

## SHORT ARTICLES AND NOTES

### THE LONDON *ADVENTUS* of 307

IAN STEWART

IN vol. VI of *Roman Imperial Coinage* the late Dr C. H. V. Sutherland listed (no. 82) a London coin of Constantine as Caesar with the *Adventus* reverse type. This entry was based on a 'cast' in Vienna<sup>1</sup>, and the existence of the coin, which raises interesting historical questions, has been in need of confirmation. I was fortunate enough to acquire an example of the coin in London in 1986, a description of which is as follows:

*Obv.* FL VAL CONSTANTINVS NOB C. Bust right, laureate, cuirassed.

*Rev.* ADVEN - TVS AVGG Constantine, hand raised in salutation, riding left; captive below foreleg of horse. Mintmark -/PLN Wt. 6.74 g. (pl. 25, 8)

Mr John Casey, to whom I am much indebted for comments on the subject of this note, tells me that some time after he published a paper<sup>2</sup> on the London *Adventus* issues (which are otherwise of Constantine as Augustus) he was shown an example of this coin in a public house in Darlington and that subsequently another specimen was sold at auction at Morlaix in France.<sup>3</sup> Having compared a slide of the Darlington specimen with mine, I think it is clear not only that they are different coins, but also that they are from different pairs of dies. A further specimen of the type (wt. 6.62g, die-axis 180°), acquired by the British Museum in 1983, is also from dies different from mine.

Four mintmarks occur on the London *Adventus* coins. Plain PLN, as on the coin here described, post-dates the end of the coinage of Severus II, who lost his imperial rank in the early summer of 307, but the first *Adventus* issue must belong to the period before Constantine assumed the title of Augustus later in the same year. The second mintmark, -/PLN, is dated from the middle of 310 to some time in 312, and the third and fourth, S/PLN and S/MLL, which were consecutive, from some time after the defeat of Maximinus Daza in 313.

Most writers have suggested that these London *Adventus* issues were struck to celebrate imperial visits to Rome or Trier.<sup>4</sup> Dr Kent points out to me that the London mint seems at times to have had a

particular interest in Rome, as evidenced by the *Romae Aeter* type of Constantine as Caesar (307) and later by the *Romae Restitutae* and *Romae Aeter Augg* types of 312/3,<sup>5</sup> which fall between the second and third groups of Constantine's *Adventus* type at London. There is also the question raised by the inscriptions on RIC 82, with Constantine as Caesar apparently referring to the *Adventus* of two Augusti (Maximian and Maxentius), which could be a reference to their entry into Rome. On the other hand, it has been observed by Mr Casey that none of the ten other *Adventus* issues of the period 296-335 can be associated with a distant event, and that in the case of no less than eight of them known historical circumstances are such as to suggest that the type referred to the actual arrival of the emperor in the mint-city itself. On the contrary, he feels, it would have been remarkable if, as has been suggested for the second London *Adventus* group, the most distant mint of the western province had alone been moved to celebrate Constantine's conquest of Italy in 312 in this way.

Mr Casey argues that the second and third London *Adventus* series (the third comprising both the S/PLN and S/MLL marks) represent actual imperial visits to Britain, probably in 312 and 314.

As regards a possible earlier visit, in the second half of 307, to account for the first of the London *Adventus* coins, Mr Casey comments: 'the body of coinage that would have accompanied such an event does not seem to have been produced and, in the light of the extremely tenuous nature of the numismatic evidence, it is perhaps best to discount any visit of Constantine at this time'. But the subsequent appearance of three, and possibly more, undoubted examples of the issue adds some substance to the basis of Mr Casey's suggestion that such a visit may at least have been planned in 307, perhaps even carried out. Verification of the existence of coins of the description of RIC VI, London 82, thus raises questions of historical interest as well as numismatic, although I must leave their interpretation to others more expert than myself.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Dr Günther Dembski of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna for examining this for me. He tells me that it is in fact not a plaster cast but a two-sided tinfoil impression with sealing wax or synthetic plastic in between. He does not think it is the same as my coin, and has not been able to trace the origin of it.

<sup>2</sup> Casey, J., 'Constantine the Great in Britain - the Evidence of the Coinage of the London Mint, A.D. 312-314', in *Collectanea Londiniensia: Studies in London*

*Archaeology and Art Presented to Ralph Merrifield*, edited by J. Bird, et al. (1978), pp. 181-93.

<sup>3</sup> Now see also *Sacra Moneta* (Galata Coins Ltd, price list) June 1988, no. 208.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., RIC VI, pp. 120-1; RIC VII, pp. 52-3; and J. P. C. Kent, 'The pattern of bronze coinage under Constantine I', *NC* 1957, pp. 16-77 (22, 23, 29). I am grateful to Dr Kent for comments on a draft of this note.

<sup>5</sup> RIC VI, 99 and 269-74.

# A SCEAT OF SERIES K MINTED BY ARCHBISHOP BERHTWALD OF CANTERBURY (693–731)

D. M. METCALF

IT IS well known that Archbishop Iænberht (766–92) minted coins with his name on one side and that of King Offa of Mercia on the other. An early date relative to most of Offa's coinage has been tentatively proposed for the bulk of the joint issue.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Archbishop Ecgberht of York minted sceattas under the authority of his brother, King Eadberht of Northumbria, in a series of varieties at some time during the period 737 × 758.<sup>2</sup> As Offa came to the kingship only in 757, and as it may very safely be assumed that all Ecgberht's varieties do not belong to a single year, it follows that the northern archbishop's coins begin much earlier than Iænberht's. Although there are no absolute difficulties to set against the view that the York sceattas were the first archiepiscopal coins minted in this country (given the relationship between Eadberht and Ecgberht), one cannot help thinking that precedent is more likely to have been created in the south and followed in the north, than *vice versa*, and especially not after the subjection of Kent.

If there was an earlier precedent in the south, if a previous archbishop had been permitted by the king of Kent to mint sceattas in the late seventh or during the first half of the eighth century, how might we hope to recognize them? One would expect them to be, like most sceattas, anepigraphic; and one could hope for no real help from the distribution-pattern of such coins within the pattern for all stray finds of sceattas, because the king himself presumably also minted coins at Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> So the problem might well appear to be in principle insoluble.

The only glimmer of historical evidence might seem to lie in the Grateley Decrees' reference to the provision at Canterbury of four dies for the king, two for the archbishop, and one for the abbot.<sup>4</sup> Although the law-code dates from the tenth century, it may well embody the memory of a vested interest on the part of the archbishop and the abbot, which was created much earlier. And indeed, as we have seen, there are much earlier coins of the archbishops (although none have been attributed to the abbots). It is the origin of the archbishops' minting privileges with which we are concerned here, but the mention of the abbot ought to attract our attention, because of its possible value as the basis of a historical argument.

St Augustine's Abbey, just outside the walls of Canterbury, and at a little distance from the cathedral, became the mausoleum of Queen Bertha and her chaplain Liudhard, and eventually of several of the Kentish kings. (Similarly, Whitby Abbey was the mausoleum of the Deiran kings, and Repton served in the same way, apparently, for Mercia.) The first ten archbishops of Canterbury, including St Augustine himself, were buried in the abbey at Canterbury. That link with the cathedral was severed in 758. After a gap, Iænberht (who had previously been its abbot) was the last archbishop to be buried at the abbey.<sup>5</sup> The grant of minting rights to the abbot is quite understandable while the abbey was the Kentish royal mausoleum, and in light of its status as a shrine to the conversion of the English nation, but less so after Offa's subjection of Kent. While the abbot's minting rights mentioned in the Grateley Decrees could have originated at any date up to the early tenth century, there is no obvious historical context for them after c.762 – and, of course, no signed coins. The intention of the law-code might have been fulfilled if the abbot enjoyed the *profits* of one die; but it would be illogical to suppose that the archbishop put his name on the coins while the abbot did not. During the earlier part of Offa's reign the abbot was Ethelnoth (762–87), and it is just worth noting that this can hardly be the moneyer (who continues into Group III, and into the coinage of Eadberht Praen), any more than the moneyer Iænberht (again under Eadberht Praen) can be the archbishop himself. Dr Stewart has recently pointed out that it must be put down to coincidence, or family connections. Perhaps, therefore we should be looking to the years before c.762, and to sceattas rather than broad pennies, for a period when the legal privileges and their actual enjoyment coincided.

The problem of the abbot's coinage will probably never be taken out of the realm of conjecture, and it is worth discussing mainly because it serves to draw attention to the idea that there may, by the same argument but *a fortiori*, have been archiepiscopal coins before c.762. By good fortune we now have a unique variant of a sceat of Series K, Type 33, on which the standard design of the obverse (bust, with stylized drapery, and with long cross in front of the face) has been modified by the insertion, between the

<sup>1</sup> D. M. Metcalf, 'Monetary expansion and recession: interpreting the distribution-patterns of seventh and eighth-century coins', in *Coins and the Archaeologist*, edited by J. Casey and R. Reece, 2nd (revised) edition, 1988, pp. 230–53, at p.243f.

<sup>2</sup> J. Booth, 'Sceattas in Northumbria', in *Sceattas in England and on the Continent*, edited by D. Hill and D. M. Metcalf, Oxford, 1984, pp. 71–111, distinguishing six varie-

ties for Ecgberht.

<sup>3</sup> For the ideas of 'south-of-Thames' distribution patterns and 'westwards drift', see D. M. Metcalf, 'Monetary circulation in southern England in the first half of the eighth century', in *Sceattas in England*, pp. 27–69, at pp. 43–5.

<sup>4</sup> D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, vol. 1, (2nd. edition, 1979) p. 420, section 14.2.

<sup>5</sup> *VCH Kent*, vol. 2, pp. 126–7.

face and the cross, of a very carefully depicted hand raised in benediction. In Series K, Type 32a there is often a hand holding the cross. It is as simplified as it might be in modern abstract art: two claw-like curves suggest finger and thumb. The hand on the unique variant of Type 33 is quite a different matter. The third and fourth fingers are bent against the palm, so that the outstretched thumb and first two fingers give the standard western gesture of trinitarian blessing. (In the Orthodox east, the fingers were arranged in the benediction to make the letters IC XC.) The enlarged photo of the coin (pl. 25, 7) shows what seems to be, even, a ring on the forefinger. The die is disfigured by a deep die-flaw in the centre of the design, caused perhaps by an air-bubble in the metal of the die. This makes it difficult to photograph the thumb, which is however clear if one can hold the coin and turn it about.

As regards authenticity, the coin (which came from Thames spoil<sup>6</sup>) is entirely convincing. Moreover, analysis of its metal contents, recently carried out by Dr J. P. Northover as part of a larger programme,<sup>7</sup> shows the normal range of trace elements and minor constituents. The rather high tin : copper ratio suggests to us that the measured silver contents of over 85 per cent (quite consistent in three separately measured areas of the edge) may be somewhat on the high side because of the always difficult problems of surface enrichment. Even so, the fineness is much higher than for most coins of Series K. That, together with the unusual and careful design of the hand, suggests that this particular coin belongs relatively early in the sequence of Series K, which may be presumed to have undergone a process of debasement. The coin weighs 1.14g, which is above average but perhaps within normal limits for the series.

A corpus of Type 33, published in 1967, included only eight specimens, among which there were two pairs of die-duplicates.<sup>8</sup> If the sample is representative, it suggests an original total of only a dozen dies or thereabouts. No significant additions of Type 33 to the corpus have been published since. The type exists in all three of the substantive styles of Series K, which have been labelled A-B, C-D, and 'Hwiccan'.<sup>9</sup> Thus it seems to have been issued in conjunction with Type 32a, which is also known in those three styles, and in partial conjunction with Type 42.

The evidence of style, as it relates to the whole of Series K, may be thought to have a bearing on the attribution of Type 33 to the archbishop – for whom Canterbury would be the obvious mint-place. Unless Types 33, 32a, and 42 were being produced in a jumbled and repetitive sequence (which is an unreasonable assumption), their style suggests that three officinae, separate from each other in terms of die-cutting, were working in parallel, each producing first one type concurrently, and then another. Metal analyses could confirm or refute that pattern, but not until more specimens than one of Type 33 have been analysed. As there are apparently differences of weight-standard between the styles,<sup>10</sup> one would be inclined to suggest two or three mints, working to a unified scheme, rather than three officinae in one place. Provenances are somewhat inconclusive: both styles A-B and C-D seem to be equally biased towards east Kent.<sup>11</sup> In the wider context, there is evidence, e.g. from Type 23b, of parallel styles with a different regional distribution.<sup>12</sup>

In any case there can be no doubt that Type 33 is from the same mint or mints as the substantive styles of Types 32a and 42; nor that Type 33 occurs in the 'Hwiccan' style – which has London associations.<sup>13</sup> The series as a whole shows an essentially south-of-the-Thames distribution, and the attribution of a major part of it to Canterbury would be an obvious possibility. Could the archbishop have had minting rights at more than one mint? The above analysis of style seems to require either that he had, or that the design of Type 33 was not specific to the archbishop. Historically, the idea that he could have had minting-rights at London (in the 'Hwiccan' style), while difficult to accept, might be plausible while the Kentish kings still exercised authority in London.

The face of the 'benediction hand' specimen is so damaged by the die-flaw that the style (as between A-B and C-D) is something to hesitate over. The proportions of nose, face, and neck suggest A-B; and it is the right-hand wreath-tie which makes a loop over the straight left-hand one, not vice versa.<sup>14</sup> This again suggests A-B. The reverse style, on the other hand, is a very exact reproduction laterally reversed, of the C-D style of no. 7 in the corpus – even down to the little row of dots trailing off above the creature's snout. There are, in a word, difficulties involved in dividing the two styles between mints, just as there

<sup>6</sup> Coin Register, *BNJ* 57 (1987), 122–52, no. 76.

<sup>7</sup> Publication forthcoming.

<sup>8</sup> D. M. Metcalf and D. R. Walker, 'The "Wolf" sceat-tas', *BNJ* 36 (1967), 11–28.

<sup>9</sup> Enlarged illustrations of the three styles are given, *ibid.*, pl. 7.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p. 15, Fig. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Note a find of Type 32a in C-D style from the Canterbury excavations (forthcoming).

<sup>12</sup> For an up-dated view on the styles of the 'bird and branch' coins and their distribution, see D. M. Metcalf, 'The coins', in *The Coins and Pottery from Hamwic* (South-

ampton Finds, vol. 1), edited by P. Andrews, Southampton, 1988, pp. 17–59, at pp. 21f. and 49.

<sup>13</sup> M. A. S. Blackburn and M. J. Bonser, 'Single finds of Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins – 3', *BNJ* 56 (1986), 64–101, under no. 29, sets out the evidence for finds of Series L in the 'Hwiccan' style from other parts of England, and argues for an origin 'in the south east or Thames valley'. I accept the force of this argument.

<sup>14</sup> See Metcalf and Walker, *loc. cit.*, where this criterion is fairly consistent, and obviously a valid feature of the stylistic analysis. Note, however, that Type 33 does not normally have looped wreath-ties, in any style!

are difficulties arising from their similar distribution-pattern.

Against that numismatic background, how should we assess the 'benediction hand' coin historically? The primary phase of English sceattas had established a tradition of coins with a head or bust in sub-classical style on the obverse.<sup>15</sup> Although it was obviously not a portrait, the assumption that this was an icon of the king would follow easily in people's minds. In Series K, beginning soon after the end of the primary phase, a distinction is made: the bust is accompanied by either a hawk or, commonly, a cross. The hawk is plainly a secular symbol, apt for a king, whereas the cross is of universal relevance. There are far too many sceattas with crosses for us to contemplate giving them all to ecclesiastical issuers. But a hand raised in trinitarian blessing is unambiguously priestly. It implies, with no room for doubt, that the person represented by the bust is to be understood as an ecclesiastic. We have rehearsed all the numismatic background, against which this judgement is offered; but almost whatever it had been, the verdict would have had to be the same.

Although the symbolism does not serve to distinguish between an archbishop and an abbot, Iænberht's coins minted a generation later encourage the hypothesis that what we have here is a coin of an earlier archbishop.

If there is one, there are probably others, even if

their designs are not as unambiguous as this precious coin. The implications could spread some way through the sceatta series. Among the varieties attributable to Canterbury, should we be looking for a four-to-two, or even a four-to-three ratio of royal to ecclesiastical coins? The only touchstone upon which we could test the plausibility of such ratios is the proportion of coins of Iænberht to those of Offa alone, and the corresponding proportions for Ecgerht and Eadberht. It is difficult to see the Kentish kings surrendering a third or more of the profits of minting, but perhaps such profits were only a modest proportion of their total income from various sources, e.g. tolls. The hostility between Offa and Iænberht may have curtailed the archbishop's average share for Offa's reign as a whole.

The alloy of the 'benediction hand' coin points to a date relatively very early in Series K and in the secondary phase generally. Translating the relative date into an absolute date depends upon a wide range of considerations.<sup>16</sup> If, as Dr Northover and I argue elsewhere, Series A is the coinage of King Hlothere of Kent rather than King Wihtred, Type 33 may have begun as early as the 690s rather than, say, the 710s. In any case its inception will fall within the pontificate of Archbishop Berhtwald, 693–731, who was abbot of Reculver before his election to the see. He and Wihtred collaborated well in political affairs,<sup>17</sup> and a grant of minting rights is quite thinkable.

<sup>15</sup> Series A, B, and C.

<sup>16</sup> M. Blackburn, 'A chronology for the sceattas', in *Sceattas in England and on the Continent*, pp. 165–74,

suggesting that Series K was introduced c.720.

<sup>17</sup> N. P. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*, Leicester, 1984, pp. 76–80.

## A PLATE OF ANGLO-SAXON COINS FOUND AT RECVLVER, KENT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

D. M. METCALF

THE purpose of this note is to publish a group of seventeen sceattas which are illustrated, together with eight later coins, on a single sheet of paper preserved in the British Library among the miscellaneous papers of James West (Stowe MS 1049). The coins add to our knowledge of the range of material found at Reculver, which is one of the richest sites in England for finds of sceattas. To some extent they duplicate material already well known from two plates by John White, published as a supplement to Withy and Ryall's *Twelve Plates of English Silver Coins*, in 1756. As the drawings are in both cases somewhat sketchy, an acquaintance with the coins themselves is called for, to decide whether the same specimen is illustrated in both sources. If only one or two examples of a type are now in existence with eighteenth-century provenances, one may feel more confident about the

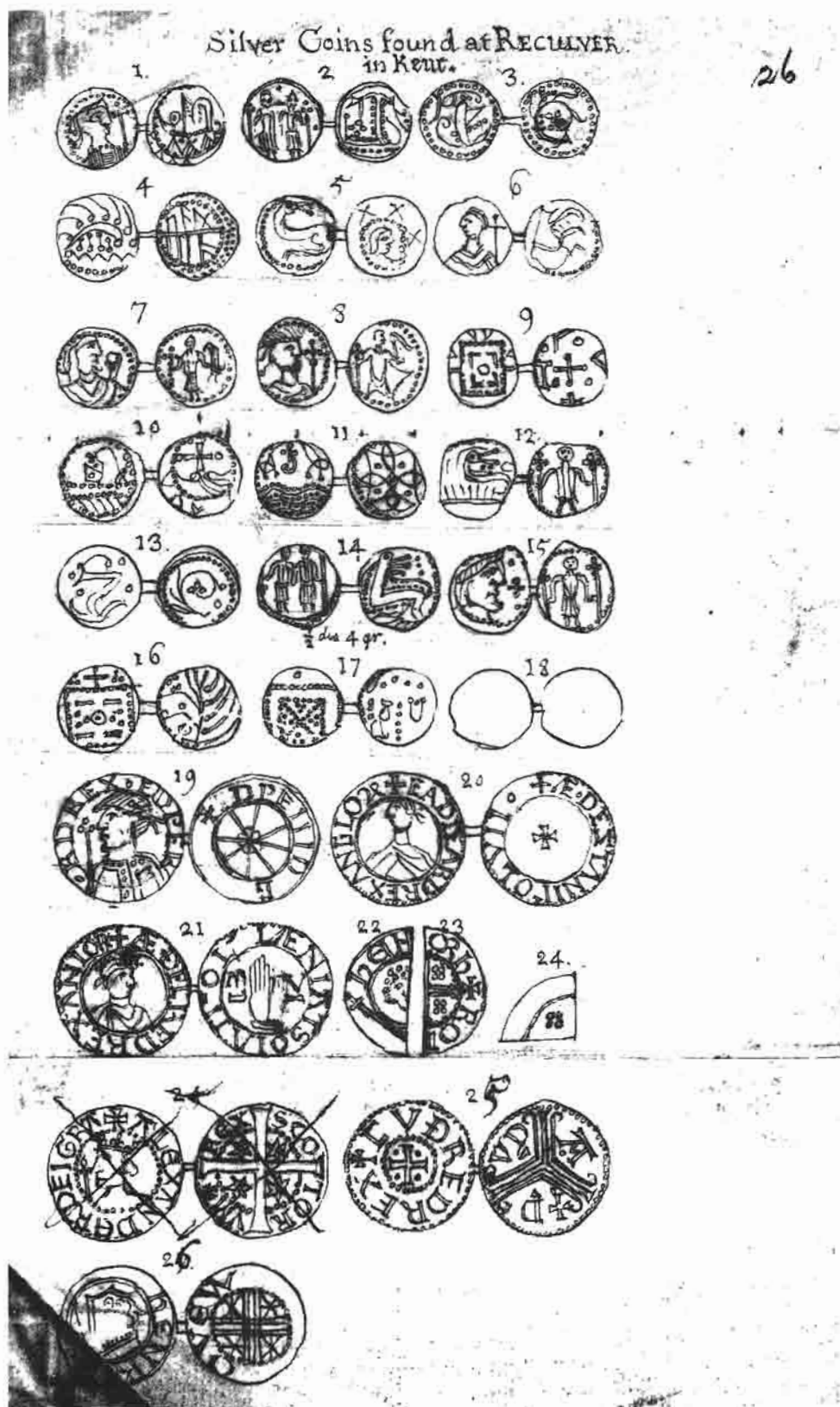
correspondence between the drawing and the similar coin, although in judging the probabilities one must allow for the possibility that the original has been irretrievably lost. A good number of the actual coins from Withy and Ryall were identified in 1956 by Dolley and Strudwick among the 'undated' coins in the *ancien fonds* of the British Museum (pre-1838), not always convincingly. The plate now published serves to confirm and sometimes correct the earlier identifications. It establishes that several coins from Reculver were acquired by William Hunter, and that at least one other surfaced again after two hundred years, in the Lockett collection. The West coins include seven sceattas which are new to the published list of finds from Reculver.

The coin of Cuthred, no.25 on the plate, was included in their corpus of the coinage of 796–840 by



Silver Coins found at RECUVER.  
in Kent.

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Blunt, Lyon, and Stewart. Three other Anglo-Saxon coins (nos. 19–21) have been noted in the Coin Register (below). They show that the Reculver finds did not dry up completely in the ninth century.

We now proceed to a consideration of the drawings one by one. Where the original coin can be pointed out conclusively, one sees that in the Stowe MS the outer dotted border of the design, which is usually incomplete, has been indicated quite faithfully. This is a useful aid to identification.

1. Series K, Type 33. Only two specimens of this variety are known, and both have pedigrees long enough to make them candidates for a mid-eighteenth century find: *BMC* 157 and *SCBI Glasgow* 101. This must be the coin in the British Museum because it shows the V pattern in the outer border of the reverse at 9 o'clock, which does not survive on the Glasgow specimen, Withy and Ryall 10.

2. Series N, Type 41b. The pointed helmet of the right-hand figure is not known on any existing coins. The pleated appearance of the skirts, and the wire border around the upper half of the obverse encourage one to think that this is WR 5, = *BMC* 175, = Metcalf (*BNJ* 1974), 9. One can see that the domed helmet of the right-hand figure might have been sketched as a pointed helmet.

3. Series M, Type 45. The design does not lend itself readily to the identification of a particular specimen. The type occurs in several sub-types, of which one (e.g. *BMC* pl. 4, 9) is sharply engraved and has an annulet on the reverse. The annulet has been pencilled into the sketch here, but not completed. Very possibly WR 20, on which the animal has long ears (indicated in the sketch?), a row of 4 dots following the rear leg, and 2 above the back.

4. Series E, *Æthilred* porcupine, WR 31. This is *BMC* Mercia, *Æthelred*, 4 which passed through the Tyssen collection (1802).

5. Series O, Type 57. A very incomplete sketch, but as there were only two specimens of the type known until recently, it may be assumed that this = WR 4 = *SCBI Glasgow* 118. The dotted border of the reverse corresponds.

6. Series K? Type 33? Extremely sketchy and inaccurate, as the face should be to the right. The double V of the drapery, with another short panel to the right, should give the clue. The reverse was evidently not understood. Type 33, wolf-head with curling tongue, is one possibility. Cf. *BNJ* 1967, pl. 7, 29? Probably the original was in worn condition.

7. Series K, Type 20. Not in WR, and not readily identifiable today. Note that the staff of the long cross is shown by a series of pellets.

8. Series L, Type 18. The misunderstood detail to the right of the standing figure is plainly repeated in WR 16. The parts of the dotted borders that are on and off the flans (in both drawings) preclude the Dolley and Strudwick identification with *BMC* 101, but fit convincingly with *SCBI Glasgow* 88, which is in any case the only obvious candidate. The drawing in

WR correctly shows the boat-shaped curve on which the figure stands.

9. Series D, Type 8. The drawing is a very good match for *SCBI Glasgow* 50.

10. Series B. Both obverse and reverse were so far misunderstood as to be drawn upside down. As the sub-type is scarce, and variable in style, there need be no doubt that this = WR 3 = Rigold B IIIA, 5 (ex Montagu, lots 164–5).

11. Series K, Type 52. The drawing mistakes the intricacies of the arabesque, which are reproduced better in WR 7, but the outer dotted borders confirm that this = *BMC* 198, bought at the Dymock sale in 1856. The type was in any case excessively rare if not unique through the nineteenth century. See *BNJ* 1986, p. 7 under no. 7.

12. Series O, Type 40. The type is uniform in style. Fortunately, the flan has two flat sections on the edge, which, together with the correspondence of the outer dotted borders, allow one to say that this coin = WR = *BNJ* 1974, pl. 2, J. Not *BMC* 171. Present whereabouts unknown.

13. Series M, Type 45. A different sub-type from no. 3 above, the sinuous shape of the crouching animal (turned through 90°) is matched on, for example, Hamwic 102. WR —.

14. Series N, Type 41b. This specimen surfaced in the Lockett sale, lot 257a = *BNJ* 1974, pl. 2, 19, on which one can see the three dots in front of the monster's jaws, the recurving tail, and the dotted border beneath the two standing figures. Present whereabouts unknown. The weight, if accurate, would be 1.037g.

15. Series L?, Type 68. The very irregular shape of flan, shown less well in WR 9, should make this specimen immediately recognizable. It is evidently from the same stable as *SCBI Glasgow* 91 and Type 32b. Present whereabouts unknown.

16. Series E, 'plumed bird' variant. Of the three reverse types (varieties J, K, and L) that occur with the 'plumed bird' obverse, K is rare. It is seen here in combination with the 'secret mark' of a pelletted annulet under the bird's neck (J normally has a cross pommeé). There need be little doubt that this specimen = *BMC* 74, although the two groups of three pellets in the outer border differ from the straight rows of three pellets on *BMC* 74. WR 18 is certainly a different coin, which was misidentified as *BMC* 74 by Dolley and Strudwick.

17. Series R?, Type 51. A specimen on which the obverse (two standing figures) was, apparently, indistinct. WR —.

Of the seventeen specimens illustrated, seven are supplementary to Withy and Ryall, namely nos 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 17. They may be listed in series order as:

- D, Type 8 (Stowe 9) = *SCBI Glasgow* 50
- E, 'plumed bird' (Stowe 16) = *BMC* 74
- K, Type 20 (Stowe 7)
- K, Type 33? (Stowe 6)

M, Type 45 (Stowe 13)  
 N, Type 41b (Stowe 14) = Lockett 257a  
 R?, Type 51 (Stowe 17)

These are in addition to the fifty-seven coins listed under Reculver in *Sceattas in England and on the Continent* (edited by D. Hill and D. M. Metcalf, Oxford, 1984), pp. 258–60 and discussed *ibid.*, pp.

203–4. The coins published by Withy and Ryall are stated to have been found 'near and in the Isle of Thanet', but Mr. Pagan has kindly drawn my attention to a copy of the book in the British Library, in which that part of the caption has been altered by the eighteenth-century antiquary Joseph Ames by substituting 'the Reculvers' (*sic*) for 'the Isle of Thanet'.

## AN EARLY REFERENCE TO STERLINGS (GUIBERT OF NOGENT 1115)

PHILIP GRIERSON

TWO recent articles, one by F. Dolbeau on the text of Guibert of Nogent and the other by R. Kaiser on the significance of money in Guibert's autobiography, have called attention to a previously unrecognized reference to sterlings, the earliest indeed that we know outside Normandy and its neighbourhood. Since the articles in question are not likely to come the way of many numismatists in this country, it is worth calling attention to them here.

Guibert, abbot of a small community at Nogent near Laon in northern France wrote in 1115 a memoir of his life that is one of the most lively and readable works of the twelfth century, and indeed of its kind. The date of the memoir is certain, for the author, after describing Bishop Godfrey of Amiens's return to his episcopal city in the spring of 1115 and his sermon there on Palm Sunday (11 April), continues to write of him as being still alive, while we know from other sources that he died later in the year (8 November). The work was first published in 1651 by Luc d'Achery, but the standard edition is now that of Labande;<sup>1</sup> there is a good English translation.<sup>2</sup> In chapter 4 of Book III Guibert describes the circumstances of the election in 1107 of Waldric, chancellor of Henry I of Normandy and England, as bishop of Laon, and of his confirmation by Pope Paschal II. Guibert was the spokesman of the small group of clergy despatched from Laon to put Waldric's case before the pope, who was in France at the time. He was able to assure Paschal that Waldric had a good reputation, that he was in orders, and that he was not of illegitimate birth. Waldric's election was approved, and a group of cardinals assured Guibert afterwards that his speech had given them much pleasure. The

pleasure, Guibert sardonically adds, probably owed less to the quality of the speech than to the prospect of a bribe, for Guibert and his colleague Abbot Adalbert of St Vincent's of Laon had come furnished with £20 apiece to be employed on the bishop-elect's behalf.

Guibert's text has until recently only been known from the seventeenth-century copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale that was used by d'Achery for the first edition, and the wording of the passage referring to the money was at one point defective: *Domine Deus meus, tu scis, quia non tam de elegantia verborum meorum emergebat, quantum de spe optima denariorum extra . . . bensium quibus ille sufficinaturs advenerat*.<sup>3</sup> D'Achery states that the copy he used had been made from a medieval original formerly at Laon but now lost, and two of the letters in the word following *denariorum* were illegible. He therefore printed the word as it stood, with the lacuna, but Georges Bourgin, when he republished the text early in the present century, noted that the Paris MS had belonged in the seventeenth century to the great scholar André Duchesne, whose son François had loaned it to d'Achery, and Duchesne had supplied the letters *li*.<sup>4</sup> It was not clear, however, whether this was a conjectural restoration or a reading derived from another manuscript. There the matter rested until in the 1970s the Israeli scholar Eitan Burstein, in an appendix to a study of Guibert's vocabulary,<sup>5</sup> proposed, since Waldric came from Rouen, to substitute *Rothomag* for *extra . . . b*, making *Rothomagensium* a qualification of *denariorum*: 'My Lord God, thou knowest indeed that it was not so much the eloquence of my words as the high hope of the deniers of Rouen with which he had come stuffed'. This reading,

<sup>1</sup> Guibert de Nogent, *Autobiographie*, edited and translated by E.-R. Labande (Les Classiques de l'histoire de France au moyen âge 34, Paris, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> J. F. Benton, *Self and Society in Medieval France. The memoirs of Abbot Guibert de Nogent (1064?–c.1125)* (Harper Torchbooks, New York and Evanston, 1970).

<sup>3</sup> L. d'Achery, *Guiberti abbatis S. Mariae de Novigento*

*opera omnia* (Paris, 1651), p. 499; Labande, pp. 290, 292.

<sup>4</sup> Guibert de Nogent, *De vita sua*, edited and translated by G. Bourgin (Paris, 1907), p. 142 and note *b*.

<sup>5</sup> E. Burstein, 'Quelques remarques sur le vocabulaire de Guibert de Nogent', *Cahiers d'histoire médiévale*, 21 (1978), 247–63, at 257–8.

despite its improbability on palaeographical grounds and the fact that references to Rouen occur elsewhere in the text and the word *Rothomagensis* would have been quite familiar to the copyist, was adopted by Labande for his text, the MS reading being given only in a footnote.

In the early 1980s François Dolbeau discovered two further copies of parts of the text, one dating from the fifteenth century in the Vatican and the other, made for the seventeenth-century scholar Jacques Sirmond, in Berlin. Only the latter included the passage in question, and a study of the filiations of the various manuscripts showed that Duchesne's *li* was not a conjecture but indeed based on a missing manuscript. Dolbeau further pointed out, initially in reviewing Labande's volume<sup>6</sup> and subsequently in his study of the various MSS and their interrelationships,<sup>7</sup> that *extralibensium* must have been a misreading of *esterlinensium* or *estrelinensium*, more especially since the bishop is later (Labande 294, line 19) described as having a large hoard of English money, goblets and plate (*magnus census monetæ anglicæ, hanaporum et scutarum*).

<sup>6</sup> In *Revue des études augustiniennes*, 28 (1982), 183.

<sup>7</sup> 'Deux nouveaux manuscrits des "Mémoires" de Guibert de Nogent', *Sacris Erudiri*, 26 (1983), 155–76, at 170 and footnote.

<sup>8</sup> 'Das Geld in der Autobiographie des Abtes Guibert van Nogent', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 69 (1987),

The interest of this emendation, which is certainly correct, has been discussed by Reinhold Kaiser.<sup>8</sup> Although it is not the earliest use of the word sterling to describe English pennies – these go back to the 1080s and perhaps the late 1070s<sup>9</sup> – it is over a decade earlier than the references in the text of Ordericus Vitalis, which dates from the 1130s even if it is quoting earlier documents. It is also the earliest reference from a region well away from England and Normandy: Ordericus's citations are in the context of gifts to the abbey of St Evroul, and the only other earlier reference (1085, or possibly 1104) is from the equally Norman abbey of Les Préaux. This fact possibly explains the uncertainty over how the word should be spelled. Since Labande discarded it from his main text of Guibert, and Benton sidestepped the enigma of *extra . . . bensium* by omitting the word entirely ('. . . the money with which the bishop-elect had come stuffed'), English scholars have cause to be grateful to Dolbeau and Kaiser for restoring the correct text and underlining its interest.

289–314, at 304–7.

<sup>9</sup> P. Grierson, 'Sterling', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins. Studies Presented to F. M. Stenton on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, edited by R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), 266–83, at 267–8.

## THE CONTEMPORARY VALUATION OF THE FLEUR-DE-LIS GROATS OF JAMES I AND II

NICHOLAS MAYHEW

THE purpose of this note is to draw attention to evidence for the valuation of James I's fleur-de-lis groats in the Scottish *Exchequer Rolls*<sup>1</sup> which seems to have escaped the notice of Cochran-Patrick.<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Scottish currency in the first half of the fifteenth century is surprisingly sparse. After the light coinage of Robert III, itself now extremely scarce, there are no Scottish coins known, apart from a few pennies of Edinburgh, Inverness and Aberdeen, until after the return of James I from England in 1424.<sup>3</sup> The hoard record from this first quarter of the century is also particularly sparse.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter four groups of

fleur-de-lis groat, valued at 6d. are conventionally assigned to the period 1424–51. The introduction of this coinage is taken to be marked by the parliamentary act of 26 May 1424<sup>5</sup> which invited James I to strike new money 'in lik wecht and fynes to the mone of Inghlande' when he wished, while the 6d. valuation set on the fleur-de-lis groat, at the 1451 introduction of the crown groat, is usually projected back to the whole of the fleur-de-lis issue.

However, even the sparse parliamentary record is an uncertain guide to the Scottish coinage, since it is often a better record of pious intention than of what

<sup>1</sup> *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1878–1903). Hereafter *ER*.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Cochran-Patrick, *Records of the Coinage of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1876), I.

<sup>3</sup> Ian Stewart, 'Scottish mints' in *Mints, Dies and Currency*, edited by R. A. G. Carson (London, 1971), pp.

232–3.

<sup>4</sup> See D. M. Metcalf, 'The evidence of Scottish coin hoards for monetary history, 1100–1600' in *Coinage in Medieval Scotland (1100–1600)*, BAR 45 (Oxford, 1977), pp. 44–6.

<sup>5</sup> Cochran-Patrick, p. 16.



actually took place.<sup>6</sup> Fortunately, the *Exchequer Rolls* occasionally give us information about the terms on which the Scottish Crown accepted its own coinage, and this picture, seen in conjunction with the parliamentary record, corresponds closely with that found in many later medieval European coinages.<sup>7</sup> What emerges is something of a tug of war between pressure for the restoration of a strong currency equal, or more nearly equal to that of England, and a greater, prevailing trend in favour of further weakening or devaluation of the money of account.

It is not certain that parliament's invitation to strike money in 1424 was acted on immediately. In the first place, the fleur-de-lis groats are clearly not equal to the English coinage. Secondly, the 1424 document also authorized James I to leave the existing money in use 'quhill the king forbyde it'. In 1427, however, we have some indication of mint developments: three senior members of the mint staff received formal quittances issued under the great seal.<sup>8</sup> Mrs Murray has suggested to me that this very deliberate, official balancing of the books could mark the conclusion of a particularly heavy period of coinage. Certainly, ordinary annual mint accounts were not normally wound up so carefully. If this were the case it would suggest that the fleur-de-lis period did begin with a period of heavy output soon after 1424.

One of the mint officials who cleared his account with the government in this way was Robert Gray. In the next few years (1428–34) Gray was continuously in receipt of a number of payments of royal money, usually from the customs officials of a number of burghs in the Edinburgh area.<sup>9</sup> Now Gray was not only a master moneyer. He was also an important burgher of Edinburgh, a wealthy merchant and man of affairs who carried out a number of commissions for the king. Several such men emerge as important royal servants throughout medieval Scottish history, and Gray crowned his service not only as master of the mint, but also as master of the king's building works at Linlithgow. As a result of such many-faceted activity, it is not possible to discern which, if any, of the money payments made to Gray were made in a mint context. However, it is perhaps worthy of note that these payments reach a peak in 1429–30, while we have clear evidence of an upward re-valuation of the money of account in 1430–31. In that year custom

officials at North Berwick and Dundee received special allowances for money received by them before the change in the money, and paid over to the king long after it, at a lower valuation.<sup>10</sup> Such a reduction in the face value of Scottish coin meant more silver was now required to make up the Scottish pound. It was a step towards English valuations, and harder money. It must have meant that merchants would have received less face value in return for each pound of bullion and, so far as it was actually effective, may be presumed to have had a deflationary effect on the economy as a whole. If anything it is likely to have discouraged merchants from bringing silver to the mint, which may explain why large royal payments were being made to Gray at this time, since a large royal float would have been essential for a re-valuation of this kind.<sup>11</sup>

In the event, however, the attempt was a short-lived failure. This may explain why only two burgh's customars required rebates, if other customars made their payments to the Crown after the new lower face-values had been abandoned.<sup>12</sup> Be that as it may, the new valuations, if not abandoned immediately, were certainly superseded in 1433–4. In that year the accounts speak explicitly and repeatedly of an increase in the face value of the groat from 5d. to 6d.,<sup>13</sup> which in effect reduced the weight of silver in the Scots monetary pound and thereby weakened or devalued it compared to that of England. It will have been intended to make the Scottish mints more competitive by valuing silver more, and to make Scottish exports seem better value abroad, and imports more expensive for the Scots. It will have inflated prices, and may have made for a more buoyant economy generally. Till 1438 the king tried to protect his own income from the effect of this devaluation by ordering that customs should be collected at the old valuation (groat worth 5d.) while continuing to pay out groats himself at the new 6d. valuation.

How do these changes in valuation affect our perception of the fleur-de-lis coinage? They tell us clearly that the 6d. valuation for fleur-de-lis groats, mentioned in the 1451 document, was introduced in 1433–4. It is not clear, however, how long the 5d. valuation had by then been in force. Was 5d. the new lower valuation introduced in 1430, which would

<sup>6</sup> Conversely, English official pronouncements on the Scots coinage generally overstate its decline, since they were chiefly intended to prevent its circulation in England.

<sup>7</sup> C. M. Cipolla, 'Currency depreciation in medieval Europe', *ECHEQ* 2nd ser. XV (1962–3), 413–21.

<sup>8</sup> *Register of the Great Seal of Scotland AD 1424–1513*, edited by James Balfour Paul, II (Edinburgh, 1984), 18.

<sup>9</sup> *ER* IV, 473, 474, 476, 478, 486, 502–4, 508, 531, 539, 542, 576.

<sup>10</sup> *ER* IV, 526, for North Berwick, and for Dundee, p. 533 viz: 'Et allocate computantibus, eo quod receperunt quasdam summas custome ante mutacionem monete quas solverunt regi diu post mutacionem dicte monete, propter

diminucionem ejusdam, £4-14-4d'.

<sup>11</sup> These payments may have had nothing to do with the mint, but some of them do give that impression: 'Et per solucionem factam Roberto Gray, magistro monete, in plenam solucionem mille librarum alias sibi assignatarum de mandato regis, ut patet per literas regis sub privato sigillo de precepto et ipsius Roberti de recepto ostensas super compositum v'iii<sup>ss</sup> j li ijs iijd de qua summa respondebit.' *ER* IV, 508, Edinburgh customar's account 1429–30.

<sup>12</sup> An alternative explanation would be that other customars received money only after the introduction of the lower face-values.

<sup>13</sup> *ER* IV, 554ff.

suggest a 1420s groat at 6d.? Or could the 5d. valuation date from the 1420s, the attempted reduction of 1430, to perhaps 4d. being a dead letter almost immediately? Although I am not aware of any conclusive answers to these questions, the limited evidence we have of the Anglo-Scots exchange rate<sup>14</sup> leads me to believe that the second possibility is more likely.<sup>15</sup>

The ratio for Scots to English money moved from 2.25 (1426) to 2.40 (1430), to 2.70<sup>16</sup> (1434–5), to 3.00 – 3.30 (1456). Although these ratios were derived mostly from valuations of the English noble in Scots money, they may be applied to silver as follows.

Date	Ratio	Weight of English penny	Implied silver weight of Scots penny	Implied weight of Scots groat
1426	2.25	15g	6.66g × 5?d.	33.30g
1430	2.40	15g	6.25g × 5?d.	31.25g
1434–5	2.70	15g	5.55g × 6d.	33.30g
1456	3.00–3.30	15g	5.00–4.54g × 12d.	60.–54.48g

The mean weight of the forty fleur-de-lis groats in the Ashmolean-Hunterian *Sylloge* of Scottish coins is 32.33g. The twenty-nine crown groats in the same collections have a mean weight of 52.85g.<sup>17</sup> Given that the weight of coin in surviving collections is but an uncertain guide to either the struck or the circu-

lating weight of the Scots currency, and given also the approximations involved in applying exchange rates for gold to silver currencies, these figures display rather more cohesion than might have been expected. Incidentally, the four Robert III light groats in these collections have a mean weight of 27.25g, implying a silver weight for the penny of 6.81g at 4d. to the groat. It thus appears that the fleur-de-lis groat may have been no stronger than the light coinage of Robert III<sup>18</sup> (although it was certainly a good deal more consistent). And that despite repeated attempts to strengthen Scots money to bring it more into line with that of England in 1424, 1430 and 1451,<sup>19</sup> the Scots in fact gradually but consistently reduced the silver content of their money of account throughout this period. Although the physical appearance of successive fifteenth-century groats consistently improved from the light issue of Robert III through the fleur-de-lis groats of James I and II to the crown issue of the 1450s, this improvement was more than off-set by the enhanced money of account valuations set on these coins. Given that prices, wages and rents were expressed in money of account, these changes in the face value of coins will have been as important as changes in the physical composition and appearance of the coins. As such these unnoticed *mutationes monete* are worth placing on record.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange*, R.H.S. Guides and Handbooks 13 (London, 1986), p. 212.

<sup>15</sup> Mrs Murray, however, has floated the possibility that the 4d. rate was in force at the beginning of the fleur-de-lis issue, while Dr Stewart tends to prefer the idea of a 6d.–5d.–6d. progression. As this note makes clear, I have benefited greatly from discussing these questions with both these scholars, but while I have abandoned some wild notions in the light of their advice, they are by no means necessarily in agreement with all the views expressed here.

<sup>16</sup> A 15s. noble also occurs in the account dated 1434–5 (ER IV, 578), but in fact this exchange rate almost certainly

dates from the second year of the contribution for the king's ransom – i.e. 1425–6 – 'de secundo anno diete financie'.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Leith hoard weight of crown groats: Mrs Murray calculates the thirteen crown groats at an average of 56.3g, with one light (possibly clipped) piece excluded.

<sup>18</sup> Could it have continued under the Regency?

<sup>19</sup> The idea that the good intentions of 1451 were never or only briefly carried out has been long considered by Mrs Joan Murray (see also I. Stewart, *The Scottish Coinage*, 2nd edition (London, 1967), p. 196). This notion is supported by the 'Note on the coinage, Sept. 1453', in the Perth Guildry Book (see below, pp. 132–4).

## JAMES II AND HIS MINTS: AN UNKNOWN DOCUMENT

MARION L. STAVERT

THE 'Perth Guildry Book', with its first entry in October 1452, is one of the earliest guild records to have survived in Scotland, along with the Dunfermline guild court book beginning in 1433, separate guild court records in Aberdeen for the period 1441–70 and a small fragment of the Ayr guild court record for 1428–32.<sup>1</sup> The bulk of the 700 page volume is taken up with entries in Latin of admissions to the guild

which sometimes also give further information, such as the name of the father or wife, occupation and amount of entry fee. It also contains, however, details, usually written in the vernacular, of tacks of the burgh mills, small customs and fishings which have been placed together at the time of its subsequent binding between pages 405–510, spanning the period 1452–1550. These pages are all of the same paper with

<sup>1</sup> E. P. D. Torrie, 'The Guild of Dunfermline in the Fifteenth century', (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Edinburgh 1984), p. 7.

a French watermark as the first 170 pages used up to December 1512. Also included in this section, although out of context at page 508, is a 'Nota anent Bulyeon' which title would appear to have been written some years later by the guild clerk who also, in the same ink and handwriting, made a note of five guild brethren's expenses at the foot of the page. This 'Nota' appears to have been overlooked and left with the records of the Perth Guildry.

The document gives further details of the Crown's concern with the shortage of bullion contained in the two Acts of Parliament dating from the reign of James II. The first, of 19 June 1449, prohibits the export of bullion and indicates that searchers at the ports will prevent this. The 'Nota' names these officials, the ports for which they were responsible and their fee.

The 'Nota' also gives the names and fees of mint officials and appears to conflict with the Act of 25 October 1451. This gives a lower price for the ounce of burnt silver as does the Act of 5 March 1465. The answer to the problem, of a price of 9s. 6d. as against 8s. 9d., may be that a different rate was being set for the minting of the lower denominations of coin, pennies and halfpennies. The production of these was unpopular at the mint due to the extra work involved. However, an alternative solution, also giving a satisfactory rate of royal profit, may be that the fineness of the silver and the number of coins struck to each ounce, may have been adjusted.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, the 'Nota' adds to, while not conflicting with, the known itinerary of James II in 1453: he was in Aberdeen on 10 August, at Kildrummy on the nineteenth, and in Perth on 9 September, where he remained until after 1 October, reaching Edinburgh by 20 October 1453.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland* (hereafter *APS*), edited by T. Thomson and C. Innes, (1814-75), II, 37, 39. I would like to acknowledge the help I have received from Nicholas Mayhew on this subject.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to Alan Borthwick for giving me the details of the itinerary of James II in 1453 from unpublished manuscripts. Aberdeen University Library, Arbutnot MSS, MS 2764/2/41; Scottish Record Office, GD1/220/66; Blair Castle, Atholl Muniments, 2/xvi/9; SRO, GD236/2/27/2; *St Giles Registrum* no 75.

<sup>4</sup> The warden was the principal mint official at this time. Nicole Spedy was probably related to John Spedy, identified as the king's goldsmith in 1426 by Mrs Joan Murray. He is recorded as an officer of the Edinburgh guild in October 1453; as renting the seventh booth in the chamber of the Tolbooth for 15s. in 1456 and in the *Exchequer Rolls* as loaning money to James II, receiving payment for Gascon wine and, with George Fairle, for making payments for bringing the great bombard to Scotland in 1458. I. Stewart, 'Scottish Mints' in *Mints, Dies and Currency*, edited by R. A. G. Carson (1971); Joan E. L. Murray, 'The Organization and Work of the Scottish Mint 1338-1603' in *Coinage in Medieval Scotland 1100-1600*, edited by D. M. Metcalf, (BAR 45, 1977). I am grateful to Mrs Murray for her analysis of the implications of the price of silver contained in this document. *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh*, I, 2 (where the date is a mistranscription), 16;

Guildry Incorporation of Perth, George Street, Perth, 'Perth Guildrie Book', GI 16 (NRA(S) 2799), p. 508.

The punctuation has been modernised, contractions expanded and apart from the symbol 'y' which has been printed as 'th' and '3' as 'y', the original spelling has been retained.

#### Nota anent Bulyeon.

At Perth the vii day September the yeir liii.  
In primis: it is thocht spedefull that the unce of fyne silver salbe set to ix. vid., of the quhilk thair salbe gevin to the wardane i ob.,<sup>4</sup> to the vissillare id.<sup>5</sup> and to the cunyeur for him, his childer, yrnis, lay (= alloy) and al uthir uncostis that pertenis til him iid. i ob.<sup>6</sup> and sua sal the merchand haf for his unce of fyne silver ix. iid. of cunyet mone.

Item: it is thocht spedefull that thare be bot a cunyeoure, a vissillar and a wardane: Jak Laundales cunyeour, Nicole Spedy wardane and George Fairle vissillar.

Item: it is thocht spedefull thatt the custumaris of the gret custume of al burawis within the realm sal tak souerte of al merchandis that sailis and passis out of the cuntre, that the said merchandis sal bring in bulyeoun eftir the tenour of the act of the mone made thairupon,<sup>7</sup> and that the said custumaris sal with al the merchandis and gudis that passis out of the realm and gif the copy thairof and of the said souerte to the vissillar swa that he may ask at the merchandis the bulyeoun to the cunyeour as is ordanit be the said act.<sup>8</sup>

Item: it is thocht spedefull that thair be sercharis made at al portis within the realm for the inhalding of the mone, the quhilk serchearis sal have ful power to

*Exchequer Rolls of Scotland* (hereafter *ER*), V, 100, 381, 610; VI, 383.

<sup>5</sup> The vissillar was the officer responsible for the bullion and it was more usual for this post to be held by either the warden or the coiner. George Fairle (Fairlau, Faulau, Fawlow) would appear to have been a prosperous Edinburgh merchant supplying the king with a variety of merchandise. He was closely associated with Nicole Spedy, renting the adjacent booth in the Tolbooth for 45s. in 1456. His name appears frequently in the *Exchequer Rolls* showing that he was custumar in 1444 for Edinburgh, auditor, loaned the king money, bought his hides and received payments for various services. He was deceased by 1460. *Edin. Recs.*, I, 16; *ER* V, 148, 369, 437, 502, 552; *ER* VI, 383, 582.

<sup>6</sup> The coiner was responsible for the actual production of the coins and the 2½d. deducted from the price of 9s. 6d. for each ounce of fine silver had to cover his costs for his apprentices, irons, alloy and any other expenses, including his fee. Jak Laundales is presumably the same man as the John Laundales who presented an account as moneyer three months previously and who has been identified as a goldsmith to James I. *ER* IV, 442, 503; *ER* V, 556; R. W. Cochran Patrick, *Records of the Coinage of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1876), I, 28; Murray, p. 159.

<sup>7</sup> *APS* II, 37, 39.

<sup>8</sup> There is apparently no record of such payments in *ER*.

deput personis under thaim, for the quhilk deputis thai sal answeire to the King and thir ar the personis ordanit to be the said sercharis: that is to say, at Invernes, Williame Thane of Caldore;<sup>9</sup> at Abirden, James Lord Forbes;<sup>10</sup> at Montros, Allexander of Strathachin of Dullevaide;<sup>11</sup> at Dundee, the constabil Sir Johne Skrimgeoure and James his sone;<sup>12</sup> at Perth, Williame Murrai of Tulibardin;<sup>13</sup> at the portis of Sancteandros and Edynmouth, the lord of Sancteandros;<sup>14</sup> at Edinburgh, James Erle of Murrai and Lord Crichtoun;<sup>15</sup> at the Blak Nes, the Erle of Cathnes;<sup>16</sup> at Dumbirttan, the lord of Glasgw;<sup>17</sup> at Are and Irwin, Gilbert Kennady;<sup>18</sup> and for al the

portis of Galway, the Erle of Douglas.<sup>19</sup>

Item: sercharis on the bordouris; on the est bordoure, Sir Alixander Hume;<sup>20</sup> on the medil bordoure, Androu Ker<sup>21</sup> and on the west bordoure, Johne of Carruthis of Mouswalde.<sup>22</sup>

It is thocht spedefull that of al the mone that salbe fundin with ony personis passand out of the cuntre, the serchearis sal have a quartare and thre quartaris of the said mone to the King and al the lafe of the said personis gudis sal be the Kingis eschete.

Item: that al thir officiaris abone writtin sal cum yerly to the chekkare and thai to the auditoris.

<sup>9</sup> William Thane of Cawdor was described as 'dilectus familiaris et scutifer noster' by James II in 1454, and as knight when witness to a charter in 1463; he managed the estates of Archibald Douglas, earl of Moray, after the earl's downfall and he was Crown chamberlain beyond Spey. *The Book of the Thanes of Cawdor*, edited by C. Innes, (Spalding Club Edinburgh, 1859), pp. xv–xx.

<sup>10</sup> James Lord Forbes, second lord succeeded his father in 1448. J.B. Paul, *The Scots Peerage* (Edinburgh, 1904–14), IV, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Alexander of Strathachin of Dullevaide belonged to the Strachan family who owned lands in Angus. An Alexander de Strathin dominus de Dulleward, presumably the same man, was witness to charters in 1439 and 1444; he received half the lands of Keir, Perthshire in 1452 from James II. *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum*, II edited by J. B. Paul (Edinburgh, 1882), nos 216, 275, 495; C. Rogers, *Memorials of the Families of Strachan and Wise* (Grampian Club, 1877), p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> Sir John Scrimgeoure was constable of Dundee, died 1460–63. *Scots Peerage*, III, 306.

<sup>13</sup> William Murray of Tullibardine succeeded his father David in 1451/2; he was steward and later bailie of the earldom of Strathearn and sheriff of Perthshire. He died in 1459 or soon after. John Murray, seventh duke of Atholl, *Chronicles of the Atholl and Tullibardine Families* (Edinburgh, 1908), I, 8.

<sup>14</sup> Edynmouth was possibly the haven for Cupar. Angus Graham, 'Archaeological Notes on some Harbours in Eastern Scotland', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 101 (1968–9), 239. The lord of St Andrews was James Kennedy, bishop of St Andrews 1440–65, *The Hand-*

*book of British Chronology*, 3rd edition (London, 1986), p. 321.

<sup>15</sup> James earl of Murray was the eldest son of lord Crichton, referred to as earl of Murray in the parliament of June 1452; dead by August 1454. *Scots Peerage*, III, 63. Lord Crichton was chancellor of Scotland 1448–53; dead by July 1454. *Scots Peerage*, III, 61; *British Chronology*, p. 182.

<sup>16</sup> The earl of Caithness was George Crichton of Blackness, a cousin of lord Crichton, referred to as earl of Caithness in the parliament of June 1452. *Scots Peerage*, II, 327.

<sup>17</sup> The lord of Glasgow was William Turnbull, bishop of Glasgow 1447–54. *British Chronology*, p. 312.

<sup>18</sup> Gilbert Kennedy was created lord Kennedy in March 1457/8 and was brother of the bishop of St Andrews, *Scots Peerage*, II, 453.

<sup>19</sup> The earl of Douglas was James, ninth earl who had succeeded his brother, murdered by James II in 1452/3; he was commissioner in England 23 May 1453; exiled from Scotland April 1455, *Scots Peerage*, III, 180.

<sup>20</sup> Sir Alexander Hume was the son of the first lord, *Scots Peerage*, IV, 447; IX, 107.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Ker was probably the Andrew Ker of Cessford and Altonburn who, in 1451, had a safe conduct to accompany the earl of Douglas to Rome; appointed conservator of the truce with England in 1453, 1457 and 1459–60. *Scots Peerage*, V, 50; VII, 322–3.

<sup>22</sup> John of Carruthers was keeper of Lochmaben Castle for the earl of Douglas. *Scots Peerage*, I, 235; C. L. Johnstone, *History of the Families of Dumfriesshire* (Edinburgh, 1888), p. 9.



# A TOWER MINT DIE OF CHARLES I

EDWARD BESLY

THE subject of this note was found on 27 February 1983 by use of a metal detector on the Thames foreshore at Bull Wharf, near Queenhithe, London. The finder held at the time a permit from the Port of London Authority to search the foreshore, and in accordance with the conditions attached to this he reported the object to the Museum of London for recording and potential acquisition. The Museum was not in a position to buy it, but contacted the British Museum, which in May 1984 arranged to purchase the die.<sup>1</sup> As discovered, the die was in good metallic condition. To assist its full identification, the die-face was cleaned by Keith Howes of the British Museum Department of Scientific Research and Conservation, by alkaline reduction using aluminium, then coated with cellulose.

The die is an obverse ('Pile' or lower die) for the striking of gold double crowns of ten shillings for Charles I, bearing the privy-mark heart, samples of which were assayed at the Trial of the Pyx on 23 June 1630. The previous trial had been held on 26 June 1629, so the heart mark was used during 1629 and 1630, probably for the coins struck between 1 April 1629 and 31 March 1630. Surviving mint output figures of the period are given for years running from April to March, and the Pyx trials were generally held between April and July. From 1 April 1629 to 31 March 1630, the value of gold coinage produced was £198,215.<sup>2</sup>

The die consists of a single piece of iron weighing 1.252 kg. The main body is pyramidal/conic in form, 95 mm long, tapering from a square base (58 × 56 mm, to a circular die-face 27 mm in diameter, with a chamfered edge (fig. 1 and pl.33, 1). The final 13 mm to the die-face are circular in section and may have been made separately and welded to the rest of the body. Below the base is a square projection 30 mm long, which with the square shape of the base will have been used to anchor the die in a wooden bench or other firm base.

The die-face bears the complete design of the obverse of a double crown (pl.33, 2), built up by use of positive punches, the portrait-bust being the work of Nicholas Briot, whom Charles I had appointed designer of effigies for the regal coinage in December 1628. The effigy itself appears to be formed by three or four punches; bust, ruff, head and crown. No coin struck from this die has yet been discovered, but the

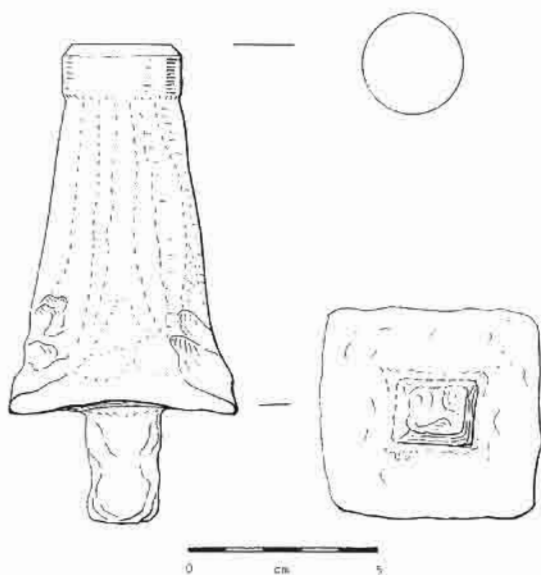


FIG. 1

identity of design elements and letter-punches with those used on other dies of the same date (pl.33, 3) and its similarity of form to a shilling die of James I (fig. 2a) confirm its authenticity as an official Tower Mint die of 1629–30.

Laboratory examination of the die<sup>3</sup> provided two important observations, firstly that the die face may have been decarburised by heating to about 723°C to make it soft, in order to facilitate the engraving of the design. Secondly, hardness tests gave relatively low figures. Unpublished work on eighteenth-century Royal Mint dies has shown that used dies have a high hardness value, while unused dies are soft and have not been hardened.<sup>4</sup> Presumably, dies were only hardened when required for use, by carburisation followed by quenching. The present die thus appears to be in an unfinished state and unsuitable for use without further heat treatment. This accords with the apparent lack of any surviving coins struck by it and the conservator's opinion that it appeared never to have been used.

The new die is an important addition to the known minting tools of the early Stuart period, since related objects are few. The Royal Mint Museum possesses only two minting tools of the time, and no dies.<sup>5</sup> The

Research Laboratory.

<sup>5</sup> G. P. Dyer, pers. comm.; the tools are a punch for sinking the shields for the reverses of 20-shilling pieces of Charles I and Briot's punch for the obverse design of a gold angel of Charles I. The shilling dies of James I listed by Hocking as nos 9 and 10 of Vol. II of his Catalogue of the Mint's Collection (1910) are in all probability irregular.

<sup>1</sup> British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals 1984, 5–39, 1.

<sup>2</sup> J. D. Gould, 'The Royal Mint in the early seventeenth century', *EcHR* 2nd ser. 5, (1952–3), at p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> By Janet Lang; BM Research Laboratory File No. 5326.

<sup>4</sup> D. Sellwood, unpublished communication to BM

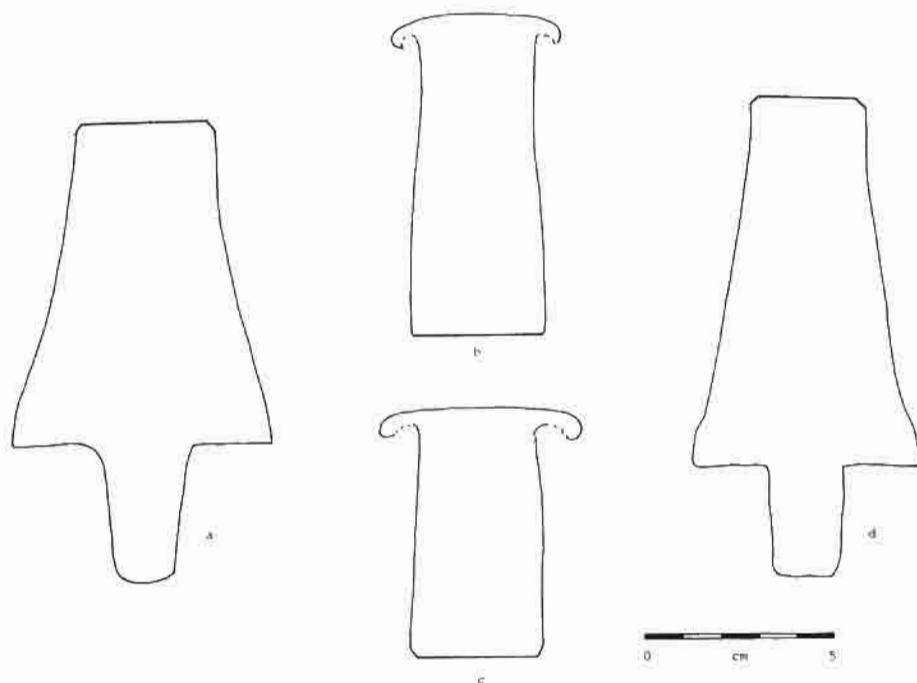


FIG. 2

only other early Stuart dies known to the writer are three Tower Mint dies of James I, formerly in the Guildhall Museum, now in the collections of the Museum of London:

- i obverse (pile) for shillings of the second coinage (1604–19), privy-mark rose (1505–6); Museum number 7870; *Catalogue*<sup>6</sup> p. 281, no. 69 (fig. 2a). This is similar in form to the Charles I die (fig. 2d), but more massive, being designed for the striking of heavier coins in a harder metal (silver).
- ii reverse (trussel) for shillings, 2nd coinage, p.m. rose; Museum number 7871; *Catalogue*, p. 281, no. 70 (fig. 2b). A slightly waisted cylinder, its upper end burred over by hammering.
- iii reverse (trussel) for shillings, 2nd coinage, p.m. perhaps grapes (1607); Museum number 7872; *Catalogue*, p. 281, no. 71 (fig. 2c). Form as ii, with top heavily burred by use.

Medieval coin dies, such as those in the Public Record Office and British Museum, are generally similar in form, but less substantial, being designed for pence weighing less than 1.5 g up to groats of between 5.2 g and 3.1 g.<sup>7</sup> The Stuart silver shilling weighed 6.02 g and the gold double crown of Charles, 4.55 g.

Tower Mint dies of any period before 1662 are extremely rare, reflecting the tight security which

generally surrounded their use and disposal. The provenance of the three Stuart dies in the Museum of London is only given as 'City of London'. All show considerable signs of use – an example of a shilling struck by the obverse die, no. 7870, is known. If the three indeed form an associated group, unauthorised abstraction from the mint is possible. It is harder to explain the finding of an apparently unused die of Charles I about 2 km upstream from the Tower. One possibility is that the die was somehow mislaid before hardening. Gold output in 1629–30 was considerable (nearly £200,000) and many dies seem to have been used. It is conceivable that when the mint was transferred to new premises on Little Tower Hill in 1811–12, accumulated rubbish cleared from the Tower may have been dumped up and down the river frontage.

Another possibility is that the die may have been stolen with a view to illicit coining. Such operations were widespread, usually using home-made dies whose products are readily identifiable, and often using sub-standard metal, such as thinly gilded or silvered copper or brass blanks. However, a subtler form of illegal coining for which we have an eighteenth century parallel in the case of the Halifax coiners<sup>8</sup> involved the culling from circulation or clip-

<sup>6</sup> *Catalogue of the Collection of London Antiquities in the Guildhall Museum*, London 1903; in the 2nd edition (1908) the dies appear on p. 291 as nos 77–79.

<sup>7</sup> Derek Allen, 'Dies in the Public Record Office, 1938', *BNJ* 23 (1938–41), 31–50.

<sup>8</sup> J. Styles, "'Our Traitorous Money makers': the Yorkshire coiners and the Law, 1760–83", in *An Ungovernable People, the English and their law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* edited by J. Brewer and J. Styles (London 1980), pp. 172–249.

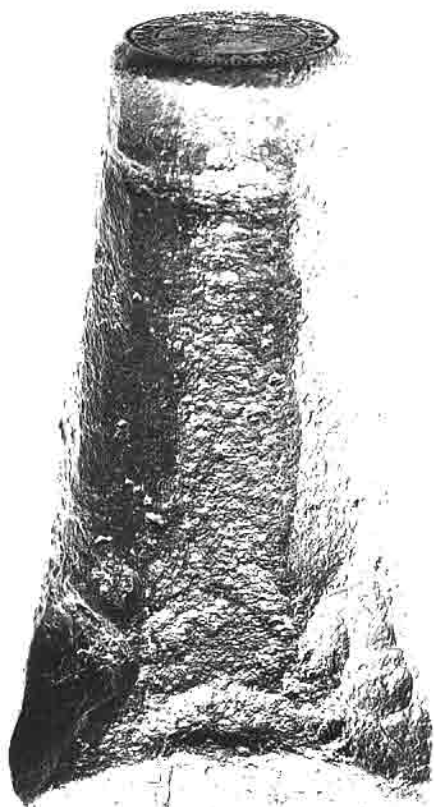
ping of overweight coins for melting down (the coinage being struck to an average standard (*al marco*), individual weights could vary considerably). New coins were then struck, perhaps light in weight, but of the correct fineness. Such unofficial issues, if struck by authentic dies, would be hard to distinguish from official issues, even today. However, the present die appears never to have been used, but it may have

been stolen and subsequently jettisoned by its thief, to avoid detection. Illicit coining carried stiff penalties, sometimes death. A recent parallel may be cited, also from the Queenhithe area, of a hoard of forged pence of Edward IV (1461–83), which seems to have been thrown into the River Thames to get rid of incriminating evidence of counterfeiting.<sup>9</sup>

#### KEY TO PLATE

1. Iron die for double crown of Charles I, Tower Mint 1629–30. (BM)
2. Die-face of 1 (BM)
3. Double crown (obv.) of Charles I, p.m. heart, Tower Mint 1629–30. (BM)

<sup>9</sup> M. M. Archibald, 'The Queenhithe hoard of later fifteenth-century forgeries', *BNJ* 50 (1980), 61–6.



1  
(1:1)



2  
(2:2)



3  
(2:2)

BESLY: TOWER DIE