

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 Please note that the old david@powell8041.freemove.co.uk address advertised on earlier versions of LTT is no longer active.

Crosses: Many Variations on a Simple Theme

Our series of comparative pictorial displays of different classification types comes this month to one of the commonest of the lot, albeit with many varieties: type 14, or crosses. They can be left plain, or the angles filled in; a ring or two can be added, as per the mediaeval penny and groat; the cross can extend to the rim, or stop short; it can be plain, or have a variety of ornamental ends. There are seemingly no end to the embellishments and evolutions, and were we to show those of the Continent, even more; yet even in this selection, which is predominantly post-mediaeval and after the heyday of the cross, there is much variety. I leave you to enjoy and compare.



{Continued overleaf}



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The “filled quarters” crosses, last discussed in LTT_83, are amongst the most interesting type 14s. This is a wider range, and I leave you to ponder what the various letters and designs stand for.



Readers' Correspondence

Mark Iglesias landed Fig.1 in my inbox on New Year's day, and what a fine piece to start the numismatic year. The diameter is only about 13mm or so, so I have magnified it 3:2, but that is a diameter fully in keeping with the date of 1610 or thereabouts {last digit uncertain} which seems to appear beneath the exergue. Assuming it is a date, it is the earliest example I can remember with such a feature.



As people became more literate, they gradually, but very slowly, moved across from merchant marks to initials, the latter often in the form of triads. This is a hybrid piece; the issuer is using the initials of a triad, but half working them into a merchant mark. In Williamson's book on the main series of copper and brass 17th cent tokens, which was published in 1889 and covers the years 1648-1672, there

were about 75 merchant mark examples amongst the 12,700 or so tokens then known; i.e. a very small percentage, indicating that such marks were by then in serious decline. Go back a few decades to the early years of the 17th cent, however, and the proportion would have been quite significantly higher. The 15th and 16th cents were their heyday.

The late Robert Thompson, of main series 17th cent token fame, once told me that earlier in the 17th cent, before his series got going in 1648, inverted triads were occasionally found. I have hardly seen any, but this appears to be one: EB/A, instead of the usual A/EB. They work in the same way: A = surname initial, E = issuer's forename initial, B = his wife's forename initial.

Back to the main depiction, it is not very clear, but I think it is probably a sack or other relatively soft container, for wool, flour, sugar or some such commodity, according to the issuers' trade, with ties at the top. There is an outside chance that it could be two women in long dresses standing, but I favour the sack.



Also amongst Mark's finds, slightly later and magnified to about the same scale, is another piece which dubiously depicts a figure {Fig.2}. We will presume that she is female, but she is keeping her secrets hidden. There is something on the reverse, but wear has rendered it even less obvious.

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Confusion of another type, between different centuries {the 4th and 17th, to be precise} is the theme of Dave Jenrick's Fig.3. It is likely to be a contemporary forgery from the time of Charles II, post-1672, based on a Roman coin that the maker had previously seen or found. It is somewhere near the size of the copper farthings which were introduced in that year, but the lettering style is unrealistic for 17th cent copper and the portraiture is definitely more Roman than Charles II. It is possible that the manufacturer might have commenced making his mould by sinking a genuine Roman find into it, after which he tried to smooth out the surround and then add the name. I quite fancy that theory because the quality of the head is too good compared with the rest.

Fig.4, shown from two different angles, was kindly sent in by Tom Hulme. These pieces with well-formed circular inscriptions are not very common, but we have seen them before. My hunch is that it is a Huguenot church communion token {CT}, along the lines of those shown on LTT_104, page 3; whether from the issuers' French homeland or after they fled to England, uncertain, although the British findspot of this piece favours the latter. The chief periods for these Protestant migrations to escape the wrath of Catholic France were the late-16th, 17th and early 18th cents, and a number of emigrant congregations established themselves in this country. Only a few dozen of their CTs are known and published, nearly all in lead, and it is reasonable to conjecture that there may be quite a number more



out there waiting to be discovered and identified. One of their larger communities was in the East End of London, near a certain river which some of you may be familiar with, so, if you find any more, please write in!

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Next up, an example of engraving on a lead blank {Fig.5}, sent in by Andy Holmes and bearing the comparatively late date of 1830. No, I haven't magnified it! it is a huge beastie, 46mm across, 5mm thick and weighing 84gm {almost exactly 3oz, in old money}. Let us deal with the reverse first: is "8" a weight, or a serial number? The answer will be determined by the nature of the issuer's business. What superficially looks as if it might be a wreath, which was one of the favourite designs c.1830, is actually an inscription, if not a terribly readable one.. It looks as if it might say something like IOS ACOOM, which could be short for a name like Joseph Haycombe.



If Mr.Haycombe was a tradesman, such as a shoe repairer, the piece could be a numbered receipt for an item left with him to work on; brass examples of such serially-numbered pieces are seen in the later 19th cent. However, Andy believes after further study that he can possibly make out the word "ACCOMODATION", which would shift the focus significantly, rendering the issuer a hotelier and "8" possibly a room number.

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Another debatable "17th cent or early" piece appears at Fig.6, courtesy of Ian T., and also like Fig.2 featuring what might be a standing female figure. The field in which it was found, in Nottinghamshire, has yielded a number of 17th cent artefacts but apparently nothing ancient; yet, somehow, the style doesn't feel very 17th cent.



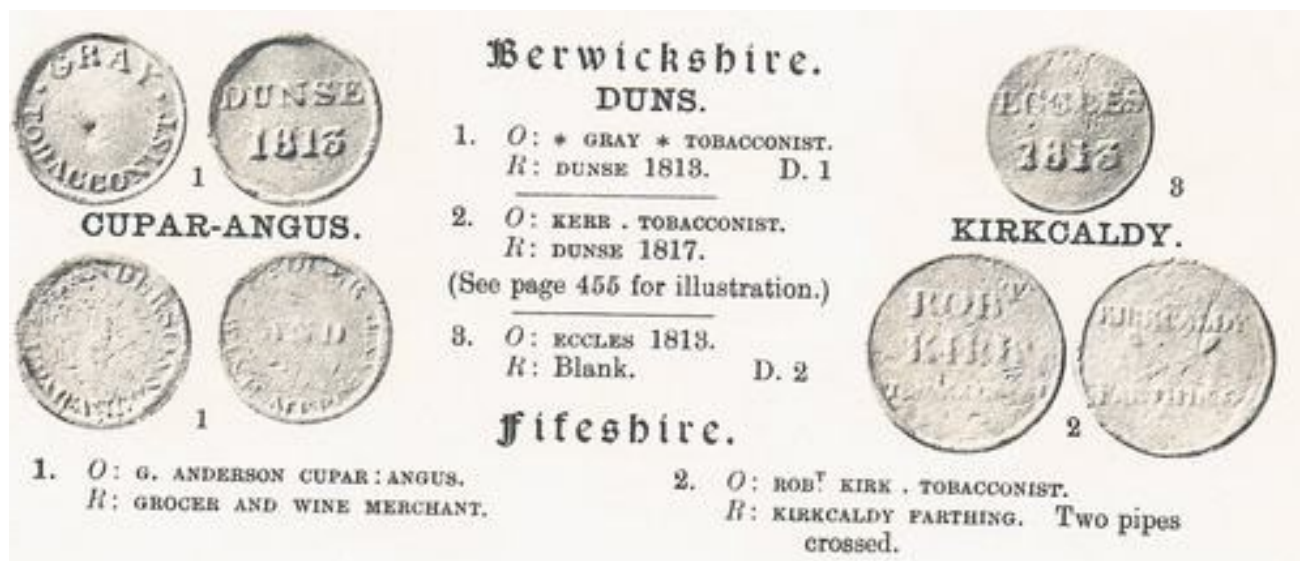
Taking the easier reverse side {Fig.6b} first, human figures of this type appear on both ancient pieces and those contemporary with the main Williamson series of copper/brass tokens of the third quarter of the 17th cent. A diameter of 18-19mm is consistent with the latter, after about 1663-65. I would guess that active figures waving their limbs around are probably more common on Roman pieces and are usually gods or goddesses, whilst those on 17th cent tokens of whatever metal are usually ordinary people doing everyday tasks, probably a little more sedately; however, there will be plenty of exceptions to that. Our striding or dancing figure could easily be some 17th cent publican or trader's shop sign, but equally he/she feels quite in keeping with the Roman choice of subject matter.

The obverse {Fig.6a} does not help to resolve it either; I can think of all sorts of things which the depiction might be and which it almost certainly isn't. As shown, it hints at a chess pawn with a lump of crud on top, which could be argued with great difficulty to be a female head; I don't fancy that, for the person who drew such a good figure on the back would not give the lady a stick-like neck. Perhaps it is the other way up, and the triangle is the top half of a wineglass? In which case the blob at its base takes some explaining, but it would fit with the idea of an inn token. Alternatively perhaps we are looking at a capital L, again adorned by some extraneous matter, which would favour the 17th cent; however, I don't feel convinced by that either.

After all that thinking, I am still undecided, whilst Ian favours the 17th cent.. Any more ideas and opinions for the melting pot? As usual, many thanks to all this month's contributors.

The Issuers of Scottish Lead Tokens: *Sundries: Areas other than Glasgow, Midlothian & Perth*

This month we move to a variety of towns, from the southern and central counties, which have only one or two issuers apiece. Again, the introductory notes from LTT_147 apply.



DH.Berwicks.1

From Scotland's People Wills and Testaments:

Gray	John	6/8/1832	Feuar and Tobacconist in Dunse, d. 27/12/1831	Testament Testamentar	Duns Sheriff Court Wills	SC60/44/2
Gray	John	3/9/1832	Feuar and Tobacconist in Dunse	I and Regd. D and Deed of S	Duns Sheriff Court	SC60/41/6

From Scotland's People Deaths & Burials:

GRAY	JOHN	----	72	M	27/12/1831	735/	60 402	Duns
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John was probably the son of Thomas Gray & Margaret Nisbet, born {or baptised} on 28 January 1761. He had an elder brother, Thomas, born in 1750. One of the Thomases died on 25 April 1813 and in his will later that year is described as a merchant.

{Note: The term feuar, above, is irrelevant to the current discussion; it merely means that he is a landholder who has to pay an annual payment, and usually quite a significant one, for the privilege. Wikipedia will enlighten you as to the fine detail, if so desired!}

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DH.Berwicks.2

The most likely looking candidate is a Thomas Kerr who married Margaret Whitelaw on 18.6.1800. In the 1841 census they are in the Market Place at Duns with several of their by then adult children. Thomas is described as being independent {presumably retired} and his John as a grocer & spirit dealer. A George Kerr was trading in Pleasance Street as a tobacconist in 1841 but his age is given as 25 {-29}. He is almost certainly the George Home Kerr born to Thomas & Margaret on 14.9.1810.

DH.Berwicks.3

This is a known communion token {Burzinski.2311} but Dalton & Hamer misidentified it and listed it as commercial.

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DH.Fife.1

There are known to be quite a few George Andersons in Coupar Angus, from the late 17th cent onwards, but I have found no firm link to the merchant. The Perthshire Advertiser of 4 Dec 1834 mentions one of them as a proprietor of a local inn, but he seems to have gone by 1841.

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DH.Fife.2

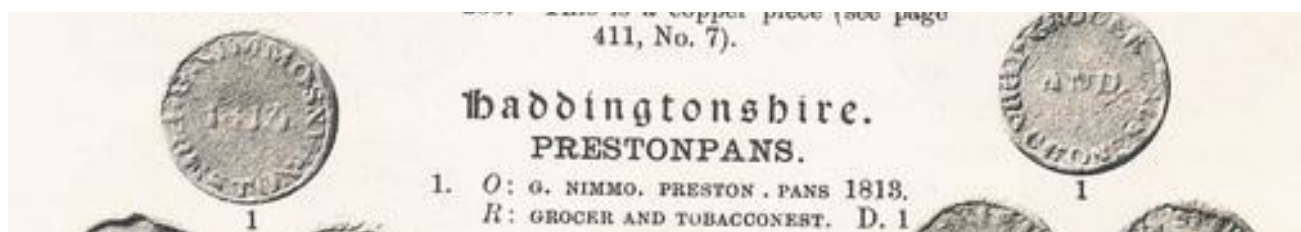
A Robert Kirk married at Kirkcaldy in 1803 and had a large number of children there in the quarter century following. The following is from page 39 of James Landale's "Duel: A True Story of Death and Honour", describing Robert's encounter with George Morgan, a local bank manager and ex-soldier of vindictive disposition who had a penchant for deliberately trying to provoke people into fighting duels with him just for the fun of it. He so exasperated Robert over a protracted period that in August 1825 the latter accepted an invitation, but Morgan ran off. A year later there was a similar incident involving Landale's ancestor, David, which resulted in Morgan becoming the last person to be killed in a duel on Scottish soil.

DUEL

recalled that he 'frequently breakfasted as well as dined and supped with George . . . When he first took up house, he was rather stingy but latterly he became more liberal and invited me to his house oftener than I was inclined to.'

These character traits, however, might have been more easily forgiven if George were not such a bully. Morgan was quick to anger and slow to forgive, almost incapable of conversation without taking offence. He was, according to one Kirkcaldy historian, 'a touchy, fire-eating kind of man'. He carried a smart walking cane which he used to wave angrily at people and threaten them with a beating. One man who knew this better than others was Robert Kirk, a tobacconist and agent for a rival bank in Kirkcaldy, the Commercial Banking Company of Scotland. In the autumn of 1824, he sued George Morgan's brother, David, who 'had on the public street of Kirkcaldy taken liberties with his character when speaking of him to Mr Samuel Rope of the House of Roebuck, Rope

The story concerning Robert runs on for two pages and is well worth reading. Amongst the several other Kirkcaldy inhabitants who came near to duelling with Morgan was Thomas Ronald, issuer of copper farthing DH.Fife.10, in 1822.



DH.Haddingtonshire.1

In case you were wondering where Haddingtonshire is or was, there were several Scottish county re-namings in the early 20th century:

- ⇒ 1921: Haddingtonshire renamed East Lothian
- ⇒ 1924: Linlithgowshire renamed West Lothian
- ⇒ 1928: Forfarshire renamed Angus

Dalton & Hamer's numbering and grouping is a bit messy at times but, as their book was written in the previous decade, they can at least be forgiven on this occasion.

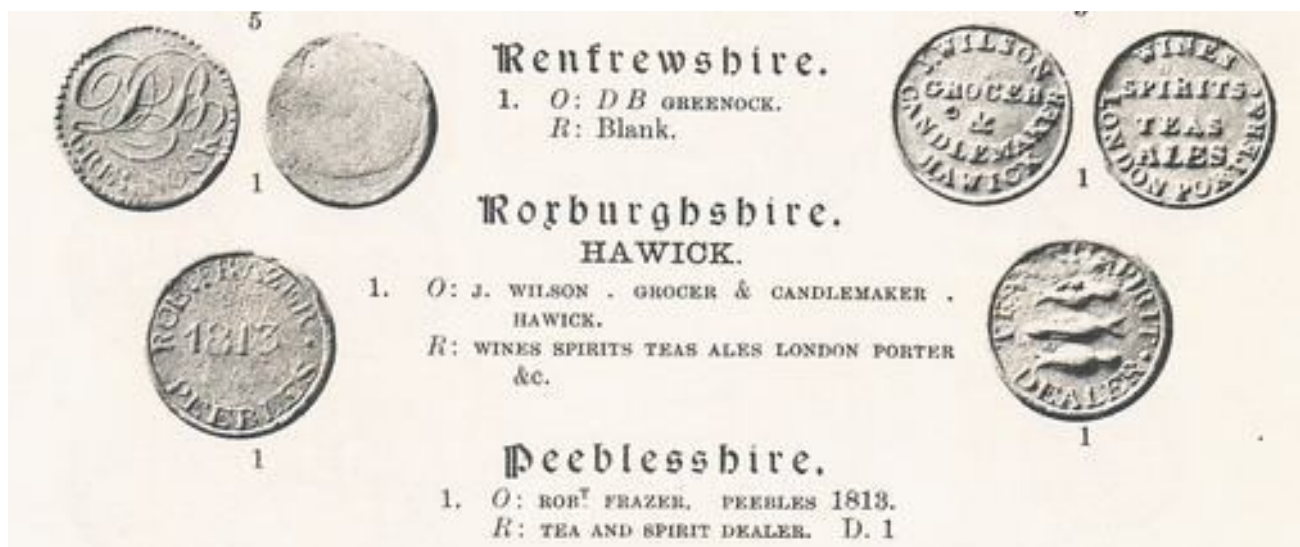
There is an SPWT entry for George Nimmo, merchant in Prestonpans, dated 22.4.1825. He died there on 19.1.1824 {Perthshire Courier, 6.2.1824} and was buried three days later.

An inventory of papers in the National Library of Scotland { The Cadell of Grange papers, Acc.5381} refers to property adjacent to the land of Alexander and George Nimmo:

10. Houses in Grangepans with 23 falls of land to the south, bounded on the east by the land and houses once of the Hamiltons of Grange, and lately of Alexander and George Nimmo, on the west by the house of Alexander Nimmo, on the south by the ward dyke of Grange, and on the north by the sea, 1790-1803.

Alexander was almost certainly George's brother; he was also described as merchant at Prestonpans, in his own SPWT entry dated 13.1.1813.

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DH.Renfrew.1

Finding issuers from initials alone is usually fairly thankless. The most likely candidates from the two directories of the 1805-15 period, one at each end, look like being:

- ⇒ David Brown, baker, Vennel {1805/15}
- ⇒ Donald Black, grocer, Crawford's land {1805} and vinter, Vennel {1815}
- ⇒ Duncan Baxter, grocer, foot of Charles St. {1805}
- ⇒ David Baith, merchant, Kernochans Land, Blackhall St. {1815}

Michael Dickinson, however, feels that the style is more akin to the earlier copper tokens of James Angus of Glasgow, dated 1780, or of Robert Davies of Paisley {see Token Corresponding Society Bulletin Vol.12.8, page 316}, also probably dating from the 1780s. Unfortunately, there are no earlier directories available other than the one of 1805 mentioned above.

DH.Roxburgh.1

The issuer is John Wilson, who was born in 1783 and died on 26 Sept 1857. He was described as a merchant when his will was proved at Jedburgh Sherriff Court on 9 Nov.1858.

There were clearly at least three successive generations of John Wilson practising the trade of candle maker in Hawick.

An anthology of poems published by George Caw of Hawick in 1784 contains a list of his subscribers at the back, and whilst it may not be a complete directory of Hawick's tradesmen of the day it is certainly a very good substitute. George Buchanan's "History of Scotland in Twenty Volumes" does likewise in 1752. These are the names beginning with "W":

{1784}	{1752}
<p>392. LIST, &c.</p> <p>W.</p> <p>Mr James Wilson, surgeon, Hawick. — James Wintrobe, writer, there. — James Wilson, watchmaker, there. — John Wilson, candlemaker, there. — William Wilson, there. — Robert Waugh, tailor, there. — John White, Jedburgh. — Charles Wilson, shoemaker, Hawick. — George Wier, wright, Dam-side. — William White, skinner, Hawick. — Thomas Wallace, shoemaker, there. — John wright, shoemaker, Melrose. — Thomas Wintrobe, wright, Jedburgh. — John Walker, there. — Thomas Wilson, there. — Robert Wemyss, shoemaker, Hawick. Mrs Wintrobe, Jedburgh. Peggy Wilson, Hawick.</p>	<p>W</p> <p>Mr John Welsh gold-smith James Wilkie Charles Wright bookseller, 12 sets James Wallace merchant, Ceres Anthony Woodhead writer James Wilson farmer, Peaston Thomas Walker Andrew Wilkie candle-maker James Wotherpoon weaver Alexander Wright Kilbarchan John Wilson candle-maker John Wood vintner, Leith Thomas Waugh writer, Jedburgh Baillie Winter, there William Watson merchant, ditto Thomas Winterup merchant, there 2 sets James Waters schoolmaster William Wilson</p>

The 1784 and 1752 references are almost certainly to the father and grandfather, respectively, of the token issuer.

The ancient annual practice of riding the bounds of the parish is well known in the borders and the list of cornets who have led the event from 1703 is online. The honour fell to our token issuer in 1812.

There are no shortage of John Wilsons in the area, as witness the very extensive local history "A Hawick Work Book" published in dictionary form at [www.astro.ubc.ca > people > scott > book](http://www.astro.ubc.ca/people/scott/book) The latter probably includes some references to the candlemaking family but it is not easy to discern which John Wilson is which.

DH.Peebles.1

Robert Frazer's Scotland's People Will and Testament reads as follows:

Frazer	Robert	19/10/1855	merchant in Peebles	Inventory; Settlement; Testamentar	Peebles Sheriff Court	SC42/20/6
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He was born, or baptised, on 18.1.1789. The newspapers have little to say other than that Robert lost his wife in 1845, that he was one of Peebles' magistrates and that he was actively involved on the committee seeking to establish the Edinburgh & Peebles Railway. All these references are much later than the date of his token and have little to say about his life as a merchant.