

# KING STEPHEN AND THE INTERDICT OF 1148

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THE reign of King Stephen provides the most varied and problematical coinages of all the Norman kings. In a series of three papers the writer proposes to discuss some of the problems concerning the chronology, typology, and geographic distribution of the coins of this reign.

Stephen's substantive issues comprise the first and last coinages of the reign issued at mints throughout the country, and two intermediate types which were produced during the civil war at mints situated principally in the eastern part of the country. For the purpose of this paper it is proposed to describe these types as the Cross Moline, Cross Pattée (actually voided cross pattée), Cross Fleury, and Cross Pommée (double cross) coinages, and it may be useful to provide a concordance with other references:

	<i>BMC</i>	<i>Hawkins</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>Seaby (1981)</i>	<i>Hoard names</i>
Cross Moline	I	270	873	1278	'Watford'
Cross Pattée	II	269	878	1280	
Cross Fleury	VI	—	879	1281	
Cross Pommée	VII	268	881	1282	'Awbridge'

The types numbered *BMC* III, IV, and V by Brooke are now considered to be merely local types as they are issued by very few mints.

Commander Mack, in his 1966 survey of the coinage,<sup>1</sup> followed the then generally accepted view that the Cross Moline issue continued to be struck until shortly after the king's release from captivity in November 1141. He did express some uncertainty regarding the duration of the Cross Pattée and Cross Fleury types and whether the latter followed the former or whether they were issued concurrently. However, Michael Dolley, in publishing the Norman coins in the Uppsala University collection,<sup>2</sup> tentatively suggested that a date in the late 1040s might be more appropriate for the commencement of the Cross Pattée type and that the Cross Fleury issue might be 'a relatively ephemeral transitional coinage' bridging a year or two at the most between the Cross Pattée and the Cross Pommée issues. In a recent issue of the *Journal*<sup>3</sup> Robert Seaman has formulated a more specific chronology for the obverse die variants of the substantive Cross Moline type and its succeeding issues, based on a consideration of the composition of the Watford, South Kyme, Sheldon, Nottingham, and Linton hoards, the coins of Matilda and the earliest issue of Henry of Anjou:

Cross Moline issue:	STIFNE REX (etc.)	Dec. 1135–c. 1141
	STIEFNE RE	c. 1141–c. 1145
	STIEFNE R	c. 1145–c. 1147
	STIEFNE	c. 1147–c. 1149/50
Cross Pattée issue		c. 1150–c. 1152
Cross Fleury issue		c. 1153
Cross Pommée issue		c. 1153–c. 1158

<sup>1</sup> R. P. Mack, 'Stephen and the Anarchy 1135–1154', *BNJ* xxxv (1966), 38–112.

<sup>2</sup> M. Dolley, 'The Anglo-Norman Coins in the

Uppsala University Cabinet', *BNJ* xxxvii (1968), 29–34.

<sup>3</sup> R. J. Seaman, 'A Re-examination of Some Hoards Containing Coins of Stephen', *BNJ* xlvi (1978), 58–72.

This proposition, that the first issue of the reign continued for a period of some fourteen years and that the three succeeding issues were condensed into the last five years of the reign, the final issue continuing for some years into the reign of Henry II, implies a major break with the earlier practice of frequent and presumably regular changes of type. Under William I and II there had been thirteen changes of type over a period of 33½ years and during the 35½ years of Henry I there were fifteen changes of type. Stephen had certainly taken over a bulging treasury on securing the crown and it seems that he was content to institute a *type immobilisée* during the greater part of his reign, a course of action which would have received the approval of commercial interests in the city of London and other urban centres. His inability ultimately to replenish his resources due to the disruption of the civil administration over large areas of the country and his need to rely on military forces recruited from the continent may have been factors which prompted Stephen to reintroduce changes in coin types at the close of the 1140s or shortly after.

Further evidence to confirm or revise the proposed new dating would obviously be desirable, and it is the writer's view that a reconsideration of Stephen's coins struck from defaced dies may provide a fixed point in the later 1140s which would go some way to support the new chronology. Mack describes these coins as being from 'erased' dies, but it may be preferable to use the term 'defaced' as the designs were not wholly erased. It will be argued that a consideration of the particular form of defacement and of the mints from which the defaced coins were issued is essential to an understanding of this unusual phenomenon. It was only the obverse dies that were defaced and, with one exception, only selected parts of the dies were damaged. It is only one Bristol die (Mack no. 136) which is defaced with what appears to be indiscriminate marks cut in various directions across the surface.

There are two coins from the Nottingham hoard<sup>4</sup> which have been described as having been struck from defaced dies that may not belong to the main series. A Hastings penny of the moneyer Sawine (Danson 148, Mack 155) has a curved line passing through the king's chin and a vertical line downwards, and this may only be the result of accidental damage. Another coin of the uncertain mint 'Delca' (Danson 149, given as 'Derby?') has a horizontal line to the right of the king's sceptre which could be either accidental or a somewhat half-hearted attempt at defacement.<sup>5</sup> This leaves a main body of defaced pieces which can be divided into East Anglian, Lincolnshire, Nottingham, and York groups.

## THE COINS

### *The East Anglian Group*

The East Anglian group is by far the most extensive with coins known of four mints: Norwich, Thetford, Bury St. Edmunds or possibly Eye, and an uncertain mint, probably Castle Rising. The main defacement is a long cross which extends across the king's head to the edges of the coin, Fig. 1. On some of the Norwich coins there are smaller subsidiary crosses stamped into the fourth quarter of the cross, Fig. 3, or into the second and fourth quarters of the cross, Fig. 2, possibly with the intention of

<sup>4</sup> E. W. Danson, 'The Nottingham Find of 1880: a Stephen Hoard Re-examined', *BNJ* xxxvii (1968), 43-64.

from the same reverse die, were found in the Prestwich hoard (*Coin Hoards*, i (1975), 92, pl. 20, 4).

<sup>5</sup> Three 'Delca' coins of the moneyer Willem, probably

defacing the head and shaft of the king's sceptre (e.g. Mack 145). Defaced coins are now recorded for seven of the ten or more Norwich moneyers who are known to have been active during the later years of the Cross Moline coinage, i.e. Adam, Alfwald, Edstan, Eustace, Iun, Oter, and Walter. All these coins have the obverse inscription STIEFNE R or STIEFNE. This heavy concentration of moneyers issuing defaced coins at one mint would seem to suggest that Norwich may well have been the centre from which the defacement of the coinage was organized.



Thetford is represented by one moneyer, Baldewin (Mack 142). The Bury St. Edmunds coin listed in the summary of the Prestwich find in *Coin Hoards*<sup>6</sup> is of the moneyer Gilebert, a known Bury moneyer, but the form of the mint name 'ei' might equally well indicate Eye, a Domesday borough (*Eia*) just south of the Suffolk/Norfolk border and the centre of Stephen's principal demesne estates known as the 'honor of Eye'. Another defaced coin from the Sheldon find (Mack 143) is by the moneyer Robert, and unfortunately it has an illegible mint-signature, but it may be significant that the only East Anglian mint at which a Robert is known to have been active is Castle Rising near King's Lynn, a mint that was only in operation during the reign of Stephen.

Some of the East Anglian defaced dies have the large cross somewhat crudely cut across the dies but others appear to have the cross carefully punched into the die to terminate at the outer circle.

#### *The Lincolnshire Group*



Lincoln pennies of the moneyer Gladwine occur with a bar stamped across the shaft of the king's sceptre (Mack 150a and 150c), Fig. 4. A coin from the same die struck prior to the die being altered is also known (Mack 150b). At Stamford some pennies of the moneyer Lefsi have a bar through the king's sceptre and a plain cross stamped on

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 92. To be published by Marion M. Archibald and F. Elmore-Jones.

the king's shoulder near the edge of the coin (Mack 151), Fig. 5. Again, coins are known from one of the obverse dies prior to alteration. Another penny (Mack 154) is described as being from an uncertain mint, '+ ( ) BF( ) ANE',<sup>7</sup> but this may also be a Stamford coin as the last four letters of the inscription could be read as '-TANF.'. This coin has a thick bar across the sceptre but seems to be without a cross over the king's shoulder, Fig. 6.



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There is a further coin of an uncertain mint of the moneyer Edward (Mack 153) which conceivably could belong to this 'Lincolnshire' group as it has a thick cross on the king's shoulder and a defaced sceptre, Fig. 7. Across the shaft of the sceptre is a peculiar mark which bears some resemblance to a small conventionalized thunderbolt as it is made up of two fleured sceptre-heads placed back-to-back. If a thunderbolt was intended its symbolism may become apparent when the purpose of defacement is considered. A moneyer Edward is known at the mints of Colchester and Sudbury for the Cross Moline type, so it may be East Anglian.

### *The Nottingham Group*

The defaced coins of the Nottingham mint are only known of the moneyer Swein who appears to have been the only moneyer working at the mint during this reign. The fact that defaced coins of Swein far outnumber those of moneyers from other mints



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9



10

must be due to the composition of the Nottingham hoard and the relatively near-by Sheldon find. Swein's coins of the Cross Moline type can be divided into those that are undefaced (Mack 25), coins which have had the obverse inscription defaced wholly or in part by being hammered around the outer part of the coin (Mack 157a-e), Fig. 8, and those pennies which have a neat Latin cross pattée struck over the shaft of the king's sceptre (Mack 148), Fig. 9, or a Latin cross with usually a pellet in one angle struck across the king's head (Mack 149a-oo), Fig. 10. These coins with a cross usually

<sup>7</sup> G. C. Brooke, *BMC Norman Kings*, p. lxxviii, no. 231, where it is tentatively attributed to 'Canterbury?.'

have hammered-out inscriptions. The very irregular Mack 149*qq* does not seem to be part of the same series.<sup>8</sup>

The hammering of the inscription appears to have been carried out as a separate process from the defacement of the dies with a cross as each coin seems to have had individual treatment. It must have been quite a laborious operation.

### *The York Group*



11

Only two coins are known, both of which have the obverse defaced by two parallel lines cut across the die from edge to edge. The type was originally only recorded from the coin of the moneyer Martin of York in the University of Leeds collection (*SCBI* 793; Mack 156) which Brooke suspected was a forgery,<sup>9</sup> probably because it had a left-facing bust of irregular style and rather crude lettering, Fig. 11. The inscriptions are only partly legible and this may be due to some flattening through hammering. However, another coin with a right-facing bust, similarly defaced though with the lines running almost diagonally, has more recently come to light in the Prestwich hoard. The moneyer is Willem, but the mint name is not certain though clearly it is not York.

### *The Bristol Group*



12

As mentioned above, the defaced Bristol coins (Mack 136) are all from one obverse die of the moneyer Gurdan which is marked with lines cut in various directions in a seemingly indiscriminate manner, Fig. 12. This is an obverse with the inscription *STIEFNE* which Seaman would date to *c.* 1147–1149/50, so the die in its original state may date to some time after February 1148 when the 'Empress' Matilda left England for the continent and the defacement could have been carried out either late in 1148 or possibly during the period of her son Henry's 1149 expedition.

<sup>8</sup> Not from the Nottingham hoard as described in the Roth (1917) Sale catalogue. See Danson, *op. cit.* p. 58.

<sup>9</sup> *BMC Norman Kings*, p. lxxxi.

## THE FINDS

The defaced coins occur in five hoards<sup>10</sup>—Dartford (1825), Sheldon (1867), Nottingham (1880), South Kyme (c.1922), and Prestwich (1972). They only comprise a substantial proportion of the total number of coins in the Sheldon and Nottingham finds:

<i>Hoard</i>	<i>Total no. of coins</i>	<i>Defaced coins</i>	<i>Percentage of total</i>
Nottingham <sup>11</sup>	300+(177)	c.60 (38)	20.0 (21.5)
Sheldon, Derbys.	102	17	16.6
Prestwich, Lancs.	1065	32	3.0
Dartford, Kent	63	1	1.4
South Kyme, Lincs.	344	2	0.6

The number of defaced Nottingham coins in the Nottingham and Sheldon finds has been commented on above. The importance of the East Anglian group, and defaced coins of the Norwich mint in particular, stands out in the following listing of the mints striking defaced coins in the five hoards:

*Nottingham*<sup>11</sup> Norwich 17 (11), Thetford 3 (1), Stamford 3 (3), Lincoln 2 (2), Nottingham 31 (20), Uncertain 2 (1).

*Sheldon* Thetford 1, Stamford 1, Nottingham 15.

*Prestwich* Norwich 22, Bury St. Edmunds (or Eye?) 1, Stamford 2, Nottingham 6, Uncertain (?York Group) 1.

*South Kyme* Norwich 1, Bristol 1.

*Dartford* Bristol 1.

The fact that there are half as many defaced coins of Norwich as there are defaced coins of Nottingham in a Nottingham hoard and three and a half times as many in the Prestwich hoard, some sixty miles further from Norwich than is Nottingham, reinforces the proposition that Norwich appears to be the focal point for the entire series.

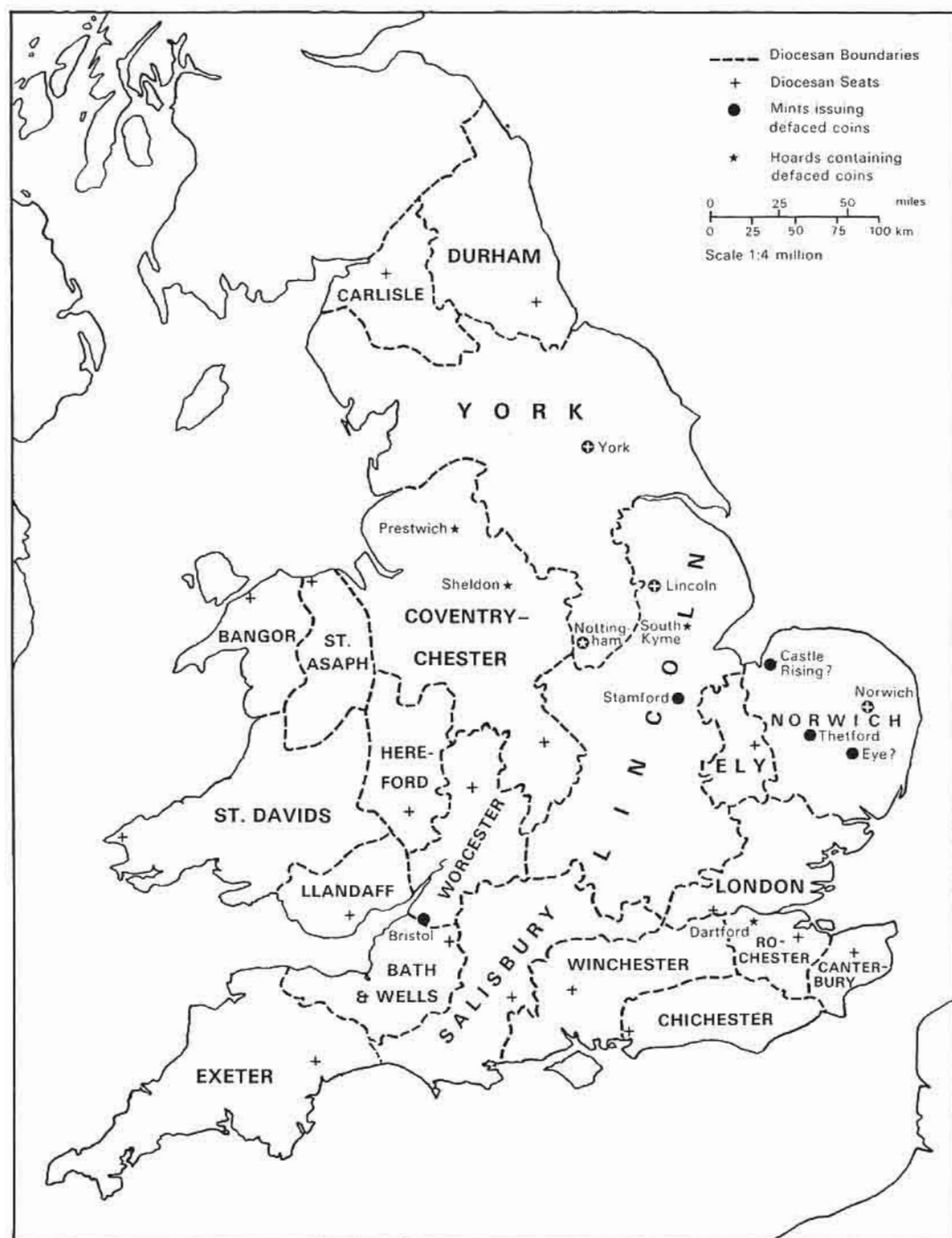
Dartford, the one southern hoard, contained only one defaced coin of the Bristol mint. South Kyme, with one Bristol and one Norwich defaced coin, apparently had none from Lincoln itself although normal Lincoln pence of the Cross Moline type outnumbered coins of any other mint represented in the hoard. In the Prestwich hoard, which had more pennies of Lincoln than of any other single mint, there were again no defaced coins of Lincoln. Perhaps the attempt to institute a defaced coinage at Lincoln was interrupted and the issue quickly suppressed.

As Cross Moline coins of Henry of Anjou were present in the Nottingham, South Kyme, and Prestwich hoard, and as the argument for their date being not earlier than Henry's expedition of 1149 seems a strong one, it would appear very probable that all three hoards were deposited about the time of Stephen's campaign in the north in the summer of 1149 or very shortly afterwards. The Sheldon hoard contains two variants of the Cross Pattée type and two Cross Moline/Cross Pattée mules, so it is likely to have been deposited at a slightly later date, and Seaman's proposed

<sup>10</sup> Mack, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-7. J. D. A. Thompson, *Inventory of British Coin Hoards A.D. 600-1500* (R.N.S. Special Publications no. 1, 1956).

<sup>11</sup> The figures in parenthesis refer to the Danson listing.





Dioceses, Mints, and Hoards

dating of c.1150 appears very reasonable. The Dartford hoard, now known to have contained a specimen of Stephen's rare *BMC* type V as well as a penny of William of Gloucester's last type (Mack type 3),<sup>12</sup> can hardly have been deposited before 1153 at the earliest.

If the assumption that the Nottingham, South Kyme, and the Prestwich hoards were not deposited prior to mid 1149 is sustained then it would seem reasonable to assign to the defaced coinage a date of issue shortly before this, i.e. some time between c.1147 and mid 1149.

#### THE OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF DEFACEMENT

If the dating of the defaced coins now needs to be revised by some six to eight years it is also necessary to bring into question the purpose of the coinage. It is no longer sufficient to presume a change of allegiance by various barons or moneyers from Stephen to the Angevin cause,<sup>13</sup> a theory which may not have seemed unreasonable when a dating to the period of Stephen's captivity was being mooted. The form of defacement is obviously an important consideration in arriving at an acceptable answer. The following summary excludes the Bristol coins:

Type of defacement	E. Anglian group	Lincolnshire group	Nottingham group	York group
Cross on head	×		×	
Cross on shoulder		×		
Cross(es) on sceptre	×		×	
Bar across sceptre		×		
Thunderbolt (?) across sceptre		×		
Hammered inscription			×	?
Parallel lines				×

The use of a cross as a means of defacement is such a prominent feature of the coinage that it is strange that an ecclesiastical origin has not been advocated before, particularly as the form of the Latin cross used on some of the Nottingham coins is so obviously a Christian symbol. It is necessary, then, to examine the relations between Stephen and the Church, especially for the period c.1147–1149.

Stephen had not been able to secure the throne without the co-operation of the English Church which had been obtained largely through the influence of his younger brother, Henry, bishop of Winchester, and Roger, bishop of Salisbury, who was justiciar. His coronation had been a hastily contrived affair, with Archbishop William de Corbeil only agreeing to anoint him after Hugh Bigod, King Henry's steward, had testified that on his deathbed Henry had relieved the English barons from their oath of allegiance to his daughter Matilda. In return Stephen had promised to restore and protect the privileges and liberties of the Church and, once his coronation had been recognized by Pope Innocent II, he confirmed these liberties in what has come to be called the 'Oxford Charter'.

<sup>12</sup> C. E. Blunt, F. Elmore-Jones, and P. H. Robinson, 'On Some Hoards of the Time of Stephen', *BNJ* xxxvii (1968), 40.

<sup>13</sup> E. Hawkins, *The Silver Coins of England* (3rd edn. 1887), p. 178. W. J. Andrew, 'A Remarkable Hoard of

Silver Pennies and Halfpennies of the Reign of Stephen, Found at Sheldon, Derbyshire, in 1867', *BNJ* vii (1910), 59 ff. Brooke (*BMC* p. lxxx) was inclined to believe that the dies might have been defaced by royal authority 'when the mints were in danger of falling into enemy hands'.



Stephen's first rupture with the Church stemmed from his arrest, in 1139, of Roger of Salisbury and his nephews, the bishops of Lincoln and Ely, and the confiscation of their castles. This breach was healed but there then arose a bitter conflict between St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the Papacy on the one hand and the king's party in the English church led by Henry of Winchester. The death of Archbishop Thurstan of York in 1140 was followed by a disputed election and eventually by the consecration of William Fitz Herbert, Stephen's nephew, in 1143. However, St. Bernard was able to prevent him receiving the *pallium* and he was finally deposed by Pope Eugenius III in 1147. When Henry Murdac, abbot of Fountains, won another contested election he was consecrated by the Pope but Stephen refused to acknowledge him and forbade him to enter his diocese. When refused entry to York early in 1148 Henry Murdac placed the city under interdict and he excommunicated both the treasurer of York, who was Stephen's nephew, and William of Aumale, the earl of York. A further dispute resulted from the exile of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, who had attended the Council of Rheims in March 1148 in clear defiance of King Stephen's orders. The Pope threatened that the country would be placed under interdict and that the king himself would be excommunicated at Michaelmas if he did not allow Theobald to return to his diocese.

The king refused to give way and the interdict was promulgated by Theobald to take effect from 12 September 1148; conceivably Stephen's personal excommunication was imposed, as decreed, two weeks later. The majority of the English bishops, however, failed to carry out the provisions of the interdict. John of Salisbury records that 'almost all the bishops who were in the king's power were turned aside from the archbishop like a deceitful bow (*Psalms lxxviii*, 58) and the clergy preferred tranquility to obedience. For some took to flight so that no orders could be given in their absence; others offered in excuse the danger to themselves and their friends, the loss to the Church and a justifiable fear of schism breaking out.'<sup>14</sup> The chroniclers do not record which of the bishops were *not* in the king's power nor those who did enforce the interdict, nor do they give any details of the king's excommunication. The bishops excused their failure to attend Theobald in France by their inability to leave England without the king's permission. Theobald decided, then, to return to England, but knowing that he would be refused entry to Canterbury he embarked for the Suffolk coast where he received a friendly welcome from Earl Hugh Bigod, who was one of Stephen's less loyal barons and who installed him in his great castle of Framlingham. Various bishops attended him there, amongst whom are known to have been the bishops of Norwich, London, and Chichester. Stephen realized that he must rapidly come to some arrangement with Theobald, and some time in October or November he gave in and allowed the archbishop to return to his see, though he remained obdurate on the exclusion of Henry Murdac from York. Presumably Stephen had been under threat or sentence of excommunication for a period of some four to six weeks from 29 September.

In the light of the events of 1148 the phenomenon of the defaced coinage now appears to fit neatly into place. With the exception of Bristol, which was in Angevin territory, the mints where the coins were issued were all in the dioceses of Norwich, Lincoln, and York, and from those parts of the dioceses which are known to have

<sup>14</sup> John of Salisbury, *Historia Pontificalis*, in *English Historical Documents*, vol. ii, p. 681; see also the edition by Marjorie Chibnall, London, 1956.

been or are likely to have been outside the effective control of the king in the autumn of 1148.

In the diocese of Norwich most of Norfolk and part of Suffolk would have been under the control of the rebellious Earl Hugh Bigod who is known to have given support to Archbishop Theobald. Framlingham was within easy reach of Norwich and Bishop William and Earl Hugh would have been able to use the Norwich moneyers to set a pattern for the defacement of the coinage.

William de Roumare had been made earl of Lincoln in 1141, but he was in Normandy in the mid 1140s supporting Geoffrey of Anjou, and in 1149 Stephen created Gilbert de Gant earl of Lincoln in his place. In 1148 Earl Ranulf of Chester, the half-brother of William de Roumare, was seeking to repurchase the estates in Lincolnshire inherited from his mother which had been confiscated when Stephen had arrested him in 1146, though Ranulf was not able to regain control of the city of Lincoln. The see of Lincoln had been vacant since Bishop Alexander died in February 1148. Though Stephen and Henry of Winchester had hoped to provide an episcopal seat for one of their relations, Gervase abbot of Westminster, Hugh abbot of St. Benet's Holme, or Henry de Sully abbot of Fécamp, there was papal opposition to any such candidate. The chapter of Lincoln probably wanted to avoid antagonizing the king but they wished to elect Robert de Chesney, archdeacon of Leicester. After the interdict was ended he was eventually elected in the presence of the king at Westminster on 13 December and was consecrated by Theobald six days later.<sup>15</sup> One moneyer at the Stamford mint would have been under the control of Martin, abbot of Peterborough (1133–55), and this moneyer must have been Lefsi. A bull of Eugenius III (1145–53) confirmed to the abbey the privileges it formerly held and actually specifies a coining-die in Stamford.<sup>16</sup> In other parts of the diocese of Lincoln Stephen's earls, Robert de Beaumont of Leicester, Simon de Senlis of Northampton and Huntingdon, and Aubrey de Vere of Oxford, would probably have brought pressure on the local clergy to prevent the interdict being enforced in their earldoms. Similarly, in other dioceses in the south and east of England the clergy would have been fearful of the king's wrath if they had attempted to put the interdict into operation.

In the province of York which included Nottinghamshire, the Church was in a state of schism which persisted until 1150. The political situation in Nottingham in 1148 is somewhat obscure. When Robert de Ferrers received the earldom of Derby after the Battle of the Standard in 1138, this also included the county of Nottinghamshire, and he is even styled *Comes de Notingeham* in two charters that must date prior to 1141.<sup>17</sup> After 1141 he is usually styled just *Comes Robertus de Ferrarus*. At some time between 1148 and 1153 he is known to have been allied by private treaty to Ranulf, earl of Chester.<sup>18</sup> William Peverell, sheriff of both Nottinghamshire and Derby, was Earl Robert's father-in-law. Archbishop Henry Murdac, who had been received at both Beverley and Ripon, two of the three 'sub-cathedrals' of the huge diocese of York, would certainly have tried to secure similar recognition at the third, Southwell near Nottingham, in the southern part of the diocese. It is possible that at Nottingham the moneyer Swein could have continued the production of defaced pennies for some

<sup>15</sup> A. Saltman, *Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury* (1956), p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen* (1967), p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>16</sup> *BMC Norman Kings*, p. clxxviii.

months after defacement had ceased in the province of Canterbury, perhaps even until Stephen moved north for his successful campaign against King David, Henry of Anjou, and Earl Ranulf in 1149. It is also possible that, with the city of York barred to him, Archbishop Murdac was able to procure the services of Swein of Nottingham to produce most of the new coin that he needed. It appears that after Stephen left York in the summer of 1149 Count Eustace found that the clergy of the city were obeying the provisions of the interdict imposed by Archbishop Murdac and he insisted that they performed the full service of the mass as usual.<sup>19</sup>

The types of defacement, in particular the cross struck over the head or shoulder of the king, must surely have symbolized the authority of the Church being imposed on a recalcitrant monarch, and it would seem to indicate that the penalty of excommunication *had* been imposed. Interdiction was a general punishment which forbade the celebration of mass throughout the area over which it was imposed. Excommunication was a sentence imposed on particular persons, and if that person was a monarch then his subjects were relieved from all oaths of fealty sworn to him. It is this aspect of the punishment which seems to be indicated by the cancellation mark on the sceptre; the sceptre symbolizing the power of sovereignty invested in the monarch, *dei gratia*, at his coronation. A defacement of the coinage could have been conceived as an ideal medium for bringing before all those handling currency a visible sign that the king was being punished and humiliated by the Church, and it would have served as a warning to his subjects that they should refrain from any association with him lest they be punished likewise.<sup>20</sup>

It is probable that negotiations between Theobald and the king commenced soon after the archbishop arrived in Suffolk, for Stephen soon reached agreement with him. Very probably Stephen would have wished to call in defaced coins for reminting as soon as was practicable, and it may be that this was a further reason for the introduction of a new type of money, the Cross Pattée coinage, some time during 1149, possibly during the summer or at Michaelmas or, at the latest, early in 1150.

That the defacement of Stephen's coinage was ecclesiastical in origin seems indisputable, and if the writer is correct in assigning the operation to the period of the Interdict and perhaps to the period of Stephen's possible excommunication, i.e. 29 September–October/November 1148, this provides a firm chronological base for arriving at a more positive dating of hoards, later types, and some of the irregular issues. It also seems to be a phenomenon unique in the annals of European medieval coinage and one that illustrates the struggle of the Church in the twelfth century to stamp out simony and to liberate itself from the restrictions imposed on it by a feudal lay society. Further hoards or finds of single coins will probably add to our knowledge of the 'defaced coinage'.

<sup>19</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richmond I*, ed. Richard Howlett, Rolls Series (1884–6), p. 56.

<sup>20</sup> The writer is indebted to Professor R. H. C. Davis, University of Birmingham, for the interest he has shown in the subject discussed above. Whilst agreeing that, in the circumstances of the Interdict and the threat of excom-

munication, the coinage could well have been defaced in some areas, Professor Davis has expressed the view that there is no evidence from other sources that the sentence of excommunication actually came into force. Did Theobald expect the Pope to perform the rites of excommunication at Michaelmas, or did he order the coinage to be defaced as a final warning to the king of the serious nature of the sentence about to be promulgated?