

# The last Henry VI Halfpenny of Calais?

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In 2015 I purchased this rather sad looking little coin on Ebay with the thought that there's always something special about a Calais coin of Henry VI that has Trefoils on it.

After futile attempts to identify it or to give it a catalogue reference from any of the standard reference books I set it aside for another day and promptly forgot about it. That day turned into years during which I only added a few Henry VI pieces to my collection. The most recent purchase being a Henry VI Annulet-Trefoil / Rosette Mascle mule penny of Calais, it was only then, at the mention of Trefoil, that I thought it was perhaps time to reappraise my little halfpenny.



**Fig 1. Henry VI Trefoil Halfpenny of Calais**

**Obv.** (hEnR)IC' :: RE(X : AnGl)

Leaf on breast, Trefoils by neck and Trefoil before Rex, cf. Ref. Stewartby group VI (Trefoil after REX?) (Trefoil Group)

NB Stewartby notes: 'London only henceforth'

**Rev.** (VIL)/ <> LA : / C(AL / SIE)

Mascle before LA and double saltire stops Ref. Stewartby group IV (Leaf Mascle issue)

Wt. 4.42 grains, 0.287 grams (issued wt. 7.5 grains)

If this classification is correct it would appear to be an unrecorded type of halfpenny of the Trefoil Issue of Calais. *C.f.* the same mule sequence as the Halfgroat Ref. Spink S1911B, Galata DIG 1 and referred to in SNC Vol. 102 No. 3 (1994)

If this is the case it would seem that this little coin is one of 'The Last Calais Halfpennies' to be minted.

Wishing to have some verification of my findings I shared the photograph of the coin with Paul Withers and he confirmed that it did appear to be an unrecorded Trefoil / Leaf Mascle Issue halfpenny.

I also sent the photograph to a fellow member of The Numismatic Society of Ireland (Northern Branch) and within a week he sent me a link to a Metal Detectorist Site.

It would appear that Calais Halfpennies follow the same law of nature as buses, you wait an age for one and then two turn up at the same time. Ref. Fig. 2



**Fig. 2**

**Obv.** (h)EnR(IC':: REX : Angl)

Leaf on breast and Trefoils by neck (*and Trefoil before REX*) Ref.as Stewartby group VI

**Rev.** (VIL / <>LA) / CALI / SIE

Ref. as Stewartby group IV

This coin was described on the website as an 'Unknown Leaf trefoil issue of Calais, 1422-61 Henry VI hammered **silver farthing**.' I suspected that this may well be a halfpenny

Paul and I contacted the Website to find out if they had any information regarding the weight of the coin. Unfortunately they had no further information and told us that the coin had been taken to the USA by the finder.

#### References

\***Stewartby, Lord** (2009). English Coins 1180-1551. Spink pp 334-336

\***Withers, P & B** (2003) *Small Change III; Halfpennies & Farthings of Henry IV, V & VI*. Galata Print Ltd

\* **Website** – [www.Colchestertreasurehunting.co.uk](http://www.Colchestertreasurehunting.co.uk)

\* **Spink** - SNC vol. 102 No. 3, (1994 April), pp. 106 'The Last Calais Halfgroat'

