

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 mail@leadtokens.org.uk Please note that the old david@powell8041.freeserve.co.uk address advertised on earlier versions of LTT will not be active after 31 May 2017.

A Pair of Tokens by the Same Issuer

It is a rare luxury in the lead token world to look at two different tokens and know that they are from the same source, but these two {Figs.1-2} look fairly certain. They both have a bust on one side and an animal on the other, flanked by a pair of characters, probably initials, but despite their general similarity of style the details of each element diverge. Their size and use of beading is, however, almost identical; as, indeed, is their weight: 5.41gm in one case as against 5.44gm, in a series which has little reputation for conforming to standard. The diameter of both pieces is approximately 21mm.

Fig.1 was found near Newbury, Berks, whereas Fig.2 is of Wiltshire provenance. So, not too far apart. It has been suggested to me that the animal depicted on Fig.1 is a talbot, a type of hunting dog which disappeared in the late 18th cent. Fig.2, less clear, is perhaps a fox or goat, probably the former.

Since both the gentlemen depicted appear to be fairly well-dressed, and at least one of the animals possibly a little aristocratic as well, the issuers are likely to be minor gentry or the like. As to use, my first suggestion is that they were passes indicating that the holder was authorised to participate in one of the hunts which said gentry organised, and in which said animals participated.



I have a secondary suggestion also, which I think is feasible but a little less likely. What appear to be flanking initials are, on Fig.1, I-S, which would normally be those of the issuer, e.g. John Smith, but could conceivably indicate a value "1 Shilling". The flanking initials on Fig.2 are less legible but the right hand one is probably a P. If the left hand one is a letter, then the initials are those of a person, but if by any chance it is a number, e.g. "6", then a value in pence could be indicated, suggesting that the two pieces were part of a set of private money.

Whichever, the social status of the issuer would be fairly similar either way. For date, I favour early 18th cent, possibly late 17th. The quality of execution argues for earlier rather than later, but then aristocratic issuers might have access to better workmanship than the average commercial shopkeeper. No doubt the dress would be a clue, but the finer sartorial detail is indistinct, even for those who are knowledgeable about such things.

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The Town Coin; were they also Engraved or Counterstruck?

We have made frequent mention in these pages to the unusual frequency of the initials TC and conjectured that they may stand for "Town Coin", i.e. a municipal issue. Recently seen is this George III halfpenny of 1774 with the same initials and, whilst it may of course stand for the name of a trader, one cannot but help wondering whether it, too, is perhaps a continuation of the same tradition. The provenance, unfortunately, is unknown.



Request for Assistance: Cambridgeshire lead piece of 1666

Gary Oddie, who has written a book on the 17th cent tokens of Bedfordshire and is currently working on one of Cambridgeshire, has discovered this reference to a consignment of lead in a Sotheby's auction catalogue of July 1907 {for those interested, the sale of the F.E.Macfadyen collection}. A long

224 A parcel of about 100 Leaden Tokens and early Badges in lead, including Elizabeth, with crowned rose and spread eagle, BEATI REGINA (2) and GOD SAVE THE QVEEN; others of 17th century token type, with initials of issuer, one dated 1583, and another of Joseph T. . . . of Benjamin Street, London; a large piece of Oliver Harlei, dated 1666 (see Williamson, *Burwell, Cambs. no. 9*); early Ecclesiastical Pieces and others of interesting types

shot, but Gary would welcome hearing from any one who either knows what happened to the Oliver Harlie specimen or who has come across another example of it {email: goddie1@hotmail.co.uk}. Whilst the lead piece has no location stated on it, the name is sufficiently scarce that the issuer is probably the same man as Williamson's Cambs.9, which is undated and depicts the Haberdasher's Arms. The latter are almost certainly an indication of Oliver's profession.



A number of the Williamson issuers are known to have struck in lead as well as copper, and probably a lot more than are known about. Further examples such as Oliver Harlie {however spelt} are likely to emerge as time progresses, and it would be well worth any finder of a full-name 17th lead consulting Williamson to see if there is a piece of that name in there. Ralph Robins of Sandwich was one of the very few where both the copper and lead pieces were known to Williamson {Kent.504,592 respectively; see Figs.1-2}, but the lead specimen as often is initials only, not full name. The recently-discovered Fig.3 of Richard Hamerton of Clonmel is an Irish example of a lead piece with fuller inscription, but I do not have access to any of his copper pieces {Ireland.179-182} to contrast. Three of the latter are dated 1657 or 1664, whereas the lead is dated 1653, hinting of a natural progression from lead to more durable metals, rather than the two being simultaneously issued.

Both of the above examples use different dies for the lead pieces. Gary has kindly provided me with an example of a copper-and-lead pair struck from the same dies: Figs.4-5 are Williamson's Cambs.1, Thomas Smith of Abington.

Note dies, rather than moulds; the idea that casting would permit the level of detail normal to a main series token is hard to imagine.



Figs.6-8 show what certain of the other named pieces mentioned in the Sotheby's catalogue entry are likely to have looked like. {PLEASE NOTE: Because several of the items illustrated are very small, as little as 14-15mm in some cases, I have magnified everything 3:2 for ease of viewing}.



Early English Lead & Pewter Tokens, continued

Type D

{NOTE: All photos magnified 3:2}



BNJ53 type D, known as the main pictorial series, is for the most part just a continuation of type C; a slight lessening of the average diameter, and no beaded edge, maybe here and there a little lessening of the quality of artistic execution, but still generally very good. 15½-16mm diameter, rather than type C's 18mm, is more typical. Indeed, so smooth is the transition between the two series that a borderline cannot always be drawn, with some pieces seeming to have a beaded border on one side and not on the other.

The choice of design is broadly similar to the beaded issues, although some depictions seem to become more common; most noticeably the shield, which over the 14th century diversifies to offer a considerable range of heraldry; bars, chevrons and basic fields with all combinations of shading and not. One wonders how much of it genuinely represents someone's coat of arms, how much done to distinguish sub-issues, and how much merely done for decorative effect.



The use of shading is one of the notable innovations of around this period, and whilst pure geometric issues are still a little way off one can see them, on the reverses, starting to emerge. For the moment, the attractive pictorial is still the order of the day.

One pair of noteworthy designs are the pilgrims of Figs.2-3. The figure in Fig.2 appears to be wearing a headscarf, suggesting that she is female, whereas the bald-headed chap sat by the roadside munching an apple in Fig.3 is obviously male. Would they have bothered with his and hers in those days? Maybe the headscarf is actually a cowl, and both are male. The would-be lady has a wineglass in her hand, so perhaps Fig.2 is for drink and Fig.3 for food.

Type D tokens are sometimes referred to as Winetavern tokens, in consequence of a hoard having been discovered at a site in a street of that name in Dublin. The impression thus given is that they were the pub tokens of the day, but that is not necessarily the case; the name is coincidental, although obviously the street will at some time have contained a pub. As indeed will most!

Early English Lead & Pewter Tokens, continued

Type F

{NOTE: All photos magnified 3:2}



BNJ53 type F, known as late pictorials, are just an increasingly degenerative form of their predecessors on the previous page. They start from c.1307 where type D left off and run up until about the middle of the century, i.e. c.1350. Artistic style drops off gradually throughout the period and, as will be seen, the artwork on the more complicated depictions becomes blurred. The diameter falls further, with most pieces measuring somewhere in the range 14-15½mm.. Metal quality is maintained at first, but after a while drops; less tin content in the pewter alloy, more lead.



BNJ53 reckons that some of the earliest tokens in pure lead, rather than pewter, are from about this period and of similar size and design; however, almost all the ones it lists are, like the pewter, of London provenance. Their weight, although variable, is still quite light; 1gm or so on average, rarely more than 1½gm. Fig.19 is an example.



Cut halves and quarters are not normal, but have been seen. One such example, possibly type F rather than type D, appears at Fig.20. It does at least confirm that the pieces were monetary, since one would hardly bother to quarter a pass.

Book: “The History of Signboards”

Another book has recently come to my attention, of which I was not previously aware, and which may be of interest to those endeavouring to interpret token depictions in terms of business signs. “The History of Signboards from the Earliest Times”, by Jacob Larwood and John Camden Hotten, was originally published in 1866 with various reprints since. My copy is dated 1898.

Design apart, there is some interesting coverage of subjects such as:

- ⇒ the implementation of the 1760s Act requiring all signs for businesses other than pubs and inns to be fixed to the wall rather than hung, and the history leading up to it.
- ⇒ comparable practice on the Continent.
- ⇒ the introduction of street numbers.

The example on the right is a modern pub sign from Midhurst, Sussex.



I identifying Communion Tokens using Fasti

Previously unseen pieces continue to turn up in the communion token {CT} series, from time to time, just like they do with crude lead and with the 17th cent main series commercial tokens. As with the other series, the limitations of the depicted information often leave some ambiguities to be resolved.

One useful source for identifying communion tokens {CTs}, but perhaps little known amongst detectorists, is *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*. This is the ecclesiastical equivalent of a school or university alumni book, but instead of listing pupils covers all former ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, by whom the majority of CTs were issued. The arrangement is chronological within parish within presbytery {area jurisdiction}, and is dealt with over the course of several volumes each covering different areas of the country. If a minister has several posts over the course of a career, he will turn up in several different places.

Early lead & pewter CTs have very little on them, often only one, two or three initials, and one first has to work out whether they represent the parish, the minister's name, or both. The letters M and K are ambiguous in that they may stand for Minister or Kirk respectively, but in most cases it is possible to work it out from the context.

CTs have the advantage that they rarely travel very far from home, causing most lost specimens to be found in the parish of issue; indeed, findspots in the immediate vicinity of church buildings are most common, thereby eliminating much of the doubt. Specimens with parish letters can often be dealt with by local knowledge, reinforced if necessary by the use of a map; if the parish letter on the token does not correspond with that of the findspot, one starts looking around the immediate locality for a parish which does.

It is the pieces with minister's initials only on that can be more awkward, and here it is that *Fasti* can sometimes come in to its own; as also in cases where there are both parish and minister's initials, but the guess as to the former is doubtful, and some further evidence is necessary to corroborate it.

GARIOCH]	KEITHHALL	163
<p>her children was granted £100 sterling, on 5th July 1663 by Parliament, out of vacant stipends.—[<i>Acts of Parl.</i>, vii., 454; <i>Scot. Notes and Queries</i>, vii., 53.]</p>	<p>GEORGE SKENE KEITH, M.A.; pres. 1778 by Commissioners for George, Earl Marischal, 9th May 1776; ord. 14th May 1778; D.D. (Marischal College, May 1803); trans. to Tulliallan 18th July 1822 (<i>cf.</i> Vol. IV., 365). Had other issue—Helen, born 13th Jan. 1785, died 10th June 1798; Ann, born 22nd April 1786, died 3rd May 1787; Jean, born 2nd Dec. 1789, died 22nd Aug. 1801; George Skene, born 27th March 1794, died 11th Sept. 1815.—[<i>Aberdeen Journal Notes and Queries</i>, iv., 74.]</p>	
<p>SAMUEL WALKER, M.A., above 1662 mentioned.</p>	<p>JOHN KEITH, born 7th May 1797, son of preceding; educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen; M.A. (2nd April 1814); licen. by Presb. of Garioch 9th April 1818; pres. by Anthony Adrian, Earl of Kintore; ord. (assistant and successor) 3rd</p>	
<p>GEORGE KEITH, M.A.; adm. about 1675 1675; trans. to Old Deer in 1683.</p>		
<p>WILLIAM KEITH, grand-nephew of 1683 preceding; educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen; ord. between 5th Aug. and 16th Sept. 1683; died before 5th May 1709. He marr. and had issue—John; Margaret (marr. Patrick Anderson in Moss-side of Kingswells); Elizabeth; Janet, died before 19th Dec. 1723; Jean.—[<i>Aberdeen Tests.; Aberdeenshire Poll-Book</i>, i., 339.]</p>		

Fig.1 above shows the upper half of a typical Fasti page, chosen to illustrate the origins of the square piece shown at Fig.2. The latter has an unusual design, with a Latin inscription round the edge, which does not appear to occur in Burzinski {the standard reference work} other than on a known piece of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, which has different details inside the box: “Mr/RL/1825”, instead of “M/WK/1704”. Using our one clue, that the design might be local to the Inverurie area, we look up the Fasti reference for that parish and find on Vol.6, page 161 that the incumbent was William Murray, minister from 1679-1717. In other words, not that parish specifically.



Time for plan B; get out the map, find out what parishes are alongside, and/or see who was in post in the other parishes of the presbytery; and adjacent presbyteries, if your parish is on the edge of one. If you have it, use of Peter Hall's index of ministers {see LTT bibliography} might assist. As it happens, just turning the page over suffices in this case; Keithhall is the adjacent parish to Inverurie, and only one mile to the south-east. The identity of WK is revealed to be William Keith.

The Keiths seem to have had rather a hold over Keithhall parish, it would seem, with four of the five ministers on show being thus named; although if I had included the rest of the page, it would have shown that there was a break from them for half a century in between. Also worth noting is that, if you happen to be related to a Scottish minister, there is some fairly useful genealogical information which, at this date, might take some searching out otherwise.

Figs.3-5 show three CTs for three consecutive ministers of Panbride, Angus. All are uniface, but it is worth noticing in passing how all three could very easily pass for commercial tokens south of the border. Fig.6 is thought to be a piece of Patrick Strachan, who served at Carmyle from 1659-1665 and then at St.Vigeans from 1665-1693, but there is nothing on it to say at which church it was used. Maybe they were his personal pieces and he took the whole batch from one church to the other when he moved.



MINISTERS OF PANBRIDE
 RR = Robert Ramsay, 1589-1593
 AR = Andrew Drummond, 1593-1635
 AG = Arthur Grainger, 1636-1675

The main Presbyterian Fasti are online as .pdfs, and the easiest way to use them is to download them. Fasti and annals exists for the other Scottish denominations but are not so readily available; for details, see Apps. B and C of the LTT bibliography.