TWO FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MINT INDENTURES AND RELATED DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

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The texts of five indentures appointing masters of English ecclesiastical mints have been published. The Durham indenture of 20 September 1489 and 20 January 1495 appeared in Mark Noble’s pioneering book on the Durham mint in 1780, and Noble’s contemporary George Allan published a version of the Durham indenture of 20 September 1510. In 1908 Caesar Caine published the York indenture of 1 May 1523, which had been summarised by Ruding. The Canterbury indenture of 16 January 1534 was brought to the attention of numismatists by Henry Symonds, and edited by T.F. Reddaway. Christopher Challis has analysed the contents of the five indentures, and provided a revised transcript of the Durham indenture of 1510. The texts of two important fourteenth-century indentures, which are in French, remain to be published. A York indenture of 18 February 1357 received a brief notice in a history of the archbishops of York published in 1863, followed by later writers without further investigation of the text in the register of Archbishop John Thoresby. An original copy of a Durham indenture of 2 November 1367 has apparently not been mentioned in print until now. Texts and translations of the indentures of 1357 and 1367 will be found in the Appendix of this article, with a privy seal writ of 29 June 1353 regulating the operation of franchial mints. These documents can significantly increase our understanding of the administration of English ecclesiastical mints in the fourteenth century.

The indenture of 1357 appoints Laurence of Florence as master of the archbishop of York’s mint, to make sterlings. The archbishop’s mint had been closed after a brief period of activity in 1353, and its resumption of minting in Pre-Treaty series G may have followed Laurence of Florence’s appointment. The archbishop’s sterlings were to be minted in his palace in York, which was a collection of buildings in a precinct on the northern side of York Minster. This is the earliest known reference to the location of the archiepiscopal mint, confirmed by further documentary evidence at various dates from 1374 to 1487. Laurence of Florence was not the only Italian...
master of an English ecclesiastical mint in the second half of the fourteenth century. Bonageus of Florence, who may have been a master of the bishop of Durham’s mint, took up two landholdings near Durham in 1358, which were forfeited in 1364 after he became a moneyer in Scotland. Bonageus may also have worked in the York mint, as he became a freeman of the city in 1363/4. Laurence of Florence was admitted to the freedom of the city in 1360/1. Andrew of Florence, who was described as a moneyer when he was registered as a freeman in 1362/3, leased the archbishop of York’s mint in 1365. On 14 March 1365 Andrew of Florence agreed to farm the mint for two years, paying an annual rent of twenty marks (£13 6s. 8d.). The brief record of this contract in Archbishop Thoresby’s register refers to an indenture, the archbishop’s copy of which was kept by his treasurer, but unfortunately the text of this indenture was not registered. Andrew of Florence was one of the two joint masters of the Durham mint named by the surviving indenture of 1367, and it is possible that he also renewed his lease of the York mint in 1367, at the end of his two-year contract. In May 1388 an inquisition examining the assets of Archbishop Alexander Neville found that the mint had been leased for a year from Christmas 1387 by Andrew Monymaker, who may have been the same man as Andrew of Florence. Andrew of Florence’s partner in the Durham mint, John of Bishopdale, was a local man described as a burgess and citizen of Durham in the indenture of 1367. John of Bishopdale was the bailiff of the city of Durham in 1370, and he later became a collector of customs, mayor and MP of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Andrew of Florence and John of Bishopdale leased the Durham mint for one year from Martinmas (11 November) 1367, agreeing to pay an annual rent of £4 at the four major terms of the bishopric of Durham, presumably in four equal instalments. The four major terms were the Feast of St Cuthbert in March (20 March), the Nativity of St John the Baptist (24 June), the Translation of St Cuthbert (4 September), and Martinmas. Martinmas was the normal end of accounting years in the bishopric until the late 1370s or the early 1380s, when Michaelmas (29 September) was adopted for most purposes. The record of the lease of the York mint in 1365 does not provide any indication of the accounting year, but during a vacancy of the archbishopric of York in 1373–4 rent was received from the mint for the Martinmas term of 1373, implying an annual rent, probably halved at Martinmas in November and Pentecost in May. However, the 1387/8 rent year of the mint began at Christmas. The surviving evidence suggests that the archbishop of York’s mint was customarily leased for an annual rent from no later than 1365, but the indenture of 1357 expects Laurence of Florence to pay seignorage to the archbishop. The Durham mint also provided seignorage instead of rent at various times in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The Durham and York indentures require the mint-masters to pay all necessary costs, and the York indenture specifically mentions the cost of dies, sent to London for replacement under the archbishop’s seal.

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[14] PRO SC 6/1344/10, rot. 8 (particulars of account of Henry de Barton and John Harnethorp, keepers of the archbishop’s of York, 5 November–6 May 1374); R. Davies, ‘Notices of the York mint and coinages’, Proceedings of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society 1847–54 (1855), 191–269, at p. 252; Caine, The Archepiscopcal Coins of York, as in n. 2 p. 71; Benson, ‘Coins: especially those relating to York’, as in n. 5 p. 70. The keepers received 100s. rent for the Martinmas term of 1373. In 1374 Pentecost was on 21 May, fifteen days after the end of the account.

[15] PRO SC 6/1344/10, rot. 8 (particulars of account of Henry de Barton and John Harnethorp, keepers of the archbishop’s of York, 5 November–6 May 1374); R. Davies, ‘Notices of the York mint and coinages’, Proceedings of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society 1847–54 (1855), 191–269, at p. 252; Caine, The Archepiscopcal Coins of York, as in n. 2 p. 71; Benson, ‘Coins: especially those relating to York’, as in n. 5 p. 70. The keepers received 100s. rent for the Martinmas term of 1373. In 1374 Pentecost was on 21 May, fifteen days after the end of the account.
Both of the indentures specify the use of Tower standards of weight and fineness. The Durham indenture implies that this is to be enforced by a pyx trial, as the bishop’s officials are to take and keep pyx samples of the coins minted (lassay del monoi overi). The York indenture forbids the use of silver from old English coins. The origin of this unusual prohibition seems to have been the privy seal writ of 29 June 1353, in French, which stipulated conditions to be attached to minting rights claimed by certain lords (ascuns seignurs). The archbishop of Canterbury had obtained a confirmation of his minting rights on 4 December 1352, and the archbishop of York’s claim was conceded on 2 May 1353. The writ forbids the melting of sterling money to make coins, implying that this would adversely affect the king’s profit from this source in his own mints. Minting silver derived from the melting of relatively heavy old coins had been made profitable by the reduction of the weight standards in 1351. The writ further restricted competition with royal mints by prohibiting lower minting charges, specifying the 14d. per pound by weight charged for the minting of pence in the king’s mints from 1346 to 1355. The York indenture seems to be obeying this prohibition in its adherence to the Tower charges for the minting of pence. The writ’s stipulation that mints should not be farmed, except to the king or by his permission, shows an awareness of the potential profits of mint farmers after the weight reductions of 1351. The Durham indenture displays a similar awareness in the provision that it should be cancelled, allowing the bishop to take his own profit, if the coinage is changed.

The York indenture states that Thomas of Duffield and John Frebois will stand as pledges, to guarantee the performance of the contract and to indemnify the archbishop. Thomas and John are described as citizens and merchants of York, and they may have been business associates of the new mint-master, Laurence of Florence. The indenture was sealed on 18 February 1357, and two days later the two guarantors agreed to a bond promising to pay £100 to the archbishop at Easter (9 April). On 22 February 1357 Thomas and John sealed an indenture between themselves and the archbishop, completing the formalities required. This indenture states that Laurence has been appointed by indenture, to make sterlings in the archbishop’s palace, and that Thomas and John are bound as pledges. Their bond will be null and void if Laurence keeps his agreement. The Durham indenture merely states that the two mint-masters are bound by all of their goods for the performance of the contract, and there is no reference to pledges.

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21 Calendar of Charter Rolls 1341-1417, p. 126.
22 Calendar of Close Rolls 1349-1354, p. 358; Caine, The Archiepiscopal Coins of York, as in n. 2, p. 32.
23 A New History of the Royal Mint, edited by C.E. Challis (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 701–4 summarises the royal mint indentures of 1346–55. In 1351 the yield of a Tower pound of silver minted into pence was increased by 30d. to 25s., including 17d. (14d. by weight) deducted for minting charges. Mint customers would have received a net profit of 12 ½d. (10d. by weight) from the reminting of full-weight pence struck before the weight reduction of 1351. The reminting of halfpence and farthings was less likely to be profitable, as they had been struck at lighter standards since 1346 (23s. 3d. for halfpence and 23s. 5d. for farthings).
24 BI Reg. 11, fol. 309v.
25 Ibid.
26 The Durham indentures of 1489, 1495 and 1510 include pledges.
Privy seal writ of 29 June 1353

Text

[Collation of two texts: A: PRO E159/176, rec. Hill. rot. 6 B: BI Reg. 18, fol. 309r–309v]

Edward par la grace de Dieu roy Dengletere et de France et seigneur Dirland a noz chaunceller et tresorer saluz. Pur ceo que ascuns seignurs Dengletere par chartres de noz progenitours et de nous cleyment davoir coignes pur faire monioie et davoir le profit dycelle\textsuperscript{27} et par celle cause ouent pursuue devers nostre conseil\textsuperscript{28} a ceo que nous avons entenduz, nous, veillanz ce quesjon soit fust sibien a nous come as diz seignurs en celle\textsuperscript{29} partie, avons fait debatre devant nous la dit bussaigne et sur ceo vous declarons nostre entencion et volonte en la manere que\textsuperscript{30} sensuit. Primes volons ce les seignurs qui deverant avoir tielx coignes par resoun les cient desire et gils pouissent faire esterlynges de plate sicome faire soleient\textsuperscript{31} et devient resonablement sans\textsuperscript{32} faire funder lysterlyng. Et gils ne facent autre monioie que le petit esterlyng et gils ne doignent plus\textsuperscript{33} grantz gages as moneours ce nous ne fesoms et que nul de eux ne preign ceur leur seignurage de la monioie meyns que nous ne pernons cestassavoir qatorze\textsuperscript{34} deniers de poyx a la livre de poyx pur overage et toutz autres choses.\textsuperscript{35} Et que nul de eux le lasse les profitz de sa monioie a ferme si noum a nous ou par nostre assent. Et si nulls veilles\textsuperscript{36} esterlynges soient foundez en plate en deceite ou destourbage de nostre profit par nul\textsuperscript{37} des diz seignurs ou par les maistres de leur moniois\textsuperscript{38} ou nul\textsuperscript{39} autre marchauent en purpos de faire mesme la plate monioie novel, soit la dite plate forfai\textsuperscript{40} a nous et ceux qui laveront fait soient puniz a nostre volente.\textsuperscript{41} [B: fol. 309v] Et que nul lumbard autre qad este ou serra trove en defaut\textsuperscript{42} en ascune moignage en engeterre soit retenuz en toutz\textsuperscript{43} nulls des\textsuperscript{44} seignurs par leur moignages\textsuperscript{45} surdictes. Et que nous ens nous serchez par tourz\textsuperscript{46} les lieux en fraunches as toned\textsuperscript{47} les foitz\textsuperscript{48} qe pliera a nous et a nostre conseill. Si vous mandons et chargeons que les pointz et articles susditz facez tener et garder desere sanz\textsuperscript{30} ceo que rience ysoit fait ou attempte al encuentre. Don` souz nostre prive seal a Westun` le xxix jour de juyn lan de nostre regne Dengletere vynt et septisme et de Fraunce qatorzisme.

Translation

Edward by the grace of God king of England and of France and lord of Ireland to our chancellor and tressurer, greeting. Whereas certain lords of England by charters of our progenitors and ourselves claim to have dies for the making of money and to have the profit thereof, and for this cause have, as we have heard, made suit to our council, we, willing that right be done both to us and to the said lords in this regard, have caused the said matter to be discussed before us, and thereupon declare to you our intention and will in the manner

\textsuperscript{27} B: dycelle.
\textsuperscript{28} B: counseill.
\textsuperscript{29} B: rete.
\textsuperscript{30} B: ge.
\textsuperscript{31} B: solatau.
\textsuperscript{32} B: soumz.
\textsuperscript{33} B: pluis.
\textsuperscript{34} B: qatorze.
\textsuperscript{35} B: choses.
\textsuperscript{36} B: veilez.
\textsuperscript{37} B: malle.
\textsuperscript{38} B: monie.
\textsuperscript{39} B: malle.
\textsuperscript{40} B: forfai.
\textsuperscript{41} B: volume.
\textsuperscript{42} B: defaine.
\textsuperscript{43} B: ov.
\textsuperscript{44} B: dcr.
\textsuperscript{45} B: moignage
\textsuperscript{46} B: tonz.
\textsuperscript{47} B: iz.
\textsuperscript{48} B: iz.
\textsuperscript{49} A, dorse: Adhuc de processu tangente archiepiscopum Elbor* de cauis liberandi.
\textsuperscript{50} B: swedir.
\textsuperscript{51} B: saunt.
following. First, we will that the lords who rightly should have such dies shall have them henceforth, and that they may make sterlings of plate as they have been accustomed and ought rightly to do, without having sterling [money] melted. And that they make no other money than sterlings and they give no greater wages to the moneyers than we do, and that none of them take as their seignorage of the money less than we take, that is to say fourteen pence by weight to the pound by weight, for striking and all other things. And that none of them let the profits of his money to farm if not to us or by our assent. And if any old sterlings are molten into plate in deceit or disturbance of our profit by any of the said lords or by the masters of their money or any other merchant for the purpose of making the same plate [into] new money, let the said plate be forfeit to us and those who have done so be punished at our will. And that no Lombard or other who has been or shall be found in default in any mint in England be retained with any of the said lords for their mints. And that we have our searches in all places within franchises at all times that it shall please us and our council. So we command and charge you that you cause the aforesaid points and articles to be held and kept henceforth, without anything being done or attempted to the contrary. Given under our privy seal at Westminster the twenty-ninth day of June the twenty-seventh year of our reign in England and the fourteenth in France [29 June 1353].

Indenture of 18 February 1357

**Text**

[BL Reg. 11, fols 309r–309v]

[Latin:] Indentura facta inter dominum et Laurencium de Florencia super pactione de faciendo sterlingorum in palacio Ebor.

[French:] Ceste endenture faite par entre Lonorable piere en dieu sire Johan par la grace de dieu ercevesque Deverwik et primat Dengleterre dune part et Laurence de Florence del autre tesoigne que le dit ercevesque ad graunte et depute le dit Laurence maistre de faire le petit esterling en son palays deizn le citee Deverwyk de tiel pois et de tiel alaye comme il fount en la Tour de Loundres de plate saunz founde lesterling. Et aussi le dit Laurence prendra pur lercevesque susdit pur lui et ses oeverours et rendra as marchaanztz en mesme la manour comme il fount a Loundres pur loveraigne del petit esterling. Et les coignez serront envoiez a Loundres a tant foitz comme mestre serra a les coutages le dit Laurence de souz le seal le dit ercevesque. Et le dit Laurence trovera toutes autres maneres des coutages autour loveraigne susdit. Et a ses covenantes loialment tenir et parfoumire et a paier au dit ercevesque et as marchaanztz et oeverours bien et loialment solom ceo qil fount a Loundres le dit Laurence ad trove pieeges. Cest assavoir Thomas de Duffeld et Johan Frebois Marchauntz et citezeins [fol. 309v] Deverwyk et de sauver le dit ercevesque saunz damage. En tesoignance de celle chose as cestes endentures si bien le dit ercevesque come le dit Laurence entrechaungeablement omnit mis leur seals.

Don’a Cawode le xvij jour de feverer lan de nostre Seigneur mcclvime.

Fait a remembre que lune partie de ceste endenture remente devers le dit Laurence seale du seal le dit ercevesque leutre partie remente devers le dit ercevesque seale du seal51 le dit Laurence.

**Translation**

Indenture made between the lord [archbishop] and Laurence of Florence about an agreement concerning the making of sterlings in the [archiepiscopal] palace of York.

This indenture made between the honourable father in God lord John by the grace of God archbishop of York and primate of England of the one part, and Laurence of Florence of the other, witnesses that the said archbishop has granted and deputed the said Laurence [to be] master for making sterlings in his palace within the city of York, of such weight and of such fineness as is minted in the Tower of London, of plate without melting sterling [money]. And also the said Laurence will take [charges] for the aforesaid archbishop, for himself and [for] his workmen, and will render to merchants, in the same manner as is done in London for the making of sterlings. And the dies will be sent to London as many times as shall be necessary, at the expense of the said Laurence, under the seal of the said archbishop. And the said Laurence will find all other manner of expenses concerning the aforesaid work. And the said Laurence has found pledges, that is to say, Thomas of Duffeld and John Frebois, merchants and citizens of York, for the loyal keeping and performance of his covenants, and for good and loyal payment to the archbishop and to merchants and workmen in accordance with the practice in London; also, for the saving of the archbishop without damage.

In witness whereof both the said archbishop and the said Laurence have interchangeably set their seals to these indentures.

51 du seal inserted.
Given at Cawood the eighteenth day of February the year of our Lord 1356 [18 February 1356/7].
Be it remembered that one part of this indenture remains with the said Laurence sealed with the seal of the said archbishop; the other part remains with the said archbishop sealed with the seal of the said Laurence.

Indenture of 2 November 1367

Text
[DCD Misc. Ch. 6883]
Ceste endentur fait a Duresme le second jour de novembre Ian de grace mile trois centz scissant septisme entre le tresholdorable pier en dieu Thomas par la grace de Dieu eveske de Duresme dvn part et Andre de Florence moneur et Johan de Bishopdale burgseys et citezeisme de Duresme dautre part tesmoigne qu le dit evesque ad lesse au dit Andre et Johan soum moneage de Duresme ovc toutz les profites duez et acustumez. A havoir et tenir as ditz Andre et Johan et lours deutez de dit eveske de la feste de Seint Martyn proschein avenir par un an entier adonques proschein ensuant pleinerment acompli. Rendant au dit evesque a soum escheke de Duresme as qare terms usuelles deiz leveques de Duresme qare livres desterlinges le primer terme commencant a la feste de Seint Cuthbert en marce prochevin avenir issint qu le dit Andre et Johan facent touz les costages du dit moneage et des coynees et quanque a le dit moneage appartient durant le terme suivit. Et ferront tout le monoy que serra overi el dit moneage demesmes lalay et poise como les moneoures nostre seigneur le roi fount a Loundres et acquiteront et defendront le dit evesque de damage et empechement envers le roi et touz autres que ceste busoygne purra toucher. Estre ce les avautditz Andre et Johan grantotent qu en cas doechange de monoy se taille en royalme deiz leveques celes sesse soit tenuz par mouille mais bien liue adonques au dit evesque faire soum profit de dit moneage a soum pleisire nient contestant ceste endentur. Et le dit evesque par ses ministres prendra et gardera lassay del monoy overi de temps en temps solont le maner use en le moneage nostro seigneur le roi a Loundres et aillours en royalme. As quelles covenantz touz et chescuns par solo loyament tenir cest assavoir paixement de rent overage et faute de monoy et des costages appertenant et dacquier leveques de damage et empechement en le maner suivit lez avautdit Andre et Johan obligezont soi jointement et severalement lors heirs et lors executours et touz lors biens par ceste escript endentez entrechaungablement enseallez des sealx as parties suivitz.

Translation
This indenture made at Durham the second day of November the year of grace one thousand three hundred and sixty seven between the right honourable father in God Thomas by the grace of God bishop of Durham of the one part, and Andrew of Florence moneyer and John of Bishopdale burgseys and citizen of Durham of the other part, witnesses that the said bishop has leased to the said Andrew and John his mint of Durham, with all the profits, dues and customs: to have and to hold to the said Andrew and John and their deputies, of the said bishop, from the feast of St Martin next coming [11 November 1367] for a whole year then following, fully accomplished; rendering to the said bishop at his exchequer of Durham at the four terms usual within the bishopric of Durham four pounds sterling, the first term commencing at the feast of St Cuthbert in March next coming [20 March 1368], so that the said Andrew and John bear all the costs of the said mint and of the coinage and whatsoever appertains to the said mint during the aforesaid term. And they shall make all the money to be struck at the said mint of the same fineness and weight as the moneyers of our lord the king do at London, and they shall discharge and defend the said bishop from damage and impeachement as regards the king and all others whom this business could affect. Moreover the aforesaid Andrew and John warrant that if the coinage changes in the realm during the aforesaid term then this lease will be held as null, but it will then be properly permitted for the bishop to make his profit of the said mint at his pleasure notwithstanding this indenture. And the said bishop by his ministers shall take and keep the assay of the money struck, from time to time, according to the manner used in the mint of our lord the king at London and elsewhere in the realm. To the loyal keeping of all and each one of which covenants, that is to say payment of rent, striking and making of money and the costs appertaining, and discharge of the bishop as to damage and impeachement in the aforesaid manner, the aforesaid Andrew and John bind themselves, jointly and severally, their heirs and their executors and all their goods, by this indented writing interchangeably sealed with the seals of the aforesaid parties.

52 ioni inserted.
ROBERT BRUCE PENNIES - CLASS I

HOLMES AND STEWARTBY: SCOTTISH COINAGE (1)
PLATE 4

ROBERT BRUCE PENNIES - CLASSES II AND III

ROBERT BRUCE HALFPENNIES

HOLMES AND STEWARTBY: SCOTTISH COINAGE (2)
ROBERT BRUCE FARTHINGS

DAVID II FARTHINGS

HOLMES AND STEWARTBY: SCOTTISH COINAGE (3)
PLATE 6

DAVID II HALF PENCE

HOLMES AND STEWARTBY: SCOTTISH COINAGE (4)