

The Moneyers of St. Edmund

By Veronica Smart

The independent coinages struck by the Viking invaders in the Danelaw are as enigmatic as they are historically interesting, and none more so than that struck in honour of the royal saint Edmund who was killed during a Danish raid on Suffolk in 869 (1). The event is mentioned without much comment by the West Saxon writers of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, and by the time his first biography was written over a hundred years later by Abbo of Fleury it had gained the accretions of edifying myth, with similarities – indeed, with explicit comparisons – with the passions of Our Lord and St. Sebastian. During his lifetime, as King of the East Angles, Edmund had been responsible for the last native coinage of his kingdom. In 878 East Anglia came under Danish rule through the partition of the Treaty of Wedmore, and Guthrum, the Danish signatory, struck a coinage there in his baptismal name of Æthelstan, which closely imitates that of his godfather king Alfred.

The St. Edmund memorial coinage names no secular ruler but the obverse design – a large A in the field – recalls earlier East Anglian types, and the associations of the saint are wholly East Anglian. Links with Alfred's last coinage, and the provenance of such an overwhelming proportion of the known coins from the Cuerdale hoard (2) have provided a chronology of c. 890-c.905. Dating, location, and the difficulties

against attributing the coinage solely and unequivocally to anywhere in East Anglia, have been discussed comprehensively by Mr. C. E. Blunt.

The most explicit feature of this coinage, apart from the SC EADMVND REX on the obverse, is the record of the moneyers' names which it provides. The nature of this record is remarkable, since the great majority of these names are not English, nor even Scandinavian, but continental in origin. This fact was recognised at least as long ago as the compilation of the British Museum Catalogue (3) in the 1890s but so far no attempt has been made to relate the names to their probable etyma and thus establish what the proportions are. The great hindrance to such a survey is the mass of blundered and incomprehensible legends which make up a large part of this issue. For many of the names one or two good readings exist, consisting of a complete and comprehensible name sometimes latinised, followed by a legible MONETA or ME FECIT. Other dies render the name more carelessly but still recognisably, but there then remains a body of material ranging from possible connections with the known names, to pseudo-epigraphy. Often too it is not clear how the legend should be divided, whether Latin endings other than in *-us* have been attempted, whether MR may stand for the element *-mar* or be part of the monetarius abbreviation.

Occasionally features proper to the obverse legend stray on to the reverse. Whilst it is not true to say that 'good' dies are the earlier, since the post-Cuerdale coins are no worse than the rest, it may be that within the output of one moneyer 'good' dies were provided by a literate or at any rate careful craftsman which were subsequently copied more haphazardly.

Here I am attempting only to assess the recognisable names and the variants which appear to belong to them. The more barbarous material may give up valuable secrets to a die-study, but is unlikely to make much of a philological return. Where possible I give a 'good' form followed by variants. All instances cited without other reference may be found in the British Museum Catalogue.

1. Continental names

Abonel. The best forms appear in ABONELMONE, ABONELLOA. Numerous dies contain Abbonoe, Abboe. Some forms therefore may denote uncompounded *Abbo* F. 11 but in others the derivative *Abonel* M. 13a 'formation romane' is clearly intended.

An **Abenel** appears as a moneyer of Æthelstan-Guthrum and **Abonel** for Æthelstan.

Adalbert. Numerous good readings of **Adalbert**, **Adelbert** point to CG *Adalbert* F. 163, M. 15b. Forms in AOAL- are also numerous, where O may stand for D, but in CG sources ao is sometimes found as a spelling for o in the elemen *Odal-*, cf. *Odalbert* below.

Adlanto Rigold 1958? Blunt p. 238. CG *Adaland* F. 156, and 174 where forms in *-lant* occur.

Adradus (also **Adiret**?). CG *Adrad* F. 157, M. 14b. For *-ret* cf. OE names, **Edret**.

Adus. For **Adradus** above, or uncompounded *Ado* F. 152. Cf. also **Arus**, **Alus**.

Aifio. ? CG *Affo*, *Effo* F. 14, M. 20b.

Ainmer. CG *Ainmar* M. 25a.

Alus. ? CG *Alo* F. 52, M. 32b. Cf. **Adus**, **Arus**.

Ansiger (also **Ansigar**, **Ansier**). CG. *Ansigar*, *Ansier* F. 126, M. 38b.

Ansfred. CG *Ansfred*, *Ansifrid* F. 125, M. 38b.

Arus. ?CG *Aro* F. 135. Cf. **Adus**, **Alus**.

Bado, Badi. CG *Bado* F. 225, M. 49b.

Bascic. Perhaps a derivative of CG *Bas-* F. 248-9, 252-3, M. 49b, cf. *Bezeco*, *Betcecho*, *Bassac*.

Berincari. CG *Beren-*, *Beringar* F. 269, M. 53b. (Fig. 1.1).

Berner BM 1921 anonymous presentation. This is a very common form of CG *Berenher* F. 269-70, M. 53b, but cf. *Beornere* BMC AS II 89, a moneyer of Edward the Elder, where the same elements appear in an OE form.

Beslin. CG *Betselin*, *Bezelin* F. 254. It is not certain whether BMC no. 280 which appears to read **Besecin** should be associated with this name or the next.



Fig. 1. Fully legible coins of continental-named moneyers. 1. *Beringar*. 2. *Bosecin*. All illustrations from the Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, National Museum, Copenhagen.

Bosecin (also **Bomecn**, **Bomicn**, where M is presumably to be read as a form of angular S placed sideways). Probably CG *Bosi-* F. 329, M. 60b with the Low German diminutive suffix *-kin* F. 356 but cf. also *Bosochind* F. 329 where the second element is *kind* 'child'. (Fig. 1.2).

Cunrnet, **Cunriiete**. ?CG *Cunrad* F. 374; for *-ret* cf. **Adiret**, OE **Eadret**.

Deinolt. CG *Thegenold* F. 1408, M. 66a.

Edulf. CG *Edulf* F. 450 but perhaps OE *Eadwulf*.

Eldecar. CG *Hildegard* M. 130a.

Elismus. *Elis-* detached from Biblical names M. 79a; the suffix *-smus* is also West Frankish, F. 1349.

Ergemond. Probably CG *Argamund* F. 144-5; for *a/e* initial variation in this element cf. *Ergefede*, *Ercamar* *ibid*.

Erlefredus. CG *Erlefrid*, *-fred* F. 468, M. 81a-b.

Espertel SCBI 26 5. Possibly a diminutive of CG *Ansbert* but *Es-* as a variant is rare at this period and not found in West Frankish where the name would have acquired the Romance suffix *-el*. Perhaps Latin *Expertus*, recorded once as a personal name M. II 49 may be considered as the base.

Evvrām. The closest parallel is in M. 48a sub *Awī* 'watermeadow' which gives *Aviramnus*; for the variant *Ev-* see *Evigrimus* *ibid*. CG *Ew-* 'time, eternity' F. 49, M. 86a is not recorded with *-hramn* or equivalent.

Fredemund (also **Fredemun** and ?**Franovndo**). CG *Fredemund* f. 536, M. 93a.

Gilenart. CG *Gail-* with internal extension in *-n*; M. 98a *Gelenert*. The only equivalent in F. is *Keilhart* 568.

Giselfred. CG *Gislefred* F. 652, M. 110b.

Gisler. For above? or CG *Gislehar*, *Gislerus* M. 111a.

Gisleca? In a problematical group of coins presumably all from the same moneyer the initial appears as G, R, retrograde R, round and angular S. The best reading is probably *Gisle-*. For the suffix *-co*, *-ca* see F. 353-4 but it is not recorded with *Gisle-* nor with any form of *Ris-* or *Sis-*. A short form of **Giselfred** above? (4).

Gotolbert Blunt p. 247. CG *Godalbert*, *Gotolbert* F. 686, M. 113b. *Godal-* is an extension of the stem *God-*.

Grimo (also **Grime**). CG *Grimo* F. 670, M. 116a.

Gundbert. CG *Gundbert* F. 699-700, M. 116b-117a. This name also appears on coins of Edward the Elder and of a 'Sitric comes' c. 890-900.

Haiebert. CG *Hagabert* F. 716, *Haibertus*, *Heibertus* M. 120a.

Hamin (also **Hemnc**; **Hamni** retrograde). The controversial reading HEMNCREXE has given rise to speculation that this may be a royal rather than a moneyer's name, but **Hamin mone** (and perhaps **Hamni mon** retrograde SCBI 4 147) may well denote the same person. The name *Haming*, *Heming*, though old and common in Danish as a byname SPLY 138 is not necessarily Scandinavian, being found early in Frankish and Low German as a derivative of *Haimo*, *Hemmo*, from *Haim-* 'dwelling place' F. 731-2, M. 122b.

Hartmari. CG *Hartmar* F. 756, M. 123b.

Hludovicus (also ? **Hodu(mr)beco**). CG *Hludovic* F. 855, M. 133b.

Husca (HVSCAMMO). If this division of the legend is correct, an uncompounded name in *Hus-* cf. *Husicho* F. 936. Cf. also OE *Hysca* Redin 156. Scand. *Hus-* is known only from original bynames such as *Huscarl*, *Husman* SPLY 146.

Iohanne. Biblical, from Hebrew *Jochanan*, and as such likely to be continental.

Isemund. CG *Isemund* F. 972.

Isembalt BM ex Seaby 1971. CG *Isenbald* F. 973, M. 147a.

Milo. MILOMEECTS found on the obverse of a coin whose reverse reads **Oanddert me.** F. 1122-3, M. 169 relate *Milo* to *Mild-* 'merciful', according to F. of great antiquity, (whence also Lat. *Milo*).

Martinus. Ultimately from Latin *Mars*, the name was especially popular in France because of St. Martin of Tours, apostle to the Gauls and patron saint of the Merovingians, M. 76a-b.

Nordvico. One coin found at Northampton provides this reading, which has been interpreted as the placename Norwich as mint-name. Although this name appears on the obverse (cf. **Milo** above) it is equally possible that this is the personal name *Nordvic* F. 1171, M. 174b.

Odomer (ODOMERLAEX, ODOMONERLIAX). If not the simplex *Odo* F. 186, M. 45b, with *monetarius* abbreviations and unintelligible space-filling, then perhaps CG *Audomar*, *Odomar* F. 198, M. 44b.

Odulbert (also **Odulber, -be, -b**). CG *Odalbert* F. 1184-5, M. 175a. *Odal-* relates to *odal* 'native land' and thus should not be confused with **Adalbert** above.

Odulf (also *Odulfus*). CG *Aud-*, *Od-ulf* F. 205, M. 45a.

Otbert (also retrograde, and **Otberus**). CG *Aud-*, *Ot-bert* F. 190, M. 43a.

Otibvini (also **Otibvin, Otibini**). Perhaps CG *Aud- Ot-wini* but the dies are numerous and consistently contain *b*. This could possibly have arisen

through a continental engraver's unfamiliarity with the OE graph **ƿ**.

Ouran. Very uncertain. The reading *Quran* from a mark on several dies beside the O seems to me unlikely. A possible interpretation might be to take O as D (cf. AOAL for *Adal-* above) and read *Duran*, from CG *Durand* F. 435, M. 76a.

Pancrad private collection Blunt p. 247. Possibly for *Dancrad*, *Thancrad* F. 1404-5 M. 65a.

Rannl SCBI 26 6. Possibly *Hramnulf*, *Rannulf* F. 872, M. 135.

Rather. CG *Rather* F. 1214, M. 181b. **Reart** and **Rerar**, otherwise unintelligible, may be blunderings of this name.

Remigius. Latin *Remigius*, popularised by St. Remigius bishop of Reims, M II 97b.

Rodbetus (also **Roidibert**). CG *Rodbert* F. 893, M. 136a.

Rodul Vatican find. CG *Hrodulf* F. 919, M. 138b.

Sigemund (also **Siemond -mund, Simund, Simundus, Semund and** blundered forms). CG Sigimund F. 1330, M. 198b but see also OE names.

Stephan (also **Stephaes**) Gk *Stephanos*, popular in Frankish sources from the cult of St. Stephen the first martyr, M. II 108. Also found as a moneyer's name on coins of Alfred's last type.

Tedred. CG *Tedrad* M. 69b. F. 1389-90 takes the *Ted-* names separately as from *taita* 'cheerful' whereas M. treats them with *Deod-*, *Theod-* 'people' which seems preferable.

Tedwin. The best reading is TEDVVINVSMEFC but other forms are TIBVINIOMER and TBVIN-

ROMI, TBINROMEID. The name intended is probably CG *Tedwin* F. 1390, 1453, M. 70, for which forms in *Did-* also occur. for *-bvini* cf **Otibvini** above.

Walter. CG *Walter* F. 1507, M. 213a.

Walucus Blunt p. 247. CG *Walach*, *Walaco* found in this form *Walacus* F. 1513, M. 215a. An unpounded name in *Walah-* 'stranger, foreigner'.

Wandefred. CG *Wandfrid* F. 1526, M. 216.

Widbald, Wigbald? One die reads VVIG-BALDVSME but several others have **Widald, Widbald, Widboldus, Widbolds**. D may possibly stand for retrograde G. Both *Widbald* F. 1565, M. 220b and *Wigbald* F. 1579, M. 222b are common in CG sources; *Wigb(e)ald* is also found as an OE name. A moneyer Wigbald strikes in Alfred's last coinage.

Winedulf (also **Winedlf** and blundered forms). CG *Winidulf* F. 1620, M. 227b.

Wineger (also **Winiger, Winier** and blundered forms) CG *Wineger* F. 1613, M. 226b. A Winigerus strikes Alfred's last type.

2. Old English names, and names possibly Old English

Chenapa. This appears to be an attempt at rendering OE *cnapa* 'boy, servant' in continental orthography. *Cnapa* as a personal name in OE is known only from coins. (Fig. 2.1.).

Cipic. Perhaps OE *Cypping* PNDB 221.

Degemund (also **-mond, Dagemond -mund, Daiamond -mund, Daemond, Deimund, Dagiemund** and blundered forms). Only two instances of CG *Dagamund* are known, F. 395, but *Dægmond* is recorded in several OE charters of the 9th cent. Searle 162. (Fig. 2.2).

Eadret. OE *Eadred* PNDB 233.

Edwinus (also **Aedinvivn, Aoedinvivn?**) OE *Eadwine* PNDB 238-40.

Edulfus. Probably OE *Eadwulf* PNDB 240, but CG *Edulf* is recorded F. 450.

Roddsii ? SCBI 26 16. Very uncertain, but included here since *-sige (-sii)* is rare in CG names but common in OE. Perhaps an unrecorded **Hrothsige*. (Fig. 2.3.).

Osvulf. Probably OE *Oswulf* PNDB 341. A CG *Osulf* is found F. 132, but the usual CG form is in *Ans-*.

Sigemund. *Sigemund* is recorded in several OE charters of the 9th cent. Searle 421 but see also Continental names above.

Wigbald. Possibly OE, but see Continental names above.

Gulcreo. Possibly for OE *Wulfred* PNDB 422-3.



Fig. 2. Old English names? 1. *Chenapa*. 2. *Daiamond*. 3. *Roddsii*.

3. Names possibly Scandinavian

Asten. An element *Ast-* 'branch, lance' is found in CG names but is not recorded with the second element -*stan* or its equivalent. Cf. Scand. *Hasteinn* SPLY 135, PNDB 287, but see also **Sten** below.

Elof. Perhaps contained in ELOFROEDREI. Scand. *Elof* SPLY 74.

Sten (also **Stien**). *Stein-* is found as an element in CG names but occurs uncompounded only in the fem. *Steina* F. 1359. In all the Scandinavian languages the uncompounded name *Sten*, *Steinn* is fairly common SPLY 263. (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Scandinavian name? *Sten*.

On this telling more than sixty names of continental origin can be distinguished. Perhaps eleven, some of which are very doubtful, may be Old English and two (or three?) may possibly be Scandinavian. In most cases the continental names are recognisable as such because one of the component elements is unknown or rarely used in Old English. In those other instances, where the name has been considered continental only

because of the form in which it is found, it is not impossible that its bearer may have been an Anglo-Saxon, and his name adapted into continental orthography. Up to a dozen names may fall into this category, but such a scribal alteration, far from diminishing the role of continental moneyers in this coinage, would suggest a measure of authority and control rather than simply the involvement of artisans.

The Continental Germanic names appear for the most part to have been distributed throughout the area in which the language was spoken, but as the M. references show, almost all are to be found in West Frankish sources, i.e. approximately from the territory of modern France. The names Martinus and Remigius have a particularly French reference; certain features such as variation on elements from Biblical names (*Elismus*), extension of elements by -l and -n (*Gotolbert*, *Gilenart*), and the use of the diminutive



Fig. 4. Obscure blundered legends. 1. *DOHRNIEISF*. 2. *OIIHOHEAII-AIRI*.

suffix -el (Abonel) are associated with the West Franks, although -*cin* (in Boscⁱⁿ?) is Low German.

Clearly, then, the sudden appearance of such large numbers of continental names in a Danelaw coinage presents a problem. Continental moneyers' names are of course not confined to the St. Edmund coinage, but their dominance there demands some explanation. I have sketched elsewhere (5) the outlines of continental involvement in the Anglo-Saxon coinage; briefly, such names do occur, but are scarce before the issue of Alfred's last type. Thereafter their share of the moneyers' names grows gradually until in the mid tenth century continental names take between twenty and thirty per cent of the total. This begins to decline in Edgar's reign, and in the post-Reform coinage continental names are certainly present, but in nowhere near such a strong position. The St. Edmund involvement is altogether of a different order from continental moneyers' names elsewhere even at their peak.

Keary (6) has two suggestions to explain the St. Edmund moneyers. The first takes account of the relationship between the St. Edmund coinage and the Danish settlement of the eastern counties and supposes a large number of Frankish soldiers or captives amongst the Great Army. The documentary evidence is sparse, and the placename evidence inextricably overlaid by post-Conquest continental immigration, but there seems little reason to believe that the western continental element in the Scandinavian settlement of the Danelaw was of such a proportion that the incidence of continental names on the coinage could in any way be a reflection of the population at large. If the St. Edmund names represent an influx of first-generation immigrants, then it seems more likely that they were introduced or encouraged because of their particular skills.

The implication behind Keary's other suggestion is attractive. It is that the St. Edmund moneyers may have come from a large merchant class of continental descent already resident in England. Again, there is no evidence for such a class, but names in documentary sources tend to tell us about landowners and clerics rather than merchants. If such was the case, the problem is then why they should have become so heavily involved in the production of coinage at this particular time. Previous to the Danish settlement the East Anglian moneyers all bear English names, with the possible exceptions of Reghelm (7) and Rægenhere (8). The Danish king Guthrum, on the other hand, employed moneyers with the continental names Abenel, Berter, Guntere and Iudelberd, amongst a total of perhaps eight intelligible names on his coins (9). The mere fact that the rulers have no experience in producing a coinage may be immaterial, as the later example of Cnut would demonstrate, but the Danish raids on East Anglia may have thoroughly destroyed fiscal organisation. We cannot be certain whether the deficiency was made up by new immigrants or from a continental-descended community of extraordinary conservatism in giving and recording names.

One final tentative suggestion: granted that without the Cuerdale find our knowledge of the St. Edmund coinage would be meagre, it was obviously struck on a considerable scale and thus may equal in some ways an increase in the output of the coinage, comparable with the expansion of coinage under Alfred and his successors in which continental-named moneyers began to take a larger part. There may, then, have been a shortage of personnel amongst the Anglo-Saxon craftsmen from whom moneyers had hitherto been drawn.

This paper has no pretensions to be definitive on the St. Edmund moneyers. I have attempted to give a philological base for the discussion of some questions that I have aired, rather than answered. I have ventured here outside the area in which Professor Malmer and I have for many years been colleagues, but have been able to do so because our collaboration in the later Viking Age series has helped to keep alive for me an interest in the names which appear – so tantalisingly – in the brief inscriptions of the Anglo-Saxon coinage.

Notes

1. ASC s.a. 870.
2. Thompson 1956 no. 112; Galster 1962, pp. 1-36.
3. BMC 2 p. xlv-xlv.
4. Okasha 1968 Tables 1a, 1b give an epigraphic form of g (G3) similar to the initial most frequently found on coins of this moneyer, BMC 532-8. In the Lanteglos and Yarm inscriptions this symbol has become similar to an S as in BMC 542. These forms of G are, according to Okasha, insular, and could perhaps have been mistaken by a continental-trained die-cutter for retrograde R, whence possibly also R.
5. Smart, forthcoming.
6. BMC 2 loc. cit.
7. Pagan 1982, p. 42, 44.
8. BMC 1 p. 85, 88.
9. BMC 1 p. 95-6.

Literature

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Two of the Saxon Chronicles parallel. Edited by Charles Plummer on the basis of an edition by John Earle 1889.

- British Museum Catalogue. Anglo-Saxon Coins* vol. 1 by Herbert Grueber and Charles Keary, vol. 2 by Charles Keary, edited by R. S. Poole, 1887, reprinted 1960.
- Blunt, C. E.: *The St. Edmund Memorial Coinage. Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology* vol. 31, 1968, p. 234-54.
- Fellows Jensen, Gillian, *Scandinavian Personal Names in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.* Copenhagen 1968.
- Förstemann, Ernst: *Altdeutsches Namenbuch, I. Personennamen.* Bonn 1900. (reprinted 1968).
- Galster, Georg: *Cuerdale-Fundet og de danske vikingekonger i det 9. århundrede, Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1962, pp. 1-36, English Summary.
- Morlet, Marie-Therese: *Les Noms de personne sur le territoire de l'ancien Gaule du VI-XII siècle. I. Les noms issus du germanique continental. II. Les noms latins ou transmis par le latin.* 1968. All references are to I unless otherwise specified.
- Okasha, Elizabeth: *The non-Runic scripts of Anglo-Saxon inscriptions. Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* vol. 4, p. 321-38.
- Pagan, H. E.: *The coinage of the East Anglian kingdom 825-70. British Numismatic Journal* vol. 52 1982, p. 41-83.
- Thompson, J. D. A.: *Inventory of British Coin-hoards AD 600-1500.* 1956.
- Rigold, S. E.: *Finds of St. Edmund Memorial and other Anglo-Saxon coins from excavations at Thetford. British Numismatic Journal* vol. 29 1958, p. 189-90.
- Smart, Veronica, forthcoming: *Scandinavians, Celts and Germans in Anglo-Saxon England, the evidence of the moneyers' names.*
- von Feilitzen, Olof: *The pre-conquest personal names of Domesday Book. Nomina Germanica* 3. Uppsala 1937.

Abbreviations

- ASC = *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.*
- BMC = *British Museum Catalogue.*
- F = Förstemann 1900.
- M. = Morlet 1968.
- PNUB = von Feilitzen 1937.
- SPLY = Fellows Jensen 1968.