

Charles I Shillings of the York Mint (ii) Counterfeits

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A previous note provided illustrations of the known official issues of the shillings from the York mint during the Civil War⁽¹⁾. This note will present details and discuss five known varieties of counterfeit shillings which display the EBOR mintmark. Some of these show quite competent engraving skills, sufficient to allow the die that was copied to be identified.

The contemporary counterfeits showing the EBOR mint signature show letter and design punch links with each other and also with other groups of contemporary counterfeits of provincial mint shillings (Oxford).

All specimens of one York die combination show significant flan curvature pointing to manufacture on a roller or cylinder press.

Conclusions.

The diversity of the official coinages of the Civil War allowed a few groups of skilful counterfeiters to practice their craft. A detailed punch, design and metallurgical analysis might prove useful in linking the different spurious issues^(4,7), especially pieces with robust hoard dating evidence. It is also likely that some of the counterfeiters were already active at the beginning of the Civil War, with the tools and skills ready to step into the diverse circulating medium of the troubled time.

Through the Commonwealth and up to the recoinage of 1696/7, increasingly worn and clipped silver coins fell prey to the counterfeiters. The whole topic of the state of the circulating silver coinage in the seventeenth century requires a thorough review in order to place what seems to be a continuous undercurrent of counterfeiting in its proper context.

See the illustrations on the following pages.

Bibliography and References.

- (1) G.M. Oddie. Charles I Shillings of the York Mint (i) Official Issues. BNS Blog August 21, 2020.
- (2) E. Besly. *The York Mint of Charles I*. BNJ 54 (1984) pp210-241.
- (3) E. Besly. *Further notes on the York mint of Charles I*. BNJ 61 (1991) pp129-132.
- (4) E. Besly and M. Cowell, *The metrology of the English Civil War coinages of Charles I*, BNJ 61 (1991), 57- 75.
- (5) E. Besley. *A Civil War hoard from Breckenbrough, North Yorkshire*. The Yorkshire Numismatist volume 1 p45-55 and illustrated on p52, 1988.
- (6) C. Barclay. *A Civil War hoard from Middleham, North Yorkshire*. BNJ 1994, 64(8) pp84-98. p91 and plate 10 item A1260. Note; good colour pictures of all the Middleham hoard pieces can be found here: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Middleham_Hoard
- (7) M.B. Mitchiner and A. Skinner. *Contemporary Forgeries of English Silver Coins and their Chemical Compositions: Henry III to William III*. Numismatic Chronicle. Vol. 145 (1985), pp. 209-236 (37 pages).

York cft Type 1

Crowned bust with lace collar.

•CAROLVS•DG•MAG•BRIT•FRA•E•REX• Lion mm.

Inverted A in CAROLVS

Oval garnished shield with lion's claws at sides EBOR in cartouche below.

Lion mm.

•CHRISTO•AVSPICE•REGNO• Lion mm.

Retrograde N in REGNO



[Besly 1991 plate 14 no 10.]

BM 3.81g. As official Dies d and e

York cft Type 1

Barclay 1994 plate 10 no A1260

Middleham hoard



York cft Type 2

Crowned bust with lace collar.

•CAROLVS•D•G•MAG•BRI•FR•ET•HIB•REX• Lion mm

Retrograde E in REX

Square topped shield EBOR above. Lion mm
CHRIST//O•AVSPI//CE•REG//NO

Retrograde N in REGNO

[Rose]

BSJ 26, 22 Nov 2018 lot 280.

4.38g.

Note; R of EBOR, formed as a 2 with an extra loop



Very similar to that on official dies A, B, C and D.



York cft Type 2

Besly 1991 plate 14 no 8.
Breckenborough 1582
4.27g⁽⁵⁾.



York cft Type 3

Crowned bust with lace collar. Lion mm
•CAROLVS D G•MAG•
BRIT•FR•ET•HI•REX•
Lion mm

Oval garnished shield with lion's claws at sides EBOR in cartouche below.
•CHRISTO•AV•SPICE•
REGNO Lion mm

[Oddie]
DNW lot 277 7 Dec 2011.
Retrograde N in REGNO,
Retrograde EB in EBOR
4.09g/12h.
4.097g. As official Dies d and e



York cft Type 3

Besly, 1984 plate 8 no4.
BM⁽¹⁾.
Same piece;
Besly 1991 plate 14 no 9
BM, 4.01g.⁽⁴⁾



York cft Type 3

SCA 24/03/20 Daedalus lot 295
Auction: 20004 -
Lot: 295
3.78g
UKDFD 38494
Found near York, 4
September 2012.



York cft Type 4

Crowned bust with lace collar.
•CAROLVS•D G•MAG•
BRIT•FRA•ET[]REX•
Lion mm.

Oval garnished shield
EBOR below. Lion mm.
CHRISTO AVSPICE R []
[Oddie]
4.293g. Three specimens seen, all with same die curvature; obverse convex, reverse concave. Garniture as official dies a, b, and c.



York cft Type 5

Squat crowned bust with wavy hair and lace collar. mm?

CAROLVS D G MAG
BRIT FR ET HI REX

Oval garnished shield.
EBOR below. Lion mm.

CHRISTO AVSPICE
REGNO

Retrograde R in EBOR.

Besly, 1984 plate 8 no5
BM⁽¹⁾.



York cft Type 5

Folkes plate 26 no 7



For the York cft types 1-4 the lace collar has been created using a common punch.



Similarly the punch used to create the wavy hair design of York cft type 5 would appear to be the same as that used to make a group of Oxford type counterfeits, shown below.

Oxford cft Type 1

CAROLVS D G
MAG BRIT FR ET HI
REX mm Upright
Oxford plume

EXVAGAT DEVS
DISSIHENIUR INF•ACT•
A • Poorly engraved
Declaration legend. Three
Oxford plumes above.
Rotated 4 in 1642.
4.26g
88% Ar, 11 % Cu.
[Oddie]



Oxford cft Type 1

Crowned bust with wavy
hair and lace collar.
•CAROLVS•D G•MAG•
BRIT•FRA•ET[]REX•

2.731g, very flimsy fabric,
plated? 91% Ar, 0% Cu.
Traces Bi, Fe.
[Oddie]



Oxford cft Type 2

Crowned bust with wavy hair and lace collar. mm Oxford plume sideways to left.

CAROLVS D G MAG
BRIT FR ET HI REX •

Square topped shield.
CHRISTO • AVSPICE •
REGNO • Oxford plume
sideways to left.
4.384 g, 86% Ar, 11%
Cu. [Oddie]



Oxford cft Type 2

3.581 g, 95% Ar, 3% Cu,
traces Pb, Au, Bi. [Oddie]

