of coarse portrait dies does not necessarily mean that other die-cutters had stopped producing dies of finer style. Æiba, for example, a probable London moneyer, survived from phase IIa into the Heavy coinage, yet seemingly produced only portrait pennies of fine style throughout the Light coinage. Either he enjoyed a hiatus in his stint as a moneyer, or he had constant access to dies of fine style. In other words, greater diversity in die-production emerged as the substantive Light coinage progressed into phase IIc. Dies of the best London style probably remained available alongside an expanding array of competitors.

The diversity of the Light coinage is magnified if the non-portrait types are taken into account. Although Chick was right to point out that Christopher Blunt's chronological separation of the Light coinage into portrait (class I) and non-portrait (class II) phases was overly simplistic, it does not follow that all moneyers struck portrait coins that can be closely linked stylistically with their non-portrait issues. While there are examples of close affinities between the lettering and reverse designs of portrait and non-portrait coins, in many cases a moneyer's portrait and non-portrait coins seem to have been kept distinct. In fact, there were relatively few moneyers who used identical reverse designs on portrait and non-portrait pennies; among them were Winoth, Æalred, Æhtwald, some rarer types of Dud, and Æoba's pennies for Cynethryth. In the case of Dud and Æhtwald's main portrait and non-portrait types, on the other hand, there is no typological relationship. A number of other moneyers who...
struck portrait coins did not produce any non-portrait coins at all, among them Ciolhard, Eadhun, Ealdnod (who is only known from one coin), Ibba, Lulla and Pendred – and vice versa in the case of Babba, Ethelnoth, Heaberht, Osmod at Canterbury and Wilred, Botred, Ecbald, Egchun and Wita in East Anglia. The implication seems to be that some sort of distinction was often made between sets of dies used for portrait coins and sets of dies used for non-portrait coins, but that the rules could be flexible. Just as in the early ninth century, it is likely that some moneyers had access to portrait and non-portrait dies more or less simultaneously, often from different sources. That is to say, although the London-school portrait dies were especially dominant in the beginning and early part of the substantive Light coinage (IIa and IIb), they probably never held a total monopoly in either London or Canterbury. At any one time there were probably at least two more or less distinct sources of dies in each town.

A possible way round these complexities is to identify groups of specific types linking multiple moneyers. A number of such clusters can be picked out within the bulk of the substantive Light coinage, even if they are sometimes difficult to place into a chronological sequence. These stylistic and typological connections bound small groups of moneyers together, rather than the whole body of moneyers at a mint, and never spanned the whole of a moneyer’s career. These associations represent temporary aberrations from the general rule of diversity and individualism. Inter-moneyer stylistic and typological clusters within phase II are shown below in Figs 2–12. Group B (Fig. 3), for example, is based on a distinct two-line epigraphic design on the obverse and reverse using quite spindly, elongated lettering. Group D (Fig. 5), on the other hand, is characterised by thicker, shorter lettering and by the specific forms of cross on obverse and reverse.

There is little to show why die-cutters sometimes resorted to the same design for certain groups of moneyers, or why those particular moneyers operated together. Also, not all moneyers bought into these associated groups. Some retained the same design for a long period, implying that die-cutters recognised a ‘house style’ for them, as in the case of Ibba. Only one other moneyer, Winoth, used the same reverse design as Ibba (Fig. 7, Group F), and on the whole Ibba’s coinage remained distinct. In contrast, there were some groups of moneyers who received dies of the same design on multiple occasions, such as Dud and Æthelwald at London (Figs 2–3: Groups A and B) and Ealræd and Eoba at Canterbury (Figs 4–5 and 8: Groups C, D and G). It is possible that they were contemporaries who shared in production of the same tranche of silver, or who were associated for some other now lost reason.

It should be noted that groups B and H (Figs 3 and 9) include both Canterbury and London moneyers. Many dies flowed between these two centres, though normally only from London to Canterbury, and London dies seem to have been concentrated in the hands of only a few Canterbury moneyers: Eoba, Ealræd and perhaps Pehtweald. The East Anglian mint remained more distinct, but in the earliest period of coinage and again in the heavy coinage (phases Ia and III) it used a standardised type, and even in the substantive light coinage (phase II) East Anglian die-cutters adopted a few designs that probably originated at Canterbury or London.

The East Anglian mint was also marked out by the activity of a distinctive die-cutter, who used characteristic forms of spindly lettering with pellets at the end of each line (Fig. 13). He was responsible for a substantial proportion of the East Anglian output, though interestingly he never or rarely supplied some moneyers (Ecbald and Wihtræd), and there were no moneyers who used his dies exclusively. Among the products of this die-cutter is a sub-set of coins which share a very similar design of a lozenge surrounded by roundels, sometimes on the obverse, sometimes on the reverse. These were presumably made around the same time,

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72 Cf. the presence of both portrait and non-portrait coins of Æthelwald and Ealhmund (possible and probable London moneyers respectively) in the Aiskew hoard.
73 Chick 160, 172, 177A and arguably many of the portrait types.
Figs 2–11. Inter-moneyer types in Phase II of the Light coinage. Similarities of bust have not been included here unless there are very close features in other aspects of the design. Partial connections (often of only obverse or reverse design) are indicated by square brackets.

Fig. 2. Chick 10p. Group A: Chick 8–10 (Æthelwald), 19 (Dud) [and 37 (Alhmund)]. A relatively early type (phases IIa and b), related to some of the first moneyer-obverse portrait coins.

Fig. 3. Chick 13c. Group B: Chick 13 (Æthelwald), 18A (Cuthberht), 27 (Dud) and 119–20 (Ethelnoth) [75–6 (Winoth) and 101 (Ealræd) (Obverse only)]. Apparently another early type (phases IIa and b), found in the Aiskew hoard.

Fig. 4. Chick 32a. Group C: Chick 31–3 (Eadhun) and 43 (Ealhmund). Also relatively early (phase IIb), on the evidence of specimens in the Aiskew hoard.

Fig. 5. Chick 99a. Group D: Chick 99 (Ealræd), 115 (Eoba), 125 (Osmod) and 137 (Udd). A mid- to late-substantive Light coinage type (probably phase IIc).

Fig. 6. Chick 117c. Group E: Chick 116–17 (Eoba), 122–3 (Heaberht) and 130 (Pehtwald) [and, for ‘celtic cross’ design only, Chick 91B (Babba), 122–3 (Ethelnoth), 126–9 (Pehtwald) and 132–4 (Tirwald)]. More difficult to date, and probably extending across most of the substantive Light coinage (probably phases IIb–c).

Fig. 7. Chick 55a. Group F: Chick 55 (Ibba) and 72 (Winoth). (Reverse only) Difficult to date precisely because this was the primary mainstream type of Ibba, while the related obverse of Winoth approximates a less fine version of Group A. Probably post-Aiskew and mid-substantive Light coinage type (late phase IIb and phase IIc).

Fig. 8. Chick 92a. Group G: Chick 92 (Ealræd) and 112 (Eoba). (Obverse only) One of the earliest varieties of the substantive Light coinage (phase IIa).

Fig. 9. Chick 30a. Group H: Chick 30 (Dud), 112 (Eoba) [and, for reverse design only, 131 (Tirwald)]. (Dud obverse/Eoba and Tirwald reverse only) A relatively early type, through association with a moneyer-obverse portrait coin of Eoba (phases IIa–b).

Fig. 10. Chick 49a. Group I: Chick 49 (Ealhmund) and 62 [and (for reverse) 58–61 and 62–6 (Lulla)]. Probably a mid- and/or late-substantive Light coinage group (phase IIc).

Fig. 11. Chick 24a. Group J: Chick 23–5, 30 (Dud), 131 (Tirwald) and 148 (Eoba) (reverse only). Probably a type from relatively early in the substantive Light coinage (phase IIb).

Figs 2–11. Inter-moneyer types in Phase II of the Light coinage. Similarities of bust have not been included here unless there are very close features in other aspects of the design. Partial connections (often of only obverse or reverse design) are indicated by square brackets.
and indicate a group of contemporaneous moneyers who drew on the same source for their
dies (Eadnoth, Lul and Æthelred; Group K, Fig. 12). Also associated with this group is an
enigmatic coin that combines an obverse die of this design with a reverse die in the name of
the London moneyer Æthelweald.74 However, there are oddities in the design of the reverse
die which indicate that it is not a product of the main London die-cutter, and is probably an
unofficial (East Anglian?) issue.75 This die-cutter could theoretically have been behind most
or all die-production during a certain period. Currently these coins are very rare and thus
some of the gaps in his supply of East Anglian moneyers may one day be filled through new
finds; but it is more probable that heterogeneous die-cutting applied in East Anglia as well as
Canterbury and London.

These islands of unity in a sea of diversity show that moneyers were not necessarily averse
to the sharing of types, but bring home the general variation of the Light coinage at three
levels – mint, die-cutter and moneyer. Several die-cutters worked at any one time, though
sometimes they collaborated with or drew inspiration from their fellows, and they as well as
the moneyers possessed considerable freedom in the design and distribution of dies. Often this
was exercised within a general pattern of continuity that was established for each moneyer,
manifested (for obvious reasons) on reverse dies in particular. It is this diversity and loose
organisation which hampers any attempt to fit these groups and the rest of the Light coinage
into any very exact chronology.

**Relative chronology of the Light coinage**

During the years prior to the establishment of the Heavy coinage in 792/3 (phase III), any
standardisation among Offa’s pennies was largely dependent on the interaction between die-
cutters and moneyers, resulting in a coinage that was diverse and dynamic yet also the despair
of numismatic organisation. Determining when the coinage of Offa began, and when the
justly-famed portrait element of the Light coinage was produced, is a particularly complex
matter because of the scarcity of background events with which it can be associated. Absolute
dates have deliberately been avoided so far, as it is the assignment of specific dates which is
particularly difficult and which will be discussed in detail below. It is preferable to discuss the
coinage separately and arrive at a relative chronology before attempting to associate it with
the historical background before 792/3.

This, the most important date within the coinage of Offa, was identified by Christopher
Blunt in 1961.76 Blunt noted that the three-line inscriptional obverse design characteristic of

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74 Chick 15. For another interpretation of this group cf. Metcalf 2009, 3.
75 Alternatively, it could be the sole survivor of the output of an East Anglian moneyer also named Æthelweald, or possibly
of an errant East Anglian die which was used in London.
one part of Offa’s coinage was also associated with coins of higher weight, and that the coinage struck in the name of Archbishop Æthelheard and Offa used only this weight and mostly this design. He deduced that this ‘class III’ (or ‘Heavy’) coinage of Offa was instituted around the time of the death of Archbishop Jænberht and the accession of Æthelheard in 792/3.77

Another major advance in chronological understanding of Offa’s coinage came in the 1990s, when Derek Chick pinned down a very small early group within the ‘Light’ coinage (here phase Ia).78 This group was dominated by non-portrait issues which used an abbreviated form of royal title: Off[ã] R[ex] M[erciorum].79 The early coinage was struck by only a few moneyers and is known from fewer than twenty surviving specimens. One of the moneyers, Wilred, was based at the East Anglian mint, and had previously worked for the East Anglian ruler Beonna, clinching his early date and East Anglian attribution. Another moneyer of this phase, Man[emin], was unknown until a series of detector finds in the late 1980s at the productive site of East Tilbury. Tilbury was dominated, in the time of the sceattas, by products of London and Essex, which led Chick to attribute Man[emin] to London.80 A third moneyer (‘Odd…’) is known only from a fragmentary coin found at Flixborough in North Lincolnshire, and cannot be named or attributed with any confidence. Finally, Eoba, who was to enjoy an exceptionally long and prominent career, seems to have produced the earliest coinage of the period at Canterbury for Heaberht, the local ruler, and for Offa.81

In many respects this early series stands out quite clearly from the substantive Light coinage which immediately followed. There was considerable unity of design among all the early issues, based on an epigraphic obverse design featuring an abbreviated form of the royal name and title (which persisted only to a limited extent into the rest of the light coinage). The average weight was noticeably higher, as was often the case at the inception of a new coinage, with a mean of 1.23 g and a median of 1.26 g based on twelve well-preserved specimens, as opposed to an overall mean and median for the light coinage of 1.18 g.82 The early coinage was also marked out by general discontinuity of moneyers’ careers into the later phases of the coinage.83 Only Eoba, who probably started latest of the four known moneyers of phase Ia, survived into later coinages.

To this early group one can possibly add certain other rare coins that span the period between the earliest issues and the main part of the Light coinage, forming an ‘intermediate’ phase datable to c.775–c.785 (phase Ib). At Canterbury the coins of Egbert II by the moneyers Eoba, Babba and Udd belong to this period.84 One coin by the otherwise unknown moneyer Wita is of curious appearance and bears the title OFFA REX; it probably belongs to the transitional period at the end of the ‘early’ coinage, and although the unusual style is not diagnostic of any particular mint, the rare moneyer’s name may be a hypocoristic variant of the well-known East Anglian moneyer Wihtred.85 A more probable but still uncertain specimen of intermediate East Anglian coinage recently came to light in the form of a fragment which appears to combine an abbreviated royal title on the (non-portrait) obverse with the moneyer’s name [Wiht]red on the reverse.86 At London, possible candidates for issues struck at this time are some types of Bishop Eadberht and the associated non-portrait coins of Ealhmund,87

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77 It is possible that the movement toward this design actually began before Jænberht’s death on 12 August 792: Christopher Blunt (Blunt 1961, 47–8; Chick 150–1) drew attention to a ‘transitional’ penny of the archbishop, which places his name into a three-line legend much like that used for Offa after 792/3.
78 Chick 1997 and 2005.
80 Though it should be noted that in the time of Offa and in the early ninth century there was a significant East Anglian element among the finds from Tilbury. Man[emin] stands at the head of this period, so may have had more in common with the eighth-century element, but nevertheless his attribution to London should remain tentative.
81 Chick 84 and 102 (and possibly 103). Cf. Naismith 2010b.
82 Naismith forthcoming d.
83 Metcalf 2009, 10.
84 Chick 85 and 87–8.
85 Chick 185.
86 Chick 177A.
87 Chick 38–42 and 78–83. For the relatively early stylistic dating of (at least some of) Eadberht’s coinage, see Chick 1997, 53. Eadberht’s episcopal dates are, unfortunately, too broad to permit any additional precision in dating.
### TABLE 4. Relative moneyer chronology in the coinage of Offa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moneyer</th>
<th>Early coinage (ph. Ia)</th>
<th>Intermediate coinage (ph. Ib)</th>
<th>Early portrait &amp; related coinage (ph. IIa)</th>
<th>Substantive light coinage</th>
<th>Later (?) portrait &amp; related coinage (ph. IIc)</th>
<th>Heavy coinage (ph. III) (792/3–6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>London</strong>&lt;br&gt;Æthelwald&lt;br&gt;Dud&lt;br&gt;Ealhmund&lt;br&gt;Wineth&lt;br&gt;Giothald&lt;br&gt;Cuthberht&lt;br&gt;Diola&lt;br&gt;Bp Eadberht&lt;br&gt;Eama&lt;br&gt;Eadhun&lt;br&gt;Ilba&lt;br&gt;Ludoman&lt;br&gt;Lulla&lt;br&gt;Mang&lt;br&gt;Odd-&lt;br&gt;Wihun&lt;br&gt;Wulfhath</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uncertain moneyers&lt;br&gt;Ealdnod&lt;br&gt;Pendred&lt;br&gt;Tirwald&lt;br&gt;Wita</td>
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**Note:** The table provides a chronology of Offa's coinage, categorizing moneyers into different phases based on the presence or absence of portraits on the coinage. The table outlines the relative chronology of light coinage (c. 760/5–92/3), with phases labeled as (ph. Ia), (ph. Ib), (ph. IIa), (ph. IIb), (ph. IIc), and (ph. III). The columns indicate the progression from early to later periods, with uncertain moneyers marked as such.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canterbury</th>
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<td>Babba</td>
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<td>Beaghard</td>
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<td>Deimund</td>
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<td>Ealred</td>
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<td>Eadberht</td>
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<td>Eebald</td>
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<td>Egchun</td>
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<td>Lul</td>
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<td>Oethelred</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilred</td>
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<td>Wilhtred</td>
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many of which carry an abbreviated royal title (sometimes \( \text{Ofa} \bar{f} \text{reglorum} \)) and designs similar to early issues from Kent and East Anglia. No portrait pennies were issued in phases Ia and Ib.

It is the chronology of the next period, that of the substantive (phase II) Light coinage, that remains most problematic. It was probably struck from c. 784/5 right down to the institution of the Heavy coinage in 792/3: several moneyers came and went over its course, coins could be overstruck and there are typological connections and even die-links with the Heavy coinage of 792/3. The earliest specimens of it, however, are probably those which bear the moneyer’s name on the obverse – that is, alongside the portrait – and the king’s name (often in abbreviated form) on the reverse (phase IIa). This odd feature was presumably a hangover from the preceding non-portrait coinage, which universally allotted one face of the coin to the king’s name and title. These coins are very rare now, represented by only five moneyers, some of whom used two or three varieties of royal title at this time, implying experimentation and swift adoption of new forms. This movement away from the style \( \text{Ofa} \bar{f} \text{reglorum} \) was one of the defining features of the main Light coinage, although complete uniformity in this area was not to emerge until the Heavy coinage of 792/3 and after.

The substantive part of the Light coinage was broken down by Derek Chick into a ‘primary’ and a ‘secondary’ phase – roughly corresponding to the phases labelled IIa/b and IIc here – with the Aiskew hoard providing a convenient snapshot of the ‘primary’ phase (IIa and b). This consisted of portrait pennies of very fine quality along with contemporary non-portrait pennies. But it is also important to define more closely what Chick labelled the ‘secondary’ phase: a period which he described as one of slowed production and stylistic deterioration. Few coins were advanced as examples, and several potential cases – such as the crude portrait coins of Eoba and Udd – may represent difficulty in obtaining London-school portrait dies at Canterbury, rather than any change over time.

These specimens thus make a limited contribution to understanding of the overall chronology. More useful from this point of view are the products of moneyers at Canterbury and London which were struck with portrait dies close in appearance to those of the London school, but which are not of so fine a style as those found in the early Aiskew hoard. This criterion is subjective to a certain extent, of course, and has been discussed already in the context of die-cutting practices. The later phase of the substantive Light coinage (phase IIc) was characterised by a tendency among some moneyers towards features not seen among earlier portrait types such as a large and pointed nose, overly rounded features and exaggerated musculature. Moneyers whose coins all or mostly fall into phase IIc group include Winoth, Ciolhard, Lulla and Tirwald; other long-established moneyers such as Ealhmund also produced some coins answering to the same description (see for example Fig. 10). The appearance of several new moneyers at or around this point, when some of their predecessors such as Eadhun seem to have retired, suggests a chronological difference. Beaghard, for example, probably began to operate during phase IIc. He is only known from a single and very recently discovered fragment of a portrait coin (no. 7 in the Appendix, p. 98); otherwise Beaghard’s work is characterised by non-portrait coins, which seem to have become more prevalent among the issues of moneyers who emerged in phase IIc. Osmod is the best example of this tendency, but Heaberht and Ethelnoth (all three probable or possible Canterbury moneyers) are also mostly or entirely known from non-portrait issues with comparable styles of lettering.

This suggestion of a movement towards non-portrait types towards the end of the Light coinage must remain very tentative, and applies most clearly to Canterbury, where several of the moneyers shared types associated with groups D and E (Figs. 5–6 above) and survived into the Heavy coinage. The best evidence for a similar development in London is provided by a

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81 Chick 183b.
82 Chick 1997, 50–1. See Chick 8 (Æthelweald), 35 (Ealhmund), 51–3 (Ibba), 92 and 94 (Ealræd) and 112 and 138–47 (Eoba).
83 On Offa’s numismatic titulature see Naismith 2006. Cf. no. 1 in Appendix (below).
84 Chick 1997, 55.
85 Chick 114, 136 and 147.
86 See above, pp. 84–5.
die-link between a non-portrait Light coin and a Heavy coin among the coins of the moneyer Winoth. This must belong to the very end of phase IIc.

So, despite the continuing complexity presented by the Light coinage, a few points of its internal chronology seem to be emerging. The two earliest phases – IIa and b – of the substantive Light coinage at London and Canterbury are revealed by the Aiskew hoard. Thereafter it is more difficult but still possible to identify certain trends: a common but by no means universal tendency towards non-portrait issues in the later stages of the Light coinage (late phase IIc); and hints that after the initial burst of portrait dies of exceptional artistic merit, portrait dies of more variable quality could be produced for some moneys all the way through the Light coinage.

These conclusions are summarised in Table 4 (see pp. 90–1). It should be noted that all of the chronologies assigned for individual moneys remain provisional, and are subject to reinterpretation in light of new finds.

**Absolute chronology**

Thus the relative chronology of the coinage: it still remains to fit this around actual dates within Offa’s reign. A simplified representation of the chronology most recently offered by Chick is as follows:

| Table 5. Derek Chick’s reading of the absolute chronology of Offa’s coinage. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **LONDON** | **CANTERBURY** | **EAST ANGLIA** | **EAST ANGLIA** |
| c.760–76 | Earliest coinage of Offa by Mang and ‘Odd...’ | | c.760 | Coinage of Beonna |
| | c.770 | Coinage of Heaberht | c.765–75 | Earliest coinage of Offa by Wilred |
| | c.774–6 | Coinage of Offa by Eoba (?) | ? | ? |
| | c.776–80 | Coinage of Egbert II | c.782 | Coinage of Offa by Wita? |
| | | | | |
| c.779–85 | ‘Primary’ Light coinage of Offa | | c.780–5 | ‘Primary’ Light coinage of Offa |
| | | | | ? |
| c.783–92/3 | ‘Secondary’ Light coinage of Offa | | c.783–92/3 | ‘Secondary’ Light coinage of Offa |
| | | | | (and Æthelberht) |
| 792/3–6 | Heavy coinage of Offa | 792/3–6 | Heavy coinage of Offa |
| | | | 792/3–6 | Heavy coinage of Offa |

The relationship between Offa’s coinage and the events in contemporary Kent – the best-recorded region of England at this point and home to the mint of Canterbury – is crucial to any discussion of the chronology. These events, which are recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and contemporary charters, are summarised below:

764–5: Charters show a complex political situation emerging in Kent after the death of King Æthelberht in 762: two new local kings, Heaberht and Egbert II, (who may have come to power under Offa’s patronage), sometimes granted land to recipients who also sought Offa’s consent, implying recognition of both rulers’ authority. In other cases these local kings issued charters alone.

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84 Chick 75b and 213a. Winoth was also responsible for portrait pennies (Chick 72) that used a reverse design similar to that of Chick 75, which hints that he may have been issuing pennies with different obverse designs around the same time.

85 Important discussions of the problem include Lockett 1920, 57–65; and Blunt 1961, 39–41 and 53–4.

86 S 34 and 105. For the classic statement on Offa’s relationships with subordinate or soon-to-be subordinate local rulers, see Stenton 1971, 206–10. For more recent views, with references to intervening literature, see Keynes 2005, 10–13; Kelly 1995, 201; and Brooks and Kelly forthcoming, no. 21.
776: The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records a battle between the Mercians and the men of Kent at Otford. Neither the cause nor outcome are stated, nor indeed exactly who led the two sides, though the evidence of subsequent charters issued without Offa’s consent suggests that Offa was defeated and excluded from rule in Kent.

778/9–c.784?: Kentish kings issue charters without any reference to Offa, first Egbert II (and possibly Heaberht) in 778/9 followed by a gap of some years and lastly a charter probably of 784 in the name of an enigmatic King Ealhmund.

785: The sequence of Offa’s charters dealing with Kentish lands resumes, and continues uninterrupted for the rest of his reign. A reference in a charter from a few years after his death shows the dim view Offa took of Egbert II usurping his status as rightful king and grantor of lands.

This presents several conflicts with Chick’s chronology outlined above, particularly for the period 776–c.784/5 when Offa is usually supposed to have been excluded from Kent. Chick reduced the length of Offa’s exclusion from Kent to the bare minimum indicated by the charters of Egbert, but there remains a strong case for Kentish independence persisting until the mid-780s. Elsewhere Chick circumvented this difficulty by suggesting that the important Canterbury moneyer Eoba may have defected to Mercia after the battle of Otford. If so, his coins for Egbert II would presumably represent either an earlier issue, struck during the period before 776, or more probably one from the period after the battle but before Eoba’s supposed reversal of loyalties.

Ongoing historical analysis and the insights given by additional finds and Chick’s complete catalogue suggest caution, however. There is no compelling reason to reject the chronological framework of the charters and Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and neither is there any evidence for Eoba’s temporary departure from Canterbury other than his access to London-made early portrait dies. No other obvious break or lacuna in Eoba’s contribution to the Light coinage presents itself, and the division in the coinage of Kent is best placed between the earliest phase of Offa’s coins (phase Ia), which extended down to about 776, and the subsequent substantive Light coinage.

If Eoba was based in Canterbury throughout the 770s and 780s, it seems very unlikely that the substantive Light coinage of phase II began at London substantially earlier than at Canterbury. The most reasonable conclusion is that this main part of the Light coinage began at a time when Offa had control over Kent as well as London and, on present evidence, these conditions most likely came about in or after 784/5: hence the substantive Light coinage of London and Canterbury was probably produced over less than a decade.

There is no secure evidence to date the sub-phases of the substantive Light coinage: on the basis of surviving quantities of coin and projections of original output one might estimate c.784/5 for phase IIa of portrait and related coins with the moneyer’s name on the obverse; c.785–787/8 for phase IIb – the Aiskew hoard phase of the Light coinage, which was distinguished by the highest quality portrait coins; and c.787/8–92/3 for the final post-Aiskew phase IIc.

The East Anglian mint is even more obscure. The coins of Wilred are undoubtedly Offa’s earliest issue from this mint, representing all of its output in phase Ia; others may belong to...
the intermediate phase Ib. There follows a more easily definable substantive phase of the East Anglian Light coinage, which possibly began somewhat later than at Canterbury and London (between the years 785–907), as no East Anglian coins were found in the Aiskew hoard. Portraits were scarce on the East Anglian Light coinage, and for whatever reason seem not to have appealed to the main Offa die-cutter of the phase (see Fig. 13). Æthelberht of East Anglia’s rare coins are of uncertain date: they must have come after Wilred’s coins for Offa, and before – perhaps around the inception of – Offa’s Heavy coinage. Beyond that it is impossible to determine conclusively how they fit in with Offa’s Light coinage: the most likely possibility is that Æthelberht usurped or was granted the services of one moneyer, while other moneyers continued to work for Offa around him.

As is apparent, problems and uncertainties (historical and numismatic) still lurk, but it is now possible to offer an overview of the chronology of Offa’s coinage. The ‘early’ coinage of phase I began c.760/5 at London and East Anglia, and probably a few years later at Canterbury (c.765/70). While the former two mints sank back into abeyance and restarted on a low level c.775/80 (i.e., phase Ib), Canterbury gradually increased its output, first with a coinage for Heaberht and Offa by Eoba, which probably belongs to the years before the battle of Otford in 776. The outcome of this battle left Offa without control over Canterbury, and coins of Egbert II were minted there for the next few years, quite probably until Mercian control was re-established, probably c.784/5. It was only after Offa’s rule was secure at both Canterbury and London that minting began once again with phase II, apparently on a much-expanded scale, but based on a substantially devolved system of administration, which was extended to the East Anglian mint sometime soon after. Phase III, the Heavy coinage, began – presumably around the same time at all mints – in 792/3. This scheme is summarised in Table 6 below:

TABLE 6. Revised absolute chronology of Offa’s coinage. Phases are given in parentheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LONDON</th>
<th>CANTERBURY</th>
<th>EAST ANGLIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c.760–70</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Coinage of Beonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.760</td>
<td>Earliest coinage of Offa by Mang (Ia)</td>
<td>c.760–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.765/70</td>
<td>Earliest coinage of Offa by Eoba (Ia)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.770–76</td>
<td>Coinage of Egbert II (Ib)</td>
<td>c.780?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.784/5</td>
<td>Substantive Light coinage (Ia)</td>
<td>c.785–907/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.785–87/8</td>
<td>Substantive Light coinage (Ib)</td>
<td>c.785–907–92/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.787/8 –92/3</td>
<td>Substantive Light coinage (Ic)</td>
<td>c.785–907–92/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>792/3–6</td>
<td>Heavy coinage of Offa (III)</td>
<td>792/3–6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

Offa’s reign was a generally fluid and experimental period for Anglo-Saxon coinage. In many respects its earlier portions looked back to the early pennies or sceattas and the issues of Beonna and Eadberht, though by the end of the reign in 796 the trends for much of the next century were beginning to emerge. Types and die-production were becoming increasingly

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107 See above, p. 89.
109 The high weight of one of the surviving specimens (Chick 186c: 1.41 g) may suggest they were minted after the adoption of the Heavy coinage weight standard.
110 See above, p. 79.
standardised, at least within each mint and sometimes more widely, as in Offa’s final Heavy coinage. It is also possible to exaggerate the diversity of the preceding Light coinage. Unity in weight, fineness and use of some form of royal name and title prevailed throughout Offa’s reign, and foreign coinage was excluded from circulation after the early 780s. The complexities that applied to design, style and die-production should not be allowed to overshadow these basic elements of uniformity.

At the same time, these complexities are in themselves an intrinsic part of the coinage, and a reflection of the emergent minting organisation that produced it. No silver bullet has yet appeared with which to overcome these problems posed by Offa’s coinage, or at least the Light coinage. There is no cause to doubt the date or nature of the change from Light to Heavy coinage in 792/3, and the issues of Offa’s last years are much less problematic. Despite fuzziness over the exact date of the inception of the Light coinage, the earliest phase of Offa’s coinage (phase I) is also relatively clear. It is the large and artistically vibrant intervening period of the substantive Light coinage that still remains enigmatic, mainly because of its generally loose organisation of minting and die-production and its lack of standardised types within or between mints. Indeed, it is generally more helpful to focus on moneyers rather than minting towns as a whole, in the same way as was probably done by Offa and others in the eighth century. Sporadic groupings of type or style among these moneyers appear from time to time, as presented in Figs 2–12, but while helpful for purposes of mint attribution and relative chronology these fleeting associations also serve to demonstrate the flexible relationships that prevailed between moneyers and die-cutters. Several of the latter probably worked within each town at any one time. London was host to an especially accomplished die-cutting school during the substantive Light coinage. Only a few Canterbury moneyers had access to these dies depending on their own or the die-cutter’s needs and wishes. Sometimes this access may have been dictated by political factors, though doubtless other (now invisible) forces played a part.

These conclusions remain subject, as with all others on the problematic coinage of Offa, to changes necessitated by new discoveries. The pennies listed in the Appendix have already filled in some blanks, and even a single new coin might force substantial revision of the chronology, while further hoards would prove invaluable. Yet Derek Chick’s new book with its detailed corpus has brought us an important step closer to definitive conclusions, and to full appreciation of a coinage that presents a unique cocktail of numismatic challenges, aesthetic qualities and historical and economic significance.

REFERENCES

Blackburn, M.A.S., 2007. ‘Gold in England During the “Age of Silver” (Eighth–Eleventh Centuries)’, in J. Graham-Campbell and G. Williams (eds), Silver Economy in the Viking Age (Walnut Creek, CA), 55–98.
Chick. See type numbers in Chick 2010.

111 Metcalf 2009, 17–18.
APPENDIX: RECENT FINDS OF COINS OF OFFA AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

This appendix lists 63 coins discovered between the closure of the catalogue in Chick 2010 in 2006 and May 2010. All are illustrated on Pls 7–8. Coins which have changed hands since 2006 but are already included in Chick’s catalogue are not listed.
1. Chick 8A (new type) [Offa: London, Æthelweald]
Obv. +ÆÆILLUEALO around an undraped diademed bust right, breaking a beaded inner circle.
Rev. OF / F / AR / EX divided by four jewel-like lobes; the inner circles contains a cross botonnée with four petals in saltire.
1.24 g.
Note: the obverse moneyer's name is here combined with a new form of royal title, indicating that the abbreviated title was not universal even at the earliest stage of the substantive Light coinage.

2. Chick 10 [Offa: London, Æthelweald]
Obv. +OFFA REX+ (lozenge-shaped O) around a diademed and heart-shaped bust right, breaking an inner circle.
Rev. ëA / IL / VÀ / LÒ divided by four jewel-like lobes; the inner circle contains a cross botonnée with four petals in saltire.
Ex Baldwin's catalogue Winter 2008, no. BH061.
No wt.
Same dies as Chick 10 (k).
Same obverse die as Chick 10 (j) and (l).

Obv. +OFFA REX+ around a diademed and heart-shaped bust right, breaking a beaded inner circle.
Rev. ëA / EL / VÀ / LÒ divided by four jewel-like lobes; the inner circle contains a cross botonnée with four petals in saltire.
EMC 2009.0231.
No wt (chipped and bent), 330°.
Found near Lincoln, Lincolnshire, July 2009.

Obv. +OFFA REX+ (lozenge-shaped O) around a diademed and heart-shaped bust right, breaking a beaded inner circle.
Rev. ëO / IL / VÀ / LÒ divided by four jewel-like lobes; the inner circle contains a cross botonnée with four petals in saltire.
PAS SUR-00E794.
1.31 g, 17 mm.
Same dies as Chick 10 (k).
Found near Guildford, Surrey, January 2006.

5. Chick 14A (new type) [Offa: London, Æthelweald]
Obv. OFF` || REX in two lines divided by beaded bar with triangles or forks at each end.
Rev. ëEEL || VALD in two lines divided by beaded bar with triangles or forks at each end.
No wt.
Found on Biggleswade Common, Biggleswade, Hertfordshire, by April 2009.

Obv. ÔÔ / FF / AR / EX in angles of cross of lobes over a smaller saltire cross of lobes, with a trefoil-headed sceptre in all lobes.
Rev. ÔHÀH || HARD in two lunettes divided by a beaded bar with cross at either end.
EMC 2009.0115.
1.20 g, 90°.
Same dies as Chick 17 (a).

7. Chick 17A (new type) [Offa: London, Beagheard]
Obv. uncertain inscription around draped and diademed bust right.
Rev. ÔCÀH || HARĐ in two lines divided by a plain bar, with further indistinct ornamentation on either side.
Personal communication, Gareth Williams, January 2009.
0.57 g (small fragment), 90°.
Note: the only portrait type of Beagheard, on the authority of which it is possible to date his activity somewhat earlier than would otherwise be possible.
Obv. +OFF0 REX+ around a Roman-style draped and cuirassed bust right with curly hair, breaking beaded inner circle.
Rev. +H0 I0 L| || H A R D (lozenge-shaped O) above and below serpent-like creature forming a lateral figure of eight across the field.
Ex Lockdale’s auction 75, 15.11.2009, lot 565.
No wt (badly chipped).
Found in Suffolk, by 2009.

Obv. +OFF0 REX+ around a Roman-style draped and cuirassed bust right with curly hair, breaking beaded inner circle.
Rev. +H0 I0 L| || H A R D (lozenge-shaped O) above and below serpent-like creature forming a lateral figure of eight across the field.
No wt (slightly chipped), 17 mm.
Same reverse die as Chick 18 (c).
Found near Temple, Bisham, Berkshire, June 2006.

10. Chick 19A (new type) [Offa: London, Dud]
Obv. +OFF0 +REX+ around an undraped diademed bust right, breaking a beaded inner circle, with ornamental spray projecting in front of bust.
Rev. +D / V / D divided by four enclosed and jewelled lobes, with four further lobes in outer angles; the inner circle contains a cross bottonnée with four petals in saltire.
EMC 2008.0245.
1.21 g.
Found near Harston, Cambridgeshire, by 2008.
Note: the reverse includes additional lobes, producing an interesting floral effect.

Obv. +OFF0 REX+ around a diademed bust right breaking a beaded inner circle, with ornamental spray projecting in front of bust.
Rev. +D / V / D divided by four enclosed lobes containing trefoil-headed sceptres of linear variety; the inner circle contains a linear cross bottonnée with four petals in saltire.
EMC 2008.0375.
0.97 g.

Obv. OFF0 REX in field before a large, elaborately draped and distinctive bust right, the head diademed with ties.
Rev. +D / U / D in angles of a large cross of lobes with trefoil-headed sceptres in each lobe over a saltire cross bottonnée.
PAS KENT-1C89E2
1.1 g (to one decimal place), 16 mm.
Same dies as Chick 24 (a).
Found near Wingham, Kent, April 2007.

Obv. OFF0 REX in field before a large, elaborately draped and distinctive bust right, the head diademed with ties.
Rev. +D / U / D in angles of a large cross of lobes with trefoil-headed sceptres in each lobe over a saltire cross bottonnée.
1.3 g (to one decimal place), 16 mm.
Same dies as Chick 24 (a).

Obv. +O / FF / A R / EX (lozenge-shaped O) in the angles of a cross fourchée over a smaller cross voided with rounded ends, containing a beaded cross.
Rev. +D / U / D in the angles of a large cross of lobes, each lobe containing a trefoil-headed sceptre; overlaid by a saltire cross bottonnée.
EMC 2009.0413.
0.99 g.
Found near Herongate, Essex, December 2009.
Same dies as Chick 30(a); and same obverse die as Chick 29(a).

Obv. \textit{OFFA} in field before bust right with elaborate hairstyle.
Rev. \textit{+E / AD / HV / UN} in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with small plain cross at centre.
EMC 2008.0374.
1.08 g.
Same dies as Chick 31 (c), (d) and (e).
Found near Chelmsford, Essex, by 2008.

Obv. \textit{OFFA} in field before bust right with elaborate hairstyle.
Rev. \textit{+E / AD / HV / UN} in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with small plain cross at centre.
PAS BUC-D5B3E5.
0.99 g (chipped), 17 mm.
Same dies as Chick 31 (c), (d) and (e).
Found near Hardwick, Buckinghamshire, August 2005.

Obv. \textit{OFFA REX} around bare-headed and undraped bust right with distinctive ‘horned’ shoulders and pendant with or without chain at neck; the head within a broken, beaded inner circle.
Rev. \textit{MUN} || \textit{D} in three lines, divided by beaded line, surrounded by serpent torque, divided by line of pellets.
Baldwin’s catalogue Winter 2008, no. BH062.
No wt.
Same dies as Chick 37 (o).

Obv. \textit{OFFA REX} around bare-headed and undraped bust right with distinctive ‘horned’ shoulders and pendant with or without chain at neck; the head within a broken, beaded inner circle.
Rev. \textit{MUN} || \textit{D} in three lines, divided by beaded line, surrounded by serpent torque.
EMC 2009.0139/PAS SUSS-3CD791.
0.64 g (small fragment), 270°.
Probably same obverse die as Chick 37 (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e).

Obv. \textit{O / R / w} in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with pellet in annulet at centre.
Rev. \textit{ALH} || \textit{MUN} || \textit{D} in three lines, and divided by a beaded bar with fleury ends and \textit{D} below.
EMC 2008.0214.
No wt.
Found near Maidstone, Kent, 2008.

20. Chick 45A (new type) [Offa: London, Ealhmund]
Obv. \textit{OFFA REX MERCIOVRV} around inner circle containing diademed and cuirassed bust right.
Rev. \textit{+E / AL} || \textit{MV / NO} within four petals forming cross; annulet in each angle.
1.2 g (recorded to one decimal place).
Note: a new combination of bust-type with this legend and reverse design.

Obv. \textit{OFFA / REX} (downwards) divided by diademed bust right without diadem ties, with curved shoulders and collar.
Rev. \textit{+H} / \textit{B / B / A} in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with plain cross in centre.
0.81 g (fragment), 90°.
Probably same dies as Chick 55 (b) and (c).

Obv. \textit{OFFA / REX} (downwards) divided by diademed bust right without diadem ties, with curved shoulders and collar.
Rev. \textit{+H} / \textit{B / B / A} in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with plain cross in centre.
PAS SUR-3017D5.
Obv. OFFA / REX (downwards) divided by diademed bust right without diadem ties, with curved shoulders and collar.
Rev. H / B / B / A in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with plain cross in centre.
PAS BUC-BAE5D3.
No wt (slightly chipped), 17 mm.
Found near Cadmore End, Buckinghamshire, March 2006.

Obv. +OFFA REX+ around cuirassed and diademed bust right, breaking inner circle.
Rev. U / UI / N / Ø ð in angles of lozenge cross fleury containing annulet and four pellets.
Private collection; and ex Lockdale’s 2006.
1.05 g.
Note: a new layout for the reverse legend.

Obv. OFF `|R| RE in two lines divided by a beaded bar with fleuret terminals.
Rev. UU / IN / ð in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with single pairs of fleurs; saltire cross with a pellet in each angle.
1.07 g (slightly chipped), 90°.

Obv. OFFA || REX in two lines divided by a beaded bar with floreate terminals.
Rev. UU / IN / ð (lozenge-shaped Ø) in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with single pairs of fleurs, with long cross over saltire of petals in centre.
Offered for sale on www.ebay.co.uk, September 2009.
No wt.
Probably found in Wiltshire, September 2009.
Same dies as Chick 76 (b).

27. Chick 76 [Offa: London, Winoth]
Obv. OFFA || REX in two lines divided by a beaded bar with fleurs at each end.
Rev. UU / IN / ð (lozenge-shaped Ø) in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with single pairs of fleurs; saltire cross with pellet in each angle in centre.
PAS BH-349AD7.
1.03 g (badly chipped), 14 mm.
Found in South Cambridgeshire, October 2008.

Obv. OF / FA / RE / X+ around a large lozenge with incurved sides, and with a small, plain circle at the centre containing a cross of four pellets superimposed on a saltire with a trefoil of pellets at each terminal.
Rev. ðØBB || ERH || T CP (CP ligatured) in two lines within a beaded rectangle, divided horizontally by a plain bar with forked finials; a cross above and CP below.
PAS YORYM-0AFL1A5.
1.2 g (recorded to one decimal place).

Obv. Ø / F+ || B / m (four pellets in centre of Ø; m with extended and slashed central leg) in two lines, in the angles of a long cross crosslet with a large annulet containing a rosette of pellets in centre.
Rev. CAD || BERH || T CP (CP ligatured) in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
The Searcher 289 (September 2009), p. 69.
No wt (badly chipped).
Found near Burgess Hill, West Sussex, July 2009 (PAS SUSS-5492C0).
Same obverse die as Chick 80 (a) and (b).
Same reverse die as Chick 80 (c).

Obv. Ø / F+ || B / m (four pellets in centre of Ø; m with extended and slashed central leg) in two lines, in the angles of a long cross crosslet with a large annulet containing a rosette of pellets in centre.
THE COINAGE OF OFFA REVISITED

Rev. ĞAD || BERH || T ĖP (ĒP ligatured) in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Numismatik Lanz (Munich) auction 27.5.2008, lot 551.
1.08 g.

31. Chick 89 [Offa: Canterbury, Babba]
Obv. O / F / [ F / ĖP] in the angles of a long cross-crosslet over circle containing a lozenge with rosette in centre.
Rev. B / ĖP / [ BB / ĖP] in the angles of a lozenge with crossed finials, containing a rosette.
PAS KENT-F07B14.
1.05 g (fragment), 17 mm.
Same dies as Chick 89 (c).
Found at West Peckham, Kent, September 2006.

32. Chick 98 [Offa: Canterbury, Ealred]
Obv. OFF in front of REX (RIX retrograde) behind bust right; bare-headed and with curly hair and heavy, squint bust with distinctive decorative panels.
Rev. + / ĖP / R / ĖP with fleurs composed of two pommée-headed lines in the angles; a lozenge in the centre containing a cross or saltire with symbols in the angles.
Private collection; uncertain provenance.
No wt.
Same obverse die as Chick 98 (a), (b), (c) and (d).

33. Chick 101 [Offa: Canterbury, Ealred]
Obv. OFF || REX divided by a beaded bar with fleur at each end and with cross in upper lunette.
Rev. ĖE / ĖP / REX / ĖP in the angles of a long cross-crosslet with annulet at centre containing a rosette.
EMC 2009.0330.
No wt.
Found in Lincolnshire, by October 2009.

34. Chick 104 [Offa: Canterbury, Eoba]
Obv. O / F in beaded standard; R / Ė below, bisected by standard pole with cross at top; smaller crosses on either side.
Rev. Ė / O || B / Ė in the angles of a cross fleury (to be read as either a circular or two-line inscription) with a large annulet containing a saltire of pellets at centre.
Ex Lockdales auctions 71, 22.3.2009, lot 438.
No wt.
Same obverse die as Chick 104 (c).

35. Chick 106 [Offa: Canterbury, Eoba]
Obv. O / F in a square of pellets, with a line of pellets protruding diagonally from each corner; R / Ė below, cross above, ornaments in field.
Rev. Ė / O || B / Ė (lozenge-shaped O) in angles of a cross fleury, with an annulet in the centre containing a saltire of pellets.
EMC 2008.0372.
1.15 g.
Found near Monkton, Kent, September 2008.
Same dies as Chick 106 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (h).

36. Chick 111A (new type) [Offa: Canterbury, Eoba]
Obv. R / Ė || X / Ė around a square of pellets with a crosslet at each corner and reversed OF in centre.
Rev. Ė / O || B / Ė in the angles of a cross fleury with annulet at centre containing a saltire of pellets.
Ex Spink’s auction 25.3.2010, lot 11.
No wt.
Found in North Yorkshire by 2009.
Probably same reverse die as Chick 111 (a).

37. Chick 117 [Offa: Canterbury, Eoba]
Obv. Ė / Ė || X / Ė in the angles of a long cross bottonnée with a small lobe in each angle.
Rev. Ė / O || B / Ė in the angles of a Celtic cross with fleurs on limbs and a cross at centre, a pellet in each angle.
1.16 g (chipped).
Found near Royston, Hertfordshire, November 2009.
Same obverse die as Chick 117 (a) and (b).

38. Chick 122 [Offa: Canterbury, Heaberht]
Obv. Ė / Ė || X / Ė in the angles of a long cross bottonnée with small lobe at each angle.
Rev. H / X / BE (ligatured) / R in the angles of a celtic cross with a long cross fleury on limbs and small cross saltire in centre.
EMC 2009.0005.
1.06 g.
Found near Wingham, Kent, November 2007.
Same obverse die as Chick 122 (a).

Obv. Ornately detailed bust right with elaborate hairstyle; OFFA RE in field before face; X behind.
Rev. PE / IT / VΛ / LØ in angles of celtic cross with a long cross fleury on limbs, over a small saltire cross of petals in centre.
EMC 2009.0116.
No wt.
Same reverse die as Chick 130 (a) and (b).
Found near Wragby, Lincolnshire, January 2009.

40. Chick 128 [Offa: Canterbury, Pehtweald]
Obv. +OFFA REX+ around bust right of Ciolhard style but with more elaborate hair; beaded inner circle.
Rev. PE / IT / VΛ / LØ in the angles of a celtic cross with a long cross fleury on limbs over small saltire cross of petals in centre.
EMC 2010.0110.
1.15 g.
Note: this coin is of noticeably finer style than the other two surviving specimens of Chick 128.

41. Chick 129 [Offa: Canterbury, Pehtweald]
Obv. +FF / 0R / EX in the angles of a long cross botonnée with small lobe in each angle.
Rev. PE / IT / VΛ / LØ in the angles of a voided cross with a long cross fleury on limbs over small saltire in centre.
PAS BERK-2BABE0.
1.2 g (to one decimal place), 90°, 17 mm.
Same dies as Chick 130 (g).
Found near Blewbury, Oxfordshire, April 2009.

42. Chick 130 [Offa: Canterbury, Tirwald]
Obv. +OFFA REX+ around cuirassed bust right, breaking beaded inner circle.
Rev. PE / IT / VΛ / LØ in the angles of a celtic cross with a long cross fleury on limbs over small saltire cross of petals in centre.
EMC 2008.0160.
1.16 g.
Same obverse die as Chick 129 (c), (d) and (e).
Found near Linton, Cambridgeshire, by 2008.

43. Chick 131 [Offa: Canterbury, Tirwald]
Obv. +OFFA REX+ around a central rosette, within a serpent wreath.
Rev. T / IR / VVV / A1 / D in the angles of a cross of lobes, with a trefoil-headed sceptre within each lobe and in the angles of the cross.
Ex Dix, Noonan and Webb auction 85, 17.3.2010, lot 237.
1.2 g (recorded to one decimal place).
Same dies as Chick 131 (a).
Found near Newark, Nottinghamshire, November 2009 (EMC 2009.0368).
Note: a somewhat anomalous type, combining a reverse associated with Group H (Fig. 9) with an obverse of unusual style. This is probably the earliest type associated with Tirwald.

44. Chick 143 [Cynethryth: Canterbury, Eoba]
Obv. female bust right with elaborate, curly hairstyle, inspired by Roman imperial coinage and with complex drapery below; trefoil of pellets behind head; EOBA in field before face (lozenge-shaped Ø).
Rev. LFNEOF RÆGNDINA around a beaded inner circle containing Ø’.
Ex Classical Numismatic Group auction 78, 14.5.2008, lot 2123; and ex Susan and Eddy Quinn collection.
1.29 g, 180°.
Same dies as Chick 143 (d) and (e).
Same obverse die as Chick 143 (f) and (g).
45. Chick 143 [Cynethryth: Canterbury, Eoba]  
Obv. female bust right with elaborate, curly hairstyle, inspired by Roman imperial coinage and with complex drapery below; trefoil of pellets behind head; **EOBOA** in field before face (lozenge-shaped ✷).  
Rev. **CYNEHYR Y0 REGIN** around a beaded inner circle containing ✷.  
Ex Spink; and ex Mark Rasmussen (not in catalogue).  
1.05 g, 0°.  
Same reverse die as Chick 143 (g), (h) and (i).

46. Chick 147 [Cynethryth: Canterbury, Eoba]  
Obv. large, crude female bust right; **EOBOA** in field before face (lozenge-shaped ✷).  
Rev. +6YNE/RY/REGI~ around a beaded inner circle containing ✷.  
0.98 g.  
Found near Worthing, West Sussex, November 2008 (EMC 2009.0100/PAS SUSS-2E92D1).  
Note: this cruder form of bust is not identical in style to those on other specimens of type 147, presumably indicating that unavailability of fine portrait dies was not an isolated occurrence.

47. Chick 148 [Cynethryth: Canterbury, Eoba]  
Obv. +6YNE/RY/REGI~ around beaded inner circle containing ✷.  
Rev. +E/\|/\|/B/\a (lozenge-shaped ✷) (intended to be read across the field in two lines), each letter on a limb of a cross of lobes, with fleurs in angles.  
EMC 2008.0332/PAS BERK-328187.  
1.00 g, 45°.  
Found near Ewelme, Oxfordshire, by 2008.

48. Chick 152A (new type) [Offa and Archbishop Jænberht: Canterbury]  
Obv. **OFFa/REX** in two lunettes, divided by two bars with crossed outer finials.  
Rev. +I0ENBERHT 0RIEPI around plain inner circle containing cross bottonnée superimposed on saltire.  
Ex Spink’s auction 198, 19.3.2009, lot 165.  
No wt.  
Found near Claxby Pluckacre, Lincolnshire, January 2009.  
Note: a new obverse type, with some minor differences in the central device on the reverse with respect to type 152.

49. Chick 152A (new type) [Offa and Archbishop Jænberht: Canterbury]  
Obv. **OFFa/REX** in two lunettes, divided by two bars with crossed outer finials.  
Rev. +I0ENBERHT 0~IEPI around plain inner circle containing cross bottonnée superimposed on saltire.  
EMC 2009.0358.  
No wt (chipped).  
Found near Maidstone, Kent, October 2009.

50. Chick 181A (new type) [Offa: East Anglian mint, Wihtred]  
Obv. **OF/FA/RE/X** (lozenge-shaped ✷) between four pellet-encircled bosses at the points of a cross of petals over a plain inner circle; a boss at centre with a pellet in each angle.  
Rev. /\H/\R/\E/\D in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury; in the centre a small saltire with pellets at centre and in angles.  
Baldwin’s fixed price list, Winter 2009, no. BH077.  
1.09 g (slightly chipped).  
Same obverse die as Chick 181(a).

51. Chick 201 [Offa: London, Beagheard]  
Obv. ✷ with three pellets on either side || **OFFa** (lozenge-shaped ✷) || **REX** in three lines across field; divided by beaded bars.  
Rev. +HEAX/HEARD in two curved lunettes divided by a beaded bar terminating at each end with small wedges.  
EMC 2009.0344.  
No wt (badly chipped).  
Same dies as Chick 201 (b) and (c).  

52. Chick 205 [Offa: London, Ealhmund]  
Obv. ✷ with three pellets on either side || **OFFa** (lozenge-shaped ✷) || **REX** in three lines across field divided by beaded bars.
53. Chick 211A (new type) [Offa: London, Ludomon]
Obv. $\text{m}^w$ with three pellets on either side \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) in three lines across field divided by beaded bars.
Rev. $\text{HLVD} \| \text{OMON} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ in two lines divided by a beaded bar, all within a Boeotian shield-like device.
1.41 g.
Note: a new arrangement of the reverse legend.

Obv. $\text{m}^w$ with three pellets on either side \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Rev. $\text{UU} / \text{IN} / \text{O} / \text{O} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ in the angles of a lozenge cross fleury with single pairs of fleurs; in centre a plain cross with saltire superimposed.
1.25 g.
Same dies as Chick 213 (a).
Same reverse die as Chick 75 (b).
Found at Valkenburg, Netherlands (NUMIS no. 1029877).

Obv. $\text{m}^w$ with three pellets on either side \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Rev. $\text{VVI} \| \text{IN} \| \text{O} \| \text{O} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ in two lines divided by a bone-shaped device containing a row of pellets.
No wt.
EMC 2008.0215.
Same obverse die as Chick 214 (i).
Found near Harrietsham, Kent, 2008.

56. Chick 219 [Offa: Canterbury, Babba] [obv. only illustrated on Pl. 8]
Obv. $\text{m}^w$ \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) around plain inner circle containing rosette.
Rev. $\text{o} \text{NO} \| \text{BABBAB} \| \text{X}$'s joined by one leg, with five pellets arranged in four upper angles and in centre; all in three lines, divided by two plain bars (?).
PAS NARC-DC37D2.
1.5 g (to one decimal place), 19 mm.
Same obverse die as Chick 219 (a) [images available of obverse only].

57. Chick 231 [Offa: Canterbury, Æthelnoth]
Obv. $\text{m}^w$ with three pellets on either side \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Rev. $\text{EPEL} \| \text{NO} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ in two lines divided by a beaded bar with cross at each end, all within a Boeotian shield-like device.
Private collection; and ex Lockdale’s auction 15.1.2006, lot 422.
1.36 g.
Same dies as Chick 231 (a).

58. Chick 235 [Offa: Canterbury, Æthelnoth]
Obv. $\text{m}^w$ with three pellets on either side \(\| \text{OFFA} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O) \| \text{REX} \) in three lines, the upper and lower elements within lunettes.
Rev. $\text{EPEL} \| \text{NO} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ in three lines, the upper and lower elements within lunettes.
1.22 g, 270°.
Found on the Isle of Wight, by 2008.

Obv. $\text{OFFA} \text{REX} (\text{lozenge-shaped } O)$ around plain inner circle.
Rev. $\text{OS} / \text{M} / \text{O} / \text{D}$
Ex Tom Cederlind auction 150, 2.3.2009, lot 316.
1.32 g.
Probably same reverse die as Chick 237 (c).
60. Chick 246 [Offa and Archbishop Æthelheard: Canterbury]
Obv. \(\text{M}^\text{w}\) with three pellets either side || +\(\text{OFF}A\) (square-shaped O) || REX in three lines divided by two beaded bars with crossed terminals.
Rev. +\(\text{ÆDILHEARD} \text{ POT}\) around plain inner circle containing small saltire superimposed on long cross.
Private collection.
No wt.

61. Chick 247 [Offa and Archbishop Æthelheard: Canterbury]
Obv. \(\text{M}^\text{w}\) with three pellets either side || +\(\text{OFF}A\) (lozenge-shaped O) || REX in three lines divided by two plain bars.
Rev. +\(\text{ÆDIL} \text{ HEARD} \text{ CE PI}\) in three lines divided by two plain bars.
PAS KENT-3CB7A7.
1.4 g (to one decimal place), 20 mm.
Same obverse die as Chick 247 (e).
Found near Otford, Kent, March 2009.

62. Chick 251 [Offa: East Anglian mint, Lul]
Obv. \(\text{M}^\text{w}\) with three pellets either side || +\(\text{OFF}A\) (lozenge-shaped O) || REX in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Rev. +\(\text{L} / \text{U} / \text{L}\) on the leaves of a quatrefoil divided by a beaded cross, with trefoil of pellets in each spandrel.
EMC 2009.0313.
No wt (small fragment).

63. Uncertain [Offa: uncertain mint]
Obv. \(\text{M}^\text{w}\) with three pellets either side || +\(\text{OFF}A\) (lozenge-shaped O) || REX in three lines divided by two beaded bars.
Rev. uncertain.
PAS SWYOR-F33767.
1.2 g (to one decimal place; bent in half), 18 mm.