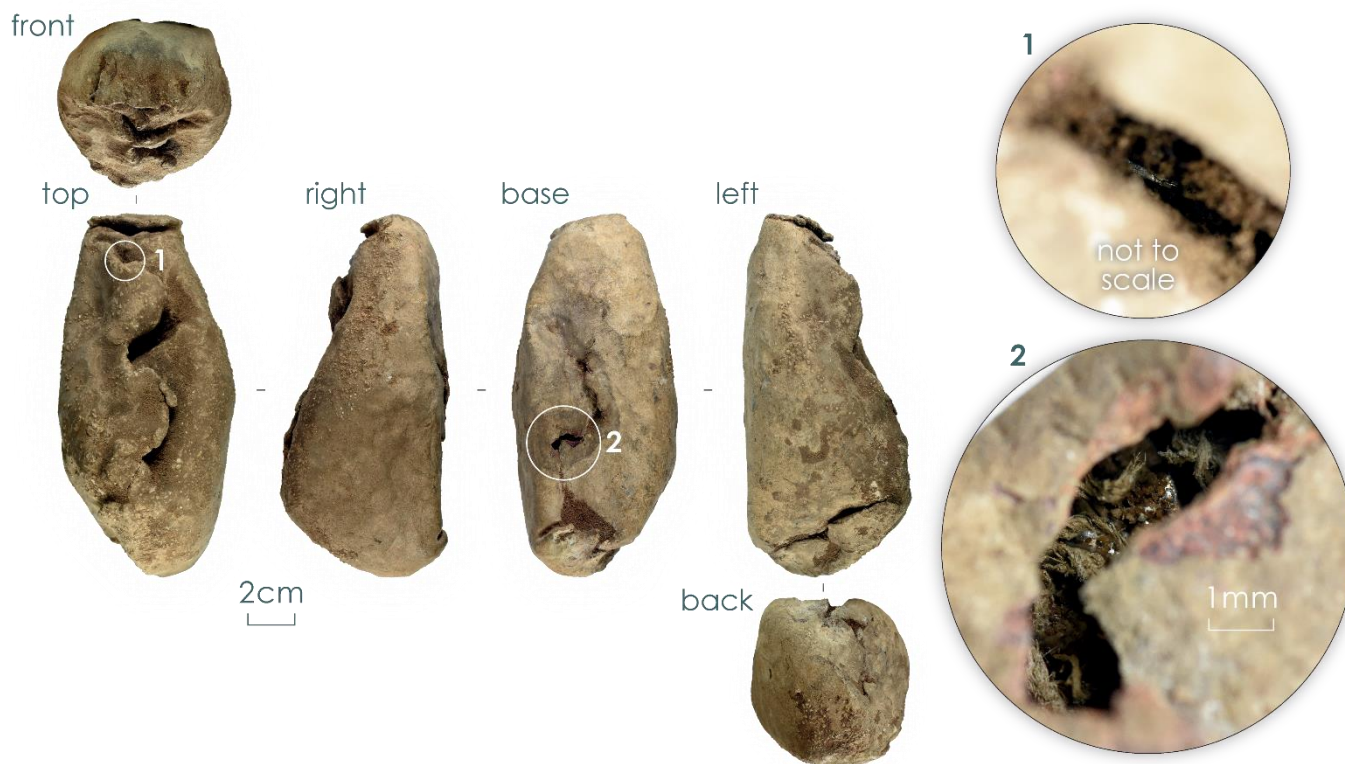


## The 'Sizewell C' or 'Near Leiston' hoard: a summary

Alex Bliss, Richard Ambrose, Dr Adrian Marsden and Hugh Pagan

### Introduction

On Friday 14th April 2023, archaeological excavation by Oxford Cotswold Archaeology (OCA) within the Sizewell C (SZC) nuclear power station development footprint north-east of the town of Leiston, Suffolk, resulted in the discovery of a small package manufactured from folded lead sheet (**Figure 1**). Glimpses of silver coins and textile inside indicated that it contained a coin hoard wrapped up in an inner layer of cloth. Measuring 150x76x75mm, it was found stratified within the boundary ditches of a small field system - specifically located at the T-junction where two ditches met. This siting evidently represented a memorable place within the landscape to its depositor. In as-excavated state its appearance was uncannily similar to a Cornish pasty, an attribute which led to its affectionate nicknaming as 'the pasty' by both field staff and project specialists alike.



**Figure 1:** 'The pasty' as it was excavated from the ground. Image copyright OCA.

Following initial assessment in May 2023, a formal methodology on dealing with the find was authored by Alex Bliss (OCA Senior Finds Officer/Numismatist) in consultation with Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS), the British Museum's department of Treasure, Pieta Greaves of Drakon Heritage and textile specialist Dr Sue Harrington. Following rigorous peer-review and subsequent approval, the lead package was fully micro-excavated from the 10th-11th June 2024. Part of this process was filmed by BBC2 for Series 12 of the archaeological docu-series 'Digging for Britain', being broadcast on January 7th 2025. This event marked the first time that micro-excavation of an intact Anglo-Saxon coin hoard had been televised.

The package was found to contain a large quantity of silver coins (**Figure 2**), which had been wrapped in a piece of textile and then enclosed in a single piece of lead sheet. The lead itself did not appear to be cut from a larger, formal object, showing evidence of being slit at both ends to facilitate tight folding. Though the textile was significantly degraded, much survived – including some fragments to which coins were corroded. Initial analysis suggests that this may originally have been a relatively coarse piece of simple, folded cloth rather than a purse or drawstring bag. However, this identification is preliminary.



**Figure 2:** Left – the hoard after initial opening and removal of soil. Top right: detail shot of coins during micro-excitation. Bottom right: detail shot of coins and associated textile during micro-excitation. Images copyright OCA.

Virtually all the coins were fully identified and catalogued on the 11th and 28th June 2024 by Alex Bliss, Richard Ambrose and Dr Adrian Marsden. Further valuable assistance from Hugh Pagan was subsequently provided in August of the same year via emailed, high-resolution images. Only a relatively small number of the overall total were not able to be identified fully (mostly in respect of mint, moneyer or dies), those with incomplete attributions being variously corroded together, heavily encrusted or obscured by adhering textile. Just one coin out of the entire group could not be attributed to type whatsoever, which stands as testament to their generally excellent state of preservation.

This note is intended to provide a brief summary of the hoard's content and character, in response to keen interest from both the general public and specialist numismatic community. It is hoped that formal, detailed publication of the find will be forthcoming within a future edition of the British Numismatic Journal (BNJ).

## Types

A total of 321 silver coins were contained within the package, comprising 319 pennies and two cut halfpennies. These were struck under three English monarchs of the earlier 11th century; Harold I (1035–1040); Harthacnut (1040–1042) and Edward the Confessor (1042–1066). Pieces belonging to four substantive types make up the bulk of the group; Harold I/Harthacnut Jewel Cross (*circa* 1036–1038, mostly Harold I); Harold I Fleur-de-Lys (*circa* 1038–1040); Harthacnut Arm-and-Sceptre (*circa* 1040–1042) and Edward the Confessor PACX (*circa* 1042–1044). Encompassed within these are a small number of more unusual variants, alongside several mules. A summary listing of the hoard's contents per type and ruler are presented in **Table 1**.

## Mints

Currently, 32 mints have been identified within the hoard based on 311 pieces attributed at either a certain or highly probable level. A significant element of the overall parcel (125, almost 40%) derives from the London area – i.e. London and Southwark. Next most prevalent (67, 20%) are coins from East Anglian mints located from the region immediately surrounding the hoard's findspot, followed by pieces of Lincoln and Stamford (43, 13%) in the East Midlands. These three regional mint groupings (London, East Anglia, East Midlands) thus provide 235 coins (approximately 73%) out of the hoard's overall total. The remaining mint-groupings are of much smaller size, continuing with 24 coins (7%) from mints in wider eastern England/ 'Greater Anglia', after which come a slightly smaller group (19, 6%) from south-eastern mints, though predominantly Kentish. The three smallest groupings are of broadly comparable size (3-4%), comprising coins of the combined central/western midland region (12), the north (11, solely from York) and the southwest/Wessex (9). An abbreviated summary of coins in the hoard broken down per type, mint and moneyer are presented in **Table 2**.

## Individual coins of note

The hoard contains a number of pieces significant on the individual level across all four types represented within it. These are briefly summarised in **Table 3**.

## Date and context of deposition

Dating of the hoard's burial is provided by presence of the PACX type, which was struck from the summer of 1042 till later 1044 (Pagan 2011, 9). However, this element of the hoard importantly includes a large number of rare reverse die-variants combining the short-cross reverse type (Hildebrand Da) with variant readings such as 'CRVX' and 'PAXX' – which appear to emerge towards the end of the PACX type (Pagan pers. comm 2024; Pagan 2011, 21-22, 30-32). As such, it is tentatively suggested on the basis of these coins that burial of the hoard can be refined more closely, i.e. 1043-1044.

A date of burial in the period 1042-1044 coincides with the early reign of Edward the Confessor, whose accession to the throne in summer of 1042 marked the return of the House of Wessex to power after over 25 years of rule by Cnut and his heirs. Shortly after Edward's return to England, a number of high-status individuals (including his own mother, Emma of Normandy; Bishop Stigand of Elmham, Norfolk, and several relatives of Cnut) were proscribed and/or exiled for disloyalty. As such, it is perhaps appropriate to set the hoard's burial against these aspects of the historical narrative. Its owner may well have been concerned about the political situation on a general basis, although it is equally plausible that they may have been connected in some way with the previous regime and thus took measures to conceal their wealth in light of Edward's punitive actions. Within the context of the hoard's East Anglian findspot, the figure of Stigand

may well loom large. It is extremely unlikely that he represents the hoard's owner, but perhaps served as a catalyst for its deposition. His removal from the Bishopric of Elmham in 1043 by Edward and subsequent exile, although brief, may well have created local instability. It is not impossible that the individual (or individuals) who buried the hoard may well have been connected with either him directly or the Diocese of Elmham.

**Table 1:** Summary of the coins from the Leiston hoard per type, ruler, mint and moneyer. Entries accompanied by an asterisk in the mints/moneyers columns denote coins of probable rather than definitive attribution, while the numbers in the variety column relate to Jeffrey North's standard reference on the earlier English hammered series (1994).

Type	Variety	Mints	Moneyers	Sub-total	Total for type
Jewel Cross	Standard, in the name of Harold, bust left (N 802)	Cambridge (2)	Wulfwine (2)	78	84
		Canterbury (1)	Leofnoth		
		Colchester (1)	Wulfwine		
		Dover (5)	Boga (2), Cynstan (1), Eadwine (1), Leofwine (1)		
		Hereford (1)	Æthelwig		
		Ipswich (3)	Lifinc		
		Leicester (1)	Wulfstan		
		Lincoln (10*)	Ælfnoth (1), Brihtric (1), Godric/Godric (1), Oslac (1), Sumerlethe (2), Swartbrand (1), Wadlos (1), Wulfgeat (1), uncertain (1*)		
		London (30)	Ælfnoth (1), Ælfwold (2), Brun (1), Cinewold (1), Corf/Corff (2), Cynewig (1), Eadwold (1), Eadric (1), Fareman (1), Goda (1), Godman (1), Godwine (6), Godwine Stewer (1), Godsige/Goldsige/Goltsige (3), Leofred (1), Leofstan (2), Widia (1), Wulfgar (1), Wulfwine (1), Wynsige (1)		
		Northampton (1)	Ælfwine		
		Norwich (3)	Ælfwine (1), Ælfwold (2)		
	Stamford (4)	Brunwine (1), Lefedei/Leofdaeg (1), Leofric (1), Thurulf (1)			
	Thetford (13)	Ægelmaer (1), Ælfwald/Ælfwold (3), Ælfwine (3), Brunstan (2), Leofwine (4)			
	York (3)	Sunulf (1), Ucede (1), Witherwine (1)			
In the name of Harold, bust right (N802/1).	London (1)	Ælfred	1		
In the name of 'Harthacnut', bust left (N 808)	London (1)	Leofstan	2		
	York (1)	Wulfric			
In the name of 'Harthacnut', bust right (N 809)	Exeter (1)	Eadmær	2		
	Winchester (1)	Ægelric			
Variety uncertain	Canterbury? (1*)	Leofnoth	1		
Jewel Cross/Fleur-de-Lys mule	Jewel Cross obverse, Fleur-de-Lys reverse (N 802/803)	Wallingford? (1)	Burewine	1	1



		Lincoln (3)	Authgrim (1), Brihtric (1), Godric (1)		
		London (12)	Ægelward (1), Ælfric (1), Brihtmær (2), Brungar? (1), Godric Calic (1), Leofred (1), Lifinc (2), Lifric/Leofric (1), Wulfsige (2)		
		Norwich (1)	Manna		
		Romney (1)	Wulfmær		
		Southwark (1)	Ælfric		
		Stamford (1)	Brunwine		
		Thetford (5)	Ælfwine (1), Eadric (3), Tidred (1)		
		Worcester (1)	Lufvic		
		Uncertain (2)	Uncertain/illegible		
	Bust left variety in the name of 'Harthacnut' (N 811)	Bedford (1)	Ulfcetel	14	
		Buckingham (1)	Leofwine		
		Cambridge (1)	Godsunu		
		Dover (1)	Cynstan		
		Exeter (1)	Manleof		
		Huntingdon (1)	Ælfwine		
		Ipswich (1)	Lifinc		
		Langport (1)	Dunbeord		
		Norwich (1)	Osmund		
		Oxford (1)	Ægelric		
		Southwark (2)	Ægelwine (1), Burnred (1)		
Variety uncertain	Stamford (1)	Godric	1		
	Thetford (1)	Tidred			
PACX	Standard (N 813)	London (7)	Brihtwine (1), Leofnoth (1), Leofræd/Leofred (2), Leofric (1), Wulfric (1), Wulfwine (1)	10	
		Thetford (3)	Eadric (1), Leofwine (2)		
	Standard, PACS reverse (N 813.1)	London (2)	Leofric (1), Wulfred (1)	2	
	Standard, CRVX reverse (N 813.1)	London (1)	Leofstan	1	
	Short-cross variety (Hildebrand Da, N 814)	London (6)	Ælfric (1), Eadwold (1), Godwine (2), Wulfgar (2)	10	
		Southwark (3)	Burnred (2), Wulfwine (1)		
		Uncertain (1)	Lifinc		
Short-cross variety with CRVX reverse (Hildebrand Da, N 814.1)	London (1)	Æthelweard	1		
Uncertain	-	Uncertain (1)	Uncertain	1	1
<b>Grand total:</b>					<b>321</b>

**Table 2:** Coins in the hoard totalled per mint in descending order of prevalence. Numbers marked with a star include coins with mint attributions of a probable rather than definitive status.

Mint	Region	Jewel cross	Fleur-de-lys	Arm-and-sceptre	PACX	Mules	Unidentified	Total quantity of coins
London	London	32	57*	12	17	1	-	119*
Thetford	East Anglia	13	19	6	3	-	-	41
Lincoln	East Midlands	10*	13	3	-	-	-	26*
Stamford	East Midlands	4	11	2	-	-	-	17
Ipswich	East Anglia	3	7	3	-	-	-	13
Norwich	East Anglia	3	8	2	-	-	-	13
York	Northern	4	7	-	-	-	-	11
Cambridge	Eastern/Greater Anglia	2	4	3	-	-	-	9
Dover	Southern	5	2	2	-	-	-	9
Colchester	Eastern/Greater Anglia	1	5	2	-	-	-	8
Southwark	London	-	-	3	3	-	-	6
Canterbury	Southern	2*	-	2	-	-	-	4*
Northampton	Central/West Midlands	1	3	-	-	-	-	4
Winchester	Southwest/Wessex	1	3	-	-	-	-	4
Huntingdon	Eastern/Greater Anglia	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
Bedford	Eastern/Greater Anglia	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Exeter	Southwest/Wessex	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Hereford	Central/West Midlands	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Hertford	Eastern/Greater Anglia	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Leicester	Central/West Midlands	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Nottingham	Central/West Midlands	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Wallingford	Southern	-	1	-	-	1*	-	2*
Axbridge	Southwest/Wessex	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Buckingham	Southern	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Chester	Central/West Midlands	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Gloucester	Southwestern/Wessex	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Guildford	Southern	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Langport	Southwest/Wessex	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Oxford	Southern	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Romney	Southern	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Salisbury*	Southwest/Wessex	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Worcester	Central/West Midlands	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Uncertain	-	-	5	3	1	-	1	10

**Table 3:** Coins of individual significance within the hoard<sup>2</sup>.

Coin no.	Type	Mint	Moneyer	Note
27.43	Jewel Cross, Harold I, bust right	London	Ælfred	Second known 'true' bust-right Jewel Cross penny of Harold with normal legend. Variety previously known only by a unique coin of Canterbury.
27.132	Jewel Cross, Harold I	London (Eastcheap)	Eadwold	With its enigmatic reverse reading EADPOLD ON ESTCEP LV, this coin represents the sole occurrence of a street name on a Late Anglo-Saxon penny. Two other examples known to exist, for discussion see Ambrose and Naismith 2020.
27.53	Jewel Cross/Fleur-de-Lys mule, Harold I	Wallingford?	Burewine	Moneyer known at Wallingford in Jewel Cross/Fleur-de-Lys/Arm-and-Sceptre, but not in this mule. Additionally, this mule previously only observed for Canterbury, London and Oxford. Almost certainly new moneyer for mule and new mule for mint.
27.139	Fleur-de-Lys, Harthacnut	Norwich	Ringulf	Exceptionally rare variety of the Fleur-de-Lys type in the name of Harthacnut rather than Harold.
27.55	Fleur-de-Lys, Harold I	London	Wulfnoth	New type for moneyer, Wulfnoth known (albeit extremely rarely) in preceding Jewel Cross.
27.246	Fleur-de-Lys/Arm-and-Sceptre mule, Harold I	London	SPVLF[...]?	This partially corroded coin's reverse reads 'SPV[...]ON LVNDE'. It appears to die link with 27.68, which expands this reading to 'SPVLF[...]'. Potentially new moneyer for London and also potentially new moneyer in this mule.
27.68	Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut – variety uncertain	London	SPVLF[...]?	Potentially new moneyer for London, potentially new moneyer in this type.
27.133	Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut	Chester	Fargrim	New type for moneyer, Fargrim known previously at Chester for Edward the Confessor but not Harthacnut.
27.46	Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut	Romney	Wulfmær	Moneyer previously known at Romney in Edward the Confessor and via an Arm-and-Sceptre/PACX mule, no 'true' Arm-and-Sceptre pieces of this moneyer previously attested.
27.27	<i>Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Harthacnut</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Ulfcetel</i>	<i>Previously known only in several of Edward the Confessor's types, including PACX</i>
27.183	<i>Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>Wulfsige</i>	<i>Moneyer known in Fleur-de-Lys, not previously observed in Arm-and-Sceptre.</i>
27.254	<i>Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>Wulfsige</i>	<i>As above, moneyer known in Fleur-de-Lys, not previously observed in Arm-and-Sceptre.</i>
27.187	<i>Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut</i>	<i>Norwich</i>	<i>Manna</i>	<i>Known previously in Jewel Cross/Fleur-de-Lys/PACX, but not Arm-and-Sceptre.</i>
27.226	<i>Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut</i>	<i>Ipswich</i>	<i>Ricward</i>	<i>Previously unknown moneyer.</i>
27.184	Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Harthacnut	Langport	Dunbeord	Extremely rare mint.
27.58	Arm-and-Sceptre, Harthacnut in the name of Cnut	Axbridge	Leafwine	Extremely rare mint.
27.112	Arm-and-Sceptre,	Buckingham	Leafwine	Second known, other example a die-duplicate fragment in

<sup>2</sup> NB: some of these coins, despite technically being 'new to science' in that they represent previously unobserved moneyer/mint combinations or fill gaps in moneyer sequences, are in fact precluded by other pieces awaiting publication (Ambrose, Marsden and Pagan in prep). Where this is the case, entries are italicised.

	Harthacnut in the name of Harthacnut			Stockholm with only part of the moneyer's name preserved (SCBI 40, no. 1579). This coin confirms moneyers name as Leofwine.
27.234	PACX	London	Leofnoth	Moneyer previously unknown in PACX.
27.162	PACX	<i>London</i>	<i>Ælfric</i>	<i>Moneyer unknown in PACX, previously attested only in Harold I/Harthacnut.</i>

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