

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@powell8041.freewe.co.uk](mailto:david@powell8041.freewe.co.uk). Please note that the old [LJEditor@aol.com](mailto:LJEditor@aol.com) address advertised on some earlier versions of LJT is no longer active.

## Picture Gallery



More London pewter this month; as on some previous occasions, I have magnified them by a factor of 1.5 for visibility. Thanks to Doug Henty for the first two. The provenance of Fig.1 is unknown, but I would guess London; it is 14mm, near square, and weighs 4.56gm.

This is about three times what a token of the same size would weigh, and we decided that it was probably some sort of commercial trade weight.



Fig.2 is an early 17<sup>th</sup> cent London token of fairly typical style, presumably originally intended as a farthing but adapted as a pendant, found at the Vintry {Thames foreshore} near Queenhithe. Tokens of various series are often damaged to invalidate them at the end of their active life, but I don't think I have seen one mutilated in this manner before. The reverse design is a wheatsheaf, which is quite a common shop sign of the period. The late 16<sup>th</sup> cent pieces tend to be 11-13mm and have single initials; the early 17<sup>th</sup> tend to be 13-15mm, and have double initials or triads. The latter, being slightly larger, tend to have a little ornamentation {pellets, stars, annulets and the like}; the small pieces rarely carry any. By the Commonwealth period, 15-17mm is more par for the course. Hence my conjectured date.

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Following on from our June/July articles on BNJ54 type M, here-with another batch of four {Figs.3-6}, plus a very similar one which you have seen before for comparison {Fig.7, previously Fig.10 on page 5 of the July issue}. They are, however, rather varied in style, and show different stages of the evolutionary process.

Fig.3 is a genuine mainstream type M, with typical clockwise-shaded grenetis and expanded cross with ringed pellets; depicting a tall jug, this dates from c.1425-90. Possibly the expanded cross indicates an earlier date, and a plain cross a later one, within that range. Figs.4-6 are type M derivatives, however, increasingly diverging from the typical model. Fig.4 is not too far off; the crossed keys, the plain cross bare pellets and the grenetis on each side are all type M features. Yet the rot is setting in. The shading is half-hearted and indistinct, and only truly clockwise on one side; a true type M would certainly allow anti-clockwise, but not radial as in Fig.4a. Note also the keys; Fig.7, a true type M, shows the protrusions outwards; in Fig.4, one of them points inwards. Finally, notice the nibble, probably an invalidation mark.



Fig.5 goes a step further, losing the fineness of execution which Fig.4 manages to preserve. Such grenetis shading as survives appears to be radial, and the bell {a common type M design} is so poorly drawn that it could at first glance be mistaken for an A. The marks to the side of the bell are copied from the original type M and may possibly be letters; even on a good early specimen, they are difficult to decipher. The cross, like Fig.4, is plain. Note also the straight edge on this piece, probably indicating that the piece was cut from too near the edge of a piece of metal plate.

Fig.6 takes the evolution process a bit further. On a smaller flan, barely 10mm, one side at least retains its links with type M quite well; however, the other abandons the style and shows a foretaste of what is to follow; no rim, no shading, just a single design. In this case a rather unusual one; a clear full-length standing figure of an archer, firing his bow to the left. Again, there is an invalidation clipping.

It is presumed that these transitional pieces take us increasingly through the period 1490-1540, at about which point a new generation of London pewter emerges. We shall be discussing the latter shortly, as the next part of our ongoing examination of English lead token development.

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In LTT\_48 {March 2009} I made mention of Spangles for the first time within these pages; BNJ53 type A, the earliest known London pewter pieces c.1250-70, usually minute, with two holes enabling them to be sewn on to cloth. I have two more to show this month, at 19x14mm and 17x13mm considerably larger than the 13x10mm and 12x8mm shown previously. This is as large as they come, apparently; not that any of them are common, but the smaller pieces are more usual.

Any one who remembers Goldilocks from their childhood may, on seeing Figs.8-10, be forgiven for thinking that they are looking at daddy, mummy and baby spangle. I have lightened them for easy viewing. Fig.8 depicts what I irreverently describe as a Pascal Donkey. Animals standing in front of, or speared by, a large upright cross are usually sheep or horses; I suspect that the latter is intended, but to my mind it looks more like a donkey. Fig.9 is a lion, with raised forepaw. Fig.10, reproduced from the March article for comparison shows another animal, possibly again a lion; with only an 8mm circle to live in, he looks rather cramped. From the style, I expect that all three are by the same engraver.



### *Oh Deer..... or is it No Deer?*

What would be your first conjecture as to the use of Fig.11? a piece connected with a gentry estate, perhaps; they had deer. But what would they be used for; who would do what with their seven deer? Pieces with the inscriptions "New Deer" and "OD" {for Old Deer} were also



issued; Fig.12 shows an example, albeit more modern and in white metal, dated 1840 on the rear.

Let me now partly enlighten you by revealing that both pieces are Scottish communion tokens. So, can I turn up at the relevant parish on a Sunday morning and insist that my seven deer be granted entry to morning service, or can I demand my right to a goodly supply of venison? Young venison, perhaps, if I have one of the New Deer tokens, whereas perhaps an OD would only entitle me to venison which was past its sell-by date. With just "Deer" on its own, I probably have to take pot luck.

Alternatively, perhaps such CTs were used in a more traditional manner, entitling the holder to participate in the Eucharist. In which case, how young did a lady have to be to pass as a New Deer as opposed to an Old Deer, and what tokens did the men use?

To reveal the rest of the story: New Deer and Old Deer are parishes in Aberdeenshire. There are some interesting names amongst Scotland's 900 or so ancient parishes; after the deer, I am now on the lookout for a CT from the Dumfriesshire parish of Ewes.....

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## Forgeais' Guild Pieces, part 6



The Rotisseurs, or roasters, return to the pictorial format and the large flan; for some reason, cooks seem to have needed different guilds according to what they cooked. St.Laurent and the Virgin Mary have a side each, accompanied in the first cases by a variety of tools and a number of animals ready spitted for the fire. On the oldest piece {Fig.1}, the Virgin Mary looks distinctly masculine, as if she ought to be the baby's grandfather, and appears to have dressed the baby Jesus in a cloth cap. This is reckoned to be 15th cent, whilst Fig.2, on which the characters look to be rather more animated, looks somewhat later; I would guess quite late 16th cent, although Forgeais still says end-15th. By 1645 {Fig.3} the Virgin Mary has ditched the baby Jesus and gone up to heaven for a bit of peace and quiet, whilst St.Laurent is being cooked medium-rare. Who the chap is doing it I have no idea. Back to the original theme in Fig.4.



The first of two pieces issued by the selliers, or saddlers {Fig.5}, shows the saint in action, hacking with a rather awkward-looking tool at a piece of leather; not often do we see them actually employed in manufacture. On the reverse he appears in rather more traditional guise, and looks as if he is holding forth to a congregation. Fig.6, 16th cent compared with Fig.5's 15th, shows him preening himself, with what looks like a mirror in one hand and a comb in the other; perhaps he has plans to relax after his labours, in the company of some tasty young nun or other. The reverse shows the product of the day's work.



The serruriers are a subset of iron-mongers devoted specifically to the trade of the locksmith. On the solitary large piece {Fig.7}, St.Eloi identifies himself by having his name inscribed around the edge. The style is obviously 15th cent, and two keys, with a zigzag grenetis around,



two pieces {Figs.8,9} are typical small grenetis types, depicting a key or two on one side and cross & pellets on the reverse. As with previous series with such reverses, I am not disposed to read anything in to the particular shape of the crosses, which are various; however, I could be wrong!

Sifflet was one of the words I had trouble with; I think it is a whistle. Was there market enough for whistles that you needed a whole guild of people to market them? St.Claude presides over the whistle-merchants {Fig.10}, in fairly conventional manner on the obverse; whilst on the other side a horizontal band with his name on is augmented by a fan above and two whistles below. At first glance the fan looks like a back view of a young lady with her elbows up and her hair flying, whilst the whistles form her legs. Whether such was intended I am uncertain. Forgeais thinks 16th cent.

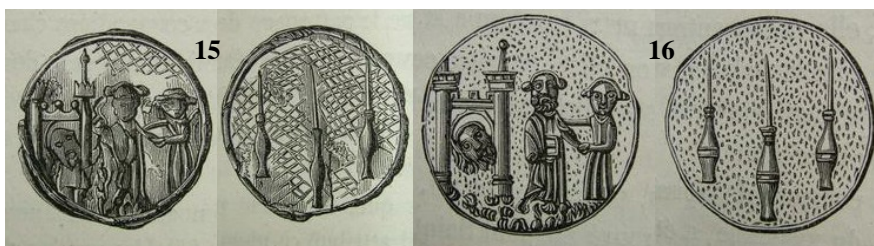


The souffletiers or cheesemongers, from their solitary piece {Fig.11}, were another group to go for the small-flan grenetis option. The obverse is believed to be one of their wares, with the all-too-familiar C+P on the reverse. C+P; numismatic version of the G+T. Cross and pellets, if you haven't got it.



The tailleurs de robes naturally chose the large flan {Figs.12,13}, having rather more interesting things to advertise than a cheese; but what else you can be a tailor of, other than clothes, I am not quite sure. The first has a 15th cent date round the edge, using the hybrid formula, “L’an mil CCCC etc” which has been seen on a number of other pieces, whilst the second has the equally familiar inscription “To the...”, in this case, tailleurs de robes. Also 15th cent is a small flan piece, Fig.14, unusually for this size seen without grenetis.. All three show the scissors so vital for the business, whilst on the first two the initial impression is that the saint is helping a customer kit out; however, closer inspection shows that more serious subject matter is depicted.

The two pieces of the tapissiers, or upholsterers {Figs.15,16}, are both 15th cent and again, like several of those above, opt for a reverse both appropriate and obverse; in this case, the needle. The obverse subject matter is more obscure; it shows what



looks like an elderly peasant couple, whose names are apparently Anne and Joachim ; the gates are apparently those of Jerusalem, and the disjoint head which is sticking through them belongs to an angel. I’ll take M.Forgeais’ word for it. However, if you want some background filler for the unused space on your token, what better for an upholsterer than a bit of old type 7 mesh?

There are separate guilds for the teinturiers de draps and the similar-sounding tondeurs de draps, for both of which Forgeais lists two 15th cent specimens {Figs.17,18}. They represent, so I understand, hanging drapers and cutting drapers respectively;



although why hangers couldn’t cut and cutters couldn’t hang, I do not know. The hangers have a fairly manly St.Maurice on a horse; he looks as if he could be on his way to fight a crusade. Fig.17 show his initials at the head of a multi-line inscription of the “To the...” type, the last word of which is “leinne”. Linen, perhaps? Fig.18’s reverse is less full; the saint’s name, accompanied by a couple of tools.

The first of the tondeur pieces, Fig.19 show a charming view of what appears to be a couple about to embrace at the entrance to a cottage; Forgeais hazards which saints they are, but is uncertain. The second piece again shows a homely scene, albeit in more abstract manner; something along the lines of the Virgin Mary sat down on a settee



with the toddler Jesus standing next to her. He had better be careful about standing on the seat like that; it is only because his mother has her hands full with things like orbs and lis that he hasn’t got a smack.

On the reverse of both these tondeur pieces, a fitting pair of cutting shears; one handed implements such as have been used to shear sheep and hedges in comparatively recent times. The lis on Fig.20 might just indicate royal patronage, whilst the “I” might be either an initial or a value. However, this is only about the second numeral we have seen in this series, so that explanation seems unlikely.

{to be continued}