

Response to a memorandum from Nicholson and Briggs.

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Source: MINT 19/2/455, National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, UK

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To the Right Honourable the Lord Commissioners of his Majestys Treasury.

May it please your Lordships

In answer to the Memorial of M^r Nicholson & M^r Briggs, I humbly represent that as often as they have applied themselves to me I have told them that without a Warrant from the King I could not receive copper in blanks, nor coine money with round edges for the people, & that without your Lordships Warrant I could not deliver Cutters to them. I have told them also that M^r Appleby & M^r Hines since the 3^d of Iune last as is pretended, tho I have a Warrant to justify me; nor are they contractors but at discretion; nor have there been any delays but for want of Warrants which the Memorialists should have procured. But if the Memorialists instead of applying for Warrants, have given themselves a great deal of trouble in solliciting me to act without any; if before they had cutters to direct them in the measure of their work & in opposition to the notice which I gave them that Appleby & Hines being first ready should have the first triall, they have built furnaces & prepared a sufficient quantity of copper ready for the Cutters & been at sufficient charges in preparing the same: they have done this contrary to my advice & without staying for sufficient authority or knowing how to size their work, & can blame no body but themselves if they should lose their charges for acting in this manner.

The nature of coinage is such that amongst the moneys newly coined there will be some pieces faulty in form. It always was & always will be so in the coinage of gold & silver, & the coinage of fine copper is more difficult. But it is the duty of the Moneyers to pick out the faulty pieces, & I have caused have a Tonn of such faulty copper moneys to be melted down again. And if any faulty pieces escape we change them they are brought back to us & coin them again. And this has been the standing practise of the Mint {time} out {illeg} without any dispargement to the coinage. Tis the moneyers fault if too many of the pieces escape & they promis {me} to be careful in this matter. Because I am accountable for the gold & silver moneys in weight & fineness, that coinage is performed by people under my direction. But if Appleby & Hines be used too hardly no body else will serve me. This coinage is upon such a foot that I can get nothing but discredit by coining the moneys ill. The assays of Copper are not so exact as those of gold & silver & I am not so well guarded against abuses. And his Majestys Warrant has made me accountable also for the value of the copper moneys according to the Rules prescribed therein. Therefor I cannot undertake absolutely that in the copper imported there shall be no faulty barrs which may escape the assays, but I am safest in people whom I can punish by turning them away. Which I shall not be able to do if those that have served me be used too hardly so that no nobody else will serve me. ③ To coin money of fine copper is a manunufacture never before set up in England, & I have met with difficulties in setting it up for want of time to try experiments & settle things in the best manner before I began. For removing the main difficulties I perswaded M^r Hines & M^r Appleby to rent a water Mill, a horse Mill being found too weak, And instead of nealing & cleaning the barrs the Moneyers are now trying if they can learn too cleans the blanks after nealing. And if the Refiner can but learn

to keep the fumes of the sea-coal from his copper the difficulties will be over. In the mean time, as I have brought the sizing of the gold & silver moneys to a much greater degree of exactness then ever was known before & thereby saved some thousands of pounds to the government, & {I am} not blameable for any accidental errors within the remedy of those moneys & have found out a new assay for the copper: so I hope that I shall not be blamed for such errors in the assays of copper as are only accidental <455v> {&} do not exceed in value the remedy allowed in weight, especially while I am endeavouring to set up this coinage in the best manner. If any man can help me to better assay I am ready to receive them. If he pretends that I do not keep up my assays, I am willing it should be referred to a trial. If he pretends to help me to finer copper without proposing better assays, he offers nothing but words & deserves not to be regarded. If he pretends to mend the form of the moneys, this is the Moneeyers business & I'll endeavour that they do it well. If he complains of the faulty pieces which escape the moneyers, he may have been changed at the Mint & I'll charge the Moneyers to be as carefull as they can in not letting such pieces escape.

All which is

If any man hath a mind to contract with your Lordships to coyn the money without a assay, I do not oppose it. If he complains that the blanks crack a little on the edges, he complains that the Assay established by the Kings Warrant is not good enough to exclude fine copper touched a little with the fumes of the sea coale tho it be better to have this Assay then none at all. If he can tell me to better assays I am ready to receive them. If he pretend

If any man would have the copper nealed & cleaned in the blanks rather then in the barrs, I am trying which is the better way. If he complains that some pieces of the money have formerly had great cracks on the edges that accident is long since removed by using a water mill. If he complains that some of the blanks in coining still crack a little on the edges, he complains that the Assay established upon the Kings Warrant is not good enough to exclude fine copper touched a little with the fumes of sea-coale, tho this Assay is better then none at all. If he can help me to better Assays I am ready to receive them. If he pretends that I do not keep to my Assay, I am willing it should be referred to a trial of the moneys coined. If he pretends to help me to finer copper without proposing better Assays, he offers nothing but words & deserves not to be regarded. If he pretends to mend the form of the moneys, that is the Moneyers buisness & I'll endeavour that they do it well. If he complains of the faulty pieces which escape the Moneyers, he may have them changed at the Mint, &

In the mean time it may be observed that^⑥ when this coinage was set on foot, it was recconed better way to neale & clean the copper in the barrs then in the blanks, that the persons hitherto complaining have wanted to be employed,^② that they have not been able to discover any fraud in the management nor to help me to better assays,^③ that no defect has hitherto been discovered in the moneys which exceed the Remedy,^⑤ that the government pays no more for the moneys now coined they she did for those in the reign of King W^m & yet the copper & workmanship is much better & within these seven years the price of copper is risen 3^d per pound weight, &^④ that the competition at present is really between the Memorialists & the Moneyers. ⑥ that when this coinage was set on foot it was recconed better to neale & clean the copper in the barrs then in the blanks, but I am now reconsidering that matter.⑥ & that the melting down of the money for an Assay alters the goodness of the Copper, & thereby makes the Assay uncertain³⁸ that their proposals have tended either to lay aside the Assays or to weak them. that
