

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Please note that the old david@powell8041.freewe.co.uk address advertised on earlier versions of LTT is no longer active.

Some Early Scottish Bakers' Farthings



To start with this month, a trio of the Scottish “bakers’ farthings”; as the series are generally known; these are the series discussed in LTT_125-129, which contained mainly line drawings, so I thought it would be good to show some as they look in the flesh. These specimens date from c.1805-15; by that time other trades had joined the ranks of the issuers, and the design has started to evolve towards that employed by the earliest of what are now often known as the “unofficial” copper and brass farthings. Dalton and Hamer’s standard work on 18th cent tokens shows some of the earlier ones current in Edinburgh c.1770-80, and they are cruder, more like what might normally appear in these pages. Quite a number of them have large single letters on the back, most frequently “F” for farthing. The origin of Fig.4 is unknown; the style and the “F” fit the early Edinburgh series nicely, but the “2” does not; issuers’ initials predominated. So, two farthings, two loaves, or a different meaning for the “F” altogether?



Readers’ Correspondence

Some fine contributions this month, so thank you all. First of all, Figs.1-3 from Simon Holloway, from the Ludlow area, who correctly points out that the western side of England and Wales are under-represented in lead token finds, and sends in pictures of three pieces found in a field between Stokesay and Onibury, in Shropshire, near the Welsh border. I can’t do anything about which region chose to issue how many tokens, I am afraid, but I will be pleased to redress the balance where possible! Having lived together for so many years, this trio have a pleasantly even patination.



Simon also asks whether the very common six-petal design, type 1 in my classification system, could derive from what are known as apotropaic or witches marks, i.e. ritualistic protection symbols to protect against evil, used in an earlier age which was much more superstitious than ours. I am aware that

the symbol often appears on buildings and furniture, as well as on other artefacts, and my thanks to Simon for pointing out an excellent introductory article on the subject at [“https://historicingland.org.uk/whats-new/features/discovering-witches-marks/what-are-witches-marks/”](https://historicingland.org.uk/whats-new/features/discovering-witches-marks/what-are-witches-marks/).

I think that the suggestion could well be correct, although how many of the rustic local issuers would still have been aware of those origins by the 16th/17th/18th cents I am unsure. Perhaps some, and if the six petal symbol had come to be regarded as a good sign, as was clearly the case, then that would help it gain favour for selection when a token design was needed. There is also a possibility that the six-petal might have been separately selected because it was easy to construct {memories of early geometry lessons in the first year of secondary school, learning to draw with compasses and ruler}; however, I am sure that favourable folklore would often have reinforced the choice as well. Fig.5 shows a typical example, Fig.4 another which looks uncharacteristically modern.



Another piece for which we have an accurate findspot provenance is Jase Allen's Fig.6, found in a field near Tamworth, Staffs. Anchor tokens showing the chain attachment appear with moderate frequency but I am not sure I have seen one before where the shaft of the anchor has actually been broken to accommodate it. As Jase observed, the area could not be much further from the sea, but then he further enlightened me: “The area has the river Anker passing through it and has turned up many navy related items. So far I've had an anchor pendant, navy buttons and a belt buckle with a scratched galleon on it. Also boys brigade items showing the anchor in the badge.” So, we live and learn; I'd never heard of the river Anker, and if anyone finds any more anchor tokens in that vicinity we would be delighted to hear.

The anchor is a frequent pub sign, of course, but usually in a more obviously maritime location. This is another example of there often being two or more, sometimes several, unrelated reasons, for a choice of token depiction, and a gentle reminder not to jump to too many early conclusions.

Moving to some smaller pieces for our next couple of items, this pleasing quartet of pictures from Charlie Dixon {fig.7} showing the two sides of one piece at two different angles. It is surprising how often it is worth turning a token round like this. The piece came from the Thames and is only 12mm across, hence I have magnified it for obvious reasons. The size and style dates it to about mid-16th cent, and the double-barred cross on the obverse appears to suggest an ecclesiastic issue; however, it feels a little after the late 1530s Reformation date after which many such issues terminated. Any clues from the reverse, one then has to ask? If one can work out what it is, of course.



Charlie suggests a teardrop, which feels rather unlikely, although I suppose it could have something to do with penance. A mis-shaped “O” for oil, or a horseshoe, are other possibilities, although not significantly better. BNJ54 {1984} page 153 offers more of a clue, illustrating another double-barred cross in a slightly different setting {<https://www.britnumsoc.org/publicns/bnj-articles-by-year>}. The associated text on pages 115-116 suggests that pieces of this type are Elizabethan communion tokens, not of the Scottish type but more “méreau de presence”, indicating attendance at a service. The suggestion elsewhere is that these were probably concerned more with church finance than discipline. I have, however, seen a 13mm piece with a similar cross to Charlie's but with a dog on the reverse, which seems a rather less churchy choice of subject matter.



Another Thames find in need of magnification, partly because of its size but partly because of an uncertain reverse, is Giovanni Forlino's Fig.8. It dates very obviously from the early-mid 17th cent, but the object on the second side, no doubt a shop sign, is somewhere between a trident-cum-lis, a shrub

and a candlestick, all with a few prickly protrusions on the side. Anybody who cares to guess, please write in. Also worth noting in passing are:

- ⇒ The presence of fine beading round the edge, this being quite an early example.
- ⇒ The forename initial K, which according to Williamson was quite rare in the 17th cent. Katharine is statistically the most likely probability, despite the fact that only about 4-5% of token issuers were reckoned to be female.



Another piece from Giovanni is Fig.9, this time 18th cent in origin and exuding apparent symbolism. Arriving only very shortly after Richard Wingett's supposedly masonic piece shown in LTT's last edition {bottom of page 3}, I wondered whether this one had similar origins, but Richard, who kindly gave me his views on it, thinks probably not. There are a number of pieces of this date and size which show a variety of letters and pictures in their four quarters {see the back page of LTT_83 for more}, but this group of objects are amongst the most diverse selections I have seen on one. They must have meaning, so if anyone can work out what it is, please let us know!

Anna Borzello's rather curious and very pewter little piece {Fig.10} is probably 17th cent or early 18th, although I'm guessing at the diameter; once again I have magnified it to persuade it to reveal its mysteries. The reverse hints at a cartwheel with bent spokes, or a starfish; most probably it is intended to be a sun in splendour, a not uncommon shop or inn sign. What however, of the obverse? One would expect initials, but it appears to depict two people sitting, pleading, looking up to the right. Am I being over-imaginative, or is that just a rather crudely rendered "LK"?

We are all very used to finding type 12 quartered geometrics, especially those with a nest of inverted chevrons in as per Fig.11, but congratulations to Ashley van Quailskin for finding a thirded geometric along similar lines; i.e. with the segments divided into three rather than four, and the chevrons having a 120 degree angle rather than 90. I haven't seen that before; very simple, but pleasant to see a variant on the usual. Basic geometric designs are usually divided into twos and fours, not threes. I guess that with the outer chevrons worn or missing on two of the three angles, as shown, one might conceivably argue that it is meant to be a tree; but picture it at another angle and fail to turn it round, and possibly one would not even think of it.

Somewhat along the same lines, dividing the field into three, is Ash Davison's Fig.13; a typical mid-18c hybrid playing on a combination of the standard token stock types, but one I haven't seen before. Harking back to the Shropshire pieces on the first page, one can see not six petals but three, with, between them, not another petal but the inverted arc of a circle. For more examples of these compounds and combinations of simple designs, see LTT_86.



Finally, this month, a piece which has been known to the British Numismatic Journal for 116 years but, as far as I am aware, has been rarely seen. Caldecott & Yates, writing in BNJ4 in 1907, described it as follows:

- ⇒ 6. Obverse.—RN with King's bust (? James I.) half length with sceptre in right hand between.
- ⇒ Reverse.—IN ST. | MARTINS | LANE in three lines.



Much of the material from this article was reproduced by Mitchiner & Skinner in their much quoted article in BNJ54, but in most cases, including this one, they neither knew the weight or had one to illustrate. Until, that is, Jack Jeffries found this one on the Thames foreshore recently; Fig.14, magnified, is BNJ54, piece S.216.

A Winetavern Token found in Lincolnshire

My thanks to Michael O’Bee for sending in the two specimens shown, both found in Appleby, Lincs, just outside Scunthorpe. The first is a fairly standard BNJ53 type D, commonly known as a winetavern token, not because that was necessarily their use, but because a major hoard of such pieces was recovered from a street of that name in Dublin. In fact, nearly every known piece in the series seems to come from central London, specifically London Wall, or Winetavern Street, Dublin; so, one so far afield from either of those locations is, to say the least, interesting.


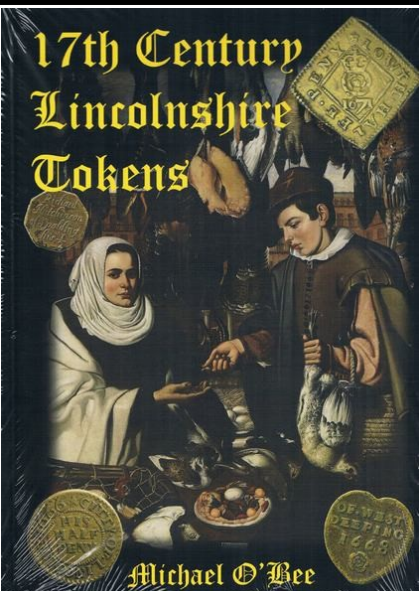
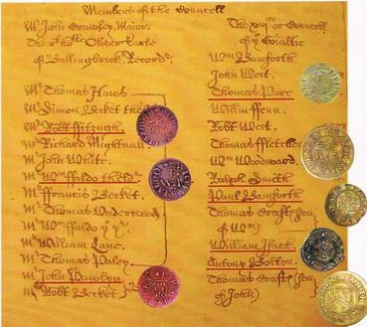
The date for such pieces is late 13th cent, or very early 14th. The second is rather more enigmatic; it looks fairly early, but it is lead rather than pewter, and its armorial shield savours more of something like BNJ54 type L, which is mid-15th cent; except that the size of tokens tends to decrease towards 1500, rather than increase, so that this one again bucks the trend. Its lion, if that is what it is meant to be, is very finely executed; the shield reasonably so, but not as well as a typical London-produced type L.

Michael is one of a number of members of the Token Corresponding Society {TCS} who have produced books on the 17th cent tokens of their own counties in recent years; so, if any of those counties are yours, a look at them might be worth a go.

A mention of the TCS, of which I am a member, whilst we are on the subject. We are an informal amateur group of about 150 people, scattered around the country {plus a few abroad}, who are interested in a variety of tokens and like to do their own research. Lead tokens are just one of the many categories of material covered. The “C” is for “Corresponding”; we are a collaborative society, with members whose interests cross over into each others’ specialists areas, enabling us to help each other out. Detecting and collecting may be about the thrill of finding a piece; research is the thrill of finding out about it, but both very rewarding in their own way. The highlight of the TCS year is when about 100 of us get together for annual Congress in the autumn for a weekend of talks and sharing of ideas.

This newsletter, LTT, is now accommodated on the TCS website {<https://thetokensociety.org.uk/>}, as will other material in time also be, as a way of protecting against the loss of authors and webmasters to the vagaries of life. Do please have a browse around the rest of the site, which will grow in time. Apart from articles, all but the most recent quarterly bulletins are there, under “Publications”, and have a wealth of detail which can be searched via the bulletin index on the same page. Finally, if you ever fancy joining us, the coordinator {bulletin editor} is at tokencorrespondingsociety@gmail.com !



<p>SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TRADING TOKENS OF SURREY AND SOUTHWARK</p>  <p>Tim Everson GALATA</p>	<p>17th Century Lincolnshire Tokens</p>  <p>Michael O'Bea</p>	<p>BEDFORDSHIRE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TOKENS</p>  <p>John Gaunt Edited and Expanded by Gary Oddie GALATA</p>
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A Load of Old Rubbish {and the tokens associated with it}

The token on the right {Fig.1}, a Brussels city piece, was issued by the “Service de la Ferme des Boues”, which may be translated as the city refuse department, and has a value of “Un Tombereau de Boues”, or a cart load of muck, specifically sludge. I have been told, without supporting evidence, that it dates from c.1871, which is perfectly feasible, as octagonal brass tokens were regularly in use in French-speaking locations during the mid-19th cent. In recent issues we have discussed token usage in connection with a variety of civic services, such as water distribution and fire prevention, and here perhaps is another. Refuse disposal has been needed in all ages, by all members of society, in village, town or city. No doubt those who carted it or processed it required payment for their services, and quite possibly with tokens per load handled as per the farm pickers. A city like Brussels might use brass, but an 18th cent rural village....? Lead, I would think, if anything. Maybe even in some of the towns and cities as well.



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The only token I have so far come across which is almost certainly a refuse disposal token, or pass, is Fig.2 {magnified 3:2}; in copper, and a little under farthing size, the piece of the Whitehaven Scavenger. Discussed at length in Michael Finlay’s excellent book on the mining tokens of West Cumberland, it was long thought of as just being a ticket for permission to scavenge the local beaches for coal, and that indeed would be consistent with the way we use the word scavenger now; however, Michael reveals that the role of “Scavenger” in Whitehaven was far from that of being an 18th cent mudlark, and was in fact an official post for which an Act of Parliament was created as far back as 1708. The three paragraphs in Michael’s description which most sum up the need for such an official, his role and his relationship with the general public are as follows:

“The Trustees having taken into consideration the extreme distress of the streets, and the great mischief that is occasioned by its washing into the Harbour and the Clause in the Act Of Parliament being read, empowering 15 Trustees with the Consent of Sir James Lowther, to employ a Scavenger to carry away the Dirt of the said streets to such places as Sir James Lowther shall appoint for the laying of the same

Second. That no inhabitant shall throw, or lay any Ashes, Dirt or Dung or other Filth in the Streets, but shall keep the same in their respective Houses or Yards, in Tubs or Baskets, or otherwise as they can most conveniently, and that, (when the Scavenger goes thro’ the Streets) they shall cause the same to be put into his Coup, at their own Expense, upon the like pain of one shilling for every default



Fifth. That in the Marketplace, the space before the Fronts their (sic) to the Kennel² shall be under the care of the respective Inhabitants, but that the rest of the Marketplace, as also half the breadth of Lowther Street, Queen Street and Church Street adjoining the old Churchyard, and half the breadth of Scotch Street, before the front of the New Churchyard as also the like breadth of the streets before the Meeting Houses, shall be swept Clean by the Scavenger.



So far so good {except if you happen to be in the post}; our friend the Scavenger seems to be in charge of both rubbish collection and street sweeping for an entire town; which, as there appears to be only one of him, seems rather a thankless and unpleasant task. Michael hints that, not surprisingly, it was difficult to recruit and retain personnel willing to undertake the role. However, the need was not unique to Whitehaven, so I decided to consult some early newspapers to see if this concept of the Scavenger was known elsewhere. Indeed, he was, and quite a common species too!

Herewith a number of extracts from provincial newspapers, often reporting wider news than that affecting their home towns. References: CM = Caledonian Mercury, DM = Derby Mercury, IJ = Ipswich Journal, NC = Newcastle Courant, SM = Stamford Mercury.

NOTE: All five of these titles were using New Style dating, even before 1752, so the extract dates below may be interpreted in the modern manner.

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Adverts for the post of Scavenger appear frequently in the Newcastle Courant during the 1740s, sometimes with a hint that the post might have been contracted annually from Michaelmas to Michaelmas. The one below is typical {NC, 26 Feb 1743}.

To be Lett,
Against MAY-DAY next,

By the CORPORATION of NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,
THE Dwelling House, call'd HALF-WAY HOUSE,
in the Parish of Walls End, in the County of Northumberland,
late in the Possession of Mr Christopher Barrow, deceas'd, pleasantly
situated, with the Gardens planted with great Variety of Fruit Trees
of the best Kind, Stables, Brew-house, and other Conveniences there-
with enjoy'd, and either with or without a Cow's Grass. Any Per-
son or Persons aminded to take the same, are desired to deliver Pro-
posals in Writing at the Town Clerk's Office. Also to be lett, by
the Corporation, against Lady-day next, together, or in Quarters,
or Divisions, as the same is now divided, the Place or Employment
of Scavenger of the said Town, and the conveying of all Dirt and
Rubbish. Proposals in Writing for taking the same to be deliver'd
as above, on or before the 18th of March inst.

It would appear that in this country the role of Scavenger was generally financed at the local authority's expense, but in the only foreign practice in our sample {DM, 6 Jan 1743}, Paris proposed to implement a tax especially for the purpose:

There has lately been some Mistakes made in respect to the Duty upon Houses lately imposed on the City of Paris. The Fact stands thus; the Court had hitherto paid the Scavenger and the Contractors for lighting the Streets, but the new Edict declares that the present Situation of Affairs will not permit his Majesty to be any longer at that Expence, and therefore imposes a Tax of 450,000 Livres annually, in order to defray it.

It would appear normal that a local authority put the job out to tender, but other large organisations seem to have employed their own internal scavengers, as witness this example {DM, 8 July 1748} when some were made redundant.

Last Wednesday near 200 Scavengers, Rope-makers, Labourers, Boatwains Labourers, and Joiners, were discharged out of the Dock-Yard at Portsmouth.

The posts of dustman and roadsweeper are generally thought of as being very humble roles, and at the lowest level of everyday operation they undoubtedly were, as is hinted by some of the examples later; however, contrary to what was suggested by the Whitehaven account above, it would appear that scavenging activities were often sizeable operations headed by some fairly senior staff. In one flood in Dublin over the New Year of 1725/26, the city's Scavenging Dept. lost 37 horses which were drowned when their stable flooded {IJ, 15 Jan 1726}.

We have this Day an Account from Dublin, that on the 31st past and 1st Instant they had such excessive Rains that many Streets in that City were over Flowed, and the Water rose in some Houses 9 or 10 Foot; that many Horses were drowned in the Stable, and abundance which were Grazing by the River were carry'd away by the Torrent and lost, as were also many Cowes and Cattle. 'Tis added, that 37 Horses in the City Stable belonging to the Scavengers were all drowned; and at Cork 2 or 300 Souls perished, and vast quantities of Merchandizes were destroy'd in the Warehouses and Cellars there, as well as at Dublin.

One man who bore the title Scavenger, amongst many others, was one John Mist, Esq. of Hillingdon, now in outer NW London suburbia but then in rural countryside, whose death was reported in DM, 21 April 1737. There were probably not too many Scavengers who had fifty grand and a country seat, and it is difficult to reconcile the same term being used for a man in his position as for a common roadsweeper:

Last Saturday Morning died John Mist, Esq; much lamented, at his Seat near Hillingdon, reputed to die worth 50,000 l. He enjoyed the following Places, viz. Paviour to the Royal Palaces, Paviour to the Office of Works, Slater, Cartaker, Thatcher, Scavenger, Foundation-Digger, &c. He was a great Undertaker, and a Slave to Business: He finish'd the great Drain in Pall-Mall, and since the new Road in Hyde-Park.

In NC, 11 Oct 1740, an advert appeared in which a Newcastle bookseller offered a legal guide to the roles of various parish officers. Most of the others are well-known posts of the time to which, each year, some unfortunate {but usually fairly senior} member of the local community was rostered from time to time and had

to undertake in addition to his normal employment. It is interesting to see the much lesser-known role of Scavenger featuring on the list.

This Day is Published,

Neatly printed in **ONE VOLUME, TWELVES,**
And sold by **M. BRYSON, Bookseller, in Newcastle,**

A COMPENDIOUS LIBRARY of the **LAW,**
necessary for Persons of all **DEGREES and PROFESSIONS.**
In **TWO PARTS,**

PART I. Containing,

- I. The Laws relating to Parish-Officers, viz. Church-Wardens, Overseers of the Poor, Constables, Scavengers, Surveyors of the Highways, &c.
- II. The Laws relating to the Game.
- III. The Laws relating to Landlords, Tenants, &c.
- IV. Precedents for Vestry-Clerks, Justices Clerks, &c.
- V. A Summary of the Laws in Force against idle and disorderly Persons, Rogues, Vagrants, &c.

The duties of the Scavenger sometimes became more onerous during times of emergency, as witness this example from Edinburgh and Leith {CM, 24.1.1740} during one of the severest British winters on record:

EDINBURGH, Jan. 24.

The Magistrates of this City have sent seasonable Supplies to the Prisoners in several Jails, Correction-house, &c.

The great Societies here have generously contributed for Relief of the Poor at this Time of Affliction. Nor could it be expected that the ever extensive Benevolence of the Free and Accepted Masons should *now* been confin'd to their own Poor; particularly, the Lodge of Drummond-Kilwinning have extended a very liberal Hand. Collections have been made at every Door whatsoever in the Town of Leith, and 30 l. Sterl. of what's already collected has been divided among the Necessitous. We had a gentle Thaw last Tuesday Forenoon, which promised gradually to carry off the Snow, but at Night there fell a great deal more Snow, and a hard Frost followed on it, which continues. The Scavengers are set to work to cleaning the Streets of the vast large Heaps of Ice, &c. and as those who drive Carts thither with Coals draw a round Price therefore, they have been prevailed upon to load outward a Proportion of our Ice by way of Drawback.

Being a rank-and-file Scavenger on the streets of Britain's largest cities could have its dangers, as witness these two London examples {DM, 1 Jan 1735 and IJ, 5 March 1726 respectively}:

Yesterday as a Scavenger's Cart stood in Tower street, the Driver, who was bringing a Basket of Dirt to throw into it, called out to a Drayman who was driving a great Pace towards him, to take Care he did not kill him; but the other drove on, and crushed the poor Fellow in such a Manner that he died immediately. This was seen by several People, and yet the Drayman was suffered to drive clear off.

Last Tuesday a sad Accident happen'd at the Dughill or Layfall, over-against Holywell Lane End, near Shoreditch, a large Hole, like a Well, had been dug in the Middle of the Dughill to the solid Earth, upon the Account of felling it, a Scavenger's Man driving his Cart with four Horses a little to near the Brink of the Hole, the Fore-Horse fell in and drew the other three with the Cart after it into the Hole, by which, three of them were killed.

The local authorities were not always satisfied with either the Scavengers or the general public in respect of their waste-disposal habits {so, what's new?}, and occasionally resorted to exhortations such as this, relating to London, from SM, 10 Jan 1740. This comes from the same very severe winter as previously discussed, so probably it was intended as a reminder of what extra was necessary under the unusual conditions.

The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor has issued his Precept to the several Aldermen of this City, to desire them to cause their Beadles to give Notice to the several Inhabitants of their respective Wards, to cleanse the Streets before their respective Houses; and likewise to cause the Scavengers of the said Wards to carry away the Snow, Ice, Dirt, and Soil, that the Streets may be free and clear for the Passage of his Majesty's Subjects, otherwise they will be prosecuted as the Law directs.

Public perception of the Scavengers was not always good. This extract from SM, 17 Feb 1737 suggests that sometimes they were deficient in their duties and needed to be bribed:

"Tuesday the Inhabitants of the Borough of Southwark presented a Petition to the Hon. Commons, for the better paving and cleaning the Streets, so that they now hope it will not be in the Power of dirty Fellows, call'd Scavengers, to force their Money from them, and at the same Time oblige them to plunge thro' the Dirt up to their Knees to visit their Neighbours."

...whilst this, from IJ, 14 Mar 1741, suggests that Scavengers were regarded, like window cleaners today, as being in a profession more congenial to crime than most:

On Saturday was committed to the Gatehouse, by Sir Edward Hill, one George Sreet, for being concern'd with three others in stealing a Pair of Silver Snuffers, and other Things of Value, from out of the House of Mrs. Hitch, in Sackville-street, Piccadilly. There is a Set of those Rogues who go about under Pretence of being the Dustmen employ'd by the Scavengers; and under that Colour get into Gentlemen's Kitchens, and by their Hands upon what they can find in the Way, which is the above-mentioned Case; it is therefore to be wish'd that Servants, as well for their own Characters, as their Masters and Mistresses Interest, would be guarded against such Villains.