

AN ENIGMATIC JEWEL CROSS COIN OF HARTHACNUT

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THE coinage of Harthacnut has been discussed extensively, and in general the outline of the series is fairly well established.¹ The rarest type is *Jewel Cross*, and the right-facing variety (Hildebrand type A var.) is particularly so. Talvio identified 124 of these in public collections, representing about 10 per cent of the *Jewel Cross* type.² He also identified thirty-one known mints, as well as one unidentified mint. Twenty-three of these were south of the Thames, eight were north, and three (including London), were on the Thames.

A search of the EMC/SCBI database (www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/coins/emc) lists the following London moneyers for the Harthacnut right-facing bust coins: Bruna, Goda, Godric, and Oda. The EMC/SCBI database, and the tables of mints and moneyers published by Jonsson and van der Meer,³ do not list any Harthacnut coinage struck by the moneyer Ælfgar. A coin by this moneyer from the London mint has appeared recently (Fig. 1). The physical description of the coin is: 0.97 g, 17 mm diameter, with die-axis 180°. The weight falls within the acceptable range for London mint coins of this type as summarized by Petersson.⁴ The provenance of the coin is unknown, except that it was acquired in trade in the United States.



Fig. 1 Harthacnut *Jewel Cross*, bust right, London mint, moneyer Ælfgar
Obv. $\overline{\text{HAR CNVT RE}}$, diademed and draped bust right.
Rev. $\overline{\text{ÆLFGAR ON LVNDI}}$, jewelled cross with two circles enclosing a pellet in centre.

The style of the obverse engraving seems to fit that of Winchester. However, there are several features that are not commonly seen on other *Jewel Cross* coins of Harthacnut. On the obverse, the $\overline{\text{DA}}$ is noticeably missing on this coin. In place of these letters are three dots arranged vertically. Thus, the obverse legend reads: $\overline{\text{HAR CNVT RE}}$. It seems that the die-cutter did not leave sufficient room for the two letters. The dots appear to be an extension of the drapery. The reverse also has some features not generally seen on other *Jewel Cross* coins. The bands surrounding the lobes of the cross terminate on the outer circle around the centre pellet, rather than on or inside of the circle. Each band is linked to the adjacent band via the outer circle. Also, the jewels are more linear rather than ovals, and terminate on the inner circle surrounding the pellet.

¹ Talvio 1986; Metcalf 1994, 144–6.

² Talvio 1986, 277.

³ Jonsson van der Meer 1990.

⁴ Petersson 1990, 295, 347.

A moneyer Ælfgar struck coins with the London mint signature for Cnut's *Pointed Helmet* issue (c.1024–29/30), and for Edward the Confessor's *Radiate/Small Cross* (c.1044–6), *Trefoil Quadrilateral* (c.1046–48), and *Expanding Cross* (c.1050–53) issues. Ælfgar appears to be absent from the London mint for the period c.1030–44, save for the new coin. It is possible that the Confessor's moneyer is the same as that for Cnut.

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A NEW TYPE OF ALEXANDER III FARTHING

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Fig. 1. Alexander III farthing from Suffolk (twice actual size).

IN January 2015 Mr Philip Darling found a coin in a Suffolk meadow, with the aid of a metal detector, that may be the earliest known farthing of the second (single cross) coinage of Alexander III of Scotland (1249–86). It is illustrated in Fig. 1 and it may be described as follows:

Obv. *ALEXANDERREX, lion rampant facing left.

Rev. SC / OT / OR / VM, four mullets of six points in the angles of cross.

Weight: 0.39 g; diameter: 12 mm; die axis: 260°.

This new coin differs from the two varieties of Alexander III farthing identified by Burns in two respects, one minor and one major.¹ The minor difference is the appearance of a stop instead of an initial cross at the start of the obverse inscription. The major difference is the substitution of the lion rampant of Scotland for the left-facing profile portrait seen on all other single cross coins of Alexander III known at present. It is possible that this was an experimental early feature of the farthing (a denomination new to the Scottish coinage as a struck rather than cut coin), intended to differentiate it from the other denominations of Alexander III's second coinage, the sterling and the halfpenny. Alexander III's new halfpenny was differentiated from the sterling by having mullets or stars in two quarters of the reverse cross only, and not in all four quarters.² It seems that the use of the lion rampant was soon abandoned, as only this one coin of the type has been found to date.

The use of a lion rampant as a symbol of the Scottish monarchy during the reign of Alexander III is attested by its appearance within a pointed shield on the reverse of a small seal used during the early years of the reign, during the period when the king was considered too young to exercise full royal authority. Impressions of this seal are known today from three documents, dated 1250, 1252 and 1257. The seal (Fig. 2) is quite small – only 4 cm in diameter – and the inscription around the shield reads ESTO PRVDENS VT SERPENS ET SIMPLEX SICVT COLUMBA (Be as cautious as a snake and as innocent as a dove). This is an adaptation of advice given by Christ to his disciples, as reported in Matthew ch. 10, v. 16, and would have been equally appropriate for a young king learning the responsibilities and dangers of his position.³

¹ Burns 1887, I, 184, III, Pl. XVII, 196–7.

² Burns 1887, I, 183–4, III, Pl. XVII, 194–5.

³ Simpson 1993.

The lettering of the farthing from Suffolk is broadly consistent with class M in the Stewart and North classification of Alexander III's single cross sterlings (note the unbarred A, the open E and C, and the tilted S with thick centre), but the L with a long and thin upturned front is consistent with class B.⁴ Stewart and North suggested that class B was contemporary with late class A and early class M, and it may be concluded that the dies for the new farthing were probably made early in the period of class M, and not at the very beginning of the new coinage.⁵

The Suffolk farthing has a 24 point reverse, with four mullets of six points. Stewart and North noted that the early phases of Alexander III's second coinage sterlings (classes A, B, Ma and Mb1) have 24 point reverses only,⁶ which may be the mark of the Berwick mint.



Fig. 2. Cast of the seal of the minority of Alexander III (© Trustees of National Museums Scotland)

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MRS MURRAY'S ARRANGEMENT OF THE COINAGE OF ROBERT II OF SCOTLAND, 1371–1390

LORD STEWARTBY

IN March 1994 Mrs Joan Murray read a paper to the Society on the coinage of Robert II.¹ Already frail, she was finding it increasingly difficult to study coins or to write about them, and the Robert II paper remained incomplete at the time of her death two and a half years later. Although the text was unfinished, her draft contains much material of interest and value for the study of this numismatically difficult reign. She had borrowed the relevant part of my collection for many years, and the notes she had made on the envelopes are often useful in helping to understand her thoughts (although the information is not always easy to interpret because she changed her classification more than once). In this publication of her classification, I have found it necessary to go beyond the ordinary process of editing, while still incorporating Mrs Murray's own words when appropriate.²

As Mrs Murray observed, not much has been published about the classification of the coins of Robert II. She could point only to the account of the Balleny hoard as showing an advance in the recognition of some early varieties, and to the relevant discussion in 'Scottish Mints', which emphasizes the close relationships between the three mints, Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee, involving shared obverse dies, especially late in the coinage.³ Mrs Murray's own

⁴ Stewart and Holmes 1990, 57–9.

⁵ Stewart and Holmes 1990, 41.

⁶ Stewart and Holmes 1990, 43–4.

¹ Murray 1994.

² would like to thank Dr Martin Allen and an anonymous referee for their assistance with the editing of Mrs Murray's paper for publication.

³ Seaby and Stewart 1964; Stewart 1971, 228–32.

interest in this reign began in the 1970s, with her note on a small group of groats of David II and Robert II which probably emanated from the hoard found on Elvet Moor, Co. Durham, in 1756.⁴ Thereafter she worked on the Robert II material intermittently for many years, and her working notes show that she took into account the contents of all the major public collections and several others. The total number of groats she examined was 265, of which 150 were from Edinburgh, 99 from Perth and 16 from Dundee. Of the lesser denominations she had records of perhaps c. 160 coins collectively.

The coinage of Robert II, whose reign extended for nineteen years, is remarkable for its lack of variety. Mrs Murray developed a numismatic classification with five classes based largely on epigraphical detail, but although I have no doubt that her arrangement is technically valid it is not always easy to apply because differentiation of the first three Murray classes depends mainly upon the form of a few key individual letters (notably the R and T), and those may only be evident on well-struck and unworn specimens. Changes in these letters arose only when replacement punches were required, and had no significance (apart from utility) for those who introduced them. So it is also useful to have regard to the three principal periods which are defined by such substantive features as resulted from conscious decisions by mint personnel. The First Period ran from Robert's accession in February 1371 to 1385/6, and included all the coins of Murray classes I, II and IIIa, a run of coinage characterised by the absence of any significant new features. This was followed by the short but varied Second Period, in which most of the obverse dies were marked with a small B or other symbol in the field behind the king's head (Murray classes IIIb and IV). To the Third Period are assigned a small group of coins (mostly Perth groats), of very different appearance, and struck from dies made with new punches for the portrait and other elements (class V).

Summary of the Murray classification

Class I (Edinburgh only). R1 and T1. Large A1 in *Villa*.

Ia Small composite letter E1, with straight cross-bar added to letter C punch.

Ib Integral shaped letter E2. Some later groat obverse dies have single cross stops instead of the usual doubled ones.

Class II (Edinburgh and Perth only). R2 and T1. Large A1 in *Villa*.

Iia Single cross stops.

Iib Doubled cross stops.

Class III. Doubled cross stops. R2 and T2. New large A in *Villa* (A2).

IIIa No mark behind head.

IIIb B or other mark behind head.

Class IV. Saltire stops. Mark behind head. R3 on some late coins.

Class V. New head, with upright crown. Thick single cross stops. Various new letters (e.g. T3, R4).

Mrs Murray's classification is based upon the groats, as usual the most plentiful denomination in the Middle Ages, and the only one which provides a complete series. The summary of the classification and Fig. 1 above show the principal diagnostic features of the five Murray classes. As the same fount was used for all denominations, the same classification is generally applicable throughout; however, in the case of the smaller coins greater wear and their shorter inscriptions often makes it harder to identify their class. A larger fount of lettering was, as under David II, used for the mint names on groats only (apart from a few half groats of Dundee). Letter forms mentioned in the text refer to the small basic fount unless specifically described otherwise (e.g. large A1). Double crosses were used on the majority of obverse dies for groats, but almost restricted to these. On reverse dies for groats a single cross either side of the & character was normal. *Dns* (for *Dominus*) was generally followed by a cross over a crescent, the crescent attached to *P* being the standard manuscript contraction for *Pro*; exceptionally, and

⁴ Murray 1978, 76–7.

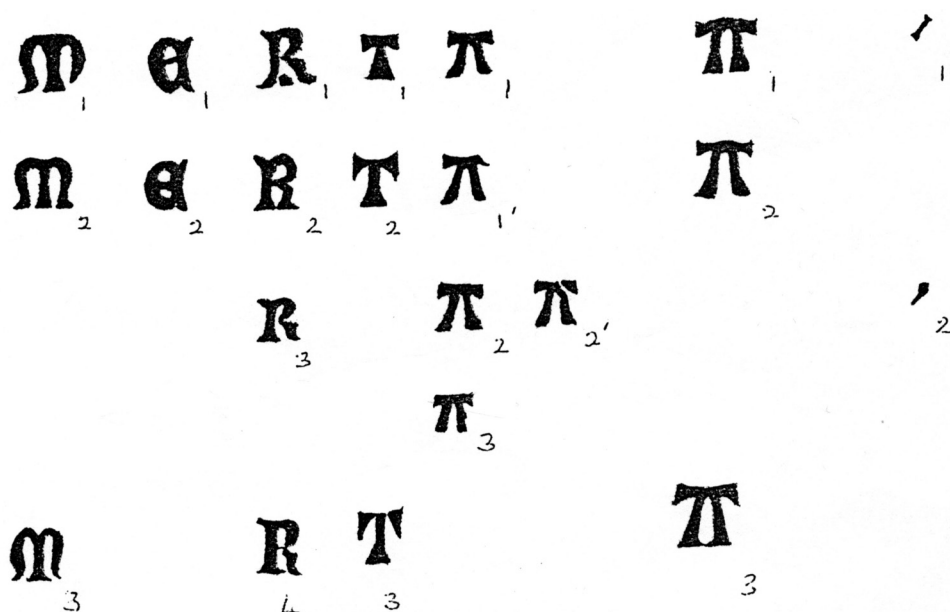


Fig. 1. Letter forms in the Murray classification.

very rarely, some early Robert groats have two stars there instead, as on late groats of David II, or two crosses without a crescent.

Class I

Since early in the heavy coinage of David II Edinburgh had been the only mint active in Scotland. This situation continued for a short while after the accession of Robert II, and class I, as now defined, belongs to the short period before a second mint was opened at Perth.

The earliest coins of Robert II use the same fount as on late coins of David II, with one important exception: a small plain T (T1) replaces the old punch with long serifs, and coins with this new T, when accompanied by the old R (R1), constitute class I in the Murray classification. Since Robert groats normally spell the king's title *Rex Scottorum*, with a second *t*, and his Latinized name is three letters longer than David's, the new and smaller T1 will usefully have helped towards fitting in the longer legend. Mrs Murray noted that on earlier coins of class I the small letter *e* is composite, with a thin cross-bar added to the punch for *C*, whereas on later coins of class I an integral shaped letter *e* appears. Accordingly, she chose these two forms of the letter *e* as the criterion for splitting class I into Ia and Ib, since it is applicable to all denominations. She also noted that the composite *e* is occasionally found on later coins, e.g. the Perth groat that is Burns fig. 319, but without chronological significance. Another feature of Ia groats is an M (M1) with its right limb broken at the foot.

Before the end of class Ib the obverse stops on groats changed from double crosses to single ones (which remained in use in class IIa).

Class II

Although still with the old T1, a new form of the letter R (R2), more angular and with a prominent peak, separates class II from class I. Mrs Murray drew attention to an entry in the Chamberlain's accounts for the year to February 1374 for a payment by the warden of Perth mint, which was probably opened during that year.⁵ Mrs Murray subdivided groats of class II

⁵ Cochran-Patrick 1876, I, 9, documents V and VI.

according to the stops, single in IIa and double in IIb. Perth features in both divisions, and at least in IIb shows as the more prolific of the two mints.

During the course of class II the punch for small A (A1) broke (A1') and was replaced (A2). Mrs Murray wrote that 'the two recorded Perth IIa groat obverse dies show unbroken A1, whereas at least one reverse die has the broken form, as have the three Edinburgh IIa obverse dies (one of which in fact has mixed stops, single ones predominating). I have recorded five IIb obverse dies for Edinburgh, and nine for Perth, five of which have class III reverses. The new letter, A2, is perhaps found on some of these Perth IIb groats, as well as on the reverses of the mules, and certainly on a Perth class II halfgroat. On Edinburgh coins, however, only A1 has been observed, presumably always in the broken state. The picture which emerges is thus one of alternating use of the two mints, Perth, Edinburgh, Perth again (if not more frequent alterations): the same punches were certainly used, and presumably the same master moneyer and die-sinker officiated.'

Class IIIa

The next stage of the series is marked by the introduction of the new letter T2. This has a tall straight trunk, widening at the base. A change in the shape of the large A in *Villa* on groats appears to coincide with the arrival of T2, and these two letters thus define the beginning of class III. Large A1, on groats of classes I and II, had pincer legs, i.e. their feet nearly meet, whereas the feet of large A2 are splayed outwards. In the Murray classification the rare coins of late class III with a B or other fieldmark behind the king's head are called IIIb, leaving their common unmarked predecessors as IIIa. In one case a IIIa Edinburgh groat obverse die had a small B added to it, to produce a IIIb coin. More than half of all the Robert groats seen by Mrs Murray were of class IIIa. One exceptional die has small saltires instead of trefoils in the spandrels; it was used at both Edinburgh and Perth, and in its lack of any fieldmark it must be classified as of class IIIa, although it may actually have been made in the Second Period.

Second Period – Class IIIb and Class IV

These two classes, which constitute the Second Period of the coinage, are characterised by rare groats and halfgroats having a small B or other mark in the field behind the king's head. To class IIIb are assigned the coins which in other respects accord with the numerous coins of class IIIa, while class IV is defined primarily by the introduction of saltire stops instead of the crosses which had been normal during the whole of the First Period. It has long been accepted that the B on coins of this period indicates that they were struck under the authority of the Florentine moneyer Bonagio, who had worked at the Edinburgh mint since the 1360s and who is named as Master as late as 1393 under Robert III.⁶

Groats and halfgroats of IIIb are found of all three mints with a small B; and there is also an Edinburgh IIIb/V mule groat with a 'blob' behind the head (a pellet struck over another mark, perhaps a B). The only B-marked penny noted of class IIIb is from Edinburgh; and, unsurprisingly in view of the lack of space on the smallest coins, no halfpenny with a comparable mark occurs. The inscription on the Edinburgh groat with small B added to an already used IIIa die ends *Scotoru'*, which Mrs Murray said 'made this identity easy to recognise, but I am fairly certain that there are no other such cases in the sample available to me'. During this Second Period there is an increasing tendency to depart from the established *Scottorum* spelling, with shorter abbreviations, or dropping the second *t*, or both. Another tendency is to lose the star on the sceptre-handle, either replacing it with a small cross or saltire, or dropping any sceptre-mark altogether.

Class IV is particularly associated with the mint of Dundee. Although nearly all coins of Dundee are of class IV, the earliest obverse dies used at this mint are of class III. Four cases deserve mention. First, there is a IIIa groat obverse die which was shared by Perth and Dundee:

⁶ Cochran-Patrick 1876, I, cxv, 12–13; Stewart 1971, 229.

there appears to be a flaw through the first O of *Scottorum* on the Dundee specimen, but not on the Perth ones. This could imply that the transfer of the IIIa die in question to Dundee was connected with the opening of the new mint. Then there are two IIIb groat obverse dies, one with B behind the head, the other with a pellet, both of which are recorded only for Dundee, while a IIIb halfgroat die, with B, was shared by all three mints.

Class IV groat dies begin with the small B in the field, as in class IIIb, but there was also one with a large B which was shared by Dundee and Edinburgh. Then there were dies on which B is replaced by a saltire in the field behind the head, known for groats at Edinburgh and Dundee, and similarly for halfgroats at both mints (with a die shared between them). For convenience the B marked coins of class IV may be called IVa, and those with saltire IVb. The saltire-marked coins of class IVb are all very rare, and no such groat or halfgroat is recorded at Perth, which is the rarest of the mints in both classes IIIb and IV. The sharing of obverse dies between mints is a conspicuous feature of the coinage at this point. Six of the interchanges involve coins of Dundee.

In the case of pennies a fieldmark is very rarely found. In particular, it is absent from a class IV Edinburgh penny die reading *Scotoru* followed by two saltires, and from two other penny dies which Mrs Murray also assigned to class IV because of their use of the new R punch, the small and spiky R3, which is an indicator of late class IV. Another Edinburgh penny die with R3 is known both without a fieldmark and with a pellet added.

Mrs Murray also noted another broken letter in the Second Period, namely small A2 (A2'), which is found on at least one Edinburgh halfgroat of class IIIb, and on rather more coins of class IV; this occurs in *Villa*, but it may have been used elsewhere, with the broken top of the letter off the flan.

Fieldmarks in classes IIIb and IV

Mrs Murray gave considerable thought to the possible meaning and significance of the B and other fieldmarks found in the late coinage of Robert II. Commenting on the addition of a B to a used Edinburgh IIIa die, she said 'there is no reason to doubt that the B denotes that those coins were the responsibility of the moneyer Bonagio. If the moneyer previously in charge, Master Jacobus Mulekyn, had died or otherwise given up, it would presumably be necessary to distinguish the coins for which his successor was responsible, at least until a trial of the pyx, and quittance for both men. On the assumption that Bonagio was sole master for a time, then the other marks behind the head, namely saltire and pellet, should also denote his coins. The pellet, however, may have had some additional significance, since there is an Edinburgh IIIb/V groat which has a pellet struck over another mark, perhaps a B; and in two other cases where the fieldmark cannot be identified with certainty (pence of Edinburgh and Perth, die-link no. 36; and a Dundee groat, class IV), the explanation may likewise be the addition of a pellet over another mark.'

Regarding the IIIa groat die that went from Perth to Dundee, Mrs Murray argued that the Dundee coin 'was presumably struck later than IIIb ones of the other mints, and thus might be thought to show that the other master moneyer was operating after the beginning of Bonagio's responsibility, but another explanation may be preferred. If Bonagio was the only master moneyer at Dundee, the mint name would be sufficient to show his responsibility, without the addition of a B (or other mark) to this shared obverse die; but when new obverse dies were needed, a mark behind the head was punched in by force of habit. In the case of pennies, though, the mark is rare, while it is unknown on halfpennies. ... In my opinion it is highly likely that these unmarked minor coins represent the responsibility of another master moneyer, working concurrently with Bonagio.'⁷

Mrs Murray was attracted to the view that minting at Dundee in Robert II's reign was a result of exceptional circumstances, namely the 1385 invasion by an English army under Richard II, and its aftermath. Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee were burnt (and indeed Stirling

⁷ Murray 1994.

and Dunfermline, according to Froissart).⁸ The Chamberlain's accounts for the year to April 1386 record a payment of £21 1s. 10*d.* received from the warden of Dundee mint.⁹ The custumars' accounts for these three towns give some indication of the degree of devastation, which of course affected their hinterlands too (see Table 1).¹⁰ Observing that Dundee evidently suffered less in proportion than Edinburgh and Perth, Mrs Murray remarked that it may have been easier to set up the mint there than at the previous mint towns, after the English withdrew.

TABLE 1. Revenue in the custumars' accounts, 1383–87

	1383–84	1384–86	1386–87
Edinburgh	£2,398	£863	£2,758
Perth	£769	£146	£732
Dundee	£902	£401	£838

Class V

The last of the Robert profile coins differ so materially from classes I to IV than in an early attempt to classify the series Mrs Murray originally designated them class II, and all the rest class I. She did, however, accept that to put 95 per cent of the material in one class and only the remainder in the other class was not likely to prove convenient in practice, since it would require a detailed breakdown of all the varieties contained within the original class I. As a result of our discussions of this problem she developed the scheme of five classes as presented here, the last of which is sufficiently different from all the other classes to constitute the Third Period on its own. Mrs Murray argued that the front-face Robert groats replaced the profile series not in 1390, as Burns had suggested,¹¹ but in 1393, as a result of the Act of Parliament of October in that year which, amongst other things, introduced a regular gold coinage in Scotland for the first time.¹² Mrs Murray's detailed exposition of the case for this has been recorded elsewhere, and I find the idea convincing. The consequence of this view is that the last Robert profile coins (i.e. class V) should probably be attributed to Robert III (1390–1406) and not to his father. There is also a numismatic argument in favour of Mrs Murray's suggested chronology, which is that there is close correspondence between early facing-head light-weight Robert groats and the first of the new gold coins, so much so that one must assume that they were contemporary. The wording of the 1393 Act makes it clear that the gold 'lion' that was authorised therein was new, and that means that the introduction of the light facing-head silver coins also belongs to the same date.

The composition of the rare class V is distinctly odd. Each of the three mints is represented, but by a different denomination. Thus there are groats of Perth, a halfgroat of Edinburgh and a penny of Dundee. The most conspicuous feature of the groats and halves is the bust, which much resembles the intermediate head (B) of David II, and wears a tall crown with nearly vertical end fleurs. Independently, Mrs Murray and I wondered whether the class V portrait, displacing the old head that had been in use since the 1360s, was perhaps an attempt to represent a younger king, following the accession of Robert III in 1390. She even floated the idea that perhaps a special effort was made to allow largesse in newly minted coin at his coronation in August 1390 at Scone – close to Perth, the mint for class V groats.

Table 2 summarizes the groat obverse dies of Robert II by mint and class, with recorded specimens, including mules. The number of shared dies, included in the counts, is also given (e.g. as 2S). Dies of class V are frequently linked with dies of earlier classes. One of the three Perth groat dies has a pellet behind the head, as has the single Edinburgh halfgroat die: their reverses are of class III. Mrs Murray recorded only one coin from homogeneous dies for each

⁸ Stewart 1971, 229; Berners 1927–28, II, 53.

⁹ Brooke 1880, 680.

¹⁰ Brooke 1880, 114, 116–17, 119, 132, 135, 138, 145, 147–8, 150.

¹¹ Burns 1887, I, 270–1.

¹² Murray 1997; Cochran-Patrick 1876, I, cxv, 12–13.

of the other two Perth groat obverses, the rest being V/III mules. She thought the survival of these class III reverse dies for use with class V obverses might have been connected with the despatch of a class IIIa groat obverse die to Dundee, and perhaps another one (with saltires in the spandrels, die-linked with Perth) to Edinburgh. There are also several cases of class V Edinburgh groat reverse dies being used with class IIIb or IV obverses, so that class V does not appear to indicate independent operation at Perth mint, as has sometimes been thought (there are also V/III Edinburgh halfgroats and the V/IV Dundee penny).

TABLE 2. Groat obverse dies by mint and class

Class	Edinburgh		Perth		Dundee	
	Dies	Specimens	Dies	Specimens	Dies	Specimens
Ia	5	18	—	—	—	—
Ib	9	23	—	—	—	—
IIa	3	4	2	5	—	—
IIb	5	10	9	20	—	—
IIIa	25* (1S)	78	18 (2S)	56	1 (S)	1
IIIb	3* (1S)	13	1 (S)	3	2	9
IV	2 (IS)	4	1 (S)	1	4 (2S)	6
V	—	—	3	14	—	—
Totals	52	150	34	99	7	16

*Shows the altered IIIa die becoming IIIb.

Reverse dies of class V used with obverses of classes III and IV can be identified by their lettering and stops. Various new letters were introduced, of which R4 and T3 are notable: the loop of R4 is linked thinly (if visible at all) to a very tall straight upright; and T3 with pendant serifs, a nearly flat top, and a wedgy body with a slightly concave base. The stops on class V dies are what might be described as thick crosses, or perhaps small quatrefoils. These are prominent on obverses of the Perth class V groats, but are also sometimes seen on reverses after *Villa*.

Die-interchanges between mints

Many die-interchanges are discussed in the foregoing text, but it may be found convenient to have them listed together, incorporating the six cases of links published in 1971 (indicated by L. nos.) and the six additional cases (A nos.) discovered subsequently. Mrs Murray carried out a reasonably thorough check through the available material, and hoped that new links might be found to expand the picture. She identified two cases (A2 and A4) where the condition of the dies clearly indicated the direction of the transfer – in both cases the later/last mint being Dundee. In these lists coins with the prefix S are in the collection of the author.

Groats

- L.31 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Perth. Murray class IIIa. Saltires in spandrels. No fieldmark
No mark on sceptre-handle? (a) Burns fig. 334, S.1243; (b) S.1357.
- L.32 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Perth. M. Class IIIb. Small B behind head. Star on sceptre. (a) Burns
fig. 328; (b) S.1358.
- A.1 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Dundee. M. Class IVa. Large B behind head. Star (?) on sceptre. (a)
Burns fig. 327 (rev. die of class V); (b) *SCBI* 35, 477.
- A.2 (a) Dundee/(b) Perth. M. Class IIIa. No fieldmark. Star on sceptre. (a) S.1419 (flaw at
co of *Scottorum*); (b) S.1353.
- A.3 (a) Dundee/(b) Perth. M. Class IVa (saltire stops). Small B behind head. Cross on
sceptre. *Scotor*'. (a) National Museums of Scotland reg. no. H.C1776 (Richardson
1901, Add. 116); (b) Burns fig. 330 (rev. V).

Halfgroats

- L.33 (a) Dundee/(b) Edinburgh/(c) Perth. M. class IIIb. Small B behind head. Cross on sceptre. Six arc tressure, with trefoils in spandrels. (a) S.1418 (rev. outer reading ends *Lira*, i.e. groat legend; inner reading has large fount for mint name); (b) S.1269; (c) Burns fig. 330A, S.1386.
- L.34 (a) Dundee/(b) Edinburgh. M. class IVb. Saltire behind head. No mark on sceptre. Seven arc tressure (without trefoils). *Dei Gra* omitted. (a) Burns fig. 326A, S.1417 (large fount for mint name); (b) Burns fig. 326.

Pence

- A.4 (a) Dundee/(b) Edinburgh/(c) Perth. No obv. stops but revs. of (a) and (b) have two saltires on rev. (i.e. M. class IV). No mark on sceptre. *Rex Scotor*'. (a) National Museums of Scotland reg. no. H.C1806 (wrongly? labelled 'false'); (b) National Museums of Scotland reg. no. H.C1801 (Richardson 1901, no. 27); (c) National Museums of Scotland reg. no. H.C1804 (ex 'Breachin find').
- L.35 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Perth. No stops on obv. No mark on sceptre. *Robertus D G Rex Sc* (unique reading). (a) Burns fig. 314; (b) Burns 13, S.1409.
- A.5 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Perth. Cross stops (M. class III). No mark on sceptre. *Scotor*. Cross at 11 o'clock. (a) S.1287; (b) Burns fig. 324, S.1400.
- L.36 (a) Edinburgh/(b) Perth. Blob (?trefoil) behind head. M. class IIIb. *Scottor*'. Star on sceptre. (a) Burns fig. 313A, S.1293–4; (b) S.1394–6.

Halfpence

- A.6 (a) Dundee/(b) Edinburgh. No mark in field or on sceptre. (a) S.1421; (b) S.1295–6.

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SALOP WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY

D.W. DYKES



Fig. 1. Westwood and Hancock's Shrewsbury Halfpenny of the Salop Woollen Manufactory, 1793 (*DH*: Shropshire 19).

Obv.: Shield of arms of the borough of Shrewsbury. SHREWSBURY 1792 HALFPENNY

Rev.: A woolpack. SALOP WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY *

Edge: PAYABLE AT SHREWSBURY + +

IN a recent book on eighteenth-century British provincial coinage the author, Mr Jon Lusk, contended that the Shrewsbury Halfpenny in the name of the Salop Woollen Manufactory (*DH*: Shropshire 19–22) was issued by Isaac Wood, a Shrewsbury watch maker and printer and a member of the board of directors of the local workhouse or, as it was more euphemistically described, 'House of Industry'.¹ While Mr Lusk's suggestion is not without its interest there are nonetheless to my mind a number of difficulties weighing against it.

Since there is no contemporary testimony that points directly to the issuer of the Shrewsbury Halfpenny – the only commercial coin put out in the town at this time – any attempt at attribution must necessarily be speculative.² Isaac Wood was certainly an assiduous and vocal proponent of the House of Industry and for a time its treasurer, his pamphlet *Some Account of the Shrewsbury House of Industry, its Establishment and Regulations; with hints to those who may have similar institutions in view* going through five editions between 1791 and 1800.³ It seems strange, therefore, that, in his detailed description of the finances of the workhouse and his references to the dole paid to working inmates and the occasional relief extended to the deserving out-poor, Wood should have made no mention of the tokens if they were issued by that institution or by himself on its behalf.⁴ And, if they were so issued, it is equally odd that

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¹ Lusk 2014, 161–2. The Shrewsbury 'House of Industry' – the original range of which, built in 1765 at the then prodigious cost of £16,000 for the Coram's Foundling Hospital at Kingsland on the southern bank of the Severn, and now forming part of Shrewsbury School – was established by private act of Parliament of 16 July 1784 (24 Geo.3 s.2. c.15). Incorporating the five borough parishes of Shrewsbury together with that of Meole Brace into a union for 'the better Relief and Employment of the Poor', the act was driven by a concern to reduce the mounting costs and the perceived inefficient and indiscriminate application and frauds of the existing system of poor relief undertaken separately by the parishes. Little regard was paid to the old system's humanity and flexibility. Cf. Owen 1808, 333–5, 339–46 and Wood 1795, 6–8. The workhouse actually opened 'for the reception of the Poor' in December 1783: Wood 1795, 14. Isaac Wood (1735–1801) was a director of the workhouse between 1786 and 1789 and 1796 and 1799. He was therefore not actually a director at the time of the issue of the Shrewsbury Halfpenny.

² It is interesting that Owen and Blakeway 1825, I, 491, n.1 made no attempt – or were unable – to identify the issuer of the halfpenny, curiously illustrating in their plate of tokens [Plate 39: op. cit., I, fronting p. 490] only the Westwood/Hancock consortium's false version of '1794' (*DH*: Shropshire 25d) and John Westwood, Junior's '1792' 'Half Halfpenny' (*DH*: Shropshire 28). Significantly, both Hugh Owen and John Brickdale Blakeway (a nephew of the mayor of the town) were incumbents of parishes incorporated into the Shrewsbury union and would surely have known if the halfpenny had been issued by the workhouse or on its behalf. For Owen and Blakeway see *ODNB* and *Clergy of the Church of England Database*. Miss Banks in her catalogue of tokens makes no reference to the issuer: [Banks], MS Catalogue.

³ My references to Wood's pamphlet relate to the fourth edition of 1795.

⁴ Nor does there seem to be any reference to the tokens in the extant archives of the workhouse.

neither in their iconography nor legends was reference made to its social purposes in the way, for instance, of its Birmingham counterpart (*DH*: Warwickshire 1–2 and perhaps 3–5).

The 1780s were hard times. And, with population and prices increasing, the number of the indigent poor and the costs of poor relief soared particularly in the more rural areas of England. Shrewsbury was no exception, with the town's poor rate increasing by virtually 75 per cent between 1776 and 1783.⁵ Governed by the contemporary urge to conduct social affairs by tenets of Moral Reform and Economy, the aim of the workhouse project, as Wood makes clear in his pamphlet, was twofold: to reduce the 'rapid and alarming Increase' in the burden of the poor rate on its six supporting parishes through a rigorous restriction of 'outdoor relief and assistance to the deserving'; and to furnish suitable employment for 'those poor, who are able to work, but are either averse to labour or cannot otherwise procure it', compelling them 'to earn their own support'.⁶ While 'a comfortable asylum' was afforded to 'the deserving poor, whom age, disease, or infirmity' had 'disabled from pursuing their various employments', the main thrust of the institution was the provision of in-house employment for the contributory parishes' paupers and, in particular, the 'training up the children of the poor to habits of industry and virtue'; separating them from 'the abandoned and depraved', sheltering them from the vagrancy, viciousness and profligacy they were too prone to, and so fitting them for some sort of regular work. Thus, the existing system would be cleared of 'those obnoxious weeds with which it was over-run ... and ... ORDER, DECENCY, INDUSTRY, and VIRTUE' would be planted in their place.

Wood indicated that the 'average number of working poor employed' in the House of Industry was about 250 (out of a customary total number of inmates of 350). Most of this workforce were parochial children and the overall figure included an unspecified number of young people being instructed in small groups by shoemakers, tailors, nailors and carpenters – themselves 'paupers who had been brought up to these occupations'. In like manner weavers were employed and a weaving shop set up but the majority of the children were employed in an in-house 'woollen manufactory'. Though this latter was intended to be a productive operation it was seen as essentially a training venture carried out under the instruction of 'persons versed in scribbling, carding and spinning wool' the overall intent of the scheme being to prepare children for an industrial occupation before they were old enough to be put out to apprenticeship, normally at about the ages of twelve and a half to fourteen.⁷

While the manufactory contributed to the self-sufficiency of the workhouse by the manufacture of clothes for the inmates and the sale of surplus production to the public – in its early years it did quite well in this respect – its success seems to have been comparatively short-lived and it was soon being run at a pecuniary loss. It became a general complaint that in such manufactories the able-bodied inmates worked 'in such a feeble and languid manner that the occupation is anything but calculated to preserve, much less generate habits of industry'.⁸ The traveller Arthur Aikin, in his description of Shrewsbury's woollen trade in 1796,⁹ made no mention of the manufactory; it was probably already defunct by then or, in common with some other woollen mills in the town, of insufficient commercial consequence to merit detailed attention.¹⁰ By 1808 the manufactory had certainly been abandoned. Writing anonymously that year, the Reverend Hugh Owen, perpetual curate of St Julian, Shrewsbury – a contributory parish to the workhouse project – explained that the manufactory had 'turned out a very losing concern to the real interests of the institution, from the unavoidable ignorance of the

⁵ Eden 1797, II, 634–5.

⁶ Since, as Wood contended, 'whilst the poor are supported in idleness, they will be averse to labour: and the indolence thus encouraged, is the fruitful parent of that debauchery and depravity, and that consequent wretchedness and misery, which have made so fatal a progress among the lower orders of the community': Wood 1795, 2–3.

⁷ Wood 1795, 2–3, 5, 8, 21–2, 26–7, vi, 29 note and *passim*.

⁸ Quoted Webb and Webb 1927, 223.

⁹ In Chapter VII ('On the woollen manufactures of North Wales') of Aikin 1797. This chapter was contributed by 'a friend, whose personal acquaintance with the subject may be depended upon': Aikin 1797, ix.

¹⁰ The Shrewsbury section of Sir Frederick Morton Eden's pioneering and exhaustive *The state of the poor* (Eden 1797, II, 622–42) did refer to the workhouse's 'woollen manufactory' (op. cit. II, 633) but his description of the enterprise was a reiteration of Wood's pamphlet and had been written up by November 1795.

directors in the various branches of a complicated machinery, and the consequent necessity of delegating its entire management to inferior agents'. The children, by then were 'furnished with knitting, or other employments which may easily be superintended and controuled, merely to prevent habits of idleness. As soon as their ages will admit, they are put out parish apprentices'.¹¹ The 'productive' element of the Shrewsbury House of Industry had gone the all too frequent way of similar optimistic 'profit-making' enterprises undertaken by workhouses.

Charles Pye suggested that five tons of the Shrewsbury Halfpenny were struck.¹² It seems hardly likely that the House of Industry would have been the sort of undertaking that would have warranted or embarked upon the issue of tokens on such a scale for it would not have been within its mission to provide small change for the community at large which Pye's assessment implies.¹³ If his figure was reasonably accurate, as was likely since Pye probably derived his information directly from John Gregory Hancock, it would indicate that, on the basis of a notional striking of 44 halfpennies to the lb, something in the region of 490,000 tokens would have been produced.¹⁴ Such a substantial striking, in a town of perhaps 12,000,¹⁵ predicates a commercial token designed not only to provide a petty-cash facility for the families of those working in the Salop Woollen Manufactory and of the domestic weavers it employed out of house but to feed the general circulatory needs of a large area surrounding it. The tokens are still fairly common today and judging by their average condition – they are rarely found in anything approaching EF state¹⁶ – they must have been well received as a popular local currency. Indeed, they must have attained an even wider acceptance because they were quickly copied for general circulation – initially by the Westwood coinery itself and later probably by William Lutwyche – some of the counterfeits achieving considerable ubiquity.¹⁷

The most natural interpretation of the Shrewsbury Halfpenny must surely be that it was issued by a relatively large commercial concern. Although the area's woollen industry was declining,¹⁸ there were still at the time a limited number of woollen factories operative in the town. While most were comparatively small-scale,¹⁹ a substantial flannel mill, operated by the Shrewsbury firm of White Cooke, Sons, and Mason, did exist three miles or so upstream from the town 'at a place called the *Isle*'. Reiterated opinion points to this business as the issuer of the token but, as far as I know, this attribution was not put forward until the 1880s and even then Samuel, its advocate, was cautious in his suggestion.²⁰ The source of Samuel's inspiration was probably Aikin whose informant saw the mill in the summer of 1796 three years after it was built and described it as the 'greatest undertaking of the kind' in the area. '[A] vast series of machinery for spinning, fulling, and many other operations' was powered by a 'great water wheel' which had been successfully installed through the 'perseverance and

¹¹ [Owen] 1808, 340–6, 555. Owen's remarks about the 'House of Industry' also drew on Wood's pamphlet (op. cit., 341).

¹² Pye 1801, 17, no. 2 and Pl. 44, no. 2. The tokens were struck in Birmingham by the Westwood/Hancock consortium: see Dykes 2011, 178–9.

¹³ One might remember here that the Birmingham Workhouse tokens, for instance, were issued in only limited numbers even if, judging by the number of specimens in existence today, it is likely that rather more than the six dozen suggested by Pye were struck: Pye 1801, 7, no. 1 and Pl. 8, no. 1.

¹⁴ Arthur W. Waters in his edition of Pye converts the latter's tonnage into the even more substantial quantity of 515,200 pieces: Pye 1916, Pl. 44, no. 2. Waters' estimate was based on a misreading of Sharp 1834, ii, and his erroneous assumption that Westwood struck 46 halfpennies to the lb. at this time. Sharp was, though, quoting a *sample* production estimate given by William Lutwyche to a Birmingham dealer which was simply said to apply to 'many' tokens. Waters, unfortunately, generalised Lutwyche's yardstick, repeating his solecism throughout his *Notes on Eighteenth Century Tokens* (Waters 1954, [v], and – for the substantive Shrewsbury pieces – 23), and has been widely reiterated ever since (e.g. Lusk 2014, 161).

¹⁵ In 1750 the population of the borough was estimated as being 8,141. By the 1801 Census it had increased substantially to 13,486: Champion and Coulton 2014, 201.

¹⁶ Personal comment from Peter Preston-Morley.

¹⁷ The genuine trade tokens are listed in *DH* as Shropshire 19–22, the concoctions for general circulation and for collectors as Shropshire 23–27. See also Waters 1954, 23.

¹⁸ Eden 1797, II, 642.

¹⁹ For example that of Thomas Child, who employed a chestnut mare to power carding machinery on his premises in Barker Street, where he also had looms and jennies: *Salopian Journal*, 18 June 1800. See also Nightingale 1813, 164; Trinder 1996, 138 and Trinder 2014, 253.

²⁰ [Samuel] 1882, 609–10. Samuel merely said that he 'fancied' the attribution. Bell 1963, 143, took this somewhat further saying that the token 'probably emanated' from the Isle factory and his view has become the received one.

great mechanical skill of Mr. Mason' despite the rapid flood of the river and silting of its bed.²¹ The factory, combined with a corn mill, was still water-powered when it was put up for sale after the death of its then owner Edward Holt in 1824.²²

An alternative and perhaps more likely issuer of the token, however, may have been the firm of Powis and Hodges that built an integrated woollen factory in Longden Coleham just south-east of the centre of Shrewsbury at the confluence of the Severn and the Rea Brook in 1790 at a cost of some £20,000.²³ This mill was not mentioned in Aitkin's *Journal* because by the time of its composition the company had long ceased business and the factory buildings had fallen into disuse. Although less is known of this mill than the one at the Isle it seems to have been an even more ambitious enterprise. With two five-storey ranges and a four-storey block housing some of its workforce it was said to be one of the largest of its kind built by that time, its dominance of the surrounding countryside dramatically conveyed in a later nineteenth-century painting (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The Coleham Manufactory as seen from the west end of the English Bridge, Shrewsbury, from a nineteenth-century painting by an unknown artist. (Reproduced by courtesy of Shropshire Council: Shropshire Museums).

When its machinery was sold in October 1795 the mill was described as the 'New Woollen Manufactory at Shrewsbury' with power for carding engines, spinning jennies and fulling stocks provided by a steam engine and a fifteen-foot diameter, seven-foot wide water wheel.

²¹ Aitkin 1797, 77–8. The partnership of White Cooke, Sons [Samuel and Thomas], and [John] Mason was dissolved in 1798, to be succeeded by that of [Thomas] Holt and Mason. In 1802 Edward Holt took over sole operation of the mill: *The London Gazette*, 24 July 1798 (No. 15044), 704; 17 Apr. 1802 (No. 15472), 399.

²² *Salopian Journal*, 3 Mar. 1824, 23 June 1824, 28 July 1824. See also Trinder 1996, 138 who notes that nothing now remains on the site of the mill.

²³ Trinder 2014, 253.



Fig. 3 Detail from Robert Baugh's 1808 map of Shropshire. (Reproduced by permission of Shropshire Archives (ref: CM/2/40)). Added letters indicate the sites of **A** the manufactory at the Isle, **B** the Coleham Woollen Manufactory, and **C** the House of Industry.

The buildings could not be disposed of at the time and they remained empty or were used to house prisoners of war until they were leased by Charles Hulbert, a Manchester cotton weaver in 1803 to be converted into a cotton manufactory, a venture that itself was to prove unsuccessful before the ensuing decade was out.²⁴

It seems to me that either of these concerns would be realistic candidates for the issue of the Shrewsbury Halfpenny. Both were large enough to have justified its promotion and although Powis and Hodges went bankrupt after a relatively short period this in no way militates against their issue of the token, an initiative only too consonant with an over-ambitious venture at the time.²⁵ My own inclination, in the past, has been to accept the conventional view that the

²⁴ *Shropshire Chronicle*, 9 Oct. 1795; Hulbert 1852, 194–5, 222–3; Trinder 1996, 138–9; Trinder 2006, 82–4. For Hulbert see *ODNB*. The manufactory had a chequered history in the nineteenth century, most of its buildings being converted into tenements. The last of them appear to have been demolished in the 1920s, part of the site having been occupied by the Territorial Army and, since 1996, by the Shrewsbury centre of the Barnabas Community Church.

²⁵ It could well be that the tokens were produced quite early in 1793 or even in 1792. The trial referred to by Atkins 1892, 167 (*Shropshire* 17) and Dalton and Hamer 1914, Part VII, 224 (*DH: Shropshire* 18) – but whereabouts presently unknown – is said to have been dated '1792' with 'the 2 partially erased' (Atkins, loc. cit.). It is not without interest that the younger John Westwood's later 'Half Halfpenny' is dated '1792', perhaps suggesting his awareness of a projected issue earlier than the date of the substantive version. Moreover, on the analogy of the Swansea halfpennies of John Voss, the substantive version may have been struck during the year prior to its declared date. Unfortunately, Miss Banks does not specify the date of acquisition of her Shrewsbury token as she does with that of Voss: [Banks], *MS Catalogue*. Published catalogues of the period are of no help, the earliest listing and representation being Pye's plate of 1 August 1794: Pye 1795, iii ('Index') and Pl. 2, [3]. Bankruptcy seems to

issuer was White Cooke, Sons, and Mason but now I am not so sure and I incline much more to the Coleham mill.²⁶ It set out to be a substantial, fully integrated concern and had the advantage of being sited virtually in Shrewsbury itself – near the English Bridge entrance to the town – thus more pertinently justifying the adoption of the halfpenny’s ‘loggerheads’ arms and its edge legend **PAYABLE AT SHREWSBURY**.

Having said this, until positive evidence materializes the identity of the issuer must remain an open question. Whatever the answer, however, it will surely be found to lie with a commercial firm of some pretention and, while it would be rash to rule out Mr Lusk’s suggestion completely, it cannot, in my view, be regarded as more than an ‘also ran’ and a rather distant one at that. The tragedy, of course, is that, unlike Matthew Boulton’s Soho Mint, no business papers of the Westwood/Hancock consortium have survived to shed any light on its productions.²⁷

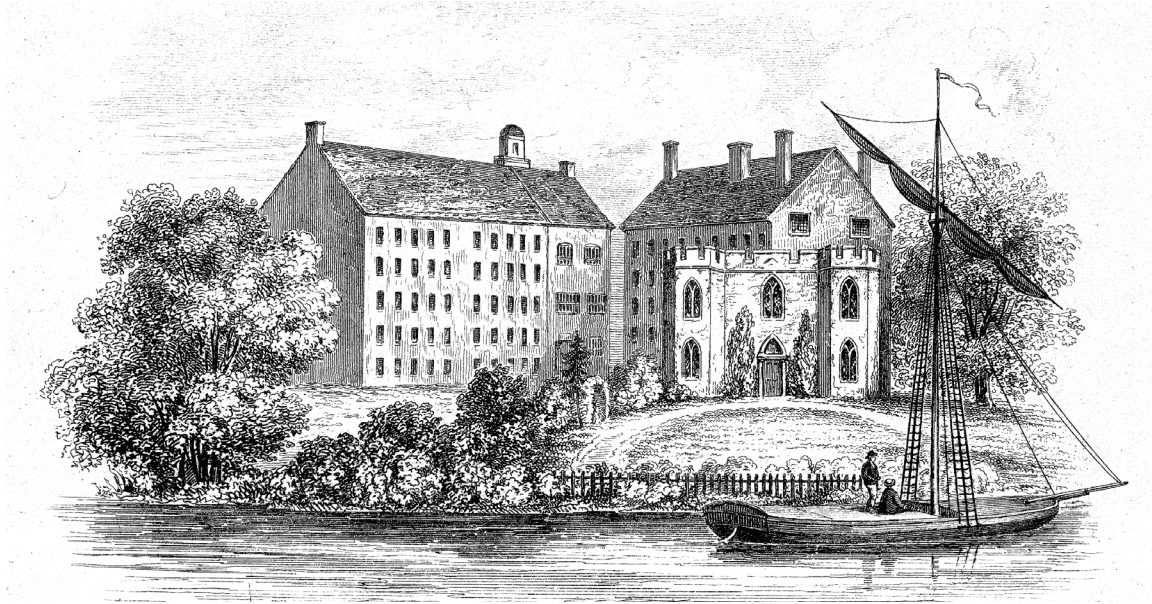


Fig. 4. The Coleham Manufactory viewed from across the river Severn, c.1820s. (From an engraving in Hulbert 1852 (© British Library Board)). The main mill buildings are substantially as built in 1790 but the neo-Gothic ‘Hulbert’s Castle’, shown in the right foreground, was an early nineteenth-century addition built to provide a home for Charles Hulbert, the then owner.

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have bedevilled a number of eighteenth-century token issuers, even if not so immediately, Richard Paley of Leeds being a case in point: Dykes 2011, 172–3.

²⁶ Mr. Lusk admits that ‘There are conflicting opinions about the issuer of this token. Dykes indicates the Salop Woollen [sic] Manufactory appears to have been a flannel mill operated by the firm of Cook [sic] and Mason at the Isle on the Severn just upstream from Shrewsbury’: Lusk 2014, 161. He does not make it clear that I had indicated the alternative of the Coleham mill to him in response to a draft he sent me of a preliminary paper on the Salop Woollen Manufactory. This paper was duly published three years ago as Lusk 2011 where Mr Lusk did then acknowledge my alternative suggestion (p. 24). It was a suggestion also referred to in Dykes 2011, 179, n.73.

²⁷ Or indeed of any other token manufacturer of the eighteenth century.

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