

Eadwine at the Lincoln Mint: A minting career from Cnut to Edward the Confessor.

Robert Page

Lincoln was already a substantial urban centre during Cnut's reign (1016–1035), although no contemporary census allows its population to be established precisely. Archaeological evidence shows considerable growth during the Viking period, with settlement extending into the lower city, the waterfront and Wigford. By the early eleventh century Lincoln was one of England's principal towns, and its population may reasonably be estimated at several thousand inhabitants, perhaps around 3,000–5,000.

Lincoln's importance was largely due to its geographical position. Situated on the River Witham and connected to the Trent valley, the Midlands and the east coast, it was an important regional market and trading centre. Goods could move by both river and land, and archaeological evidence demonstrates commercial connections extending to Scandinavia and continental Europe.

The town had a diverse craft economy. Archaeological excavations, particularly at Flaxengate, have produced extensive evidence for metalworking, textile manufacture and pottery production. Metalworking was especially sophisticated, including the working of iron and copper alloys and the melting and refining of silver. These industries were supported by trade with the surrounding countryside, which supplied food and raw materials, while Lincoln provided manufactured goods and a market for agricultural produce.

Lincoln should therefore be regarded as a sizeable and economically diverse Scandinavian-influenced town, serving a substantial rural hinterland and participating in both regional and North Sea trade. It was considerably more than a local market settlement and was one of the major urban centres of eleventh-century England. It supported an active mint, with over forty different moneyers known during Cnut's reign.

The appearance of a rare Cnut Short Cross penny of the moneyer Eadwine at Lincoln in a recent auction provides an opportunity to reconsider the activities of this little known Lincoln moneyer during the turbulent succession of the mid-eleventh century. The coin in question, recently offered as lot 82 in Hosker Haynes Auction 8 on 15 September 2026, ([Link](#)), is a Short Cross penny of Cnut, weighing 0.93 g. Its obverse legend is +CNVT RECX and its reverse reads +EDPIN N LINCOL. It was described by the



Figure 1- The Hosker Haynes coin (Author's collection).

auctioneer as "excessively rare". The catalogue further stated that the moneyer was not recorded for Cnut at Lincoln and that no example was known to the Early Medieval Corpus (EMC).

The assertion that Eadwine was not recorded for Cnut requires qualification. Eadwine is a well-attested moneyer's name in the coinage of Cnut, occurring at a number of mints, and the spelling EDPINE or EDPIN is entirely consistent with the normal late Anglo-Saxon practice of representing the sound *w* by the letter *P*. Thus, EDPINE is the epigraphical equivalent of the personal name Eadwine or Edwine. Cnut Eadwine pennies are known from, among other mints, Cambridge, Dover, London and Thetford. The occurrence of the name elsewhere, however, should not be taken as evidence that all these moneyers were the same individual.

The significant feature of the Hosker Haynes Lincoln coin is that the auctioneer believed that Eadwine was an unknown moneyer of Cnut. The Lincoln mint was one of the principal English mints and produced a substantial quantity of Cnut's coinage, including many Short Cross pennies, but a Cnut Lincoln penny of Eadwine does not appear to have been recorded in the Early Medieval Corpus.

The discovery of an earlier auction record, however, demonstrates that the Hosker Haynes specimen is not unique. London Coins Auction 141, lot 1138, held on 2 June 2013, ([Link](#)) contained a Cnut Short Cross penny of Lincoln also by the moneyer Eadwine. The photographs of the London Coins specimen make it possible to compare it directly with the Hosker Haynes coin.



Figure 2 - The London Coins Specimen

Comparison and overlay of the photographs demonstrates that the two Lincoln Eadwine pennies were struck from the same reverse die. Thus, the London Coins specimen of 2013 and the Hosker Haynes specimen of 2026 constitute at least two surviving examples struck from the same reverse die. The obverse dies are clearly different. At the moment, these are the only two Eadwine coins of Lincoln that I have been able to trace, and they are amongst the rarest Cnut moneyers at Lincoln.

The significance of the discovery becomes greater when Mossop's *The Lincoln Mint c. 890–1279*¹ is taken into consideration. Mossop's study is fundamental to the investigation of Lincoln

¹ Mossop, H. R., *The Lincoln Mint c. 890–1279*, ed. Veronica Smart, Newcastle upon Tyne: Corbitt & Hunter, 1970.

coinage, and his published plates record Eadwine at Lincoln during the reigns immediately following Cnut. Crucially, however, Mossop does not record an Eadwine coin of Cnut. His evidence therefore agrees with the conclusion that the Cnut Lincoln Eadwine issue was unknown when his study was compiled, while simultaneously providing evidence that an Eadwine was active at Lincoln during the succeeding reigns.

Mossop records an Eadwine on Lincoln penny of Harold I's Jewel Cross type, illustrated on plate LVII. The specimen is stated to be in the British Museum and weighs 0.87 g. He also records an Eadwine on a Lincoln Arm-and-Sceptre penny of Harthacnut in the name of Cnut, illustrated on plate LXIV; this specimen was in the L.E. Bruun Collection at Frederiksborg and likewise weighs 0.87 g. A third, and particularly interesting, occurrence is recorded on plate LXV, where Mossop illustrates an Eadwine penny of Edward the Confessor. This is a mule combining the PACX type of Edward with the Arm-and-Sceptre type associated with Harthacnut. The specimen is identified as Stockholm BEH Edward 319 and weighs 0.86 g.

These three further specimens establish that an Eadwine or Edwine was active at Lincoln during a remarkable sequence of political and numismatic change. Before the present discovery, the sequence began with Harold I's Jewel Cross coinage, continued through Harthacnut's Arm-and-Sceptre coinage and extended into the transitional coinage of the opening years of Edward the Confessor's reign. The newly recognised Cnut Short Cross specimen can now be placed immediately before the Harold I coin, indicating an earlier commencement of work at the Lincoln mint by Eadwine than suggested by Mossop's volume.

The chronological implications are striking. Cnut's Short Cross coinage belongs broadly to the latter part of his reign, terminating with his death in 1035. Harold I's coinage followed from 1035 until 1040, while Harthacnut's Arm-and-Sceptre coinage belongs principally to his effective rule in England from 1040 to 1042. The Edward/Harthacnut mule belongs to the transition into Edward the Confessor's reign. The occurrences of Eadwine therefore potentially span approximately twelve years, from the later part of Cnut's reign to the beginning of Edward's.

It is important, nevertheless, to distinguish between a strong hypothesis and a demonstrated identification. The recurrence of the same uncommon personal name at the same mint on successive issues provides circumstantial evidence for continuity, but it does not by itself prove that all the coins were struck under the same moneyer, though this author believes this to be a likely interpretation. Such continuity is entirely plausible in the context of Anglo-Saxon minting. Moneyers were skilled personnel whose expertise was valuable to the administration of the coinage, and examples are known elsewhere of moneyers appearing under successive rulers. The politically unstable period between 1035 and 1042 provides a particularly interesting setting in which to examine such continuity, since the succession from Cnut to Harold, from Harold to Harthacnut, and subsequently to Edward produced several distinct coinage types within a relatively short period.

The close similarity in weight among Mossop's three specimens is also worth noting, although it should not be overstated. The Harold I Eadwine weighs 0.87 g, the Harthacnut Eadwine 0.87 g, and the Edwardian mule 0.86 g, while the newly recognised Cnut specimen weighs 0.93 g. The four weights fall within a remarkably narrow range. Individual Anglo-Saxon pennies naturally exhibit substantial variation through clipping, wear, manufacturing tolerances and other factors,

so weight cannot be used to establish identity. Nevertheless, there is certainly nothing in the 0.93g weight of the Cnut coin that conflicts with its possible association with the later Lincoln Eadwine specimens.

The present evidence suggests that the Hosker Haynes Cnut Short Cross penny represents more than an isolated rarity. It is an exceptionally rare Lincoln moneyer/mint combination, presently represented by only two known specimens, which share the same reverse die. The type appears to be absent from EMC and from the Cnut Lincoln material published by Mossop and in SCBI Copenhagen XIV. Mossop records three subsequent Lincoln occurrences of the same or a very similar moneyer's name under Harold I and Harthacnut, with an Edwine also occurring on a transitional Edward the Confessor mule. Taken together, these occurrences suggest the possibility of a moneyer's career extending through one of the most interesting periods of transition in Anglo-Saxon numismatics, although whether the Cnut Eadwine and these later occurrences represent the same individual remains unproven.

The discovery of even one further Cnut Lincoln Eadwine penny if struck from a different obverse or reverse die, would be of considerable importance in better establishing the scale of the issue, and any reader having or knowing of such a coin is encouraged to contact me by use of the Blog's comment box.

Collectors of Cnut's coinage may also wish to look out for other rare moneyers from Lincoln; including Ælfnoth, Osmund, Vathlauss, Iosteinn and Crinan.

