A Die Study of James I Shillings – Second Issue, mm Tun

Gary Oddie

Introduction

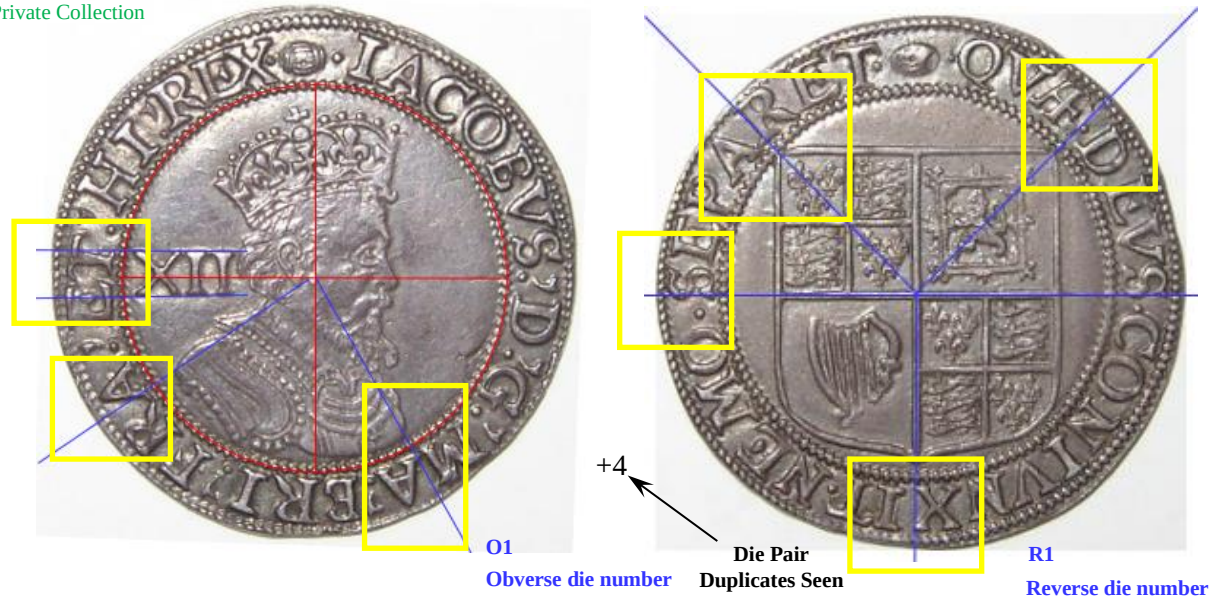
This note continues the die studies of James I shillings, working backwards through the mintmarks of the second issue. Here the mintmark Tun is presented – issued 17th May 1615 to 15th November 1616.

Method

As previously, the image is scaled to fit a nominal inner circle (red) and the coin is rotated to make the XII horizontal and guidelines drawn above and below the XII (blue) and from the centre of the inner circle past the edge of the bust closest to the inner circle (blue). On the reverse the centre of the shield is used as the origin and guidelines drawn through the top left and top right corners of the shield (blue). The features in the yellow boxes are sufficient to identify the individual dies.

Summary of Results

[P1]
Provenance 1
Private Collection



This is one of the scarcer mintmarks and just 22 specimens have been found.

Type		Obv. Legend	Obv. Dies	Rev. Dies
Issue	Bust			
2nd	5th	**IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HI REX**	6	8 1/2
		IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HIB REX	2	2 1/2 1/4
		IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRAN ET HI REX	2	2 3/4
		Totals	10	14

The die study follows the same sequence.

The Die Study

IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HI REX

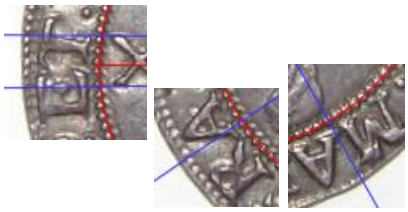
5th Bust

[P1]

O1

+4

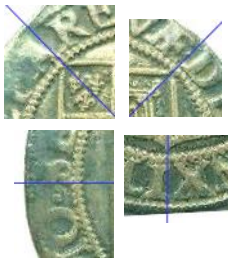
R1



[P2]

O1

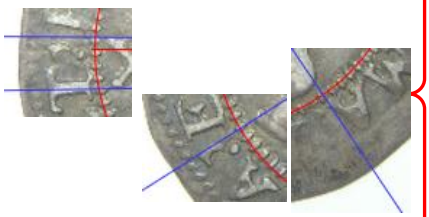
R2



[P3]

O2

R3



[P4]

O2

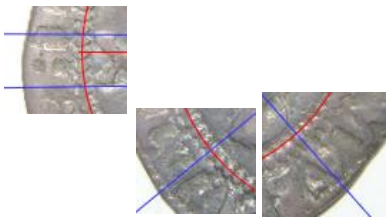
R4

[P5]

O3

R5

No Stop before mm



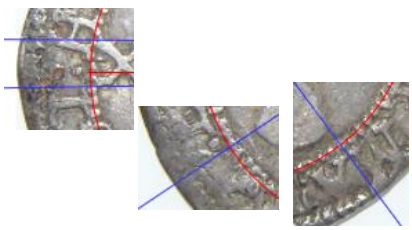
Tun over Trefoil Obv?

[P6]

O4

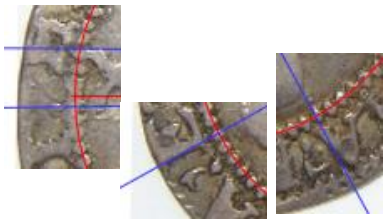
R6

No Stop before mm



IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HIB REX – Continued

5th Bust



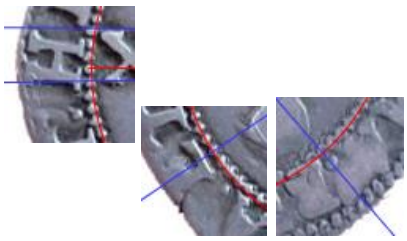
[P7]

O5

R7

No Stop before mm

From a very distorted photo



[P8]

O6

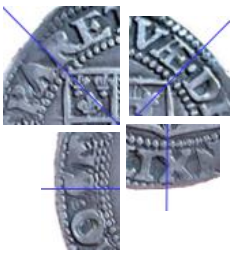
R8

[P9]

O6

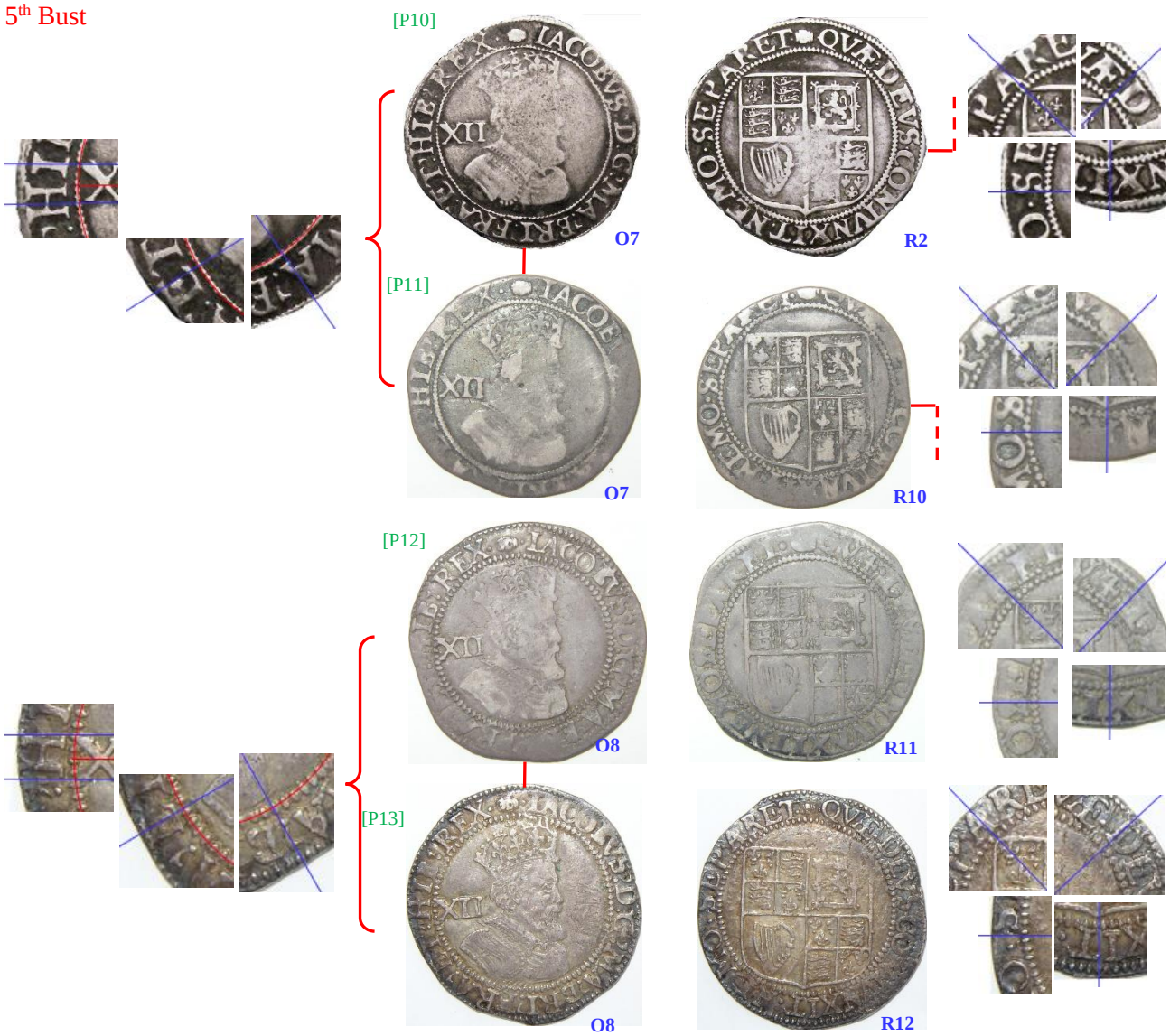
R9

No Stops at mm



IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HIB REX

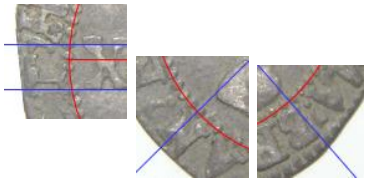
5th Bust



IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRAN ET HIB REX

5th Bust

Double struck



[P14]

O9

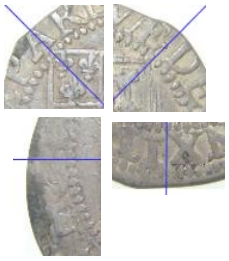
+2

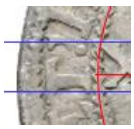
R10

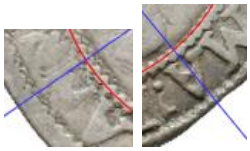
[P15]

O10

R13







[P16]

O10

Top left shield breaks ic

R14

Sources of Images and Acknowledgements

The following are thanked for the use of their images:

[P1]	Private Collection	[P7]	Private Collection	[P13]	Private Collection
[P2]	Private Collection	[P8]	Private Collection	[P14]	British Museum
[P3]	British Museum	[P9]	Private Collection	[P15]	British Museum
[P4]	British Museum	[P10]	LCA 5-6-2015 Lot 1761	[P16]	Ashmolean Museum
[P5]	British Museum	[P11]	British Museum		
[P6]	Private Collection	[P12]	British Museum		

On [P10] LCA is London Coin Auctions. Thanks also to David Holt and Nigel Prevost for useful contributions regarding provenances. From the "English Hammered and Early Milled Coin Collectors" Facebook Group thanks go to Michael Thompson and Stuart Wood.

Also thanks to Tom Hockenhull and the team at the British Museum for allowing pictures to be taken of their pieces, Martin Allen and Richard Kelleher at the Fitzwilliam for the same and finally Julian Baker at the Ashmolean Museum for showing me the subtleties of their search engine!

Discussion and Conclusions

On 15 November 1616 the value of silver in the Pyx box was £5 5s 10½d comprising 1/- 6d, 2d, 1d and ½ d. This is the last of the moderate sized issues of silver (mintmarks key to tun) before the very rare silver issues (mintmarks Book to Spur Rowel). I have an old recollection of a silver half-crown with mintmark tun, but can't recall where, and not sufficient to appear in the indentures or pyx.

O1/R1 is certainly a finework issue, with five specimens found, all in high grade and on almost perfectly round flans. The slight irregularities in the flans are sufficient to untangle the provenances in earlier collections with average plates.

Interestingly **O1** appears on a circulation piece with **R2**. I haven't seen this piece in person but from the photos, it is slightly double struck on the obverse and though high grade and on a good and round flan, **R2** is also muled with **O7** which is definitely a normal circulation issue.

O4 and **O5** show significant die damage/corrosion.

With just 22 specimens struck from 10 obverse and 14 reverse dies the sample is still far from ideal. The table below presents the usual statistical analysis for shillings with mintmark Tun.

		Obverse	Reverse
Sample size	n	22	22
Number of dies	d	10	14
Singletons	d_1	3	11
2 examples	d_2	5	1
3 examples	d_3	1	
4 examples	d_4		1
5 examples	d_5		1
6 examples	d_6	1	
Coverage	C_{est}	0.86	0.50
Estimated dies	d_-	9	20
	d_{est}	13	39
	d_+	21	83

Table 1. Die statistics of the James I shillings, second issue, mintmark Tun.

At first this was a little surprising, with the obverse coverage at 0.86 suggesting the sample is not too bad. However, the reverse coverage at 0.50 definitely needs improving with a larger sample size, hopefully providing more die duplicates rather than adding to the singletons count.