

## THE BOY PIANIST'S PARCEL OF COINS OF EADGAR

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A significant collection of Roman, English and Scottish coins and medals, "the property of the late George Aspull, the celebrated pianiste", was sold at auction in 226 lots on 15-16 December 1836, "by Mr Wheatley, at his Great Room, 191, Piccadilly".

The content of the collection as a whole is not the present writer's concern, but its Anglo-Saxon element, offered as lots 63-74, incorporates a group of coins of Eadred and Eadgar that must be presumed to have been a parcel from a coin hoard, and it may thus be useful to reproduce the catalogue descriptions of the lots concerned. They are as set out below :

63	Sceattas, one has a Dragon, <i>on the reverse</i> VALDFELA, <i>rare</i>	2
64	Sticas of Eaned, Ethelred, Osbrecht, &. Kings of Northumbria	12
65	Saint Peter's Penny, with Sword, <i>fine</i>	1
66	Pennies – Eadred - Eadgar, 2 varieties – Aethelred, reverse, Hand, &., and 2 of Edward the Confessor	6
67	Eadred – Eadgar, 3 varieties, one reads, "Rex Anglorum," struck at Wallingford – Edward the Confessor, 2	6
68	Eadred, 2 – Eadgar 2 – Edward the Confessor, 2	6
69	Eadgar, 6 – Edward the Confessor, 1	7
70	Eadgar, 6 – Edward the Confessor, 1	7
71	Eadgar, 4 – Cnut, 1 - - Confessor, 1	5
72	Eadgar, 4 – Confessor 2	6
73	Edgar, different moneyers	6
74	Harold II, "Leofi on Lund" – William I., side face, "Liofold on North, " and 2 uncertain	4

Aspull's Anglo-Saxon coins thus comprised, excluding the lots that contained sceattas and stycas :

- one Sword St.Peter
- four coins of Eadred
- thirty-three coins of Eadgar
- one coin of Aethelred II, Hand type
- eleven coins of Edward the Confessor
- one coin of Harold II

It must surely be the case that most, if not all, of the four coins of Eadred and the thirty-three coins of Eadgar represent a parcel from a coin hoard. Regrettably, none of the coins in question are described in the catalogue, other than the coin of Eadgar attributed to the Wallingford mint with an inscription said to read REX ANGLORUM. It is however clear that this particular coin will have been of *Circumscription Cross* type, the only type of Eadgar's reign on which the REX ANGLORUM title is given in more or less its full form, and if the attribution to

Wallingford made by the cataloguer is correct, the moneyer of the coin concerned is most likely to have been Eadwine or Heremod.

Although the catalogue indicates that the coins of Eadgar were of more than one “variety”, it is a strong probability that the bulk of the coins were of *Horizontal Trefoil* type, the commonest type in Eadgar’s pre-Reform coinage, and the hoard will thus have conformed in character to the majority of recorded hoards which end with pre-Reform coins of Eadgar and which were probably deposited in the late 960s or very early 970s.

Aspull himself had died on 19 August 1832, at the age of only nineteen, but he had already made a sufficient reputation as a pianist and tenor singer that he features in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. The highlights of his career included a three-hour piano-playing performance at the age of ten before George IV at Windsor, a visit to Paris, and concert tours in Britain and Ireland.

The biographical data given in the *ODNB* article show that he was born in Manchester but give no further clue to any particular location in Britain or Ireland where he might have had family or personal connections by which a parcel from an Anglo-Saxon coin hoard would have entered his collection.

It should be noted that the copy of the rare Wheatley coin auction catalogue from which the details given above are taken is a copy that is neither priced nor named, currently held in the joint library of the Royal and British Numismatic Societies. A copy in which the names of the purchasers of the relevant lots were stated might add usefully to the sum of knowledge about the coins in question.

