AN UNPUBLISHED HALFPENNY OF JOHN BALIOL

By J. S. SHIRLEY-FOX

It is not easy in these days of intensive specialization and minute numismatic study to discover a British coin hitherto unknown to collectors, but such has apparently been my good fortune recently. The coin in question is a Scottish halfpenny of John Baliol, 1292–96, which has on the reverse the name of the mint where it was struck, instead of the usual legend REX SCOTORVM, which is a continuation of the obverse legend. The reading is GIVI | TAN | SAN | DRH and there is a mullet in the field in the GIVI and SAN quarters. Although the piercing of the mullet is not clear, I think it is likely that the objects are mullets rather than stars.

Burns, in his Coinage of Scotland, states that halfpennies of John Baliol with the mint name are not known, and I can find no reference to any since that publication appeared. I think, therefore, that this halfpenny of St. Andrews, which is certainly unpublished, can probably be regarded as unique.