


## THE INSCRIPTION ON THE OXFORD PENNIES OF THE *OHSNAFORDA* TYPE.

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HE first plate of the first volume of *The British Numismatic Journal*, Fig. 14, gives a representation of one of the so-called *Orsnaforda* coins of King Alfred which is in the collection of Mr. Carlyon-Britton. The inscription on the obverse of this coin is :—ÆLFRED across the middle of the field followed by a cross pattée, with the letters ƆRSNÆ above and FORDÆ below, and a group of pellets, 1-2-1, above, and a similar group below the legend. The reverse shows three crosses pattée side by side across the middle of the field, with the letters BERIV above the crosses ; the letters ALRDMO below them, and two groups of four pellets disposed and arranged as on the obverse. The inscription on this particular coin very closely resembles that on one of the coins in the British Museum, namely, *Alfred*: No. 146, but the inscriptions are not identical. The British Museum coin is one of thirty-seven grouped together by Messrs. Herbert A. Grueber and Charles Francis Keary under the type-name "*Orsnaforda*" in their *Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum, Anglo-Saxon Series*, vol. ii, p. 50 (Lond. 1893).

This family of Anglo-Saxon coins has received a large share of attention of late, and not undeservedly so ; for the inscription of which its members are the vehicle is interesting and instructive, whether we regard it from the historical, the palæographical, or the literary point of view. Much of the attention which has been accorded to it has been of a controversial nature, however, and that originated, as we all know, in the need to refute certain opinions that were put forward by Mr. C. L. Stainer in a monograph on *The Oxford Silver Pennies* that

was published in 1904 by the Oxford Historical Society. In this monograph Mr. Stainer relied partly, and as I think, unwisely, upon the results of errors made by artificers in preparing the dies, and his criticisms and views are founded upon extreme divergences from the true type of inscription. The arguments he advanced with regard to the origin of these coins and the identity of the minting-place were rebutted by Mr. Carlyon-Britton in *The British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ii, p. 21, and it is not necessary for me to refer to them more explicitly. But I hope to show that several reasons for assigning these coins to the Oxford mint have been overlooked, and thereby to convince Mr. Stainer that the coins are entitled to reconsideration in any future edition of his interesting work that he may see fit to issue.

I propose, then, in this paper to deal :—

- 1st. With the coins in the British Museum collection themselves ;
- 2nd. With the type of lettering upon them ;
- 3rd. With the orthographical peculiarity in the name of the mint that has puzzled so many of us ;
- 4th. With the grammar and meaning of the inscription ;
- 5th. With the probable date of the issue.

1. *The Coins.*—My observations on the coins of this class will be confined to those preserved in the national collection. As I have said already that collection comprises thirty-seven specimens. Thirty-one of these are more or less respectable pieces of money ; five others are blundered pennies, and there is one blundered halfpenny. The quality of the silver of which these pennies are made may be presumed to be equal to that of other coins of the same period, and the want of symmetrical outline in not a few of them does not call for comment. But the quantity of metal they contain differs widely in different coins, one being as light as 17·3 grains, and another as heavy, speaking comparatively, as 25·6 grains. That is to say, the extremes stand to each other in the proportion of 2 to 3, nearly. The aggregate weight of the thirty-six pennies is 764·9 grains, and the average weight is 20·691 grains. Twenty-eight of the pennies

range in weight from 20 grains to 22·8 grains, and four of them weigh 22 grains each, which, it will be remembered, is believed to be the correct weight for the Saxon penny. They compare in weight thus :—

Individual Weights.		Classification.		
No. of coin.	Grains.	Number of coins in each class.		Grains.
118	22	2	xvii	'3 ; '7.
119	22·5	—	—	—
120	18·3	1	xviii	'3.
—	17·7	—	—	—
—	20·7	2	xix	19.
—	21·4	—	—	—
—	24·3	11	xx	20 ; (two) ; '2 ; '4 ; '5 (two).
125	22·8	—	—	'7 (three) ; '8 ; '9.
—	22·3	—	—	—
—	25·6	—	—	—
—	19	6	xxi	21 ; '2 ; '4 ; '7 ; '8 ; '9.
—	22·5	—	—	—
130	20	11	xxii	22 (four) ; '1 ; '2 ; '3 ;
—	21·7	—	—	'5 (three) ; '8.
—	22	—	—	—
—	21·9	—	—	—
—	20·5	—	xxiii	—
135	24·4	—	—	—
—	19	2	xxiiii	24·3 ; '4.
—	17·3	—	—	—
—	20·2	1	xxv	25·6.
—	20·5	—	—	—
140	20·8	—	—	—
—	20·7	—	—	—
—	22·5	—	—	—
—	20·4	—	—	—
—	22·1	—	—	—
145	22	—	—	—
—	20	—	—	—
—	20·9	—	—	—
—	21·2	—	—	—
—	21·8	—	—	—
150	20·7	—	—	—
—	22·2	—	—	—
—	22	—	—	—
—	a halfpenny	—	—	—
—	21	—	—	—

Numbers 119, 121, 124, 127, 128, 129, 137, 138, 139, 142, 148, 151, 153 and 154 are illustrated in the plate accompanying Mr. Carlyon-Britton's paper, and they are described by him on pp. 28-30. The coins illustrated are referred to herein by their number in the plate, set in parentheses.

The inscription on the reverse does not always correspond in relative position with that on the obverse, and the imaginary lines marking the axes of the coins vary in direction in different specimens when the coins are revolved. In some of them revolution about the horizontal axis brings the reverse right-side up; with others it is necessary to revolve them about the vertical axis in order to achieve that result; in a third class, and this is the most numerous, the inscription on the reverse is askew. The three classes severally comprise the following coins:—

1	2	3
—		X
118	125 144	120 142
119	126 147	121 145
124	129 149	122 146
127	130	123 148
128	135	131 150
133	136	132 151
137	140	134 152
138	143	139 154
		141

The heaviest of the pennies, viz., No. 127, is a beautiful coin, perfect, I think, as to its inscription, and it is noteworthy that it has been gilded. It is not likely that this gilding has been done since 1840, when the Cuerdale hoard, of which these coins formed a part, was unearthed; and I presume, therefore, that it was done before A.D. 911, the date of the concealment, though I do not know whether the determination of the date of the operation would have much significance. This coin appears as Fig. 3 on Mr. Carlyon-Britton's plate, and has the following inscription on it:—obverse, ÆLFRED across

the middle of the field, with ÖHSNÆ above and FORDÆ below, and a group of four pellets 1-2-1, above, and a similar group below. On the reverse :—three crosses pattée side by side across the middle of the field with the letters BERNV above, and ÆLDMO below. The letter which represents M on this coin is gallows-shaped and very peculiar.

The syllables that I have written down as OHSNA are usually pronounced *oh'sna*, but that is an oversight. In Anglo-Saxon orthography of the end of the ninth century and of a great part of the tenth, *hs* stands, though not very often, for *x*, as I shall explain more fully presently. Where I refer in this paper to the *Ohnsaforda* type, it is to be understood that the whole series of Alfred's coins which is commonly spoken of as the "Ornsaforda" series, is intended.

2. *The Lettering of the Inscription.*—On the partly-gilded coin, No. 127, the lettering is of the type known as Hiberno-Saxon, as we should expect; but there are peculiarities about it which would seem to point to an earlier rather than to the later part of the period during which that beautiful script was cultivated. The different letters that occur on this coin, and on two other coins, viz. :—Nos. 139 and 142 (Figs. 8 and 1), are fifteen in number. They are :—A, Æ, B, D, E, F, H, L, M, N, O, R, S, U, V. Of these, Æ, B, H, M, S, U, V, occur once; E, F, L, N, occur twice each, and A, D, O, R, occur three times each. On many other coins of the *Ohnsaforda* type numerous blunders appear in the lettering, but it can be shown that the more important of these blunders reflect the peculiarities which inform the inscription and the style of No. 127.

Before entering upon the consideration of the letters seriatim some attention should be paid to the mistakes made by the cuneators in preparing the dies. Some of the fifteen letters of the inscription on different coins are recumbent; others are inverted; those in a third class are fractured; in a fourth there are the "looking-glass" letters; and in the fifth class the letters are still worse confused, being both "looking-glass" and inverted. It is customary to speak of the looking-glass letter as retrograde, but it may be suggested that we should do better to reserve that term for the reverse order of letters in words and

words in inscriptions, and I suggest, though not without diffidence, that numismatists might borrow a term from the science of heraldry in order to name the looking-glass letter with precision. The open hand in armorial bearings is more frequently borne with the palm forward, but sometimes the back of the unclosed hand is shown and then the charge is spoken of as "dorsed"; now that, it seems to me, is just the term that fits certain characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon cuneator's handiwork—that is to say, his letters are sometimes dorsed.

Of the fifteen letters, then, which make up the four words of the inscription, A and S are found recumbent; A, F, L, M are found inverted; Æ, E, and H, are found fractured; B, D, E, L, N, R, S, are found dorsed; Æ, F, L, are found dorsed and inverted; and S is found dorsed and recumbent. In addition to these opportunities for going wrong which the cuneators have afforded us, there are numerous misrepresentations of individual letters, and these will be noticed under the particular letter affected.

#### A.

When reading the inscription on the pennies of the *Ohsnaforda* series at the British Museum I handed the specimen I regard as the actual type, viz., No. 127 (Plate, Fig. 3), to one of the numismatic experts there, explained my views to him, and asked what epigraphic objections could be raised against the coin in explanation of the fact that no prominence was given to it in the official catalogue. He replied that the only fault seemed to be the absence of the bar from the A in the ligatured Æ in the royal name. Now that omission is not incongruous with remote antiquity, inasmuch as the absence of the transverse stroke is characteristic of the majuscule A in the Rustic hand of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, and it is absent from other Roman hands of that period, as well as of later periods. (Appendix III.) The Rustic hand was one which employed capital letters exclusively, and was so called because it was less precise and its letters less carefully formed than the purity of the monumental Roman style demanded. The oldest book written in England which exhibits the peculiarity of the unbarred A is the celebrated psalter of



St. Augustine of Canterbury, now the Cotton MS., *Vespasian A. I.* For many centuries this psalter was supposed to have been received by Augustine from Pope Gregory the Great in about the year 600. But the ornamentation of the manuscript is characterised by distinct Hiberno-Saxon traits, and experts believe that it was not written until the end of the seventh century. Facsimiles of the psalter are given in the *Catalogue of Ancient MSS. in the British Museum*, Latin MSS., Part II, 1884, Plate XII, *et seq.*

Another and equally celebrated MS., which was written in Ireland at about the same time as the Canterbury Psalter, namely, *The Book of Kells*, not only shows the unbarred A (Appendix I), but also several other literal peculiarities which are more or less closely reflected in the inscription on the *Ohnsaforda* and other coins of King Alfred. The conversion of various tribes of Angles to Christianity in about the middle of the seventh century by missionaries from Irish monasteries was synchronous with the introduction into England of practically the same style of handwriting as that of *The Book of Kells*. Five different forms of majuscule A are found in that MS., and four of these are reflected on different coins of the *Ohnsaforda* type. The first Irish A copied by Mr. Lewis Day, viz.,  $\overline{A}$ , is identical with one written by the scribe of the Parker MS. of the *Saxon Chronicle*. This MS. dates from soon after A.D. 892, which was the twenty-first year of Alfred's reign. The first A, which has two horizontal bars, one joining the limbs of the letter, and the other touching the apex of it, is not found on the *Ohnsaforda* coins. The second A, viz.,  $\overline{A}$ , has an inverted apex instead of a bar between the limbs and is found on coins Nos. 118, 120, 135 (*bis*), 142 (Fig. 1). The third A is not found on the coins. The fourth, viz.,  $\overline{A}$ , is that which recurs most frequently. It has only one bar, which truncates the apex of the letter, and it is found on twenty-five coins: Nos. 118 *bis*, 120, 121 *bis* (Fig. 13), 122 *bis*, 123 *ter*, 124 *ter* (Fig. 9), 125 *ter*, 126 *ter*, 127 *ter* (Fig. 3), 128 *ter* (Fig. 4), 129 *bis* (Fig. 2), 130 *bis*, 131, 132, 133 *ter*, 134 *bis*, 135, 136 *bis*, 137 *bis* (Fig. 5), 138 *bis* (Fig. 7), 143, 145, 146 *bis*, 149 *bis*, 154 (Fig. 16). It occurs inverted on six others: Nos. 122, 125, 133, 134, 137 (Fig. 5), 138 (Fig. 7), and recumbent on No. 136.

Another A of the fourth class is the Rustic A already referred to. It has no transverse stroke at all, and from our point of view is simply a capital V inverted. It occurs on five coins: Nos. 119 (Fig. 12), 131, 139 (Fig. 8), 147, 154 (Fig. 16). Yet a fifth kind is one that, I believe, is not represented in the *Book of Kells*. It is a majuscule letter, it has no cross stroke, and its apex is capped by a blind triangle, viz.,  $\lambda$ . Both A and V are found treated in this way on the Alfred coins—A; Nos. 119 (Fig. 12), 140, 141, 147; V:—118, 119 (Fig. 12), 125, 126, 127 (Fig. 3), 133, 137 (Fig. 5), 143. This curious form occurs, though with an open triangle, in illuminated MSS. written in the Franco-Saxon style in North-Eastern France in the time of King Alfred. In these MSS. A is frequently found capped by an inverted open triangle which often corresponds in size with the triangle formed by the inner cross-bar and the sides of the letter. Ten or more instances of this treatment are cited by Mons. L. V. Delisle as appearing in the magnificent MS. known as the second Bible of the Emperor Charles the Bald. This Charles was the father of King Alfred's stepmother, Judith, who married Baldwin I., Count of Flanders, the father of Alfred's son-in-law, Baldwin II., Count of Flanders. There is also a fine example of this letter on Fo. 15 of the gorgeous Gospel Book of St. Vaast's at Arras, a facsimile of which is given by Mons. Delisle as *Planche III.* of his monograph on *L'Evangélaire de Saint-Vaast d'Arras et la Calligraphie Franco-Saxonne du IX<sup>e</sup> Siècle* (Paris, 1888). This little work is out of print, but I have had a copy of *Planche III.* drawn, and it is noticeable that the transverse of the initial A is broken down and disposed in such a way as to give the centre of the letter the appearance of a lozenge. (Appendix II.) A similar effect is noticeable on the four *Ohsnaforda* coins Nos. 118, 120, 135, 142 (Fig. 1). We shall have to return to Mons. Delisle's monograph in the sequel.

#### Æ.

The ligatured letter Æ occurs on the *Ohsnaforda* coins in the king's name only. It is fractured into I E on No. 124 (Fig. 9); it is dorsed and inverted on 137, 138, 139 (Figs. 5, 7 and 8), and it yields place to



the simple E on twelve coins:—Nos. 120, 121 (Fig. 13), 144, 146, 154 (Fig. 16), 119 (Fig. 12), 140, 141, 142 (Fig. 1), 143, 145, 147. On No. 149 the stroke of the A is bowed and the letter looks like O E ligatured.

B.

The letter B on the coins is of the upright, double-bowed, majuscule variety which is retained in modern founts of type and which serves us as a capital. The Italian penmen of the fifteenth century, who furnished the earliest printers with the models for the round letters which have been adopted in Italy and Western Europe, really reverted to ancient forms. What we know as Roman type is for the most part a modification of the forms of letters written in the ninth century in the fine MSS. spoken of as Carolingian. Modern letters have been copied at second hand, therefore, from the alphabet which was adopted in the monastic *scriptoria* of France under the influence of Charlemagne and through the instrumentality of the Englishman, Alcuin. (Compare facsimiles 4 and 5 in Mr. Madan's *Collection*.)

D.

The letter D of the *Ohsnaforda* coins is not represented in *The Book of Kells*, wherein a similar form is used for the letter O. On the coins we get a bowed letter perfectly easy to read. It is dorsed on Nos. 133, 136, 138 (Fig. 7), 153 (Fig. 6). In two or three cases, and notably so on No. 140, the shaft of the letter overtops the curve of the bow. On No. 120 the letter has a tail, which may be accidental.

E.

The letter E is quite plain on the whole, and is of the majuscule variety, as we might indeed expect, seeing that it is easier to make that letter than the round Hiberno-Saxon variety, which is practically identical with our Roman minuscule. E is intrusive in Bernvaled for Bernwald on Nos. 123, 144, 145, and it is misrepresented therein by R on Nos. 146, 147.

## F.

The letter F is quite clear on all the coins except No. 149, where it is dorsed and inverted; on No. 137 (Fig. 5) where it is inverted, and on Nos. 125-130, 131, 153 (Fig. 6), where it is misrepresented by E.

## H.

The letter H on the coins is quite distinct from the type of letter traced in *The Book of Kells*, which is uncial, whereas the H we are speaking of is monumental (compare Appendix, Nos. III, IV, V, VII). It has suffered numerous vicissitudes through carelessness on the part of the artificers, and is more unstable than any other letter with which we are now concerned. On the *Ohsnaforda* coins H sometimes misrepresents the letter N:—Nos. 120, 130, 131, 154 (Fig. 16); on others it stands for M:—Nos. 128 (Fig. 4), 132, 142 (Fig. 1). The letter H for M is itself misrepresented by E I on No. 122.

H and N of the majuscule variety are often found mistaken for each other in early times, and the error on the coin No. 149, where we get ONSNA, finds numerous parallels in MSS. of the Anglo-Saxon period (Appendix XI). Cf. *Hiridano* for *Niridano* in the More MS. of Bede's "H.E." IV, i, which was written c. A.D. 737 (*ed.* Plummer, p. 202). The letter H of the coin No. 127 (Fig. 3), is misrepresented by N on No. 137 (Fig. 5); by N dorsed on No. 153 (Fig. 6); by the gallows-shaped M inverted on No. 129 (Fig. 3); by V on No. 142 (Fig. 1); by V inverted on No. 139 (Fig. 8); by R on not fewer than twenty coins, viz., Nos. 118, 119 (Fig. 12), 120, 121 (Fig. 13), 122, 125, 126, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138 (Fig. 7), 140, 141, 145, 146, 147, 154 (Fig. 16); and by II on No. 149. The letter R erroneously standing for H is variously misrepresented on Nos. 123, 124 (Fig. 9), 125, 130, 131, 143. H is misrepresented by M on No. 129 (Fig. 2), as I have just remarked. This error is only found once, but the contrary instance of H misrepresenting M occurs on the three coins Nos. 128 (Fig. 4), 132, 142 (Fig. 1), where we get H O for M O, the regular abbreviation for *monetario* on the *Ohsnaforda* coins.

L.

The letter L of the coins is the pure monumental angular letter. It is dorsed on No. 134; and dorsed and inverted on No. 132, 133 *bis*, 134, 138 (Fig. 7).

M.

The monumental capital M does not appear on any of the *Ohsnaforda* coins in the national collection, nor yet do we find thereon any one of the three-stemmed varieties used by the scribe of *The Book of Kells*. The letter employed by the cuneators is the gallows-shaped M which appears on Nos. 127 (Fig. 3), 131, 133, 138 (Fig. 7). This is found inverted on No. 129 (Fig. 2) and misrepresented by majuscule H on No. 119 (Fig. 12). It would appear that this gallows-shaped letter is simply the Rustic M of the Psalter of St. Augustine, with the curved stroke raised to the top of the letter. A similar letter M is a feature of the Mæso-Gothic alphabet of the fourth century, and an example of a shrunken M is given by Lewis Day, *Alphabets, Old and New*, p. 16, from a Franco-Gallic MS. of the seventh century.

Many examples of this gallows-shaped M appear on other coins of Alfred; *vide* Keary and Grueber's Catalogue, vol. ii, pl. iv, No. 10; pl. v, No. 12; pl. vi, Nos. 1, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16.

M is found misrepresented by H: on Nos. 128 (Fig. 4), 132, 134 (here we get a little wedge in place of a line), 142 (here the line is transverse and slightly dished; Fig. 1); by N: on Nos. 129, 148, 154 (Figs. 2, 10, 16); by II: on Nos. 120, 121 (Fig. 13), 123, 125, 126, 130, 135, 136, 137 (Fig. 5), 139 (Fig. 8), 140, 141, 143, 146, 147, 149; and by I: on Nos. 118, 144, 145.

N.

For the most part the letter N on the coins does not differ very much from the monumental N. The cross-bar, like that of the Rustic N, starts a little below the top of the left-hand stroke, and ends a little above the foot of the other. Hence it is not very dissimilar from the majuscule N of *The Book of Kells*. It is very different from the

eighth-century Saxon letter, however, inasmuch as its right limb is never made longer than the left, *vide* Appendix, No. V, III. The letter N is dorsed on the coins Nos. 119 (Fig. 12), 139 *bis* (Fig. 8), 140, 141, 145, 147; it is misrepresented by H on Nos. 120, 130, 131, 154 (Fig. 16); it yields place to two parallel strokes on twenty-six coins; and in four instances it is represented by one stroke only: Nos. 118, 119 (Fig. 12), 132, 145. Compare Appendix, Nos. VIII and IX for various examples of the letter N.

## O.

The angular, lozenge-shaped letter  $\diamond$  does not appear on the *Ohsnaforda* coins in the British Museum. On them this letter is always round, and except on No. 128 (Fig. 4) it is always closed. It is dotted both centrally and externally on Nos. 130 (with 5), 136 (with 4); externally on Nos. 127 (with 1 only; Fig. 3); 126, 128 (Fig. 4), 132 (with 2); 144 (with 3); 119 (Fig. 12), 122, 133, 134, 138 (Fig. 7), 139 (Fig. 8), 140, 145, 147 (all with 4); 120, 123, 125, 126, 143 (with 7). This treatment with dots is a familiar feature in MSS. of the period, as well as on other coins.

## R.

The form of the letter R on the coins, when it is complete, is identical with that assumed by the R of the monuments and of *The Book of Kells*. It occurs frequently as a misrepresentation of H, as in the cases I have enumerated above. The forms of this letter on several coins are marked by extreme carelessness; on No. 142 (Fig. 1) the bow of the letter curves above the stem; on No. 125 the bow is not joined up to the stem and the tail is omitted; on No. 143 the bow is inverted over the stem; on Nos. 130, 131 we find a degraded form like a capital F, but with the limbs drooping; on No. 124 (Fig. 9) we get a form resembling L, but with the limb drooping; and on No. 139 (Fig. 8) we get the ultimate representative of all letters with a straight limb, namely, one stroke (in FOIIA). L is misrepresented on No. 123 by a form which is accidentally identical with the Anglo-Saxon and Visigothic rectangular  $\sqsubset$ ;

Appendix, No. V. This letter is dorsed on Nos. 136, 139 (Fig. 8), and it misrepresents an intrusive E in the name of the moneyer on Nos. 146, 147.

On No. 123 (ORSNA) the bow of the letter is neither joined to the tail nor the stem, and it looks very like a K. The K of *The Book of Kells*, if the bow were thicker and not joined up to the stem, would very fairly represent the R on No. 123. It is this coin, I believe, which misled Mr. Barclay V. Head, and caused him to inform J. R. Green, the historian, that the word had been misread and that it was clearly *Oksnaforda*. This, so Green averred, is to be taken as the earliest form of the town's name. But in the first place Mr. Keary is not in doubt about this letter, for in his introduction to the second volume of the catalogue, p. xxxviii, he speaks of the difficulties latent in the alteration of it into K, and appears to be inclined to think them serious. In the second place Mr. Head is an authority on Greek coins and he would necessarily be very familiar with the forms assumed by the Greek letter *Kappa*, and even, perhaps, prepared to find it where it has no right to be, for *Kappa* has no right to a place on an Anglo-Saxon coin of King Alfred's time, inasmuch as it is not an Anglo-Saxon letter. In King Alfred's time the Latin C was regularly used for the guttural tenuis. No other coin of the *Ohsnaforda* series has any such letter, and that on which this doubtful letter is said to occur is one of the poorer specimens and has no such claims to our consideration as Mr. Head supposed. The letter K is certainly found in MSS. of the ninth and tenth centuries in the initial place in some Anglo-Saxon words. For instance, it occurs in the word *kyning* on the first page of the Hatton MS., No. 20, Appendix, No. V, which contains a copy of King Alfred's own translation into English of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, which he intended for the Bishop of Worcester, and had had written not long after 887; *kyning*, again, is the only *k*-word that occurs in that portion of the Winchester (Saxon) Chronicle (Parker's MS.) that was compiled before A.D. 893; the same word, curiously enough, is the only *k*-word in the unique copy of the *Béowulf* lay in the tenth-century Cotton MS., *Vitellius A. XV.*, and it only occurs there three times.

This rare use of K would appear to be a sort of affectation, and Mr. Henry Sweet on p. xvii of the introduction to his edition of King Alfred's *Pastoral Care* speaks of it as an archaism. I shall presently return to the consideration of the ninth-century orthography of the name of the city of Oxford.

## S.

The letter S on the *Ohsnaforda* coins is very variable. On Nos. 137, 153 (Figs. 5 and 6), we find an S with an upright stem and short straight divergent horizontal limbs identical with the first example given from *The Book of Kells*. On Nos. 127, 128, 129 (Figs. 3, 4 and 2), we get the angular  $\Sigma$  of Anglo-Saxon script which is like a printed Z dorsed, and is frequently found in the MSS., e.g., in the Hatton MS., Appendix V, line 1, and in St. Cuthbert's Gospels in the Cotton MS., *Nero D. V.*, which was written in Northumbria in about A.D. 750; *Facsimiles of Biblical MSS.*, ed. Kenyon, 1900, plate xi. On No. 149 the angular form is dorsed. On eleven coins we get the true monumental capital: Nos. 118, 119 (Fig. 12), 120, 121 (Fig. 13), 125, 126, 142 (Fig. 1), 143, 146, 147, 154 (Fig. 16). It is dorsed on Nos. 124 (Fig. 9), 130, 131, 135; dorsed and recumbent on Nos. 139 (Fig. 8), 145; and recumbent on Nos. 122, 123, 132, 133, 134, 136, 138 (Fig. 7), 140, 141.

## U.

The letter U is believed to appear in the mint-name on No. 129 (Fig. 2). The second letter therein might be compared with the square-bottomed variety of U which is similar to that traced in *The Book of Kells*, Appendix I, and found on some coins and in some MSS. of the period, both Continental and Anglo-Saxon. But Messrs. Keary and Grueber have transliterated the letter by M inverted and I think there can be no doubt but that they are right. On this coin the gallows-shaped letter M in MO is rendered by N, and other variations on it point to the supposition that the cuneator was working from written instructions which he misread.

The supposed presence of the letter U on No. 129 (Fig. 2) has



caused the mint-name to be misread as *Ousnaforda*; but in the first place the diphthong *ou* has no true place in the Anglo-Saxon of the ninth century; and in the second the genitive plural in *-na* has no connexion with a river-name. The true ninth- and tenth-century form of the name of the midland Ouse is *Wusa* (*Wusan* in the oblique case), as in the annal 905 of the contemporary Parker MS. of the Chronicle. In the eleventh-century MSS. C and D, in annal 1010, we find *Usan*.

V.

The letter V properly occurs on the *Ohsnaforda* coins only in the name of the moneyer Bernvald, where it stands for W. It is a true V and represents the Rustic form of U rather than the uncial. On some of the *Ohsnaforda* coins it has the elongated and thickened apex which resembles the excrescence that is characteristic of the capitals A and V in some illuminated MSS. written in the Franco-Saxon style in the ninth century. We get **ⱱ** on Nos. 118, 119 (Fig. 12), 125, 126, 127 (Fig. 3), 135, 137 (Fig. 5), 143; V on Nos. 128 (Fig. 4), 129 (Fig. 2), 131, 132, 140, 141, 142 (Fig. 1), 144, 145, 146, 148 (Fig. 10), 154 (Fig. 16); and **Ⱶ** on Nos. 124 (Fig. 9), 130, 133, 134, 138 (Fig. 7), 142 (Fig. 1). It is inverted on Nos. 120, 121 (Fig. 13), 122, 123, 136, 139 (Fig. 8), and in these cases it has the external horizontal stroke like A of the fourth class.

On No. 142 (Fig. 1) we get **ⱵXSNA** and on No. 139 the V is inverted and appears as **ⱶ**. These accidents have been misjudged to support the erroneous reading of *Ousna* on No. 129 (Fig. 2). They are very noteworthy because no form of H could be mistaken naturally for all the letters N, M, R, and U. The carelessness of a penman who made the Rustic **ⱶ** so badly that one cuneator saw N and another saw M, is, of course, a possible cause of error, but the majuscule letter, whatever it really was, that could be misread M or N by two persons, and R by a third, could not possibly be supposed by a fourth to be V. The palæographical problem then that the *Ohsnaforda* coins present is—What form of letter was it that stood in the second place in the mint-name in the written instructions to

the cuneator and how came it that this letter was read or misread as H, M, N, R, and V?

On folio 15 of the Evangelium of St. Vaast's, a facsimile of which is given by Mons. Delisle in the monograph already referred to, *Planche I*, the enlarged minuscule letter N in the word *principio* is identical in shape with the letter that stands for *u* in the word *apparuit* on folio 15; *vide* facsimile of *Planche III*, Appendix II. But the letter standing for the letter *u* in *apparuit* is not a Roman letter at all; it is the rune-letter *Ur*, the second letter of the Teutonic Futhorc. The following letters standing for *t* and *n* in the same line are barbaric likewise, being the rune-letters *Tîr* (glory) and *Nýd* (need) respectively. This page of the Gospel Book of St. Vaast's is very curious, for it presents Latin, Greek, and runic letters mingled together. Much nonsense has been written about the Teutonic rune-letters, and some writers have sought to prove that they were derived by the pre-historic Teutons from the Phœnicians. We are also assured that the Christian clergy successfully resisted the use of runes, but, as we have seen, the scribe who wrote the Evangelium of St. Vaast's in the time of King Alfred, or a little earlier, introduced not fewer than four rune-letters on one page, one of which, the thorn-rune, he even employed for the D in *Dominus*. We find the runic *Wên* (p) on numerous English coins as late as the middle of the twelfth century, and the inscription on the baptismal font in the church at Bridekirk, although its language is English of the twelfth century, is nevertheless carved in runes. The mingling together in one word of heathen runes and Christian letters is not peculiar to the St. Vaast's MS. On a dish found at Chertsey the inscription is carved in mixed runes and decorated uncials, and this is ascribed to the ninth century; *vide* Stephens's *Runic Monuments*, No. 482. The same variety is found on Æthred's ring (*ib.*, No. 463) and in the Alnmouth inscription also (*ib.*, No. 461), both of which belong to the eighth century. All the rune-letters referred to may be found in the inscription on the celebrated runic monument erected in the tenth century at Jelling, near Veile in Jutland, by King Harold Blaatand, to the memory of his father and mother Gorm and Thyra. A facsimile of this inscription is

appended to the second volume of the *Historia Danica* of Saxo Grammaticus (*edd.* Müller & Velschow, Copenh., 1858). There is no letter H, h, in Anglo-Saxon writing of the ninth century which could be mistaken for *u*, but a glance at the facsimile of the Jelling inscription shows quite clearly that the runic *u*, found there and in the St. Vaast's MS., is an inversion of the Rustic V, the stem of which rises but very little above the knee of the letter. Compare, also, the second letter of *ousna*, No. 138 (Fig. 7). The rune-letter *u* is therefore very like the minuscule *h*. For these reasons I believe that the second letter in the mint-name in the hypothetical written instructions to the cuneators was so outlandish that one of them who did not understand the spelling OHSNA, and who was acquainted with runes, supposed that this was the rune-letter *u*, and accordingly transliterated it by the Roman V when preparing the obverse die; while another cut the rune itself, as on No. 138 (Fig. 7).

We must now return to the letter H. As I have said already this letter on the *Ohsnaforda* coins is different from that found in *The Book of Kells*. In the syllables OHSNA on No. 127, we find the ancient capital H which we moderns have retained, and which is quite distinct from the uncial, the half-uncial, and the cursive forms. These latter are practically the small Roman letter of the modern printing-press. Different from them and also from the pure Roman capital, though in a smaller degree, is the Rustic letter H, which is the H of the monuments written negligently and ornamented with a flourish or two. In the Psalter of St. Augustine already referred to under the letter A, the letters H, M, and N are all constructed with two upright stems: H has a straight horizontal bar; N has a sloping bar from the left downwards; and M has a curved stroke thicker on the left side than on the right and touching both the upright stems in the middle. The similarity of these three letters in the Rustic hand, to which the unbarred A resembling that of the coins also belongs, is so great that the least carelessness in marking the cross-bar of any of them would lead to confusion, even in the more exact style of the seventh-century Psalter. In some other early MSS. the Rustic capital H is different from that of the Psalter. For instance, it is similar to the capital K in the venerable

MS. of the poems of Prudentius, which probably belonged to Mavortius, consul in the year 527.<sup>1</sup>

In another MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, formerly *MS. du Roi*, Nro. 653, which was written in the ninth century and which contains Pelagius's Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul, the letter H is very like our small letter *n*, written large, only the knee of the letter has a little serif or tongue, and this addition makes the letter very remarkable; *vide* Planche 36, *Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique*, 1757, Tome iii, where, in example viii, last line, we get an illustration of this; see Appendix X. This serif is really the debased upper half of the right-hand stem of the letter, which, instead of being perpendicular, inclines outward to the right. We find this curious letter very frequently used as the abbreviation for the Latin word *autem*, which was erroneously spelt with the letter *h*, the difference being that the stem of the symbol is normal in height, whereas that of the Rustic H in the Pelagius MS. is very little taller than the knee of the letter. It is obvious that these peculiarities would make it very difficult for one who did not know the letter to determine what it really was. Such a one would not identify it as H, but might suppose it was N or R. R for H appears on the coins in twenty-two instances. The opposite mistake of H for R is found in a conspicuous position in the ninth-century Gospel Book of St. Vaast's already referred to. Therein, on folio 26, the opening of the Gospel proper for St. Agnes's Day is given as "*Simile est regnum caelorum ho*" instead of *simile . . . thesauro*. These errors, coupled with the positive evidence of the existence of such a letter in the ninth-century Pelagius MS., point to a form of majuscule H in which the cross-bar has been enhanced to the top of the letter, with the result that some readers misread it as a minuscule *n*, and others as a minuscule *r*. Handwriting had become tolerably uniform in the South of England before Alfred's death (*cf.* H. Sweet, *The Oldest English Texts*, E.E.T. Soc., No. 61, 1885, p. 421) so that deviations from the normal forms would run great risk of being misunderstood. The general characteristics of the handwriting of

<sup>1</sup> See Mons. L. Delisle's *Note sur le MS. de Prudence*, No. 8084 du fonds latin de la Bibliothèque Impériale.

Alfred's time are lightness, freedom, and elegance (*idem*, Alfred's version of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, E.E.T. Soc., No. 38, 1871, Introd. p. xvii). The chief peculiarities cluster round the letter *r*, which has four shapes. The first that of our capital R, but small; the second like the first, but with the stem lengthened below the line, like the R in the word *Corinthios* already referred to, Appendix X, and the K in the Hatton MS., *Nro.* 20; the third that of the ordinary A.-S. type; the fourth like that of the third but with a short stem. The last stroke of all these is always turned up at the end, and that distinguishes the fourth shape of this letter from the letter *n*. If we had only the variations of the syllables *Ohsna* in *r* and *n* to consider these accidents might be put forward as the solution of the problem; but the Anglo-Saxon *h*, whether minuscule or capital, could never be confused with the Anglo-Saxon *r*; though the capital H could be confounded with the capital N; compare the facsimiles in the Appendix. Moreover, cuneators who were accustomed to use the gallows-shaped M might be excused for supposing that the Rustic H with the cross-bar enhanced was intended for that letter; but they could not make such a mistake over the Anglo-Saxon H and *h*. I am aware that the most debased form of the uncial *h* approximates closely to that of our minuscule *n*; *vide* Dr. Anton Chroust's *Monumenta Palaeographica: Denkmäler der Schreibkunst des Mittelalters*, 1904, Lieferung XI, Tafel 2, lines 22, 34, which gives the facsimile of a page of a seventh-century MS. preserved at Vienna in which the small *h* is exactly like our small *n*; but I do not think that there is any need to multiply causes. Consequently as three of the variants of the H in *Ohsnaforda*, viz.: N, M, and R, indicate the existence of a letter unlike any letter in Anglo-Saxon script in Alfred's time, and as we also get *Ousna* (with the runic *u*), and that misreading, as I have shown, points directly to an original letter H with a shortened stem and a knee like the Roman minuscule *n*, I conclude that a letter H similar to the Rustic H of the ninth-century Pelagius MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale is postulated by the misreadings we have passed in review and may be held responsible for all of them.



3. *The Orthography of the mint-name Ohsnaforda.*—I come now to the orthographical peculiarity in the word *Ohsnaforda* which has puzzled so many numismatists, namely, the representation of the guttural tenuis and the sibilant, in contact, by *hs* instead of by *x*. This is not truly Anglo-Saxon and the Old Teutonic dialects fall into two groups accordingly as these sounds are represented in them by one letter or by a digraph. Anglo-Saxon, Old Norse and Old Frisian employed the letter *x*, while Gothic, Old High German and Continental Saxon wrote *hs*. The words for "ox" in the A.-S., O.N. and O.F. dialects are *oxa*, *uxi*, *oxa*, respectively, and in Gothic, O.H.G. and O.S. they are *auhsan*, *ohso*, and *ohs*, respectively. In this connection I must point out that Mr. Stainer's suggestion that the orthographical peculiarity we are considering is attributable to Danish influences is quite gratuitous. Not only did old Norse employ the letter *x*, but the genitive plural of the O.N. word *uxi*, "an ox," is *oxna*, which is, of course, identical in spelling and meaning with the A.S. word *oxna*. It is possible that the identity of form shown by the Latin X, the Greek X (chi) and the runic letter for G, which is X in some Futhorcs, may have occasioned the peculiar spellings, "Ocx," "Recx," in the eleventh century (*vide The Oxford Silver Pennies*, Cnut, Type XIV, 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21). But the occurrence of *hs* for *x* on the *Ohsnaforda* coins is not connected with Danish, *i.e.*, Old Norse, peculiarities in any way.

As I just now intimated, the representation of *x* by *hs* is not quite foreign to Anglo-Saxon. In the tenth century we find it in the Saxon Chronicle in the annal DCCCCXI. The Winchester Chronicle (Parker's MS.) which, practically speaking, is continuously contemporary with the events recorded after Ethelred's reign, gives us, at that year, *Ða geascade se cyng*, *i.e.*, "then the king ascertained"; but the three later MSS. all write *geahsode* (*vide* Benjamin Thorpe's edition of the Saxon Chronicle, "R.B.SS." No. 23, 1861, i, 184, 185). This annal, I would remark in passing, is that treated by Mr. Andrew in his paper on *Buried Treasure* in the Society's first volume, where he connects the Cuerdale hoard with our national history and with the folk-tales of the district in which that hoard lay concealed for so many centuries.



In the next annal to DCCCCXI. we get the earliest notice of Oxnaford that occurs in the Saxon Chronicle, that in the annal DCCCCX., in MS. D, being excepted, and there the references may have been misplaced by the annalist. In all the MS. copies of the Saxon Chronicle at present known, the name of the town is written with the letter *x*. *hs* in *geahsode* undoubtedly represents the sounds more frequently written down by *x*, and in this word and in *rixian*, "to rule," by *cs*. In annal DCCCCXVIII. we get *niehstum*, *neshtan* and *nehstan* in MSS. A, B, and C respectively, and in MS. D we get *nyxtan*. We find also *hs* in *niehstum* in the Winchester Chronicle in A.D. DCCCCXI., but these letters do not represent *x* in this word, neither do they in *nehst* in annals DCCCLXXVIII. and DCCCXCIV., inasmuch as the contact of the two letters results from the syncope of the short vowel in the hypothetical form *niehost*: consequently the *x* of MS. D really represents *hs* of the earlier MSS. instead of the converse being the case. In his *The Oldest English Texts* (E.E.T. Soc., No. 61, 1885) Mr. Henry Sweet indexes two or three instances of the disappearance of this *h* before *s* in these superlatives, which consequently appear as *hesta* and *nesta*, for "highest" and "nighest." *Hs* for *x* is found in other MSS., but very rarely. In King Alfred's translation of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, the Cotton MS. of which, namely, *Otho A. VII*, was written in about A.D. 950, the verb *ahsian* occurs three times spelt with the digraph, and no other word is so spelt in this MS., the letter *x* occurring regularly more than seventy times. The verb *weaxan* and its forms occur seventeen times in the MS., and they are always spelt with *x*. (*Vide* Mr. W. J. Sedgefield's edition published in 1899.) In the tenth-century Cotton MS., *Vitellius A. XV.*, which contains the *Béowulf* poem, we also find forms of the verb *acsian*, "to ask," spelt with *hs* (see lines 423, 433, 1,206). The letter *x* occurs more than thirty times in this MS., which was edited last in 1898 by Mr. A. J. Wyatt, and *hs* occurs in it only four times at most. For these reasons we may rightly assert that the representation of the guttural tenuis and the sibilant by *hs* very rarely occurs in Anglo-Saxon documents of the tenth century.

It is not clear when the digraph began to be used instead of *x*,

and there is no instance of it in the Chronicle itself earlier than King Alfred's time. (Cf. Mr. Plummer's Glossary, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, vol. i.) But in the Hatton MS., *Nro.* 20, in the Bodleian Library, which was written not very long after the year 887, as I have already remarked, and which contains King Alfred's version of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, the digraph makes its appearance in the words *weahsan* and *weahsað*. In the Lauderdale MS. of King Alfred's translation of Orosius, too, which is also in the Bodleian, and which was written in the same decade as the Hatton MS., we find *geahsian* spelt with the digraph.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear, therefore, that the deliberate use of *hs* in place of *x* dates from the latter part of King Alfred's reign. Now, in the first place, as I have said already, the use of *hs* for *x* is a characteristic of Old or Continental Saxon orthography; in the second place, in the preface to his translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, Alfred says: "I translated into English the book which is called in Latin *Pastoralis*, and in English *Shepherd's Book*, sometimes word by word, and sometimes according to the sense as I have learnt it from Plegmund, my archbishop, and Asser my bishop, and Grimbold my mass-priest, and John my mass-priest. And when I had learnt it as I could best understand it, and as I could most clearly interpret it, I translated it into English, and I intend to send a copy to every bishopric in my kingdom"; and in the third place it was this very bishop Asser who wrote the life of Alfred, and who tells us therein that this John, a priest and monk, was an Old-Saxon by birth, who had been invited over to this country from the Continent by the king, and had become one of Alfred's instructors in the liberal arts.

The connection is clearly made out, therefore, between (1) the Old-Saxon spelling of *ohs* for "ox"; (2) the presumably novel forms of *weahsan* in translations made by King Alfred with the assistance of an Old-Saxon, among others; and (3) the orthography of the mint-name on the *Ohsnaforda* coins. Consequently, I think that there need be no doubt that the spelling of that name on the British

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the kindness of Professor Napier and Mr. Falconer Madan of the Bodleian Library for the knowledge of these three instances.

Museum coin *Alfred*, No. 127, is not the result of a casual blunder, but is intentional and systematic, and is due to foreign influences brought to bear on Alfred by John the Old-Saxon.<sup>1</sup>

4. *The Grammar and Meaning of the Inscription.*—The inscription on No. 127 (Fig. 3), the real type of the *Ohsnaforda* coins, is therefore correctly struck as—OHSNAFORDA : ÆLFRED : BERNVALD : MO. The name of the mint is compounded of *ohsna*, an Anglo-Saxon genitive plural of the weak declension of nouns substantive, meaning “of oxen”; and *forda*, which is the dative singular of the Anglo-Saxon word *ford*, and means “at the ford.” Some writers appear to regard “Ohsnaforda” as if it were the latinized form of the name of Oxford; but that is wrong,

<sup>1</sup> I believe that there is another trace of Old-Saxon influence in the greater particularity with which Asser, Bishop of St. David's in Pembrokeshire, records the total eclipse of the sun on October 29th, 878. The middle of this eclipse coincided with 1.30 p.m. on the meridian of Paris, and this was in the eighth ecclesiastical *hora*. The Saxon Chronicle and Asser's *Life of King Alfred* assign the eclipse to the year DCCCLXXIX. In both authorities the year commences on September 1st, four months earlier than our year. The Chronicle merely says that the sun was darkened for one hour; Asser, however, implies that the eclipse coincided with the tenth hour, but was nearer Nones than Vespers. Such a report could not possibly be correct for any part of South Britain, or for Gaul, West of Paris. If we would localise the source of Asser's information we must look to the East of Paris. This source in all probability was the monastery of New Corbey in Old-Saxony, or Westphalia, from which abbey it has been suggested that Alfred's mass-priest John, the Old-Saxon, originally came. Local time at New Corbey is twenty-six minutes later than Paris time, and as the ecclesiastical *hora* on the day in question is forty-nine minutes long, the hour during which the sun was in eclipse was current from 1.31 p.m. to 2.20 p.m. Vespers, or the tenth hour, coincided at New Corbey on this day with 3 p.m.; consequently, the statement made by Asser, though untrue for any part of Britain, is exactly applicable to New Corbey. There the eclipse was seen “inter nonam et vesperam,” *i.e.*, between 1.22 p.m., the beginning of the ninth hour, and 3 p.m., the end of the tenth, when the office of Vespers was performed; “sed propius ad nonam,” but nearer to Nones, because it continued, as I remarked just now, from 1.31 to 2.20. One of the first abbots of New Corbey was Wala, a brother of Adalhard, its founder, who was abbot of Corbie. Wala died in A.D. 836, and we are told that his mother was an Old-Saxon. For these reasons I think there need be no doubt but that Asser derived his particular information about the eclipse from John, and unwittingly applied it to England.

though it certainly is curious in view of the connexion with oxen that the word *forda* is Latin for "a cow in calf." The word *Ohsnaforda* on the coin undoubtedly locates the minting-place and means "at Oxford." The word *forda* occurs uncompounded in annal DCCCXCIIII. in the Parker MS. of the Saxon Chronicle (p. 85, ed. Plummer, line 3, up); and in the annal DCCCCXII. in MSS. A, B, and C, we are told that King Edward took possession of London and Oxford and all the land that was in the jurisdiction of those cities on the death of his brother-in-law Ethelred, the ealdorman of the Mercians. The phrase used is *feng to Oxnaforda*, and *on* and *to* both governed the dative. *On Oxnaforda*, as in the Laud MS. of the Chronicle in annals MXIII., MXXXVI., and MXXXVIII., means "at Oxford," and there ought to be no doubt, therefore, about the meaning of this word on the coin.

The word *Ælfred* requires no elucidation; it is the name of the great king who ruled in Southern England from the spring-time in A.D. 871 to October 25 in the year 900, counting the years as we count them, or DCCCCI., as the chroniclers counted who began the year on September 1, four months earlier than we do.

Bernvald is the name of the moneyer and it appears in the Kentish dialect form. On one coin of the *Ohsnaforda* series, namely, No. 149, we get Biernvald, with *ie* instead of *e*, and this is the contemporary West-Saxon form of the name, which may also be latent in the confusion of the inscription on the blundered penny, No. 152.

The meaning of the letters MO after the moneyer's name is in dispute. They may represent either *moneta*, or *monetarius*, or *monetario*. These letters occur in other inscriptions and notably on coins of King Athelstan, Alfred's grandson; e.g., Nos. 77 and 78 of the British Museum Catalogue. On both these coins there is a mark of contraction over the space between M and O, showing that the O is not that of the first syllable of either of the nominatives *moneta* or *monetarius*, but the last syllable of the ablative *monetario*. The legends on these two coins of Athelstan, when the abbreviations are expanded, are:—No. 77: *ÆDELSTAN REX TOTIUS BRITANNIAE, INGELRICO Monetario OXonii VRBI*; No. 78: *ÆDELSTAN REX WYNELMO*

Monetario OXoniensis VRBIS. These inscriptions are obviously not identical in meaning, inasmuch as we are given to understand that No. 77 was struck at Oxford by Ingelric the moneyer, and that No. 78 was struck by Wynelm the moneyer of Oxford. In the case of the *Ohsnaforda* coins it may be that we ought to understand and supply some such form of words as that actually inscribed on some of the coins of Alfred and his contemporaries, namely, ME FEC for "*me fecit.*" Such a formula as the one required occurs on the famous enamelled jewel found many years ago near Athelney, and now preserved in the Bodleian, namely, AELFRED MEC HEHT GEƿYRCAN—"Alfred ordered me to be made." If then, we supply this form of words the inscription on the gilded *Ohsnaforda* coin No. 127 would mean: Alfred (ordered me to be made) at Oxford by Bernwald the moneyer.

The Latin word *monetari-us* is represented by the Anglo-Saxon *myneter*, the parent of our word "minter." It seems to have been used ambiguously in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, for William of Malmesbury, in his history *De Regum Gestis Anglorum* (V. 399, p. 476, ed. Wm. Stubbs, D.D., "R.B.SS.," No. 90, 1887-8), speaks of the severities practised by order of King Henry I. "*Contra trapezitas* (MS.—*etas*) *quos vulgo monetarios vocant,*" i.e., against the trapezites whom they commonly call moneyers. The word trapezita is the Greek *τραπέζιτης*, which is derived from *τράπεζα*, "a money-changer's table." "Trapezita" in William of Malmesbury, then, means a money-changer, and corresponds with the Latin *mensarius* or *argentarius*, who was one that used to set up his table and exchange current coin for valuables. It is clear that the money-changer was not the actual striker of the coins, but probably an official appointed by the moneyer, and it is to this popular and early confusion between the moneyer and the money-changer that one of Mr. Stainer's difficulties with the records is attributable. The annalists of Waverley and Winchester, and the monk of Peterborough who continued the Saxon Chronicle to 1154, as well as William of Malmesbury, relate certain things about the misdemeanours and the punishment of the moneyers which Mr. Stainer is unable to reconcile with the accepted deductions



respecting the legal status and responsibility of the King's mint-masters. The Peterborough Chronicler tells us that in the year 1125 "the penny was so bad that a man who had a pound could not lay out twelve pence thereof at market for anything"; that is to say, the booth and stall-keepers in the market-place could only accept a few of the pennies in payment for their wares, although the would-be purchaser might have a pound's-worth of them. The passage is badly rendered by Thorpe, vol. ii, p. 221, but I believe I have given the meaning of it, and in view of the ambiguity glanced at by Malmesbury there need be no difficulty in accepting both what Mr. Stainer brings additional evidence to support, namely, the high social and legal status of those *monetarii* who were the king's officers, and whose names appeared on the coins, and also what the chroniclers tell us about the degrading mutilation of the other *monetarii* who were money-changers and who were made responsible for the forgeries complained of, and, rightly or wrongly, punished for them.

5. *The Probable Date of the Issue of the Ohsnaforda Pennies.*—In 886 King Alfred was able to restore London, and in the words of the *Saxon Chronicle* at that year, "all the Angle race that were not in thralldom under the Danes submitted to him, and then he entrusted London to the government of the ealdorman Ethelred." The English of Northumbria, East Anglia, and the northern and eastern counties of Mercia were all in subjection to the Danes at that time, and the only Angles who could put themselves under the protection of a West-Saxon king were those Mercians who were in constant danger of attack from the Danes of the five towns of Leicester, Lincoln, Stamford, Nottingham and Derby. These free Mercians were those dwelling in the shires bordering on the Severn and the Thames. Of the shires near the latter river Oxfordshire seems to have been less molested than the others, and when the Danes conquered the north part of Mercia in 874 the bishop's see was removed from Leicester and set up at Dorchester in that county. We may read in annal 912 what is really a complementary statement of that made in annal 886, viz. :— "In this year Ethelred, the ealdorman of the Mercians, died, and King



Edward took possession of London and Oxford and all the territory that belonged thereto." In the earlier annal Oxford is not mentioned, perhaps because it had not then become for a time the leading town of Mercia outside the districts dominated by what were known later as the Five Burghs. The remarks of J. R. Green on this point in *The Conquest of England* (1883), are noteworthy. He is about to speak of the *Ohsnaforda* coins, and he says (p. 144), "How thoroughly Ælfred asserted royal rights in mid-Britain may be seen indeed from his Mercian coinage. Coinage in the old world was the unquestioned test of kingship and a mint which Ælfred set up at Oxford within the borders of the Mercian Ealdormanry proves even more than the submissive words of Witan or Ealdorman the reality of his rule." This picture is rather too high in tone, but there need be no doubt about the importance of the events woven into it, and Alfred's Mercian coinage, as Green calls it, should not, it is obvious, be assigned to a year very distant from that in which the submission of the unconquered remnant of the Mercians to him took place. Hence I think that, until a more tenable hypothesis has been invented, we may assign the issue of the *Ohsnaforda* coins to A.D. 886 and date the first appearance of the name of Oxford in that year.

#### APPENDIX.

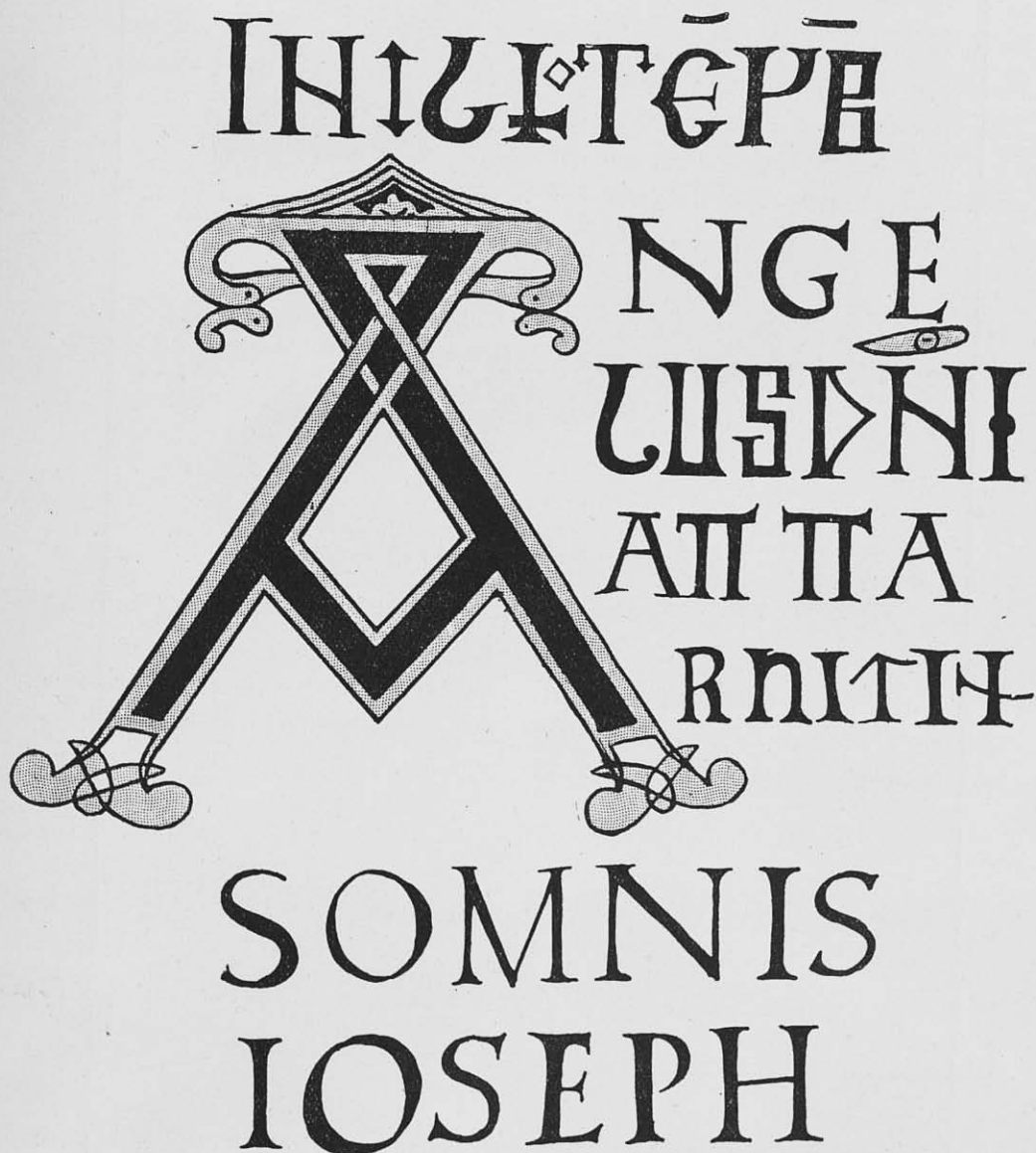
The need of facsimiles for purposes of comparison has been met, to some extent, by the photographic reproduction of nine drawings from selected collotypes and photogravures of portions of manuscripts dating from the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. I hope that these drawings will be found sufficient for the purpose. They are accompanied by exact references to the sources from which they have been extracted. The Anglo-Saxon numismatist will, no doubt, find them useful; and the palæographer will perhaps forgive those shortcomings which, as he will recognise, are inseparable from the methods of copying and reproduction adopted.



The above drawings of the forms of letters common to the *Book of Kells* and the *Ohsnaforda* and other Anglo-Saxon coins are copied

from an engraving in *Alphabets, Old and New*, by Lewis F. Day (1898). The manuscript is preserved in the library of Trinity College,

II.



*In illo tempore Angelus Domini apparuit in somnis Ioseph.*

From *Planche III.* of Mons. L. V. Delisle's monograph on *L'Evangélaire de Saint-Vaast d'Arras et la Calligraphie Franco-Saxonne du IX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*; Paris, 1888.

Dublin. Its style of writing is round half-uncial. Facsimiles of it are given in Eugene O'Curry's *Lectures on the MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History* (1861); and in *Facsimiles of the National MSS. of Ireland* (1874-1884). Two photographic reproductions of ornamentation and initials of great beauty appear in Mr. Falconer Madan's *Collection*, No. 3 (1c); and one, Plate VI, in *Writing and Illuminating, and Lettering*, by Edward Johnston, 1906.

The incorporation of the runes for *u*, *t* and *n* into the lines reproduced above is explained under the letter V.

## III.

hē spēalt hērodes fram him sylfum ofsticod 7 arche

AN·II    AN·V    AN·U·U

Her spealt herodes fram him sylfum ofsticod *ond* arche ... .. *An. iii.*  
*An. v. An. v. u.*

From Plate II in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Benjamin Thorpe, in "R.B.SS.," No. 23, 1861.

These lines occur in the Cotton MS., *Tiberius A. VI.* which was written about A.D. 1000. The large A's in the second line are of the Rustic variety.

h

## IV.

cýningas on north pealum hopel 7 cledauc  
7 ieoþ þeall north þeall cýn hine sohton  
him to hlaforde.

Cýningas on north pealum hopel *ond* cledauc *ond* ieoþpel *ond* eall north  
peall cýn hine sohton him to hlaforde.

From Plate I in Thorpe's edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

The original of these lines appears in the Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS. *Nro.* 173, which was written before A.D. 950 in so far as the annal in which the passage selected occurs is concerned. The fine H reproduced above heads the annal, which is 923. The Howel referred to is Howel the Good, one of whose coins is in the possession of Mr. Carlyon-Britton : *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ii, p. 31.

V.

† ÐEOS BOC SLEAL TOPIOGORA  
ÆLFred kyning hateð gretan pærferð biscep

LEASTRE  
his pordum luf

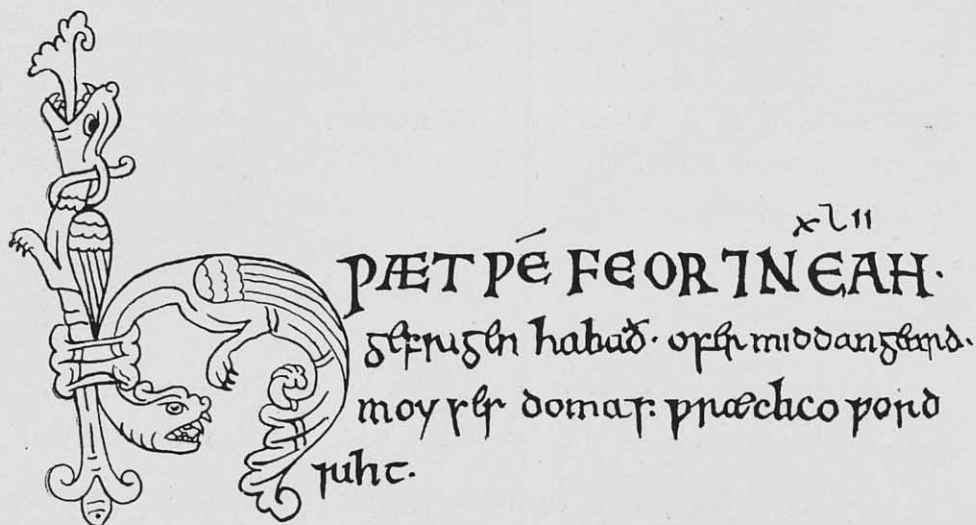
† ÐEOS BOC SLEAL TOPIOGORA LEASTRE

ÆLFred kyning hateð gretan pærferð biscep his pordum luf (lice) ... ..

From Plate I, in *Twelve Facsimiles of Old English Manuscripts*, by the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, Litt.D., 1892.

These lines are from King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, in the Bodleian MS., *Hatton Nro.* 20, which was written in the South of England in about A.D. 890.

VI.

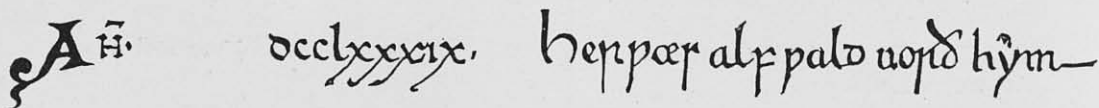


Hpæt pé feor *ond* neah · gefrigen habað. ofer middangeard. moyses dōmas. præclico pord riht.

From Plate II. of Prof. Skeat's *Twelve Facsimiles*.

These lines occur in the Paraphrase of Exodus in the Bodleian MS. *Junius 11*, which was written in the latter part of the tenth century. They were selected on account of the large initial H.

VII.



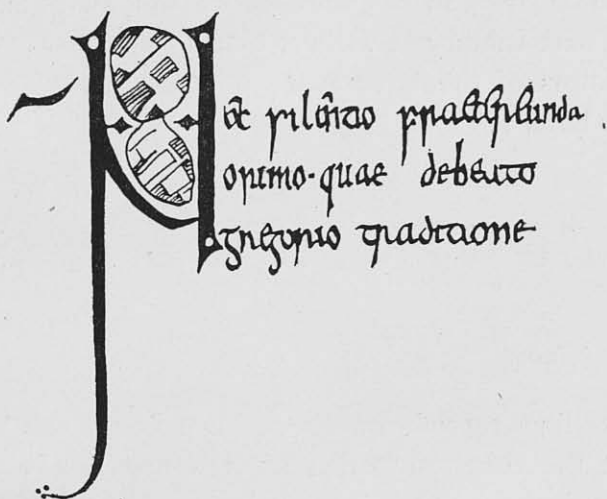
Annus dcclxxxix. Her wæs alfald norð hȳm—

From Plate IV, in Thorpe's edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

This line occurs in the Cotton MS., *Tiberius B. IV.* which was written in about A.D. 1100. The cross-bar of the letter N in "Annus" is even more horizontal in Thorpe's facsimile than it appears to be when judged by the reproduction.



VIII.



*Nec silentio prætereunda opinio quae de beato Gregorio traditione ... ..*

From the Plate at p. 90 of *The British Museum Guide to the Manuscripts*, etc.

These lines are reproduced from the Cotton MS., *Tiberius A. XIV*, which is a copy of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, and which was written about A.D. 800. The passage was chosen for reproduction here in order to show the large initial N.

IX.

IN nobis completæ  
sunt rerum, sicut  
fuit in diebus hero  
dis regis iudeæ sc

*In nobis completæ sunt rerum, sicut ... .. Fuit in diebus Herodis regis, iudeæ sa(cerdos).*

From *Monumenta Palaeographica: Denkmäler der Schreibkunst des Mittelalters* ed. Dr. Anton Chroust, VIII. Lieferung, Tafel 2.

This facsimile is taken from the Gospel Book of Cutbercht, who wrote it, it is believed, in England, before the year 750. The MS. is now in the Court Library at Vienna, *Codex Latinus*, Nro. 1224, fo. 111. The three forms of the letter *n* are noteworthy; as also are the two forms of the letter *r*.

## X.

a. AD CORINTHIOS (*Ad Corinthios*)

b. *hwc* (*Hunc*)

The two lines reproduced above have been dealt with under the letter H at the close of section 2. The first line is drawn from the facsimile of a line or two of the Pelagius MS. written in the ninth century. The second is from the sixth-century MS. of the poems of Prudentius.

## XI.

A table of the forms assumed in different periods by the letters H, M, N, and R.

				Century :				
Monumental Letters...	...	...	...	IV.	H	M	N	R
Rustic	...	...	...	VII.	H	H	N	R
Uncial	...	...	...	VI.	h	m	N	R
Half-uncial	...	...	...	VIII.	h	m	n	Rr
Anglo-Saxon Minuscules	...	...	...	X.	h	m	n	p
Anglo-Saxon abbreviation, = <i>autem</i> ...				IX.	h			
Frankish Rustic Letters	...	...	...	IX.	π	M	N	R

[We are indebted to the author's son and daughter, Mr. A. and Miss E. Anscombe, for the carefully executed drawings which illustrate this Appendix.—EDITORS.]