

# Another Short Cross die link between London and Canterbury in class VIII

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At the anniversary meeting of the Society held in November 1951, Elmore Jones exhibited two Short Cross pennies of class VIII from London and Canterbury, both from the same obverse die.<sup>1</sup> This note publishes another pair of Short Cross pennies of class VIII from London and Canterbury that also share a common obverse die. The two coins are described and illustrated below.

1. Obv.:  $\text{H}\text{A}\text{N}\text{R}\text{I}\text{C}\text{VS}:\text{R}/\text{EX}$  Short Cross coinage class VIIIb  
Rev:  $\text{✠}\text{N}\text{I}\text{C}\text{H}\text{O}\text{L}[\quad]\text{VN}$   
1.31 g.  
Ex Leconfield (2000) hoard<sup>2</sup>.



2. Obv.:  $\text{H}\text{A}\text{N}\text{R}\text{I}\text{C}\text{VS}:\text{R}/\text{EX}$  Short Cross coinage class VIIIb (same obv. die as 1)  
Rev:  $\text{✠}\text{N}\text{I}\text{C}\text{H}\text{O}\text{L}\text{E}\text{O}\text{N}\text{C}\text{A}\text{N}$  Lombardic style for first n  
1.35 g.  
Ex Silbury Coins, 2021.



<sup>1</sup> BNJ 26, p. 363 and pl. A, 14 and 15. See also Elmore Jones Norman and Plantagenet Part I, Glendining, 13 April 1983, 1228 and 1229.

<sup>2</sup> CH 2001, no. 81.

Both coins were struck by the moneyer Nicholas of St Albans (Nichole) who achieved a monopoly of the king's dies at London and Canterbury during class VIIc, a monopoly that continued through class VIII and into the beginning of the Long Cross coinage. Although the reverse of the first coin is somewhat double struck, the letter v in the mint signature is clear and confirms the mint reading is **LVN** for London. The second coin, from the same class VIIIb obverse die, has a clear Canterbury mint signature, **CAN**.

The first letter of the moneyer's name on the Canterbury coin is in the form of a Lombardic n, a form of letter that occurs on quite a few reverse dies of class VIIc, usually as the last letter of the mint name, **LVN** or **CAN**. It is also found on two obverse dies of class IIIa2, one of London and one of Bury. Only one other example of a Lombardic n occurring in class VIIIb is known to the author and that is the Canterbury coin exhibited by Elmore Jones in 1951, which reads **✠ - - - JONCANTE**. It seems a remarkable coincidence that the only coins with this feature in class VIIIb are Canterbury coins that share obverse dies with London.

How do we explain these die links between mints. The most likely reason is that a die with the wrong mint signature was dispatched to a mint where it was used alongside other coins with the correct mint signature. Many examples are known in the Short Cross coinage. They are often found because the incorrect mint signature creates a moneyer that did not exist. Die studies can confirm where the die was used, for example **✠ANDREW•ON•CAN** at Lincoln and **✠ANDREW•ON•LVN** at Winchester. Sometimes, even where a mint operates without any die linkages, we can still be confident that the mint signature on the coins is incorrect, for example **✠NORMANONCAN** must have been used by Norman at Bury St Edmunds, because we know there was no such moneyer at Canterbury.

Finding a second die link between London and Canterbury in Class VIIIb does not lead us to change the explanation. It just means that the error occurred more than once. Perhaps it was not regarded as being of any importance, after all Nicholas of St Albans was a moneyer at both mints and sending the wrong die to either of his mints simply did not matter. In the Elmore Jones die link, the moneyer's name is not legible on the Canterbury coin, but there is insufficient space for it to be Nichole and it probably is the archbishop's moneyer, John Chic, who is named simply as **IONAN** on coins of class VIIc3 and VIII. In that case it is likely that the London coin of Nichole was sent to Canterbury and used there. For the new die link, there is no evidence yet to confirm whether the coins were struck at Canterbury or London.

Other reasons for the links seem less likely, but cannot be completely ruled out. Possible explanations might include the deliberately transferring of dies between mints or even having a shared workshop producing coins of both mints. While there is no evidence to indicate either of these possibilities, the discovery of more die links could change the picture.

We know that similar errors occurred in later coinages, for example the Mayfield (1968) hoard showed that a Canterbury penny of Edward I was used at London<sup>3</sup>. This was a chance discovery which indicates many other instances probably occurred within the Long Cross and later coinages. Most will be almost impossible to discover. Die studying mints with very large outputs, such as London and Canterbury in the reign of Henry III, is already a daunting task, one made more difficult by the need to systematically check for dies shared between mints.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archibald, M.M., 1971. 'The Mayfield (Sussex) 1968 hoard of English pence and French gros, c. 1307'. In *Mint, Dies and Currency, essays in memory of Albert Baldwin* (London).



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<sup>3</sup> Archibald, 1971, 153.