THE HALF-HARPS OF HENRY VIII'S IRISH COINAGE

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While helping in Dolley and Hackman's study of the harp groats of Henry VIII,1 the attention of the writer was called to the comparative scarcity of the half-harps in relation to the harps and to the fact that this rarity might offer some vital clue to the chronological sequence of those Anglo-Irish coins bearing the initials HA, HI and HK. It seems there were no HR half groats.

Cursory examination of ten half-groats in the cabinet of the National Museum of Ireland revealed that two of the pieces, an HA and an HI, had a common obverse, the latter coin showing more wear in the die at the time of striking and therefore almost certainly proving that the I coins followed those with A.2 What, however, clinched the matter as to the order of striking was the discovery that on several of the reverse dies for Jane Seymour, both at Dublin and Belfast, the large 1 punch with stroke through the middle of the upright (as used on the groat) had been stamped over the small A for Anne Boleyn, almost but not quite obliterating it. This improvisation on the part of the moneyers at the London Tower, who were responsible for making the dies and supplying the coin, shows that the A dies were not destroyed with the beheading of the Queen on 19 May 1536 and Henry's marriage to Jane the following day. Since the 1 punch would not obliterate the much larger A on the groat no such substitution is found on those groats issued for the period of Jane Seymour's consortship, and new dies were made for both obverse and reverse.3 More detailed die study of all traced half-groats has now been completed, and the findings have not only substantiated the original investigation but have established beyond doubt that most if not all of the dies employed for 'Jane Seymour's' coins were first used for striking the half-groats during the period of Anne Boleyn. Those bearing the initial K and undoubtedly struck during the consortship of Katherine Howard do not die link with the others. Therefore it seems there were but two main coinages of the half-harps.

This paper is not concerned with the historical evidence for the timing or extent of the issues, something which others have dealt with from documentary sources,4 although it can be stated with some degree of certainty that the percentage of half-groats to groats did not exceed one to six in the case of HA/HI or one to three in the case of HK coins.5 Here it is thought worthwhile to present the numismatic evidence derived from an examination of some thirty-six specimens in public and private collections, or in dealers' hands, in Britain, Ireland and abroad; also to summarise the earlier provenances and possible origins. These have mostly been culled from published sources, including public and private sales, and in one case at least in a collection extending back some 240 years. To the present

2 Dolley and Hackmann, pp. 84-5.
3 The writer has examined 82 'A' groats and 98 'I' groats and found no die duplication between the issues either amongst the reverses or the obverses.
4 Aquilla Smith, 'Irish Silver Coins of Henry VIII', NC (1879), 157-84; Henry Symonds, 'The Irish Coinages of Henry VIII and Edward VI', NC (1915), 192-209; Dolley and Hackmann, pp. 84-108; C. E. Challis, 'The Tudor Coinage for Ireland', BNJ 40 (1971), 97-119, and other sources quoted by these writers.
5 It has been possible to examine 180 groats bearing the initials HA and HI and 27 half-groats bearing the same initials, also 30 HK groats and 9 HK half-groats.
owners-collectors, curators and dealers, who have so kindly assisted the writer in his enquiries, sincere thanks are due for the supply of photographs, weights, provenances and other details of the coins in their keeping.

Methods employed in tracing back the coins to their sources have of necessity been empirical, the very meagreness of entries in the earlier auction catalogues making this task at best a series of provisional attributions. Nevertheless, if the search has not been totally exhaustive, it is thought that very few more of these coins which have been turned up by plough or spade during the past two centuries or more and which have passed through the hands of the bigger collectors, the auction houses and numismatic dealers will have escaped notice. Even so, the total sum of the extant coins themselves stands at only about six shillings sterling.

James Simon was first to notice the harp half-groat, and the one he illustrated and described could be of special interest.\(^6\) If the inscriptions on the coin are correctly given this piece should be either a pattern or struck from the first pair of dies put into service at the London mint. No other example traced bears the Roman VIII—such as is found on the groats—in place of the Arabic 8, so much more economical of space and, as far as the Irish series goes, apparently reserved for the smaller denomination. Furthermore, the obverse legend is shown as having double saltires after D, G and R, as with the early groats, and the termination AGLIE, while the reverse legend, besides the full word DOMINVS, has the unusual abbreviation of FRANCI for FRANCE and reads HIBERN for HIBERNIE. By 1749 the coin was in the possession of Ralph Howard, later to become Viscount Wicklow (d.1786), and eldest son of Robert Howard, bishop of Elphin. Ralph Howard was sheriff of Co. Wicklow, 1749, and of Co. Carlow, 1754, also an M.P. and privy councillor. It is just possible that this HA coin had been kept as a memento from the time of minting and has been handed down in the Howard family for generations. At the same time it should be pointed out that the piece does not appear to be amongst the coins listed in the Howard sale of 20 May 1874; so the possibility must remain that it may have been wrongly engraved from a meagre description given by Simon.

The second reference and illustration is an HK half-groat to be found in the 1810 edition of Simon, where the editor, Edward Ledwich, illustrated one on his Additional Plate no. 18,\(^7\) so carefully drawn that it can easily be identified as that which passed through Dr L. A. Lawrence’s hands to the British Museum trays in 1923 (BM1). This coin may also be the one in the Moore sale of 1815 or one of the two coins bearing HK which were in the collection of T. Dimsdale when sold at Sotheby’s on 6 July 1824.

The next main reference is the summary of all half-groats known to John Lindsay in 1839.\(^8\) The fact that he was able to list five more in addition to those two already published strongly suggests that one or more major hoards of Henry VIII groats which would have included a few of the much rarer halves, may have been unearthed in the late eighteenth century or early in the nineteenth. One such hoard, which perhaps meets with this requirement, was a find of ‘upwards of 60 ounces of silver coins’ chiefly groats of Henry VIII and a few of Richard III discovered at Downpatrick during 1809 and disposed of in Belfast.\(^9\) There must have been of the order of 350 to 450 coins in the cache and if they extended through the period of the harp groats would surely have included one or two

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6 J. Simon, An Essay towards an Historical Account of Irish Coins and of the Currency of Foreign Monies in Ireland (Dublin, 1749), Addenda, p. 76 and pl. 8, no. 172. In this paper illus. under 'A'.
7 In this paper illus. under no. 35.
8 J. Lindsay, A View of the Coinage of Ireland, etc. (Cork, 1839), pp. 49-50, 92, nos 10-14 and pl. 7, nos 145, 146; in this paper illus. under nos 19 and 38.
9 Ulster Journal of Archaeology, I (1835), 164. But Dolley believed this consisted only of English coins and was deposited 1529 (?), see J. D. Brown and Michael Dolley, Coin Hoards of Great Britain and Ireland 1500-1967 (1972), p. 69, IL9.
half-harps, which might well have found their way into the hands of collectors at that period.

Lindsay's list included the following: The HA (DOMINVS) half-groat published by Simon as well as two others (both DNS), one of which is now identified (NMI4, pl. 1, no. 19); two HI (DNS) half-groats which he claimed were both in the dean of St Patrick's cabinet. One of them was certainly acquired by the Royal Irish Academy, being no. 440 in the Dawson MS catalogue of 1834 (NMI2, pl. 2, no. 28); the other may have passed to Aquilla Smith before the dean's death in 1842, and is now also in the National Collection at Dublin (NMI1, pl. 1, no. 22). The HK (DNS) piece which was said to be in the possession of the dean, being no. 442 of his MS list, is a third one from the Academy collection at Dublin (NMI10, pl. 2, no. 34).

In 1879 Aquilla Smith published a paper on the 'Irish Silver Coins of Henry VIII' setting out what he considered was the order of the various issues based on historical and numismatic reasoning. While his arguments are not necessarily acceptable today, he cited five half-groats (two HI, two HA and one HK), the reverses and one obverse of which he illustrated, the engravings being taken from his own fine drawings. And they are sufficiently well engraved to be identified today with reasonable certainty: no. 2 = (UMB 2; pl. 1, 8), no. 3 = (NMI 4; pl. 1, 19), no. 4 = (NMI 1; pl. 1, 22), no. 5 = (NMI 2; pl. 2, 28), and no. 6 = (MS1; pl. 2, 33). Two of the coins shown by Dr Smith were then in possession of W. J. Gillespie of Stillorgan, from whom they passed to C. Gillespie, being purchased by Spink; and thereafter were bought by such collectors as Symonds, Bearman, Lockett and the Carlyon-Britttons.

In 1895 George Coffey published a catalogue of all the Anglo-Irish coins in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy, by then transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. He listed nine examples of the harp half-groat, three HI, four HA and two HK. At least three of the coins were those described by Aquilla Smith and are so identified, others must be from the Dawson collection, but since Coffey's catalogue is without illustrations and no provenances are given it is not possible now to say how others arrived at Dublin and from whose collections they may have originated. Today the same nine coins are in the coin trays of the National Museum, together with a tenth. There is also half of a half-groat amongst a group of groats all of which are believed to constitute the Three Rock Mountain Hoard found in 1849, and probably deposited in 1557.

Harp half-groats by their very rarity are as likely to turn up in hoards as chance single finds. Although many hoards are reported to the authorities, both in Eire and Northern Ireland, and when of gold or silver are sometimes the subject of a Treasure Trove inquest, it is quite certain that many such finds go, and have gone, unrecorded. In recent years the only hoard which included a harp half-groat was that from the townland of Moig South, near Askeaton, Co. Limerick (pl. 1, 4). The coin was in fact the sole Irish piece in eighty-six specimens, the rest consisting of eighty-five English coins. As pointed out in the report on the hoard, the latest English coins are London groats with the initial marks rose and lis only, also Canterbury half-groats with several marks of Cranmer who received the temporalities on 29 April 1533. Since the Canterbury mint is thought to have had a limited existence after 1534, it seems unlikely that the English content of the hoard was brought together later than about 1535. In which case the Irish HA (DOMINVS) half-groat, if these coins were not issued earlier than March 1536, seems likely to have been the latest

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10 A. Smith, 'Irish Silver Coins of Henry VIII', NC (1879), 157-84, pl. VII, 2-6; in this paper illus. under 8, 19, 22, 33 and 28.
11 Brown and Dolley, p. 71, IM7.
13 C. E. Challis, 'The Tudor Coinage for Ireland', BNJ 40 (1971), 101 et seq.
constituent piece. The whole of this hoard is now housed in the National Museum of Ireland.

Thorburn and Grueber illustrated the HA half-groat (no. 293) from the same engraving as used by Aquilla Smith (plate VII, no. 2 = UMB 2; pl. 1, 8); and they also recorded auction sales and prices paid for the coins during the second half of the nineteenth century. Quoting Lindsay they claimed that all three initialled half-groats were very rare, but it is to be noted that the original 1839 valuations of £1 5s. (HI), £1 10s. (HA) and £1 (HK) show a drop to sale prices around 9s. and 10s. apiece, suggesting that by the mid and late nineteenth century there were enough specimens available to meet the needs of the specialist collectors. Before the end of the century the prices had dropped even lower. In the earlier 1900s the prices taken from Spink’s Numismatic Circular show a definite rise, from £1 5s. to £2, according to condition, and with emphasis still on the rarity of all three issues. Grueber himself in his Handbook cited an HK half-groat as example for the series, but did not illustrate it. This is perhaps understandable since at that date no specimen of the HK coin had been acquired by the BM Department of Coins and Medals. As was then generally accepted, Grueber considered the K stood for Katherine of Aragon.

**APPENDIX 1**

Schedule of Harp Half-Groats

Set out here are thirty-eight coins, all except one traced, together with their known or suggested pedigrees. These have mostly been taken from auction sale and other catalogue entries from which an attempt has been made to identify specimens. All have initial mark crown on obverse and reverse. (Legends on the original coins are all in Lombardic lettering rather than the Roman letters used below.)

**Obv./Rev. Die Nos. Henry and Anne (Boleyn) initials**

1. 1/1. HENR/IC+8/D'+ G'+ R'/AGL' + Z = FRANCE + DOMINUS + HIBERNIE
   Ex Sir John Twisden sale (1841) part of lot 776; purchased by Hawkins for the British Museum, (BM4). Weight: 16.7gr. (1.08g).

2. 1/1. Legends as above. Ex Lord Grantley sale (1944) lot 1848; ex Carlyon-Britton collection, purchased by Ulster Museum, 1962. (UMB3). Weight: 18.3gr. (1.19g).

3. 1/1. Legends as above. Ex John Keith collection (?); purchased from Spink by Dr T. S. Agnew, 3 Feb. 1954. Stolen with other Irish coins in his collection 1970. (TSA1). Weight: 17.7gr. (1.15g).

4. 1/1. Legends as above. From the Askeaton Hoard found 1954 (BNJ 37 (1968), 85-92 and pl. VIII. no. 1). Purchased by the Royal Irish Academy for the National Museum of Ireland, no. 1134–1956. (NMI8). Weight: 17.4gr. (1.13g).


6. 2/2. HENR/IC×8/D− G× R−/AGL× Z× = FRANCE + DOMINUS× HIBERNIE×
   British Museum, pre-1840, no details. (BM3). Weight: 15.9gr. (1.03g). Broken edge.

7. 2/2. Legends as above.Probably ex Bergne sale (1873) purchased Johnston; ?ex Johnston sale (1876), purchased Webb; probably ex Webb sale (1895); ex Hoblyn sale (1906) lot 242; ex Baldwin stock (1907); ex Bearman collection, purchased Baldwin (1918); purchased Lockett and in his sale (1957) lot 560 (A) illustrated pl. XXI; presented to Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. (FMC1). Weight: 19.8gr. (1.285g).

8. 2/2. Legends as above. Illustrated by Aquilla Smith in NC (1879), 166 pl. VII, no. 2; ex W. G. Gillespie Coll.; thence C. Gillespie (1899) purchased Spink and advertised in NCirc (March 1900) the initials HI has been advertised in NCirc (July 1987) at £2,500!

**14 Lt Col. W. S. Thorburn, A Guide to the History and Valuation of the Coins of Great Britain and Ireland, etc. Third Edition. Revised and enlarged by Herbert A. Grueber (London, 1898).**

**15 Today these prices mean nothing when a half-groat with**
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and (Jan. 1907); purchased P. Carlyon-Britton (1915); illus. by R. Carlyon-Britton in NC (1954), pl. X, 16; ex his collection, purchased by the Ulster Museum (1962). (UMB2). Weight: 19.3gr. (1.255g).

9. 2/2. Legends as above. Purchased in a lot from Hewson of Adare, Co. Limerick (c.1965) by Stuart Lane and in his collection. (SNL1). Weight: 16gr. (1.035g).

10. 2/2. Legends as above. Probably from the Three Rock Mountain hoard, found 1849. Half a coin with a group of coins, mostly debased groats from HA to Philip and Mary, 1557. In the collection of the National Museum of Ireland. (NMI 11). Weight: not recorded on account of its condition.

11. 3/2. HENR/IC+ 8+/D'+ G'xR'/AGL'+ Z = . As no. 6. Ex Canon Grainger coll. (1891), bequeathed to Belfast Municipal Art Gallery, now Ulster Museum (UMB1). Weight: 20.9gr. (1.355g).

12. 3/2. Legends as above. Purchased from Stack's (Coin Galleries) New York by Emil Szauer (1966); now in private coll. (GB1). Weight: 17.2gr. (1.115g).

13. 3/2. Legends as above. Possibly in Dean Dawson's coll. MS. cat. (1834) no. 438; purchased (1842) for the Royal Irish Academy's coll. and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 66, no. 1. (NMI 6). Weight: 17.3gr. (1.12g).

14. 4/2. HENR/IC+ 8/D'+ G'+ R'/AGL'+ Z =. As no. 6. ?Dean Dawson's coll. and purchased (1842) for the Royal Irish Academy's coll. and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 67, no. 4. (NMI 5). Weight: 18.2gr. (1.18g).

15. 5/3. HENR/IC+ 8/D'+ G'+ R'/AGL'+ Z = FRANCE+DNS'+ HIBERNIE x

?W. G. Gillespie coll. and thence C. Gillespie (1899); purchased by Spink; advertised in NCirc (1900), (1907) and (1915) when purchased by P. Carlyon-Britton; illus. by R. Carlyon-Britton in NC (1954), pl. X, 17; ex his collection, purchased by the executors of Lockett to Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. (FMC 2). Weight: 17.6gr. (1.145g). Chipped and plugged.

16. 6/6. HENR/IC'x 8/D'+ G'+ R'/AGL'+ Z = FRANCE+DNS+ HIBERNIE x

Possibly ex Aquilla Smith's coll. (1890); ex W. G. Gillespie when purchased by Spink; advertised in NCirc (1900), (1907) and (1915) when purchased by P. Carlyon-Britton; illus. by R. Carlyon-Britton in NC (1954), pl. X, 17; ex his collection, purchased by Spink and subsequently bought by Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, now Ulster Museum. (UMB 6). Originally covered with black deposit and since cleaned. (UMB 6). Weight: 18.1gr (1.175g).

17. 6/6. Legends as above. ?ex English sale (Nov. 1973); ex Horace Hird sale (6 March 1974) lot 183; ex Barry Dunham coll. (c.1975). Spink. (BD1). Weight: 16.9gr. (1.10g)

18. 7/4. HENR/IC'x 8/D'+ G'+ R'/AGL'+ Z = FRANCE+DNS' x HIBERNIE x

Royal Irish Academy's coll. and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 67, no. 3 (NMI 4). Weight: 20.2gr. (1.31g).

19. 8/5. HENR/IC'x 8/D'x G'x R'/AGL+ Zx = FRANCE'x DNS'x HIBERNIE'x

Dean Dawson's coll. (?); illus. by Lindsay, A View of the Coinage of Ireland (1839), pl. VII, no. 145 (p. 92, no. 11); thence to Aquilla Smith (?) and illustrated by him in NC ns 19 (1879), p. 166 pl. VII, no. 3; Royal Irish Academy's collection and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 67, no. 3 (NMI 4). Weight: 20.2gr. (1.31g).

20. 9/5. HENR/IC'x 8/D'+ G'x R'/AGLIE'x Z = . As no. 19. Possibly ex Chapman Sale (1894) lot 105 and purchased by Lincoln; purchased from Lincoln & Sons with miscellaneous lot of coins by British Museum (1902). (BM 2). Weight: 18.5gr. (1.20g). Pierced for suspension.

21. 9/5. Legends as above. Ex H. A. Parsons Sale (1929) part of lot 732 and illustrated on pl. VIII; purchased by Baldwin. Possibly this specimen sold to Clarke-Thornhill, but present whereabouts unknown. (HAP 1). Weight: unrecorded.

Henry and Jane (Seymour) initials

22. 7/2. Obv. legend as no. 18. Rev. legend as no. 5, but with large crowned t punched over crowned A and the coin exhibiting some amount of wear in the die. Not specifically mentioned by John Lindsay but possibly in the collection of Aquilla Smith; reverse illustrated by him in NC ns. (1879), p. 166 pl. VII, no. 4. Acquired by the Royal Irish Academy and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 66, no. 1. (NMI). Weight: 18.20gr. (1.175g).

23. 8/5. Obv. legend as no. 19. Rev. legend as no. 19, with large crowned t punched over crowned A in the die. Possibly ex Webb sale (1895) and ex Hoblyn sale (1906) lot 241; when purchased by Spink; ex Bearman collection when purchased by Baldwin (1918); ex Lockett sale (1957) lot 559 and illustrated pl. XXI; purchased by Spink and subsequently bought by Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, now Ulster Museum. (UMB 5). Originally covered with black deposit and since cleaned. (UMB 6). Weight: 18.2gr. (1.18g).
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24. 8/5. Legends as above. Ex collection of Dr D. S. Quill, Carlow. Purchased by Emil Szauer and sold to Spink; advertised in NCirc 95, no. 6 (July 1987), p. 193, no. 4487 (illustrated). (DSO 1). Weight: 17.5gr. (1.137g).

25. 9/6. Obv. legend as no. 20. Rev. legend as no. 16 but with large crowned I punched over crowned A and the coin exhibiting some amount of wear in the die. Probably Dean Dawson’s collection as Lindsay (1839) mentions two specimens in his cabinet; passed (1842) to Royal Irish Academy and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey, p. 66, no. 3 (NMI 3). Weight: 18.1gr. (1.170g).

26. 10/6. HENRIC + 8/D’ + G’ + R’/AGL’ + Z (?) Rev. legend as no. 16 with crowned I over crowned A. Ex Clarke-Thornhill coll., bequeathed (1935) to the British Museum. (BM 5). Weight: 18.2gr. (1.18g).

27. 11/7. HENRIC+%8/D’ + G’x R’/AGL’x Z = FRANCE’x DNS’ + HIBERIE’x xx

28. 11/7. Rev. legend as no. 16 but with large crowned I punched over crowned A. Ex Sir John Twisden sale (1841) part of lot 776; purchased by Hawkins for the British Museum. (BM 6). Weight: 18.5gr. (1.20g).

29. 12/8. HENRIC’+ 8/D’ + G’ + R’/AGL’ + Z = FRANCE’x DNS’x HIBERIE’

30. 12/8. Legends as above. Possibly ex W. G. Gillespie thence C. Gillespie (1899) and advertised in NCirc (1907); ex Bearman collection (1918) when purchased by Baldwin; ex Lockett sale (1957) lot 561; ex R. Carlyon-Britton collection and purchased with his Irish collection by Ulster Museum (1962). (UMB 5). Weight: 19.9gr. (1.29g).

31. 12/8. Legends as above. Ex J. S. Henderson bequest (1933) to Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. (FMC 3). (This coin may have come from the Chapman sale (1894) lot 104 or 105). Weight: 19.7gr. (1.28g).


33. 13/9. HENRIC’%8/D’ + G’x R’/AGL’x Z = FRANCE’x DNS’x HIBERIE’ (?) Possibly one of the coins from the Moore sale (1815) and/or Dimsdale sale (1824) purchased by Young. However, this coin was illustrated and described by Aquilla Smith in NC no 19 (1879), p. 167, pl. VII no. 6. Passed through the W. Gillespie collection, thence to C. Gillespie; purchased (1899) by Spink when it was wrongly described in NCirc (March 1900) as HA under no. 60962. It was not sold on this occasion because it appears to be correctly given in NCirc (Jan 1907) under no. 5709. Purchased by Henry Symonds (d. 1933) and in his sale (1973) lot 117 and illustrated on pl. IV. Now in private collection. (MS 1). Weight: 18.3gr. (1.85g).

34. 13/9. Legends as above. Dean Dawson’s coll. MS cat. no. 442; acquired by the Royal Irish Academy and (1890) transferred to the National Museum of Ireland. Coffey p. 67, no. 1 (NMI 10). Weight: 17.6gr. (1.14g).

35. 14/9. HENRIC’%8/D’ + G’x R’/AGL’ (?) Rev. legend as No. 33. Illustrated by Edward Ledwich (editor) in second edition (1810) of Simon’s Essay on Irish Coins. Additional pl. no. 18. Its subsequent nineteenth-century pedigree is unknown but it may have passed through Leybourne sale (1838) and/or the Chapman sale (1894). Purchased by L. A. Lawrence from Lincoln stock and by exchange to the British Museum (1923). (BM 1). Weight: 1.34gr. (20.7g).

36. 14/9. Legends as above. (K less well seen). Without pedigree, but possibly one of those recorded in nineteenth-century sales. In Baldwin’s stock (1833). (AHB 1). Weight: 20.8gr. (1.35g).

37. ?? No details of die identities. Advertised by D. H. Cannon, Cincinnati, Ohio, in World Coin News (16 Oct. 1984), p. 16. In correspondence with the dealer said to have been purchased with other rare English coins (1935). (DHC 1). Weight: unrecorded.

A. ?? HENRICVIII/D’%G’x R’x Z/AGLIE = FRANCIx DOMINVSx HIBERN

without initials either side of the harp as illustrated by Simon, Essay on Irish Coins (1749), pl. 8, 172. But on p. 76 under Addenda he writes: ‘Since the foregoing sheets were printed, I have seen a curious collection of coins, in the possession of Ralph Howard, Esq; a Half-groat of Henry VIII with the arms of England on one side, and on the other, the crowned harp between the letters H.A. See Plate VIII. Numb. 172’. This suggests, if the inscriptions are correct and the engraver only forgot the initials, that there are yet other dies. More likely, however, this coin is from dies
1/1 or 2/2 and that the engraver drew from a memory sketch made by James Simon. This coin does not seem to have turned up in the sale of Hugh Howard (1874) but, since it cannot now be identified and may well be one of the first ten 'Dominus' coins in this schedule, no number has been assigned to it. (RH 1). Weight: unrecorded.

APPENDIX 2

Metrology of the Half-Harps

So far as is known no assay of a half-groat has been made owing to their rarity but Symonds made assays of both HI and HA groats and found them to be somewhat better than the prescribed standard of 10 oz fine.17 Also, four HA half-groats, one HI and one HK were submitted to S.G. determination and the results were published, with that of the groats from the same collection, by Hackmann together with his reservations as to the validity of the specific gravity treatment.18

A weight histogram of thirty-two half-groats which appear to be reasonably intact, although slight clipping and some chipping of the flans is to be noted, has been set out below. Twenty specimens lie below 18.5 grains and twelve above. It is found that the average weight of twenty-four specimens of the HA/HI coinage is 18.3 grains whereas eight specimens of the HK issue is 19.1 grains, and two of the heaviest at 20.7 and 20.8 are also HK. Since there were to be 288 half-groats to the lb troy weight,19 it might seem that the fineness was somewhat above a standard of 10 oz fine but the weight was slightly down.20 The half-groats were to have been tarifed at threepence in Ireland and the groats at sixpence.21

17 Symonds, p. 198.
18 Dolley and Hackmann, pp. 100, 106.
19 Symonds, p. 199 quoting a commission to Rauf Rowlett and Martin Bowes, masters of the Tower Mint (1540).
20 Symonds, p. 202, where an HR groat with the mark of rose, thought to be of the second coinage, assayed at

10 oz. 11 dwt. 12 gr. fine but Dolley and Hackmann, p. 107, placed all the groats and half-groats with initial mark crown under a probable standard of 10 oz. 2 dwt. fine.
Half-Harps: Die Link Chart

One of the interesting things to come out of the die study, both of the groats and of the half-groats, is the fact that the reverses have proved to be the piles or standards and the obverses, the trussels. Why exactly this should be is not clear but since the contemporary English groats showed the cross over the royal arms as the reverse side the moneyers apparently ignored the inscriptions and made the crowned harp with marriage initials the lower die and the cross over the crowned arms the upper. In all the coinages the pattern is the same. For example, in an examination of 82 HA groats 44 obverses were noted but only 23 reverses. Of 98 HI groats examined there were 53 obverses and 34 reverses. With the much smaller HK group at 30 coins there were 16 obverses to 10 reverses; and taking together the 36 half-groats 14 obverses have to date been traced to only 9 reverses. And it must be remembered that of these nine reverse dies employed three at least, possibly four, used for HA coins were in sufficiently good condition for the striking of the HI coins.

The issues, then, would seem to be small; and possibly all or nearly all the dies used have now been traced. In the case of the HA ‘Dominus’ piles it seems reasonably certain that there were only two as against five (or six) HA ‘Dns’ piles. In the case of HK the figures suggest only two piles. As for the trussels it is rather more difficult to forecast the number actually employed but twelve might have been made for the whole of the HA/HI coinage and four for that of HK. The lay-out of the chart is the possible order of striking with the two ‘Dominus’ reverses placed at the head of the series. Since one of these seems only to pair with a single obverse it is placed first;22 the other given second not only paired with three other HA obverses but was altered to HI; and this coin was described by Aquilla Smith.23 The remaining HA/HI reverse dies were probably all used at about the same time but reverse die 4 has to date not been found in altered state and die 7 has not been traced with an undoubted HA obverse. As regards the HK coins reverse 8 has only been found to pair with obverse 12 so may be the first of this group.

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22 This includes the coin from the Askeaton Hoard, (no. 4 of the Schedule) so here is another reason for placing it at the beginning of the series.

23 Smith, pp. 164-5, (no. 22 of the Schedule) although he did not notice that the large I had been stamped over the small A.
THE HALF-HARPS OF HENRY VIII

KEY TO THE PRINTS

As 8  (Rev. 2). From Aquilla Smith, NC ns XIX (1889), pl. VII, no. 2.
As 19 (Rev. 5). From Aquilla Smith, pl. VII, no. 3.
As 22 (Rev. 2 altered from A to I). From Aquilla Smith, pl. VII, no. 4.
As 33 (Rev. 9). From Aquilla Smith, pl. VII, no. 6.
As 19 (Obv. 8 Rev. 5). From J. Lindsay, A View of the Coinage of Ireland (1849), pl. 7, no. 145.
As 28 (Rev. 7). From Aquilla Smith, pl. VII, no. 5.
As 28 (Obv. 11 Rev. 7). From J. Lindsay, pl. 7, no. 146.
A (Unknown Obv. and Rev.). From J. Simon, Essay on Irish Coins (1749), pl. 8th, no. 172.

KEY TO THE PLATES

HA
1. British Museum: Obv. 1 Rev. 1 (BM4)
2. Ulster Museum: Obv. 1 Rev. 1 (UMB3)
3. T. S. Agnew Coll: Obv. 1 Rev. 1 (TSA1)
5. Hermitage Museum, Leningrad: Obv. 1 Rev. 1 (HML1)
6. British Museum: Obv. 2 Rev. 2 (BM3)
7. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge: Obv. 2 Rev. 2 (FMC1)
8. Ulster Museum: Obv. 2 Rev. 2 (UMB2)
9. Private Collection: Obv. 2 Rev. 2 (SNL1)
11. Ulster Museum: Obv. 3 Rev. 2 (UMB1)
12. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 3 Rev. 2 (NMI6)
13. Private Collection: Obv. 3 Rev. 3 (GB1)
15. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge: Obv. 5 Rev. 3 (FMC2)
16. Ulster Museum: Obv. 6 Rev. 6 (UMB4)
17. Private Collection or Spink's stock: Obv. 6 Rev. 6 (BD1)
18. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 7 Rev. 6 (NMI5)
20. British Museum: Obv. 9 Rev. 5 (BM2)
21. Private Collection(?): Obv. 9 Rev. 5 (HAP1)

HI
22. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 7 Rev. 2 (NMI11)
23. Ulster Museum: Obv. 8 Rev. 5 (UMB6)
24. Spink's Stock: Obv. 8 Rev. 5 (DSQ1)
25. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 9 Rev. 6 (NMI3)
26. British Museum: Obv. 10 Rev. 6 (BM5)
27. British Museum: Obv. 11 Rev. 7 (BM6)
28. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 11 Rev. 7 (NMI2)

HK
30. Ulster Museum: Obv. 12 Rev. 8 (UMB5)
32. Private Collection: Obv. 12 Rev. 8 (HAS1)
33. Private Collection: Obv. 13 Rev. 9 (MS1)
34. National Museum of Ireland: Obv. 13 Rev. 9 (NMI10)
35. British Museum: Obv. 14 Rev. 9 (BM1)
36. Baldwin's Stock: Obv. 14 Rev. 9 (AHB1)
THE HALF-HARPS OF HENRY VIII

PRINTS

8

19

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17 2

Hen VIII.

A