

CHAPTER 10

THE PERIOD OF THE 'NEW-FRISIAN' PENNY IN THE YADE AREA (c.1300 - c.1500)

Now come to the chapter dealing with the first indications of what I have called 'new-Frisian' money. These are found in the Yade area. In my study, the Yade area denotes roughly the seventh Frisian sealand. In the late Middle Ages, it comprised Wangerland, Oistringen, Riustringen, Butyadingen, Stadland and Wursten, but we should bear in mind that the areas covered by these names are not very precise or constant over time because of changes in the natural and political scenery. In due course the first two districts mentioned, together with a part of Riustringen, were jointly named Jeverland.¹

It happens that the Yade area provides the oldest example of the 'second way' evolution of the money of account in late medieval Frisia. Instead of adapting the initially English system of money of account, this second way turned off that road and began an indigenous development with a new standard - called 'new-Frisian' money in this study. Although we know very little about the development of this money in the Yade area, it is of interest because it seems that in Jever this road was taken well ahead of any other place in Frisia.

The historical context

In the Yade area, as elsewhere, the maritime transgression substantially changed the geographic conditions during the late Middle Ages. From the 13th to the end of the 15th century, a large part of the district of Riustringen was swallowed by the sea.² Consequently, the Yade area was divided into two parts: Jeverland in the west and Butyadingen, Stadland and Wursten in the east, separated by the Yade. In due course, this geographic cleavage also caused a differentiation in the political history of the area, as we shall see.

Dyke building and internal colonisation would have characterised the economic development of the Yade area during the late Middle Ages, as in the other parts of Frisia. Nevertheless, the traditional trade with other parts of Frisia, Denmark, the Hanseatic towns and the Saxon hinterland was still very much alive. Several of the few surviving documents refer to commercial relations with Bremen. The influence of this town,

¹ Sello, *Östringen und Rüstringen*, 57.

² *Ibidem*, adjoined maps I to III.

situated close to this part of Frisia, was obviously significant. This influence was enhanced by the fact that the Yade area belonged to the bishopric of Bremen.³

When the period covered by this chapter began, at the beginning of the 14th century, the districts of the area were still ruled by their own communal judges (counsellors), the seignorial rights of the Counts of Oldenburg having been bought off during the 13th century.⁴ This changed after the middle of the 14th century, when local *hovetlingen* came to power. A tradition tells us how this occurred in Oistringen and Wangerland. A conflict between the judges and the inhabitants of these districts seems to have ended, perhaps in the 1370s,⁵ with the election of Edo Wymeken, *hovetling* in neighbouring Riustringen, to the position of *hovetling* in both these districts.⁶ In any case, between the 1380s and 1433, the rule of Edo Wymeken was reduced to Riustringen again. By that time, minting in Jever was executed by the *hovetlingen* in Brokmerland (the Tom Brokes)⁷ and their successor (Fokko Ukena, *hovetling* in Leer).⁸ These had come to power in large parts of Frisia between the Lauwers and the Yade, as we shall see in the next chapter. After 1433 Hajo Harlda, *hovetling* in Riustringen and step-grandson of Edo Wymeken, restored the position of this dynasty in Jeverland, which lasted for the remainder of the period under consideration.⁹

It seems that, from at least 1376¹⁰ and all through the 15th century, this dynasty was more-or-less continuously engaged in a state of war with Holland.¹¹ It was a war at sea,

³ Zielinski, *Der Reichsepiskopat*, 286.

⁴ Sello, *Östringen und Rüstringen*, 40-41.

⁵ According to tradition this happened in the 1350s, but the sources are not reliable. Because in 1414 Edo Wymeken was still able to participate in military action for a feud, he must have been too young for election in c.1350. At best he might have been elected *hovetling* in the 1370s (Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 92; Sello, *Studien*, 12).

⁶ OUB2: 882; Sello, *Östringen und Rüstringen*, 151. Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 94-96, supposes that Fredo of Wangerland had already become the elected *hovetling* in both districts around 1350, before Edo Wymeken. Coins have been found that were struck by a Fredo of Wangerland. As Fredo had no progeny he would have been succeeded by Edo Wymeken, who was *hovetling* in Riustringen; Edo is mentioned for the first time as late as 1376. Kappelhoff's opinion is based on the assumption that, as minting in Wangerland is unlikely, these coins must have been minted in Oistringen. However, the assumption that Fredo could not have minted in Wangerland is questionable. In a document of 1496 mention is made of a mint-master's daughter on the island of Wangeroge, who had been taken hostage by the Hollanders around 1389 (OUB6: 356).

⁷ Sello, *Östringen und Rüstringen*, 225.

⁸ *Ibidem*, 82-83.

⁹ *Ibidem*, 43.

¹⁰ OUB6: 58.

¹¹ OUB6: 356. According to a plaint in an arbitral process to settle the conflict in 1496, the war would have started around 1389 and was due to the kidnapping of the *hovetling* in Jeverland by visitors from Holland; he was subsequently kept hostage in Stavoren and The Hague, and redeemed by a ransom taxed from his subjects. According to documents in Holland, however, this event took place in 1408 (Janse, *Grenzen*, 217, footnote 123).

fought by hired privateers.¹² This caused continual damage not only to the merchantmen from Holland but also to friendly trade, and this in turn caused occasional conflicts with Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck.¹³ As late as 1496 Bremen intervened for an arbitral settlement of the conflicts between Jeverland and Holland, the Count of Oistvrieland and others.¹⁴

As the most powerful *hovetlingen* in the area, it seems,¹⁵ this dynasty controlled Jeverland, but they did not control the whole sealand. They tried in vain to gain control over the eastern part, Butyadingen, and, in its resistance, Butyadingen was supported by Wursten and Stadland.¹⁶ In 1427, a treaty of mutual defence was made between those districts and Bremen against *heren, fursten, stede, Dudeschen edder Vreschen*, and the treaty was extended in 1472.¹⁷ Consequently, the Yade area was politically split into two parts.

In the eastern part, the government remained in the hands of the communal judges, the counsellors.¹⁸ This continued even when Ulrik Cirksena, *hovetling* in the Emden area, was appointed by the Emperor as hereditary Count over Frisia between Ems and Weser in 1464; see next chapter. This county included the whole Yade area, but Butyadingen also rejected this sovereign,¹⁹ developing its own statutes in 1479.²⁰ Only after the Emperor had appointed the Duke of Saxony as *gubernator* over all of Frisia, in 1498, did Butyadingen accept (in 1500) the Count of Oistvriesland as its lord, to keep the *gubernator* out.²¹

¹² OUB2: 527 (1398: The privateers were hired to fight merchantmen from Holland, Flanders, England and Scotland but not the Hanseatic towns); OUB6: 127 (1432: A treaty was made by the *hovetling* of Riustringen with the Frisian districts east of the Ems, Bremen and Oldenburg, to obtain compensation from Holland; if this was refused, the *hovetling* would be free to continue privateering with the consent of all Frisians); OUB6: 348 (1495: The foregoing consent was apparently not continued; in 1495 the *hovetling* of Jeverland came into conflict with the Count of Oistvriesland owing, among other things, to the confiscation by the Count of a stranded ship from Holland that had been captured by privateers).

¹³ OUB2: 529 (1398: the *hovetling* in Jeverland promised Bremen to dismiss the privateers under his authority that had been used in wars against Holland and others); OUB2: 576 (1408: the inhabitants of Wiurden received compensation from Bremen for privateering against them by the crew of a Bremen warship); OUB6: 172 (1450); OFU2: 1063 and 1064 (1481: Lübeck, Hamburg and Bremen required from the *hovetling* in Jeverland restitution of 13 bales of cloth belonging to Hanseatic merchants that had been taken by his privateers from a ship from Holland, but he refused on the grounds that he had warned the Hanseatic merchants beforehand not to transport their goods with merchantmen from Holland).

¹⁴ OUB6: 352.

¹⁵ Sello, *Östringen und Rüstringen*, 97.

¹⁶ Borchling, *Die niederdeutschen Rechtsquellen*, LXXI-LXXV.

¹⁷ OUB2: 700 (1427); OUB2: 992 (1472).

¹⁸ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 39: In 1464 Butyadingen had disposed of its *hovetlingen* again.

¹⁹ OFU1: 842.

²⁰ Borchling, *Die niederdeutschen Rechtsquellen*, LXXV.

²¹ Sello, *Studien*, 67. See also: Vries, *Het Heilige Roomse Rijk*, 187.

The western part, Jeverland, was also confronted with the claims of the Count of Oistvriesland after 1464. Consequently the *hovetlingen* in Jeverland should have accepted Cirksena as their overlord, but as the Cirksenas did not enforce this right the *status quo* was more-or-less maintained. In fact, the *hovetlingen* in Jeverland behaved as independent allies of the Count,²² and this continued for the remainder of the period under consideration. In the 16th century, the Count of Oldenburg took the place of the Count of Oistvriesland in Jeverland.²³

The history of the means of payment

According to the 16th century copy of a register of possessions of the Count of Oldenburg in Frisia from about 1273-1278, the communal mint in Jever, in Oistringem, should pay the Count a yearly rent of 2 *Colnsche mark na Osterger wichte*.²⁴ This rent was only a part of the yearly fiscal rights of the Count in Oistringem and Wangerland. All his rewards were quoted in Oistringem money. Hence, at that time, the mint of Jever was still active. Moreover, apparently indigenous money was struck. Curiously, Oistringem money of that time has not been discovered, or at least identified. It is shown in the next section that in 1317 the Oistringem penny was almost equivalent to half an English penny. As Oistringem participated in the treaty of the Upstallisbam in 1323,²⁵ we would expect to find these pennies listed among the coins admitted as legal means of payment in Frisia,²⁶ but the only pennies mentioned in the treaty that are worth half an English penny are *hallingen*.²⁷ However, English halfpennies were not struck before 1280,²⁸ so the coins struck in Jever in 1273 would not have been imitative halfpennies. Instead, they might have been coins replacing the so-called *skillinga cona*. These are assumed to have been means of payment - woollens, furs or coins - worth a shilling in 'old-Frisian' pennies.

²² Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 39-40.

²³ As the Saxon rule over Frisia proved unsuccessful, the Saxon Duke had sold his rights in 1515 to the Duke of Burgundy (Woltjer, "In de leerschool", 260). So, when the last heiress of the dynasty of Jever transmitted her rights in Jeverland to her cousin, the Count of Oldenburg, in 1573, it was the governor of the Burgundian state who recognised this deed after her death in 1575 (Sello, *Östringem und Rüststringem*, 50-51).

²⁴ OUB6: 16.

²⁵ In a letter from Jever dated 10-2-1327 to the Count of Holland and Zeeland (Chbk1 176; OUB6 no. 36) the community of Oistringem confirms its participation in the treaty, which, it is argued, was not intended to undermine the Count's rights but to serve the cause of internal order in Frisia. See also: Cleveringa, *Gemeene landswarf*, 10.

²⁶ Excursus 6.1: 'On the monetary regulation in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323'.

²⁷ Kappelhoff, *Friesische 'Schuppen'?*, 443-445, mentions a large proportion of Westphalian halfpennies discovered in Norden in a hoard deposited after 1275, but Westphalian halfpennies must have been lighter than the English halfpennies in the first decades of the 14th century; the average gross weight of 50 halfpennies in this hoard was only c.0.46g (Buchenaus, "Mittelalterfund in Norden", 4328). Hence these halfpennies cannot have been the *hallingen* mentioned in the treaty of the Upstallisbam of 1323, but they do provide evidence of the use of halfpennies in Frisia at that time.

²⁸ Brooke, *English Coins*, 117; 122-125. (Halfpennies struck during the early Middle Ages are here, of course, ignored).

Admittedly, this is merely speculation. The genesis of the Oistringen penny is unknown, but a link with the 'old-Frisian' pennies seems obvious. A sterling influence also seems obvious; one might think of local sterling imitations²⁹ developing about the end of the century into 'light' or 'brown' sterlings.³⁰ Import of these imitations into England was prohibited from 1299/1300; those that were already circulating in that country had to be recoined, valued at a half an English penny each.³¹ This possibility may seem attractive, but it has no numismatic foundation so far. It is likely that the Oistringen pennies had their roots in the development of the system of money of account in the Yade area. This is to be dealt with in the next section.

There is no further information about minting in the Yade area until about the middle of the 14th century, but it cannot be mere coincidence that the first 14th century coins from the Yade area to have been discovered were coins struck in Oistringen and Wangerland. Coins from the *hovetling* (?) Fredo of Wangerland have been discovered.³² In the second half of the 14th century the mint in Jever (Oistringen), hitherto in the hands of the community of Jever, was seized by Edo Wymeken, *hovetling* in Riustringen - and in due course also *hovetling* in Oistringen and Wangerland.³³ Thereafter, minting in Jever was executed in the name of the *hovetlingen* in Jeverland. It is most likely that the coins of Fredo of Wangerland and Edo Wymeken were linked to - if not a continuation of - the existing local currency. Like many other petty lords, the *hovetlingen* marked the coins with their arms - a lion, an eagle, or something similar³⁴ - after the model of the shield sterlings that had already been struck in the southern Low Countries during the 1280s.³⁵ Complementary to these, larger silver coins - imitative old *groten* (*tornoyse groten*) - were struck in 14th-century Jever.³⁶

Coins which appear similar to the shield-sterling derivations were struck in Groningen and, from 1365,³⁷ in Lübeck, Hamburg and the other Hanseatic towns on the Wendish coast of the Baltic.³⁸ They were evidently very attractive as a means of payment along the northern European coasts; but however similar the coins may have appeared exter-

²⁹ If the Oistringen pennies in 1273 were sterling imitations, these must have been the long-cross type; sterlings of the Edwardian type - and hence the imitations that would be called 'crockards and pollards' at the end of the century - were only struck after 1279.

³⁰ See Chapter 6, 'The history of the means of payment'.

³¹ Johnson, *The 'De Moneta'*, xxxviii-xxxix.

³² Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 266 (no.6).

³³ OFU1: 607. Sello, *Studien*, 3: This charter was doubtless falsified, but it may have true foundations.

³⁴ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 77 (also note 18); 266-267; 269-270.

³⁵ Information kindly provided by Mr J.C. van der Wis, numismatist in Groningen.

³⁶ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 267-270.

³⁷ According to Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 79, the *witte* was mentioned in documents after 1347, but according to Berghaus, "Phänomene", 81-115, the minting only started in 1365. See also: Sprandel, *Das mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem*, 15 and 176.

³⁸ Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 83.

nally, the Frisian and Hanseatic monetary systems were not at all alike. The sterlings of Lübeck were called *witten*. We do not know what the Oistringen coins were called by contemporaries, but today's numismatists of our age usually refer to the sterling derivations of East Frisia as *witten*, after the Hanseatic type.³⁹ Only a century later, however, in 1472, a coin called *witte* is documented for the first time in the Yade area.⁴⁰ If the numismatists are naming them correctly, it follows that the basis of the coin system in the second half of the 14th century was a half-*witte*, and the two pence coin became a *witte*.⁴¹ It seems to me much more likely that, rather than beginning a complete new money system, the *hovetlingen* of Oistringen would have tried to continue the extant local minting in their own name. If their basic coin was the old Oistringen penny - simply given a new shape - the name 'half-*witte*' is doubtless not the true historic name. The name could have been *halling*, but as there is no evidence I continue to refer to it simply as 'Oistringen penny'. There are more reasons for questions whether the names of the Oistriungen coins after the middle of the 14th century were borrowed from the Lübeck system. Whereas the so-called Frisian *witte* was reckoned at 2 half-*witten*/Oistringen pennies, the Lübeck *witte* was reckoned at 4 Lübeck pennies.⁴² The Frisian '*witten*' were also lighter than the Hanseatic; about 1380 they had an assumed silver content of 0.77g⁴³ whereas that of the Hanseatic *witte* was 1.12g.⁴⁴ Taken together, notwithstanding the outward similarity, the 14th century coins of the Yade area cannot be understood as a regional version of the Lübeck money system. However, the two coin systems may have had common roots in the sterling derivations of the Southern Netherlands, and the Frisian system may even have been the elder, having descended from sterling imitations of the previous century.⁴⁵

In the 1380s, the *hovetlingen* in Brokmerland - the Tom Brokes - considered themselves rightful claimants of the mintage in East Frisia; see next chapter. It seems that they ousted Edo Wymeken from Jever and took over the mintage, but Edo Wymeken may well have continued minting in his homeland of Riustringen.⁴⁶ After 1427, the rule of the Tom Brokes and, after 1433, of their successor, Fokko Ukena, came to an end, and the heirs of Edo Wymeken resumed minting in Jever.⁴⁷

³⁹ Kappelhoff, "Beiträge", 38.

⁴⁰ OUB6: 222. Apart from white marks mentioned in an arbitrary contract in 1428 between the *hovetling* of Riustringen and the inhabitants of Butyadingen, which was made before the burgomasters of Bremen and might refer to Bremen money.

⁴¹ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 86.

⁴² Sprandel, *Das mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem*, 196.

⁴³ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 100. A material analysis of a so-called *witte* of Ocko I tom Broke (chief in Brokmerland 1376 - c.1390) has been made. It resulted in a fineness of 0.747. The average weight of 13 pieces was 1.03g; hence the average silver content would be c.0.77g. It follows that, at about that time, a so-called half-*witte* had a silver content of c.0.3g to 0.4g.

⁴⁴ Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 210.

⁴⁵ Suggestion kindly supplied by Mr J.C. van der Wis, numismatist in Groningen.

⁴⁶ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 99.

From then onwards *kromsterten* were struck in this town, alongside the Oistringens pennies, the so-called *witten* and the old *groten*. *Kromsterten* are documented from the middle of the 15th century. They were most probably imitations of the genuine Flemish *kromsterten*, the silver content of which, at the end of its production in 1432, was c.1.5g.⁴⁸ In the Emden area and in Groningen, at that time, a *kromstert* was valued a little below c.1.0g;⁴⁹ hence this coin must have been an imitative type. In the next chapter we shall see that the *kromstert* imitation in the Emden area was a denomination of 4 *witten* or 8 pennies, and it is likely that this was the same in the Yade area.

After 1464 the Cirksena dynasty became Counts of Frisia between Ems and Weser, so they claimed the rights of the mint in Jever. There was no war, but in 1473 the Count and the ruling *hovetling* in Jeverland settled their dispute by means of a treaty. According to this treaty the coins of Jeverland - hitherto struck in Jever - would be legally accepted in Oistvriesland at the same value as the coins of Oistvriesland, but minting in Jever had to stop for 10 years.⁵⁰ After those 10 years, the mint in Jever resumed production. According to Kappelhoff,⁵¹ the *groten* of Jeverland were adapted to the model of the *groten* of Emden, but the (very scarce) documents from the Yade area do not refer to these coins.

In 1491, a monetary reform in Groningen and Oistvriesland, under which the coin systems were harmonised, was also followed in Jever, and in 1502 Oldenburg adjusted its money system to join this monetary alliance.⁵²

The use of gold money in the currency of the Yade area is better documented. *Rins*guilders (the guilders of the electors of the Rhine) and *arens*guilders (Arnhem guilders of the Duke of Guelders) are frequently mentioned, and *postulatus*guilders (the guilders of the Bishop/*postulatus* of Utrecht) also appear on occasions.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, 142-144.

⁴⁸ Van der Wee, *Vlaams-brabantse muntstatistieken*, 58: struck between 1418 (1.7g silver content) and 1433 (1.5g).

⁴⁹ See Appendix II. In 1437 in Nesse (Emden area) an *arnseguilder* was valued at 15 *kromsterten*. In the same year it was valued at 7 Groningen *braspenningen* (7 x c.2.1g = c.14.7g), and in 1437 it was valued in Groningen at 12 old *vleemse groten* (12 x 1.2g = 14.4g); hence the *kromstert* at that time had a silver equivalence of c.14.5g : 15 = c.0.97g. See also Chapter 12, 'History of the means of payment'.

⁵⁰ OFU2: 915.

⁵¹ Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 143; 283.

⁵² *Ibidem*, 129: The monetary co-ordination between Oldenburg and Groningen was formalised by a treaty in 1503.

The history of the measure of value

The most striking feature of the ‘new-Frisian’ money in the Yade area is its early beginning. In Chapter 6 it was assumed that the English pennies became the standard for the Frisian money of account at the time and that a score ‘old-Frisian’ pennies (that is, an ‘old-Frisian’ ounce) was equivalent to 1 English penny; but the development in the Yade area seems to have been somewhat different.

The early existence of a new, regional system of money of account is based on documentary evidence. Although the Counts of Oldenburg had no authority in Frisia, they had a few fiscal rights in Oistringen and Wangerland, which they had probably inherited. In the surviving register of these rights between 1273 and 1278,⁵³ the amounts are quoted in *Colnsche mark na Osterger wichte*, as we saw in the previous section. This may be read as marks of 144 pennies (Cologne style) in Oistringen money. The marks may have been marks in ‘old-Frisian’ pennies. In that case the value of the rent from the mint would be down to a silver equivalence in the order of 17 English pennies per year.⁵⁴ This seems too low to be credible, and my objection is supported by the comparison of two other amounts in the same register. In the case of single combat (to prove a thief guilty), the Count would receive $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks if the thief lost, but if the thief won the Count had to pay 4 *verding* and 1 lot. The silver equivalence of the first amount, if quoted in ‘old-Frisian’ money, would be far less than that of the last amount, and this also seems unlikely.⁵⁵ It is more likely that the money *Osterger wichte* was not ‘old-Frisian’ money. We do not know whether the mint in Jever still struck ‘old-Frisian’ pennies at the time, but in any case other money must also have been produced. *Osterger wichte* was apparently the new standard for the money of account. Precisely what this was is still a matter of guesswork, but imitation of English pennies, which was common in the north-western part of the continent in the second half of the 13th century, would have been more profitable for the mint than ‘old-Frisian’ pennies. However, as we have seen, imitative sterlings struck in Jever between c.1250 and c.1350 have not been identified so far, and the next information regarding ‘money *Osterger wicht*’ is dated about 40 years later. Marks in Oistringen money were mentioned in the registers of the papal collector in Oistringen and Wangerland in 1317.⁵⁶ The 1322 synodal statutes of Wangerland confirm, moreover, that this money was also standard in this district since the fines are quoted in *marcas argenti et ponderis astringorum*.⁵⁷ It is possible that the

⁵³ OUB6: 16.

⁵⁴ This is an estimate. See Chapter 5: ‘The history of the measure of value’: around 1270 1 ‘old-Frisian’ penny \approx c.0.08g silver. Hence 2 marks Cologne style $\approx 2 \times 144 \times$ c.0.08g = c.23.0g silver. Since 1 English penny \approx c.1.35g of silver, it follows that c.23.0g : 1.35g = 17 English pennies.

⁵⁵ 5 *verdingen* + 1 lot $\approx (5/4 + 1/16) \times$ c.234g = c.307g; in Bremen silver this would be c.0.7 \times c.307g = c.215g. If we assume that 1 ‘old-Frisian’ penny in 1270 \approx c.0.08g, it follows that $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks ‘old-Frisian’ $\approx 2\frac{1}{2} \times 144 \times$ c.0.08g = c.29g; but $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks sterling $\approx 2\frac{1}{2} \times 144 \times$ c.1.3g = c.468g.

⁵⁶ Kirsch, *Die päpstlichen Kollektoren*, 101.

⁵⁷ OUB6: 25.

marcis usualibus mentioned in Blexen (Butyadingen) in 1312⁵⁸ - apparently local money - also refers to Oistringen money. The silver equivalence of the unit of account was equal to half an English penny (c.0.6g). There are two sources from which the silver equivalence of this unit can be derived:

1. In 1317, the contributions of a number of parishes in the Jever area to the papal collector⁵⁹ amounted to a sum total of 44 *march. Astriung. den.*, which was exchanged for 4 pounds 8 shillings *gros tournois*, i.e. each mark æ 24 *gros tournois*.⁶⁰ A mark of 144 instead of 160 English pennies had already become usual in Frisia.⁶¹ As early as 1273-1278 the accounts of the Count of Oldenburg concerning, among other things, the tribute from the Jever mint has: ... *twe Colnsche mark na Osterger wichte*.⁶² A mark of Cologne had counted as 144 pennies for a long time. Hence, as 1 Oistringen mark æ 24 *gros tournois* the conversion rate in the papal collector's books would simply have been 6 Oistringen pennies for 1 *gros tournois*. As 1 *gros tournois* æ 3 English pennies, it follows that 6 Oistringen pennies æ 3 English pennies, or 1 Oistringen penny æ $\frac{1}{2}$ English penny.
2. The 1312 synodal statutes of Wangerland⁶³ specify fines - to be paid to the dean - in Oistringen money. In Frisia, compensations and fines for (a) manslaughter, (b) blowing out an eye or cutting off a hand or foot, or (c) blinding an eye and laming a hand or foot are usually $1 : \frac{1}{2} : \frac{1}{3}$. In these statutes the fine for killing is 4 marks Oistringen money, for cutting off a hand or foot, 2 marks Oistringen money, and for laming a hand or foot, 32 *gros tournois*. From these data it may be deduced that 32 *gros tournois* æ $\frac{4}{3}$ Oistringen marks; hence 1 Oistringen mark æ 24 *gros tournois* - giving the same result as in 1.

How did this Oistringen money emerge? Without further information, the answer can only be conjectural. A few points draw our attention. First, the early appearance of local money in the Yade area is unique, as is the use of a multiple unit of account found in the Riustringen judges' books - the *skilling cona*, mentioned in Chapter 5. Second, this Oistringen money of account did exist, at least, in 1273. Third, as it was valued at half an English penny in 1317, its silver equivalence in 1273 would not have been much over 0.8g or 0.9g unless extraordinary circumstances occurred; if they did, they are unknown. So, there seems to be an obvious link between the *skilling cona* and the Oistringen penny. During the first half of the 13th century, when 'old-Frisian' pennies

⁵⁸ OUB2: 262.

⁵⁹ Kirsch, *Die päpstlichen Kollektoren*, 93; 101

⁶⁰ 4 pounds 8 shillings *gros tournois* = $4 \times 240 + 8 \times 12 = 1,056$ *gros tournois*, hence 1 mark of Oistringen pennies æ $1,056 : 44 = 24$ *gros tournois*.

⁶¹ See Chapter 7, 'The history of the measure of value'. The first mention in Drenthe was in 1288; the first mention in East Frisia was in 1319 (OFU1: 48).

⁶² OUB6: 16 (after a 16th century copy).

⁶³ OUB6: 25.

were still the main coins in circulation, English pennies infiltrated. At first they would have circulated at a rate - let us say - of 9 or 10 'old-Frisian' pennies. This rate was increasing because the silver equivalence of the 'old-Frisian' penny was decreasing. At some time during the 13th century - presumably in the 1250s - an 'old-Frisian' shilling - that is, the value of 12 'old-Frisian' pennies - was about equivalent to an English penny. As the silver equivalence of a *skilling cona* can be reconstructed at something between 1.5g and 0.8g,⁶⁴ it seems possible that the English penny could have been used when a payment of an 'old-Frisian' shilling had to be made. In other words, it could have represented or substituted a *skilling cona*.⁶⁵ If it did, the demand for English pennies would have increased and induced the mint in Jever to strike imitative sterlings as shilling coins. In the following decades, as long as the 'old-Frisian' penny still remained the standard of the unit of account, the shilling coin would have had to follow the decrease of the silver equivalence of the standard. Thus, in order for it to remain in use as the shilling coin, the silver content of the imitative sterling had to be decreased. But this decrease came to an end when the 'old-Frisian' pennies became too small to be a useful standard and, moreover, the new coin, the sterling derivation (preceding the 'light' or 'brown' sterling?), came into circulation. Shortly before 1273, when the 'old-Frisian' penny was down to only c.0.07g silver equivalence,⁶⁶ the new shilling coin had become too light to be used as an English penny any longer, but it had become convenient for use as the standard of a new system of account, a penny *na Osterger wichte*. It would have ousted the 'old-Frisian' system of money of account. From then onwards the new system followed its own course. The name *skilling cona*, obviously, fell out of use. This is not history, it should be repeated, but speculation based on a few surviving data. It is not supported by numismatic evidence, because, to the best of my knowledge, no 'deceptive' long cross pennies so far have been identified as having been produced in the Low Countries, apart from those struck by the Cunre mint.⁶⁷

The first coins from the Yade area dating from the second half of the 14th century apparently reflect the continuation of the regional monetary system that operated around the town of Jever in the first decades of the century. Also, the late medieval unit of account in Jeverland must have been linked to the unit of account in the last quarter of the 13th and the first quarter of the 14th century, the Oistringem penny.

⁶⁴ Excursus 5.6: 'On the meaning of the *skilling cona* in the judges' books'.

⁶⁵ See Excursus 5.6: 'On the meaning of the *skilling cona* in the judges' books', (4).

⁶⁶ See Chapter 5, 'The history of the measure of value'.

⁶⁷ Mayhew, "The circulation", 55-57. Steen Jensen, "Møntfundet", 72-74, mentions 56 sterling imitations of English long-cross type with confusing legends that do not match any typology. They are mainly imported from the Low Countries and form part of a hoard containing over 80,000 coins that was discovered in Kirial (Denmark). The weight of these coins varies between 1.1g and 0.4g. Could these have been pennies *na Osterger wichte*?

If so, the silver equivalence of what I assume to have been second phase ‘new-Frisian’ money must match an evolutionary development. Unfortunately there is hardly any information, so we must base our assumptions on the silver content of the so-called *witte* of Brokmerland of that time (c.0.8g⁶⁸). This implies that the ‘new-Frisian’ penny (the ‘half-*witte*’) had a silver equivalence of c.0.4g. Although Brokmerland is not Jeverland, the comparison is justified because, in or before 1376, the *hovetling* in Brokmerland began minting by imitating the model of the Jever coins, as we have seen in the previous section. Assuming that this ‘new-Frisian’ penny was the standard for the system of account, it follows that the silver equivalence of the unit of account decreased between the 1310s and the 1370s by c.0.2g. This represents a continuous development.

So, it is assumed that the money of account used in Oistringen in the second half of the 14th century was indeed a continuation of the money used during the first decades of the century. A second trace of the money of account system in the Yade area is only found about half a century later, in two documents dated in 1450 and 1479 and dealing with *rinsguldern* of 32 *kromsterten* each.⁶⁹ This rate is also found in Groningen in 1454.⁷⁰ It seems that this *kromstert* was valued in Jever as it was in Groningen in the 1430s - at c.1.0g silver.⁷¹ Furthermore, a *kromstert* was valued at 8 pennies in both Groningen⁷² and the Emden area.⁷³ This might have been different in Jeverland, but it seems unlikely because, in 1473-1482, the coins of Jeverland were recognised as legal money in Oistvriesland as were the coins of Oistvriesland itself, and these included *kromsterten*. If we therefore assume that a *kromstert* was also a denomination of 8 Oistringen pennies in Jeverland, it follows that the silver equivalence of the Oistringen penny in the 3rd quarter of the 15th century was c.0.1g.⁷⁴

In the second half of the 15th century the system of marks, shillings and pennies gradually disappeared in the Emden area and in Groningen, whereas the use of *arens*guilders and *kromsterten* increased. *Arens*guilders are ‘guilders such as the merchant uses’; that is, a fixed number of specific silver based units of account. Whereas a mark counted as 18 *kromsterten* (144 : 8), the *arens*guilder counted as 15 *kromsterten* or 120 pennies, which was equal to a minor mark. This may also have been the case in Jeverland.

⁶⁸ Chapter 11, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁶⁹ OFU1: 632/OUB6: 173 (1450, Jeverland/Harlingerland): *dusent Rinsche gulden und den Rinschen gulden tho rekende vor 32 krumptert*; OUB6: 249 (1479, Wangerland/Wursten) *negen styge rinsche gulden, den gulden to betalen vor 32 kromsterten*.

⁷⁰ GAG VMC: 24.

⁷¹ Chapter 12, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁷² RAG OCG: 9.

⁷³ Chapter 11, ‘The history of the measure of value’.

⁷⁴ $1/8 \times c.0.93g = c.0.12g$.

As we have seen, in 1473 a monetary treaty was made between the *hovetling* of Jeverland and the Count of Oistvriesland, valid for 10 years. This treaty supports the assumption that the systems of money of account of both countries must have been almost similar: they apparently shared the same coin - the imitative *kromstert* - as the standard. When these years had passed, the treaty was not renewed. The *hovetling* in Jeverland resumed his own minting. There may have been political reasons for this, but perhaps there were monetary reasons as well. In 1483 the money of Oistvriesland began depreciating rapidly. Although this was a consequence of the fast depreciation of the money in the Burgundian Netherlands, it may have alarmed the population of Jeverland. Perhaps the people expected that their own money would do better. The rate of 32 *kromsterten* for a *rinsguilder* is found in Groningen and in Oistvriesland until c.1470. Thereafter this rate was increasing.⁷⁵ As the silver equivalence of the *rinsguilder* remained fairly stable from the 1470s until the end of the 1490s,⁷⁶ the increasing rate was caused by the depreciation of the silver coins of Groningen and Oistvriesland. Whether this rate was valid in the Yade area is unknown. A possible difference between the Oistringeng money and the money of Oistvriesland - perhaps a token of appreciation of Oistringeng money - has survived in a will in Wisens, Aurikerland from 1483: debts to people in Wangerland and Oistringeng are quoted in *arenguilders ostergheldes*,⁷⁷ which seems to mean the money of Oistringeng.⁷⁸ In any case, with some delay, Jeverland followed the 1491 monetary reform in Oistvriesland and Groningen in 1493.⁷⁹

Most of the scarce surviving information concerns Jeverland. There are very few documents relating to Butyadingen, Stadland or Wursten. Amounts quoted in marks, sometimes called 'white' marks, are found in Butyadingen in a 1428 compensation contract⁸⁰ as well as in the 1479 statutes of Butyadingen.⁸¹ The term *hwite merk* (white mark) had already been used in or before 1327 in the statutes of the court of Riustringen;⁸² that is, four decades before coins named *witten* were struck for the first time in the Hanseatic world - see previous section; so this name does not refer to a mark in *witten*. The qualification 'white' might have been used to stress the good silver quality of the coins to be used for payment. In Stadland also, an amount is found quoted in marks, in a contract regarding a transmission of *spadeland* in 1497,⁸³ and the 1508 statutes of the most

⁷⁵ See Appendix II; in Groningen 1 *jager* æ 2 *vliegers* æ 3 *kromsterten*.

⁷⁶ Jesse, *Der wendische Münzverein*, 219, in the Hanseatic area.

⁷⁷ OFU2: 1118.

⁷⁸ Also: Kappelhoff, *Die Münzen*, 125.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, 129; 143.

⁸⁰ OUB2: 709.

⁸¹ OUB4: 1370.

⁸² Buma, *Das Rüstringer Recht*, 158 (§12).

⁸³ OUB3: 94. *Spadeland* is a piece of a dyke that has been given up by the original owner, who is unable to fulfil the necessary upkeep as is required for common interest. He puts a spade on his dyke and swears an oath to show that it is free.

eastern district of Frisia, Wursten, still use marks alongside guilders; they are sometimes called ‘Frisian’ marks.⁸⁴ One of the amounts concerns wergeld. This had been 10 scores of Frisian marks ‘previously’; unfortunately we do not know for how long, so we cannot infer the silver equivalence of the unit of account of this wergeld with any degree of accuracy. These findings are not very informative, but they do at least show that valuation in Frisian marks (‘new-Frisian’?) also occurred until the end of the late Middle Ages in the eastern part of the Yade area.

So far I have not mentioned the use of Bremen money of account. In the numerous connections of the Yade area with Bremen, Bremen money dominated. It is difficult to discover the extent to which the Bremen marks of 32 *groten* / 128 *swaren* / 384 pennies⁸⁵ - mentioned in the documents as units of account - were also used for internal transactions in the Yade area. The Bremen *groten* were also initially imitative *tornoyse groten*, but whether there was equivalence between the Frisian and the Bremen old *groten* is unknown.

Survey of the evolution of the money of account in the Yade area
(c.1270-c.1500)

Period	Standard coin	Equivalence	Unit of acc./multiple units
c.1270- c.1360	Oistringen penny (derivative sterling?)	c.0.9g?/c.0.6g (in 1317)/ c.0.4g? of silver <i>halling</i> ?)	1 d. = 1 standard 1 sh = 12 d. 1 mk = 12 sh
c.1360- c.1430?	Oistringen penny (<i>hovetlingen</i> issues)	c.0.4g?/c.0.1g of silver	1 d. = 1 standard 1 sh = 12 d. 1 mk = 12 sh
c.1430?- 1483	imitative <i>kromstert</i>	c.1.0g/c.0.8g? of silver	1 d. = 1/8 standard 1 sh = 12 d. 1 mk = 12 sh 1 <i>arengld</i> = 15 standard (= 120 d.)
1483- 1491	do.	c.0.8g?/c.0.3g of silver	do.
1491- c.1500	do.	c.0.9g of silver	do.

⁸⁴ Borchling, *Die niederdeutschen Rechtsquellen*, 196-200.

⁸⁵ Sprandel, *Das mittelalterliche Zahlungssystem*, 194.

Economic analysis

As the foregoing conclusions are mainly drawn from a conjectural picture of the history of the money of account system in the Yade area, it follows that its analysis can only be made with the same proviso. The theoretical framework has in fact contributed substantially to the creation of the picture. From the above survey, the following changes in the history of the system of money of account in the Yade area between c.1300 and c.1500 must be explained:

- The emergence of the Oistringten penny as assumed standard for the unit of account.
- The decrease in the silver equivalence of the unit of account from c.0.9g (?) in c.1270 (?) to c.0.5g in 1317, to c.0.4g (?) about 1360 (?) and subsequently to c.0.1g in c.1430 (?).
- The emergence of the *kromstert* as multiple unit and as standard of account.
- The emergence of the *arens*guilder as multiple unit of account.
- The decrease and restoration of the silver equivalence of the unit of account between c.1430 and c.1500.

The evolutionary path of the 'old-Frisian' penny had come to a natural end in the middle of the 13th century, as we have seen. The emergence of the Oistringten penny as standard for the unit of account was one of the new ways that the evolution of the money of account in Frisia could and did follow. It has been conjectured that this was caused by the inconvenience of the 'old-Frisian' penny as means of payment and as standard for the unit of account, which had in turn resulted from the deep deterioration of that coin on the one hand, and from the local use of an imitative sterling as shilling coin on the other. In the 'old-Frisian' money system at that time, 12 'old-Frisian' pennies were approximately equivalent to 1 sterling. As long as the 'old-Frisian' penny remained the habitual standard for the penny of account, the price of a sterling to be used as a shilling 'old-Frisian' had to be lowered at the mint according to the mechanisms of monetising bullion and of mint enterprising. So, the silver content of this coin was lowered at the same speed as that of the 'old-Frisian' penny. However, at the same time it must have become increasingly convenient to use the new coin as the basis for calculations, thus putting it in competition with the 'old-Frisian' penny as standard, an 'old-Frisian' pound being equivalent to a score or an ounce of the sterling derivations. By 1273 it had apparently become usual to use this coin (the penny *na Osterger wichte*) instead of the 'old-Frisian' penny as standard. As will be clear, this conjecture is founded on the economic theory of the evolution of money of account systems. All the elements are there: neither the need for convenient communication in trade nor the need for reducing future price uncertainty could any longer be satisfied by the 'old-Frisian' penny, and there was an obvious alternative. At some time a creative entrepreneur was bound to take the initiative and begin using the new coin as unit of account, to be followed by

other people as soon as their social inertia - their reluctance to abolish what had been habitual within living memory - was overcome.

Moreover, this novel instance of local creativity made the switch from the 'old-Frisian' to the English money of account system in the Yade area redundant. An explanation as to why this only occurred here might be that, in the Yade area, the use of a means of payment for an 'old-Frisian' shilling - the *skilling cona* - had already become usual. If it had been woollen cloth or a fur, this means would have been ousted as soon as the shilling in 'old-Frisian' pennies had decreased too much, in accordance with Gresham's law. It needed to be replaced, and the depreciating sterling derivation, if my conjecture is true, lay conveniently to hand.

The decrease in the silver equivalence of the unit of account (from c.0.9g/0.8g in c.1270 to c.0.6g in 1317, to c.0.4g (?) about 1360 (?) and subsequently to c.0.1g in c.1430 (?)) is also a mere guess, linking the assumed silver equivalencies of the 'old-Frisian' penny as standard at approximately known dates. The rapid decrease of c.0.3g silver equivalence between c.1270 and 1317 cannot be understood without taking a foreign development into account. In the 1290s, currency debasements in France, Hainaut and Flanders, occasioned by the expenses of wartime finance, also caused a rapid debasement of other continental sterling imitations. At Christmas time in 1299, England closed its borders to the import of these coins - called 'crockards and pollards' - and, by legally valuing them as halfpennies, enforced recoinage of those that were already circulating in that country.⁸⁶ This debasement process, reflected in the exchange market and expressed in the decline in price of the continental sterling imitations concerned, would also have affected the Jever mint. For reasons of competition, it had to follow the conditions in the market that were offered by the debasing mints of the continental lords. The extent of this influence can only be guessed at. After this period of rapid debasement, that is from the first decade of the 14th century onwards, the scarce numismatic and historic sources support the impression of a decrease more-or-less corresponding to the normal decrease of a market-controlled currency - a rate of c.0.4g of silver per century.

The emergence of the *kromstert* as standard and multiple unit of account must have originated in the import of this coin from the southern Low Countries, it having been struck in Flanders from 1418 onwards. Its popularity in East Frisia shows that it must have filled a gap in the currency. However, there are no data about the currency or the system of account in the Yade area for at least half a century before the emergence of the *kromstert* as the new standard, worth 8 pennies. It is mentioned in Frisia from c.1430 onwards. If something revolutionary had happened in the system of account, we would expect a surviving indication, but since this is not found we must assume an evolutio-

⁸⁶ Mayhew, "The circulation", 61-62; Mayhew, *Sterling imitations*, 66-67.

nary development. The *kromstert* was a popular coin not only in Flanders but also in other areas of the Low Countries. It was widely imitated but, peculiarly, at a much lower silver content. This happened in the countries south of the Frisian borders: Het Oversticht and Guelders;⁸⁷ but it also happened in Groningen and in the Emden area. No doubt the imitative type was imported into the Yade area through trade with the south. It gradually became a popular element, particularly in the currency of the areas that had adopted the ‘new-Frisian’ money of account. This would imply that it suited the existing money of account system. It was apparently valued at 8 ‘new-Frisian’ pennies. At that time a more trustworthy coin than the worn ‘new-Frisian’ penny would have been welcomed by the merchants, and the imitative *kromstert* would serve that purpose. It was current like the ‘new-Frisian’ penny, and although it was still in production, which was a disadvantage for its future value, gold coins were already current to meet the need for trustworthiness. It seems likely that the newly circulating *kromstert* would gradually have acquired its denomination of 8 pennies. If this is in fact what happened, the *kromstert* would tacitly have attained the position of standard for the money of account. This transition would have occurred without leaving the old path of development of the system of account and hence without the cost of switching standard. In other words, it would have been a repetition of the course of events I have suggested for when the ‘new-Frisian’ penny took over from the ‘old-Frisian’ penny as standard of account about 150 years before.

The *arens*guilder, originally the gold guilder of Arnhem, at some time during the 1430s/1440s, had a market rate in Frisia of approximately 15 imitative *kromsterten* (see Appendix II). This must have been a convenient rate in long-term contracts. As this rate facilitated value calculations in general, it eventually became a new multiple unit of account, independent of the exchange rate of the genuine Arnhem guilder. A multiple unit of 15 *kromsterten* may seem inconvenient, but it was in fact equal to a minor mark of 120 pennies that could easily be integrated into the extant system of money of account. As the development of this unit probably followed the development in the Emden area in its entirety, its evolution will be explained in the next chapter.

The decrease and restoration of the silver equivalence of the unit of account in the Yade area between c.1430 and c.1500 was in fact determined by the development of the system of money of account in neighbouring and monetarily-dominant East Frisia and Groningen. It is dealt with in the next two chapters.

⁸⁷ Van Gelder, “Oostnederlands geld”, 54-55; 60-62.