

## A LONDON STREET-NAME ON A LATE ANGLO-SAXON PENNY\*

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The late Anglo-Saxon coinage minted between the early 970s and the Norman Conquest of 1066 is one of the most extensively studied portions of medieval English currency. Even so, new surprises continue to emerge. One such is the coin illustrated below, from [a recent auction](#):



Obv. +HAROLD RE+A  
Rev. +EADPOLD ON ESTCEP LV

Harold I (1035–40), Jewel Cross type (1035–c. 1037?), Eastcheap in London mint, moneyer Eadwold. 1.10 grams, 0°. Ex Baldwin's of St James's auction 38, 26 September 2019, lot 1029.

The coin itself is in an excellent state of preservation, and its reverse inscription is readily and clearly legible. Eadwold, the moneyer named here, occurs at London in every type (save *Second Hand*) from Æthelred II (978–1016) *First Hand* to Edward the Confessor (1042–66) *Small Flan*, and after a break also issued *Pointed Helmet*.<sup>1</sup> In *Jewel Cross*, the only other mint-place where an Eadwold occurs is Canterbury (and both surviving specimens from that source are struck from stylistically anomalous obverse dies with a right-facing bust).<sup>2</sup> The mint-signature on the present coin, ONESTCEPLV, is the principal point of interest. Its first two letters, the preposition ON, establish that what follows signifies the moneyer's location. The final two letters, LV, can be read as a short version of *Lundene* (i.e. London). The intervening portion, ESTCEP, is most plausibly interpreted as a form of Old English *east ceap*, or 'eastern market': the name that lies behind the modern Eastcheap, a street in the City of London. This coin presents, to the best of the authors' knowledge, the first known instance of a street-name on Anglo-Saxon coinage.

Eastcheap is thought (on the basis of topographical and archaeological evidence) to have first been built up in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, and provided an eastern counterpart to Cheapside (or, as it was known in the Middle Ages, Westcheap) in the western part of the City. The medieval street extended further westwards than its current descendant (which runs between Monument tube station and Idol Lane), originally reaching to where King

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\* This paper is an abbreviated version of a longer paper with more extensive annotation, due to be published in the *British Numismatic Journal*.

<sup>1</sup> K. Jonsson and G. van der Meer, 'Mints and Moneyers c. 973–1066', in K. Jonsson (ed.), *Studies in Late Anglo-Saxon Coinage in Memory of Bror Emil Hildebrand* (Stockholm, 1990), pp. 47–136.

<sup>2</sup> R. Naismith, *Medieval European Coinage, with a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. 8: Britain and Ireland c. 400–1066* (Cambridge, 2017), no. 2062; and *Numismatic Circular* 96 (September 1988), no. 5436 (struck from the same dies).

William Street meets Cannon Street. This western portion of Eastcheap was formerly known as Great Eastcheap, with the eastern section beyond Fish Street Hill being Little Eastcheap. Like other known sites of minting in Lincoln, Winchester and York, Eastcheap was a bustling centre of business and manufacturing. The coin described here now constitutes the earliest occurrence of the name of Eastcheap, predating by some seven decades its mention in a list of properties in London belonging to Christ Church, Canterbury in about 1100.<sup>3</sup>

The reason for giving the street-name on this coin is debatable. A well-established moneyer could have relocated from elsewhere in the city, or felt a wish to emphasise his location as part of the same urge to project identity and individuality that led some moneyers to have their bynames placed onto coins: Eadwold himself did so, as Eadwold DE ALDA ('the old'), on rare coins of c. 1040.<sup>4</sup> The most probable explanation is arguably that there were two moneyers of the same name in London around this time, who distinguished themselves with reference to location and (a few years later) age – that is to say, one Eadwold who was based on Eastcheap, and another who was not; and one Eadwold who was 'the old', and another who was, by inference, 'the young'.

This important and surprising new discovery evidently reflects an exceptional practice, and should be viewed as analogous in many respects to the occasional placement of bynames on coins. Nonetheless, the occurrence of one street name opens up the possibility that certain other puzzling mint-signatures could reflect streets or districts within larger centres rather than separate locations.



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<sup>3</sup> E. Ekwall, *Street-Names of the City of London* (Oxford, 1954), p. 185. The Canterbury list is London, British Library, Cotton Faustina B.VI, f. 100, edited in B. W. Kissan, 'An Early List of London Properties', *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* new series 8 (1938), 57–69, at 58

<sup>4</sup> V. Smart, 'Osulf Thein and Others: Double Moneyers' Names on the Late Anglo-Saxon Coinage', in Jonsson (ed.), *Studies*, pp. 435–53, at 438 and 443–4.