

A NEW MONEYER FOR THE MINT OF AYLESBURY

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The coin in Figure 1 was recently sold at auction in Germany.¹ It is a silver penny of the *Crux* type of Æthelred II (978–1016), probably issued from the late 980s to the mid-990s.² The mint signature ÆGL clearly identifies it as being from the minor Anglo-Saxon mint of Aylesbury, although it was catalogued as a coin of the Gloucester mint, and its moneyer (Leofsige) is previously unrecorded at Aylesbury in the *Crux* type.³

Obv. +ÆDELREDREXANGLOR, bust left with sceptre in front.
Rev. +LEOFSIGEM-OÆGL, CRVX in angles of short cross voided.
 Weight: 1.41 g.



Fig. 1. Æthelred II *Crux* type penny of Aylesbury, moneyer Leofsige (© Kuenker, Osnabrück)

The most comprehensive study to date of the mint of Aylesbury listed twenty-eight coins struck over a seventy-year period of existence during the late Anglo-Saxon period.⁴ These include four *Crux* pennies, struck by two moneyers: Ælfgar, whose two surviving coins were both of the standard *Crux* type, and Leofstan, whose two coins were of the rare *Transitional Crux* issue struck towards the end of the type.⁵ This new coin provides evidence of a new moneyer, Leofsige, both for the *Crux* type at Aylesbury and indeed for the mint in general.

Moneyers of the same name are known at more than a dozen mints during the late Anglo-Saxon period. At Gloucester, Ilchester, Ipswich and Northampton, there was a Leofsige who issued coins during the *Crux* type itself, while at Cambridge and Shrewsbury, men of the same name are known in the subsequent *Long Cross* type (c.997–1003).⁶ Of these mints, Northampton (34 miles distant) is by far the closest to Aylesbury, and it might be suggestive that one of Aylesbury's other *Crux* moneyers, Leofstan, also had a contemporary namesake at Northampton. Neither Leofsige nor Leofstan issued coins at Northampton after the *Crux* type, and it is possible that the two men moved to Aylesbury to establish minting operations there.⁷

The weight and style of this new coin suggests that if this relocation did take place, it was relatively late in the type. At 1.41 g, it is somewhat heavier than the two standard *Crux* coins of Aylesbury already recorded for the moneyer Ælfgar (at 1.32 g and 1.28 g respectively), but still well below the initial weight standard.⁸ The obverse style, with its somewhat naturalistic treatment of the hair and the sceptre angled into the base of the bust, is reminiscent of the so-called *Small Crux* variety, dated towards the end of the *Crux* type.⁹

Whatever the origin of its moneyers, the Aylesbury mint sprang into existence in the *Crux* type with no fewer than three of them. As the authors of the earlier corpus of coins of the mint observed, 'it is hard to advance any compelling reason why coins should have been

¹ Kuenker (Osnabrück) eLive Auction 57, 3–5 Dec. 2019, lot 395.

² The so-called 'sexennial theory' of type change during the reigns of Æthelred II and Cnut, developed by Michael Dolley (e.g. Dolley 1952–4, 275; Dolley 1954, 152–6), proposed 991–97 as the period of issue of the *Crux* type. The rigidity of the theory has been called into question (e.g. Brand 1984; Stewart 1990, 457–85) and more recent scholars (e.g. *MEC* 8, 264; *SCBI* 68, 93–8) have preferred these earlier and more cautiously bounded start and end dates.

³ Carroll and Parsons 2007, 4–7; the mint-signatures on the previously recorded *Crux* pennies of Aylesbury are ÆGLS and ÆGLSBY, while two different moneyers in Cnut's Quatrefoil type use the precise form ÆGL found on this new coin.

⁴ Clarke and Symons 2007.

⁵ For the identification and dating of the *Transitional Crux* issue, see Dolley and Elmore Jones 1955–7; Dolley 1958–9; Stewart 1968.

⁶ Jonsson and van der Meer 1990, 49–136, especially p. 131.

⁷ A search of the EMC/SCBI database, auction catalogues and dealer lists has however found no obverse die-duplicate for any of the Aylesbury *Crux* pennies at the Northampton mint.

⁸ Petersson 1969, 107–8, 183, proposes for the *Crux* type an initial weight standard of 1.65 g, a later modal value of 1.43 g, and a reduction to 1.32 g by its end. Petersson 1990 expands his foundational work on the metrology of late Saxon coins and considers it from the perspective of individual mints.

⁹ Stewart 1955–7.



Fig. 2. Cnut *Quatrefoil* type coins of Aylesbury, moneyer Æthelwine. *Left*: corpus no. 6a.1 (© Classical Numismatic Group); *right*: corpus no. 7.3 (© Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne)

minted in Aylesbury in the *Crux* issue, especially when the nearby mint of Buckingham scarcely appears to have been overworked at the time.¹⁰ The discovery of a third moneyer at the inception of this very minor mint makes it still more likely that it was associated with ‘the need to strike large amounts of coin very quickly to facilitate the payment of specific *gelds*’.¹¹

This article also provides an opportunity to put on record two further coins of the Aylesbury mint that have surfaced since the first corpus was published in 2007 (see Figure 2). Both are coins of Cnut’s *Quatrefoil* type of the moneyer Æthelwine, one of them from previously unrecorded dies. Along with the *Crux* penny that is the main subject of this article, they increase the total number of coins known from Aylesbury to thirty-one. They are added below in a format consistent with the first corpus.

- 6a. *Obv.* +C[...]ANGL•O: (legend starts at 9 o’clock)
Rev. [...]PINE ONÆ
Obv. die of London Cm style (Blackburn and Lyon 1986, 244–5)

(6a.1) Classical Numismatic Group e-Auction 263, 31 August 2011, lot 497; listed as ‘Continental find’. 0.41 g/ 6.3 gr. (cut halfpenny).

7. *Obv.* +CNVT REX ANGL•ORV (legend starts at 12 o’clock)
Rev. +ÆÐ EL•P•NEN EGL•
Obv. die of Oxford l style (Blackburn and Lyon 1986, 228–30)

(7.3) Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne Auction 64, 14 May 2016, lot 152. 1.13 g/17.4 gr. Cracked down bust.

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¹⁰ Clarke and Symons 2007, 177

¹¹ Clarke and Symons 2007, 175; for the association of the *Crux* type with *geld* payments, see Lyon 1976, 197; Brand 1984, 31; although Metcalf 1998, 115–17 looks closely at the metrology of the type and argues against too simplistic an association of the *gelds* with the surge of minting during *Crux*.

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“EADWOLD ON EASTCHEAP, LONDON”: A STREET-NAME ON A LATE ANGLO-SAXON PENNY

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In September 2019 the coin illustrated and described below (Figure 1) was offered for sale by Baldwin's of St James's. It belongs to the *Jewel Cross* type, minted in the years immediately after Cnut's death (12 November 1035) for his two sons Harold I Harefoot and Harthacnut, at a time when their partisans vied for control of England.¹ This specimen belongs to what Tuukka Talvio identified as the 'National A' style of Variety L2: a group from later in the issue, struck entirely in the name of Harold, during which die-cutters based at a central workshop probably in London supplied most mint-places across the kingdom.² The vendor was able to give no further information about the coin's provenance or find-spot.³

Harold I (1035–40), *Jewel Cross* type (1035/6–late 1030s), Eastcheap in London mint, moneyer Eadwold.

Obv. $\text{+H}\overline{\text{A}}\text{ROLD RE}\text{+}\text{A}$

Rev. $\text{+E}\overline{\text{A}}\text{DPOLD ON ESTCEP LV}$

1.10 g, 0°. Baldwin's of St James's auction 38, 26 September 2019, lot 1029.



Fig. 1. Harold I *Jewel Cross* type penny of Eadwold in Eastcheap (twice actual size; courtesy of Baldwin's of St James's)

The reverse inscription is not paralleled on any other extant coins. It names a moneyer, Eadwold, who is found on four other surviving *Jewel Cross* pennies with a London mint-signature,⁴ all of the same later variety as this piece (although none uses the same obverse die).⁵ The inscription that follows Eadwold's name on the present coin is ONESTCEPLV . The character read as P is rendered quite differently from the rounded winn in Eadwold's name, suggesting an effort to differentiate the two. The opening two letters are the preposition ON , used in coin inscriptions to introduce a mint-name, while the final two letters LV suggest *Lu[ndene]* or London, the largest and most productive mint-place in England at this time. The intervening part of the inscription, ESTCEP , is

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¹ Naismith 2017, 270–1. For context, see Keynes 1998, xxix–xxxviii.

² Talvio 1986, 279–82.

³ It may come from the same source as a selection of other coins of the same period and state of preservation contained in the same sale (lots 1030–5), and in other recent sales (e.g. Baldwin's of St James's 7 June 2018, lots 106–11).

⁴ The only other instance of the name Eadwold in *Jewel Cross* is on a few anomalous pennies from Canterbury with a right-facing bust: Naismith 2017, no. 2062; and *NCirc* 96 (September 1988), no. 5436 (struck from the same dies). For general guidance on occurrence of moneyers see Jonsson and van der Meer 1990.

⁵ SCBI 40, 414, plus three others in private sales: Dix, Noonan and Webb auction 75 (26 Sept. 2007), lot 190; *NCirc* 103 (April 1995), no. 1824; and Classical Numismatic Group auction 85 (15 Sept. 2010), lot 1520.