

Card Advertising Tokens c.1930? Part 4

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Introduction

Three previous articles have presented 16 different varieties of cardboard advertising tokens, with a common design feature of a photographic image of a very worn bun-head of Queen Victoria.^(1,2,3) This note presents seven further pieces that have been found in the Royal Mint Museum collection. Usefully these all have accession dates prior to 1936. In summary, four have the usual photographic image of a worn bun head penny of Victoria, a fifth has an image of a high grade Victoria old head penny and two have images of high grade pennies of George V. The usual search of online archives has been carried out for each of the businesses. The final piece is shown to be a self-advertisement issued by D. Harper & Co, of London, a long standing manufacturer of card labels and advertising novelties. To allow easier page layouts, the tokens are presented in no particular order.

017. The Financial News

Obv. ALL THE NEWS OF | **The | Financial | News.** |
ALL THE MARKETS

Various fonts and sizes printed in black on white paper

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a high grade George V penny (1911-1926).

Details Thin card with white paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm.

[Royal Mint Museum. 54.382 from an envelope dated 1916]



The Financial News was founded in 1884 by Harry Marks (1855-1916), a journalist and later a politician. Born in London, Marks began his career with United States newspapers and on returning to London he set up the Financial News.⁽⁴⁾

The launch of the financial Times paper in 1888 provided strong competition. Following a stroke in 1909 Marks relinquished the editorship but retained a controlling interest and the post of editor-in-chief. In 1916 Marks died and the newspaper declined. The Financial News was bought by publishers Eyre & Spottiswoode in 1928. In 1945, Brendan Bracken purchased the Financial Times from Lord Camrose, and, following 57 years of rivalry, merged it with the Financial News to form a single six-page newspaper. The merger combined the editorial talent of the Financial News with the circulation of the Financial times.⁽⁵⁾

The Royal Mint Museum acquisition date of 1916, being the same year as that of the death of Harry Marks, may not be a coincidence.

018. [] Unprinted Blank

Obv. Unprinted blank

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a high grade Victorian old head penny (1895-1901).

Details Thin card with white paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm.

[Royal Mint Museum. 54.378 accessioned 12.7.37]



It is anticipated that card advertising tokens will exist with this portrait. There is a possibility that the printed advert has delaminated and been lost. However, the remaining blank white paper looks too smooth and has worn at the edge to reveal the raw card underneath, so this is probably the original surface. This piece also provides a cautionary note that card tokens should not be stored with steel paperclips, as they will rust and stain the card.

019. White Horse Hotel, Ditchling

Obv. **Present | this and 2d. off | first drink allowed |**
White Horse | Hotel | Ditchling | Phone : |
Hassocks | 317

Various fonts and sizes printed in black on cream paper

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a very worn Victorian bun head penny (1860-1894).

Details Thin card with cream paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm.

[Royal Mint Museum. 54.373 and 54.374 both accessioned 28.5.1936]



The building still survives as the White Horse Inn, 16 West Street, Ditchling, Brighton and Hove, West Sussex, BN6 8TS. It is Grade II listed and has the same layout as when it was built in the early 19th century.⁽⁶⁾

The 1905 Sussex Kelly's has Arthur Duffin as the publican. The 1911 Kellys has it in the ownership of George James Pratt. The 1911 census gives George aged 46, married for 13 years to his wife Sophia, aged 39. Their children are given as Charles (16), Albert (10), Dorothy (8) and George (1 month). The 1915 Kelly's has George James Pratt as the publican at the White Horse at Ditchling, Hassocks.

The South of England Advertiser – Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Kent gave this announcement of the death of Charles Pratt on October 28, 1915 (p5 col7).

The mid Sussex Times of 18 September 1923 (p6 col1) has George James A. Pratt of the White Horse Hotel, Ditchling, in Lewes Police court for “not keeping a dog under proper control at night time”. He was fined 2s 6d.

DITCHLING.
Private Charles Pratt, A Company, 2nd Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment, was killed in action in France on Sept. 25. The young soldier, who was 20 years of age, was the son of Mr. George Pratt, landlord of the White Horse hotel, Ditchling. Earlier in the war he had been wounded.



George James Augustus Pratt died in Ditchling on 23 April 1944, aged 79. He left £1976 12s 10d to his wife Sophia and son Albert Joseph Pratt turner.

This postcard⁽⁷⁾ probably shows the Pratt family outside the White Horse in about 1905. George in the bowler hat holding the horse, Albert age about four sat on the carriage, and Sophia standing in the hotel doorway.

With the Royal Mint accession date of 1936, there is a good chance that the token was issued in the 1930s by the man in the bowler hat or his successor at the White Horse.

020. Electric Theatre, Bournemouth

Obv. **100% | Entertainmen[t] | for EVERY 1d. |**
SPENT AT THE | Electric Theatre, |
Bournemouth | : : : :

Various fonts and sizes printed in black on cream paper

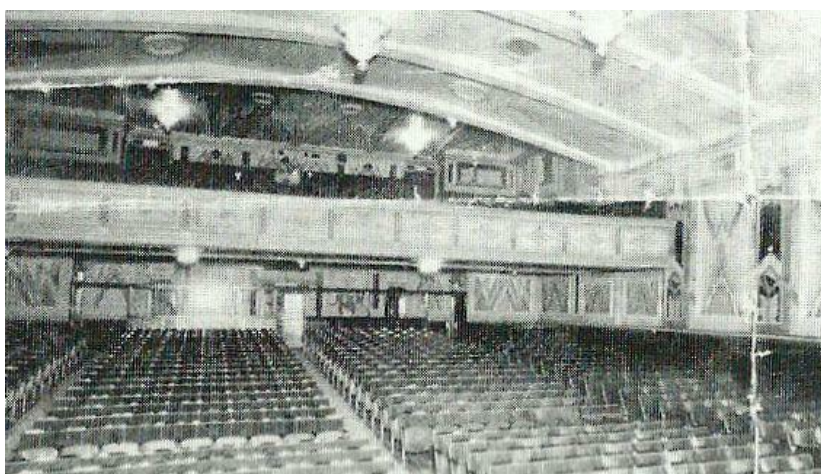
Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a very worn
Victorian bun head penny (1860-1894).

Details Thin card with cream paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm
[Royal Mint Museum. 54.375 accessioned 6.1.33]



In 1910, two premises located at 25 and 27 Commercial Road were converted into the Electric Theatre and this operated under the ownership of the Popular Bioscope Syndicate of London.

In 1921 the old building was demolished and a new Electric Theatre seating 1,400 was designed by the theatre architectural firm Frank Matcham & Company. It was built by Alexander Bernstein's building company and opened on 22 December. Initially a 15-piece orchestra accompanied the silent films but by 1922 a Norman & Beard straight organ had been installed to add to the experience.⁽⁸⁾



The business went through a few changes of ownership and the Christie organ, originally installed in 1929, was played regularly until 1954 when it was decommissioned due to a woodworm infestation.



The Electric Theatre closed on 2 March 1966. It was demolished and replaced by retail outlets. For many years, the new building was occupied by Marks & Spencer's, but it has been vacant since April 2018 when M&S moved to new premises in the Castlepoint shopping mall.⁽⁹⁾

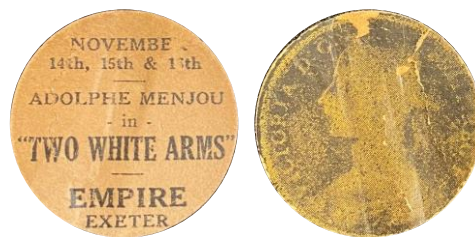
021. Empire, Exeter

Obv. **NOVEMBE[R] | 14th, 15th, & 16th |
ADOLPHE MENJOU | - in -
| “TWO WHITE ARMS” |
EMPIRE | EXETER**

Various fonts and sizes printed in black on cream paper

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a very worn
Victorian bun head penny (1860-1894).

Details Thin card with cream paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm
[Royal Mint Museum. 54.376 accessioned 6.1.33]



The Empire Electric Palace was on Fore Street, Exeter, next to St. Lawrence's Church, and opened on 18 August 1910.

It was re-named the Empire Theatre around 1930, when it was equipped for sound films. It had closed by August 1937. In 1942, it was destroyed by German bombs, together with the church.⁽¹⁰⁾

The 1933 Kinematograph Yearbook states that “Two White Arms” was released by M-G-M on 19 September 1932. The stars were Adolphe Menjou and Margaret Banner. A one-line summary of the film - A man in an unsatisfying marriage fakes amnesia in his sly pursuit of extramarital adventures. The film was also shown in the USA under the title “Wives Beware”.⁽¹¹⁾



Adolphe Menjou (1890-1963) was an American actor who appeared in many films with a career spanning both silent and talkies. His characteristic moustache, a style that became the symbol of the resourceful criminal. About which Salvador Dali stated “*la moustache d'Adolphe Menjou est surréaliste*”⁽¹²⁾

To be consistent with the release date of the film and the acquisition of the token by the Royal Mint Museum, the dates stated on the token must refer to 1932.

Thus the token was issued between 19 September and 16 November 1932.

022. John Barnes New Store

Obv. [] IN BARNES | NEW STORE | OPENING EARLY 1936 |

WILL BE FULL OF | PLEASANT | SURPRISES

With a line drawing of a large store front.

Various fonts and sizes printed in black on cream paper

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a very worn

Victorian bun head penny (1860-1894).

Details Thin card with white paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm

[Royal Mint Museum. 54.377 accessioned 27.11.35]



The original plan for a large department store was first proposed in 1898 by a group of six prominent London retailers. The chair, John Barnes, died in 1899 and the project was postponed. In 1900 a four floor shop was opened on Finchley Road. The building amalgamated 14 shops and several houses. The first profits came in 1905 and after that the store thrived with up to 400 members of staff living on site and working in the various departments. In 1926, the business was purchased by the newly formed Selfridge Provincial Stores group. Afterwards the staff were no longer living on site.⁽¹³⁾

In 1935 the store was completely rebuilt and the Hendon & Finchley Times (Friday 1 May 1936 p4 col4) had the following announcement.

JOHN BARNES' NEW STORE

Official Opening Planned for May 25.

Many of our readers have no doubt watched with interest the gradual growth of the imposing building at Swiss Cottage which is being erected on the site of Messrs. John Barnes' well-known store. Concentration is centered on one-half of the building at the moment, the official opening of which is scheduled for May 25. Very interesting happenings, it is said, are planned for the occasion, and although the programme remains a secret we are promised an opening that will make history in the annals of retailing.

A Typical example of forethought and careful planning is a girder which protrudes from the back of the building in order that special exhibits in the nature of racing cars and speedboats may be hoisted into the building with ease for exhibition purposes.

Every detail which promotes comfortable shopping and advantageous display of merchandise has been incorporated in the design, which should make shopping not a task but a pleasure. Escalators will glide customers gently from floor to floor under lights which after many tests have been proved best suited to attractive displays.

So often described as the "personal store," John Barnes have made every effort to provide this personal contact between shop and customer which they maintain is the foundation of intelligent trading.

The new store was located on three of the eight floors, with 96 flats on the upper five floors in a development known as St John's Court

The Selfridge Provincial Store group collapsed in 1940 and John Barnes became part of the John Lewis Partnership. John Barnes continued to flourish, though became increasingly dependent on food sales. The opening of the Brent Cross shopping centre in 1976 (which also included a John

Lewis store) led to further decline. On 17 January 1981, the John Barnes store closed with many of the staff being transferred to the Brent Cross Branch of John Lewis. However, on 2 February 1981 the store reopened as Waitrose John Barnes.



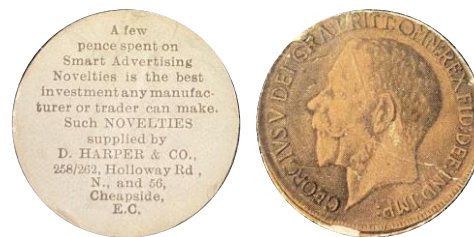
023. D. Harper & Co, Holloway & Cheapside

Obv. A few | pence spent on | Smart Advertising |
Novelties is the best | investment any manufac- |
turer or trader can make. | Such NOVELTIES |
supplied by | D. HARPER & Co., |
258/262, Holloway Road , | N., and 56, | Cheapside, | E.C.
Uniform font printed in black on white paper

Rev. Dark brown printed photographic image of a high grade George V penny (1911-1926).

Details Thin card with white paper on both sides to take the printing. 30mm

[Royal Mint Museum. 54.383 accessioned 9.8.37]

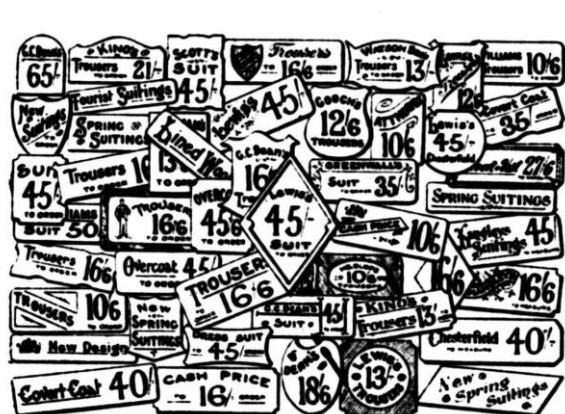


D. Harper and Co were founded 1875 primarily as stationers, label printers and diary makers. Their large premises at Railway Crosses, Islington, known as the “Harpers of Holloway” building was a major landmark in the first half of the twentieth century.

Alderman Sydney C. Harper was Mayor of Islington 1922-5 and 1928-9, as well as a leading member and one-time President of Islington Chamber of Commerce.

Also connected with the firm was the Harper Electric Piano Co. Ltd, formerly of Holloway Road and New Oxford Street.

The company also advertised across the country in many newspapers and trade journals. For example in the Tailor & Cutter, Thursday 20 April 1899 (p28) appeared the following advert for printed tickets.



**HIGH-CLASS
TAILORS'
WINDOW TICKETS,
AT MANUFACTURERS' PRICES.**
D. HARPER & CO.,
266, HOLLOWAY ROAD,
LONDON, N.
— SAMPLES SENT ON APPLICATION. —

The Cornish Telegraph on Wednesday 12 August 1903 (p7 col 4) carried an advert addressed to licensed victuallers, for “penny-in-slot” pianos, available second hand, but as new. The machines included all the popular music on 20 barrels. The advert also included testimonials that the pianos had improved takings by £3 a week.

The Post Office Commercial and Professional Directory for Holloway Road in 1915 has the following entries (p407):

- 258 Harper's South of England Automatic Co. Ltd
- 258, 260 & 262 Harper D. & Co. Ltd. Advertisers' novelty manufctrs
- 258, 260 & 262 Harper Electric Piano (1910) Co. Ltd
- 262 Sunrise Speciality Co. Ltd
- 262 Provident Clothing & Supply Co. Ltd. outfitters

The relationship between this last entry at 262 and the Harper business has yet to be determined.

This advertisement in the Holloway Press, on Saturday 16 June 1923 (p13 col2) gives more details of the company's products.

Also on the same page are adverts for Harper Pianos at 43 Guineas or monthly payments of 25s available at 258-262 Holloway Road and the Sunrise Washing Machine available for £3 10s from 262 Holloway Road along with adverts for their Diary, Calendar and Advertising Novelties printing business.

The most recent newspaper advert has been found in the Birmingham Daily Post, on Wednesday 3 September 1969 (p10 col 1), where D. Harper & Co. Ltd are advertising custom-printed pocket diaries.

The date of the end of the Harper business has not been found, but in 1992, the building at 258 Holloway Road was occupied by a branch of the Pamela Stevens skin treatment clinic.

The original buildings remain, now operating as separate businesses – a café, pizza restaurant, vape shop etc.

Looking upwards reveals a ghost sign for Harper Pianos on the end wall of one of the buildings.

D. Harper & Co. is also known to have issued several different types of metallic token. They can be found listed in the Appendix to this blog.

At this point suspicions were increasing that the D. Harper & Co. novelty advertising and printing business, with its connections to other businesses and entertainments, was a possible candidate for the manufacturer of the card tokens showing images of coins.

The longevity of the business also raises the possibility that it was responsible for all of the tokens found so far.

D. HARPER & Co., Ltd.
258, HOLLOWAY ROAD, N.7.
STAND No. 13.

This business is an old established one, and was founded at Church-street prior to coming to Holloway-road where it has now been for nearly 30 years.

Few people in Islington are aware of the activities of this firm. They are manufacturers of novelties for the Fancy Goods trade and for advertising purposes. Very large quantities of mirror and comb cases, photograph frames, postcard albums, cigarette albums are turned out, also gold and silver blocked calendars, blotters, diaries, pocket books, looseleaf notebooks, wallets, match cases, telephone indexes, recorder pads, book covers, cigarette cases, music cases, vesta cases, etc.

They are members of the National Union of Manufacturers, London Chamber of Commerce, Stationer's Association, Toy and Fancy Goods Association, and National Leather Goods Association. The governing director is the present Mayor of Islington, Councillor Sidney C. Harper, J.P.



This would have been the end of the blog but for a very late night / early morning search of the British Newspaper archives, trying different keywords and combinations to get deeper into D. Harper & Co and their connection with the advertising tokens. The search for “imitation penny” produced over 200 hits. Working through them all revealed several items relevant to advertising tokens, toy coins and cardboard counterfeits being used to deceive vending machines, which will be saved for another blog.

However, a Supplement to the Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly issued on 23 April 1914 (p.vii) carried the advertisement shown below on the left. Then a few months later in the supplement to same magazine on 11 June 1914 (p.xxxvi) included the advert shown on the right.

**Advertising Novelties
for Cinemas.**

Our Imitation Pennies, X Ray Cards, Vesta Cases, Mirrors, etc., are being used with good effect by leading Cinema Proprietors. Inexpensive but effective.

Particulars from

D. HARPER & Co., Ltd.,
Advertising Novelty Mfrs.,
258, 260, 262 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON, N.

Advertising Novelties for Cinemas.




Proprietors of Cinemas should send for particulars of our Imitation Pennies which are a most effective but inexpensive method of advertising.

We also supply X-Ray Cards, Vesta Cases, Match Box Cases, Mirrors, etc., and shall be pleased to send samples and prices.

D. HARPER & Co., Ltd.,
Advertising Novelty Manufacturers,
258, 260, 262 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON, N.

And then in the main magazine for - 1 March 1917 (p.73).

MONEY for NOTHING!



Kinema Proprietors should give away our Imitation pennies:-

They are an excellent advertising medium and command attention.

They are inexpensive, the price being

5,000 for 60/-

10,000 for 100/-

Printed with any advertisement on back.

Send your order to—

D. HARPER & CO., LTD.,
Novelty and Fancy Leather Goods Manufacturer,
258/262, HOLLOWAY ROAD, N.

And a week later, also in the main magazine, for 8 March 1917 (p.33).

Messrs. D. Harper and Co., Ltd., 258-262 Holloway Road, N., who stock novelties of various kinds, are at present specialising with imitation pennies, which are an excellent advertising medium, and command attention. Proprietors of kinema halls should find them useful as a publicity device. The firm also have a “Flashograph” advertising novelty, which should interest exhibitors.

These provide the “smoking gun” that D. Harper & Co. Ltd manufactured imitation card pennies.

Other newspaper adverts from the 1880s to the 1930s also suggested that there were other suppliers of “cardboard pennies” to be used for advertising. These need following up before publication.

Discussion and Conclusions

This note has added six further cardboard advertising tokens and an unprinted blank to the previously published lists. All are penny sized. Four have the familiar worn bun head penny of Queen Victoria. The unprinted blank has an image of a high grade old head penny of Victoria and two pieces show an image of a high grade penny of George V.

Background searches have found details for the issuers and allows the approximate dating of the tokens as summarised in the table below.

Token			Issuer	Location	Trade	Approx issue date
017	1d	GVI	The Financial News	London	Newspaper	1884-1916
018	1d	OH	n/a	n/a	n/a	1895-1937
019	1d	BH	White Horse Hotel	Ditchling	Hotel/Inn	c.1911-1936
020	1d	BH	Electric Theatre	Bournemouth	Cinema	1921-1933
021	1d	BH	Empire Cinema	Exeter	Cinema	Sept-Nov 1932
022	1d	BH	John Barnes New Store	Finchley Road	Department Store	May 1936
023	1d	GVI	D. Harper & Co.	Holloway & Cheapside	Novelty advertising	Pre 1937

The presence of a group of such tokens in the Royal Mint Museum collection may be just the result of random acquisition, or possibly a record of tokens that have potential to be deceptive and close to counterfeiting.

D. Harper & Co. seems to have had many different businesses over the decades following its foundation in 1875. The label and diary printing, as well as novelty advertising, along with its connections to other businesses and entertainments, made it a likely candidate for the manufacturer of the card tokens showing images of coins.

Searches have confirmed that D. Harper & Co. were responsible for the manufacture of card advertising pennies bearing a portrait of a monarch, but have also raised the likelihood of other manufacturers.

References and Acknowledgements

- (1) G. Oddie. An Unusual Series of Card Advertising Tokens c.1930? *BNS Blog* 21 February, 2024. <https://britnumsoc.files.wordpress.com/2024/02/427-card-pennies-blog-001.pdf>
- (2) G. Oddie. Card Advertising Tokens c.1930? Part 2. *BNS Blog* 19 March 2024. <https://britnumsoc.blog/2024/03/19/card-advertising-tokens-c-1930-part-2-gary-oddie/>
- (3) G. Oddie and A. Judd. Card Advertising Tokens c.1930? Part 3. *BNS Blog* 6 August 2024. <https://britnumsoc.blog/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/card-pennies-003-blog-1.pdf>

As well as the usual Ancestry, FindMyPast, Directories and British Newspaper Archives, the following specific sites have been used.

- (4) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_News_\(1884%E2%80%931945\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_News_(1884%E2%80%931945))
- (5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_Times
- (6) https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101275631-the-white-horse-hotel-ditchling#google_vignette
- (7) <https://www.ditchlinghistoryproject.org/then-and-now.html>
- (8) <https://beekman.herokuapp.com/theaters/22292>
- (9) <https://bournemouthbeatboom.wordpress.com/cinemas-and-theatres/>
- (10) <https://ia601604.us.archive.org/24/items/kinematographyea00kine/kinematographyea00kine.pdf>
- (11) <https://cinematreasures.org/theaters/35020>
- (12) <https://m.imdb.com/title/tt0023630/?language=es-mx>
- (13) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Barnes_\(department_store\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Barnes_(department_store))
- (14) <https://www.islingtonhistory.org.uk/downloads/streets-with-a-story-19-april-2021-2.pdf>

Thanks to Virginia Porter, Sarah Tyley and Susie Sandford for arranging and hosting KT's visit to the Royal Mint Museum and providing photographs of the card tokens.

Appendix – D. Harper Tokens

These tokens were not known when the first systematic listing of machine tokens was published by Ralph Hayes in 1986.⁽¹⁵⁾ Two had been found by the time of the fifth supplement in 1988.⁽¹⁶⁾

Harper's Auto Co.

- 183B.** Obv. HARPER'S | SOUTH OF ENGLAND | AUTOMATIC | C^O L^D
Rev. 266-8 | HOLLOWAY R^D | LONDON
Details All incuse, alloy, 21mm



- 183B.1** Obv. HARPER'S AUTO C^OY HOLLOWAY.N.
Rev. VALUE | 2^D
Details Br, 17.5mm

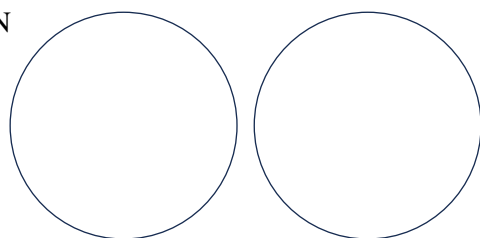


A further four pieces had been found by 2000.⁽¹⁷⁾

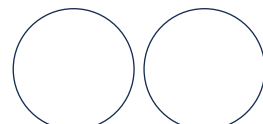
- 183B.2** Obv. HARPERS PICKWICK | HOLLOWAY
Rev. Blank
Details Zinc, central hole, plain rim, 16mm



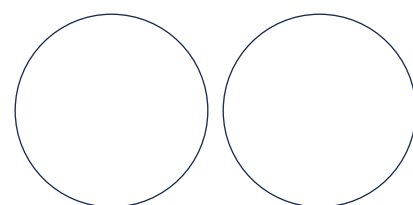
- 183B.3** Obv. HARPERS 266/8 HOLLOWAY ROAD LONDON N
all incuse in four, lines/no rim.
Rev. Uniface.
Details Zinc, 30mm (Not seen)



- 183B.4** As 183B.2 without c/h Rev. Blank. Zinc/16mm (Not seen)



- 183B.5** Obv. D. HARPER & CO'S AUTOMATIC MACHINES |
HOLLOWAY R^D LONDON.
Around a tall central building
Rev. CHANGE AT | COUNTER FOR GOODS | VALUE 1^D
Details Brass, 25.5mm (Not seen in brass, but see below)



And more recently, the following two have been found.⁽¹⁸⁾

- 183B.6** As 183B.5 but in Zinc.



- 183B.7** Obv. D. HARPER & C^O | HOLLOWAY - LONDON.N
Around VALUE 1^D
Rev. View of four floor building with D. HARPER on roof and
flag on flagpole.
Details Zinc, 26mm.



References

- (15) Hayes, R. *British Machine Tokens*, 1986.
- (16) Hayes, R. *British Machine Tokens – Supplement 5*. p23 (April 1988).
- (17) Hayes, R. British Machine Tokens – Final Supplement. *Token Corresponding Society Bulletin*, v6 n7 p267, January 2000.
- (18) <https://machinetokens.com/token.php?id=1598> thanks to the late Malcolm Johnson.

Complicating the searches, there is an unrelated Harper Automatic Machine Manufacturing Co., Stafford Road, Waddon, Croydon, Surrey which made vending machines under Percy Stephen Harper around the same time. This company made cigarette vending machines.

