

A Couple of New Sub-variant Charles I Tower Mint Shillings

Paul Woodard

The two coins in this article are both ‘newly identified’ sub variants within the Tower issued Charles I Shilling’s (Issued under Parliament) It is the hope both these coins can be considered additions into Michael Sharp’s BNJ 47 article 1977 and to complement the update article by Holt, Hulett and Lyall BNJ 84 2014. Both coins are of good silver with weights illustrated.

The first illustration (Fig.1.) shows a Charles I Tower mint Shilling with the mint mark (R) Up until now this mint mark has only been known/seen with the earlier G1 portrait (Fig.2.) It’s sometimes quite a task to differentiate the subtle differences between the two portraits especially when the coin in question is fairly worn and with damage, so it took me quite some time to conclude, but with the help of the Osborne plates (BNJ 54 article 1984) it became obvious this was his portrait ‘89’ for Sharp G2. Numerous differences are evident with the most obvious pearls at base of collar which are unique to the G2 portrait. It is worth pointing out that the only previous evidence of the existence of a G2 (R) die was a shilling from the Dr John Hulett collection that was a G2 mm eye punched over (R) which was noted in the 2014 updated papers. Interestingly that coin, like this one, although different dies both have the full upper crown which could suggest early made G2 dies, mostly the common G2 Shillings with eye and sun mm show a break (probably a die flaw) in the upper/front section of the kings crown.



Fig.1. Charles I Shilling (Sharp G2/2) mm (R) 5.83g (newly identified)



Fig.2. Charles I Shilling obv (Sharp G1/2) mm (R) 6.14g (common)

The second Shilling illustrated in (Fig.3.) Shows a Charles I Tower mint Shilling with mint mark Sceptre. The portrait is a Sharp H1 which is common coupled with reverse 1 (Fig.4.) therefore known and listed in all previous studies as a Sharp H1/1. Reverse 1 of 'type' H generally has larger cross ends with a larger sized 'cruder' designed shield which was carried over from the earlier 'type' G designs (see reverse in fig.1.) Reverse 2 didn't show until the later smaller 'neater' designs of the sceptre mm H2 and H3 portrait Shillings, these later (and last) designs in the Tower mint for Charles I Shillings were on smaller mostly round but full flans, they seemed much better and carefully made. The coin in question has a full reverse of that later neater smaller design (the cross ends varied slightly in size but the all coins used the same Irish harp design) but the obverse is an early H1 portrait die. Many H1 sceptre mm coins show a full legend, this coin displays slightly small due to the smaller flan used. It is probable an early obverse die was coupled with a new reverse die making this coin a Sharp H1/2.



Fig.3. Charles I Shilling (Sharp H1/2) 5.72g (newly identified die combination)



Fig.4. Charles I Shilling rev of a (Sharp H-/1) 5.85g

1. Both coins exhibit considerable wear with varying damage but as mentioned are of good silver and weights are within expected parameters. All coins illustrated are from one private collection with full permission gained.

2. 'Sharp' – Michael Sharp BNJ 47 1977

3. 'Osborne' – BNJ 54 1984

4. Holt, Hulett & Lyall – BNJ 84 2014

