CASTLECOMER TOKENS : AN INQUIRY

By W. A. SEABY

Mr. S. A. H. Whetmore has recently concluded his study of the rare countermarked silver tokens issued by mill owners, coal mine proprietors, bankers and other traders in northern Britain and Ireland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries 1. His second article on the Co. Kilkenny issue is all the more welcome (apart from its numismatic interest) as a piece of Irish social and economic history, based on the Ormonde manuscripts as well as contemporary accounts and official reports of the period.

Unfortunately Mr. Whetmore did not inquire closely enough into the extant coins themselves, although he cites a number of important sales dating back to Murdoch (1904) in which they figured; he also quotes from Aquilla Smith, Boyne and Davis, all of whom listed this stamp in their series of silver tokens. It is perhaps surprising that Smith, writing in 1855 2, seems to have been the first to mention the tokens although by that time they were at least forty years old. It suggests, of course, that comparatively few pieces escaped the melting pot and the present high price confirms such assumption. Smith, quoting Robertson, stated that the dowager Countess of Ormonde, not wishing to lose by the depreciated value of Spanish dollars of which she had a large number, caused them to be stamped five shillings and fivepence and this happened about forty years ago.

Several matters stand out. For instance, there is the vagueness in the statements made by a man who was not born until 1816 but who nevertheless lived and worked in Kilkenny and became founder and curator of the Archaeological Society’s museum; this later formed the basis of the collection of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland now in the National Museum. Then there is the fact that Aquilla Smith, most notable of Irish numismatists in the mid-nineteenth century, seems to have depended on Robertson’s report alone for his authority as to issuer and date of issue. Lindsay 3 does not record this token, and Dean Dawson, who was rector at Castlecomer, appears to have had no example in his considerable numismatic cabinet 4. Further, there is the denomination of 5s. 5d.

It is not the purpose of this survey to discuss in detail the economic reasons for the countermarking of Spanish dollars and other foreign coins for general or local circulation in Britain and Ireland. Davis has covered the ground well in his introduction 5, Col. Morrieson reviewed the period 1757-1817 at the centenary of the modern coinage in 1917 6, while Whetmore has attempted to resolve the dating for some at least of the countermarked silver in Britain 7. It would seem that the various banks, mills and collieries issued such tokens at different dates between c. 1787 and 1823 8, yet Acts prohibiting the manufacture of private tokens occur in 1812 and 1813, and their circulation finally became illegal on 20 December 1814 9.

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4 No example appears to have been acquired by the Royal Irish Academy at his death and none is found listed in his sale, Sotheby, 30 June/5 July 1839.
5 W. J. Davis, Nineteenth Century Token Coinage (1964), pp. xl.
6 BNJ, xiv (1917), pp. 121-49.
7 BNJ, xxviii, pp. 945-8.
8 The stamp at the Cork Cotton Works is dated 1787, the mill having been opened in 1782; J. McK & Son, Greenock, were counterstamping on dollars as late as 1823 (see Howard Gibbs sale, Schulman, N.Y., 19 Nov. 1960, lot 350).
9 Whetmore, BNJ, xxviii, p. 647.
From the time when the Hon. William Wellesley Pole was appointed Master of the Royal Mint in September 1814 to the reinstatement of regal currency in 1816/17, the price of silver began to fall, with some appreciation in the early part of 1815. Apart from legislation, economic conditions were, on the whole, less favourable for the issue of private tokens after that period. But Whetmore has well summarised the pros and cons as to whether countermarked dollars constituted tokens in a legal sense.

Under the Union, Ireland was subject to the same acts as Great Britain but her fiscal position was more precarious. This was due to separate monetary systems, the almost universal use in the south of Ireland of paper currency both for gold and silver, and the fluctuations in the exchange rate between Dublin and London. Ireland's economy was finally forged into that of Britain in the reign of George IV, so had the Castlecomer pieces been issued as late as 1815 they would in any case have been short-lived.

The value of five shillings and five pence is not an arbitrary market figure but the Irish equivalent of five shillings sterling prior to 1826. The fact that the English shilling passed for 1s. 1d. in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries meant that foreign specie, scarce though it was in Ireland, circulated more freely than British gold and silver coin which, when obtainable, was banked, hoarded or melted down. If, too, the issue of the tokens was restricted to one particular year we have good reason to scrutinise most carefully the extant examples, particularly the dates on the dollars and the design of the countermark.

The matter is raised here because even a cursory examination of the coins themselves, and photographic illustrations in catalogues, reveals that there were at least two distinct stamps, the determining factors being as follows: (1) **Curved top** to the first 5 and the same to the second but turning upwards a little more at the tip, **narrow opening** to loops below; the small **d** for pence with long downward pointed tail and the lower part of the letter sloping upwards to right; the margin of the countermark consisting of a series of radiating grooves divided by fine lines to give a **cusped edge**; surface of stamp mark convex. (2) **Shallow curved tops** to both 5s., **wide opening** to loops below; the small **d** with shorter tail and the lower part of letter turned slightly to left; **serrated edge** to countermark; surface of stamp mark **flat**.

There are several minor differences, such as the spacing of the border lettering and its punctuation, but these criteria are less easily discernible. Captain F. Pridmore also points out that No. 2 stamp appears to have been applied by pressure, probably in a vice, using a piece of wood or similar material to avoid metal markings on the reverse of the coin. On the other hand, No. 1 stamp was undoubtedly made by heavy striking, probably in a screw press, the punch not always descending centrally on the flan and occasionally slipping out of vertical to the coin’s surface. In every recorded instance the countermark is on the obverse, and the upper part of the curve of the stamp is directed approximately towards the top of the king’s head.

In the sale of W. Talbot Ready at Sotheby’s on 18–19 November 1920 the following entry appears under lot 942: ‘Castle Comer Colliery (Co. Kilkenny) countermarked Dollar for Five Shillings and Fivepence; an original counter stamp with **curled** tops to the 5s., not **flat tops** as in the fabrication recently produced. This specimen has also a minute **AM** in an oval stamp [Davis, 134], very fine and extremely rare . . . 1’. This particular coin passed through the Cokayne sale and is now in the Ashmolean Museum (No. 8 in list below).

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1. Davis, op. cit., p. xliv.  
The only other published reference to this allegation of forgery, so far traced, is a repeat of the warning, taken direct from the Ready catalogue, in the form of a published letter by Lionel L. Fletcher to E. C. R. Armstrong, Vice-President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Fletcher stated that it was the first and only reference he had seen regarding the counterfeiting. There are, however, hints in correspondence sent to Francis Cokayne, as early as the first decade of the nineteenth century, which suggest that forging of marks on Spanish dollars may have occurred even before the first World War.

Examination by photograph and pedigree of coins, including all those mentioned by Whetmore and of others since traced, reveals that only No. 1 countermark has been found on specimens which can be dated as early as, or earlier than, the illustrations shown by Davis in 1904. The first representation of No. 2 countermark is, in fact, that in the catalogue of the W. Waite Sanderson sale of 1923, lot 93 (Pl. I,) on a Charles III Lima dollar of 1789. This coin, with a number of other countermarked pieces, was withdrawn from the sale as judged ‘wrong’ by auctioneer and bidders. The Waite Sanderson piece eventually came into the hands of S. A. H. Whetmore, who used it to illustrate his article; later it was purchased by the Ulster Museum (See No. 17 listed below). Three others so far noted, bearing No. 2 stamp, seem all to have passed through the Paget sale of 1944. Unfortunately owing to wartime restrictions no more than one was illustrated in his catalogue.

In fairness to the reader, and particularly to later researchers, it must be admitted that only one third of all extant examples so far traced have been examined personally by the writer; and on the basis of photographs alone, some taken direct from the coins, others from casts, it is not possible to be absolutely certain that only two stamps exist; although this would appear to be the case. Superficially, at least, some of the genuine stamps appear broader than others. Had the concave surface of the punch become slightly flattened and the edges worn with the constant hammering and friction, a slight variation in the oval shape might well have occurred.

It remains to determine, if possible, the date when the genuine countermarks were put on the dollars. Smith, quoting Robertson’s remarks and publishing his paper in 1855, has led subsequent writers and numismatists to accept 1815 as about the year in which Anne Countess of Ormonde decided to dispose of her dollars in the way suggested. In the absence up to the present time of any contemporaneous documentary reference to the tokens we must rely on other factors in attempting to arrive at the truth.

After considerable inquiry in Ireland and Britain, on the continent, in America and even further afield, only fifteen examples of dollars bearing countermark No. 1 have come to light, and even one of these is a counterfeit, cast in billon with a silvered surface, from a dollar bearing the genuine stamp. Of the other fourteen, eight at least are stabilised in public collections and unlikely again to be marketed, while six may still be ‘in circulation’ amongst private collectors on both sides of the Atlantic. The authenticity of the countermark on one specimen has still to be determined. It cannot, of course, be estimated how many

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1 J.R.S.A.I., li (1921), p. 80.
2 I am indebted to Mr. Albert Baldwin for allowing me to read through a number of letters in the Cokayne MSS. in possession of the firm.
3 No. 10 in the list below is a case in point.
4 At first Smith seems to have been of the opinion that the Castlecomer tokens were issued in 1804. According to his original manuscript dated 9 June 1861, now housed in the National Museum, Dublin, he has this sentence (crossed out and replaced by Robertson’s statement): ‘Castle Comer is in Co. Kilkenny. This token was used for paying the miners of the colliery during the late war, probably about the year 1804’. I am indebted to Mr. Michael Dolley for pointing this out to me and for suggesting that the tokens probably date from 1804.
more pieces may be hidden away in obscure collections or museum cabinets where they
might least be expected; but the coins, which during the present century have passed through
the hands of well-known collectors in this numismatic field have probably now mostly been
accounted for.

We may assume then that the fifteen coins listed below (the counterfeit has been included
for the purposes of analysis) are a representative sample of the dollars which the dowager
countess possessed, and which were made available for the purposes of promoting her coal
trade. Robertson's statement to the effect that coals to the value of 5s. 5d. were given for
them at the pits, and that 'Kilkenny traders used to take them in exchange for their com-
modities knowing that they could give them afterwards to colliers in payment for coals',
seems substantially correct. What is more interesting is just when and for how long such
stamped dollars enjoyed local circulation during this period of great economic stress.

Scrutiny of the dates on the dollars themselves gives the following pattern: 1779(1),
1790(1), 1796(1), 1797(1), 1798(2), 1799(2), 1801(3), 1803(1), 1804(3); all being struck at
Mexico or Lima. The proportion of twelve of the first mint to three of the second is probably
close to the percentage for the actual output from those particular mints during the period in
question. On the other hand, the four coins known to bear No. 2 countermark are much
more diverse, and one might say that by the law of averages they could scarcely be accepted
as the residue of a second issue, or for that matter of a first issue. The dates, with mints
and rulers, are: 1774 (Lima—Charles III), 1789 (Lima—bust of Charles III with name of
Charles IV), 1791 (Mexico—bust of Charles III with name of Charles IV), 1808 (Potosi-
Ferdinand VII). Here it is seen that the date bracket is extremely wide, yet no dollars are
in evidence for the period 1796–1804 from which come thirteen of the specimens in the former
group.

The bulk of the coins, bearing the authentic stamp, may therefore have been brought
together over a period of some eight years; at present there is nothing to suggest that anything
was added to this private bank after 1804. The only outliers in the group are the Charles III
Mexico dollar of 1779 and the Mexico dollar of 1790 but these, as indeed probably many
others of early date, may have been acquired by the Countess as the result of normal trading
transactions. The countermark on the Ferdinand VII Mexico dollar of 1808 (No. 10) has
yet to be proved authentic.

The Bank of Ireland, like the Bank of England, had suspended specie payment from
early in 1797, and in March 1804 the Post Office decided no longer to accept counterfeit coin
which had been passing as currency in the absence of regal money. Country, as well as
Dublin, banks and business houses had therefore been compelled to issue silver notes
(permited by an Irish Act of 1799) which were payable on demand in Bank of Ireland notes.
William Tighe, who wrote a very full account of the Castlecomer mines in a survey he made
of Co. Kilkenny, states that 'the payment to colliers are made in notes at present, which
are generally passed at a depreciated value; colliery notes have on some particular occasions
borne a premium, but 1s. discount is sometimes demanded for 9s. 9d. In consequence of

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1 Spanish dollars of the Mexico mint are by far the commonest of those under review which have
found their way into the Ulster Museum cabinet, many being derived from local sources. Of the other
Spanish-American mints, Lima is commoner than Potosi.

2 J. de Yriarte, Catalogo de los Reales de a Ocho

3 Yriarte (op. cit., p. 133) gives 1790 as the last
date for the issue of Mexican dollars bearing the
bust of Charles IV.

4 Fetter, op. cit., p. 18.

5 W. Tighe, Statistical Observations relative to the
County of Kilkenny made in the years 1800–1 (1802),
p. 71.
these notes, the huxters impose in their charges for articles of necessity; and the collier is obliged to pay a halfpenny more in the price of a pottle of meal, when he pays in tickets as they are called.¹

Whetmore has suggested that Job Hart Price-Clarke (father of the girl who married the eighteenth Earl of Ormonde and apparently both a trustee and agent of the earl, 1806–10), coming from Sutton-cum-Duckmanton in Derbyshire, must have known Richard Arkwright, who was lord of the manor there, and who issued countermarked Spanish dollars at the Cromford cotton yarn mill in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries¹. If it was Hart Price-Clarke who advised Lady Ormonde on the similar use of her foreign silver,

¹ BNJ, xxxi, pp. 157–8.
presumably it could have been as early as 1804 when arrangements were being settled for the marriage between his daughter and the earl which took place on 17 March 1805.

But there would appear to be a more probable link between Castlecomer and North Britain during this period of specie scarcity, when payment of industrial workers and colliers presented such a problem. To find this connection one must go back some forty years: to a time when the Countess was an eligible young heiress to the important Kilkenny estates and her father, the Earl of Wandesforde, was developing the colliery at Castlecomer. During the 1760s the first Duke of Northumberland had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and, there he gave much fine entertainment at Viceregal Lodge in Dublin\(^1\). Here, one may be sure, the young Anne Wandesforde would have met both of the Duke's sons: Algernon, about her own age, and the older Hugh, a soldier, who was later to become second Duke, owner of vast estates in the north of Britain and proprietor of several collieries in the county of Northumberland.

It is not surprising then to find that the tokens for five shillings issued at the Percy Main colliery are very close in style to those of Castlecomer, and the same hand way well have been responsible for the two punches. Several examples of the Percy Main Colliery tokens are known, and four which passed through the sale room are illustrated in figure 1 a–d (Cokayne, 17/18 July 1946, lot 10–Mexico, 1787; Lingford, 24/26 October 1950, lot 703—Mexico, 1790, ex Thelusson collection; Howard Gibbs, New York, 19 Nov. 1960, lot 129—Lima, 1808, said to be ex Cokayne, but presumably ex Paget sale; Whetmore, 14 July 1961, lot 228—Guatemala, 1802, ex Nightingale collection). A fifth token, mentioned by Whetmore\(^2\), has kindly been traced for me by Mrs. Joan Martin, at the British Museum, as appearing in a sale of various properties held at Glendining, 18/20 September 1929, lot 169. It was there described as an *unpublished* countermark, very rare; and the Spanish dollar (of which neither date nor mint were given) as pierced. It fetched £5.15s.0d.; as it has not been traced further, the specimen may well have found its way into a public collection.

Having now linked the two series the writer is not prepared to stand over the authenticity of the Percy Main group, as at present represented by the four illustrated coins, without further corroboration. The objections were set out in a letter sent to Mr. S. A. H. Whetmore, on 7 June 1965, and are here transcribed in full.

There are difficulties in accepting the Northumberland colliery group. For instance, in all four cases the surface of each obverse face has been first scored with a sharp toothed wheel or serrated edge round about where the Percy countermark has been applied. The stamps were very carefully placed with the name upwards in relation to the king's head, yet in quite a different position on the flan of each coin. The surface of the countermark appears to be flat, as in the case of the false Castlecomer mark. Had a screw press been used, the coins must have been arranged most carefully in position, both in relation to the obverse axis and to the die stamp coming down centrally over the scoring, so that it cancelled and obliterated an earlier mark.

Obviously, if thousands of coins were being countermarked such elaborate care would scarcely have been necessary; but if only a very few coins were being marked, and there was an important reason for thus stamping them, the matter may be looked at in a different light. For instance, if all four pieces had been dollars prior to 1804, one might have jumped to the conclusion that the original marks on them were either the oval or the octagonal

\(^{1}\) See *DNB*, xlv, pp. 418–20.  
\(^{2}\) *BNJ*, xxviii, p. 623.
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stamp used officially by the Bank. Another suggestion is that all the present countermarks were struck over 4/6 or 4/9 marks, used either by the colliery itself or by some other northern industrial house; but in either case the Lima dollar of 1808 discountenances such a supposition. If the coins were marked at one and the same time, which seems probable from their very similar appearance, then perhaps they are trial pieces. The suggestion that the Northumberland tokens were issued during the winter of 1811/12 is at variance with the official value of the dollar which was then worth 5s. 6d. At 5s. 6d. they would not have passed for payment or freely circulated, when their bullion price was 10% higher.

There is, however, a further possibility. Accepting the Northumberland mark as genuine could not all these pieces have been re-strikes, very likely carried out by the same person who perpetrated the four false Castlecomer stamps? In other words he became possessed of the original die-stamp and struck it on four dollars of widely separated dates, 1787—1790—1802—1808. But the fifth example from the sale of 1929, which was not illustrated and no date given, is holed; and a forger making such tokens for profit would scarcely have selected a pierced specimen, unless as a ‘blind’. Thus this particular coin may well be one of the original tokens which escaped the melting pot.

This inquiry has posed more questions than it has answered. The writer recently prepared a chart setting out in groups, under the years 1790 to 1825, most of the recorded countermarked silver coins; but, while only one or two examples do not fit comfortably into such an analytical pattern, too few details of the issue by mills, banks and Scottish town traders are recorded for such data to be published without a great deal more study of the subject. Mr. Whetmore seems to have followed the main lines of inquiry but admits he has not made an exhaustive search of contemporary literature, such as newspapers, etc.

One further aspect of the employment of foreign silver currency has been investigated but not pursued. Through the kindness of Mr. Anthony Thompson, at the Ashmolean Museum, copies have been obtained of all his transcriptions, taken from official and semi-official sources, referring to the capture of Spanish treasure on the high seas during the period in question. The number of dollars recorded, as having been taken in particular years, appears to have some bearing on the comparative frequency of surviving countermarked dollars of the same dates; yet it cannot be claimed that the figures are accurate enough for one to build up or substantiate a theory on these lines. To make any such equation one would have to know, for instance, how much of the captured specie found its way into the ordinary channels of trade, how much was melted down and how much was simply re-issued as Bank of England or Bank of Ireland dollars.

To summarise: it is suggested that the Castlecomer Colliery tokens were first issued in 1804, or early in 1805, and perhaps the same stamp was in use up to 1810, by which time the scarcity of foreign coin, the rise in the value of silver and the issue of the Bank tokens had to some extent taken the responsibility for supplying specie out of private hands. That metal tokens cannot have been in circulation in this region of Ireland much before 1804 is confirmed by Tighe’s statement, published in 1802 (see supra p. 142). Indeed, it may have been more to right the exploitation of her own miners by the local tradesfolk, than to benefit herself, that the Countess brought her stock of dollars into public service and demanded that they pass for their true value in Irish currency.

1 Ibid., p. 624. 2 Ibid., p. 645
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PEDIGREES OF EXTANT TOKENS

Key: ——?—— = coin untraced before 1914-18 War, or there is a subsequent gap in the pedigree; * = illustration known to writer and photographically copied for reference purposes.

Note: Sale prices, both those realised at auction sales and those paid by purchasers to dealers, are omitted since many transactions are untraced. Names of present owners are only given where permission to do so has been obtained. All countermarks are impressed on Spanish American dollars, so far as known. Except for No. 20 all are illustrated on PI. XV.

First Countermark.


2. Charles IV (bust of Charles III), 1790, Mexico. Also countermarked with impressed letters R.I. (?) on obverse. ——?——; auction sale (Schulman, New York, 21/22 June 1957) lot 257*. Present whereabouts unknown. (No photographs of coin itself, but copies of both obverse and reverse from sale catalogue*).


4. Charles IV, 1797, Mexico. With second countermark, which only shows in form of crescent to right of bust on obverse. —?——; said to be ex Lingford but not apparently from Lingford sale, 1956; H. Gibbs sale (Schulman, New York, 19 November 1960) lot 271, pl. opp. p. 20*; purchased Spink. Present whereabouts unknown. (No photographs of coin itself, only copy of obverse from sale catalogue*).


8. Charles IV, 1799, Lima. With AM in oval, impressed under chin, probably for Arthur Murphy, Dublin goldsmith, working c. 1805-12; also with impressed c (?) before neck stamped anterior to the Castlecomer mark which partly obscures it. —?——; W. Talbot Ready sale cat. (Sotheby, 15/19 November 1920) lot 942, king and mint not given but coin identified by mention of AM countermark; purchased Baldwin; F. Cokayne sale cat. (Glendining, 17/18 July 1946) lot 204, pl. IX*, in which all countermarks are plainly seen; purchased Baldwin and now in Heberden Coin Room, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (Photographs* of both faces of coin obtained).
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9. Charles IV, 1801, Mexico. T. Bliss collection (?); W. J. Davis, *Nineteenth Cent. Token Coinage*, Etc. (1904), p. 27. No. 134, pl. H. 24* (photograph from ‘shrunk’ cast); T. Bliss sale cat. (Sotheby, 15/16 May 1916) lot 823, pl. XV* (good cast); purchased Spink; — ? —; W. J. Davis sale cat. (Glendining, 29/30 July 1924) lot 119, not illus. and no details of king or date; purchased at sale by Thelluson; A. Thelluson sale cat. (Sotheby, 10/20 October 1931), lot 376, not illus. but dollar given as Chas. IV, 1801; purchased Baldwin; — ? —; Paget sale cat. (Glendining, 28 June 1944) lot 71, not illus. but dollar identified by description as in Thelluson sale; purchased Baldwin; — ? —; purchased Brand, Chicago; purchased R. H. Norweb, Cleveland, Ohio; presented to the American Numismatic Society, New York, August 1965. (Photographic copy of obv. from Bliss sale cat.* and Davis illustration*; coin checked in New York by W.A.S., Oct. 1965).

10. Charles IV, 1801, Mexico; but not as deeply impressed as other genuine countermarks. — ? —; said to be ex Cokayne collection, but not in Cokayne sale, 1946; purchased from Baldwin by J. Sweeney, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, 1954; subsequently purchased by E. Szauer, Dublin, who has coin in his collection. (Photograph* of obverse of coin which has also been seen by writer).


12. Charles IV, 1804, Mexico. J. Murdoch sale cat. (Sotheby, 12/13 December 1904) lot 175, not illus.; purchased C. Weight; — ? —; Bain sale cat. (Sotheby, 8/11 May 1923) lot 523, pl. VII* purchased at sale by Thelluson; A. Thelluson sale cat. (Sotheby, 19/20 October 1931) lot 377, not illus.; purchased Seaby; — ? —; L. L. Fletcher sale cat. (Glendining, 14 March 1934) lot 37 (said to be from Thelluson collection); purchased by Baldwin and sold to Lingford, 1941; H. Lingford sale cat. (Glendining, 24/26 October 1950) lot 780, pl. LI*; purchased Baldwin and bought for Historical Section of the Bank of England where coin is now housed. (Photographs* of both faces of coin obtained.)

13. Charles IV, 1804, Mexico. — ? —; Moritz Wormser collection; purchased from the New Netherlands Coin Company, New York (March 1941) by the American Numismatic Society, in which collection the coin is now housed. (Photographs* from good casts of obverse and reverse obtained).


Counterfeit cast from dollar bearing first countermark.

15. Charles IV, 1801, Mexico. False coin, being cast in billon and silvered over; both original and counterfeit must have received some wear. This interesting specimen is in the possession of Capt. R. C. Prior-Wandesforde, Managing Director of Castlecomer Collieries Ltd., Co. Kilkenny (now living at Evington, Co. Carlow) who sent it to the writer for examination. The owner states that he inherited it from his father with other family relics. One suggestion put forward is that, owing to its obvious falsity, the piece was identified during its period of circulation, put aside by the management of the colliery, and later became a keepsake. (Photographs* of both faces obtained).

Second Countermark.

17. Charles IV (bust of Charles III), 1789, Lima. —?—; W. Waite Sanderson sale cat. (Glendining, 14/15 February 1923) lot 93, pl. I*; two catalogues examined give indication that this coin, with other countermarked dollars, was judged wrong and passed over in the sale room, no price being placed against it; —?—; purchased from Spink by S. H. Whetmore, 25 October 1947; Whetmore sale cat. (Glendining 14 July 1961) lot 261, pl. XXVII*; purchased Seaby; BNJ xxxi (1962), pl. V, 19*; Seaby’s Bulletin (March 1962), p. 132, No. IR. 520, pl. 21*; Purchased Ulster Museum 20 June 1963. Weight: 411.4 grains. (Photographs* of both faces of coin obtained).

18. Charles IV (bust of Charles III), 1791. Said to be Mexico mint, but Yriarte, Catalogo de los Reales de a Ocho Españoles, p. 133, gives no Mexican eight real piece as late as this still retaining bust of Chas. III. The 1’s in date are unlike those used by the Spanish mints and there are other features which suggest that the coin itself may be a counterfeit, possibly British and late eighteenth century in date. —?—; H. Paget sale cat. (Glendining, 28 June 1944) lot 70, not illus.; purchased Baldwin; —?—; H. Gibbs sale cat. (Schulman, New York, 19 November 1960), lot 272, pl. opp. p. 29*; purchased Spink. Present whereabouts unknown. (No photographs of coin itself, only copy of obverse from sale catalogue*).

19. Ferdinand VII, 1808, Potosi. —?—; H. Paget sale cat. (Glendining, 28 June 1944) lot 72, not illus.; purchased Baldwin; —?—; J. Kelly, Dayton, Ohio, cat. (February 1954) No. 4882; —?—; H. Gibbs sale cat. (Schulman, New York, 19 November 1960) lot 274, pl.opp. p. 29*; purchased Spink. Present whereabouts unknown. (No photographs of coin itself, only copy of obverse from sale catalogue*).

(Countermark unknown).

20. Ferdinand VII, 1808, Mexico. —?—; Howard Gibbs collection. In a list supplied to Mr. S. A. H. Whetmore prior to Gibbs sale (Schulman N.Y., 1960); but coin not traced. (No illustration available).

In addition to the above, Spink’s advertised Castlecomer tokens for sale in their Circular on the following dates: October 1920, col. 434/86272, RR £10 0s. 0d.; July-August 1922, col. 387/7279. RRR £10 0s. 0d.; September 1926, col. 530/38818, RR £12 10s. 0d. Since in no instance are any details of the Spanish dollar given, and no illustrations shown or pedigrees mentioned, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to equate these entries with any of the specimens listed above.

It would appear that only in the cases of Nos. 3, 11, 18 and 19 could more than one token, bearing same mint and date, be in question. It should be noted, however, that Nos. 18 and 19 have the second countermark, which is patently much scarcer than the first mark; so it seems likely that the unillustrated Paget coins are in fact those which later passed through the Gibbs collection¹. With regard to No. 3, Napier was a customer of B. A. Seaby Ltd. which probably means the firm sold the Peltzer coin to him and bought it back again from his sale in 1956; in the case of No. 11, although the pedigree cannot be confirmed, there is good reason to connect the token now in the Philippines with that advertised by Platt in pre-war Paris.

¹ Correspondence with Mr. Howard D. Gibbs, Director of the Pittsburgh Numismatic Museum, failed to elicit this point, as he admitted that all details were kept on the envelopes which were disposed of with the coins when sold. The writer here acknowledges an enormous amount of help received from collectors, numismatic dealers and editors of coin magazines on both sides of the Atlantic.