

# Summarises the assay master's duties and defends the Mint's decision in favour of Charles Brattell over Catesby Oadham for the post.

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It is suggested that the Queens Assaymaster is a Cheque upon the officers of the Mint, and that M<sup>r</sup>. Brattell being under their direction hath acted partially Whereas on the contrary the Comptroller is a Cheque upon the whole mint, and all the three first Officers are a Cheque upon the Assaymaster. For he has no Trial piece of his own, but performs his Assays by their Trialpieces and in their presence, and his Assays without their approbation are of no force. In overseeing his assays the Warden and Comptroller act in behalf of the Queen and her people and the Master acts for himself, and the Assaymaster acts only as a manual Artificer, and is to act with skill and sincerity to the satisfaction of the officers of both parties. For it's easy for an Assayer to give a Turn to the assay of a quarter of a Grain, or an half penny weight or above for or against the Master. And if any such thing be suspected, the Assayer must Repeat his Assay, till the officers of the Mint are satisfied of his acting with skill and Candour. It was very right therefore for the Lord high Treasurer to Referr all the petitioners to a Trial before the officers of the Mint as the proper Iudge of their Qualifications in point of skill.

**When** M<sup>r</sup>. Brattell and M<sup>r</sup>. Oadham had a Comparative Trial before the officers they made each of them Eight Assays of Gold in four successive Fires, two in {artiffice}, and as many of silver. Some of M<sup>r</sup>. Oadham's Assays taken from one and the same peice of Gold differ'd from others a Quarter of a Grain, and one of them Erred two Grains which is three times the Remedy, and the Error was in finess, and therefore not likely to be by mere accident; whereas all M<sup>r</sup>. Brattell's Gold Assays agreed perfectly with one another, except one which differ'd from the rest only about the twelfth part of Grain, which is but the Eighth part of the Remedy: and almost all the Coynage is in Gold. M<sup>r</sup>. Brattel was also observed to handle things with more Dexterity and dispatch. At that time M<sup>r</sup>. Oadham was offerd a further Trial by more Assays, and did not then desire it, but has since desired another Trial. Had he acknowledged the fairness of that Trial, and that h e had since been Learning to Assay better and was now grown more skilful than before, his Request might have been ranted without a Reflection upon the Mint. But he pretends to have learnt his skill long ago in his Apprenticeship, and has appeald from the Report of the Officers. If declining a Trial be an objection against some of the petitioners, appealing from the Report of the officers and endeavouring to Carry his point by detaining them and making an interest against them, is a greater objection against M<sup>r</sup>. Oadham. For The

increase of the Coyn depends upon the credit of the Mint with Importers, and this Credit is at present very good and its the Interest of the Government to support it, and the Masters Interest to improve it.

To say that M<sup>r</sup> Brattle being under the direction of the officers of the Mint hath acted partially, is to Complain of the very Constitution of the Mint, for the Queens Assaymaster ought to be as much under the direction of the Officers of the Mint in assaying of the money as M<sup>r</sup>. Brattel is at present. And the directions given here,, were not other than those given to his Brother the Queens late assaymaster two years before his death, and they have been Executed more exactly by him than by his Brother, and they were to Act by the Trial peice of King Iames.

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The pott assay pieces of the Gold coyned after the Trial of the piz 1710: until those directions were given being melted down together and assayed in the Mint were found to agree with that Trial piece Exactly, the Ballance standing at the Cock: And all the Gold money coyned since that Trial of the pix, being lately tried by the same Trial piece the Iury found them equal in Finess, the Ballance standing at the cock: and after the money hath been found well Coin'd by a Iury, the Master of the Mint hath a legal Right to be quiet against the Queens subjects for what is past

By the standing Constitution of the Mint the Master and Worker receives and Coyns all the Bullion of Gold and silver by his own Trial piece, the Importer hath at all times an Appeal from the Masters Assays, to the Warden's Trial pieces, and the Queen and all her people have an Appeal to the Trial piece of the Exchequer at every Trial of the pix. If any Importer is dissatisfied with the Masters Assays and will appeal to a Trial by the wardens Trial piece, the Queen and council or the Lord High Treasurer may appoint any different person or persons skilled in Assaying to stand by and see the whole Trial. But if the Importers do not Complain, M<sup>r</sup>. Oadham and his Friends who are not Importers, have no right to Appeal, Complain or intermeddle with the Mint. They and all the Queens subjects will have justice done them at the next Trial of the pix: and in the mean time they are not to discourage the Importation of Bullion into her Majesties Mint.

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