

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

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Introduction

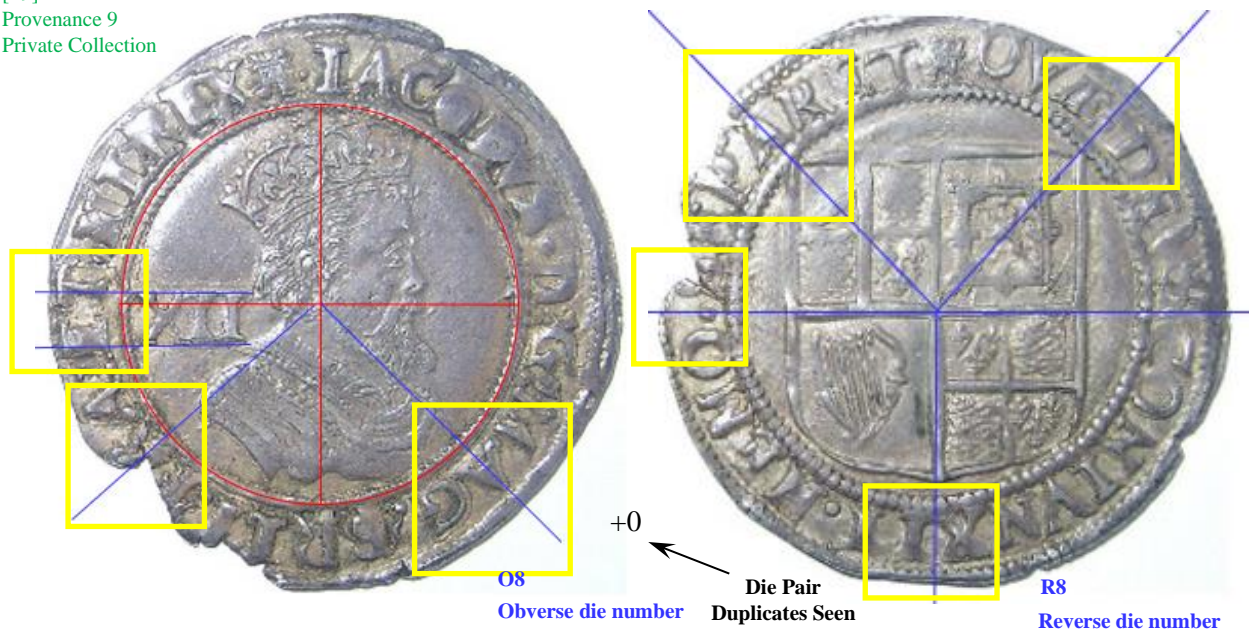
This note continues the die studies of James I shillings, working backwards through the mintmarks of the second issue. Here the mintmark Tower is presented – issued 22nd May 1612 to 28th April 1613. This note also includes many images kindly provided by Michael Thompson who has been studying and collecting images of James I shillings with mms Key to Tower for several years. MT’s method of identifying dies was very similar to that of GO but the orientation was set with a vertical line through the middle of the mm.

Method

Continuing with the GO method for now, 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

[P9]
Provenance 9
Private Collection



This is one of the scarcer mintmarks and just 21 specimens have been found.

| Type | | Obv. Legend | Obv. Dies | Rev. Dies |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|-----------|-----------|
| Issue | Bust | | | |
| 2 nd | 5 th | IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX | 3 | 1 2/4 |
| | | IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRAN ET HIB REX | 1 | 2 |
| | | IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX | 7 | 6 |
| | | IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HIB REX | 1 | 1 2/4 |

Totals 12 11

The die study follows the same sequence.

The Die Study

IACOBVS D G MAG BRI FRA ET HI REX

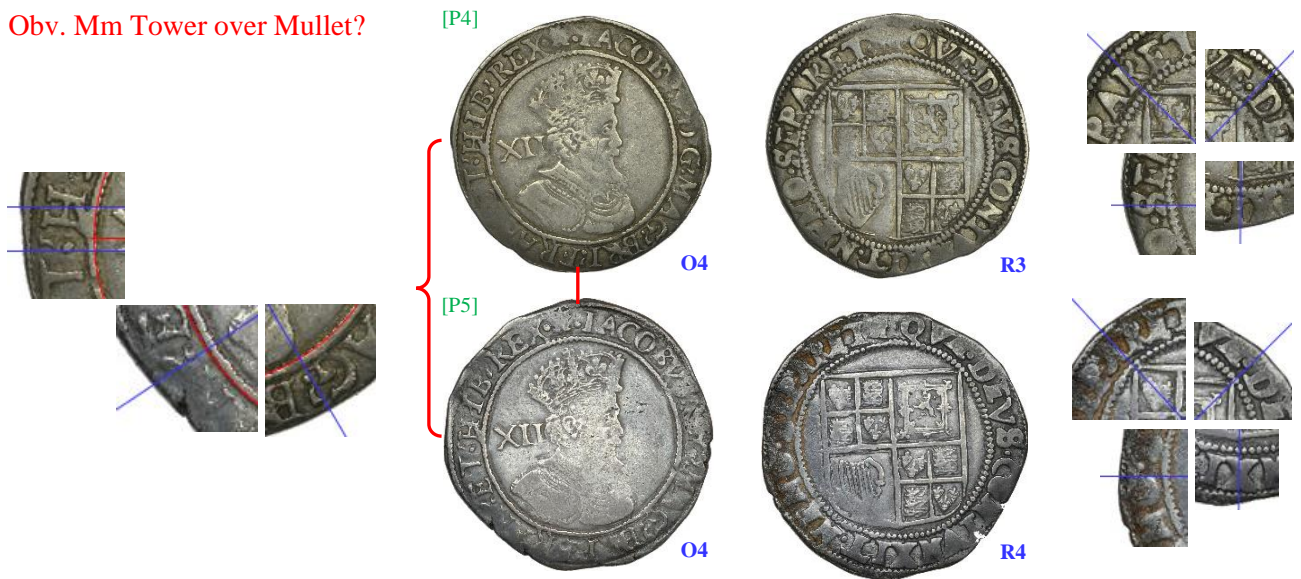
5th Bust



IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HIB REX

5th Bust

Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?



IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX

5th Bust

Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?

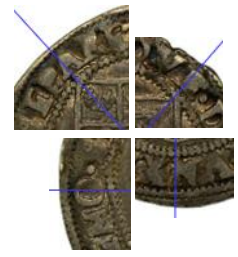
[P6]



O5

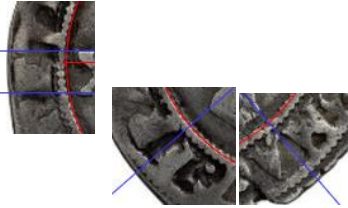


R5



Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?

[P7]

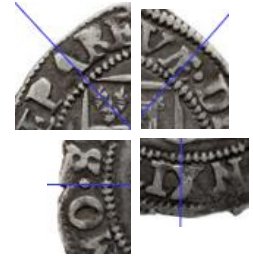


O6

+2

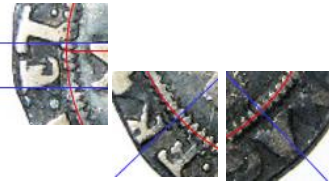


R6



Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?

[P8]

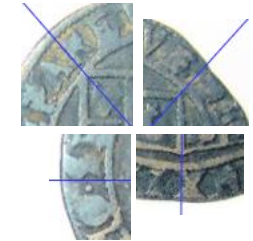


O7

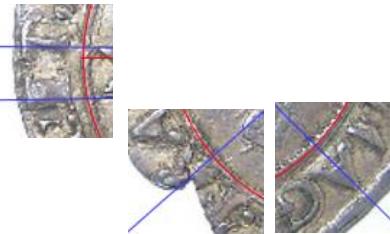
+1



R7



[P9]



O8

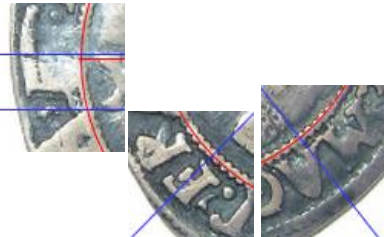


R8



Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?

[P10]



O9



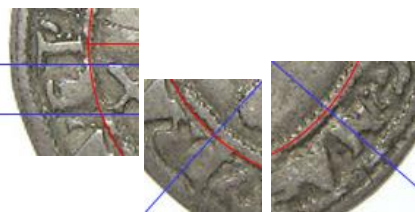
R9

Early die state



Obv. Mm Tower over Mullet?

[P11]



O10



R9

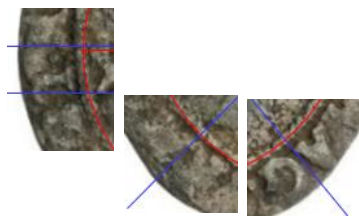
Later die state



IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HI REX - Continued

5th Bust

Obv. Mm ?



[P12]



O11



R10

Rev. Mm Tower?



IACOBVS D G MAG BRIT FRA ET HIB REX

5th Bust



[P13]



O12



R11



[P14]



O12 +1



R1



Sources of Images and Acknowledgements

The following are thanked for the use of their images:

| | | | | | |
|------|------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|
| [P1] | CNG 18 May 2011 lot 2107 | [P6] | CNG 18 May 2011 lot 2107 | [P11] | British Museum |
| [P2] | www | [P7] | H. J. Berk 30 June 2020 Lot 450 | [P12] | Spink 18 Oct 2022 lot 500 part |
| [P3] | www - Purple Penny | [P8] | Private Collection | [P13] | Private Collection |
| [P4] | Noonans 6 April 2021 lot 501 | [P9] | Private Collection | [P14] | LCA 7 Dec 2014 Lot 1912 |
| [P5] | Noonans 18 Sept 2018 lot 378 | [P10] | Private Collection | | |

Thanks to David Holt and Nigel Prevost and members of the English Hammered and Early Milled Coin Collectors Group on Facebook for providing images.

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Discussion and Conclusions

Several of the pieces shown above have been described as mm Tower over Mullet. However, closer inspection suggests a common Tower punch that has some damage.

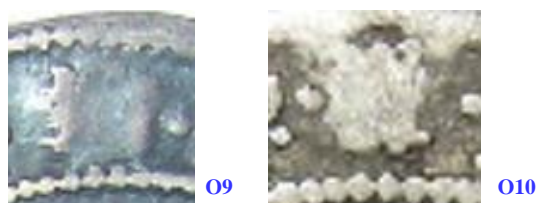
Neat Tower punch



Different Tower punch – tentatively Tower over Mullet



Another Tower punch – tentatively Tower over Mullet



On 28th April 1613 the value of silver in the Pyx box was 47s 10d comprising 1/- 6d, 2d, 1d and ½d. The period covered since the trial for the mm Mullet issue (22 May 1612) is just eleven months. This is still one of the scarcer issues as confirmed by the small numbers of surviving shillings. Just 21 specimens have been found.

With just 21 specimens struck from 12 obverse and 11 reverse dies, the sample is far from ideal. The table below presents the usual statistical analysis for shillings with mintmark Tower.

| | | Obverse | Reverse |
|----------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| Sample size | n | 21 | 21 |
| Number of dies | d | 12 | 11 |
| Singletons | d ₁ | 6 | 6 |
| 2 examples | d ₂ | 3 | 2 |
| 3 examples | d ₃ | 3 | 1 |
| 4 examples | d ₄ | | 2 |
| 5 examples | d ₅ | | |
| 6 examples | d ₆ | | |
| Coverage | C _{est} | 0.71 | 0.71 |
| Estimated dies | d _. | 12 | 11 |
| | d _{est} | 21 | 20 |
| | d ₊ | 38 | 35 |

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

As with some of the studies of the later mintmarks, the coverage of 0.71 could be better. Doubling the sample size would certainly narrow down the range of estimated dies.

