

# MINT OUTPUT OF HENRY III

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L. A. LAWRENCE, in the first part of his classic study of the Long Cross coinage, wrote: 'The historical portion of the story of the Long Cross coinage will be left in the able hands of Mr. Earle Fox. It comprises the records of the chroniclers and also many allusions in the various series of the rolls.'<sup>1</sup> In the third part of the same work Lawrence refers to Fox's intended appendix and says that his health has precluded him from doing this, but expresses the hope that he will soon be able to resume his labours.<sup>2</sup> Regrettably Fox's health, which had broken down in 1914, never recovered and he died in 1920<sup>3</sup> with the work uncompleted. He left behind, however, notebooks with the material which he was clearly collecting to this end and these passed to his brother J. Shirley-Fox who, on his death in 1939,<sup>4</sup> left them to Blunt. These contain, among other information, calculations of the mint output at London and Canterbury for most of the reign of Henry III. It was not until Blunt received, in an editorial capacity, an article deploring the fact that mint accounts had not survived for the Long Cross coinage, that he appreciated how obscure, and indeed incomplete, had been the publication of the figures Fox had extracted.<sup>5</sup> He therefore sought to prepare the figures for publication and, in so doing, learnt that Brand was independently making a study of the documentary material (including the same Pipe Roll accounts from a new transcript), and was able to add information which Fox had not found, in particular for the early years of the reign. It was decided, therefore, to pool resources and give a joint paper. Where the Fox figures disagreed with the new transcript Brand was using, he checked the entries in the appropriate Chancellor's Rolls. Some of the Fox calculations and interpretations had been found by each of us independently to need correction and our revisions have been adopted in the figures now submitted. That this was necessary is no criticism of the work of Fox, for what he left were notes which he would undoubtedly have checked himself before publication. We are much indebted to staff of the Public Record Office who have, outside of office hours, prepared the new transcripts on which this paper is largely based.

The figures set out in Table I have mainly been found from the accounts of the Keepers of the Exchange of London and Canterbury, which are enrolled on the Pipe Rolls, the great annual record of the Exchequer. In a few instances supplementary information has been incorporated from other sources. The mint itself, whilst apparently subsidiary to the Exchange, was for most of the reign farmed out to the moneyers. The Exchange accounts, however, give the 'issues' or profits of exchanging: the seignorage which was at the rate of six pence in the pound. The seignorage was assessed on the purchases of silver taken into the Exchanges. Crump and Johnson state that it was calculated on the weight of silver purchased without any allowance for variations in the

<sup>1</sup> *BNJ* ix, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *BNJ* xi, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> 21 Mar. 1920, *NC* 1920, pp. 94-5.

<sup>4</sup> 3 June 1939, *BNJ* xxiii, pp. 365-6.

<sup>5</sup> The figures for two five-year periods, 1243-7 and 1261-5, are given by Major Carlyon-Britton in a paper

entitled 'The chronological sequence of the types of Eadward the Martyr and Æthelræd II' in *BNJ* xvi, p. 23. Sir John Craig, in *The Mint* (Cambridge, 1953) starts his list of figures for mint output at 1273 (p. 410) and so was presumably unaware of these earlier records.

alloy.<sup>1</sup> It would not be proper to dispute this without examining all the evidence for the period they were discussing, namely the reigns of Edwards I, II, and III, but there are some indications that in the reign presently being reviewed the notes of silver purchases may represent the payments made for silver after adjusting for variations in alloy and, indeed, also for the minting charges. There survive in the Public Record Office (so far as can be traced) only five rolls of purchases of silver during this reign: two of London and three of Canterbury—and only two of these rolls are complete. It is possible, nevertheless, to see from them that the total purchases of silver agree with the figures shown in many of the Exchange accounts as the amounts made (*fabricatis*). The most likely explanation is that the silver bought was immediately passed to the mint for conversion into coin. For in certain years in the earlier part of the reign the accounts also give details of payments made to the Keepers of the dies at the rate of one shilling (for one period six pence) for every hundred pounds struck (also described as *fabricatis*). The amounts struck on which these payments to the die-keepers were made usually tally almost exactly with the purchases of silver on which the issues were calculated. Whilst, therefore, it is not possible to state unequivocally that the figures now presented represent the actual amounts struck in all cases, there is a presumption that they are, at the least, very close.

The seignorage at the Canterbury Exchange was shared with the archbishop. The king enjoyed the profit of five dies and the archbishop that of three. In practice, the total profits were shared in the proportions of five-eighths and three-eighths respectively, and no attempt was made, in this reign at least, to assess the amounts actually struck by each moneyer. When the archbishopric was vacant and the king took the profits of the see for his own use, the division of the Exchange profit was usually still made and the clerical share paid to the Keeper of the archbishopric. In the majority of the accounts the profits, and expenses, are shown only in respect of the king's share, and it is accordingly necessary in these cases to multiply the figures by 8/5 to obtain the true totals. At London the king took the whole of the seignorage. In the earlier parts of the reign the Exchange was sometimes farmed out to lessees at an annual rental. In these years it is, of course, not possible to obtain the amounts struck as the lessee merely accounts for the rent without giving any details. It is not at all clear how the archbishop's portion was accounted for in these circumstances.

Crump and Johnson stated that 242 pence were struck to the pound in the first few years of Edward I—the last few years of the Long Cross issues.<sup>2</sup> Using the same criteria, the same number, 242, was struck during the latter years of the reign of Henry III, and there is no reason to think that this was an innovation. The phraseology used in the accounts is *de cremento denariorum liberatorum per numerum et receptorum in argento per pondus* (the increment of the pennies paid by tale and received in silver by weight). This increment, from 1259, is calculated on the issues of the Exchange at the rate of two pence in the pound.<sup>3</sup> In earlier years it is not always possible to ascertain on what

<sup>1</sup> NC 1913, pp. 201–2.

<sup>2</sup> NC 1913, pp. 201 and 205.

<sup>3</sup> We have now found a Memoranda Roll entry which regulates these payments:

LTR Memo Roll 42–3 H. III (E. 368/34), m. 5

KR Memo Roll 42–3 H. III (E. 159/32), m. 6

Ita quod a tempore quo idem Willelmus recepit cus-

todiam cambii nichil recepit de placitis et perquisitis. Ita quod cum Rex aliquem thesaurum suum in cambio per pondus sicut mercator aliquem numero quando recepit vel mandat recepi numero tunc debet custos cambii respondere Regi de ij d. de quibus libris vel per preceptum Regis cuiusque libertam.

figure the increment is calculated—the position is further clouded by what appear to be errors in the arithmetic—but on occasion the increment is stated to be based on the sums actually paid to the king.

In the reigns of kings Richard and John there are occasional references to the profits of the Exchange. Sometimes they are the direct profits of the Exchanges, at others the rents receivable when the Exchanges were let out at farm. From none of them can we closely determine the amounts of coin struck. The years immediately preceding the civil war are silent on the subject, though this must not necessarily be construed as meaning there was no minting activity. During, and after, the war the Exchequer did not function properly for some considerable time and the records are defective even where they were compiled at all.<sup>1</sup> Thus it is that the first notice of coining in the reign of Henry III occurs in the Pipe Roll of 17 John: a roll that must, in fact, have been compiled in the immediate post-war years.<sup>2</sup> The account is in respect of the London Exchange only and for a period of twelve weeks only, in the second year of the new reign, from 15 November 1217 to 7 February 1218. Again it does not give sufficient detail for a close estimate of the amount struck, but it was probably about £3,000 (though it may have been double that figure).

The next figures are found in the Pipe Roll of 8 Henry III and are for the period end-July 1220 to beginning-November 1222.<sup>3</sup> Separate figures are given for the two Exchanges of London and Canterbury. The very brief details in the account may most usefully be supplemented by figures recorded on the Close Roll of 9 Henry III. From this source can be calculated quarterly outputs of the Canterbury mint from which it can be seen that the sums exchanged in the summer months are vastly greater than in the six winter months; a reflection of the seasonal nature of cross-channel trade at this time; a trade on which the Canterbury Exchange, even more than that of London, must have so largely depended. These supplementary figures are set out on Table II.

Following this period is a short gap when there was probably no minting, followed by a two-year period when the Exchange was let out to farm. At the conclusion of this farm, there is a period of just under four years, March 1225 to March 1229, where combined figures for the two Exchanges are given, both of the issues and of the payments to the die-keepers. The two sets of figures cannot be reconciled exactly, partly perhaps due to the incidence of the archbishop's share at Canterbury, and we have therefore shown for the combined outputs the sums obtained by grossing up the payments to the die-keepers as being probably the more reliable. The Exchanges were then again let out to farm for a period of four years from March 1229. This farmer only accounts for three years in the Pipe Rolls, however, and after what would seem to be a short gap the ubiquitous Peter de Rivallis became farmer for two years from July 1232. No figures are available again, therefore, until the period commencing July 1234, from which date the run of accounts is unbroken for the remainder of the reign with separate returns always being given for London and Canterbury. This next account covers a period of just over three and a half years, to February 1238. The amounts calculated by grossing up the issues agree almost exactly with the sums stated in the Pipe Roll account to have been *fabricatis* and on which the die-keepers fees were based. This is followed by an account

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the introductions to the Pipe Roll Society volumes (New Series), xxxv, pp. xi-xiii, and xxxvii, pp. 1-8.

<sup>2</sup> *PRS* (NS), xxxvii, pp. 20-2.

<sup>3</sup> The dates of London are slightly different from those of Canterbury as shown by the Close Roll entry set out in Table II.

which covers just over eight years, to April 1246, and again the amounts *fabricatis* for the whole period are given. For Canterbury they agree almost to the pound, but at London there is a discrepancy which, while over £2,000, is only some 1.3 per cent. The last Short Cross account is for nineteenth months. We do not have the crosscheck of the die-keepers fees for Canterbury; for London it is an exact £100 out. This might well have been a scribal error as the fees were originally omitted from the expenses and not allowed until October 1251.<sup>1</sup>

From 1 November 1247 the king's brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, later king of the Romans, shared for twelve years the king's profits of the Exchange.<sup>2</sup> It is from this date also that we assume the Long Cross pennies to have been struck in substitution for the Short Cross type. The payments to the die-keepers are no longer recorded, but from July 1250 the issues are described in the accounts as being based on an amount *fabricatis*, save for the Canterbury entry for the short period from 1 December 1261 to 22 January 1262 where the issues figure only is given. In all but three cases the issues are correctly calculated at one-fortieth of the sums *fabricatis*. Two of these differences are comparatively minor and both occur in the first period for which the figures are given, July 1250 to May 1252. In both the Pipe and Chancellor's Rolls the amounts *fabricatis* are given as London £68,894 and Canterbury £37,040: the issues grossed up come to £68,994 and £37,209 respectively—the same figures as are given in preliminary views of these accounts preserved in the Public Record Office.<sup>3</sup> The third case is at London in the last account for the reign, where the Rolls say £48,601 and the calculation is £18,601. The latter is almost certainly correct, for the profit of the mint (the 'foundry' of the Exchange) in this period indicates that the minting, and therefore presumably also the exchanging, was comparatively low. All three are probably scribal errors.<sup>4</sup>

In the Short Cross period, during the twenty years for which figures are available, the aggregate output of the two mints was some £667,000. This represents some 160 million pennies, an annual average of £33,000 or 8 million pennies. For the Long Cross period of Henry III's reign the aggregate is some £1,300,000 over twenty-five years, equivalent to over 300 million pennies, an annual average of £52,000 or 12½ million pennies. In making the comparison with the Short Cross figures, however, regard must be had to the fact that the accounts for the latter start in the middle of the type, whereas those of the Long Cross issue include the recoinage consequent on the introduction of the new type. Both sets of figures serve to bring out the massive scale of the minting operations. For the first two years of the Long Cross coinage London was striking an average of 60,000 pennies a day (assuming a 300-day working year, and there are indications that the number of working days may have only been a quarter of this figure) and Canterbury, on the same basis, over 30,000. It is instructive to compare these figures with those for the reign of Edward I. In the first six months, from 28 April 1279 to 30 November 1279, of the new Edwardian sterling coinage, £92,688 was struck into pennies at London alone: a daily average of some 150,000 pieces. Over the reign (from the introduction of the new sterling) London's average annual output is approximately £40,000 and Canterbury's £14,700.

<sup>1</sup> Liberate Rolls III, p. 383.

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1232-47*, pp. 503, 505, and 511. The Exchange accounts prove that it was the last of these which was acted upon.

<sup>3</sup> Exchequer Accounts Various (E. 101/288/1 and 2).

<sup>4</sup> The first could arise by the omission of a 'c' from the Pipe Roll number; the last by insertion of an 'l'.

Pipe Roll	Accountants	From	To	Years and months	Amount Fabricatis				Remarks									
					London		Canterbury											
					£	s. d.	£	s. d.										
8 H. III (E372/68), m. 6	Andrew Bukerel	July 1220	Nov. 1222	2-3	9,013		34,026		See Table II									
12 H. III (E372/72), m. 10	Alexander de Dorset and Henry de Sancto Albano	Nov. 1222	Mar. 1223	0-5	—		—		No profits made									
"	"	Mar. 1223	Mar. 1225	2-0	?		?		Farmed for 2 years									
"	"	Mar. 1225	July 1226	1-3		£21,700			Combined Account									
"	Richard Reinger	July 1226	Mar. 1229	2-8		£23,316			Combined Account									
13 H. III (E372/73), m. 13	Richard Reinger	Mar. 1229	Mar. 1232	3-0	?		?		Granted farm for 4 years, but only accounts for the first three of them in P. 13, m. 13; P. 14, pp. 102-3, P. 15, m. 14. Reinger's accounts in later rolls only account for his balance of rent, etc., still owing.									
21 H. III (E372/81), m. 15	Peter de Rivallis and William Hardell	Mar. 1232	July 1232	0-4	?		?		Unexplained gap									
"	William Hardell	July 1232	July 1234	2-0	?		?		Farmed for 2 years									
"	"	July 1234	July 1235	1-0	17,826		20,251		<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td><i>Totals of the four figures</i></td> <td><i>Payments made to die-keepers on:</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>London</td> <td>£63,277</td> <td>£63,276 16s. 9d.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canterbury</td> <td>£95,930</td> <td>£95,937 0s. 0d.</td> </tr> </table>		<i>Totals of the four figures</i>	<i>Payments made to die-keepers on:</i>	London	£63,277	£63,276 16s. 9d.	Canterbury	£95,930	£95,937 0s. 0d.
	<i>Totals of the four figures</i>	<i>Payments made to die-keepers on:</i>																
London	£63,277	£63,276 16s. 9d.																
Canterbury	£95,930	£95,937 0s. 0d.																
"	"	July 1235	July 1236	1-0	18,577		28,298											
"	"	July 1236	July 1237	1-0	19,163		34,760											
"	"	July 1237	Feb. 1238	0-8	7,711		12,621											
29 H. III (E372/89), m. 13	"	Feb. 1238	Feb. 1239	1-0	10,854		17,684											
"	"	Feb. 1239	Feb. 1240	1-0	9,536		24,563											
"	"	Feb. 1240	Feb. 1241	1-0	21,576		28,914											
"	"	Feb. 1241	Feb. 1242	1-0	12,380		14,705											
"	"	Feb. 1242	Feb. 1243	1-0	23,128		16,792											
"	"	Feb. 1243	Feb. 1244	1-0	37,623		34,819											
"	"	Feb. 1244	Feb. 1245	1-0	29,253		18,868											
"	"	Feb. 1245	Apr. 1246	1-1	24,714		28,364											
32 H. III (E372/92), m. 16	Executors of William Hardell	Apr. 1246	Nov. 1247	1-7	38,662	10 5	27,967		Payment made to die-keepers in respect of London only.									
33 H. III (E372/93), m. 1	John Silvester for himself and William Hardell	Nov. 1247	Nov. 1248	1-0	72,410		39,925		From 1 Nov. 1247 to 1 Nov. 1259, Henry de Wrokeshall acted as an additional joint accountant on behalf of Richard, the king's brother.									
"	John Silvester	Nov. 1248	Nov. 1249	1-0	79,893		41,358											
"	"	Nov. 1249	July 1250	0-8	35,642		18,242											
35 H. III (E372/95), m. 6	"	July 1250	May 1252	1-10	68,994	3 11	37,209 1 0		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>London:</td> <td>Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canterbury:</td> <td>" " " " 288/2</td> </tr> </table>	London:	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/1	Canterbury:	" " " " 288/2					
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Canterbury:	" " " " 288/2																	
38 H. III (E372/98), m. 6	John de Sumercote	May 1252	Nov. 1254	2-6	83,827	7 7	89,414 2 10											
40 H. III (E372/100), m. 19	"	Nov. 1254	July 1256	1-8	51,261	10 8	65,859 9 7											
"	"	July 1256	June 1257	0-11	28,329	11 3	32,462 15 3											
41 H. III (E372/101), m. 4	"	June 1257	Oct. 1257	0-4	9,167	17 0	14,118 16 0											
42 H. III (E372/102), m. 14	William de Gloucester	Oct. 1257	Dec. 1258	1-2½	28,060	7 3	34,593 18 3		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>London:</td> <td>Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canterbury:</td> <td>" " " " 288/3</td> </tr> </table>	London:	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/4	Canterbury:	" " " " 288/3					
London:	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/4																	
Canterbury:	" " " " 288/3																	
44 H. III (E372/104), m. 2	"	Dec. 1258	Nov. 1259	0-10½	19,090	11 4	32,144 10 9											
"	"	Nov. 1259	Mar. 1261	1-4½	26,524	7 9	31,374 9 9											
45 H. III (E372/105), m. 20	"	Mar. 1261	Dec. 1261	0-8½	23,907	12 10	36,459 12 7											
"	"	Dec. 1261	Jan. 1262	0-2	2,139	16 9	635 0 0											
46 H. III (E372/106), m. 21	Roger de Leye and John de Gisorz	Jan. 1262	Jan. 1263	1-0	26,163	8 5	24,008 15 1		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>London:</td> <td>Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/6 and 299/1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canterbury:</td> <td>" " " " 288/5</td> </tr> </table>	London:	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/6 and 299/1	Canterbury:	" " " " 288/5					
London:	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E101) 288/6 and 299/1																	
Canterbury:	" " " " 288/5																	
48 H. III (E372/108), m. 15	Roger de Legh and William son of Richard	Jan. 1263	Jan. 1264	1-0	34,621	13 10	18,681 12 0											
48 H. III (E372/108), m. 15d	"	Jan. 1264	July 1264	0-5½	6,558	16 1	813 9 10											
49 H. III (E372/109), m. 11	William son of Richard	July 1264	July 1265	1-0	5,389	19 2	0 0 0											
"	"	July 1265	Nov. 1265	0-4½	16,933	3 6	14,752 14 4											
50 H. III (E372/110), m. 13	Richard de Bamfeld and William son of Richard	Nov. 1265	July 1266	0-7	19,013	8 7	12,026 1 3											
54 H. III (E372/114), m. 19	Bartholomew de Castello and Richard de Bamfeld	July 1266	Dec. 1270	4-6	70,395	0 9	25,786 19 1											
56 H. III (E372/116), m. 2	Bartholomew de Castello	Dec. 1270	Nov. 1272	1-11	18,601	3 8	637 17 4											

<sup>1</sup> The document to which Ruding refers cannot be traced in the P.R.O. Presumably it was a Roll of Purchases of Silver and gives an intermediate total for this period.



Another point of interest that emerges from the accounts is the relative importance of the London and Canterbury mints at different times. For the first period for which concurrent figures occur, 1220 to 1222, the London output is £9,013 against Canterbury's £34,026. The next set of figures, 1225 to 1229, does not separate the two mints, but from 1234, when separate figures are found again, Canterbury remains consistently ahead of London until 1242: the respective outputs are £181,796 and £117,623. Thereafter the position is reversed, with London generally in the lead until the end of the Short Cross issue in 1247. With the Long Cross coinage the same trend is generally maintained, though there is one period, 1252 to 1261, when the Canterbury output again exceeds that of London. Thereafter Canterbury definitely sinks into second place, a position it continues to occupy under Edward I.

The accounts deal almost exclusively with London and Canterbury. Apart from one reference to Bury St. Edmunds in 1226,<sup>1</sup> and, in the account for 1250–2, to the collection of some £4,000 described as 'arrears of the towns in which there were Exchanges' in respect of the provincial mints opened for the recoinage into the Long Cross type,<sup>2</sup> the other mints are virtually ignored. In practice, of course, the only other mints open after about 1218 were the ecclesiastical mints of the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds (for most of the reign) and the Bishop of Durham (for the last half of the reign). There is, however, one notable exception. There is an account in the Pipe Rolls for the Exchange of Ireland opened from October 1251 to September 1254 where the sum *fabricatis* was £43,238.<sup>3</sup>

No attempt has been made in this paper to associate the various issues of coins with the amounts shown as having been produced. This is a separate task. What seemed to be important as a first step was to make available to both numismatic and economic students without further delay the figures that Fox had collected so many years ago. In the Tables that follow, round pounds signify that the figures have been obtained by calculation; shillings and pence are only shown when there is some documentary source for them. Individual dates within months have not been shown on Table I as there are occasional slight differences between London and Canterbury and, indeed, sometimes small discrepancies between the close of one account and the opening of the next. It has been thought best, therefore, to leave these minor points until full publication and discussion of the documents.

<sup>1</sup> Pipe Roll 12 Henry III (E. 372/72), m. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Pipe Roll 35 Henry III (E. 372/95), m. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Pipe Roll 38 Henry III (E. 372/98), m.

TABLE II

*Compiled from Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum . . ., vol. 2, pp. 69, 70*

<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Amount purchased</i>		
		<i>£</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	
LONDON				
28 July 1220	10 Oct. 1220	439	19 1	
10 Oct. 1220	2 June 1221	1,019	0 3	
2 June 1221	1 Aug. 1221	1,836	0 3	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E. 101) 288/7, m. 4.
Sum for the year		3,294	19 7	„ „ „ „
1 Aug. 1221	1 Aug. 1222	5,483		
1 Aug. 1222	10 Nov. 1222	235		
Sum of the totals		£9,013		
CANTERBURY				
1 Aug. 1220	29 Sept. 1220	1,303		
29 Sept. 1220	7 Nov. 1220	444		
6 Nov. 1220	25 Mar. 1221	485		
25 Mar. 1221	24 June 1221	9,638		
24 June 1221	29 Sept. 1221	3,747		
29 Sept. 1221	25 Dec. 1221	672		
25 Dec. 1221	25 Mar. 1222	3,898	0 4	Ruding <i>Annals of the Coinage</i> (1840) (i), p. 65.
25 Mar. 1222	29 May 1222	5,391	17 1	Exchequer K.R. Accounts Various (E. 101) 288/7, m. 2.
29 May 1222	24 June 1222	4,834		
24 June 1222	29 Sept. 1222	3,357		
29 Sept. 1222	7 Nov. 1222	257		
Sum of the period to 6 Nov. 1222		£34,026		