

Editor: David Powell

A free newsletter to all who share our interest in these fascinating and often enigmatic pieces. Please send the editor at least one 300 dpi JPEG scan, or a sharply focused photo print, of any interesting leaden token or tally in your collection. Send images as email attachments to [dmpowell@waitrose.com](mailto:dmpowell@waitrose.com) or [david@powell18041.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@powell18041.freemove.co.uk). Please note that the old LTTeditor@aol.com address advertised on some earlier versions of LTT is no longer active.



## Bakers' Tokens

Happy Christmas, everyone, and LTT's best wishes for a very happy 2016. Our special seasonal feature this year takes the form of a look at the commercial lead tokens of late 18th cent and early 19th cent Scotland; most commonly but not exclusively, the bakers and grocers of Edinburgh. Herewith an advert from the Caledonian Mercury of Saturday, 5 January 1782:

“PEWTER-WORK and CANDLE-MOULDS. JAMES WRIGHT, Pewterer, Cowgatehead, Edinburgh, takes this method to inform his friends that he makes and sells the following articles in the Pewter way, wholesale and retail, viz. Candle-Moulds of all sizes; Hard Metal Table-Spoons; Soup, Tureen & Punch Ladles; Tea and Children's Spoons; Musket and Pistol Balls; Church-tokens, and Bakers Farthing Tickets, &c. &c.”

For some years during the 1780s and 1790s James Wright seemed to advertise in the Caledonian Mercury annually, although the 1782 edition is too faint to reproduce the original, so herewith the 1783 equivalent, which is better. It shows that church tokens, i.e. CTs, were just a small part of a busy professional pewterer's work; or, the other way round, that many churches used the service of a secular craftsman to produce their tokens.

There is one difference to note between 1782 and 1783; “Bakers Farthing Tickets” get a mention alongside the CTs in 1782, but not the following year. Perhaps we should not read too much into that, for doubtless “&c.” still covers them. But what are “Bakers Farthing Tickets”?

**Candle-Moulds and other Pewter Work.**  
**JAMES WRIGHT, PEWTERER,**  
 Cowgate-head, Edinburgh,

Takes this method to inform the public and his friends, that he makes and sells the following Articles, wholesale and retail, viz.

Candle-moulds of all sizes, or repairs them—Hard Metal Table-spoons—Soup, Tureen, and Punch Ladles—Tea and Childrens Spoons—Musket and Pistol Balls—Leads and Meals for Damask Weavers—Church Tokens, &c.

Also makes the following Articles, in Imitation of Silver:

Sacrament Cups,	Screwed Pepper and Mustard-Boxes,
Vase Tea Pots and Flats,	Tea and Table Spoons,
Vase Sugar-bowls and Cream-pots,	Egg Cups,
Sugar-bowls and Cream-pots with feet,	Sign Watches for Watchmakers
Salts with feet,	Windows, &c. &c. &c.

Besides the vase tea-pots above mentioned, he also sells London ones of an inferior kind, and every other article in the pewter branch.

J. Wright thinks it unnecessary to use any further solicitations to those who have formerly favoured him with their custom, as they well know the above articles are equal to any done in this country, particularly the candle-moulds, which were first made in Scotland by his father many years ago, and which he has now so much improved, that they have been found, upon trial, to be preferable to any brought from England.

N. B. Commissions from the country, directed as above, will be punctually answered.

Dalton & Hamer's “Provincial Token Coinage of the 18th Century”, which is the standard reference work, contains, in addition to the many copper pieces of the 1787-99 period with which it is usually associated, some sixteen pages of Scottish lead farthings, mostly from Edinburgh. These are commercial pieces, which fall into two categories:



⇒ GROUP 1. The more detailed of them {left} approximate to the copper pieces of the early 19th cent, of which series they are the precursors. They often contain the issuer's full name, and reference to his address and/or occupation. Where dated, they tend to be from the first two decades of the 19th cent, the authors not having applied their usual cutoff. There is some stylistically affinity between the simpler pieces and the communion tokens of the period, and one may reasonably assume some commonality of manufacture.

⇒ GROUP 2. The second group, numbering 144 tokens {see below}, are earlier and, with one or two exceptions, cruder; bar a few, visibly anonymous, with initials rather than names, and only very rarely a date or picture. Some are struck, some moulded, some counterstruck on blanks; they are not pretty, for the most part, but we are talking here true crude lead type 2s; single initials, pairs and triads. Except with one difference; they were collected by an Oxford professor, Dr. Thompson, who for eight months {Oct 1781 to May 1782} actually went round town in Edinburgh noting where he acquired them and what other premises were nearby. Nowt like good recording, chaps!

The benefit of Dr. Thompson's diligence is that, where the initials on a token accord with the place where he acquired it, or one immediately adjacent, he has recorded it for posterity, along with the address and profession of the tradesman concerned; so that, we have a knowledge of provenance comparable with that achieved for communion tokens of comparable crudity through (i) parish records and (ii) proximity of findspot to church of issue. This, for commercial initial-only leads in the 18th cent, is rare indeed.

The net result of this is that 80 of Dr. Thompson's sample of 144 tokens have known or likely issuers, 68 of whom are different. Twelve of these are known only by initials, 54 are male, and two are female.

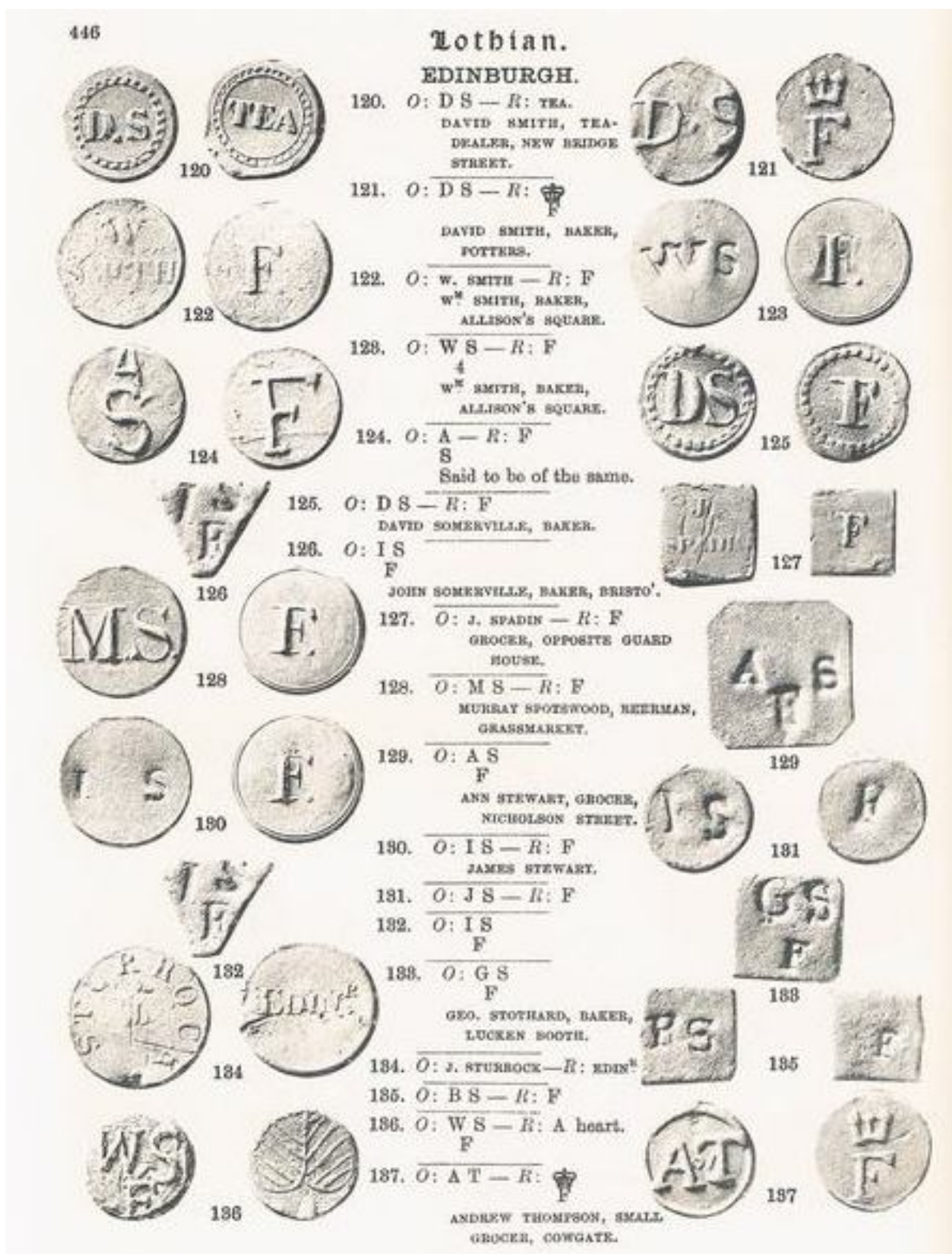
A breakdown of the professions of these various tradesmen is even more revealing. Thompson records a few of the 68 issuers as having two trades, and fails to record any for a few others, but 67 trades are stated, distributed as per the table opposite. I will retain Thompson's quaint spelling for good measure, and conjecture that a "small grocer" is what we would today call a greengrocer. The "merchant" is unspecified; perhaps his business was of too general a nature to be specifically stated.

Baker	36
Grocer	15
Beerkeeper	7
Small grocer	3
Pyebaker	2
Chesemonger	1
Ham-dealer	1
Merchant	1
Tea dealer	1

One feature very quickly stands out from the list; that the trade of baker predominates. So, I think we now know what tokens James Wright's advert of January 1782, published during the very months that Dr. Thompson was gathering his data, refers to. The phrase "Bakers Farthing Tickets" must clearly have been in regular use for Wright to employ it.

Overleaf there is an even larger display of Group 2 pieces, from which it will be seen that a large number of the tokens gathered by Dr. Thompson had the letter "F" on the back, notwithstanding that it often had no refer-





ence to the issuer's name or trade. This can only stand for "Farthing", and provokes the question as to how many unexplained single initials on other lead series relate to values either known or unknown. So, look out for "F" for farthing elsewhere, and maybe "H" for halfpenny, as ways of conveying an accepted value without upsetting the law by stating it overtly; but equally, there may be the initials of other local value-words now lost to us. Was there, for example, ever a slang term for an eighth of a penny?

It also remains to ask the question: How many different pewterers' work do the various Dalton & Hamer pieces represent? Probably we will never answer that, although I expect that most if not all of the other names lie hidden in L.Ingleby Wood's 1904 work, "Scottish Pewterware & Pewterers".

From the Caledonian Mercury, 16 April 1795, comes this report of a meeting of the Edinburgh Corporation of Bakers earlier that month. To the left of it is a list of Edinburgh bakers known to have issued lead tokens. You will recognise a number of names common to the two, and a number of other surname coincidences where, probably, the proprietor has died between 1782 and 1795 and his widow or son(s) have taken over. Readers of Dalton & Hamer may wish to compare the article with the initials on the as yet unassigned pieces, in case it provides further clues.

**DALTON & HAMER LIST OF  
EDINBURGH BAKERS  
who issued lead tokens:**

James Addison or Anderson	
George Aitchison	
Peter Bow	Peter Hutchison
John Braidwood	John Johnson
R. Bryson	John Keir
Alexander Chalmers	Andrew Kitchin
Matthew Comb	Andrew Maxwell
William Craig	Adam Murray
David Davidson	Peter Murray
J. Dudgeon	Robert Murray
Robert Dudgeon	David Smith
James Easton	William Smith
John Gordon	David Somerville
Peter Hamilton	John Somerville
Robert Hamilton	George Stothard
George Hardy{ie}	George Thompson
William Hardy{ie}	G. Turnbull
Andrew Hay	Robert White
George Hutchinson	B. Yule

*EDINBURGH,*  
**BAKERS-HALL, 8th April, 1795.**

**A**T a Meeting of the CORPORATION of BAKERS held this day, it was represented, that there had lately been published in the different Newspapers here, a paragraph, purporting that a Baker in Town had been fined by the sitting Magistrate 15l. 10s. Sterling, for selling Bread deficient in weight. As this public notification throws a particular odium on the whole Trade, by reason of the Magistrate having declined, or omitted to publish the name of the person in default; the Corporation, in duty to themselves, are therefore bound to take notice of an Advertisement, which might be imputed to any individual Member (joined to the indispensable justice they owe to the Public); in consequence thereof, they advertise, that the said Advertisement does not apply to the Under subscribers:

Henry Hardie.	Charles Reid.	James Thomson.
John Denham.	Ben. Yule.	Alex. Logan.
William Murray.	James Hunter.	William Ronaldson.
David Thomson.	John Gray.	Robert Dudgeon.
Ralph Hardie.	Alex. Laidlaw.	for A. Dudgeon.
Anthony Hodge.	David Deas.	Thomas Drysdale.
John Crawford.	John Ronaldson.	Hamilton Hunter.
David Stiel.	Robert Dudgeon.	Alex. Wight.
Robert Handyfide.	David Handyfide.	Samuel Somervell.
Walter Somerville.	James Clarkson.	James Newton.
John Orr.	Innes and Murray.	Alex. Smith.
Hugh Nimmo.	Edward Innes.	Mrs A. Hardie.
John Yule.	James Cunning-	Mrs Charles Cun-
William Young.	ham, jun.	ingham.
Thomas Myle.	Patrick Murray.	Robert Brown.
Francis Shiels.	James Weir.	Janet Murray.
Thomas Hutchison.	William Crooks.	Ro. & A. Cleghorn.
Alex. Cunningham.	Robert Bryson.	James Simpson.
George Rule.	John Laing.	Mrs Robert Craig.

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## A Scottish Selection

Sorry to have brought you to the bottom of page 4 only showing you line drawings, so .....here now for some examples of the real thing! A couple of them appear in Dalton and Hamer {D+H}, but most of them are unpublished.



Figs.1-3 show some examples of the F initials mentioned at the bottom of page 2. Whilst F alone as on Fig.1 is clearly for “Farthing”, and the “F”s at the bottoms of the triad on Figs.2-3 probably are as well, the latter are potentially ambiguous. They might stand for the surname of someone with a middle name, although fairly unlikely at this period, or they may be the initial letter of a profession, e.g.farrier. However, I think that farthing is most likely. One previous owner of Fig.1 was of the opinion that GP stood for George Panton of Bush, short for Timber Bush, which is an area of Leith; but whilst there was a known merchant of that name, I am not convinced. I fancy B for baker, but I could be wrong.

The argument over F for farrier in Fig.2 is strengthened by the depiction of a saddle on the reverse, but the piece is likely to have been a farthing even so; note that there are several saddlers represented amongst the later 19th cent unofficial farthing series, so one here would not be amiss. Google “Edinburgh Directories” and there are a nice group of early volumes, back to 1773, to explore. Nothing certain, of course, but “Clark James, kings farrier, south back of Canongate”, in 1788-90, looks a good candidate for IC.

As for Fig.3, Anchor Close dates back to 1521 and is one of a number of closes just off Edinburgh’s Royal Mile, so the device, if not that of a tavern, may just be a way of indicating an address. It is a solid piece, weighing 10.49gm, even if still only 23mm across.



Fig.4 is in D+H under the lead section, where it is listed as Lothian/Edinburgh 136. D+H inverts the reverse and describes it as a heart, but one wonders whether wheat, indicating bread, is intended. Wheat sheaves appear frequently on 19th cent unofficial farthings and also here, on Fig.5. The latter, uniface, is a Glasgow piece, as those familiar with the design of

the city’s communion tokens {CTs} will readily appreciate, even without its issuer specifically stating the fact. I have also seen a rectangular cut-corner specimen in similar vein, again from Glasgow.

As for issuers, WS is uncertain but may be the same William Smith to whom D+H ascribe Lothian/Edinburgh 123. Fig.5’s issuer, T.Gentle, kindly states his full surname. He was in business with his father, it would seem, as they feature in a list of Scottish bankrupts printed in the Edinburgh Gazette and elsewhere in early 1811:

⇒ “SCOTCH BANKRUPTS; ....William Gentle and Son, bakers in Glasgow, and William Gentle and Thomas Gentle, the partners, as individuals”

It is very considerate of issuers to go bankrupt, because one then has a latest date for their pieces. The Glasgow directory of 1809-11 suggests that father and son may have been operating separate branches at 108 & 284 High St, respectively, hence the reason for Thomas having tokens independently of his father.

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Fig.6 is altogether thicker & heavier, at 8.78gm, and may come from another town or manufacturer entirely. Its issuer, D.Forrester, was kind enough to give both name and profession but still eludes identification nevertheless. One might ask what the small “C” beneath “Baker” stands for. It is not obviously a denomination, so maybe a town?



Not all Scotland’s commercial lead token issuers were bakers, of course, and with Fig.7 we arrive at the format which persisted well into the era of copper & brass tokens known as 19th cent unofficials. Copper pieces akin to A & J Scott’s Dalkeith piece {Fig.7} appear in quantity in Dalton & Hamer’s book and, notwithstanding that the title of the work implies that they should be 18th cent, many of them are probably 19th. Some of the issuers are known to have died as late as the 1840s and 1850s, and exceptionally even the 1860s; or put another way, there is significant chronological overlap between the pieces discussed in D+H {primarily 1787-99}, W.J.Davis {1811-20} and the more modern Token Book 2 {1820-1900}.

Fig.8, overleaf, states “W.Tait / Gilmn 1813” in a slender script which is not that easy to read but which is also found on a few CTs of the same period. His trade is not stated, but in 1841 there was a victual dealer of the same name at Gilm{erto}n, a village to the SE of Edinburgh which has since been

absorbed into it. He was born c.1786-91, so 1813 might be when he was first setting up shop. Google around a bit and you will also find that he was one of the key witnesses in an interesting murder case in 1821, but that is another story.



Fig.9 is one of Dalton & Hamer’s lead pieces of unknown origin, designated “Not Local 15” in their catalogue, although they conjecture it is from Edinburgh. There is a picture of a hand holding a pen, with initials T-S flanking, so this advert below from the Caledonian Mercury of 23 February 1807 looks a reasonable clue as to its issuer’s identity, especially since several of the Edinburgh directories of the 1790s and 1800s confirm that Mr.Scott’s forename was Thomas. Writing master is an unusual trade for a token, but there are other examples in the copper 18c/19c series, so this looks promising.

**MR SCOTT**  
Respectfully informs his Friends and the Public,  
**T**HAT he has opened a Private **WRITING**  
**CLASS** for **GENTLEMEN**, from 8 to 9 o'clock  
in the Evening, where every possible exertion is made  
to form the hand in the best stile for business.

*To Writing-Masters & Booksellers.*

Mr SCOTT has now finished his Sets of large Text  
Round and Current Hand Copies, which are written  
off-hand in a stile entirely his own; and he flatters him-  
self that, for freedom, elegance, and imitability, they  
will be found, on impartial comparison, to equal, if not  
to surpass any thing of the same kind that has hitherto  
been published. He humbly hopes, therefore, that they  
will attract the attention of Teachers, and tend more to  
accelerate the progress of their Pupils than any other  
specimens of writing they were ever accustomed to use.

ST ANDREW'S SQUAE,  
Jan. 17. 1807.

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*Smith, [Dirlleton, Scotland; Lyon Register] ar. on a saltier  
az. betw. three crescents gu. one in chief, and two in the  
flanks, and a chess-ruok in base, sa. a garb of the field.  
—Crest, a dexter hand holding a writing-quill, ppr.  
Motto, Ex usu commodum.*

But what does that little phrase, “Ex usu commodum” mean? The translation is easy enough: "convenient from use", and sits very neatly alongside some of the inscriptions on 17th cent Williamson town pieces: “For a Public Good”, “For the Use of the Poore” etc.

The use of Latin is not often resorted to by lead token issuers, although Mr.Scott was clearly an educated man and may well have known some. If he did issue the token, this sense of public convenience would be a very logical way of explaining its purpose, albeit whilst demonstrating his culture to would-be clientèle simultaneously. Alas! I then found this second little extract or equivalent in several works of heraldry online, which suggests that the depiction may be the family arms of someone called Smith. “A dexter hand, holding a writing quill”, and a motto equating to the above three words of Latin. That sounds rather like our Fig.9, I think? plus, the initial “S” fits; in

which case, the token is issued by someone called Smith and we haven't a clue about his trade. So, two possibly answers, both feasible. Personally, I would like it to be Mr.Scott, the writing master.

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Public Kitchens, see Fig.10, were the brainchild of Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford {1753-1814}, a physicist and inventor whose timely creation of large-scale cooking appliances in the 1790s happily coincided with the British authorities’ need to alleviate the hunger of its urban citizens during the shortages of the Napoleonic War. Edinburgh’s was found late in 1799 and a number of references can be found in the local press of Nov/Dec that year. The use of tokens, which he refers to as tickets, is extensively discussed in Rumford’s own writings; some of which, too detailed to be reproduced here, may be readily be found by Googling {"Count Rumford" "public kitchen"} and looking at the recommended Google Books. The piece is 24mm, somewhat pewtery, and weighs 7.04gm.

Fig.11 is the only piece in this article which is not confirmedly Scottish. It could be; unlike the others, its provenance is not known. It is well-formed, and at 11.72gm has the weight and chunkiness, more than the typical 18th cent English lead, of several of the other pieces which we have seen above. So, amongst our many anonymities, we may just have one or two Scottish bakers’ tokens!

