

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 LTTeditor@aol.com or dmpowell@waitrose.com

Seasonal Greetings to all Our Readers!

It was my intention to celebrate the festive season in LTT with a pair of articles which discussed the possible use of lead tokens in connection with the acquisition of food and drink for the meal table, including one on Forgeais' pieces emanating from the Royal Households, particularly the kitchens. However, I have for a while had it in mind to review my lead token classification system, and this happens to be the month when I have completed it; so, let it proceed without further ado. This edition is therefore now mainly given over to it, and the articles on lead tokens and foodstuffs have been postponed until some less appropriate date, like the middle of Lent {March}. You might get them in February, just in time for Shrove Tuesday. Not sure which month, but expect them soon!

-:-:-

Picture Gallery

Firstly, my thanks to detectorist Mark Stonard, based in South-West Surrey, for this very attractive little selection on the right.



Fig.1 is a slightly off-centre type 28 with radial dashes, the design of the middle part being a quite delightful and rather unusual face; the lines which form the nose hint almost at the frontal portrait of a ram, whilst what looks at first like a sideways ladder below is in fact an open mouth displaying a set of teeth. There is no separate type for a face, but type 10, heads and busts, is not far off; therefore, type 28.10. The reverse is a common enough type 2, initials, but with a squiggly piece of ornamentation not uncommonly found on Kentish hop tokens. The presence of a date below, in this case 1788, is always pleasing. The diameter is variously 20-22mm.

Fig.2, 21mm, has an interesting if comparatively modern-looking head based on the picture of a Roman emperor; on the back, a standard and uninspiring set of cast initials. It is more perfectly rounded than most lead, and I will guess at 19th cent; possibly even mid-late 19th cent, and perhaps produced as a folly.

Fig.3, P/GD in typical 17th cent layout {i.e. issuer's initials GP, his spouse's DP}, is only 13mm across, which argues for the earlier part of the century rather than the later; indeed, late 16th cent is not impossible, although my guess would be about 1620. The reverse is a small and compact but pleasingly neat anchor, type 4, with at least some hint of the ring and ropes which always enhance pieces of this type. It is only medium-dark, but a London provenance, whilst not definite, is quite likely.

Fig.4 is one of the better type 16 shields; normally, on lead, they lack this degree of clarification. The arms are probably those of a local landowner, perhaps minor gentry, although a trade guild is another possible candidate. The piece is uniface, slightly oval and some 16-18mm across.

{continued overleaf}



Your LTT Christmas present is an update of the Classification System. See pages 6-14 !



Fig.5, RM with a uniface reverse, is an extremely light-coloured rectangular piece, 16x11mm; delicate, with a marked rim at the top and just a hint of rounding on the upper edge, as if it might have been cut out of a large disk. It probably hasn't, but that is the impression conveyed. Such pale colouring is usually indicative of the lead having been kept in cold conditions, but in this case I am inclined to think that the precise mixture of the alloy may be the cause; i.e. that it has some chemical construction rather different from the normal lead. The style of the lettering is reminiscent of a communion token, but Burzinski does not list it; and also, more finely executed than most crude lead. I have hopes that someone familiar with lettering styles might be able to date it with moderate accuracy {there is one person whom I intend to ask}, but my own guess would be around 1750.

Thanks next to Ron Josland, of Strood, nr.Rochester, for this group of mixed leads and pewters, none of which are likely to be much later than mid-17th cent. Fig.6. is the oldest, a typical 14th cent Winetavern token, 15mm in diameter; so-called because a large number of them were discovered in Winetavern Street, Dublin, rather than from their usage. The latter may well still be in connection with said taverns, there or in London, from where they are thought to derive. This particular one is remarkable for having one of the finest granularity type 7 grids seen, which is not only very clear but also, non-typically, slanted at an angle. The reverse, not of the same photogenic quality, consists of a wide-banded cross with fine shading in each quarter.



Fig.7, 14mm and uniface, is the only one of the set which is pure lead. The ornamentation hints slightly at the floral decoration which accompanies the issuers' initials on a number of main series 17th cent tokens, and I will guess that it is of similar or slightly earlier period.

Fig.8 of similar size but notably pewtery, shows a long-necked bird, almost certainly intended to be a swan. The rev shows the initials WC in modern lettering with some indistinct ornamentation above and below; a hint of the type 13 about it, although it is not impossible that they are meant to be wording or a date. The piece is much thicker than the very thin mediaeval pieces like Fig.6, although not as chunky as Fig.9 following. The thickness, lettering style and brightness of the pewter all hint at early 17th cent, late 16th being also possible.

Fig.9 shows a standing figure, type 32, which Ron has labelled up as Eros. It feels very Roman, except that neither the metal {pewter} or the simple initials WP on the reverse, in modern style and with pellet above and below, support it. At 17mm it is a little larger than the others, and I will guess mid-17th cent; full-standing figures, scarce on British lead, were popular on the contemporary main-series tokens.

Fig.10 is most interesting, although unfortunately its more interesting side is too poor to illustrate. 14mm, thick pewter; early-mid 17th cent perhaps? The obverse is simple enough: MP plus a couple of pellets. On the reverse there is a small indeterminate object in the centre, probably a piece of domestic hardware, surrounded by some wording which appears to read "FRI FRI" followed by something like "AVI". Is it a pass, allowing the owner to do something or go somewhere on a Friday? which may seem a silly idea, except that a Roman piece was known to Rostovtsev, a copy of which may be found in the British Museum, which has the word "September" on one side and "October" on the other. Back to chunky pewter, Fig.11 shows a piece of my own for comparison, not quite of the same style, but with a similar hint of wording on the reverse; except that, in this case, none of it decipherable.



Finally, Fig.12, our latest attempt in our quest to find the ultimate in aesthetically unattractive tokens. This piece was found by someone whilst digging a post-hole in Battle, Sussex; it is 40mm square, with nothing on the reverse, and a substantial bend running from top-left to bottom right. However, Battle is in the middle of prime hop token territory and sixty {XXXXXX in Roman} is one of the larger denominations frequently encountered. WM is the issuer. It doesn't conform to anything in Alan Henderson's book, but don't knock it just because it is ugly!



Review of the Classification System, 3 Years On....

In 2004 I introduced my classification system, involving 32 types, each of which has been individually written on and illustrated earlier in these pages, and to which I have made frequent reference since. A formal statement of the various categories has been available online, albeit a little hidden away in sects.8,9 of <http://www.londoncoinclub.fsnet.co.uk/DPowell/LeadTokens.htm>, and I feel that it is time now to (i) review & update it, and (ii) give it greater publicity by making it available on the LTT website. By the time this edition of LTT is published, both the classification and an updated LTT index should be available on www.leadtokens.org.uk; so, please, make use of them!

NOTE:

*LTT Index
updated on Website
29 Oct 2007*

For those of you who merely scan the LTT newsletters each month, and don't bother with the website's other features, I'll put the revised classification statement on the end of this month's newsletter as an extra....

NOTE:

*LTT Classification
updated on Website
3 Nov 2007*

So, where are we, three years on? I think it has worked fairly well, given that we needed to start from somewhere and use it in order to discover its merits and deficiencies. I feel that time has shown it to have the right level of granularity for in-the-field practical use, given that the often vague nature of the material dictates that a different approach be used compared with more conventional coin and token series. Is it right to amend it at all? Yes, I think so, in moderation; therefore, I propose to make just a few tweaks, for which I hope you will forgive me. There are four main areas of change.

Firstly, rather than try and force piece in to one type or another, I propose to introduce as a regular feature the concept of hybrids. Far too many pieces clearly {or arguably, depending on the accuracy of your identification} borrow significant features from two types, and occasionally from three or four; therefore, we will admit this, and describe them as hybrids. The detailed explanatory list which follows on the later pages attempts to list the hybrids which are most commonly encountered.

Secondly, type 28. There are a variety of outer rim types: for example wreaths on Roman tesserae, varieties of shading on mediaeval pieces {to which Forgeais assigns the word *grènetis*} and, slightly later, radial dashes. The presence of such a surround should not be ignored, but neither should it distract from the main subject of type nn within; therefore such pieces will be considered to belong to both type 28 and type nn {effectively another hybrid}, rather than the rather cumbersome "type 28.nn" which I originally proposed.

Thirdly, designs are still occasionally turning up which either fit no class or which fit one of the existing ones rather unnaturally; therefore I have introduced three new classes to accommodate them, which I introduce and illustrate overleaf. Body parts other than heads fit badly into type 27, and halved geometrics likewise into type 12; they are therefore now types 33 and 34 respectively. Until Forgeais introduced me to several examples of a type which I variously call toothcombs or halfbeards, I saw no reason to introduce any new types at all; but these pieces, which I have never seen in England, fit nowhere; hence, we now have type 35!

Finally, types 15 and 21 stand apart from the others in that their definitions refer to use, rather than description of the design depicted: 15 = religious, 21 = trades. This I realised by hindsight was slightly inconsistent, and is further complicated by the fact that many designs might quite possibly have a religious or trade significance without us realising it. Here the concept of hybrids comes again to our aid; a piece is of some other type until such time as we realise the religious/trade link, and thereafter becomes a hybrid.



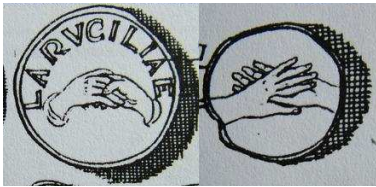
Do you have any pieces which don't fit the system? Please send pictures in....



Type 33: Body Parts, other than Heads

Hand, feet, genitals and hearts all appear with moderate frequency, and were formerly viewed as “other objects” to be included with all the inanimate items which make up the rest of type 27. This has not seemed right and, unless the hands and feet obviously resolve themselves into gloves and boots {i.e. products of trade, type 21}, they now become type 33.

Hands and feet occur occasionally on both lead and main series tokens, although usually in connection with the trade of gloves and shoemakers. If the presence of the glove or boot can be detected, the piece goes immediately to type 21; however, there are some where, though a glove is expected, the difference between glove and hand cannot be distinguished. 17th century main series tokens are sometimes seen with a hand holding something, typically a quill pen, and although I have not yet seen this on lead there is no reason why they should not exist. Similarly the design of clasped hands, shaking or holding, used since Roman times to imply concord {sometimes falsely}, and which continues on various series into the 19th cent; Ficorini illustrates some {see left}, but again unknown to me on modern lead.

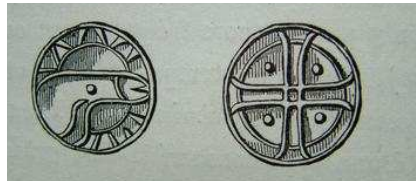


One hand type which does occur on both Roman and British lead, presumably in connection with the giving of alms, is where an outstretched hand is depicted holding a coin. On a Roman piece one could be forgiven for thinking that the coin is a nail, and that crucifixion is depicted.



Genitalia do not usually feature on the more modern lead tokens, probably because of contemporary sensibilities. They do occur occasionally in the Roman series, whilst Forgeais lists some for the mediaeval period. Presumably, they are brothel tokens. I will let M.Forgeais' artwork speak for itself; suffice it to say, those things which are pointing sideways with what looks like two wheels on the end are not cannon.

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Hearts, like genitalia, are stylised, and their reason for being may be wondered at. Are they an early form of love token? They are found both in the mediaeval and later series, and also on main 17th century tokens, occasionally with two arrows shot through. They are also found on communion tokens, where the love of God for his church and its members, or vice versa, is presumably indicated. Are some of the earlier pieces so illustrated for a similar reason? Quite possibly but, if so, not all of them, for some appear clearly to be the pieces of commercial traders. Perhaps a few of the latter had just entered into happy marriages which were uppermost in their mind when searching for a design; or perhaps “The Heart” was just one of the many pub and shop signs which were in use at the time. Perhaps there were pubs called things like the “White Hart”, and the engraver, distant from the issuer, did not know that a four legged animal was required; or perhaps he did, and the issuer had a liking for the pun. Alternatively, perhaps Hart was the issuer's surname.



The pair on the right are from the same die, found together recently near Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon, and have the common 6-petal type 1 reverse. A date is always a plus. Note that the heart is upside down; does that matter?

Type 34: Halved Geometrics

Pieces with symmetrical halves but not quarters are rare but do exist. Previously the line was taken that, if pairs of quarters were allowed to be mirror images of each other, and the two pairs were identical, the imagination could be stretched to call it a quartered geometric. The effect is quite remarkably different from a normal type 12, however, and hence a separate class has been assigned.

The simplest and commonest example is the common Kentish hop token blank with nothing but an outside rim with a diametric line across, waiting for the issuers' initials to be stamped in the top half and the value in the bottom; however, there are more interesting examples!

Type 35: Toothcombs, also known as Halfbeards

These pieces, recently discovered in Forgeais Vol.5, are all mediaeval type 28s with a grènetis surrounding two semicircles {sometimes approximate}, the lower of which is totally filled with vertical lines. Some but not all of the pieces



contain hints of a human face in the upper half, which suggests that the lower half might be a beard; however, this is not universal. I note that Forgeais lists them under "Types Monétaires", which presumably means that they emulate an official coinage. Does anybody please know which?



Any ideas on these, please?

Fig.1 on the right was found at Puckeridge, a village on the A10 near the Herts/Essex border, a few miles west of Stanstead Airport. I have magnified it to double size {the original is 20mm} to make it more visible, as the dull grey patina detracts considerably from two very interesting designs. On the obverse, a crowned king standing between two pillars, which feels very 15th cent, perhaps late 14th. On the reverse, lion rampant with shield above, plenty of ornamentation around, for the most part lost in obscurity. Any feelings, please, whether it is English or continental? It does not feel rural, and it was no surprise to discover that its find location lay near a major trunk road. If it is English, I would expect its origins to be in London, or at least a major city.



My thanks to Ron Kerridge, who kindly provided all the material for our lead articles about Sussex in Feb/Mar, for showing me the piece in Fig.2. He favours it being a seal, perhaps for a bag or sack, whereas I was wondering at first whether it was a beggar's badge. "N" on the obverse is simple enough, the initial of a merchant or parish, but what of the obverse? Merchant mark? that would kill off the beggar's badge idea. It was probably a seal which was tied, rather than clamped, to indicate ownership.

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AT THREE CRANES
If you have any lead tokens with part of their legend reading

ATTHREE CRANES
please contact
Phil Memick
who is researching them.
Email: phil@mernicks.com

Powell Classification System for Crude Lead Tokens

INTRODUCTION

The Powell system for lead tokens is a high-level classification which aims to enable the ordinary numismatist, detectorist or archaeologist to get a handle on this vague and rather complicated series {indeed, a large number of often indeterminately-related subseries}, without descending into a level of categorisation which quickly becomes unwieldy. It aims for practical ease of description, rather than fine granularity; the latter, coveted by students of other series, is not usually viable for crude lead.

Classification here will be in terms of individual sides rather than whole pieces. This is unusual in the realm of numismatics, but unlike most series it is not always possible to say which is the obverse and which the reverse, or to form many opinions as to how obverses and reverses pair. For convention we will say that issuers' initials stake the first claim for a side to be considered an obverse, and that a definite design has higher claim than an indefinite one; in many cases the matter is decided very easily by the fact that the piece is uniface, or as near as makes no difference. Not that such concepts matter much with most lead tokens.

Due to the compound nature of some designs, coupled with the frequent difficulty in establishing exactly what a moderate and often unskilled artist intended, it is not possible to assign many pieces uniquely to one of only thirty-odd classifications; therefore, the concept of hybrids is inevitable. The alternative is to introduce a much finer granularity than is easily rememberable when out in the field, and I ask readers therefore to permit the idea of hybrids in the name of simplicity.

The term "type N face" seems mildly eccentric, so the term "piece" is variously used, according to context, to describe either the token as a whole or the particular face under discussion.

LIST OF TYPES

The list of types in the Powell classification system is as follows:

- 1 Petalled flower
- 2 Initials
- 3 Segments
- 4 Lis
- 5 Anchors
- 6 Ships
- 7 Hatching, or grid
- 8 Numerals
- 9 Irregular or compound geometrics
- 10 Heads and busts
- 11 Tavern or other drinking utensils
- 12 Quartered geometrics
- 13 Frameworks
- 14 Crosses
- 15 Religious
- 16 Arms, shields or heraldic designs
- 17 Trees, plants and their produce
- 18 Birds
- 19 Animals, including fish and insects
- 20 Merchant marks & other monograms
- 21 Trade equipment and produce, other than milling
- 22 Mill-related

23	Buildings
24	Obscure characters
25	Misc objects {royal and imperial}
26	Misc objects {celestial}
27	Misc objects {other}
28	Outer rim or grènetis/wreath series
29	Words or significant abbreviations
30	Pellets or other unaccompanied simple designs
31	Circular or elliptical geometric
32	People, other than heads
33	Body parts, other than heads
34	Halved geometrics
35	Toothcombs, or halfbeards

EXPLANATION

1. Petalled flower {type 1}: Apart possibly from initials, the commonest type. The number of petals varies between three and six, five or six being the most frequent. Occasional pieces, usually larger, have the petals superimposed on a second design.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The intention of type 1 is to accommodate the ancient stock design where an array of petals reach to the rim. Where the head of an actual flower is shown rather than this formal and hypothetical one, and does not reach to the rim, this goes into type 17.

2. Initials {type 2}: Includes sides where the initials are dominant or equivalent in prominence with any ornamentation. Sides where small initials flank the main design will be classified according to that design. Items with both initials and numbers will be dealt with either here or under type 8, depending on which is predominant, although it is recognised that they are hybrids. Where there is no predominance, type 2 will take precedence because initials offer a clue to identity.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Type 2 is normally unambiguous on British pieces, except for the initials IS; whereupon it is difficult to distinguish between a genuine pair of initials, type 2, and a retrograde numeral 12, type 8. The latter number occurs frequently on hop tokens.
- On Roman pieces, it is often not possible to distinguish between initials, abbreviation and full words, rendering distinction between types 2 and 29 difficult.
- On Roman pieces also, it is sometimes also not easy to determine whether one or more letters are a Roman numeral, rendering distinction between type 2 and 8 difficult.
- There is a combination IWC occasional seen, although it is not obvious that that is intended; it sometimes has stars in the field, and may have a religious significance. These are amongst the most difficult pieces to place and, depending on what is the most prominent feature, may be assigned to type 2, 24, 26 or 9.

3. Segments {type 3}: Includes any side consisting of three or more segments emanating from the centre, except that quartered designs:
 - a. classify under type 12 if they have any regular design other than crosses and pellets.
 - b. classify under type 14 if they are simple crosses or crosses with pellets in the centre of the quarters, i.e. pseudo-mediaeval pennies.
 - c. remain here if they are cartwheel type pieces with the pellets near the perimeter, i.e. are not intended to imitate the mediaeval penny.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- As stated above, it can be possible to distinguish type 3 from type 14. The choice should be made as far as possible by estimating the apparent intent to imitate the mediaeval penny, but there are cases where it is a close call.

4. Lis {type 4}: A wide family of lis designs, which include also those sides where the outer components of the lis curve out so far as to be occasionally mistaken for the initials CC, the second C retrograde. Include plumes and arrays of feathers, plus tridents and anything else forklike.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- On British pieces, the only ambiguity is the C-Retrograde-C discussed above, which borders on type 2. However, it is relatively unlikely that one will be retrograde and the other not.
- On Roman pieces, type 4 always takes the form of a solo trident, and is permitted a stem not usually found on British type 4s; if held by a person, type 32 takes precedence. If a trident and other inanimate objects appear together, type 27.
- If one or more lis, appears on a shield, should the side be type 4 or type 16? and, moreover, if that shield is also crowned, should it be type 4, 16 or 25?

5. Anchor {type 5}: Fairly non-controversial.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- None. Whilst the anchor may sometimes have some religious significance, such cannot be distinguished from maritime uses, pub names etc; in addition to which, the anchor is not commonly regarded as religious, so there is never intent to assign it to type 15.

6. Ship {type 6}: Likewise fairly non-controversial.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Only when a design is so poorly drawn that one cannot fathom whether it was intended as a ship or an irregular geometric, type 9.

7. Hatching {type 7}: Includes those sides where the entire surface is hatched in an identical manner; where the hatching is quartered, it becomes type 12. Various granularities of grid may be observed.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- None.

8. Numerals {type 8}: Some of these are probably hop tokens, and a pseudo-weight has been seen. In addition to sides with low numbers indicating a specific value, those with dates and nothing else also come under this category.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Only with type 2 {q.v}

9. Irregular or compound geometrics {type 9}: This type accommodates a large number of abstract designs which do not fit into either type 3 or type 12, other than those which have an obvious circular or elliptical theme, which are type 31. It also accommodates designs which are a compound of different simple geometric types.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Only rarely, when poor but genuine cannot be distinguished from a doodle; e.g. type 6 {q.v}

10. Heads or busts {type 10}: Most of the English pieces are pseudo-coin designs which mimic the obverses of major series, e.g. Edward I pennies, although that is not invariably so. Extremely common on tesserae, where they can represent gods, personifications {of attributes}, emperors or private individuals. Whole bodies, rather than heads, are type 32, whilst other isolated body parts, e.g. hands or legs, go in type 27.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- None; fairly non-controversial.

11. Tavern or other drinking utensils {type 11}: Bottles, jugs etc. Bob Alvey allocated this number to bottles specifically, but I have extended the application. Could have been absorbed into type 27, but I chose to keep tavern tokens as a separate category. One feels that they should be adjacent to the 17th century series, but a Richard Gladdle catalogue of March 2000 shows one dated to the 1790s.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- None. Design fairly non-controversial, although usage can relate to either public house or the eucharist.

12. Quartered geometrics {type 12}: Any quartered design where the number of segments is necessarily four, except simple cartwheels, which are type 3 or 14 as previously discussed; this includes cases where the four quarters are two mirror-imaged pairs, which one might more correctly call halved geometrics. Pieces with four quarters containing alternate horizontal and vertical lines will also remain in type 12 for the moment, notwithstanding that they may depict millstones and should correctly reside in type 22.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- No problems other than the ambiguities raised with types 3,14 and 22 raised by the above.

Issues:

- Argument for reassigning type 12 millstone pieces to type 22.
- Argument for reassigning halved geometrics, which are rare, to a new type 34. They do not properly fit here.

13. Frameworks {type 13}: This accommodates a number of designs which border between the abstract and the real, and which may actually represent objects, the nature of which cannot be determined. The design does not cover the whole side, or at least not without significant variation; if it did, it would belong to type 9.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The ladder does genuinely occur as an object on tesserae, albeit rarely, and some British type 13s might also be intended as such. This means that there is a potential ambiguity between type 13 and type 27.

14. Crosses {type 14}: Not necessarily religious, although it may be. The cross should not obviously be the single letter X; if it is, the piece belongs in type 2, if British, or type 8, if Roman; otherwise, any design, abstract or real, which:

- a. depicts two crossed lines or objects only as the major device, or
- b. indicates by the central positioning of any pellets within the quarters of a cross that it is meant to simulate the mediaeval penny.

Wide crosses, in which the arms are bands capable of displaying other design, go in type 12 {squared geometric} unless they are strong candidates for being mill piece, in which case they go to type 22. Quite frequent is a small dumpy piece, conical and hence much thicker than anything else in the series; one wonders, albeit without any proof, whether it might have been used as part of a game.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Ambiguities with types 2,8,12 and 22 exist, some of them rarely encountered; that with type 3, where on occasion there can be some difficulty as to whether a cross rather than a cartwheel is intended, can be more difficult.
- On a Roman piece, a single X is assumed to be a number, i.e. type 8.

15. Religious {type 15}: Anything which depicts religious symbolism, e.g. a crozier, apart from simple crosses covered by type 14 above. Pieces which are known to have religious use but which depict non-type 15 designs should be categorized as if they were secular; the categorization refers to design, not use.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Drinking vessels tend always to go in type 11, regardless of whether their usage is secular or religious; which, frequently, one cannot tell.
- There is frequent difficulty in determining whether an inanimate object with religious associations should be in type 27 rather than 15, especially when the religious connotation is quite obscure.
- A single star of David would be assigned to type 30 if unadorned and to type 9 if embellished, on the grounds that random design rather than Jewish origin is the more likely reason.
- Many ancient pieces depict full-length people in the act of sacrificing. These go in type 32 by preference, because the person is more prominent than the reason for the act.

Issues:

- Many objects which appear on tesserae should probably be reclassified from type 27 to type 15 or 32 because of their association with Rome's polytheistic philosophy; however, if you do not know of that connection, this is not obvious.

16. Arms, shields or heraldic designs {type 16}: Anything where the major type is a shield or other form of compound heraldic device; takes preference over the types pertaining to the particular subject matter, except that single royal symbols remain in type 25.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Little ambiguity, except where occasionally part of the shield goes off the flan, in which case a judgment has to be made as to whether a shield is intended or whether the supposed remaining part of it is just a collection of geometric doodles.
- There can also be doubt as to whether the content on the shield is royal or not, causing doubt as to whether the piece goes in type 16 or 25.
- Shields with one or more lis on are debatably type 4 or 16; and, if crowned, 4, 16 or 25.

17. Trees, plants and their produce {type 17}: Anything botanical except national symbols, e.g. the rose covered by type 25, and the ancient petal design of type 1.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Ambiguity usually only arises in the two cases, regarding types 1 and 25, mentioned above.
- Occasionally floral heads are encountered which are more decorative than the normal type 1; these go in type 17.

18. Birds {type 18}: Any birds except national symbols, e.g. the eagle covered by type 25.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Usually fairly non-controversial, ambiguity only arising in rare cases where the creature cannot be recognized with certainty as a bird. Depending on the alternative conjectures, a would-be bird could be confused with a variety of other types, most noticeably type 32.

19. Animals, including fish and insects {type 19}: Self explanatory. Same proviso regarding national symbols as the last two types. Fish are rare on British pieces and insects virtually unknown; on tesserae, both are occasionally seen, the dolphin being the most common species.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Very few ambiguities, except as with type 18 where poor condition prevents identification of the subject matter. It is common not to be able to distinguish which of a number of animals is intended, but in any case they are all type 19.

20. Merchant marks & other monograms {type 20}: These were frequently used by the more prominent tradesmen until at least the late 17th century.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Usually fairly non-controversial; only an outside chance of confusing a merchant mark with a type 9 geometric doodle. The fact that merchant marks were usually well-executed helps keep the distinction clearer.

21. Trade equipment and produce, other than milling {type 21}: Accommodates sides containing the type of trade-related material which one might expect to find on the main series of 17th century tokens, with the one exception that anything related to milling goes in type 22.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Symbols which take the form of trade guild arms, depicted on a shield, go in type 16.
- As with type 15, there could be difficulty in determining whether an inanimate object should be in type 27 rather than 21, especially when the trade connotation is quite obscure.
- If the produce takes a form which readily lends itself to another type, e.g. birds or animals on a butcher's token, it is likely to be indistinguishable as a trade piece and will be assigned to the type concerned.
- Some depictions cannot be clearly distinguished as to whether, for example, they are gloves and boots rather than hands and feet. The practice was to put these in type 27, but a new type 33 has now been created.

Issues:

- Should some more of the type 27s be reassigned here? Or is that dangerous, because we cannot be fully certain, especially in the days of tesserae, whether trade was indicated?

22. Mill-related {type 22}: Depictions of mills and designs likely to represent mill sails. Squared geometric designs which could be mill stones should probably go in here, but are being left in type 12 because of the uncertainty. One interesting possibility: could some of the petals of type 1, and/or the spoked wheels of type 3, represent crude attempts to render mill wheels or sails?

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The possible confusion with type 12 {q.v}, whereby a quartered design may represent a millwheel, has already been mentioned.
- A type 3 cartwheel, if not extended to the edge, and with small notches at the end of each arm, may represent some sort of revolving machinery with water-buckets; in which case, a mill-wheel is assumed and the piece goes in type 22.
- The type 1 is assumed always to represent an ancient design rather than a mill wheel.

23. Buildings {type 23}: Any buildings other than mills, which go in type 22. A variety with three very thin towers is believed to be a late mediaeval tax token.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- Fairly non-controversial, although very rarely there might be confusion with an irregular geometric of type 9, if the intention of a minimally-skilled engraver was not obvious.

24. Obscure characters {type 24}: Any characters which are not obviously letters {type 2} or numbers {type 8}, although they may be crude attempts at one or the other.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The only confusion arises from whether the characters can be identified or not; a decision one way would assign to type 2 or 8, a decision the other to type 24.

25. Miscellaneous Objects, Royal {type 25}: Symbols such as crowns, roses, eagles and the like. The late Elizabethan pieces with double-headed eagle on one side and crowned rose on the other, c.1570-1600, are a notable example, although they are not part of the run of crude agricultural pieces.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The main confusion arises from whether the items depicted are interpreted as royal or not; a decision one way would assign to one of a variety of types {e.g. 4,16,17,18, 19}, a decision the other way to type 25.
- Crowned heads are assigned to type 10, i.e. that type takes preference.
- Shields with one or more lis on are debatably type 4 or 16; and, if crowned, 4, 16 or 25.

26. Miscellaneous Objects, Celestial {type 26}: This contains such items as the sun, moon, and stars; also globes, although these could be a reference to a tavern or playhouse of such a name, rather than to the heavens. There were two total eclipses of the sun visible from England in 1715 and 1724, and it is conjectured that these may have been the inspiration for the occasionally found crescent and stars type. That of 1715 was particularly spectacular, covering most of England in an approximately diagonal North-Eastern sweep; the northern boundary of totality passed through Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the southern through mid-Kent. That of 1724 described an East-South-Eastern path across the West and South of England, the northern boundary running somewhere along the line of Aberystwyth-Gloucester-Eastbourne; a larger number of the lead token areas, which are predominantly eastern, are likely to have escaped totality, although they would still nearly all have experienced a very great dimming of light.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- The only confusion arises on cartwheels with short limbs which may represent a radiant sun. If the cartwheel's spokes are significantly short of the rim and are not bounded by an outer circle, the piece is considered to be a type 26 rather than a type 3, especially if it depicts a central hub.

27. Miscellaneous Objects, Secular {type 27}: A catch-all for items which are clearly objects, whether identifiable or not, and which do not come into other categories such as 11 {tavern implements} or 16 {coats of arms}.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- A significant number of inanimate objects assigned to type 27 are probably components of commercial guild arms without a shield, in which case they overlap with type 16, or the equipment or produce of employment, in which case they overlap with type 21.

Issues:

- Isolated body parts such as hands, feet and genitals were originally put in here, rather than in 10 or 32, but have since been assigned their own new type 33. Gloves and shoes, where distinguishable from hands and feet, remain in type 21; if they cannot be distinguished, they are 33.
- Hearts are treated as body parts and have similarly been assigned from type 27 to 33.

28. Outer rim or grènetis/wreath series {type 28}: Certain series exist which have an outer rim with various types of filler, e.g. shading. These have previously been subclassified 28.nn, where nn indicates the classification of the subject matter of the inner part of the token according to the above schema; which would take in certain series, such as some of the very small ecclesiastical tokens of the mediaeval period, which the main classification does not so easily cover.

Issues:

- There is a strong argument for retaining type 28 as a way of saying “with outer shading or wreath”, whilst otherwise describing the piece as “type nn with/without grènetis/wreath”. The description “type 28.nn” is unwelcomely cumbersome.
- Suggest that this be resolved by describing such pieces generically as type 28, but individually as:
 - Type nn with wreath
 - Type nn with grenetis {of xxx type, if desired} - dropping the è for convenience.
 - Type nn with radial lines
 - Type nn with beaded rim {of xxx type is desired}
- Effectively, this means that the piece has dual membership.

29. Words or significant abbreviations {type 29}: Complete words or names are rare on British lead tokens, but not unknown; on Roman, they are quite common.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

- There can be some doubt on occasion, in the Roman series, as to whether a word or a set of initials is intended. If three letters are thought with reasonable probability to constitute an abbreviation, type 29 takes preference; otherwise type 2.
- Similarly, an abbreviation and a Roman numeral can be confused; if X is involved type 8 takes preference, otherwise the above rule applies.

30. Pellets or other unaccompanied simple designs {type 30}: Accommodates pieces which contain one or more of a single type of pellet or other simple geometric design, the latter not being identifiable as specific objects capable of going in type 27; as opposed to obscure blobs, which are

unclassified until identified.

31. Circular or elliptical geometric {type 31}: Either a set of concentric circles/ellipses, with or without a central hub, or a design consisting primarily of circles/ellipses and their fragments.
32. People {type 32}: Anyone standing, sitting, riding, walking, running or lying down; in other words, anything which shows the whole person, rather than a mere head or bust. The latter go in type 10, whilst other isolated body parts, e.g. hands or legs, go in type 33. Excessively common in the Roman series, and also in those mediaeval series, e.g. French, which depict patronal saints.

Occasional overlaps and hybrids:

 - Full length depictions of people riding animals are type 32 rather than type 18.
33. Body parts, other than heads {type 33}: An attempt to remove from type 27 {q.v} animate rather than inanimate objects, particularly parts of the human body, which do not obviously fit elsewhere. Hearts are included, despite the fact that they are fairly obviously symbolic.
34. Halved geometrics {type 34}: An attempt to remove from type 12 those designs which are based on halving rather than quartering of the main field.
35. Toothcombs or halfbeards {type 35}: An exclusively French type, borrowed from certain of their coinage, in which the lower half of the design consists of a series of parallel lines. The upper part can be various, but is often the components of a face, albeit often rather strangely rendered.

FEEDBACK

The Powell classification system for lead tokens has been in existence since late 2004 and, whilst it has not changed a great deal, is nevertheless still in a state of moderate evolution; therefore, fresh ideas are always welcome, as also are pictures or descriptions of any piece which tests the boundaries of the system as at present described. Readers are invited to submit ideas to the email address given at the top of the Leaden Token Telegraph {LTT} newsletter, currently found at “www.leadtokens.org.uk”; namely, `dmpowell{at}waitrose.com`.

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