

TWO DIE-LINKS RELATIVE TO THE ANGLO-SAXON MINT AT NORTHAMPTON

By MISS V. J. BUTLER AND R. H. M. DOLLEY

OF recent years the theory has been advanced, and very largely accepted, that there were Anglo-Saxon mints both at Northampton and at Southampton, the former coming into existence about the middle of the tenth century and continuing right into the Norman period, and the latter being set up early in the tenth century and closing early in the reign of Cnut.¹ Both mints, of course, normally employ the same mint-signature, HAM(TVNE), and the division of the coins between them is not always an easy matter. On the whole, though, the principles propounded in the note of six years ago have stood the test of time, and in this paper there are published two die-links which may be thought to supply not unwelcome corroboration of their essential validity. These new links are perhaps all the more satisfying inasmuch as the die-links already published relate only to Southampton.

The first of these die-links (Fig. 1) was brought to our notice by Mr. F. Elmore Jones, and we are most grateful to him for permission to publish it here. The 'Hamtune' end of it is a coin of the moneyer Æthelnoth who had been given to Northampton for reasons of prosopography and style. The coin illustrated here which is in his own cabinet is a die-duplicate of Hild. 1238, and belongs to the Long Cross issue of Æthelræd II which we believe to have been current from Michaelmas 997 until Michaelmas 1003. The obverse die is also used at London by the moneyer Æthelwerd, and again the coin illustrated is one in his own cabinet; it is also a die-duplicate of Hild. 2171. Æthelnoth struck at Northampton in the Long Cross type only, whereas Æthelwerd at London struck over the whole period *c.* 991–*c.* 1016. It would seem, therefore, that the obverse die in question most probably was issued in the first place to Æthelnoth, was returned to London when that moneyer gave up striking, and was taken over by Æthelwerd (a relative?) whose output of coin in this particular type may fairly be described as prodigious. One should perhaps add that the possibility of a London/Southampton die-link in this type seems remote inasmuch as there is some reason to think that Winchester was producing all the dies needed for mints in that area.

The second of the die-links (Fig. 2) was discovered by Miss Butler when working on the Systematic Collection at Stockholm. The 'Hamtune' end of it is a coin (Hild. 1289) also of the Long Cross issue of Æthelræd II by the moneyer Wulfric who likewise had been attributed to Northampton on grounds of style and prosopography. The obverse die is one that is also used

¹ The principal expositions of the new theory are R. H. M. Dolley, 'The Mints of Northampton, Southampton and Harwich', *Num. Circ.* 1955, p. 159; R. H. M. Dolley and G. van der Meer, 'A Group of Anglo-Saxon Pence at Sudeley Castle', *Num. Chron.* 1958, pp. 123–34; R. H. M. Dolley, 'Niezmany dotychczas pens mennicy w Southampton znaleziony w skarbie polskim', *Prace i Materiały Muzeum Archeologicznego i Etnograficznego w Łodzi, Seria Archeologiczna*. Nr 5, Łódź, 1960, pp. 79–88 (with English version); R. H. M. Dolley, 'The Relevance of Obverse Die-Links to some Problems of the Later Anglo-Saxon Coinage', *Commentationes de nummis saeculorum IX–XI in Suecia repertis*, Stockholm, 1961, pp. 155–72.



FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.

(Hild. 1218) by a moneyer Sidwine who employs the mint-signature GRE. Bror Emil Hildebrand identified the mint as Greenwich, but as long ago as 1909 this attribution was corrected by P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton who observed that in the immediately preceding Crux issue Sidwine had struck at Cambridge.¹ Here again the sequence of events is reasonably clear inasmuch as at Northampton Wulfric is known from coins of the Long Cross, Helmet, and Last Small Cross issues. The die would have been issued in the first place to Sidwine at Cambridge, and almost at once have been returned—presumably when Sidwine gave up striking—and been reissued to Wulfric who strikes the Long Cross coins at Northampton on a very considerable scale. It is perhaps worth noting, incidentally, that Hildebrand records the obverse legend of the Cambridge coin as ‘e, ir.100’ and that of the Northampton coin as ‘a, ir.100’. The difference lies in the use at one point of E as opposed to Æ, and a glance at the enlarged photograph of the doublestruck coin of Northampton shows how easily the discrepancy could arise.

The discovery of this die-link in particular must be considered to clinch the attribution of certain HAM coins to Northampton in the same way as the Seolca die-link with Winchester associated other coins of HAM with Southampton. Equally, of course, the new discovery may be thought to vindicate the reattribution of the ‘Greenwich’ coin to Cambridge. It only remains for us to express our thanks to Mr. Elmore Jones for allowing us to have plaster casts of the two coins in his collection, and to Dr. Nils Ludvig Rasmusson for the photographs of the coins in the Systematic Collection at Stockholm.

¹ P. W. P. Carlyon-Britton, ‘“Uncertain” Anglo-Saxon Mints and some New Attributions’, *B.N.J.* vi (1909), pp. 13–47.