

## AN ENIGMATIC PENNY OF HENRY I

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Fig. 1. Penny of Henry I, Profile left/ Cross Fleury type (approx 2:1).

THE illustrated penny of Henry I, Profile left/ Cross Fleury type, *BMC Norman Kings* ii, actual diameter 17 mm, was found near Newark, Nottinghamshire, in April 2007, by Mr and Mrs W. Severn using a metal detector. The find was duly reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and is registered in the Fitzwilliam Museum's Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds as EMC 2007.0156.

The specimen shows little sign of wear, is well centred and generally well struck up with the obverse reading +HENRI[R]. The form of the reverse legend is here more exactly rendered:



Fig. 2. Line drawing of reverse legend.

The end of this may be normalized as ON TAMP and interpreted as 'at Tamworth', as on Tamworth mint coins of William II, Cross in Quatrefoil type, *BMC Norman Kings* ii.<sup>1</sup> However, what should be the moneyer's name poses considerable problems. The first letter has a wedge jutting horizontally from the base of the upright, rather than from the crescent, as is more usual for an R. Without the crescent it would clearly represent L. The fourth letter appears to be the same and the second letter is somewhat similar, although both the crescent and the wedge have lost their shapes to form an almost colon-like group. The small O, from a broken punch, leaves no room for doubt; it reappears in the ON. So letters 3, 4 and 5 could read ORD or OLD, suggesting that letter 2 might be a wen (Ƶ), making the name perhaps LWORD or LWOLD, with a contraction mark after the first letter.

However, these musings suggest no convincing moneyer and the impression grows that the die-sinker deliberately blundered the name. If this really is a case of evasion, the reliability of the Tamworth mint attribution is thrown into doubt. No coins of the Tamworth mint are known to have been struck between the issues of William II *BMC Norman Kings* type ii and Henry I *BMC Norman Kings* type xiv, a span of c.1093–1131, except for a specimen by the moneyer Lefwine of Henry I *BMC Norman Kings* type xiii, which type has recently been

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<sup>1</sup> *SCBI* 17 (*Midlands*), no. 747, moneyer Bruninc, and no. 749, moneyer Colinc.

redated by Mark Blackburn to *c.*1101–1103 and therefore close to the probable date of issue of the coin under consideration.<sup>2</sup>

There seems little doubt that the dies of this coin were prepared by a competent worker, using possibly official punches, and that the striking itself was done with more than average care. However the weight, 1.02 g, is very low,<sup>3</sup> and, although the fineness of the metal has not been tested, the suspicion remains that this is a product of the nefarious minting practices for which this reign is notorious.

### Postscript

Subsequent to the writing of the above Note, the coin in question has appeared in Dix Noonan Webb sale 77, 12 March 2008, lot 196. In the catalogue entry, the moneyer's name has been read as LPORD and expanded to Lifword.

### REFERENCES

- BMC Norman Kings*. See Brooke 1916.  
 Brooke, G.C., 1916. *A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum. The Norman Kings*, 2 vols (London).  
 Eaglen, R., 2006. *The Abbey and Mint of Bury St Edmunds*. BNS Special Publication 5 (London).  
 Gunstone, A.J.H., 1971. *SCBI 17. Ancient British, Anglo-Saxon and Norman Coins in Midlands Museums* (London).  
*SCBI 17 (Midlands)*. See Gunstone 1971.

## TWO NEW COIN BROOCHES OF TOURNOIS TYPE

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THE production and use of a particular type of coin brooch in England in the later thirteenth century is now well-established. The coins utilised are typically either the new groats of Edward I (1272–1307), introduced in 1280, or gros tournois of the French kings Louis IX, Philip III or Philip IV. The cross side of these coins (the reverse of the groats and the obverse of the gros tournois) is gilded, to be the side on view, and a pin and catchment are attached to the other side. Usually these attachments have not survived, although portions of the base or signs of where they were fixed are often visible. Included in the illustrations is an image of a replica of a groat of Edward I with an attachment in place (Fig. 1). This was shown at the British Museum in the late 1980s, when the replica was made, although it was not possible to acquire the item. It subsequently entered trade and the gilding and attachment were removed, presumably for commercial advantage: it is recorded by Martin Allen in his survey of the Edward I groats in this later condition.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 1. Groat of Edward I with an attachment.

<sup>2</sup> For discussion, see Eaglen 2006, 76–7.

<sup>3</sup> *BMC Norman Kings*, II, 270–1. The six specimens of this type catalogued vary in weight between 1.21 g and 1.37 g with an average of 1.27 g. For this note, the recorded grains have been converted to grammes.

<sup>1</sup> Allen 2004, no. 41 at p. 37.