

## **A new hoard of Alfred and Ceowulf II pennies: expanding the corpus of the Two Emperors type coins.**

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A recently-discovered hoard from Hertfordshire which is currently being catalogued at the British Museum (PAS BH-3384E4/2025 T137)<sup>1</sup> provides important additions to the corpus of joint coinages issued by Alfred of Wessex (871–99) and Ceowulf II of Mercia (874–9?). Overall, it is smaller but of a similar character and deposition date (c.879–80) to the Watlington hoard and what is known of the Herefordshire hoard.<sup>2</sup> Along with the Croydon hoard (deposited c.872) it is only the fourth late 9th-century mixed hoard comprising coinage with Scandinavian or Viking objects to have been found in southern England.<sup>3</sup>

The new hoard contains 21 coins of Alfred and Ceowulf II – eight pennies of Two Emperors type (five Alfred, three Ceowulf II) and 13 pennies of Cross-and-Lozenge type (one Alfred, nine Ceowulf II, three uncertain) – along with two silver ‘cigar’ shaped hacksilver ingots, two gold loops of similar form to the ‘finger ring’ found in the Beeston Tor hoard (deposited c. 875; Webster and Backhouse 1991, 269–70, no 245c), and iron and copper-alloy fittings. The Two Emperors pennies in the hoard form the focus of this short note, the eight new examples expanding the corpus to 30 finds, and together they provide important new information on the type, principally the range of moneyers represented and aspects of the known bust styles (see catalogue and Figure 2 below).

Most importantly, two of the moneyers are previously unknown for the Two Emperors. Coin 1, in the name of Alfred, was struck by the moneyer Beornheah, also listed for Burgred of Mercia’s Lunettes type and London Style Cross-and-Lozenge type in the name of Ceowulf II.<sup>4</sup> Coin 6, in the name of Ceowulf II, was struck by his namesake, Ceowulf, in both cases using the early spelling of the name with an ‘e’ rather than ‘i’, i.e. Ceowulf rather than Ciolwulf.<sup>5</sup> Ceowulf (moneyer) is known for Alfred’s Lunettes type and both Alfred and Ceowulf II’s London Style Cross-and-Lozenge issues.<sup>6</sup> The moneyer seen on Coin 8, Heahwulf, is new for the Two Emperors issues of Ceowulf II but is known from those of Alfred (Watlington nos 66–67), although the use of Bust Style 4 on the coin separates it from Alfred’s issues, both of which are in Bust Style 3. The other three moneyers, Ealdulf (Coin 4, Alfred), Eanred (Coin 5, Alfred) and Cimund (Coin 6, Ceowulf II), are known from either the Watlington hoard or the Herefordshire hoard. The evidence provided by these new examples supports the previous assertions that the Two Emperors type was struck in London.

Coin 6, however, is also interesting in that it is die-linked to coin 16 in the original Herefordshire hoard parcel, its bust style unique in the Two Emperors corpus. This is in the Lunettes style and, following Naylor’s scheme,<sup>7</sup> should be considered as Bust Style 6.

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<sup>1</sup> The case has yet to be ruled on by the coroner, so no further detail can be published

<sup>2</sup> Watlington: Naylor and Standley 2022; PAS SUR-4A4231/2015 T759; Herefordshire: Hoverd et al 2020; <https://www.herefordshirehoard.co.uk/>.

<sup>3</sup> Naylor 2022a, 155–60.

<sup>4</sup> Lyons and Mackay 2008, appendix 6; Naylor 2022b, table 5.3.

<sup>5</sup> Blackburn 2003, 213.

<sup>6</sup> Lyons and Mackay 2008, table 2; Naylor 2022b, table 5.2–5.3.

<sup>7</sup> Naylor 2022b, 68–9.

The bust styles of the other coins highlight that Bust Style 3 is Alfred's most substantive group,<sup>8</sup> with fewer examples of the Roman-influenced Bust Style 1.<sup>9</sup> Other aspects of interest include a possible brooch seen on the shoulder of Coin 3. This coin appears to be in Bust Style 3 – the diagonal shoulder line fits this style better than for Bust Style 1 – for which a brooch has not been seen before, although significant damage to the flan hampers certainty here, and the T shape seen on the bust of Coin 5 is a new motif within Bust Style 3. Ceolwulf II's coinage is more varied with each coin in the new hoard (Coins 6–8) showing different drapery styles which appears to reflect the variations in the overall corpus (cf. Watlington nos 3–5; Herefordshire no 16, 3; Naismith 2016 no 649). This initial analysis of this new hoard from Hertfordshire highlights the importance of even quite small parcels of new coins to our understanding of the Two Emperors type. With the expanding numbers of moneyers and styles now known it is clearly a far more significant coin issue than was envisaged even a decade ago.

## CATALOGUE OF TWO EMPERORS PENNIES IN THE HERTFORDSHIRE HOARD

### *Alfred the Great (871–99)*

1. Bust style 1; moneyer: Beornheah; obv: +0ELFRED REX ONGL[ ]; rev. BER<sup>o</sup>ØMONETO; wt. 1.14 g (fragment).
2. Bust style undetermined; moneyer: unknown; obv: [ ]GL[ ]; rev: [ ]T0[ ]; wt. 0.39 g (fragment).
3. Bust style 3 var?; moneyer: unknown; obv: +0ELFR[ ]; rev: [ ]B[ ]; wt. 0.85 g (fragment).
4. Bust style 3; moneyer: Eanred; obv: +0ELFRED REX ANGLO+; rev: E0DVLF MONETO; wt. 1.33 g.
5. Bust style 3; moneyer: Eadwulf; obv: +ǣELFRED REX NGLO+; rev: E0DVLF MONETO; wt. 1.33 g.

### *Ceolwulf II of Mercia (874–9?)*

6. Bust style 6; moneyer: Cimund?; obv: +CEOLVVLF REX; rev: CIMVND MON; wt. 1.40 g.
7. Bust style 2; moneyer: Ceolwulf; obv: +CEOLVVLF REX M; rev: CEOLVVLF MONETO; wt. 1.44 g.
8. Bust style 4; moneyer: Heahwulf; obv: CEOLVVLF REX MER; rev: ĒAVVLF MONETO; wt. 1.25 g.

With thanks to William Mackay for his assistance with moneyer names.

<sup>8</sup> Coins 4–5, possibly 3; cf. Watlington nos 59–63, 65–8; Herefordshire 11–12; PAS SF-06FF49.

<sup>9</sup> Coin 1; Watlington no 64;; Naismith 2016 no 1417.

Figure 1 Coin no 16 from the Herefordshire hoard, die linked to coin no 6 in Hertfordshire ©British Museum.

Figure 2. The eight Two Emperors types in the Hertfordshire Hoard ©British Museum

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