

## **A Hiberno-Scandinavian Penny Orphan Emerges from Obscurity by Evans C. Goodling**

About 50 years ago, while I was visiting my retired parents in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, I came across what appeared to be a crude Anglo-Saxon silver penny with blundered legends. Since I was fairly new to collecting English coins, my numismatic library at that time consisted of a 1962 edition of Seaby's Standard Catalog of British Coins and a couple of other books on British coins published by Bert and Peter Seaby.

Coming home from the beach one day, I happened to spot a small coin shop in a strip mall and decided to see what might be in stock and to find out if I could learn something more about British coins from the manager. As I vaguely recall, the shop was run by a member of the family headed by William Fox Steinberg whose primary business was marketing world gold coins. The company is still in business as Steinberg's Inc., *Numismatic Gold Specialists Since 1950*, now managed by a son Robert L. Steinberg.

Glancing over their stock of magnificent gold coins, which included a beautiful Una and the Lion struck for Victoria, I soon decided that my pockets were not deep enough to do much business with the Steinberg's that day. The manager asked me what my interests were, and after we chatted for a bit, he hauled out a box of miscellaneous coins from a drawer under the counter, and handed me what appeared to be a medieval hammered penny of uncertain vintage and provenance. I looked it over, and although neither of us could identify the coin or its issuer, I decided that if the price was right I would buy it and take it home for future study. I asked him what he wanted for it, and he hemmed and hawed without stating a price. I told him that it appeared that he was in the business of selling coins and that I might be interested in buying one. So I asked him if he thought \$25 was a fair price, and after some thought, he agreed and we completed the transaction.

The coin in my possession is similar to No. 6132 in Spink's 2015 Edition of Coins of Scotland, Ireland and the Islands, etc., except for the additional dot and dot within a circle in the second and third quadrants of the reverse. Perhaps my coin should be identified as No. 6132A to acknowledge the additional symbols on the reverse.

It was a few years after I bought the coin that I began acquiring early volumes of The British Numismatic Journal. It wasn't long before a shipment of several volumes arrived which included Volume VI of the First Series, published in 1909. I scanned the Table of Contents, and one title caught my eye. It was Bernard Roth's lengthy article "The Coinage of the Danish Kings of Ireland; Hiberno-Danish Series". I paged through until I reached the plates, and continuing to examine the plates while holding my little silver penny close by for comparison, I soon encountered a photograph for No. 108 on Plate V which looked to me to be an actual photograph of the very coin I held in my hand! Paging forward to Page 101, I came across Roth's description of Coin No. 108, which reads as follows:

No. 108. The obverse is similar to that of No. 42, and the reverse to that of No.89 with a ring ornament in the second and a pellet in the third quarter.

Obverse.- INIININIDNIOIDI

Reverse.- ✕ III IINI ○III III Weight, 15 grs. In the author's cabinet.

[Note: In the obverse legend, the first N and the first D are actually retrograde. In the reverse legend, the N is also retrograde.]

For many years I had concluded that the coin shown as No. 108 on Plate V is a photograph of the very same coin in my collection. However, I am not quite so sure now. I am fairly sure though that if they are not the same coin, they are two separate coins that were likely struck from the same dies.

I leave it up to more experienced and meticulous numismatists to examine the accompanying photographs, and to make up their own minds as to whether they are two separate coins struck from the same die pair, or they both depict the same coin.

*Images of Hiberno-Norse penny Seaby No. 6132A  
Comparison photos*



*Bernard Roth's coin, photo from BNS Journal Volume VI Plate V*



*Author's coin*

Evans C. Goodling, Member BNS  
Wyomissing PA 19610, USA

