

Create Your Own 17th Century Token

With Ely Museum

In the 17th century the government wasn't making enough small value coins. This meant the average person had difficulty getting change from their day to day purchases. This led to small businesses all over the country making their own coins to give as change to their customers. Ely businesses were no exception.

These coins are known as tokens. Each shop would have their own token design often featuring the name of the shop owner and something related to the shop.

Learn about some Ely tokens and the people who made them. Then have a go at making your own.

Token Face

The face of a coin is normally where you find a portrait of the king or queen. Tokens however don't feature a picture instead they feature the shop owner's initials.

If the shop owner was married he would include his wife's name as well.

These initials are surrounded by text known as a legend. In tokens these are often very simple using the date and the location of the shop.



Luke Crockson

Has a very simple legend. He doesn't even use the date. Instead he has a line of stars followed by "IN ELEY". Spelling wasn't as fixed as it is today so his spelling of Ely as Eley was not incorrect just different.



Cornelius Fuller

Uses his initials C F on his tokens separated with a flower design

Token Reverse

The reverse of the coin is simply the other side to the face. On tokens this will normally feature an image that represents the type of shop the token comes from. Sometimes it was a picture of an object used by that shop or the coat of arms representing its trade. The legend around the edge is usually the full name of the owner.



John Knowls

The K at the top is for Knowls underneath is a J for John and an A for his wife Anna



Cornelius Fuller

Cornelius ran a haberdashery (a men's clothing store) he used the haberdashery coat of arms on the reverse of his token.



John Knowls

John ran the Ship Inn (a pub by the riverside) and used an image of a ship on his tokens



Luke Crockson

Luke was a Chandler (someone who made candles) and used the image of candles on a drying rack for his token



Thomas Chadarton

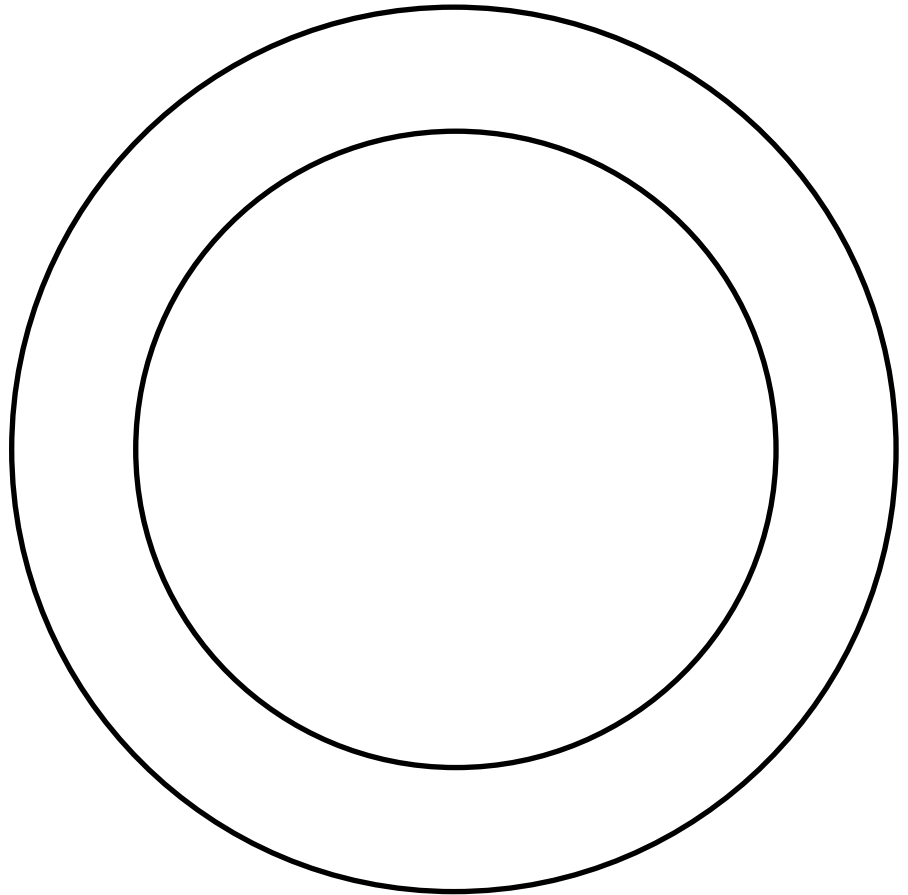
Thomas ran the Swan Inn and chose a swan for his token

Create Your Own

Use everything you learned to have a go at designing your own token just like the shop owners in the 17th century did!

Token Face

- In the centre circle you should write your initials.
- You could separate the letters of your initials with a star or flower pattern
- Around the edge you should write the year 2020
- Then write your location like IN ELY or IN... where your live



Token Reverse

- In the centre should be a picture that best represents you. It could be an image of your favourite thing or it could be an image from a job you would like to do one day.
- Around the edge you should write your name in full

