FORGERY IN RELATION TO NUMISMATICS.

PART II. (EDWARD I. TO ELIZABETH).

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In studying the forgeries of the Plantagenet and later times, the chief feature to be noticed is the relative increase of contemporary forgeries. Imitations of money generally must be nearly as old as the moneys copied, and yet contemporary false pieces of Saxon and Norman times are of very rare occurrence whether taken by themselves or compared with later periods. The reasons for this are probably two-fold. The first may be sought in the tremendous penalties attaching to the offence, consisting of fines to a very large amount and the frequent addition of horrible mutilations of false moneyers, and the second, in the want of development of sufficient artistic skill to produce an imitation which would deceive even the primitive public among whom the pieces were to circulate. The addition of the moneyer’s name to the legend doubtless added considerable security, as it enlisted the whole band of moneyers in the detection of the criminal; anyhow, be this as it may, contemporary forgeries certainly become much more abundant when the moneyer’s name came to be omitted from the legend on the coin.

When the more recent forms of imitations are taken into account, such as forgeries of rare coins intended to deceive collectors, fabrications made at a date many years later than the date of the original piece, another curious circumstance calls for notice, in the fact that nearly all these pieces bear an inaccurate resemblance to the originals. It will thus be noticed in looking over the accompanying plates, that the really deceptive pieces struck from false dies are the contemporary forgeries.
Forgery in Relation to Numismatics.

The reasons here again are not far to seek and again are twofold. In the first place the more careful and elaborate treatment requires a more careful and elaborate attempt to deceive the expert, and secondly, coins of sufficient rarity to demand this extra labour are fewer and better known in relation to the mass of money circulated. To use a vulgar phrase, the game is not worth the candle.

As the result of these reasons the plan of including plates of genuine coins for comparison, as has been followed hitherto, has been relinquished as unnecessary in connection with coins that are so well known.

Plate I.

No. 2. Another example from different dies.
No. 3. Dublin penny of Edward I.; reverse legend retrograde. False dies.
No. 4. Another forgery of the same coin. False dies.
No. 5. Penny of Edward II. or III., London. A contemporary forgery in brass.
No. 6. Another of the same period, also contemporary and struck in brass.
No. 7. Penny of Edward III., with English N's. London. A contemporary forgery in copper silvered over. A deceptive struck coin. Mr. Fox has a coin from the same obverse die bearing the name of Canterbury on the reverse, also of copper.
No. 15. Quarter noble of Henry IV. Struck in silver and gilt. This piece has been included here most reluctantly. It is of extremely fine contemporary work and must have been made from mint dies. All the peculiarities of the early work of Henry IV. can be observed on it. A precisely similar original is unknown.
Illustrations of False Coins.

No. 17. Penny of London, probably intended as a copy of Henry V.'s coinage. A contemporary forgery.

PLATE II.

No. 19. Another forgery of the same description. Different dies.
No. 20. Another example also struck in brass.
No. 21. A groat of the same period, but the reverse mint-mark is a sun, a brass strike.
No. 22. A further brass strike, the work fair.
No. 24. A brass contemporary penny of the same king.
No. 25. Another example from different dies.
No. 27. Farthing of Edward IV. London. A cast invention.
No. 34. Half-groat of Richard III. Canterbury. A struck forgery of poor work, possibly contemporary. The piece is in the British Museum and is described and illustrated in Hawkins's Silver Coins of England. The king's name is spelt, REGARD.
No. 35. Groat of Richard III. London. The king's crown is arched.

Hawkins describes and figures this piece. His description is worthy of reproduction. He says, "One struck at London differs from all the rest in having the crown arched like Henry VII., but the cross
at the top (of the crown) barely piercing the inner circle; M M obverse rose (?) and pellet, reverse rose, or rose and sun united. The legend on the reverse is the usual one, but that on the obverse is RICARDVS DI GRACIA REX ANLIE. There is a rose on the breast and no stops between any of the words, M B (= British Museum) 37 grains unique.” Hawkins’s editor transcribes all alphabets into Roman capitals. The letters on the coin are all Gothic. The engraving in the textbook illustrates the description quoted above. If the accurate copy of the coin given in Plate II. be examined it will be found that the work of the obverse is entirely different from that of the reverse. The latter is clearly of the earlier time of Edward IV., before Henry VI.’s restoration, when the rose mint-mark was in use. The work of the obverse must be left to individual imagination as it does not resemble in the least that on any authorised English coin of any time. The extraordinary legend is equally inexplicable and unsatisfactory. Hawkins points out the weight, 37 grains, another most unsatisfactory feature. The coin must clearly merit illustration here, and, as such, Hawkins’s last remark about the piece, viz., unique, is to be welcomed.

PLATE III.

No. 36. Half-groat of Henry VII., of Canterbury. Early arched crown, variety with eye of Providence after POSVI. Cast from a genuine coin.


No. 39. Groat of Henry VII. with profile portrait SEPTIM following the king’s name. False dies; a poor copy of a very rare coin.

No. 40. Groat of Henry VII. Another forgery of the same coin, very well done. False dies.

No. 41. Shilling of Henry VIII. Mint-mark, lys. This is a genuine and very rare coin, but the head, which should be in low relief, has been extensively tooled. The reverse is untouched. A most valuable and fine coin spoilt.

No. 42. Shilling of Henry VIII. Cast from a genuine coin.

No. 43. Shilling of Henry VIII., as 41. False dies.
Illustrations of False Coins.

No. 44. Crown of Henry VIII. A cast invention. It is hardly a copy.

No. 45. Crown of Henry VIII. False dies. This invention often passes as original although not the least like the unique specimen in the Bodleian library. False dies. See British Numismatic Journal, vol. i, p. 139 et seq.

No. 46. Groat of Henry VIII., of Bristol. A cast from a genuine coin.

No. 47. Groat of Henry VIII. False dies, probably contemporary.

No. 48. Penny of Henry VIII., of Durham, with initials of Wolsey, cast from a genuine and common original.

No. 49. Halfpenny of Henry VIII., with portcullis. False dies.

PLATE IV.

No. 50. Half-sovereign of Edward VI., struck in gold, false dies, a deceptive piece.
A half-crown of Edward VI. in the possession of Mr. Stroud, consists of two genuine shillings joined. The obverse having xxx altered from xii, unfigured.

No. 51. Groat of Edward VI. False dies.
No. 52. Shilling of Edward VI. Cast from a genuine coin.
No. 53. Shilling of Edward VI. Cast from a genuine coin.
No. 54. Shilling of Edward VI. False dies.
No. 55. Penny of Edward VI. with bust. False dies.
No. 56. Penny of Edward VI. Another forgery of the same coin. False dies.

No. 57. Penny of Edward VI. A further copy, again false dies.
No. 60. Shilling of Mary. Irish. Cast from a genuine coin.
No. 61. Shilling of Mary. Irish. False dies.
No. 62. The corresponding groat. False dies.
No. 63. The half-groat of the same set. False dies.
No. 64. Half-groat of Mary. English. The obverse from the same die as No. 63. Struck on another coin. False dies.
Nos. 59, 61, 62, 63 and 64 are said to be by Emery. The work is much better than that on the originals.

No. 65. Penny of Mary with bust. False dies.
No. 66. Penny of Mary with bust. False dies; a poor attempt.
No. 67. Shilling of Philip and Mary. The date, 1554, under the bust. Known in silver, copper and lead. False dies.
No. 68. Shilling from the same dies. 1554 has been altered to 1557.
No. 69. Testoon of Francis and Mary. Produced by alterations in the dies of No. 68.
No. 70. Testoon of Francis and Mary. Obverse from the same die as No. 69.
No. 71. Testoon of Mary. Reverse from the same die as No. 70. The coins of Ireland and Scotland have been illustrated here to show the connection between these and the English coins related to them. It would be impossible to even guess the relationship of No. 71 to 67 without having the intermediate coins to compare with them.
Mr. Stroud has a foreign coin about the size of a dollar, but cut down, on which the obverse of No. 67 has been impressed. This is probably intended for a half-crown.
No. 72. Half-groat of Philip and Mary. False dies.
No. 73. Half-groat of Philip and Mary. Probably produced from a coin of Elizabeth by alteration and tooling.
No. 74. Penny of Philip and Mary. False dies. A dangerous forgery.
No. 76. Half-crown of Elizabeth. Mint-mark, 1; roses have been added each side of the head. An invention, cast.
No. 78. Half-crown of Elizabeth. Mint-mark, 2. Altered from No. 77 by changing the numeral. The same dies.
No. 79. Half-crown of Elizabeth, from the same dies as No. 78, but the head has been altered to produce the extraordinary bust shown.
In the National Collection there is portion of a gold piece showing the same bust.
LEADEN TOKENS.

Nos. 1—8. DATED SPECIMENS.
9—12. NAME OR ADDRESS OF ISSUER.
13—15. ARMS OF TRADE GUILDS.
17—22. BEARING TRADE SIGNS.
23—28. BEARING HOUSE SIGNS.
29—32. MERCHANTS' MARKS.
35—36. GOTHIC INITIALS.
37—40. EARLY ECCLESIASTICAL.