

A PENNY OF LLYWELYN, SON OF CADWGAN, OF
THE TYPE OF THE SECOND ISSUE OF WILLIAM
RUFUS.

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PENNY OF LLYWELYN OF WALES, CIRCA 1075-1099.

THIS remarkable coin was purchased by me from Messrs. W. S. Lincoln and Son two or three years ago. They were unable to give me any information as to its provenance, but it is within my own recollection that it remained for some years in one of their cabinets amongst coins of William II., where it was attributed to the Southwark mint. It is of the type of that king's second issue, *Hawkins* 246, which, according to my view, was current from Michaelmas 1090 to the same time in 1093. The legends appear to be as follows :—

Obverse.—✱ **LEPIITEN RE** ✱

Reverse.—✱ **HRVEOV OH RVÐLO**

It is of good silver and weighs 18 grains.

The obverse inscription gives the name *Lewillen*, followed by the word *Rex*, a form of the name not far removed from that usually adopted in the *Annales Cambriæ*, namely, *Lewelin*.

The coin is illustrated in the electrotype block set at the head of this paper, and in the opposite plate, wherein it is enlarged to four diameters.

The name of the moneyer, **HRVEOV**, is otherwise unknown upon coins of the time of William I. and II., but there can be little doubt that the name **HERVEIVS** is intended.

Thinking that some Cambrian name might be indicated, I communicated with Professor Sir John Rhys in reference to the matter, but he could offer no suggestion which he could consider satisfactory, and wrote that he was inclined to share my opinion, that the name of Hervey is meant.

As regards the name of the mint, **RVÐLO**, there is every likelihood that the castle of Rhyd y Gors, near Carmarthen, is denoted. In the *Chronicle of the Princes, Brut y Tywysogion*, the name is written "castell Ryt y Gors" and "gastell Ryt Cors."

Having obtained the following data to work upon, namely—

1. The name of a person, Lewillen, styled Rex, or King ;
2. The name of his moneyer, Herveius ;
3. The place of mintage, **RVÐLO** = Ryth Co = Ryt Cors = Rhyd y Gors ; and
4. The approximate date, derived from that of Type 2 of William Rufus, A.D. 1090–1093,

I purpose to give such extracts from the *Annales Cambriæ* and *Brut y Tywysogion* as throw a light upon a prince of the period in question, bearing the name of Llywelyn, and his connection with the Norman castle of Rhyd y Gors.

In the *Annales Cambriæ*, under the year 1075, mention is made of a battle between Goronwy and Llywelyn, sons of Cadwgan, and Rhys, son of Owain, by whom the former were vanquished.

The *Brut y Tywysogion*, under the years 1073 and 1075, refers to battles wherein Llywelyn, son of Cadwgan, took a leading part. It must be remembered that the dates of this chronicle are two years in arrear, so for 1073 and 1075 we must read 1075 and 1077.

Under the annal 1092, really 1094, it is narrated that whilst William Rufus remained in Normandy the Britons resisted the domination of the French (Normans), not being able to bear their cruelty, demolished their castles in Gwynedd, and iterated their

depredations and slaughters among them. And then the French led their armies into Gwynedd ; and Cadwgan, son of Bleddyn, went against them, and attacked and prevailed over them, putting them to flight, and killing them with immense slaughter. Towards the close of that year the Britons demolished all the castles of Ceredigion and Dyved except two, to wit, Pembroke and Rhyd y Gors. The war was continued in 1095, and in the ensuing year, 1096, there died William, son of Baldwin, founder of the castle of Rhyd y Gors at the command of the King of England, and after his death the custodians left the castle empty.

Although the circumstance is not recorded in the meagre chronicles of the period, I suggest that it was immediately after the death of William Fitz Baldwin that the castle of Rhyd y Gors was taken possession of by Llywelyn, son of Cadwgan, and that he thereupon issued a coinage copied from that type of William II., which was probably still current amongst the Norman soldiery engaged in the campaign against the Britons. I can only conjecture that he employed the services of some Norman craftsman to act as moneyer, possibly a prisoner taken in the wars then so rife.

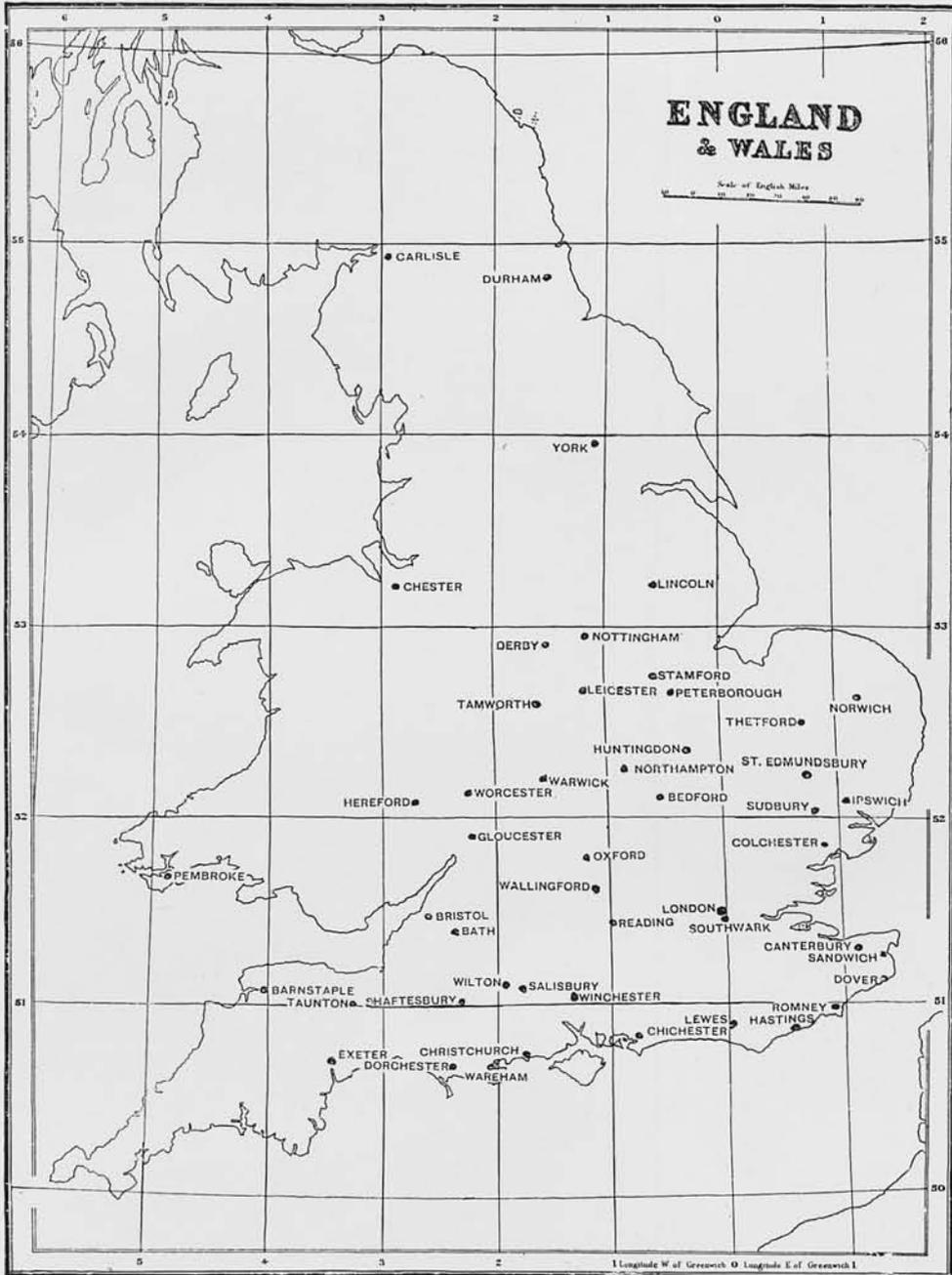
We do not know precisely what part Llywelyn, son of Cadwgan, played, but we can readily imagine that, in a country where civil war and disputes between rival princes were the rule rather than the exception, he would in his castle of Rhyd y Gors regard himself as an independent potentate and hold his position against all comers, whether Britons of rival factions or the common enemy the Norman. All that we know is that in 1099 Llywelyn, son of Cadwgan, was killed by the men of Brecheiniog (Brecknock). In conclusion, I can only refer to the somewhat parallel case of the coinage by Howel Dda at Chester,¹ in a type resembling that of his contemporary the Anglo-Saxon King Eadmund. The discovery of a coin of Howel Dda was as great a surprise to me, who first called attention to it, as it was to other numismatologists.

A coin of an independent prince, of the British race, as late in date

¹ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ii, p. 31.

as the close of the eleventh century comes as a greater revelation, but the legends do not appear to admit of any interpretation other than that which I have given to them, and such historical details as I have been able to obtain from the scanty chronicles of the period seem to confirm, in a truly remarkable way, the evidence which the little contemporary disc of metal has so happily and effectively preserved, all unsuspected, for upwards of 800 years.

My thanks are tendered to Sir E. Vincent Evans, of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, and to Professor Sir John Rhys for their kind assistance in helping me to identify the Llywelyn of the coin and the mint indicated by the inscription **RVÐLO.**



MAP OF ENGLAND AND WALES SHOWING THE MINTS OF HENRY I. FROM WHICH MONEY WAS CURRENT AT THE DATE OF STEPHEN'S ACCESSION.