

ASSAYS AND IMITATIONS, FOREIGN AND NATIVE, OF  
THE LATE SAXON PERIOD, A.D. 975-1066.

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LARGE measure of critical selection must be imported into the study of coins of the late Saxon period before it is possible to place the authorized coinages on a satisfactory basis as to their issues, their order, and the places where they were struck. Formerly it was the practice of most numismatists to take every coin of the period in question at its face description, both as to the king and country to which the obverse inscriptions superficially pointed, and as to the mints which the reverse inscriptions fitted into present-day borough nomenclature. Throughout the pages of the early numismatic writings are scattered constant references to, and discussions upon, anomalous, enigmatic and sometimes frankly impossible coins, about which the last thing the writers thought of doubting was the authenticity of the coins or the integrity of the inscriptions. In regard to mint readings, a superficial resemblance to present-day orthography was often sufficient for the allocation of coins to places which had no right to the claim. Since those early days, however, a new outlook has been brought to bear upon these coins and their inscriptions. So far as mint readings are concerned, numismatists are no longer content with a colourable resemblance to modern place-names, but delve into the question of contemporary orthography and dialect before allocating an obscure reading to a town, and even go so far as to consider the claims of foreign places before arriving at a conclusion. It will later be seen that it is sometimes necessary to call into question the authenticity of the readings themselves.

Again, numismatists are now appreciative of the fact that the imitation of the Anglo-Saxon coinages by sovereigns abroad in late Saxon times must have resulted in productions of coins which, although purporting to belong to England and its kings, were, in fact, imitations by foreign princes. One of the results, and no doubt a beneficent one, of the later Viking raids on this country was the setting up, for the first time, of an inscribed metallic medium of exchange in Ireland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden in the tenth century, and for three-quarters of a century after that the prototypes of these currencies were the coins of the late Anglo-Saxon kings. So closely, indeed, were these models followed, that often the names of English kings, mints and moneymen were slavishly copied on some of these foreign imitations, and only an acquaintance with a large number of true Saxon pieces enables the student to detect, by the workmanship or weight, which are the native coins and which the foreign imitations. It will readily be seen what possibilities of confusion and misunderstanding these facts set up. Although some attempts have been made to elucidate these enigmatic coins on up-to-date lines, our text-books, in the main, still bear the impress of the older outlook. This has the effect of causing collectors still to cling to an English attribution of some coins which maturer thought shows it would be safer to attribute to foreign sources.

Equally necessary with a more thorough investigation of the foreign imitations of the time is the detection of the existence of fraudulent money of native origin, and of unauthorized issues, and the sifting of them from the official issues. This is a question which has, so far as I know, been entirely ignored by numismatists in connection with the Anglo-Saxon coinage, although modern forgeries of Anglo-Saxon coins have had their share of attention.<sup>1</sup> But I submit that the question is forced upon the student of the period by the very existence of those sections of the coinage laws which so vividly portray the pains and penalties attached to their transgression. These, of course, related mainly to the delinquencies of the official

<sup>1</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ii, 397-409; iii, 281-290; iv, 311-316.

moneyers, but there are certain references in the statutes which point to the existence of false workers outside the official circle. For example, the coinage laws of Æthelstan not only ordained that there should be one money throughout the realm, but also that coins should be made only in a town, one implication being that unauthorized persons had been found to have set up illicit coining presses in obscure places. Similar edicts were promulgated by King Eadgar, who, however, still found it necessary, at the close of his reign, to issue a new coinage and, judging by the "finds," to call in all the old money, owing to its inferior state.<sup>1</sup> I suggest that the poor quality of this money was due, not merely to the transgressions of the proper moneyers, but also to the work of forgers. Æthelred II was further constrained to proclaim that no one but the king should have a moneyer, and that the moneyers who should work in woods and elsewhere, *i.e.* not in the properly authorized towns, should forfeit their lives. Here again there is the strong inference of the existence of forgers. Cnut followed on with laws which proclaimed, *inter alia*, that one coin should be current throughout the kingdom and that no man should refuse it except *it were false*, and if any one should falsify it he should lose the hand with which he counterfeited it without option of redemption.

The existence of these laws must, I think, show the need for them, and the corollary is that false and unauthorized issues of money were made at this time and that probably specimens of them exist to-day. The contemporary issue of false coins is further proved by the cuts and chips found on so many of the coins of this time discovered in Scandinavian lands, which, as stated in my paper on "Symbols and Double Names on Late Saxon Coins"<sup>2</sup> are due to the distrust, by the Vikings, of the money handed to them as tribute, and to the consequent test, in a rough-and-ready fashion, of this money by cutting into the metal. These cuts and chips are more frequent on the types of money in circulation at the time the

<sup>1</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xvi, 34.

<sup>2</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xiii, 3.

tributes were made. They are naturally more rare on the coins before the tribute period. Many of the Anglo-Saxon coins found in Scandinavia are also so much bent as to indicate they were sometimes doubled over as an additional test of the purity of the metal.

By this two-fold process of sifting out the foreign imitations, and the native forgeries and unauthorized issues, some anomalies in the coinage of the time will disappear, obscure mint readings will be explained, and the coin types more easily placed. In a word, a study of the coins of the period will be rendered more smooth and the results more reliable. Before developing and illustrating the ideas outlined above, a few general remarks on the ordinary currency of the time become necessary.

In a previous article I have mentioned that the last quarter of the tenth century witnessed a definitely settled policy of coin design in England.<sup>1</sup> This consisted of the invariable delineation of the king's bust or figure on the obverse, and the universal insertion of the moneyers' and mint names, in conjunction, on the reverse. Prior to this period the coins were of a mixed character and, generally speaking, those with the king's bust on the obverse, and the mint names on the reverse, were the less frequent. There seemed, indeed, no very settled policy in the early period regarding the insertion of a mint name in conjunction with the moneyer's name, although a fair number of mint names are in evidence, and we know, from the coinage laws of Æthelstan, that most towns of any note at the time could, and probably did, coin money. In heptarchic times, when coin-striking towns were few, although the kingdoms were many, there was little necessity for placing the name of the mint on the coinage; but with the increase in the number of mints, and the amalgamation of the kingdoms, the need for differentiation became more acute. Looseness in the early designs, including the insertion, or omission, of the king's bust, is also evident, but all this was brought to a close by the new coinage of A.D. 975, referred to by Roger of

<sup>1</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xiii, 1.

Wendover, when, as the evidence of the "finds"<sup>1</sup> clearly shows, there was not only a change of type but also of tender, all previous issues being called in. From then onward the coin types in their different periods may be called stereotyped, and no marked change of system occurred until the thirteenth century, when Edward I omitted from the coins generally the names of the moneyers. The initiation of this settled policy in coin design might, I think, justly be regarded as the result of a mature consideration aided by the experience of a number of centuries. We know that the Anglo-Saxons commenced to use a metallic medium of exchange in the seventh century. This was the conglomerate series of sceattas, mainly unattributed, of mixed designs. It then passed to a fixed coining system based on the penny, with the incidence of the peculiar styca period in the kingdom of Northumbria, but still unsettled in regard to design and inscription, until it reached the beginning of the late Saxon period, when stereotyped general forms of coin design were, as before mentioned, instituted and retained for the following three hundred years. The corollary is that when this final change was promulgated in A.D. 975, the country had so far advanced in mechanical and artistic education that the currency would be free from the anomalous features which mark the coinages of countries newly adopting a metallic standard of exchange, or which would be characteristic of native forgeries. And such, in general, I claim to be the case in the coinages of the late Saxon period, notwithstanding the political disturbances of sections of that period. If one takes any issue of this time, which is unequivocally and officially Anglo-Saxon, one will find an overwhelming number of extant specimens so alike that they become monotonous in their regularity: for example, the Crux and Long Cross types of Æthelred II, the Pointed Helmet type of Cnut, the Four Oval types of Harold I and Harthacnut, and the Sovereign and other types of Edward the Confessor. But here let me say that I do not maintain that variation does not exist in the different types. With some issues it is sufficiently

<sup>1</sup> "Hoards of Late Anglo-Saxon Coins," *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xvi.



marked to indicate, with other data, that there was frequently more than one die-sinking centre in operation during the period. With other issues complete departures from standard are made, *e.g.* the Hand of Providence on some of the coins of Æthelred II being in benediction instead of entirely open; the quatrefoil enclosure of Cnut's first real type, Hildebrand E, being sometimes almost round; the amount of mantle showing on the Confessor's coinages being curtailed more in some examples than in others; and in most issues of the time some variation occurs, due to the individuality of the die-sinker. But the variation generally appears, not on isolated specimens, but on a series of coins which, although somewhat varied, are of the same general workmanship, fabric and type as the main issues, and it is nearly always possible to assign the variation to its proper issue, and not to mix it with another issue, or constitute it a separate issue.

The same remarks apply to the legends. In Hildebrand's invaluable work on the coins of the late Anglo-Saxon kings in the Royal Cabinet at Stockholm, it will be observed, from the association of the obverse readings in the catalogue with the tables at the beginning of each reign, that most of these readings fall into a few standard types. Here again I am far from maintaining that it is only these coins bearing standard legends which were officially issued in this country. There undoubtedly is considerable variation in the reverse as well as obverse legends on the genuinely English coins, due to the idiosyncrasies of the die-sinkers, who must have had latitude allowed them in the spacing; or to changes in the personnel of the engraving office; or to dialectic peculiarities; or to first attempts in the engraving of names either of a king or a moneyer; or to other causes. Here again, as in the designs, the variations fall into groups, and it is always possible to assign the unequivocal coins with varied inscriptions to their proper reigns and mints.

Over and above the numerous coins with intelligible and explainable variation, either of design or inscription, the student is faced, in this period, by pieces which are commonly called barbarous, confused or doubtful, either in design, or in legend, or in

both; or, if not so called, are extremely difficult to assign to their proper country and period. Bearing in mind the probability that England, at this period, was well advanced in the mechanical arts of the die-sinker and moneyer, and having regard to the fact that it was more or less surrounded by kingdoms just emerging from numismatic darkness, which world-wide experience shows would be responsible for barbarous and abnormal productions, and also remembering that the laws of the kingdom indicate the existence of native forgery, I think the student must pause before and seriously consider the English attribution, the genuineness, and even the right to be regarded as a regular issue, of any coins of the period the designs or inscriptions on which do not fall into the general lines of the well-established types, and their varieties, of the period, or which the weight and workmanship place in an anomalous position when compared with the true types.

It will be impossible for me to deal with the multitudinous array of doubtful and barbarous coins known of this period. A large number of the worst examples have always been considered to be foreign imitations, but many others occur with colourable resemblance to authorised native issues. Each one of these latter should be considered on its merits, and although it will not be feasible to do that here in all cases, illustration of the subject will be afforded by a review, in this paper, of representative coins mentioned in published works, or known from other sources, which are peculiar or anomalous. Such review will also afford, in a broad sense, a guide to the principles necessary for judging a doubtful coin, or series of coins. It will also serve as a contribution towards the study of the types of the coins of the period.

Broadly speaking, the illustration of this inquiry falls under three heads :—

1. Foreign imitations.
2. Native imitations or forgeries.
3. Assays or trial pieces.

In connection with the first section, viz. foreign imitations of

Anglo-Saxon money, no numismatist nowadays seriously considers that type F, and F, variety a, in Hildebrand,<sup>1</sup> and type IX, and IX, variety a, in the British Museum Catalogue, Anglo-Saxon series, vol. ii, 1893, under Æthelred II, are anything but Danish issues. I have also, when writing on the coins of Harold I and Harthacnut,<sup>2</sup> adduced a considerable body of evidence showing that certain remarkable types, hitherto attributed to England, really belong to Denmark. By the readjustments then made the issues of the kings in question were brought within reasonable limits as to number, and will, I hope, in future constitute a better basis both for the study of the history of the time and of the coins. In my forthcoming treatise on the coins of Cnut, I shall have occasion to raise the question whether some of the types of his period are not also Danish, but, in the meantime, the section of this paper relating to foreign imitations can be usefully illustrated by consideration of individual pieces which have either been wrongly ascribed to mints in England, or which still constitute a puzzle to British numismatists.

It should first be mentioned that Hauberg, in discussing the early coins of Denmark,<sup>3</sup> and Major Carlyon-Britton in his treatise on "Uncertain Anglo-Saxon Mints and Some New Attributions,"<sup>4</sup> have already satisfactorily re-allocated some of the equivocal readings coming under the present heading; notably the coins given by Hildebrand under his type A of Cnut as

+ SVARTGOL MO PIB

+ SVARTGOL MO PIBR

and by those learned writers now assigned to Viborg in Jylland. To Denmark also should go, in my opinion, the coins of Hildebrand's type B of Cnut reading

+ VLFEETL MO VZTL

<sup>1</sup> Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Royal Cabinet, Stockholm, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vols. xi and xv.

<sup>3</sup> *Myntforhold og Udmyntninger i Danmark indtil 1146*.

<sup>4</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. vi.



and tentatively ascribed, by Major Carlyon-Britton, in the paper already quoted, to Islip in Oxfordshire. Similar readings occur on coins inscribed, on the obverse, with the name of Æthelred, one of which, of the same type as the Cnut penny under notice, is, according to Hildebrand—No. 3864—of barbarous workmanship, at least in the obverse reading. Following the principles outlined in this paper, such a piece must be excluded from the list of Anglo-Saxon issues. The moneyer's name is essentially Danish, and well known on coins of Denmark in and after Cnut's time; further, although it also occurs on coins of the strong Danish settlements of York, Lincoln and Norwich, it is never found on coins of mint towns so far west as Oxfordshire. In all the circumstances, the coin, with its barbarous obverse reading and Danish moneyer's name, is not Anglo-Saxon. The other two coins, one of Æthelred II's Small Cross type, and the other of Cnut's Long Cross type (Hildebrand B), should, in the absence of undoubted coins of Islip to support them, follow the penny of the Danish origin of which there is little doubt.

Another series of coins which the principles laid down in this paper exclude from Anglo-Saxon issues is that numbered 394 to 408 under Æthelred II in the "British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins," vol. ii, 1893, with the exception of No. 397, the only one with intelligible readings on both sides, which is no doubt of Dunwich,<sup>1</sup> and of No. 399 which will be discussed later. The others, which appear to be of good silver and are mostly of abnormally heavy weight, can scarcely be ascribed to forgers. Further, there is no evidence to show that, because of the troubles of the time, the Anglo-Saxon die-sinkers had lost their art. London, the chief centre for the making of dies, held out against the Danes to the very last, and, in fact, it was never conquered by Cnut. There seems no option, therefore, but to conclude that the irregular coins under notice are amongst the early numismatic efforts of one or more of the Scandinavian countries. The issuers of the coins not only did not know how to punch a die properly, but had very hazy notions regarding

<sup>1</sup> "The Dunwich Mint," *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ix.

weight adjustment, for the pieces range from 19.5 to 38.8 grains each. The one of the latter weight is illustrated below (Fig. 1). The strange objects in the angles of the cross on the reverse of this coin are quite foreign to the English coins of this type.



FIG. 1.

Under the reign of Cnut there occurs a coin in the British Museum, No. 609 in the Catalogue, of the Small Cross issue (Hildebrand A), the reverse of which is so obscure as to be quite beyond interpretation (Fig. 2). The weight is fairly high for the reign, and the coin appears to be of good silver. It cannot be an English piece, and the character of the inscriptions leads me to think that it is of



FIG. 2.

Danish work. Turning to Hauberg's account of the early Danish coins,<sup>1</sup> there appears a penny, No. 47 on Plate III of his work, so like the one under notice, except that the design on the reverse is a long instead of a small cross, that few will dispute that the coin dies came from a common hand, and that not of an official Anglo-Saxon die-sinker. The British Museum coin must, I think, be attributed to Denmark.

Under the reign of Harold I there appears in the sale catalogue (lot 1758) of Major Carlyon-Britton, which has almost the character of a standard work, an enigmatic coin doubtfully attributed to

<sup>1</sup> *Myntforhold og Udmyntninger i Danmark indtil 1146.*

Thetford, and reading on the reverse: + EÐFONEIOETMR . E. It is here illustrated (Fig. 3).



FIG. 3.

The method of treating the obverse of this coin, and its general art feeling, is exactly similar to No. 26, Plate V, and No. 40, Plate VI, in Hauberg,<sup>1</sup> and there can be little doubt that the piece above referred to belongs also to Denmark.

Before leaving this part of the subject, I should mention that, some time ago, my attention was drawn to an unusual coin formerly in the possession of Mr. J. O. Manton, and here illustrated as Fig. 4.<sup>2</sup>



FIG. 4.

Although generally similar to the Small Cross coins of Æthelred II, it differs mainly from them in the fact that the bust on the obverse is engraved to the right instead of to the left, and the coin would therefore appear to be a distinct and unknown variation from type, a mule coin, or a separate issue in the English series. That it is none of these is, however, clear from the workmanship. This is not only of ruder character than that of the ordinary Anglo-Saxon coins, but the reverse inscription is completely retrograde, and the obverse inscription is confused in such a way as to show that the mint worker responsible for it blundered through ignorance rather

<sup>1</sup> *Myntforhold og Udmyntninger i Danmark indtil 1146.*

<sup>2</sup> Since this paper was written, Mr. Manton has kindly presented the coin to the writer.

than through indifference or by design, for these distinctive features of the coin show that the engraver was unaware of the first principles of his art, and that the bust, like the reverse inscription, was punched into the die the forward way and so produced retrograde impressions. Applying the principles outlined in this paper, that the die-sinkers of this country were well versed in the elementary practices of their art, I think we must assign the coin in question to the large class of foreign imitations. Had it been a contemporary forgery made in this country its weight, 21 grains, and its standard of metal would probably have been lower, and the work and inscriptions would have been more Anglo-Saxon in character, notwithstanding the confused lettering on the reverse.

Coming now to heading 2, a consideration of false native coins of the period resolves itself into two divisions: (a) the emission of coins of low standard of metal and weight by dishonest moneyers working with proper dies, and (b) the issue of false coins struck from forged dies, for some of which the official moneyers were probably responsible.

The coins falling into the first category would not superficially differ from the proper currency, unless the debasement or lightness were very pronounced, and as it is by no means certain that, at this period, weight was fixed with mathematical precision, some of the frauds cannot now be readily distinguished from coins of the proper standard. The main point of difference between this kind of fraud and the money struck by forgers of dies appears in the workmanship of the design, or inscription, or both. Some coins struck from forged dies may be of good weight though of low standard of metal, but their designs and inscriptions are either ruder than those of the official die-sinkers, or the reverse legend, which is the incriminating part of a false coin of the time, is unreadable, or obviously misleading.

Chronologically, the first coins of the period which give rise to discussion under the heading of native forgeries are the Small Cross pennies of Æthelred II included in the Chester hoard.<sup>1</sup> Some of

<sup>1</sup> "A Find of Coins of Eadgar, Edward II and Æthelred II at Chester," *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1920.

these coins present remarkable features which call for investigation. They are :

1. The low relative weights of the coins.
2. The barbarous form of the busts and inscriptions on many of them.
3. The seemingly low standard of the metal.
4. The peculiar method of indicating the strings of the King's mantle by curved rays ending in pellets grotesquely flying across the field of the coins.

Eliminating the broken and chipped coins, which are of course useless for a weight test, I found that the average weight of such of the Chester hoard coins as were acquired by the British Museum was less than 18 grains each, as compared with an average of  $20\frac{1}{2}$  grains for the Eadgar pennies in the hoard, 20 grains for the Edward pennies and 24 grains for the coins of Æthelred II bearing the Hand of Providence, the only other type represented, excepting a muled coin of the Crux issue. For further comparison, a test of the weights of the Small Cross coins in the British Museum Catalogue with the same early legends, *i.e.* those with the abbreviations of M-O and MONETA between the moneyers' and mint names, disclosed an average of  $20\frac{1}{2}$  grains. The natural inference to be drawn from this low relative weight of these Chester "find" Small Cross coins of Æthelred II, when compared with the coins from the same "find" both of the preceding and succeeding issues, and of the same issue but taken from other sources, is, that here we have examples of contemporary forgery, and, all unsuspected till now, they supply an illustration of the stringent laws of the time against forgery which have been already quoted. It is not to be assumed that all these Small Cross coins of Æthelred II in the Chester hoard are contemporary forgeries, but the second remarkable feature about them—*viz.* the barbarous form of the bust and inscriptions on some of them—not only further supports the idea of forgery in some cases, but also gives a clue to the genuine pieces, since these latter would be the



coins with normal workmanship and of proper weight, on the laid-down principle that the official Anglo-Saxon die-sinking office had so far advanced in the mechanical arts, by this time, that it would not have emitted dies which would produce such poor and grotesque impressions as those represented by some of the coins in the hoard. At this period, too, the troubles arising out of the later viking raids had scarcely recommenced, so that no explanation can depend upon the confusion arising out of those disturbances.

In connection with the third point arising out of these Chester hoard pennies, namely, the low standard of metal, I can only record the impression which I brought away with me from the British Museum after close examination of the coins, which is that some are of a lower standard of metal than others, and this, if actually the case, which only an assay can conclusively prove, points in the same direction as the first two features referred to. The coins seemed too fragile to cast, hence the omission to illustrate them here.

Finally, we have the curious detail on some of these Small Cross coins of Æthelred II in the Chester hoard, and only on them, of the barbarous specimens having the strings of the king's mantle flying out across the field of the obverse. This variety of design, so very plentifully represented in the Chester hoard, was hitherto known only on very few coins, but it is reminiscent of some other pennies of the period on which three pellets occur in the field of the obverse, and which, in view of similar marks on the reverse, belong to the category of differentiating symbols rather than to modification of design. The position of these mantle strings in the Chester hoard coins is so grotesque, curious and anomalous that I hardly think the trained workers in the official die-sinking office could have been responsible for so impossible and meaningless a design.

Associated with the peculiarities described above is the fact that, although the other types represented in any number in the hoard are of mints widely distributed, these Small Cross coins bearing the name of Æthelred are confined to mints outside Wessex, with the exception of the coin attributed to Totnes, the obverse of which is barbarous and the weight of which, even allowing for the

chip in it, is very low ; and the blundered piece, No. 109, doubtfully attributed, I think incorrectly, to Canterbury. London, from whence one would expect a considerable number in a new coinage, even although the " find " spot is not near London, is not represented. In a genuine coinage, not only should London have been represented, but far larger numbers of the types generally should have made their appearance, in view of the fact that the hoard covered the whole of the first few years of Æthelred's reign and contained so many as 52 of the rare coinage of Edward the Martyr.

On the other hand, the coins of Lincoln, which is the mint most largely represented, are more barbarous than any of the others, in design as well as in inscription. The Stamford pieces are also remarkable for their exceptionally low weight, which neutralizes the effect of their somewhat better workmanship. The weights of the three in the British Museum out of the four in the hoard are as follows :—

No. 102, an extra fine piece in condition, scales only 16 grains.

No. 100, also perfect, but not quite so fine in condition, goes  $\frac{1}{2}$  grain less.

No. 101, which is a little chipped, weighs  $14\frac{1}{2}$  grains.

Sixteen grains were obviously aimed at. Although one of the Stamford coins of Edward the Martyr in the hoard scales as high as  $25\frac{1}{2}$  grains, and another weighs 24 grains, so many are broken that a better comparison of weights is afforded by the coins of Edward the Martyr in the " British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins," vol. ii, 1893. These scale, at the lowest 19.3 grains, and at the highest 23.1 grains. Probably 22 grains were aimed at, making the great difference of 6 grains in 22, when compared with the Stamford coins of Æthelred II in the Chester hoard.

Further anomalies disclosed by the coins with expanding rays and pellets on the obverse are as follows :—

1. The Bedford coins of Edward the Martyr, although of the same two moneyers as those of Æthelred, and separated from them only by a short interval of time, are without this grotesque feature

notwithstanding that the money of this reign is, as a rule, markedly inferior in execution to that of Æthelred II. The remaining Bedford moneyer on the Æthelred pieces, viz., BYRNPINE, is an improbable one in that form. If, however, it is intended to mean BYRHPINE it is significantly quite unknown on the undoubted Bedford coins of the period. This piece, although unchipped, weighs only  $16\frac{1}{2}$  grains.

2. As regards the Chester coin, No. 81, Mr. Hill's analogous reference to No. 1489 in Hildebrand is ineffective, for the latter reads ON LEIE, thus proving it to come at the end of Æthelred's long reign and far removed from the piece in the Chester hoard.

3. The Tamworth penny, No. 104, is of very low weight, and the workmanship of the head is barbarous. The reverse inscription commences NA, and the coin is, at that part, a little broken. It represents an entirely unknown name if commencing in N. The second Tamworth coin, No. 105, is equally barbarous in design, and low in weight, and bears the impossible moneyer's name of LEFDIN, suggested by Mr. Hill to be Leofwine. If it is intended to mean Leofwine it is so much blundered that no official die-sinker would have been guilty of it.

4. One of the York coins in the hoard, No. 107, is also inscribed with a name of a very unusual kind, otherwise entirely unknown in the period. It reads CIEOLOG HO EFE, and it is suggested, in the account of the "find," to be from the Irish Ceallach.

5. The uncertain and broken coin, No. 109, attributed to Canterbury, and stated to read . . III-OCΛZT, should, in my opinion, be corrected to . . III-O EAZI. Whatever it is, it is evidently intended to deceive, for it is unlikely that an official die-sinker would punch on the die a series of strokes as shown on this coin.

These phenomena, cumulative as they are, lead one to the conclusion that most of the coins of this Small Cross issue of Æthelred II in the hoard, and probably some specimens of Edward the Martyr, of low weight, are from an unauthorized die-sinking centre in the north or middle of England. It is improbable that the official die-sinkers, descending as they often did from father to son, would

all, and at the same time, and only on this occasion, be guilty of such gross departures from standard work as we find here. The coins were no doubt emitted by forgers working, as the laws against forgery put it, outside a town, who relied upon the troubles of the times and the change of monarchs to cover their nefarious proceedings. For the same reasons some other coins in the hoard, *e.g.* the Stamford pennies, although apparently struck from official dies, were fraudulent also in their weight and purity. In no other way can one account for all the peculiarities of these Small Cross coins as a whole, peculiarities which stamp them quite apart from the genuine official emissions either of the reign of Æthelred II or just before. With the Anglo-Saxons they evidently passed muster amongst the genuine examples, like forgeries of to-day, and it was left to the so-called barbarian vikings to notice these and similar frauds of the time, with the result that, as before stated, they took very good care to test, in their own fashion, the integrity of the coins given to them, either as tribute or in trade. That the test was thorough is proved by the numerous genuine coins from Scandinavia which have come down to us marked by the testing process. That it was effective is shown by the paucity, in the Scandinavian finds, of the rude spurious coins bearing the so-called rays ending in pellets, the known specimens being chiefly in this country. Amongst the 1,400 or so coins of the type in Hildebrand, apparently only one with this peculiarity occurs.

It is small wonder that the monarchs of the time were constrained to issue more stringent laws regarding the integrity of the money, and the numismatic remains of to-day show that they were largely effective. The Chester hoard is, indeed, almost alone in the plethora of doubtful coins it contains, but that contemporary forgeries were extant in other hoards is evident from the presence of them in almost all large collections, in which occur pieces of which there is strong suspicion. Some are of good weight, whilst others are of low standard both of weight and metal. What must make the student pause before accepting some of these doubtful coins as genuine official emissions is the curious fact that, although the obverses are

correct, the reverses are confused. It can only be regarded as an axiom that the workman who could produce a proper obverse might reasonably be expected to punch an intelligible reverse, unless some motive existed for confusing this legend. Now the reverse inscription is the one which incriminates a moneyer. Its form was designed for that purpose. When, therefore, we come across a coin so confused and blundered in the reverse inscription as to make it unintelligible, surely we have an instance of blunders deliberately designed to hide the identity of the issuer of the coin; and if the workmanship is otherwise good it is probably an emission of a trained moneyer acting fraudulently. Instead, therefore, of attributing such a coin to some unknown and unusual mint by a liberal display of fancy, is it not more rational to attribute it to one of the forgers who certainly existed at the time, the last thing in whose mind was to let anyone know, then or later, the place of origin of his coins?

In the extensive cabinet of Mr. R. C. Lockett, F.S.A., there is a coin of the Hand type of Æthelred II which I believe to be a contemporary forgery uttered by a non-official workman. It will be seen from the illustration (Fig. 5), that although the obverse inscription is clear, the work on the reverse is crude, and the legend is



FIG. 5.

unintelligible. The letters of it are  $\text{+HENAN W-OLA}$ , and it is clearly meant to deceive, for the obverse legend shows that the die-sinker was quite capable of producing an intelligible inscription had he wished. Its weight is 22 grains.

I will now take an example of the same Hand type from my own collection, probably made by an official workman. It is illustrated as Fig. 6, from which it will be seen that the workmanship in this case is quite normal, except as to the reverse inscription.



In the hands through which it has hitherto passed it was regarded as a genuine coin, but three points are against it. Its weight is only  $13\frac{1}{2}$  grains, whereas the weight of the type generally runs high, well



FIG. 6.

over 20 grains. It has all the appearance of inferior metal and, above all, the reverse legend is a medley from which one might extract the following letters :—

+HRAONIEN MTO GFLI.

The prior owner, a reputable dealer, put this coin down to Ilchester—a rare mint, of course, for all these confused coins are allocated to rare mints. But I suggest that nothing reasonably intelligible can be made of this inscription, having regard to the time and country of its issue, and, further, that it was not the design of its issuer that anything intelligible should be made of it. As the design is good, for the bust is quite well done, and as the obverse inscription clearly and normally reads +ÆDELRED REX AN, the die-sinker is proved to be quite capable of intelligible work, and failed to punch a proper reverse inscription from an ulterior motive—the motive of deceit and forgery. So far as this coin is concerned, this is further proved by its light weight and low standard of metal.

Applying these illustrations to some of the puzzles given in the standard works, I venture to think that one explanation of the coin given as No. 329 under Æthelred II in Hildebrand, and doubtfully given by that writer to Corbridge, in view of the reading on the reverse, +OIERHDMOELOR, is now forthcoming. This is one of the very few inscriptions left unexplained in Major Carlyon-Britton's important work on "Uncertain Anglo-Saxon Coins."<sup>1</sup> The obverse

<sup>1</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. vi.

legend is quite clear, but there is all the appearance of intentional obscurity on the reverse, for the die-sinker could not plead ignorance of his craft, and I suggest that this coin also was intended to deceive. In other words, it is a contemporary forgery.

Turning now to the "British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins," vol. ii, 1893, there is a penny given as No. 399 of the Small Cross type of Æthelred II which, although it has a clear and normal obverse legend of EÐELRED REX ANGL, discloses a reverse inscription so much confused as to be unintelligible. It is described in the Catalogue as "much blundered." The weight is only 14.5 grains, quite low for this reign, and there seems no other explanation of the inconsistencies of the coin than that it also is a contemporary forgery.

The same remarks apply to No. 610, under Cnut, of the same Catalogue. Here again we meet with a fairly clear obverse of LNVTR + ANGLOR, showing what the die-sinker could do, but associated with an unintelligible reverse, composed of the letters +NEOFNIORREN. This inscription must be considered therefore to be intentionally disguised and the coin a contemporary fabrication.

In the same Catalogue, under No. 613 of Cnut, and also in Hildebrand under No. 284 of Cnut, occurs a reading with a clear obverse legend of +LNVTR EX ANGL, but disclosing, on the reverse, the inscription +ODA ON DNCENITI, for which no satisfactory interpretation is forthcoming. The weight of the British Museum specimen is given as 13.2 grains. A further example was in the Bruun collection, lot 163, Plate IV, which scaled still lower, viz., 11.37 grains, and which, besides being of low weight, is of small module and of workmanship somewhat different from that of the ordinary coins. Placed as of uncertain attribution in the British Museum Catalogue, it was considered by Major Carlyon-Britton, in the work already quoted, as of Hiberno-Danish origin, but the weight and design are both against this.<sup>1</sup> Having regard, however, to its clear obverse legend and low weight, I think a more reasonable explanation is that

<sup>1</sup> "The Chronology of the Hiberno-Danish Coinage," in this volume.

the coin is the work of a native contemporary forger who did not intend the reverse inscription to be read for any particular place. The coin is important because it leads to a consideration of a penny of the rare type Hildebrand B of Cnut reading on the reverse, + ODA M'O MEONRE. This latter is given in Hildebrand's catalogue of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Royal Cabinet at Stockholm, but was unattributed by that numismatist. It came under review by Major Carlyon-Britton, who tentatively suggested that one of the Meons in Hampshire gave it birth. What makes the latter attribution unconvincing is that this is the only known coin of this suggested mint, and it seems improbable that such a small place, insignificant then as now, should be represented only in so rare and peculiar an issue as Hildebrand's type B of Cnut to the exclusion of coins of the common types. Had the issue been one of the common types of the period when, for political or commercial reasons, there was a large output of coins, the institution of a mint at even so unimportant a place would not call for special remark. Or had the coin been one of a period when hoards were few and not of great extent, the presence of examples of mints which were unimportant would be to some extent explained. But neither of these conditions applies to the coin under notice, for the type is probably an unauthorized one, and is, in any case, very rare, and the hoards of coins of the time are numerous. Add these indisputable facts to the obscurity of the mint reading, and to the strong evidence afforded by the preceding coin that a worker describing himself as ODA was one of the forgers of the time, and I think it is reasonable to conclude that this coin also comes in the dishonest class, and that its reverse inscription was never intended to indicate any known place.

In the same category must, I think, be placed the three following coins of Edward the Confessor, given as Nos. 258 to 260 under the mint of York in the "British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins," vol. ii, 1893. The obverse legends are fairly clear, but on the reverse we have the following doubtful readings:—

+ L · CI O · N EIOER (2)

+ LIFICE ON EOF: (1)

The weights of the coins are 11·8, 11·0 and 12·0 grains, respectively, as against the usual 17 or 18 grains of the York coins of this type.

The annulet universally placed on the undoubted coins of York of Edward the Confessor, except type III,<sup>1</sup> is not in evidence on these three coins. For the threefold reasons of obscurity of legend, low weight, and the departure from type which the absence of the annulet constitutes, it seems certain that these coins were fabricated outside the usual channels, and represent examples of the forger's art of the time. Granting this, the anomaly of the absence of the annulet is at once explained, and prevents inaccurate surmise based upon wrong premises.

The period during which this type was current appears to have been fairly prolific of forgery, for, besides the three coins referred to in the foregoing paragraph, which the colourable resemblance to York of their mint-name caused to be placed under that city, three other coins of the same type occur in the British Museum Catalogue under the heading of uncertain mints. The obverse legends on two of the three coins are regular, but on the reverse we meet the under-mentioned more or less unintelligible readings :—

No. 1560.	ELEIPREIIPHIO	..	Weight, 12·5 grains.
„ 1561.	HORCEP ON ED	..	„ 15 „
„ 1562.	PIDRED ON RTF	..	„ 10·4 „

Having regard to their low weight and uncertain inscriptions, the more rational view is to consider that it was never intended that the place of issue of these coins should be disclosed. The third piece, reading PIDRED ON RTF, appears fairly regular. But the moneyer Withred is unknown of the period, except on this doubtful coin, and although RTF might be extended, superficially, to Retford (in Domesday Book it is, however, called Redford), this is also unknown as a mint-town and is unlikely to have been one.<sup>2</sup> On the

<sup>1</sup> "Edward the Confessor and his Coins," *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> For the correction of coins attributed to Retford in Hildebrand, see "Uncertain Anglo-Saxon Mints and Some New Attributions," by Major Carlyon-Britton, in *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. vi.

other hand, the weight of this particular coin is low even for this type, the weights of the coins of which vary considerably, and I think this piece forms a good example of the futility of attempting to ascribe an obscure reading to an unknown mint.

Under the reign of Harold I several coins might be noticed as illustrating our subject. In the sale catalogue of the coins of Major Carlyon-Britton appears a doubtfully attributed coin, which could be explained if students will admit the existence of contemporary forgery; it appears amongst the coins of Harold's second type, lot 571, and reads on the reverse:

PVLING HLYLEFOL

It is described as of Lydford, with the name of an unpublished moneyer. Here again we get a coin with a quite normal obverse, but which on the reverse discloses a series of letters which only with a good deal of imagination can be even colourably likened to a mint-reading. In this case the first three letters of the mint-name, HLY, are those of some coins of Lydford, and so, in the absence of a more rational explanation, the coin is attributed to that very rare mint. But apply the thesis of this paper and consider the coin as a forgery or a foreign imitation, and I venture to think that we have an explanation which is far more probable. That it is not a foreign imitation by an unskilled workman appears clear from the non-existence of a true coin bearing the name of PVLING to copy from, and the fact that the obverse inscription is quite clear, showing the worker's ability to punch a proper reverse die had he so minded. This leaves us with the conclusion—after all quite a simple one—that the coin is a contemporary forgery.

There was a coin purporting to be of Æthelred II in the Carlyon-Britton sale catalogue, lot 1743, now in my possession, which illustrates a very different kind of deception. Its design outwardly proclaims it a mule coin connecting the Long Cross type with the Crux type, but the workmanship and the lettering are very weak and the legends are unintelligible. In fact the coin has all the appearance of being a native falsely uttered piece, for the workmanship is not



bold enough to cause it to be classed as an imitation by a foreign workman. On the other hand the weight, 25 grains, is abnormally high, even for a true coin of the period, and this seemed strongly to militate against the idea that the coin was false. After puzzling over it for some time, the idea of its true character occurred to me. Now, the forgeries we have hitherto been dealing with were struck on flans of solid metal, even if sometimes base, but this piece comes more frankly in the open as a spurious issue by being composed simply of two thin sheets of silver overlaid on a disc of inferior but heavy metal. This at once accounts for the abnormal weight.<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes difficult to separate a forgery from an imitation made quite legitimately by a foreign workman, but this piece proves, beyond all cavil, that native forgery was, in fact, practised at this period, and that the laws respecting the issue of false money were not merely precautionary, but were inspired by the actual existence of evil-doing. This piece further justifies the distrust of the Vikings illustrated by their test of the integrity of the money given them, as tribute or in trade. By the small cuts and incisions so frequently seen in the Anglo-Saxon pennies found in Scandinavia, as before mentioned, a forgery of the type we are considering would at once be disclosed. With this type of forgery can be fittingly concluded my remarks on the section of this paper relating to native forgeries.

We now arrive at a consideration of another aspect of the late Saxon coinage which has not, I think, so far received the attention it deserves, although there is a brief allusion to it in the *British Numismatic Journal* of 1919-20, p. 52: this is the question of issue of patterns or trial pieces. Before dealing with representative emissions illustrating this view of Anglo-Saxon numismatics, a few preliminary remarks on the subject in general seem necessary. Our early money has so long been dissociated from the suggestion of such pieces, notwithstanding that they are universally a feature of

<sup>1</sup> When the author read his paper before the members of the Society on June 27, 1923, he partly raised the coating of this piece while he spoke.

the initiation of a new coinage in modern times, that no pronounced views appear to be current on the subject in connection with the early mediæval period. In the late Saxon era, with which we are immediately concerned, there occur, however, two pieces in gold which cannot possibly be regarded as current money. They are a gold penny of the Quatrefoil type of Æthelred II, and a gold penny of the Expanding Cross type of Edward the Confessor. Having regard to the value of the metal and its very different appearance to silver, these pieces can hardly have been the result of a moneyer's error. Neither can we consider them a separate gold currency, for entirely new designs would, in that event, have been adopted. The more reasonable view is that they were patterns or trials just in the same way as were the gold and silver specimens of the ordinary copper currency of later times. No numismatist doubts the propriety of the existing practice of placing the latter in the pattern or trial series, and the gold pence of Æthelred and Edward the Confessor are on exactly the same plane.

The suggestion of patterns or trial pieces which I am about to advance will quite naturally and freely account for the existence of some other exceptional emissions of the period. It accords with what we would expect of the economic and mechanical side of the coinage which, as I have stated, was quite well established in this country on definite lines, and it would fit in with the close attention which the laws show was paid to the coinage. In a word, why should not those who inspired the designs of our early money have had their periods of hesitation regarding the adoption of suitable patterns when a new coinage was in prospect, as well as the officials of the mint in modern times? Experiment in design must have existed then as now, and I believe the results of such experiment are evident in certain otherwise anomalous pieces, the existence of which can best be accounted for by the theory now propounded.

The first of these trials to which reference might usefully be made are the pieces described in Hildebrand as type E, variety c, of Æthelred II; they are illustrated here by Fig. 7, from which it will be seen that, although the obverse is that of the main type,

Hildebrand E (Fig. 8), the reverse discloses a new design of a Long Cross with the letters C.R.V.X. in the angles. It thus partakes of the nature of the issue called the Crux type (Fig. 9), although there



FIG. 7.

are essential differences. In view of the type of the obverse, it must come after. Now this word CRUX is known otherwise on Anglo-Saxon coins only on a single issue.<sup>1</sup> When, therefore, the question



FIG. 8.

of a new coinage was raised after the Crux type had served its turn, I suggest that the few coins of the variety under discussion are the concrete evidence of the initiatory work which would naturally



FIG. 9.

arise on such an event. The word CRUX would be very much in evidence in the mind of the designer of the new currency, and, for

<sup>1</sup> The Harthacnut coin on which the word CRUX appears is Danish. See "The Anglian Coins of Harthacnut," *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xi, 33.

sentimental or religious reasons, or by force of precedent, he probably had it imported on the designs for the new coinage he was preparing; but, on reconsideration, similarity to the preceding issue caused its rejection in favour of the more distinctive quatrefoil design finally adopted. This, I suggest, is a natural explanation of these anomalous pieces. That they would conform closely to the models of the regular currency, in having the names of a moneyer and a mint punched on them, follows as a matter of course, otherwise the trial would not have been a true presentment of what the coins would have looked like as a whole. The fact of the presence of the names of moneyer and mint is, no doubt, the one which has thrown numismatists in the past off this new line of enquiry, and has prevented them from seeing and applying to these early coinages the principles of all ordered undertakings, viz. that of having assays first before the adoption of new ideas. And, after all, the trial emissions of later periods are often so much like the current issues that they are with difficulty distinguished from those issues. The pattern groats of Edward III, with crowns instead of pellets in the angles of the reverse cross, are similar examples. A good illustration of the likeness of patterns to current money is also preserved to us in the set of silver coins of George II of the date 1746. The design of these, which omits the word LIMA from under the bust, a characteristic of the current money of that year, is, for that reason, more like the ordinary currency of other years.

There is every reason to think that many trial pieces of post-Saxon times got into circulation, as was the case with the Georgian patterns above mentioned, and no doubt some of the anomalous Saxon pieces under review similarly passed into circulation. The only coins known of this suggested trial issue of Æthelred II's Quatrefoil type are the two inscribed on the reverse as follows:—

+ ALFPOLD M<sup>CO</sup> BAÐON

+ GOLDYS M<sup>O</sup> ZEREBRIL

Both of these readings are abnormal, and the dies for these Æthelred pieces no doubt never reached the two western cities the

names of which are inscribed on them, but were destroyed at the common engraving centre when they had served their purpose of producing a few impressions for the information of the chief engraver or others concerned. Hence their great rarity at a time when, had they been an authorized general currency, they should have come down to us in at least fair plenty.

Coming now to the time of Cnut, I think there is also, in that reign, evidence of the system of issue of trials or patterns, and illustration of it is furnished by the pieces which, in Hildebrand and in the British Museum Catalogue, were constituted a distinct issue of coins and designated the *Pacx* type, from the circumstances that on the reverse appears the word *PACX* in the angles of a long double cross (Fig. 10).



FIG. 10.

The pieces are of excessively rare occurrence, and the only ones known to the present writer have the following legends:—

1. Obverse. +ENVTID REC  
Reverse. +SVMERLVÐA ON L (Stockholm.)
2. Obverse. +ENVT REX AN  
Reverse. +VLF ON\_INEONLNE (British Museum.) (Fig. 10.)
3. Obverse. +ENIT Ð DEI  
Reverse. +BRIHTRIC ON LIN ("City" Find.)
4. Obverse. +ENVTIDD RE  
Reverse. +EDRIC ON ÐEOD (Stockholm.)

Although Hildebrand places this so-called type somewhat early in his sequence, he rather inconsistently mentions that the design



on the obverse is that of one of the late issues of the reign, his type I (Fig. 11).

No modern numismatist would, I think, dispute that the two issues came close together. It follows, therefore, that the suggestion made in the introduction of the "*British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins*," vol. ii, 1893—that the word PACX had some reference to the agreement arrived at during the meeting of the Witan at Oxford, in A.D. 1018, when it was decreed that the laws of Eadgar were to be observed—cannot be accepted as a sound one, any more than Hawkins's view that the coins commemorated the peace concluded with Eadmund Ironside in A.D. 1016. Notwithstanding the failure of these particular explanations, the numismatist is quite justified in associating remarkable coin designs with prominent historical events. It is primarily a question whether all the facts of the case are in one's



FIG. 11.

possession, and I think we must look for some less local event than those named for the inspiration of the Pacx pieces of Cnut. It should, however, be first mentioned that Hildebrand also made the tentative suggestion that these coins might be of Edward the Confessor's period with the obverse fabricated. The idea was present in his mind because the King's name on the specimens in the Royal Cabinet at Stockholm were somewhat blundered. The suggestion is, however, negatived by the single example, also of Lincoln, in the British Museum, which has a quite regular obverse legend (Fig. 10), and of the further specimen of the issue with a different moneyer's name on it discovered in the "*City*" hoard. Both these coins appear to have been unknown to Hildebrand.

Mr. C. A. Nordman adverts to this suggestion of Hildebrand, and amplifies it by remarking that there is a possibility of early and late

stamps being mixed together, *i.e.* in the reign of Edward the Confessor.<sup>1</sup> He states, in support of this, that the round s on the reverse of Hildebrand No. 1734 under Cnut does not occur on coins of Cnut bearing the name of Sumerlutha. This is, however, a detail of no weight, in face of the fact that the round s is of very frequent occurrence on the later coins of Cnut, including those of the Lincoln Mint. On the other hand, the evidence of the coin numbered 1735 in Hildebrand, which is of his ordinary type I, and combines an obverse identical in design and description with, and a reverse almost similar in legend to, No. 1734 in Hildebrand, is in support of the attribution of the latter to the time of Cnut (*see also* No. 1552 in Hildebrand, which has the same obverse). Moreover, if the suggestion that these pieces were struck in the time of the Confessor with mixed Cnut obverse and Edward reverse stamps is correct, there is the difficulty of explaining the presence of a sceptre pommée on the British Museum example (Fig. 10), instead of the fleur-de-lis sceptre of the normal issue of Cnut. It is inconceivable that the die bearing this unusual form of sceptre should have been preserved for a long period, and fortuitously discovered and used in the time of the Confessor. Further, another example of this Pacx issue, from different dies, is in existence. It is given as No. 3 above. Mr. Nordman was unaware of it, and it will readily be seen that every fresh, and differing, example which arises, weakens the case for the fortuitous use of old dies of Cnut, in the reign of the Confessor.

Mr. Nordman is, however, not convinced that the transfer to Edward the Confessor should be made, and, like Hildebrand, retains them under Cnut, but with reservation. In order to advance the subject to something definite, I now claim that all the anomalies, including the irregular forms of the inscriptions and of the sceptre, of this Pacx issue of Cnut are accounted for if we apply to it the principles enunciated in this paper, and consider that these abnormalities are due to the fact that the pieces are patterns or trials. That they are

<sup>1</sup> "Anglo-Saxon Coins Found in Finland," published by the Finnish Archaeological Society, Helsingfors, 1921.

of the time of Hildebrand type I (Fig. 11) needs no demonstration. And as Hildebrand type I came after Hildebrand type H, and Hildebrand type H was struck in or before the summer of A.D. 1027, when Cnut forced his overlordship upon Sweden, and there coined money with Hildebrand H as the prototype,<sup>1</sup> it follows that Hildebrand type I came after that year. The time of issue of these coins can, I think, be deduced from the historical events which, at the time, occurred outside England in another part of Cnut's dominions. In the early part of the year 1027 Cnut went on a pilgrimage to Rome and, returning the same year via Denmark, explained in a letter sent to England his reasons for so doing, of which the following extract throws a flood of light upon our subject.

" I wish you further to know that, returning by the way I came, I am now going to Denmark through the advice of all the Danes, to make peace and firm treaty with those nations who were desirous, had it been possible for them, to deprive me both of life and of sovereignty. This, however, they were not able to perform since God, who by His kindness preserves me in my kingdom and in my honour, and destroys the power of all my adversaries, has brought their strength to nought. Moreover, when I have *established peace* with the surrounding nations, and put all our sovereignty here in the East in tranquil order, so that there shall be no fear of war or enmity on any side, I intend coming to England as early in the summer as I shall be able to get my fleet prepared."

In my account of the coins of Sigtuna inscribed with the names of Æthelred, Cnut and Harthacnut, I showed that Sweden was partly conquered in the summer of 1027. Written records indicate that Norway was subdued in the following year, 1028, and, as a result of this final conquest, Cnut convened, at Nidaros, now Trondheim, the then capital of Norway, a meeting of the magnates of England, and the chiefs of Denmark and of Norway, *i.e.* the three principal kingdoms,

<sup>1</sup> " Some Coins of Sigtuna inscribed with the Names of Æthelred, Cnut and Harthacnut," *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xi.

to consider the conditions of the lasting peace referred to in the letter, and to decide on a future policy. In this important and far-reaching event, constituting Cnut's first and only imperial conference, and marking the policy adopted for the governance of the empire, there was ample reason for the idea which might have been in the mind of the chief engraver at the mint when the word PACX was introduced on the pieces under discussion. And more especially as, from that time onwards, with the exception of the irruption of Olaf the Saint into Norway and his defeat at Sticklestead in A.D. 1030, the empire, *i.e.* the north generally, was free from turmoil and enjoyed a tranquillity hitherto unknown.

The circumstances of this famous gathering would not have been fully known in England until A.D. 1029 or 1030, and the thought of celebrating this great pact, embracing nearly the whole of northern Europe, by a reference on the coinage can, I submit, be regarded not only as possible but as probable. The extreme rarity of the pieces on which the idea is expressed, at a time when coins of the authorized types have come down to us in considerable numbers, shows, however, that no general use of it was made and, instead, there was adopted a quatrefoil design punctuated at the points with four globules, possibly reminiscent of the four great countries of the empire—England, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Such substitution was at least not inappropriate, for the peace conference at Nidaros was merely the outstanding event of one year. The uniting of the four kingdoms was expected to be lasting.

With the exception of one die, on which appears a cross pommée instead of a fleur-de-lis sceptre, the obverse dies were left unaltered, for, as mentioned on p. 90, Nos. 1552 and 1735 in Hildebrand both seem to be from the same obverse die as the Pacx piece, Hildebrand No. 1734, numbered 1 above. The names of Brihtric and Edric, Nos. 3 and 4 above, are also in evidence on the coins of Lincoln and Thetford of the current type I. Ulf is, however, not traceable as a moneyer of Lincoln, or any other undoubted English mint in Cnut's time, and this, added to the exceptional use of the sceptre pommée on the relative Pacx piece, strengthens the present explanation of

the issue, for in this case neither the obverse nor the reverse was used for the finally authorized design.

As in the case of the Crux patterns of Æthelred II (Fig. 7), a trial of this period would, as now, be made in the same general form as the ordinary currency which, in late Saxon times, invariably included the names of the moneyer and mint.

An alternative explanation of these excessively rare Pacx pieces seems to be that a die-sinker went beyond the standard design, and completely modified the reverse of some dies of Hildebrand type I of Lincoln and Thetford which he was preparing for the new coinage. The modification is, however, so drastic that it would scarcely pass, and there also seems no good reason why the die-sinker should have given himself the extra trouble which such unauthorized modification from standard would have involved, or that the local receiver of the dies would have accepted them.

Admitting the Pacx pieces as trials of the time when Hildebrand type I was about to be put into circulation, a date for the initiation of the latter is forthcoming at about the year 1030, probably a little before. Although the convention at Nidaros took place in A.D. 1028 or 1029, Cnut returned with his suite to England only after a leisurely progress southward to Denmark, frequently landing and meeting the local Norwegian chiefs on the way, and so cementing the peace already made in the North.



FIG. 12.

An illustration of our subject also comes from the reign of Edward the Confessor. It is the excessively rare issue given in Hildebrand as type I, variety a, and in the British Museum Catalogue as type XIV. It is known with the inscription of the following towns, Cricklade, Dover, Sandwich, Tamworth and Worcester. The Cricklade one is illustrated as Fig. 12.



It will be seen that the reverse is identical with the ordinary type 11, Fig. 13, but the obverse has rather more in common with the previous type 10, Fig. 14. There are, however, essential differences. The bust descends to the edge of the coin instead of being confined in the inner circle. The mantle is arranged differently. The right hand and the arm and a sceptre are introduced into the



FIG. 13.

design. The inner circle of type 10 is absent and the size of the pieces is appreciably larger than most examples of type 10.<sup>1</sup> In view of these numerous and important variations, and of the fact that no specimen exists with this obverse associated with a reverse of type 10, it is improbable that these are mule coins connecting types 10 and 11 as suggested by Major Carlyon-Britton.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the obverse cannot be regarded as normal either to type 10 or to



FIG. 14.

type 11, and a mule coin should reflect the normal designs of two issues of money. Hildebrand was the first numismatist to arrange, in some classified order, the types of this king, and he placed these assays as variety a of his type I, Carlyon-Britton's type 11. The obverse of these pieces differs so drastically from that of the main

<sup>1</sup> The specimen of type 10 illustrated as Fig. 14 was struck on an unusually broad flan.

<sup>2</sup> "Edward the Confessor and his Coins," *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1905.

type II, however, that the pieces can hardly be regarded as varieties in the ordinary meaning of that term.

Mr. Willet in his account of the "City" hoard<sup>1</sup> was so impressed with the differences of design on these coins that he allocated them to a separate issue entirely, and this was followed in the "British Museum Catalogue of Anglo-Saxon Coins," vol. ii, 1893. This explanation is, however, not altogether satisfactory, in view of the fact that the reverse is identical with type II, Fig. 13. Further, the pieces are of excessive rarity, and the "finds" of the time have produced so many coins of closely related types, that had the pieces in question been a distinct issue of money they would have come down to us in far greater plenty. Apply, however, the theory advanced in this paper, and consider the pieces as assays not ultimately approved, and they become no longer anomalous. What most militates against the application of the theory to these pieces are the mint names which appear on them. As in the preceding examples, it is not necessary, however, to consider that the pieces were actually struck in those towns. Specimens were no doubt taken off the dies in the central engraving office, as in the case of the gold piece of the Confessor before alluded to, for approval, showing the full idea of the proposed issue, but the obverse design was ultimately rejected in favour of the authorized type as we know it. As the preceding issue was a full-face one, this is quite reasonable. Even before the profile design was selected for the general currency, some experiment in profile types appears to have been made, for the unique piece illustrated as Fig. 3 in the article entitled "The Prototype of the First Coinage of William the Conqueror,"<sup>2</sup> may justly be regarded as a result of it. The idea of showing a proposed design for a coinage in full by striking off impressions of both sides is a common-sense one, and was undoubtedly a feature of most of the later mediæval pattern and trial issues. If these pieces which I now designate as patterns or trials were not actually struck at the places named on

<sup>1</sup> *Numismatic Chronicle*, new series, vol. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xv.

them, it goes far towards explaining the presence on them of mints of such great rarity ; for, if we except Dover, the towns named showed little minting activity in any period, and, at this particular time, there were no great tribute payments to account for issues of money at small places, as was the case in the first few decades of the period we are considering. If the designs were those of an authorized issue, we ought to have examples of it from the prolific mints like London, Lincoln and Winchester.<sup>1</sup> This is the case with genuine issues of money of which the accident of treasure-trove has resulted in few examples being handed down to us, for example, in some of the rare types of Henry I. It is, indeed, quite possible that some or all of these very small mints were dormant at the time, and that their names were selected because of this, in order to avoid confusion regarding responsibility for issue. It is at least significant that specimens of the main issue, type II, are not in evidence from all the towns concerned, and it cannot be argued, for obvious reasons, that they took the place of coins of the main type at those towns or that they are the product of a local die-sinking centre. From whichever standpoint the matter is looked at, the present explanation, that these pieces are trials or patterns, seems less open to objection than the points of view hitherto held regarding them.

As giving point to the various theories and propositions advanced in this paper, if the whole mass of documentary evidence as to the history of any century of modern times was swept away, or at least remained only in the meagre form of the last century of the Anglo-Saxon epoch, it requires little imagination to believe that the real coinages of that century would, unless great discrimination were brought to bear upon them, be intermixed with patterns, trials, forgeries and, if the century witnessed them, foreign imitations. To take the eighteenth century, I have already quoted one illustration of a pattern coinage of exactly similar design to the current money (p. 87). In the same century there is a series of copper patterns of

<sup>1</sup> The example attributed to Winchester in the Ready Sale Catalogue of 1920, lot No. 183, is of Worcester.

the reign of Queen Anne which, without extraneous information, one might have placed as extremely rare varieties of current money, or even as distinct, though rare, issues. The real evidence is, however, strong that some of these Anne pieces are not even patterns, but simply medalllets or jettons. Forgeries of the same century, especially in copper, would probably also have been accepted, even by practised numismatists, as authorized currency, and impossible dates of issue would therefore have been introduced. A good example of this is afforded by the Irish halfpenny (Fig. 15).



FIG. 15.

Although in design it is of that issue of Ireland restricted to the years 1766 and 1769, its date is 1776 ; but the work is practically as good as the normal copper coins of the period, and did we not know that the design was current only up to 1769 there would have been grave risk of accepting this piece as an official issue of 1776.

If, in the eighteenth century, with its wealth of recorded facts, we have occasionally confounded coins with the other types of the die-sinker's art, we are much more likely to have been under misapprehension in regard to some numismatic remains of Anglo-Saxon times.