

Copy of letter concerning suggestions for the discouragement and reduction of counterfeiting

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Source: MINT 1/7/37, National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, UK

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To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of His Majestys Treasury

May it Please Your Lordships

In Obedience to your Lordships Order that We should Consider of the Most Effectual Methods to prevent the Counterfeiting and Diminishing the Coin of this Kingdom, and to lay them before Your Lordships, We humbly Represent

That it will be necessary that An Act of Parliament made the 8th. & 9th. of His Present Majesty by Continued, Entitled An Act for the better preventing the Counterfeiting the Currant Coin of this Kingdom which was Continued by another Act of the 9 & 10 {Guliel} Entitled An Act for the better preventing the Counterfeiting, Clipping, and other diminishing the Coin of this Kingdom, but Expires the last day of this sessions of parliament. It having been found of great Vse to Discourage Coiners, or bring them to punishment.

But we are humbly of opinion that a Clause in the said Act, whereby tis made Felony for any person to take, receive, pay, or putt off any Counterfeit Milled Money, or any Milld Money unlawfully diminished & not cutt in pieces, at or for a lower rate than the Same by its Denomination doth import, or was Coined, or Counterfeited for, loses its Effect, by being too Severe Iurys being unwilling to punish a crime with Death which is often Committed without any ill Design. And the Law would be more Effectually Observed if the Penalty were less Severe.

That there be a Clause in the said Act that the £40 Reward for Convicting any Coiner, shall not be paid any longer by the Sheriff of the County but by the Receiver General to be allowed him upon his Accounts in the Exchequer It being a General Complaint that the Sheriffs in the Country often Discountenance such Tryals, to avoid being out of Pocket so much Money.

That from and after no person have in his Custody any Flasks for casting of Metals, without a License Signed by two or more of the Iustices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions (which License shall be there Registered without Fee) under the penalty of or Months Imprisonment: the Trade of Counterfeiting being generally carryed on with those Instruments. And because the Instruments are made use of in lawfull callings, it is not punishable without further proof, when they are found upon suspicious persons.

That for the more Effectual preventing the Currency of Counterfeit Money, the Bank of England and all Goldsmiths who Circulate Bills of Credit be obliged by the said Act to cutt all Money they refuse in payment under the penalty of for every offence And that for their greater Encouragement to do their Duty, the Receivers of Taxes be obliged upon Demand to change any Money that proves good upon cutting and that it be brought into His Majestys Mint to be new Coined

All which is humbly submitted to your Lordships great wisdom by

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[1] Mint Office Dec^r. 1701.
