

AN ENGRAVER'S ERROR - A SECOND HAND (AETHELRED II) PENNY OF NORWICH

by Steve Green

Amongst the coins in my collection is a Second Hand type penny from Norwich by the moneyer 'FORANTINC' which illuminates some of the difficulties faced by die engraver's and moneyers in the chaotic reign of Aethelred II.

This coin was reportedly found at Lakenheath, Suffolk in 1983 or a little earlier. It was advertised in Seaby's Coin and Medal Bulletin 1983, 18 # 8. It was later included in the first Coin Register published in the BNJ in 1987 (Volume 57, page 138 # 131) but with the mint signature recorded as +BRANTINC MO NORDPI.

The information above was included in the auction catalogue when I bid successfully for the coin in 2013 but on closer examination this is clearly another coin and, as far I am aware, this one is unique. It was only the second Aethelred II coin I bought and I know a lot more now than I did at the time (photos by the author from his collection).



The details of the coin are weight 1.21 gm / 18.7 gn, die axis 3 hours and diameter 20mm.

Legend: Obverse – +ÆDELRAED REX ANGLORX (ORX ligated) / Reverse – +FORANTINC M-O NORD•

The engraver (in London?) has apparently combined the names of two Norwich moneyers of this type known from Hildebrand – Brantinc (BEH # 3107) and Folchard (BEH #3130). Brantinc also struck First Hand types at Norwich and Ipswich whilst Folchard also struck a unique Benediction Hand / Crux mule at Norwich (SCBI 7 Copenhagen Part II # 1016) and regular Crux coins at Norwich and Thetford.

Looking at this record of striking one could assume that Brantinc had died or ceased moneying mid-way through the Second Hand type with Folchard taking over and continuing into Benediction hand and Crux. However the engraver has begun with Folchard and after just two letters has switched to the other moneyer's name but part way through that as well.

With the moneyers circulating between mints within East Anglia there was clearly confusion as to who was actually minting at a particular mint at any given time. Hopefully further coins will come to light which will throw further light on 'Forantinc'.

