

SOME FURTHER REMARKS ON THE TRANSITIONAL CRUX ISSUE OF ÆTHELRÆD II

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IN a recent paper in the *British Numismatic Journal*,¹ Mr. F. Elmore Jones and I have distinguished a late variant of the so-called Crux issue of Æthelræd II which we believe to be not without significance for the student called upon to establish the correct sequence of the six substantive coinages initiated in the course of that long and far from happy reign. Of this 'Transitional'



FIG. 1

variant we have further distinguished three principal varieties, one with diadem but no sceptre, one with neither diadem nor sceptre, and one with sceptre but no diadem. The bust, however, is essentially the same, and anticipates that found on coins of the Long Cross issue, while the characteristic of the reverse is the use of the copulative MΩO instead of M-O, though in practice mules with true Crux reverses are almost as common. In this note, the annates of a further visit to Scandinavia, I wish to distinguish a fourth variety of the Transitional Crux obverse, and also to put on record a further four mints with which these important late variants of the main Crux issue are to be associated.

A convenient point of departure is afforded by a coin of the Bath mint in the Stora Sodjeby hoard from Gotland (Fig. 1). This was listed by Schnittger² as belonging to Hildebrand's C.b variety, i.e. as an Intermediate Small Cross/Crux mule. The enlarged direct photograph, however, establishes beyond all cavil that it is a particularly fine example of a Transitional Crux penny of the least uncommon of the three varieties distinguished in the paper already

¹ *B.N.J.* xxviii, i (1955), pp. 75-87.

² *Fornvannen*, 1915, p. 47 (no. 1650).

mentioned. There is no sceptre and no diadem, the hair is 'curly' and two double lines of drapery run from the throat downwards to the inner circle. On the reverse the copulative takes the form ΜΩΟ, and the coin thus ranks as a true coin and not as a mule. A die-duplicate is in the City Museum at Bath,¹ a reminder of the rarities tucked away in provincial collections which



FIG. 2

it is hoped will be flushed by the British Academy's new *Sylloge*. The moneyer is Æthelric who struck quite a number of coins at Bath during the last decade of the tenth century and the first two decades of the eleventh, and this is perhaps a suitable place to remark that Hildebrand was nodding when he described his Æthelræd 43 as belonging to the C.a variety. This admittedly largely illegible coin is not in fact struck on an appreciably narrower flan, and the weight is far from being on the light side,² while what can be seen of the style of the obverse die is typical of the Crux type proper.

To revert to the coin from the Stora Sodjeby hoard which is now in the Museum at Visby, I would like to draw attention to the very important pellet on the forehead and also to the circumstance that the obverse legend ends not ANGLON, as on true Crux coins, nor yet ANGLON*, as in the case of the Intermediate Small Cross issue, but ANGLONX. It is my contention that both these features merit inclusion in the canon of criteria proper to the Transitional Crux variant.

The second of the coins with which this note is concerned is in the Royal Coin Cabinet at Stockholm, and in the 1881 edition of *Anglosachsiska Mynt* is listed as no. 3908 of Æthelræd II (Fig. 2). Hildebrand considered it a normal coin of his Type C, i.e. a normal coin of the Crux issue, but the enlarged direct photograph suggests that he was mistaken. Both the portrait and the treatment of the drapery leave no room for doubt but that we are dealing

¹ I am again under an obligation to Mr. C. E. Blunt who has been generous enough to supply me with copies of his unrivalled sets of photographs of Ancient British, Anglo-Saxon, and Norman coins in various provincial collections.

² The weight is in fact 1.66 grammes, i.e. 0.26 of a gramme more than the heaviest of a number of true C.a coins which were weighed by Hildebrand (cf. *Anglosachsiska Mynt* (1881 ed.), p. 30).

with a coin of the Transitional Crux issue—at least as far as the obverse is concerned—and it is a variety with sceptre but without diadem which until now has been recorded only at Oxford where a single obverse die was used by Ælfwine to strike a true coin and by Godinc with a normal Crux reverse. In this case the reverse lacks the ΜΩΟ form of copulative and so the new coin



FIG. 3

ranks as a mule. The moneyer is Alfwold and the mint Wallingford, and it is perhaps not without significance that this particular variety should be found at two adjacent mints.

So far we have been considering coins which fit within the classification proposed in the 1955 paper to which allusion has already been made, but the three coins that follow constitute an entirely novel variety of the Transitional Crux issue. All have the drapery characteristic of the group as a whole, and the portrait is essentially the same except that the hair is straight instead of 'curly'. All, moreover, have the quite characteristic epigraphical quirk of ΛΓΘΓΧΛ instead of ΛΓΘΛΧ. What sets them apart from the coins already recorded is the occurrence on one and the same coin of the sceptre (cf. the coins of Oxford and Wallingford cited above) *and* the diadem (cf. a unique die at Chichester known from coins in the British Museum and the H. H. King collection). These features are seen quite distinctly on the only very slightly double-struck penny of the Aylesbury moneyer Leofstan, no. 2 of Æthelræd II in *Anglosachsiska Mynt* where it is considered a normal coin of Type C, which is preserved in the Royal Swedish Coin Cabinet (Fig. 3). The second coin where I have noted this phenomenon is a unique penny of the Buckingham moneyer Sibwine in the Royal Danish Coin Cabinet at Copenhagen (Fig. 4). It is, however, considerably more double-struck, though as it happens the line of the diadem is even more pronounced. Again I would suggest that the circumstance that this variant obverse is found at two adjacent mints is one that merits the most serious consideration. It now begins to appear reasonably certain that the Transitional Crux dies were engraved at Winchester, and the fact that certain minor variants would seem to

be regional—and peripheral—might suggest that the dies required for a given area were both engraved and dispatched at the same time.¹



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

It will have been noticed that both the above coins are 'mules', the reverses being from what appear to be quite normal Crux reverses with the M⁻O copulative instead of the MΩO form proper to the Transitional Crux variety. The same is true of a third coin with this obverse (Fig. 5) which has occurred

¹ There is a pretty phonological argument that the Traditional Crux (and Intermediate Small Cross?—though the epigraphy is very different) dies were engraved by the same hand on the same occasion—namely the remarkable consistency with which the prototheme *Beorht-* appears as *Byrh(t)-* even in the case of compounds where metathesis is normal (e.g. Brihtmaer, Brihtnoth, &c.). In this connexion it is perhaps worth remarking that, whereas in Crux these metathetic forms together with such spellings as *Beorh(t)-* and *Berh(t)-* are relatively common, in Long Cross the writing *Byrh(t)-* is universal—another indication, if one were needed, that the Transitional Crux variety is late and not early.

in a small parcel of coins recently purchased by the Royal Swedish Coin Cabinet. Still, therefore, there has to be discovered the true coin of this new Transitional Crux variant, and it is possible that it does not exist. The third mule is of the Totnes mint, the moneyer being Ælfstan, and again it should be remarked that the mint is peripheral to the presumptive die-engraving centre at Winchester. In this case the reverse die is perhaps of slightly unusual work, but it is already recorded in conjunction with a normal Crux obverse, Hild. 383 being from the same reverse die.

To the 1955 paper there was appended a table setting out the position that then obtained with respect to both the Intermediate Small Cross and the Transitional Crux varieties. Regarding the latter, two of the columns inadvertently were transposed—though fortunately the error should have been self-evident to the attentive reader—and it may perhaps be thought useful here to set out the present (spring 1960) position respecting the Transitional Crux variety and the diverse mules thereof:

TABLE I

	<i>Var. A (no sceptre or diadem)</i>	<i>Var. B (with diadem but no sceptre)</i>	<i>Var. C (with sceptre but no diadem)</i>	<i>Var. D (with sceptre and diadem)</i>	<i>Var. A/Crux mules</i>	<i>Var. B/Crux mules</i>	<i>Var. C/Crux mules</i>	<i>Var. D/Crux mules</i>	<i>Mule with Intermediate Small Cross obv.</i>
AYLESBURY									
Leofstan	..	..	..	r	..	..	..	S	..
BATH				u					
Æthelric	B, V	..	..	e	..	..	..	..	..
BUCKINGHAM									
Sibwine	..	..	..	c	..	..	..	K	..
CHICHESTER				o					
Eadnoth	..	BM, HHK	..	i	..	..	..	..	..
DORCHESTER				n					
Wulfnoth	L	..	..		..	..	..	..	..
EXETER				s					
E(a)dric	..	..	..	t	K	..	..	..	..
HEREFORD				i					
Byrh(t)stan	..	..	..	l	..	..	..	..	S
OXFORD				l					
Ælfwine	..	..	S		..	..	..	..	..
Godinc	..	..	..	t	..	..	BM	..	..
TOTNES				o					
Ælfstan	..	..	..		..	..	..	S	..
WALLINGFORD				b					
A(E)lfwold	..	..	..	e	..	..	S	..	..
WAREHAM									
Ælfsige	S	..	..	r	..	..	..	..	..
WINCHESTER				e					
Æthelgar	..	..	..	c	..	..	..	..	K
Byrh(t) -mær	S, FEJ	..	..	o	..	..	..	..	..
-noth	S, BM	..	..	r	..	..	..	..	..
-sige	S, TCG	..	..	d	..	..	..	..	..
-wold	..	..	..	e	..	..	..	..	S
Godeman	..	..	..	d	..	..	..	..	S
Godwine	S	..	..		..	..	..	..	..

B = City Museum, Bath; BM = British Museum; FEJ = F. Elmore Jones; HHK = H. H. King; K = Royal Coin Cabinet, Copenhagen; L = University Historical Museum, Lund; S = Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm; TCG = T. C. Gardner; V = Gotlands Fornsal, Visby.

Since also at least three of the obverse dies employ a diademed bust, a detail *prima facie* suggestive of continuity with the Second Hand type, it may be as well to recall that the balance of the evidence is that the Transitional Crux variety belongs late, and not early, in the currency of the Crux type proper. For one thing the portrait so very clearly anticipates that of the succeeding Long Cross type, while the very distinctive—and indeed unprecedented—form of copulative (MNO) itself points to a period adjacent to that issue. Only less effective is an appeal to prosopography, and the following table, based on the coins recorded in the 1881 edition of *Anglosachsiska Mynt*, sets out the different substantive types of the period *c.* 980–*c.* 1015 in which the moneyers so far recorded for the Transitional Crux variety are known to have been striking:

TABLE II

	<i>First Hand</i>	<i>Second Hand</i>	<i>Crux</i>	<i>Trans. Crux and Mules</i>	<i>Long Cross</i>	<i>Helmet</i>	<i>Last Small Cross</i>
AYLESBURY							
Leofstan	..	..	..	+	..	..	..
BATH							
Æthelric	..	..	+	+	+	+	+
BUCKINGHAM							
Sibwine	..	..	..	+	..	..	..
CHICHESTER							
Eadnoth	..	+	..	+	+	..	..
DORCHESTER							
Wulfnoth	..	..	+	+	+	+	+
EXETER							
E(a)dric	..	..	+	+	+	..	..
HEREFORD							
Byrh(t)stan	..	..	+*	+	+	..	..
OXFORD							
Ælfwine	..	..	+	+	+	+	..
Godinc	..	+	+	+	+	..	..
TOTNES							
Ælfstan	..	..	+	+	+	..	..
WALLINGFORD							
A(E)lfwold	..	..	+	+	+	+	..
WAREHAM							
Ælfsige	..	..	..	+	+	..	..
WINCHESTER							
Æthelgar	..	..	+	+	+	+	..
Byrh(t) -mær	..	..	+	+	+	..	..
-noth	+	+	+	+	+	..	+
-sige	+	+	+	+	+	+	..
-wold	..	..	..	+	+	..	..
Godeman	..	..	+	+	+	+	+
Godwine	..	..	+	+	+	..	..

* H. H. King collection.

In other words, of the 19 moneyers concerned, 2 are found in the First Hand type, 4 in Second Hand, 14 in Crux, 17 in Long Cross, 7 in Helmet, and 4 in Last Small Cross. On this evidence alone one would be justified in suggesting that the variety in question comes at the very end of the Crux issue (summer of 997?).

It only remains for me once again to express my gratitude to my Scandinavian colleagues, Forste antikvarie N. L. Rasmusson and Inspektør Fritze Lindahl, for the admirable photographic enlargements from which have been made the blocks illustrating this paper.