FOUNDLING TOKENS:
A NUMISMATIC SURVEY

Belgium & London

LINDA EVERAERT

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Linda EVERAERT
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Email: linda.everaert1@telenet.be

1. INTRODUCTION

On 25 February 2015, the following news bulletin[1] was issued: '*... A baby was found in a baby hatch of 'Mothers for Mothers' at Borgerhout [2] at the beginning of December 2014. [...] It is a healthy, white baby, which was found in the hatch wearing only a nappy.*
Since 2000, a foundling hatch has been installed in the premises of 'Mothers for Mothers' in the Helmstraat 87-89 in Borgerhout. Women give up their babies anonymously by leaving them in this special tray. It is the seventh foundling baby that has been left into the care of 'Mothers for Mothers', and the fifth that was actually left in the foundling hatch. There is no trace of the mother. She had three months to think over her decision, but she did not change her mind. The baby boy, who had provisionally been named Jules, was placed in a foster home and these parents are now planning to adopt the baby. The new family will also decide the final name of the foundling...'.

For some mothers the situation seems to be so hopeless, that keeping the child is not an option, and often their fear is too great for them to appeal to official channels. An anonymous solution such as a foundling tray is then a last resort for the child and it gives the mother the chance to make sure her child has a warm and safe home[3]. In many European countries foundling trays are accepted as part of the network that takes care of problematic pregnancies. A mother who leaves her child in a baby hatch has six months to review her decision. An ID token[4] in an envelope in the hatch allows her to be recognized as the one who left the child there.

The baby hatch ensures that the child, after a short stay in the crèche of the City's Social Service, ends up in a foster home. This family may possibly later adopt the baby.

The decision of the mother is not judged nor condemned, but this system gives the child the chance of a good life in the only way that seems acceptable to her.

The mention of a 'token' used in the way a foundling tray works aroused my curiosity. Upon consulting the book[5] about the origins of the Maagdenhuis and the Care for the Poor in Antwerp, it appeared that leaving a tokens with foundlings is an old custom that dates back long before the beginning of the 20th century. At the time, it was mostly the mother herself who left a token with the child. This token ranged from a cut card (playing card or print), a piece of cloth, to a note. When I inquired about this at the Maagdenhuis in Antwerp, I learned that also metal tokens such as crosses, religious medals and coins have been used.

During a trip to London, I took the opportunity to do some research at the Foundling Museum. Since apparently little seemed to be known about the use of tokens, my interest was aroused to do in-depth research on this subject.

[1] Het Laatste Nieuws dd. 25-2-2015.
[2] Part of the city of Antwerp.
[3] Moeders voor Moeders - www.vondelingenluik.be
[4] Nowadays the mother gets a token when she leaves her child in the baby hatch. Till the beginning of the 20th century it was the other way around, with the mother leaving a token with the child.
[5] Verhelst Dirk: Tot eerlick onderhoudt van meyskes cleene (1996).

2. HISTORY

The very first laws on child protection date back to the Romans[6]. The population was encouraged to have many children, and bachelors were even 'punished' by having to pay additional taxes. All young men who were not disabled and the eldest daughters were given priority for education, whether or not they were unwanted. After a while the attitude changed and unwanted children were thrown into the Tiber.
In 315, in order to prevent murders of unwanted children, Emperor Constantine issued an edict[7] stating that children left as foundlings were to be sold as slaves and that their parents had to be punished. He gave them the opportunity to sell unwanted children, which was severely criticized.
In cases of extreme poverty and given the fact that there existed no form of birth control, children (young and older) were frequently sold or killed.

With the rise of Christianity and the belief that every child had a soul, more attention was paid to the protection and care of the child.
Humanity gradually became more empathetic and civil, and ecclesiastical authorities took up their responsibilities with regard to the welfare of the child.

Thanks to decrees[8] promulgated in the 5th and 6th centuries by the Council of the Roman Church, mothers who could no longer take care of their children could leave them behind in a bin at the entrance of a church. Written sources[9] dating from the 7th century mention a marble shell next to the church of Trier (Germany) and of a shelter for abandoned children next to the Church in Milan founded by Archbishop Datheus[10]. The initial purpose of this shelter was to save the souls of the unwanted children. It was also mentioned that 'wet nurses' were present and that the children were taught a trade before they entered the wide world. Only in the 11th century was this idea of Archbishop Datheus imitated in Western Europe.
During the middle Ages, the Church was very influential. It was opposed to child murders and abortions, causing a large increase in the number of trays or bins where mothers could leave behind their children anonymously. This usually led to heart-breaking scenes when, in order to ensure that their child was found, they observed the tray from some distance. In England and France this action was called a 'tour ', an expression that was taken over later in the Low Countries. A child found in the tray at first got the surname 'de Tour'. Most of these children were illegitimate, but it also happened that parents saw no other solution in their shabby existence and feeding an extra mouth would lead to an untenable situation.
The first shelters for abandoned children saw a large influx in the 17th and 18th century. One of the reasons for this increase is to be found in the economic agrarian downturn causing a large migration to the big cities.
Leaving a child behind as a foundling was primarily a phenomenon occurring in the large cities rather than in small communities, where people knew one another better.

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[6] M. le Dr. Marjolin: Mémoire sur la Nécessité du Rétablissement des Tours (Extrait du Compte-Rendu de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, rédigé par Charles Vergé).
[7] Codex Theodosii, lib. II, tit. 27, quote from 'Recherches sur les enfants trouvés' by Rev. Adolphe-Henri Gaillard (1836) p. 76. According to the Codex Theodosii this law had to be engraved on bronze plates and put on display in all cities.
[8] 'Recherches sur les enfants trouvés' by Rev. Adolphe Henri Gaillard (1836) p.76-77.
[9] 'Vie de Saint Gour' of Childebert p.83.
[10] This house was the property of archbishop Datheus (787) and was the first registered shelter.

From the French Revolution on, and in the regions under French rule, it was compulsory to keep records of foundlings, and as a result, many large cities possess information on the phenomenon of foundlings.

3. BELGIUM

3.1. ANTWERP

3.1.1. Genesis of care for the poor

From the 12th-13th century onwards, the 'Tafels van de Heilige Geest'[11] concerned themselves with the care of abandoned or found poor orphans. Until 1477, the Church of our Lady was the only parish church within the city walls that was entitled[12] to shelter and baptize foundlings. The Holy Spirit priests of the Church of Our Lady took care of accepting the children and finding a safe home for them, which was usually found in the neighbourhood where they had been found.
In the 14th and 15th centuries there were many children among the beggars. Abandoned and neglected children made the neighbourhoods unsafe and they formed gangs. To stop this, the 'Caemer der Huisarmen' was established in 1458, which commissioned chaplains to take care of the older children. Because of the lack of clarity on the age limit, the City Authorities decided that the Holy Spirit priests were responsible for the initial care of the foundlings, and that the chaplains had to take care of the other children. The authorities felt that poor education was causing juvenile crime and poverty. To combat this, chaplains were sent out to keep young beggars from the streets, to teach them a trade, and to outsource them.
As the city grew, so the number of abandoned children increased.

In the first half of the 16th century the chaplains built a large shelter for abandoned children near the St. Rochus hospital. After it opened its doors in 1532, it soon proved to be too small, forcing the children gradually to find shelter in the old hospital together with the mentally ill. In those days it was not unusual to put children together with the mentally ill and disabled, who were also given shelter by the chaplains in exchange of an additional fee.
The foundlings shelter was a transit institution, i.e. children received first aid and were then sourced out to farmers as soon as possible in the Kempen. The shelter itself only lodged sick children and those learning a trade. Due to the large increase in the number of children, it became necessary to outsource children to farmers and craftsmen for a small fee[13].

In the shelter the abandoned children were put to work; the boys learned a trade and the girls made lace or sewed. Boys and girls residing there for a short time knitted stockings for children in other shelters[14].

[11] The 'Tafels van de Heilige Geest' was an institution during the Middle Ages that provided food to the poor. Most of the time they were linked to a church or a monastery.
[12] These are part of the so-called Parish rights, meaning that this church kept the extreme unction and the baptismal font.
[13] Until then, shelters were mixed; from 1552 on, thanks to a donation by a wealthy merchant Jan van der Meeren, a 'scole voor schamele meyskens' or 'Maagdenhuis' was established.
In 1558, thanks to another benefactor Johanna van Schoonbeke, a 'werckhuys' for boys was founded, the so-called 'Knechtjeshuis'.
[14] Due to the languishing economic activity in Antwerp it was getting harder and harder for orphan boys to find a place with a craftsman, which in 1780 lead to the idea to close the 'Knechtjeshuis'.

Outsourced children were not always treated well. The chaplains regularly checked the children and in the case of abuse, the children were moved elsewhere. It sometimes happened that the children had already run away before the chaplains arrived.

3.1.2. Foundlings in Antwerp

Despite the fact that in the 16th century, the abandonment of children was criminalized and was made equivalent to murder, children were abandoned almost daily at churches, monasteries, street corners or on the doorstep of the shelter. Penalties were imposed to deter parents from abandoning their children, but with little result. Economic uncertainty and the influx of unemployed people who came to the cities from the countryside made less work available to those already struggling to feed their families.

In the 18th century, an urban regulation[15] was issued stating that whoever was guilty of abandoning a child, would be shamed publicly and banned from the city for 12 years. In addition, a reward was offered to those who could identify the parents of the abandoned child.

In order to find the parents of abandoned children, midwives had to report the birth of illegitimate children to the Chamber. The father's name was kept secret, but the mother's was registered in a 'Secreetboek'. When the child could be identified and was registered in the 'Secreetboeken', the mother was tracked down and forced to take back the child.

The statutes of the 'Chamber of the House poor' stipulated that (insofar as this could be verified) only children born in Antwerp or whose parents were citizens of Antwerp could be accepted. Apparently as long as money was involved, the clergy who managed the shelters took a flexible attitude. One of the still existing records reports the following:

'Joseph Van Roermonde oudt drij maenden aengenomen door de kamer Van den Armen ten Versoecke Van sijn Hoochweerde onsen Bischop Reginaldus die voor sijn onderhoudt heeft belooft te geven aen de kamer door handen van freer Basseliers de somme van vier hondert guldens en alhoe wel het Bovens(chre)v(e) kint niet van dese stadt is ende gebrocht van Roermonde of jurisdictie soo heeft de kamer om de gunste van sijn Hooghweerde te Winnen het selve kint aengenomen voor de Voors(chre)v(e) somme alles sonder consequentie en int Vondelingen huijs gedaen.'

In 17th and 18th centuries' records[16] registering orphans and foundlings, clear descriptions of financial transactions are reported, such as inheritances, parents who had debts and/or had disappeared:

'Aengenomen uijt gratie de twee kinderen maria magdalena out 14 jaren ende Ludovicus alouisius out 8 jaren den vader Carolus amedeo de moeder Jacoba Van de Cauter beijde overleden waer voor de Camer genoten heeft 823 gulden 19 ½ courant gelt sijnde het paert ofte aendeel dat de voorschreve kinderen was competerende als erfgenamen testamentairs van jouffr(ouw) geertruij melis volgens staet daer af gepasseert ter weeskamer alhier in dato 2 april 1732 mits dat de voorschreve kinderen als sij groot ende onse directie quiteren (verlaten, afzien van) boven den ordinairen uijtset alnogh sullen hebben ende geniten ider der

[15] Urban regulation of August 28, 1725.

[16] Details from notes from 'Uw Antwerpse voorouder een vondeling, verlaten kind of wees?' Georges Vervoort, Jan Verhaeghe, Georges Lathouwers.

selve de somme van een hondert guldens volgens accoort met Dheeren Weesmeesters in dato 13 junij 1732 daer over aengegaen als handtboeck f(oli)o 49: en sijn de voors(ch)r(eve) kinderen naer t huijs gesonden'. Gedoopt in Sint-Joris op 28.12.1718. Onderaan rechts werd er in het besteedboek bijgeschreven: 'De hondert g(u)l(de)n hier boven gemelt sijn betaelt aen magdalena amedeo 22 jan(uarij) 1700 vier en veertig'. In de rechterrand van het blad werd op zijn beurt vermeld: '16 (?) julij 1748 is de f (gulden) 100 aen alouisius amedeo voldaen'.

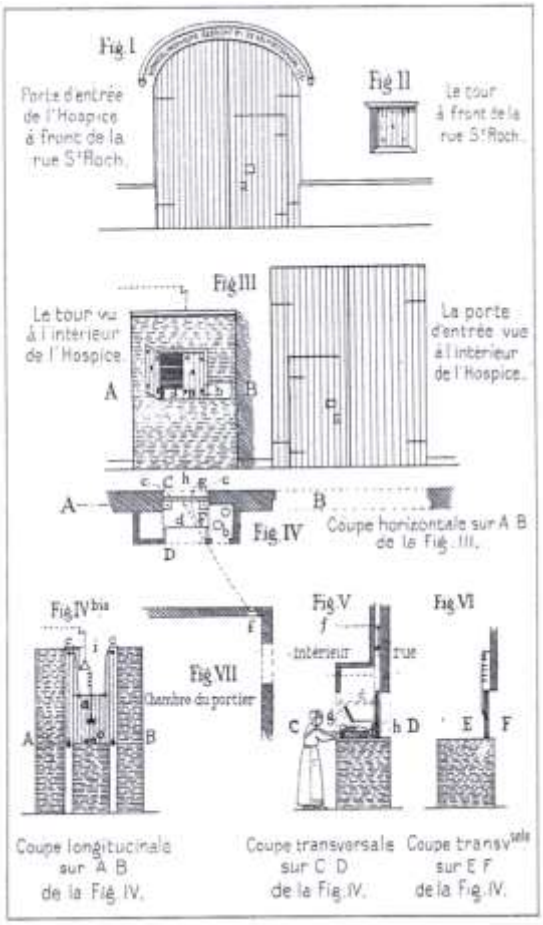
Picking up children required a payment to the 'Caemer'.
Twee kinderen. Vader Franciscus Praet naar Oost-Indiën. Moeder Joanna Catharina De Vadder gaan lopen. Gedoopt in Onze-Lieve-Vrouw op 12.01.1732.
Gedoopt in Onze-Lieve-Vrouw op 12.09.1735. Onderaan het proces-verbaal werd vermeld: 'op 29 8ber 1785 heeft haer maria francisca uijtgekogt met f (gulden) 15 aen de camer te betaelen'.

3.1.3. Foundling tray

Thanks to the decree of January 19, 1811[17], it became possible to leave children behind in a legal way. The abandonment was no longer a criminal act, provided that the child was placed in the tray. This decree stipulated that children were the property of the State and from the age of 12 would be available to the French navy which needed troops; who could be better suited for this purpose than children without family or home. As a consequence of this decree, a tray was installed next to the gate of the shelter. It was designed in such a way that as soon as a child was put in the tray, a doorbell would ring.

'Le Tour'
Watercolour by Hermann Vogel (1889)

[17] Article 4 of the Imperial Decree of January 19, 1811 stated that a foundling shelter had to be set up in each district. Unlike Antwerp, Ghent and Leuven, Bruges never had such an institution.



Drawing of the baby hatch at the gate of the St. Rochus Hospital
Geudens E., Recherches Historiques, Antwerp (1896)

This decree also defined for example the categories of children that could be entrusted to the public social care, viz.:

Poor orphans: children without father and mother and who had no resources (Article 6).
Abandoned children: children whose parents are known and who were first brought up by their parents or other persons but later on abandoned, without knowing what had become of the father and mother, or without the possibility to turn to them (Art. 5).
Foundlings: children from unknown father or mother who were found somewhere or brought to the shelter (Art. 2).

Although the first child was found in the tray already on July 6, 1812 and was named Paul Du Tour[18], the Antwerp foundling tray was officially inaugurated only on July 16, 1812. Most of the children were left behind between nightfall and midnight, moments when this could be done in the most unobtrusive way.

The public officers noted in the records[19] the location, date and hour, the clothes the foundling was wearing and whatever type of token[20] had been left by the mother so she could later

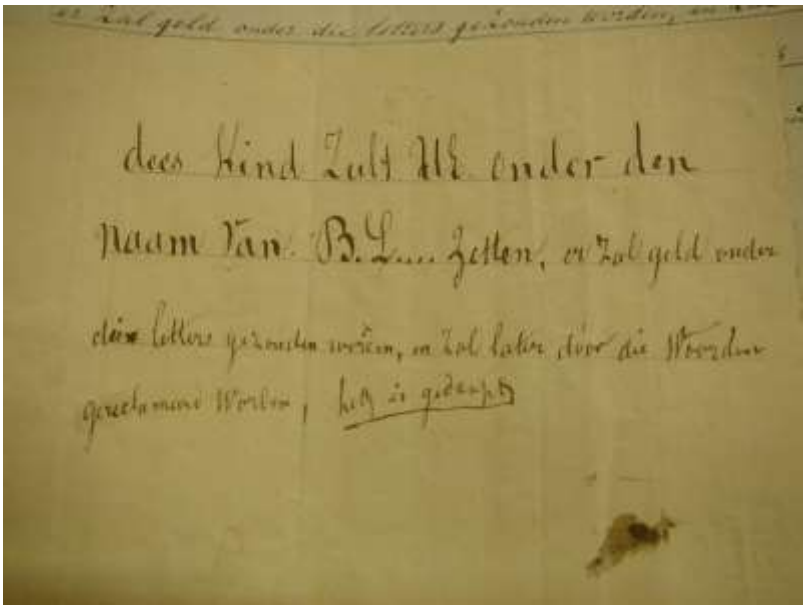
[18] *Tour* was the French word for the hatch.
[19] Thanks to the tray books and registers that can now be consulted in the archives, it is possible to write a piece of history of the lower (poorest) population class and to find the identity of abandoned children.
[20] If no token was left, a piece of the original cloth attached to the minutes and it was sufficient (when the child would be asked back) to give a precise description of the clothing.

recognize the child more easily if she wanted to take it back. They had to describe the token or take a sample (e.g. in the case of cloth). Only when the mother could correctly describe this token was she allowed to take the child back and had to provide a full or at least partial reimbursement of the costs incurred.
The token could be a written note, a print or playing card cut in half (the mother keeping one half as proof), a piece of cloth, a medallion, cross, medal or coin, sometimes cut in half.
Unfortunately the child was rarely reclaimed. Abuses were sometimes observed. There were even parents who came to reclaim their child when he or she was old enough to work for money.

On July 31, 1860 the baby hatch was closed permanently and the last foundling was called Joseph Finis.

3.1.4. Names of foundlings
If a note was found together with the foundling with his/her original name, this choice was respected when registering the child. If no name was found, then the choice depended on the ingenuity of those who registered the child. The surnames usually spoke for themselves: Dymphna Dapper (= Brave), Monica Charet, Anneke Schilders (= Painter; she was found on the doorstep of Rubens), Clara Poorte (= gate), Balthasar Vuylweder (= bad weather), Jacob Onbekent (= unknown), Anneken sonder Toenaem (= no surename), Merten Schoonkint (= pretty child), Jan Luys (= louse) ...

In 1648, the ingenuity on names took a dip, and the children simply got a number. The one before last in this series was Hendrick den Hondertsten (= the hundredth), and the last foundling to be 'numbered' was given the name Peeter Overschot (= surplus).
Later on they appealed again to the ingenuity of the registering officials.

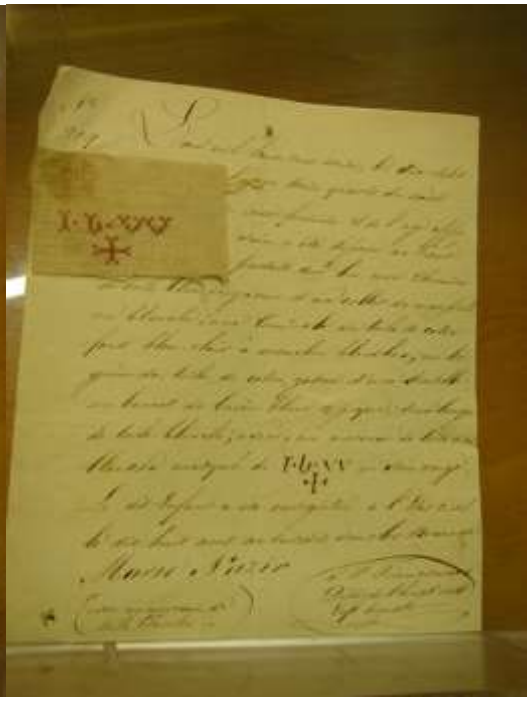


Not all wishes the parent(s) wrote on the note or letter were respected when the child was left as a foundling. In one case they asked that the child be registered with the initials B. L., and money would be donated regularly referring to these initials, which would also be used when reclaiming the child. Nevertheless, the child was registered under a completely different name on the official registration certificate.

3.1.5. Foundling tokens

The Felix Archives in Antwerp kept the official records[21] of the foundlings left in the tray between 1683 and 1876, and also the 'Tray Books' for the period 1618-1876 which still contain several tokens[22]. The majority consists of loose notes, short texts, halved or marked prints or cards, a fragment of 17th century wall paper, ribbons, beads, embroidery pieces and pieces of cloth.

Coloured religious print
Felix Archive 860 # 7447 N237 (1821)

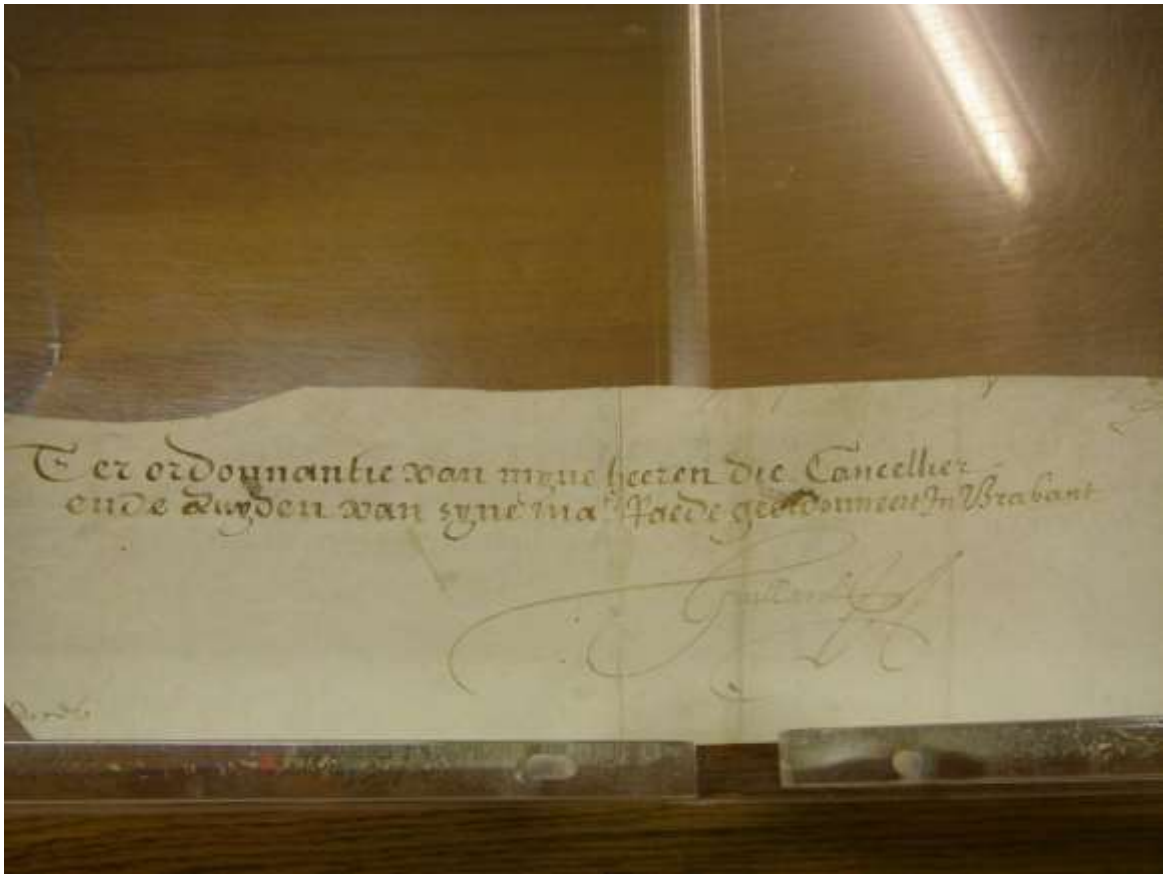


The embroidery was described in the register
Registry # 860 7439 219-N6 (1813)

Register 363 N9 foundling Joannes Baptiste Norband with description and drawing of the halved playing card attached to the rear side. Felix Archive 860 # 7451 N9 363 (1826)

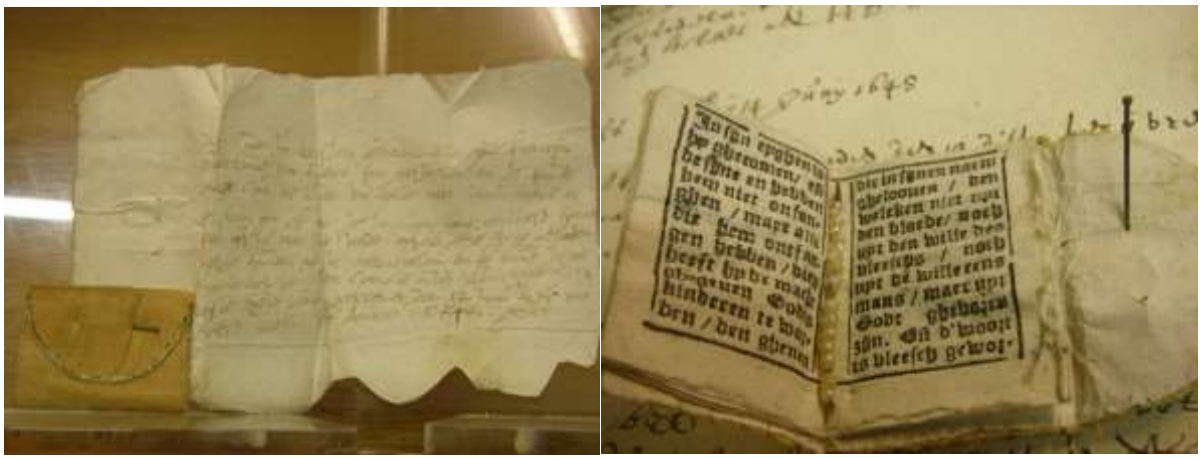
[21] Minutes from the period 1744-1812 were unavailable due to restoration.
[22] Most of the tokens have either being given to museums or have simply disappeared.

"Commissaire de Police D'Anvers"
To all records a wax seal was attached together with the token



The tray book of 1645 (record 860 # 7332) contained part of an ordinance as a token. A personal message was written on the back.

The tray book for the period 1618-1632 contained a halved pamphlet announcing a theatrical play in Antwerp in 1596.

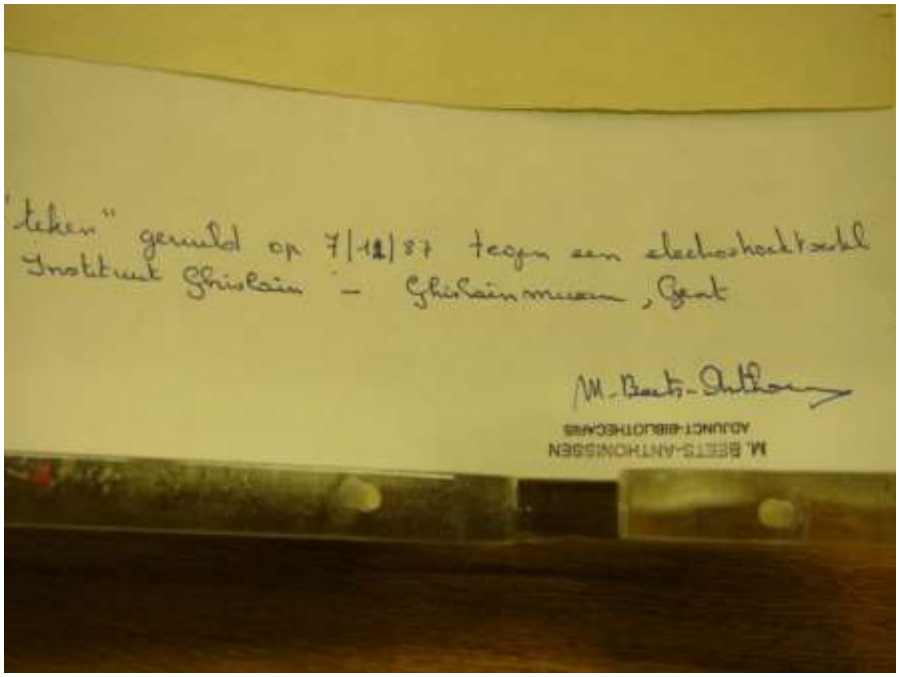


Homemade bag with pin (4cm x 3cm) with a covering letter. Inside the bag is a pearl necklace and a miniature prayer book. Ref. 860 # 7332 N522 (1645)

Most of the parents left a written note with the child. Sometimes the parents themselves had a copy of it. A large portion of the tokens were cut in half, one left with the child and the other kept by the mother or other members of the family. The piece was halved in such a way that the markings coincided when the two halves were put side by side.

Playing cards were the most often used. These were readily available, easy to halve, and could be written upon.

Besides money or numismatic tokens some records mention other types of tokens, the majority of which were no longer attached to the document. Presumably they were removed at that time.



Some tokens in the tray books were exchanged with other museums, and we found proof of exchanges with the Institute Ghislain - Ghislain Museum in Ghent.

3.1.6. Foundling tokens

Silver denarius emperor Maximilian II Hungary 1597 - Ref. 860#7331 N134 (1619)

Religious medal on a white ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7467 N51 (1849)

Halved 1 Frank Napoleon Empereur
Ref. 860#7439 216 N (1813)

Religious medal attached on a coloured card - silver - Ref. 860#7468 N130 (1850)

Religious medal on a white ribbon
Ref. 860#7334 N32(d) (1618)

Religious medal on a white ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7469 (1849)

Religious medal on a white cord - brass
Ref. 860#7467 (1849)

Religious medal on a beige shoe lace - brass
Ref. 860#7472 N173 (1854)

Religious medal on a white cord - silver
Ref. 860#7472 N179 (1854)

Religious medal on a blue ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7474 N68 (1856)

Religious medal on a white ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7472 N182 (1854)

Religious medal on a blue ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7474 N73 (1856)

Religious medal on a pink ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7473 N13 (1855)

Religious medal on a blue ribbon - brass
Ref. 860#7474 N92 (1856)

Religious medal - brass
Ref. 860#7473 N19 (1855)

Religious medal Holy Mary of Halle on a beige cord - gilded silver
Ref. 860#7474 N93 (1856)

Religious medal on a blue ribbon - gilded silver
Ref. 860#7474 N98 (1856)

Two religious medals - brass and silver
Ref. 860#7475 N181 (1857)

Religious medal - brass
Ref. 860#7475 N167 (1857)

Religious medal
Ref. 860#7476 N 37 (1858)

Religious medal
Ref. 860#7475 N178 (1857)

Religious medal
Ref. 860#7476 N41 (1858)

Religious medal attached on a wax seal
Ref. 860#7475 N180 (1857)

Religious medal
Ref. 860#7477 N117 (1862)

Religious medal Mary and child/St. Alfons - copper - Ref. 860#7479 N181

Halved medallion engraved hammer and pincers, no reverse
Ref. 860#7332 N602 (1645)

Religious medal - copper
Ref. 860#7479 N182

Halved silver ring on a green ribbon
Ref. 860#7446 N113 (1820)

Silver ring on a green ribbon
Ref. 860#7332 N577 (1645)

Medallion on a green ribbon
Ref. 860#7471 N82 (1853)

Halved silver ring on a cord
Ref. 860#7332 N578 (1645)

Half of a medallion or the reverse of a pocket watch - brass Ref. 860#7473 N29 (1855)

Metal disc engraved ELEAMNAV (VANMAELE)
Ref. 860#7475 N152 (1857)

Engraved silver medal ‘L’ and ‘P’
Ref. 860#7477 N72 (1862)

 Earring with religious medal St.Hubert / St. Rochus - silver Ref. 860#7477 N105 (1862)	

The numismatic material kept at the Felix Archive consists mostly of religious medals and crosses. Only a silver coin struck in 1597 by the Emperor Maximilian in Hungary and a halved 1 franc of Napoleon (with the date missing) were found in the registers.

The vast majority of religious medals were found are:

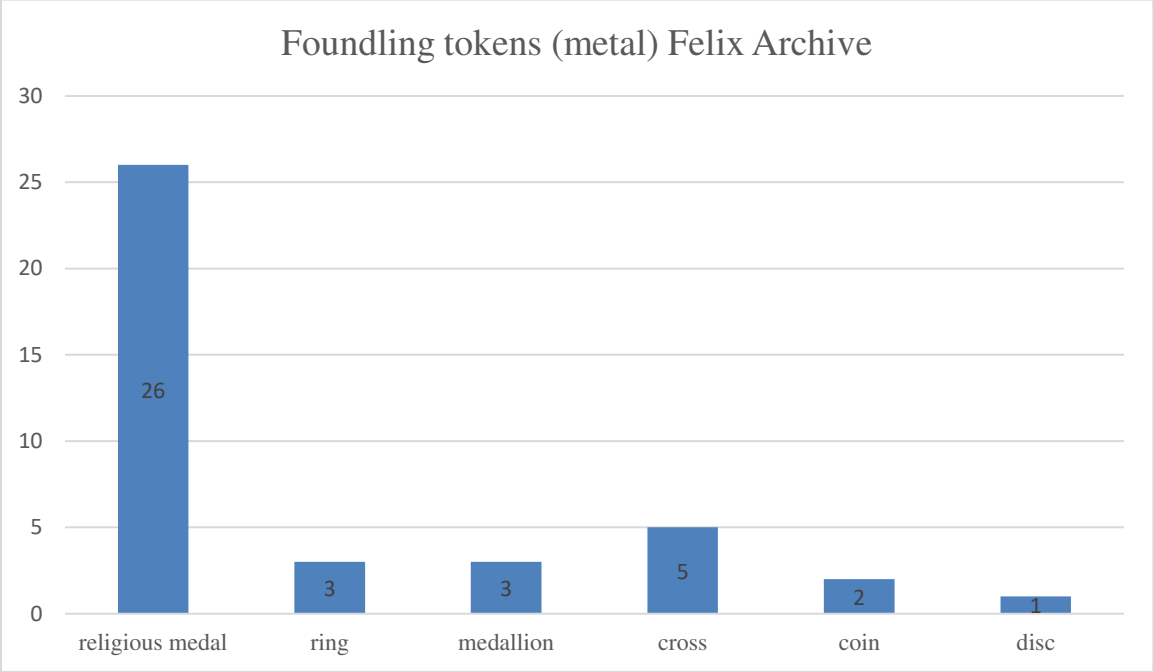
Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

The medals found in the records of the 19th century point towards a great devotion to Mary. We also find medals dated 1854 with the image of Pope Pius IX on the obverse. It was he who, in 1848, appointed a commission of theologians which had to prepare the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary[23]. On December 8, 1854 this dogma was proclaimed through the bull "Ineffabilis Deus". To confirm this, Pius IX inducted the statue Immaculate Conception at the Piazza di Spagna in Rome in 1857.

[23] The essence of the dogma is that Mary as mother of God would have been free from her birth of original sin.

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal

Another medal often found in the registers pictures the appearance of Mary to Catherine Labouré in Paris, which would have taken place on July 19, 1830. At the site where this occurred now stands the chapel of Notre-Dame-de-la-Médaille-Miraculeuse dedicated to this event.



Forty metal tokens were found in the records, most of which were religious medals, (halved) rings, medallions, crosses, coins (including one halved) and an engraved plate. Since this is a numismatic survey, the crosses have been left out of the list of illustrations.

3.2. BRUGES

In 1796, two public agencies were established, viz. the Committee on Civil Hospices and the Charity Office. Several laws and regulations concerning orphans, foundlings and abandoned children were drafted. In 1925 these two public agencies were merged into one, viz., the Commission for Public Assistance.

An increase in the number of orphans, abandoned children and foundlings was due to the bad economic situation.

The demise of the Flemish weaving industry and a number of failed potato harvests brought a flurry of disease and famine in Flanders. Crises caused growing poverty and the number of people needing help from the Charity Office rose substantially.

The province of West Flanders has been described as having the most people needing help[24]. In 1848 Bruges got the little honourable title of poorest city in Flanders because the economic and agricultural crisis was then at its peak, and 21,239 people on a total population of 49,211 received help.

If we compare the figures of the needy in other cities such as Ghent and Kortrijk with those of Bruges at that time, it becomes clear that the latter city was certainly not an exception in 'poor' Flanders. The figures give only an idea of the magnitude of poor relief in Flanders, but not of the acuteness of the need as such[25].

3.2.1. Foundlings, orphans and abandoned children

The National Convention was the first to proclaim that the nation had to undertake the physical and moral education of abandoned children. The same decree, dated June 10, 1793, also stated that these children may only be referred to as "orphans" (art. 2). Article 9 of a provision enacted on March 21, 1795 stated that "... the children known as the 'enfants abandonnés' shall henceforth be referred to as 'orphans of the fatherland' ".

The Congrès de Patronage defined the second group as children who were left to themselves due to neglect or debauchery of their parents. The parents let them wander in the streets – especially in large cities – and forced their children to beg.

The first central issue was the decision that the municipality or city should take care of the child. This was elaborated in the Act of July 30, 1834 and again broadly confirmed by the Act of March 14, 1876. Irrespective of the support of the municipality, the Commission of Civil Hospices or the Charity Office of the place where the parents of orphans and abandoned children received assistance, should pay for the cost of education. Foundlings, as well as abandoned children and orphans whose parental relief residence was unknown, were sheltered by the municipality in which they were found even if the public charities disagreed with the municipal authorities (art. 2 Law 1834, art. 3 Law 1876).

Art. 23 of the Decree of 1811 stated that the persons who were found guilty of leaving a child or depositing it as a foundling would be punished[26]. A circular dated January 26, 1835 had drawn the attention of the Attorneys General on the necessity to identify the perpetrators.

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[24] In 1850 the Charity Office helped one out of every five inhabitants.

[25] In 1843 more city dwellers were helped than people from the countryside; a few years later this was again reversed.

[26] Fathers or mothers – legal or natural – who left their children under the age of seven years as foundling or abandoned them, or had this done by someone else, in a 'public' environment, committed an crime carrying a prison term of 3 months to 2 years and a fine of 26 to 200 fr.
It was considered not a crime but an offence if the child was permanently disabled or died. In the first case, parents could get 1 to 3 years imprisonment and a penalty of 50 to 300 fr., while for the second respectively 2 to 5 years and 50 to 300 fr. If the child got sick or hurt the legislator provided for no specific provision.
When the child was left in a secluded location, the penalty was imprisonment from 1 to 5 years and a fine of 50 to 500 fr. Parents were imprisoned for 5 to 10 years if the child was permanently disabled. If the child died they were condemned to forced labour for some 10 to 15 years.

They deemed it as necessary as finding child murderers. Also according to French law these acts were considered to be crimes, but in practice, they were hardly ever prosecuted.

The poor children formed gangs extorting alms and committing petty thefts. The authorities saw a close link between poverty and family disruption on the one hand, and juvenile delinquency on the other.

During the 19th century, one could rely either on a home or on a foster family for the education of orphans, abandoned children and foundlings. The institutions were either owned by private organizations or by the official charity offices. According to Art. 9 of the Imperial Decree of January 19, 1811 foundlings, abandoned children and orphans had to be contracted out in the countryside as much as possible. This law was not to the advantage of orphanages.

3.2.2. Foundling tokens

The collection of tokens was transferred to the archives of the Commission for Public Assistance in Ghent.

3.3. GHENT

The inventory of the archives of the Commission for Public Assistance in Ghent contains a lot of documents on foundlings that were recorded during the 19th century. The vast majority of these foundlings stayed at the Civil Hospital. They were recorded by the 'Caemer der HUisarmen' (established by Emperor Charles V in 1535) and then by the Board of Civil Hospices in 1797.

During the French period, two terms were used to denote abandoned children, viz. '*Enfants abandonnés'* or '*enfants délaissés'*. There was a difference between these two terms: the first group consisted of children who had a home, but whose parents were too poor to take care of them and left them to their fate. Children of the second group (the so-called '*enfants délaissés*' had parents who had fled or had been convicted. The records of these children contain the additional mention *'enfants trouvés et dont l'exposition a eu lieu'*, i.e. foundlings.

Children were registered under their original or a new name and received a numbered tin plate worn on a necklace. When growing up, this system proved impractical, and at the age of 6 the plate was removed under the assumption that the child was now old enough to remember his/her own name. When a foundling was brought in, their chance of survival was minimal. Most young children died after a few months because they were malnourished or sick when they were abandoned. If they survived, they were contracted out by the age of 6 with foster families who were paid for taking care of them. By the age of 12, this fee was discontinued because it was assumed that they were by then able to care for themselves.

3.3.1. Foundling names

There was no general rule about giving a name to the foundlings. This was the choice of the official. As in other homes surnames were based on events, sites, weather, appearance, occupations, and even numbers.

Even when a note with the baptismal name was found besides the child, a new name was given when the child was accepted in the home. As in Antwerp, this new name depended on

the ingenuity of the official and sometimes refers to the circumstances in which the child was found. A girl left behind with a trumpet was called Petronilla Trompet (= Trumpet).

Stricter rules were applied in the course of the 19th century with regard to naming, by proceeding alphabetically and systematically.

3.3.2. Foundling tokens

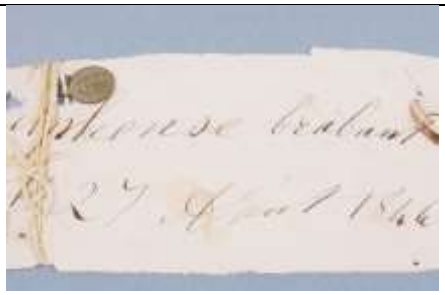
A large quantity of tokens was inventoried, with the majority made from paper or textile. Metal tokens consist mainly of crosses, a gold ring, religious medals, a piece of aluminium with floral pattern, a straight pin, a complete or halved medallion with an inscription and a small trumpet. No coins or medals have been found so far.

Of the more than 7,000 foundlings only a small number were picked up again by the family. In some cases, the token was preserved in the registers, and one can reasonably assume that it concerns cases in which the mother never took her child back.

The valuable tokens were kept in a box in the warehouse of the foundling institution, but so far we have no idea where this box ended up.

The records from 1791 to 1922 are available online[27], as well as the tokens.

Since this is a numismatic survey only the religious medals and the halved medallion have been included in the survey, excluding all other metal objects.

<table>
<tr>
<td>
Metal plate with symbols Ref. 1688 (1822)</td>
<td>
Religious medal Ref. 5003 (1846)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>
Religious medal Ref. 2018 (1824)</td>
<td> 
Religious medal Ref. 5070 (1846)</td>
</tr>
</table>

[27] www.erfgoedinzicht.be

 a piece of aluminium with floral pattern - Ref. 4616 (1843)	 Religious medal - Ref. 5350 (1848)
 Religious medal - Ref. 4810 (1844)	 Halved engraved medallion - Ref. 5642 (1851)

3.4. BRUSSELS

In the Museum of the Brussels Commission for Public Assistance references to foundling tokens can be found in the records. On inquiry it turned out that these tokens were primarily made from paper, apart from a glove and two hats. Surprisingly, no metal / numismatic tokens have been found. As in Antwerp, such metallic tokens may have been used, but this cannot be confirmed with certainty.

4. ENGLAND

During the Middle Ages religious orders and parish organizations took care of the poor and they worked primarily in hospitals, hospices, and shelters.

In England, homes for foundlings were created later than in Flanders and they were not supervised by official authorities. They could organize the care of children without external control. The first and only official foundling home ever founded in England was situated in London, and it is the only one included in this survey.

4.1. LONDON

4.1.1. Thomas Coram

Thomas Coram (1688-1751) was a British citizen who, since the age of 11, worked as a sailor on the American trade route. Wherever he docked during this voyages, he saw how children were left to their fate, were killed and their bodies thrown on dung heaps.

The situation in London was not much better. The city experienced industrial prosperity and was very wealthy. On the other hand, it was dirty, overcrowded and plagued by diseases. Although social assistance was provided, many people ended up in poverty and in a criminal environment. Unemployed people could call on parish organizations where they could get some support or could work in workshops. Over time these organizations could no longer handle the massive influx of aid applications, and as a consequence the conditions for receiving aid were tightened. As a result the poor were forced to outsource their children as apprentices whether they were fit for work or not. The situation for these children was hopeless, and in 1700 the mortality rate for children under 5 years was on average around 75%, and in the workshops around 90%.

During that period the city was in the grip of the 'Gin Craze' (Gin hysteria)[28]. The population was averse of foundlings because they were seen as the symbol of moral decay. By collecting foundlings debauchery was encouraged so that parishes could evade their responsibility.

Thomas Coram found this unacceptable and wrote a letter to King George II. Unlike Europe, where the Roman Catholic Church took care of orphans and foundlings, there was as yet no single authority doing the same in England.

The Royal Charter, which was promulgated in 1739, reported the plight of these children who were either killed at birth or ended up on the streets and/or in criminal activity. On the other hand, the charter mentioned the existence of legacies that were bequeathed to other rich people, whereas others again such as Thomas Coram could well use these legacies for charitable purposes. Thanks to this charter many wealthy people donated money and charity funds were set up in Britain. One of them was the artist William Hogarth. In the 18th century he was well known for his 'Beer Street and Gin Lane' engravings picturing scenes of decay[29] in

[28] Around 1730 about 10 million litres of gin were distilled annually in London. Gin was cheap and it reduced the appetite, and as a consequence mothers fed it to their children and babies to keep them quiet. As a result, thousands of children died from alcohol poisoning and many more were dumped or abandoned.
[29] In 1689 on average a person would consume 2 litres of gin per day.

large cities such as London. To an outsider the engravings by William Hogarth may seem slightly overdone, but they were in fact very realistic.

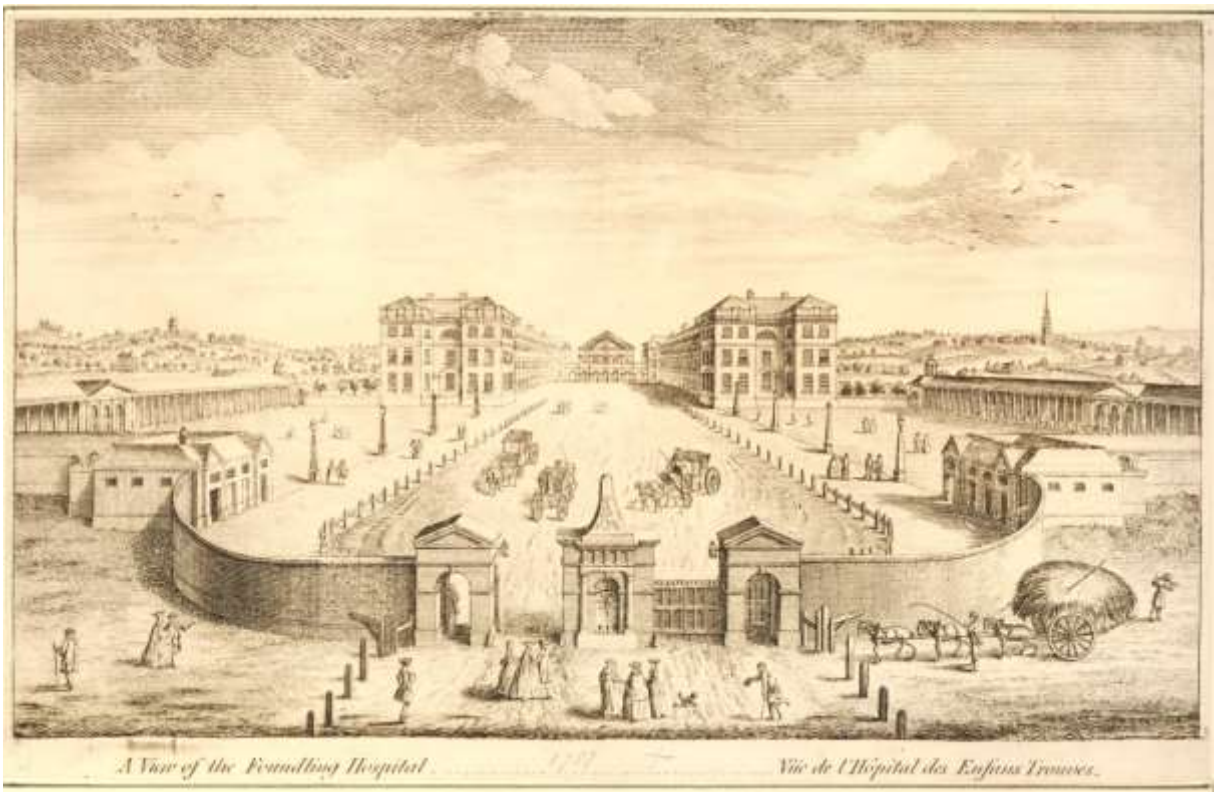
'Gin Lane'- William Hogarth (British Museum)

The print 'Gin Lane' portrays the despair and misery of a generation brought up with gin, with heavy alcoholism as a result. In the 18th century a large part of the common people was so addicted that it was not uncommon for children to die from neglect or simply to be killed. The moral decay was so great that adults would not hesitate to sell clothes of deceased children to buy gin. Syphilis and other venereal diseases were very common.

4.1.2. Foundling Hospital

Thanks to the charter Thomas Coram could begin building the first Foundling Hospital in London in 1739. It was completed by 1741, and the first children could be accommodated. This was the only shelter for abandoned children in England to enjoy royal protection.

The Foundling Hospital was also called the ‘Lambs Conduit Fields’.



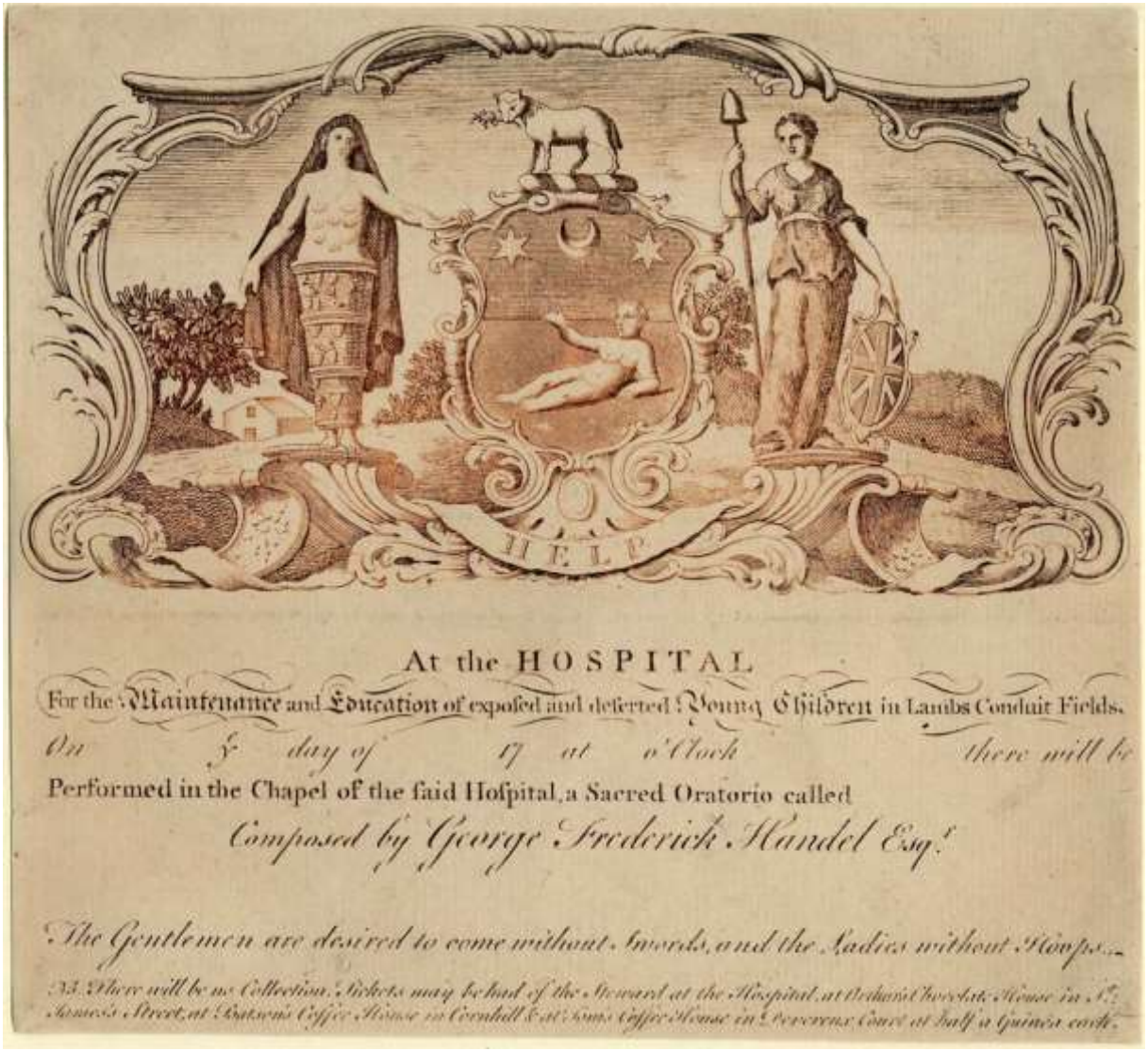
British Museum 1880,1113.4792
Engraving of the Foundling Hospital about 1750

4.1.3. Philanthropy

Thomas Coram maintained a close relationship with some well-known persons such as William Hogarth, but also George Friedrich Handel was a regular guest at the Foundling Hospital. Many of his compositions were written there and performed at benefit events[30]. They were both members of the Board of the Foundling Hospital.

William Hogarth was also a Freemason and collected money through this channel too.

[30] In 1750 Handel performed his ‘Messiah’ during a benefit event; thanks to the success he was appointed member of the board of the Foundling Hospital. At his death, he bequeathed a copy of the ‘Messiah’ to the Foundling Hospital. In Italy there was a similar situation with Vivaldi supporting the ‘Hôpital de Pieta’ (foundling home for girls) with his concerts.



British Museum 1858,0417.578

Dating: ± 1750 - engraving: probably William Hogarth

Entry ticket to attend 'A Sacred Oratorio' by Handel at the Foundling Hospital. Underneath the coat of arms is 'HELP', an indication that it effectively was a benefit performance.

Also tokens were struck to support the Foundling Hospital.

Obv.: FOUNDLING FIELDS 1795. A lamb holding a sprig of thyme or some other vegetation, a representation of the crest of arms of the Foundling Hospital designed by William Hogarth.
Rev.: initials JB and the legend PAYABLE ON DEMAND
Milled edge – 8,41 gr. - copper - (Middlesex) London
Engraver: Westwood/Hancock
British Museum Foundling token SSB, 190.11

JB is the abbreviation of James Burton. He was developer and contractor in London. His first big development was land on the outskirts of London, also known as Foundling Fields.

Obv.: FOUNDLING HOSPITAL / LAMBS CONDUIT FIELDS / COMPLETED / 1741
View of the Foundling Hospital located in Lambs Conduit Fields
Rev.: LONDON PENNY TOKEN
A coat of arms surrounded by foliage
Engraver: Peter Kempson - London
21.64 g – Copper

Lambs Conduit Fields was named after William Lamb, an Elizabethan philanthropist, who restored the local conduit from tributary of the Thames to provide a public water supply in the area in 1577

4.1.4. Conditions of admission
1742-1755
Initially it was foreseen that children accompanied by £ 100 would be admitted automatically. But because demand was greater than the number of available places, these acceptances were stopped and replaced by a lottery system, which implied that mothers were obliged to continue to sit on their chair while waiting (as soon as they got up they lost their turn). When their name was called, they could pick a ball out of a bag. The colour of the ball determined whether the child was admitted or not. A white ball meant that the child could enter the room for a medical examination prior to admission. A black ball meant that mother and child had to leave, a red ball meant that mother and child had to wait in a separate room until someone with a white ball did not pass the medical examination. The number of white balls in the bag was always equal to the number of available places.

From the first day of the Foundling Hospital opened its doors, children were given tokens, which consisted of fabric, letters, cards, medals and coins.

1756-1760

In 1756 began the most difficult period of the Foundling Hospital. The influx of foundlings and orphans was so large that the Foundling Hospital was constantly full. Many children either stayed in the Foundling Hospital or were outplaced to the countryside.

The lottery system was replaced by official applications, in which the mother had to give her name and explain why she could not care for her child.

A basket was hung at the gate and equipped with a bell. Each time a child was left in the basket, the mother pulled the bell in order to attract the attention of the doorkeeper.

The financial impact was felt quickly, and the £ 100 rule was re-introduced for children younger than two years.

Starting from 1760, the system of tokens left with the child by its mother gradually disappeared.

In 1772 receipts were issued making it easier to reclaim children afterwards. This system lasted until 1940.

1801-1953

From 1801 only illegitimate children were admitted to the Foundling Hospital. An exception was made for orphans whose father was a sailor or soldier.

Before a child could be admitted into the Foundling Hospital, the children were examined by the head nurse and the pharmacist[31]. Infectious diseases were devastating for those who stayed at the Foundling Hospital and at all times children had to be protected against such diseases.

The child was then recorded in a register noting the date, time and appearance. The clothing was described in detail, as well as any identifying object such as a note, card, cloth, coins, medallions...

Then, the child was given new clothes and assigned a number together with a new name[32]. This number was the only link with the original data and is to this day the only way to identify foundlings.

4.1.5. Foundling names

As in other houses the choice of the name depended on the creativity of the person who registered the child. Some examples include Elizabeth Rainbow, Hetty Feather, ...

In general, children lived reasonably well in the home. They were clothed, given shelter and learned a trade. They were in time contracted out to the countryside.

4.1.6. Foundling tokens

The Foundling Hospital has inventoried various types of tokens. Most parents left a written text in the hospital with the child, together with a piece of paper with e.g. a name, a poem or a rebus. In some cases the parents also kept a copy.

A large part of the tokens were halved before the child was left at the Foundling Hospital. The other half was kept by the mother or other family members. The token was cut in such a way

[31] At that time it was not uncommon that the profession of pharmacist was combined with the occupation of physician or other notable professions.

[32] At the Foundling Hospital all children were given a new name regardless of the original name being known or not.

that the markings coincided exactly when the two pieces were laid side by side. The same can be said of other items that normally consist of two units such as sleeves (in 1740 sleeves were separate garments) or gloves.
Playing cards were the most frequently used. They were tangible objects, which could be halved and written upon.

Unlike my research in Flanders, the one at the Foundling Hospital yielded a vast and unique collection of numismatic material.

One of the tokens found with a child is a coin with 5 holes. In itself this is not so special, but for the mother this was a special indication to retrieve her child. When the child was retrieved later, cover costs had to be paid.
Most of the tokens consisted of coins with one or more holes in it. Usually, there was a hole near the edge of the coin so it could be hung with a cord or ribbon around the neck of the child. Several holes were used to personalize the coin. For the same purpose the edges of a coin might have been cut. The inventiveness gave the token its unique character. Such clipped coins generally had a low value since cutting of silver and gold coins was severely punished.
The collection also includes coins bent in a kind of S form, typical for a 'love token'.

The surface of these coins is generally smoothly polished. Unfortunately these tokens have no other identification. The only way to link the child with the coin is the date on the coin, but this assumption is not always true. Quite exceptionally it was possible to identify a child in the baptismal records of the parish based on the year on the coin.
There was a lot of creativity, as is shown by an Irish penny with eight wedges filed out, which resulted in a flower with eight petals. A girl wore it around her neck when she was admitted in 1759.
Sometimes two identical tokens were left with the child. In this case it was important to make a detailed description in order to attribute the appropriate token to that child. Some knowledge of the history could already be helpful, because often it was a matter of a few months to find out when a particular historical event had taken place.
Even so, dramas occurred when a mother came and asked the child back but found out that it had died some time ago, sometimes shortly after arrival at the hospital. Once the child was admitted, there was no further communication.
Unlike coins and medals, some tokens had a personal or symbolic meaning. These were kept in people's pockets or purses.

The collection contains tokens having served as an entrance ticket to lectures, e.g. by Dr. Erasmus King. He lectured in Experimental Philosophy between 1730 and 1756 at his home in Dukes Court (Westminster). During these meetings, the audience could learn more about

anatomy, astronomy, electricity, chemistry, microscopes, and geometrical instruments, in other words everything that was a symbol of the Enlightenment spirit.

In 1722 landlords distributed tokens to their tenants giving them access to their rental residence.

These tokens were generally made in copper or bronze. Because this could be easily counterfeited, the design had to be changed four times. On the basis of the design it was often possible to find out from what period it dated. This too sometimes allowed a foundling in the records to be traced back.

Another sought after token are entry tokens for entertainment venues such as the Vauxhall Gardens from the 18th century.

4.1.7. Overview of the material found

The Foundling Hospital Museum in London has an extensive numismatic collection of over 300 foundling tokens.

This collection was divided into three parts viz., English coins, non-English coins, and 'other material' such as tokens, medals, reckoning counters, metal discs and religious medals.

4.1.7.1. English coins

Edward VI (1547-1553)

British coin shilling Edward VI, undated (1551-3), engraved: S: MARLEY (Spink 2482)	British coin (very worn) shilling Edward VI undated (1551-3), silver (Spink 2482)
British coin (half), one shilling, silver, undated but 1551, Southwark mint, reign of Edward VI (Spink 2482)	British coin six pence Edward VI undated (1551-53), silver (heavily clipped), silver, (Spink 2483)

Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

British coin, shilling, silver, undated (1590-92), reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Spink 2577)

British coin, six pence, silver, dated 1584, reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Spink 2578A)

British coin, six pence, silver, dated 1562, reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Spink 2595)

British coin six pence Elizabeth I 1587, silver (Spink 2578B)

British coin six pence Elizabeth I 1569, silver (Spink 2562)

British coin, six pence, silver, 1593, reign of Queen Elizabeth I, pierced in centre at time of 1696 recoinage. (Spink 2578B)

British coin, six pence, silver, dated 156? reign of Queen Elizabeth I (Spink 2593-9)

British coin, six pence Elizabeth I 1572, silver (Spink 2562)

British coin, six pence Elizabeth I 1571, silver (Spink 2562)

British coin (broken), six pence Elizabeth I 1572, silver (Spink 2562)

James I (1603-1625)

British coin, six pence James I 1623 (heavily clipped), silver (Spink 2670)

Charles I (1625 – 1649) & Civil War

British coin, six pence Charles I undated (1638-9) - silver - Briot's 2nd milled issue (Spink 2860)

British coin, two pence, silver, undated but 1645, Civil war issue showing King Charles I but minted by Parliament, 1750, engraved MC? (Spink 2836)

British coin, four pence Charles I 1644 Oxford (civil war), silver (Spink 2983)

British coin, one penny Charles I undated, silver (Spink ?)

British coin, three pence Charles I undated (1643-44), York mint, silver (Spink 2877)

British coin, two pence civil war period undated, silver (Spink ?)

Charles II (1660-1685)

Touch piece, gold, undated, reign of Charles II, engraved I . H. (Woolf O4/R4)

British coin, four pence Charles II 1679, silver (Spink ???)

British coin, one shilling Charles II undated (1660-62), silver (Spink 3322)

British coin (half) four pence Charles II 1679, silver (Spink 3384)

Love token Charles II Shilling engraved 'R . I / E . D / 1758 // INNOCENCY in SAFETY'

British coin (half), four pence Charles II undated, silver (Spink 3383)

 British coin, four pence Charles II undated (c1662), silver (Spink 3324)	 British coin, four pence Charles II 1684, silver. (Spink 3384) engraved 'S*B/1779'
 British coin, four pence Charles II 1670, silver (Spink 3384)	 British coin, three pence Charles II 1676, silver (Spink 3386)
 British coin, four pence Charles II 1678, silver (Spink 3384)	 British coin, three pence Charles II 1677, silver (Spink 3386) rev. engraved P:S August 14 1758
 British coin, four pence Charles II 1679, silver (Spink 3384)	 British coin, three pence Charles II 1679, silver (Spink 3386)
 British coin, three pence Charles II 1680, silver (Spink 3386)	 British coin, two pence Charles II 1680, silver (Spink 3388)
 British coin, three pence Charles II 1680, silver (Spink 3386)	 British coin (half), two pence Charles II 16??, silver (Spink)
 British coin, three pence Charles II 1682, silver (Spink 3386) obv. engraved I (&)W E	 British coin (half), two pence Charles II (date missing), silver (Spink 3388)

 British coin, three pence Charles II 168?, silver (Spink 3384)	 British coin, one penny Charles II 1677, silver (Spink 3390)
 British coin, two pence Charles II undated (1660-62), silver (Spink 3318)	 British coin, one penny Charles II 1681?, silver (Spink 3390)
 British coin, two pence Charles II - 1679 - silver (Spink 3388)	 British coin, farthing Charles II 1672, copper (Spink 3394)
 British coin, two pence Charles II 1679, silver (Spink 3388)	 British coin, farthing Charles II 1674, copper (Spink 3394)
 British coin, farthing Charles II 16??, copper (Spink 3394)	

James II (1685-1688)

 British coin, shilling James II 1685 - silver (Spink 3410)	 British coin, three pence James II 1687, silver (Spink3415)
 Love token James II shilling engraved 'ELIZTH HARRIS BORN JUNE 6TH 1756' Angel	 British coin, three pence James II 1687, silver (Spink 3415)

 British coin, four pence James II 1686, silver (Spink 3414) rev. engraved I*C	 British coin, three pence James II 1687, silver (Spink 3415)
 British coin, four pence James II 1687, silver, stamped marks (Spink 3414)	 British coin, two pence James II 1687, silver (Spink 3416)
 British coin, four pence James II 1687, silver (Spink3414)	 British coin, two pence James II 1687, silver (Spink 3416)
 British coin, four pence James II 1688, silver, engraved 'B' (Spink 3414)	 British coin, one penny James II 1685, silver (Spink 3417)
 British coin, four pence James II 168?, silver (Spink 3414) engraved 'Wm Stanley 4 Mar. 1756'	

William & Mary (1689-1694)

 British coin, four pence William & Mary 1689, silver (Spink 3439) M.A.J. Jan^{y} 1778	 British coin, three pence William & Mary 169?, silver (Spink 3442)
 British coin, four pence William & Mary 1689, silver (Spink 3439)	 British coin, one penny William & Mary 1691, silver (Spink 3445)

 British coin, four pence William & Mary 1689, silver (Spink 3439)	 British coin, one penny William & Mary 1693, silver (Spink 3445)
 British coin, four pence William & Mary 1694, silver (Spink 3439)	 British coin, one penny William & Mary 1693, silver (Spink 3445)
 British coin, three pence William & Mary 1689, silver (Spink 3441)	 British coin, one penny William & Mary 1693?, silver (Spink 3445)
 British coin, three pence William & Mary 1692, silver (Spink 3442)	

William III (1694-1702)

 British coin, crown, silver, reign of William III, reverse smoothed and engraved “N”	 British coin, six pence William III 1697, silver (Spink 3538)
 British coin, shilling, silver, William III Smoothed and engraved “ANN BUTLER OCT^{R} 15 1757”	 British coin, six pence William III 169?, silver (Spink ?)

 Love token shilling William III - silver. Engraved IUNE / Hinton / 14.1758	 British coin, six pence William III, engraved W^{M} FROMONT - silver - 169?
 Love token William III shilling 1696/7 Chester, engraved 'HB / M*S / 1758'	 British coin, six pence William III 1696, silver (Spink 3531) engraved R ↓ H
 5. British coin, six pence William III, silver, 1696? (Spink 3520)	 British coin (very worn), six pence, silver, date unreadable, reign of King William III, engraved LXI
 British coin (very worn), six pence, silver, date unreadable but 1696 or 1697, Bristol, reign of King William III (Spink, 3521 or 3539)	 British coin bent as love token, six pence, silver, dated 1696 or 7 y(York), reign of King William III (Spink 3525 or 3536)
 British coin, six pence William III 1697, silver (Spink 3505)	 British coin, four pence William III 1702, silver (Spink 3549)
	 British coin, three pence William III 1701, silver (Spink 3550)

Anne I (1702-1714)

 British coin, half crown Anne, silver 1707 E(dinburgh) (Spink 3605)	 British coin, four pence Anne 1709, silver (Spink 3595A)
 British coin, shilling Anne 1707 E (Edinburgh), silver (Spink 3608) engraved T*R	 British coin, three pence Anne 1703, silver (Spink 3596)
 British coin, shilling Anne 1711 silver (Spink 3608)	 British coin, three pence Anne 1706, silver (Spink 3596A)
 British coin, six pence Anne 1707, silver (Spink 3610) met hall mark RR (Robert Rew) and a counter mark	 British coin, three pence Anne 170?, silver, (Spink 3596B)
 British coin, six pence Anne 1711, silver (Spink 3619)	 British coin, two pence Anne 1704, silver (Spink 3597)
 Love token, British coin, six pence Anne 17??, silver (Spink) reverse erased and engraved with hand holding heart above C	 British coin, two pence Anne 1708, silver (Spink 3597A)
 British coin (very worn), six pence, silver, dated 17??, reign of Queen Anne	 British coin, one penny Anne 1709, silver (Spink 3598)

George I (1714-1727)

British coin, two pence George I 1721, silver (Spink 3656)

British coin, farthing George I 1723, copper (Spink 3662)

British coin, farthing George I 1721, copper (Spink 3662)

British coin, farthing George I 1723, copper (Spink 3662)

George II (1727-1760)

British coin, six pence George II 1734, silver (Spink 3707) engraved: 34

British coin, three pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3714A)

British coin, six pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3710a) engraved: LOVE AND FOLLY / E.W JULY 27 1758

British coin, three pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3713A)

British coin, six pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3710a)

British coin, two pence George II 1737, silver (Spink 3714A)

British coin, four pence George II 1731, silver (Spink 3712)

British coin, two pence George II 1743, silver (Spink 3388)

 British coin, four pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3712A)	 British coin, two pence George II 1756, silver (Spink 3714A)
 British coin, three pence George II 1739, silver (Spink3714A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1731, silver (Spink 3715)
 British coin, three pence George II 1746, silver (Spink 3713A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1735, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1739, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1746, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1740, gilded silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1750, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1743, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1750, silver (Spink 3715A) engraved IR
 British coin, one penny George II 1746, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1750, silver (Spink 3715A

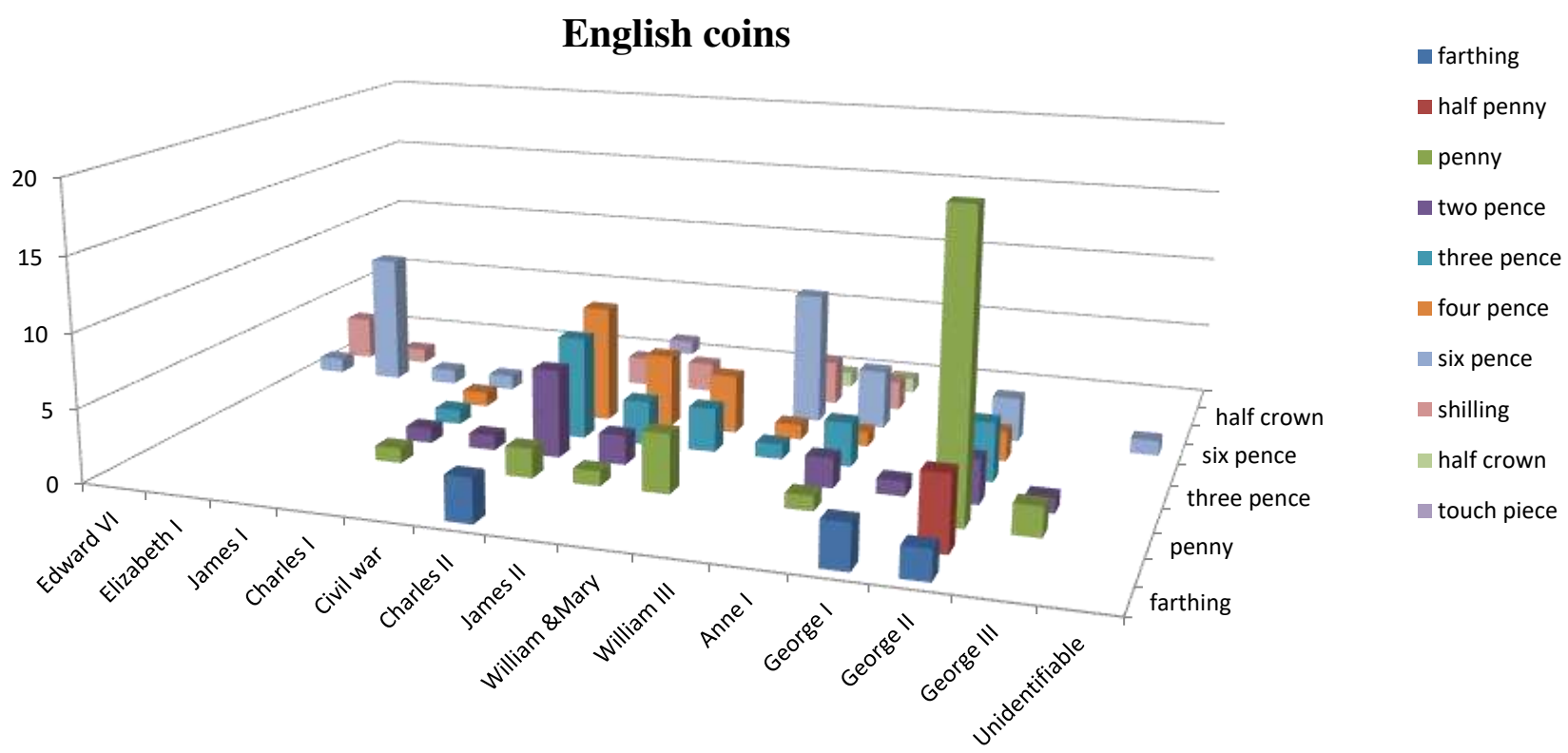
 British coin, one penny George II 1746, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1750, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1746, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1752, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1746, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, one penny George II 1755, silver (Spink 3715A)
 British coin, one penny George II 1756, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, half penny George II, copper, date?, edges hammered up
 British coin, one penny George II 1757, silver (Spink 3715A)	 Half penny George II copper possibly counterfeit) with letters “TM” punched in
 British coin, one penny George II 1758, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, half penny George II 1745 - copper (Spink 3718)
 British coin, one penny George II 1758, silver (Spink 3715A)	 British coin, farthing George II 1733, copper (Spink 3720)

 British coin, half penny George II 1734, copper (Spink 3717)	 British coin, farthing George II 175?, copper (Spink 3722)
 British coin, half penny George II 1738, copper (Spink 3717)	

George III (1760-1820)

 British coin, two pence George III 1772, silver (Spink 3756)	 British coin, penny George III 1797, copper, punched with initials 'JC SS'
 British coin, one penny George III 1772, silver (Spink 3759)	

Chart of the English coins



	Edward VI	Elizabeth I	James I	Charles I	Civil war	Charles II	James II	William &Mary	William III	Anne I	George I	George II	George III	Unidentifiable
farthing						3					3	2		
half penny												5		
penny				1		2	1	4		1		20	2	
two pence				1	1	6	2			2	1	3	1	
three pence				1		7	3	3	1	3		4		
four pence				1		8	5	4	1	1		2		
six pence	1	9	1	1					9	4		3		1
shilling	3	1				2	2		3	2				
half crown									1	1				
touch piece						1								

The Foundling Hospital opened its doors in 1741, which probably helps explaining the large number of coins of George II (1683-1760). Most coins are in silver or copper, and quite exceptionally in gold such as a 'touch piece' of Charles II. Rather surprisingly the collection contains nine six pence coins of Elizabeth I, one of which dates from the currency reform[33] in 1696.

4.1.7.2. Non-English coins

Rosa American coin (American colonies) 2 Pence 1723, brass (KM 11)	German coin (Prussia, Konigsberg mint), 1/12 Thaler, silver, 1766, Frederick II (KM 18f)
Rosa Americana coin (American colonies), 2 pence, 1723, brass (KM 11)	French coin, 10 Sols Louis XIV 1707 - silver engraved 'A.B MARCH Y^{E} 20 1760'
German coin, 2 Pfennig Brandenburg-Bayreuth 1751, billon (KM 207)	French coin, Liard Louis XIV 1656 - copper (KM 192)
Brunswick Luneburg 1/6 Thaler, silver, 1729, engraved initials H (W) S (KM 207)	French 1/10 Ecu Louis XV 1728 K (Bordeaux), silver (KM 481.11)
Silver? disc engraved "SS" and half of a German coin (Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel) 1/6 Thaler 1755, silver. (KM 930)	French coin, Lille mint, 1/20 Ecu, silver, 1728, reign of Louis XV, several hall mark like stamps on obv. (KM 480.6)

[33] The currency reform in England in 1696 was a rather unsuccessful attempt by William III to revaluate the variety of coins in circulation and that had a low amount of silver, were cut or worn, by drilling a hole in the middle. After the currency reform in 1696 silver remained a legally undervalued currency and England adopted a monometallic gold standard. In 1774 silver coins could still be used for a limited number of payments. In 1798, after a sharp fall in the price of silver, the free striking of silver came to an end. Under the gold standard silver only fulfils a role of change currency, with only the gold coins being standard currency.

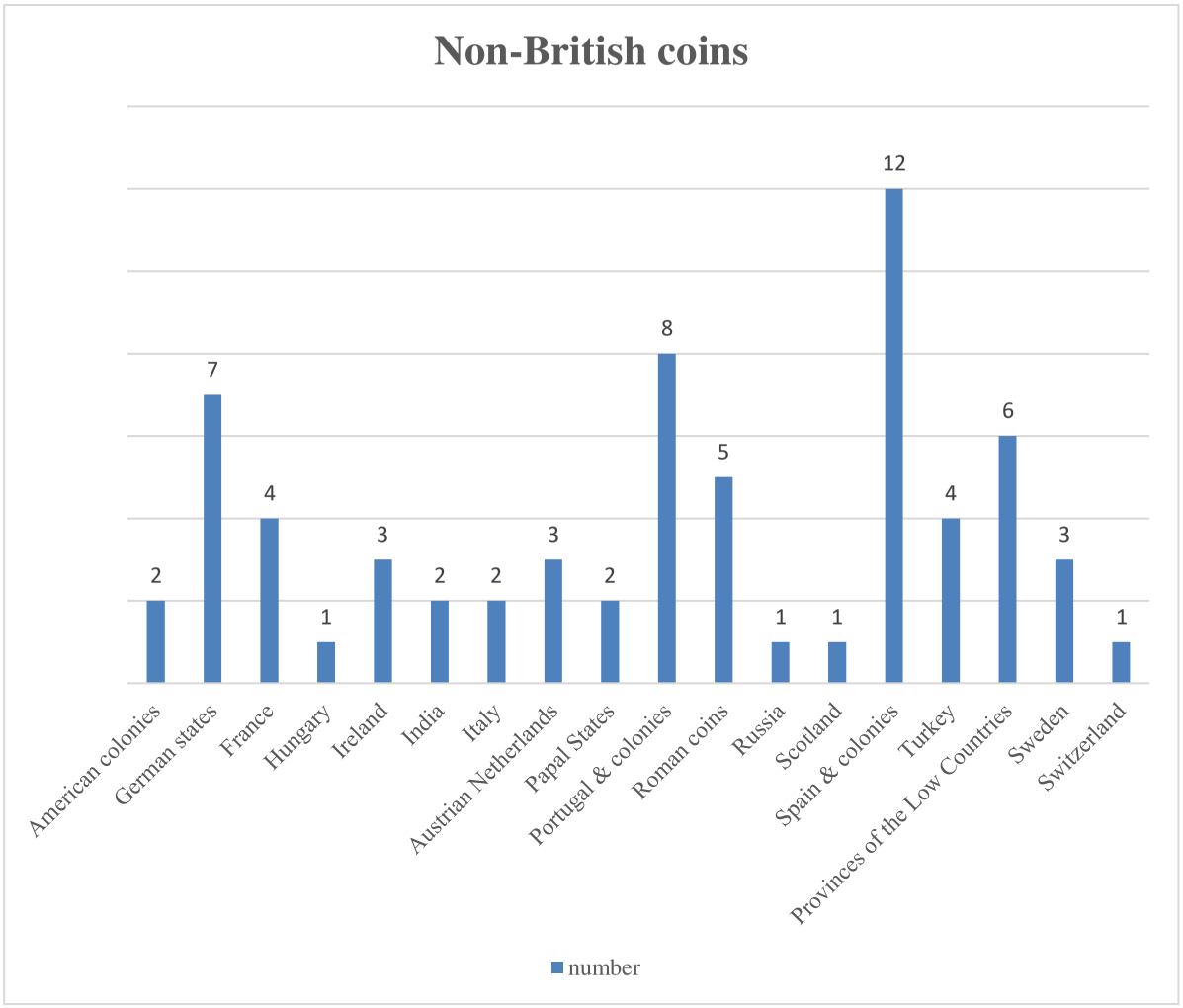
 German coin (Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel), 1/6 Thaler, silver, 1757. (KM 930)	 Hungarian coin, Thaler, silver, dated 1741, Maria Theresia. Engraved 'John Howell 1759'. (KM 328.3)
 Pfalz-Sulzbach 12 Kreuzer 1746, silver. (KM 66)	 Irish coin (gun money), half crown, brass, Sep(tember) 1689
 Irish coin, half penny, copper, dated 1750, reign of King George II, cut into ornate shape. (KM 130.2)	 Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) coin, liard, copper, 1744, reign of Maria Therese. (KM 1) & (VH J5 - Brussels)
 Irish coin (possibly counterfeit), halfpenny, copper, 1766, reign of George III. (CC 055)	 Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) coin, 2 liards, copper, 1787. (KM 31) & (VH J49 Brussels)
 India, East India Company, Madras Presidency, 10 cash, copper, 1720. (KM 291)	 Papal States testone Alexander VIII (1690), silver (KM A523)
 East India Company coin Bombay, 1 Pice, zinc, undated (18th century). (KM156.2)	 Vatican coin Rome, 1 carlino, base silver, 1749 Benedict 14th. (KM 1165)
 Italian coin Genoa, 10 soldi? Base silver, unreadable date (17th century?). (KM 146?)	 Portuguese coin, 10 reis, copper, Peter II, 1699 (KM167 & GA)

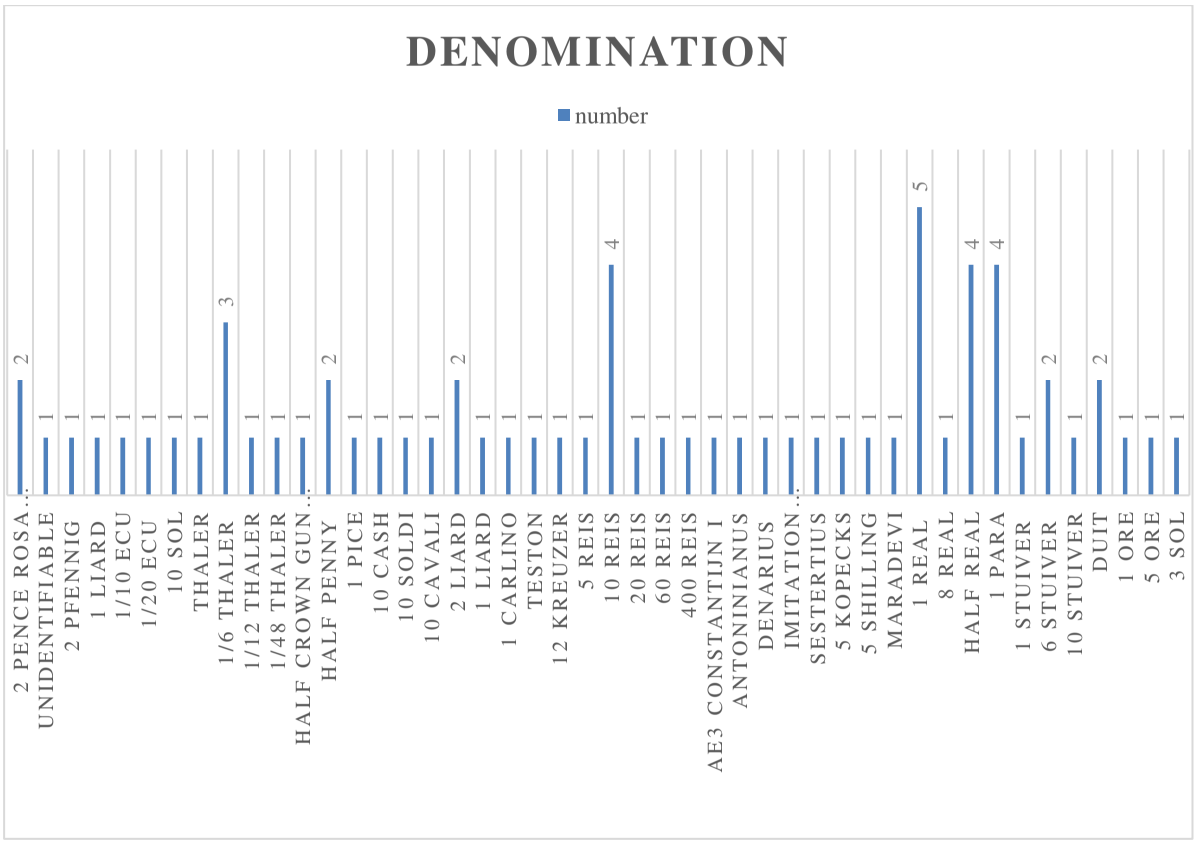
 Italian coin, Naples & Sicily, Grano (12 Cavalli), copper, 1790, Ferdinand IV (KM39)	 Portuguese coin, 400 Reis, silver, 1750, John V. (KM 179 & GA)
 Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) coin, 2 liards, copper, 1749-53, Maria Theresa, engraved 'Rachel Paz' (VH J22 Antwerp or Bruges)	 Portuguese 60 Reis Ioannes V undated (1706–50) - silver (KM 175 & GA)
 Portuguese coin, 10 Reis, copper, 1713, John V. (KM 191 & GA)	 Roman coin, Victorinus, copper, contemporary imitation, SALUS AUG, A.D. 269-271
 Portuguese coin, 10 Reis, copper, 1736, John V. (KM 217 & GA)	 Roman coin, Antoninianus, very base silver, Emperor Tacitus (AD275-6) MARS ULTOR
 Portuguese coin, 5 Reis, JohnV (1706 – 1750), copper, reverse smoothed and engraved 'THOMAS TUPTON BORN / OCTOBER THE 8 1756'	 Roman coin, Constantine the Great, AE3, VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP, 318-320 AD
 Portuguese coin, 20 Reis, José I, undated, silver (Krause 235 & GA)	 Russian coin, 5 Kopecks, 1727, copper (KM 170), engraved 'Cha^{s} Temple Williams Scoler'
 Portuguese coin (Azores) 10 Reis José I, copper, 1750 (KM 2 & GA)	 Scottish coin, 5 shilling William II/III 1697, silver (CC 015)

 Roman coin, brass sestertius, Claudius I (41 – 54 A.D.), RIC 112, engraved ‘MP’ on obverse and ‘ZQ’ on reverse	 Spanish colonial coin, 1 real, silver, 1572?
 Roman coin Severus Alexander, AD 222 –235, denarius, silver, FIDES MILTUM (Sear 2106)	 Spanish colonial coin, 1 real, silver, undated, 16th/17th century, engraved 1757 T / W 23 1757
 Spanish coin, maravedi, copper, 16-17th century	 Spanish colonial coin (Lima), 8 Reals, silver,17S(5)4, Ferdinand VI (KM 55.1)
 Spanish coin, 2 Real Philip V - silver - engraved ‘M(M)E BORN MARCH 25 1759 HALF AN HOUR PAST ONE NOON’	 Spanish colonies (Mexico), half real Ferdinand VI, 1747, silver (KM 67.1)
 Spanish coin, one real, silver, 1728, reign of Philip V. (Krause ?)	 Spanish colonial coin, Lima (Peru) mint, half real, silver, dated 1756, reign of King Ferdinand VI. (Krause 67.1)
 Spanish coin, 1 real Philip V, 1728, silver (Krause ?)	 Turkse 1 para gedateerd AH1115 (1703), zilver (KM 141)
 Spanish coin, 1 real Filip V, 1738, silver (Krause 354)	 Turkish coin, Constantinople, 1 Para, silver, Ahmed III, 1703 – 1730 (KM 139.1)

 Spanish colonies (Mexico), half real Philip V 1734, silver (Krause 65)	 Turkish coin, Constantinople, 1 Para, silver, Mahmud I, 1730 – 1754 (KM 194)
 Spanish colonies (Mexico), half real Philip V 1738, silver (Krause 65)	 Turkish coin, Constantinople, 1 Para, silver, Mahmud I, 1730 – 1754 (KM 194)
 Dutch coin (Holland), 10 stuivers, silver, 1749 (KM 95)	 Swedish coin, 5 öre, silver, dated 1692, Queen Christina (KM 410)
 Dutch coin, Province of Holland, 1 stuiver, silver, dated 1734 (KM 85)	 Swedish coin, 1 öre, copper, 1749, Frederick I (KM 416.1)
 Dutch coin, West Friesland, duit, copper, 1702 (KM 100)	 Swiss coin Geneva, 3 sols, base silver, dated 1722 (KM 68)
 Dutch coin, State of Zeeland, duit, copper, dated 1736 (KM 81)	 Dutch coin, 6 stuivers, silver, date unknown
 Dutch coin (Zutphen), 6 stuivers, silver, 1688-91 (KM19)	 Swedish coin, Bremen & Verden, 1/48 Thaler, silver, dated 1676, reign of Karl XI (KM 90)

Chart of Non-British coins





4.1.7.3. Tokens, medals and reckoning counters

British token, farthing, copper, undated (1650s), James Partrich of Rooston (Royston), Vintner, Williamson Hertfordshire 165/166

Dutch jetton, copper, 1581, referring to the siege of Tournai. Van Loon 1, 299. Neumann 34258

British token, farthing, copper, (16)57, Tho Pulteny at ye Ball on Snow Hill, Williamson London 2908

Medalet commemorating the birth of Charles II, 1630, silver. MI 35

British token, half penny, copper, THOMAS TEMPLE AT BISHOPSGATE. WB 258

Medal/jetton, silver 1702, Coronation of Queen Anne. MI 4

British token, 17th century, half penny, copper, William Dod at Broken Wharf (London) WB 438

Medalet, brass, Queen Anne's coronation 1702. MI 7

Copper token, halfpenny, Odd Fellows Quis Rides, 18th century. D & H 804

Silver medalet commemorating the union of England & Scotland, 1707, Queen Anne, engraved "Elisabeth" on obverse and "E" at centre of reverse. MI 111/112

Pass to use Kings Road, copper 1737. DW 320/6

Calendar medal for 1718, brass, made by Buckley?

 Love token, copper disc engraved “Fanny / Coleman / born Dec^{r} 25 / 1739”	 Tin medal (broken into two parts), death of Isaac Newton (1727), engraved “EE” both sides. MI 85?
 Love token JOHN / CUTHBERT / BORN DECEMBER / ^{YE} 20TH 1757 (copper)	 Commemorative medal. Admiral Vernon & Captain Brown, brass, 1739. MI 99 var.
 Love token, copper, engraved SARAH / GILL / 1757	 Commemorative medal. Admiral Vernon takes Porto Bello, 1739. MI 109
 Love token, copper, engraved ‘Tho / Spencer / Born / Oct ye 29 / 1759 // this is A token’	 Medalet brass, King George II, one side (Royal arms) smoothed off.
 English token 1794, copper, EARL HOWE & THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE / KING AND CONSTITUTION. D & H Hampshire 20	 Calendar medal for 1753, brass, made by John Powell of Birmingham
 Foundling Hospital token - 1795 - copper	 Medalet celebrating the victories of Frederick the Great, copper? 1757. MI 402 var.

 Foundling Fields token, half penny 1795, copper (D & H Middlesex 304/5)	 Brass medalet dated 1757 celebrating the victories of Frederick the Great. “THE HAUGHTY QUEEN (MARIA THERESA) HUMBLED//BY THE KING OF PRUSSIA”. MI 402
 Foundling Fields token, half penny 1795, copper (D & H Middlesex 304/5)	 Pinchbeck Medalet dated 1758 celebrating the victory of Frederick The Great over the Russians
 Half penny token Duke of York 1795 (D & H Middlesex 985)	 Coronation of George III Medalet, brass, 1761. BHM (1) 47
 Mail coach half penny token, J. Palmer (D&H Middlesex 363)	 British Medalet or card counter imitating a gold guinea, brass, dated 1761, reign of King George III, obverse engraved JAMES STANWELL
 Silver pass to Vauxhall Gardens, engraved on reverse “Rich[d] Arnold Esq / 184” Davis & Waters 270	 German (Nuremburg) brass jetton, Hans Schultes (II?), circa 1600
 Reckoning counter, brass, Nuremburg, Hans Krauwinckel, c1600	 German jetton (Nuremburg), brass. Wolf Lauffer II? (active1612-31)

 Nuremburg reckoning counter depicting George I, brass, Johan Jacob Dietzel active c1711-48	 German (Nuremburg) brass jetton copying French type circa 1720
 Reckoning counter, copper, Hanover, c1720	 Lead bale seal
 German jetton (Nuremburg), brass, depicting George II, J.F. Weidingers (active to c1765)	 Coin weight for Charles 1st gold Unite
 Brass imitation of a George III spade guinea. Dated 1788 but much later.	 British coin weight (20 shillings), brass, reign of King Charles I
 Badge St / Ethel / burga and St / Swithin / No 38 (messing)	 Coin weight? 3 crowns over MAC
 Spitalfields market token, brass, Boston & Son, c1870	 Satirical anti-Catholic medal, brass, Continental? 17th/18th century.

4.1.7.4. Metal discs, religious medals and others

 Silver disc engraved: Kings/Experimental/Philosophy/Dukes Court	 Silver disc engraved 'Chid More/Nov ye 10th/half hour after/12 o'Clock' - reverse: Coronet with Phoenix
 Stamped copper disc. 3 suns / WC	 Silver top from? Masonic emblems
 Silver disc engraved with child in cradle, an eye, ant and leaf: (eye) W (ant) /RE (leaf) / GB. JAN. 16.1759	 Copper object 22 mm diameter, GR // Crown, purpose unknown
 Diamond shaped silver disc engraved 'M : S'	 Heart shaped silver disc engraved 'James Andrews / Born August / the 10 / 1746'
 Heart shaped silver disc (half locket?) engraved 'I * T'	 Silver disc engraved 'S.E.G / D.E.G A° 1758 / 21? Febr'
 Brass heart shape engraved 'C 8 / E B'	 Silver heart shape engraved both sides 'INBOSHAOUENS OSINMNIOES'

Oval silver disc engraved ‘Augusta / Percy / Nata 4 Julii / 1757 // Deus nobis Haec otia Fecit’ (Virgil - God has given us this ease, the motto of the Boleyn family and The City of Liverpool)

Silver heart shape engraved ‘QD / 1SM’

Worn flat coin? Punched with letters ‘S B’

Oval disc, copper, engraved on one side with male and female heads and on reverse ‘F/P*C/D’

Tinned? Disc engraved ‘I Coleman/Born Decr 21/1757’

Small silver medallion. Engraved “Lucy Tuley/Jany, 1754”

Brass (from watch?) engraved ‘Stephen Large/Born Jany. 31th (sic)/1758//he is registered/at St Gile’s in ye/fields’

Triangular piece of silver engraved “In/Amore haec/Sunt Vitia”

Heart shaped copper medallion, engraved ‘Meria (sic) Duchesne/Born August/8th 1759’

Small brass medallion with cut out letters C(H)T

Tin? top from a button?

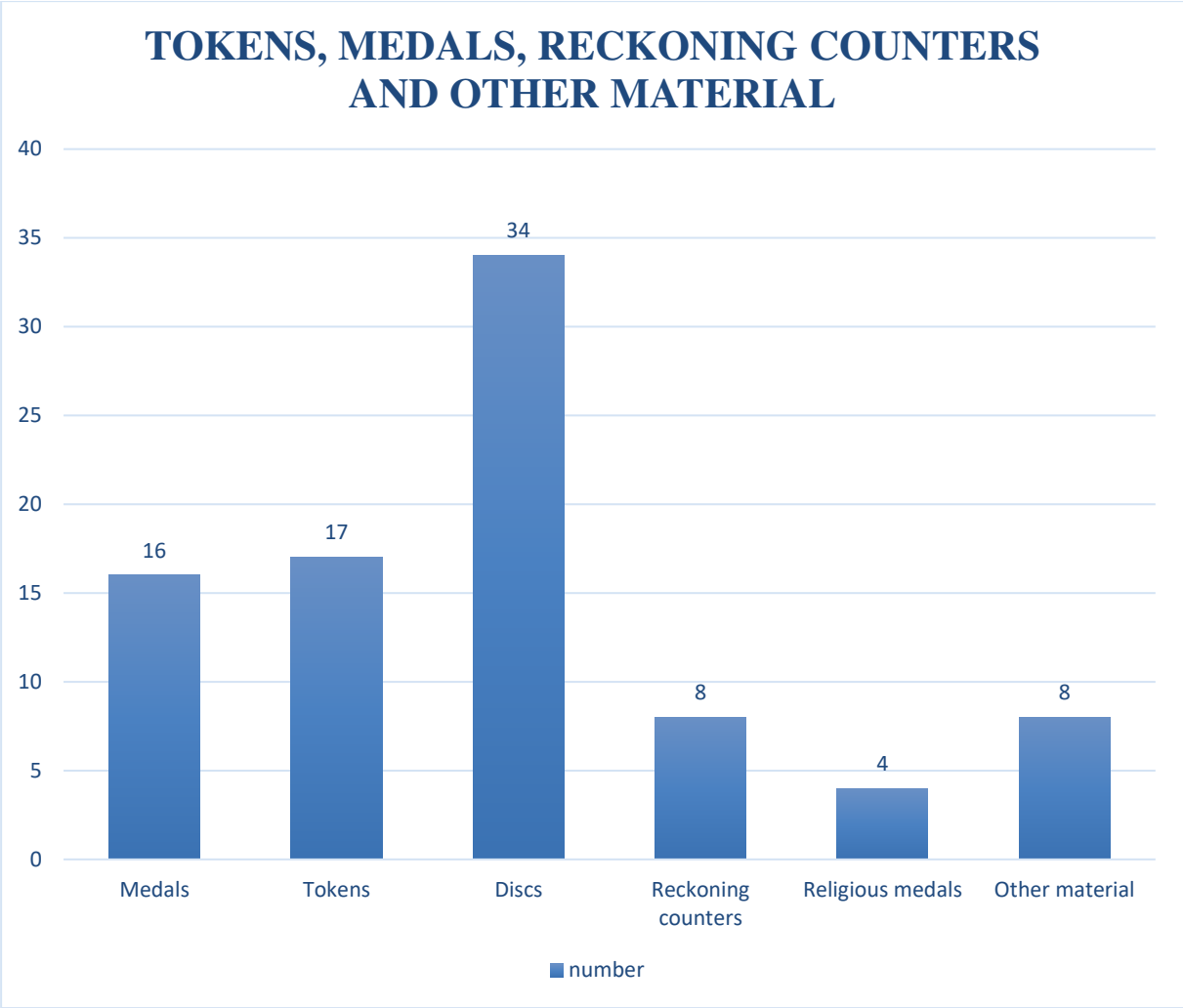
Tin, purpose? Impression of a George II halfpenny / bust of ?

 Silver medallion engraved “VOYEZ ET SOUVENEZ” LRS? Monogram	 Small silver medallion. Engraved “J*P/Needham June 6/1758”
 Silver disc engraved “Rebecca/Wilkinson/28 Feb./1764”	 Silver disc (smoothed coin?) engraved “Dec.r 9/1757/J.C”
 half of an unidentifiable silver coin	 Arabic? Coin, silver, engraved SN
 Very worn silver coin size of a six pence, love token?	 British coin (very worn), six pence, silver
 Silver label engraved B*G = P / 1756	 Unidentifiable silver coin bent as love token
 Silver disc engraved Maria Augusta / Handel / Born April 15 / 1758	 Silver disc engraved PM 1756 ?
 Twisted piece of silver	 Copper coin (halfpenny of George II or III?) with designs obliterated.

 Religious medal, brass, 17th/18th century, Virgin / Jesus	 Catholic medal, brass, 18th century?, Immaculate conception / Angel holding name of Christ
 Brass Catholic medal 18th century? Our Lady of Guadalupe/St. Jerome. Forest 14.9	 Religious medal, Rome, brass, Our Lady of the Rosary / Saint Dominic of Syrian

This category contains all other metallic objects such as a lid, the upper part of a knot, a piece of lead, twisted silver, coin weights and a copper object.
Copper crosses, thimbles, hair pins, a pocket knife and jewellery in the collection of the Foundling Museum were excluded from this survey.

Chart of tokens, medals, reckoning counters and other material



5. CONCLUSION

In this survey, I focused mainly on the historical context and on an analysis of the numismatic material still extant whether between the metal tokens stored in archives or available in the former shelters in Flanders, and then on making a comparison with the tokens in the Foundling Hospital London.

The foundling homes in Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, Brussels and the Foundling Hospital in London used similar procedures with regard to the care of abandoned children and the use of the recognition process.

There is little or no numismatic material to be found in museums, archives and warehouses in Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges and Brussels. Regarding the *'Maagdenhuis'* in Antwerp, over the years some numismatic material was collected or donated by generous benefactors. A distinction should be made between the donations and the foundling tokens. If no clear inventory is available, the foundling tokens cannot be distinguished from the normal collection. The engraved and modified pieces are a clear demonstration of personalization and served (later) to identify the child. The tray books and records which were consulted in the Felix Archive contain a lot of interesting material including a denier of 1597 struck by Emperor Maximilian in Hungary and a halved 1 Franc of Emperor Napoleon I. But it is striking that most

numismatic items are religious medals. The choice of these medals suggests that they were considered valuable and 'appropriate' by those leaving behind a child as a foundling.

In London, on the other hand, sufficient material was present to make this survey interesting from a numismatic point of view.

The silver coins left at the gate of the Foundling Hospital as tokens date from the reigns of Edward VI (1547-1553) to George III (1760-1820). All denominations from penny to a half crown are present. Most coins are from the reign of George II (1726-1760), i.e. the period when the Foundling Hospital was founded. Also notable is the number of coins of Charles II (1660-1685) represented by different denominations, with the four-pence dominating.
Of note also are the 9 six pence pieces of the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), which appear to have remained an appreciated currency even after the reform of 1696.

The non-English coins come from twenty different regions, including the German States, the United Provinces of the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal and their colonies. There is a wide variety of denominations, mostly silver, just like the English coins. Most of these coins can be attributed to the period of the frequent use of foundling tokens in London during the 18th century. It is the period of the colonization of America (2 pence Rosa Americana), the Spanish colonies of Mexico and Peru, Frederick II the Great of Prussia, Portuguese and Dutch sailors. There were also coins from The Low Countries. Of course, London has always been a bustling commercial metropolis which may explain the variation of foreign currencies. In this category, I also included Roman coins although in my opinion these are accidental discoveries, London having been a Roman city. It is unlikely that they still had a value in monetary transactions, but they will probably have left a special impression on the owner.

The medals found in the collection date from the 18th century and refer to a particular historical event. They give a fairly accurate date that was important when registering the child.

The tokens in this survey have no date, but given their variety they are unique as identification. They had a low nominal value and due to a shortage of copper money, they were more numerous than the official copper coins in the 18th century.

Notable are the polished coins (the so-called Love tokens) that have been modified in various ways and bent to give them a personal touch. Some still show traces of a date or another identification, which could be helpful to trace back information in baptismal records. Some were engraved and processed into true works of art.

Interestingly, there were very few religious medals compared to Flanders.

The most obvious explanation is the quantity of religious medals manufactured in mainland Europe for the faithful (pilgrims) from the 17th century on. Proportionately fewer religious medals were manufactured in England.

In London, the practice to leave tokens with foundlings was at its height between 1741 and 1803, despite the introduction of official authorizations. In this way the children were given something personal when they were left in the Foundling Hospital.

Does leaving numismatic tokens with foundlings indicate that there was less poverty among the population, children and abandoned in England than in Flanders? For the lower classes a silver coin, no matter how small its denomination, was relatively valuable.

Unlike Flanders, the tokens of the Foundling Hospital in London were kept in the registers for later identification.

The use of tokens with foundlings was until recently completely unknown to me. Leaving such tokens was current practice until the early 20th century and provides a picture of the social backgrounds and motivations of the parent(s). The object of this survey was to highlight the diversity of tokens used and what is currently still available. This resulted in a fascinating study with a surprising amount of numismatic material.

The author wants to thank the Maagdenhuis - Mr. Daniel Christiaens for giving the impetus to the study of foundling tokens, as well as the archivists of Felix Archive for providing access to the tray books and records. The author also wants to thank the Foundling Museum in London, in particular Stephanie Chapman, for the information provided regarding the collection of tokens, and to Philip Mernick for the photographs so that the survey could be illustrated.

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