REMARKS ON THE SILVER COINAGE OF HENRY VI

By H. ALEXANDER PARSONS

The coinages of Henry VI appear still to present problems which have, so far, not perhaps received the attention they warrant, or at least, if they have, the solutions have not yet been made available. The main reign from A.D. 1422 to A.D. 1461, although a long one, presents, in its silver coinage, but one general type. On the obverse there is a conventional full-faced bust, crowned, and with the hair exaggeratedly shown at the sides, the whole enclosed in a tressure of curves (on the groat and half-groat) and on all the coins surrounded by the legend. On the reverse, we have four quarters each containing three pellets, surrounded by two legends, an inner one and an outer one, in the case of the groats and half-groats, and by one legend, the mint-name, in the case of the other denominations; the whole impressed with a plain cross extending to the edges of the coins.

Notwithstanding this similarity of design throughout the whole period it has been the practice, from early times, to divide the coins of the reign into a number of distinct classes, based upon the presence on the coins of certain special marks or symbols, which are in addition to the general design of the money. Such a division was forced upon the early numismatists not merely by the presence on the coins of the symbols alluded to, which required some sort of explanation, but also by the absence of the large variety of initial mint-marks which formed so marked a feature of the following and all succeeding reigns, to the end of the “hammered” period, a feature which, apart from change of type, enabled the numismatist to evolve, with practical certainty, the sequence of the issues of the coins. The only decidedly different initial mint-marks known on the heavy silver coins of Henry VI are the plain cross, in varied forms and sometimes pierced, and the cross fleury, a number obviously insufficient to mark the frequent emissions of the reign. Hence arose a differentiation of the issues by symbols, the only effective method which the coins themselves presented. Hawkins in his Silver Coins of England laid down, on the basis of the symbols on the coins, a reasonable progressive
division of the issues, and under his classification the coins of the reign were divided into six classes, as follows:

1. The Annulet issue.
2. The Rosette-mascle issue.
5. The Pine-cone-pellet issue.

It should, perhaps, be observed that these issues do not include the "Light" coinage of Henry VI during the Restoration period, 1470–1, which can only be scientifically considered with the coins of Edward IV.

Mr. F. A. Walters, in his illuminating account of the silver coins of Henry VI, published in the *Numismatic Chronicle* of 1902, followed the divisions adopted by Hawkins, but he appeared to be inclined to consider that there was a further class consisting of coins identical, in all respects, with the first issue of Edward IV. These coins are marked with a lis on the neck, and have pellets at the sides of the crown. In the 1887 edition of Hawkins there is a passing reference to these lis-marked coins under Class VI.

Mr. Walters also brought under notice a decidedly different variety of the object hitherto known as the pine-cone, and he divided Hawkins's pine-cone-mascle issue, Class III, into two divisions, one marked with pine-cones and mascles and the other with what he called rose leaves and mascles.

The still more modern trend of classification, as exemplified in Dr. G. C. Brooke's work entitled *English Coins*, has resulted in an increase in the number of issues to eleven, by the constitution of the rose-leaf-mascle coins, above referred to, as a separate issue, by the introduction of the trefoil and trefoil-pellet issues (of which, however, the former of these two still retains the pine-cone on the tressure under the bust), and by the constitution, as a distinct issue, of certain coins of the reign considered by Dr. Brooke as having no marks on them, notwithstanding that they have the extra pellets on the reverse common to the later issues of the reign.

Mr. Walters, in his work before mentioned, also had the idea that the number of distinct issues should be largely increased, as is evident from his remark on the amount of
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silver coined “that the accounts from 1440 to 1460 agree very well with the number of small issues of which we have evidence during the period”. He goes on to state “that Hawkins and others divided these into three groups, Classes IV, V, and VI, but they could be divided into a considerably larger number”.

Following this idea in relation to the whole period there is a series of coins of the reign, comprising the groat, half-groat, and penny, and at present known of Calais and York, bearing a combination of symbols which would be difficult to place unless the series were constituted a distinct main issue. I allude to the coins, not uncommon so far as the groats are concerned, bearing the combination of the annulet and trefoil (Plate, fig. 5). These coins have, I believe, been hitherto regarded as a transitional issue, but such an explanation is not altogether convincing when it is recollected that between the true annulet issue and the first of the trefoil issues there are at least two extensive emissions, well known as the rosette-mascle and pine-cone-mascle issues. There are, in fact, no two contiguous issues that the annulet-trefoil coins could be a transition between, and there seems little or no alternative to constituting them a separate main issue.

These annulet-trefoil coins have annulets in the field of the obverse, and in one, instead of two, quarters of the reverse, and they bear trefoils at the left side of the crown, or after POSVI, or in both places. In the case of the penny, as there is no POSVI legend, the trefoil does not appear on the reverse, but it is evident on the left side of the crown.

The place in the sequence of issues of this distinctive coinage is, I suggest, after the pine-cone-mascle issue and, judged by the type of the initial mint-mark, the plain cross, before the pine-cone-trefoil issue, for on the latter coinage we get the initial mint-mark of the cross fleury for the first time, and this displaces, at first gradually, the plain cross of the previous coinages.

Apart from the difficulty of placing the annulet-trefoil coins above described, one has to bear in mind the possibility of having to consider some of the symbols solely as pyx trial marks, and not marks of distinct issues. These pyx trials may possibly, according to precedent, and at least in some years, have been made as frequently as four times annually.
We do not appear to know whether, in fact, the pyx trials were carried out so frequently as four times a year in the reign of Henry VI; the probabilities are against it. I venture to suggest that our first step to obtain a clear view of this problem must be to decide what combinations of symbols were adopted to mark the main issues, leaving the unappropriated balance, if any, or other peculiarities, to represent the differentiating marks of the intermediate pyx trials. It might, however, reasonably be surmised that a change in the symbols dividing the main issues formed the marking which would denote the first contribution of the issue to the pyx box.

Prior to the publication of Dr. Brooke’s English Coins, the division of the main issues or classes of Henry VI seems to have been based only upon the symbols, or combinations of them, appearing on such coins as have come down to us in fair numbers. Having regard, however, to the uncertainty of treasure trove, it is as unreasonable to consider that, because a combination of symbols appears only on a few coins of Henry VI, those coins cannot constitute a distinct general issue of money, as it would be to assert that, because only a few pennies of some of the rare types of, say, Henry I exist, they could not represent separate and general issues of money. The rarity of to-day may be a common coin to-morrow. In exemplification of this it may be mentioned that, prior to the Beaworth hoard of 1833, the pennies of the commonest type of William I, the Paxs type, were amongst the rarest coins of that king.

Instead, therefore, of relying solely on the coins for a decision as to the number of general issues of the reign, and then considering where such issues fall into the recorded periods of bullion coined, it is proposed to reverse the process and to consider first the recorded periods of bullion coined and then endeavour to fix the coins we have into those periods. At least we should have a more complete idea of the number of main issues.

That some such thought was in the mind of Mr. Walters at the time he wrote his paper on the silver coins of Henry VI is evident from his remark as follows. “I should be inclined to think that each of the accounts which Ruding describes as in bundles in the Tower represents the total amount of bullion coined during each of the separate issues which, by
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their mint-marks and other special characteristics, were no doubt confined to certain dates."

In the Numismatic Chronicle of 1929 there appears a series of monetary statistics relating to the period from 1377 to 1550 culled from the records by Miss E. Stokes, and entitled "Tables of bullion coined". So far as the reign of Henry VI is concerned, similar tables had previously been compiled by Mr. F. A. Walters from the same source. I was expecting to obtain considerable assistance from these details, but on examining them closely it was found that, so far as the reign of Henry VI is concerned, they relate only to the amounts of bullion purchased by the mint and, further, the details do not include the Calais accounts except for one entry of A.D. 1436 of bullion coined, mentioned by Mr. Walters, and subsequently referred to hereunder. For the present purpose the writer does not consider that those tables are of authoritative value in regard to the actual bullion coined but, in Ruding's still valuable work, Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain, a reference is given not only to the amounts of bullion purchased by the mint, but also to the quantities of bullion actually coined, together with the periods during which the money was made. Ruding's details also include the important Calais accounts.

A complete extract of the details furnished by Ruding is given in the Table (on p. 6), columns 2, 4, and 5. Mr. Walters in his paper on the silver coins of Henry VI, before mentioned, considered that these accounts in Ruding of bullion coined were nearly, if not quite, complete, with the exception of the interval between the eleventh and eighteenth years, and the absence of any Calais accounts after the pine-cone-mascle coinage. He, however, subsequently traced an entry of 1,770 lb. of silver coined in the Calais mint in February and March 1436, and this has been included with Ruding's details.

From this Table emerges the fact that on at least eleven separate occasions, which I have numbered at the side 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, definite sums were expended in separated periods in order to furnish coins for use in the kingdom including Calais, and it seems probable, as Mr. Walters suggested, that each of these eleven separated periods represent distinct issues of money differentiated from each other, in the absence of distinct changes of type
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Period, regnal</th>
<th>Period, datal</th>
<th>Mint</th>
<th>Amount coined</th>
<th>Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10th Hen. V to 3rd Hen. VI.</td>
<td>1422-5</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>£6,924 0 10 lb. oz. dwt.</td>
<td>Annulet. Fig. 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25 Feb, 2nd Hen. VI to 31 Jan. 6th year</td>
<td>1424-8</td>
<td>Calais</td>
<td>67,745 4 10</td>
<td>Rosette-mascle. Fig. 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>28 July, 3rd Hen. VI to 27 July 9th year</td>
<td>1425-31</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>4,919 9 10</td>
<td>Pine-cone-mascle. Fig. 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 Feb, 6th Hen. VI to 3 Aug. 9th year</td>
<td>1428-31</td>
<td>Calais</td>
<td>89,660 9 0</td>
<td>Pine-cone-mascle. Fig. 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12 Oct. 10th Hen. VI to 13 Oct. 11th year</td>
<td>1432-3</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>1,466 9 10</td>
<td>Leaf-mascle. Fig. 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11th Hen. VI</td>
<td>1433</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annulet-trefoil. Fig. 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No record</td>
<td>No record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pine-cone-trefoil. Fig. 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10 Feb. to 30 March 1436</td>
<td>1436</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,770 0 0*</td>
<td>Trefoils only on reverse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>18th and 19th years</td>
<td>No record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fig. 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>12th year</td>
<td>1447</td>
<td></td>
<td>88 7 5</td>
<td>Trefoil-pellet. Fig. 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>25th year</td>
<td>1448-50</td>
<td></td>
<td>651 2 15</td>
<td>Pine-cone-pellet. Fig. 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>24 June, 26th Hen. VI to 11 Oct. 28th year</td>
<td>1451-2</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,980 5 17</td>
<td>Cross-mullt. Fig. 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 April 31st Hen. VI to 28 Mar. 34th year</td>
<td>1453-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,075 3 15</td>
<td>Cross-mascle. Fig. 11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mich. 37th Hen. VI to Mich. 38th year</td>
<td>1459-60</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,103 2 0</td>
<td>Lis-pellet. Fig. 12.</td>
</tr>
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and legend, by the placing, in the field or in the legends, of clearly defined marks or symbols.

It will be observed from the Table that there is a considerable hiatus between the eleventh and eighteenth years, except for the record of A.D. 1436 subsequently discovered by Mr. Walters. Ruding was not altogether satisfied that he had seen all the accounts, and Mr. Walters's discovery shows that he had not. Further, the written, apart from the statistical, records of the Calais mint show that it was intermittently active during the period. Allowing for these missing accounts, it will be noticed that the number of issues of the reign, each probably distinguished by certain well-defined marks, amounted to thirteen, which can be conveniently labelled as shown in the last column of the Table. It will be noticed that one issue, number 4, is inserted in the period from 1433 to 1436 of which there is no record of bullion coined, and that in the period between 1436 and 1440 it is suggested that the Calais coins of the pine-cone-trefoil type were issued. Evidence for these insertions in the Table of bullion coined will be adduced later.

I will now give reasons for the order of issues as shown in the Table, although it should be mentioned that details have been published and inferences drawn by previous writers on this aspect of the subject, at least in connexion with some of the issues.

So far as the first and last coinages are concerned we appear to be on solid ground. The first or annulet coinage (Plate, fig. 1) is identical in practically all respects with the last or annulet issue of Henry V of London, although possibly the form of the initial mint-mark may be a means of dividing the coins of the two reigns. At least Mr. Walters thought so. There can be no reasonable doubt that this last coinage of Henry V, and first of Henry VI, was one continuative issue, and that it is represented by the entry of £6,924 os. 10d. worth of bullion coined under the years 1422-5. Further evidence of this is furnished by the annulet coins of the York mint, and by the records of that mint. Calais coins, identical in all respects with the London annulet coins of Henry V and VI, are in evidence in the greatest abundance, and they are no doubt the results of the use of the 67,745 odd pounds of bullion recorded as used during the years 1424 to 1428. We know from the records of the Calais mint that it did not
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recommence to strike money until after the commencement of the reign of Henry VI.

At the other end of the reign, no reasonable doubt can exist as to the proper place of Class number 13, the lis-pellet coinage (Plate, fig. 12), for it is identical, except as to the king’s name, with the relative issue of the heavy coinage of Edward IV. Although Ruding does not give details of bullion coined in the reign of Henry VI after the year 1460, the Table furnished by Miss E. Stokes in the Numismatic Chronicle of 1929 discloses that over 7,040 pounds of bullion were bought by the mint from Michaelmas 1460 to Michaelmas 1461, and there seems good reason to suppose that from this bullion was coined the lis-pellet issue of Henry VI and Edward IV, although the record is not so convincing as it would have been had it been of the amount of bullion actually coined into money.

Had Edward’s accession to the throne been a normal one it is probable that his lis-pellet coins would have continued to bear Henry’s name, but we know that it was a disputed succession, and whatever Edward’s claims may have been, he actually ascended the throne by right of conquest, and the earliest steps would need to be taken to alter the king’s name on the coins, if not the type or symbols. As neither the type, nor the marking, was altered it is a reasonable assumption that the lis-pellet issues of Henry VI and Edward IV followed each other without a break, and the accounts of bullion used for both would not be made up until the reign of the latter king, although the bullion would have been purchased and commenced to have been used in Henry’s reign.

A further feature, and one mentioned by Mr. Walters, which indicates the place of the lis-pellet issue, is the presence, on the coins, of the reverse initial mint-mark of the plain cross, a mark which had been discontinued from the coinages of Henry VI long before, and which is universally in evidence again on the coins of Edward IV. This temporary disappearance, on the reverse of the coins of Henry VI, of the initial mint-mark provides one reliable line of division between the issues of the reign, those with the initial mint-mark on the reverse falling into the first part of the period, and those issues without the mark falling into the latter part of the reign, before its reintroduction.
Examination of the coins shows that the trefoil issue (Plate, fig. 7) is the last of the earlier coinages to bear the initial mint-mark on the reverse; and from the trefoil-pellet issue to the cross coinages the initial mint-mark is absent on the reverse. On this test, therefore, issues one to seven group together in the first part of the reign, and issues nine to twelve group together in the latter part of the period.

In the early group of issues the annulet and rosette-mascle coinages (Plate, figs. 1 and 2) are linked together by a transition type with annulets on the obverse, and annulets and rosettes on the reverse. Although "mule" coins of non-consecutive issues are not unknown in this reign there is so frequent a series of mule coins combining a rosette-mascle obverse with a pine-cone-mascle reverse, and vice versa, that, added to the continuance of the mascle in conjunction with a new symbol, the pine-cone, on the latter issue, we are justified in considering that these two issues followed one another. The pine-cone-trefoil issue (Plate, fig. 6) is fixed to the appropriated period by the fact that the last of the Calais coins bear the marks of this issue. The Calais groat given by Walters to the pine-cone-pellet issue seems really to belong to the pine-cone-trefoil coinage with the trefoils omitted, for it has the mint-mark before POSVI, and is without the pellets of the pine-cone-pellet issue.

It will be observed from the Table of issues, that there is no record of the amount of bullion coined at the Calais mint corresponding with the London output of the pine-cone-trefoil issue, and that there is a hiatus between 1433 and 1436 in the records of bullion coined. The Rolls of Parliament, iv. 340, § 24, show, however, that the profits of the Calais mint, granted for five years from the 11th of November 1425 to the Treasurer and Victualler of the town,1 were continued, in 1429, for another five years in order to cover a Treasury grant of 10,000 marks.2 This would show that the Calais mint was active up to at least 1434, and the coins struck in this latter year may account for the leaf-mascle issue (Plate, fig. 4), which, owing to the presence of the mascles, almost certainly followed the pine-cone-mascle issue (Plate, fig. 3). Further, Mr. Walters had, in his collection, a groat with the reverse of the leaf-mascle issue linked with an ordinary pine-cone-mascle obverse.

1 Ruding, ii, p. 256.  
The Proceedings and Ordinances of Privy Council, iv. 306-7, also show that, on the 13th of December 1435, an issue of coining appliances was made to the Master of the Calais mint comprising 350 sets for groats, 600 for half-groats, 30 for pennies, and 60 for halfpennies and farthings. This issue of irons, which appears to have been unknown to Mr. Walters when he wrote his paper, implies the expectation of another fresh supply of coins marked differently from the preceding, and synchronizes with Mr. Walters’s own discovery of the 1,770 lb. of silver coined in February and March 1436. That earlier use of the irons was not made is explained by the entry in the Foreign Roll that from 30 March 1435 to 10 February 1436 no money was coined, on account of the war with Burgundy.

The above issue of coining irons and record of bullion coined would account for the annulet-trefoil issue (Plate, fig. 5), which, having regard to the use of those symbols, suggests the striking of the coins before, and contiguous to, the main trefoil issues. The scarcity of the annulet-trefoil coins is also explained by the comparatively small amount of bullion coined in 1436.

In the same year Calais was besieged by the Duke of Burgundy, with no doubt a further suspension of coining activity, but, according to the Proceedings and Ordinances of Privy Council, v. 131, twelve pyles and ninety-six cruses for groats and three pyles and twelve cruses each for half-groats, pennies, halfpennies and farthings were issued to the Master in January 1441. In the following year that office appears to have been abolished in favour of a Receiver and Keepership, and was combined with the Treasurership of the Town, vide Privy Council Proceedings, v. 283. This appears to end the coining activities of the Calais mint, although officials were appointed under various titles, no doubt as holders of sinecure offices.

I have accordingly bracketed the very rare issue of pinecone-trefoil Calais groats with the London output of 1440-1, number 6 on the Table (Plate, fig. 6), as I consider them the result of the small issue of coining irons to the Calais mint in January 1441, above mentioned. This allocation is justified on the grounds that this issue of irons is the last record

4 Ruding, ii. 256-7.
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we have of the activities of the Calais mint, and the pine-cone-trefoil groats are the last-known Calais coins of the reign. The London coins bearing the same symbols naturally belong to the same period and can therefore be appropriated to the definite record of bullion coined then. Dr. Brooke gives this issue to circa 1438 on the ground that Bishop Neville was appointed to the see of Durham in that year, and that he began his coinage with the pine-cone-trefoil marks. The evidence adduced above shows, however, that the issue was placed by Brooke rather earlier than was probably the case, and moreover there is no record of a coinage or of bullion coined in Calais from 1436 until January 1441. The Bishop of Durham evidently did not commence to coin for some time after his appointment to the see in 1438.

The present allocation of the Calais annulet-trefoil coins to 1436 and of the Calais pine-cone-trefoil coins to 1441 is also borne out by the relative numbers of these coins which have come down to us. The specimens of this annulet-trefoil issue, although rare, are much less so than those of the pine-cone-trefoil coins of Calais, and this is accounted for, at least in part, by the relative numbers of irons suggested above as used for each issue.

That the output of the Calais mint was much restricted after 1433 is indicated by the introduction of a new system of payment by piece-work for graving of the dies at this time. Instead of an annual salary of £20, as granted on the 23rd of November 1431, "so long as the quantity of money struck at Calais did not become less", the king's graver, under a new patent of 8 August 1433, was authorized to receive payment only from time to time for such dies as were required.¹ It has been indicated above that this new method of payment for graving of irons from time to time was carried out only on two occasions after the leaf-mascle issue, namely, in 1436 and 1441, corresponding with the rare annulet-trefoil and pine-cone-trefoil Calais coins. The new method of payment indicates that a considerable lessening of the activities of the Calais mint was anticipated in its last few years, and it would not be unreasonable to consider that the record of its coinages in the reign of Henry VI, as given here, is now complete.

At this point it should be mentioned that both Walters

¹ Num. Chron., 1918, p. 117.
and Brooke discontinued the use of the descriptive word pine-cone after the introduction of the true leaf-mascle issue, at the same time admitting that the objects afterwards depicted on the coins were rougher and coarser than those on the undoubted leaf-mascle issue. On the numerous coins I have seen bearing this debatable object it is as much like a pine-cone as a leaf. It is quite possible that the object is neither a pine-cone nor a leaf, but merely some conventional heraldic detail. As, however, since the time of Hawkins, if not before, the object has been called a pine-cone I retain this name, except for the true leaf issue number 4, in preference to introducing the later one of the leaf. It is to be said in favour of this preference that the pine-cone is of one shape only, whereas leaves are multi-shaped and therefore not so descriptive of the object on the coins. Then again this object is often without a stalk which a leaf should always have.

Mr. Walters suggested that the various issues of the "trefoil" coinage should be placed to the period 1445–52. Brooke, however, dates his "trefoil" issue to circa 1440 and places the trefoil-pellet coinage immediately after, but as these issues are later phases of the pine-cone-trefoil issue I consider that their place is likely to be considerably later in the decade, as shown against issue numbers 7 and 9 in the Table. Issue number 8, representing the very small emission of 88 pounds weight in bullion, has either failed to be represented in our cabinets to-day, as a distinctly marked coinage, or is to be sought in a further variation of the "trefoil" issues. Alternatively, the bullion was used in continuation of the "trefoil" issue of 1445–6, or in the following trefoil-pellet issue of 1448–50. This latter issue, number 9 on the Table (Plate, fig. 8), precedes the pine-cone-pellet issue, number 10 on the Table (Plate, fig. 9), in virtue of the introduction on it of the pellets which continued as a regular feature of the coinage throughout the remainder of the reign. The issue with trefoils only on the reverse, number 7 on the Table (Plate, fig. 7), follows the pine-cone-trefoil issue, number 6 on the Table, in virtue of the retention, at the point of the pressure under the bust, of the pine-cone of the preceding issue.

Reference should here be made to a few groats, referred to by Hawkins and subsequently by Walters, which are void
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of characteristic symbols on the obverse, but have the extra pellets, two or four, in the quarters of the reverse. Brooke constitutes these coins a distinct issue, made late in the reign, describing it as the unmarked issue, his number 9, notwithstanding the presence of the pellets. As, however, the numerous coins of the reign clearly indicate the practice of differentiating the issues by characteristic symbols, I think that it is more feasible to consider the unmarked coins as the product of dies from which the symbols were accidentally omitted by the die-sinker, or were omitted for purposes of a sub-pyx test. This idea is strengthened by the existence of groats, both of London and Calais, also without any characteristic symbols on the obverse, but having rosettes and mascles on the reverse. This latter feature removes these groats from those of the unmarked issue, above referred to, by a lengthy period and there could hardly have been two main issues unmarked on the obverse. Mr. Walters seemed to be inclined to consider these, and some other anomalous coins, as trials, but their weight, appearance, and the fact that they were found with circulated coins imply that they were regular currency, which a trial would not be.

The introduction of the pellets at the sides of the crown on the trefoil-pellet issue, number 9 on the Table (Plate, fig. 8), and their presence also on a few coins of the main pine-cone-trefoil issue serve to indicate that the well-known pine-cone-pellet coinage followed. The large amount of bullion recorded to have been struck into coins in 1451–2 agrees very well with the considerable number of these coins which have come down to us.

Brooke puts this pine-cone-pellet coinage to circa 1457, which implies the issue only of the very small "trefoil" and "trefoil-pellet" coinages between his dates 1438 to 1457, roughly about twenty years, a very long period indeed for two issues only, small, as these appear to have been, or otherwise. Moreover, there is no record of any bullion coined into money during this latter year.

Brooke was apparently led to his conclusion by the existence of a few pennies of William Booth, Bishop of Durham from 1457, which appear to have a cone on the breast, but they bear also the characteristic saltire cross of Hawkins's Class VI. and judging by his list of coins of Durham under
Remarks on the Silver Coinage of Henry VI

Henry VI, Brooke evidently was not himself altogether certain whether Booth’s pennies were of the pine-cone-pellet or cross-pellet issue. Hawkins and Walters had the same doubt. The evidence advanced in this paper points to these Booth coins being of the cross issues, the cone on them being in the nature of a purposeless repetition. It will also be remembered that pennies are known of mixed Neville and Booth dies, showing some lack of precision in the working of the Durham mint at this very time.

Having regard to the modern tendency for more intensive subdivision of our coinages since Walters wrote in 1902, I think an examination of the issues collectively grouped by Hawkins as Class VI, and followed by Walters and Brooke, will produce features that justify a more minute division of that class. An outstanding detail of these coins is that they introduce, for the first time, a striking and prominently placed symbol called the mullet or five-pointed star. This symbol appears generally after the king’s name and at the end of the obverse legend, and their cramped positions show that they were not intended as stops to fill up gaps. A second detail is that the mascle of the earlier coinages of the reign is revived, generally being placed after Henric and 6fl. In my view, these distinctive marks have the same significance as the earlier mascle, the rosette, the pine-cone and the trefoil of the preceding issues. In other words, they are marks characteristic of separate coinages. If one accepts the rosette-mascle and the pine-cone-mascle combinations as marking distinct issues, why not also the cross-mascle and cross-mullet combinations?

The recorded amounts of bullion coined after 1452 also indicate that two further separated issues were made, and these can, seemingly, be identified amongst the coins known to us only by a division of Hawkins’s Class VI. I have therefore ventured to consider that the mint entries from 1453 to 1460, numbers 11 and 12 on the Table, represent the bullion used for the two varieties which I have named the cross-mullet (Plate, fig. 10) and the cross-mascle issues (Plate, fig. 11). The extra pellets are also retained on these issues. These pellets appear to be part of the design on all the issues of approximately the latter half of the reign, and they continued into that of Edward IV.

1 English Coins, p. 147.
The above order is suggested on the grounds that the mascle is continued on the succeeding lis-pellet issue (Plate, fig. 12), and that it is also found on a few coins of the cross-mullet series, evidently marking the transition from that series to the cross-mascle issue. This order is also borne out in practical collecting experience. The amount of bullion used for the proposed cross-mullet coinage shows up nearly treble in quantity as compared with the cross-mascle issue and this agrees with the considerably greater number of mullet-marked groats in our cabinets.

As previously mentioned, it is a reasonable assumption that the special marks selected for each coinage, as above described, were noted for purposes of check at the first pyx trial of the issue. The position of these marks on the coins sometimes varied with the different denominations, and on the lowest denomination, the farthing, they were sometimes omitted through lack of space. It seems doubtful whether, during this troublous time, regular quarterly checks were made, but if such trials were, in fact, more frequent than one for each of the main issues detailed on the Table, the coins must have been marked in other ways than by the insertion on them of characteristic marks or symbols, as all such special marks known are sufficient only to account for the number of issues implied by the amounts of bullion coined, and allowing for such marks and initials as were purely personal badges of the ecclesiastical owners of the York and Durham dies, and necessary to differentiate their coins from those issued from York and Durham under the royal authority.

Examination of the actual specimens shows that the dies from which the money of this reign was struck were, in general, consistently well made, at least for the London and Calais coins, and although there are some errors of spelling, some misplacements of letters, and some deformed letters, such anomalies are not universal enough to be likely to have been designedly imported into all the new dies for pyx trial purposes. In my view they are merely die-sinkers' errors, for we cannot consider that these officials were immaculate.

We are left, seemingly, with the frequent variation in the arrangement of the symbols on the coins, or of their omission from the dies in places, or altogether as occurs in some cases. In this direction there may be some scope for differentiating
the coins if they were tested more frequently than once for each main issue, and I think investigation along those lines would afford the most promising results.

My thanks are due to the British Museum for the splendid casts used for the illustrations, and specially to the Keeper of the Coin and Medal Department for permission to use the Museum’s coins for Figures 4, 7, 11, and 12. The other illustrations are from coins in my own cabinet.