

# A Die Study of James I Shillings

## – Third Issue, Sixth Bust, mm Thistle

Gary Oddie

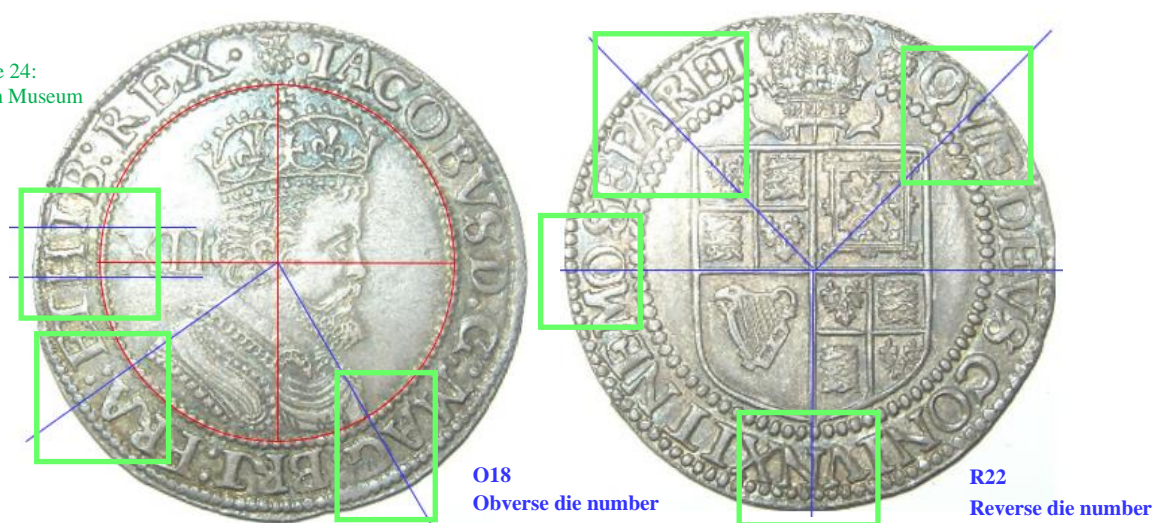
### Introduction

Having produced dies studies for James I third issue shilling with mintmarks Rose<sup>(1)</sup> and Lis<sup>(2)</sup>, and the method of identifying individual dies seems to be working and the statistical analysis is giving sensible results, this note presents a die study of the shillings bearing the mintmark Thistle.

### Method

As with the mintmark Lis shillings, the busts do not break the inner circle and so the distinguishing features outlined below are used to identify and then compare dies. The presence of stops at the mintmark is used to help order the dies.

[P24]  
Provenance 24:  
Fitzwilliam Museum



### Summary of Results

Images of 37 specimens from various private collections and archived auction catalogues have been found (see sources section at end). Only 7 die-pair duplicates were found and the best specimen of each is illustrated, resulting in the 30 pieces illustrated below.

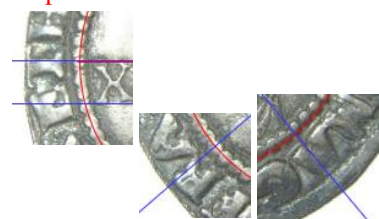
The table below summarises the main obverse legend varieties and further divides the coins by the reverse design (plain or with plume above the shield). Where a type might be expected to exist it has been added for completeness. The groups of illustrations follow the same sequence.

Dies have been found muled with dies in different groups and are indicated by the coloured fractions thus allowing the correct total to be maintained. Thus in the **IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX** group the entries of 11  $\frac{2}{3}$  and 6  $\frac{1}{3}$  indicate that one of the obverse dies is known from 3 specimens; two with a plain reverse and one with a plume reverse.

Main Type	Obv. Legend	Reverse	Obv. Dies	Rev. Dies
Third Issue Sixth Bust mm Thistle	IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX	Plain	5	6 1/2 1/2
		Plume	-	-
	IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX	Plain	11 2/3	13 1/2 1/2
		Plume	6 1/3	6
		Totals	23	27

The Die Study – in the same sequence as the table above.

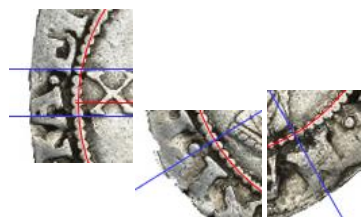
Stop before mm



01



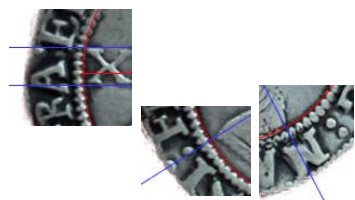
**R1**



02



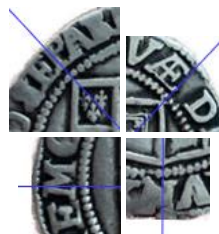
R2



02



R3



+1  
03



**R4**



+1  
03



R5



03



R6





**IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX – Plain reverse - Continued**

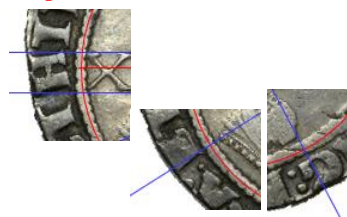


**IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX – Plume reverse**

Not seen

# IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Plain reverse

Stop before mm



[P9]



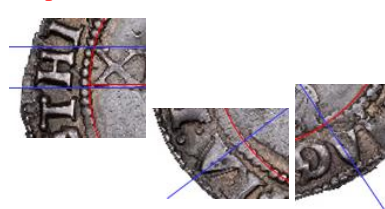
O6

Stops at mm



R2

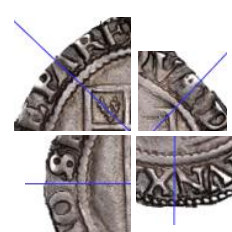
Stop before mm



[P10]

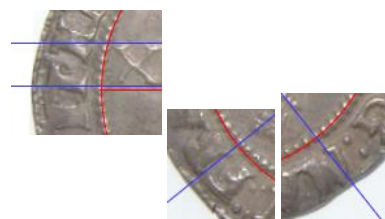


O7



R9

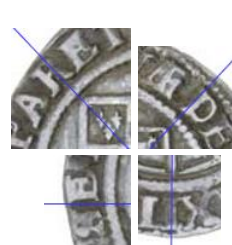
Stop before mm



[P11]



O8



R10

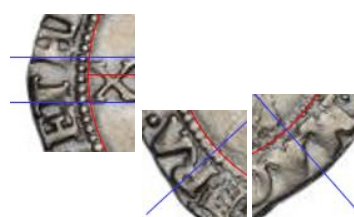
[P12]



O8



R11



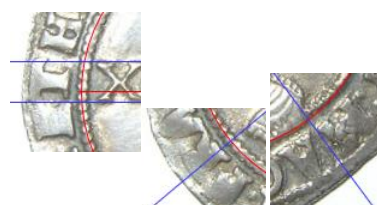
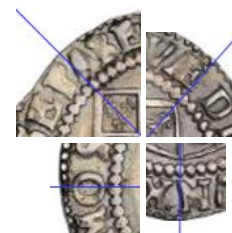
[P13]



O9



R12



[P14]



O10

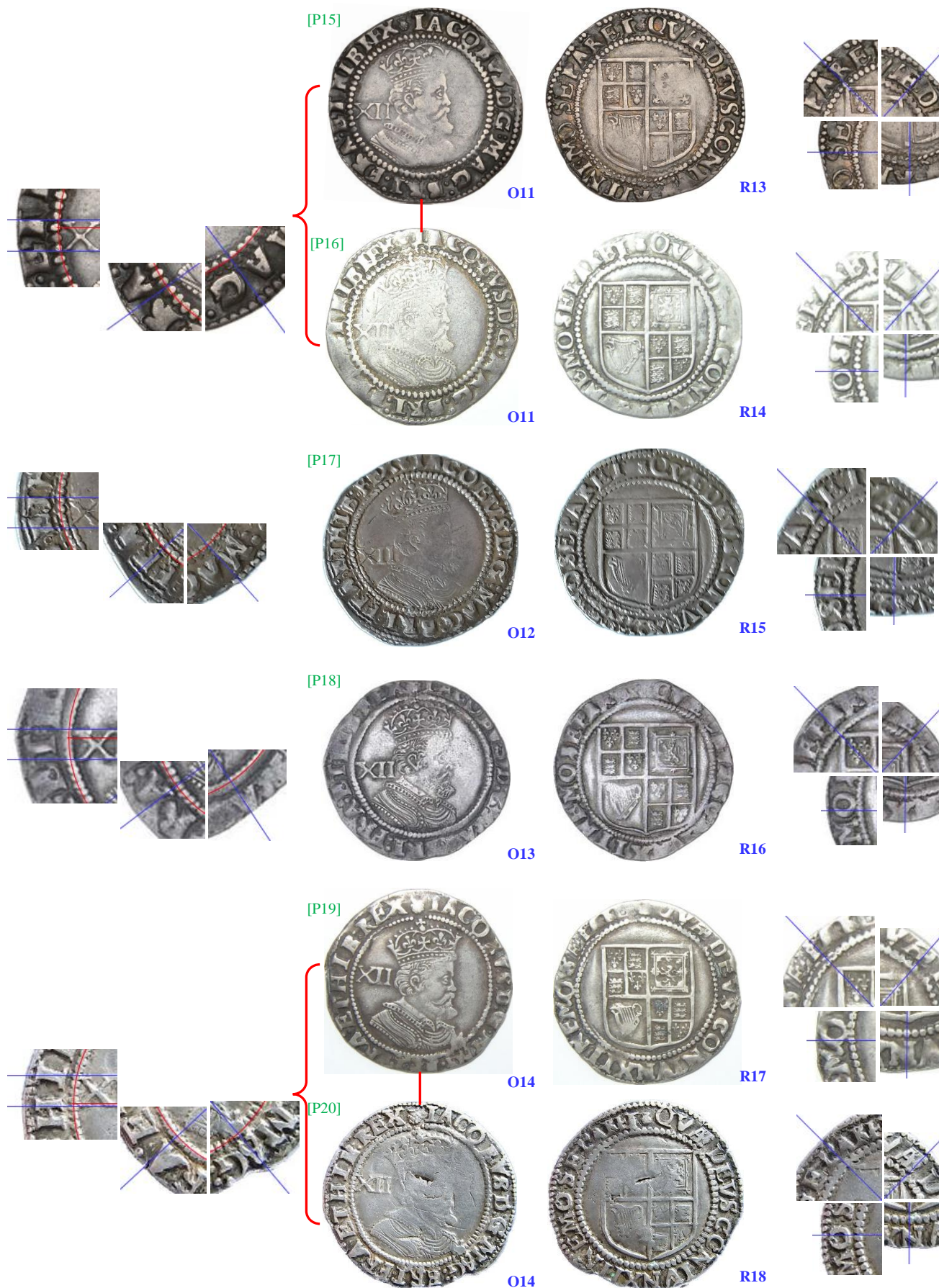


R3





IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Plain reverse - Continued





# IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Plain reverse - Continued



## IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Plume Reverse

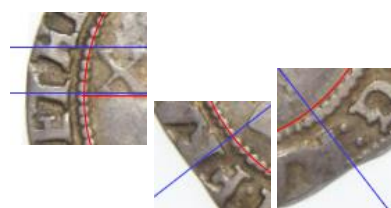
Stops at mm





# IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Plume Reverse - Continued

Stop before mm



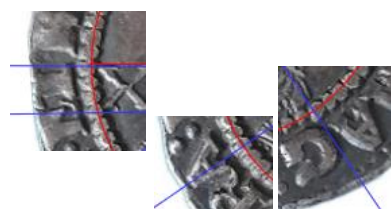
[P26]



O8



R23



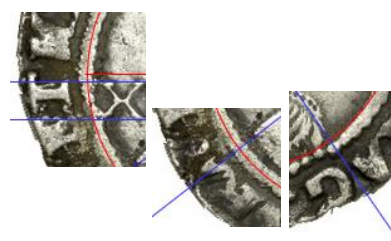
[P27]



+2  
O20



R24



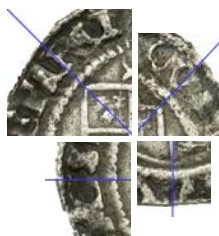
[P28]



+2  
O21



R25



[P29]

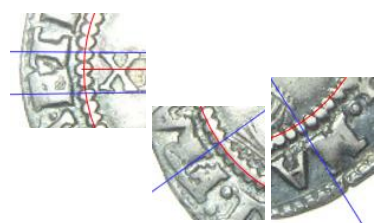
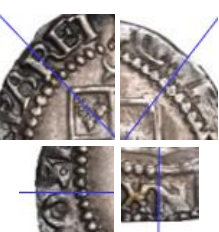


O22



R26

Shield with flat base



[P30]



O23



R27



## Sources of Images and Acknowledgements

The following are thanked for the use of their images: Noonans, formerly Dix Noonan Webb (Noonans), London Coin Auctions (LCA), Noble Numismatics Australia (NNA), private collections, and recent eBay sales (eBay).

[P1]	Fitzwilliam Museum	[P11]	NNA 19-11-2019 lot 2936	[P21]	NNA 31-3-2009 lot 1564
[P2]	Noonans 16-9-2014 lot 2501	[P12]	Private Collection	[P22]	ebay
[P3]	ebay	[P13]	Noonans 6-2-2013 lot 451	[P23]	NNA 20-11-2022 lot 1690
[P4]	Noonans 1-12-2012 lot 139	[P14]	Fitzwilliam Museum	[P24]	Fitzwilliam Museum
[P5]	NNA 5-4-2005 lot 2088	[P15]	Noonans 11-10-2021 lot 1127	[P25]	Noonans 11-10-2021 lot 1128
[P6]	Noonans 17-3-2010 lot 431	[P16]	Private Collection	[P26]	Private Collection
[P7]	Private Collection	[P17]	Private Collection	[P27]	Private Collection
[P8]	Noonans 8-12-2014 lot 2398	[P18]	NNA 9-4-2013 lot 1829	[P28]	Noonans 23-1-2020 lot 127
[P9]	Noonans 20-2-2019 lot 268	[P19]	Private Collection	[P29]	Noonans 8-12-2015 lot 857
[P10]	Noonans 11-6-2014 lot 200	[P20]	ebay	[P30]	Fitzwilliam Museum

David Holt, Ray Jenkins and Nigel Prevost are also thanked for providing images of their pieces. Martin Allen and Richard Kelleher at the Fitzwilliam Museum are thanked for allowing access and photography.

## Discussion and Conclusions

This note has presented a catalogue of dies used to strike James I shillings of the third issue, mintmark Thistle. This is a scarcer mintmark, with just 37 specimens found including 7 die pair duplicates. Thus far 23 obverse and 27 reverse dies have been identified. A few of the dies are muled within the groups and also between the groups.

The **MA** obverse type is scarcer than the **MAG** type and only the latter is known with a plumes reverse. With the exception of **O21-R25** which shows some die corrosion, the reverse dies with plumes are typically much better engraved than the plain reverse dies. **O18-R22** is clearly a finework piece and **O19-R22** also likely started off as a finework piece before being slightly clipped, double bent and straightened. The reverses with plumes are scarcer than the plain reverses, with 6 and 21 dies respectively. Once again, the plain reverse dies are known with both coarse and finely engraved shields. No die sinker's errors have been found so far.

The following table summarises the results and analyses the obverse and reverse die statistics separately using the usual method.<sup>(3,4)</sup>

		Obverse	Reverse
Sample size	n	37	37
Number of dies	d	23	27
Singletons	d <sub>1</sub>	15	21
2 examples	d <sub>2</sub>	4	3
3 examples	d <sub>3</sub>	3	3
4 examples	d <sub>4</sub>	-	-
5 examples	d <sub>5</sub>	1	-
Coverage	C <sub>est</sub>	0.59	0.46
Estimated dies	d <sub>-</sub>	31	44
	d <sub>est</sub>	51	81
	d <sub>+</sub>	87	155

**Table 1.** Die statistics of the James I shillings, third issue, sixth bust, mintmark Thistle.

As with the previous two studies, the low coverage, especially of the reverse dies confirms that the sample is very small and even without the statistical analysis, the high proportion of singletons suggests there are many more dies yet to be identified. It will be realistic to expect over 50 obverse dies and more than 80 reverse dies to have been used for this issue.

Once again the ratio of obverse to reverse dies 1:1.17 (23:27) and very close to the values for the Rose and Lis studies and far from the 1:1.9 ratio for the crowns issued through the whole reign.



## References

- (1) G. Oddie. A Die Study of James I Shillings – Third Issue, Sixth Bust, mm Rose. BNS Blog 26 June 2022. <https://britnumsoc.blog/2022/06/26/a-die-study-of-james-i-shillings-third-issue-sixth-bust-mm-rose-gary-oddie/>
- (2) G. Oddie. A Die Study of James I Shillings – Third Issue, Sixth Bust, mm Lis. BNS Blog 10 August 2022. <https://britnumsoc.blog/2022/08/10/a-die-study-of-james-i-shillings-third-issue-sixth-bust-mm-lis-gary-oddie/>
- (3) W.W. Esty. Estimation of the size of a coinage: A survey and comparison of methods. Numismatic Chronicle. Vol 146 (1986) pp185-215.
- (4) W.W. Esty. How to estimate the original number of dies and the coverage of a sample. Numismatic Chronicle. Vol. 166 (2006), pp. 359-364.

