

A NUMERATION OF LATE ANGLO-SAXON COIN TYPES

IAN STEWART

OVER the years late Anglo-Saxon coins, from the reform of Edgar to the Conquest, have received attention from a considerable number of students who have differed greatly in their interpretation and arrangement of the material. As a result, the types and varieties have been classified, designated, or numbered in many different ways and it may fairly be wondered whether yet another numeration is necessary or useful.

Coins are usually studied and recorded with the emphasis either on time or on place; only occasionally is a serious attempt made to reconcile the two, as in Allen's *British Museum Catalogue* of coins of Henry II, where they are listed by mint but illustrated by type. When dealing with coins by type or issue (in what one might call the geographical or horizontal dimension) the relative designation of types is fairly unimportant, since in this respect the material is basically uniform and detailed breakdown will be by mint and moneyer. But when treating the coins of a single mint or region in chronological order (or in a vertical dimension) there is constant need to refer to the sequence of types and issues in a simple, accurate, and continuous series. After the frustrations of using the existing equipment for a purpose of this kind—that of considering the activities of particular mints and moneyers over a period—I have come to the conclusion that a new system is essential.

All the available systems have serious disadvantages, and the current practice of using descriptive labels instead, *Crux*, *Quatrefoil* and suchlike, is a consequence of this. Unfortunately however, these labels are unsuited for use in considering the coinage of moneyers or mints over a period of time, since they carry no implication of sequence (of which they therefore demand intimate knowledge by the user), and need constant reference to reigns or rulers because some types are found with more than one royal name whilst others involve similar labels for separate types in different reigns.¹ A precise description of which types are known of a moneyer whose career spanned two or more reigns is thus a long-winded exercise, especially if there are some gaps in the series.

The disadvantages of existing classifications derive partly from progress in numismatic knowledge since they were devised and partly from their inclusion of types and varieties which do not have the status of main issues. Modern research,² much of it initiated or inspired by Professor Dolley, has established *inter alia*: that Ethelred's *Small Cross* type (Hildebrand A) consists of three parts, one a continuation of Edgar's *Reform* type

¹ This problem led H. B. A. Petersson in *Anglo-Saxon Currency* (Lund, 1969) to make a brave attempt at devising a system of labels based on reverse types, but some of these (e.g. *Pellet Cross* for *Arm-and-Sceptre*, type 12, or *Crescent Cross* for *Helmet*, type 18) are somewhat artificial as well as being unfamiliar, and they have not been widely used by others.

² Amongst much relevant literature see especially: R. H. M. Dolley, *Some Reflections on Hildebrand*

Type A of Aethelraed II (Antikvariskt Arkiv 9, Lund, 1958); C. S. S. Lyon, G. van der Meer, and Dolley, 'Some Scandinavian Coins in the Names of Aethelraed, Cnut and Harthacnut Attributed by Hildebrand to English Mints', *B.N.J.* xxx, pp. 235–51; Dolley, 'The Jewel Cross Coinage of Aelfifu Emma, Harthacnut and Harold I', *ibid.* xxvii, pp. 266–75; and P. J. Seaby, 'The Sequence of Anglo-Saxon Coin Types, 1030–50', *ibid.* xxviii, pp. 111–46.

perpetuated by Edward the Martyr, the second an ephemeral experiment near the end of the *Crux* issue, the third and largest, a substantive issue at the end of the reign; that most of the types in the names of Cnut, Harold I, and Harthacnut distinguished by Hildebrand¹ and in the *British Museum Catalogue*² are Scandinavian imitations; that coins of the *Jewel Cross* and *Arm-and-Sceptre* types in Cnut's name were struck not in his lifetime but the latter in Harthacnut's sole reign (1040–2), and the former probably during his joint rule with Harold I (1035–6); and that neither the Hildebrand nor the *BMC* nor the Brooke³ sequence of the early issues of Edward the Confessor can be sustained. As a result, the sequence of types embodied in the standard works by these authorities needs fundamental revision, and they are therefore misleading to use for any purpose involving a chronological view of the coinage.

Two recent numerations take account of modern progress, those in J. J. North's *English Hammered Coinage* and Seaby's *Standard Catalogue*. Apart from problems in the area of Harold and Harthacnut, where neither has freed itself from the traditional preoccupation with royal names that has for so long hindered understanding of the structure of Anglo-Saxon coinage, both suffer for chronological purposes from three drawbacks inherent in their kind: first, that by virtue of separate numbers substantive types are given equal status with varieties of unequal significance; second, that even the bulk of some substantive types—e.g. *Fleur-de-Lis*, *Pacx* (Seaby), and *Expanding Cross* (North)—may be divided between entries separately numbered; and third, that on a strict definition no single number represents the whole of a substantive issue unless no varieties of it are separately listed. These difficulties can be well illustrated by trying to express by means of North's numeration the fact that a given moneyer is recorded from the first to the fifth issue of the Confessor with the exception of the second. We cannot say that he is known for the types from North 813 to 823 except for 816; that would imply that he struck coins of the varieties 814, 815, etc., which he probably did not, and which in any case we would often not be able to establish on the basis of descriptions published by those who were not concerned with such fine differentiation of typological variety. We cannot say, either, that he is known for types 813, 817, 818, and 820/823, but not 816, so picking out the numbers representing substantive issues; apart from the difficulty of splitting the *Expanding Cross* issue according to weight (which published records often omit), that would imply that in each of the four known issues his coins were all of the standard type, whereas it is quite possible, for example, that his known coins of the *Pacx* type were of North 814 rather than 813.

Neither North's nor Seaby's numeration is therefore suitable for our purpose, and the reason is that both are designed to identify individual specimens and not those groups of similar but not always identical coins which make up an issue. Hildebrand in part approached the latter objective by designating the coins of each king by separate letters according to their reverse type. But reverse types are, though largely, not entirely coincident with issues (the *Small Cross* type, Hildebrand A, is divided between two separate issues in the reigns of both Ethelred and Edward the Confessor) while the reigns after Ethelred are badly confused by Scandinavian imitations, by the variety of royal names within two main issues in the Harold–Harthacnut period, and by the

¹ B. E. Hildebrand, *Anglosachsiska Mynt*, 3rd edn., Stockholm, 1881.

British Museum, Anglo-Saxon Series, vol. ii, 1893 (cited as *BMC*).

² C. F. Keary, *Catalogue of English Coins in the*

³ G. C. Brooke, *English Coins*, 3rd edn., 1950.

incorrect sequence for Edward the Confessor. Grueber and Keary in the *British Museum Catalogue* created an even greater profusion of 'types' by giving separate numbers to most of the sub-types, varieties, and mules, which Hildebrand had gathered together within his main types and denoted by small letters suffixed; although, perversely, when they did collect variants within a single type they sometimes applied the undifferenced number to a minor variety or mule, and then placed the standard type in a subsidiary position to it—making, for example, Hildebrand's type Cb (which is a rare mule between the *Intermediate Small Cross* and *Crux* types) type iii and the mass of normal *Crux* coins, type iiiia. The picture was drastically tidied up in *English Coins* by Brooke, who excluded most (though not all) of the Scandinavian copies, typological variants, and mules, and so approached the kind of basic list of types which is our present need; advances in knowledge have since, however, rendered his numbering of every reign unsatisfactory for one reason or another.

None of these systems therefore meets the need for a simple reference to the main issues, uncomplicated by varieties within them, gathering together coins of the same type and issue with different royal names, ignoring non-substantive types and arranged in what we may now hope is established as a definitive sequence. To provide this I have numbered each main issue separately in a single series from Edgar's *Reform* type to the Conquest. The twenty-three types are listed in table A with their descriptive labels and their equivalents according to Hildebrand, *BMC*, Brooke, Hawkins, North, and Seaby. It is not by any means suggested that this continuous numeration should be used for all purposes or that the familiar descriptive type labels should be abandoned. Indeed, at first mention it is usually convenient to identify the type in this way—e.g. type 6 (Ethelred's *Last Small Cross*), particularly in anything other than a technical numismatic context. Also, where discussion is concentrated on the coins of one or two types only, labels continue to be the most easily comprehensible and suitable to use. For the many non-substantive types and variants it seems perfectly satisfactory to retain the designations of earlier systems. Hildebrand's sub-types are often convenient and the few gaps in his system, or the need to differentiate part of a type (e.g. *Intermediate Small Cross*), can usually be met by reference to *BMC* or North. Mules may be treated similarly—e.g. one may say *Pacx/Radiate*, or in Hildebrand's scheme type Aa of Edward the Confessor, though there is equally no difficulty in using the new system (type 13/14).

Three types, 1 (*Reform-First Small Cross*), 10 (*Jewel Cross*) and 12 (*Arm-and-Sceptre*), cover coins in the name of more than one king. These may be differentiated either by giving the king's name afterwards—type 10 (Harold)—as is often desirable for the sake of clarity in a text, or by means of some code which is convenient for use in lists or tables. Unfortunately, there are too many E's, C's, and H's to use simple initials, so that any scheme has to be somewhat artificial. Personally I use, and have found simple to remember, the following:

- Type 1 R—Edga*R*, *Reform* type
- M—Edward the *M*artyr
- A—Aethelred II, First Small Cross (Hildebrand *A*)

- Type 10 D—*D*efinitive Jewel Cross type in name of Harold
- C—Cnut
- H—*H*arthacnut

Type 12 C—Cnut

H—Harthacnut

These are the only three cases in which the part of the type in each separate name constitutes a material proportion of the whole issue: other instances, such as type 9 (Cnut's *Short Cross*) in Harold's name or type 12 in Edward the Confessor's, are oddities of extreme rarity which need special mention anyway.

It should be emphasized that each of the twenty-three types does not necessarily constitute an entire or separate issue. Under the *renovatio* system most changes of type involved the demonetization and reminting of at least a large part of the currency, and the extensive network of mints permitted one issue to be replaced by the next on a national scale. Where the duration of a single type coincided with the period between recoinages, it is often called a substantive type (or by Petersson, a period-type). Under Ethelred two abortive types were each struck by a limited number of mints, *Intermediate Small Cross* near the end of the *Crux* issue (type 3), and *Agnus Dei* probably between types 5 and 6 (*Helmet* and *Last Small Cross*); being clearly non-substantive, these types have not been given separate numbers, and where reference is needed *ISC* and *AD* can be used (perhaps in the forms type 3 (*ISC*) and type 5 *bis* (*AD*) in any context where a sequential connotation is needed). In other cases we do not know whether a change of type involved a national *renovatio*. It may be, for instance, that types 22 and 23, Edward the Confessor's last type and the only one of Harold II (and perhaps also the first type of William I), belonged to a single issue, during which politics required new types to advertise new kings. There is only one converse case, that of type 2 (Ethelred's *Hand* type, Hildebrand B), where it has been proposed that the coins of one basic type-group belong to more than one *renovatio* issue. There are three variants of the *Hand* type: Hildebrand B1 which has a diademed bust without sceptre; B2 which has a cross pommée sceptre and a slightly elaborated reverse design; and B3, normally without diadem, with a cross pattée sceptre and the *Manus Dei* in benediction. The last, known as *Benediction Hand*, is very rare and clearly non-substantive, but it is less clear whether or to what extent B1 (usually called *First Hand*) was followed or replaced by B2 (*Second Hand*). Nevertheless, typologically these three variants have much more in common than other adjacent issues and it is therefore fair to group them all together as previous classifications have done. For differentiation (B1), (B2), and (B3) may be used, or to avoid confusion with other numbers in tables, etc., (F), (S), and (B).

It has been remarked to me by Mrs. Smart¹ that there is one considerable objection to the system here proposed, namely that it fails to convey to a non-specialist the reign or historical context of a type, and so a separate numbering within each reign would be preferable; historians naturally like to know which reign they are in, since it provides an immediate general time-reference and conjures up an ambience of the relevant historical matter, whilst if a reign reference is added, or even if a certain reign is only under general discussion, they might be forgiven for believing that a large number of types was issued in any reign after Ethelred. To this I can only say that while these problems can be overcome, those of a reign-by-reign system cannot be except, as I have found, at the expense of undermining the whole concept of concentrating on the integrity of the basic types. Much of this problem lies in the Harold–Harthacnut period,

¹ Letter, St. Andrews, 23 Sept. 1975.

but there is also in several cases a small typological overlap from one reign to the next, quite apart from the distribution of the integral type 1 between three reigns, all of which a regnal division would obscure besides complicating the numeration within each reign. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that there are these disadvantages in a continuously numbered series used on its own. Any broad discussion, including frequent references to coins of various types, probably needs, therefore, to be prefaced by a statement to the effect that, e.g. three main types were struck during Cnut's reign, *Quatrefoil*, *Helmet*, and *Short Cross*, numbered respectively 7, 8, and 9, in the continuous series; thereafter, the type number, the label or 'Cnut's second issue' can be used according to context. This last form (or, more explicitly, 'the fourth of Edward the Confessor's ten types') can be used more generally when there is need to refer to a particular issue of Cnut or Edward the Confessor and to set it in its historical place.

There would be advantages if the sequence of serial numbers could be extended to include the types struck for the Norman kings before the *renovatio* system, which had collapsed in the Stephen civil war, was finally abandoned in 1158 with the first of the two major recoinages instituted by Henry II. Unfortunately, the sequence at some points of Henry I's fifteen types is still in considerable doubt,¹ and it would therefore be premature to attempt to continue the numeration for the issues of this period. So far as concerns the thirteen types issued under the two Williams, however, it is generally agreed that the sequence of issues is now settled and there would, in addition to convenience, be a positive advantage in numbering these from type 24 to type 36.² The reason for this is that Brooke's allocation of eight types to the Conqueror and five to Rufus is no more than a hypothesis; by defining the *Paxs* issue as type VIII of William I and the *Profile and Sword* type as type I of William II it begs the whole question of attribution and renders it almost impossible to discuss sensibly in terms of *BMC* numbering what may be an artificial division between the two reigns. I have accordingly added, in table B, a list of the thirteen types of the two Williams with the labels used by Brooke in the *British Museum Catalogue* and with the Hawkins figure numbers (widely used by Brooke himself in his introduction, as if he had written it before settling on his eventual *BMC* numbering) and the North and Seaby references. For Henry I and Stephen we may continue to use the Brooke numbers for the time being, though learning to discipline ourselves never to refer, for example, to the 'tenth issue of Henry I', but to '*BMC* type X of Henry I' which is probably not the same thing. For some purposes, however, it has been suggested to me that it might be convenient to recommence the numeration, after a gap for the first twelve types of Henry I, for the last three issues of that reign, *BMC* types XIII (49), XIV (50), and XV (51), and for the four which are all that can be regarded as substantive issues³ of Stephen, *BMC* types I (52), II (53), VI (54), and VII (55); type nos. 37–48 could then be allocated as and when the sequence of issues in the first quarter of the eleventh century becomes established beyond reasonable doubt.

¹ See M. M. Archibald, 'English Medieval Coins as Dating Evidence', in *Coins and the Archaeologist* (ed. Casey and Reece, 1974), pp. 234–71 (at pp. 248–9).

² The possibility of doing this was mentioned in passing in an earlier draft of this paper and I have been encouraged to propose it more positively by several of those who commented on the draft.

³ *BMC* type VI, though of necessity confined to the south-east by Stephen's loss of authority elsewhere, may represent an attempted *renovatio*, but in the absence of hoard evidence we know little about this very rare type. Types III, IV, and V appear to be purely local issues from the period when central royal control had broken down.

TABLE A

Coin Types from Edgar's Reform to the Conquest

Type no.	Ruler's name	Descriptive label	Hildebrand	BMC	Brooke	Hawkins fig.	North	Seaby
1.		Small Cross						
1 (R)	Edgar	Reform	C2	vi	6	200	752	660
1 (M)	Edward the Martyr	(Sole type)	A	i	1	202	763	662
1 (A)	Ethelred II	First Small Cross	A	i	1	205	764	663
2.		Hand						
2 (F)		First Hand	B1	iiia	2	(type 5)	766	664
2 (S)		Second Hand	B2	iiid	2	206	768	665
2 (B)		Benediction Hand	B3	iiif	2	(type 6)	769	666
3.		Crux	C	iiia	3	(type 2)	770	667
ISC.		Intermediate Small Cross	A	i	1	205	773	667B
4.		Long Cross	D	iva	5	207	774	668
5.		Helmet	E	viii	4	203	775	669
AD.		Agnus Dei	G	x	6	(type 7)	776	671
6.		Last Small Cross	A	i	1	205	777	670
7.	Cnut	Quatrefoil	E	viii	2	212	781	675
8.		Helmet	G	xiv	3	213	787	676
9.		Short Cross	H	xvi	4	208	790	677
10.		Jewel Cross						
10 (D)	Harold I		A	i	1	(type 1)	802	679
10 (C)	Cnut		K	xx	6	211	797	678
10 (H)	Harthacnut		A, Aa	i, ia	1	216	808-9	682-3
11.	Harold I	Fleur-de-lis	B	vc	2	214	803-4	680-1
12.		Arm-and-sceptre						
12 (C)	Cnut		I	xvii	5	209	799	685
12 (H)	Harthacnut		B	ii	2	217	811	684
13.	Edward Confessor	Pacx	D	iv	4	221	813	687-8
14.		Radiate	A	i	2	226	816	689
15.		Trefoil	C	iii	1	220	817	690
16.		Small Flan	B	ii	3	229	818	691
17.		Expanding Cross	E	v	5	219	820, 3	692
18.		Helmet	F	vii	6	227	825	693
19.		Sovereign	H	ix	7	228	827	694
20.		Hammer Cross	G	xi	8	222	828	695
21.		Facing Bust	Ac	xiii	9	225	830	696
22.		Pyramids	I	xv	10	223	831	697
23.	Harold II	Pax	A	i	1	230	836	699

Incidentally, for purposes where one needs to refer to *BMC* type numbers for Norman coins in quantity, a useful short-hand is simply to use an initial for the reign (Conqueror and Rufus to avoid confusing the Williams) followed by the *BMC* type numeral, thus C vii, H xiv, and so on.

The numeration of issues here proposed is the result of long experiment for private use in tabulating and recording late Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins by type, mint, and moneyer. I venture to publish it partly by way of explanation since I have used it in current work, some of which is now in the press,¹ and partly because I hope it may be found useful by others. Before putting it forward I have discussed it with others interested in the same field and would like to thank many friends for their comments,

¹ 'The Sussex Mints and their Moneyers' in *Aelle and After*, a volume to mark the 1500th anniversary of the arrival of the Saxons in Sussex.

TABLE B

Coin Types of William I and II

<i>Type no.</i>	<i>Descriptive label</i>	<i>BMC</i>	<i>Hawkins fig.</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>Seaby</i>
24.	Profile[Left]-Cross Fleury	i	233	839-41	701
25.	Bonnet	ii	234	842	702
26.	Canopy	iii	236	843	703
27.	Two Sceptres	iv	237	844	704
28.	Two Stars	v	238	845	705
29.	Sword	vi	243	846	706
30.	Profile[Right]-Cross and Trefoils	vii	239	847	707
31.	Paxs	viii	241	848-50	708
32.	Profile [and Sword]	i	244	851	709
33.	Cross in Quatrefoil	ii	246	852	710
34.	Cross Voided	iii	250	853-4	711
35.	Cross Pattee and Fleury	iv	247	855	712
36.	Cross Fleury and Piles	v	248	856	713

in particular Miss Marion Archibald, Mr. Christopher Blunt, Professor Dolley, Mr. Stewart Lyon, Dr. Gay van der Meer, Mr. Peter Seaby, Mr. Robert Seaman, and Mrs. Veronica Smart; although the proposals as they stand are, of course, my own.