

CHAPTER 7

THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEQUEL TO THE ENGLISH PENNY AS FRISIAN UNIT OF ACCOUNT (c.1350-c.1500)

The order of the story, so far, has been chronological, but after the first period of the English penny I have to change the order. The story from now on concerns only one period, the late Middle Ages, but during this period there are different stories in different Frisian sealands, so it has to be presented in what we might call geographical order. However, it will be an odd geographical order, as instead of presenting it from west to east or from east to west, we have to take a significant difference between the sealands into account which requires another approach. This study aims to trace and explain the evolution of the money of account systems in Frisia. As in the late Middle Ages this evolution was apparently split up into two diverging developments, I have to deal with those developments separately. Essential for our understanding of this divergence is the fate of the English penny in the 14th century. We saw in the previous chapter how the English penny quite easily took over the role of standard coin for the unit of account in Frisia in about 1250, when the ‘old-Frisian’ pennies had become too small to be useful for that purpose. In 1279, the export of genuine English pennies was prohibited by the English king. So the currency supply in Frisia was mainly limited to imitative sterlings (and halfpennies and farthings) alongside smaller and larger silver coins imported from France and Flanders, which also served as denominations or fractional coins in the ‘English’ currency system. This development had consequences for the development of the unit of account in Frisia. In one group of sealands I found a continuation of the previous development; that is, a continuation of the sterling based system of account. In the other group of sealands I found the development of a new, indigenous money system of account, first in the Yade area and finally in Oostergo, in Mid-Frisia. I therefore start with two chapters dealing with the continuation of the sterling system (Westergo and the Ommelanden), and the following four chapters describe the new system in the order in which it appeared in the documents; that is, from east to west (the Yade area,¹ the Emden area,² Groningen and Drenthe, and Oostergo).

Furthermore, I have some amendments to make concerning the areas of the sealands. According to a treatise on the seven sealands of the league of the Upstallisbam,

¹ In my study, the Yade area denotes roughly the seventh sealand, comprising Wangerland, Oistringen, Riustringen, Butyadingen, Stadland, Wursten and Wiurden.

² In my study, the Emden area denotes roughly the sixth sealand, comprising Emsingo, Brokmerland, Norderland, Harlingerland, Aurikerland, Mormerland, Overledingerland, Lengenerland and a few smaller districts.

Sewenwalden belonged to the sealand Oostergo, but its monetary development in fact followed Westergo. Hence I have, in my presentation - for clarity of demonstration only - encroached upon the mythical concept of the seven sealands³ and separated Sewenwalden from Oostergo to connect it to Westergo. Groningen and the Ommelanden were also one sealand, and Drenthe, with the Stellingwerven, was another. But the history of money of Groningen in the late Middle Ages differs from the history of money in the Ommelanden, whereas Drenthe, for the most part, has followed Groningen; so I have taken Groningen from the Ommelanden and connected it to Drenthe. For the same reasons, the district of Achtkarspelen is separated from Oostergo and connected to the Ommelanden, and the district of Oistringen is separated from 'the 6th sealand' (the Emden area) and connected to 'the 7th sealand' (the Yade area). The monetary boundaries within Frisia, had apparently little to do with the political division of the country.

Closely over the southern border of Drenthe and Sewenwalden, two seignorities were situated - those of Coevorden and Cunre. These belonged to the lay territory of the Bishop of Utrecht, but they acted *de facto* independently of their lord until they were seized in 1402 and 1407 respectively. They did not belong to Frisia, but they are mentioned here because their mints contributed to the currency of Frisia.

In the present chapter, only general Frisian characteristics regarding the history of money in the late Middle Ages will be dealt with.

The historical context

Politically, Frisian society stood quite apart from the surrounding territorial structures, but as a commercial society it was open to the rest of the world. This implies that the influence of general economic developments in Europe would have been strong. These must be described before we pay attention to regional and local developments during the late Middle Ages.

The European economy was suffering from plague, famine, sea pirates, and internal and international wars. The resulting decline in population was accompanied by a shift in the division of income.⁴ Labour became relatively scarce in relation to land. This resulted in a relative rise in wages in relation to agricultural prices.⁵ This shift was

³ RQ, 110-112. Meijering, *De willekeuren*, 291, maintains that the oldest surviving version of this treatise dates from 1417. It refers to a common mythical description of the area covered by the league of the Upstallisbam. In Meijering, "De zeven zeelanden", 107, he agrees with Richthofen, *Untersuchungen II*, 1-145, that the treatise might have been made in connection with the privileges granted to Frisia by the emperor Sigismund in 1417, but he adds that it reveals older layers.

⁴ North, *The rise*, 71-90.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 13-14.

favourable to the industrious population of the towns and to the small tenants in the countryside, but unfavourable to the property-owners and, in particular, the landowners.⁶ Moreover, in the first decades after the years of plague of about 1350, the sudden rise in the *per capita* stock of money may have caused a rise in the general price level.⁷ This inflation would have enhanced the problems of the property-owners, but it was short-lived. The growing participation of labourers and small tenants in the money economy resulted in an increasing need for money in Europe. It is assumed that the production of bullion did not keep pace with this growing demand. This would even have caused deflation if the silver content of the coins had not been diminished to meet the demand.⁸ By reducing the precious metal content of the coins, the rising price of this metal could be accommodated together with a relatively stable purchasing power of the money, expressed in a relatively stable general price level.⁹ However, we can assume that the shift in the economic structures, mentioned before, was not easily accepted by the big landowners. In Frisia some of them tried to safeguard their positions by political means.

From a political point of view, the middle of the 14th century was even more of a turning point. The Frisian resistance to foreign pretensions was still strong enough to keep the country independent during the late Middle Ages, notwithstanding attacks and partial losses of territory.¹⁰ The change in Frisia came from the inside.

The lack of a central authority, legalised to keep order within the country when needed, had already been a major weak point in the Frisian political structure in the previous centuries, as we have seen. The league of the Upstallisbam did not even develop into a confederation. Groningen, rapidly becoming the most powerful town in Frisia, seems to have tried to revive the league in 1361. A treaty for the next 8 years was made in

⁶ *Ibidem*, 75.

⁷ *Ibidem*, 77.

⁸ Graus, "La crise monétaire", 445-454, describes how, in the 14th century in Bohemy, centre of silver mines, silver production went on as usual, and yet, here too, there was a painful debasement of silver coins. In his opinion this was provoked by the growing demand for money among the lower classes of society.

⁹ North, *The rise*, 74-79.

¹⁰ In 1368, Christian and Maurice, Counts of Oldenburg and the Archbishop of Bremen, against Butyadingen (Maurice slain); in 1369, Christian, Count of Oldenburg, against Butyadingen; in 1395, Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht, against Drenthe (successful); from 1398-1401: Albrecht, Duke of Bavaria and regent of Holland, against Frisia, with short-lived success; in 1401, Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht, besieging Groningen in vain; in 1408, Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht, against the Stellingwerven (Mid-Frisia); in 1409: same Bishop, same conflict; in 1428, Diederik, Count of Oldenburg, against Riustringen (loss of Varel and the Friese Wede); in 1456, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and Count of Holland, against Frisia (given up before military action); in 1473-1474, Charles the Rash, Duke of Burgundy and Count of Holland (given up before military action). See among others: Janse, *Grenzen*, passim; Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, passim.

Groningen by representatives of Westergo, Oostergo, Humsterland, Hunsingo, Fivelingo, Oldambt, Reiderland, Emsingo, Brokmerland and Groningen itself, confirming the previous treaties and adding a few new clauses regarding internal peace and justice,¹¹ but in 1368 only the Ommelanden and Groningen continued the alliance.¹²

New forces had entered the political stage. Their emergence appears to have been a result of the new economic conditions of the big landowners, together with fallacies inherent in the communal system of public authority. The main fallacy was the lack of power to enforce communal law where necessary. If a conflict between two parties could not be settled by a judicial sentence, the only solution was to enforce it by military action. In old times the males of the community as a whole had the duty to follow the communal officer of the ban (*bonnere*) - with a banner on his spear - to support him in the execution of the law. But obviously this system did not work very well. Urban communities such as those of Groningen could develop a more effective executive structure (supposedly a small force of hired soldiers with an experienced commander). In many rural communities, however, it was not the community itself but some of the rich landowners, using their stone-houses (*stinsen/borgen*) as fortifications, who filled the gap by hiring their own troops. In this way they tried to defend themselves against the pretended rights of others, mounted expeditions to execute their own real or pretended rights¹³ and, lastly, sought to 'protect' the local tenants upon whom they were increasingly dependent. In the preceding centuries small local fights had often resulted, as we have seen. At last, in the 14th and 15th centuries, many Frisian communities put themselves under the military protection of one of these local warlords, called *haedling* (Old Frisian) or *hovetling* (Low Saxon).¹⁴

But this supposed solution only made things worse. *Haedlingen/hovetlingen* started to co-operate in various military groups. At last the number of these groups was reduced to two factions who remained in continuous conflict: the Schieringer faction and the Vetkoper faction. The second half of the 14th and the 15th centuries are characterised by bitter rivalry and fierce wars between these factions. At the end of the 15th century, the whole structure collapsed.

The conflict between the Schieringer and the Vetkoper factions came to a head in the first decades of the 15th century. At first the Schieringer faction had the lead, with a strong position in the town of Groningen. Groningen became the refuge of those members of this faction who had been driven away from their own *stinsen/borgen* elsewhere in Frisia. But the tide turned when Keno tom Broke, already the most powerful *hovet-*

¹¹ OGD1: 509.

¹² Emmius/Reeken, *Friesische Geschichte*, 209.

¹³ Schmidt, "Studien", 45-46.

¹⁴ Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, 20.

ling in East Frisia between Ems and Yade, conquered Emden (in 1413) and started to support the Vetkoper faction west of the Ems. In 1415 he conquered Groningen and the Ommelanden, and in the next year he penetrated Mid-Frisia. After these successive defeats, the Schieringer Mid-Frisians, driven into a corner, made an appeal to the Emperor. The Emperor, who at that time was King Sigismund of Hungary, was indeed ready to intervene since this might help his policy of restoring imperial influence in the north of Europe and counterbalancing the growing power of the Burgundian princes. In a charter of 1417 Sigismund recognised that Frisia ‘of old’ was not to be enfeoffed, the only condition being that the imperial authority had to be respected. Consequently the Frisians had to pay homage and a yearly tribute directly to the emperor, who in his turn was to defend Frisia against foreign rule.¹⁵ In 1418 the homage was duly paid by Westergo, Oostergo and Riustringen, but not by the other sealands ruled by Keno tom Broke.¹⁶ Keno tom Broke died suddenly in 1417, but although his dynamic approach was halted, his strong position was maintained by his successor. As even the Emperor appeared unable to break the deadlock by using force, the Schieringer faction looked for another ally, whom they found in their former enemy, the Count of Holland. His intervention was short-lived; his attempt at making a peace treaty with the other faction was not accepted.¹⁷ At last the Frisian adversaries preferred to compromise among themselves, which resulted in the all-Frisian ‘reconciliation treaty of Groningen’ in 1422.¹⁸

This treaty effectively restored the old positions, but it took another decade before the political legacy of Keno tom Broke in East Frisia was finally settled. After that (1433), conflicts between *haedlingen/hovetlingen* continued to result in local fights. Nevertheless the call for peace was heard and understood by the powerful town of Groningen, which - in its own interest as a central market place - tried to bring peace to the Ommelanden and Mid-Frisia by piecemeal treaties with the various districts, sub-districts and even villages. Its growing influence, however, was also felt as a threat to the positions of some *headlingen*, and at the end of the century a military conflict between a number of them in Mid-Frisia and Groningen ended up with a new appeal to the emperor.¹⁹

This time the act was final. In 1498, the Emperor appointed his stadtholder in the Netherlands, the Duke of Saxony, as hereditary governor, in his name (*gubernator, potestatis*), of all of Frisia.²⁰ The realisation of the governor’s power resulted in war again, particularly with Groningen, but it ended finally with the loss of Frisian independence.

¹⁵ Chbk1, 399-401; Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, 37-47; 251-255.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 52.

¹⁷ Chbk1, 437-441.

¹⁸ GAG STAD: P16 RvR 135.

¹⁹ Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, 85ff.

²⁰ Chbk1, 786-789.

The history of the means of payment

In the previous medieval centuries the currency in Frisia had, generally speaking, been similar in the various sealands. There had been differences in the appearance of the coins, but their silver content was probably almost identical from east to west. This changed in the second half of the 13th century, as we have seen, when the ‘old-Frisian’ money finally became obsolete and new types of coins entered the currency from abroad. English pennies (sterlings), cavaliers (double sterlings) and *tornoyse groten* (triple sterlings) have been found all over Frisia, but in addition to these discoveries, other coins such as *hallingen*²¹ (halfpennies), pennies of Münster and of Osnabrück, Holland pennies, Brabant pennies (*lovenschen*) and *copkinos* were current according to the treaty of the Upstallisbam in 1323. This variation in the composition of the currency in Frisia gave way to different selections of development in different parts of Frisia. To some extent these processes are to be regarded as the reflection of a general European tendency: the growing monetisation of the economy and hence the growing need for small money for local use (‘usual money’²²). As the manufacturing and marketing of coins was a trade in itself,²³ particularly in Frisia, this need was met. The smaller a coin, the higher the proportion of production costs contained in its face value. In due course coins with a silver content below their silver equivalence as a means of payment - that is, their face value - were also produced, the mint providing a warranty that they could at any time be exchanged for coins with a silver content corresponding to their face value. The more trustworthy the mint, the easier the acceptance of this token money.²⁴

Local money/usual money is found in almost all of the Frisian sealands. This money had local variants but perhaps a common origin. The evolutionary processes in the various sealands are to be discussed in the following chapters. The supply of small money is probably best exemplified by the mint of Jever since, in 1312 and 1317, mention is made of Oistringen pennies worth half a sterling,²⁵ but whereas the appearance of Oistringen pennies struck in the last half of the 13th and the first half of the 14th century can only be guessed at, Oistringen pennies dating from the second half of the 14th century have been identified. Similar types from that period have been discovered

²¹ So-called ‘enigmatic sterlings’ have been discovered in Denmark and Mecklenburg (Dannenberg, “Der Sterling-Fund von Ribnitz”, 302-323; Thomson, “Foreign sterlings”, 67-69 (discovery Haagendrup); Steen Jensen, “Møntfundet fra Kirial”, 37-151). It is suggested, that these enigmatic sterlings could be identified with the *hallingen* in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323 and would have been imported into Mid-Frisia, as most of these enigmatic sterlings were struck in Cunre (Grolle, “De financiële paragraaf”, text referring to and including note 31; unpublished treatise used in a meeting of the societies of numismatists in the Netherlands and in Westphalia in Amsterdam, June 1994, without page number).

²² Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 52: the term *Usualsilber* was used in the middle ages to denote silver of the locally standard of fineness.

²³ Mayhew, “The circulation”, 57.

²⁴ Sprandel, *Das mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem*, 158.

²⁵ Chapter 10, ‘The history of the means of payment’.

outside the Yade area - in the Emden area and in Groningen. The coherence between these types of coins and a common inspiration - the sterling - seems obvious, but remains only an assumption.²⁶

Alongside the production of sterling-oriented coins in Frisia, the currency was supplied by the import of silver coins, mainly from Flanders, and gold coins from France, the Rhineland and Guelders. The silver half-*groten* of c. 1.8g of silver, produced in Flanders before 1337,²⁷ and, above all, the (*leeuwen*)*groten* or *vleemse groten*, produced from 1337 to 1365 with a final silver content of c. 1.5g,²⁸ became significant elements in the Frisian circulation, particularly in the western part. They were succeeded by the *vleemse placken*, produced in the period 1365-1384 with a final silver content of c. 2.0g,²⁹ and by *butkens* and *butdraggers*, from 1390-1402, finally containing c. 1.0 and c. 2.0g of silver respectively,³⁰ which in their turn played a prominent role in the Frisian currency. These Flemish coins remained in circulation during the late Middle Ages; that is, quite some time after their production came to an end.

Only once in the late Middle Ages did a chance seem to occur for the introduction of a new general Frisian currency. That was when the Emperor Sigismund intervened in the faction conflicts in Frisia; see above. In 1417 he granted the town of Leeuwarden the exclusive right of mintage in Frisia, forbidding the minting by either the town of Groningen or by Ocko tom Broke (in the Emden and Yade areas). One of the coins to be struck was an imperial *grote* at the rate of 20 *groten* for half an English noble (or 16 for a Rhine guilder).³¹ His intervention was a failure though, and the imperial *groten* were never struck (or at least, they have never been discovered).³²

After 1433 the Burgundian *stuvers*, produced between 1433 and 1456 with a silver content of c. 1.6g and between 1466 and 1474 with c. 1.4g of silver,³³ became the main silver coins in Flanders, Brabant, Hainaut and Holland. They were imported into Frisia and also imitated with local differentiation, as we shall see in the next chapters. This coin was highly successful, not only in Frisia but in all the main parts of western Europe, because it satisfied the commercial need for a common means of payment. However, the imitation of the Burgundian *stuver* in Frisia, Cologne, Utrecht and Liège caused

²⁶ The coins in question are also similar to the 14th century *witten* of Lübeck (information kindly supplied by Dr H.E. van Gelder, 1996), and these Lübeck *witten* - and subsequently their imitations in the Hanse area - are also considered to be sterling derivations (Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 82).

²⁷ Van Gelder, "De munten van Vlaanderen", 123-124.

²⁸ Van der Wee, *Vlaams-brabantse muntstatistieken*, 43-44.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 55-56.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, 44-45; 57-58; Van Gelder, "Botdraggers", 118.

³¹ Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, 43; 254.

³² Information kindly supplied by Dr H.E. van Gelder, in 1996.

³³ Van der Wee, *Vlaams-brabantse muntstatistieken*, 97-98.

much friction with Burgundy. Competition among the mints of the various countries caused a rapid, ongoing debasement of the coins during the second half of the century. The Burgundian Dukes, aiming to stabilise the value of the Burgundian currency, tried to prevent the penetration of foreign coins. In 1476 letters of patent against foreign silver money were sent out, and among those mentioned were the coins of Leeuwarden, Groningen, Bolsward and Sneek³⁴. This monetary policy ended with the rule of Maximilian, regent in Burgundy since 1482, who manipulated the coinage as a source of revenue to meet the exigencies of war.³⁵ His policy turned the inevitable competition among currencies in western Europe into a *guerre monétaire*. This war was only halted for any length of time at the end of our period. Maximilian, who was German King as well as Burgundian regent, reached an agreement in 1492 that established monetary harmony between the Burgundian Netherlands and the Empire.³⁶ Frisia was not involved in this agreement, but there too the new European conditions induced a monetary recovery.

In the second half of the 14th century gold coins also appeared in the Frisian records.³⁷ The French *écu* (or *schild/sceld*), produced in France from 1337 to 1351 with a gold content of c.4.5g declining to c.3.4g,³⁸ was referred to until the end of the 15th century. The *rinsguilder* (= Rhine guilder) was also an important element in the currency all over Frisia. The genuine *rinsguilder* had been struck by the electors of the Rhine and other princes since 1354; it contained c.3.5g of gold until 1419, and c.2.8g thereafter.³⁹ Its lighter Guelders imitation, struck since 1379 with a varying gold content,⁴⁰ is mainly found in the Frisian areas where local (usual) money was used. The *rinsguilder* was also imitated in a number of Frisian towns.

The history of the measure of value

Although most of the late medieval documents on the measure of value in the various Frisian sealands concern one particular sealand, there are a few which concern a group of sealands, or Frisia as a whole.

It will be remembered from the previous chapter that the genuine ('new') English penny must have been the unit of account referred to in the treaty of the Upstallisbam in 1323 as well as in the 1338 peace treaty between Westergo, Oostergo, a number of

³⁴ Spufford, *Monetary problems*, 124-125.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, 164.

³⁶ See the chapter on *la guerre monétaire* in *ibidem*, 74-129, particularly 106-129. As Spufford says on p.129: 'Burgundian coinage was inextricably linked with that of Liège and Utrecht, Cologne and Friesland'.

³⁷ See Appendix II.

³⁸ Spufford, *Money*, 408.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, 408.

⁴⁰ Van Gelder, "Oostnederlands geld", 48ff.

Ommelanden districts and Drenthe, and Groningen. Apparently this was considered the standard unit for the Frisian league.

In 1361 a treaty of the Upstallisbam was made in Groningen. Most of the sealands were involved, but a few districts of the Ommelanden were missing, and so were Drenthe and the Yade area.⁴¹ It confirms the previous regulations (presumably those of 1323) and has a few clauses added. The clause regarding the money to be admitted, and its valuation, is neither adapted nor substituted. The amounts are expressed in marks. The wergeld mentioned in this treaty concerns a special case: the compensation of 40 *marquas antiquas* is to be paid to the heirs of the victim by anyone who hides the killer in an other sealand.⁴² *Marquas antiquas*, old marks, are frequently found in late-medieval sources in Frisia. They presuppose the existence of new marks, or current marks. Sometimes, in other documents, this expression is indicated more precisely: ‘old marks English’.⁴³ Where it is not, we must examine the expression in the context of the time. In 1361, old marks may refer to the money called ‘old’ sterlings mentioned in the treaty of 1323, which have been identified as (high-grade) Frisian imitative sterlings.⁴⁴ The wergeld in 1361 corresponds to twice the doubled wergeld in English marks, found in the last stage of the Fivelingo wergeld tradition.⁴⁵ A wergeld of 40 old marks English would be conceivable in this case.⁴⁶ We do not know the silver equivalence of the Frisian sterling about 1360. In 1323 it was valued at c.1.2g, but outside Frisia it had been valued at c.1.0g and c.1.1g in 1325 and 1335 respectively (as we have seen in the previous chapter). Probably the Frisian imitative sterling was still legally reckoned at its original silver equivalence of c.1.2g in 1361, so that the wergeld amount was a fossilised value. But except for cases of fossilisation, after 1351 the lighter genuine English pennies (c.1.1g fine⁴⁷) and the imitative Frisian sterlings cannot be distinguished as units of account. The legal rate of the genuine English penny in England remained at c.1.1g silver equivalence, but at that rate, even in the English Kingdom, the silver coinage was hardly profitable; in 1361-1370 the minting volume was only 9% of that of the previous decade, and in the following decades it fell as low as 3%, sloping down to almost zero.⁴⁸ Finally, in 1411, the silver content of the genuine English pennies was legally reduced in England to c.0.9g of silver. It seems unlikely that genuine English pennies were circulating in Frisia during the second half of the 14th century. The Frisian imitations

⁴¹ OGD1: 509.

⁴² Excursus 6.2: ‘On the wergeld in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323’.

⁴³ RAG Manuscripts: 13b (1425), RAG ADU: 33 (1464), RuG UB PEIP: 37, 44 (1503).

⁴⁴ The treaty itself was probably expressed in marks ‘new’ sterlings; that is, genuine English pennies (Excursus 6.2: ‘On the wergeld in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323’).

⁴⁵ Excursus 5.3: ‘On the analysis of the Fivelingo wergeld tradition’, stage (9).

⁴⁶ Excursus 1.1: ‘On the wergeld hypothesis’.

⁴⁷ Brooke, *English Coins*, 126: a penny of 18 grs (= 1.17g) of standard silver (= 0.925 fine). Hence silver content $0.925 \times c.1.17g = c.1.08g$.

⁴⁸ Spufford, *Money*, 418; Brooke, *English Coins*, 130-131: ‘difficulty of obtaining silver’.

may have remained current for some time, but this question is not answered by numismatic information on the discoveries so far. Because the genuine sterlings in England were undervalued in terms of the currency of the continent,⁴⁹ we may assume that the face value of the imitative sterlings in Frisia gradually slipped down to c.1.0g and c.0.9g silver equivalence in the second half of the 14th century; that is, to the legal English level in 1411.⁵⁰ Sterlings would still have been circulating in the second half of the 14th century, but when their presence in the currency diminished they were replaced by *butkens*, not only as means of payment but also explicitly representing the English penny as money unit of account, as we shall see. This seems to have remained the case to the end of the Middle Ages.

As I have said, the mention of old marks reveals the existence of new marks, in other words a new system of money of account. How this new money of account system came about in Frisia is not documented. Whereas the old money of account remained the basis of account in Westergo and the Ommelanden, the new systems emerged in the Yade area, the Emden area, the Ommelanden (alongside the old), Groningen and Drenthe, and Oostergo. There is little doubt that the new money was based on domestic minting for domestic use. The sterling derivations struck in the second half of the 14th century in Jever, Emden and Groningen, mentioned in the previous section, obviously reflect this domestic type of money.

The obvious coherence of the types of coins representing these systems in the second half of the 14th century, as well as their apparent common inspiration - the sterling, may be linked to the conjecture that I made in the previous chapter about the way the 'old-Frisian' money of account system during the second half of the 13th century was transformed into systems of money of account that were ultimately based on the English sterling penny as standard. An apparent deviation from the development according to this conjecture occurred in the Yade area in that period. Although there too the English penny may have been the basis of a new development, this did not result in the use of an imitative sterling valued at c.1.2g silver equivalence as standard, but in the use of a sterling derivation of less value, resulting in a penny Oistringen money of c.0.6g silver equivalence, half the value of an English penny, in 1317. A conjecture concerning that development is given in Chapter 10.

A development comparable with that of the Yade area may have occurred elsewhere in Frisia, but if so, no trace is left. The Fivelingo wergeld tradition mentions a point at

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 137: 'the English currency remained undervalued in relation to foreign coins'.

⁵⁰ Brooke, *English Coins*, 137. The English penny was reduced to 15 grs = $15 \times 0.065\text{g} = 0.975\text{g}$ gross weight and $0.925 \times 0.975\text{g} = 0.90\text{g}$ fine.

which a score ‘old-Frisian’ pennies was worth an (imitative) sterling; that is, when the ‘old-Frisian’ penny had a silver equivalence of only $c.1.2g : 20 = c.0.06g$ (c.1270/1280?⁵¹). That seems close to the turning point in the development in the Yade area, but, apart from Oistringen money, no mention is made in Frisia of coins worth half a sterling until the monetary regulation of the treaty of the Upstallisbam in 1323 (*in casu* the *hallingen*). Since that regulation, the carrying of ‘old-Frisian’ pennies, even below $c.0.08g$, was no longer allowed.⁵² Apparently, its earlier use at lower silver equivalence in Frisia must have caused much confusion; yet it is documented that earlier use below that level did indeed occur. About 1300, ‘old-Frisian’ pennies were valued at only $c.0.03g$ to $c.0.02g$ of silver.⁵³ The need for an alternative system was obvious, but at that time, unlike the Yade area a few decades earlier (as we assumed), an alternative system of money of account was already prevalent in these other areas of Frisia: the system based on the genuine or imitative English penny. However, compared with the former various ‘old-Frisian’ pennies, the English penny was a relatively heavy coin, and a growing need for smaller coins was a tendency of the time in the more prosperous parts of Europe.⁵⁴ In Frisia this development is reflected in the mention of *hallingen* ($\frac{1}{2}$ sterling), *lonschen* ($\frac{1}{3}$ rd sterling) and *kopkiins* ($\frac{1}{8}$ th sterling) in the treaty of 1323.

Now, the system of account in the Yade area, based on the Oistringen penny - an indigenous *halling*? - as the standard, may be the first example in Frisia of a local system of money of account designed to be convenient for the small man. We should not rule out the possibility that the use of this system influenced the emergence of similar systems in the Emden area, the Ommelanden and Groningen in the first half of the 14th century without leaving a clear trace in the documents. Moreover, the use of low-grade or brown sterlings in Groningen and Drenthe, and perhaps Sewenwalden, during that period⁵⁵ might indeed suggest the existence of such a system in those areas. Kappelhoff identifies the ‘usual money’ found in the Ommelanden in 1371 with the brown sterling.⁵⁶ However, we know too little about the money involved to jump to conclusions. After 1317 there is a gap in the data of about half a century, denying us sufficient indications of any relationship between the systems of money of account existent in the Yade area, the Emden area, the Ommelanden and Groningen after c.1350, or of their assumed origin in the Yade area about 1300.

Apart from the numismatic data, the main indication that we have is the existence in Groningen, in 1368, of a penny valued at half an English sterling as standard for a unit

⁵¹ Chapter 5, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁵² Excursus 6.1: ‘On the monetary regulation of the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323’.

⁵³ Chapter 5, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁵⁴ Spufford, *Money*, 237-239.

⁵⁵ Chapter 6, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁵⁶ Kappelhoff, “Das friesische Geldwesen”, 72.

of account. In a treaty of that year between Groningen and surrounding Ommelanden, mention is made of a mark of 24 old *groten*; that is, *tornoyse groten*. As a *tornoyse grote* was customarily equivalent to 3 English pennies, hence to 6 halfpennies, this was a mark worth $24 \times 6 = 144$ halfpennies. At that time, as we shall see in Chapter 12, a *tornoyse grote* was a debased, antiquated coin with a silver content of only 2.4g in France, its country of origin. If we suppose that its value in Frisia at that time was about the same, it follows that the unit of account in the treaty had a silver equivalence of c.0.4g; that is, less than half that of the English penny of the time. From further evidence it will appear clearly that the tie between the silver equivalence of this penny in Groningen and that of the genuine or imitative sterling had indeed been lost, but, curiously, the relationship between this penny of Groningen and the *tornoyse grote* on the one hand, and between the Oistringen penny and the *tornoyse grote* in 1317 on the other, was the same. The assumption arises that, in the first half of the 14th century, a new system of money of account had already emerged in Frisia, based on a standard coin initially worth half a sterling, derived from - but used alongside - the English money of account system. In the second half of that century, this system in Groningen was in many respects comparable with the systems found in the Yade area, the Emden area, the Ommelanden and Oostergo. The systems had no particular name, as far as we know, so in this study they are referred to under the general heading 'new-Frisian' money'. This denotation is more specific than the indistinct expression 'usual money' that is sometimes used in the documents. A common name for the various regional pennies used in late medieval Frisia seems all the more justified because, initially, the silver equivalence of the regional pennies of account was more or less interdependent in the 14th century, perhaps until about the 1380s.

The 'new-Frisian' pennies may themselves have been the standard for the penny of account, but they may also have been just token money, in which case denominations of larger silver - maybe the old *groten*⁵⁷ - had that role. So far, we cannot be sure. The paths of evolution of this new unit in the Frisian areas are described in the following chapters. A survey of the reconstruction of the silver equivalences of genuine sterlings, Frisian imitative sterlings and 'new-Frisian' pennies in the 14th century in the Yade area, the Emden area, the Ommelanden and Groningen can only be given roughly and tentatively. An attempt is made in table C.

After the more-or-less parallel development until the 1380s, a divergence occurred. In Groningen the system collapsed, and in the Ommelanden - if a separate system existed there at all - it disappeared. In the Emden and Yade areas the systems became politically connected. In Oostergo the system had only just emerged, and it took its own direction.

⁵⁷ Frisian imitative *tornoyse groten*. The *korte groten* - cavaliers, *petit gros* or *vleemse groten* - do not deserve consideration. See footnote 75.

Yet there must have been a need for links between the various systems of account in Frisia. With the help of these links, amounts in the one Frisian money unit could be easily converted into the other. As we shall see in the following chapters, they converged again during the course of the 15th century. The systems were subject to the same foreign influences, mainly those of the Low Countries bordering on the south of Frisia. To begin with, foreign coins such as the old *vleemse grote*, the *kromstert*, the black *stuver* and the white *stuver* completed the local currency. They were imitated, received a place in the regional currency systems and helped internal conversion as links to the regional pennies of account within Frisia. Hence, some coherence remained because, in a sense, they shared a common fate. This is exemplified by the so-called *guerre monétaire*, the monetary crisis in the second half of the 15th century.

Table C Silver equivalence of 14th century units of account in Frisia

The figures are derived from conclusions still to be drawn in the following chapters.

year	genuine English sterlings	Frisian imitative sterlings	‘new-Frisian’ pennies (approx.)
1317 ⁵⁸	1.3g	1.2g	0.65g
1323 ⁵⁹	1.3g	1.2g	0.60g
1335	1.3g	1.1g ⁶⁰	0.55g?
1362	1.1g ⁶¹	1.0g?	0.40g ⁶²
1371	1.1g	1.0g?	0.40g ⁶³
c.1380	1.1g	0.9g?	0.30g ⁶⁴
1387	1.1g	0.9g?	0.22g ⁶⁵

In addition to links caused by the use of imported and imitated foreign silver coins as standards, links have been found in the use of gold money connected to the silver-based money of account.⁶⁶ The most frequently used coins for these connections were the French *écu* and the Rhine guilder. Originally they were used as gold based units of

⁵⁸ Kirsch, *Die päpstlichen Kollektoren*, 101.

⁵⁹ Excursus 6.1: ‘On the monetary regulation in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323’.

⁶⁰ Muller, *De registers I*, 515-521; 565-567.

⁶¹ After 1351 genuine and imitative sterlings in Frisia cannot be distinguished as units of account. The rate of genuine English pennies given in the table is the legal rate in England.

⁶² Chapter 12, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁶³ Chapter 9, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁶⁴ Chapter 13, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁶⁵ Chapter 9, ‘The history of the measure of value’; Chapter 12, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁶⁶ See Appendix II.

account, but from these origins silver-based multiple units evolved. So the *écu* was the origin of the silver-based old *schild* (found mostly west of the Ems), the Rhine guilder/*rins*guilder was the origin of the silver-based *kaepmans/coepmans*guilder (found in almost the whole of Frisia) and the guilder of Guelders/Arnhem was the origin of the silver-based *arnse*guilder or simply ‘guilder’ (found mostly east of the Lauwers). The links were modelled in various conventions. The various expressions of amounts in gold money that are found as measure of value may be categorised as follows:

- (a) The value of 1 gold unit is expressed in a conventional amount of silver money, that is, only the name of the unit reminds us of its gold origin; in this case we have ‘a silver money based multiple unit’.⁶⁷
- (b) The value of 1 gold unit is also expressed in current silver money; that is, the rate in silver money is prescribed beforehand;⁶⁸ here we have ‘a present silver money based multiple unit’.
- (c) The value of 1 gold coin could be paid with other money of equal value; that is, its value depends upon the rate in silver money valid at the moment of payment;⁶⁹ this must be considered as ‘a future silver money based multiple unit’.
- (d) The value of 1 gold coin is neither expressed in other money, nor open to be paid in other money; that is, the value is to be paid exclusively (and sometimes this is stated emphatically) with specified coins;⁷⁰ this case expresses ‘a gold based unit of account’.

As far as the old *schild* is concerned, we must distinguish between the real gold coin on the one hand and the money of account on the other. In the documents, the real gold coin is mostly recognisable as ‘an (old) French *schild/sceld*’ or ‘an (old) gold *schild/sceld*’. The money of account was habitually denoted simply as an ‘old *schild/sceld*’.

⁶⁷ Examples: guilder, *arnse*guilder, *coepmans*guilder, Groningen *schild*.

⁶⁸ For instance: (1) in 1395, sale of land for 117 Guelders guilders, each guilder now valued at 16 shillings Groningen *payement* (GAG KFH: 42); or (2) in 1433, hereditary tenure of a homestead in Groningen for 2 Arnoldus Arnhem guilders of 14 *kromsterten* apiece or other payment of equal value (GAG KFH: 153).

⁶⁹ For instance: in 1434, a gift of a hereditary rent from a house in Groningen of 20 Arnhem guilders ‘current at the times of payment or other payment of equal value’ (GAG AHS: 250, prov.inVENTORY); or, in 1494, a hereditary rent of a lot in Helpman of ‘2 $\frac{1}{2}$ golden Rhineguilders a year or other payment exchangeable for these golden Rhine guilders at the time of payment’ (RAG SEL: 1, fo.75^v x III); or, in 1497, a sale of a hereditary rent from land in Selwerd (near Groningen) of 4 golden *overlandsche* Rhine guilders, minted before the date of the contract or to be paid with the value of it as the merchants accept in their trade before the town’s weighing-house’ (GAG PK: 444).

⁷⁰ For instance: in 1489, loan on mortgage of goods within and outside Groningen at 300 golden *overlandsche* Rhineguilders, ‘coined before the date of this contract’, at 6% interest, to be repaid with full interest ‘and with no other money’ (RAG SEL: 1, fo.44^v).

This last unit is found as early as 1362 in the statutes of the Groningen merchant's guild, defined as a unit of 30 'olde *corte grote*'.⁷¹ Whether the old *korte grote* was an imitative debased cavalier, an imitative *petit gros* or a *vleemse grote* is unknown. These coins all had about the same silver equivalence when the statutes of the merchant's guild were made in 1362: c.1.6g or c.1.7g.⁷² Hence, the silver equivalence of the old *schild* must have been c.48g to c.51g.⁷³

In Groningen, this new multiple unit, the old *schild*, was an expression of 10 shillings = 120 pennies Groningen ('new-Frisian') money.⁷⁴ When the silver equivalence of the Groningen penny declined during the second half of the 14th century, the Groningen *schild* remained a unit of 120 pennies or 10 shillings in Groningen, so its value followed the decline of the standard coin.⁷⁵ The decline in the value of the Groningen *schild* was legalised by the Groningen town government in December 1394;⁷⁶ by then it was equivalent to 10 *korte groten* as compared with 30 in 1362. Hence in Groningen the tie with the original gold coin was broken. This is also visible in a charter made shortly before in Groningen, in July 1394. In this document the real gold *schild* is valued at 29 *korte groten*.⁷⁷

However, in other parts of Frisia the silver equivalence of the old *schild* was not dependent upon the fate of the local 'new-Frisian' penny; neither, of course, was it dependent on the Groningen penny. It is true, that when, in Groningen, the old *korte grote* was defined as being represented by an old *vleemse grote*, in 1394, this was reflected in a change of the definition of the old *schild* elsewhere. Shortly after, in 1397, we find it defined in the Ommelanden as a unit of account, now reckoned at 30 old *vleemse groten*.⁷⁸ This indicates consistency with the case in 1362, mentioned before, as far as the definition of the silver base of this multiple unit is concerned, but the old *vleemse grote* in the 1390s had a somewhat lower silver equivalence than the old *korte grote* in 1360s,⁷⁹ so the silver equivalence of the old *schild* in the Ommelanden had also declined, to c.41g.⁸⁰

⁷¹ OGD1: 514. The document itself is lost, but a copy is surviving in GAG Collections: RF ms.in quarto 41, f.8-f.13, which folios (and the following until f.19v) are authorised by the imperial notary in Groningen in 1586.

⁷² Excursus 12.1: 'On the old *korte grote* in Groningen'.

⁷³ $30 \times c.1.6g = c.48g$; $30 \times c.1.7g = c.51g$.

⁷⁴ Comparable with the so-called 'minor mark' in Mid-Frisia (Excursus 7.1: 'On the Mid-Frisian conversion directive; a survey').

⁷⁵ If that standard coin had been the *korte grote*, the Groningen *schild* would still have been valued at 30 *korte groten* after 1394; *quod non*.

⁷⁶ Chapter 12, 'The history of the measure of value'.

⁷⁷ OGD2: 867.

⁷⁸ OGD2: 948.

⁷⁹ Excursus 12.1: 'On the old *korte grote* in Groningen'.

⁸⁰ $30 \times c.1.37g = c.41.0g$; see Excursus 12.2: 'On the meaning of a lot of silver in Groningen'.

About 25 years later, in the peace treaty of 1422 among all the Frisian sealands,⁸¹ the old *schild* reckoned at 30 old *vleemse groten* became legally an all-Frisian unit of account, possibly linking the various Frisian systems of account.⁸² Yet the old *vleemse grote*, standard in Groningen since 1394, was not the general standard in Frisia. Even in Groningen it would lose its dominating position about 1430. Moreover, in 1435, its legal silver equivalence was reduced to c.1.1g.⁸³ If the Groningen town government had had sufficient authority to determine the value of the old *schild* - as a generally accepted unit of account in Frisia - this reduction would either have been amplified with a new valuation of the old *schild* (henceforth being reckoned at about 36 old *vleemse grote*) or the compensations and fines quoted in old *schilden* in Frisia would have been adapted to the declined value of the old *schild*. Neither of these occurred. So, it seems highly unlikely that the measure in Groningen implied a decrease in silver equivalence of the old *schild* elsewhere in Frisia. Consequently, we must assume that in the rest of Frisia the face value of the antiquated *vleemse grote*, c.1.4g silver equivalence, remained a conventional fiction after 1435. Hence, in pricing, the old *schild* remained equivalent to c.41g of silver.

In the Ommelanden this fossilised value seems not to have been changed,⁸⁴ but in the second half of the 15th century, in treaties between Groningen and Mid-Frisian areas, it was adapted. This appears for the first time in a treaty between Groningen and Kollumerland in Oostergo in 1467. It is a treaty in which the old *schild* is redefined: 30 old *vleemse groten* or $2\frac{1}{2}$ *arnseguilders*.⁸⁵ From this definition it follows that the silver equivalence of an old *schild* had by then been reduced to c.35g.⁸⁶ This definition was repeated in subsequent treaties with areas in Oostergo and, finally, in 1494, also with Westergo.⁸⁷ The *arnseguilder* was itself a multiple unit in Groningen, based on 10 (*stad*)-*vliegers*. This coin was severely debased during the western European monetary crisis between 1467 and 1491.⁸⁸ After 1491 it was restored again. The definition of the old *schild*, however, was not adapted during this period, so it was completely dependent upon the value of the (*stad*)*vlieger* as standard for the unit of account. From this somewhat complicated history of the old *schild* as money of account in the late Middle Ages

⁸¹ An old *schild* reckoned at 30 old *vleemsen* had already been used shortly before, in the treaty of 1421 between John of Bavaria (pretended lord over Mid-Frisia) on the one hand and the East Frisian sealands on the other (Chbk1, 437-441).

⁸² GAG STAD: P16; Chbk1, 445-449.

⁸³ Excursus 12.2: 'On the meaning of a lot of silver in Groningen'.

⁸⁴ Chapter 9, 'The history of the measure of value'.

⁸⁵ PG: 19.

⁸⁶ GAG AHS: 57 (prov.) r102: in 1467 was in Tammingaland 1 *arnseguilder* æ 10 Groningen *stadvliegers* æ $10 \times 1.38\text{g} = 13.8\text{g}$ of silver; hence 2.5 *arnseguilder* æ $2.5 \times 13.8\text{g} = 34.5\text{g}$ of silver (æ 30 old *vleemse groten*; hence 1 old *vleemse grote* æ $34.5\text{g} : 30 = 1.15\text{g}$ of silver (= $1/12 \times 1$ lot of 15*lodiges* silver).

⁸⁷ See Appendix II.

⁸⁸ Chapter 12, 'The history of the measure of value'.

in Frisia, it follows that it was not a fixed multiple of any ‘new-Frisian’ penny. Neither did it evolve from the English system of money of account. In the English system of account it might have been considered as a unit of 45 English pennies since 1411 or thereabout.⁸⁹

The other all-Frisian multiple unit found in the second half of the 15th century was the *kaepmans/coepmans*guilder. It was the silver-based derivation of the originally gold *rins*guilder/electoral florin. If the real gold coin was referred to, this is usually recognisable by indications such as *overlandsche rins*guilders and *enckelde* guilders. As a multiple unit of account it was valued at a number of silver-based multiple units of account. This was the ‘white’ *stuver* in the areas which used the English money based system of account, and it was the ‘black’ *stuver* in the areas that developed an indigenous ‘new-Frisian’ system of account. The ‘white’ *stuver* was based on the Burgundian *stuver*; the ‘black’ *stuver* was based on either the Emden *grote* or the Groningen *stadvlieger* or the *philippus (braspennig)*, all of which were apparently equivalent. This will be elaborated in the following chapters. As we shall see, in Westergo the *kaepmans*guilder was reckoned at 20 white (or carolus)- *stuvers*. In the Ommelanden it is not found as a multiple unit of account alongside the old *schild*. In the areas which used ‘new-Frisian’ money of account the *coepmans*guilder was reckoned at 24 black *stuvers*: in Emden (and possibly also in the Yade area) as a multiple unit of 24 *groten*; in Groningen at 24 Groningen *stuvers*, and in Oostergo at 24 *philippus*. There is no evidence that these various definitions of the *kaepmans/coepmans*guilder were equivalent all through the second half of the 15th century. However, it is known that in Westergo, in 1482, a *rins*guilder was reckoned at 20 (white) *stuvers*,⁹⁰ that also in Oostergo, in 1483, 20 white *stuvers* were equivalent to a *rins*guilder ‘merchant’s payment’ (*‘kaepmans paymenten’*),⁹¹ and moreover that in the same area in 1482 20 white *stuvers* were equivalent to 24 *philippus*.⁹² So we may assume that a *kaepmans*guilder was probably a common concept in Mid-Frisia with a common silver equivalence. But we may go further. In Groningen, in 1483, a *rins*guilder was reckoned at 12 old *jagers* = 24 old *stadvliegers*,⁹³ and this was still so in 1488 when 24 Groningen *vliegers*, also called *swarte* (= black) *stuvers* (!), were reckoned at 1 gold guilder.⁹⁴ Furthermore, in 1489, in the Emden area, a *coepmans*guilder was reckoned at 24 *groten*.⁹⁵ The Emden *groten*, no doubt,

⁸⁹ The conventional rate of 1.5 English penny to 1 (old *vleemse*) *grote* is found, for instance, in the townbook of Stavoren (Telting, *De Friesche Stadrechten*, 202 (§105)). See also Chapter 9, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁹⁰ OFO2: 110 (1482, Sneek).

⁹¹ OFO1: 329 (1483, Leeuwarden).

⁹² OFO1: 321 (1482, Giekerk) and OFO1: 323 (1482, Paesens).

⁹³ GAG STAD: H3 RvR881 (1483, Groningen).

⁹⁴ GAG STAD: D67 RvR250 (1488, Groningen).

⁹⁵ OFU2: 1256 (1489, Emden).

were equivalent to Groningen *vliegers*.⁹⁶ These examples suggest a close interdependency of the silver equivalencies of the underlying standard coins. So we may even assume that all over Frisia a *kaepmans/coepmans*gulder was a common concept with a common silver equivalence in the second half of the 15th century. However, this common silver equivalence itself – as will be shown in the following chapters - was not constant over time.

Although during the late Middle Ages the English penny was the origin of the systems of money of account in Frisia, a relic from the previous centuries has survived: the ‘old-Frisian’ pound. Occasional examples of this multiple unit have been found in the Ommelanden,⁹⁷ Groningen⁹⁸ and Drenthe.⁹⁹ Numerous examples have been found in Mid-Frisia. The examples prove the persistence of a relic, particularly in the law. Amounts of half a pound, a pound, 2 pounds, 8 pounds, 20 pounds, 80 pounds and multiples, for instance, were used for fines in the 13th century and before. These tariffs remained, notwithstanding the enormous decrease in the silver equivalence of the ‘old-Frisian’ penny over the centuries. Only in the 1456 town-book of Sneek is a clear answer given on the question of the rate at which this pound was legally reckoned in the 15th century. A pound was rated at 7 *butkens*.¹⁰⁰ As the genesis of this surprising answer cannot be inferred from the documents, we are obliged to guess. That is done in Excursus 7.2.

A survey of this history in table form - as presented in Chapter 2 - would be too complicated for this period because of the diverging developments in the various parts of Frisia. The following chapters are focused on the various regional developments, and there a survey is given of the evolution of the money of account system in that particular area. The general history of the measure of value in late medieval Frisia may be summarised as follows:

1. The genuine English penny as unit of account about the middle of the 14th century was the origin of various systems of account:
 - (a) One group (represented in Westergo and partly in the Ommelanden) was still based on the English penny; the development in this group ended, via the use of the *butken* as successor of the English penny, with the white *stuver* as a common standard.
 - (b) Another group (represented in the Yade area, the Emden area, Groningen/Drenthe and Oostergo) evolved from the penny initially worth half a (Frisian) imi-

⁹⁶ 1 *arnse*gulder was in 1487 reckoned at 10 Emden *groten* (OFU3: 626) and in 1488 at 10 Groningen *vliegers* (GAG STAD: H45 RvR 896).

⁹⁷ For example: Boeles, *De hoofdbronnen*, 160-161 (1406, Synodal statutes of Langewold).

⁹⁸ OGD2: 626 (1376, 3 pond *Gronsche*); OGD2: 756 (1386); GAG STAD: RF ms. 1425.4 (f.1, undated gloss).

⁹⁹ RQ, 522-530 (1412, statutes of Drenthe or “Drenths landrecht”).

¹⁰⁰ Telting, *De Friesche stadrechten*, 134.

tative sterling ('new-Frisian' penny) as standard. This evolution resulted in various local standards for the unit of account; it ended with the black *stuver* as a common standard.

2. Both groups were supplemented by a singular multiple unit of account, the old *schild/sceld*, based on silver money, valued at 30 old *korte groten* until c.1390, on 30 old *vleemse groten* between 1422 and c.1465 and on $2\frac{1}{2}$ *arnseguilders* (= 25 black *stuvers*) from then onwards.
3. Notwithstanding the differentiation in the evolution, some coherence remained between the various systems, and a final convergence resulted which seems to have been expressed in the use of the *kaepmans/coepmansguilder* based on 20 white *stuvers* æ 24 black *stuvers* as common multiple unit of account.

Economic analysis

The further development of the sequel to the English system of money of account shows a divergence of systems coming into being within Frisia. This was a new development. The causes of the divergence in the Frisian money of account systems in the 14th century are not documented. There were no authorities sufficiently powerful to introduce a new system of account for all of Frisia as soon as the English penny based system ceased to suffice in every respect. The divergences emerged in the way social institutions evolve organically: habits change, and these changes may differ regionally. The general Frisian features must be analysed now. There are three topics to be explained:

- the emergence of the 'new-Frisian' money of account;
- the persistence of the English or 'old' money of account;
- the growth of links between these systems.

The 'new-Frisian' money systems emerged in most Frisian areas. The development of the coin sphere here may be compared with the development of the means of payment elsewhere. At the end of the 13th century a new wave of silver supply was generated by the discovery of silver and the opening of mines in Bohemia and, on a smaller scale, the Black Forest. Particularly in the last region, in Hall, the production of so-called *hellers* increased substantially. They provided the small change for everyday use throughout Germany, even in distant areas.¹⁰¹ Thus the need for money of small size was commonly felt, perhaps as a consequence of a growing monetisation of the economy in north-western Europe;¹⁰² but whereas in Germany the penny of Cologne, like the English penny, had a State enforced silver content that remained constant through the centuries - so that smaller coins were needed for everyday purposes, in other parts of Europe the penny itself had decreased to a low value. In Holland for instance, the penny struck by

¹⁰¹ Spufford, *Money*, 124-127; Schrötter, *Wörterbuch*, sv.Heller, original silver equivalence 0.371g; Spufford, *Handbook*, 235; 262; 1277-1286 1 florin æ 30 pennies of Cologne, 1265-1311 1 florin æ 120 *hellers*.

¹⁰² Sprandel, *Das mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem*, 156-160.

the Counts of Holland had a silver content of c.0.47g in 1265.¹⁰³ In Het Sticht and Guelders the indigenous penny was set at a value equivalent to half an imitative sterling (Brabant sterling).¹⁰⁴ In Westphalia the $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ th fractions of the pennies of Münster and Osnabrück, the *Halblinge* and the *Vierlinge*, were produced and circulated in the 13th century.¹⁰⁵ In this context the need for a medium of payment of that size in Frisia too is obvious, and the emergence of coins worth half a sterling as means of payment is in agreement with the trend of the time. In terms of our theoretical framework this is a clear example of the way in which requirements for a standard coin may change by inducements from the economic sphere. An increasing degree of division of labour created new kinds of participants in trade - such as the urban artisans and merchants - with different needs for means of payment. Obviously the mint entrepreneurs would have welcomed this new demand. Apart from new, lighter coins, the need for a more convenient communication in trade regarding small amounts would have induced creative people to try out pricing on the basis of a particular, popular small coin. Such a system could develop alongside an existent system based on a larger standard coin and convenient for larger amounts; but since the economy was not split up into completely separate parts, there would have been kinds of trade where the two systems met and became competitive. Whether both systems remained or one was preferred to the exclusion of the other appears to have been different in different areas. Hence, this depended upon regional circumstances. How the 'new-Frisian' systems developed in the various areas is dealt with in more detail in the following chapters.

But the general question remains: why is it that in most areas of Frisia the 'new-Frisian' penny replaced the sterling as unit of account, whereas in other areas - Westergo and partly the Ommelanden - it did not? It seems that the areas where the genuine English penny had been the standard for the system of account did coincide, for the larger part, with the areas where the English penny remained the dominating standard. This holds for Westergo and the Ommelanden, but not for Oostergo. In the Ommelanden, moreover, the imitative English money had also been found occasionally in the previous period, and the 'new-Frisian' money also occurred in the current period. These phenomena suggest a relationship between the developments within Frisia in the previous and current periods respectively. It might reflect a difference in the causative social forces. The adherents of the 'sterling group' may have preferred to reduce future price uncertainty, and hence focused their attention on the trustworthiness of the measure of value, the prestigious English penny. The 'new-Frisian' group may have preferred the ease of communication in pricing found in local 'everyday money'. Sterling-based money of account would have been felt as 'strong money' and 'new-Frisian' money as 'weak' money. Strong money is in the interest of creditors (property-owners, landowners),

¹⁰³ Van Hengel, *De munten*, 28

¹⁰⁴ Van Gelder, "Noord-Nederlands kleingeld", 84-85.

¹⁰⁵ Ilisch, *Die mittelalterliche Münzprägung*, 10.

whereas weak money is in the interest of debtors (tenant farmers, mortgagors).¹⁰⁶ The two systems of account could exist side by side initially, but this changed as, after c.1350 almost everywhere in Europe, coins were more-or-less severely debased, while the English sterling remained relatively stable. This would have generated a tension between the sterling-based money of account and the local money. This tension was even visible in Frisia in a 1371 treaty between landowners in the Ommelanden, who were suffering from the debasement of the local money in which their tenants paid their rents. They tried to co-operate against the tenants - a shortage of labour at that time working in favour of these tenants - by attempting to tie the local money to trustworthy coins such as genuine English pennies. Their mutual sanctions were quoted in their own system of account: English money.

The development of the old *schild/sceld*, the *arnseguilder* and the *kaepmans/coepmans-guilder* as multiple units of account, alongside the traditional penny/shilling/mark system in sterling and in 'new-Frisian' money, is a curious example of adaptive compromise. A widely known unit of a gold-based money system was borrowed and inserted as a silver-based multiple unit into the existent money of account system for facilitating communication in large amounts, or in amounts in other Frisian or foreign systems using the same unit as a multiple unit; furthermore these multiple units could be easily used for pricing in a gold-based system in case the existent silver-based system did not provide sufficient certainty on future values.

¹⁰⁶ Bloch, "Le problème", 30, puts the question as to whether, in a society, different classes had different money systems.

