

***Leeuwengroten* in the Collection of the Museum Rotterdam**

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Museum Rotterdam (formerly Historisch Museum Rotterdam)
Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Research viewing: 2 & 16 March, 2016
19 coins

A surprising number of *leeuwengroten* can be found lurking unnoticed in the collections of many museums, even in those museums where one might not expect to find such medieval coins.

At first glance, the 19 *leeuwengroten* in the collection of the Museum Rotterdam may not appear all that spectacular, but upon closer inspection, it becomes apparent that there are in fact a number of very interesting coins present, including three rare types from Flanders, two coins likely to be medieval counterfeits, two rare coins from Horne, three coins from Holland, and several other Flemish pieces.

The Museum Rotterdam *leeuwengroten* can be divided into two groups: those 16 coins donated to the Dutch state by the late Willem van Rede (along with many other coins) and those 3 coins found during excavation of the Willemstunnel (Spoortunnel) in Rotterdam (along with many other coins of various type and age).

The van Rede coins include 2 coins from Horne and 3 from Holland, as well as 1 Flemish coin struck for Louis of Nevers, and 10 struck for Louis of Mâle. All 3 of the Spoortunnel coins were struck for Louis of Mâle, although one of them is a medieval counterfeit (and a second is probably counterfeit as well).

The coins are shown at approximately 2.5x actual size. See the Conclusion for a complete list of the Museum Rotterdam *leeuwengroten*.



*leeuwengroten shown at actual size
(private collection)*

Coins donated by W. van Rede (16 coins):

Willem van Rede (1880-1953) was a wealthy, Rotterdam resident and a collector of *objets d'art*. His collection included paintings, prints, drawings and so on, as well as natural specimens such as butterflies, beetles, fossils, etc. He also collected coins, his collection including over 4000 pieces and at the time of his death.

Van Rede's entire collection was bequeathed to the Netherlands state, with the stipulation that the city of Rotterdam should receive the greatest benefit. The coins were divided between several museums, with the Historisch Museum Rotterdam receiving the coins struck in "The Netherlands" after 1000 A.D. ^[21]

All 19 *leeuwengroten* are currently housed in the Museum Rotterdam, although they are not on display to the public. The 16 coins from van Rede's collection are as follows:

Lordship of Horne (2 coins)

Dirk-Loef, Lord of Horne (☉ c. 1400-1403)

Dirk of Horne, Lord of Perwez (☉ c. 1380)

The *leeuwengroten* of Horne are not well documented, due in large part to a lack of legible specimens. The coins are very scarce, and the Museum Rotterdamcoins are some of the few specimens that have actually been seen. (All of the available information on the *leeuwengroten* of Horne will eventually be provided in a future publication.)

There are 3 types of Horne *leeuwengroot* known to exist: the MONETA VESMN type (cf. **RM 55003-2**), the MONETA VIERD / DIRIC type (cf. **RM 55003-1**), and the MONETA VIERD / THEO type (RM —), the latter of which is in fact the most common type seen today. The 2 coins in the Museum Rotterdamcollection are thus of the two less common types. (References for the MONETA VIERD / THEO type are: v.d. Chijs XXX, 3; R. Serrure 43.)

Exactly which Dirk had these *leeuwengroten* minted is not certain. They are more often than not ascribed to Dirk-Loef, but his uncle Dirk of Horne is another possible candidate. The legends on the coins have not yet been satisfactorily deciphered, which only exacerbates the problem.

MONETA VIERD / DIRIC type

Weert mint
v.d. Chijs Plate XXX, 2
R. Serrure —



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55003-1 / 2.53 g.

• ✠ MON [...]VIERD'
O'.DI RID' [V'πN'] HER•
[✠ BND]ICTV : [SIT :] NOm[ε : DNI : NRI] : IHV : [XPI]

RM-55003-1:

The Roman N of NOME is clear. The obverse, border leaves appear to have 3 lobes. It is not clear if the outer border is 12♣ or 11♣ / 1♣, but the visible portion of the top emblem looks more like a lion's tail than the lobe of a leaf. On this piece, it is not possible to see if the A's were intended to have crossbars or not.

Both the correct reading and the intended meaning of the reverse, inner legend are in question:

MONETA VIERDensis (i.e. Weert)

DIRICvs VAN HERnO ? (or HErNO)

DIRICVs AN__ HERnO ?

DIRICvs Van AlteNa HERnO ?

DIRICVs AlteNa HERnO ?

Previous authors have stated that the legend is not in Latin, but half Latin / half Dutch (*Diets*), and reads: *Diricvs van Herno*, i.e. Dirk of Horne.

According to Haanen, p. 74 ^[4], the legend reads: DIRIC VAN ME[R]O = *Dirk van Merode*, without further explanation. But the first letter is clearly an **h**, not an **M** (or even **Ṣ**) – a reading of **hER** (or **hEN**) is possible, but not **MER**. (It is conceivable that the final **R** is in fact an **Ṣ**.)



hER (or hEN)

Although we have no alternative reading to offer, we nevertheless have doubts about the reading DIRICvs VAN HERnO (or HErNe). There appear to be abbreviation marks (apostrophes) after the V and the N, which would be unnecessary for the word VAN (*of*):



V'AN'

RM 55003-1 (detail)

Despite the assertion commonly made by numismatists that many die-sinkers (perhaps even engravers) were illiterate, more often than not the legends on later medieval coins are fairly precise, and not simply haphazard (die-cutting errors notwithstanding). Indications of abbreviation (apostrophes) are not usually found where they do not belong, and they usually belong at the end of abbreviated words on medieval coins. **VA'N** is unnecessary and unlikely to have been used for VAN.

On **RM 55003-1**, the **Q** (?) of VAN (?) is illegible, and illegible coins do not help solve the problem.

MONETA VESMN type

Wessem mint
v.d. Chijs Plate XXX, 4
R. Serrure 45



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55003-2 / 1.71 g.

✠ MONE[TA + VESM]N'
DED ERI [CDH ORN]
[...]: SIT :) **V**OM[...]

RM 55003-2:

This coin is fairly light, not even 2 grams in weight. The obverse outer border has a set of three horns in the 12:00 position, the crest of Horne. Note the Latin **E** in MONETA, which is unusual for a *leeuwengroot* of any region. The {retrograde} Latin **N** in NOME is also unusual.

MONETA VESseMeNsis
 DEDERIC De HORNe



Ɱ' ✚

RM 55003-2 (detail)
photo: P. Torongo

If there was intended to be a pellet between the **N** and the cross, it is small and malformed.

County of Holland (3 coins)

Count William V (William of Bavaria) (c. 1350-1389)

Grolle 17.2.2

All 3 of the Museum Rotterdam/ van Rede *leeuwengroten* from Holland seem to be of the exact, same type. It would be interesting to know their provenance – were they all originally found together? All 3 coins have a pellet **L** in **HOLAND**, pellets left and right of the initial cross, and a leaf-mark with a straight stem pointing up towards the **H** of **HOLAND**. On the reverse, all 3 coins have a double pellet (colon) after DVX.

• ✚ • MONETA ✚ hOLLAND'
 GVIL LELM DVX:Q OMES
 ✚ BNDICTV: SIT: NOMES: DNI: DRI: IHV: XPI



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 56041 / 3.11 g.

The pellet to the left of the initial cross is under the **D** of **HOLAND**, on the central lion's nose: **D**.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 56042 / 3.40 g.

The pellet to the left of the initial cross is under the **D** of **HOLAND**.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 56068 / 3.07 g.

County of Flanders (10 coins)

Count Louis I (Louis of Nevers) (1322-1346) (1 coin)



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55641 / 3.11 g.

✠ MONETA * FLAND'

LVD OVI CACO MES

✠ BNDICTV : SIT : DOMUS : DNI : DRI : DEI : IHV : XPI

BeNeDICTVm SIT NOMEn DomiNI NostRI DEI IHsV CHRIsTi
Blessed be the Name of Our Lord God Jesus Christ

This is an outstanding example of this type of coin. Note the obverse border of 12 leaves, and the word DEI in the reverse, outer legend. This type is one of the oldest types of *leeuwengroten*, probably minted c. 1338. There is another, similar type known that has Roman N's in the reverse, outer legend (struck c. 1337?), which may be the very oldest type of *leeuwengroot* struck.

In the photographs above, it appears as though the crossbar of the A of FLAND is an annulet: **A**, but that is just a photographic illusion; the crossbar is straight (but feeble):



County of Flanders

Count Louis II (Louis of Mâle) (1346-1384)

All of the *leeuwengroten* struck for Louis of Mâle have an obverse border of 11♣ / 1♣, and the word DEI is absent from the outer legend on the reverse.

ISSUE II

(24 November, 1346 – 27 May, 1351)

Haeck Type 6A



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-2 / 2.96 g.

✠ • MONET + FLAND'
 LVD OVI C<C MES

Coins of Louis of Mâle's Issue II are instantly recognizable by the round **O** in COMES on the reverse. This coin, well worn from circulation, is an example of a Haeck Type II-6A^[5]. Coins of this type are quite rare; most Issue II coins have 5-lobed leaves in the outer border. But on this piece the 3-lobed leaves are clear, as is the barless **A** in MONETA, the barred **A** in FLAND, and the straight-stemmed leaf-mark between the words. The pellet right of the initial cross is also visible. With this coin, we are able to confirm the existence of Haeck's proposed Type 6A.

ISSUE V

(20 December, 1354 – 17 June, 1358)

Haeck Type 12

• ✠ MONETA ✠ FLAND'
 LVD OVI CACO MES
 ✠ BNDICTV : SIT : NOMES : DNI : NRI : IHV : XPI

12 ✠

Coins of this type are the most common sort known today.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-6 / 2.71 g.

This coin may be from the 'footless' N sub-type of Issue V.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-7 / 3.05 g.

This coin appears to be from the 'narrow' L sub-group.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-8 / 2.66 g.

Although it is difficult to be certain, this coin appears to be from 'rough' style sub-group.

ISSUE VI

(22 October, 1359 – 4 December, 1361) (?)

Haeck Type 16

[. ✠ MON[**ET** ✠ FL**AN**]ND'

LVD OVI [C^oCO] MES

✠ BNDICTV : SIT : NO[ME : DNI : NRI : IHV : XP]I



1  / 11 



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-3 / 2.35 g.



RM 55642-3 (detail)

The coin is only semi-legible, due to corrosion and wear, but it appears that the A's have no crossbars, making it likely to have been struck during Issue VI. Coins of this issue are fairly rare.

ISSUE VII

(4 December, 1361 – 27 September, 1362)

Haeck Type 17

• ✠ MONETA + FLAND'
 LVD OVI MES

1 / 11

There are 4 coins in the collection with pellet L's on both faces, indicating that they were struck during Issue VII. All 4 coins have the 'bow' A's seen on some (but not all) Issue VII coins. Coins of this issue have 3-lobed border leaves instead of 5-lobed, and are not all that rare.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-1 / 2.66 g.



RM 55642-4 / 2.66 g.
photo: Museum Rotterdam



RM 55642-5 / 2.22 g.
photo: Museum Rotterdam

There is little trace of a leaf-stem.



RM 55642-5 (detail)



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-9 / 2.88 g.



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 55642-10 / 2.51 g.

Coins Found During Excavations for the Spoortunnel (3):

County of Flanders

Count Louis II (Louis of Mâle) (1346-1384)

ISSUE I

(20 January, 1346 – 20 November, 1346)

medieval counterfeit



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

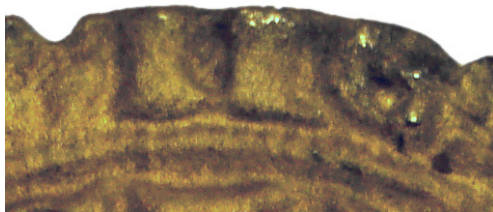
RM 59254-187 / 1.24 g.

✠ MONETA ✚ FLAND' ✚
LVD OVI C^o MES
✠ BNDICTV : SIT : **QOM** E : DNI : DRI [: IHV : XPI]

RM 59254-187:

This piece is almost certainly a medieval counterfeit. The weight is light for a *leeuwengroot*. The leaf-mark after MONETA is unusual. The lack of pellets by the initial cross of the obverse legend should indicate a coin from Issue 1, but the general look of the coin does not conform to the known Issue 1 specimens. In fact, the general look of the coin resembles other known counterfeits.

But perhaps most telling of all: the reverse, outer legend begins at 6:00 instead of 12:00 like the inner legend does. This has never been seen on an official, Flemish issue, for as far as we are aware. Furthermore, a Roman **M** in **NOME** has never been seen on a *leeuwengroot* specimen of Louis of Mâle.



*Roman M in **NOME** (at 12:00)*



*✠ **BND** (at 6:00)*

ISSUE IV

(7 September, 1353 – 24 October, 1354)

Haeck Type 11



photo: Museum Rotterdam(some distortion)



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

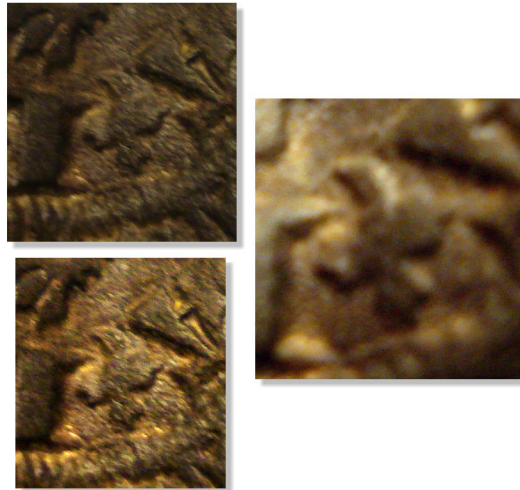
RM 59254-553 / 3.20 g.

**• ✠ MONETA ✚ FLAND'
 LVD OVI α&OO MES**

This coin, although badly bent, is a clear and legible example of a Haeck Type IV-11 ^[5]. Coins of this type are extremely rare. On this piece the 5-lobed border leaves are clear, as are the barred A's in both MONETA and FLAND. The pellet left of the initial cross is also

visible, as is the all-important leaf-mark after MONETA, with its stem clearly curving toward the **F** of FLAND.

Until now, all of the known pieces thought to have been struck during Issue IV were slightly suspect, as they all had fairly short stems that were open to interpretation as to their nature. But the stem on coin RM 59254-553 is clear, and unquestionably points to the **F** and not the **A**. With this coin, we are able to confirm the existence of Haeck's proposed Type IV-11. (See our paper on Issue IV: ref. 15.)



RM 59254-553 (detail)

The coin is difficult to photograph because it is bent, but we have seen the actual specimen, which is always an advantage.

Issue V

(20 December, 1354 – 17 June, 1358)

Haeck Type 12

medieval counterfeit



photo: Museum Rotterdam



photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

RM 59254-555 / 2.73 g.

Although the characteristics of this piece conform to those of Issue V, the general “look” of the coin is that of a medieval counterfeit. Author Torongo viewed this coin on two separate days, and on both occasions had the distinct impression that the coin was not genuine. The weight of the coin does not resolve the issue either way.

CONCLUSION

The following *leeuwengroten* can be found in the collection of the Museum Rotterdam:

Ex-collection van Rede (16):

55003-1	Horne (Weert) : Dirk Loef (?) ☠ c. 1400-1403
55003-2	Horne (Wessem) : Dirk Loef (?)
56041	Holland : William V (c. 1350-1389)
56042	Holland : William V
56068	Holland : William V
55641	Flanders : Louis of Nevers (1322-1346)
55642-1	Flanders : Louis of Mâle (1346-1384), Issue VII
55642-2	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue II, type 6A
55642-3	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue VI
55642-4	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue VII
55642-5	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue VII
55642-6	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue V
55642-7	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue V ('narrow' L)
55642-8	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue V
55642-9	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue V
55642-10	Flanders : Louis of Mâle, Issue VII

***Spoortunnel* finds (3):**

59254-187	Flanders Louis of Mâle, Issue V (counterfeit)
59254-553	Flanders Louis of Mâle, Issue IV-11
59254-555	Flanders Louis of Mâle, Issue V (counterfeit?)

The Flemish Issue II, Type 6A coin, the Issue IV coin and the Issue VI coin are all significant pieces for the study of the Flemish *leeuwengroot*, and the 2 coins from Horne are important pieces for the study of *leeuwengroten* of all regions. The counterfeit pieces are interesting as well, as are the Holland coins. The coin of Louis of Nevers is an excellent example, and the other Flemish coins, although somewhat more mundane, are also of use for our study.



RM 51195

photo: P. Torongo (some distortion)

Although not a *leeuwengroot*, this is another interesting, medieval coin, originally from van Rede's collection: a *groot*, stuck in Holland (at Dordrecht) for John (Jan) II (1299-1304) (Grolle 13.1.1).

NOTES

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except:

Additional photographs © 2016 Paul Torongo

Conclusions as to which mintmarks correspond to which issues for Flemish coins have been drawn based in part on Aimé Haeck's *De leeuwengroten met het kruisje van Lodewijk van Male – Een proeve van (her)classificatie*^[5], as well as the authors' own expertise, including our *A Preliminary Look at the Leeuwengroten of Louis of Mâle: Issues IV and V*^[15].

The authors are especially grateful to the Museum Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, and to Dolf Ruesink (in particular) for their cooperation and assistance.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Aimé Haeck, Martin Damsma, Erik van der Kam, Jean-Claude Martiny and Ernie Ruigrok.

The photographs taken by the museum staff were produced with the camera plane parallel to the coin face, which is correct. The photographs taken by author Torongo were produced with the coins lying on a table and the photographer leaning over them, which inevitably produces a shadow. In order to avoid this shadow, it was necessary to lean backwards, taking the camera plane out of parallel, resulting is a somewhat distorted image of the coin – in this sense, the photos are inaccurate. Despite this distortion, the author's photographs have been included alongside those from the museum, since the difference in lighting reveals details not apparent in the museum photos.

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