

I.

NOTICE OF PERMISSIONS GIVEN AT PARIS TO JOHN ACHESON TO MAKE DIES WITH THE PORTRAIT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, 21ST OCTOBER 1553, AND TO NICOLAS EMERY TO MAKE A DIE FOR JETTONS, WITH THE ARMS, ETC., OF THE QUEEN OF SCOTS, FROM A REGISTER PRESERVED AT PARIS. BY AUGUSTUS W. FRANKS, ESQ., M.A., DIR. S.A., F.S.A. SCOT.

While in Paris some years ago, my attention was directed by Baron Pichon to a register preserved in the French archives, in which was to be found much information respecting the making of dies for coins and counters. Among the entries which I found in it are two connected with Mary Queen of Scots, and relating to the year 1553. The first of these is dated 21st October 1553, and is as follows:—

“Ce jourdhuy xxi. jour d’octobre mil v^elⁱij a este permis a Jehan Acheson, tailleur de la monnaie d’Escosse, de graver pilles et trousseaulx aux protraictz de la Royne d’Escosse, par lui exhibez a la dite court, a la charge de fere les espreuves en la Monnaie de Paris, parentre lun des gardes pour icelles faictes estre apportees en la dite court.”

There are only two coins known with portraits of the Queen, which bear the date 1553—viz., the testoon, with crowned bust to right, and the legend on the reverse, *DA PACEM DOMINE* 1553. (Engraved in Lindsay, plate viii. No. 179; and in Wingate, plate xxvi. fig. 11;) and the half testoon, with the Queen’s bust in the opposite direction, without a crown. Legend on the reverse, *IN IVSTICIA TVA LIBERA NOS DNE* 1553. (Lindsay, plate viii. No. 180.) The first of these coins is somewhat rare; and of the second I believe that only one specimen is known, now in the British Museum.

Although the heads are very dissimilar, it is possible that they may have both been prepared by Acheson, for the word portraits is used in the license in the plural. The crowned bust may have been preferred, which would account for its being less rare than the other.

The second entry relates to a point much debated among numismatists. In the series of Scottish pieces are two of silver, one of which is thus noticed by Lindsay:—“There is another coin of this date [1553] given

by Cardonnel [plate vii. fig. 1], which has been the subject of much conjecture; it bears on the obverse *DELICIE. DNI. COR. HUMILE*, with the arms of Scotland crowned; reverse, F.M. in cypher crowned, between two stars of six points waved, *DILIGITE IVSTICIAM 1553*; and the use of such a cypher several years before her marriage with the Dauphin is not easy to account for. The resemblance this coin bears to the gold coins of the same date is remarkable; but although the original treaty in 1548 for the marriage of the Queen with the Dauphin, coupled with her residence at the French court, might account for the appearance of such a cypher on a medal or a jetton, its occurrence on the coinage of Scotland could be scarcely warranted; and I am therefore inclined to think that it was either struck as a medal, or not intended for general circulation, and its anomalous weight (two pennyweights) would render this supposition still more probable."

The following entry in the register above alluded to seems to refer to this piece, though it does not exactly agree with it in some details:—

"Ce jourdhuy dernier jour de Janvier l an mil cinq cens cinquante trois a este permys a Nicolas Emery, graveur, de graver vne pille et vng trousseau a fere gectons aux armes de la royne d escosse du coste de la pille; et du coste du trousseau y a une devise qui est une F et une M lasees ensemble qui sont romaines et deux soleils au coste de la dite devise. Et autour dudit trousseau est escript *Diligite Justiciam 1553*. Et autour est escript *Maria D G R Scotorum*."

This entry, though exactly agreeing with the reverse of the piece above described, does not quite accord with the obverse. It is possible that some alterations were made in the design before the counters were struck.

From the position of the entry, the date must be January 31, 1553–4, which was shortly after Mary had been provided with a separate establishment. A letter from her to her mother, preserved among the Balcarres papers in the Advocates' Library, and printed in Prince Labanoff's "*Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart*," vol. i. p. 17, dated January 1, [1554], has the following passage:—"Ce jour de l'an je suis entrée au menage qui vous a plue me dresser."