

Money

Money was calculated in pounds, shillings and pence.

One pound = 20 shillings. The pound was represented either by 'li', or £: transcribe both with a £ sign before the amount given. This symbol is actually an elaborate 'L', from the Latin 'libra', meaning pound. Compare the symbol for about a pound in weight, which is represented by 'lb' - it comes from the same.

One shilling = 12 pennies. A shilling was represented by 's', originally short for 'solidos', a Roman coin.

One penny = two halfpennies, or four farthings. A penny was represented by 'd', short for 'denarius', a Roman coin.

One halfpenny = 2 farthings. A halfpenny was represented by 'ob', short for 'obolus', a Roman coin.

One farthing = a quarter of a penny. A farthing was represented by 'qua', short for 'quadrans'.

A 4d coin was called a groat.

There was also an amount of money known as a mark. A mark was not an actual coin, but an amount. It was worth two-thirds of a pound, that is 13s 4d. Half a mark (one-third of a pound) was therefore 6s 8d.

When transcribing documents that mention amounts of money, do not expand the abbreviations such as li, ob, etc. Leave them abbreviated, and remember to transcribe li as '£'. They were never written out in full.

Measurements

Square measurements were given in acres (abbreviated to 'a'), roods ('r') and perches ('p').

40 perches = 1 rood

4 roods = 1 acre

Confusion arises from the fact that a perch is also a measurement of length. A perch, pole and rod are all terms for a measurement of length of approximately 5 metres (5.5 yards). For further information about measurement see Colin Chapman, 'How heavy, how much and how long?: weights, money and other measures used by our ancestors' (Lochin, 1995).