

***EXPANDING CROSS/POINTED HELMET* MULES : SIX NOW KNOWN**

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Mules between coins of Edward the Confessor's *Expanding Cross* and *Pointed Helmet* types, struck in succession in the middle years of Edward's reign, have historically been evidenced by four coins only.

These are, in order of minting place, the following :

London, Brihtwine (normalised as Beorhtwine). P.W.P.Carlyon-Britton (1913) 601 (ill. *NC* 4th series, vol.v, pl.vii, 1).

Newport (Newport Pagnell ?), Sired (normalised as Sigeraed). Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (*MEC* 8, 2184); acquired 2003, from W.Conte; purchased from Baldwin 1995; ex Norweb (1987) 1255 (*SCBI* 30, 601); ex Elmore Jones (1971) 584; ex Lockett (1955) 820; ex Drabble (1939) 532; purchased from Baldwin; ex Thomas Bearman (recorded *NC* 4th series, vol.v, p.190, as Bearman); ex Allen (1898) 273 (ill.)

Thetford, Godeleof (normalised as Godleof). Two die-duplicates : (1) British Museum (*BMC* 1542); ex Chancton hoard, 1866 (ill. *BMC* pl.xxx, 14, and *NC* 1949, pl.xiii, 7) ; and (2) Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (CM.1403-2018); ex Dr A.J.P.Campbell; purchased from Spink 1966; ex Lockett (1958) 2813; ex P.W.P.Carlyon-Britton (1916) 1131.

To these four a single find made at Kentford, Suffolk, on 14 November 2021, has now added a further coin of Thetford, Godeleof (*EMC* 2021.0375), but struck from obverse and reverse dies which were different from those of the die-duplicate mules already known.

More unexpectedly, while looking through the illustrations of coins of *Pointed Helmet* type viewable on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database, the present writer recently noticed that a cut halfpenny, found on 10 November 2009 at Northill, Bedfordshire (*PAS* BH-3A3536), and with a suggested identification on the *PAS* database to the Hertford moneyer Wilgrip (normalised as Vilgrip), was not in fact a coin of *Pointed Helmet* type as stated in the *PAS* description, but an *Expanding Cross/Pointed Helmet* mule, struck from an obverse die of *Expanding Cross* type. The suggested attribution to this minting place and moneyer is however very likely to be correct, and the visible part of the obverse die is indeed closely similar in style to that of the obverse die used to strike the specimen of this type, minting place, and moneyer, in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (*SCBI* 9, 830).

As explained in an earlier note on this blog, coins of *Expanding Cross* type can be divided into a Heavy series, struck on flans normally measuring 20mm and to a weight averaging 1.65g, and a Light series struck on flans normally measuring approx.. 16mm and to a weight averaging 1.09g.

What remains undecided is the relative order in which the Heavy series and the Light series were struck. It would be helpful in this connection, bearing in mind that the *Pointed Helmet* type followed on immediately from the *Expanding Cross* type, if the evidence of these *Expanding Cross/Pointed Helmet* mules were to show clearly which of these two series was being struck at the end of the period during which coins of the type was issued.

As it happens, the evidence in this connection provided by the other production of the moneyers responsible for the mules listed above is curiously indecisive. The London moneyer Brihtwine (Beorhtwine) is currently only recorded for the *Expanding Cross* type for the Light series; the Newport moneyer Sired (Sigeraed) is only known in this context from his *Expanding Cross/Pointed Helmet* mule, not being recorded at present either for the Light series or for the Heavy series; the Thetford moneyer Godeleof (Godleof) is only recorded for the *Expanding Cross* type proper from a coin in the 1883 Vossberg hoard from Pommern, Preussen, Germany (now Lisowo in Poland), of which the present whereabouts is unknown and for which there is no record of weight or dimensions; and the Hertford moneyer Wilgrip (Vilgrip) is currently only recorded for the *Expanding Cross* type for the Heavy series.

This leaves the style of the king's busts on the obverse dies of these mules as the only obvious determining factor in trying to assess the relative probability of the Heavy series preceding the Light series, or of the Light series preceding the Heavy series, but here again the evidence is unhelpful.

The coin of the London moneyer Brihtwine (Beorhtwine) is struck from an obverse die on which the king's bust is of "PACX style", i.e. of a character normally found on coins of Edward the Confessor's PACX type, struck in the early 940s. Dies of this nature are found in some numbers among coins of the *Expanding Cross* Light Series struck by moneyers at York and at Lincoln, and are also found for moneyers of Light Series coins struck at Derby, Nottingham and Stamford. No dies of "PACX style" are known by the present writer to have been used to strike coins of the Heavy series, but although this points to the obverse die of the present coin having been intended for use as a Light series obverse die, it is a one-off in terms of the character of obverse dies used by London moneyers and by moneyers in Southern England generally. In the circumstances, the process by which the die came to be used with a *Pointed Helmet* reverse die may well have been unusual, and it is not in itself a reliable pointer to the Light series having immediately preceded *Pointed Helmet*.

The king's bust on the obverse die of the coin of Newport, moneyer Sired (Sigeraed), is of a style which the writer would certainly associate with the Light series, its principal distinguishing features being the fact that no eyebrow is shown on the king's face, and that a line extends rightwards from the king's eye to the king's ear. Newport, presumably Newport Pagnell, would however been a very minor minting place, and it can readily be visualised that there might have been no call for a coin issue from there during the period in which Heavy series coins were being struck, so a Light series obverse die might have been still available there at the outset of *Pointed Helmet*, notwithstanding the fact that there had been an intervening Heavy series issue elsewhere in the country.

The two die-duplicate coins of Thetford, moneyer Godeleof (Godeleof), are by contrast of a style potentially associable with the Heavy series, still without an eyebrow but in this instance without the line joining the king's eye to the king's ear. The newly discovered third Thetford *Expanding Cross/Pointed Helmet* mule, unfortunately, has significant surface damage to the king's face which prevents any close stylistic classification for the obverse die involved.

Finally, the visible part of the cut halfpenny attributable to Hertford, Wilgrip, is, as already noted, close in stylistic character to known Heavy series coins of this moneyer, but a definitive conclusion that the obverse die involved was a Heavy series die is prevented by the fact that the upper part of the king's face, which would provide clear evidence for this from the treatment of the king's eye and from the absence or presence of an eyebrow, is on the missing half of the coin.

Further discoveries are required !