

A Dublin portrait halfpenny of Henry VII

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One of us found a small coin, Figure 1, near Salisbury in Wiltshire, and posted it on the “British Hammered & Milled Coins – Buy, Sell & Auction” Facebook page for identification. It was identified as a Dublin portrait halfpenny of Henry VII by Lee Stone, who tagged the other of us for a second opinion. The purpose of this note is to put this significant find – to our knowledge the first known example of an Irish portrait halfpenny of Henry VII – on record. Until now, Irish halfpennies of Henry VII were known only from the aniconic three crowns coinage.



Figure 1. Dublin portrait halfpenny of Henry VII.

The coin is 10 mm in diameter; the diameter of the inner reverse circle is 7 mm. It weighs 0.28 g. The weight standard of Henry VII Dublin portrait groats is c. 1.81 g – 2.07 g,¹ implying a halfpenny weight standard of 0.23 g – 0.26 g; the coin is slightly overweight relative to this, but from its weight and dimensions there can be no doubt that it is a halfpenny.

The obverse inscription is HENRI[VS] The terminal letter of the inscription is visible, but indistinct. The portrait has a punched flat crown, with four hand-engraved arches terminating in a jewel, possibly topped by a cross, that breaks the inner circle, similar to the Henry VII Dublin portrait groats S.6455-S.6458, the halfgroats S.6465-S.6467, and the pennies S.6469-S.6470. An arched crown such as this is known in the Irish series for Henry VII only, and mirrors the representation of the king in the English series from 1489 to the introduction of the profile issues in the early years of the 16th century. In the English series, Henry VII is also the only monarch to be represented with an arched crown; and therefore the

¹ Sovereign Rarities 2026 169.

attribution of the coin to him appears to be firm. The reverse inscription is read as CI[-T]S-DVB-LIN There is some unclear mark between the L and the I; the terminal letter is definitely an N, and is from the same punch as the N of the obverse inscription. English halfpennies of Henry VII are known from London, Canterbury and York, none of which fit the mint signature of this coin. It is therefore concluded that its attribution to Dublin and to Henry VII is secure, and it joins the recent discoveries of Edward IV halfpennies of Trim² and Drogheda³ in a growing corpus of Irish halfpennies of the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

References

- Hodgkiss, L., and Mac Conamhna, O., 2026. A Suns and Roses halfpenny of Drogheda. *BNS Research Blog* 11 February 2026.
- Sovereign Rarities 2025. *Coins of Scotland, Ireland and the Islands (Jersey, Guernsey, Man & Lundy) including Anglo-Gallic coins.* (Malta).



² Highlighted to one of us by Bente and Paul Withers, ex the David Rogers collection.

³ Hodgkiss and Mac Conamhna 2026.