

Tetbury Tokens

Tetbury tokens were issued by some tradesmen during the period 1650-1670 in the period of the Civil Wars when normality was absent. It is thought the minting of them was financed by the Feoffees. The legend and device was taken from a contemporary borough seal and show 'ye armes of Tetbury Burrough' although not recognised by the College of Arms then nor now. They recall an earlier borough seal used in 1397 which has a *luce naiant hauriant*. They were very popular and one collector, John Neufville Taylor, a one-time curator of Gloucester City Museums, collected more than 700 specimens in Gloucestershire.

What of Tetbury? One of the traders was **Obadiah Arrowsmith**, and his wife Alice, haberdashers, and he was also bailiff from 1650, again in 1656-1661. Obadiah had been a Churchwarden in 1640 when he (lime) washed the church, painted the pulpit and benched the chancel, and again in 1649. He was one of the lessees of the borough who enabled the Market House to be built. Sounds a good chap but in 1659 the Court Leet presented him for laying dung in Chipping Croft; in 1660 for erecting a stack for a signpost and in 1661 for putting a horse in the common. On the token was printed, on the obverse side Arrowsmith Obadiah and on the reverse In Tetbury Baylef and then the initials A O A.

John Stephens, a tallow chandler had a token in 1664 which gave his name on the obverse and on the other side In Tetbury 1664 and the initial S with the Roman numerals 1 1. In 1682 he signed a bill of complaint to the Exchequer about misapplication of profits from the markets. At an unknown date the borough jury presented him for laying timber in Chipping Croft.

The third of Tetbury's five tokens was owned by **Antipas Swinnerton** who was described as a 'woll-man'. He married Margaret Huntley at Tetbury in 1638 and had five children. He

was a Churchwarden in 1651-2 and had the steeple pointed and the weathercock gilded, and ten years later had the leads re-cast. He joined with Obadiah Arrowsmith, and others, in having the Market House built. In his turn he also fell foul of the Court Leet in 1660 when he was ordered to take down his porch which encroached on the highway. On his token were the words Swinnerton Antipas (a Woolpack) and on the other Of Tedbury, Wollman and the initials S A M

The last of the named Token providers was **Samuel Teakle** who was a clothier, and married Elizabeth in 1632. In 1647 he rented two tenements at £1 each from Sir Thomas Estcourt's executors. Samuel Teakle was also a churchwarden who helped in the building of the Market House. He, too, had a problem with the Court Leet who ordered him to cease obstructing a path from Cirencester Street [Gumstool Hill] to the dean bottom. He had to pay tax on three hearths in 1671, as did most of the population (wars had to be paid for somehow) and when he died he left his second wife, Mary, a tenanted house plus two other houses in The Chipping. The family name was carried on by his son Caleb. His wording was Teakle Samuel and on the reverse Clothier in Tetbury with the initials T S E.

The fifth token found in Tetbury was presumably a general one which simply said on one side 'In Tetbury this farthing is owned and on the reverse side
The Armes of that Burrough'