

New Dies for the Moneyer Odo at Bury St Edmunds

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In his key work on the mint of Bury St Edmunds, Dr Robin Eaglen (2006, 81) makes reference to the moneyer 'Odo' or 'Oddo' – who is currently known to strike coins of type XIII (star in lozenge fleury, struck c. 1123) and XIV (pellets in quatrefoil, struck c. 1124) during the later reign of Henry I. As of writing, a total of 8 coins struck by Odo in this period are known; one of type XIII and seven of type XIV (Eaglen 2006, 81). It is considered likely that this moneyer is the 'Odde' who strikes at Thetford in Henry I type XV and Stephen type I, although this cannot be proven definitively. However, a coin of Stephen type I in the collection of David Palmer with the incomplete reverse legend seemingly rendered as [...]O:ON S:[...] may indicate that Odo also continued working at Bury. However, this attribution is not 100% certain (D Palmer pers. comm; Eaglen 2006, 100).

Amongst the corpus of known Bury coins from this period, Odo's are particularly distinctive due to the shortness of his name – a feature which results in somewhat lengthy renderings of the mint signature. These consist the following (after Eaglen 2006):

Type 13: SANTEEDMV

Type 14: SANCADM, SANCEDMVN, SANTIED[...]

In late August of 2020, a type XIII penny of Henry I was discovered near South Newbald in East Yorkshire (Fig. 1). This coin was duly recorded on the EMC (2020.0273) and quickly identified as a product of Odo from the Bury mint – the latter already demarcating its status as an important find, given that it represents only the second type XIII penny of this mint/moneyer combination known to exist.



Figure 1: The coin from South Newbald. Diameter: 20mm. Weight: Unknown. Images courtesy N Davey

This coin is described as follows:

Obverse: King's bust mantled and crowned left with sceptre before, +hENRICVS R:

Reverse: Star in lozenge fleury with trefoil of annulets in each angle - all the latter within an inner beaded border, +ODO(:?)[..]S.E/A[...]DMVND: ('N' and 'D' ligatured)

Although a rare find in its own right, this coin is of additional academic significance pertaining to the Bury mint in that it is struck from hitherto unpublished dies, different to those which struck the only other type XIII coin of Odo known to exist (Eaglen 2006, pl. 1, fig. 12). Unfortunately, the usual flatness encountered on Henry I's later coinage makes a full reading of the reverse legend impossible. However, judging by what remains – the legend on this new find suggests that it was an impressively literate rendering of the town's name. Given that there is space for at least two or three letters after the 'E' or 'A' following the pellet stop – the original signature could perhaps have been rendered as **S.E[EI]DMVND:** or **S.A[NTE]EDMVND:** However, the author acknowledges that these suggestions are wholly speculative.

Thanks are given to David Palmer for his help and encouragement in writing this short note, as well as to the finder for providing the necessary images, dimensions and findspot information.

Reference

Eaglen, R, J. 2006. *The Abbey and Mint of Bury St Edmunds to 1279*. BNS Special Publication no. 5. London: Spink and Son.

