

As against the regal coinage of the kingdom issued by command and through the agencies of the king and his ministers, token coinage is unofficial, local and generally personal. The pieces were small and made of copper, bronze or billon. In the 17th century there was an orgy of token issuing and over 12,500 in the British Isles which have been listed by Williamson, of which 4,350-odd come from London and Southwark. Kent issued more than any other county (595), and Yorkshire comes next with 445, of which 78 can be attributed to the East Riding.

These tokens are not easy to find today, especially tokens in good condition.

Farthings (one-quarter of a penny) do not carry the denomination explicitly (see our secondary image, which is an old farthing token), but most half pennies use variations of HIS HALF PENNY encircled at the center. Sometimes HALF is spelled HALFE and sometimes PENNY is spelled PENY.

The actual date, merchant, and location on the coin do not affect value as much as its overall condition and eye appeal.

Robert Capon. Dartford, Kent, 17th Century Trade Token. ROBERT CAPON 1668, Tallowchandlers Arms. R. IN DARTFORD IN KENT, HIS HALF PENY. R.I.C. 1.06g. W130. Ex. Vale Coins. From the collection of Kent trade tokens formed by Mr Roger Green.