A new *Agnus Dei/Last Small Cross* mule

SIMON KEYNES AND RORY NAISMITH

The Lenborough hoard has produced the twenty-third coin struck from *Agnus Dei* dies, which is also the second known mule of an *Agnus Dei* obverse with a *Last Small Cross* reverse. It is illustrated in Gareth Williams's preceding article as Fig. 7 (p. 304). This specimen adds to the small group of English finds of *Agnus Dei* pennies, which previously consisted of three single-finds. Lenborough is therefore the first ever English hoard to contain an *Agnus Dei* coin, mule or otherwise. The presence of just one penny of the type in an assemblage of almost 1,000 coins of Æthelred II (with a large proportion of the total consisting of the types either side of *Agnus Dei*) reinforces the rarity of the issue. Detailed research into the hoard may unveil more about the circumstances behind its composition, including the chronological profile of the *Last Small Cross* element, and thereby add to the general picture of the context in which *Agnus Dei* was produced.

Obv. +ÆÐELRED REX ⱭNGLORVM. *Rev.* +ÆÐELPINE ON STⱭNFO.
Tablet: trapezoid, inscribed ⱭG NV.
Weight: 1.74g.
Same obverse die as Keynes and Naismith, 'Agnus Dei Pennies' (n. 1), nos. 18 and 19(?), and same reverse die as mule *a* and *Last Small Cross* pennies SCBI 11 103, SCBI 27 1189–90, and SCBI 45 77.

The coin was minted in Stamford by the moneyer Æthelwine. It therefore fits comfortably into the pattern of *Agnus Dei* minting recently laid out by the present authors:[1] both the mint and the moneyer are already known from coins of this rare and remarkable type. So too, in fact, are both of the dies used to strike the Lenborough penny. The obverse, somewhat double-struck on the Lenborough specimen, is possibly identical with that of the one other full *Agnus Dei* penny known for Æthelwine (Keynes and Naismith 19), although the latter is only known from a nineteenth-century drawing, so any identification must remain tentative. However, the obverse of the Lenborough penny can be matched more confidently with that of Keynes and Naismith 18: a

[1] S. Keynes and R. Naismith, 'The *Agnus Dei* Pennies of King Æthelred the Unready', *ASE* 40 (2011), 175–223.

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fragmentary *Agnus Dei* penny also from Stamford but by a different moneyer (Æscwig). The reverse (*Last Small Cross*) die of the Lenborough mule is the same as that of the mule previously known (Keynes and Naismith mule *a*); it is also known from a number of full *Last Small Cross* pennies, listed above.

The Lenborough mule offers a valuable insight into mechanisms of production at Stamford, the most significant of the mint-towns known to have issued *Agnus Dei* pennies, and the source of both known mules. This coin reveals the first case of *Agnus Dei* dies being shared by more than one moneyer, and the first case of a moneyer using at least two *Agnus Dei* obverse dies, both of which were also utilized with *Last Small Cross* reverses. As a rule, late Anglo-Saxon moneyers kept to their own dies, most likely because each moneyer operated a separate minting workshop.[2] Instances of moneyers sharing obverse dies, as in the case of Æthelwine and Æscwig, presumably represent the two sharing equipment and potentially even premises. This could have occurred for a number of reasons, one possibility being shortages in supply and pressure on production during the minting of *Agnus Dei*. The very existence of two mules, from different *Agnus Dei* obverse dies used at the same mint-place, out of a corpus of just twenty-three specimens also points tentatively towards the same conclusion. These circumstances indicate something of the complexity of this short-lived coin issue, which placed strain on regular mechanisms of production.

[2] The best evidence for this arrangement derives from mid-eleventh-century Winchester: see M. Biddle and D. Keene, 'Winchester in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: an Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, ed. M. Biddle, Winchester Stud. 1 (Oxford, 1976), 241–448, at 396–407.

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