

Bedfordshire Tokens, Tickets, Checks and Passes – Supplement 1

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Introduction

Publishing a book in late 2023 that could have had the title *Bedfordshire Tokens – Everything that isn't Seventeenth Century* was always likely to lead to the discovery of new pieces. The BNS blog will be used as a route to publish additions, comments, and further research. A few corrections have also been noted by readers and are included for completeness. Hopefully the publication of supplements will be infrequent!

A reformatted (A5) version of this Supplement, designed to slip into the original book will be available shortly. Additional copies of the book⁽¹⁾ are also available.

ARLESEY

007.

Obv. **ARLESEY INDUSTRIAL & PROVIDENT SOCIETY
LTD**

around **2LB LOAF**

Rev. Uniface

Details Red fibre, PE, 28 mm (Rains 12.) [AJ].



At the time of printing a specimen had not been seen and its existence was noted from the third edition of Roy Rains' catalogue of co-op checks⁽²⁾. Thanks to Alan Judd for providing the illustrations.

BEDFORD

015.

In 1935 Bedford Borough Council issued small cardboard boxes with a half-crown for the Silver Jubilee of George V.

The last line includes a cross-reference to entry [230](#) for Kempston, where that half-crown is described as being dated 1937, in error.

BLUNHAM

159.

Obv. **H. DENNIS BLUNHAM BEDS**

around **1** and in small letters

R NEAL MAKER PERCIVAL ST EC

Rev. Bracteate.

Details Zn, 38×38mm.

This is a very thick bracteate. The position and size of the piercing varies but is always either side of the **1**. [Luton Museum BL/1/28/49]



Punched with a hole for stringing (often around waist). These pea-picking and bag checker tokens were acquired from the users, Messrs. H. Dennis & Son, market gardeners, Hill Farm, Blunham, Beds. Made about 1914-9.

This token could not be found during a visit to Luton Museum on 25 July 2023 and at the time of printing the only description was from a drawing by T.W. Bagshawe. A subsequent search by Elise Naish (Head of Heritage and Collections) at Wardown House Museum and Gallery (Luton Museum) found the original group of six tokens and provided the photographs.

KEMPSTON

230.

Kempston Urban District Council issued a boxed half-crown to local pensioners for the Silver Jubilee of George V in 1935.

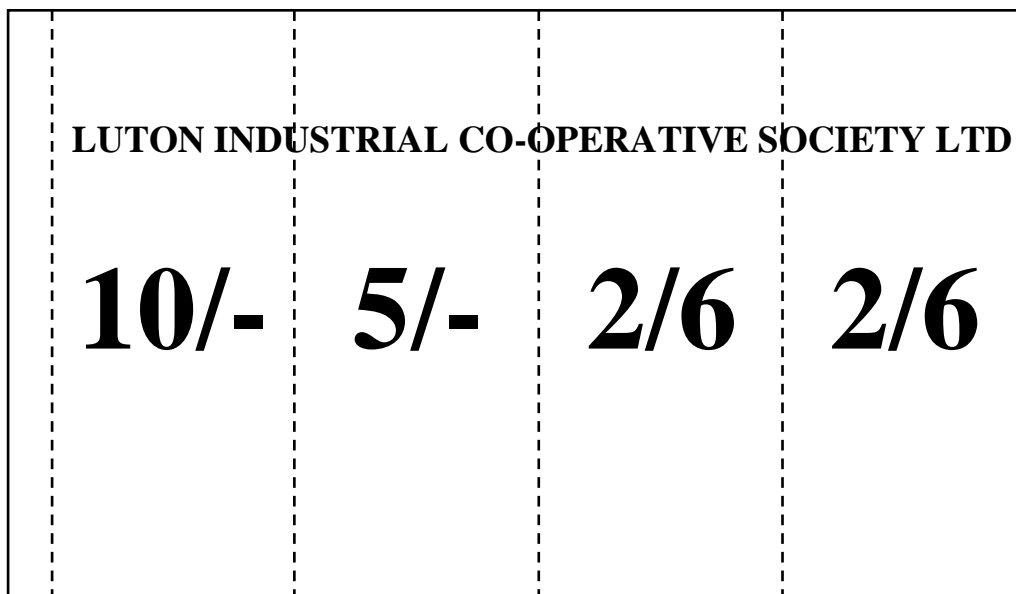
There is a typo in the caption where the half-crown is described as being dated 1937.

LUTON

285.

This entry for a group of paper tickets for Luton Co-op with denominations 2/6, 2/6, 5/- and 10/- was based on a verbal description of an item still to be seen by the author.

Thanks to Trevor Owens the paper tickets are better described as follows - the “paper tickets” were four vertical section, reading from left to right 10/-, 5/-, and two at 2/6, and they were perforated, having the appearance of a banknote. From memory there was much more text on the sheet, and it was about A5 size.



293x.

Obv. ST MARGARETS RELIEF TICKET
around 6D

Rev. Outer border and inner circle.

Details Br, PE, 27 mm.

[Andrew Wager].



With a past suggestion that this token might have been issued by a tramps' hostel at Streatley, Luton⁽³⁾, at the time of printing, no evidence had been found to confirm this. The token was included for completeness, with an **x** to indicate that a non-Bedfordshire attribution might be made in future.

Thanks to Trevor Owens, the following has been found in a history of Luton and Dunstable hospitals⁽⁴⁾.

The E.M.S. (Emergency Medical Service) patients at the L&D were putting undue pressure on the beds and some were transferred to other sites – Ashridge, Arlesey, Friern Barnet and Hill End. Luton was still being used as a reception area. The inmates from the Home and Hospital for Jewish Incurables was evacuated twice; first from their home in Tottenham to Essex and, having been bombed out there, they were taken in at St Margaret’s, Streatley (formerly the New Bedford Road Casual Wards). 60 patients arrived and later a further 40 were accommodated.

The Casual Ward was originally at the Workhouse. When the poor law institutions in Luton were transferred to the County Council in 1930 a “hostel “ was built up the New Bedford Road within the Streatley parish boundary and named St. Margaret’s.

NEW TOKENS

As predicted, the Farming and Market Gardening areas around the Greensands Ridge have produced the first new tokens.

CALDECOTE

The Bygraves family can be traced back to at least 1870 when Percy Bygraves came from Hertfordshire and married Ada Fanny Jeeves of Beeston. In 1919 Percy Bygraves was voted chair of the Biggleswade and District Market Gardeners and Farmers Association. At the time he had about 60 acres of land. They had a son, Charles Bygraves and were farming at Wyboston in 1920. The land was bought in 1948 as part of the Government Land Settlement Association and divided into smallholdings.

172.001.

Obv. **P B** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 25.5 mm. [RB].



172.002.

Obv. **C B** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, probably once plated, PE, 23.5 mm. [RB].



The following tokens (**172.003-172.013**) were used as tallies to count the numbers of containers filled by the pickers. These are generic tokens purchased by the farmers and market gardeners. Examples of all of these have also been found amongst groups of tokens with provenances to farms in the Wisbech area of the Fens.

172.003.

Obv. **KIDNEY B** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.004.

Obv. **PEAS** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.005.

Obv. **LARGE BARRELS P** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.006.

Obv. **SMALL BARRELS P** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.007.

Obv. **POTATO** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.008.

Obv. **POTATOES** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 25 mm. [RB].



172.009.

Obv. **RASPBERRY** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.010.

Obv. **RUNNER B** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.011.

Obv. **STRAWBERRY** all incuse.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 26 mm. [RB].



172.012.

Obv. **STRAWBERRY** all incuse in very small letters.

Rev. Uniface.

Details Steel, PE, 25 mm. [RB].



172.013.

Obv. **STRAWBERRY** all incuse in very small letters.

Rev. Double-headed spread eagle.

Details Steel, PE, 23 mm. [RB].



Thanks to Roger Bygraves (grandson of Percy) and Alan (great grandson) for bringing the story and tokens to my attention and to Nigel Lutt for making the connection.

References and Acknowledgements

- (1) G. Oddie. 2023. *Bedfordshire Tokens, Tickets, Checks and Passes*. St Neots Press. Available from The Eagle Bookshop at Bedford, Galata at Llanfyllin and the author at goddie1@hotmail.co.uk.
- (2) D.R. Rains *Co-operative Checks and Tokens* (Galata 2014).
- (3) Troublesome Tokens display, Token Congress 1996, p36 No. 2
- (4) M.R. Currie. *Hospitals in Luton and Dunstable – An Illustrated History*. 1982.

