A REVIEW OF THE PATTERN BROADS OF CHARLES II.

By E. C. Carter, M.D., M.R.C.P.

In presenting this short review on the subject covered by the title of this paper my first duty would appear to be to test the assumption that all the coins described as Patterns for Broads, in Charles II's reign, were the productions of Thomas Simon. A reference to such authorities as lay to my hand, and including the Coin Department at the British Museum, failed to show that any other of the recognized medallists of the period had produced trial pieces of this particular denomination.

The artists, besides the brothers Simon, who might have essayed similar patterns for a special new issue were Thos. Rawlins, David Ramage, and Jan Roettiers. Of these Rawlins, the moneyer of Charles I, had executed several dies for broads at one time in that reign. He had been reinstalled in the Mint on the Restoration, apparently as a reward for his loyalty and sufferings. He held that position till 1670 as official senior to both Simon and Roettiers, yet no current coin struck in that period is attributed to him. It is possible that this talented artist, who had been referred to by Evelyn in 1657 as a "debashied fellow," had lowered his capacity for work by drinking confusion to his Roundhead foes with too great perseverance in his season of adversity. Ramage had produced some patterns of considerable decorative merit during his service with the Commonwealth, but latterly he seems to have specialized in the farthing coinage both for Cromwell and Charles II, and had been described as "Farthing maker in the Tower." He died not later than 1662.
J. Roettiers, the designer of all the milled coins of Charles II's reign, did not arrive in this country, it appears, till 1661; that is a year after the issue of some of the series we are reviewing. It is supposed that he had virtually a promise of the appointment which he held so long in our Mint, and that this was the return for services rendered to the exiled monarch by his father in Antwerp. There is thus no evidence to show that anyone besides Simon attempted at this time patterns to improve and, as I hope to show, to enlarge the currency and its denominations.

It was impossible for the Crown to overlook Simon's work and merits, and on these he was continued in his former appointments and duties—being made responsible for the hammered coinage first issued in the reign—to hold his position till the arrival of a capable successor, or supplanter, in Roettiers should enable the Crown authorities to rid themselves of one who had not only helped to glorify the usurper's office, by commemorating his successes on land and sea, but who had shown the possibility of a currency mechanically far superior to any previously in use in this country as well as to that which he was allowed to furnish in the first issues of the new reign. This hammered currency was a fine effort as far as the dies were concerned. Yet, I think, it must be allowed that the series we are now considering reached a still higher artistic level in the several portraits of the king, while the technical processes rivalled the excellence of the Protector's patterns.

It seems almost impossible to escape the conclusion that the neglect of these efforts was, as previously suggested, a political one, and that Simon produced his patterns partly from his own expert enthusiasm for an improved currency, and partly as a personal appeal to the authorities, which found their most urgent but unavailing expression in the Petition Crown, dated 1663.

It is not the main object of this paper to dwell on minute differences in this series of patterns, but for completeness a certain detailed description is called for. Fortunately, it is not so tedious a catalogue as is furnished by the pattern florins of Victoria, or courage might have failed me.
We may say that there are five main varieties or types, which are as follows. They are all produced by the mill and screw, and in diameter measure 8 in Mionnet’s scale. In this they agree with Rawlins's pattern broads for Charles I, and Simon’s own coin for Oliver Cromwell.

Descriptions of the five different types of Thos. Simon's broads:

_Type I._

Obverse: Head to right laureated, bust with breastplate and drapery; legend, CAROLVS * II· REX.

Reverse: Four swept shields with arms of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, alternating with \( \frac{1}{12} \) crowned, and star in centre; legend, MAGNALIA· DEI 1660. Edge grained.

_Type II._

Obverse: Bust in high relief to right; legend, CAROLVS· II· D·G·MAG· BR·FR·ET·HI·REX.

Reverse: Square shield crowned with arms of the four kingdoms quarterly; legend, MAGNA· OPERA· DOMINI· 1660.

_Type III._

Obverse: Bust in high relief, crowned; legend as on the Coronation medal. T.S. below.

Reverse: As Type II.

_Type IV._

Composed of two reverses (a) swept shield crowned with arms of England and France quarterly; legend PROBASTI· ME· DNE· SICVT· ARGENTVM. (b) As Type II.

On edge *REVERSVS· SINE· CLADE· VICTOR ✠ SIMON F.

_Type V._

Obverse: Bust to left, laureated in low relief, S beneath; legend CAR· II· D·G·M·BR·FR·ET·HI·REX.

Reverse: Square shield, crowned arms of England and France, dimidiated in 1st and 4th quarters; legend, FLORENT· CONCORDIA· REGNA· 1662.
There are, then, on these coins four different reverse legends and two edge inscriptions with which we will deal in order.


MAGNA OPERA DOMINI is a variant of the same; or it may be translated "The works of the Lord are great".

PROBASTI ME D[OMIN]N[NE] SICVT ARGENTVM is also a sentence from the Vulgate, Psalm LXVI, v. 5: "Thou hast tried us as silver is tried."

REVERSVS SINE CLADE VICTOR, "Thou (or he) hast come back a conqueror without shedding of blood." This may be an original sentiment of Simon's. I am unable to trace it.

FLORENT CONCORDIA REGNA means "The kingdom that is in agreement flourishes."

One more edge inscription, however, must be noted. It is found on a copper striking of Type II which is probably unique. When it came into my hands the legend was given as VERGINEAM CAEVEAS TUTAMINE SOLVITO ZONAM, but it seems more likely to read ISTAM NE instead of TUTAMINE. As it is signed THO. SIMON we may suppose the artist was particularly satisfied with the hexameter here perpetrated. Neither version is good Latin, and the uncertainty of the reading, which is rubbed, makes exact translation doubtful. Much less so is the gist of the remark. It amounts to "Take off this maiden's girdle at your risk," and is evidently a warning similar to the grimly humorous effort on Cromwell's crown, "HAS NISI PERITVRVS MIHI ADIMAT NEMO", "Let no man take these letters off unless he wants to die."

The first four out of the five types, you will note, originated in 1660, the last in 1662, and it is to be remarked that the only metal in which the whole series is represented is silver; that three of the five are known to occur in gold, and a solitary one in copper.

The question as to the purpose of these issues deserves some study. There is no doubt of their being the work of T. Simon. This is shown by the signatures or initials on all of them. In Vertue's monograph on the medallic work of the brothers Simon,
published in 1753, Types 1 and 2 are figured and they are described as Coronation medals; the others are not noticed. By what authority they have all been considered as broads, and catalogued as such in the main collections dispersed at auction in recent years, I am unable to say. The obverses of course tell nothing one way or the other. But it seems more likely that the conventional reverses destined them for currency rather than for the essential purpose of a medal, viz., commemoration, which rightly gives the artist who produces it an opportunity to develop his fancy in suitable allegory.

I think we may briefly dismiss Types III and IV as having little or no bearing on the argument I am prepared to advance shortly. Type III is a pattern of considerable rarity, not being found in the National Collection. Its interest consists in its being a "mule," comprising the crowned bust of the Coronation medal, issued in 1661, with the plain shield reverse of Type II, dated 1660. It shows the possibility of this bust having been originally intended for the pattern issue, but it does not, of course, prove it. Type IV, it is plain, could have no use as a currency piece. The unique so-called obverse and its weight and inscribed edge give it a claim to notice apart from mere rarity.

Having thus disposed of two types, I wish to direct your attention in the three others to an important feature—the evidence of the scales in the case of actual specimens.

In Type I the low relief of the bust is quite in favour of its intended destination for currency. This coin is known in gold and silver. As is not uncommon with proofs and patterns, the examples struck in gold are generally below weight. The British Museum specimen weighs 130½ grains, Montagu’s and Murdoch’s were 137 and 132 grains respectively, and I have seen an unrubbed example of 120 grains, but that had probably been filed, as the edge only just cleared the legend.

On the other hand, silver strikings with grained or plain edge vary from 135 to 171·8 grains, and with the motto on the edge, Montagu’s weighed 193 grains and the British Museum’s 197½ grains.
Let us now take Type II, which occurs in three metals, that in copper being the only variety with a lettered edge. My own gold specimen and that in the British Museum have a weight of about 175 grains each, which corresponds with no useful value, while the size of the flan and the depth of the obverse die would require the amount of metal used, at the least. The flan of the copper specimen is, if anything, skimped for displaying satisfactorily the legend on the edge. Yet it weighs in rubbed condition as much as a currency broad, and if it had been struck in gold, a reference to a table of specific gravities proves that it would weigh close on 300 grains.

A calculation in the case of Type I shows that the heaviest silver specimen noted—that of 197 grains—if struck similarly in gold would weigh about 357 grains. Remembering the weight of the Cromwell Fifty-shilling pieces—350 grains—have we not found a clue to the meaning of some of the series?

It is evident to me, at any rate, that Type II is unsuited for a broad; it is probably not a medal on account of the design of the reverse, and this view is strengthened by the words of warning on the edge of the striking in copper. No one could be legally punished for defacing a medal or tampering with its edge, and indeed it would never occur to anyone to do so. Melting or selling would be the needy or the greedy man’s resort.

There remains to be noticed Type V. This differs from the others in being a fairly attainable gold coin in one or other of its three die varieties, while it is very rare in silver. The specimens are nearly all within a grain or two of their proper weight, the relief of the bust is low, making it quite suitable for currency, and the legend on the reverse is a revival of that on the sovereign of Charles I. Some of them look as if they had been in circulation. This type, dated 1662, constitutes Simon’s last and most practical effort to influence and control the improved coinage of the future.

The conclusions I have reached as the result of the facts I have tried to set out for your consideration may be summed up briefly. Type I was intended for a broad, or alternatively with a lettered edge for a higher denomination. Type II was intended to
be issued as a higher denomination only with a lettered edge. Type V was a broad and nothing else. In addition to the evidence of the coins themselves, I claim in support of my conclusions the facts of history both before and after these issues.

In Charles I’s reign Rawlins had struck a Five-pound piece—the Juxon medal—besides many treble sovereigns at Oxford. Simon himself had issued a small number of Fifty-shilling pieces with lettered edge from the dies of the Protector’s Broad. In the very next year after the Petition Crown was presented, Two-guinea pieces became current, to be followed, in 1668, by those of Five guineas. Modern custom does not favour such bulky pieces, but there was evidently a demand and a use for them at that time. On looking through the work of Kenyon who, if anything, tends to understatement in these matters, I find that in the following ninety years two-guinea pieces were issued thirty-two times and the five guineas no less than fifty-seven times. Simon’s intentions then, in the light I have tried to show them, would be fully explained and justified.

Without belittling Roettiers and his works, for he was a fine and competent medallist, the portraits and workmanship of these exhibits show equally with the Petition Crown that the Englishman was still the greater artist, and that he was at the height of his powers. A comparison of Simon’s likenesses of the King and of the Protector should have convinced an authority that the artist, like the medical man, in relation to his work has no religion and no politics. A whole-hearted recognition and a free hand would have enabled Simon in the space left to him before his untimely taking-off by the Plague in 1665, to furnish his country with a currency of a beauty and variety unsurpassed and probably not even approached in modern times.