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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 or david@powell8041.freemove.co.uk. Please note that the old LJFeditor@aol.com address advertised on some earlier versions of LJT is no longer active.

Anchor pieces from the Durham Coast & Tyneside

You have seen one or two of these before, but not all together, and now another one has turned up to join them. One of them is reputedly from just south of the Tyne, somewhere in the Hebburn/Pelaw area, and the others from the coastal area just below South Shields. I wasn't told any of the exact findspots, but they are all from that fairly small area, they all display anchors, they all come from one of crude lead's most northerly locations, there is a fair consistency of size, and the two which are dated are later than any other dated pieces I have seen.



If anyone out there, particularly from that part of NE Durham, either has any more or can comment from their experience, I would certainly welcome hearing from them. I would also be interested in whether there are other types in use in the same area at the same period, or whether these anchors are predominant; if the latter, it would be very unusual, for crude lead is significantly lacking in strong regional themes.

Worth observing is that the three pieces which have initials straddling the anchor all have 6-petals on the reverse, and that in at least one case, possibly two {WH or WM is ambiguous}, the anchor is upside down. The presence of the date on Fig.1 suggests that this is quite deliberate, unless the engraver was too uneducated to know what he was doing. There are certain items which one cannot visualise naturally up-ended, and surely the anchor is one of them. For the record I will invert the WH/WM piece, for comparison {Fig.6}; if it were not for its companions, one could almost imagine it showing a chap waving his arms around wildly. What would he be holding in them, I wonder? A bricklayer, perhaps, carrying a brick in either hand. Enough of the fancy; it is an anchor.



Figs.7-8 reputedly have a Yorkshire rather than a Durham provenance, although they have had two intermediary southern owners and I have not therefore had a chance to check with the original finder. Fig.7 looks very similar and has what may be a faint date {1831 or 1837} or initials flanking the shaft; Fig.8 is cruder. Both have 6-petal reverses.



I will conjecture that all the undated pieces are, probably, of a very similar age to the dated ones.

The Variety of mid-17th Century Reverses: Types 22-31

We continue here our discussion on the variety of subject matter types on 17th cent tokens, and in particular the contrast between the crude lead and main copper/brass series, as expressed in terms of Powell classification types. As previously stated, due to the small size of most pieces concerned, pictures in this sequence of articles will continue to be magnified 3:2.

Type 22 is now obsolete.



Type 23

Although buildings appear occasionally on lead, they do not usually do so until the 18th cent, by which time pieces are larger; it would be very difficult to accommodate on pieces of comparable diameter the finely detailed depictions such as those shown on the main series 17th cent tokens of Figs.1-5. The most common of them are the gatehouses and towers of town and city walls, which have a certain symbolic meaning and are commonly used on town pieces {Fig.1}; however, they might also be a natural choice for a trader who happened to reside in the immediate vicinity {Fig.2}. Churches also have a similarly symbolic role on the main series, being again regarded as significant physical landmarks of their community, and thus usually again indicate town pieces {Figs.3-4}; there are just one or two communion tokens in Williamson {Fig.6}, but probably only by accident, because he didn't know at the time that they were. They are quite scarce.

Whether W.Clough owned as grandiose a house as the one in Fig.5 is open to debate, because he omits to state on the other side where he came from. Williamson describes the piece as "a public building with a walled enclosure in front". The wall looks too insecure for defence and the whole thing too posh for a private residence, so most likely Mr.Clough was the boss man of some large public or commercial body.



Fig.7, by contrast, is a windmill; in order to get the concept of millsails across on a 16mm flan, and with an inscription round the edge as well, the main body of the building has been sacrificed in order to magnify them into predominance. On lead also, windmills are almost always reduced to sails; which, because they almost invariably go to the edge, are readily interpretable as a fancy cross.

It is virtually impossible to find buildings on 17th cent lead and one usually has to wait until later times, and larger flan sizes, before encountering any. The choices are nearly always of more humble dwellings; the occasional church maybe, on what is probably a village piece, but more usually cottages, barns and the like. Figs.8-9 are a couple of examples, probably from a little later than the period under consideration.



Type 24 is a sump for character-related obscurities, and hence irrelevant to the main series. The only Williamson pieces which might conceivably go in here are botched overstrikes where neither the original or final designs, are in good enough condition to be assigned elsewhere.

Type 25

This is one of the very few types where there is often little difference in quality between the depictions on main series pieces and those on the best of the lead; for some reason, although there are later degeneracies, the crude lead is often very well executed. There are, therefore, few major contrasts to illustrate. Roses, crowns and lions all appear with great frequency on 17th main series pieces and to a moderate extent on lead, the specific detail of the crowns particularly being many and various.



The fourth very common main series design which might arguably go in type 25 is the George & Dragon, which is one of the most complex devices to appear in either series; but because the lead examples cannot be always identified as distinct from other horsemen, I have tended to regard them as type 32 {and still do}. The design tends to be too detailed for the lead manufacturers to attempt and even taxes their main series counterparts, although Fig.10 {an early 17th cent piece already shown in June 2010} is a very commendable attempt for a lead piece. Fig.11, despite being quite a good piece, shows that the main series manufacturers also struggle.



Rather scarcer is the portcullis {Fig.12}, a known but fairly unusual business sign, which is also found on lead occasionally. It is possible that one or two of the type 7 grids are crude attempts at portcullises, but grids are disproportionately numerous, by far, compared to the more obvious portcullis depictions.

**Type 26**

Suns, moon, stars and globes are all frequent signs on main series 17th cent tokens {Figs.13-16}; illustrations of other astronomic phenomena, such as comets and rainbows, occur only exceptionally. They occur to a fair extent also on lead, and some of the whorls and short-arm cartwheels may also be intended comets, stars and suns. The crescent moon and stars, although known from the coinage of antiquity, does not seem to appear much on mid-17th cent pieces of either series; piece size suggests that in lead this is an 18th cent type, possibly associated with the eclipses of 1715 and 1724. Figs.16-17 show comparative renderings of the globe.

Stars also appear also as mintmarks on main series pieces which are not basically type 26 {the Ramage 5-pointed mullet is famous}, but as such should be regarded only as provenance marks and/or ornamentation. Other marks include pellets, diamonds, and various five or six-petalled flowers; their overall status is uncertain, as to whether they have any meaning or not, although certain patterns can be noted. Some of these marks appear similarly as ornamentation on lead, although whether they have any significance on lead is much less likely.

Type 27 is obsolete, having now been absorbed into type 21.

Type 28 is virtually obsolete, and in any case wreaths occur only exceptionally in the main series and grenetises never; hence, no further comment.

**Type 29**

Inscriptions, usually around the edge, are the norm in the 17th cent main series, and not uncommonly run to several lines when the whole of one face is assigned to them; Fig.18 shows the density of word-ing which can normally be achieved, with the two sides usually just sufficing to state the issuer's



name and address plus the value of the piece. Fig.19 shows the effect of a rare attempt to be over ambitious; even on an a tolerably good piece, the packed script is not easily readable.

Lead lacks the capacity to accommodate similar quantities of verbiage in the same amount of space, and full length edge inscriptions on lead are only exceptionally attempted; when they are, they are often quickly rendered illegible, as Fig.20, which looks to have a grenetis rather than a length of wording, readily shows. Some of you may feel that it is too poor to justify inclusion, which just serves to illustrate the point. There are one or two very fine specimens of mid-17th cent lead pieces in main series style, but by and large we have to wait for the larger flans of the 18th cent before full-word inscriptions are seen. Even then, they are fairly scarce and still only confined to the issuer's name Village and town names on crude lead; dream on, do you want luxury?



Type 30

A variety of simple isolated shapes appear as the sole subject matter on 17th cent main series tokens {Figs.21-23}, although none of them with any great frequency; the main series as a whole tends to like greater detail. The shapes encountered include pellet groups, triangles, squares, pentagrams, rectangles, lozenges and diamonds; the square being the most numerous, although none of them are common. Lead, because it cannot easily accommodate the more complex artwork of the main series, correspondingly opts for these simplicities rather more.



One occasional shape seen on lead but not the main series is the whorl, a circular array of rays which look as if they are radiating out from a rapidly-spinning body; some renderings are more like a star-fish, but without the right shape to the legs. It is probable that an astronomical body is intended, in which case it should go in type 26, but the intention is uncertain. Depictions of the sun, moon and stars can and do all occur on lead with moderate frequency, so there is no absolute reason why lead token manufacturers should resort to the whorl to render them.

Type 31

The only circular object to appear with any frequency on the main series 17th cent tokens is the ball, on account of its use as a business name; some 30-odd examples are known. There are also one or two extremely rare lozenges {ovals}, which should be interpreted as per the other shapes in type 30. The single ball is much rarer on lead, although there is no reason why it should not occur, whilst a group of balls is likely to finish up as pellets. However, more complex geometrical designs based on circles, or arcs of circles cutting the perimeter, are found occasionally on lead, albeit probably 18th rather than 17th cent lead, and are unknown to the main 17th cent series.

Key to 17th cent main series tokens:

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| 1. Dev.19, Willliam Hill of Barnstaple | 13. Northants 178, John Worthington |
| 2. Lond.1970, John Randell of Moorgate | 14. Lond.40, Walter Jones of Aldersgate |
| 3. Dev.4, Ashburton town piece | 15. Suff.24, John Riddelsdale of Boxford |
| 4. Dev.219,Moreton Hempstead town piece | 16. Lond.511, Globe Tavern, Chancery Lane |
| 5. Unknown 34, W.Clough {London} | 18. Berks.34, William Bell of Hungerford |
| 6. Unknown 66: Church token? | 19. Lond.966, Murat's Coffee House |
| 7. Surr.223, Luke Chynnall of Richmond | 21. Norf.155, John Hutton of Norwich |
| 11. Lond.2621, Thos Lacy of St.Katharines | 22. Dev.335, Thomas Whichar of Tiverton |
| 12. Som.175, Langport town piece | 23. Cambs.72, Thomas Powell of Cambridge |