

SCOTTISH BLACK MONEY IN THE LOW COUNTRIES c.1484–1506

PETER SPUFFORD

THERE seem to me to be two main problems arising from the previous article by Nicholas Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe.¹ How far did the areas to which Scots black money penetrate relate to Scots trade with the Low Countries? Why were the *Crux Pellit* pieces used so widely that it was worth imitating them? I would therefore like to expand this marvellous set of new findings by looking at the context, both geographically and in terms of what denominations the Scottish 3*d.* and ½*d.* pieces might have been used for in the Low Countries. I am controversially following up the text cited by Joan Murray by not calling these pieces pennies and farthings, but instead calling the *Crux Pellit* coins ‘3*d.* pieces’, and the smaller pieces ‘halfpennies’: ‘for thir was blak cunyhe in the realme strikkin and ordinyt be king James the thred, half pennys and three penny pennys innumerabill of coppir’ in a short anonymous chronicle ending in autumn 1482, and therefore contemporary.² Some of the smaller pieces were probably ‘farthings’ and ‘halfpennies’ at different times. The latest ones seem to have been regarded as ‘halfpennies’ in 1482. As will be apparent from the second section of this paper, it helps to think of these pieces in Joan Murray’s terms.

How far did the circulation of Scottish Black Money correlate with Scottish trade?

I would like to present the work of Nicholas Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe geographically in the context of a map of the principalities of the Netherlands in the late fifteenth century. The boundaries of principalities that I have used are those of the last third of the fifteenth century as far as I can determine them. Most, but not all, these principalities were ruled in turn by Charles the Bold or Rash (Duke of Burgundy 1466–77), Mary (Duchess of Burgundy 1477–82), and Philip the Handsome (Duke of Burgundy 1482–1506). The legal French boundary of 1468, which had been the *de facto* boundary since the Treaty of Arras in 1435, was too far south to be shown on the map. My sea-coast is approximately as it was after the third Saint Elizabeth flood of 1424. As can be seen there was a much wider mouth to the great rivers than obtains to-day. For routes of trade I have marked the course of the rivers Leie/Lys, Schelde/Scheldt, Dender/Dendre, Maas/Meuse and Rhine. Not only were bulky goods largely carried by water, but there were also roads alongside the rivers which by this time had already been made up for the past two hundred years to be fit for carts to use and were maintained by the principal cities. There was similarly a coast road from Calais to Bruges to supplement coastal shipping. By the late fifteenth century the key east-west commercial road ran from Bruges to Ghent, where the Scheldt was crossed, to Dendermonde, to Mechelen/Malines, Diest, to Maastricht, where the Meuse was crossed, to Valkenberg, and through Jülich to Cologne. The key north-south commercial road ran from Antwerp, which had already largely replaced Bruges as the principal commercial centre of the Low Countries, through Mechelen, the administrative centre, to Brussels, where the court was, which was the

Acknowledgements This is a supplementary article to Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014, above pp. 109–24, which is itself a development from van Caelenberghe 2014, which won the prize offered by the Bruges Numismatic Society in 2013. I am much indebted to Hendrik van Caelenberghe and Professor Jos Benders for providing me with meticulous commentaries on my article.

¹ Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014.

² Cited by Murray 1977, 116. She suggests, p. 120, they may have begun before 1466, that they were four to the penny in 1466, but halfpennies again by 1468. Nick Holmes points out that the June 1468 reference is to their having at some point been reduced from halfpennies to farthings. He therefore suggests they began as halfpennies before 1466 and were downgraded to farthings: Holmes 2008a, 158–9, and 2008b, 240. Yet in 1482 they could again be regarded as ‘half penys’.

consumption centre for the whole of the Low Countries. To show where these Scottish coins were used in the Low Countries, I have marked finds of one or two pieces by a small dot, and for larger numbers by circles with the name of the place. For this map I naturally started from the material newly provided by Nicholas Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe, together with the material described by Joan Murray and Claire van Nerom in 1983.³ Virtually all of these places appear on my map (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Finds of Scottish coins and imitations in the late fifteenth-century Low Countries.

For the concentration of the use of Scots coin in Zeeland I have supplemented the finds reported above by Nick Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe by those recorded in NUMIS, now based in the Netherlands National Bank in Amsterdam. I am most grateful to Jan Pelsdonk for letting me have details of them. They include six *3d.* pieces and forty $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces from Middelburg itself. Jan Pelsdonk has also provided me with details of all those so far recorded in NUMIS from other parts of the modern Netherlands. As can be seen from the map, virtually all the pieces found outside Zeeland were in the south of Holland. There is a quite exceptional group of fifty-three *3d.* and thirty-two $\frac{1}{2}d.$ found in the dunes by Heemskerk. These could be part of a much larger number gradually being washed ashore from a wreck. For what is now Belgium I have been very fortunate to be able to add a very great deal of information from the series of volumes on coin-finds recently published by Jean-Luc Dengis.⁴ I am particularly grate-

³ Murray and van Nerom 1983, 109 n.34.

⁴ Dengis 2009–13.

ful to him for letting me consult his two crucial volumes for Flanders ahead of publication. However, since most of the finds recorded in both NUMIS and the Dengis volumes are either from urban excavations, or from near the surface of agricultural land, the distribution pattern may reflect the areas of recorded activity of archaeologists and metal detectorists up to the present, as well as what was happening in the late fifteenth century. I have included details of all the mapped finds in an appendix to this article (below, pp. 136–8). Despite this caveat, the map shows the great concentration of finds of Scottish *3d.* and $\frac{1}{2}d.$ and their imitations in the islands of Zeeland and in Flanders. I should next like to explain this concentration.

By 1323 there was already a Scottish merchant community in Middelburg, the principal town of Zeeland, in the middle of Walcheren, its largest island. In 1347 Middelburg, for the first time, became the Staple town for Scottish goods.⁵ The Staple meant that all Scots goods had to pass through Middelburg, but that did not mean that they stayed there. They primarily went through Middelburg to Bruges. Bruges itself was also already enormously important for Scottish merchants by the end of the thirteenth century, and there was a ‘Scottendyc’, essentially a very small Scots enclave, in the city until the sixteenth century.⁶ It has been suggested that in the mid-fifteenth century there were some ten Scots merchants and their families permanently resident in the city. In the late fourteenth century there had been a further fifty or so merchants coming for short periods from Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Perth or Dundee, who stayed in some ten of the regulated hostels.⁷ The Scots formed one of the fourteen ‘nations’ at Bruges, and had their own chapel, dedicated to St Ninian, in the Carmelite church.⁸ In the period with which we are concerned, from 1484 onwards,⁹ the Staple was permanently in Middelburg, after fifteen years of oscillation between Bruges and Middelburg up to 1473.¹⁰

In both Middelburg and Bruges the ‘Scots Nation’ had a corporate existence, with a governor or conservator, variously elected by themselves, or appointed by the king or the duke of Burgundy.¹¹ In 1483 Bruges unsuccessfully petitioned for the return of the staple. It was in the 1480s that other nations left Bruges for Antwerp, but the Scots do not seem to have had any permanent presence in Antwerp. It is therefore not surprising that no finds of Scots pieces or imitations have yet been reported from Antwerp. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there were still, or again, some Scots in Bruges, after the civil war of the 1480s and 90s. However their presence was subsidiary to their main base in Middelburg. Only one imitation *3d.* has so far been reported from Bruges itself, although a dozen have been found at Bruges’ then current outport of Sluis, which was itself a town of approaching ten thousand people in the 1470s.¹² This is quite unlike the numbers found in Middelburg, which retained the Staple until 1506, when it was moved for the first time to Veere. The next year it was back in Middelburg, but from 1508 it was permanently at Veere.¹³ Since Middelburg lay in the centre of Walcheren, it had to rely on Arnemuiden as its outport, to which it was joined by a canal.¹⁴ Vlissingen (Flushing) and Veere were rival ports on the south and north of the island, with better harbours, and lower harbour dues, than Arnemuiden, giving on to the West and East Scheldt respectively. It is singular that although Scots black money has been found at both Arnemuiden and Vlissingen, none has so far been recorded for Veere. It may just be that no reported metal detecting or excavation has taken place there. Alternatively it might suggest that by the time the Scots were primarily going to Veere they were no longer bringing black money with them. Can 1506–8

⁵ Rooseboom 1910, document 5.

⁶ Rooseboom 1910, 6.

⁷ Murray 2005, 264.

⁸ Van Houtte 1982, 235.

⁹ See below, p. 131.

¹⁰ In 1455 the staple was still clearly in Middelburg, but by 1461 in Bruges. In 1466 the Scots Parliament forbade the carrying of goods directly to Sluis, Damme or Bruges and the Staple was back in Middelburg. In 1470 it was back in Bruges, and in 1472 James III ratified a treaty requiring merchants to take their goods directly to Bruges and not elsewhere. Since the promised privileges at Bruges did not materialise, the Staple was transferred back to Middelburg the next year, 1473: Rooseboom 1910, 21 and documents 29 and 30.

¹¹ Davidson and Gray 1909, 88–147.

¹² Henderikx 2012, 216

¹³ Letter of James IV to Anna van Borselen Lady of Veere: Rooseboom 1910, document 35.

¹⁴ For more detail on Arnemuiden, see Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014, above, pp. 111–13, 120–1.

be used as some sort of end point for their circulation in Zeeland? This might also fit with the end of their circulation and availability in Scotland itself?

Scottish trade was sufficiently worth having for the towns which were competing for the Staple to give substantial presents. In 1474 Henry of Borselen had sent a young lion to James III to ensure that the Staple remained in Middelburg, and did not go back to Bruges.¹⁵

Many of the finds on the mainland are on the coast or in places immediately behind the coast, like Veurne. The inland finds were influenced by the routes of trade, particularly along the rivers, Lys, Scheldt, and Dender, and their adjacent roads. The key finds of Scottish black money in these valleys were in and around towns that made light cloth, like Courtrai/Kortrijk on the Lys, famous for its says, Zonnebeke just off the Lys, Oudenaarde/Audenarde and Tournai/Doornik on the Scheldt, and Dendermonde/Termonde and Geraardsbergen/Grammont, on the Dender. At first sight this would suggest that this is where Scots merchants or their agents were primarily to be found selling their wool, as has already clearly been emphasised by Nicholas Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe. The Scots also brought hides and furs, salmon and their own coarse cloth, but I suspect that these left Scottish hands at the fairs of Bergen op Zoom and Antwerp, or even at Middelburg-Arnhemuiden and do nothing to explain the distribution of Scottish black money elsewhere. But did the Scots even carry their own wool to the places which used their wool? Earlier in the fifteenth century the clothiers of Oudenaarde had kept their own broker in Bruges for obtaining Scots wool for them. By the end of the century Oudenaarde clothiers had largely turned to tapestry, but in 1501 they still had a broker in Bruges buying wool, but now it was for tapestry.¹⁶ So one has to wonder whether Scots merchants actually went up those three rivers or only their wool and their black money?

Our knowledge of the use of Scots black money in this part of the Low Countries is severely hampered by the French conquests of the seventeenth century. Therefore there remains the problem of whether and how much Scottish black money has been found in these areas, which include all of the Boulonnais and Artois and large parts of Flanders, Hainault and Liège. Unfortunately the annual reports of coin finds diligently put together by B. Delmaire and his collaborators over the past three decades in the *Revue du Nord* were only concerned with Gallic, Roman and Merovingian coins. I would expect that a very small number of further Scots pieces and their imitations will have been found, but not recorded, along the Flemish and Artois coast perhaps as far as Boulogne, and up the Lys valley to Armentières, and possibly even up the Scheldt and Dender valleys. From this conquered area, I have only been able to put on the map Théroouanne on the Lys, then in the county of Artois, because referred to by Joan Murray and Claire van Nerom.

Lighter fabrics using cheaper Scottish, Spanish and local wool, instead of, or mixed with, the more expensive English wool were woven in many places in the Low Countries, including Middelburg itself, and Veurne, just inland from the Flemish coast and, like Courtrai, notable for its says. However, two areas of the Low Countries were specialising in producing these lighter fabrics. One was in the three river valleys of Flanders, the other was in Mechelen and northern Brabant. Sixteen Scottish or imitation pieces have been found in Mechelen. Otherwise the penetration of Scottish copper coin into this area appears to have been much more limited than in the river valleys of Flanders. Single pieces have been found in Lier and Diest where Scots wool was also being used.¹⁷ Further east, a small group of eight 3*d.* pieces have been found in Weert, not in Brabant itself, but the principal town of the county of Horn, formerly a fief of Loon/Looz, but at this time temporarily ruled by John, bishop of Liège 1482–1505. In the second half of the fifteenth century Weert was another centre for the manufacture of light cloth using Scottish wool. Its products, like those of Mechelen and north Brabant, were sold through Antwerp and Bergen op Zoom.¹⁸ Apart from Zeeland and other coastal places and these light cloth producing areas, only a scattering of finds of Scottish black money has been reported elsewhere, including a few in the northern Low Countries.

¹⁵ Rooseboom 1910, 20.

¹⁶ Vanwelden 2006, 56.

¹⁷ van Uytven *et al.* 2004, 246–7.

¹⁸ Alberts and Jansen 1964, 128.

As well as carrying black money with them when they sold, Scots merchants could have equally carried it with them when they bought. And what and where did Scots buy? For their clothiers at home they needed alum, now brought from Tolfa to Bruges or Antwerp, madder grown on Walcheren itself, and woad brought by Spanish shippers from the Toulouse area to Middelburg-Arnemuiden. Spanish goods, like iron and soap, were available at Middelburg-Arnemuiden, for it was not only the Scots who unloaded there, Spaniards did as well. At the end of the fifteenth century there was also a permanent Spanish colony in Middelburg. Portuguese merchants bringing Madeira sugar to Antwerp, unloaded first at Arnemuiden, and Portuguese merchants became burghers of Middelburg.¹⁹ Alum may still have come from Italy by sea, but lighter Italian luxury goods were increasingly brought overland at this time by South German merchants and were available at Antwerp and in Bergen op Zoom. Damme, between Bruges and Sluis, was the wine distribution centre for northern Europe, for French, Iberian, Greek and Rhine wines. There was also hopped beer, not yet available in Scotland itself, but made in huge quantities in South Holland, and increasingly in Brabant at this date. After the sack of Liège in 1468, brass goods, whether tableware or armaments were largely produced in Mechelen. However did Scots merchants go there? Not much later, in 1511–13, six culverins, together with copper and iron for casting further guns, were acquired for James IV, not at Mechelen, but at Veere, to which their Staple had been moved by then.²⁰ Salt too had to be imported into Scotland. Sea salt was made by evaporating seawater, using local peat as fuel, in Zeeland itself and on the northern coast of Flanders, at places like Hulst, where Scots black money has been found. My guess is that Scots purchases in the Low Countries also included linens, since linens were already the most important element in English purchases at Antwerp.²¹ Much linen came from the Dender valley and was sold at Oudenaarde.²² Surprisingly many of the goods that the Scots merchants needed to import could be found at Middelburg-Arnemuiden. Even if they bought other than at Middelburg, their purchases would not have taken the Scottish merchants, and their black money, to places not already mentioned as places for the sale of wool, except for the coastal salt refining areas of northern Flanders.

The total number of reported finds of *3d.* and $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces is not easily countable. It is clear that overall *3d.* pieces outnumbered $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces. I would suggest totals of something like 240 *3d.* pieces (including imitations) and 105 $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces, have so far been reported from Belgium and the Netherlands.²³ However, more are being found all the time. The $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces are heavily congregated in Zeeland, where they outnumber the *3d.* pieces and in the dunes by Heemskerck, where they probably came from a wreck. Apart from two reported from coastal Brabant, very close to the border with Holland, none have yet been found outside Zeeland and Holland. It is also not possible to sift out the numbers of imitations, since large numbers of the records of their finding do not distinguish between Scottish pieces and continental imitations. This contrasts with the great precision shown in this paper by Nick Holmes and Hendrik van Caelenberghe. It would be good if all future finds in the two countries could be catalogued according to the classification set out by Holmes in 2008,²⁴ as well as any that are accessible for re-cataloguing. It is a pity that Holmes regards it as impossible to make a similar classification for the halfpennies.

For what values did Scottish *3d.* pieces circulate in the Low Countries?

The Cambridge numismatic symposium on the role of foreign coins in the local monetary economy in 1997 concluded that there were two principal reasons why foreign coins were

¹⁹ Henderikx 2012, 218, 290.

²⁰ His purchase also included some boxes of sugar and almonds and some barrels of soap: Rooseboom 1910, 33.

²¹ In 1469–1504 linen was the second, or third, most valuable import into England, after wine, and perhaps iron: Spufford 2007, 75–80, and Spufford 2012, 66–7.

²² Vanwelden 2006, 51

²³ This includes the parcel, supposedly a hoard, of six *3d.* pieces and six $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces found somewhere in ‘Holland’ and acquired by the National Museums of Scotland in 1993: Holmes 2008a, 158–9.

²⁴ Holmes 2008a, 138–76.

acceptable as a part of a local currency. There were some cases where the foreign coin was essentially the same as a coin in the recipient country, but many more cases when the foreign coin provided a denomination that was lacking in the recipient country, either because such a denomination did not exist, or because inadequate quantities were being minted.²⁵

At the level of gold and silver coinage, the Burgundian rulers had unified the coinage for all their principalities after 1433, but at the level of small change they continued to mint the old local coinages of the individual principalities: mites, double mites and later quadruple mites in Flanders (24 mites made the common groot), different mites, double mites and quadruple mites for Brabant (here 36 mites made the common groot, which was effectively the flemish groot continued), deniers and double deniers in Hainaut (twelve deniers made the common gros), and pennynxken (little pennies) in Zeeland and Holland (eight made the common groot). The lack of anything minted in Zeeland and Holland as small as the mites of Flanders and Brabant meant that the need for very small change there was met by imported mites from Flanders and Brabant and their imitations. Perhaps this lack of any very small local coin was what made the Scots $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces acceptable in Zeeland and Holland.

To understand how the Scots $3d.$ and $\frac{1}{2}d.$ pieces fitted into the currency of Flanders, Zeeland, Brabant, and Holland, it is necessary to calculate the value of these pieces in the individual provinces. We have a very few direct exchange rates between Scotland and Flanders for this period:²⁶

1456: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £2 10s. 0d. Scots	£1 Scots = 8s. <i>gr.fl.</i>
1457: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £3 0s. 0d. Scots	£1 Scots = 6s. 8 <i>gr.fl.</i>

Black money began in Scotland circa 1465–6:

1469: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £2 15s. 0d. Scots	£1 Scots = 7s. 3 gr. 7 <i>m.fl.</i>	3d. Scots = 1 gr. 2 <i>m.fl.</i>
1473: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £2 4s. 5½ <i>d.</i> Scots	£1 Scots = 9s. <i>gr.fl.</i>	3d. Scots = 1 gr. 8 <i>m.fl.</i>
1480: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £3 0s. 0d. Scots	£1 Scots = 6s. 8 <i>gr.fl.</i>	3d. Scots = 1 <i>gr.fl.</i>
1481: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £3 6s. 8d. Scots	£1 Scots = 6s. <i>gr.fl.</i>	3d. Scots = 22 <i>m.fl.</i>

In 1482 Black Money was called down in Scotland.

If there was to be any advantage to Scots to bring quantities of these pieces to Zeeland and Flanders, they must have been worth less at home than in the Low Countries, in the same way that Venetian merchants bringing *soldini* to England could make a profit by passing them as English halfpennies although they were only worth one third of a penny. If the Scots $3d.$ pieces were brought to the Low Countries before 1482 they would have had to circulate at over a flemish groot to be worth bringing. They are not found with white money such as groten, which suggests that it was not worth bringing them up to this point.

However, after 1482 it was a different matter. It is not clear whether the intention in Scotland was totally to demonetise black money or call it down radically. In practice black money went on circulating until the end of the century.²⁷ In 1977 Joan Murray suggested that $3d.$ pieces should have circulated in Scotland after 1482 as farthings,²⁸ and, on this basis, Jean-Luc Dengis recorded many of the finds in Belgium as ‘farthing au globe et à la croix’.

John Gilbert gives us a couple of Scots-Flemish exchange rates after 1482:²⁹

1483: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £3 6s. 8d. Scots	£1 Scots = 6s. <i>gr.fl.</i>	$\frac{1}{4}d.$ Scots = 1.8 <i>m.fl.</i>
1484: £1 <i>gr.fl.</i> = £3 13s. 4d. Scots	£1 Scots = 5s. 5 gr. 11 <i>m.fl.</i>	$\frac{1}{4}d.$ Scots = 1.6 <i>m.fl.</i>

These exchange rates make it clear that if $3d.$ became $\frac{1}{4}d.$ at home, there was a very substantial advantage in bringing *Crux Pellit* pieces to the Low Countries, when they could circulate in Flanders as Flemish 4-mite pieces. There would even have been a very slight advantage in circulating them as Flemish 2-mite pieces, but probably not enough to be worth the trouble. I

²⁵ Travaini 1999.

²⁶ Gilbert 1977, 146–7. One may question how realistic these rates are when the Scottish-English rates show a Scots pound worth 8s. English in 1466, but down to as little as 2s. $3d.$ English in 1483: Gilbert 1977, 136–41.

²⁷ Murray 1977, p.129

²⁸ Murray 1977, p.118. The evidence for them passing as $\frac{1}{4}d.$ seems to depend on a single account.

²⁹ Gilbert, 1977, pp. 146–7.

therefore believe that they circulated as 4-mite pieces, but there were no 4-mite pieces in Flanders in 1482. It was not until the end of March in 1484 that 4-mite pieces were created in Flanders and that there was a denomination with which the *Crux Pellit* pieces could correspond. Once 4-mite pieces existed in Flanders there was some point in bringing the *Crux Pellit* pieces across.

In Flanders ‘four mites’ was an ambiguous denomination. Should it be white money or black? The earlier double denier of Hainaut, which was of equivalent value, was black, but the Holland penning, of a lower value, only the equivalent of 3 mites in Flanders, was still firmly white. Black four mite pieces had already existed in Brabant since 1466, but they were lower in value than the white Holland penning, being equivalent only to $2\frac{2}{3}$ Flemish mites. When a white four mite piece was struck for Brabant at Antwerp in 1482 it was regarded as a failure. The mint instructions stipulated that it should be made as if it was a very small piece of white money. It was found in practice that it was too small and too thin to use. The mint was reimbursed for melting them all down again. So what should the 4-mite piece be in Flanders when introduced in 1484? It was black, and one of the largest pieces of black money in the Low Countries of its time. John of Horn, between his taking possession of the bishopric of Liège in October 1484 and his consecration as bishop on 11 September 1485, began to have larger *brulés* minted, valued at *4d. Liègois*. These were extraordinarily like the 4-mite pieces that began to be minted at this very time for Philip the Handsome (Fig. 2), with a simple shield of Horn on the obverse, and a cross patty on the reverse, with a quatrefoil in the centre. If Jean-Luc Dengis is right, these were the first purely copper pieces of Liège. He had them minted both at Maastricht and at Hasselt in the former county of Loon, and continued to do so after his consecration.³⁰ Since the Flemish 4-mite piece was supposed to contain only one thirtieth part of silver (10 *gr. argent le-roi*), it looked as if it too was made of copper.



Fig. 2. Philip the Handsome 4-mite pieces. (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.)

When I looked at examples in the Grierson collection in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, I was struck by the fact that one of his Scots *3d.*, and one of his 4-mite pieces looked and felt more or less identical for use as small change, despite the difference in type. This *Crux Pellit* piece weighed 1.61 g (type IIR, Holmes no. 108), and this 4-mite piece, of the 1489 issue, weighed 1.52 g. I wanted to see if this near equivalence held on a larger scale. The 1484–5 issue of 4-mite pieces in Flanders were intended to weigh 1.77 g. In 1960, Hendrik Enno van Gelder and Marcel Hoc did not know of any surviving examples, although nearly 300,000 were struck at the Ghent mint in the two months of April and May of 1484, and a further 9,000 in the following twelve months.³¹ The 4-mite pieces struck in 1489 at the Ghent mint for Philip the Handsome’s Council of Regency, effectively continued this issue.³² After

³⁰ Dengis 2006, nos 762–4 and 800.

³¹ van Gelder and Hoc 1960, no. 59–5; also Spufford 1970, 42–3, 180–1.

³² van Gelder and Hoc 1960, no. 152. I believe that the noble and patrician Council of Regency deliberately copied earlier pieces to emphasise their claim to legitimacy against Maximilian, whom they claimed had usurped the regency, thus flouting the terms of his marriage agreement, which specifically ruled out his regency if Mary died before they had a child of an age to rule in person. Since Maximilian found difficulty in getting consent to taxation, he debased the coinage in the areas of the Low

Maximilian had fled the Low Countries, he left his part of the Low Countries to be run by his deputy Albert of Saxony, who returned to strong money in December 1489, as a means of winning over the nobility and the patriciate. After he captured Bruges he opened a mint there in December 1490, which produced very different 4-mite pieces. They were treated as a sort of very small white money. They containing one-sixth silver, which gave them the appearance of poor silver, and they weighed only 0.69 g.³³ However, the final issue of the reign, 1499–1506, included 4-mite pieces which were again of black money and reverted to the scale of the 4 mite pieces of 1484–5, and 1489, although somewhat lighter.³⁴

When 4-mite pieces were black money they were of the same module as the called-down *Crux Pellit 3d.* pieces, but thinner and lighter. Looking at the *Crux Pellit* pieces, in reasonable condition, listed in this article, and in the article by Joan Murray and Claire van Nerom, they are generally 19–21 mm across, and weigh 2.05 g ± 0.35 g, which is distinctly heavier than the intended 1.77g of the 1484–5 issue of Flemish 4-mite pieces.

The Grierson Scots *3d.* that I began by looking at was patently at the lighter end of the range, and his 1489 Flemish 4-mite pieces were heavier than those put out at the end of the reign of Philip the Handsome.³⁵ Nevertheless, I remain convinced that the Scots called-down *3d.* could profitably pass as 4-mites in Flanders. I suspect that 4-mites was the standard price of the variable weight loaf of bread in late fifteenth century Flanders.³⁶ The *Crux Pellit* pieces could equally have passed as *4d. brulés* in the principality of Liège, but find evidence suggests they hardly did so. A very few have been found at Maastricht and further up the Meuse valley.³⁷ This fits in with the pattern of Scots trade in the Netherlands.

By the mid-fifteenth century the mites minted in Brabant contained only one ninety-sixth part silver, barely one per cent.³⁸ All such black money was essentially copper. Totally copper coins were not officially minted in the Low Countries until the early years of the sixteenth century.³⁹ Nevertheless this small part of silver in official coins meant that the derivative mites and double mites put out by the small seigneurial mints on the eastern border of the Low Countries could successfully undercut them if they did not incorporate any silver.⁴⁰ Most of these minting lordships were fiefs of, or enclaves in the old county of Loon, which had been taken over in the previous century by the bishops of Liège, but not properly controlled by them. Most were on the west bank of the Meuse downstream from Maastricht, and are now in Belgium. The rulers of these lordships were not content with producing derivatives and even fraudulent imitations of the mites and double mites of Flanders, Brabant, Namur and Liège, but also imitated the poorest coinages of Luxemburg, Aachen, the Rhineland electors, and the doubles, deniers and mailles tournois of France. The French imitations were bought in bulk by entrepreneurs in France who then put them into circulation. One of the rulers of Gronsveld even had imitations of the blancas of Castile struck in his castle earlier in the century. These too were presumably sent to Castile in bulk. Once 4-mite pieces were minted in Flanders, derivative 4-mite pieces began to be struck in these lordships. For example, Henry I

Countries he controlled. The Council of Regency did obtain consent to taxation in the areas of the Low Countries they controlled, and ostentatiously maintained the quality of their coinage (Spufford 2012). Since their 2-mite pieces of 1489–90 altered only the legends of the 2-mite pieces of 1482–7, I believe that they are highly likely to have done the same for their 4-mite pieces. If this was the case, the 4-mite pieces of April and May 1484 will have had as an obverse type a shield of the arms of Flanders, and some such legend as MON ARCHIDU AUST BG CO F and as a reverse type a cross patty with a lis in the centre, and some such legend as IN NOMINE DOMINI AMEN, those of the following twelve months might conceivably have changed their reverse legend to some version of SIT NOMEN DOMINI BENEDICT as with other denominations.

³³ van Gelder and Hoc 1960, no. 91

³⁴ van Gelder and Hoc 1960, no. 125; weight 1.51 g and 12 gr. fine (0.039 silver).

³⁵ His second 1489 4-mite piece weighed 1.71 g, much more like the intended weight in 1484.

³⁶ The system of fixed prices and variable weights of loaves in late medieval Europe has most recently been explained by Travaini 2013, 189–97. I shall be following up her article by writing more about bread prices in the late medieval Low Countries in the future.

³⁷ In the excavation of Neufchâteau-sur-Amblève, in the seigneurie of Sprimont, south of Liège, and at Neuville and Ferrières.

³⁸ Spufford 1970, 41.

³⁹ van Gelder and Hoc 1960, nos 130–7, *maille* of Namur, 1502–4.

⁴⁰ I am conscious of derivative pieces put out by the lordships of Bicht, Brogel, Elsloo, Gerdingen, Gronsveld, Gruitrode, Kessenich and Kinrooi, Limbricht, Reckheim/Rekem, and Rummen/Rumigny.

of Bronkhorst, who died in 1496, issued 4-mite pieces at Gronsveld with the shield of arms of Flanders on the obverse, and the cross patty on the reverse, but with his own name on the obverse and with a letter G for Gronsveld (not for Ghent) in the centre of the cross instead of a Flemish lis. His son continued the issue. The lord of Bicht, did the same, even including the Flemish lis in the middle of the cross. Similar 4-mite pieces were struck in Elsloo, Limbricht and Rekem, and maybe other places too.⁴¹ These pieces were not outright imitations, but deceptive derivatives, designed for circulation in Flanders, not in the Meuse valley.

It seems highly unlikely that the imitations of Scots 3*d.* pieces were produced in Scotland since none have been found there. It is possible, but improbable, that they were made in Zeeland, since the only imitations found in Zeeland, were turned up on the Arnemuiden harbour front amongst a large quantity of black money brought in from Flanders. The two realistic alternatives are that they were made within Flanders itself or by minor Mosan mints that were already producing derivative black money for Flanders. It was much safer to produce derivative 4-mite pieces, or imitation Scots 3*d.* pieces, than outright imitations of Burgundian coin, which made the issuer, and those who distributed them, liable to the draconian penalty of being 'gestraeft tot de ketel', the forger to be melted down like his own false coin. Imitating Scots pieces carried no such penalty.

The imitations overlap in module with the original Scots 3*d.*, generally being 18–19 mm across. However even excluding those that are chipped, they are enormously much lighter, generally weighing only 1 g ± 0.25 g. In other words they were not only around half the weight of genuine Scots 3*d.* pieces, but also lighter than Flemish 4-mite pieces. Furthermore, some imitations of the *Crux Pellit* 3*d.* carried the reverse legend 'Sit Nomen Domini Benedict' as the 4 mite pieces of Flanders did after 1499, and possibly in 1485.⁴² Like Borys Paszkiewicz and Michael Anderson I too was struck by the handful of imitations that read *Karolus Dux*, which surely refers to the recent local count of Flanders, Charles of Burgundy (1466–77), rather than any French king Charles.⁴³ Like Paszkiewicz, I feel that the change from *Jacobus* to *Karolus Rex* was also intended to make users of these imitative pieces feel that they were properly local, and refer to their recent local ruler.⁴⁴

The use of Scots *Crux Pellit* pieces as 4-mite pieces in Flanders would seem to fit the general case of foreign coin being essentially the same as a coin in the recipient country. This is accentuated by the fact that there were not enough official 4-mite pieces in Flanders until after 1505, which is about the time that I suspect that the *Crux Pellit* pieces stopped circulating. However, I am conscious of imitation Scots 3*d.* and Flemish 4-mite pieces being found together only at the Abbey of St Adrian in Geraardsbergen.

The smaller pieces which began in or before 1466 as 1/4*d.* Scots, but were later called 1/2*d.* Scots, if called down in the same proportion as the 3*d.* pieces, became 1/12*d.* or 1/24*d.* Scots. Up to 1482 these would have been worth by exchange just over 4 mites in Flanders, but after 1482 well under a mite. They were smaller than any of the mites that had been minted in Flanders before minting ceased in 1458, or even the smaller mites minted in Brabant until 1474. But were mites still needed in either principality? If so, the called down Scots 1/2*d.* pieces fitted the other criterion, as a foreign coin which provided a denomination that was lacking in the recipient country, either because such a denomination did not exist, or because inadequate quantities were being minted. The standard denomination of black money actually minted in Flanders throughout the second half of the century was the *courte* or double mite.⁴⁵

All this suggests that, in Flanders, Scots pieces had roles to play after 1484. The called-down 3*d.* pieces could circulate for 4 mites in Flanders after 1484 and the called-down 1/2*d.* for a mite, and in each case give considerable profit to the Scots merchants who brought them, as well as providing for local needs. But what about the other principalities, particularly Zeeland?

⁴¹ Grierson, Spufford *et al.* forthcoming.

⁴² At Geraardsbergen, Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014, above pp. XXX, and Anderson 2006, 345–8.

⁴³ Paszkiewicz 2000, 86

⁴⁴ However I would not interpret it as an allusion to Charles ambition to be a King (of the Romans).

⁴⁵ Spufford 1970, 180–1.

In Zeeland and Holland after 1484 the called-down Scots 3*d.* pieces, if re-valued at $\frac{1}{4}d.$, were worth by exchange just over half the local *pennyncxkin* (little penny). When the Holland mint was open, it struck a continuous, although not very large quantity of penningen for Holland and Zeeland, but not enough to satisfy demand. No half-penningen had been minted since 1417. In response to complaints about the lack of small change, the Dordrecht mint had been specially opened, without a master, to mint penningen in 1463–5. However, they were not black money, but small and poor white money with a noticeable silver content, equivalent in value to three mites in Flanders. Since halves and quarters of the penning were no longer minted, there was no indigenous black money available north of the Rhine-Meuse estuary as there was in Flanders and Brabant. However, the excavations at Arnemuiden clearly show that black money from the southern Low Countries was being used as small change in Zeeland, see above (pp. 111–13, 120–1). If the 3*d.* pieces were revalued at $\frac{1}{4}d.$, they could be passed as half a Holland penny, whilst the original Scottish $\frac{1}{2}d.$, when revalued, had become worth something unimaginably small, and yet they circulated. As well as the fourteen Scots $\frac{1}{2}d.$ described above, the excavation of the old dockside at Arnemuiden in 2008–9 turned up other equally small pieces, including some which had been cut down to this size.⁴⁶

In Brabant after 1482 the called down Scots 3*d.* pieces, if revalued at $\frac{1}{4}d.$, would by exchange be worth around 2½ Brabant mites. They would have had to circulate as 4-mite pieces to bring a profit to those who brought them across the North Sea, and this is perfectly possible. However, many fewer have been found in the northern part of the duchy, in which Scots wool was being used, than in the light woollen area of Flanders. And this although there was a general lack of black money in Brabant. None of its own 4-mite or 2-mite pieces were struck there between 1482 and 1490, and no single mite pieces after 1474.

In the Low Countries themselves finds of imitations may not have outnumbered genuine Scots 3*d.* pieces, but in two places in northern Spain many more imitations have been found than Scots pieces. A startling article by Michael Anderson indicates that since the parallel trade in Spanish wool intersected with that in Scottish wool, *Crux Pellit* pieces, and more particularly their imitations, were carried back to areas of northern Spain which provided the sailors for Biscay shipping.⁴⁷ At Oiartzun and Lasarte, both in the hinterland of San Sebastián, three genuine *Crux Pellit* pieces, and seventy-nine imitations, at least three with a *Karolus* legend, have been found along with a dozen coins from Brabant. Shippers from Bilbao to Bayonne, including San Sebastián, shipped out not only the Spanish wool sent out in large quantities by Burgos merchants, but also local iron, Bordeaux wine and Toulouse woad, all consumed in the Low Countries. They have not yet been reported, but one might expect more to be found in the hinterlands of Bayonne, Laredo and Bilbao as well. In Castile there was no coin of the right denomination in the earlier part of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, but from 1497 a *blanca* of the right module, black money despite its name, worth a single *maravedi*, was struck at Castilian mints including Burgos. In Navarre there was no denomination at the end of the fifteenth century between their half *blanca* (still white money here) and the black *cornado*, which was a much smaller coin. An imitation Scots 3*d.* could pass here for the lacking intermediate double *cornado*.⁴⁸

Conclusion

From the evidence of pieces so far found and recorded it seems clear that Scots black money did not circulate in large quantities in the Netherlands as a whole, but was heavily concentrated in Zeeland, where Scottish merchants disembarked, and in the areas of Flanders in which the wool they brought was used, and in which the goods they purchased were available, particularly along the coast and in the valleys of the Lys, Scheldt and Dender. It is not yet

⁴⁶ Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014, above pp. 111–13, 120–1, and Janson 2012, 58. I am indebted to Hendrik van Caelenberghe for drawing my attention to this publication.

⁴⁷ Anderson 2006, 345–8.

⁴⁸ Crusafont, Balaguer and Grierson 2013.

clear what role the Scots black money played in the currency of Zeeland, but it seems that in Flanders the *Crux Pellit* pieces circulated alongside Flemish 4-mite pieces after the latter were introduced in 1484. The Flemish 4-mite pieces attracted derivatives from those Meuse valley lordships which had already been minting 2-mite derivatives for circulation in Flanders, and it seems likely that it was some of these mints that also produced the imitations of the *Crux Pellit* pieces for circulation in Flanders. The valuation of Scots black money at home as 3*d.* and ½*d.* pieces, meant that they were too valuable to export until they were called down in 1482. The issue of comparable 4-mite pieces made the *Crux Pellit* pieces acceptable in Flanders from 1484. How long they continued to circulate is not clear, but it may be significant that although numerous pieces of Scots black money have been found in Middelburg-Arnemuiden, none have yet been found in Veere, to which the Scottish Staple was moved in 1506.

APPENDIX

Finds of Scottish Black Money in the Low Countries

Place found	Scots		Imitation		Total		Total coins	Reference/remarks
	3d.	½d.	3d.	½d.	3d.	½d.		
Zeeland								
Middelburg					6	40	200–400	NUMIS
Arnhemuiden	2	5	3	9	5	14		Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; excavation
Vlissingen/Flushing	2	1	2		2	1		Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014
Goes	1		1		1			Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; sewage works
Reimerswaal			1		1	1		NUMIS
Borsele			1		1	2		NUMIS
Noord Beveland					1	1		NUMIS
Schouwen			1		1			NUMIS
Westenschouwen		5			5	5		Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; lost village
Zierikzee	1	1	1		1	1		Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014
Coastal Flanders								
Beveren	1		3		4		>200	De Wilde 1999–2000; excavation
Hulst	1		2		4 ⁵⁰			Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014 and NUMIS; farm sites
Klein Sinaai, Boudeloo Abbey					1		13	Dengis 2013a, no. 100; excavation
Moerbeke (Waastrand)					1		29	Dengis 2013a, no. 126; farmland
Stekene	2		2		4		167	Dengis 2013a, no. 174; farmland
Wachtebeke					1			NUMIS
Assenede			1		1		175	Dengis 2013a, no. 11; farmland
Sint Laurens			1		1		2	Dengis 2013a, no. 168
Sluis					12			NUMIS
Damme (port)	1				1		311	Murray and van Nerom 1983; excavation
Brugge			1		1			Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; excavation
Koksijde (Abbaye Dunes)	4		1		5		29	Murray and van Nerom 1983; excavations
La Panne			4		4		6	Murray and van Nerom 1983; in dunes
Veurne I	1				1		32	Dengis 2013b, no. 127; farmland
Veurne II	2		5		7			Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; field outside Veurne
Adinkerke			1		1		1	Murray and van Nerom 1983; farmland
Oostduinkerke	1		1		2		28	Murray and van Nerom 1983; excavation
Lys valley								
Deinze	1		1		2		277	Murray and van Nerom 1983; dredging Lys
Harelbeke					1		10	Dengis 2013b, no. 50; farmland
Courtrai Beguinage			3		3		476	Dengis 2013b, no. 67; excavations
Zonnebeke Abbey	3		3		6		51	van Laere unpublished; ⁵¹ excavation
Théroutanne					?			Murray and van Nerom 1983

⁵⁰ Four finds are recorded in NUMIS, but only three coins are described in Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014.

⁵¹ Dr Raf van Laere, personal communication of unpublished article 'Munten gevonden tijdens de opgravingen van de augustijnenabdij te Zonnebeke'.

<i>Place found</i>	<i>Scots 3d.</i>	<i>Imitation 3d.</i>	<i>Total 3d.</i>	<i>Scots ½d.</i>	<i>Imitation ½d.</i>	<i>Total ½d.</i>	<i>Total coins</i>	<i>Reference/remarks</i>
Scheidt valley								
Temse	2	5	8 ⁵²				c.100	Van Hove and Van Roeyen 1996; extension of Market Place into Churchyard
Sint Amandsberg			1				23	Dengis 2013a, no. 165; farmland
Machelen			1				46	Dengis 2013a, no. 119; farmland
Oudenaarde	5	5	12 ⁵³				148	Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; sewage works
Eine			1				17	Dengis 2013a, no. 39b; farmland
Petegem-Aan-De-Schelde			1				7	Dengis 2013a, no. 154b; excavation
Kaster			4				30	Dengis 2013b, no. 56; farmland
Tournai I, quartier Nord			2				67	Dengis 2009a, no. 198a; ?market
Tournai II			1				38	Dengis 2009a, no. 198b; surface
Tournai III		3	3				190	Dengis 2009a, no. 395; ?market
Dender valley								
Dendermonde Abbey		1	1				6	Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; monastic site
Aalst		2	2				88	Dengis 2013a, no. 4; excavation
Hillegem			1				2	Dengis 2013a, no. 89; farmland
Moorsel			1				3	Dengis 2013a, no. 127; excavation
Nieuwerkerken		1	1				8	Dengis 2013a, no. 133; excavation
Ninove Abbey		1	1				17	<i>RBN</i> 2006, p. 221.
Ninove Grain Market			2				11	Dengis 2013a, no. 137; excavation
Geraardsbergen		6	6					Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; within town
Flanders uncertain place			4					Dengis 2013a, no. 49
Brabant coastal								
Bergen op Zoom	1		1					Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; outskirts of Bergen op Zoom
Breda			2					NUMIS
Moerdijk			1					NUMIS
Oosterhout			1					NUMIS
Boxtel								NUMIS
Brabant inland and Mechelen								
Lier			2				14	Dengis 2012, no. 68; farmland
Mechelen I		2	2				521	Dengis 2012, no. 76; excavation
Mechelen II	1		1				124	Dengis 2012, no. 84; farmland
Mechelen III	5	8	13				c.10,000	Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; dredging
Diest		1	1					Holmes and van Caelenberghe 2014; farmland

⁵² Van Hove and Van Roeyen 1996 records eight Scottish coins of 3*d.*, but Holmes and Van Caelenberghe 2014, XXX, distinguishes only two Scottish coins and five imitations.

⁵³ Including two coins not identified as Scottish or imitations.

<i>Place found</i>	<i>Scots 3d.</i>	<i>Imitation 3d.</i>	<i>Total 3d.</i>	<i>Scots ½d.</i>	<i>Imitation ½d.</i>	<i>Total ½d.</i>	<i>Total coins</i>	<i>Reference/remarks</i>
Holland								
Bermise			1					NUMIS
Dordrecht			1					NUMIS
Heemskerk			53		32			NUMIS; in dunes
Alkmaar					1			NUMIS
Holland uncertain place	6		6	6	6		13	<i>BNJ</i> 2008, pp. 158–9
Utrecht bishopric								
Amersfoort			1					NUMIS
Gelderland								
Zaltbommel			1					NUMIS
Liège bishopric								
Weert			8					NUMIS
Maastricht			1					NUMIS
Neuville		1	1				19	Dengis 2009b, no. 235; farmland
Ferrières		1	1				2	Dengis 2010, no. 348; farmland
Limburg								
Neufchâteau-sur-Amblève		1	1				179	Dengis 2010, no. 348; excavation
Hainault								
Sirault		1	1				8	Dengis 2009a, no. 171; farmland
Mons		1	1				59	Dengis 2009a, no. 334; farmland
St Denis en Broqueroie			1				2	Dengis 2009a, no. 171; farmland
Friesland								
Scheemda			1					NUMIS

Note: NUMIS is NUMismatic Information System, database containing single finds and coin hoards in the Netherlands, formerly maintained by the GeldMuseum Utrecht, and being transferred, with the Netherlands National Numismatic Collection, to De Nederlandsche Bank.

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