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DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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The Ohio State University

1967

Approved by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Monetary Problems in Thirteenth Century Europe

Historians have paid little attention to monetary problems, despite their importance.¹ This has weakened our understanding of European history for three major monetary problems faced western rulers in thirteenth century Europe, and the measures they devised to solve them affected the economies not only of their own countries but of all Europe. By far the most pressing problem of the three was the small number of coins in circulation, which was quite inadequate to serve the needs of an expanding economy and an increasing population. That problem was aggravated by the shipment of silver to the Near East and to North Africa, leading to a shortage of silver which became acute by the end of the century. Finally, princes were often frustrated in their efforts to introduce monetary reforms by a proliferation of minting rights which prevented adequate royal control.

The Italians had led the revival of trade and industry, and they were the first to introduce remedies, not always satisfactory, for the inadequate coin

¹The three volumes of the Cambridge Economic History dealing with medieval Europe do not contain a chapter on currency and money, although there is a brief appendix on coinage in vol. III.
supply. In the hope of making existing supplies of silver go farther, they debased the coinage by increasing the proportion of alloy in each coin. This certainly increased the number of coins in circulation, but, with the depreciation of the currency, prices began to rise until by the end of the twelfth century, large quantities of coin were needed to conduct the simplest transaction. In response, many Italian cities began to issue larger silver pieces, known as grosso or groats. The first appeared in 1172 when Genoa issued a silver coin worth four pennies, but this proved too small, and in 1202 Venice issued its own grosso, the matapan, worth twenty four pennies. These examples were soon followed and Verona in 1203 and Florence in 1237 both issued grossi worth twelve pennies each. The new grossi were of finer silver than the old pennies and were generally referred to as "white money" to distinguish them from the black debased pennies which were still used for local transactions, but were becoming unsuitable for large-scale payments. ²

Unfortunately neither the debasement of the coinage nor the minting of the groat was able to solve permanently the problem of an inadequate currency in an expanding commerce. Since the break-up of the Carolingian Empire, silver had been the only metal minted in Europe in any quantity, but its supply had not kept pace with the increasing demand for money. The burden had been

eased slightly with the development of credit and the circulation of Byzantine and Islamic gold coins, but by 1250 these coins had deteriorated in weight and were no longer acceptable as international currency. Clearly some additional currency was necessary and the answer which seemed obvious to the Italian cities was a return to the minting of gold pieces. Once again the Genoese took the lead and, with the aim of fostering their trade with Sicily and Syria, issued their first gold coin, the genovino, in 1257. Later the same year the Florentines followed their example, striking a gold florin that was worth twenty groats (240 deniers). Much later, in 1284, the Venetians issued a gold coin, the ducat, of the same weight as the genovino and the florin. 3

The introduction of the gold coins eased the currency shortage, but made silver even scarcer, since much of the gold was paid for by the export of silver. Towards the end of the twelfth century the Muslim world, which had been issuing nothing but gold pieces, began to strike silver coins again. The Islamic mints both in the Near East, and in North Africa, obtained their silver from Europe and paid for it in gold. Furthermore, in the beginning of the thirteenth century rulers in Southern Europe began to manufacture counterfeit Muslim coins destined for North Africa. Most of these coins were also paid for in gold. It was probably this African gold that enabled Genoa to issue her gold coins so early. But, as the trade in the counterfeit coins, the millarées, expanded, large quantities of silver escaped from Europe never to return. The

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trade was secret, so there are no exact figures, but one scholar has estimated that more than three billion coins containing about 4,000 metric tons of silver was exported during the thirteenth century. As a result, Europe by the end of the century was faced with an acute shortage of silver.  

Rulers in northern Europe faced with the same problems as the Italians arrived at similar solutions. In 1266 St. Louis of France issued a groat (the *gros tournois*) worth twelve *deniers*. It was immediately successful and from France the minting of large silver pieces eventually spread to Aragon, Castille, the Low Countries and the Empire. He also tried minting gold pieces, which failed miserably just as had an earlier attempt by Henry III of England. In 1257 Henry had issued a gold penny worth twenty silver pennies. It was struck for three years but disappeared almost as soon as it issued from the mint, because it was undervalued in relation to silver, so that bullion dealers found it profitable to melt it down. In neither France nor England was there a real need for a coin of such a high denomination, for the business needs of the country were not sufficient to sustain it, and, as the people of London complained, few men had chattels worth even one golden penny.  

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4 These ideas were first put forward by R. H. Bautier, "L'or et l'argent en occident de la fin du XIIIe siècle au début du XIVe siècle," *Academie des inscriptions et belles lettres, comptes rendus* (1951), but they have been more fully developed by A. M. Watson, "Back to Gold--and Silver," *Economic History Review, Second series*, XX (1967).

merchants did need a larger coin, they used the florins of Florence, which circulated freely in northern Europe.

St. Louis's monetary reforms had been checked by the existence of private minting franchises. Although his predecessors had closed down as many feudal mints as they could, a large number of counts, monasteries and bishops still possessed the right to issue their own coins and were unwilling to follow the royal lead. In 1262, therefore, St. Louis insisted that the money of the feudal barons was to be accepted only in their own lands whereas the royal deniers had to be accepted throughout the whole kingdom. In addition non-royal minters were forbidden to imitate royal money or to mint new kinds of coins. He could not prohibit the use of seigneurial coins, as there was not enough royal money to meet the needs of the people. He did, however, try to limit the circulation of feudal money and to encourage that of his own. In this he was successful. He also succeeded in checking the manufacture of the millares, but he could not prevent the outflow of silver, which continued to be exported from the southern coast of France and particularly from Montpellier, leaving France with an acute silver crisis by the early fourteenth century.

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Bloch, *Esquisse*, p. 35.

7 In Languedoc, for example, the coinage was almost entirely in feudal hands at the beginning of his reign, but by 1270, several seigneurial mints had been closed down and royal coins were circulating freely. Thomas N. Bisson, "Coinages and Royal Monetary Policy in Languedoc during the reign of St. Louis," *Speculum*, XXXII (1957).
While the French kings were building up a national currency to help bind their country together as it developed into a centralized, territorial state, the petty princes in the rest of Europe, as they escaped from centralized control, jealously guarded their right of mintage, leading to a tremendous fragmentation and diversity of coinages. In the Empire, for example, as the imperial authority declined, the coinage fell almost entirely into seigneurial hands. The same was largely true of the Low Countries and, of course, in Italy, each city state issued its own money. With no centralized control, each ruler was free to debase his coinage as much as he wished. Most of them did so, either by reducing the weight or increasing the amount of alloy in the coins, so that by the end of the thirteenth century the currency throughout the greater part of Europe had depreciated badly. England was the one exception.

English kings steadfastly resisted the influence of the continent and determined to maintain the stability of their currency. It was not an easy task, but they succeeded because they exercised greater control over their coinage than most of the continental rulers. Their greatest problem was the deterioration of coins with age or clipping. Coins were made without a raised rim or clear-cut edge and striking was often carelessly done, so that if the blank was not perfectly centered on the die, part of the design ran over the rim and the rest of the coin remained empty. It was easy to remove slivers of metal from the edges of such coins and clipping of the coinage was a common

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offense. The design of the short-cross on the reverse of the coins also encouraged clipping, for it was too small, so that silver could be snipped from the edges without attracting attention. In addition the coins slowly lost metal by wear, so that after twenty-five to thirty years they were no longer of the standard weight. Consequently English kings needed to call in the defective coins three or four times a century and replace them with new coins of full weight. Thus there was a recoinage under Henry II in 1180, under John in 1205 and under Henry III in 1247. Each one was accompanied by measures, not always successful, against clippers and counterfeiters. Henry III, for example, altered the design on the reverse of the coins to a long cross extending to the very edge of the coin in the hope that clipping would be easier to detect.

Why did the English kings take so much trouble to maintain the stability of their coinage when currencies in the rest of Europe were depreciating so rapidly? Several reasons are put forward by Professor Cipolla in his excellent article on currency depreciation in the Middle Ages. He points out that the demand for money in England up to the middle of the thirteenth century was


much less than in Italy, because its economic growth had been slower. In addition England had the advantage of a surplus of raw wool, which was much in demand, so that she enjoyed a favorable balance of payments. Finally the English kings had to consider the interests of the landed classes who objected to inflation, whereas the Italian cities were ruled in the interests of merchants, who profited by it. 12 These reasons, although valid, do not, however, explain why the currency of France, whose economy did not differ so radically from that of England, was not stable, like the English one, but depreciated almost as badly as that of the Italian cities.

It therefore seemed worthwhile to undertake a detailed analysis of how and why this stability was maintained under Edward I and to find out, if possible, what effect it had on the economy. For, as Mr. Lopez has pointed out, monetary stability cannot always be regarded as "the supreme blessing," with inflation the evil to be avoided at all costs. 13 There are times, and the history of North Italy in the eleventh and twelfth century was one of them, when a moderate inflation actually stimulated economic expansion by increasing prices and allowing greater profits to the incipient capitalist. It would be interesting to discover whether the stability of the English currency helped or hindered the country's economic development.

12 This idea was first put forward by R. S. Lopez in "The Dollar of the Middle Ages," Journal of Economic History, XI (1951).

13 Ibid., p. 221.
Although in many instances Edward I was only carrying out the policies of his predecessors, his reign was chosen for this study because it was at this time that the documents became more plentiful. The Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls and the King's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls, for example, which in the 1270's contained only twenty membranes, had expanded to eighty membranes by the 1290's and over 100 membranes by 1307. The Pipe Roll accounts of the Wardens of the Mint also became much fuller and the Exchequer Various Accounts for the Mint virtually begin with Edward I, as only seven have survived from the period before. No one has yet made extensive use of these documents, although much work has been done in the field of numismatics.

Not only are more documents available for Edward I; they are more communicative of money matters, for his reign is a significant one in the monetary history of England. In 1279 he undertook a major recoinage, introducing a new coin, the groat, and round farthings and halfpennies as well as several important administrative reforms. In addition he passed many acts and ordinances trying to prevent the clipping of the coin and the importation of bad money. Because historians have largely ignored these measures, no one knows how successful they were and how they affected the lives of the people. Edward also sought to improve the organization of the mints by bringing them under a more unified control. Again no one has bothered to find out precisely

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14Before the reign of Edward I, halfpennies and farthings had been formed by cutting the pennies into two or four pieces at the mint.
what kind of people were in charge, how efficient they were or even how much profit the king made from the mints. The answers should prove an interesting contribution to our understanding of medieval administration and medieval economic development.

Finally Edward's reign occurred at a strategic time. It came at the end of the thirteenth century, which in general was a period of growth and prosperity, and before the economic crisis of the mid-fourteenth century, which was, according to the monetary school, caused partly by a shortage in the supplies of bullion. Thus a study of monetary conditions in England, the only country with sources for a detailed study of this period, may help to clarify in an important way the background of the fourteenth century crisis.

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CHAPTER II

JEWS AND JUSTICES

On November 17, 1278, all the Jews in England, young and old, men and women, were unexpectedly seized and imprisoned on the charge of coin-clipping. Immediately afterwards, all goldsmiths were arrested together with those suspected of helping the coin-clippers by exchanging clipped money for good. The goods and chattels of the suspects, both Christians and Jews, were seized at the time of their arrest and a thorough search was made "above ground and below it" where there was any hope of finding clipped money. During the same month all mint officials were seized and the head of the royal exchanges

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3 Chronicon Petroburgense, pp. 26-27 contains a copy of the writ sent to the sheriff of Northampton ordering the arrest of the goldsmiths and the subsequent search for concealed goods. (There is no record of this writ in either the Patent or the Close Rolls.)

4 Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, p. 66; French Chronicle of London, p. 239.
of London and Canterbury, Bartholomew de Castello, was dismissed from his post of Warden and the exchanges were taken into the king's hands. Finally on December 7, Edward I decreed that no one, native or alien, Christian or Jew, should take out of the country silver plate, clipped money or other broken silver, a measure that was clearly designed to prevent the escape of anyone with incriminating evidence. In January, the bailiffs of the major ports were ordered to search all merchants and others to make sure that this prohibition was obeyed. Such drastic measures were unprecedented. Clearly the king was worried about the state of his money and was determined to take every possible step to improve it, but why did he act with such violence and why did he choose this particular time to try and stamp out coin-clipping, a crime which was not a new one but had plagued every English king from the time of the Anglo-Saxons?

He had not acted earlier because other and more urgent affairs had diverted his attention. On his return to England in 1274, Edward was faced with

5E. 372/122, m. 28d. The significance of this dismissal was concealed when Sir John Craig in his book, The Mint, A History of the London Mint from A.D. 287 to 1948 (Cambridge, 1953), p. 39, said that Bartholomew de Castello died in November, 1278. In fact he was very much alive. In February, 1279, he was ordered to deliver to the new Wardens any money from the exchange that was still in his hands (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 301), and later the same year he was delivered to the custody of the marshal until he paid the arrears of his account. (Thomas Madox, History and Antiquities of the Exchequer (London, 1769), II, 134-5). Throughout the eighties he was active as a money lender (Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, pp. 54, 110, 115, 138, 360, 361, 377, 481), and he finally died in 1296. (E. 159/70, m. 55).


many complaints about misgovernment and trouble was brewing in Wales which was finally to erupt in war in November, 1276. Financial problems were also worrying him. He did not have enough revenue to meet his expenses, as his expedition to the Holy Land was not yet paid for and debts incurred while he was in Gascony were still outstanding. In addition he had to decide whether to take notice of the Council of Lyon's recent call for no further toleration of usury. Acting decisively, he tackled one problem after another. In November, 1274, he ordered all merchant usurers to leave the country within twenty days or lose their lives and goods, but his need for revenue was greater than his desire to comply with the wishes of the church; in 1275 the Italian merchants were allowed to recover their goods and remain in the country, on the payment, of course, of substantial fines. Also in 1275 he persuaded parliament to grant him a fifteenth and a completely new source of revenue, the customs on wool and hides. The Statute of Jewry tried to deal with the problem of Jewish usury and the Statute of Westminster I and an inquest on sheriffs tackled the major administrative and judicial problems facing the royal government. With so many parts of the government demanding his attention, Edward decided to leave the mint and the coinage as it was for the moment. Bartholomew de Castello, who had been appointed Warden by Henry III in 1266, was left in office and


9 Ibid., p. 161; Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, pp. 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 128, 448.
Edward continued to issue the long-cross coins of his father, still bearing the title Henricus, although with a new head and a slightly different hair-style.\textsuperscript{10}

Although the making of false money was classed as a major crime in the Statute of Westminster I,\textsuperscript{11} Edward did not have the time or consider the problem sufficiently serious to take any further action. He could not ignore it for long. There were three prosecutions in 1275\textsuperscript{12} and more the following year, so that in December, 1276, the king felt it necessary to issue special commissions of oyer and terminer in London and Nottingham to try Jews accused of coin-clipping and their Christian accomplices.\textsuperscript{13} The problem of clipping, however, was still not as serious as it became during the next two years, when the number of men brought before the courts on charges of clipping increased sharply.\textsuperscript{14} It is, of course, impossible to say whether clippers were


\textsuperscript{11}Statute of Westminster, I, c. 15.

\textsuperscript{12}One Christian, Roger de Hatfield, was charged with the possession of silver coming from false money or the clipping of money (Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 188), and two Jews left the country rather than answer charges of coin-clipping (Calendar of the Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews, II, 299).

\textsuperscript{13}Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 236; see Foedera, I, ii, 539 for the full text. The French Chronicle of London, p. 238 says that three people (one man and two women) were condemned in London as a result of this commission.

\textsuperscript{14}According to the Jewish Plea Rolls eight Jews were accused of coin-clipping in 1276 and forty four Jews and Christians in 1277. In the report of the under-constable of the Tower of London (E. 101/249/22), fifteen Jews and Christians in London were accused of monetary offenses between January 1275 and June 1277 (a period of two and a half years), and twenty one men were accused of similar offenses between June 1277 and December 1278 (a period of a year and a half).
in fact becoming more active or whether the government was simply more
interested in catching them. But it is quite likely that more Jews were involved
in clipping after 1275 than before, as they had been badly hit by the Statute of
Jewry, which strictly curtailed money-lending, their principal occupation.
Although in theory they were compensated by being allowed to trade, to purchase
homesteads in cities and boroughs and to take farms for terms not exceeding ten
years, in practice these occupations were rarely open to them. Faced with the
need to support themselves and their families, many of them may have tried to
make a profit from the coinage, either by clipping the current coins and turning
the clippings into sheets of silver or by coating base metal with silver and
passing the result as pure silver. For at the very time they were finding it
harder to make a livelihood, they were being heavily tallaged. A tallage of five
thousand marks, for example, had been levied on the Jews just before Henry
III's death and a new one, assessed at one-third of all their movable goods was
imposed by Edward's ministers late in 1273. While much of this money was
still being collected, fresh tallages were levied in 1276, 1277 and 1278. The
harshness of these exactions, coupled with the restrictions imposed by the
Statute of Jewry, probably incited many Jews to raise cash by whatever means
they could.

Certainly many of the Jews accused of clipping and other offenses
against the coinage were hardpressed for money. Moses of Colton, one of the

15H. G. Richardson, The English Jewry under the Angevin Kings
thirty-five men and women accused in York in the spring of 1277, had paid the
tallage last assessed on him in 1276, but in so doing had left himself short of
money, for later the same year he was accused of unlawful distraint in an
attempt to recover part of a debt. Early in 1277 he was still trying to recover
the same debt, and probably turned to clipping as the only alternative.\textsuperscript{16} He
was not alone in his troubles. The accused Jews at York were so poor that they
could not find mainpemors and had to be carried to London at the expense of the
Jewish community of York.\textsuperscript{17} The increase in the number of prosecutions in
1276-78 therefore almost certainly reflected an increased activity on the part of
the Jews. Many of the accused were clearly guilty, as clipped or false plate was
found on them as well as the scissors or pots that they used.\textsuperscript{18} Yet they were
not treated severely, but appear to have been fined.\textsuperscript{19}

Their Christian accomplices were also fined, for the Jews could not act
alone. Their clipped money had to be passed into circulation and they needed
the help of Italian and other merchants. The report of the under-constable of the
Tower of London for 1275-78 contains many references to Christians suspected
of illegal exchanging and when one Christian was found among the Jews, he fled,

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Jewish Plea Rolls}, III, 138, 156, 262, 277.

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 277.

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 119, 124, 125, 205, 277, 309.

\textsuperscript{19}Unfortunately the \textit{Jewish Plea Rolls} do not give the penalty inflicted
on the guilty, but in one instance (III, 292), a fine seems to have been made. In
E. 101/249/22 the fines ranged from 10s. to 6 l. 13s. 4d.
leaving behind the one hundred shillings he had brought with him for making exchanges. Probably the king's suppression of open usury in 1275 had encouraged Christians, as well as Jews, to seek other means of making money. Goldsmiths were sometimes tempted to clip the coin and more frequently to buy the clippings. Other men, both Christians and Jews, were accused of making small halfpennies. Officially halfpennies were made at the mint by cutting pennies in half, but they were often made illegally. For someone anxious to make money it was easy to cut pennies slightly off-center and melt down the parings. These underweight coins would not be readily noticed as the whole coinage had deteriorated badly.

It had been over thirty years since the last recoinage had taken place under Henry III, so that many of the coins had worn thin with age and constant use. Others had been badly clipped. Some, for example, were found at the time of the general arrest whose face value was 406 l., but only weighed 337 l. 19s. People were, therefore, worried about receiving poor money for their goods or in repayment of their loans. In addition, according to the chronicler

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21 E. 101/249/22. Eight accusations were made between 1275 and 1278.

22 E. 372/123, m. 22.

23 Out of the forty-eight debts registered in the City of London in 1278, twenty-one requested that the debt should be repaid in "good money," and eight added that this money was not to be clipped. In 1279 there were only eighteen debts registered, but fourteen specified repayment in good money and nine further requested unclipped money. Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London, ed. R. R. Sharpe (London, 1899), A, pp. 16-29.
Thomas Wykes, foreign merchants were staying away from England with their merchandise on account of the weakness of the money and all kinds of goods had become dearer. He was probably correct. From 1274 to 1278 no money at all was made at the Canterbury mint, where most of the foreign merchants brought their silver, and in 1278 only 803 l. 7s. 9d. were minted there. The years 1277-78 saw a crisis in the confidence placed by men in the royal currency. Thomas Wykes even goes so far as to suggest that money by weight was only worth half its numerical value. This was undoubtedly exaggerated, for once the king had decided on a recoinage and all the old money was called in some of it was found to be up to the required standard. The important fact is that people believed the rumor to be true. Much of the old money had become so worn out or so badly clipped that it was being refused and despised by everyone and complaints were reaching the king. It was clearly time for a recoinage and once the Welsh war was over, the king had the time and the energy to tackle the question and the related problem of clipping, which was first discussed at the parliament of Gloucester in the summer of 1278.

24 Chronicle of Thomas Wykes, Annales Monastici, IV, 278.
25 E. 372/123, m. 21.
26 Annales Monastici, IV, 278.
27 The Patent Rolls are full of commands to the Wardens of the Exchange to pay to the Wardrobe various sums out of the "old and good money" coming to the exchange. Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, pp. 326, 367, 368, 370, 389, 390, 393, 395.
Something drastic had to be done as existing measures were clearly inadequate. Several Jews were indicted and fined more than once, so that obviously the fines were not heavy enough to act as a deterrent. Sometimes men were wrongly accused. If someone was found with plates of silver made from melted clippings in his possession, he was usually regarded as guilty of clipping and later, when he was able to show that he bought the plate legally from someone else, he had to be released and acquitted. Jews were also accused on flimsy evidence. Jake, son of Bonamy, for example, was arrested in London in 1277 because a young girl of seven or eight had found some clipped coin in the street near his house. But by the time of his trial, the young girl had disappeared, and he was acquitted. Sometimes an accused Jew tried to put the blame on one of his fellows by throwing clipped coin on top of his house or in front of his door, but in each case an enquiry was made and in at least one instance, the Jew who had been so carefully framed was, in fact, let off.

Thus there is every evidence that the trials of 1276-78 were conducted fairly, with due regard for law and justice. The judges were even prepared to accept rather thin excuses. Clipped coin was found in a house belonging to

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30 E. 101/249/22.


32 Jewish Plea Rolls, III, 291.

Joceus, son of Salle. While Joceus was not at home at the time of the search, a visitor, a foreign Jew, was present and managed to escape through the window, while the sergeant was breaking down the door. Joceus, when questioned, protested great innocence and said that he had no knowledge of that Jew, nor did he know anything about the clipping or consent to it. When an inquest was held, he was not found guilty or anything except showing hospitality to the foreign Jew and so he was acquitted. 34 Thus much time was wasted in trials that ended in acquittal and the guilty often escaped entirely or were only lightly punished. 35 This explains why all the Jews and all the goldsmiths were arrested in November, 1278. This time the king wanted no one to escape and he hoped that by seizing everyone at once, innocent as well as guilty, the truth could be found.

In January, 1279, three special commissions were appointed to try the Christians and Jews who had been arrested. Stephen de Pencestre, Walter de Helyon and John de Cobham, who headed the commission for southeast England, were also ordered to view and examine the money in the exchanges of London.

34 Jewish Plea Rolls, III, 290.

35 The general ineffectiveness of the measures from 1276 to 1278 can be seen from the fact that several of those found guilty in 1279 had previous convictions. Joceus of Marlborough, who was fined 20 l. in 1279 (E. 372/124, m. 30), had been accused of making small halfpennies and illegal exchanging in the preceding two years (E. 101/249/22). Joceus, son of Salle, Jew of Canterbury, who was hanged in 1279 (C. 47/9/50), is probably the same person as the Joceus of Canterbury who was earlier fined 5 l. 6s. 8d. because clippings were found in his house and 36s. 8d. for transgressions of halfpennies (E. 101/249/22). Vives, le Lung, Jew of Oxford, who was hanged in 1279 (E. 159/56, m. 2), had been accused of clipping in 1276, although he protested his innocence (Jewish Plea Rolls, III, 185).
Canterbury and Bury St. Edmunds and to hear and determine all trespasses against the coinage committed by the Wardens, ministers and workers in those mints. The work of these commissions continued for several months. In London, from the end of November, 1278, until the end of May, 1279, the merchants were forced to go to the house of Hugh Motun, the Chamberlain, to register their debts, instead of to the Guildhall, as the Jews were on trial there.

Those who were found guilty, especially among the Jews, were treated severely. The chroniclers testify to this. Thomas Wykes said that a great multitude of Jews and a few Christians were hanged, but that nearly all the goldsmiths escaped death, although he did not know whether they deserved to. The Dunstable annalist was more specific and said that two hundred and eighty Jews were executed in London alone. This number was increased to two hundred and ninety three in The French Chronicle of London, where it also stated that three Christians were hanged. These tales must be treated

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36 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 338. Bartholomew de Southleigh, William de Brayboef, and Adam le Butiller headed the commission for the west of England and John Bek, Alexander de Kirketon and Ralph d'Acre were sent to the north of England.


38 Annales Monastici, IV, 279.

39 Annales Monastici, III, 279.

40 French Chronicle of London, p. 239; Annales Londonienses, p. 88 gives the same figures. The Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, p. 67 said that two hundred and sixty-seven Jews were condemned to death in London.
cautiously. Yet there is no doubt that very severe punishments, including heavy fines, seizure of houses and lands, and even death, were inflicted on both Christians and Jews, but that royal vengeance fell most heavily on the Jews.

Little mercy was shown to them in the early months of 1279. Many leading Jews were killed and many more were kept in prison and forfeited all their goods and chattels. It is impossible to say how many were executed. Walter de Helyon who was responsible for the sale of the houses, lands and tenements of condemned Jews in southeast England mentioned six Jews hanged in Canterbury, five hanged in Norwich and one burnt, three hanged at Bedford, three at London and one at Oxford. The same number plus an additional one were cited by Philip de Willoughby in his account of the money received from the sale of the chattels of condemned Jews. When the executors of John le Falconer rendered a similar account, they specified only one Jew, Benedict of Winchester, as having been hanged, and when John le Falconer's successor,

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42 C. 47/9/50. Mr. Richardson in his book on the English Jewry first drew attention to this document and its significance, but he was not aware of the corroborative evidence of the Pipe Rolls.

43 E. 372/124, m. 30. Philip de Willoughby was appointed in 1279 to receive all the money and other things which Stephen de Pencestre and his fellow-justices delivered to him as a result of their commission on the trespass of money (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 297).

44 E. 372/123, m. 23. John le Falconer had been appointed in January, 1279, to receive the money coming from the commission of William de Brayboef and his companions in the west of England (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 297). Shortly after his appointment he died and was replaced by William de Brayboef (Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, pp. 111, 113), who was later authorized to sell the houses, lands and rents of condemned Jews (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 323; Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 115).
William de Brayboef, rendered his account, he only cited the hanging of the same Jew, Benedict of Winchester. Unfortunately, when Hugh de Kendal accounted for the money received in the north of England, he merely referred to Jews who were hanged, without giving any indication of the number. Thus many Jews whose names have disappeared must have been hanged, but all the evidence available at present points to the death of thirty to fifty Jews for the whole of England, a figure considerably less than that suggested by the chroniclers. Even so, it remains an unusually large number, considering that the death penalty had not been exacted for monetary offenses in the early part of Edward's reign and, while it remained a threat, was only exacted once in the future.

45 Michael Adler, "Inventory of the Property of the Condemned Jews (1285)," Jewish Historical Society, Miscellanies, II, 56-71. Benedict had been one of the leading Jews of Winchester, acting as chirographer and representing the Jewish community in a dispute over a tallage. Later he moved to London where he was active in official positions. (H. P. Stokes, "A Jewish Family in Oxford in the Thirteenth Century," Jewish Historical Society, Transactions, X, 193-206).

46 E. 372/123, m. 22.

47 The statute of money of 1284 said that anyone caught smuggling in false or counterfeit money would forfeit his body and his goods. (Statutes of the Realm, I, 219; C. 66/103, m. 5 schedule). The statute of money by William de March of 1291 (Quia mercatores) restricted forfeiture of body and goods to those caught bringing in or using clipped or counterfeit money for the third time (Statutes, I, 220; Cal. Close Rolls, 1288-96, p. 203, B.M. Addit. MS, 32, 085). The statute of Stepney of 1299 similarly threatened loss of life and goods for infringement of its regulations (Statutes, I, 131) and in 1300 two Flemish merchants were hanged for bringing false and counterfeit money into England. (E. 159/74, m. 31d.)
This harsh treatment was partly due to the royal dislike of Jewish blasphemers. A devout Catholic, Edward naturally distrusted people who refused to accept the evident truths of Christianity and in May, 1279, he ordered the justices concerned with trespass of money to extend their jurisdiction to include charges of blasphemy by Jews. Moreover Jews were forbidden to have Christian servants living with them and all Jewish women were required to wear a sign on their outer garments. But this innate distrust was balanced by his concern for law and justice, and once the most severe period of persecutions had passed, a few Jews were able to escape the death penalty by paying large fines, while others fled. In May, 1279, the king decreed that all Jews who had forfeited their goods and were still in prison might be released on payment of a fine. In addition, their wives and the wives of those who had been hanged were to be released on payment of a fine, but if they were too poor or if they had already lost all their goods, they might be released without paying

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48 Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 565. The only recorded instance of a Jew being burnt for blasphemy is that of Abraham, son of Deulecress, Jew of Norwich. According to the account of Walter de Helyon (C. 47/9/50), he was drawn and burnt for blasphemies and other transgressions which he made (c.f. Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 377), but according to the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer's Memoranda Rolls he was first imprisoned and then hanged for a trespass of the money, with no mention of blasphemy. (E. 368/54, m. 8d; E. 368/57, m. 6d.) Perhaps he was imprisoned for clipping and then, angered at his treatment, he started to blaspheme so that he was hanged first and then drawn and burnt, or perhaps there were two different men, or father and son, the one being burnt and the other hanged.

49 They lost their property but they kept their lives. Hake, son of Besse, for example, had one messuage in Norwich which was sold to Roger de Tendenham for four marks (C. 47/9/50; E. 372/124, m. 30).
Among those who benefitted from this decision was Master Elias, son of Master Moses, one of the richest Jews in London, who was pardoned on the payment of a fine of one thousand marks. Another London Jew, Aaron, son of Vives, was pardoned at the request of Edmund, the king's brother. He had also lent a thousand marks to the Queen consort, which may have helped to secure his release. Other leading Jews were released in return for substantial fines, which took them many years to pay. But it is the women who benefitted most, for the accounts of Philip de Willoughby and Hugh de Kendal contain many references to fines paid by wives for having grace or because they concealed the goods of their husbands.

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53 Bonefey of Cricklade was fined two hundred marks (E. 372/124, m. 30). In 1282 he still owed 25 l. 13s. 6d., which he was not able to pay on account of his poverty, because many of his debtors had not paid him. The king, therefore, agreed that he could pay his arrears at the rate of 40s. a year (E. 159/55, m. 4d.). In 1285 he was imprisoned for another offense and so was not even able to pay 40s. a year. The rate was, therefore, reduced to 20s. a year (Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 216).
54 The usual fine for "having grace" was either one pound or five marks (E. 372/124, m. 30). The fines for concealment of goods ranged from half a mark to the twenty-three marks levied on Sarah de London and her son and daughter (E. 372/123, m. 22). She was able to pay eighteen marks immediately but the remaining five remained unpaid. In 1281, the king, having compassion on her poverty, said that she could pay the arrears at the rate of one mark a year (Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, p. 66).
The Christians were treated more kindly. Few were executed, and the fines, although heavier than in the past, were not quite so harsh as those levied on the Jews and they were not kept in prison for so long. On December 29, 1278, all the goldsmiths were released on bail, except those definitely suspected of clipping or exchanging clipped money. These were tried later and when found guilty, were fined. The chronicler of Bury St. Edmunds gives a clear account of what happened there. At the end of 1278, five goldsmiths and three others were arrested and taken to London by the town bailiff. When complaints were made that this was an infringement on the liberty of Bury St. Edmunds, the accused men were sent back to await trial. Sometime in 1279, John de Cobham and Walter de Helyon arrived at Bury and, ignoring the rights of the abbot, held a court at the Guildhall to try the goldsmiths and others. The fines that they collected went into the royal treasury and included one hundred marks from the sacrist, presumably for offenses in connection with the mint at St. Edmunds. The highest fine paid by a Christian was the five hundred marks levied on Walter de Watford, goldsmith and merchant, who had to seek the help of two Italian merchants, Orlandino and Henry de Podio, as well as of Bartholomew de Castello, in order to pay it. Even so, eighty pounds of his

55 Only two Christians are known to have been executed. John le Havekere, who was hanged at London for forgery of the king’s money (Cal. Close Rolls, 1279–88, p. 87) and William de Nettingham, a moneyer at Bristol, was drawn and hanged there for clipping (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281–92, p. 151).


fine was still outstanding in 1285 and he was forced to sell some of his lands to help pay his debts.⁵⁸

Goldsmiths were not the only Christians who were involved in clipping and related offenses. Guy, prior of Montacute, was pardoned the trespass of clipping in 1279 for a fine of sixty marks, but this did not deter him, and in 1284 he was found guilty of clipping, forging the king's money, and receiving the chattels of certain Jews, for which he was fined two hundred marks.⁵⁹

Men in responsible positions, who were short of money, seem to have had recourse to clipping rather than the money-lender. Philip de Stanburn, constable of Stamford castle, was fined 91 l. 12s. 4d. for a certain trespass of the money.⁶⁰ Walter de Kent, who had been a royal steward and later, as royal clerk, was active on many commissions of oyer and terminer, was fined 50 l. for a similar offense, although he was soon pardoned and acquitted.⁶¹ The Italian merchants who were in charge of collecting the custom in Ireland, took advantage of their position and clipped the money of the custom to the amount of

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⁵⁸E. 372/124, m. 30; E. 159/59, m. 2; E. 368/59, m. 3d.

⁵⁹Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, pp. 113, 209; E. 368/54, m. 8d.

⁶⁰Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 303; Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, p. 277; E. 159/58, m. 1d. In 1284 the fine was still unpaid and he was allowed to pay it off at the rate of five pounds a year (Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 206).

⁶¹He had also engaged in other questionable activities. In 1280 he was charged with causing the death of a man in the New Forest and a few months earlier he had been pardoned for all trespasses of vert and venison caused by him there. (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, pp. 392, 413; Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, pp. 2, 154). On page 2, his fine is described as 50 l. and on page 154 as 50 marks. There is no means of knowing which figure is correct.
10 l., using the clippings for trade and making silver vases. They were therefore imprisoned for several months until surety was offered by their associates in London, whereupon they were released and restored to their former post. The large number of prominent Christians involved in monetary offenses shows that men had little respect for the royal currency and helps to explain the severity of the punishments in 1279. Small fines were no deterrent. Once the king had decided on a new and complete recoinage, effective measures had to be taken to discourage clipping, or the recoinage would be useless.

Another reason for the harshness of royal actions was the king's shortage of money in 1279. The fifteenth of 1275 had been used to meet the debts incurred by the king during his absence in Gascony. The recent tallages on the Jews had proved disappointing and although the king had been granted the customs on wool and hides in 1275, this additional income had not been enough to

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63 Probably this decision was made by the king and his council in January 1279, since the state of the coinage was discussed at that time (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 338) and Gregory de Rokesle, citizen of London, and Orlandino de Podio, merchant of Lucca, were appointed the new Wardens of the Exchange on January 7. (Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 106). Orlandino de Podio was obviously chosen because the help and backing of the Riccardi were needed for the recoinage.

cope with the extraordinary expenditure incurred during the Welsh war of
1277. Faced with the expenses of recoinage, Edward hoped to pay them out
of the fines and forfeitures imposed for trespasses of money. He therefore
ordered the justices to pay to the Wardens of the Exchange all the money and
silver they obtained from the Jews and other transgressors against the
coinage. Furthermore they were to be diligent in collecting fines, selling
books and other forfeited goods and in levying debts owing to the Jews, so that
as much money as possible would accrue to the royal treasury. At all times
they were to be sure to get the best possible price and to send the money to the
king quickly.

65 The customs for the nine years 1278-87 average 8,500 l. a year
[J. Conway Davies, "The Wool Customs Accounts for Newcastle upon Tyne for
The war expenses amounted to 20,200 l. which the king met by borrowing from
the merchants of Lucca, but this loan, of course, had to be repaid. [T. F. T.
Tout, Chapters in Administrative History of Medieval England (Manchester,
1920), I, 112].

527; Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 111.

67 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 363-4; Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88,
p. 41; Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 529. The work on the recoinage did not
begin until May when the dies for the new coins were issued to the Wardens (E.
159/52, m. 6d.). This delay was probably to allow the money collected by the
justices to reach the Wardens.
He was not disappointed in his anticipation of extra revenue. By the end of 1280 he had received 7,449 l. 16s. 1-1/2d. from Philip de Willoughby, 68 2,629 l. 5s. from Hugh de Kendal, 69 and 736 l. 13s. 2-1/2d. from the executors of John le Falconer, making a grand total of 10,815 l. 14s. 4d. Of this money, just under half (5,325 l. 7s. 7d.) was paid directly to the Wardens of the Exchange and helped to finance the recoinage. The rest was swallowed up in expenses, such as wages to justices, and in payments to the Wardrobe (2,053 l. 10s. 8d.), to the Queen (600 marks), to Giles de Audenarde for the works of the Tower of London (1,237 l. 10s. 5d.) and to other royal officials. But more was to come, for debts owing to Jews were still outstanding and many of the fines remained unpaid. In addition many of the forfeited goods were unsold or had not been discovered, as wives tried to conceal the goods of their husbands or

68 E. 372/124, m. 30. Over half of this sum came from fines and the sale of goods and property in London and Middlesex, i.e.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4,431 l. 17s. 7 d.</td>
<td>from London and Middlesex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 l. 15s. 8 d.</td>
<td>from Essex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>494 l. 5s. 8 d.</td>
<td>from Kent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>218 l. 4s. 0 d.</td>
<td>from Cambridge and Huntingdon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,045 l. 0s. 5 d.</td>
<td>from Norfolk and Suffolk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148 l. 4s. 9 d.</td>
<td>from Bedford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,044 l. 8s. 1/2d.</td>
<td>from Oxford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 7,449 l. 16s. 11d. 2

69 E. 372/123, m. 22. 2,252 l. 13s. 1d. from fines and forfeitures in the north of England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 l. 11s. 4d.</td>
<td>from gold of the Jews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373 l. 0s. 7d.</td>
<td>from plates and pieces of silver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 2,629 l. 5s. 0d.
As late as 1283, the king granted his wife all the concealed goods not yet come to light, as well as the forfeitures of those convicted of concealing them. The following year further commission of enquiry was made into the concealment of goods, and Walter de Helyon and the other men responsible for the receipt and sale of forfeited goods were ordered to render their final accounts, most of which have unfortunately disappeared, so that there is no means of knowing how much the king finally received.

The persecution was not as successful in weeding out clippers and in acting as a deterrent as it was in encouraging the anti-semitism so prevalent in

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70 In July, 1279, Henry de Dernegate in Winchester was fined one thousand marks for buying the clothes, lamps, and books of Benedict of Winchester and other condemned Jews (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 320; Cal. Fine Rolls, 1272-1307, p. 144).

71 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 62; E. 159/57, m. 4. We do not know how much the Queen eventually received from this source, but it was probably a substantial amount. In 1285, Floria, the wife of Elias, son of Master Moses, Jew of London, was granted freedom from tallage in consideration of the fine of 1,000 l. which she paid to the Queen for concealing the goods of her husband (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 193). The same year several Italian merchants were also found guilty and paid the Queen a fine proportionate to their offense, i.e. for a 100 l. of concealed goods they paid 100 l. fine and for 200 l. of concealed goods, they paid 200 l. fine (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 173).

72 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 128. Annales Londonienses, p. 93 lists several men who were unjustly detained because of this commission.

73 Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, p. 256; E. 368/57, m. 21d. The only surviving account is that of William de Brayboef, who had received 381 l. 15s. 7-1/2 d. in addition to the money given to him by the executors of John le Falconer (Jewish Historical Society, Miscellanies, II, 56-71).
thirteenth century England, and many Jews were accused on slender and
non-existent evidence. Christians, inspired by religious zeal and genuine
grievances, either falsely accused certain Jews of trespasses of money or
threatened to do so in the hope of extorting money from them. As soon as the
king found out what was happening, he ordered that all Jews who had not yet
been indicted on certain suspicion were not to be charged with trespasses of
money committed by them before May 1, even if Christians brought new
accusations against them. Clearly many Jews in the preceding months had
been brought to trial on light or groundless accusations, but this does not prove
that they had been found guilty. On the contrary, the most obvious explanation
for the king's order is that the justices were once more wasting their time
trying innocent people and the king wanted to prevent this in the future. The
trials of 1279 seem to have been carried out as fairly as the ones of 1276 to
1278 had been, but the guilty were punished more severely. Yet clipping
continued, although not as seriously as in the preceding three years. In 1280
the king was forced to take measures to prevent the clipping of the new coinage,^75
and in 1283 someone complained, probably unjustifiably, that clipping had been
carried on to such an extent that twenty shillings by number scarcely equalled

^Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 529; Foedera, I, ii, 570 (May 7,
1279).

^Nicholas Oresme, De Moneta and English Mint Documents, transl.
twenty shillings by weight. The Jews, the Italian merchants and other Christians were still involved in monetary offenses and a brisk trade developed in sheets of silver either made out of clippings or of tin silvered on the outside, for clipping, even with new money, was relatively hard to detect on an unmilled coin. After 1279, only the more adventurous or perhaps the more foolhardy, resorted to clipping, whereas before the coinage had deteriorated so much with age or use, clipping had become so easy that the temptation was, for many men, impossible to resist.

The severity of the royal attack on clippers and counterfeiters in 1279 was the result of the severity of the crisis facing the king. Between 1276 and 1279 both Christians and Jews, spurred on by the curtailment of usury in 1275 and encouraged by the general deterioration of the coinage, had been increasingly engaged in clipping and other monetary offenses. A recoinage was urgently needed, but was useless unless something was done to discourage clipping. In addition the recoinage was expensive and the king was short of revenue, so that the fines and forfeitures for trespasses of money not only helped to finance the recoinage but also provided a welcome addition to the royal income. It seemed only reasonable that those responsible for the bad state of the coinage should pay for its improvement. But the Jews paid more heavily than the Christians, for they lost not only their goods and their wealth, but also their lives.


CHAPTER III

THE RECOINAGE OF 1279-81

The new Wardens of the Exchange, Gregory de Rokesle and Orlandino de Podio, were formally appointed on January 7, 1279. In accordance with tradition, Gregory de Rokesle came from one of the leading London aldermanic families. Nominally a goldsmith, he was also active as a merchant, trading in corn, fish and cloth, as well as exporting wool and importing wine. Before becoming Alderman of Dowgate in 1265, he had been one of the London sheriffs and in 1274 he was chosen Mayor of London. An excellent administrator, he spent the next seven years codifying the various customs of the city in his assizes and making the administration more efficient. During this time he was also engaged on the king's business, serving as commissioner in the Anglo-Flemish dispute in 1275, scrutinizing the chirographers of the Jews in 1276, and acting as tax-collector in 1277-78. Well-known and trusted by the king, he was a natural choice to replace Bartholomew de Castello. After his appointment as Warden, he put his experience in the administration of London to good use.


2 Full details of his career can be found in G. A. Williams, Medieval London from Commune to Capital (London, 1963), pp. 330-31.
use, and the mint accounts presented by the Wardens become more detailed and more efficient. Orlandino de Podio, on the other hand, was clearly chosen because the help and backing of the Riccardi were needed for the recoinage. He was to some extent simply their attorney and the exchange was described as being delivered to "the merchants of Lucca commorant in London."³ But he was also one of the royal companions. The only layman who possessed the right of sleeping in the Wardrobe, he was constantly at the king's side and had provided much of the money to finance the recent Welsh war.⁴

Preparations for the recoinage proceeded slowly. In February, 1279, the Wardens were promised reimbursement for all reasonable expenses, including the provision of extra moneyers and workers.⁵ As a result, new moneyers were appointed, all of them foreigners. In March, William de Turnemire of Marseilles and Peter, his brother, were granted 100 l. a year as a fee for their expenses and in April, Hubert Alion of Asti was granted 200 l. a year for his maintenance.⁶ The dies for the new coinage, however, were not delivered to the Wardens until May 17,⁷ and they did not present the new

³Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 301. In the audit of the account of Bartholomew de Castello, it states that he delivered a 1000 pounds to "Gregory de Rokesle and the merchants of Lucca, keepers of the said exchange." Thomas Madox, History and Antiquities of the Exchequer (London, 1769), II, 134-5.

⁴T. F. T. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England (Manchester, 1933), II, 29.


⁶Ibid., pp. 305, 313.

⁷E. 159/52, m. 6d.
keepers of the dies, John de Blakethorn, Ralph de Ráby and John de Heywood, until July 6. As one of the most important duties of the keepers of the dies was to sit beside the moneyers and supervise the striking, it is quite likely that coining did not actually begin until early July.  

Edward made several important changes at the time of the recouminage. He first issued a new coin, the groat, which was equal to four pennies. Here the king was clearly influenced by events on the continent. Following the example of the Italians, St. Louis of France had issued a groat (the gros tournois) worth twelve deniers in 1266. It proved popular and from France the minting of large silver pieces spread to Aragon, Castille and the Low Countries. Edward wished to follow suit, but as the English coinage had not depreciated as much as the continental ones, his groat was worth four instead of twelve pennies. Another change was the minting of round farthings. In the past half-pennies and farthings had been made by cutting pennies into two or four parts at the mint, but so many men had been caught in the past three years cutting coins illegally and making small halfpennies that the king wanted to discourage this. Two of the new farthings could now be used as a halfpenny. At first the new

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9In the Red Book of the Exchequer there is a document headed Forma Nove Monete which probably dates from May, 1279, and sets forth all the conditions for the new coinage. It has been reprinted and translated by Charles Johnson in The De Moneta of Nicholas Oresme and English Mint Documents (London, Nelson, 1956), pp. 56-8.
farthings were struck at London only. Four of them contained as much fine silver as a penny, but to make them larger and easier to handle they were given a higher percentage of alloy than the penny. Thus each penny contained 5-1/2 grains of good silver but weighed 6-1/2 grains.

The design on the new coins differed radically from that of the long-cross coins of Henry III and remained the basic design for English pennies for the next two centuries. Whereas his father had been represented by a copiously bearded portrait, Edward chose to be shown by a young and beardless king's head wearing a crown with five ornaments and with the words EDW REX ANGL DNS HYB. On the reverse was a broad cross with three pellets in each angle surrounded by a circle containing the name of the town at which the coin was struck. The name of the moneyer, which had previously appeared on the reverse, was now omitted. ¹⁰ A close check, however, was kept on the work of the moneyers, as one penny or four farthings from each ten pounds coined had to be put in a box, the pyx, and four times a year the assayer delivered the pyx to the Exchequer in order to make the assay before the Barons. If the pence in the box were found to be short-weight, the moneyer had to make good the deficit. The position of assayer was thus a responsible one, and the king appointed a new assayer, Boniface Galgani of Florence. At the same time John de Maidstone, who had been Clerk of the Exchange, was appointed controller on

¹⁰ For fuller details and a complete classification of coins, see J. J. North, English Hammered Coinage (London, 1960), II, 8-18; Sir Charles Oman, The Coinage of England (Oxford, 1931); Fox, BNJ, VII.
behalf of the king, to keep a further check on the activities of both the Wardens and the moneyers. 11

The first new coins were not issued until August 4. In the meantime, in June, the king had decreed that false and clipped money was no longer to be current in the country and that no one was to buy or sell or do any business with this bad money without danger of losing his life, limbs or property. To make this prohibition effective he set up exchanges in ten major towns. 12 People were to bring their clipped money there and exchange it for good unclipped pennies and halfpennies of the old type, which still remained legal tender for another year. Furthermore no one was to change money, plate or other kings of silver except at one of the king's exchanges. 13 This calling in of the clipped coin caused much suffering, especially to the poorer people, as it was

11 Forma Nove Monete, Johnson, p. 58. In the household ordinance of 1279, John de Maidstone is described as a clerk of the marshalsea. Tout, Chapters, II, 160.

12 York, London, Canterbury, Winchester, Exeter, Gloucester, Norwich, Lincoln, Newcastle on Tyne and Northampton. Two of the chroniclers mention the setting up of the exchanges, but do not list the towns (Dunstable Annals, p. 280; Thomas Wykes, p. 280). There is no record of the establishment of the exchanges in either the Patent or Close Rolls, but in the Ancient Correspondence there is a letter from Stephen de Pencestre to the bailiffs and barons of the port of Hastings, which includes a copy of the king's original writ dated June 19, 1279 (S. C. 1/30, no. 183; see Appendix A). Other exchanges were added later, for example, at Durham, where the merchants of Lucca were put in charge (E. 372/132, m. 3) and at Oxford, where in March, 1280, 3,000 l. of new money was sent to be exchanged for the advantage of the scholars there (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 366).

13 Forma Nove Monete, Johnson, p. 58.
exchanged by weight and if their money had been badly clipped, they received few good coins in return. In addition they had to pay 16d. a pound for the cost of exchanging and reminting. Several of the exchanges were entrusted to the Italian merchants, from whom the king borrowed large sums in order to be able to finance his recoinage and provide sufficient good money for the work of exchanging. Altogether he borrowed 20,300 l. from different merchants.

The clipped money which was brought into the exchanges or seized by the commissioners for the trespass of money was then turned into new money. By January 1, 1280, 92,379 l. 12s. of old money had been reminted. From each pound, 1-1/4d. was deducted for the loss of silver in the fire and 1-1/2d. for making good the clipping. In addition, 15,486 l. 12s. 11d. of silver was brought in from abroad and coined, partly as a result of the efforts of Yved de Domo, merchant of Ghent, who was authorized to buy plates of silver for the king's money. The king received a substantial profit from this work, as in

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14 Thomas Wykes, p. 280. 6d. of this sum was the king's profit for the exchanging and 10d. the "revenue of the foundry," i.e. the cost of the recoinage (E. 372/132, m. 3).


16 Account of Gregory de Rokesle and Orlando di Poggio of money received to make exchange from April 28, 1279, to November 20, 1279 (E. 372/132, m. 3). This sum probably includes the 3,000 marks which Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, lent the king to make his exchange and which was then handed over to the society of the Pulci of Florence, who were responsible for the actual exchanging (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 321). The 20,300 l. had been repaid to the merchants by October, 1280.

17 E. 372/132, m. 3. (Mint Account enrolled on the Pipe Roll.)

addition to the traditional seigniorage of 6d. in the pound, he now received an extra 3d. in the pound as a result of his decision to make 243 pence to the pound instead of 240. A merchant bringing a pound of silver by weight would be paid 240 pence (less deductions), the extra three pennies being a hidden profit for the king. Some of this profit was swallowed up in expenses. Extra weights and balances were required; coal had to be brought from Kingston to the Tower of London with a keeper to look after it; candles were bought so that the moneyers could work late and the doorkeeper received a raise in salary from 13s. 4d. a year to 4l. 11s. 3d. a year (3d. a day).

All the coins of 1279, pennies, farthings and groats came from the London mint. The mint at Canterbury had been closed when Bartholomew de Castello was arrested in November, 1278, and the new Wardens had been too busy with their work in London to reopen it. On August 18, the mint buildings were still sealed with the seal of Stephen de Pencestre and apparently the Wardens dared not break it without his authority. The archbishop of Canterbury, who had been promised in June his customary profit from his three dies at Canterbury, was not, of course, receiving any money. He therefore wrote to Stephen de Pencestre asking him to remedy the situation and deliver the houses of the mint and the utensils in them to the Wardens or their attorneys, as the delay was causing him much harm. How soon the seals were removed

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is not recorded, but the new dies for the Canterbury mint were not ready until November 15, when Gregory de Rokesle produced them at the Exchequer. The three which belonged to the archbishop were then delivered to his servant, Henry Lovel, who the same day presented William Tollomer de Perogal to serve as the archbishop's moneyer. 20

Shortly afterwards an agreement was made between the archbishop and Gregory de Rokesle and Orlandino de Podio, whereby the archbishop handed over to the Wardens his three dies together with his exchange at Canterbury with all the revenues and profits of those dies and exchange. This concession was to come into effect on November 27, 1279, and last for three years. In return the archbishop was to receive one thousand marks of good new sterling in two payments of five hundred marks, the first to be made at Easter 1280 and the second at Michaelmas next following. Alternatively the Wardens could arrange for one thousand marks to be deducted from the money the archbishop owed the king. Gregory and Orlando pledged themselves and all their goods that they would perform this. They also promised that for the next three years they would sustain eight dies at Canterbury, five in the name of the king and three in the name of the archbishop and that they would bear all the expenses without any damage to the archbishop. Once the three years had elapsed, the

20 E. 368/53, m. 2d. See Appendix A.
three dies and the exchange would be freely returned to the archbishop or his successors without difficulty or hindrance.\(^{21}\)

The other major ecclesiastical mints also received their dies in November, 1279. On November 2, the Bishop of Durham was granted seisin of three dies of the king's new money, but these could not be given to him until he produced his old dies. As his attorney only returned two dies on November 2, he had to wait until he had handed over the third old die before he received the three new dies, so that the first new coins were not struck until January 1280.\(^{22}\)

The abbot of St. Edmunds was granted seisin of his die on November 8 and on November 15, the sacristan of St. Edmunds, Simon de Kingston, presented Robert de Hadley as moneyer and John de Rede as assayer. They were accepted and sworn in and according to the Memoranda Roll, the Treasurer delivered to the sacristan one die, namely one staple and two puncheons.\(^{23}\) The abbot, however, later asked for information about the number of pence to be made to the pound and petitioned the king for a standard of the money (i.e. a bar of coin fineness to be used as a standard of reference). When the question was discussed by the king and his council, it was decided that as the demand was

\(^{21}\) Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 334; E. 368/53, m. 2d. See Appendix A. This document offers further proof that Orlandino de Podio was acting as representative of the Riccardi, since he pledged not only himself, but his companions, citizens and merchants of Lucca, to carry out the terms of the agreement.

\(^{22}\) Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 542; E. 368/53, m. 2. The first Durham coins bearing Edward's name were issued by Bishop Robert de Insula and except for the mint name are indistinguishable from those of the other mints.

\(^{23}\) Cal. Close Rolls, 1272-79, p. 544; E. 368/53, m. 2d.
unprecedented, no standard should be given to the abbot, but that he should be
told the necessary information by word of mouth. This decision is somewhat
surprising as a standard was sent to St. Edmunds in 1247, at the time of the
introduction of the long-cross coinage, but probably reflects the king's desire
to restrict privileges as much as possible. Gregory de Rokesle duly provided
them with the information they required and the first money was coined at St.
Edmunds on June 26, 1280.\textsuperscript{24}

The monks of St. Edmunds subsequently wrote down the information
given orally by Rokesle and this provides the best evidence of the composition of
pennies in 1280. The mint pound contained 12 ounces, each ounce weighing 20
pennyweights; of this, 11 ounces 2-1/4 pennyweights had to be fine silver and the
rest alloy. The pound was minted into 243 pence, although a penny more or
less was accepted. A true penny weighed 24 grains, a heavy penny 25-1/2
grains and a light penny 22-1/2 grains. The money had to be cut so that there
were not more than six heavy or six light pennies in each pound, although seven
pennies would be accepted.\textsuperscript{25} Nothing but pennies was minted at St. Edmunds or
any of the other ecclesiastical mints.

\textsuperscript{24}English Mint Documents, Johnson, pp. 85-7. According to the
p. 72, minting did not begin at St. Edmunds until August 2, 1280.

\textsuperscript{25}"The St. Edmundsbury Trial Plate," Johnson, English Mint Docu­
ments, p. 87. These figures do not agree. If each penny weighed 24 grains,
then only 240 could be cut from one troy pound of 5,760 grains. If 243 pennies
were cut, then each could only weigh 23.7 grains. But in practice pennies
weighed only 22-1/2 grains, so that 240 of these weighed 5,400 grains. This
weight came to be known as the Tower pound. When the number of pennies was
increased to 243, the weight was reduced to 22.2 grains.
The coins of St. Edmunds differed from the rest of the country in having on them the name of the moneyer, Robert de Hadley, instead of that of the mint, although the use of the moneyer's name had been suppressed everywhere else. Furthermore the first coins were struck from a very peculiar die, which appears to have been made locally and modelled on the groat. That something irregular had been done at the abbot's mint can be seen from the commission to John de Lovetot and Gregory de Rokesle in July, 1283, to enquire who were the moneyers who had made the king's money in the town of St. Edmunds and who had falsified the die delivered by the king. They were also to examine the money coined by the said moneyers and the dies in their possession and to seize the latter if they were not satisfactory.\(^{26}\) The outcome of the commission is not recorded, but no drastic action was taken as Robert de Hadley continued as moneyer until 1287 and his name continued to appear on a series of dies of official workmanship.

One possible explanation for this anomaly was put forward by the Fox brothers. They suggest that owing to the long dispute over the question of a standard, the supply of a die to the abbot was overlooked. But Gregory de Rokesle, when he gave the monks their instructions, believed that they had received it in November, 1279, at the time the abbot was granted its seisin. The new abbot who had never superintended a coinage would be ignorant of the usual routine and allowed the monks to make their own die. When this first die

\(^{26}\) Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-93, p. 97; Fox, BNJ, VII, 117.
was returned to the Exchequer for replacement, it was automatically copied. There are two serious flaws in this argument. First, it was well known that new dies could be supplied only by the Exchequer or the Exchange: under no circumstances was anyone allowed to manufacture his own. Even if the new abbot was unaware of this, all the other monks and especially the sacristan cannot have been ignorant of the customary procedure. Secondly, the entry in the Memoranda Roll clearly states that one die was delivered to the sacristan.27

There is, however, another possible explanation. Boniface, the assayer, was sent to St. Edmunds in November to make the assay there (presumably for the money coined by the previous moneyer, Joceus the Goldsmith) and to cut the dies.28 Whether the die they had been given needed alteration, or whether they were given others is not known. As assayer, Boniface would not be very familiar with this task and this would explain the poor quality of the workmanship. Boniface was given the job because the regular diemakers were so overworked. New dies were needed almost every day and they had to buy some from Gerard of Ghent, so that it would have been impossible to spare anyone to go to St. Edmunds. When the enquiry was made in 1283, it was discovered that the poor die was not the fault of the monks and so

27"Et predictus Thesaurarius liberavit eodem sacriste per brevem Regis inde directam eidem Thesaurario et camerario unum cuneum ad monetam fabricandam videlicet unum stapellum et duos punczones sicut Simon nuper abbatus eiusdem loci habere consuevit." E. 368/53, m. 2d.

28"ad cuneos talliandos." E. 372/132, m. 3. The Wardens' Account records the expenses of Boniface going to St. Edmunds.
no action was taken. This theory received additional confirmation from the fact that John Gyot, who succeeded Boniface as assayer, originally came to England to cut the dies, so the two jobs were not incompatible. Furthermore, sometime between September 1281 and October 1283, three dozen and three dies were delivered to the abbot of St. Edmunds, so he clearly was allowed to have more than one die at a time. Thus it is quite likely that Boniface cut sufficient dies at the time of his visit to carry out the recoinage at St. Edmunds, all, of course, bearing the name of the moneyer. Why Robert de Hadley's name was put on the coins in the first place and why it was kept after the enquiry of 1283 remains a mystery.

Several different types of dies were often used at the same mint at the same time. Thus between May 17, 1279, and December 31, four distinct types of pennies were struck at London. Type a was probably issued between May 17, when the dies for the new money were delivered to Gregory de Rokesle and Orlandino de Podio, and July 6, when Hugh Fitz-Otto, the guardian of the young son and heir of Thomas Fitz-Otto, the hereditary engraver of the dies, presented Stephen de Munden, goldsmith and citizen of London, to perform the duties of engraver in place of the heir. Type b, very rare coins, were apparently the first efforts of the artist who later designed c and d. Evidently the type was not approved and was replaced almost immediately by the earlier varieties of type c. These different types served to distinguish the work of the different moneyers, who in the past had always had their names on the coins. There were three moneyers at work in the mint at this time. One of them,
Peter de Turnemire, was wholly responsible for the issue of groats and his coins are distinguished by a dot punched on the middle of the cross-bar of the Roman N on the reverse of the coins. Types a, b and c appear to represent the work of another moneyer and type d the third. A very rare variety of type d has an annulet on the king's breast, which might indicate that these coins were issued for the abbot of Reading, as the coins struck in London for the abbot of Reading under Henry I were distinguished by this mark.29

It is not certain who were the other two moneyers at work in London. According to the Forma Nove Monete, they were William de Turnemire and Hubert Alion de Asti, but according to the Warden's accounts for this period (April-December, 1279), they were William de Turnemire and Master Albert. Of course, master Albert may be simply a scribal error for Hubert, but it occurs so often that this is rather unlikely. More probably Hubert Alion decided at the last minute not to come and was replaced by master Albert, who was definitely in an inferior position. He did not mint as much money as William de Turnemire and he and his family only received four shillings a day for their expenses between November 20, 1279 and December 25, whereas William de Turnemire and his family received 9s. for their expenses during the same period. Furthermore, Albert seems to have been inefficient. When the first pyx of his work was delivered, 128 l. 14s. 11d. were found to be deficient in the second pyx, while William de Turnemire, who minted far more money,

29 All the information in this paragraph has been taken from the work of the Fox brothers, BNJ, VII.
was responsible for only 34 l. 19s. 3d. of poor money. In addition Albert not only failed to make 243 pennies to the pound, making on an average 242-1/2d., but he also made 958 l. of farthings of which each pound weighed four farthings less than it ought to have done. It is no wonder that the king decided to replace him.

On December 8, 1279, the king appointed William de Turnemire Master of the King's Money in England. Starting on January 8, 1280, he was to be responsible for making money in four places; in London, where he was to have as many furnaces as he wanted; in Canterbury, where he would operate eight furnaces, plus the three belonging to the archbishop of Canterbury; in Bristol where he would have twelve furnaces and in York where he would also have twelve furnaces. In each of the provincial mints he was to have a master moneyer under him. William was to bear all the burdens and expenses in these four places, and in return the king would allow him 7d. for each pound of the old money minted and 5-1/2d. for each pound of foreign silver. This allowance was made up as follows: 3-1/4d. for the wages of the moneyers, 1-1/4d. for the loss of silver in the fire, 1-1/2d. for making good the deficiency in the old money and 1d. for the wages of the Master and all his expenses, including food and drink, robes, charcoal and purchasing and cutting the dies. As the foreign silver was of higher quality, it did not need the 1-1/2d. deficiency allowance and so William was only granted 5-1/2d. in the pound. The king promised to

\[\text{E. 372/132, m. 3.}\]
find suitable buildings for the four mints and to pay the fees due to the Fitz-Otto family for cutting the dies. All the tools in the London mint were to be handed over to Turnemire, who was to return them in good condition at the end of the year or when he resigned his office. 31

The indenture also made provision for coining the groat and the farthing. The groat was to be made at the same rate and the same terms as the penny, but as it could be made more easily any extra profit which accrued would be the king's. Farthings were now to be made throughout England, not just in London, but because of the extra labor involved in making them, Turnemire was allowed 10d. a pound. Each farthing was to contain more alloy than the penny, partly so that they would be larger and easier to use and partly so that the king would receive as much profit from them as from the pennies. The royal seigniorage was now officially increased to 12d., 32 as the cost of minting had theoretically gone down. In 1279 the king had received 19d. from each pound of old money. According to the Warden's accounts, 9d. was for the seigniorage and 10d. for the cost of minting. William de Turnemire received

31 There are two versions of this indenture with William de Turnemire. One in the Red Book of the Exchequer is printed by Johnson, English Mint Documents, pp. 59-61; the other is in the Wardens' accounts on the Pipe Roll, E. 372/132, m. 3. The only significant differences are that the Red Book version does not mention the 5-1/2d. deduction for foreign silver, and gives the mintage rate for farthings as 10-1/2d. instead of 10d.

32 "the king shall have of each pound (of farthings) as much profit as he will have of the common sterlings, to wit twelve-sterlings." Johnson, "The Indenture with William de Turnemire," English Mint Documents, p. 61.
7d. a pound for minting old money, but the deduction was kept at 19d., and the extra 3d. went to the king. In practice it made little difference, as the cost of minting had been set artificially high and the king had never spent 10d. a pound on minting.

William de Turnemire took this opportunity to introduce new minting techniques. In the past square blanks had been cut from a sheet of silver of the approximate thickness of the coin. These oversized blanks were then hammered between the dies and finally the correct diameter coin was separated from its blank by means of a "pastry-cutter." Edwardian coins, however, have a more rounded edge and were obviously produced quite differently. According to Sir John Craig, Turnemire started making the metal into square rods, whose cross-section was about the same area as the intended coin. The rods were cut into slices a little heavier than the coin with a pair of scissors or shears. These slices were then "forged into roundness by beating in the angles" and finally trimmed and filed to the correct weight. Mr. Sellwood, however, thinks that this method was not suited to making groat blanks and suggests instead that flat-bottomed holes were made in a piece of cast iron, so that each hole was the same depth. Metal was then poured into these holes, forming "buttons" of the correct weight, which could then be beaten out flat with only one intermediate annealing. He also suggests that pennies were made from

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circular, not square, rods of about 1/4 inch in diameter, from which the correct number of lengths were cut and then beaten flat. Unfortunately the Treatise on the New Money, which was written by William de Turnemire in 1280, is very vague on this question of techniques, although he does make a clear distinction between the preliminary processes of making the blanks, which were done by "workers" receiving 2-1/2d. a pound and the actual striking of the coin, by hammering it between dies, which was done by "moneyers," receiving 1/2d. a pound. The Warden's accounts offer a clue about the making of halfpennies and farthings, since there are several references to the buying of basins and making holes in them for halfpennies and farthings. This agrees with Mr. Sellwood's suggestion that some coins were made by "pouring the molten silver through a metal sieve with holes of the appropriate size, the drops thus produced falling directly into water where they solidified as odd shapes, but of fairly uniform weight. They were then ready for use between the dies without further adjustment than that of beating flat." If these suggestions are correct, then Turnemire was even more inventive than has previously been thought, since he introduced not one new method, but three different methods for each type of coin.

The terms of the indenture were closely adhered to. On January 6, 1280, the king compensated Hugh Fitz-Otto for his temporary loss of the sergeancy of the dies by giving him half the garden and manor of Chilwarton

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35Printed in Johnson, pp. 76-7.
with rents worth 1 l. a year which had been in the hands of Benedict of Winchester, one of the Jews who had been hanged for trespass of money. In addition, Hugh was to receive all the debts, arrears and fees due from Thomas de Chilwarton to Benedict and another Jew, Jospin, son of Deulegard. On the new coins the king’s crown was made with a new iron, but the hair was stamped with the irons which had been used in the preceding year, which shows that the utensils of the London mint had in fact been handed over to William de Turnemire. Farthings were now minted at Bristol and York, but none were minted at Canterbury, probably because of the archbishop’s connection there, for no ecclesiastical mint was allowed to coin anything but a penny.

Extensive work had to be done at Canterbury before the mint became operational. The buildings had not been used for over a year and before that they had been empty for a four-year period and little money had been coined there, so that both the equipment and the houses were inadequate. Two new furnaces had to be made in the foundry and the existing buildings needed rebuilding and repairing. The further hall of the exchange, for example, needed new joists, new doors, new windows and a new floor, the gutters on all the buildings had to be repaired and a new house had to be made for the dies. In addition two new exchequers were built, the hall received a new store, and the great chamber two new glass windows. Outside the exchange new gravel

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37 Fox, BNJ, VII, 113.
paths were made. A great deal of new equipment also had to be bought or made, for example, three new chests, wooden benches and reed mats for the benches, new balances and eleven seats for the work of the moneyers. This suggests that there were eleven moneyers working at Canterbury. Nine of these came from abroad, receiving 15s. each for their wages and expenses, but they were either poor workers or they quarrelled with their English fellows for they tried to escape. Peter Turnemire, who had been staying at Canterbury to supervise the making of the furnaces, went to Dover to capture them. They may have tried to escape again or made life hell for their companions and the mint officials, for about this time Orlandino de Podio wrote to Thomas Bek begging him to order the sheriff of Kent to send workers to the mint, as great damage had arisen from the lack of workers and the danger of those who had come from abroad.

In addition to this extraordinary expenditure the Wardens at Canterbury had to meet their regular expenses, such as the donation to the parish church of All Saints and the wages of the doorkeeper who, like his counterpart in London, received a substantial raise and was given 3d. a day. Other mint officials also had to be paid. The two keepers of the dies each received 6d. a day, the co-adjutor to the exchange, who kept one key to the treasury, received 8d. a day.

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38 The account of the Wardens for the exchange of Canterbury from January 1, 1280, to October 18, 1280. E. 372/132, m. 2.

39 S.C. 1/30/no. 192. The letter is undated but must have been written between January 1, 1280 and July, 1281, when Orlandino de Podio gave up his wardenship of the Canterbury mint.
and the clerk, Richard, also received 8d. a day for himself and his boy. Much of the royal profit was thus swallowed up in expenses. Although 35,200 l. was minted at Canterbury between January and October 1280, and the king obtained 3,089 l. 11s. in revenues, he spent 1,087 l. 15s. 3-1/2d. on expenses and so only received 2,001 l. 15s. 8-1/2d. in profit.40

At London, the mint needed extra equipment, such as sacks to keep the money in and extra men to supervise the coining and help with the exchanging. Between November 1279 and February 1280, five keepers of the dies were working in the foundry, but in February the number was reduced to three, one of whom, Stephen de Munden, kept account of the number of dies made and was paid 6d. a day, and the other two (John de Blakethorne and William de Dertford) supervised the striking, for which they received 8d. a day. In the exchange, in addition to the king's clerk, John de Maidstone, who received 8d. a day for himself and his valet, two new clerks were appointed and two assistants for weighing and counting the pennies. One of these assistants, Adam de Rokesle, was a relation of the Warden. Other new men were brought in from the City of London, such as Nicholas le Convers, a prominent goldsmith, who became a temporary exchanger, despite the fact that he had earlier been accused of clipping the coin.41 Four different men were employed as exchanger between June 1280 and April 1281, but they may not have all been working at the same

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4027,032 l. 16s. 1d. of old money and 8,167 l. 3s. 11d. of foreign silver.

41Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 255; the rest of the information comes from the Warden's Accounts. (E. 372/132, m. 3d.)
time. The position of chief assayer, however, remained in the hands of one man, Boniface Galgani of Florence, who sent subordinates to take his place in the provincial mints. All these men had to be paid and nearly 200 l. was spent on wages alone between November 1279 and April 1281.

Because the king had to face such heavy expenses, both at Canterbury and London, he instituted an increment of 2d. in the pound on payments from the foundry into the exchange. Starting January 1, 1280, 245 pennies were cut from every pound. The value of such increments can be seen when the figures for 1279 and 1280 are compared.\footnote{Appendix B, Tables 1 and 2.} Between April and November, 1279, just over 93,333 l. was minted, bringing in revenues of 7,303 l. 13s. 5d. Between May and October, 1280, a very similar sum was minted (94,194 l.), but the revenues were considerably higher (9,298 l. 3s. 6-1/2d.). In both cases the revenues from the mintage and seigniorage were the same, but the extra profit came from the increments. For in addition to this new increment of 2d. in the pound, there was the traditional increment coming from the exchanging of small sums.\footnote{"Et de cc.xxix l. viiiis. iiiid. de incremento invento per minutias particulias per manus cambitorum cambiantur." E. 372/132, m. 3d. (Warden's Account from May to October, 1280).} Large amounts would be paid out by weight but small sums would probably be paid out by number, so that the recipient could obtain several light pennies without being aware of it. Money received in this way was kept by the king. This profit was not allowed to stand idle, but was used to pay the
king's debts or to meet the expenses of the wardrobe. Between May and October, 1280, about 2,000 l. in new money was paid to various creditors and over 5,000 l. of old money was used for household expenses. The exchange was thus very useful as a supplementary exchequer and on one occasion when Eleanor, the Queen mother, could not obtain payment of a customary rent because the Exchequer was closed, she obtained the money from the exchange.

Once the recoinage got underway, it became obvious that existing moneyers could not cope with the extra work, so moneyers and workers were brought in from abroad. In addition to the nine who went to Canterbury, twenty went to Bristol at the end of 1279. But the Warden had underestimated his needs and in 1280 tried to recruit more workers in France. The French king, however, did not look kindly on his activities and ordered the arrest of the workers. They may have been released later. Certainly others were recruited elsewhere, perhaps from Flanders, for eventually 191 workers and moneyers came to England in the early months of 1280. Later the same year, just before Michaelmas, another nine moneyers came from Spain, bringing their hammers and other tools with them. They probably replaced moneyers

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44 These figures are taken from the above account, but additional confirmation can be found in Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, where there are many letters to the Wardens ordering them to pay sums of old, good money to the master of the wardrobe "with all speed as the king wants money for the expenses of the household." (pp. 367, 368, 370, 378, 390, 393, 395.)


46 E. 372/132, m. 3.
who had left or who had fled, for one of the exchangers spent eighty days going to Dover twice and Scotland once trying to track down moneyers who had escaped. Working conditions in the mint at this time cannot have been pleasant and may have been dangerous, as at Newcastle one of the moneyers was killed.

Many of these foreign workers went to the provincial mints. Work began at Bristol, under the supervision of William de Turnemire, early in 1280. At the same time the Wardens sent 2,000 l. from London to set up an exchange there, as Bristol had not been one of the cities granted an exchange in June, 1279. Peter de la Mare, constable of Bristol castle, was made keeper of the exchange. This policy of appointing prominent local citizens to keep the exchange, while leaving the mint under centralized royal control, was followed at York. The exchange there had been set up in June, 1279, under the guardianship of John Sampson and John le Specer. The former was mayor of York five times and the latter twice. Both were active in trade and had invested their wealth in property within the city and the surrounding countryside. Occasionally John Sampson was replaced by Adam Verdennel, who also belonged to one of the leading families of York. In contrast, the mint, which

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47 E. 372/132, m. 3d.


began working early in 1280, was under the general supervision of William de Turnemire, who sent his brother, Peter, to act as his deputy.  

The episcopal mint at York also started working in 1280. The archbishop of York had asked in 1279 to have seisin of the two dies which he and his predecessors had possessed from time immemorial. His claim, however, was disputed by the king, for the mint had not been active since Henry III's recoinage of 1247-58. Litigation followed, in which the archbishop was able to cite precedents from the reigns of William I, William II and Henry I. The king, therefore, finally agreed, in August 1280, that the archbishop should have two dies "of the king's special grace" and ordered the Wardens at York to give them to him. The archbishop's coins were distinguished from those of the royal mint at York by an open quatrefoil on the center of the reverse.

Two other provincial mints were opened in 1280 in towns where there were already exchanges, i.e. Lincoln and Newcastle on Tyne. The Warden's Accounts for May 19 to October 18, 1280, include the expenses of sending a keeper of the dies to Lincoln, so that the mint must have been opened there during that time, probably during July as the assistant of Boniface Galgani, the assayer, was sent there then. This mint was not included in the indenture with

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50 Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, p. 33, where Peter de Turnemire is described as the king's master moneyer at York.


52 Fox, BNJ, VII. This distinguishing mark was retained by all the archbishop's successors until the reign of Henry VII.
William de Turnemire and so he was not responsible for meeting its expenses; consequently, balances, both large and small, basins and other equipment were bought by the Wardens at London and sent to Lincoln. The exchange was in the hands of the mayor of Lincoln, Roger Fitz-Benedict and Ralph de Raby, who had been one of the London keepers of the dies appointed on July 6, 1279. At Newcastle on Tyne the royal mint had not been active since the recoinage of Henry III, but between May and October 1280, the mint was repaired and new balances were sent there. On September, 16, 1280, John the Fleming, burgess of Newcastle on Tyne, was appointed Warden and it is tempting to link the opening of the mint with that date. It cannot have been ready much earlier as on August 24 and September 10 the Wardens of the exchange of Durham and York respectively were ordered to provide money for exchanging at Newcastle. On the other hand, the assayer's deputy arrived in August, so that it may have started working slowly then.

The dies for the royal mint at Newcastle, as well as those for the archbishop of York and the Bishop of Durham, were supplied from York. This can be proved not only from the fact that the order for the archbishop's dies was


54 The Wardens' Accounts have a reference to the expenses of carrying writs to the sheriff of Northumberland and the mayor of Newcastle on Tyne to repair the mint there. E. 372/132, m. 3d.


addressed to the Wardens of the Exchange of York, not London, but also from the existence of a special type of coin (III 6) which was not found at any of the southern mints, but only at the northern mints of York (royal and episcopal), Durham and Newcastle. 57 This arrangement was more practical than sending the dies every time from London and explains why Peter Turnemire went to York. At the very end of 1280, in December, the last English provincial mint was opened at Chester to serve the marches of North Wales. Like the mints of Lincoln and Newcastle, it received its balances and other equipment from London and the first Warden of the exchange was a local official, Guncelin de Badelsmere, justice of Chester. Later he was replaced by Stephen Sarazin, a burgess of the city, and Robert le Mercer, a somewhat surprising choice as he seems to have had no connection with the city and was a burgess and merchant of Southampton. Badelsmere had received a 1,000 l. to make the exchange and in July, 1281, the new Wardens paid 1,200 l. to the keeper of the wardrobe, so this probably marks the end of their activities. 58 Finally in January, 1281, a start was made on the Irish recoinage, when Alexander of Lucca was placed in charge of the minting and exchanging at Dublin and Waterford. 59

57 Fox classification, BNJ, VII. Several of these coins had the peculiar form of the letter N, with a dot on the cross-bar, which was the distinguishing mark of the moneyer, Peter de Turnemire.

58 Oman, Coinage, p. 163; E. 372/132, m. 3d; Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, pp. 415, 450.

In addition to the opening of the provincial mints, several other important changes were made in the royal coinage in 1280. In August, round halfpennies were coined for the first time at a mintage rate of 9d. in the pound, and the long-cross coinage was finally demonetized. For the past year good old money had been current as well as the new money, but by August 1280 sufficient new money had been minted to meet the needs of the exchange and the 20,300 l. which had been loaned for making exchanges had been repaid. Thus the king felt that the time had come to call in all the old money, especially as some men were charging more for their goods in old money than they were worth in new money. After August 15, everyone was forbidden to buy or sell with the old currency and no one was allowed to take it out of the country. Later sergeants were sent to Dover and Sandwich to make sure that this prohibition was obeyed.

By the end of 1280 most of the clipped money had been reminted, so that the king felt able to reduce the mintage rates. After December 25, William de Turnemire, instead of receiving 7d. for each pound of old money, received

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60 Dunstable Annals, p. 280. Halfpennies were struck at London, Bristol, Lincoln and York (Fox, BNJ, VII, 119).


62 Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, Gransden, p. 72. The Warden's Accounts for May 19-October 18, 1280, contain a reference to the expenses of carrying letters of the king to the ports of England and other diverse places lest anyone cross with old money and the account between April and July, 1281, refers to the wages of one sergeant at Dover and one at Sandwich, keeping the port, for twenty weeks, lest anyone should cross with old money to ports beyond the sea.
and instead of 9d. a pound for coining halfpennies, he was given only 8-1/2d. The mintage rate for farthings, which had fluctuated from 10-1/2d. to 11-1/4d., was not set at 10-3/4d; the rate for foreign silver remained unchanged at 5-1/2d. At the same time the king decided to abolish the lower standard of purity formerly used in farthings and from henceforth both farthings and halfpennies contained the same amount of alloy as the penny. The higher cost of minting the farthings was met by reducing the silver content and making them less than a quarter of the weight of the penny.

The recoinage was nearly over and the major expenses in setting up the new mints and exchanges had been met. Edward, therefore, gave up both his secret profit of 3d. and the increment of 2d. and in February 1281 brought the pound of the exchange back to the pound of the exchequer. Before this, a man receiving a pound by number at the exchange would have been given 240 pence. If he had then taken it to the exchequer and had it weighed, it would have been regarded as underweight as, of course, 245 pennies were minted to the pound. After February the king abandoned the increment of 2d., and it was officially recognized that the pound contained 243 pennies instead of 240. Thus the king received only 16d. instead of 19d. from each pound of old money and 14-1/2d.

63 The memorandum in the Red Book of the Exchequer is wrongly dated February 10, 1284 (Johnson, p. 88). But from the Wardens' Accounts it is clear that the change took place in December, 1280. Furthermore the light farthings date from 1281 (Fox, BNJ, VII).

64 Craig, The Mint, p. 45.
from each pound of foreign silver. Edward's willingness to give up this profitable source of revenue reveals his concern for the stability of the coinage.

The reduction in the charges made for the minting of silver had an immediate effect and encouraged the bringing of foreign silver to the mints and especially to Canterbury. Between October 1280 and March 1281 only 813 l. of foreign silver had been brought to the Canterbury mint, since foreign merchants were no doubt discouraged by the heavy charges for seigniorage and mintage, but once these were reduced silver began to pour in. Between March 12 and May 3, 1281, in just over six weeks, the amount of foreign silver doubled. The trend continued. Between May and September, 1281, 15,936 l. was brought there and the following year 23,400 l. of foreign silver was minted at Canterbury compared with 1,688 l. of old money. Another possible reason for this influx of silver was the good reputation of the new money. Merchants who had stayed away when the coinage was badly clipped and worn were now returning and bringing their silver with them.

As soon as the recoinage was completed and the English currency had been restored to its traditional soundness, everything returned to normal.

65 Wardens' Accounts, October 1280 - April 1281. E. 372/132, m. 3d; E. 159/54, m. 4d. (See Appendix A). In this document the deduction for silver of Ghent is given as 6d. because this silver was finer than English silver, so that more alloy could be added. Thus the merchant was charged 6d. but the king received a revenue of 14-1/2d. because 8d. of alloy was added to the silver before it was minted. At Canterbury, the change did not take place until March 1281.

66 Wardens' Accounts, E. 372/132, m. 2.
Several of the leading officials gave up their positions. In May, 1281, the work of Boniface Galgani and William de Turnemire was judged satisfactory and the former gave up his office of principal assayer which was taken over by John Gyot. By July, Orlandino de Podio was no longer needed in the mint and on the 15th he rendered his final account before the council. His fellow warden, Gregory de Rokesle, charged himself with all Orlandino's arrears and the king acquitted Orlandino and his heirs and executors of all that could be exacted from him on account of the exchange.

One by one the provincial mints closed down. At Newcastle and York, minting had probably stopped by Easter 1281 when the assayer left, but the exchange continued to function for some months longer and the wardens at York did not render their final account until October. At Bristol and Lincoln the assayer left in June and Peter de la Mare rendered his final account for Bristol in October. The wardens at Lincoln paid small sums of foreign silver and old money into the London exchange between May and September, 1281, presumably from money they had received after the mint stopped working. They did not pay the arrears of their account until after September. At Newcastle, John le Fleming gave up the custody of the exchange in May, 1281,

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68 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1272-81, p. 450. The king's letter to the Barons telling them that Orlandino is no longer responsible for the arrears of either exchange is enrolled in the Memoranda Roll, E. 159/55, m. 2.

and was replaced by Hugh de Vichio, merchant of Florence. When he handed over his office, he also handed over the 1,200 l. he had received to make the exchange and the 582 l. 10s. 9d. profit he had made. Later the same month Hugh delivered 1,000 l. of that money to the exchange of London, but there is no record of what he did with the rest of the money or when he rendered his final account.70 There is also no record of how much money was minted at the provincial mints but it was probably very little compared with the output of London.

By the end of 1281 the king had made 18,219 l. clear profit at London, after all his expenses had been paid.71 This was a substantial sum, but nowhere near the 35,000 l. estimated by Sir John Ramsey, who was probably misled by the large sums borrowed by the king to make the exchange. At Canterbury, the king had received 3,836 l. in accordance with the indenture made with Gregory de Rokesle and Orlandino de Podio. If the archbishop had been given his customary 3/8 of the profit during this time, he would have received 1,488 l. As it was, he had been paid only a 1,000 marks, as at the time the indenture was made no one could have anticipated the influx of foreign silver. Realizing that he was being short-changed, the archbishop asked for


71 See Appendix B.
his dies back earlier. When they were not returned before the appointed time, he claimed compensation and was eventually granted 160 l. 72

What had been achieved by the recoinage? First the king had introduced a new coin, the groat, but these were not very popular and no more were issued after 1286 and perhaps before. 73 Far more important was the issue of round farthings and halfpennies, which lasted almost until today. Thirdly all the worn clipped money had been withdrawn from circulation and replaced with new money, carrying a basic design that remained unchanged for two centuries. To carry out this recoinage the king put up new buildings, brought in extra workers, many of them from abroad, and opened five provincial mints. It caused much hardship to those who possessed old or clipped coins, for when badly clipped money was exchanged by weight the owners lost heavily on the change. Furthermore, when the old money was called in, even if it was sound, 16d. was deducted for the cost of reminting and exchanging. But to the king it was worth it, for confidence was restored in the royal currency. No longer was it necessary to stipulate payment in "good money," for goods and debts and foreign merchants who had been staying away from England began to bring their silver to the exchanges once more.

72E. 159/58, m. 2; Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, I, no. 1288; Calendar of Chancery Warrants, 1244-1326, p. 11.

73Fox, BNJ, VII.
CHAPTER IV

A MINT OF TROUBLE, 1281-98

The years following the recoinage were troubled ones for the mint, filled with continual bickering between the Master and the Warden and with administrative upheaval as mintage rates went up and down and new ways of doing things were tried and abandoned. Of the two problems, the rivalry between the Warden and the Master was the more serious and stemmed from a division of responsibility. The Warden was responsible for buying the silver and the Master for minting it. If the Warden overvalued the silver, the Master lost on the minting. Furthermore, the Master was the king's choice, not the Warden's. He was appointed by the king and responsible to the king. The Warden was therefore jealous of the Master, who in turn was suspicious of the Warden, and each took every opportunity to complain about the mismanagement of the other. The king made this rivalry even worse by appointing a third man, the comptroller, to watch over the activities of both the Master and the Warden. For the Master was afraid that the comptroller was siding with the Warden against him, whereas the Warden was convinced that the comptroller was in league with the Master against him. The result was a mint of fear and suspicion, of accusation and counter-accusation, in which it was almost impossible to sift fact from fiction.
Yet, however delicate the balance between the interests of the Master and the interests of the Warden, if both men had been honest and willing to work together, no problem need have arisen. William de Turnemire managed to work in harmony with Gregory de Rokesle for four years. The king was lucky. He had needed a Master that he could trust and he had found one in William de Turnemire, who had done his work faithfully and well and to the king's complete satisfaction. When Turnemire wished to give up his position, the king naturally looked for someone like him, and preferred his brother to anyone strange or unknown. Peter Bertin de Turnemire was therefore appointed Master of the money on 10 February 1284, and William pledged 500 marks to make up any loss that might occur is his brother failed to perform his duties satisfactorily.

The king was to be disappointed in his choice, for brothers are not necessarily alike, and Peter was not as trustworthy as William. In 1296 Gregory de Rokesle complained that he had delivered 1,126 l. 1s. 10d. in silver to Peter Bertin to be minted and that money was still in the foundry and had not yet been returned to him as coin. Questioned about this, Peter accused Adam de Rokesle, Gregory's deputy, of concealing a delivery of 570 l. by

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1"Rex mandat Baronibus quod ob fidelem servicium quod magister Willelmus de Turnemyre nuper magister monete regis monete cudende impendit, rex magis vult quod unus qui sit de consanguinitate et familiaritate prefati Willelmi officio illi intendit quam unus extraneus et ignotus" (E. 159/57, m. 3). William received acquittance on 28 January 1284, "divers assays having proved his fidelity in his office of coining money" (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 111).

2E. 368/57, m. 4d; E. 159/57, m. 3. See Appendix A for a complete transcription of the agreement with Peter Bertin Turnemire.
withdrawing the 57 pennies (one for each ten pounds) which he had placed in the pyx and falsely asserting that they came from a sum of bad money which had been condemned as insufficient, whereas in fact they came from another delivery of good and legal money made at another time. When asked for his side of the story, Adam said that Peter had made only one delivery of 570 l. and that had been condemned as insufficient as a result of an assay made by John Gyot. The money was therefore refused and the 57 pennies returned to Peter with his assent.

Faced with these conflicting stories, the Barons ordered an enquiry to be made among the moneyers. They agreed with Rokesle that the 57 pennies withdrawn from the pyx came from a batch of condemned money and not from any other delivery. But, as Peter Bertin had insisted that the 57 pennies came from a good delivery and not from condemned money, the Barons ordered John Gyot to make another assay. This time Gyot found that the money was only deficient by one grain, which was within the prescribed tolerance, whereas before he had thought it deficient by 2-1/2 grains. Clearly Peter Bertin had made a false accusation against Adam de Rokesle, but he may have been right in saying that the 57 pennies came from a good delivery. John Gyot could have made a mistake the first time or he may have been testing two different sets of coins. Once the 57 pennies had been withdrawn from the pyx it would have been fairly simple to replace bad coins with good. The truth will never be known.

3E. 268/58, m. 15d.
A similar dispute arose the following year when Gregory de Rokesle complained that he had delivered £76 1. 1s. 8d. of silver to Peter Bertin, who recognized that he had received it, but had not returned it. Gregory was ultimately responsible for this money and felt that it was unfair that Peter Bertin, who was chosen by the king and not by himself, should have this power to jeopardize his position. His fears were justified for Bertin was obviously more concerned with his own interests than the king's and took the easy way out. He left the country illegally without repaying the money. In the end, Gregory was not forced to make up the money himself, but was granted an allowance in his account. Bertin, however, had had no reason to serve the king well, as he had been ousted from his office to make way for new Masters.

Early in 1286, Edward decided that the English currency had improved so much it was no longer necessary to differentiate between it and foreign silver. Both could be minted for 5-1/2d. a pound. Before the king could put the change into effect, however, he had to find a Master who was willing to accept it. Eventually he found two. These were John de Cahors, who became Master at London, and Gerard Maignan, who became Master at Canterbury where he had previously been clerk of the treasurer of the exchange. They

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4E. 159/60, m. 8; E. 159/61, m. 4d.
5E. 159/59, m. 25d. Letter from the king to the Barons.
6E. 101/288/14; E. 372/131, m. 4; E. 159/59, m. 29d. Gerard Maignan's name is sometimes written Maigian or Manhan. Both men were described as coming from Marseilles, but this may be just the clerk's way of saying that they were foreigners. Later Gerard received the favor and support of the Bishop of Albi (E. 159/72, m. 27).
agreed to accept the reduced rate on English silver and promised that they would not add any copper or other alloy to old and clipped money or even good English silver and that they would make farthings and halfpennies from such money rather than foreign silver. Having accepted 500 marks security from them, the king ordered the Barons to admit them to office as soon as possible.

Edward, however, was not in England but in Gascony, and so was not able to oversee the operation of the mint. Gregory de Rokesle felt free to ignore the royal commands and refused to work with the new Masters. They complained that he delayed as long as he could before delivering any money to them and that he refused to let them enter or use the mint buildings at Canterbury. But there is no break in the mint accounts at London or Canterbury at this time, so that the delay cannot have been serious. Later they complained that when the Warden bought English silver in their absence, he deliberately overvalued it, so that not enough deductions were taken and they lost heavily on the minting. Furthermore they said that Gregory on his own authority appointed two sergeants to watch over their expenses and activities. If these complaints were true, they had a legitimate grievance. Gregory had been acting in a high-handed fashion, but perhaps with some justification.

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7" promisit etiam quod in moneta veteri seu retonsa vel etiam billone non ponunt aliquod cuprum vel deterioramentum et quod de eadem veteri moneta et retonsa et etiam billone facient obolos et ferlingos." E. 159/59, m. 28.

8Ibid. The writ was dated 15 July 1286.

9E. 159/60, m. 3.
For later a violent disagreement (verboso tumultu) arose between the Masters and Reyner of Florence about the withdrawal of certain sums of money from the exchange of Canterbury. The details of the affair unfortunately remain obscure, but Gerard Maignan was engaged in money-lending and it is quite likely that he was lending the king's money and not his own. When the matter came to the attention of the king, he ordered an exhaustive inquiry, as he suspected that Gerard and John were trying to hide the truth, but the outcome of the inquiry is not recorded. 10 Gregory's suspicions about their honesty were probably correct and he was wise to keep a close watch on their activities. On 25 November 1287, they recognized that they had received 780 l. 5s. 11d. of silver from him which they had not paid back. They were, therefore, imprisoned in the Tower of London until they were able to repay it. 11 In 1299, however, Gerard Maignan complained that he had been unjustly accused and that the Treasurer, William de March, had refused to accept the statements which he put forward in defense of his innocence. As a result he had endured great misery and expense while he was in prison. With the support

10 In 1297 the Warden accounted for the goods that Gerard had left behind at the exchange of Canterbury and found that they consisted mainly of jewelry pledged by various people in return for small loans (E. 372/144, m. 27). The king's first demand for an enquiry into the affair was dated 20 September 1287, but nothing seems to have happened, for he ordered another enquiry on 22 January 1288 (E. 159/61, m. 1d., m. 6d).

11 E. 159/61, m. 2d., m. 4d. By July 1290 they had paid off 200 l. (E. 372/135, m. 1).
of the Bishop of Albi, he begged for another hearing. This was granted, but it is not known whether he was able to prove his innocence or not.  

Gregory himself was not above reproach and engaged in some questionable activities which came to light in 1293, two years after his death. They were discovered by accident, when the king ordered an examination of the goods of John de Bruges, one of Gregory's executors. His clerks found a piece of silver, weighing 39s., which was stamped with the seal of the king's money and inscribed with the words "Civitas London," so that it appeared to be a standard of the king's money. An inquiry was therefore held before the council and the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, at which Walter de Maidstone, another executor of Gregory de Rokesle, who had also been clerk of the exchange under him, was asked if he knew how the standard came into the possession of John de Bruges. He said that the piece had been made by Gregory de Rokesle out of his own silver, so that it corresponded exactly to the standard of the king in the treasury and that Gregory had done this to be more sure of the form of making money. Walter himself had found the piece of silver among the goods of Gregory after his death and had handed it with several other possessions belonging to Gregory to John de Bruges for safekeeping.

The council felt that Walter had behaved badly; he was a clerk of the king, he received the king's wages for looking after the exchange under Gregory, and yet he had concealed this standard, knowing full well that only the king was

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12E. 159/72, m. 27. The note on the Memoranda Roll merely orders the Barons to hold an enquiry. The result of the enquiry is unfortunately not recorded there.
allowed to have one. He had not informed the Treasurer or any other member of the council of his discovery and had delivered it to John de Bruges secretly. Furthermore, after John's death, when an inventory was taken of his goods in the presence of Walter, no mention was made of the standard. Later Walter allowed the executors of John to sell the standard to an unsuspecting goldsmith who turned it into silver dishes, thus destroying the evidence. Angered at this irresponsible behavior, the king ordered the imprisonment of Walter, the goldsmith, and one of the executors of John de Bruges in the Tower of London.¹³

Later, in the hope of throwing more light on the affair, the king ordered an examination of the goods of Gregory de Rokesle, which were still in the custody of Walter de Maidstone. There the searchers found a die in two parts (the pile and the trussel). Walter de Maidstone was therefore summoned once more into the presence of the Treasurer and Barons and asked how the die came into his possession. He said that Gregory had been assigned with others to hear the case of a false moneyer, who had been seized with the die that he had been using. After the case was over and the moneyer had been condemned, Gregory had taken the die, and instead of informing the royal council or handing it over to the Treasurer, he had kept it for himself. When Walter had found it after Gregory's death, he had also kept it without informing anyone.¹⁴ It was, therefore, obvious that both Gregory and Walter had everything necessary for

¹³E. 159/66, m. 38d. The other executor, who was an Augustine friar, was committed into the custody of his prior.

¹⁴Ibid. This second enquiry is on an attached schedule.
making money outside the royal mint, although there is no evidence that either of them did so.

Why had Walter de Maidstone tried so hard to conceal the trespasses of Gregory de Rokesle? There are three possible explanations. First Walter himself may have been responsible for making the standard and secreting the die and was trying to hide the fact by blaming Gregory, who was not in a position to refute him. Secondly Walter may have acted out of loyalty. He had been Rokesle's personal proctor before he became clerk of the exchange and may have wanted to shield his lord from disgrace. If this was so, he had taken a great risk and exposed himself to the wrath of the king, for he was imprisoned for some time and only released after agreeing to pay a fine of 220 l. Thirdly he may have realized the potential value and usefulness of the die and the standard and planned to keep them until a suitable opportunity arose to use them, but when the standard was discovered, he became apprehensive and so allowed it to be sold.

Whatever the reason, he had acted foolishly and continued to do so. On 4 March 1297, the king ordered his arrest for counterfeiting papal bulls and other letters. The following August an inquiry was held into his goods and chattels in the presence of master William de Wymondham, who had succeeded Gregory de Rokesle as Warden of the Exchange and had also been appointed

15Ibid. The poor goldsmith, who had bought the standard in good faith, without paying any attention to the markings, was released on payment of a fine of 40s. The fifth mainpernor of the fine of Walter de Maidstone was distrained in 1302 in an attempt to collect the money from him (E. 159/75, m. 51d).
keeper of the king's mines in Devon. There Walter de Maidstone was accused of having a die at the king's mines in Devon while he was controller there, in order to make farthings with the silver of the mines, and of making them with the assent and consent of Runcinus, the Master of the Money. Unfortunately when the king's clerk came to inspect the goods, the die had disappeared and it was suspected that one of Walter's household had removed it after his arrest. When asked why he had done this, Walter denied the charges, insisting that he had no die in the mines or elsewhere, nor had he made any money nor done anything to the prejudice and damage of the king. He therefore sought that another inquiry be made with another set of jurors, as the previous inquisition consisted of friends and close associates of William de Wymondham, who had caused the inquisition to be made out of "premeditated malice." His request was granted and at the beginning of April, 1298, another inquisition was held. This time the jurors agreed that the charges were false and that he had not used a die in the mines and so he was acquitted. The whole case was finally settled in 1299, when Walter, for a fine of 50 l., was pardoned both the offenses of having a die and of forging and sealing letters and was promised that he would suffer no loss from the arrest of his goods. \(^\text{16}\) Was he guilty? It seems rather unlikely as the die was never produced. He probably had been accused out of spite by William de Wymondham, who had engaged in other nefarious activities.

\[^{16}\text{E. 159/70, m. 15d; E. 159/71, m. 27; E. 159/72, m. 28d. He was pardoned at the request of his son, Robert, who was also a royal clerk. (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 403.)}\]
Very little is known about William de Wymondham's early life. At one time he worked for the archdeacon of Chester as bailiff and receiver of his revenues, but by May, 1290, he had left the service of the archdeacon for that of the king. When Gregory de Rokesle died in July, 1291, Wymondham was chosen to succeed him by William de March, the Treasurer, as the king was absent in Gascony. He was not formally appointed as Warden until 5 May 1292, after the king's return. His appointment completely broke with the tradition that the Wardens had been chosen from the leading London aldermanic families. Wymondham had never been an alderman, nor played any part in London politics. He was simply an obscure royal clerk, but one that the Treasurer and the king felt that they could trust at a time when so few royal officials were proving themselves trustworthy. Later he was given the additional jobs of keeper of the king's mines in Devon and collector of the sixth in the City of London.

This trust was misplaced. In December, 1295, Wymondham was questioned about the arrears of the sixth that he owed the king and the receipts and expenses in the mines, as he had received £200 for which he had not accounted. Given a day on which to answer these charges, he did not observe it but secretly fled, which implied a guilty conscience. As the king had also heard "sinister things" about the state of the mint, he ordered an inquiry, which

17E. 159/65, m. 38.

18E. 372/144, m. 26.
was held in the exchange in August, 1296. The royal officials summoned before them Walter d'Anesty, clerk of the king in the exchange, and Lapus, the comptroller and assayer, and asked them for the records of the purchases of silver and the amount of coins minted. Walter d'Anesty, however, asserted that he had no records, except one roll of purchases of silver from 25 November 1295 until 7 August 1296, because he had rendered his account to master William de Wymondham, his lord, and had delivered to him all the bills and rolls. Whereupon he was scolded severely and told that he was not clerk of the Warden, but clerk of the king, and that it was his task to write and keep the records faithfully and to give them to no one, because he was the king's representative in the exchange, appointed to keep a check on the Warden, which was why he received his wages from the king and not from the Warden.\(^\text{19}\) It was, therefore, his duty to produce the bills and rolls or face imprisonment and forfeiture. He then asked for permission to look for them. This was granted and with Hugh de Nottingham, one of the king's clerks in attendance, he left the exchange and entered a room next to it and there he found the rolls of purchases of silver lying in a coffer. So they took them and brought them before the others. Naturally Walter was asked why he had denied the said rolls

\(^{19}\) "... et dictum est dicto Waltero quod ipse non est clericus predicti custodis set est clericus regis de eodem cambio et ad ipsum pertinet billos et rotulos emptionum functorii et lucri fideliter scribere et custodire et nemini liberare et quod tenet ibi locum regis et est contrarotulor custodis et propter hoc percipere ille vadia sua a rege et non a custode." E. 368/67, m. 45. In fact, if the Warden's accounts are correct, Walter had not received any wages at all (E. 372/144, m. 26).
earlier and why they had been placed outside the exchange when they should have been kept in the exchange and not elsewhere, but he had nothing to say.  

When the rolls had been examined, Walter was questioned further about the purchases of silver, namely where and to whose hands the money had come and how much and by whom and when. He replied that he did not know and that it belonged to the Warden of the exchange to know and respond and not to the clerk. He was then ordered to produce the rolls of the foundry and the bills of the king’s profit and other rolls of the revenues of the exchange. Again he insisted that he had nothing but the rolls that he had shown, because everything that he had possessed he had delivered to master William de Wymondham, keeping nothing. But because Walter had first denied the rolls of purchases of silver, which he afterwards found, it was suspected that in the same way he had concealed the bills and other rolls of the foundry and profit of the king, which he should have had with him. He was therefore imprisoned in the Tower.

In the meantime, Lapus, the controller and assayer, was similarly questioned concerning the counter-rolls of the foundry, of the profit of the king and of the revenues of the exchange. He said that he had no counter-rolls, except those of the purchases of silver, which he immediately showed, nor could he be expected to do anything else than buy silver and deliver it immediately to the Warden. He was then told that he received a 100 marks a year from the king that he might be comptroller of the exchange in all things

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20E. 368/67, m. 45.
which touch the exchange and that all previous comptrollers had kept counter-
rolls of both purchases and revenues and he should have done likewise. 21
Because it was suspected that he really had counter-rolls of the foundry but
was refusing to show them, he was also imprisoned in the Tower and the keys of
the exchange were given to the Constable of the Tower to keep.

Afterwards both Walter and Lapus were again questioned at the Tower
by the Chancellor and others concerning the delivery of the aforesaid rolls and
bills. They replied that William de Wymondham had everything with him. They
were also asked if at any time the Warden had taken the king's money from the
exchange and used it for his own advantage. Walter thought that Wymondham
had taken some money, but he did not know how much because there were two
coffers in the exchange where the coin was placed for safekeeping. Although he
had the key to one and William's clerk had a counter-key, he did not have a key
to the other coffer. William de Wymondham had the only key to that coffer and
so was able to take what he wanted from it without hindrance. Lapus testified
to the truth of this statement. Pressured for further information, Walter
suggested that William de Wymondham had lent the money he had taken from the

21 Ibid. "Et responsum est ei quod ipse percipit de rege per annum C
marcas per sic quod sit contrarotulor cambii in omnibus que cambium
continguent et emtor et assalator et ad ipsum pertinet onerare custodem
cambii et testari facta custodis alioquin posset custode, nisi vellet commodum
proprium et damnum regis facere et omnes qui ante eum tenuerunt statum
suum contrarotulos tam emptiones quam exitus cambii habuerunt et habere
debuerunt et ipse similiter." Like Walter d'Anesty he had not received any
wages during the wardenship of William de Wymondham (E. 372/144, m. 26).
exchange to various people. Later, on 29 August 1296, he drew up a list of people and the amounts he estimated that William had lent them.

The Exchequer took this estimation as the truth and tried to collect the money, especially the 409 l. which Walter d'Anesty said William had lent to the Bishop of Bath and Wells. Each time he was ordered to repay the loan, the Bishop asked for more time. Finally in 1300, he sent his attorney to find out why the king was trying to exact this debt from him. No one seemed to know anything about the debt and the only evidence for it was the statement of Walter d'Anesty. It was therefore agreed that the case should be postponed. Royal officials, however, continued to press him for repayment and when he died in 1302 they tried to exact the money from his executors. In 1304 the executors asked how the court knew that the Bishop had owed that sum of money. They were told that two memoranda had been found among the goods of William de Wymondham. One of them was the schedule by Walter d'Anesty, the other a roll of payments, totalling 409 l., made for the consecration of the Bishop by William de Wymondham. This debt had never been repaid. The executors, however, felt that it was neither just nor equitable that they should be burdened by either the schedule or the roll or indeed any other memoranda which were

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22 E. 368/67, m. 46. Included in this list was 409 l. lent to the bishop of Bath and Wells before his consecration, 50 marks lent to John de Theford and 10 l. in farthings to his executors on the day of his burial, presumably for distribution at that time. He had also withdrawn 400 l. or more for his own wages for the mines and lent 419 l. to Runcinus Penyk and 240 l. to John Porcher, successive Masters of the money. The total came to 1,840 l. 6s. 11d.
found in the possession of William de Wymondham, when the Bishop himself did not have a record, which confirmed the truth of these statements. They, therefore, promised that if any contract or other probably valid deed could be found, they would pay the debt, but otherwise they did not intend to be held responsible, although they were willing to pay a small sum towards the expenses of the suit. As no further proof could be found, the Barons acquiesced in the petition of the executors and promised not to bother them any more. For their part, the executors agreed to pay 100 marks towards the expenses of the case.23

A precedent had been set and the king was unable to secure the repayment of any further loans made by William de Wymondham. In 1306, for example, the prior of Horton was asked to repay the forth shillings he had received as a loan from Wymondham, out of the revenues of the king's exchange of Canterbury. When he denied the loan, a search was made among the memoranda and the only evidence for the debt was a schedule similar to the one drawn up by Walter d'Anesty for the London exchange. As this was obviously insufficient, the prior was allowed to withdraw without a date being set for repayment of the loan.24 Once again, it becomes impossible to distinguish fact from fiction. Had William de Wymondham really lent money from the exchanges of London and Canterbury and had the recipients conveniently destroyed the records after receipt, or was Walter d'Anesty manufacturing

23E. 159/72, m. 67d., m. 101; E. 159/73, m. 52d, m. 57; E. 159/74, m. 9d, m. 50; E. 159/75, m. 55; E. 159/76, m. 82d; E. 159/77, m. 21.

24E. 159/79, m. 24.
evidence out of malice or because the king seemed to expect it? Certainly at
the time the king had no doubt about William de Wymondham's guilt and he was
arrested at Berwick.

New arrangements had to be made for looking after the mints. The
exchange at London, which had been closed when Walter d'Anesty and Lapus
Philip were imprisoned, was reopened and temporarily entrusted to Richard de
Gloucester, one of the leading moneyers, on 7 September 1296. Lapinus
Roger, who had been buyer and assayer at Canterbury was transferred to
London. The following month William de Wymondham took up his office
again, but not for long. On 2 December 1296, Peter de Leicester was
appointed the new Warden. Leicester was an eminently respectable royal
official, with a lot of financial experience. In 1279 he had been appointed clerk
of the receipt of the Exchequer. Later he was made one of the justices of the
Jews and on 2 January 1293, he became a Baron of the Exchequer. Under
his rule there was no further trouble at the mint.

25 E. 368/67, m. 45d.

26 E. 368/67, m. 43d., 45.

27 E. 159/70, m. 66d.

28 Thomas Madox, History and Antiquities of the Exchequer (London,
1769), I, 267, II, 62, 300; E. 159/66, m. 17. Later in 1301 he was granted a
license to reside in his own house whenever he required quiet and recreation.
He was given this privilege because of his long service at the Exchequer (Cal.
Why then had there been so much disturbance earlier? One reason was the administrative make-up of the mint. The Warden and the Master were both appointed by the king and responsible to him and yet were dependent on each other. The Master was dependent on the Warden for the supply of silver and the rates at which silver was bought affected his profit. The Warden was dependent on the Master for the return of the coin and if the Master kept some of that money for himself, then the Warden was faced with a loss. Furthermore, the king's insistence that everyone, clerk, assayer and controller, keep a watch on each other, as well as on the Master and Warden, encouraged an atmosphere of suspicion rather than trust. But it was not entirely the king's fault. Nearly every mint official was out for his own advantage and more concerned with furthering his own interests than the king's. Although the major charges, that Gregory de Rokesle planned to make money outside the mint and William de Wymondham made loans with royal revenues, were not proven, there does seem to have been a remarkable unwillingness to carry out royal commands or to perform duties satisfactorily. Gregory de Rokesle refused to cooperate with John de Cahors and Gerard Maignan; Walter de Maidstone deliberately concealed the standard and the die that he found; Walter d'Anesty was unwilling to produce the rolls of purchases of silver and Lapus, the controller, failed to keep adequate counter-rolls.

This failure to do satisfactory work resulted in part from an uncertainty about the nature of the work. Was the clerk's main responsibility to the Warden or to the king? What was the difference in the position and duties
of the clerk and the controller? These questions had never been satisfactorily
answered. During the recoinage, John de Maidstone had held the dual positions
of clerk of the exchange and controller at a salary of 8d. a day (12 l. 3s. 4d. a
year). In July 1281, he left the mint for other royal service and was replaced
in September by Hugh de Dunstable at a slightly increased salary of twenty
marks a year (13 l. 6s. 8d.).29 Hugh held the two positions of clerk and
controller from September 1281 until May 1285, when they were divided. Hugh
continued as controller and carried one key to the treasury, but his salary was
reduced to 8d. a day. The position of clerk, however, was given to Walter de
Maidstone, a kinsman of John de Maidstone, and a personal servant of Gregory
de Rokesle.30 This appointment smacks of favoritism and it seems likely that
Walter, because of his close personal relationship with Gregory de Rokesle,
was not trusted to keep a sufficiently close watch on the activities of the Warden.
From 1285 until 1291 Hugh and Walter worked together in the mint, each
receiving 8d. a day. On the death of Gregory de Rokesle, they either left or
were dismissed and the office of controller was given to Boniface Galgani, who
already held the positions of assayer and exchanger.

The office of assayer changed hands several times but remained
exclusively in the hands of foreigners. During the recoinage a Florentine,
Boniface Galgani, had acted as assayer. When he left the mint in May 1281, he

29E. 372/132, m. 2.

30G. A. Williams, Medieval London from Commune to Capital (London,
1963), p. 331; E. 372/133, m. 29d.
was replaced by John Gyot, who had first come to England during the recoinage, but it is not known where he came from. Gyot was given fifty marks a year, twenty-five marks for making assays in England and twenty-five marks for making assays abroad, presumably in Gascony. He appears to have done his work well, and when he left the service of the mint in May 1285, he was paid not only his arrears of salary, but twenty-five marks for his expenses in first coming to England. His departure left the way open for the return of Boniface Galgani, who was then given the double position of exchanger and assayer, at both London and Canterbury, with the high salary of a hundred marks a year. He must have performed his duties satisfactorily, for in 1291 he was given the additional job of controller, although without any raise in salary. Early in 1292, however, he wished to go abroad, so the king agreed that until his return his work could be done by his two nephews, Lapinus Roger, who went to Canterbury, and Lapus Philip, who stayed at London.

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32 E. 372/131, m. 4. He did not, however, receive any money from November, 1285, until July, 1290, when he was granted 400 marks, the arrears of four years wages, although he had made forceful complaints in 1287 (E. 372/135, m. 1; E. 159/61, m. 6d).

33 Lapus and Lapinus were mainperned by a group of Italians, who also promised that Boniface would return by Michaelmas, 1292 (E. 372/144, m. 26d; E. 159/65, m. 26; E. 368/63, m. 19d). If he did return he did not stay long, for in 1296 Lapus Philip was still acting as controller, assayer and exchanger at London (E. 159/69, m. 27).
There was no fixed wage for most mint officials. Wage rates went up and down, but in general wages were slightly lower at Canterbury than at London. In 1281, for example, when the additional staff needed to carry out the recoinage had been dismissed, those who remained received a cut in salary. At London, the three keepers of the dies, two of whom had received 8d. a day, were replaced by one man receiving 6d. a day. 34 At Canterbury, the two keepers of the dies were working in the foundry in the early years of 1280 had each received 6d. a day. But from October 1280 there was only one keeper of the dies, who was given two shillings a week, which is just over 3d. a day. This office was held for six years by Thomas Man, who was responsible only for the king's dies. 35 The archbishop did not pay a share of Man's salary and presumably had his own keeper to supervise the striking of his own dies. Similarly the exchanger at London, between September 1281 and May 1285, received 8d. for himself and his boy, whereas the exchanger at Canterbury during the same period received only 10 l. a year, which is slightly over 6d. a day. 36 After 1285 the offices of exchanger and assayer were combined until 1296, when the mint at Canterbury was closed and Lapus Philip, who had held the three offices of assayer, exchanger and controller at London, fell into royal

34E. 372/132, m. 2.

35Thomas Man is first mentioned by name in the account beginning May, 1281 (E. 372/132, m. 2d). He continued to serve as keeper of the dies until May, 1287, when he was promoted to keeper of the treasury at a salary of 7d. a day (E. 372/133, m. 29d).

36E. 372/132, m. 2.
disfavor, as a result of his failure to keep adequate counter-rolls. After 1296, Lapus filled just the one position of exchanger at a salary of 10d. a day. When Roger de Frowyk took over his job in January 1297, he received a raise and was given 20 l. a year. 37

Seigniorage and mintage rates also rose and fell as the king tried to exact as much profit as he could from the mint. In October 1283, the seigniorage on old money went up to 10d., but the mintage rates seem to have stayed the same, for when Peter Bertin replaced his brother as Master of the money on 10 February 1284, he was promised 6-1/2d. for each pound of sterling, 8-1/2d. a pound of halfpennies and 10-3/4d. a pound of farthings, the same rates that William de Turnemire had been granted on 25 December 1280. 38 Two years later, in May 1285, the mintage rates were reduced to 6d. a pound for old money, 5-1/2d. for foreign silver, 7-1/2d. for halfpennies and 9-1/4d. for farthings. 39 The new rates were soon changed, for in 1286 the king decided that English silver could be minted at the same rate as foreign silver, i.e., 5-1/2d. a pound. The cost of minting was thus going down steadily, but the total deduction from each pound of silver had remained unchanged since


38E. 368/57, m. 4d; E. 159/57, m. 3.

39E. 372/131, m. 4.
February 1281, which meant, of course, that the seigniorage was slowly increasing. 40

Emboldened by the success of this policy, Edward seized the opportunity offered by the appointment of a new Master of the money to make further reductions in the mintage rates. When Runcinus replaced John de Cahors and Gerard Maignan in November 1287, the fees paid to him for minting pennies, halfpennies and farthings were each cut by a farthing. 41 But the king had been too greedy and Runcinus found it impossible to mint money at these low rates. In July 1290, therefore, the rates for minting pennies and halfpennies went back to their previous levels of 5-1/2d. a 7-1/2d. and the rate for farthings went up to 9-1/2d. In addition, this concession was backdated to November 1287, and Runcinus was compensated for the money he had lost on the minting at the rate of 1/2d. for each pound of pennies, halfpennies or farthings that he had minted between November 1287 and July 1290. 42 No further attempt was made to cut the mintage rates during Edward's reign and these rates remained in force until September 1308. When the king was so clearly concerned with his own interests, with making as much money as he could from the mint, it is no wonder that the Masters and Wardens were tempted to follow suit.

40 See Appendix B, Table III.

41 E. 372/133, m. 28. See the above table.

42 E. 372/136, m. 29.
Royal profit, however, depended on an adequate supply of silver. The more silver that was brought to the mint, the more profit the king made. But after 1286, the amount of foreign silver being brought to the mint dropped off. In the years immediately following the recoinage, merchants, encouraged by the stability of the new coinage, had been bringing large sums of foreign silver to both London and Canterbury. This movement reached its height in 1286-87. Between August 1286 and June 1287 over 41,551 l. of foreign silver was brought to the London mint and 29,699 l. to the mint at Canterbury. After this the amounts brought began to drop rapidly. Between November 1288 and July 1290 only 16,153 l. was brought to the London mint and 5,956 l. to the Canterbury mint. The king, therefore, decided to reduce the rates at which foreign silver was bought in the hope of reversing the trend. From 14 July 1290, the king's farm on foreign silver was reduced from 9d. to 6d. and the total deduction on foreign silver was cut from 14-1/2d. to 11-1/2d. This reduction had absolutely no effect. Between July 1290 and September 1291 only 1,219 l. of foreign silver was brought to the London mint. As a result the king only received 137 l. 10s. 1/4d. in revenues. The total bill for wages and mintage came to 124 l. 17s. 4d. and so the royal profit was 12 l. 12s. 8-1/4d. No money had been spent on paying the porter or Hugh, the controller. If they had received their customary wages, the royal profit would have disappeared.

43See Appendix B, Tables 1 and 4.

44E. 372/136, m. 29.
altogether. The situation was just as serious at Canterbury. Only 745 l. of foreign silver was brought there during this period, so that the king's profit dropped to 13 l. 8s. 9-1/2d. and, as in London, the porter remained unpaid. 45

Naturally the king was anxious to squeeze out every last penny that he could from the mint and he tried to increase his revenue from increments. There were two traditional increments. One at 3d. in the pound came from all revenues (including both seigniorage and mintage) which were collected by weight at 240 pence and paid into the exchange by number at 243 pence. 46 The other came from small amounts of old money exchanged for new money. 16d. was taken from each pound of old money regardless of its weight. If it was good money, then the deduction was too high, as there was no deficiency to make up and this extra money went to the king as an increment. But it was not always possible to cut 243 pennies to the pound; sometimes 244 pennies were cut and these extra pennies went to the crown. This source of revenue never amounted to much; 15d. in 1292/3 and 6s. 6-1/2d. in 1293/4. Far more money came from the increments of halfpennies and farthings which first appeared in the Warden's accounts in September 1291. Owing to the difficulty of making these smaller coins, the tolerance for light ones was much greater than that for pennies. A pound of halfpennies by weight could contain 6d. or 7d. more than

45 Ibid. See Chapter V for a further discussion of this problem of the shortage of silver.

46 "... de incremento denariorum predicti exitus receptorum per pondus et liberatorum per numerum videlicet de qualibet libra iiiid" (E. 372/131, m. 4).
the official number. Thus the Warden receiving a pound of halfpennies by weight might receive 500, but when the exchanger delivered it to the merchants he only paid 486 halfpennies; the remaining 7d. went to the king. Similarly a pound of farthings by weight might contain up to 9-3/4d. more than the required number. The king therefore increased the amount of farthings minted and in 1293/4 minted 1,210 l. of farthings (compared with 50 l. the year before) bringing in an increment of 40 l. 16s. 8d.\textsuperscript{47}

Other administrative changes included different ways of presenting accounts. During the recoinage the Wardens had debited themselves with the total deduction taken from each pound of silver, i.e. both seigniorage and mintage, and had then credited themselves with the mintage paid to the Master. Starting April 1281, they reverted to the old method of presenting accounts used by Bartholomew de Castello, whereby they debited themselves with the seigniorage only. But in May 1285, Gregory de Rokesle abandoned this method and returned to the one used during the recoinage. For the rest of Edward's reign, the Warden debited himself with the total amount deducted from each pound of silver and then credited himself with the amount spent on mintage.

Changes were also made in the sergeanty of the dies. On 7 July 1283, the sergeanty was restored to the Fitz-Otto family. But Sir Hugh Fitz-Otto, the guardian of the son and daughters of his brother, Thomas Fitz-Otto, who had been granted the sergeanty in 1275 and then compensated for its loss during the

\textsuperscript{47}E. 372/144, m. 26.
recoinage, had died in March 1283. The office therefore could not be returned to him and instead was granted to Guy Ferre who had married Joan, the eldest daughter of Thomas Fitz-Otto. Gregory de Rokesle, however, was slow in carrying out the royal orders and the king had to send several letters before Ferre finally received the money due to him. From July 1283, he was paid 7s. for each dozen dies made, but he reimbursed the king for the cost of cutting the dies at a rate of 2s. a dozen. This rate may have been higher than the actual cost of making the dies, for when 3-1/2 dozen dies were made for the bishop of Durham and 3 dozen and 3 dies for the abbot of St. Edmunds, the cost was shown as 6s. 9d., i.e., 1s. per dozen. Unfortunately Joan Ferre died shortly afterwards without issue and in 1285 the sergeantry passed to John Botecourte, who had married her sister, Maud. Botecourte also received 7s. for each dozen dies made, but he was not required to pay the 2s. engraving cost, which was now borne by the Master of the money.

Two years later, a further change took place when the cost of making dies was divided between the London and Canterbury mints. Between October 1281 and November 1287, all the dies had been made at London and sent to

48 E. 372/132, m. 2; E. 368/56, m. 2.


50 E. 372/132, m. 2. The bishop and the abbot, however, paid the king 7s. for each dozen.

51 E. 372/131, m. 4.
Canterbury or the ecclesiastical mints of Durham and St. Edmunds when needed. After November, the Warden accounted separately for the London and Canterbury dies. This may have been simply an accounting device, but it probably indicates that dies were now being made on the spot at Canterbury, instead of being sent there from London. Dies seem to have been made at Canterbury from November 1287 until July 1290, after which time the king abandoned this practice and reverted to the old position of making all the dies at London and sending those that were needed to Canterbury. 52

No other major change took place at the royal mints at this time, but several important changes took place in the ecclesiastical mints. At Durham, Bishop Anthony Bek placed this personal mark on the coins. Bek bore as his arms a cross moline, and soon after he received the temporalities of his see, in September 1283, a cross moline appeared on his coins, at first on the reverse and later on both sides. 53 At St. Edmunds, in November 1287, Richard de Lothbury, a goldsmith, replaced Robert de Hadley, the moneyer whose name had appeared on the coins. After this the coins of St. Edmunds were distinguished only by the name of the mint town. Ten years later Lothbury was replaced by Roger de Reda. At the same time a new assayer was appointed,

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52 When William de Wymondham took over the mint at Canterbury he noted that no money was received from the Master in part payment of the fee to John Botecourte, because all the dies for Canterbury were made at London (E. 372/144, m. 26d).

Hugh de Houghton. After both men had been sworn and admitted to office, the sacristan asked for a new die as the old one was so worn it could scarcely be used any more. Naturally he was granted one, but it is clear from this that the practice of giving the mint at St. Edmunds three dozen dies at a time had been abandoned like so many other new ideas introduced at this time.

The years following the recoining were trying ones for the mint. Not only was it a time of conflict and intrigue, but it was also a time of administrative upheaval. Nothing was stable. Wage rates, mintage rates and seigniorage all fluctuated wildly. New methods of presenting accounts and of paying for dies were tried and abandoned. New Masters were appointed with astonishing rapidity and other officials had new positions thrust upon them or old ones taken from them at a moment's notice. With so much in a state of flux, it is not surprising that the Wardens, the Masters, clerks and controllers took advantage of the confusion to further their own interests and neglect their duties.

54E. 159/61, m. 1d; E. 159/70, m. 23d. "quod cuneus suus ita usitatus est quod amplius sufficere non potest."
CHAPTER V

THE LEAN YEARS

If Edward had hoped to solve his monetary problems with the recoinage and the severe punishment of the Jews, he was to be disappointed. Clipping was a deep-rooted practice in thirteenth century life. But it was not so easy to clip the new coins and many men turned to coating base metal, such as copper or tin, with a thin layer of silver and passing it off as pure silver. This was not the only problem facing the king. When foreign merchants brought silver into England and exchanged it for English coin, they did not always spend this coin on English goods. Quite often they exported the English coin, which was acceptable anywhere on the continent, on account of its purity and stability. Realizing this, foreign princes began to manufacture their own "imitation" English coins, of lesser weight and fineness, but easily mistaken for English coins by the unwary and of course accepted at the same rate as true English money. After a while these foreign, imitation coins found their way into England to the disruption of the English monetary system. The king therefore was forced to wage an unending battle on four fronts against clipping, the manufacture of false sheets of silver, the export of good English money and the importing of bad or counterfeit foreign money.
The first moves in this battle were taken in 1283. In February, Hamo Hauteyn was asked to find out which Jews were dealing with foreign merchants and others in plates of silver made out of clippings or out of tin silvered on the outside. Those who were guilty were to be arrested.\(^1\) How successful this commission was is not known, but some arrests must have been made, for in October a Genoese merchant was pardoned the offense of buying plates of silver from the Jews of London.\(^2\) The same month the king tackled his other monetary problems. First he forbade any foreign or native merchant to export English money and exchange it abroad for foreign money or silver. If they disobeyed these orders, they would risk losing not only their own goods, but all the goods of their society found in England.\(^3\) Later he appointed John de Bourne to watch the seacoast near Dover and Sandwich. Bourne was responsible for seeing that all ships arriving in these ports were searched by royal officials. Any money that they found was to be examined by good and lawful men and if it was false or clipped, they were to arrest it, along with the men bringing it in. The king justified this action by saying that clipping had been

\(^1\)Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 56. The previous year a Jew had tried to sell a plate fused from clippings to a Bristol goldsmith, but had been discovered (Select Pleas, Starrs and Other Records of the Jewish Exchequer 1220-84, ed. J. M. Rigg (Selden Society, 1901), pp. 121, 127).


\(^3\)Cal. Close Rolls, 1279-88, p. 244.
carried on to such an extent that 23s. by number scarcely equalled 20s. by weight. How effective these measures were is hard to assess.

The trade in false plates of silver flourished until the expulsion of the Jews, despite repeated royal efforts to suppress it. In 1284 the king appointed a new commission to deal with the two problems of merchants and Jews trading in sheets of silver and the concealment of goods forfeited by Jews condemned during the recoinage. The fines collected by this commission were given to the Queen. By September 1289, she had received 3,015 l. 18s. 5d., although it is not known how much of this money came from fines for concealing Jewish goods and how much from fines for trading in silver plates. Fines were the strongest penalty imposed and several foreign merchants were pardoned at the request of their lord, so that the work of the commission was probably not very effective. It continued to function, however, with a change of justices in 1288, until the forcible removal of the Jews brought the trade to a standstill.

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4 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 86. There were no complaints about clipped coin from either merchants or debtors, so that the king was probably exaggerating and the problem of clipping was not as serious as he made out. Certainly clipping was not as widespread in 1283 as it had been in 1279.

5 Ibid., pp. 128, 134.

6 E. 372/143, m. 36. The account of John de Berwick, keeper of the wardrobe of Eleanor, Queen of England.

7 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 187. In August 1285, Jakeminus de Hagerinsarth was pardoned at the request of Florence, count of Holland. This cannot have been the only example; there must have been others which have escaped the records.

8 Ibid., p. 291.
But the Jews were not acting alone. Because of the general shortage of silver, foreign merchants frequently came to the Jews and offered to buy plates made of coin-clippings or inferior metal. The Jews thus met a definite need and were encouraged by the ready sale of their products, so that it is not surprising that royal efforts to suppress the trade met with little success.

Some attempts were also made to prevent the export of silver. In 1284 the count of Holland determined to improve his coinage, which had become defective in weight and value, and to make new money. But before he could do so, he needed silver for the moneyers to work with and he did not have any. He therefore sent to England and bought 960 l. of silver. On the way back to the coast his men were ambushed and attacked by bandits and several of them were killed before the arrival of the sheriff drove the robbers away. The sheriff, however, refused to hand over the silver and arrested it in the king’s name. The count of Holland was naturally anxious to get his silver back, and he wrote to Edward asking for his help. His request was probably granted and the silver released, but this incident does show that the sheriffs were well aware of the royal policy of not allowing the export of silver.

John de Bourne was extremely zealous in carrying out his task of preventing the importation of counterfeit foreign money on the south coast, but he was not always very sensible. He disregarded the licenses issued by

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Hiss, Select Pleas, pp. 125-7.

Rymer, Foedera, I, ii, 646.
Gregory de Rokesle and arrested all bad foreign money coming in regardless of whether the owner intended to bring it to the mint or use it elsewhere. In 1285, for example, a merchant of Bruges brought in 9 l. 5s. 10d. in Brabantine money, with the license and consent of Gregory de Rokesle, since he planned to have it exchanged at the royal mint of Canterbury. It was arrested by John de Bourne,¹¹ so he complained to the king. The money was restored to him, but he was probably discouraged from bringing any more foreign silver to the English mints. This was not an isolated case. Two merchants of the society of the Mozzi of Florence planned to import 1,247 pounds of Brabantine pennies and some unmoneued silver and have it exchanged at the London mint. Although they had a license from Gregory de Rokesle, the bailiffs of John de Bourne arrested the money to the great annoyance of the merchants.¹² Eventually Gregory de Rokesle took the money into his custody, but as it was still technically arrested, he was unable to deliver its value in English money to the merchants without a special warrant from the king. These delays were not appreciated by the merchants and Rokesle, as Warden of the Exchange, was worried that they would prove damaging to the exchange and stop or check the flow of foreign silver to the mints. Yet the problem of the importation of clipped and counterfeit foreign money could not be ignored, but some more efficient method of dealing with it had to be devised.

¹¹E. 159/55, m. 7d.

The king was deeply concerned about the state of his money and in 1284 addressed himself to this problem. He himself was very conscious of the "damages and perils" which had threatened the money of England in the past and might do so in the future if strong action was not taken against them. That others might be more aware of the dangers, he drew up a list of articles describing in great detail the different kinds of false money. First there was the money with a mitre, 20s. of which weighed only 16s. 4d. in English money. Then there were two kinds of money with lions "whereon there were bends in one money and not in the other," but which were both as light as the money with the mitre. Furthermore there was another sort of money which was made in Germany, but under the name of Edward, King of England, so that it could not be distinguished from English money except by weight, which was as little or less than the money with the mitre. In addition to these foreign coins, there was money made from whitened copper or from sheets of pewter or lead covered with a thin layer of silver. Finally there was clipped money. Most of this money was being brought into England by passengers and merchants, who tried to hide it in cloths and bales. Because they knew that a search was being made at Dover and Sandwich by John de Bourne, they avoided those ports and went to London or some of the east coast ports. Fearing that if these men did not cease their operations, the money of England would be brought to

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13 The original version of these articles of money can be found on the Patent Rolls C. 66/103, m. 5, on a schedule. They are also printed and translated in The Statutes of the Realm, ed. Al. Luders et al. (London, 1810-22), I, 219.
nothing, Edward decided that existing measures were inadequate and took new steps.

In August 1284, the king sent a copy of the new articles to the wardens of the fair of Boston, together with a list of remedies which they were to administer. They were to make sure that no one used any other coins than the coins of the king of England, Ireland and Scotland, and no one was to bring money into England except for his expenses. Furthermore the king restricted entry to such major ports as Dover, Sandwich, London, Boston and Southampton unless merchants were driven elsewhere by a storm. When a merchant arrived at one of these ports he had to show all his money, without concealing anything, to an official appointed by the king, upon pain of losing his life and his goods. He was not allowed to leave or take his goods with him until the royal official had viewed and examined his money. If the examiner found that anyone had hidden money between cloths in small bundles or in bales, he was to have four-pence in every pound that he found and the rest was to be forfeited to the king. Moreover, if anyone else found foreign coin or clipped money he had to break it and the man in whose hands it was found was to be arrested. Because many people could not tell true from false money and could not recognize light and clipped money, the king ordered that anyone who regularly received or paid

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money should do so by weight, using a special accurate measure provided by
the warden of the exchange. 15

The king originally intended that these articles and provisions should
be proclaimed and enforced in every mercantile town throughout the kingdom,
but in fact between 1284 and 1289 they were only carried out in a few major
ports. Gregory de Rokesle was charged with their enforcement in London and
the neighboring ports, 16 but he soon ran into difficulties. He was instructed to
appoint two discreet men to see that the statute was kept at Dover and Sandwich,
but when his men arrived there, the bailiffs of John de Bourne chased them
away. Gregory, already angry with Bourne for his indiscriminate arrests,
demanded that these two men, who were appointed at the command of the
Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, be allowed to return and be not
disturbed by either Bourne or his bailiffs. He also asked that John de Bourne
be ordered to stop arresting merchants who were bringing silver and money to

15 The original version of these remedies and provisions can be found
on C. 66/103, m. 5, on a schedule. They are printed and translated in Statutes
of the Realm, I, 219. These provisions, with the addition of one more which
was probably added in 1289, appear in one thirteenth century law book under
the heading of "Magnum statutum de moneta" (B. M. Addit. MS. 32, 085).
Usually they are followed by the articles of money, often without a break, but in
one manuscript (Harleian MS. 1120) the articles precede the provisions. In
this document there is an additional article, which describes two other kinds of
money, one with an eagle and one showing the king's head without a crown. The
two parts, the provisions (which begin en contre les damages et les perils) and
the articles (which begin ces sunt les choses) are often run together and referred
to simply as Statutum de Moneta (Lansdowne MS. 467; Harleian MS. 1690). In
no law book do the provisions stand by themselves, and in only one do the arti-
cles stand alone, under the heading Articuli de Moneta (Harleian MS. 869).

the royal mints, because the new statute had completely nullified his power and
his warranty. Rokesle was right: the tasks of Bourne and the new searchers
were so similar there was no need for both of them. Bourne was dismissed
and Gregory stationed four men with their servants at the four major ports of
dover, Sandwich, London and Boston in order to examine the money that was
brought in from abroad and to arrest all false money. They were first
appointed at Easter, 1285, and they worked for the next five years, although the
examiner at Boston worked only from Easter to Michaelmas each year.

In 1289, however, the king felt that this was not enough and he
appointed Gregory de Rokesle and Baroncinus Galteri, one of the leading
members of the Riccardi, to see that the provisions and articles of 1284 were
proclaimed once more in the city of London and also observed throughout the
country. Faced with the prospect of finding a large number of new officials,
they decided to use existing ones, and Baroncinus volunteered the services of
the Riccardi. They therefore ordered the collectors of the customs at Sandwich
and ten other major ports including Boston to execute the provisions with the
help of the bailiffs. The opportunity was also taken to extend the statute of
Ireland and the collectors of the customs in all the major ports there were


18E. 372/135, m. 1. In 1290 when Gregory de Rokesle was explaining
what he had done with the money that he owed the king, he accounted for the
wages he had paid to Purtacinus of Lucca, who was appointed at Dover, William
le Porcher at Sandwich and two other men at London and Boston. They
received 6d. a day.
likewise ordered to see that the articles and provisions were proclaimed and observed. At this time the king decided that if a pound of new money was sixpence light but the coins were clearly worn rather than clipped, they could be accepted without forfeiture. He also reminded the examiner of the money that, if he valued his life and his goods, he should take no gift or allowance nor make any extortion or give any manner or delay. This exhortation may have been inspired by the activities of John de Bourne, but more likely by the complaints of maladministration which had reached the king while he was in Gascony.

Edward's concern was justified. There is clear numismatic evidence for the manufacture of imitation sterlings throughout the Low Countries. The movement began in Brabant, probably in 1273, when Duke Jean I issued coins of the same weight and alloy as the new English coins and with the same cross on the reverse, but with a lion in a triangular shield on the obverse instead of the king's face. These coins were then imitated by his neighbor, the lord of Limbourg, the seigneur of Herstal, the count of Gelders and others, who were less scrupulous than Duke Jean about maintaining the fineness of the

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19 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1281-92, p. 313; Cal. Close Rolls, 1288-96, p. 9. It is not clear from the printed calendars that the remedies and articles referred to in 1289 were, in fact, the same as those originally promulgated in 1284, but this is quite obvious from a comparison of the original letters (C. 66/103, m. 5; C. 54/106, m. 7).


21 J. Chautard, Imitation des Monnaies au Type Esterlin frappées en Europe pendant le xiiie et le xiv siècle (Nancy, 1871).
coins and usually made them of light weight and poor silver. Such lesser princes were clearly interested in their own profit, as their coins would be accepted at the same value as genuine English or Brabantine ones, whereas in fact they were not worth it. But at least these coins were clearly distinguished from English ones.

Starting about 1290, Gui de Dampierre, as count of Namur, issued a new type of coin, identical with the English sterling, except that the king's head was bare instead of being crowned. It was, however, an honest imitation of approximately the same weight and fineness as the English coins and with the name of the mint town on the reverse. Slowly the issue of "bare-heads" spread from Namur to Looz and finally Brabant. Then the duke of Brabant thought of putting a garland of roses around the king's head. This idea spread like wildfire and after 1293 there was a veritable flood of coins, similar to the English sterling, but showing the king crowned with roses. Among the major princes

22 Ibid. See page 427 for a complete list of princes issuing coins of this type "with a lion." Some coins had two lions on the shield, but these were much rarer.

23 The exact date for the first issue of the "bare-heads" is very doubtful. A few may have been struck before 1290 and it was probably these to which Edward was referring when he described the coins which could not be distinguished from English money, but he was wrong in thinking that they were made in Germany. His father's coins had indeed been copied in Germany, but by the 1280s the center of commercial activity was shifting from Germany to Holland and Flanders and nearly all the Edwardian imitations were made in the Low Countries.

issuing these rosarii during the next twelve years were Gui de Dampierre in Flanders and Namur, Jean d'Avesnes of Hainault, Florence of Holland and the Bishops of Cambrai and Liége, but there were many others. The coins that were issued by the princes and bore the name of the mint town were usually fairly close to the standard weight and purity of their English counterparts, but there were many coins that were the work of unknown moneyers, with deliberately illegible inscriptions, and most of these were too light or made of poor silver. Much of this money, both genuine Brabantine "leonines," the true rosarii and their poorer imitations, eventually found its way into England, to the great annoyance and discomfort of the king and his ministers.

By 1291, the king realized once more that existing measures were inadequate, for all his attention had been concentrated on the ports, on stopping the merchants from bringing in the clipped and false money. Nothing had so far been done to check its distribution and use within the country. He therefore ordered each sheriff to proclaim publicly in a full county court and in every city and market town within his county that it was strictly forbidden for any merchant, native or alien, or anyone else to bring such clipped or counterfeit

25Ibid., p. 47. For a full list see Chautard, Imitation des Monnaies, p. 427. The coins with the mitre that Edward described in the articles of 1284 probably came from the mint at Cambrai, for it is known that William d'Avesnes, bishop of Cambrai from 1292-95, issued rosarii that were marked with a mitre and it is quite likely that some of his predecessors had issued coins with a similar distinguishing mark. For a full description of the coins of William d'Avesnes, which appear in the Kirkcudbright find, see Edward Hawkins, "Counterfeit Sterlings," Numismatic Chronicle, XIII (1851), pp. 86 ff.
money into the kingdom or use it in trade within the country. At the same time the king laid down more clearly defined penalties. For the first offense the merchants lost all the bad money, but if they were caught again in a similar offense, they lost not only the money but all other goods found with them. If they committed the same offense a third time and were caught, they were liable to lose their lives as well as their goods. People who were not merchants, but had clipped or counterfeit coin in their possession, were asked to pierce it and bring it to the royal exchange to be reminted. This ordinance was reissued the following year and the sheriffs were ordered to see that it was made known at all fairs and markets.

William de Wymondham, as Warden of the exchange, was responsible for seeing that the ordinance was obeyed. In 1292 he visited the fairs of St. Ives, Royston and Boston, taking with him four moneyers to examine all the

26 On 23 September 1291, the king, who was in Gascony, wrote to the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer asking them to send orders to the sheriffs to make the necessary proclamations (Cal. Close Rolls, 1288–96, p. 203; E. 159/65, m. 3d). On 4 October, therefore, the Treasurer, William de March, sent letters to all the sheriffs (E. 368/63, m. 31; E. 159/65, m. 44). Several of these writs appear in thirteenth century lawbooks. In Addit. MS. 32,085 the writ to the sheriff of Lincoln appears under the heading Statutum de moneta per W. de Marchia; in Harleian MS. 1120 the writ to the sheriff of Kent immediately follows the articles and provisions of 1284 under the general heading Statuta de moneta; in Harleian MS. 869 the writ to the sheriff of London is given under the heading Statutum per W. de la Marchia, statutum de moneta.

27 The king’s writ to the Barons was dated the last day of June, 1292 (E. 159/65, m. 25). The letters to the sheriffs were sent out by William de March on 21 July 1292 (E. 368/63, m. 42d) and one appears in Harleian MS. 867 under the heading Statutum novum de moneta.
money that was used there and four searchers who watched all the arrivals and departures to make sure that no merchant brought in clipped or counterfeit money. He started work at St. Ives on 7 May 1292, and found that many merchants were indeed bringing in small amounts of clipped and foreign money. While he was there he arrested 4 l. 6s. 5d. of clipped money and 5 l. 8s. 2d. of foreign money, making a total of 9 l. 14s. 7d. Having spent twenty-two days on his trip to St. Ives, Wymondham moved on to Royston, stopping there for eight days. He found only 5 l. 17s. 8d. of poor money (2 l. 13s. was clipped and 3 l. 4s. 8d. was foreign money). Most of it was in the hands of English merchants, one of whom, John de Hertford, was guilty of two offenses. After leaving Royston, Wymondham returned to London to catch up with his work there, but on 27 July he left for the fair at Boston and stayed until 26 August. There he found a much higher percentage of foreign merchants and far more clipped and foreign coin. Altogether he arrested 21 l. 19s. 8d. of poor coin at Boston.

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28 In E. 101/288/26 William de Wymondham claims his expenses for the trip. He received 3s. a day for his own wages, the moneyers each received 4d. a day and the searchers 3d. There was also a clerk who recorded the amounts of forfeited money. William's letter of appointment (E. 368/63, m. 37d.) was dated 5 May 1292.

29 E. 101/288/22.

30 E. 101/119/23. On 26 May 1292, 10d. in clipped money and 6s. 4d. in foreign money was found in the possession of John de Hertford. The following day he had 6s. 3d. of foreign money.

31 Ibid. It is not possible to divide the total into clipped and foreign money as many of the entries are illegible.
While Wymondham was away he appointed a deputy at London to search ships, bales and bundles for false money and to arrest all that he found. 32 Someone else was appointed to watch the bridge at London for six weeks, presumable to examine the coins of everyone that crossed. All the money that was arrested was taken to the exchange to be weighed and examined. Similar measures were carried out during the next two years and as a result 108 l. of clipped and foreign money was discovered at London between 1292 and 1294. 33 Even though the amounts collected were quite small, about 1s. in 10 l. being clipped or foreign, they did present a potential threat to the stability of the English coinage, for it is impossible to say what percentage of the bad money was actually discovered. 34 Certainly enough was circulating to cause the king justifiable concern. Edward was particularly afraid that if he did not take severe action to nip the problem in the bud, then it would grow so large that it would be impossible to solve.

Realizing that the proclamations of 1291 had had little effect and that merchants and others were still using clipped and counterfeit money in fairs

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32 E. 101/288/26. The deputy worked from 7 May 1292 until Michaelmas and was paid 3d. a day.

33 E. 101/228/22.

34 In 1293, when the goods of Richard of Cornwall, sheriff of Kent, were taken into the king's hands on his death, it was found that he had 25s. 8d. of clipped money (E. 159/67, m. 11d). If he had not died at this time, this bad money might never have been discovered. Similarly in 1295 when the chattels of John de Biry were scrutinized, 60s. of gros tournois were found hidden in the ground (E. 159/68, m. 31).
and markets, the king determined to keep a closer watch on such places. On 13 June 1293, therefore, he appointed John de Basing and Richard de Eu to oversee all buying and selling throughout the country. Whenever payments were made in money instead of in kind, they were supposed to arrest and examine the money and to seize all base coins so that they would be removed from circulation. Their first commission ran from June until Michaelmas 1293, and it was renewed the following year on 10 March. But it clearly was much too big a job for two men to carry out on their own. On 20 May 1294, therefore, the king granted an identical commission to John de Lincoln, a merchant of Hull, and master John de Gloucester, one of the royal clerks who had already been employed on similar work. But not all the bad money was being used openly. Some of it had been hoarded. To try and uncover this money, the king, on 16 June 1294, appointed two men in each county to scrutinize and examine all deposits in churches, monastic houses and elsewhere, and to arrest all clipped and counterfeit money that they found. As a result

35E. 159/66, m. 28.

36E. 159/67, m. 38d; E. 368/65, m. 44d. The appointment is printed in full in T. Madox, History and Antiquities of the Exchequer (London, 1711), I, 293-4. In November 1292, John de Gloucester had been assigned to inspect and examine the money arriving at Dover from abroad and was given 100s. for his expenses (Issues of the Exchequer, being a collection of payments made out of His Majesty's Revenue from King Henry III to King Henry VI inclusive, ed. Frederic Devon (London, 1837), p. 106).

of all these efforts, 1,020 l. 6s. 8d. in clipped and counterfeit money was paid into the exchange in 1294. 38

The visits of the commissioners were not always welcomed. On one occasion John de Gloucester met with considerable resistance. In 1293 the king sent him to Sandwich to arrest all clipped and foreign money that he could find there. When he arrived, John de Gloucester discovered large quantities of black tournois in circulation and forbade its further use. But the mayor of Sandwich, on hearing of this prohibition immediately opposed it and asked John if he had a special warrant from the king to do this. Because John refused to show his warrant, the mayor obstructed him and prevented him from arresting the black tournois and doing whatever else was necessary to carry out his duties. As a result the mayor was summoned before the Treasurer and Barons to account for his resistance. At first the mayor refused to answer, claiming that through the liberties of the Cinque Ports, he need only account to the Warden of the Ports. But after spending some time in prison, he accepted the royal jurisdiction and admitted his error in impeding John de Gloucester. He was fined 100 l. for this transgression but was soon pardoned. 39

38 This sum weighed 1,007 l. 14s. 9d. so that the greater percentage was probably counterfeit rather than clipped money (E. 372/144, m. 26). Two years later, in 1296, another 240 l. 2s. by number of clipped and counterfeit silver was paid into the exchange, which weighed 213 l. 16s. 1/2d (E. 372/144, m. 26).

39 E. 159/67, m. 2d.
Sometimes merchants tried to hoodwink the commissioners. In June 1294, John de Lincoln went to Newark to supervise payments being made at the fair there. He learnt from a reliable informer that a merchant, John de Graham, had 6 l. of clipped and counterfeit money stowed away in a purse. John de Lincoln therefore arrested the money, but he was unwilling to examine it in the absence of his superior, John de Gloucester. So he sealed the purse with his seal and gave it to John de Graham and two other honest men to keep until John de Gloucester arrived, warning them not to tamper with the seal in any way. John de Graham, however, took no notice, but broke the seal and removed the money. Questioned about this, John de Graham denied the charges and said that John de Lincoln had not found any counterfeit money in his possession, as he well knew. He argues that John de Lincoln had arrested 36s. in his possession at the fair at Newark wrongly asserting that it was false money. Afterwards when Lincoln had discovered that it was good money which he had arrested on an unfounded suspicion, he had made the new charge. This seems a very unlikely explanation. 40

The statute of 1291 did not supersede the articles and provisions of 1284 but merely supplemented them. The collectors of the customs were still responsible for preventing the importation of clipped and foreign money. But the customs had been given to the Italian merchants to farm and their agents were responsible both for collecting the customs and for checking the money.

40E. 159/68, m. 31d; E. 368/66, m. 29. The king ordered an inquest to be held, but its report is not given in the memoranda roll.
Unfortunately they did not render detailed accounts to the king and it is impossible to find out how much bad money they collected. Yet it is clear that they did arrest some, for occasionally the king relaxed the penalties they had imposed in the interests of maintaining good relations with his neighbors. In 1292, for example, at the request of Guy, count of Flanders, the king restored the money which had been arrested in the possession of a burgess from Bruges and then pierced. 41 Two years later, at the request of John, duke of Brabant, he restored the 171 l. which had been confiscated from Gerard of Brussels, because four shillings of it was false money. 42 If Gerard had lost all his money, then he must have been found guilty for the second time.

In 1294, however, the Riccardi lost the right to collect the customs and in place of their attorneys the government appointed local and royal officials as collectors and controllers. These men accounted to the king for all money received, including bad money. At Hull, for example, between 1294 and 1296 the revenue from the customs came to 10,802 l. 10s. 1d., out of which the collectors reported 27s. 10d. of counterfeit coin. 43 Far more bad money was discovered at Newcastle on Tyne, which suggests, perhaps, that the collectors at Hull had not been as scrupulous as they should have been. In the exchequer year 1294/5 the total customs revenue at Newcastle came to 252 l. 9s. 7d., out

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41 E. 159/65, m. 20d.

42 Cal. Close Rolls, 1288-96, p. 353; E. 159/67, m. 52d.

of which the collectors reported 30 l. 10s. 7d. of forfeited money. This is a surprisingly high percentage considering that the collectors did not seize all clipped and light money that they found. Only if a pound contained more than 9d. in light coins and 4d. in counterfeit coins was it forfeited to the crown. Otherwise it was allowed to pass. The following years, however, did not show such a high return, for the outbreak of war in 1294 and the subsequent increase in the customs duties led to a decline in trade. In 1295/6 only ten ships left, compared with twenty-one the year before and just two shillings of light money was discovered. The following year no bad money was reported. This can either mean that the collectors were getting lazy or that the merchants were getting more crafty. Both explanations are probably true. Knowing that the collectors examined the coins with which the customs were paid, the merchants took care to pay their dues in good coin, however many poor coins they had stowed away elsewhere. The collectors, although they examined the money they received, could not be bothered to search for any hidden coins. Nor do they seem to have made any great effort to search incoming ships in order to prevent the importation of any further counterfeit money.

Not all the bad money circulating in England came from abroad. Some of it was manufactured at home. The making of false coins was indeed almost a recognized profession. When Gregory de Rokesle, for example, was

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examining the case of two false moneyers in the eighties, he was told by one that the other had been his master and had taught him the trade and that they both belonged to the society of false moneyers. But quite often false money was made secretly by otherwise respected citizens. In 1294, Walter de Shrivenham, a brother of the hospital of St. Thomas outside Marlborough, was arrested at Hungerford, for possessing three shillings of false and counterfeit money. He pleaded not guilty and said that he had obtained the money from the chaplain of the hospital and a burgess of Marlborough, who had been responsible for making it. The bailiffs of Hungerford therefore ordered the farmers of the town of Marlborough to arrest the chaplain and burgess. But when the farmers went to do this, they found that the men had fled and although they searched everywhere they could not find them. In the course of their search, however, they discovered in the men's homes an iron instrument and fused metal used in making the false money, so that their guilt seems fairly certain. The chaplain and the burgess were in a good position to dispose of the coins that they made and there were no doubt encouraged by the trend towards money payments.

The volume of money in circulation in Europe was greater at the end than at the beginning of the thirteenth century. At the same time some of the most

45S.C. 1/31/26.
46E. 159/67, m. 62d.
47All ranks in the army, including the Marshal, began to receive pay under Edward I, instead of serving at their own expense (A. Z. Freeman, "The King's Penny; the Headquarters Paymasters under Edward I, 1295-1307," Journal of British Studies, VI (1966), pp. 2-3).
productive silver mines in Central Europe were becoming exhausted. The shortage of silver was not yet as acute as it became in the fourteenth century, but the persistence of the trade in false sheets of silver and the count of Holland's need to buy silver in England indicates that it was beginning. Most of the silver that was brought to the English mints to be turned into English coins was already minted into foreign coins. Quite often these English coins would be exported and in time no doubt turned into Brabantine or French coins, which might eventually find their way back into England, so that the same piece of silver could be minted and reminted a dozen times in almost as many years. Attracted by the stability of the new coinage, many foreign merchants brought their silver to England to be minted in the years immediately following 1281. But after 1286 this influx of silver began to decline. Merchants were perhaps discouraged by the activities of John de Bourne and other royal searchers at the ports, who were not as discriminating as they should have been in their quest for clipped and counterfeit coin. Whatever the reason, less and less silver was brought to the mints each year. Even the decrease in the seigniorage charges in July 1290 failed to reverse the trend and attract more silver to England.

The king became increasingly worried by his loss in revenue, for as less silver was brought to the mint, the king's profit dropped. Between September 1293 and September 1294 only 98 l. 17s. of foreign silver was

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48J. U. Nef, Cambridge Economic History, II.
brought to the Canterbury mint. During the next two years no foreign silver
was brought there at all and only 36 l. of English silver. After 1296 the
Canterbury mint closed down for the king's expenditure had exceeded his
revenue and he had been unable to pay the wages of the porter or the keeper of
the dies. His total revenue for these two years, 1294–6, came to 2 l. 8s.
10-1/2d., out of which he had to pay 10s. in alms to the parish church (5s. a
year) and 28s. 10-1/2d. in repairs to the mint buildings, leaving 10s. over,
which was not enough to pay any wages. The situation at the London mint was
not much better. Between 1291 and 1296 about two or three thousand pounds of
English money was brought there and slightly less foreign silver, a considerable
drop from the 42,000 l. of 1285–6. Naturally the royal revenues from the mint
dropped too, so that the Treasurer had to send 750 l. to sustain the exchange,
although the king tried to squeeze out every penny that he could be increasing
his revenue from increments. He also tried to save money by cutting down on
wages and this is probably the reason he gave the office of controller to
Boniface Galgani, who already held the positions of assayer and exchanger,
without increasing his salary. Furthermore, from 1291–6, during the warden-
ship of William de Wymondham, the only wages which were officially paid were

49 E. 372/144, m. 26d.

50 E. 372/144, m. 26.

51 See the preceding chapter.
those to the keeper of the dies and to William de Wymondham himself, although
the other officials continued to function. 52

Faced with this shortage of foreign silver, the king decided to exploit
English resources. In May 1292, he sent Vincent de Hilton to dig and seek
mines of lead and silver in Devon. 53 Later William de Wymondham was made
keeper of the king's mines in Devon with Walter de Maidstone as controller.
They worked diligently and in 1296 sent 1,246 l. 8s. 3d. of silver in two
instalments from the mines to London. When this silver was brought to the
exchange, the assayer, Lapus Philip, the Master of the money, John Porcher,
and the Warden, William de Wymondham, were all asked to assess its value
and they all gave different answers. Later the Master and the assayer agreed
together that it should be valued at 20s. 2d. a pound, but William de Wymond-
ham and Walter de Maidstone refused to accept this and insisted that each pound
was worth 20s. 4d. and that this should be verified by assay. 54 Finally a
compromise was reached and the silver was assessed at 20s. 3d. a pound. 55

52 According to the official Warden's Accounts enrolled on the Pipe Roll
(E. 372/144, m. 26), no wages were paid between 1291 and 1296 to either Lapus
or Lapinus, the nephews of Boniface Galgani, who served as assayers and
exchangers. But according to one of the preliminary mint accounts (E. 101/
288/26), they were paid 40 l. in 1293. When Walter d'Anesty, the clerk of the
exchange under William de Wymondham, drew up his list of money lent by
William de Wymondham to various people, he included 66 l. paid to Lapus, the
exchanger, for his wages, so it seems quite likely that in this instance the Pipe
Roll accounts are not reliable and that the exchangers, at least, received some
of their wages.

53 E. 368/63, m. 38d.

54 E. 159/69, m. 27.

55 E. 372/144, m. 26. 709 l. 10s. 4-1/2d. by weight was reckoned as
718 l. 7s. 9d. by number.
To expedite the work of the Devon mines, the tax collectors in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset were ordered to pay all the money that they received direct to the mines. But this was not all. In June 1296, the sheriff of Nottingham and Derby was told to send two hundred miners from his bailliwick to Devon. Two years later another sixty miners and six smelters were sent from the mines of High Peak in Derby to Devon. Clearly every effort was being made to extract as much silver as possible from the royal mines to offset the lack of foreign silver and with some success. In 1297, 1,110 1. 5s. 2d. by weight was received in the exchange from the revenues of the Devon mines.

Why, despite a cut in the seigniorage, were foreign merchants so unwilling to bring their silver to England that the mint at Canterbury was forced to close down, the mint at London limped along with unpaid officials and great efforts were made to increase the production of English silver? The explanation lay in the international situation. The outbreak of war with France in 1294 led to complete disruption of trade, not only with France but with her vassals and allies. As part of his war offensive the king hoped to establish an economic blockade of France and to interfere with French shipping and imports as much as possible. Thus when, in the autumn of 1294, he heard that foreign ships loaded with horses, armaments and other merchandise had been forced into

56E. 159/69, m. 67d; E. 159/67, m. 102.

57E. 159/69, m. 79d; E. 159/71, m. 98, 112.

58E. 372/144, m. 27.
several northern ports for shelter, he immediately ordered that the ships be attached and not allowed to depart without his permission. Their goods were to be unloaded and sold. Unfortunately Edward had been misinformed and the ships did not belong to Frenchmen but to Germans. Nevertheless Edward's prompt action showed the kind of reception a French ship might expect and it is small wonder that French merchants stayed away. Other merchants were probably discouraged by the large increase in the customs duties, which the king imposed in order to help pay for the war. Faced with the prospect of paying three marks duty on each sack of wool exported, men who might have brought silver to England in order to buy wool, decided to trade in other merchandise elsewhere. Other probable factors were the financial decline of the Riccardi and the king's diplomatic manoeuvres. After the outbreak of war the French king seized all the agents and assets of the Riccardi in his kingdom. This led to a mass withdrawal of the deposits in their care and serious undermining of their credit. Edward, rather than rally to their support, decided to take advantage of their distress and in 1294 he took away their control of the customs and requisitioned their assets in England. They were therefore in

59 J. Conway Davies, "Shipping and Trade in Newcastle upon Tyne, 1294-8," Archaeologia Aeliana, XXXI (1953), pp. 175-186. The royal clerk who was sent to the north and put in charge of this operation was John de Basing, a man experienced in commerce and finance (ibid., p. 177), who had earlier been appointed to supervise payments in fairs and markets and to search for false money.

no position to attract foreign silver to England. At the same time the king was
sending large sums of English money to Germany and the Low Countries in the
hope of winning the support of the princes there. People who were anxious to
acquire English currency because of its stability no longer had to go to England
to get it, since large quantities were circulating on the continent.

The war with France, followed by the Welsh rebellion, the constitutional
crisis and trouble with Scotland, limited the effectiveness of Edward's
campaign against bad money. Royal officials were needed for other tasks.
John de Gloucester, for example, who had been used so often in searches for
clipped and counterfeit coins, was sent in the spring of 1296 with money for the
works at Caernarvon. Later the same year the king assigned him to Portsmout­
mouth to receive the grain being sent there en route to Gascony. Edward did
not rescind the statutes of money of 1284 and 1291, but he no longer had the
time to see that they were vigorously enforced. He had other more important
problems to solve. Arrests for the possession of bad money were still made,
but they were carried out at the initiative of local officials and were thus
sporadic. There was no concentrated effort to prevent the importation and
distribution of foreign money after 1294, as there had been during the preceding

61 E. 159/69, m. 25, 30d.

62 In February, 1297, the king received a petition from a merchant of
Zeeland, who had come to Yarmouth to trade and received 10d. in false money
as change. He was then arrested by the bailiffs of Yarmouth for the possession
of this money and had been imprisoned five weeks (E. 159/70, m. 10).
three years. Local officials were left without the prodding that they needed if they were to function efficiently. Consequently foreign imitation sterlings, both the "bare-heads," known to the English as pollards and the rosarii, also called crockards, flooded into the country. What Edward had been afraid of in 1291 had indeed come to pass. Because the preventive measured had been inadequately enforced, the king had to face a serious monetary crisis by 1299. Men registering debts once more specified that they should be repaid in "good and lawful sterlings." Drastic measures were now needed to restore the soundness of the English currency.

63E. 159/71, m. 52, 53.
CHAPTER VI

POLLARDS AND CROCKARDS

Foreign imitation sterlings, known to the English as pollards and crockards, had been circulating freely on the continent since 1273, but had become more prevalent after 1297 when the count of Flanders made an offensive alliance with Edward I and in return received military and financial help. Some of these coins found their way into Scotland, others were brought back into England by merchants who had exported wool or other merchandise. Edward I had tried to prevent their importation, but had tackled the problem in a piecemeal and unsystematic way, appointing searchers first at a few ports, then at all the ports and finally at the inland fairs and markets. His war with France, followed so closely by the Welsh rebellion and then the constitutional crisis of 1297, had prevented him from seeing that these measures were effectively enforced. Consequently pollards and crockards flooded into the country, threatening to disrupt the English monetary system unless Edward took drastic action. He did so, but once again he was unable to deal with the problem cleanly and at once, either because he could not make up his mind, or because of pressure of circumstances, but the results were the same, constant confusion and distress.
In May 1299, the king made his first moves and with the advise and consent of the barons meeting at Stepney he issued the following orders. First, no one was allowed to bring pollards and crockards into the country under penalty of losing his life and his goods, unless he was bringing them to one of the royal exchanges, in which case they would not be forfeit. To enforce this prohibition two keepers were to be chosen and appointed in each port. The keepers, with the help of the bailiffs, had to search everyone who arrived and all their goods. If they found anyone bringing in false money, he was to be imprisoned, his money sent to the exchange and his other goods confiscated.

Secondly, everyone who was bringing English coins back into the country had to take them to the nearest assayer. If the assayer found that they were of the same weight and fineness as the standard English coins, then he could release them and the person who was bringing them in; but if he found that they were light or made of inferior metal, they were to be forfeited and their owners arrested.

Thirdly, no one was allowed to sell or barter any wools, leather, woolfells, lead or tin except for the good and lawful sterling or silver plate or in exchange for sufficient merchandise. Anyone found disobeying this order would lose the goods that he sold or bartered.

Fourthly, no silver in coin, plate or any other form was allowed to be carried out of the country without the king's special license and the keepers of the ports and seacoast were to be responsible for seeing that this was observed. Finally, exchange tables were to be established at Dover and some of the other ports, so that men bringing with them French money or other foreign coins could have it exchanged for an equivalent

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1 Statutes of the Realm, I, 131.
amount of English money. When they left they could exchange their English
money back into their own currency.

Theoretically these measures were more severe than the earlier ones.
In the statute of 1291 a man found guilty of importing false money for the first
time lost only his bad money. Now for the same offense he was liable to forfeit
his life as well as his goods, but the king decided that as foreign merchants had
had no warning the death penalty would not be enforced until after 24 June.²
Furthermore, in August, when he issued a special commission to John de
Cobham and William de Carleton to try all those who had been imprisoned in
Newgate jail for bringing false money into the country, he agreed to spare the
lives of the convicted in return for heavy fines.³ Edward also proved willing to
pardon offenses committed by the Italian societies and tried to make sure that
they did not suffer as a result of the new statute.⁴ Later he extended similar
favors to other foreign merchants and in September 1299 he not only pardoned
certain merchants from Bruges for bringing bad money into Ireland but also
restored the 954 l. in pollards which had been arrested on them.⁵ In addition

²Ibid., p. 134.
⁴On August 3, 1299, the king pardoned the Frescobaldi for bringing in
99 l. 10s. of pollards and crockards (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 430) and
in May he had promised the same society to recoup them for any loss they might
incur in connection with a loan of 2,000 pollard marks (ibid., p. 419). See also
Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp. 271, 273, for pardons granted to the Spini
and other societies.
⁵Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp. 266, 270.
the merchants and burgesses of Bristol were given special permission to carry pollards and crockards to Ireland and trade with them there. Thus in practice the new statute was no harsher than the old, but it was more vigorously enforced. Repeated royal orders goaded the sheriffs into action and throughout 1299 they made many arrests, sometimes not very sensibly. In the early months they often arrested money or wool that had already been imported or bought before the statute was issued, so that later they had to restore them to their owners. Other officials also made mistakes. The bailiffs at Bristol were in a particularly delicate situation, as they could never be sure whether merchants were landing from abroad or merely crossing the Channel. In the summer of 1299, for example, they arrested a Gascon merchant who had 22 l. of pollards on him because they believed that he had brought them from the continent. Later they found that he had received the money at Haverford, after selling his wine there, and had crossed to Bristol by water on his way to London. But, at least, they were trying to carry out royal commands instead of ignoring them as so many officials had done in the past. The collectors of customs had been the worst offenders, and Edward realized that it was useless to expect them to search for bad money in addition to their other duties, so he appointed separate officials, the port wardens, whose sole task was to prevent

6Ibid., p. 267.

7Ibid., pp. 257, 264, 266, 268.

8Ibid., p. 264.
the importation of pollards and crockards and the export of good English money. These new men did their work well and large sums of forfeited crockards were paid into the Wardrobe.  

The provision that wool should be sold only for good and legal sterling was the hardest to enforce. Although wardens had been appointed in each county to watch over sales, the king was not satisfied with their performance and became convinced that wool and the other prescribed merchandise was often sold for pollards and crockards and then shipped before it could be discovered whether the sale had been contrary to the statute or not. In August 1299, therefore, Edward ordered the arrest of all merchandise in London and the other major ports, pending an enquiry into the method of its purchase. If the sheriffs and the collectors of the customs then found that the wool, woolfells, lead and tin had been purchased honestly and without fraud, it was restored to the purchaser, but if they discovered that it had indeed been bought with pollards and crockards, then it was forfeited. Many of the foreign merchants, especially the Italians, complained bitterly at this treatment, so the king promised that their wool and woolfells would be restored to them.

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9E. 101/356/21 records the receipt by the keeper of the wardrobe in 1299 of 1,132 l. 12s. 3-1/2d. in forfeited pollards and crockards and 26 l. 8s. 4d. from forfeited sterling and silver vessels. The receipt of some of this money is also recorded in the Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae Anno Regni Regis Edwardi Primi Vicesimo Octavo (London, Society of Antiquaries, 1786), p. 5, and a further confirmation can be found in John de Sandale’s account on the Pipe Roll (E. 372/168, m. 18d).

immediately, provided, of course, that they could prove that they had paid for it with good and legal sterling. 11

Edward also made a determined effort to prevent the export of silver. It had always been an accepted part of royal policy that coin and other forms of silver should not be exported without a royal license, but its enforcement had been somewhat sporadic and royal licenses were given readily. 12 After 1299 fewer licenses were given, 13 and the king embarked on a determined campaign against the export not only of coin, but also of silver plate and vessels and jewels of silver and gold, which he felt were taken abroad so that they could be exchanged for pollards and crockards. The first steps had been the appointment of the keepers of the seacoast, and the establishment of exchange tables at Dover and Yarmouth, so that merchants and others would not even need to take English money out of the country for their expenses. 14 But this was not enough. Edward felt sure that many native and foreign merchants were still secretly


12 Cal. Close Rolls, 1288-96, pp. 367, 511. Travellers were given permission to take money out of the country, but only for reasonable expenses. In 1295 the king appointed Stephen de Pencestre, Robert de Basing and John le Blund to see that no unauthorized merchants crossed with money in the company of the cardinals, but members of the cardinals' household were allowed to take money with them as they had a royal license (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 142).

13 In August 1299 a monk received permission to cross from Dover and take with him two grooms and two horses, provided that he did not also carry with him sterling or other silver, except for his reasonable expenses (Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p. 265; Cal. Chancery Warrants, 1244-1326, p. 103).

14 Italian merchants from Lucca, the Ballardi, were asked to keep the tables, but the king appointed his own clerks as controllers (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, pp. 417, 418).
taking silver out of the country, contrary to the statute, and bringing back fresh pollards and crockards, so in August 1299 he appointed John de Cobham and William de Carleton to make enquiries in London and discover who had done this and then inflict fines on the offenders. Subsequently they indicted many citizens and others of the City and ordered their imprisonment. The king, however, was always willing to relax the penalties under special circumstances. In October 1299, two Brabantine merchants were arrested and imprisoned in Newgate because 12 l. of good sterling had been found on them and it was thought that they wished to take this money out of the country. When they denied this, the king, at the request of the duke of Brabant, agreed that they should be released and their money and other goods restored to them.

Throughout 1299 pollards and crockards circulated in England as legal tender, because otherwise there would not have been sufficient money in circulation. It had been nearly twenty years since Edward I's great recoinage and much of the money had worn out with constant use, but in the preceding five years little new money had been coined. From September 1297 until October 1298, for example, only 1,110 l. of pennies had been made, plus 180 l. of half-pennies and 720 l. of farthings. Without pollards and crockards, therefore, trade and commerce would have dried up, but no one was anxious to receive them. Indeed everyone tried to get rid of them as quickly as possible. When

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the Italian merchants made loans to the crown, they made them in pollards, not sterling. Even the Wardrobe, when it paid off a series of small debts that the king owed for goods delivered to the kitchen, craftily paid them in pollards, no doubt suspecting if it did not know for certain, that one pollard would not be accepted for one sterling much longer. It had acted just in time. On 25 November the king decreed that after Christmas Day, 1299, pollards and crockards would no longer be valued at a penny, but only at a halfpenny, i.e. two for a sterling. Nevertheless he wished that debts which were contracted before 25 December should be paid in such money and with the same number of pennies as was specified in the covenant or bargain.

This decision caused great hardship and men were unwilling to comply with it. Someone who had sold goods in 1299 worth 20 l., for example, objected strongly to receiving 20 l. in pollards in 1300. In general, creditors wanted to receive payment in sterling, whereas debtors were anxious to pay in

17 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 447. Edward was usually ready to listen to the duke of Brabant because his wife was Edward's daughter, Margaret, and because he had supported Edward in his struggle against Philip the Fair.

18E. 101/354/24. These payments must have been made in 1299, since one pollard equalled one sterling, probably after the end of September, as several payments specify for the year 27. Some of the debts had been outstanding since 1296, so the conclusion is inescapable that the wardrobe was seizing this opportunity to get rid of some unwanted pollards to unsuspecting creditors who were pleased to receive any money at all.


crockards. Often a compromise was reached whereby the creditors accepted payment in pollards, but at the rate of two for one, even for debts contracted before 25 December 1299. Occasionally, however, a creditor faced imprisonment rather than accept such money. Not only creditors were unwilling to accept pollards and crockards. Many merchants concealed their goods or refused to sell them except for sterling. So widespread was this resistance that on 20 January 1300, the king wrote to all the sheriffs, ordering them to see that the decree was observed more strictly in the future. Two men were also elected in each market town and given the task of arresting all those who either refused to accept pollards and crockards at the new rate, or were unwilling to sell their merchandise at a reasonable price. Despite this order, Edward had to write again, in March, to the sheriff of Northumberland, threatening him with complete and immediate forfeiture of all his goods if he did not see that the king's ordinance was obeyed in his bailiwick.

Merchants, however, were still reluctant to bring goods to market and receive pollards in payment. If they did, they wanted a higher price in pollards

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23 Ibid., p. 335.
than sterling. Although the king issued frequent proclamations forbidding the withholding of provisions from sale or the enhancement of prices, tradespeople refused to listen and preferred either to conceal their goods or to sell more dearly for pollards. Even in London, where a proclamation had been issued in Christmas week setting standard prices which were not to be exceeded, and men from each trade had been elected to see that the proclamation and the prices were observed, merchants were still guilty of selling provisions and other merchandise more dearly and more exorbitantly than they ought to have done. On 10 February 1300, therefore, the king ordered the mayor and sheriffs of London to summon everyone who sold goods within the City to be at Westminster the following Sunday, so that he could impress on them the need to produce their goods and sell them at a reasonable price. Anyone who refused to do this or who refused to accept two pollards for a penny was to be arrested.

Consequently throughout February and March representatives from the various crafts were attached in turn to answer the Mayor and Aldermen for selling dearer after the proclamation, concealing their goods, and refusing money. Sometimes the jury found that the tradesmen were not guilty and they were acquitted. But other groups admitted their guilt. The chandlers, for example, admitted that they sold a pound of tallow candles at 4d. before and 5d.

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24 The proclamation of Christmas week, including the prices that were set, is printed in *Munimenta Gildhalliae Londoniensis*, II, 567. A summary together with a list of the names of the men elected from the different crafts is given in *Letter Book C*, pp. 54–5.

after Christmas. The coppersmiths also admitted selling dearer, but pleaded that the pound of metal that they bought at 2d. before Christmas cost 4d. or 5d. after. Often certain members of a craft were innocent, whereas others were guilty, especially of selling dearer for pollards than sterling. Sometimes, however, a jury uncovered a case of absolute refusal to comply with the royal commands. Two curriers, for example, Walter de Acton and William, his brother, concealed their goods and would only expose them for sale in samples and even then would not sell them except for sterling. Another currier, John le Fraunceys would not sell his goods at all. Those who were found guilty were either committed to prison or charged to appear before the king and his council at the next parliament. This uncooperative attitude was not confined to London. A Wardrobe account book for 1300 records the receipt of a fine made by a merchant in the liberty of Beverley for refusing to accept for his goods "money commonly current in England." In Oxford, master Nicholas de Whitchurch, having sold his horse, refused to receive 28s. in pollards in payment for it.

While most people were refusing pollards and crockards, a few men were collecting them in order to melt them down and refine them. This was strictly forbidden on 29 January 1300, and anyone who had already melted down

26 Early Mayors Court Rolls, pp. 59-65. In February 1300, the cordwainers, fishmongers and cornmongers were acquitted of selling dearer, but earlier in January a fishmonger, Adam of Ely, had admitted selling his goods too dear in contempt of the king's proclamation (ibid., p. 59). The tanners and leather dressers had some innocent and some guilty members.

27 Liber Quotidianus, p. 5; E. 159/74, m. 29.
pollards and crockards was ordered to take his bullion immediately to the royal exchange and have it changed; otherwise it would not be accepted. Anyone found melting down this money after the end of January would be imprisoned and would forfeit everything. 28 This prohibition was probably ignored, for pollards and crockards were clearly worth more than a halfpenny. Although a few were lightweight and of inferior metal, most of them approximated the weight and fineness of their English counterparts. 29 But when they were exchanged at the mint for sterling, they were still exchanged at the official rate of two for a penny. Thus the owner of pollards, if he took them to the mint as they were, would lose heavily, whereas if he managed to melt them down and presented them in the form of silver plate, he would receive their true value less the deductions for mintage.

The Wardrobe was not exempt from the problems of the rest of the population and although it occasionally made a profit from the receipt of pollards, in general it lost more than it gained. In January 1300, there was still 174 l. 16s. in pollards in the hands of various people in the Wardrobe. This money had been received when it was worth a penny but when it was used after Christmas it was only worth a halfpenny, so the Wardrobe lost 87 l. 8s. 0d. On the other hand, they did make a small profit from 121 l. 8s. 8d. in pollards which

28 Munimenta Gildhalliae Londoniensis, II, 565.

29 From the cases recorded in the Liber Quotidianus, Charles Johnson has calculated that the average value of the pollards and crockards was 72.5 percent of the sums they nominally represented (Introduction to English Mint Documents, p. xxxix).
they exchanged at the mint at the rate of one pollard for one sterling. These pollards weighed 109 l. 5s. 3d. and even after the heavy deduction of 5s. a pound had been made for the cost of minting and exchanging, the Wardrobe still got back 82 l. 19s. 5d. in new coin. As they had received this money for 60 l. 14s. 4d. (two pollards being counted for one sterling), they made a clear profit of 22 l. 5s. 1d. on the exchange. This was most unusual. In general the Wardrobe lost on any money they sent to the exchange, as pollards were usually changed at the rate of two for one sterling and high charges were made. Thus from a sum of 1,000 l. in single pollards (500 l. in double pollards), they only received back 406 l. 1s. 11d., losing 93 l. 18s. 1d. Later they lost 36 l. 11s. 9d. from a sum of 240 l. in pollards and there are many other examples. 30

Sheriffs and other receivers of royal revenues were also afraid of losing money on pollards and crockards that they had, or would have, so they were unwilling to accept them and often refused to receive payments in anything but sterling. Consequently in February 1300, the king ordered the sheriffs and all other receivers of his revenues to follow the same rules as the rest of the people and to accept two pollards for one sterling. Pollards and crockards were also to be accepted at the Exchequer in the same way, for the king did not want the government to be in a more privileged position than "the good people of our realm." 31 This royal proclamation, however, did not fulfill the king's

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30 Liber Quotidianus, pp. 5, 52–3, 57, 60, 67–8. They lost 10 l. on 50 l. in pollards which they exchanged among the merchants of the Spini and 60 l. 3s. 5-1/2d. in money that they exchanged at Newcastle on Tyne.

31 E. 159/73, m. 12. Letter from the king to the Treasurer and Barons ordering them to send the necessary orders to the sheriffs.
expectations and restore confidence in royal policies, which were clearly impractical. The king himself was soon forced to back down and grant special privileges. On 18 March 1300, he told the sheriff of Northumberland not to force the citizens of Bayonne to receive the custom on wools, woolfells in pollards and crockards, as the king had promised them that they could receive this money in sterling until all the debts that the king owed them had been repaid. Later he allowed the prior of Okeburn and other priors to pay one mark sterling for each pound of pollards due from the fines they had made for having the administration of the goods that the king had taken into his hands during the war with France. Other people would have liked to have received similar privileges, for men everywhere, in all walks of life, were unwilling to accept this foreign money because they were apprehensive that it would soon be quashed completely and become valueless. Their fears were justified. On 26 March, the king informed all the sheriffs that pollards and crockards had been wholly condemned by his council and that after Easter (April 10) no money except English sterlings would be current in the realm.

Why had Edward taken this action when only a few months earlier he threatened grievous forfeiture to anyone refusing to accept pollards and crockards? One possible reason is that he or his council had become distressed by the persistent refusal of everyone to accept them at the reduced rate and felt

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33 Ibid., p. 345. (April, 1300.) See also E. 159/73, m. 14, 15, 18.
that the only way to solve this problem was to get rid of the pollards entirely. But another more likely explanation is that he had planned all along to demonetize pollards and crockards eventually, but had been unable to take this drastic action because of scarcity of money. The Warden of the Exchange throughout 1299 had not had enough money on hand to pay the merchants, so that he had been forced to return their minted silver to them by weight, without having collected the increment that in the past had come to the king from pounds containing more than 243 pence and paid to the merchants by number. By March 1300, however, this problem had been largely overcome, for many of the pollards and crockards had already been brought to the London mint and recoined. In addition the king had persuaded various Italian merchants to lend him 1,900 l. to serve as a fund for exchanges.

To cope with the extra work caused by the demonetization of the pollards and crockards the provincial mints were reopened. On 29 March 1300 the king and his council agreed that there should be thirty furnaces at London, eight at Canterbury, four at Kingston on Hull, two at Newcastle on Tyne, four at Bristol

35 It is unfortunately impossible to say exactly how many pollards and crockards were reminted, because until 14 March 1300, they were bought as foreign silver. But between October 1298 and September 1299, 13,009 l. 16s. of foreign silver was accounted for at the London mint and the following year 29,944 l. of foreign silver was purchased there, the greater part of which probably consisted of pollards and crockards brought to the mint before 14 March, after which date they were purchased as English silver (E. 101/288/30, E. 372/150).

36 Ibid. Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 505 (writ dated 11 April 1300). The king promised to repay them out of the issues of the exchange by All Saints. He failed to do so, but he may have met his obligation later from some other source.
and two at Exeter. John Porcher, who had become Master of the Money in place of Runcinus in 1294, was to stay in London to supervise the work there, but he had to appoint a deputy in his stead at each of the provincial mints. He was responsible for meeting all the expenses incurred in coining the money and in return he received 51/2d. from each pound of pennies minted, 71/2d. a pound of halfpennies and 91/2d. a pound of farthings. The exchanger, Roger de Frowyk, who stayed at London, found changers for Canterbury and Bristol, for whom he was responsible. As he was extremely busy at London and needed a clerk to help him, Frowyk received a raise in salary and was granted forty marks a year during the whole time pollards and crockards were being reminted. The changers at Canterbury and Bristol were granted 20l. a year, the same wage that Frowyk had previously been receiving at London. He did not have to find men for the mints at Kingston on Hull, Newcastle on Tyne and Exeter, since the exchanges there had been given to the Frescobaldi, who were responsible both for finding changers and the money with which to maintain the exchanges.

37 All this and much of the subsequent information on the recoinage of 1300 can be found in English Mint Documents, ed. Charles Johnson (London, Nelson, 1956), pp. 62-5.
38 E. 159/67, m. 39.
39 The appointment of Taldo Janiani and Coppo Cottenni and their companions to the exchanges is given in the Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 504.
John de Sandale, who had replaced Peter de Leicester as Warden of the Exchange in October 1298, was responsible for overseeing the whole operation. As one of the royal clerks, he had plenty of administrative and financial experience. In 1297, for example, he had gone to Gascony as controller of receipts and payments and after his appointment as Warden he had returned to Gascony in September 1299 to audit and receive the accounts of various stipendaries there. He returned on 17 January 1300, in time to take charge of the recoinage. The Frescobaldi had to render accounts to him for the exchanges under their control and he appointed clerks in each of the provincial mints to act as controller and to keep a close watch on the merchants and other mint officials. These clerks of the exchange also acted as keeper of the dies, receiving twenty marks a year for their double position. To help him with this extra work, John had the services of another clerk at London, who started work on 10 April 1300 and received ten marks a year. Whenever John left London to visit one of the provincial mints, he was granted three shillings a day for his expenses. He visited Canterbury once a year, spending a week to ten days there each time, and in 1300, after the mint at York had been reopened, he spent twenty-five days there, but he does not seem to have visited any of the other

40E. 159/73, m. 51d. He was probably born at Wheatley and derived his name from the township of Sandale, a suburb of Doncaster in Yorkshire (Introduction to The Registers of John de Sandale and Rigaud de Asserio, ed. Francis Joseph Baigent (London, 1897), p. xvi).

provincial mints. The assayer, Lapin Roger, was also granted a raise and, beginning on 10 April, received forty marks a year instead of twenty pounds.  

The king also decided to reopen the mint at Dublin with four furnaces. Because he did not have sufficient staff to manage it, he entrusted it to the Italian merchants. Alexander Norman of Lucca was made Master of the Money and promised 6d. for each pound of money coined, on the condition that he paid the expenses of the engraver of the dies. The custody of the exchange was given to Taldo Janiani and Coppo Cotenni and the other members of the Frescobaldi, who agreed to find the exchanger and the money and to account for the issues of the exchange before the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer, Dublin. Owing to the danger of the voyage between England and Ireland and the need to carry the pyx to England to be assayed, it was ordained that two pyxs should be made so that if one were lost, it might be replaced by the other. Edward also agreed to reopen the mint at Chester, which was in a good position to catch pollards and crockards exported from Ireland. The Chester mint stayed under the control of London, with John de Sandale appointing the clerk and Roger de Frowyk the exchanger.  

Before work could begin at the provincial mints, their buildings had to be repaired as they had not been used since 1281. The order to start on the

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42 English Mint Documents, p. 63; E. 101/288/30; E. 372/150 (The membranes on this Pipe Roll are unnumbered. The account enrolled on the Pipe Roll is a somewhat inaccurate copy of the original E. 101 document).

43 English Mint Documents, pp. 64-5; Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, pp. 504, 508.
repairs was sent to the various sheriffs and bailiffs on 14 March 1300, nearly two weeks before the other sheriffs were informed that pollards and crockards were no longer to be current in the realm and a month before the actual date set for the demonetization, which shows that this act had been planned for some time. The mint at Kingston-on-Hull was ready first. Coining began there on 27 April and continued until 31 December. Later another royal mint was opened at York and between them the two mints made 17,770 l. of pennies. Work was not continuous as many of the moneyers had to remain idle for forty days, because no silver was available.  At Bristol a new building had to be erected within the castle for the exchange and eleven shops had to be repaired before the mint could be put into operation. As a result twenty-seven of the thirty-seven workers and moneyers who had been sent there were unemployed for eight days while they were waiting for the new exchange to be completed. Work finally began on 8 May and continued until 30 October during which time 13,410 l. in pennies were minted. The shops which had been so carefully repaired were unfortunately burnt by the fire of the foundry so that they had to be repaired again.


45 E. 101/288/30; 25 foreign workers, led by Arnulph of Berflet were sent to Kingston-on-Hull in April 1300 and another 30 were sent there in May (E. 159/77, m. 6).

46 Ibid. This mint account gives an interesting example of discrimination against women. The regular workers and moneyers at Bristol received 10d. a day while they were not working, but a certain woman worker, who was unemployed during the same period, received only 5d. a day.
Similar problems plagued the other provincial mints, where the workers and moneyers were unemployed a large part of the time they were there. At Exeter, even though the exchanger came seventeen days before the moneyers in order to supervise the repairing of the mint buildings, they were not ready by the time the twenty foreign workers and moneyers arrived, forcing them to spend nine days waiting idle. Later five of these men were unemployed for three days owing to lack of silver. Work eventually began there on 12 June 1300 and continued until 31 December, but the workers only coined 3,870 l. in pennies during that period, whereas over four times as much had been coined at Bristol during a similar period. Thus the men cannot have been working full time, even when they were technically employed. The mint at Chester was the last one to open, coining 1,405 l. 10s. 5d. between 12 July and 16 November. It probably should have closed sooner for five moneyers and twenty-six workers were idle for twenty-four days and after sixteen of these men had left, the remaining two moneyers and thirteen workers were still unemployed for another fourteen days.

In contrast to the other provincial mints, which had all stopped working by the end of December 1300, the mint at Newcastle on Tyne continued to

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47 Ibid. On 4 October 1300, the sheriff of Devon was allocated 24 l. 2s. 6d. which he had spent on repairs to houses in the town of Exeter for the workers of the money and for the royal exchange (E. 159/74, m. 5).

48 Ibid. The moneyers and workers at Chester received only 8d. a day while they were unemployed, whereas at the other mints the workers received 10d. a day.
function until 29 September 1302. There are two possible reasons for this. The king was fighting in Scotland and needed money to pay his troops, buy provisions, etc., and the Newcastle mint was the most conveniently located to provide this. Secondly, Scotland had placed no restrictions on the import of pollards and crockards, so that many had been taken there. From Scotland, of course, they found their way into the north of England, so that it is quite likely that more pollards and crockards were circulating in the area around Newcastle than around any of the other provincial mints. Before coining could begin there on 1 June 1300, the buildings which had been rented for the exchange and mint had to be renovated and repaired and both the exchanger and the clerk of the exchange arrived six days before the repairs were completed. While the mint was in operation, 20,690 l. in pennies were coined, but, as was the case with the other mints, the moneyers were unemployed much of this time. Between June and September 1300, twenty workers and moneyers were idle for twelve and a half days for lack of silver and the following year the workers were unemployed for the same reason on ten different occasions, generally for just a few days, but once for as long as sixteen days. Consequently several of the moneyers fled from the mint without permission on two separate occasions, perhaps because they were bored. Whatever the reason, the exchanger and the clerk chased after them, arrested them at Berwick, and brought them back to the Newcastle mint. 49

49 Ibid. In 1300 the sheriff of Northumberland was allocated the 7l. 7s. 7-1/2d. which he had spent on getting ready the mint buildings at Newcastle (E. 159/74, m. 6d).
Not everyone dealt directly with the exchanges. On 12 April 1300, the king granted the Frescobaldi the right to exchange and buy pollards and crockards and all other kinds of counterfeit money provided that they then took them to the royal exchanges to be reminted. This privilege was later extended to the other Italian merchant houses. It was not given to them for nothing, for the Ballardi had to pay a fine of 500 l. in order to receive their license to buy pollards and crockards and presumably the other Italian merchants paid likewise. The Ballardi also obtained the right to receive pollards and crockards from their English creditors in settlement of their debts. Most of the money that they and the other Italians received was taken to the principal exchanges of London and Canterbury.

The Canterbury mint, which had been closed in 1296, was reopened on 1 November 1299. Between then and 29 September 1300, 22,340 l. was minted, most of it after the middle of March when the pollards and crockards had been condemned. Some repairs and renovations had to be made to the mint buildings, but they were not nearly as extensive as the ones incurred in the earlier recoinage of 1280-81. The major expense was 15 l. 15s. spent on building a }


51Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, pp. 519, 528, 531. The Ballardi were granted this right on 19 June, the Spini on 21 July and the remaining Italian societies on 16 August.

52E. 159/73, m. 44.

new house for the foundry after it had been burnt down by fire. The next year only half this amount was coined; by September 1301, nearly all the pollards and crockards had been brought in and reminted. Because fewer merchants were coming to the mint, the porter's salary was decreased. When he was first appointed on 1 January 1300, he was given 3d. a day (4 l. 11s. 3d. a year), the same rate that the porter had been given in 1280–81. But on 29 September 1300, this was reduced to 1s. a week (2 l. 12s. a year), because "the flood of merchants" had lessened. The following year (September 1301 to September 1302) even less silver was minted (3,070 l.), so that his salary was decreased still further to 20s. a year. Somewhat unfairly the salaries of the exchanger and the clerk remained unchanged, although they too must have had less work to do. 54

At London, the existing staff were quite unable to cope with the extra work, so additional workers and moneyers were brought in from abroad, including master Guy de Turnemire, who came to England to give the king the benefit of his advise and instruction. 55 Altogether 451 foreigners came to

54 E. 101/288/30; E. 372/150. In the Pipe Roll account for the year 29 (September 1300 – September 1301) the amount of pennies minted is given as 22,250 l. This figure is copied by C. G. Crump and C. Johnson in "Tables of Bullion coined under Edward I, II, III," Numismatic Chronicle (4th series), XIII (1913) and quoted by Sir John Craig in his book on the mint. But this is clearly impossible, for only 10,534 l. 3s. 6d. of silver had been brought to the mint. In E. 101/288/30 the figure is correctly given as 12,250 l., for 1,144 l. of silver remained unminted from the previous year and the addition of alloy to the silver slightly increased the number of pennies minted.

England from Paris, Brabant, Namur, Bruges and Brussels, receiving from 20s. to 60s. for the expenses of their journey. Many of these men went on to the provincial mints, but 264 stayed behind at London. To house such a large number of men, a new building was erected within the mint 400 feet in length, and costing 166 l. 2s. 7d., for the existing buildings were simply inadequate. The total cost of bringing these workers to England and then sending them to their various destinations was 1,146 l. 16s. 8d. and this expense does not seem to have been justified. Not only were they frequently unemployed at the provincial mints, but also at London twenty-six of them were kept idle from four to six days, because their seats were not ready. Even when they were working, they do not seem to have been very busy, for they only coined 148,650 l. at London between September 1299 and September 1301, compared with the 343,980 l. minted at London in 1279-81 with the help of only 200 foreign workers. 56

Soon after the recoinage had begun, the archbishop of York sought the renewal of his right to coin money, despite the fact that there was not yet a royal mint at York. He felt that as the royal moneyers were working at Hull, which was within his diocese, the same principle applied. After some deliveration, the king conceded his request and on 28 June 1300 ordered the Barons of the Exchequer to let the archbishop have possession of two dies, just

56E. 101/288/30; E. 372/150; E. 159/77, m. 6. The foreign workers came over in small bands headed by contractors, whose names are given by Sir John Craig in The Mint (Cambridge, 1953), p. 56.
as his predecessors had been accustomed to have every time the king opened a mint at York. This writ was presented in the Exchequer on 13 July, when John de Derby, the archbishop's chaplain, was sworn in as head of the exchange. In the meantime John de Sandale had been asked to have twelve dies of hard and competent metal made for the archbishop and sent to the Treasurer and Barons at York. They arrived in York on 28 July and the same day two of them in six pieces (two piles and four trussels) were delivered to William de Southhill, the archbishop's clerk. Shortly afterwards the archbishop seems to have decided not to run the mint himself and he leased it to the Frescobaldi. Consequently two new moneyers, both Italian, and a new warden of the exchange were sworn in on 17 August. But the mint was not open for long and coining had ceased by 18 December, two weeks before the royal mints at York and Hull closed down. The final settlement with the Frescobaldi, however, was not made until 21 November the following year. 57

While it was open the archiepiscopal mint was very active, judging by the number of dies that it used. On 27 August, the clerk of the exchange, Edmund de St. Clement, received two new piles and one trussel, having already received two new trussels two days before. Four days later, on 1 September, he was given four new trussels, which lasted only twelve days. The piles did not last much longer, as St. Clement received two new sets of dies on 1 October

57 Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p. 359; E. 159/73, m. 18d., 57, 58d., 61d. Register of Thomas of Corbridge, Archbishop of York, 1300-04 (Surtees Society, v. 141), pp. 5-6, 7, 35, 72. The royal mint at York opened later and received two dozen dies on 27 June and another dozen on 28 August.
and he had been given two new piles only five weeks before. 58 Dies were used up equally quickly by the Bishop of Durham's mint. William Servat, the Warden of the Durham mint, sent two sets of used dies to the exchequer at York on 24 May and in return was given two new sets of dies. A week later, on 31 May, he received another new set of dies in return for an old one and he continued to receive new dies at the rate of two or three sets every week or ten days. 59

According to Mr. Stewart's calculations from similar dies sent to Bristol and Newcastle at this time, 30,000 coins could be minted from an obverse die (pile)

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58 E. 159/73, m. 58d.

59 The following dies were sent to the episcopal mint at Durham (E. 159/73, m. 29d):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>2 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>1 set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 June</td>
<td>2 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 June</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 June</td>
<td>2 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 July</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 July</td>
<td>2 sets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(There is a gap in which the issues are not recorded.)

(E. 159/73, m. 58d.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 September</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 September</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 September</td>
<td>7 piles and 6 trussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 October</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

William Servat, the Warden of the Durham mint, had a long and varied career. A merchant of Cahors, he settled in London in 1273 and spent the next twenty years trading in wool and spices, buying property in London and lending money to the king. He was also employed on royal business, being sent to Norway in the train of the Bishop of Durham and going with him again on royal service to France in 1294. It was probably because of this close association with Anthony Bek that he was chosen to serve as Warden of the mint. For full details of Servat's career see Franz Arens, "Wilhem Servat von Cahors als Kaufmann in London (1272-1320)," Vierteljahrschrift fur Social und Wirtschafts geschichte, v. XI (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 477-514.
and approximately half that number for a reverse die (trussel). This means that about 125 l. a week was being minted at York and double that amount at Durham.

The dies wore out quickly because they were badly constructed and made from too soft material. On 9 May the king complained to John de Sandale that the dies which he had recently sent to Durham were used up within a few days because they were made from such poor metal. He was ordered to produce better dies in the future, but does not seem to have taken any notice of the royal command, for on 9 June, the king again complained about the quality of the dies. They were being made too small in circumference, too shallow and poorly engraved. Consequently the pennies were coming out too small, so that there was little difference between them and the halfpennies, and the inscription was scarcely legible. The numismatic evidence shows that these complaints

60 B. H. I. H. Stewart, "Medieval Die-Output: Two Calculations for English Mints in the Fourteenth Century," Numismatic Chronicle, Seventh Series, vol. III (1963). In another article, "Second Thoughts on Medieval Die-Output," Numismatic Chronicle, Seventh Series, vol. IV (1964), he discusses the possibility of revising these figures if the word cuneus referred to sets of dies rather than individual dies. But there is conclusive evidence in the memorandum roll (E. 159/73, m. 29d) that the word cuneus does in fact refer to individual dies. For when John de Sandale sent three dozen dies to York for the mint at Newcastle, he sent not three dozen sets of dies, but 36 pieces (12 piles and 24 trussels) or twelve sets. Thus Mr. Stewart's original calculations need no correction.

61 E. 368/71, m. 56. "Et quare intelleximus quod cunei quos ad mandatum nostrum apud Dunolm nuper misistis ex tam molli metallo et consumptibili fabricantur quod ex paucorum dieum operibus consumuntur."

62 See Appendix A for a full transcription of this writ of 9 June from which it is clear that the royal mint at York was not yet in operation.
were well-founded. Sir Charles Oman points out that the coins from the provincial mints in 1300 are easily distinguished from the 1280 issues by being decidedly smaller and Mr. Stewart notes that they were "often struck from obverse dies in very poor condition scarcely capable of making an effective impression on the blank."

While the recoinage was taking place, the king insisted on a strict enforcement of the statute of Stepney. On 1 April he appointed a three man commission to find out who had been guilty of exporting silver, importing pollards and crockards or infringing any of the other provisions of the statute in the city of London and the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Lincoln, as these counties were nearest to the Low Countries and received more than their fair share of bad money. But Edward soon realized that it was pointless to limit his enquiry to south-east England, for the money circulated rapidly, so he appointed twelve other special commissions, covering every county in England and Ireland. This inaugurated his most important and far-reaching campaign against bad money since the commissions against clipping in 1280, but there was one major difference between the two occasions. In 1280 the

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65 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, pp. 525, 528, 549, 550-1; E. 159/73, m. 17, 32.
death penalty had been frequently enforced; in 1300 most men who were found guilty were just fined, although sometimes quite severely. Two Brabantine merchants, for example, were fined 200 l. and another 200 marks for exporting silver and importing false money; and Walter de Barra, a citizen and merchant of Hereford, was fined 180 marks for buying wool with pollards and crockards. Unfortunately it is impossible to find out exactly how many people were found guilty and how much money was collected in fines, since the justices themselves were not responsible for collecting them. This task was left to the sheriffs, who often used the money to pay off royal debts and expenses, but the standard fine seems to have been about 40 marks. One thing, however, stands out clearly: royal officials, who should have been responsible for enforcing the statute, were often guilty of infringing it although they were usually pardoned for this offense. For example, Richer de Refham, sheriff of London, was pardoned in April and William Servat, Warden of the Durham mint, received a pardon for himself and his two yeomen in November.

66 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 531; E. 159/74, m. 8. Walter de Barra paid 40 l. of his fine in 1301, and was given three years to pay the remaining 80 l. Later this money was remitted as the king owed him 100 l. for seizure of his wool and hides (E. 159/74, m. 35, 61).

67 E. 159/73, m. 50d., 58, 43d; E. 159/74, m. 61. Walter le Mercer of Norwich was fined 40 marks, so was William de Doncaster, citizen of Chester.

68 Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, pp. 509, 558; E. 159/74, m. 46. Originally William Servat was fined 500 marks, but this was reduced to 50 marks after the bishop of Durham had spoken for him (Franz Arens, op. cit., note 59, p. 498).
The Italian merchants received special consideration from the commissioners. The king granted them a general pardon on 8 April and promised that any of their members who had already been arrested would be released and that any future indictment against them would be ignored, as he was convinced that in general they had conducted themselves well and faithfully and had not offended against the statute in any way. Consequently the justices were given specific instructions "to let them go in peace and not to meddle with them." But they did not escape entirely. In July the king sent a group of justices to Boston to try the merchants and others who had already been indicted by the commissioners. In line with the king's general policy, these justices received strict orders not to hinder the Italian house of the Mozzi, who were to be allowed to buy and sell and make their profit while the Boston fair was being held, without any interference. It was understood, however, that once the fair was over, they would be given a special day, at which they were bound to be present, to answer any charges that had previously been made against them. Edward was probably willing to treat them so well because they had already lent him substantial sums of money, which he had not yet repaid, and because he needed their help in buying up pollards and crockards and bringing them to the exchange.


70 E. 159/73, m. 19d.
Occasionally the justices came into conflict with private jurisdictions, but wherever possible the king tried to smooth out these difficulties and to maintain local rights. The Bishop of Ely, for example, complained that certain of his tenants had agreed to pay fines before John de Botecourte and his companions and that these fines properly belonged to him and not to anyone else. After some discussion, the Barons agreed that the sheriff should not collect the fines made by the bishop's tenants for trespass of money until it had been finally decided whether this money should be allocated to the bishop or not.\footnote{E. 159/73, m. 32d.}

The Barons of the Cinque Ports similarly complained of an invasion of their franchise. For when the justices came into Kent, several barons of the port of Dover were indicted before them by people outside the liberty and their lands were subsequently distrained by the sheriff or by the bailiffs of the port. They felt that they should answer to no one but the king or the Warden of the Cinque Ports and petitioned the king for redress. Edward was anxious to help them because of the good service they had lately rendered in the Scottish war and he therefore ordered them to be present at the next parliament, where they would have a chance to explain what hardship and grievances they had sustained. Meanwhile the sheriffs were ordered to relax any distraint they had imposed on the barons.\footnote{E. 159/74, m. 5d., 26.}
Although the commissioners were responsible for checking on the illegal export of silver or silver vessels, the king did not wish to rely solely on their efforts. On 11 April, therefore, he ordered the bailiffs and constables of nearly every port, both large and small, to proclaim publicly every fifteen days the royal prohibition against the export of silver. Special wardens were to be appointed, if this had not already been done, to see that the prohibition was obeyed. 73 Edward, however, had always been willing to grant special licenses 74 and he continued to do so. On 13 April, two days after his insistence that no silver of any kind was to be exported, he allowed the abbot of Chercamp to take abroad six silver cups, twelve silver spoons and other silver vessels. Later, in October, he granted a similar privilege to William Reymund de Genciaco, who was allowed to carry with him 112 l. in sterlings and sixteen silver cups. 75 At other times important men, such as the bishop of Winchester, were allowed to cross with all their household without a search being made of their belongings, so that it would have been quite simple for them to take money or silver vessels out of the country, although they had not received specific permission to do so. 76 This continual granting of special privileges seriously

73 Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp. 390-1. This order was sent to the bailiffs of 68 ports, as well as the justices of Chester, Ireland and Wales and the keeper of the islands of Guernsey and Jersey.

74 Ibid., p. 328. (On December 3, 1299, the king had allowed two knights to send 40 l. abroad with their attorney.)

75 Ibid., pp. 348, 369.

76 Ibid., pp. 349, 416.
undermined the general effectiveness of his legislation and actively encouraged smuggling. Consequently little money was actually captured by the port officials. In 1299 the scrutinizers of the money arrested 221 l. 5s. 4d. in sterling and in the following year they found only 81 l. 17s. 3d. in sterlings, 56 l. 13s. in pollards and silver and gold vessels worth 14 l. 6s. 8d. 77

By the end of 1300 the major crisis caused by the influx of pollards and crockards was over. The majority of the bad coins in circulation had been brought to the mints and recoined and all the provincial mints except Newcastle on Tyne had closed. In the process the king made a profit of nearly 5,000 l. 78 But this had not been his main concern. He had hoped to prevent the further

77 E. 372/168, m. 18d. An account by the executors of John de Sandale of forfeited money received in the exchange from the wardens and scrutinizers of the money in the ports. Not all the money that the wardens collected is recorded here as they sometimes paid their receipts directly into the Exchequer. The capture of the 56 l. 13s. in pollards, for example, is recorded in the Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p. 332, and Liber Quotidianus, p. 158, but not in the Pipe Roll. These pollards, which had been left for safekeeping in London, were stolen. The thief, however, did not get very far before he was arrested by the Thames wardens for exporting money illegally. The stolen money and vessels were later restored to their original owner.

78 E. 101/288/30; E. 372/150. Profit from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury</td>
<td>554 10s. 9-1/4d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>489 16s. 2d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>13 1s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>131 3s. 3-1/2d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hull</td>
<td>533 19s. 1-1/4d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>215 0s. 1-1/4d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*London</td>
<td>3,988 17s. 9-3/4d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,926 8s. 3d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Less the expenses of bringing the foreign workers over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,146 16s. 8d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final total 4,779 11s. 7d.
importation of false and light money, which threatened to dilute the English monetary system. This hope was to be frustrated, for the merchants in the Low Countries wanted to pay for their wool in good, English coins, as they recognized the value of the stable English coinage at a time when the other coinages in Europe were depreciating rapidly. At the beginning of Edward's reign, for example, one English penny was worth four deniers tournois. By 1300, after Philip IV's devaluations in 1295, it was worth six deniers tournois. There was not enough genuine English money, however, to meet everyone's needs, so foreign princes continued to manufacture their own imitation English money but did an increasingly better job of imitation. So while the manufacture of pollards and crockards virtually ceased soon after 1300 (partly because of Edward's legislation and partly because many of the princes issuing them died), the issue of false Edwardian sterlings increased. These new coins, with a crowned head, were Edwardian in everything but the inscription so that it was impossible for the illiterate to distinguish them from the genuine English coins. They were thus a more serious threat than the earlier pollards and crockards.

79Liber Quotidianus, pp. 157, 169. In another entry (p. 87) one sterling was valued at 11 deniers tournois. A good example of the depreciating value of French currency is the rising wages paid to the seneschal of Ponthieu. In 1297 he was paid 200 livre parisis. Later this was increased to 300 livre parisis and in 1301 he was granted an extra 200 l. a year for the preceding three years owing to the fall in the value of money from the time when the wages of 300 livre parisis were first assigned (Hilda Johnstone, "The County of Ponthieu," English History Review, vol. XXIX (1914), p. 442).

80Jean d'Avesnes died in 1304, Guî de Dampierre in 1305.
What then had been accomplished by Edward's actions and how justified was his concern? There is no doubt the pollards and crockards had constituted a large part of the English money in circulation in 1299, but should he have been worried by this? Most of the coins, it is true, were lighter than their English counterparts, but without them there would not have been enough money in circulation to meet the needs of the population. Probably the basic, though unacknowledged, reason for his refusal to countenance pollards and crockards was his anger at the presumption of these foreign princes in usurping his rights, debasing his image and depriving him of the revenue he would otherwise have received. Consequently he determined that all pollards and crockards should eventually be turned into good English money. In this he succeeded. By December 1300, 183,920 l. of bad money had been reminted and another 64,750 l. was coined the following year, so that, apart from the scattered coins which found their way into hoards, few pollards and crockards were left in circulation.

Edward was less successful in preventing the importation of further imitation sterlings. Smuggling was too easy and there were not enough wardens to police the seacoast effectively. For the last seven years of his reign, therefore, Edward had no respite in his fight against bad money. He also had

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81 E. 101/288/30; E. 372/150. H. A. Miskimin in Money, Prices and Foreign Exchange in Fourteenth Century France (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1963) is wrong in linking this large mint output of 1298-1301 in England with the substantial French coinage of 1298-99. The pollards and crockards came not from France but from the Low Countries.
to spend much time solving the problems caused by his handling of the crisis of 1299–1300. By allowing pollards and crockards to circulate freely within the country in 1299 and then devaluing them to a halfpenny, before finally demonetizing them, he made prices and wages rise and caused great distress to many people. Anyone who had received pollards at the rate of one for a penny in 1299 and then been forced to pay them out at two for a penny in 1300, was unlikely to look with favor on the royal policies. The purity of the English coinage had been restored, but at great cost to the people.
CHAPTER VII

THE FAT YEARS, 1301-1307

During the last years of his reign, Edward was bothered by several distinct monetary problems. First there were the complaints of the sheriffs who had received pollards and crockards when they were worth a penny and paid them out when they were worth only a halfpenny. Next came the embezzlement of the Master of the Money, John Porcher, who like so many of his predecessors, diverted silver that should have been coined to other uses and then was unable to repay it. In addition the king had to attack the problem of smuggling, as merchants, despite the prohibitions of the statute of Stepney, still tried to bring in bad money and export good money. Finally, toward the end of his reign, Edward was faced with an unprecedented influx of foreign silver, which mint officials were unable to handle without additional, foreign help.

In 1301 Edward was mainly concerned with the problem caused by the demonetization of pollards and crockards. Many sheriffs, bailiffs and farmers of royal manors had received pollards and crockards between Michaelmas and Christmas 1299 when they were still worth one penny and had given full acquittance to the men who paid them. But when they themselves paid this money into the Exchequer, or used it on other business of the king, they

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received only half its value, as two pollards were then worth one penny. They were, therefore, out of pocket and complained bitterly. But other sheriffs, who had not received pollards and crockards, seized this opportunity to complain unjustifiably and demanded allowances to which they were not entitled. Consequently, in May 1301, the king determined to put an end to these schemes. He ordered the treasurer and barons to find out which sheriffs, bailiffs and farmers had actually lost money through the receipt of pollards and crockards and how much damage each of them had sustained. He promised that if the sheriff had suffered through no fault of his own, he would be given a reasonable allowance, but if he had suffered through his own negligence, by failing to pay his receipts at the appointed time, then he would not be given anything. ¹

To guard against possible fraud and deceit, the barons gave no allocations unless the plaintiff first filed a suit against the king in parliament and a thorough inquisition was made. ² For the barons wanted to satisfy themselves that the sheriff had received the money between Michaelmas and Christmas, 1299; that he had given full acquittance to the men paying him, and that he had received no orders to spend it on the king's affairs or to pay it in at the Exchequer before the end of 1299. They also wanted to make sure that when the sheriff or bailiff paid the money into the Exchequer or used it in buying wine or other provisions for the king's service, he had received only half its


²When Gilbert de Knovill, who had been sheriff of Devonshire, sought an allocation, he was told to sue against the king at the next parliament. As he failed to do so, no allocation was made. E. 159/74, m. 67.
original value. Only if the sheriff satisfied all these requirements did he receive a full allocation for the money he had lost. John de Broughton, for example, who had been sheriff of Warwick and Leicester, sought an allocation for 56 l. 8s. 1-1/2d., but when the enquiry was made, the barons found that 30s. 11-1/2d. of this sum had been the arrears of his preceding account. This amount was therefore deducted and he was given only 54 l. 17s. 2d.

From the cases which are recorded in the Memoranda Rolls, it seems clear that many of the sheriffs had legitimate grievances. They often had little warning about the impending devaluation of pollards and crockards, since the writs of notification did not reach them until just before Christmas. This meant that they had no time to dispose of the pollards and crockards before they went down in value. The barons, however, were scrupulously fair and although the inquisitions took some time, they enabled the barons to take into consideration the difficulties faced by the sheriffs and other royal officials. Thus when a farmer of certain royal manors in the south of England sought an allocation, they recognized that the Exchequer was at York, some distance away and that the roads were often bad, so that the farmer could not reasonably be expected to have paid the money he had received into the Exchequer before Christmas. They, therefore, granted his request.

Royal officials might have to wait some

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3 The keepers of the archbishopric of York were allocated 44 l. 10s. (E. 159/76, m. 25d); John Abel, sheriff of Surrey and Suffolk, was granted 95 l. (E. 159/77, m. 27, 27d.)

4 E. 159/76, m. 26d.

5 E. 159/77, m. 34, 34d.
time before their case could be heard, but in the end everyone received the allocation to which he was entitled. This privilege, however, was not extended to non-royal officials, such as bailiffs on monastic and other estates, who were faced with similar losses and either absorbed them themselves or passed them on to their estates.

Another problem troubling the king in 1301 was the embezzlement of John Porcher, who took the silver that he should have turned into coin and lent it to foreign merchants and others. The Warden, John de Sandale, had been suspicious for some time but whenever he pressed Porcher for an accurate account of the money he received and returned, the latter always refused, giving the excuses that he was too busy and that much of the silver was scattered in various parts of the foundry. At the end of November 1300, however, John de Sandale finally pinned him down and found that over 5,000 l. of silver was still in Porcher's hands. Even allowing for the money in the pyxes and the silver in the hands of the moneyers, he estimated that Porcher owed nearly 2,000 l. for which he could not account. John Porcher, however, denied this debt and was confident that when the money in the pyxes was assayed and all his expenses were taken into account, he would be proved right. Consequently the...

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6 The sheriff of Southampton did not receive his allocation until 1306, although he had made his application at the end of 1301 (E. 159/75, m. 85; E. 159/79, m. 45).

7 The bailiffs of Merton College estates sought and received an allocation for 22 l. 16s. 11-1/2d. "on account of the change of money." James E. Thorold Rogers, *A History of Agriculture and Prices in England* (Oxford, 1866), II, 664.
barons set a day early in 1301 to make the assays and discuss the matter further.  

Porcher had been too optimistic and in fact was unable to satisfy the king or the barons concerning his arrears. When all the costs of mintage and his other expenses had been deducted from the amount of silver he had received and not yet returned, it was discovered that he still owed 3,542 l. 4s. 9d. by weight. Later he paid 160 l. from minted money and pennies found in a pyx, but this still left 3,424 l. 10s. 4-1/2d. by number. The only explanation that he could offer was that the silver from which the money ought to be made was scattered in the houses of the foundry in cinders. This statement, however, could not be proved and the barons were sceptical. Furthermore, the arrears were so great that it was doubtful whether his goods and chattels would suffice to meet them. He was, therefore, imprisoned in the Tower of London and his two brothers, Boniface Porcher, who had been Master at Bristol, and William Porcher, who had been Master at Canterbury, were imprisoned with him as they could not pay the arrears for Bristol or Canterbury.

8 E. 159/74, m. 27d., 32. It is clear from these documents that the assays were not being made regularly, for John Porcher brought with him the pyxes from the exchanges of London and Canterbury for the time when he was Master under William de Wymondham, as they had not yet been assayed.

9 This amount is made up as follows: from London 2,845 2s. 8d. from Canterbury 483 3s. 6d. from Bristol 201 10s. 8d. from Chester 12 7s. 11d. Total 3,542 4s. 9d.

10 It is known that Boniface was John's brother (E. 372/150) and it is quite likely that William was a brother, too, although he may have been a cousin.
paid their arrears and were released, but by 1303, John Porcher had been able to pay only 1,000 l. 16s. 2d. off his debt, so that he was kept in prison until he could pay off the remaining 1,739 l. If, as Sir John Craig charitably assumes, he was in debt as a result of "a muddle in his accounts," then he should have straightened his accounts out by 1303. But all his contemporaries agree that he had lent money to various people. Probably he had misjudged his debtors and lent money to men who were bad risks and not able to repay him.

While John Porcher was in prison, the king had to find someone to take his place and chose Porcher's brother, Boniface, which indicates that he did not take John's crime too seriously. Every Master of the Money except William de Turnemire either spent some time in prison on account of his arrears, or, in the case of Peter Bertin, left the country in order to escape imprisonment. Where John Porcher differed from his predecessors was in the larger amount that he owed. The king and the barons, however, learnt from this experience and placed less trust in Boniface Porcher than they had previously placed in his brother. They appointed a clerk to oversee Boniface's activities. He carried

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11Porcher was still in prison on 3 December 1303 when the barons, who were auditing the account of John de Sandale, questioned him whether he had paid off any more of his arrears. As he had not, John de Sandale was allocated the 1,739 l. that Porcher owed, for the barons recognized that Porcher had been assigned to his office by the king and not by Sandale (E. 159/74, m. 32; E. 159/77, m. 68).


13In 1307 he paid off another 400 l. and was released from the Tower and allowed to stay within the city of London until he paid the rest of his arrears (E. 159/80, m. 69d., 74d.)
another key to the foundry and checked all money received and paid out by
Boniface, to make sure that he did not stray too far. This scheme worked
well. When Edward died in 1307, Boniface Porcher was still holding his
brother's place, but he did not owe the king any money, despite the large sums
that had been minted during the preceding four years when the temptation to use
some of that money for himself must have been great. Without the constant
presence of the king's clerk, Boniface might have succumbed to that temptation.

Even after 1299 Edward was still worried by the threat of the illegal
importation of pollards and crockards and other false money. It had been easy
for him to declare at Stepney in May 1299, that no one was to bring pollards
and crockards into the country, but it was much harder for him to enforce this
prohibition. In October 1300, two foreigners, Jacob del Dam and his son,
William, were arrested at Lynn for bringing into the country 11 l. 8s. 4d. in
counterfeit sterlings and 8s. 1d. in white tournois. They admitted their guilt
and said that many other merchants were planning to land on the east coast,
bringing with them 30,000 pounds or more of false, counterfeit money to use in
trade. Perhaps they hoped in this way to minimize their offense by pointing out
that they were not acting alone. It had the opposite effect. Henry Spigurnel,
the justice who tried the case, was greatly concerned about "this great evil"

14 The first clerk, John de Heyden, was replaced by John de Shadworth
on 1 May 1305. They both received 6d. a day as wages (E. 372/150; E. 372/153,
m. 32).

15 Judicial commissions were still trying new offenses against the
which threatened to damage the people and felt that something should be done to check it. As a start, he had both father and son drawn and hanged to serve as a warning for future offenders.  

Edward shared Spigurnel's concern and tried to ensure that a closer watch was kept on the coast and the ports. On 3 November, in a letter that was obviously inspired by Spigurnel's report, he berated the sheriffs for their negligence in carrying out the statute of Stepney and told them that a great sum of entirely false sterlings had been forged on the continent and would be brought into England unless they took immediate action. He therefore ordered them to publish the statute once more throughout their bailiwick and to appoint keepers to watch over all places where ships could land, so that the plans of the forgers might be frustrated.  

In addition, the sheriff at Norfolk and Suffolk was ordered to find out at what ports and places false money had been brought in. Having done this, he was to attach the keepers of these places and bring them before the king to answer for their negligence. The sheriff, however, ignored

16 E. 159/74, m. 31, 31d. Letter from Henry Spigurnel to the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer dated Norwich, 18 October 1300. William, the son, pleaded that he was not to blame for his father's actions, but he was found guilty of consenting to the importing of this money, knowing it to be false, and was hanged too. This is the only recorded instance of the death penalty being enforced for a monetary offense, after the attack on the Jews in 1280-81.

17 Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p. 412. The king described the money as "false sterlings, forged under the king's name and royal title by hateful presumption... which are so like his true and lawful money of sterlings... that they can scarcely be distinguished from them." He was thus obviously referring to the newer "crowned head" sterlings, rather than the older pollards and crockards.
repeated royal commands and by the end of 1301, he had neither found the culprits nor explained his failure to do so. 18

It was always difficult for the king to find out exactly what his officials were doing. At the end of 1301, he asked the sheriffs of all coastal counties to let him know who had been elected as keepers of the seacoast and how much money they had arrested. 19 The keepers were asked to report in person, but many of them did not show up. 20 Those who did appear had little to report. Most of them insisted that they had received nothing during the whole time they had been appointed. 21 The keepers at Ravensere, however, had arrested a Flemish merchant in 1299 for bringing in 12 l. 10s. in pollards and crockards. In 1301, they also arrested a merchant from St. Omer, because 102 l. in pollards and crockards belonging to him had been found on a Flemish ship,

18 K. B. 27/163, m. 9. The sheriff was first summoned to appear on the octave of St. Hillary, 1301. When he failed to turn up then, he was told to come at Easter. But he neither came nor sent a letter of explanation, so he was given another day at Michaelmas. When he did not appear then, he was given longer and told to come at Easter, 1302.

19 E. 159/75, m. 23d., 24, 70. (See Appendix A for a full transcription of the king's writ to the sheriff.)

20 Ibid. Not one of the keepers from the counties of Kent, Southampton, Somerset and Dorset appeared and only some of the keepers from Sussex and Devon.

21 E. 159, m. 23d., 24, 70. The keepers from the ports of Malden and Norwich in Essex; the rapes of Chichester, Bramber and Pevensey in Sussex; the port of Bristol in Gloucester; the ports of Ottermouth and Sidmouth in Devon; the ports of Barton, Saltfleet, Skegness, Waynfleet and Boston in Lincoln and the ports of Scarborough, Whitby and Hull all reported arresting nothing.
which had been forced into the port during a storm. It is doubtful whether this money would have been discovered if the captain could have landed wherever he wished. For the only other keepers at this time who reported arresting any money coming into the country were those at Newcastle, who had found 30s. in pollards and 15s. of black tournois in 1299. Yet pollards and crockards and other counterfeit money were still being imported, for they were often arrested by sheriffs at the inland towns. Thus either the keepers were not doing a thorough job of searching the ships, or more likely, the ships landed at unwatched harbors. Even so, the small amounts of false money collected suggest that the king had overestimated the danger threatening the country.

When the keepers who failed to appear in 1301 finally made their reports, they had discovered little money. The keepers at Weymouth in Dorset, for example, only accounted for sterlings, pollards and silver jewelry worth 6 l. 2s. 2d., which they had arrested in the hands of several merchants, so each one must have brought in very little. Similarly the Wardens at Yarmouth found very small sums of false money. One merchant had 4d., another 3d. The largest amount was the 5s. 9d. found on a merchant from Etaples and their total money collected was only 15s. 1d. Although larger amounts were forfeited

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid. See also Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, p. 434. Later, at the request of the Queen, the money was restored to the merchant, on the condition that he took it to the exchange to be reminted.
Blakeney (28 l. 19s. 10d.), Lynn (62 l. 4s. 8d.), and Portsmouth (72 l. 10s.), there is no evidence that foreign merchants ever attempted to bring in the 30,000 l. of false money mentioned by Jacob del Dam. Smuggling, of course, went on to some extent. Merchants, who intended to bring false money into the country, would not willingly land at ports where the keepers were waiting to search their goods. But if counterfeit coins were being imported on any large scale, more would surely have found their way into the major ports. Royal fears seem to have been exaggerated. Yet without the constant presence of the keepers of the seacoast, they might have been realized. The mere fact that the keepers of the seacoast were ready and waiting might have acted as a sufficient deterrent and prevented a recurrence of the crisis of 1299.

The king also expected the port wardens and the keepers of the seacoast to prevent the export of silver, but he was continually dissatisfied with the way they performed this task. He was convinced that many merchants were carrying money and silver out of the country secretly in sacks of wool, hides and bales. In February 1301, therefore, he ordered the mayor and bailiffs of all the ports

23See E. 159/78, m. 32d., 36, 37d., 40d. for the reports from the keepers of Portsmouth, Blakeney, Lynn and Weymouth and K. B. 27/171, m. 75 for the report from Yarmouth. The money they arrested was either given to the sheriff or to John de Sandale, neither of whom had yet accounted for it. It took a long time for the king to get these reports, since they are not recorded on the Memoranda Roll until 1305.

24In April, 1306, the king complained that merchants were avoiding Dover and similar ports and landing along the Thames and "other secret places out of the common ways" so that their goods might not be scrutinized. Cal. Patent Rolls, 1301-7, p. 341.
to search all merchandise more diligently in the future to ensure that no money or silver of any kind was taken abroad in any way by anyone without the king's special license. As a result frightened port officials sometimes arrested money "without reasonable cause" and were forced to restore it. In addition the justiciary of Ireland tried to prevent the export of money from Ireland to England, until the king assured him that this was all right, so long as the merchants provided security that they would not take the money elsewhere than England. Although some officials may have been a little indiscriminate in their arrests, others did frustrate attempts to carry money out of the country illegally. The keepers at Exmouth, in October 1301, came upon the prior of Cowik and his household entering a ship by night, with three horses, which they were taking to Normandy. When the keepers searched the members of the prior's household, they found 15 l. in sterling on one of the clerks, which was hidden and covered over by his tunic. They naturally arrested both the money and the horses. This was not an isolated case. Several foreign merchants also tried to send money out of the country and were caught.


26 Ibid., p. 439, 468, 508; E. 159/77, m. 4d; Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-1307, p. 6.

27 E. 159/74, m. 24. See Cal. Close Rolls, 1296-1302, pp. 509, 566, 568 for other money arrested. Sometimes the amounts were quite large as in the case of the merchant of Bruges who tried to send out 85 l. in sterling.
Although offenders occasionally suffered hardship as a result of their crimes, in general they were treated more leniently than those found guilty of bringing false money into the country. Not one was hanged. Most of them were either fined or imprisoned and the king was sometimes willing to mitigate sentences at the request of the Queen. But in one instance a merchant was kept in prison longer than was customary as a result of an oversight. In 1304 a merchant of Caen was arrested at Sandwich for trying to take 29 l. 10s. in sterling and 10 florins out of the country. He forfeited this money and was left in prison for two years before an enquiry was made. Then the barons decided that as he was a foreigner and had apparently been ignorant of the prohibition, he should be released on payment of a 20s. fine. Originally, they had intended to restore the rest of his money to him, but the bailiff of Southampton complained that he had spent 40s. or more on the prisoner's sustenance while he was being detained. So the poor man, who had been unable to carry on his regular business all that time, was forced to pay for his board during his imprisonment. But he was no doubt so pleased to be released that he made no objection.

28In 1302 a Flemish merchant tried to smuggle out 10 l. hidden in his wool. It was discovered by the keepers of the Thames and the merchant was imprisoned in Newgate. At the request of the Queen, he was pardoned and released, but his money and his wool remained forfeit to the crown (Cal. Chancery Warrants, 1244-1326, p. 157).

29E. 159/79, m. 40. The bailiff of Southampton seems to have been very conscientious, for he arrested and imprisoned another merchant in 1306. But this man was soon released on payment of a 40s. fine (ibid., m. 57).
After 1300 the king became less willing either to grant licenses for money to be carried out of the country or to allow people to leave without a search being made. In 1301, he issued only one license, in May, when he permitted the envoys of the king of France to return home with their men, horses, arms and other things that they had received after their arrival in England, which would presumably include money. He did not issue another such license until May 1304, when he allowed the Master of the Templars to take with him the money necessary for his expenses in going to Cyprus. The following year he granted one more license for 100 l. to be taken out of the country, but this was the only one and he refused to allow the Duke of Brittany to export in money the revenues of his estates as it was contrary to the statute.

Furthermore, Edward was particularly strict that no unauthorized money was to be taken out of the country. Although priors of foreign orders were readily given permission to visit their mother house on the continent, it was on the condition that they did not carry with them any money or silver contrary to the statute. When the abbot of Cîteaux sent proctors to the

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English Cistercian houses, seeking financial help from them, the king wrote to each one of the English abbots, ordering him not to make any subsidy to the abbot of Cîteaux in money or other things which might be exchanged, so that money would in effect be carried out of the country. For the king did not want any silver to leave the country without his permission. Later he sent a similar letter to the English Premonstratensian abbots when they were asked for money by the abbot of Prémontré. Yet in 1306 Edward still felt the need to proclaim once more that no one "whatsoever estate, order or dignity" he might be could take out of the country money or gold and silver vessels without a special license.

Suddenly, in the last year of his reign, Edward changed his policy and began to relax slightly his restrictions on the export of money. Between November and June 1307 he issued five licenses whereas in the preceding seven years he had issued only three. He also restored 4 l. 3s. which had been arrested in the hands of two pilgrims at London, because they had been ignorant of the prohibition and were planning to use this money for the expenses of their pilgrimage. Finally he made a new rule that the ban against the export of money applied only to English money and did not include foreign money. In the past,

34Ibid., p. 576. See also Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7, p. 69.
36Ibid., pp. 236, 375.
pollards and crockards, florins and other foreign money had been arrested and
forfeited along with English money. Consequently, when in 1307 the royal
bailiff at Southampton found a merchant trying to take 100 l. out of the country,
he arrested him. The merchant appealed and when the case came before the
barons, they agreed, after some discussion, that it was only the king's intention
to apply the prohibition to British money. As the 100 l. had consisted entirely
of black foreign money, it was restored to the merchant and he was released
from custody without further penalty. 38

Yet at the very time that he was relaxing his restrictions against the
export of money, Edward insisted that no other goods could be exported without
a license. In January, he prohibited anyone from taking not only silver, but
horses, armor, corn, beasts or any other victuals out of the country without
his permission, as he had such a great need of supplies for himself and his men
in Scotland. 39 Furthermore, in May he insisted that any goods or money which
were forfeited as a result of an infringement of this prohibition should be sent to
to the exchequer immediately and should not be delayed or respited for any
reason. 40 This order had been inspired by a rather curious incident. Early in

38E. 159/80, m. 50d., 52d. No one seems to have asked how the
merchant gained possession of this foreign money. It is quite possible that he
brought it in illegally.

39Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7, p. 522. This prohibition seems to have
been obeyed for the Memoranda Roll records the arrest of both horses and men.
E. 159/80, m. 30d.

1307, Eleanor, the wife of Robert de Scoteville, complained to the king that certain silver vessels, which belonged to her husband, had been arrested at Dover when he left the country and kept there for two years as forfeited to the king, without the king receiving any profit from them. She was therefore trying to recover them. Edward was angry when he heard this and marvelled greatly at the temerity of the keepers in withholding anything at a time when his needs were so great. He therefore ordered the treasurer and barons to send these writs insisting on the immediate dispatch of all forfeited goods.

But Edward had acted precipitately, for when an inquiry was held it was discovered that Eleanor de Scoteville had not told the truth. What had really happened was this: When Robert de Scoteville crossed at Dover in 1305 he carried with him a royal writ giving him permission to cross with horses and harness, but nothing else. He had brought the silver vessels with him in the hope that the port examiners would be able to give him a license to export them. When they refused, he left the vessels with them for safekeeping until his return. Unfortunately Robert died while he was abroad. His widow, who was waiting at Dover, was short of money, and William Salekyn, who had custody of the vessels, lent her 20s. on the security of the vessels. This loan had not been repaid and so the vessels were still in the hands of William Salekyn.
They had never been forfeited or even arrested and therefore the keepers at Dover had not been guilty of withholding forfeited goods. 41

Thus, just before he died, Edward was pursuing two distinct and contradictory policies. On the one hand he was restricting the export of men and supplies; on the other, he was easing some of the earlier restrictions on the export of money. But these restrictions were only relaxed and not abandoned entirely. Papal nuncios in charge of collecting annates were not allowed to take this money out of the country except by way of exchange. 42 The same rule applied to papal tax-collectors. It was at this time and for this reason that the Italian merchant houses who were also papal bankers began to use the proceeds of papal taxes to buy up English wool and ship it to Italy instead of money. Even so, these papal revenues were allowed to be sent out of the country by way of exchange, whereas earlier Edward had refused to allow English orders to make any contribution to their foreign headquarters either in coin or by exchange. The most likely explanation for this change of heart is the influx of silver into the country, so that there was no longer any shortage of money in circulation. But the king was still fighting in Scotland, which was a continual drain on his resources, so that he was perpetually short both of money to pay his troops and of food and other supplies. This explains why he was

41 E. 159/80, m. 49d., 50. Several inquisitions were held to try and determine the truth and in one of them the loan was described as 20s. and in the other as 19s. 7d. The difference probably represents a disguised interest. This incident shows how dangerous it is to generalize solely from the evidence of the Patent and Close Rolls.

unwilling to let horses and other goods leave the country; he never knew when he might need to commandeer them. Furthermore, if men tried to take them out of the country illegally, they were forfeited to the crown, which could immediately use them. But, although the king was short of money, there was, by 1307, plenty in circulation, so that the king would not have too much trouble in borrowing some if he needed it. Thus he felt able to allow more money to leave the country.

In the early part of 1301 mint organization was governed by the rules laid down in March 1300 by the king and his council. For pollards and crockards were still being bought up by the Italian merchants and then taken to the royal exchanges of London and Canterbury to be reminted. Consequently the exchanger and the assayer at London still received their increased salary and John de Sandale still enjoyed the services of another clerk. But by September 1301, the flood of merchants had lessened and everything was restored to normal. Those who had received a raise were forced to relinquish it. Lapin Roger, who had been working full time as assayer for the whole of England, returned to his old position of exchanger at Canterbury, although he kept his job of assayer. For the next six years, until the death of Edward I, he kept both positions, being paid 20 l. a year for his work as exchanger and ten

43 The license of the Ballardi was renewed in April 1300 (Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 587), and there is no reason to suppose that the same privilege was not accorded to the other Italian houses.
marks a year for his work as assayer. Even the porter at Canterbury received a reduction in wages, as he had little work to do.

The influx of silver which overwhelmed mint officials at the end of Edward's reign was completely unexpected. From September 1301 to September 1303 the mints at London and Canterbury were quiet, coining between three and five thousand pennies a year. The royal profit dropped and the king had to borrow money from the mayor of Bayonne to sustain the exchange. Then, in 1304, foreign silver began to flow in. The total foreign silver purchased at Canterbury increased from 2,000 l. to 14,500 l. At London the total jumped from 4,000 l. to nearly 16,000 l. These amounts went on increasing year by year, until in 1307 merchants took over 85,000 l. of foreign silver to the London mint. Never had so much foreign silver been purchased at London. The previous high point had been reached in 1285/6 when 42,387 l. was purchased.

Some of this foreign silver came from France, since Philip the Fair, when he started manufacturing gold coins in the 1290s, deliberately overvalued gold at the expense of silver. It is not certain why he did this, although contemporaries blamed the Lombards, since they were responsible for importing

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44 He was not paid his assayer's wages between 29 September 1301 and 30 April 1305. He therefore petitioned the new king, Edward II, for the payment of these arrears and his request was granted in Michaelmas 1307 (E. 372/152B, m. 25).

45E. 372/150. The membranes on this roll are unnumbered.

46 See Appendix B for full details.
the gold and were anxious to make as much profit as they could. But whoever
was responsible for this decision, the results were the same. No one wanted to
use silver; instead it was exported abroad where its value was higher and it
could be exchanged for gold at a much better rate. In 1310, an Italian, who had
been Master of the French mints for twenty years, estimated that during that
time nearly a hundred tons of silver had been exported from France. This sum
included not only minted silver but virgin metal from the southern mines.
Much of the French silver was minted into imitation Moslem coins and exported
to North Africa, but a considerable quantity also found its way to Brabant and
England.  

Silver also reached England from the Low Countries in payment for
English wool. This trade expanded sharply in the early years of the fourteenth
century, with the number of sacks of wool exported rising from 31,621 in 1300
to 46,382 at the peak of the market in 1305. Although some of the merchants
used the foreign money they received to buy goods, others brought it back into
the country and of course were forced to take it to the mint and have it exchanged
for English coin.

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47 Marc Bloch, Esquisse d'une histoire monétaire de l'Europe, Cahiers
des Annales, no. IX, Paris, 1954, pp. 56-62; R. H. Bautier, "L'or et l'argent
en occident de la fin du xiiie siècle au début du xiv siècle," Académie des
Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Comptes Rendus (1951), pp. 169-174; A. M.
Watson, "Back to Gold--and Silver," Economic History Review, Second Series,
XX (1967), pp. 7-17.

48 These figures are taken from E. M. Carus-Wilson and Olive
Consequently the royal mints at London and Canterbury were flooded with silver and unable to cope with the situation. When John de Everdon replaced John de Sandale as Warden of the Exchange, he found that the silver already in the exchange could not be minted within six weeks. There was no prospect of improvement unless additional workers and moneyers were employed, for merchants were daily bringing silver there in great quantities.

The barons therefore told Everdon to seek additional workers in Brabant and he did so. Seventy-two foreigners eventually came over, but this was not enough and moneyers were sent from Canterbury to London to help out. All the moneyers must have worked hard, for 46,897 l. 10s. 4d. in pennies was coined at London between May and September 1305, a period of twenty-two weeks.

This means that approximately 2,133 l. was coined each week, by one hundred workers or less (72 foreigners, plus the resident London staff).

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49 While serving as Warden, John de Sandale had been employed on other royal business in Gascony and England. But in 1305 the king appointed him chamberlain in Scotland, a position which needed all his time and attention. He was replaced by John de Everdon, one of the king's clerks, who in 1297 was parson of the church of Stoke Basset and later became dean of St. Peter's church, Wolverhampton, and fermor of Bolsover castle and mills. Before his appointment as Warden, he had been employed as an assessor of tallage. (For a full account of John de Sandale's other activities, see Cal. Patent Rolls, 1301-7, pp. 5, 55, 57, 62, 116, 136-7, 140, 201, 245-6, 327, 335; Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7, pp. 61, 68, 135, 137, 163.) For the early life of John de Everdon, see Cal. Patent Rolls, 1292-1301, p. 277; Cal. Close Rolls, 1302-7, pp. 131, 163, 175, 201-3; Cal. Patent Rolls, 1301-7, pp. 149, 202.

50 E. 368/75, m. 44d. For a full transcription of John de Sandale's report to the barons, see Appendix A.

51 E. 372/153, m. 32, 32d.
Royal control over the export of silver was so stringent that very little of this money left the country, causing widespread inflation. Not all prices rose to the same extent, but two good examples of the way in which prices rose are eggs and poultry. From the beginning of Edward’s reign until 1305, the price of eggs generally fluctuated between 3-1/2d. and 4d. a hundred, but in 1306 the average price suddenly rose to 6-1/4d. a hundred. Although the average dropped to 5d. in 1308, it climbed back to 6-1/4d. in 1309. Similarly the average price of hens, which had remained fairly stable, between 1d. and 1-1/2d., suddenly rose to 1-7/8d. in 1309 and 2-1/2d. in 1310. Grain prices were influenced by other factors such as bad harvests, so that there was usually a close connection between bad harvests and high prices. Nevertheless the national price level of wheat clearly rose between 1306 and 1310, from 4s. 6d. to 7s. 11d. a quarter, at a time when harvests were up to average or even better. Obviously this price rise was caused by monetary factors. The harvest of 1324, when prices were markedly higher than they had been at the beginning of the century, was almost as good as those of 1300-2, when prices were low.

52 H. A. Miskimin in Money, Prices and Foreign Exchange in Fourteenth Century France (New Haven, 1963) found that wheat prices did not rise in response to the influx of new money. He therefore thought that the money was spent on manufactured and luxury goods and immediately exported before it could reach the majority of the population. It is difficult to see how he arrived at these conclusions.

53 This information is obtained from Rogers, History of Prices. In 1307, according to Rogers, the average price of eggs dropped to 1-1/2d., but as this was based on only one set of figures, it is clearly not representative.
and dropping lower. These low prices of 1300-2 were part of the deflation caused by the calling in of pollards and crockards and the high prices of 1324 were part of the inflation caused by the vast influx of silver into the country. When Edward died in 1307, he had successfully solved the immediate money problems facing him. He had made amends to the sheriffs for their losses at the time of the demonetization of pollards and crockards. He had at last devised a scheme for preventing the Master of the Money embezzling the royal money. Through the appointment of the keepers of the seacoast, he had prevented both the large-scale importation of false coins and the unauthorized export of money and silver, although smuggling on a small scale still continued. Finally the shortage of silver which had worried him in the 1290s had been replaced by an unexpected influx of foreign silver.

54D. L. Farmer, "Grain Price Movements in the Thirteenth Century," Economic History Review, Second Series, X (1957-8), pp. 217-8. Quite naturally Mr. Farmer attributed this price rise to a devaluation of the currency but there is no evidence for this at all.
The maintenance of the stability of the English coinage, in the face of severe monetary problems, was one of Edward I's major administrative accomplishments. Shortly after his return from Palestine in 1274 he found confidence in the royal money dwindling as the practice of clipping and other monetary offenses grew. By 1278 the deterioration of the English coinage had driven merchants to stipulate payments "in good and legal sterling." Furthermore the royal mints at London and Canterbury were starved for silver, because English and foreign merchants who had acquired silver on the continent were reluctant to exchange it for English coin, even though newly minted. Edward's responses to this crisis were direct and brutal. He exacted fines, mild and savage, from many convicted coin-clippers; the rest he hanged. Meanwhile he called in the old coins and replaced them with new ones, the Edwardian pennies, whose design remained unchanged for centuries.

These new English coins were highly prized on the continent. Soon foreign princes in the Low Countries and northern France began to produce imitations of lesser weight and fineness for use in the English wool trade. When Edward saw how easily the importation of these imitations could corrupt his new
coinage, he at once appointed John de Bourne to search all ships landing at Dover and Sandwich for foreign money. This proved inadequate, so in 1284 he appointed separate examiners for the ports of London, Dover, Boston and Sandwich. Then in 1289 he made the collectors of customs at eleven major ports responsible for preventing the importation of inferior coins. Having done what he could to keep bad money out of England, Edward turned his attention to that already in circulation. From 1291 to 1294, in a determined effort to rid the country of all clipped and counterfeit coins, he sent commissioners to examine the money used at fairs and markets and to scrutinize the deposits in churches and monasteries. But the vigorous and effective enforcement of these measures was relaxed after 1294, when the king's energies were diverted to the urgent problems of France, Wales and Scotland. The trickle of false coins then became a flood, until they became so commonplace in England that they were known familiarly as "pollards and crockards."

In 1299, therefore, Edward, free to return to monetary problems, issued the Statute of Stepney, which sought to prevent both the importation of foreign imitations and the export of English coin and silver through the appointment of "keepers of the seacoast." They did their work well and by 1307 the widespread circulation of "crowned head" sterlings on the continent presented no real threat to Edward's coinage. Silver or coin could be brought into England only if it was destined for the royal mints; none could be taken out without the king's special license, which was rarely granted. These restrictions were maintained even while a favorable economic climate caused an
unprecedented influx of silver. The English mints, now working at full capacity, poured new coins into circulation in larger amounts than ever before. The result was a marked increase in prices that was just beginning to be felt by Edward's death. Earlier prices in England had remained stable owing to the stability of the English coinage.

Edward, acting out of a strict sense of duty, had steadfastly refused to follow the example of his continental contemporaries and debase his coinage. He was continually short of revenue and yet in 1281 he had given up his secret increment of twopence, which had substantially increased the profit from the mint, as he had been afraid that it might damage the integrity of his money. Throughout his reign he had kept himself well informed on monetary matters and the success of his measures was the result of his constant supervision and effort.
APPENDIX A

UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

1. Letter of Stephen de Pencestre to the barons of the port of Hastings

S. C. 1/30, no. 183, 21 June 1279.

Stephanus de Pencestre, constabularius castri Dover' et custos quinque portuorum ballivis et baronibus portus de Hasting', salutem. Mandatum domini regis in hec verba recepimus. Edwardus dei gratia rex Anglie, dominus Hybernie et dux Aquitanie dilecto et fideli suo Stephano de Pencestre custodi suo quinque portuorum salutem. Quia dampna gravia et innumerata nobis et toti communitati regni nostri hactenus provenerunt occasione monete male false et retonse currentis in eodem regno per quod cambium monete in villis Ebor', London', Cantuar', Wynton', Exon', Gloc', Norwyci, Lynncln', Novi Castri super Tynam et Northampt' fecimus provideri. Vobis mandamus firmiter iniungentes quod sub omni festinatione per singulas villas portuorum predictorum publice proclamari faciatis quod omnes illi qui huismodi monetam, mala, falsam vel retonsam habuerunt, veniant ad villas predictas vel aliquam ipsarum prout sibi magis viderint expedire ad ipsos quos custodes cambii nostri deputavimus, ubi inventent bonos denarios et bonos obolos non retonsos ad cambiendos et quod nulla moneta mala, falsa vel retonsa de cetero currat in portibus predictis et etiam quod nullus sub periculo vite et membrorum et
amissionis omnium bonorum suorum de cetero emat vel vendat seu aliquo alio modo negocietur de huismodi moneta mala falsa vel retonsa nisi tantum modo in cambiando sicut predictum est. Teste me ipso ad Dovor' xix die Junii anno regni nostri septimo.

Quare vobis ex parte domini Regis firmiter iniungentes mandamus quatinus predictum mandatum suum per singulas villas portus predicti publice proclamari et firmiter teneri faciatis. Datum apud Dovor' die martis proxima ante Nativitatem beati Johannis Baptisti. Anno regni regis Edwardi septimo.

2. E. 368/53, m. 2d. 15 November 1279.

Presentatio archiepiscopie Canturariense de quodam monetario

Memorandum quod die Mercurii proxima ante festum sancti Edmundi Confessoris venit ad scaccarium Gregorius de Rokesle custos cambii Londonie et Cantuarie et tradidit in pleno scaccario Thesaurario viii cuneos per quos debet fieri moneta in cambio cantuariensi videlicet v cuneos qui pertinent ad dominum Regem et iii cuneos qui pertinent ad archiepiscopum cantuariensium. Quos quinque cuneos idem Thesaurarium retradidit predicto Gregorio ut inde operari et fieri faciat commodum Regis in cambio predicto prout moris est. Ed predictos iii cuneos liberavit idem Thesaurarius eodem die magistro Henrico Lovel, senescallo predicti archiepiscopi ad opus eiusdem archiepiscopi. Et idem magister Henricus nomine predicti archiepiscopi presentavit ibidem eodem die Willelum Tollomer de Perogol ad intendendum officium monetarii in eodem cambio quod pertinet ad ipsum archiepiscopum. Qui eodem die admissus fuit et sacramentum prestitit de fideliter se habendo in officio predicto.
Conventio inter J. archiepiscopum Cantuariensis et Gregorium de Rokesle et Orlandinum de Podio

Postea vero inferius annotata tradidit et dimisit idem archiepiscopus Gregorio de Rokesle et Orlandino de Podio exitus et proventus predictorum iii cuneorum ad terminum notum sic universis quod ita convenit inter venerabilem patrem dictum J. dei gratia archiepiscopum cantuariensis totius Anglie Primatem ex una parte et Gregorium de Rokesle et Orlandinum de Podio ex altera, videlicet quod idem archiepiscopus dimisit et concessit eidem G. et O. tres cuneos suos una cum cambio apud Cantuariam cum omnibus exitibus et proventibus corundem cuneorum et cambii prout antecessores dicti archiepiscopi eos habuerunt et in omnibus habere consueverunt in cambio supradicto habendos et tenendos predictos iii cuneos cum cambio dictis G. et O. eorum assignatis cum omnibus exitibus et proventibus ad eosdem cuneos et cambium quoque modo spectantibus a die Lune proxima post festum sancte Katerine Virginis anno domino m. cc. lxx nono usque ad triennium proximum sequens plene completum pro mille marcis bonorum novorum sterlingorum solvendis eidem archiepiscopo vel litteras suas patentes deferenti in domo ipsius archiepiscopi apud Lamhuthe terminis subscriptis videlicet D marcas ad Pascham anno domino m. cc ottogesimo et residuas D marcas ad festum sancti michelis proximum sequens vel predicti Gregorius et Orlandinus habere facient eidem archiepiscopo quientantiam a domino Rege de m marcis in quibus idem archiepiscopus tenetur eidem domino Regis pro fructibus archiepiscopatus sui in quindenam Paschae et in quindenam sancti michelis. Et ad predictam pecuniam dictis loco et terminis eidem
archiepiscopi solvendam vel quietantiam predictam predictus Gregorius obligat
se et omnia bona sua mobilia et immobilia presentia et futura et similiter
predictus Orlandinus pro se et sociis suis civibus et mercatoribus Lukarum
distriptionem Thesaurari et Baronum de Scaccario se et heredes suos et
executores suppenentes. Et ad maiorem huius rei securitatem debitum
predictum in dicto scaccario recognaverunt et concesserunt quod si in
solutionem dicti debiti deficiant quod de terris, bonis et catallis eorum dictum
debitum dicti Thesaurarius et Barones levari faciant cum dampnis et expensis
si que idem archiepiscopus sustinuerit occasione dicti debiti non soluta terminis
et loco supraddictis. Et predicti G. et O. concesserunt et bona fide promiserunt
quod ipsi et assignati sui a predicta die Lune usque ad finem predictorum trium
annorum sustinebunt apud Cantuariam octo cuneos ad minus per totum tempus
predictum videlicet v nomine domini Regis et iii nomine dicti archiepiscopi. Et
similiter ipsi G. et O. et eorum assignati omnes sumptus et expensas et onera
quecumque alia medio tempore facient et sustinebunt in cambio predicto et sine
omni periculo et dampno eiusdem archiepiscopi et ecclesie sue. Et elapso
termino supraddicto predicti tres cunei cum cambio libere et integre cum omni
libertate et alii ad eosdem pertinentibus eidem archiepiscopo vel eius
successoribus sine difficultate et molestia revertantur. In cuius rei testimonium
etc huic scripto in modum cyrographi confecto sigilla sua alternacum
apposuerunt.
3. E. 159/54, m. 4d. February 1281.

**Baronum per Regem**

Rex dei gratia etc. Baronibus suis de Scaccario salutem. Licet nuper consilium nostrum pro magnis custibus et expensis quas in factionibus domorum et aliis necessariis ad cambium, quos in principio nos facere oportebat, ordinasset quod argentum, tam monete retonse et veteris quam argentum transmarinum ad libram cambii, que libram excedit scaccarii et ad quam alias in mutatione monete Anglie argentum emptum fuisse dicitur, emeretur, quia tamen iam expensas et custus huiusmodi recuperavimus, volumus quod ex nunc utrumque argentum billonis et transmarinum ematur ad libram scaccarii et quod retentis ad opus nostrum pro custibus et expensis et firma nostra sexdecim denariis de libra billonis et sex denariis de argento de Gandavo per pondus eiusdem argenti venditoribus decetero satisfiat. Nisi fuerint oboli vel ferlingi de quibus quanto magis ad cudendum constiterint tanto plus volumus retineri. Et ideo vobis mandamus quod iam faciatis in omnibus locis Anglie in quibus moneta nostra cuditur, observari. Teste, etc.

4. E. 159/57, m. 3; E. 368/57, m. 4d. 10 February 1284.

**Scriptum Petri Bertin de Turnemyra de moneta**

Omnibus ad quos presentes littere pervenerint Petrus Bertyn de Turnemyra monetarius Lemovicensis diocesis salutem in domino. Noveritis quod cum egregius princeps dominus Edwardus dei gratia rex Anglie, dominus Hybernie, et dux Aquitannie mihi commiserit principiam curam monete sue
fabricande in Anglia habendam a decimo die mensis Februarii anni regni sui
duodecimis quamdiu sibi placuerit videlicet in civitatibus Londonie et Cantuarie
percipiendam a prefato domino rege pro qualibet libra communum sterlingorum
bene et perfecte fabricata sex denarios et obolum. Et pro fabricatione
cuiuslibet libris obolorum octo denarios et obolum. Et pro fabricatione
cuiuslibet libris ferlingorum decem denarios, obolum et quadrans tantum pro
stipendiis meis et ministrorum meorum quorumque et pro omnibus expensis et
misit faciendis circa fabricatione cuiuslibet libra dicta monete. Ita tamen quod
idem dominus rex inveniat mihi idoneas domos ad fabricandam monetam
predictam. Et etiam quod sustinebit onus feodi heredis Otonis, filius Thomi
Othonis quod clamat habere in custodia cuneorum. Et ego predictus Pretrus
obligo me, heredes meos et omnia bona mea mobilia et immobilia presentia et
futura et ad quorumcunque manus in posterum devenirent eidem domino regi et
tactis sacrosanctis evangeliis promitto bona fide quod totam monetam suam
predictam fideliter faciam fabricare et sibi eandem dealbatam fidelem liberabo
et ei de omnibus qui contingunt monetam et facricationem monete predicte
fideliter respondebo iuxta formam et securitatem conventionis inter prefatum
dominum regem coram concilio suo et me munite et firmate. Obligo me in
super ut predictum est ad omnia et singula promissa sicut superius anotatum
est, faciendo fideliter et observando et quod a regno prefati domino rege
mullatinus recadam nisi de licentia eiusdem domini regis inde requista et ab
eidem specialiter obtenta. In cuius rei testimonium presentibus litteris sigillum
meum apposui. Datus apud Westmonasterium mensis Februarii predictis die
et anno.

5. E. 368/71, m. 56; E. 159/73, m. 61. 9 June 1300

Letter to John de Sandale concerning the dies

Rex Johanni de Sandale, custodi cambii Londoniensis, salutem. Cum
nuper coram venerabili patre W. Coventrensis et Lichfeldensis episcopo et
aliis de consilio regis ordinatum esset et vobis inunctum quod iuxta ordinationem
illam fieri et fabricari faceretis cuneos idoneos et sufficientes in competenti
latitudine et sufficientes profundatos pro cambiis nostris in diversis locis regni
nostri transmittendos, vos ut tardi et remissi commodum et necessitatem
nostram hiis diebus paululum considerantes nullum quasi super hoc executionem
facere curantes presertim cum illud modicum quod per vos factum est;
insufficiens est, nam forma cunei est minus parva in circumferentia, nec
cunei est bene cavatus seu profundatus et sic denarius est nimis parvus, et
impressio vix apparens unde inter denarium et obolum parva est differentia ad
dampnum nostrum et incolarum nostrorum et aliorum cambiare volentium non
mocidum de quo vehementer admiramus sicut et debemus vobis mandamus quod
omnium dilatione postposita cuneos ad sufficientiam iuxta ordinationem predictam
et quod sint competentis latitudinis circularis, et bene cavati et profundati. Ita
quod impressio sic evidens et aperta fieri et fabricari faciatis et de illis mittatis
apud Eboracum cuneos ad sufficientiam pro cambio nostro de Kingston' super
Hull', et Novi Castri super Tinam, et pro cambio Dunholmi, et etiam cuneos ad
sufficientiam apud Exon', Bristol', Cestr', et ad alia loca prout vobis constat
per ordinationem antedictam et hoc cum omnium celeritate qua fieri poterit.

Attendentes si quidem quod si dilationem aliqualem super hoc invenieremus vos
indignationem nostram in perpetuum vestris de meritis incurremus. Teste
Thes. ix die Junii.

6. E. 159/75, m. 70. 4 October 1301.

Letter to the sheriff of Cornwall concerning the keepers
of the seacoast

Cum rex per diversas costeras maris regni sui custodes constitui
fecerit ad defendendas ex parte sua ne aliquid argentum in moneta seu in
jocalibus vel platis vel aliquis quocumque inde fusum vel fabricatum ad partes
transmarinas deportaret et ad huiusmodi argentum si quod sub concelemento
inventum fuerit attachandum et retinendum donec rex aliud super hoc
ordinaverit et etiam ad arrestandam omnem pecuniam venientem de partibus
transmarinis que de cuneo regis non fuerit seu quocumque modo contrafactam
tanquam regi forisfactam preceptum est vicecomite quod venire faciet hic in
crustino sancti Martini omnes huiusmodi custodes in balliva sua et quod habcant
secum omnem huiusmodi pecuniam bonam et malam et totum argentum
qualitercumque fusum vel fabricatum occasione predicta penes eos arestatum
ibidem ad opus regis liberandum. Et scire faciet eis nisi venerint ad diem
supradictam in forma predicta rex eos ad xl libras amercari faciet. Teste P.
de Wilughby tenens locum Thes. iiiii die Octobri.
Memorandum concerning the provision of workers for the mint of London

Memorandum quod magister Johannes de Everdon, custos cambii regis, cui rex commissit ipsam custodiam primo die huius mensis maii, hoc termino monstravit thesaurario et baronibus quod propter confluentiam argenti venientis de partibus transmarinis ad cambium regis hoc anno, cambium regis Londoniensis in tantum oneratur de argento monetando ad presens, quod per paucitate operariorum et monetariorum argentum quod remanet in eodem cambio monetandum, quod receptum fuerat tempore Johannis de Sandale, nuper custodis eiusdem cambii, non poterit monetari infra sex septimanae proximas a tempore quo idem Johannes de Sandale dimisit illud officium, et nichilominus de die in diem defertur argentum ad monetandum ibidem ad magnam quantitatem de quo nichil omnino monetatur, seu operatur, etc. propter quod dominus rex non percipit proficium de eodem cambio sicut modo percipet si fuissent in eodem cambio operarii et monetarii sufficientes ad operandes et monetandes etc. Et habito inde tractatu concordatum est, quod operarii qui et quot sufficiant etc. pro videantur pro dicto cambio. Et super hoc thesaurarius et barones inimplement predicto magistro Johanni, custodi cambii etc. ex parte regis quod ipse statim mitti faciat ad partes Brabantias pro operariis et monetariis querendis etc. quot et quos videat posse sufficere ad operandum etc. simul cum illis qui nunc sunt in cambio operantes etc. Et quod super compotum suum constare faciat et de custibus quis inde etc. ei allocabantur, ei in compoto suo,
videlicet tam custus, quos apposuerit in mittendo pro operariis eligendis et querendis in partibus transmarinis et venire faciendis in Angliam quam illi quos apposuerit in expensis ipsorum sic missorum in redeundo etc. nec non in expensis operariorum in veniendo in Angliam pro predictis operationibus etc.
**APPENDIX B**

**TABLE 1**

**LONDON MINT, PURCHASES OF SILVER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Nov. 1272 - Nov. 1273</td>
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<td>10,230</td>
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<td>June 1275 - June 1276</td>
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<td>7,894</td>
</tr>
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<td>June 1276 - Nov. 1278</td>
<td>E. 372/122, m. 28</td>
<td>60,161</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1279 - Nov. 1279</td>
<td>E. 372/132, m. 3</td>
<td>79,358</td>
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<td>3,876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1280 - May 1280</td>
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<td>63,322</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1280 - Oct. 1280</td>
<td>E. 372/132, m. 3</td>
<td>79,996</td>
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<td>36,697</td>
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**Old Money**

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<td>79,358</td>
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<td>E. 372/153, m. 32</td>
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<td>E. 372/153, m. 32</td>
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*This sum includes pollards and crockards.
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<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Profit</th>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>Profit</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,146 15 10</td>
<td>1,275 2 0</td>
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<td>280 18 3</td>
<td>203 16 6-1/2</td>
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<td>Sept. 1302 - Sept. 1303</td>
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<td>250 13 1</td>
<td>77 5 10</td>
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<td>Sept. 1303 - Sept. 1304</td>
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<td>540 3 3</td>
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<td>496 17 1-1/2</td>
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<td>2,273 10 2</td>
<td>2,274 11 9</td>
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### TABLE 3
SEIGNIORAGE AND MINTAGE RATES

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<th>Mintage</th>
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<th></th>
<th>O.M.</th>
<th>F.S.</th>
<th>1/4 d.</th>
<th>1/2 d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O.M.</td>
<td>F.S.</td>
<td>O.M.</td>
<td>F.S.</td>
<td>1/4 d.</td>
<td>1/2 d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 1280 - May 1280</td>
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<td>5 1/2d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1280 - Dec. 1280</td>
<td>12d.</td>
<td>7 d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>10 1/2d.</td>
<td>9 d.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1281 - Feb. 1281</td>
<td>12 1/2d.</td>
<td>12 d.</td>
<td>6 1/2d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>10 3/4d.</td>
<td>8 1/2d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 1281 - Oct. 1283</td>
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<td>9 d.</td>
<td>6 1/2d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>10 3/4d.</td>
<td>8 1/2d.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Oct. 1283 - May 1285</td>
<td>10 d.</td>
<td>9 d.</td>
<td>6 1/2d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>10 3/4d.</td>
<td>8 1/2d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1285 - Aug. 1286</td>
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<td>9 d.</td>
<td>6 d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>9 1/4d.</td>
<td>7 1/2d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 1286 - Nov. 1287</td>
<td>10 1/2d.</td>
<td>9 d.</td>
<td>5 1/2d.</td>
<td>9 1/4d.</td>
<td>7 1/2d.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1287 - July 1290</td>
<td>10 3/4d.</td>
<td>9 1/4d.</td>
<td>5 1/4d.</td>
<td>9 d.</td>
<td>7 1/4d.</td>
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<td>July 1290 - 1307</td>
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<td>7 1/2d.</td>
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</table>

O.M. is old money and F.S. is foreign silver.

The total deduction per pound can be found by adding seigniorage and mintage.

201
**TABLE 4**

**CANTERBURY MINT, PURCHASES OF SILVER**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1272 - June 1274</td>
<td>E. 372/118, m. 18</td>
<td>1,065 7s. 6d.</td>
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<td>April 1278 - Nov. 1278</td>
<td>E. 372/123, m. 21</td>
<td>803 7 9</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Nov. 1283 - May 1285</td>
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<td>May 1285 - Aug. 1286</td>
<td>E. 372/131, m. 4</td>
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<td>E. 372/135, m. 1</td>
<td>209 0 5-1/2</td>
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<td>E. 372/144, m. 26d.</td>
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<td>E. 372/144, m. 26d.</td>
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<td>Sept. 1293 - Sept. 1294</td>
<td>E. 372/144, m. 26d.</td>
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<td>Sept. 1294 - Sept. 1295</td>
<td>E. 372/144, m. 26d.</td>
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<td>Sept. 1306 - Sept. 1307</td>
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*Pollards and crockards purchased at the same rate as English silver.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Revenues</th>
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<th>Profit</th>
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</tr>
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</table>

*The archbishop's dies were restored to him. After this revenues and expenses were split: the king received 5/8, the archbishop 3/8. The figures given are the king's revenue and profit.*
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