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

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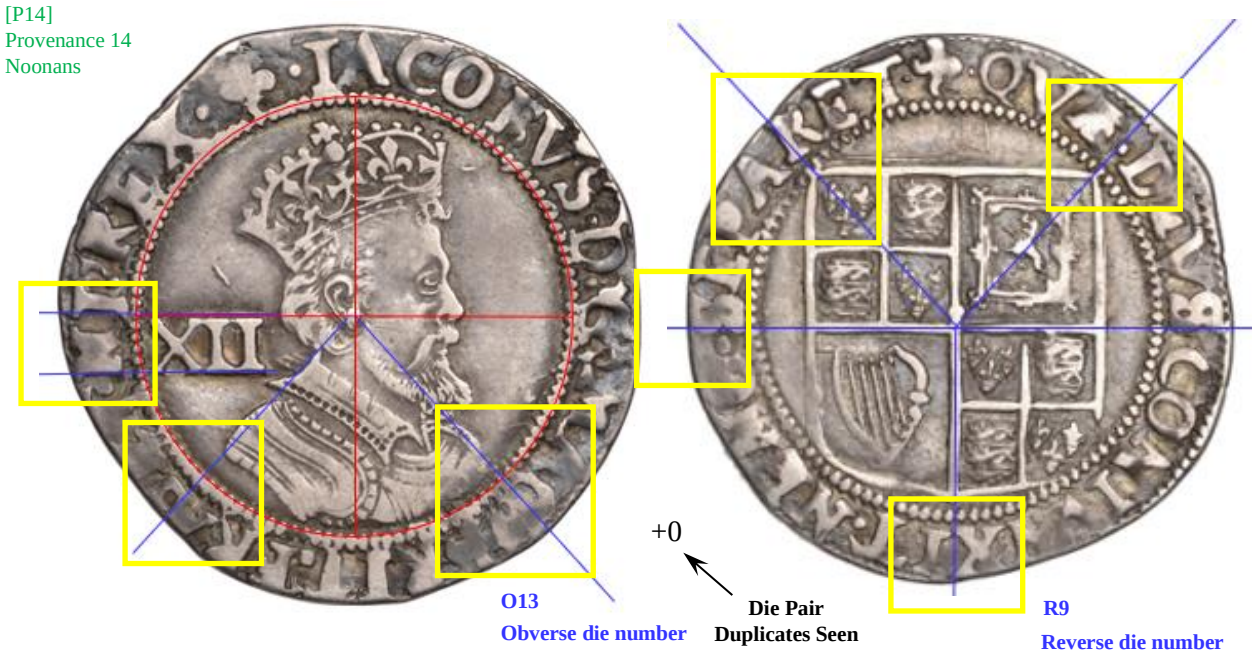
Introduction

This note continues the die studies of James I shillings, working backwards through the mintmarks of the second issue. Here the mintmark Trefoil is presented – issued 28th April 1613 to 20th October 1613.

Method

As previously, the obverse 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



This is one of the scarcer mintmarks and just 19 specimens have been found.

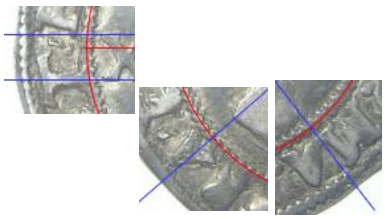
Type		Obv. Legend	Obv. Dies	Rev. Dies
Issue	Bust			
2nd	5th	**IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HI REX**	4	2 1/2 1/3
		IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRAN ET HI REX	1	RM_{Cinq}
		IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX	3	2 1/3
		IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX	1	1
		IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX	6	3 1/2 1/3 RM_{Tower}
		IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HIB REX	1	1
			Totals 16	11

The die study follows the same sequence.

The Die Study

IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRA ET HI REX

5th Bust

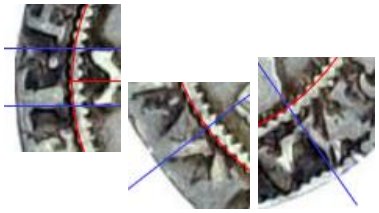


[P1]

O1

R1

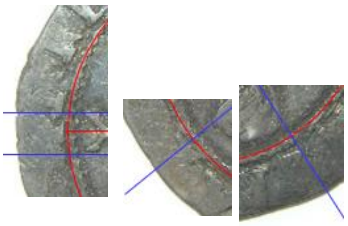
[P2]



O2

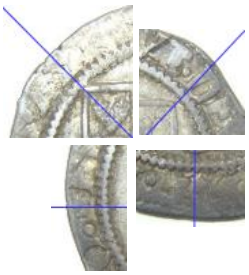
R2

[P3]

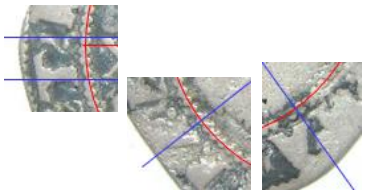


O3

R3



[P4]



O4

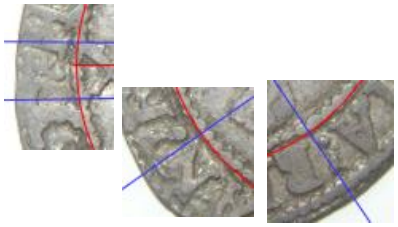
R4

IACOBVS D G MA BRI FRAN ET HI REX

5th Bust

Mule Obv mm Trefoil

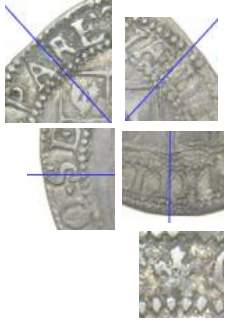
Rev mm Cinquefoil



[P5]

O5

RM$_{Cinq}$



IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX

5th Bust

[P6]

[P7]

Overstruck? Obv mm, as O9

[P8]

IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HIB REX

5th Bust

Overstruck? Obv mm, as O8

Overstruck? Rev mm

[P9]

IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX

5th Bust

[P10]

[P11]

[P12]

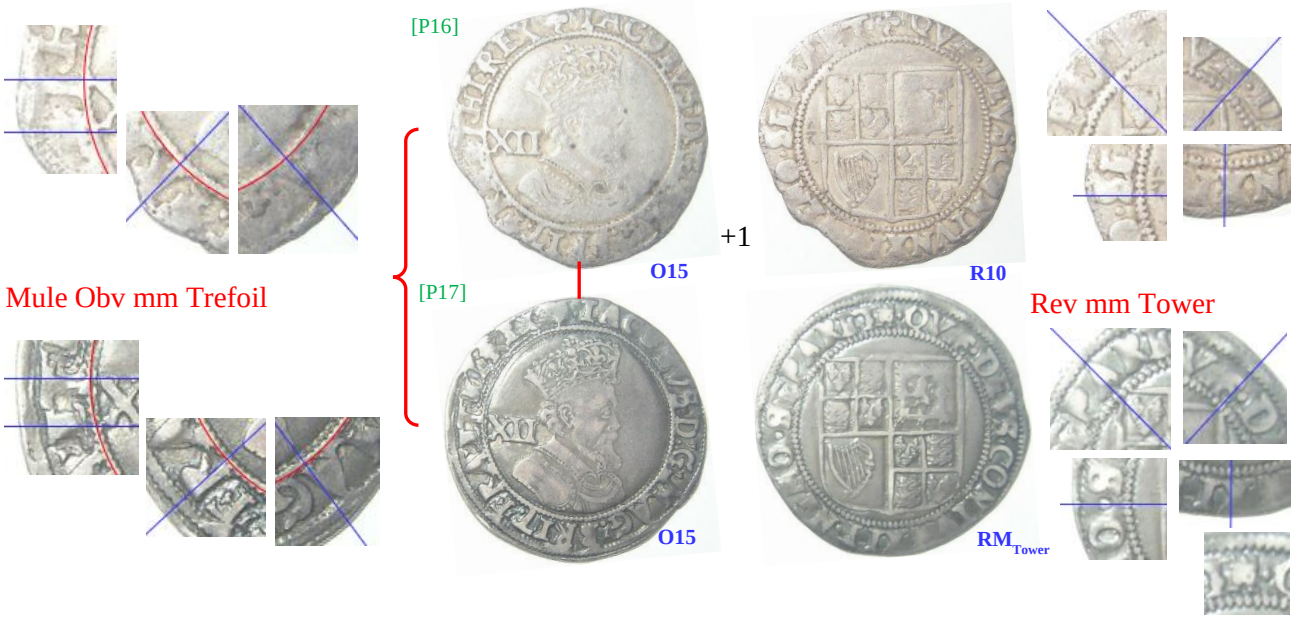
[P13]

[P14]

[P15]

IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX - continued

5th Bust



IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HIB REX

5th Bust

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]	Noonans 13 Mar 2002 Lot 648	[P8]	Heritage via Numista	[P14]	Noonans 7 June 2023 Lot 213
[P3]	British Museum	[P9]	Heritage 29 May 2014 Lot 17027	[P15]	Private Collection
[P4]	British Museum	[P10]	Fitzwilliam Museum	[P16]	Private Collection
[P5]	British Museum	[P11]	British Museum	[P17]	Private Collection
[P6]	Private Collection	[P12]	Christies 1 Jan 1971 Lot 2041	[P18]	Heritage 4 Jun 2015 Lot 61094

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Discussion and Conclusions

On 20th October 1613 the value of silver in the Pyx box was £7 2s 1d comprising 1/-, 6d, 2d, 1d and ½d. The period covered since the trial for the mm Tower issue (28 April 1613) is just six months. This is still one of the scarcer issues as confirmed by the small numbers of surviving shillings. Just 19 specimens have been found including two that are muled with reverse dies from the adjacent issues – **RM$_{Tower}$** and **RM$_{Cinquefoil}$**.

The muled dies are not counted in this study but will be counted in the studies of their respective mintmarks.

Interestingly Trefoil **O5** is muled with a cinquefoil reverse, but this obverse die is not known (yet) with a Trefoil reverse die and is the only piece found with a **FRAN** legend in these mintmarks.

Some of the dies continued to be used when in a damaged state the several letters in the legend merging with the inner circle (**O8**, **O10**, **R10**, **O11**, **O14** and **O15**) and **R7** has a "blob" where the reverse mintmark should be. For **R7** it has been assumed that the mintmark is a trefoil, but this may be revised if a specimen in an earlier die state is found and it turns out to be something else, e.g. Trefoil over Tower.

With just 19 specimens struck from 16 obverse and 11 reverse dies, and just one die pair duplicate, the sample is far from ideal. The table below presents the usual statistical analysis for shillings with mintmark Trefoil.

		Obverse	Reverse
Sample size	n	19	17
Number of dies	d	16	11
Singletons	d_1	14	7
2 examples	d_2	1	3
3 examples	d_3	1	1
4 examples	d_4		
5 examples	d_5		
6 examples	d_6		
Coverage	C_{est}	0.26	0.59
Estimated dies	d_-	50	13
	d_{est}	87	25
	d_+	294	53

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

As with some of the studies of the later mintmarks, the coverage is poor, especially for the obverse dies at 0.26 and even the reverse coverage at 0.59 means there is a long way to go before the numbers can be used confidently. These are the worst statistics found for any of the die studies so far. For the obverse, with 14 singletons in a sample of 19 coins from 16 dies, the sample really is way too small to be statistically useful. The issues caused by very low coverage values have been discussed in another blog note.(1) When the coverage is this low, the range and predicted numbers of dies are not valid.

Reference

(1) G. Oddie. *A Die Study of Victorian Shillings Dated 1865. Part 1 - Validating the Statistical Methods.* BNS Blog, 23rd April 2023. https://britnumsoc.files.wordpress.com/2023/04/355-1865-pt1-oddie-blog-003.pdf