

A Probable Lis - Pellet Issue Halfpenny of Henry VI

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The Primary source work for coins of Henry VI was undertaken by C. A. Whitton and published in three parts in the *British Numismatic Journal* under the title 'The Heavy Coinage of Henry VI' *B.N.J. XXIII* (1938-40), and *B.N.J. XXIV* (1941-44). In the third part for the last issue (Lis pellet Issue) he lists groats as the only coins struck. These being identified by a Lis on neck and extra pellets by the crown. This convention was carried on into J. J. North's 'English Hammered Coinage Vol II' and in the 'Small Change - III The Halfpennies and Farthings of Henry IV, V and VI' Galata Print 2003, the last issues of halfpence for Henry VI Heavy issue are listed as Saltire-Leaf Issue and Saltire Issues (these two issues are recorded as as Cross Pellet issue in Spink and Son's 'Coinage of England' and North's 'English Hammered Coinage Vol II').

The Saltire Leaf Issue is recognised by the leaf on breast, saltires by neck and with, or without, pellets by crown and extra pellets on the reverse. It is notable that coins from these late issues usually show considerable wear to the portrait and in particular the Leaf on the breast. In the latest (Saltire) issue the saltires by neck and leaf on breast are replaced with a saltire on the neck again found with and without pellets by Crown.

I recently obtained a specimen identified as Cross Pellet issue in quite excellent condition (with the exception of the legend from 8 - 11 o'clock being broken away).



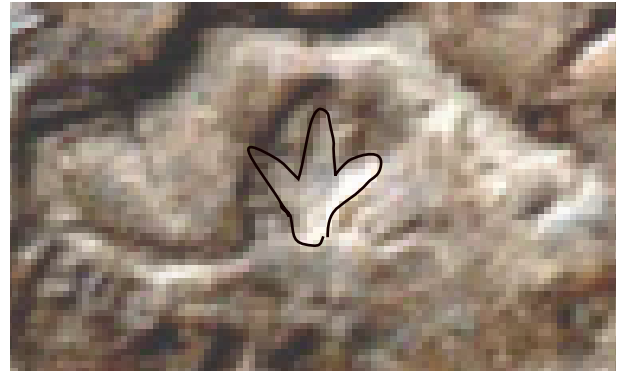
The coin reads +HENRI[C REX ANG]LI with initial mark IIIb (Cross Patonce) with pellets by crown, saltires by neck and leaf on breast (North Cross-Pellet A, Withers Saltire-Leaf).

The reverse reads CIVI / TAS / LON [/ DO]N without any extra pellets in the reverse quarters.

The coin weighs 0.35g

On examining the coin a peculiarity was noticed to the leaf on the breast in that it appeared to have been over struck with a small lis (see enlarged segments of the bust on next page).

I propose that this coin is a Cross Pellet issue die that has been altered for use during the Lis Pellet issue 1456-61. The alteration of a Cross Pellet A die would take the over striking of a Lis easier than the Cross Pellet B with the bold Saltire on the breast. There may well be several more coins of this Lis Pellet issue but identification is problematical in that the Lis on the leaf would be the first element to wear away and so would not be readily noticeable on coins that were worn even slightly.



Leaf on Breast with over struck Lis, note also double curve to the drapery.



Normal Leaf on breast with flat base line to drapery.



Saltire on breast.

All coins illustrated
are in the authors
collection.

Last Issues of Halfpence of Henry VI Heavy (First Reign)



Cross-Pellet A
Pellets by crown
Leaf on Breast
Saltires by Neck
Extra pellet under
CIVI and DON



Cross-Pellet A
Pellets by crown
Leaf on Breast
Saltires by Neck
Extra pellet under
TAS and DON



Cross-Pellet A
Pellets by crown
Leaf on Breast
Saltires by Neck
Extra pellet under
TAS and DON



Cross-Pellet A
Pellets by crown
Leaf on Breast
Saltires by Neck
Extra pellet under
TAS and DON



Cross-Pellet B
Pellets by crown
Saltire on Breast
Nothing by Neck
Extra pellet under
TAS and DON



Cross-Pellet B
Pellets by crown
Saltire on Breast
Nothing by Neck
Extra pellet under
TAS and DON



Cross-Pellet A
Altered to Lis Pellet
Pellets by crown
Lis / Leaf on Breast
Saltires by Neck
No Extra pellets on reverse