

DIES OF HENRI LE RUS

IAN JONES AND KEITH SUGDEN

Introduction

WILLIAM the Lion succeeded to the throne of Scotland in 1165, on the death of his older brother Malcolm, and died in 1214. His early coins formed a very small disparate issue, and his first major coinage did not take place until around 1174.¹ This coinage (the Crescent and Pellets coins) was provided by six moneyers (Alibode, William, Adam, Folpolt, Raul and Hue) at four named mints (Edinburgh, Berwick, Perth and Roxburgh), and lasted until 1195, when, according to the *Chronica de Mailros*, an ‘innovation’ of William’s coins took place.² This is accepted as referring to the commencement of the Short Cross and Stars coinage, which lasted until well after William’s death: indeed, coins in William’s name were probably struck until the 1230s, and the final phases of the coinage continued until 1250.³

Phase (a) of the Short Cross and Stars coinage was provided by three moneyers at three named mints: Hue at Edinburgh, Raul at Roxburgh and Walter at Perth.⁴ Although there were only two or (perhaps) three moneyers in phase (b), where the mints are not named, the numbers of obverse dies recorded by Stewartby (see Table 1) suggests that phase (b) was a larger issue than either phase (a) or the Crescent and Pellets coinages.⁵

TABLE 1. Obverse dies recorded by Stewartby

Crescent and Pellets	55
Short Cross and Stars, phase (a)	33
Short Cross and Stars, phase (b)	72
Short Cross and Stars, phase (c)	8
Short Cross and Stars, phases (d) and (e)	>13

It would seem that the two or three moneyers of phase (b) – Hue Walter and Henri le Rus – were either working at one mint for a prolonged period, or at several mints concurrently or consecutively; if consecutively, there would be no need to identify the place of minting, but if several mints were operating together, it would be strange if there were no ‘audit trail’ to identify poor-quality or fraudulent work. Burns suggested that, analogous with the later ‘Sterling’ coinage, the number of points to the stars in the reverse design might identify the mint producing the coin,⁶ but Stewartby has commented:

However, although I have noted a considerable number of obverse links between sterlings of these moneyers with different reverse type varieties, I have not included them here since I am very doubtful whether they were designed to indicate separate mints. This is partly because the number of points is indistinct . . . but more particularly because of the extensive and haphazard occurrence of links. . . . Such density of obverse linking seems more likely to have taken place within than between mints and, though not impossible if these moneyers were in charge of coinage at several mints, goes far beyond the linking observed in connection with the activity of the itinerant moneyers Walter and William under Alexander III.⁷

There is, however, no published study of the dies used in any phase of the Short Cross and Stars coinage, and this brief note aims to record all known obverse and reverse dies used by

Acknowledgements. The authors wish to thank the Fitzwilliam Museum, the National Museums of Scotland, Dix Noonan Webb, Messrs Spink, and the Portable Antiquities Scheme for permission to illustrate coins in their collections and publications respectively; coins from the British Museum are reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

¹ Stewart 1967, 10.

² Burns 1887, 50–1.

³ Stewart 1967, 16.

⁴ Burns 1887, 63–9; the issues discussed on pp. 70–3 are now considered to belong to phase (c).

⁵ Stewart 1967, 68.

⁶ Burns 1887, 90.

⁷ Stewart 1971, 264–5.

one moneyer, Henri le Rus, in phase (b) of the coinage. It can make no claim to completion, because it excludes an important private collection of Scottish coins, which would certainly have included pieces relevant to this study, but which was stolen before a photographic record of its contents could be made. Nevertheless, the relatively small numbers of coins that are the only known specimen from a die (two coins unique for the obverse die and three for the reverse die) suggest that the study may not be far from completion.

Results

Using Burns's plates as a template, photographs were assembled from the following sources:

- a. The collection of one of the authors (Ian Jones).
- b. Major public institutions.
- c. Sale catalogues and fixed price lists.
- d. Portable Antiquities Scheme and other on-line databases.

Thirteen obverse dies were identified, and twenty reverse dies, all of which are illustrated on **Pl. 34**. On stylistic grounds the obverse dies fall into three groups: an early group (dies A, B, and C), a middle group (dies D, E, F, G and H) resembling phase (b) class IV pennies, and a later group (dies I, J, K, L and M) of very crude busts. We have used the term 'early' for the first group of obverse dies, since they are linked with a reverse die including the mint signature **DEPT** (i.e. of Perth), assumed to be carried over from phase (a) pennies which normally carry a mint name; it is also generally accepted that die engraving quality deteriorates during a run of die-sinking, and the crude busts have been labelled 'late'. Reverse die linking was noted within each group (see Appendix and Fig. 1), but no links were seen between early, middle and late groups, perhaps suggesting discrete minting in three phases, separated either temporally or geographically. From the deteriorating quality of die engraving, it is perhaps more likely that minting continued over some years, possibly, but not necessarily, at Perth. There is certainly no support in the pattern of points of the reverse stars to suggest that the number of points has any particular significance; in any case they are often difficult to determine with any confidence.

This study is based on an examination of fifty-six coins, but, in view of the poor state of preservation of many pieces, some dies are difficult to distinguish from each other. Two coins apparently showing obverse die D with unrecorded reverse dies, noted by Burns, could not be located. Unfortunately, the actual chronology remains as obscure as ever.

APPENDIX. DIES OF HENRI LE RUS

<i>Obverse</i>	<i>Reverse</i>	<i>Coins</i>
A +LEREIWILT	1 hENRILERSVDEPT, 4×6 2 hENRILE[]V.S, 4×7	56B 57* (obv. and rev. ill.); INJ (cut half)
B +LERE[]AME	1 3 hENRILERV[], 4×6	56C* (obv. and rev. ill.) BM
C +LEREIWILT	4 hENRILERSWS, 4×5 3 5 SUREL:IRIIEh, 3×6, 1×5	51B; INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.) 51C* (rev. ill.) NCirc Feb. 2006, SCO352* (rev. ill.)
D LEREIWILA+	6 hENRILER[]S, 3×6, 1×5 7 hNRILER.:V:2, 2×7, 2×6 8 SVRELINEh, 2×7, 2×6 (Not illustrated); 4×5 (Not illustrated); 2×6, 2×5	60B; INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.) 61; FM*(rev. ill.) 61A* (rev. ill.)
E +LEREIWIL[]	9 hENRILERSVS, 4×6 11 8	60A* (rev. ill.) INJ (cut half) 61B* (obv. ill.)

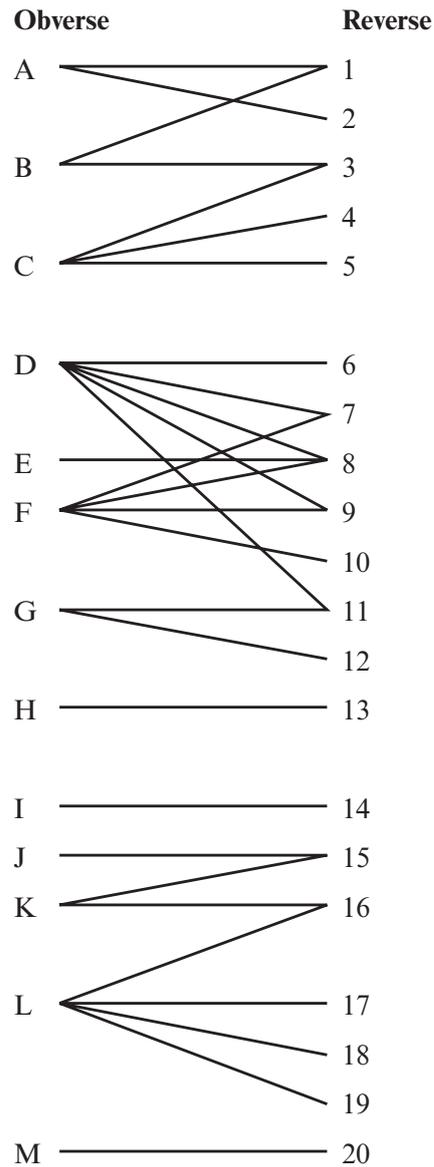


Fig. 1. Obverse and reverse die links.

<i>Obverse</i>	<i>Reverse</i>	<i>Coins</i>
F †LEREIWILT	7	AM
	8	NMS* (obv. ill.)
	9	BM
G †LEREIWILT	10 SVRELINEh, 2×5, 2×6	NMS* (rev. ill.)
	11 hENRILERV2, 4×6	INJ* (rev. ill.)
	12 SVRELINEh, 4×6	INJ×2; INJ (cut half)×2; NMS* (obv. and rev. ill.)
H †LE[]M	13 hE.ŃRILERV5, 4×6	INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.); PAS: SUR-F3CF84 (cut half)
I †LEREIWILAM	14 hENRILERV5, 4×6	INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.); NMS
J †LEREIWILAM	15 hENRILERV5, 4×6	51; INJ* (obv. ill.); BM* (rev. ill.)
K †LEAMLER	15	BM
	16 hENRILIRV, 2×6, 2×5	51A; INJ×2* (obv. and rev. ill.); <i>NCirc</i> Feb. 2008, SCO664

L +W[]AMR	16	BM; DNW sale 78, lot 513
	17 hENRI:RWS (from 2 o'clock), 1×6, 3×5	INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.); BM×2
	18 hENRILERV[], 4×6	Spink sale 57, lot 61* (rev. ill.); BM
	19 hE[]ERVS, 4×5	BM* (rev. ill.)
M +LERIIRWM	20 hENRILERVVS, 4×5	INJ* (obv. and rev. ill.)

Notes:

- (a) Numerals given for reverses are number of points to stars.
 (b) Numbered coins refer to illustrations in Burns 1887.
 (c) Coins illustrated on **Pl. 34** are indicated by an asterisk.

Abbreviations

AM	Ashmolean Museum
BM	British Museum
DNW	Dix Noonan Webb
FM	Fitzwilliam Museum
INJ	Collection of Ian Jones
NMS	National Museums of Scotland
PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme

REFERENCES

- Burns, E., 1887. *The Coinage of Scotland*, 3 vols (Edinburgh).
 Stewart, I.H., 1967. *The Scottish Coinage*, rev. edn. (London).
 Stewart, I., 1971. 'Scottish Mints' in R.A.G. Carson (ed.), *Mints, Dies and Currency* (London), 165–289.
 Stewart, I., 1977. 'The volume of early Scottish Coinage', in D.M. Metcalf (ed.), *Coinage in Medieval Scotland, 1100–1600*, BAR British Series 45 (Oxford), 65–72.

SOME SMALL MEDIEVAL HOARDS FROM SCOTLAND

N.M.M^cQ. HOLMES

The years 2009 and 2010 have seen the recovery of a number of very small and individually rather insignificant hoards from Scottish soil, but they are recorded here in order to place their existence in the public domain and to ensure that they take their place in the overall picture.

Cruggleton Farm, Garlieston, Wigtownshire (2009)

A hoard of twenty-five English pennies of Edward I was discovered by Mr John Senior with the aid of a metal-detector. They have been claimed as Treasure Trove and allocated to Stranraer Museum.

A *terminus post quem* of c.1306 for the concealment of the coins is provided by the latest of them, which belong to type 10cf2. Although this may be somewhat inconclusive in the case of such a small hoard, it is notable that almost half of the coins (eleven) are of types 10ab or 10cf1–2, issued between 1300 and c.1307, and that the later issues of 10cf which are unrepresented are just as common overall as the earlier ones.

LIST OF COINS

		<i>Wt (g)</i>
	<i>Canterbury</i>	
1	3g3; S3, stops?	1.16
2	4d	1.33
3	10ab3a; top-tilted S	1.35
4	10cf1	1.29
5	10cf2a; A2, E?, h2, N1	1.32



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J



K



L



M



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



18



19



20