

Edward IV Durham halfpennies: Some new examples?

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When Paul and Bente Withers published their guide *Small Change IV: Halfpennies and Farthings: Edward IV - Henry VII* in 2004 (Withers, 2004) there were four known types of Edward IV Durham halfpennies. Since then, metal detectorists have added at least another seven to this list. It is the aim of this article to present all those new examples that have been recorded by the author up to February 2023.

It should be no surprise that the number of known varieties of Durham halfpennies should be increasing over time. There is good contemporary documentary evidence to suggest there should be more Edward IV Durham halfpennies awaiting discovery. In his book *The Durham Mint* (Allen, 2003) Martin Allen lists the contents of documents relating to the Durham mint. One document dated 26th August 1473 records Bishop Laurence Booth being authorised to make four obverse and 8 reverse halfpenny dies. A later document dating to the 21st March 1477 shows that Bishop William Dudley was authorised to have twelve obverse and twenty-four reverse dies for halfpennies made.

The first two halfpennies shown below (Fig.1 and Fig.2) could possibly be related to the Durham penny with a cross on the breast and crosses over the crown, Spink number S2117 (Spink, 2021). These halfpennies do not appear to have crosses over the crown which could be simply due to lack of space?



Figure 1. Edward IV Durham halfpenny. (No.1)

Obverse: [?] **EDWARD DEI GRA REX**[?]

Reverse: **CIVI TAS: DVNO LMI**

Notes: Cross on breast. Four extra pellets on reverse and 'V' in CIVI quarter. Two examples known to author. The example in the British Museum and has a large 'D' in centre of reverse cross. It is not clear whether the above coin has a 'D' in the centre of the reverse.



Figure 2. Edward IV Durham halfpenny (No. 2).

Obverse: ❁ **EDWARD DEI GRA REX A**

Reverse: **CIVI TAS DVNO LMI**

Notes: Cross on breast. Four extra pellets on reverse and 'V' in CIVI quarter. 'D' in centre of reverse cross. Nine examples seen by the author.

Another halfpenny which is very similar to a Withers type 3a with a 'B' to the left of the crown and crosses by the neck was found by a metal detectorist in October 2014. This variety was different because it had a 'V' on the breast too. This is very similar to the penny designated by Spink as S2120. Unfortunately, the finder could not be contacted in order to gain permission to use the picture of the coin and so only a description is possible here.

Obverse: [?] **E[DW]ARD DI or DEI] GRA REX AnG**

Reverse: **CIVI [TAS] DEx RAM**

Notes: 'B' to the left of the crown, crosses at neck and 'V' on breast. 'D' in centre of reverse cross is not clear. Unique?

A very similar halfpenny can be seen in fig.3. This coin compared to the one above is much coarser in design. Unfortunately, the legend is mostly unreadable. An important difference

between these coins is the reverse legend. This reverse legend appears to read DVNOLMI or possibly DVNOLMIE.



Figure 3. Edward IV Durham halfpenny. (No.4).

Obverse: [EDWA]RD [.....]

Reverse: [CIVI] [TAS] **DVNO** [LMI?]

Notes: 'B' to left of the crown, crosses at neck and 'V' on breast. 'V' in CIVI quarter? 'D' in centre of reverse cross. Unique?

The following varieties of Durham halfpennies are usually attributed to Bishop William Dudley (Withers, 2004). The first example is very similar to the Withers type 4a with the 'V' to the left of the bust. The halfpenny in fig.4 also has the 'V' to the left of the bust but it is higher and touches the jaw.

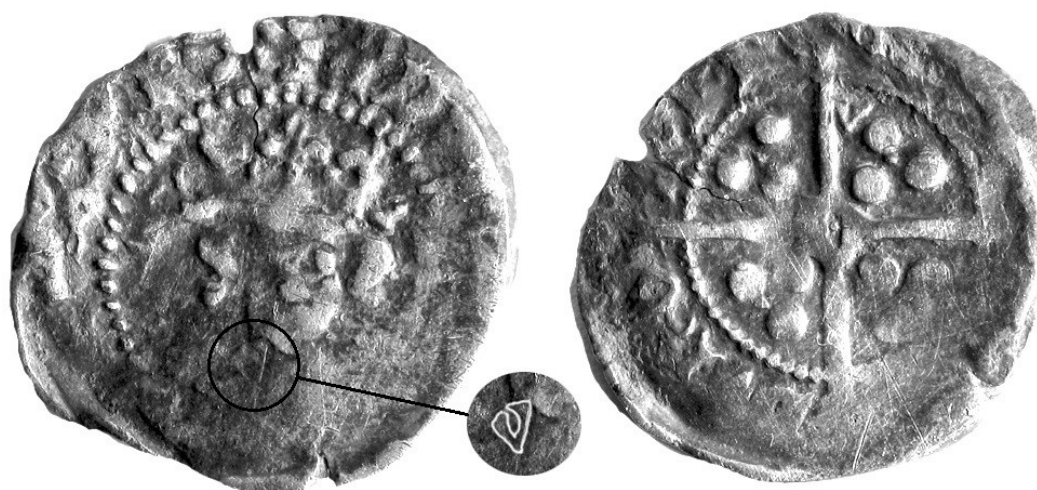


Figure 4. Edward IV Durham halfpenny. (No.5)

Obverse: ***EDW[ARD][DI or DEI GRA][R]EX AnG**

Reverse: **C[IVI] [TAS] DVno LMI[E?]**

Notes: 'V' to the left of the neck. Four extra pellets on reverse and 'V' in CIVI quarter. Two examples seen by author.

Fig. 5 shows an example of the Durham halfpenny with the 'V' to the right of the neck. This also occurs on some of the rarer varieties of the penny.



Figure 5. Edward IV Durham halfpenny. (No.6)

Obverse: **[?] EDWARD DEI GRA REX [AnG?]**

Reverse: **CIVI TAS DVno LMIE**

Notes: 'V' to the right of the neck. Four extra pellets on the reverse and 'V' in CIVI quarter. 'D' in centre of reverse cross. Two examples seen by the author.

The last halfpenny (Fig.6) to be presented here has been designated a Withers type 5, although does not feature in the present edition of *Small Change IV: Halfpennies and Farthings: Edward IV - Henry VII.* (Withers, 2004). It has a 'D' to the left of the neck and a 'V' to the right. This seems closely related to the pennies with the Spink number of S2123. These also are generally accepted to be issued under Bishop Dudley. It must be noted that there is no 'D' in the centre of the reverse unlike most other Durham halfpennies, with exception of the Withers type 2b.



Figure 6 Edward IV Durham Halfpenny. (No.7)

Obverse: [?] [ED]WAR[D][DI or DEI GRA]REX An[G?]

Reverse: [C]IVI T[AS] [.....]L[]

Notes: 'D' and 'V' by neck. No 'D' in centre of reverse. No 'V' in CIVI quarter? Unique?

References

Allen, M. (2003). The Durham Mint. by M. Allen, *The Durham Mint* (pp. 92-93). London: Spink.

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