

Complaint about trial plates.

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To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of her Majesties Treasury.

May it please your Lordships

Finding reason to suspect that the present indented trial piece is too fine; I have nicely examined it & find that it is finer then the last trial piece by about a quarter of a grain & that the last trial piece is also something too fine by the assay. Which excesses of fineness being of great consequence, I have further endeavoured to find out the reason thereof that the like accidents in making new triall pieces hereafter may be avoided. And by the assay I am satisfied that there are various degrees of fine gold, some being 24 carats fine by the assay, some a quarter of a grain coarser or finer or above, & that gold may be refined so high as to be almost half a grain finer then 24 carats. And accordingly as the fine gold of which the standard pieces are made is finer or coarser the standard pieces will be finer or coarser in proportion. By which means the standard of gold is rendred uncertain. And the like for silver.

I humbly offer therefore to your Lordships consideration, whether for ascertaining the value of gold & silver there should not be one common standard of gold & one of the silver for the money plate & Merchantable Ingots in all great Britain, settled by the assay which is the rule of the market; & whether the standard once settled should not be preserved in the Exchequer for a rule to Iuries in makeing trial pieces for the future without varying or the present trial piece remain.
