

Jersey Copper Coinage Correspondence, 1851–1853

Overview

These nine documents form a coherent administrative file relating to the production of a copper coinage for the States of Jersey at the Royal Mint. The correspondence spans from September 1851 to March 1852, with the dies record extending to 1853. Together they illuminate the bureaucratic process by which a British Crown Dependency obtained its own coinage in the mid-nineteenth century.

Document by Document Analysis

Philip de St. Croix to [Master of the Mint?], 16 September 1851

This is the initiating letter of the sequence. De St. Croix writes **as President of the Committee of the States of Jersey** for carrying into effect an Act of the States dated **13 December [1850]**, ordering a further copper coinage to the amount of **£1,000 sterling**, sanctioned by Order in Council of **8 May last**. He requests the letter be laid before the **Lords Commissioners of the Treasury** so that instructions may be given to the Master of the Mint to execute the coinage, "as on two previous occasions." He notes that attested copies of the Act and the Order in Council have been transmitted to the Master of the Mint. The letter is signed **Philip de St. Croix**.

Treasury Chambers to [Master of the Mint], 24 September 1851

A two-page Treasury letter (file reference **19130 19/9**) dated **24 September 1851**, with a marginal note confirming receipt on **16 September 1851**. The writer states he is "commanded by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury" to transmit a copy of de St. Croix's letter requesting a further copper coinage to the amount of **£1,000**. The continuation instructs the Master of the Mint "to ensure that you will cause this coinage to be executed as requested." It is signed **G. Cornwell Lewis** — this is **Sir**

George Cornwall Lewis, a prominent Victorian statesman who served as Financial Secretary to the Treasury. A handwritten annotation at the bottom requests **Mr. Arabin** to state the terms on which he will undertake to supply blanks for this coinage on the same conditions as other blanks already supplied by him — a note dated **Sept. 25, 1851**, signed by **H.C. Herries** (or similar).

Philip de St. Croix to A.D. Darnes Esq., 29 November 1851

A letter from de St. Croix at Jersey, directed to **A.D. Darnes Esq.** at the Mint (file-docketed as **Miscellaneous 2230**). He writes that he has been desired by the Committee of the States "for the Copper Coinage" to inquire when the coinage can be executed at the Royal Mint, and requests information on the amount of money to be paid into the Bank of England to the account of the Master of the Mint — noting that "no unnecessary delay may take place, the retail trade of this Island suffering much from the insufficiency of the Copper Coinage now in circulation." He signs himself **Philip de St. Croix**. The docket summarizes: "*29th Nov. 1851. Mr. de St. Croix. Inquiring when the Jersey Copper Coinage can be executed. Answer enclosed.*"

Treasury/Mint to P. de St. Croix (3 December 1851 & 30 March 1852)

These are outward drafts or file copies of letters from the Mint to **Philip de St. Croix**, the Jersey committee's representative.

The **December 1851** letter acknowledges his letter of the 29th November and informs him that it is "not desirable that the copper coinage required for the States of Jersey can be completed before the latter end of next month," estimating probable expense at **£550**, though the precise sum cannot be confirmed until the work is complete.

The **March 1852** letter forwards the "detailed account of the expenses incurred in the recent coinage for the States of Jersey" and states that a balance of **£51. 13. 8** is due to the States, to be paid upon receipt of a

proper stamped receipt. The writer also asks that the required receipt be dated either 30 or 31 March 1852 so the whole account for this coinage may be closed in the present quarter. It is signed with initials **H.D.H.** — likely a senior Mint official.

Docket: *Miscellaneous 2288, 30 March 1852*

A filing docket reading: "*The account of the Jersey Coinage forwarded to Mr. St. Croix.*" This corresponds precisely to the previous letter, confirming the account was dispatched on 30 March 1852.

States of Jersey Coin: Dies Record (1853)

This is an internal Mint ledger recording the matrices, punches, and dies used for Jersey penny and halfpenny coinage. Columns are headed **H** (Head) and **R** (Reverse). The penny section records dies brought forward, those destroyed, and the remainder — with a note that some were "Placed out for destruction." The halfpenny section similarly accounts for 13–14 dies brought forward, 17–3 destroyed, leaving a small remainder. This document is significant as a production record confirming the physical tools of coinage manufacture and their disposition, consistent with Mint practice of retiring worn or surplus dies.

Themes and Significance

1. Constitutional process. The correspondence illustrates the formal chain of authority: the States of Jersey passes an Act → it receives Royal sanction via Order in Council → Jersey petitions the Treasury → the Treasury instructs the Mint. This layered process reflects Jersey's status as a Crown Dependency requiring imperial authorization even for domestic coinage.

2. The urgency of copper supply. De St. Croix's November letter explicitly states the retail trade was "suffering much" from the shortage of copper

coin — a reminder that small-denomination coinage was critical to everyday commerce in mid-Victorian island economies.

3. The figure of Philip de St. Croix. He appears consistently as the active agent of the States committee, writing both the initial September 1851 request and the November follow-up. His persistence reflects the practical difficulties of managing a coinage contract from a distant island.

4. George Cornwall Lewis. The Treasury letter signed by Lewis (Financial Secretary 1850–52, later Chancellor of the Exchequer 1855–58) gives the file a notable provenance.

5. The financial settlement. The March 1852 letter's revelation of a balance of **£51. 13. 8** due *back* to the States suggests the original £550 estimate was slightly high — a satisfactory outcome for Jersey. The insistence on a dated stamped receipt for quarter-end accounting is characteristic of Victorian Treasury financial management.

6. The dies record. Though dated 1853, this connects directly to this coinage. The careful accounting of dies destroyed versus retained reflects standard Mint anti-counterfeiting practice — surplus dies were defaced or melted to prevent misuse.

Conclusion

This is a well-preserved file documenting a routine but historically interesting episode in the monetary history of Jersey. The documents move cleanly from petition to authorization to execution to financial settlement, with the dies record providing a technical postscript. They would be of particular value to historians of Jersey's institutional history, numismatists researching Victorian Jersey coinage, and those interested in the administrative relationship between the Crown Dependencies and Westminster in the 1850s.