



**NEWSLETTER**  
**THE JOURNAL OF THE LONDON NUMISMATIC CLUB**  
**HONORARY EDITOR**

Peter A. Clayton

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## EDITORIAL

With this issue of the Newsletter we begin a new volume, Number VIII, and the Club celebrates its Golden Jubilee of fifty years. So many numismatists and collectors have passed through our membership lists in those years, many who went on to become 'names' in numismatics but all had one thing in common - friendship and a common interest in coins. That has always been the *raison d'etre* of the London Numismatic Club, and the reason for the name and its not being the London Numismatic Society - we are a club of like-minded souls.

As we look back over the fifty years, and we do still have some founder members with us as well as some 'old-timers' who almost go back to the beginning, it might be of interest to members to have a glimpse of the early days of the Club's foundation (with thanks to David Sealy who dug out the original details for the Editor). After the War, life and collecting began to get back to normal. Names that we all know such as Laurence Brown and Frank Purvey had joined the ranks of B.A. Seaby Ltd (founded in 1926) under the eagle eye of H. A. (Bert) Seaby, and it was Seaby's who made the initial moves to found the Club. A notice appeared in the *Seaby Coin & Medal Bulletin* (SCMB) issue of August 1947 (p. 310), where it said: 'It is being constantly suggested to us [Seaby] that there should be a London Coin Club that would cater for the less advanced collector. It is not suggested that this should be in opposition to the RNS or the BNS but should be complementary to these learned societies. What is thought of is a club that would have a low subscription, meet regularly and have simple papers and exhibits to educate and help the young and rather inexperienced collector, the majority of the valuable monographs read to the two other societies being highly technical treatises above the heads of many collectors'.

Any interested people were invited to write to the Editor of the SCMB, and also to say if they would be prepared to help in the actual organisation. It was added that if enough people were interested the names and addresses would be passed on to whoever had expressed willingness to organise the club.

Things moved fast from that first notice in August for we next read in the December issue (p. 471) that, 'On Tuesday 4th November, a preliminary meeting was held at St Bride's Institute to discuss the

formation of a London Club'. There were 32 people present and letters from another dozen expressing regret that they could not be present but wanted to be involved. Captain L.V. Wright was elected to be the first Chairman, and he was to serve the Club as its first President from 1947 to 1954. A small steering committee was empowered to draft a proposed constitution to be placed before the next meetings. Major C. Cheshire agreed to act as Secretary, and the volunteer members of the committee were Brian Grover, C. Lovell, A.O. Reid, and O. Theobald. The next meeting was agreed to be on Tuesday 2 December at St Bride's Institute and anyone interested was invited to attend or, if unable to do so, to write to Major Cheshire. It is very pleasant to record that Brian Grover is still an active and well known member of the numismatic scene.

In the February issue of SCMB (pp. 50 and 54) there appeared a notice of the London Numismatic Club: 'A recently formed society to cater for all tastes and also to help the young and inexperienced collector, fulfilling a long felt want which the two learned societies could hardly cover'. The first planned meeting was held on Friday 9 January 1948 with almost 50 members present. The evening was devoted to short talks amongst which Peter Seaby spoke on 'Numismatic literature', Brian Grover on 'Imperial Roman coins', C.W. Peck on 'A plated denarius', and several others also contributed. An 'identification parade' of coins was passed around for comment or clarification.

So, from small acorns, or good ideas, great oaks grow, and the London Numismatic Club still flourishes. Many of us still remember the old days of the meetings in the Printing Library at St Bride's, especially when we had to negotiate around the huge reproduction Gutenberg printing press that dominated the room - often to one side, sometimes it had been left in the centre, causing consternation. From there we moved eventually to other premises and a short history of the Club's later years will be found in my Presidential address, 'Forty Years On', that appeared in our 40th Anniversary Newsletter in November 1987, pp. 2-4.

Sadly, in this issue we record the deaths in the Obituaries of two very old friends of the Club, Robert Bridge and Margaret Amstell. Robert, as will be seen, had served the Club and the BANS well over the years with a dedicated commitment to them and to numismatics, Margaret was a well-known figure at B.A. Seaby and later in the sale rooms on her own account.

**Peter A. Clayton**

## **London Numismatic Club meeting, 5th September 1996**

The President, Anthony Portner, presented the bi-annual Norman Turner Memorial Lecture, taking as his topic, 'Aspects of Byzantine coins'. Anthony circulated copies of six maps that showed the extent of the Byzantine Empire in approximately 518, 565, 641, 1118 and 1282. It was readily apparent that the extent of the empire varied considerably and therefore so did its need for coinage. Indeed, at the end of the Byzantine empire in 1453 it merely comprised the city of Constantinople itself and therefore the need for coinage was obviously very limited. The maps gave some indication as to the area over which the coinage struck by the Byzantine emperors would have circulated, although gold at certain periods circulated far beyond the boundaries of the empire.

### **TILE FIRST AND THE LAST**

The first coin could be called the 'First and the Last'. It is an AE 2 of Arcadius (AD 383-408) - the first truly Eastern Roman Emperor who, whilst he was recognised in the West, did not control any part of the western empire. Then there is a follis of Anastasius I (491-517) with whose reign many Byzantine coin collectors start their collection as it was his reform of the copper coinage which gave it its characteristic early Byzantine appearance. Next is a silver eighth-stavraton of the last ill-fated emperor of Byzantium, Constantine XI (1448-1453) who perished gallantly on the walls of Constantinople defending the city against the Turks. It has always appeared to me somewhat more than a coincidence that the founder of Rome was called Romulus, and the first emperor was called Augustus. The last feeble emperor of the West was called Romulus Augustulus. Consider also that the founder of Constantinople was called Constantine, and the last emperor of Byzantium was the eleventh of that name.

Until the 1970s there were no coins known of Constantine XI and it was assumed that he had no need to strike any and made do with the currency in existence, together with foreign coins such as Venetian grossi. However, the sources do indicate that he struck coins during the siege but after the discovery of the first coin where his name could be read in the 1970s we had to wait twenty years until the 1990s before a hoard of coins was discovered. Both those coins were half-stavrata and

the stavraton; the eighth-stavraton only came to light with the discovery of the hoard. The half-stavraton is now considerably rarer than either the stavraton or the eighth since there were only eleven half-stavrata in the hoard compared to 59 stavrata and 88 eighth-stavrata.

## **METALS AND DENOMINATIONS**

The Byzantine coinage was initially issued in gold, silver and copper - later on the coins were also issued in electrum, billon and lead.

The gold was normally struck in three denominations: the solidus, its half the semissis and its third, the tremissis. Occasionally a sixth of a solidus was struck, although its use must have been very limited as the specimens look exactly the same as the corresponding tremissis. The solidus was the chief denomination during the early Byzantine empire, and had been inherited from the eastern Roman coinage. It was struck at 72 to the pound at an approximate weight of 4.55 grams when issued from the eastern Roman mints and, when issued from Constantinople, was generally of the highest purity. It was Tiberius Constantine (578-582) who changed the design of all the gold coin to a cross as it is said he had a dream that he should do so. His successor, Maurice Tiberius (582-602), however, reverted to the previous type, i.e. the facing angel.

Justinian II made drastic amendments to the coinage in his first reign, placing an old bust of Christ on the obverse and himself standing on the reverse, where he describes himself as the servant of Christ. In his second reign he adopted a young bust of Christ on the obverse and portrayed first, himself alone, and then himself with his young son on the reverse. The standard design of the coinage improved considerably at the end of the reign of Constantine IV, the father of Justinian II, and the same skilful engraver or possibly school of engravers, seem to have worked on the coinage for the next 40 to 50 years. Certainly, some of the most beautiful coins of the Byzantine period were produced during this period.

Silver is quite scarce except in a few periods. Anastasius and his successors continued the practice of striking siliquae and under Heraclius, because of the Persian wars, a new silver coin, the hexagram, was introduced and struck originally on a large scale. Under Leo III (717-742) the Byzantines started to strike a silver coinage similar to the thin silver dirham of the Arabs. This was struck over several hundred years.

Copper was struck in a variety of denominations, the largest being

the follis of 40-nummi. This piece was first struck in the reign of Anastasius and was to give the coinage its distinctive Byzantine appearance.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COINAGE**

The solidus gradually changed from the typical thick and fairly dumpy coin of the late Roman period to a thinner, broader coin and then, in the eleventh century, it assumed the scyphate form, another typical feature of Byzantine coinage that is instantly recognisable. The late gold and electrum debased gold was only of this type.

Solidi of the Iconoclastic period of the middle period of the Byzantine empire can show many portraits, such as that of Leo IV (775-780). This shows not only Leo, but his father, his grandfather and his son. Other coins often have Imperial portraits on both faces. During the Palaeologan period the solidus, under Michael VIII (1261-1282) became known as a hyperperon. Those of the sole reign of Andronicus II (1282-1295) are known as 'kneelers' because Andronicus kneels before Christ. Byzantine gold coinage ceases after the very rare issues of John V and John VI (1347-1353). It ceased therefore more than 100 years before the end of the Byzantine empire and the large silver pieces take its place: the stavraton, its half and eighth.

Copper also changed considerably over the period of the empire. Under Justinian a particularly heavy copper coinage was struck and he started dating the coinage with a year and it also bears an officina letter. After Justinian's reign the weight of the coinage deteriorated until only very miserable copper coins were struck under Heraclius and Constans. During the tenth and eleventh centuries some very large anonymous copper coins were struck - anonymous because they lacked the emperors name. Subsequently, copper coins were only struck in a fairly small format.

### **FAMILY COINS**

It is very noticeable from many coins that the Byzantines were very keen on putting members of the family apart from the emperor on the coinage. Heraclius appears with his son, Heraclius Constantine; Heraclius takes the left position, as demanded by precedent when two emperors appear.

On coins where three figures appear, we have Heraclius in the centre as demanded again by precedent, and on the right his elder son Heraclius Constantine and to the left his younger son, Heraclonas.

### **OFFICINA LETTERS**

The early Byzantine gold and copper coins had officina (workshop) letters. For the gold, Constantinople had the most officinas, from one to ten (A - I). For the copper, the number of officinas there were five (A - E). The system of officinas died out in the eighth century to be replaced by control marks, although what their exact purpose was is not fully known. The coins of the Palaeologan period have sigla or secret marks on them. There is still much work to be done in relation to these marks to clarify the series, and studies have not been helped by the unattractiveness and bad striking of the coins themselves.

### **MINTS**

Byzantine coinage was struck at many mints, particularly in the early years of the empire. After the reign of Heraclius most of the eastern mints closed down and minting was only resumed at Thessalonica in the late eleventh century.

Whilst the gold and silver were invariably never mint marked, attribution is based mainly on style and where hoards have been found with copper that is often mint marked. Style is an important criteria in attributing a lot of the gold. For example, a rare solidus of Justin II is attributed to Thessalonica on the basis of its being found in a hoard of coins of that mint. Additionally, the head of the S on the reverse is formed by a small dot which, interestingly, ensures that it could not be Constantinople. Once local characteristics are recognised, attribution becomes much simpler.

### **EPHEMERAL MINTS AND COPIES**

Some mints were fairly ephemeral, one of them being Salona. A fine follis of Justinian has been ascribed to this mint on provenances of finds, but it could have been issued elsewhere.

During the sixth century a large number of coppers were struck which ostensibly give a mint mark, but which are unlikely to have been struck at the mint indicated. Hahn has named these as military mints,

arguing that they were struck by the military as they moved around and therefore copied marks that they knew. In addition, there are lots of copies, many looking as good as the originals - they may have been struck in Constantinople.

### **PRECURSORS OF THE BYZANTINES**

The late Roman gold is very similar to the early Byzantine gold - the typical reverse of the angel facing left was used throughout the late Roman period in the east.

### **NEIGHBOURS AND ENEMIES OF BYZANTIUM**

I believe that interest in Byzantine coinage should also extend to the neighbours and enemies who shaped Byzantium's history at the time. In the later period of the Byzantine empire there were several states which succeeded to part of the empire. One of these was the empire of Trebizond on the Black Sea.

In the early seventh century during the reign of Heraclius the Persians invaded and conquered a large part of the eastern possessions of the Byzantine empire. When they seized Egypt they continued a tradition of minting distinctive copper coins at the mint of Alexandria. For many years it was thought that these were still issues of Heraclius as the type is similar, but there is also a crescent next to the bust which is clearly Persian and a sign that the coin was minted during the Persian occupation from 618 to 628.

When the Arabs overran most of the Byzantine empire in the east they copied the latest Byzantine coins but using Arabic inscriptions. Some Crusader coins also imitated Byzantine issues of the time and there were even copies made by Bela III (1172-1196) of Hungary. The numerous and various copies are an interesting field of study in themselves.

The Sassanians had a prolific silver coinage of their own and they also appear to have had a considerable copper coinage, but this latter has not yet been too well studied. Their gold coins are very rare. It would appear that their silver coinage complimented the relative lack of Byzantine silver and, conversely, the Byzantine gold may have complimented the Sassanian silver. Khusro II (591-628) was the last great Sassanian emperor who invaded the Byzantine empire under Heraclius



but was finally defeated and murdered.

Finally, anyone interested in the Byzantine series should equip himself with a good library. At one time it was virtually impossible to buy any books as the British Museum catalogue was long out of print and the only book readily available was the reprint of the Ratto catalogue. However, with the publication of Dumbarton Oaks and Hahn, together with David Sear's *Byzantine Coins and Their Values*, it is not difficult for the student or collector to gather some vital titles together.

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 8th October 19%**

Mr Stan Goron came to speak on 'The British Impact on Native Indian Coinages'. He noted that it was the Portuguese who first issued coins in India during the reign of D. Joao III (1521-57). These bore a coat of arms, St Thomas, armillary sphere and cross, etc. The first British settlement in India was at Surat in 1612. A factory had been opened at Masulipatam in 1611 and the first factories in Bengal were opened in 1633. Bombay island was ceded to the British Crown by the Portuguese in 1661 upon the marriage of Catherine of Braganza to Charles II. It was delivered to the representatives of the British Crown in 1665. Coinage in circulation in the Bombay area at the time was mainly Portuguese, though no doubt some Mughal coinage was also used.

The first East India Company (EIC) coinage was struck in the Madras Presidency and consisted of gold pagodas (1643-7 ?) of native type. The first EIC Bombay coinage was struck in 1672 and consisted of silver Anglinas (rupees) and copperroons or pice: these bore the arms of the Company and Latin inscriptions. The Anglinas would have enjoyed little, if any, acceptance beyond the Company's sphere of influence so coins were struck in Mughal style but bearing the name of the English monarch. Coins of this type were first struck in 1687 in the name of James II. Better known now are the rupees in the name of William and Mary of 1693-4. Their legends read: 'Coin struck during the reign of King William and Queen Mary in their 6th regnal year. Coin of the English rulers. Struck at Bombay'. However, these coins incurred the displeasure of the Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, and the coining was discontinued.

It was not until the reign of Farrukhsiyar (1713-19) that silver coinage in Bombay resumed, in Mughal style and with the permission of the Mughal emperor. The copper coinage continued to bear a crown and Latin text.

A number of the native-style coins betray British influence. The rupee of Shajehanabad (Delhi) in the name of the Mughal emperor Shah 'Alam II, year AH 1218 (=1803) depicted an English lion. This presumably reflects the capture of the city at that time by General Lake. Another rupee of year AH 1219 (1804) has a floral border, also doubtless under British influence. A copper paisa in the name of Muhammad Akbar II has the initials WH = John William Hessing, the Dutch commander of the fort of Agra under the Marathas (Mahadji Sindhia) for a few years before the British took the town in 1804. A Bareilly rupee in the name of Shah 'Alam II, year 37, has the Persian letter *wa*. These coins were struck with the same regal date from AH 1216 to 1220 (1801-5). Bareilly at this time was in the possession of the British and it is thought that the *wa* represents the initial of the new settlement officer, Henry Wellesley.

There are coins with portraits of the British monarchs such as the Bharatpur rupee. Gold and silver coins of this type were struck at both Bharatpur and Dig between 1858 and 1862 during the reign of Jaswant Singh (1852-93). He was a minor when he began his reign and the British political agent acted as regent. Jaswant Singh is mentioned on the reverse of the coins. Bindraban struck rupees and halves between 1858 and 1867 that were crude copies of the Bharatpur coinage. This area passed to the East India Company in 1803-5.

Because of the multiplicity of state coinages of very varying quality and the fact that some states melted down the British Indian coinage to make their own debased coinage for their own profit, the Government was keen to suppress the native mints or at least enter into a suitable arrangement with the rulers. On 30 September 1872 a resolution was passed, prescribing the conditions upon which the Government was prepared to promote legislation admitting the coins of Native States to be legal tender in British India. The resolution was forwarded to the Foreign Department, with the intimation that after the assent of the Secretary of State for India was obtained, the necessary legislation would be undertaken as soon as information was received that any Native State was ready to enter into the reciprocal arrangement described in the Resolution. Alwar was the first state to accept the invitation during a

period when the Political Agent was acting as President of Regency for the young Maharao Raja Mangal Singh. This acceptance resulted in the passing of an Act in 1876 entitled: 'An Act to enable the Government of India to declare certain coins of Native States to be a legal tender in British India. It provided for coins struck in gold, silver and copper and included the following conditions:

- \* coins to be struck in any mint in British India
- \* fineness and weight had to be identical with that prescribed for the Government of India issues
- \* obverse and reverse designs had to differ from coins made or issued in the Native States
- \* value had to be inscribed in the English language
- \* the Native State had to suppress its mint or mints for a period of not less than 30 years

Few states followed Alwar's example.

After 1857, when the Government of India took over the East India Company, the name of the British monarch featured on many of the states' coinage, often with the name of the local ruler. Bundi coins have the name of the British monarch in English and the local ruler's name in Nagali on the other side. For example, rupees of Jaipur in the name of Queen Victoria are dated 1858 and 1864 and were struck during the reign of Ram Singh, whose name appears on the other side of the coins. They read: *'Zarb Sawai Jaipur sanah...ba-andi malikah rnu'azzamah Sultanat Inglistan Victoria'* = Struck at Saiw Jaipur in the year... by permission of Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of England. A rupee of the state of Alwar under Sheeodan Singh (1857-74), of the Rajgarh mint, 1859, reads: *'Malikah rnu'azzatnah takiu nashin dar-us-sultanat Inglistan sikkah mubarak 'Iswy...'* = Auspicious coin of Her Majesty the Queen, England the seat of Empire, in the year of Jesus... .

A Nazarana rupee of Jaisalmir, a state in the far west of Rajasthan, is based on the rupees of the Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah, struck in Shahjehanabad (Delhi), year 22. All the coins bear this regnal year and the script on the coins is very crude. Rupees were struck at many mints and also half rupees at some (such as Jodhpur) in the name of Edward VII and George V. Very few full rupees were struck in this state after the reign of Victoria but, interestingly, Jodhpur is one of the few states that struck coins in the name of Edward VIII, in copper. The rupees of

Kuchawan, which was feudatory to Jodhpur, struck under Thakur Kesri Singh were 75% silver and 25% alloy. They were much used by bankers, and by the Rajputs, in paying largesse to temples, or by others at marriage ceremonies. An interesting reverse reads: 'Struck at Kuchawan, in the State of Jodhpur, in the year of Jesus 1863'.

The state of Radhanpur is interesting as some of the coins are unusual in actually stating the denomination, i.e. rupee, 8 annas, 4 anna, 2 annas. Some also have 50 falus and 100 falus on them! Radhanpur state lay west of Baroda. It comprised 1150 square miles and, in 1881 had a population of 98,129, of whom 50,903 were males and 47,226 females, dwelling in two towns and 156 villages of 23,048 houses. Hindus numbered 80,558, Muslims 11,575, and others 5,784. The chief, Bismila Khan, was 40 years old in 1882 and entitled to an 11-gun salute. He had an estimated gross revenue of £60,000 and maintained a military force of 248 horse and 362 foot. In 1883 there were nine schools with 572 pupils. The town of Radhanpur itself had a population of 14,722 in 1881, breaking down into 6767 Hindus, 4622 Muslims and 3313 Jains. It lay in the middle of an open plain that was mostly under water during the rains. Its surrounding loop-holed wall was 15 feet high, eight feet broad and about two and a half miles in circumference with corner towers, eight bastioned gateways, outworks and a filled-in ditch. The Nawab lived in an inner fort. The town was a considerable trade centre for Gujarat, Kutch and Bhaunagar. It had a post office, a dispensary and the nearest railway station was 40 miles away. A municipality had recently been organised with an annual income of £70. Exports were rape-seed, wheat, gain and cotton; imports were rice, sugar, tobacco, cloth and ivory.

An interesting character was Raghuraj Singh (1843-80) of Rewa. He assisted the British in 1857 and was awarded the insignia of Knight Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India in 18644. He went to Calcutta in 1875 to pay his respects to the Prince of Wales and attended the Delhi Durbar in 1877 on the occasion of the assumption of Queen Victoria of the title of Empress of India. He got his salute of **17** guns raised to 19, and died aged 46 in 1880. Another unconventional ruler was Shivaji Rao (1886-1903) of Indore. According to his great grandson, he was a keen wrestler who loved to call people off the streets to wrestle with him and in 1903 he beat up the British Resident. The British Resident at that time was Sir Francis Younghusband (of Lhasa

fame), who got his own back by deposing Shivaji Rao.

Some coins show coats of arms but such devices did not feature on Indo-Muslim coinage nor on the majority of state coinage, with the exception of Awadh from 1819. The British devised coats of arms for the 102 Treaty States in time for the 1877 Durbar at which Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, and some of these came to be depicted on state coins, especially with the advent of more machine-struck coins. At the 1877 Durbar a number of banners showed the new arms prepared for the states. These were devised by an expert in British heraldry and were adorned with supporters of cows, elephants, scrolls (often with English mottoes) and crests that had helms but no crowns. Typical rupees of Awadh carried arms after 1819 when, at the urging of the British, the then nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haidar accepted the title of King of Awadh.

Curiously, after the middle of the 18th century coins of Tripura were not struck for monetary reasons but merely for ceremonial use at coronations and other ceremonies, and to maintain the right of coinage. Between 1862 and 1870 the succession to the throne was disputed, but finally decided in favour of Vira Chandra Manikya (1862-96). The British installed a political agent in 1871, presumably to keep an eye on troublesome tribes who were making incursions into the state. No doubt the British also had a hand in the succession decision and devised the coat of arms on the coins at the same time.

Rupees of Jammu and Kashmir and those issued by Ranbir Singh (1857-85) bear the letters JHS, these having first been struck in 1850 during the reign of Gulab Singh. There are two explanations known for the appearance of these letters on these and subsequent coins. One says that Lord Lawrence, when at the court of Gulab Singh, was asked by the Maharajah to what the success and prosperity of England was due. Lord Lawrence replied that it was due to its being a Christian nation, whereupon he was asked for some symbol or sign of Christianity and he wrote the letters JHS = Jesus Hominum Salvator. Another explanation originating with General G.G. Pearse has it that Anund Messiah, a stormy petrel of a Christian, said that he had induced Gulab Singh to put the letters JHS on the coins in the midst of the Persian script because he had assured the king that by doing so he would not only please the British Indian Government but would also bring good fortune on himself. Both these accounts may well be true. There is also a tradition amongst some

people in the Kashmir region that Jesus survived crucifixion and ended up in Kashmir - an illustrated article on this subject by Carlo Buldrini appeared in the *India Magazine* of January 1983.

Mr Goron showed a wide selection of slides illustrating the coinage he described and added a second dimension by introducing appropriate painting that fleshed out a number of the characters he mentioned.

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 7th January 1997**

This meeting was an most unusual one in that the Club had never been treated to such an extraordinary and practical numismatic presentation. David Greenhalgh, well known for his work on half-groats, came with his wife Sue to speak on 'The Craft of the medieval moneyer. However, not only did he speak, he had brought an incredible full scale mint with all the tools, etc., and, not least, he and Sue were in authentic costume. He proceeded to explain the moneyer's craft in both its contemporary aspects and by modern demonstration. The audience was enthralled. Dave and Sue Greenhalgh travel widely to present their travelling mint and historical interpretation to schools and all sorts of educational gatherings. As his prospectus says:

'Grunal the Moneyer and his lady Aethelflaed of Cytringl welcome you to the World of Historical Interpretation and to their Travelling Mint. We specialise in Living History displays for Museums, Societies, Re-enactment Groups and Heritage Centres.

Our display equipment is of the highest quality, satisfying even the most stringent of authenticity requirements. We produce reproduction coins from authentic style medieval dies which are cut in the manner of the original dies, in pewter (lead free), copper, brass, silver and gold. The dies are cut by Grunal, a member of the Guild of Master Craftsmen, who has extensive knowledge from over 25 years' experience studying the coins of the medieval period, to manufacture a coin in the manner of the early mints from the period 50 to 1500 AD. We do not produce direct copies of original coins but using our experience we generate a coin for whichever period you require, with your museum, society or group's name or emblem, in the style of the coins of the period.

These coins are then struck as part of our display whilst we interact with the public using the skills we have learned from a great number of Living History displays. We can converse with confidence with all ranges

of the public from children to the academic.

With the displays we also bring a selection of genuine artefacts, coins and jewellery from the period for the public to touch and hold: It was indeed an evening to remember.

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 8th April 1997**

Ivan Buck, the long-time Secretary of the Essex Numismatic Society, spoke on 'Henry VI - Coinage and dies'. Ivan described how, some 30 years ago, he had acquired a large collection of milled coinage from an elderly colleague which included, however, a single silver hammered coin - a groat of Henry VI. He was intrigued by it and, showing the coin (which is still in his collection) said that it all started from there. He disposed of the milled coins and used the money to buy hammered coins.

Ivan first gave a quick, broad survey of the silver coinage of Henry VI, noting that he came to the throne aged eight months in 1422 and then commenced his First Reign which lasted until 1461. He was succeeded (ousted) by Edward IV (1461-70) and returned for a short restored Second Reign from October 1470 to April 1471. The later coins, as may be expected, are much scarcer than those of the First Reign. Many of the coins carry the king's name as HENRICV, and have a distinctive R that looks like a B.

Having disposed of the generalities, Ivan then turned to the real focus of his talk, what he called 'die-sinker's errors'. Using a large number of slides (mainly of reverses of the coins), together with some very enlarged details, he proceeded to demonstrate some of the curiosities that occur in the legends of the series. The majority of the errors noted appeared to fall within the inner rather than the outer circle of the two circular reverse legends. This phenomena gave rise to the speculation that perhaps the outer circle legends were done on the die by the master and the second, inner circle legend, was only added at a later date by a less competent mint worker. Some people had suggested that the errors were deliberate to act as a privy mark beyond the mint marks. For example, the spelling of SIVITAS instead of CIVITAS, but there were occasions when the S had been corrected by an over stamped C - hardly suggesting evidence for the privy mark theory.

Numerous examples were illustrated where the die sinker had made

spelling mistakes, or had simply miscalculated and run out of space, thereby necessitating the striking of a last letter over the martlet mint mark or another letter. Some of the misspellings were particularly bad, e.g. RX for REX and the like. A large proportion of the errors shown were on the reverses of the Calais-mint coins and it is still debatable if the dies for these had been manufactured in London or in Calais. Not all the errors were typographical letter errors - on occasion the reverse could be found totally missing the three pellets in the upper right quartering; on others there was a surfeit of them in the same quarter with five pellets. A theory that the initial lack of pellets was due to double-striking (or mis-striking) was not supported by the evidence of the rest of the coins.

The overall picture that emerged was that, for some unknown reason, not only was there a degree of carelessness amongst the die sinkers preparing the dies, there was also obviously a substantial degree of indifference on the part of those supposed to be checking the end product.

It was quite enlightening to realise how many die errors could be spotted once ones eye was 'in' to the reading of the medieval-style legends. A lively discussion followed the talk - always the best evidence of how interested the large audience were in the subject was revealed by the number of questions posed.

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 8th July 1997**

John Roberts-Lewis gave a talk on 'Nineteenth century Australian coinage'. John said that at the start of the 19th century there was no country of Australia, nor were there Australian coins. The first colonists and convicts landed in 1788 in New South Wales, the coast of which had been charted by Captain Cook in 1770. By 1800 the population had grown to 6000. Coinage consisted of anything brought by settlers or traders, but the bulk of transactions involved store receipts, private notes and barter.

In 1800 Governor King issued a Proclamation regulating certain coin values, shortly after the arrival of four tons of Boulton's 179 'cartwheel' pennies. These were tarified at twopence and examples were also shown of English and East India Company gold and silver as well as a typical Spanish dollar. Portuguese and Dutch gold and silver completed the total of eleven coin denominations. The Proclamation's sterling values



were received from the British Treasury and were those largely used in the colonies, in an effort to keep coin within the territory. Also, in 1800, boxes of 1799 halfpennies and farthings arrived after the Proclamation and must have been tarified at double their face value as well, although we have no evidence of this.

Promissory notes, payable in wheat, and a soldier's pay note signed by the Paymaster of the New South Wales Corps were shown as representative of the wide range of types of note in circulation. Rum, wheat and meat were used by obtaining Government store receipts or in barter. Licences for retailing spirits were held by the NCOs of the New South Wales Corps which had been raised in 1790 to guard the convicts. The use of rum as a 'currency' was widespread, the authorities even offering 30 gallons of it for the recapture of two criminals. High profits led to a corrupt system involving most of the colonists, which the next Governor, Captain Bligh, tried to reform. He suffered his second mutiny, being arrested. In 1809 Governor Macquarie arrived and the 73rd Regiment of Foot replaced the New South Wales Corps, which was sent to Europe, and its commanding officer was cashiered.

The first Australian coins were produced in 1813 using a delivery of 40,000 Spanish dollars. Their centres were punched out and stamped as 'Fifteen Pence' (quarter dollars), whilst the rest of the dollar was stamped around the inner hole with 'Five Shillings'. The dies and work were done by William Henshall, a freed convict, who had originally been transported for forgery ! Being greatly over tarified this silver remained in New South Wales, being reduced in value in 1825 and finally withdrawn in 1829.

Macquarie's decree for the coins banned paper money but continued in New South Wales and also in Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania), where a convict settlement had been started in 1803. Governor Brisbane attempted to adopt a dollar sterling standard between 1822 and 1825. The Home Government, however, instituted a standard sterling value in all colonies in 1825, thus bringing this to an end.

The Tasmanian 1823 shilling token probably never reached the colony and few pieces have survived of what was intended to accompany and assist a business venture - this would have been the first token issue. British silver reached Australia in some quantity from time to time:

£83,000 between 1824 and 1829, and £166,000 from 1835 to 1836. There were further note issues in the 1840s, but small change continued to be in short supply.

The first tokens, undated, for which we have documentary evidence were issued in 1849 for Annand, Smith and Co. of Melbourne. Produced by Heaton and Sons of Birmingham, there were a number of other undated issues ascribed to them and to other English medallists. It is possible, though no evidence has been found, that some of these were also issued towards the end of the 1840s and in the first half of the 1850s. One of Heaton's issues was for James Campbell of Morpeth, NSW, and is known to have been issued in 1854 when two tons of pennies and halfpennies went into circulation. Also, when J.C. Thornthwaite produced the first dated tokens in Sydney in 1852 the colonial makers were said to be unable to compete with the long experience of English firms. It can be inferred that a number of undated issues were already circulating.

In 1851 gold was discovered near Bathurst, NSW, an event which accelerated the build-up of population and the evolution of the separate states. It also meant that in NSW and Victoria, both of which had further gold finds in the same year, there was a worsening of the shortage of small change as people arrived at the gold fields of Ballarat and Bendigo. Gold dust was plentiful and selling for up to 35% below bullion value, bringing demands for the right to mint the metal. South Australia, anticipating British approval, passed an Act to permit melting and coining gold dust for twelve months to February 1853. At first ingots and then one pound coins were produced from over one and a half million pounds of gold received. Between 1851 and 1861 the discoveries produced £125 million worth of gold. The Royal Mint set up a branch in Sydney, beginning to produce sovereigns and half sovereigns in 1855. They used William Wyon's head of Queen Victoria with her hair held in a filet as used on the English gold. The reverse has AUSTRALIA within a wreath and the value below; the same types were used in 1856. From 1857 to 1870 an obverse design by Leonard Wyon had the Queen's hair held in a wreath by waratah (an eastern Australian flower); the same reverse was used. Subsequently, minting at Sydney and Melbourne (which opened in 1872), produced English-type 'shield' or 'St George' sovereigns or half sovereigns, using the mintmark S or M. The coins which had the 'AUSTRALIA' reverses became legal tender in Britain by Royal

Proclamation on 3 February 1866.

Token activity continued with silver threepences made by Thornthwaite in 1854 for himself and James Campbell; however, only about £5 worth of each were made. A further silver issue by Hogarth and Ericksen was made in 1858, again not in any quantity. It appears that British silver was meeting the need down to this level of small change. In 1857 numerous dated tokens were issued in several of the States and also in New Zealand, whose population had increased from 2000 in 1840 to 60,000 in 1857. Further issues occurred each year to 1862. Two makers dominated the scene: at first it was W. J. Taylor of London and then Thomas Stokes of Melbourne, who bought the plant that Taylor had set up in Melbourne, including many dies. Stokes began to produce characteristically Australian design and was responsible in 1852 for the issues of 27 firms, all in Victoria, out of a total of 33 issues in that year. His success, however, coincided with the arrival of a plentiful supply of the new bronze Regal coins. Responding to the outcry against unwanted tokens the State of Victoria made them illegal in 1863. Other States followed suit: Queensland in 1865, New South Wales in 1868, Tasmania and Western Australia in 1874 and South Australia in 1875. New Zealand does not seem to have had the same problems, since occasional issues occurred until 1881 and it was only in 1897 that tokens were made illegal.

Medallists are known for 80% of the 192 issuers, Stokes being the most prolific, followed by Taylor and Heaton and Sons. Currency requirements for Australia and New Zealand were then met to beyond the end of the century by English and Australian gold and English silver and bronze, together with local bank notes.

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 6th August 1997**

This meeting of the Club took the usual form for the August Meeting of being a 'Members' Own' contributions. Some seven members contributed papers (of which some are printed below), whilst others in the audience contributed a lot to the various discussions.

**David Sealy** contributed a reading on 'Money of Exchange and Money of Account' from Appendix G of D.H. Fischer, *The Great Wave* (New York, 1997). He had found this to be quite some interest in the

ideas and views expounded. 'A student of price history must confront a vast diversity of monetary units in the world - not merely in the variety of coins and paper currency, but also in the structure of the monetary systems themselves. In the early modern era these systems were in some ways more complex than those of our own time'. Copyright precludes us from printing the whole excerpt but one point of interest regarding the money in circulation in the 18th century was that, after 1726, the English guinea had parity with the French Louis d'or. It is not always realised how many coins of different nations were passed as current at the period. It was quoted that 'When a British general fell overboard near Boston, his baggage was found to contain 694 58 joannes, 37 moidores, 300 English guineas, 8 1/2 pistoles, 1 French guinea, 1 dollar, 1 copper halfpenny, 26 'small hearts' bits of silver, 6 pieces of gold and 7 small pieces of silver. It was common for raw unminted lumps of gold and silver to be used as money.'

Our Secretary, **Robert Hatch**, contributed a note on a large silver piece of Leopold I, 'the Hogmouth', (1638-1705), displaying the very characteristic profile that provided him with the nickname on slides. The piece was a 15-kreuzer denomination. Robert provided the translation of the lengthy and complicated Latin abbreviated legend as: Obverse: Leopold by the Grace of God, Roman Emperor, forever Augustus, King of Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, whilst the reverse bore: Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Tyrol. For good measure, after such a string of titles, the reverse also bore a nice double-headed Austro-Hungarian eagle. Robert noted that he had acquired the coin some years previously from a small antique emporium in Gainsborough, North Lines, for £12, but his two slides made of it in expensive Hampstead had cost him £5 each.

**Kevin Wicker** showed photographs of a hybrid copper core denarius. The obverse carried a portrait of Lucius Junius Brutus facing right, BRVTVS behind. The reverse carried a portrait of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, also facing right, and the legend SVLLA COS. The reverse is taken from a coin listed as Pompeia 4 in *Roman Silver Coins*, Vol. 1, the moneyer being Quintus Pompeius Rufus, the son of Sulla's daughter, Cornelia. The obverse is from Junia 30 in *RSC*, and the moneyer is Marcus Junius Brutus (junior). Both the original coins are dated to 54 BC in *RSC*. The two obverses are a curious juxtaposition and there are many

theories as to how this could have happened, not least, had mint workers stolen the dies to produce it. What does remain, however, is the fact that here, on this hybrid, are depicted one the Republic's greatest heroes juxtaposed with one of the prime movers in the fall of the Republic after the assassination of Julius Caesar on the fateful Ides of March, 44 BC.

Bank note references to be found in Victorian Post Office Notices, issued by Postmasters in Great Britain between 1840 and 1901 were reviewed by **John Roberts**-Lewis. There are 17 notices, excluding repeats, which fall into two categories: those relating to theft, and those relating to forgery and fraud.

The theft category begins with the Post Office advice to cut notes in half and send them by different posts. Details of numbers, dates, denominations, etc., were to be kept by the sender. Registration, introduced in December 1840, gradually replaced note cutting, which had been long-standing advice when using the posts. Three instances were detailed of stolen bank notes, including private bank issues as well as those of the Bank of England.

When paper, prepared for Bank of England notes, was stolen from the mills, postmasters were requested to record names of customers and details of notes. It became routine for the Post Office itself to endorse notes as well as record names, dates, payment reason, serial numbers and bank note description.

One circular deals with the failed York Bank of Messrs Swan, Clough & Co.; another with the use of a note from the long defunct Tweed Bank. Between 1874 and 1884 four instances of forgery were covered. One concerned the Wilts and Dorset Bank five pound notes. Two were of bank of England five pound notes and of a Bank of England fifty pound note.

John exhibited some of the notices and the Circulars.

**Tony Holmes** presented the 'Uqalids of Al-Jezira, a dynasty that inhabits one of the less frequented by-ways of history. After the death of the Prophet Mohammed in AD 632 the new Muslim empire was ruled by four great Caliphs who were both spiritual and temporal leaders; then came the lines of the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs. The Muslim conquests rapidly extended from Morocco and Spain in the West to parts of India in the East, and also into Soviet Central Asia in the north. The

local governors became largely independent in the 8th to 9th centuries AD and made war, often on each other, without considering the wishes of the caliph, who was by now more of a spiritual leader.

in this way the Hamdanid governors of Iraq (Mesopotamia) became independent about 920, but they tangled with another rising family, the Buwahids, and were so weakened that their territory fell to the Marwanids (the Diyarbakr area, extending into Turkey) and the 'Uqaylids who seized the al-jezira area about AD 996.

Al-jezira means 'the island', i.e. the broad area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Of course it is not an island, but the rivers are so large that it is thought of as an island. The principal mint used by the 'Uqaylids were Mosul, Nisibis, Sinjar, Balad and Takrit.

The initial leaders were Hosam ed-daula al-mukallad and Janah ed-Daula. at one point the 'Uqaylids even conquered Aleppo in Syria from the Mirdasids, but soon lost it to the Fatimids. No coins, so far, seem to be traceable to the mint of Aleppo under the 'Uqaylids, but they may well exist and await discovery. The old British Museum catalogue, in fact only lists three coins of the dynasty, but by now, no doubt, their holdings have expanded.

The coins are silver dirhams with a double legend on one side; the inner one gives the date and mint, the outer one is taken from the Koran, sum (chapter) 30, verses 3 and 4, and is generally given in numismatic books as: 'Of Allah is the command before and from after, and on that day the believers shall rejoice in the victory of Allah'. The Koran is quite varied in its content and differs from the Bible in having chapters, sura 30 is called 'The Greeks'. In N.J. Dawood's translation (Penguin Classics, 1966, p. 188), 'The Greeks [i.e. Byzantines] have been defeated in a neighbouring land [by the Persians in Syria, AD 615]. But in a few years they shall themselves gain victory: such being the will of Allah before and after. On that day the believers will rejoice in Allah's help. He give victory to whom He will. He is the Mighty One, the Merciful.' It is taken as referring to the great struggles during Mohammed's lifetime between Heraclius and the Sasanian king Khusru II in which, despite earlier successes, the pagan Khusru was eventually defeated.

The 'Uqaylids and many other dynasties were swept away by the eruption of the Seljuq Turks in 1096, so their rule lasted for exactly one hundred years - their hijrā (Muslim) dates are AH 386-489 = 103 years.

This is correct because the Muslim year is a lunar year and thus about 3% shorter than our solar year. As an example, the Muslim year 1148 began on 9 May last, but 1419 will begin on 28 April 1998.

**Trevor Stephenson** contributed a note on the young designer of Peruvian coins, Robert Henry Britten. First, he outlined the background to Peruvian numismatic history, reaching back to the initial conquest under Pizarro. There was a short-lived mint at Lima from 1568 to 1571, not to be reopened until 1684. (there had also been a mint at Potosi (now in Bolivia) where the 'silver mountain' was discovered). Independence came in 1821, with a coinage continued in Reales bearing the arms of the new Republic in place of the king's bust. Then, in 1856, the Government decreed a change to a decimal system based on the Sol. The Minister Plenipotentiary in London was instructed to find a suitable designer and engraver, The job was handed to the London firm of Gibbs & Co who noticed a young apprentice die sinker, Robert Henry Britten, working at the Soho Mint in Birmingham - he was just 25 years old. Offered a contract with passage paid to Lima and free lodging, he put the proposition to the local girl he was engaged to, Emma Roberts. She demurred but was won over, they married and sailed for Lima in January 1858. After a long and troublesome journey they arrived at the Lima Mint to take up residence on the top floor.

Britten was instructed to draw up designs for the new coinage consisting of 1, 2, 5, 10 and 20 centavos, and a half and a one Sol. First, however, he had to design two other coins, the 25 and 50 centavos. He redesigned the Arms of Peru and sat the figure of Liberty down instead of standing, arguing, it is said, the 'she has stood long enough, let the lady sit down.' This design bears a certain resemblance to our Britannia. The first two coins were minted in 1858, then he was instructed to make a start on the complete new coinage - the full set, including 5, 10 and 20 gold Soles being issued in 1863. Something, however, was wrong with the Sols and they were withdrawn. There was an uproar when it was realised that coins spilling out of the cornucopia of the Peruvian arms spelt out the word DERTEANO. This was the name of the man appointed to oversee the operations of the mint on behalf of the joint highest bidders (Graham Rowe & Co, William Gibbs & Co, and Jose Oyague\_ when the President privatised the mint. Apparently Donesio Derteano was fired and Britten exonerated since he was only carrying out orders given to him by his

superior, Derteano.

Britten continued working for the Mint but caught a chill and died on 17 January 1882 and was buried in the Old British Cemetery. His wife and daughter, Alice Emma now 24 years old, returned to England.

The large, crown-sized, silver Soles remained in circulation from 1864 until 1935, with a short interruption between 1917 and 1921. Minted in large quantities, they produced few rare dates. Several countries overstruck them for their own use. Briton also designed and engraved a number of medallion, one of the largest ever minted weighing 184 grams of silver. All the Peruvian coins are 9/10th pure silver but this dropped to only 5/10ths from 1923 to 1935.

## **AUCTION REPORTS**

**by Tony Gilbert**

### **94th Club Auction, 6th November 1996**

There was a good attendance of 26 people at the auction to bid on 87 lots which had been catalogued from seven Club vendors by David Sealy. Encouragingly, four of the vendors were new Club member. The first 40 lots (from two vendors) contained a very mixed bag of medals, tokens, modern coins, forgeries, Roman, foreign and Scottish. With only eight lots carrying reserves, bidding was brisk, and the vendors were rewarded with 39 sales (those unsold contained poorer grades). Of note was a 1702 Queen Anne Coronation silver medallion by Croker in NF condition fetched £22 against a reserve of £5, a Scottish James VI silver 30/-, without reserve, went for £26, and a 1670 Scottish Charles II silver merk, also without reserve, raised £34.

After the interval Marcus Philips took over the gavel from David Sealy. I think that it should be put on record that the Club is fortunate indeed in being able to call upon the services of these two members to conduct our auctions. The second half again offered a diverse selection of items, reflecting the wide collecting interests of the membership - there were pieces from India, Russia, France, the Middle East, southern and central Europe, jetons, English hammered and milled, plus books.

Top price for the evening was £36 for a bronze coin of Elagabalus from the mint of Sidon (its reserve was £20). Of note was the £15 fetched by a copy of Krause and Mischler's *Standard Catalogue*, 23rd edition,



1996 - this had a conservative and encouraging reserve of £5 on it. Bidding was brisk and, a reflection of the sensible reserves (or no reserves) on lots, meant that the auctioneer's nightmare of consecutive withdrawn lots did not occur. The total sales were £478.50, of which Club funds received 10% in commission.

### **95th Club Auction, 7th May 1997**

On this Wednesday evening, 80 lots were on offer, supplied by six Club members, plus books to be sold in aid of Club funds. There was a good mixture of Greek, Roman, English, Scottish and European coins, tokens, medals and bank notes on offer. Once again, David Sealy and Marcus Phillips provided an excellent service with the gavel. However, only 51 lots sold, leaving 29 lots (36%) unsold - a very disturbing statistic. The Club's commission only amounted to £38.25 from total sales of £284, barely covering the room hire fee for the evening. The highest price of the night was £25 bid for a dolphin-shaped bronze from Olbia in Thrace, just beating the £24 bid for six volumes of the BNJ, 1969-80.

Note to vendors - plates of bank notes sell! On a light-hearted note, a William of Orange 40/- piece was described as 'sea worn'. Is this a new grade? The writer has noticed this 'condition' in two recent major London auction house catalogues. Perhaps one can only say, 'Watch this space'.

### **96th Club Auction, 5th November 1997**

Fifteen members were present to bid on 86 lots supplied from seven vendors. Unfortunately, one member had omitted to bring his 20 lots along for the auction. As usual, there was a good mixture of material available - lots 73 to 78 contained some ancient Indian coin moulds, but sadly these did not find a buyer. On this occasion David Sealy and Anthony Holmes acted as the Club's auctioneers. Thirty-two lots were unsold (37%) and, from a total of £288, the Club's funds benefited by £28.80 in commission.

The highest price was for two coins in a lot comprising an Alexander the Great silver tetradrachm in Fair condition together with a rare variety of a Julius Caesar AE dupondius of 45 BC, which was also in Fair condition.

David Sealy drew members' attention to the fact that the 100th Club auction will fall next year in November at the current rate of two auctions a year, and would everyone like to consider an appropriate theme for this future event.

## **OBITUARIES**

### **Robert N. Bridge, died 2 January 1997, aged 92**

Robert Norman Bridge was born in Ealing in 1904, the eldest of three sons of an architect employed by W. Willetts in Sloane Square. Robert went to Tottenham Grammar School, where he excelled in European languages, Latin and maths. Whilst in his early twenties, and working for an international bank in the City, he contracted TB. He recovered after a spell in a sanatorium in Hastings.

He then decided to teach English in France and went to Lyons, subsequently he taught in Milan and Florence, and then in Rome where he met his first wife, Marcella, a Roman lady. They had a daughter, Muriel (Millie) and then moved to Leipzig where he worked as a translator and where their son, George, was born. The family was able to move hurriedly to London just before the outbreak of the War. Robert joined the army as a Second Lieutenant in the Intelligence Corps, using his fluent command of Italian and German in questioning prisoners of war and extracting vital information.

Promoted to the rank of Major, he was posted to the Middle East in 1941, where he served in the 8th Army under General Montgomery and spent several years in Egypt. This brought him through to Italy and to Rome with the 8th Army in the final stages of the war in 1945. When the war ended he joined the Control Commission in West Germany. His first marriage ended in divorce in 1954 and he returned to England in 1955 and subsequently married Lisa, a Berliner. It was then that he joined his brother, Walter, in a managerial post in a new company Walter was forming, the Belgian Travel Service, based in Ebury Street. Some years later Robert was to receive a medal from Belgium as a mark of recognition of his work on behalf of the Belgian tourist and travel industry.

Robert's chief hobby, and where he was able to concentrate deeper interest when he became established in London, was in the Byzantine series and especially the coinage of Cherson in the Crimea. He was soon recognised as an authority in this area and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Numismatic Society. He also took a wider interest in the service of numismatics and for many years was Treasurer of the British Association of Numismatic Societies, ultimately becoming an Honorary Vice President of the BANS. In London he had joined the London Numismatic Club and was to serve as its President from 1967 to 1973. Retirement in 1969 gave Robert the opportunity to devote as much time as possible to his involvement in Byzantine numismatics and he was a familiar figure at many numismatic gatherings where his kindly advice, identification or comment on a coin was often sought.

When the BANS Congress was held in London in March 1994, the Royal Numismatic Society, the BANS and the London Numismatic Club were able to mark Robert's 90th birthday by holding a sherry party in his honour during the Congress proceeding. Peter Clayton had designed, and had specially made, a very individual birthday cake in Robert's honour. As a pun on his surname, the main design was the reverse of the sestertius of the emperor Trajan that represented the Danubian Bridge for his conquest of Dacia. Lettering around saluted Robert's long involvement and commitment with the **RNS**, **BANS** and the LNC. David Sellwood, President of the BANS, and a splendid calligrapher, presented Robert with a hand-written scroll to mark the occasion.

Robert and Lisa had bought a house in Banstead, Surrey, not far from his sister Muriel, and he was also a frequent visitor to his daughter's family in Chichester, particularly enjoying his role as grandfather and, in the last year, being particularly pleased in becoming a great-grandfather.

Robert Bridge will be much missed by his many friends in the numismatic world, but many of them will have a closer remembrance of him in being fortunate in acquiring for their collections examples from his collection of Byzantine coins that was sold in 339 lots by Glendining's on 7 March 1990 for a total of £78,910. The Committee of the London Numismatic Club presented Robert with a specially bound copy of the sale catalogue. **Peter Clayton** (Based on information supplied by Robert's daughter, Muriel, his brother Walter's tribute at the funeral, and personal reminiscences.)

## **Margaret Amstell, died 24th February 1997, aged 83**

Margaret Amstell (née Nathan) was born in Birmingham on 18th February 1914, one of five children (four girls and a boy) and had a twin sister. Her father was a Hatton Garden jeweller and she was educated at the John Dixon Grammar School in Birmingham. Leaving school at 15, she took a number of clerical posts and during the Second World War worked for the Air Ministry. In March 1940 she had married Robert Amstell and in January 1945 their son, Anthony, was born. It was in order to pay his school fees that she was led to answer a newspaper advertisement for the post of clerk and switchboard operator for the firm of B.A. Seaby Ltd, numismatists, at 65 Great Portland Street. As Margaret always said, first she had to look up the word 'numismatist', then she got the job because no one else applied! She soon became fascinated with the coins, especially the gold series, gradually building up her knowledge, together with a flair for selling. She also took an interest in the Maundy series. Her lucky 'break' came when the chief assistant in the Gold Department was called up for National Service and she was able to take his place. By 1970 she was Head of the Gold Department and in 1973 became a Director of Seaby.

A second stroke of luck came when a publisher called at Seaby asking for a series of books to be written on collecting coins aimed at the intelligent schoolboy collector. She then wrote, for W. Foulsham Ltd, a trilogy of books on collecting but, quirky, hers were different to others. She wrote them chronologically backwards, not starting at the beginning but at the end in modern times. The first title was *A Start to Coin Collecting: Elizabeth to Charles* (1965), followed by *Another Period of Coin Collecting: Charles I to Edward III* (1967), and then *The Early Period of Coin Collecting: Edward - 130 BC* (1969). These were all well received and are still sought after. Later, in 1970, she also wrote *A Start to Collecting English Commemorative Medals..*

In 1980 Margaret left Seaby and set tip on her own account, being a familiar figure in the sale rooms where, at one time she was noted for having paid the highest price for a gold coin, a gold penny of Henry III, very few of which have survived.

Margaret's response to the advertisement not only gave the numismatic world an expert in her field but a person who was always

warm and friendly. The reason for her taking the job, to pay school fees, gave her son, Anthony, to the legal world where he became a Magistrate in Fiji, the Seychelles and Chief Magistrate of Botswana (he is now with the Crown Prosecution Service in this country after such far flung posts).

**Peter Clayton**

(Based on material supplied by Anthony Amstell, Margaret's obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* of 25th March 1997, and personal reminiscences.)

## **A NEW NUMISMATIC GALLERY FOR LONDON**

After several years of working at coin fairs and by mail, Howard and Frances Simmons, the organisers of the London Coin Fair held at the Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch, have opened a new gallery for coins, medals and medallic sculpture. They are trading as the Simmons Gallery. Howard and Frances Simmons are widely known for certain specialities: coins of South-east Asia, the Indian sub-continent and Latin America, but they also provide a general service to collectors of coins of all periods. Not least, their stock of commemorative medals is also well worth a visit. They also source exhibition and archive material for institutions and museums, most recently for the British Museum and for the Bank of Jamaica's new money galleries.

At the Simmons Gallery medal displays will feature prominently, not only historical commemoratives and prizes but also contemporary cast and struck medals by prominent designers such as Avril Vaughan, Ron Dutton, Robert Elderton and Jane MacAdam Freud, as well as by overseas artists. Howard and Frances are staunch supporters of the British Art Medal Society, and Frances is a member of the Society's Council.

For the first time collectors can visit the Gallery to see and touch modern artists' medals and sculpture, many of them in limited editions of only seven to ten pieces. Using the same designing and engraving techniques for coins and medals, the medallic form allows the artist to be playful and expressive. Objects are produced that seem far removed from the functional world of coins. Medallic sculpture is a more fitting description for these. Unlike mass-produced items, these medals are generally hand-finished by the artist. Art in the hand like this, and the even smaller coinage, provided a challenge for the Gallery's designer Simon Beeson. He has succeeded in providing a quiet, light and airy

space for visitors to *sit*, handle and study the coins and medals in comfort. The cases he designed around the walls display the many shapes and sizes in a revealing and wholly sympathetic fashion. The opening exhibition at the Simmons Gallery was a mixed display of coins and medals, followed by medals of the Art Deco and Art Nouveau styles. The exhibitions are always fresh and new - there is always something well worth while looking at there.

Not least, for the *bon viveur* (or simply hungry) numismatist, there are a number of splendid wine bars and several pavement cafés in Lamb's Conduit Street. There is also the Victorian pub, an absolute gem of its kind, *The Lamb*. It was recently voted the Cheese Pub of the Year in the Egon Ronay awards and the rest of the food is very good as well (personally tried by the Editor). Transport to the Gallery is no problem, nearest tube stations are Holborn, Russell Square (or Chancery Lane, a bit further off). Out of the back door of the British Museum it is a mere five minutes walk across Russell Square and straight down Guilford Street, Lamb's Conduit Street is on the right.

The Simmons Gallery is at 53 Lamb's Conduit Street. Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3NB. Their phone number is 0171 831 2080; Fax: 0171 831 2090. Opening hours are Monday to Friday, 10.30 to 5.30pm, or by appointment.

**Peter Clayton**

## **CARAUSIUS ANII HIS MEDALLIONS**

**by Hugh Williams**

Members will recall that our member Hugh Williams gave a paper on the Pax coinage of the usurper emperor Carausius ( 286-293 AD) to the Club that was, in effect, an hors d'oeuvres to his ongoing research on the coinage of that emperor. In the *limes* of 24 July 1997 Dr Norman Hammond, the Archaeology Correspondent, contributed a piece under the heading: 'Well-versed researcher solves a Roman riddle'. This was based on a contribution to the magazine *Current Archaeology* where Guy de la Bedoyère, a Roman specialist and the author of two Batsford books on *The Buildings of Roman Britain* and *The Finds of Roman Britain*, had proposed a reading for the enigmatic letters I.N.P.C.D.A. in the exergue of a unique medallion of Carausius in the British Museum. It had puzzled everyone since 1931 when the piece became first known. Mr de la

Bedoyere suggested that the letters were taken from a phrase in Virgil's *Eclogue IV*, lines 6 to 7, which reads *Iam Nova Progenies Caelo Demittitur Alto* - the initial letters spelling out INCPDA.

Hugh Williams responded on 5 August to Dr Hammond, via the Editor of the *Times*, with a letter which, with Hugh's permission we reproduce (it did not, sadly, make the columns of the Letters page of the *Times*).

'I have recently completed a Master of Philosopher degree at the University of Reading based on several years' research into the reign and coinage of the Romano-British usurper, Carausius. It was thus with much interest that I read your article of 24 July 1997.

'Allusions to classical texts on the Roman coinage have over the years proved to be attractive. although often erroneous, interpretations of the legends. The interpretation of the *Expectate veni* legend has, due to its unique appearance on the coinage of Carausius, often been regarded as a direct quote from the *Aeneid*, though many numismatists, myself included, have doubts that the mint officials in the late third-century were quite that erudite. It seems more likely that this reverse is merely a reference to the expected arrival in Britain of Carausius, thus fitting in alongside the more orthodox *Adventus* issues which usually signified the arrival of the emperor. Such issues possibly being given to the crowds as donatives on these occasions.

Mr de la Bedoyère's suggestion regarding the index mark RSR does seem to be based on only one solid foundation; merely that the initials fit the words *Redeunt Saturnia Regna*. There are, however, several important factors that conspire to make this theory less than likely. First, there seems little doubt on stylistic grounds and hoard evidence that this issue emanates from the early part of the reign and is contemporary with other more common index marks ML and C. The exergual index mark on the coinage would normally be expected to give some indication of the source of issue, either geographically or otherwise in terms of the official organisation of the mint. The RSR issues comprise some bronze but, more importantly, the bulk of the silver coinage. As such, the prior suggestion that RSR stands for *Rationales suffinae re*, namely an issue under the auspices of the Chief Finance Minister, does seem to be a sound one. The major factor which must cast doubt on Mr de la Bedoyère's theory is that Saturn does not appear anywhere on the

coinage of Carausius. If such a dominant 'election slogan' were to be used, then one would expect to see Saturn as a major feature of several of the more than 1000 reverse types recorded for this emperor. Saturn's non-appearance must, I fear, lay this theory to rest.

I must congratulate Mr de la Bedoyère for his success in finding a section of Virgil with the correct letters to match the INCPDA exergue on the medallion of Carausius in the British Museum. If any Virgilian reference were to be present on the coinage, then its appearance on a medallion, probably only given to a chosen few from the upper echelons of the Carausian elite, rather than a normal coin would be more likely. I still feel that the appearance of a chariot and a legend referring to *Victori Carausi Aug* would, in more likelihood, be aimed to perpetuate the idea of the *Invictus* of the emperor, and it would seem more likely that the IN would refer to this, whilst the C would probably refer to *Carausius* and the A to *Augustus*, though explanation of the other letters is open to speculation.

[**Editor's note:** Guy de la Bedoyère's original publication of this identification will be found in *Current Archaeology*, No. 153, Vol. XIII, No. 9 (July 1997), p. 358. Line drawings of the two reverse types discussed accompany the article.]

#### **POSTSCRIPT ON TUMBRELS, 1996 by Dr David J. de S. Rogers**

A third tumbrel of this type was found in the British Museum collection and a fourth has been found in August 1966 from the Thetford area. The latest find seems to have been modified in antiquity. The balance arm weighs the post-1464 penny, but the case does not balance with the obvious coins of that period. The closest balance found was with the halfgroat or quarter ryal coins of 30 grains, but a small section of the pan had been removed to adjust the balance for a heavier coin. It may be for half angels of 40 grains, but that coin was not available to be tested. The adjustment was neatly made with a file at the tip of the pan and suggests that the tumbrel remained in use long enough to require adjustment, but while the weight of the penny was unaltered. This tumbrel has a bronze pivot, with the arm loose on the rod. The arms are able to move through a great range than usual, 140 degrees instead of about 115 degrees.



**Size 4:** 6cm long by 1.3 to under 0.6cm wide and 0.25 to 0.35cm thick. 2 3/8 inch long by 16/32 to about 1/4 inch wide and about 1/8 inch thick.

**Decoration 4:** Thin hand-cut straight grooves and 'pellet in annulus'.

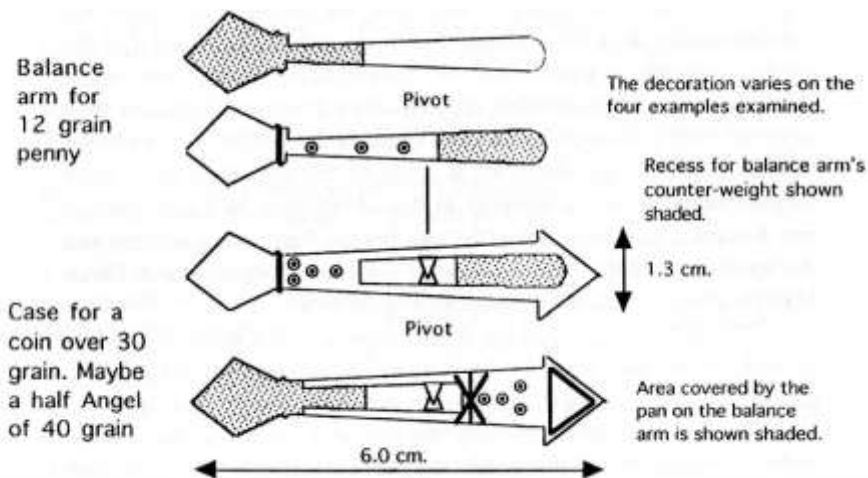
**Purpose 4:** To weight the English pennies of the 12 grain standards and originally to weigh the 30 grain quarter ryal but modified for a heavier coin in antiquity, perhaps a 40 grain half angel. There is no test of thickness, or the hinge may have been repaired with a bronze pin that fails to show this function.

**Period 4:** Made in or after 1464, after the end of the 15 grain standard penny issue. probably made within about 15 years of the first 12 grain pennies.

**Test 4:** August 1996, without a full range of coins to check the sensitivity.

The adjustment is not shown in this sketch.

Tumbrel post-1464



The case was for a 30 grain quarter ryal, but a section of the pan was filed away, in antiquity, to adjust the balance.

## REVIEWS

**Celtic Coinage in Britain**, by Philip de Jersey. Shire Publications, Princes Risborough, 1996. 56pp, 88 illus. Paperback, £4.99.

Interest in the Celtic coinage of Britain has gradually increased over the last two decades, building on the foundation studies by the late Derek Allen, followed by such as Daphne Nash (*Coinage in the Celtic World*, 1987), Richard Van Arsdell's *Celtic Coinage in Britain* (1989) and, most recently, the publication of the catalogue *British Iron Age Coins in the British Museum* (1996) by Richard Hobbs. What has been needed for a long time is a basic background, an introduction to and explanation of Celtic coins, and this Dr de Jersey has amply supplied here. Although small and brief in length, within the parameters of the excellent Shire Archaeology series, this book is packed with readable information. It begins by giving the background to coinage in Celtic society, pointing out that Britain was in fact the last part of the Celtic world to adopt coinage, and that in itself was copied essentially from the gold staters of Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great) struck some 300 years previously. It is interesting to follow the gradual breakdown of the original coin design and its re-interpretation of the Apollo head/racing charioteer types by Celtic tribes copying across Europe and through three centuries (first elucidated by Sir John Evans in the 1890s). The technique of manufacture is also discussed in detail so that the reader has a good understanding of the background to the introduction of Celtic coinage into Britain. The earliest coins, the cast bronze then potins, of Kent and the south-east often need the eye of faith to recognise their Greek Massaliot originals, as do the subsequent gold staters.

The British Celtic coinage is then examined in a series of chapters by area - south then north of the Thames; the western periphery where perhaps some of the worst examples of the series were produced by the Durotriges; and the northern periphery that goes as far as Lincolnshire and the Corieltaui (recently renamed by coin evidence from the previous Coritani). Then follows the historically emotive coinage of East Anglia, especially of the Iceni whose warrior queen, Boudicca, is known to all. It was probably her husband, Prasutagus, who issued the last British Celtic

coinage. After his death, and the ill-treatment of his wife and daughters by the Romans, the Iceni rose in revolt in AD 60/61, destroying London, Colchester and St Albans. Heavy Roman retribution left no room for an independent Celtic coinage, although some of the coins seems to have continued in circulation for a few years afterwards.

Philip de Jersey's book is a most welcome addition to the literature on the Celtic coinage of Britain - most useful as a succinct introduction to the subject for the archaeologist, historian and numismatist. It also serves well to flesh out points to the already committed collector of the series who has perhaps become too immersed in the catalogue listings of the coins and has failed "to see the wood for the trees". It is really quite remarkable how Shire Publications continue to be able to produce such splendid and useful books in so many fields of archaeology and numismatics at such a reasonable cost.

**Peter A. Clayton**

**Greek Coinages of Southern Italy and Sicily**, by N.K. Rutter. Spink, London 1997. iv + 191 pp, 210 illus, 2 figs. Hardback, £25.

It is a truism that the best preserved Greek temples are to be found not in the motherland of Greece but in the colonies of Magna Graecia (Southern Italy and Sicily). Similarly, the Greek coins struck in the colonies founded there from the later sixth century BC are amongst the finest examples of Greek numismatic art to survive. Mental pictures of the superb decadrachms and tetradrachms of Syracuse, and also those of Acragas, and the silver issues of other cities such as Leontini, Naxos, Catane, etc., immediately present a metallic and artistic apogee of ancient numismatic art. It is therefore perfectly reasonable in that event for most of the books on the coinage of the area to approach it from an artistic viewpoint. In this book, however, Dr Keith Rutter, Senior Lecturer in Classics in the Department of Classics at Edinburgh University and a well-known scholar in this field of numismatics, has put the coins into their political and economic environment, yet whilst not disregarding their artistic content. And what a difference it makes to our understanding and appreciation of the coins.

The book, after an introductory chapter on the Greeks in the area under examination, then breaks down into six chapters: three each on Southern Italy and Sicily, covering the Early Coinage, the Fifth Century, and the Fourth and Third Centuries. Too often has artistic appreciation of the coins, especially of the silver issues, overshadowed the fact that it is only by virtue of detailed study that the full story behind the coins, the

political events, effects and necessities, can be seen. Overstrikes can, in the first instance, establish a sequence of issue; die linking takes it further, and weight standards and iconography will give the links to mother cities, local alliances and the aftermath of local military catastrophes. Nominal style, abbreviations, use of the ethnic and grammatical changes in the inscriptions when noted in detail produce an incredible amount of evidence for the political structures obtaining, the alliances and local conquests. In many instances this type of examination can revise the literary record of ancient classical authors, e.g. Crotoniates taking over the territory of Sybaris as against the recorded "total destruction" by them of the latter.

The coin evidence indicates a remarkable uniformity of techniques and weight standards in the early coinage of South Italy whereas in Sicily, a little further to the west of Greek influences, the adoption of coinage was not, as might be expected, a progression from east to west but rather sporadic with the earliest coinage apparently appearing in the west of the island at Himera and Selinus, to be followed in the east at Naxos and Zancle, c. 525 BC, and at Syracuse some 15 years later. Not least amongst the basic problems that **Dr** Rutter addresses is the very simple one, often overlooked: what was the source of the silver for this abundant coinage in the metal-starved Magna Graecia? Syracuse, her coins and their art, is a major player in fifth and fourth century Sicily. Notable here is, of course, the question of the Demareteion, its identification and dating (here c. 466 **BC**), together with the later superb decadrachms of the masters Kimon and Euainetos, around 400 **BC**. Influences from outside in this period, the burgeoning might of Carthage, introduces the evidence of the ethnic on coins changing from Greek to Punic script. Bronze coins appear and, like the silver, produce evidence of internal strife and external warfare.

Whilst much work has been done on detailed die studies of many of the mint cities of Magna Graecia, much still remains to be done. In making this very valid point in several instances Dr Rutter (who has himself contributed enormously to this area of numismatic expertise) takes the evidence on board to produce one of the best, most lucid and interesting books in recent years on the coins of South Italy and Sicily.

**Peter A. Clayton**