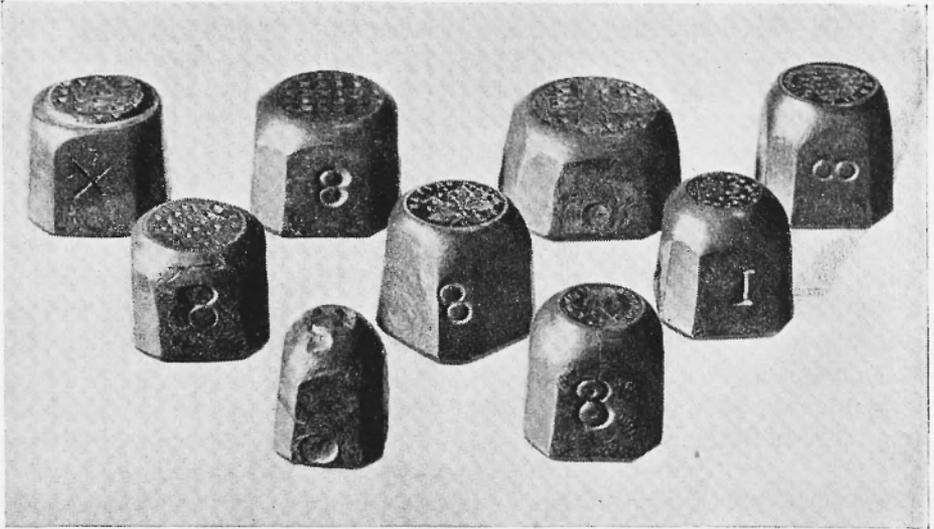


A NOTE ON SOME 18TH CENTURY DIES IN THE GLOUCESTER CITY MUSEUM

By OWEN F. PARSONS



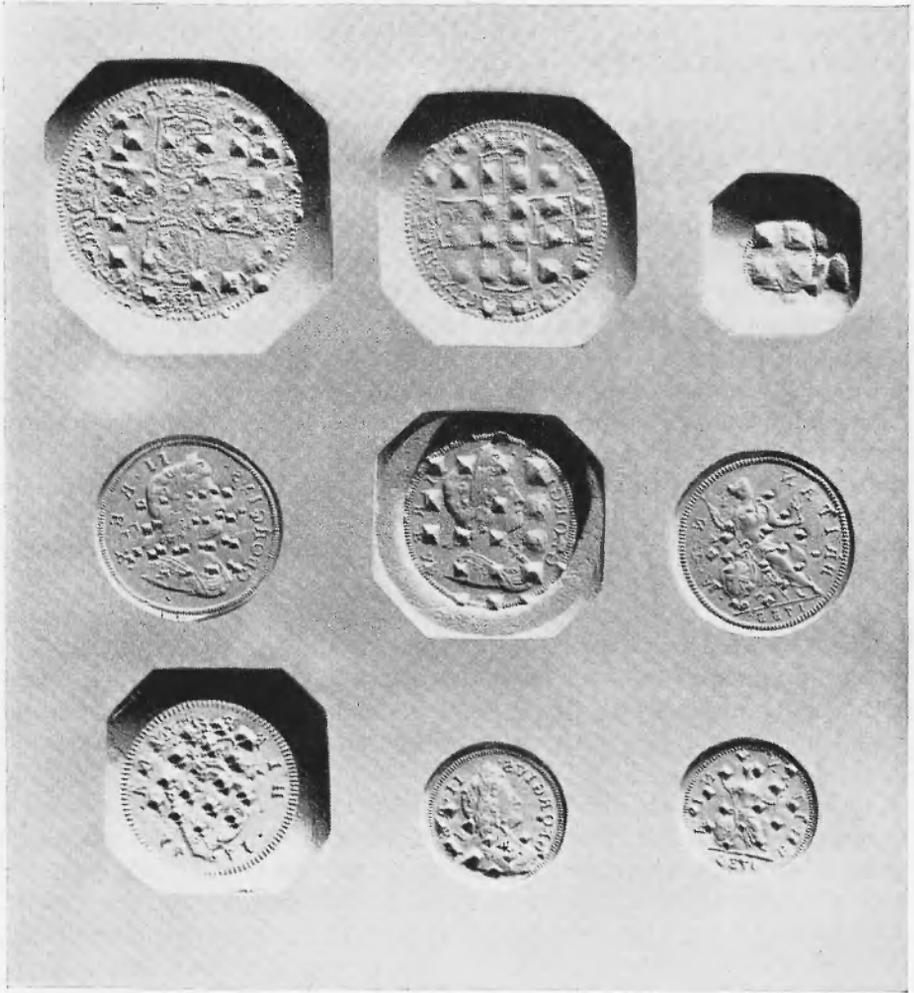
THE nine dies shown in the illustration above are of interest as being official dies for regal coins of George II, which have been defaced, probably before leaving the mint. All these dies show signs of use and are probably worn examples, defaced by being struck with a punch which has left a number of pyramidal depressions on the dies. This may be seen from the second illustration which is photographed from casts of the die faces kindly taken by the British Museum.

Three of the dies are for silver coins, the other six being for the copper series.

1. Reverse die for a crown dated 1746.
2. Reverse die for a half crown, dated 1745.
3. Obverse die for a Maundy penny of George II.
4. Obverse die for a young head halfpenny of George II.
5. Similar to No. 4, but the die has been shouldered as if to take a collar.
6. Reverse die for a halfpenny dated 1733, with a marked flaw adjacent to the T.
7. Reverse die for an Irish halfpenny, dated 1741.
8. Obverse die for a young head farthing of George II.
9. Reverse die for a farthing dated 1739.

Of these Nos. 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 all carry a large '8' impressed into the side of the die, that on No. 4 being sideways. No. 9 is impressed with a large '1', No. 5 has two incised cuts at right angles to form a cross, whilst Nos. 1 and 3 have no distinguishing marks. All the dies show traces of the four screws which centred and secured them in the press.

It is obviously unusual to come across official dies outside the Royal Mint even if discarded as worn out, because the risk of re-use by unauthorized persons is always present, but the fact that these have been defaced may indicate that they left the mint quite openly, perhaps not long after being taken



out of use. The dies were found, a little over twenty years ago, in the offices of an old-established firm of solicitors, who had acted for many years for the family now owning Archbishop Sharp's collection. It is tempting to assume that they might at some time have formed part of that collection, as some of the later owners would have been in a good position to acquire these dies quite openly and add them to the collection: they did add certain coins and medals down to about 1800.

I am indebted to the Gloucester City Museum for permission to publish these dies, and also to the British Museum who very kindly cleaned the dies before taking the casts.