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978-1-107-00662-1 - Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: The Southern English Kingdoms 757–865

Rory Naismith

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Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought

MONEY AND POWER IN
ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

This groundbreaking study of coinage in early medieval England is the first to take account of the very significant additions to the corpus of southern English coins discovered in recent years, and to situate this evidence within the wider historical context of Anglo-Saxon England and its continental neighbours. Its nine chapters integrate historical and numismatic research to explore who made early medieval coinage, who used it and why. The currency emerges as a significant resource accessible across society, and, through analysis of its production, circulation and use, the author shows that control over coinage could be a major asset. This control was guided as much by ideology as by economics and embraced several levels of power, from kings down to individual craftsmen. Thematic in approach, this innovative book offers an engaging, wide-ranging account of Anglo-Saxon coinage as a unique and revealing gauge for the interaction of society, economy and government.

RORY NAISMITH is a Junior Research Fellow at Clare College, Cambridge, working in the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge, and the Department of Coins and Medals at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107006621

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First published 2012

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

Naismith, Rory.

Money and power in Anglo-Saxon England : the southern English kingdoms,
757–865 / Rory Naismith.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in medieval life and thought : fourth series ; 80)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-00662-1 (hardback)

1. Coins, Anglo-Saxon—England, Southern. 2. Coinage—England, Southern—
History—To 1500. 3. Great Britain—History—Anglo-Saxon period, 449–1066.

4. Anglo-Saxons—Kings and rulers. 5. Coins, Anglo-Saxon.

6. Mints—England—History—To 1500. 7. Numismatics—England. I. Title.

CJ2490.N35 2011

737.4942—dc23

2011026076

ISBN 978-1-107-00662-1 Hardback

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Permission to reproduce the images in this volume was kindly given by the Trustees of the British Museum, the Trustees of the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Classical Numismatic Group (Lancaster, PA, and London), Dr Stewart Lyon and by another private collector, who wishes to remain anonymous. Figures are reproduced at ×2 life size.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with so many kind, learned and congenial colleagues in the studies of which this book and its companion volume *The Coinage of Southern England 796–865* (British Numismatic Society Special Publication 8) are the culmination. Medieval coinage and its interpretation have fascinated me since childhood, but my interest in them became serious only as a student at the University of Cambridge, where since 2002 I have split my time between the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, and the Fitzwilliam Museum's Department of Coins and Medals. Simon Keynes from the former and Mark Blackburn from the latter have been models of all that supervisors should be: guides, supporters and counsellors as well as fast friends. I also owe a collective debt of thanks to the members of both departments. In particular, Martin Allen at the Fitzwilliam generously shared his expertise on the Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds and later medieval English numismatics; Jonathan Jarrett, Adi Popescu and Elina Screen also stand out for help in a range of ways. In Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, Richard Dance read and commented on parts of the draft, and Rosalind Love and Paul Russell helped me with other specific points.

The doctoral research which lies behind this book was conducted at Trinity College, Cambridge, with the financial support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. I would like to thank Michael Metcalf and Fiona Edmonds for their role as examiners of the Ph.D. which resulted from it. Both provided valuable comments which have helped pave the way towards publication. I am also grateful to Gareth Williams for many years of helpful discussion and assistance at the British Museum. A Junior Research Fellowship at Clare College, Cambridge, has given me the opportunity to update and complete this volume for publication while working in a supportive and stimulating environment. Thanks are also due to Rosamond McKitterick for her efficiency,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00662-1 - Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: The Southern English Kingdoms 757–865

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Acknowledgements

suggestions and general advice as series editor, and to the team assembled by Cambridge University Press to see this volume through to completion, particularly Jo Bottrill, Christopher Feeney, Elizabeth Friend-Smith and Chloe Howell. Their thoroughness and expertise have improved the work immensely. I was lucky enough at various times to discuss this work as it developed with many others, some of whom kindly read portions of successive drafts or allowed me access to unpublished work of their own; these include Alex Burghart, Fiona Edmonds, Anna Gannon, Stewart Lyon, Neil Middleton, George Molyneaux, Hugh Pagan, Levi Roach, Elina Screen, Ben Snook, Lord Stewartby and Gareth Williams. Any errors which remain are, of course, my own.

Tres digiti scribunt et totum corpus laborat ('three fingers write but the whole body labours') were the words used by at least one medieval scribe to bemoan the toll which writing took on him. Advances in technology have spread the burden to more than three fingers, but the labour which goes into preparing a book remains considerable. This work has been made into a pleasure through the encouragement and companionship of my wife Brittany and my family; for this I owe them special thanks.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i> , cited from C. Plummer, ed., <i>Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel</i> , 2 vols. (Oxford, 1892–9), and <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation</i> , trans. D. Whitelock, with D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker (London, 1961) (which provides a corrected chronology)
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
ASPR	<i>The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records</i> , ed. G. P. Krapp and E. van K. Dobbie, 6 vols. (New York, 1931–42)
ASSAH	<i>Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History</i>
BCS	<i>Cartilaryum Saxonum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History</i> , ed. W. de G. Birch, 3 vols. (London, 1885–99)
BEASE	M. Lapidge, J. Blair, S. Keynes and D. Scragg, eds., <i>The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Anglo-Saxon England</i> (Oxford, 1999)
BMC	C. F. Keary and H. A. Grueber, <i>A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum. Anglo-Saxon Series</i> , 2 vols. (London, 1887–93)
BNJ	<i>British Numismatic Journal</i>
BSFN	<i>Bulletin de la Société française de numismatique</i>
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
Chick	D. Chick, <i>The Coinage of Offa and His Contemporaries</i> (London, 2010)
DOC	P. Grierson and M. Hendy, <i>Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection</i> , 5 vols. in 9 (Washington, DC, 1966–99)
EcHR	<i>Economic History Review</i>
EHD	D. Whitelock (trans.), <i>English Historical Documents</i> , vol. I, c. 500–1042, 2nd edn (London, 1979) [cited by document number]
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>

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EMC	Corpus of Early Medieval Coin Finds, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (www-cm.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/emc/)
EME	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
FEMA	C. Wickham, <i>Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800</i> (Oxford, 2005)
HE	Bede, <i>Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum</i> , ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969)
JECH	<i>Journal of Economic History</i>
MEC	P. Grierson and M. Blackburn, <i>Medieval European Coinage I: The Early Middle Ages (5th–10th Centuries)</i> (Cambridge, 1986)
MGH Capit.	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Capitularia. Legum sectio II, Capitularia regum Francorum</i> , ed. A. Boretius and V. Krause, 2 vols. (Hanover, 1883–98)
Conc.	<i>Concilia. Legum sectio III, Concilia II.i–ii (Concilia aevi Karolini)</i> , ed. A. Werminghoff (Hanover and Leipzig, 1906–8)
Epist.	<i>Epistolae III–VIII (Epistolae Merovingici et Karolini aevi I–VI)</i> (Hanover, 1892–1939)
Epp. sel.	<i>Epistolae selectae I (Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus)</i> , ed. M. Tangl (Berlin, 1916)
Poet.	<i>Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini</i> , ed. E. Dümmler, L. Traube, P. von Winterfeld and K. Strecker, 4 vols. (Hanover, 1881–99)
Naismith	R. Naismith, <i>The Coinage of Southern England 796–865</i> (London, 2011)
NC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
NCAH XIV	A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins and M. Whitby, eds., <i>The New Cambridge Ancient History XIV: Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, A.D. 425–600</i> (Cambridge, 2000)
NCMH I	P. Fouracre, ed., <i>The New Cambridge Medieval History I, c. 500–c. 700</i> (Cambridge, 2005)
NCMH II	R. McKitterick, ed., <i>The New Cambridge Medieval History II, c. 700–c. 900</i> (Cambridge, 1995)
NCMH III	T. Reuter, ed., <i>The New Cambridge Medieval History III, c. 900–c. 1024</i> (Cambridge, 1999)
NUMIS	Numismatic Information System, Geldmuseum, Utrecht (www.geldmuseum.nl/museum/content/dutch-coin-finds)
OLD	P. G. W. Glare et al., eds., <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (Oxford, 1968–82)

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PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme, British Museum (www.finds.org.uk)
PASE	Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England (www.pase.ac.uk/)
<i>P&P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series (Latina) prima</i> , ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–64)
S	P. Sawyer, <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> (London, 1968)
<i>SEHD</i>	F. Harmer, ed., <i>Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries</i> (Cambridge, 1914)
<i>Settimane</i>	<i>Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo</i>
<i>T&S</i>	D. M. Metcalf, <i>Thrymsas and Sceattas in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford</i> , 3 vols. (London, 1993–4)
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>