

Caveat Emptor II

Modern Forgeries of Richard II

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On reading the proposed (now uploaded) note by Rob Page on forged Henry III pennies I was reminded of two modern forgeries of Richard II pennies of the Durham mint currently residing in my cabinet. Both of the coins were acquired from Ebay with some 12 months separation between purchases several years ago. My suspicions were aroused by the receipt of the second coin which despite the weight difference and toning had the exact same shape and 'clipping' which is highly unlikely with genuine coins.

Richard II coins are in general worn and clipped and the Durham mint coins are particularly rare, F Purvey in his article in the 1963 British Numismatic Journal 'The Pence, Halfpence and Farthings of Richard II of the mints of London, York and Durham' States 'The known pence of Durham, the rarest of all coins of Richard II, can almost be counted on the fingers of both hands, They appear to be the product of one obverse die and two reverse dies.' One reverse Reading CIVI TAS DVN OLM and one reading xCIVI TAS DVN OLM, and he illustrates examples of both die pairings (noted as illustrations 30 and 31 in his article and reproduced below). Note the identical damage to the pellets in the bottom left quadrant. The weights of the forgeries fall within the expected weight of Richard II pennies. I weighed 10 random examples of genuine Richard II pennies of York and London, from my own collection, and these ranged from 0.78g to 1.14 with an average of 0.95g.

I have not, as yet, had the opportunity to have the metal analysed

These fakes appear to have been pressure cast with a high degree of competence and are VERY convincing it is only when you get a duplicate in the hand that suspicion is aroused.



Ebay Purchase #1
0.78 g



Ebay Purchase #2
0.93 g



30 31
Extract of Plate IX BNJ 1963



Note the damage to
pellets in angles of
the cross

