

Three new coins of the Cork mint of Edward IV

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The purpose of this note is to record two new coins of the Cork mint of Edward IV, a groat and, significantly, a penny; and to discuss a third new groat, recorded in 2023 by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). The groats most likely date to the second reign of Edward IV; the penny may belong to either.

The PAS groat, Figure 1, is LVPL-F5668F, a detecting find from Shropshire. It weighs 1.61 g, and is broken in twain; it is restored digitally in Figure 1. The Initial Mark (IM), if any, is unclear; the obverse inscription is E[]WAR[]DEI GRA DN[] There is a pellet either side of the neck, of type S.6379A.¹ The obverse is worn, but the portrait appears to be from the same punches as NMIHC:2002.1048 in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland, Fig. 10 of Mac Conamhna 2023, which also has pellets by neck. It appears, with slight uncertainty, that there is no reverse IM. The reverse inscription is POSVI-DEVMA-DIVTOR-[] / CIVI-TASC-ORCA-GIE[raised pellet stop] The letter punches used on the reverse appear to be the same as those of NMIHC:2002.1048, and this coin is doubtless closely contemporary with NMIHC:2002.1048. The new coin is from a new pair of dies, unrecorded by Mac Conamhna 2023, or since.



Figure 1. The Cork groat PAS LVPL-F5668F, restored digitally, with pellets by neck of type S.6379A, from an unrecorded die pair. Image courtesy PAS.

The second groat, Figure 2, was posted by John Auld recently on the Facebook page “English Hammered and Early Milled Coin Collectors” for identification on behalf of a detectorist friend, and identified as a Cork groat by the author. It is from the same dies as the specimen BELUM.X35357 in the collection of the Ulster Museum, but is in a much better state of preservation, allowing the outer inscriptions to be read, and the obverse die to be assigned to the reign of Edward IV with confidence. To the nearest gram, its weight is 2 g.

¹ Sovereign Rarities 2025.

There is no IM either side. The obverse inscription is EDWARDVS DEI []RA DNS []NIE ; the reverse inscription is POSVI-[]-DIVTO-REMEV / CIVI-TASE-ORC:-AGE It is somewhat surprising, given the blundering of the mint signature, to find that the outer inscriptions are rendered correctly on both sides.



Figure 2. A new Cork groat from the same dies as the Ulster Museum specimen NMNI BELUM.X35357. Image courtesy John Auld.

In light of these new specimens, and the corpus of Cork groats recorded by Mac Conamhna 2023, Mac Conamhna and Pope 2023, and Edmund et al 2024, the Esty 2006 estimators of the corpus coverage C and estimated number of dies D actually used by the Cork mint may be re-computed as follows. Here N represents the number of specimens in the corpus, from d observed dies, d_1 dies represented by a single specimen and d_2 dies represented by two specimens. A 95% confidence interval for D is given by $[D_-, D_+]$, and a 95% confidence interval for C by $[C_-, C_+]$. The coverage remains low and the estimators very uncertain, indicative of a low survival rate of specimens.

Dies	N	d	d_1	d_2	C	$[C_-, C_+]$	D	$[D_-, D_+]$
Cork groat obverses	19	12	7	3	0.63	[0.29, 0.97]	25	[13, 49]
Cork groat reverses	18	13	9	3	0.50	[0.14, 0.86]	35	[18, 83]

Table 1. Esty 2006 data and estimators for the groat dies of the Cork mint.

The third coin, Figure 3, which came to the author's attention recently, is, significantly, a penny, only the third penny of Cork known to the author, with the other two in the National Museum of Ireland. Its weight is unknown to the author. It was this coin that motivated the inclusion of the Cork penny type S.6384C, "Pellets by neck. R plain cross" in the Standard Catalogue, Sovereign Rarities 2025. There appears to be an obverse IM rosette. The obverse inscription, in the name of Edward, is []DVS DEI GRA DNS H It is possible that pellets by crown may have been lost to corrosion, but it appears not. The reverse inscription is CIVI-T[]S-[]OR-CAG: The attribution to Cork is secured by the observation that the crown and letter punches, and probably the face punch too, are the same as those of

NMIHC:2002.1045, one of the two Cork pennies in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland. The new penny is from a new die pair; the three known Cork pennies are all from different dies, indicative of low survival.



Figure 3. The new Cork penny, with pellets by neck.

References

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