

A Peculiar Series of Reverse Die Cutting Errors or Privy Marking? of Edward I Class 1c Pennies

Dave Greenhalgh (Grunal Moneta)

My collecting over the last 30 years has been somewhat influenced by my professional activities as a medieval moneyer, in so much that my attention is drawn to mint errors, so over many years I have accumulated a small collection of same.

One small group is a group of pennies of Edward I of class 1c which have the inner circle drifting away from the scribed guide line. Having cut many hundreds of dies in the manor that the original dies were cut I am aware that the incised guide line makes the insertion of the individual pellets of the inner circle very easy. The neatness of the inserted punches that drift away from the incised line suggest, to my mind, a deliberate alteration. If this were just from one die then it could be just an aberration in the die cutting but to date I have identified three different reverse dies with this feature so the 'error' could possibly be the 'leitmotif' of one particular die sinker.

The New coinage of Edward I began in 1279 with the appointment of two new Wardens to the mint Gregory de Rokesly and Orlando de Podio, Master Moneyers - Masters Hubert Alion de Aste, William De Turnemire and Peter de Turnemire. Engravers of the die punches (or irons) were the FitzOtho family. ¹

On 17 May 1279 the Wardens of the mint received the new dies and they were issued to the Moneyers and the new coinage began to be struck. It appears that the majority of the class 1 pennies were made under the control of William de Turnemire who by the time of the second trial of the pyx was found to be making the least amount of poor money. Hubert (or possibly Albert) was dismissed and William was placed in sole charge as the Master of the Mint. (Peter de Turnemire had been responsible for the production of the Groats.) ²

Production of the coins was relentless between 28 April and 20th November some 22½ million pennies were struck (and were first issued in early August 1279). ³ There was considerable pressure on the die cutters to keep up with production and in November extra dies were bought in from Gerard of Ghent ⁴

Is it possible that the dies bought in were distinguished in some way? And if so could the die errors in question arise from this external die purchase?



Reverse error 1Ci

Reverse die errors 1ci and 1cii with inner circle drift in the TAS quarter of the reverse.
Reverse 1ciii with drift in LON and DON quarters



Reverse error
1Ciii



Reverse error 1Cii

¹ H. B. Earle Fox and Shirley Fox, *Numismatic History of the Reigns of Edward I., II., and III.* B.N.J. Vol VII 1910 p 92 - 142)

² Mavis Mate, *Monetary Policies in England 1272 - 1307.* B.N.J. Vol XLI 1972 p 34 - 793.

³ Lord Stewertby, *English coins 1180 - 1551.* Spink & Son Ltd 2009 p 164 - 166.

⁴ 'Ad cuneos talliandos' (E.372/132 m.3)

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Rev 1ci
1.22g



Rev 1cii
1.42g



Rev 1ciii
1.33g



All the obverse dies of this group fall into the 1c category of class 1 reading EDW REX and having Roman Ns and having crowns with broken side fleur giving a bifoliate appearance (Crown 2)⁵ and have Face punch 4⁶. The letter Ns are either Normally or reverse Barred or mixed as is normal for class 1c

All illustrations come from coins in my own collection.

I would be interested to know of other specimens of this reverse error/privy mark.

Broken side fleur to crown



⁵ J. J. North, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* - 39. Spink and Son Ltd 1989.

⁶ Paul & Bente R Whithers, *The Galata guide to Edward I and II*. Galata Print Ltd 2006