



## NEWSLETTER

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

Peter A. Clayton

<b>EDITORIAL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CLUB TALKS</b>	
The coinage of Syracuse, by David Sellwood	3
Genuine forgeries, by Thomas Curtis	5
Medals as gifts in ancient Rome, by Dr Andrew Burnett	9
Tokens of Transportation (to Australia), by Tim Millett	14
Members' Own Evening Contributions, August 1998	16
Treasure of the Rio Formoso: 17th century Brazilian siege tokens, by Ron Haller-Williams	19
Etruscan dimes, denarii and cents, by Italo Vecchi	22
Revolutionary 'Cervantes' bank notes, by Trevor H. Stephenson	23
<b>AUCTION RESULTS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>BOOK REVIEWS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>INDEXES TO THE NEWSLETTER,</b> Vol. VI, No. 1 to Vol. VIII, No. 1, January 1974 to November 1978 compiled by Harrington E. Manville	<b>29</b>

## **EDITORIAL**

It is now a year since we had the issue of the Club's Jubilee edition of the Newsletter, which was very well received. Since then several of our speakers have either kindly made scripts available for use in the Newsletter, or have checked notes that were taken at the time of their talk.

The contents of this Newsletter range widely over the fields of Greek and Roman numismatics - treating in both instances with fine examples of ancient numismatic art. There is also a paper on a curious aspect of numismatics, genuine forgeries, again many of them being of ancient coins.

Of particular note and interest was the talk by Tim Millett, of which we reproduce notes and some illustrations. I would urge members to take the opportunity of viewing the exhibition associated with the 'Leaden Hearts' at the British Museum, and even consider adding the book about them, cited on p. 16, to their libraries.

The Members' Own Evening, as usual, produced a mixed crop, of which we print some details.

Tony Gilbert, our indefatigable auction 'clerk' has once more provided us with the results, but as is pointed out - we really must consider trying to make the Club's 100th Auction a truly 'bumper' one - so do start thinking about it now and delving in those trays of ignored or no longer wanted coins.

Our American Corresponding Member, Harry Manville, well known to most of the numismatic fraternity in the UK, let alone amongst Club members, is an incredible bibliographer, as his publications well evidence. He has turned his hand to the benefit of the Club and has kindly provided a Chronological Index, together with Author and Subject indexes to the issues of the Newsletter over the last five years - truly a labour of love, as well as interest in and commitment to the Club.

The Editor is always interested to hear of possible contributions to the Newsletter which have not necessarily been the subject of a talk given at the Club.

**Peter A. Clayton**

## **London Numismatic Club meeting, 2nd December 1997**

The Club, with a large gathering of 18 members, welcomed David Sellwood, past President of the Royal Numismatic Society and of the British Association of Numismatic Societies, to speak on 'The coinage of Syracuse'.

David first drew attention to the beauties of ancient Greek coinage and noted how Syracuse, especially, stood in the forefront of the production of such miniature masterpieces. Whilst always highly appreciated as numismatic art, views on the coinage and its interpretation and dating had changed in the last twenty or so years. The city had been founded about 700 BC because of its important great harbour and its fresh water spring. Legend had it that Arethusa, a nymph of Elis in Greece, being pursued by the river Alpheus, escaped when Artemis opened a passage for her beneath the sea and she then rose as the fresh water spring on the island of Ortygia in Syracuse.

The first tetradrachms struck at Syracuse between 510 and 485 BC showed a quadriga (four) horse chariot with the horses walking to the right; the reverse was usually a small female head in the centre of a square mill-sail incuse. The chariot-wheel was four-spoked and this wheel appeared as a type on the small obols. The charioteer type was a reflection of the aristocracy's interest and commitment to chariot racing.

In 485 democracy drove out the aristocrats to the neighbouring town of Gela, but then the tyrant of Gela, Gelon, took over in Syracuse. He added four dolphins around Arethusa's head (facing left) to the type. In 480 (the same year as the great sea battle of Salamis in Greece), Gelon heavily defeated the Carthaginians at the battle of Himera and they were forced to pay a huge indemnity. Gelon's wife, Demarete, interceded on behalf of the Carthaginians and, in gratitude an ancient source (Diodorus Siculus) tells us, they gave her a golden crown. The story, numismatically, then grew up from around the 1840s that it was by the sale of this crown that the silver for the so-called Demareteion, a large 10-drachm, decadrachm, piece was struck. This opinion held for a very long time and then was questioned by the late Dr Colin Kraay who suggested a date c. 465 BC. Gelon died in 478 and was succeeded by his brother Hieron, who died in 467. The return to democracy in 465 could have been the occasion for the issue of the Demareteion. The lion in the

exergue was replaced by a sea monster, and was assumed to allude to the defeat of the Etruscan navy by the Sicilians - but this now also tends to be a discredited theory. There was a variety of hairstyles and a number of different earrings present on the coins.

It was c. 430-425 BC that engravers' names really begin to be incorporated into the dies. Parmenides was amongst the first of the engravers' names to appear. In c. 425-420 BC the name of Euainetos appears on a plaque held by Nike who flies above the chariot that forms the obverse design, and Eucleidas signs the splendid three-quarters facing head of Athena.

The Athenians attacked Syracuse towards the end of the Peloponnesian War but failed and many of them ended up as prisoners in the quarries. Arethusa accordingly now took on an Athenian helmet. Kimon's head of the nymph Arethusa carried his name on her headband. In the exergue the Greek word *Athla* appears at times along with the trophy of armour. The word means 'prizes' and it is possible that these issues were prizes for particular events.

By 400 BC Carthage held all of Sicily except for Syracuse, which then had a population of around a million. Dionysius the Tyrant introduced the decadrachm again and also gold coins into his issues. A one hundred gold litrae piece was equal to two decadrachms. A number of the latter were by Kimon, but it has been noted from the coins that they were being struck from rusted dies. The type of Hercules overcoming the Nemean lion was seen to be an allusion to Greek culture succeeding over African (= the lion). A particular attractive piece by Euainetos struck c. 400-385 BC has reeds in the hair of Arethusa.

Dionysius I died c. 478 to be succeeded by Dionysius II. The latter did not need vast quantities of coin to be struck since there were ample supplies from his predecessor's reign. However, by c. 450 BC, under Carthaginian pressure, the population of Syracuse had fallen to about 10,000 and Dionysius decided to appeal to Corinth for help. This is reflected on the bronze coin types of c. 355 or 354 BC with the head of Zeus the Liberator on the obverse and his thunderbolt on the reverse. About 345 Timoleon of Corinth defeated the Carthaginians and the coinage returned to coins of Corinthian type. The bronze litra is associated with Timoleon.

After Timoleon's death Agathokles, one of his officers, was invited

to govern Syracuse and had Artemis as the reverse type on his electrum coins of c. 305 BC. He invaded Africa and the Carthaginian army was recalled from Sicily, an event celebrated on the coinage in 285 with Nike and armour on a trophy of arms. Agathokles died c. 287 and democracy returned for a short-lived period but tyranny was always lurking nearby and for a number of the years before 278 Syracuse was ruled by Hicetas. The fighting between Syracuse and other cities, notably Acragas, gave the Carthaginians the opportunity to make another invasion of Sicily in 280. The Greeks in Sicily appealed to Pyrrhus of Epirus to cross over from Italy, where he had not been too successful against the Romans, and support their cause. The gold decadrachms he issued have the Artemis head obverse and Nike on the reverse holding a fulmen (thunderbolt) and an oak wreath - a reference to Zeus of Dodona in Epirus. Pyrrhus met an unfortunate death, being killed by a roof tile thrown at him.

Hieron II, 274-216, who succeeded Pyrrhus was first an ally of the Carthaginians and then changed sides to support Rome. His 32-litra piece was the largest in the series. A particular feature of his issues are the silver 16-litra pieces with the attractive draped head of his queen, Philistis, on the obverse (Nike in a quadriga on the reverse). Having carefully maintained good relations with Rome and with Ptolemy of Egypt Hieron, after his death in 216, was succeeded by his fourteen-year old spoilt grandson for a reign of merely thirteen months. After his assassination democracy returned to be overturned by the Roman forces of Marcellus. It was during the Roman capture of the city in 212 BC that the scientist Archimedes met his death, a fitting postscript to the end of Greek Syracuse and its fascinating coinage.

[A recent book for further reading is by Dr N. K. Rutter, *Greek Coinages of Southern Italy and Sicily*. Spink, 1997. Hardback, £25; see the review in LNC Newsletter, Vol. VIII, no. 1, November 1997, pp. 35-6]

### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 6th January 1998**

Thomas Curtis of A. H. Baldwin regaled the Club with a talk entitled 'Genuine forgeries'. As he explained, a forgery is a spurious thing, not genuine, not being what it pretends to be, and not coming from the pretended source. One of the classic tales in numismatics is how a former

Director of the British Museum, Sir George Hill, saw an attractive Greek lady and his eyes were riveted on a splendid large Athenian decadrachm of the finest style of the mid-fifth century BC which she was wearing set in a piece of jewellery. Appropriate negotiations in 1920 secured it for the British Museum but, sadly, the piece subsequently turned out to be an imitation by the notorious Athenian forger Constantine Christodoulos. When the Greek authorities raided his workshop in 1914 they found about 1000 dies for making ancient Greek coins. This evidence, due to World War One intervening, was not published until 1922 - when Sir George and the Museum became aware of their mistake. Christodoulos forgeries still circulate, knowingly and unknowingly, to trap the unwary.

Forgeries by skilful forgers, such as the productions of Christodoulos, are, in the beginning dangerous deceits created to fool collectors, and might in one sense appear not to qualify as 'genuine forgeries'. However, products of forgers from earlier days, Camelio, Cesati and Cavino in the sixteenth century, and Becker, Cigoj and Emery in the nineteenth, in time can bring with them a respectability of sorts, even giving an added dimension of authenticity to something which begins life as a forgery.

In terms of ancient forgeries, we can turn to the story in Herodotus (mid-fifth century BC) of how Polycrates, ruler of Samos, bought off the besieging Spartans by making coins in lead and gilding them. Herodotus himself doubts the story, not believing that the Spartans could be so gullible, but the true answer may lie in Polycrates, in dire straits, issuing a lead token coinage. Examples can still be identified today. Athenian token coinage is well attested in the literature, not least in the cheerful obscenity of political satire in plays such as Aristophanes' 'The Frogs', written about 405 BC, which speaks of 'the purses of the Athenian shoppers are full of shoddy silver-plated coppers...'. Again, the result of Athens being cut off from her silver mines at Laurium so silver-plated bronze coinage was issued.

In Roman Britain, after the Claudian invasion of AD 43, the issues of copper asses with standing Minerva reverses were insufficient to meet demands and large numbers of imitations were manufactured, apparently in Spain and Africa, and especially in Britain. Whether these imitations should be classed as illegal forgeries, or as officially condoned coinage of necessity to be accepted in circulation, is a matter of debate. Recently a

hoard of silver-plated forgeries of Claudian denarii was found in Essex and, since they were considered to be forgeries did not fall under the provisions of Treasure Trove. When an export licence was applied for for some of them, it was refused on the grounds that they had not been properly studied. Indeed, at the time, the find spot had not been properly declared by the finder. Forgeries they may be, but they were an extremely important piece of numismatic evidence for the period.

Another group of forged denarii was retrieved from the Thames foreshore. This consisted of 76 denarii in the name of Septimius Severus, silver plated onto a base core. Of these, 55 were from the same pair of dies, they were not cast as is known with other Severan forgeries. There were several cross links in the dies used and, from the various combinations represented, it seems that here was a serious attempt to make plated coins in large quantities. How they came to be in the Thames leads to speculation whether they were thrown away as worthless imitations, dropped as 'hot property' by the forgers, or simply lost by someone crossing the river.

Interest in ancient coins arose in the Renaissance (Petrarch is generally credited as the first known collector of ancient coins), and this led to certain specimens being 'provided'. Two spectacular gold pieces are known from an inventory of the collection of Jean, duc de Berry, in 1402. One showed Constantine on horseback and a Christian iconographic reverse of the old and new Churches, the other represented Heraclius and a reverse scene of his return to Jerusalem with the True Cross. Once dismissed as forgeries, they are now recognised as perhaps the earliest examples of French medallic art but, at the time, purporting to be ancient originals and with an eager collector anxious to acquire them, the duc de Berry must have paid an exorbitant sum for them; the British Museum has versions in silver and bronze.

Revived interest in the histories of ancient Greece and Rome in the courts of Renaissance Europe encouraged clever engravers to create ancient works of art to supply the demand, and medallic coins were ripe for such treatment. Alessandro Cesati was a past master at producing such pieces, and is noted for his imaginative versions of ancient medals. These included Priam as King of Troy and incorporating a fine, imaginative view of the fabled city. Others of Cesati's medals included Dido Queen of Carthage and also Alexander the Great. Possibly one of Cesati's medals is

in the painting of Jean Varin showing an antique medal to Louis XIV of France. Apparently of silver, the medal bears a helmeted male portrait identified as the great Athenian general Alkibiades. No example of this piece has come to light yet, but it probably will.

One of the earliest books that treats of the problems of recognising genuinely ancient coins from (then) modern products was written by Enea Vico in 1555.

The products of Giovanni di Cavino, a native of Padua, who died in 1570, has given the epithet 'Paduan' to a whole range of forgeries, many of which have no connection with their eponymous city. Cavino's forgeries of first and second century Roman sestertii were extremely convincing. Fortunately, his dies have survived and, bequeathed to the Abbey of St Genevieve, Paris, in 1670, are now in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

In a sense, once the background to forgeries becomes known, all forgeries acquire a sort of authenticity, acceptable as long as they are seen as more or less modern copies. If nothing else, they do need to be kept in a cabinet for reference purposes, even if not as a collection in their own right. This can be seen particularly in the case of Carl Wilhelm Becker (1773-1830), one of the most talented and scholarly of hand-engravers of false coins. His career in forgery is said to have begun when he sought redress unsuccessfully for a forgery he had bought. He aged his products by packing them in a box of iron filings attached to the underside of his carriage. Fortunately, his dies were offered to, and bought by, the Imperial Cabinet in Vienna, and there is a useful publication of his *oeuvre*, although new pieces do still surface from time to time.

Another eminent master forger of the early nineteenth century was Edward Emery who was responsible for hand-struck pieces from hand-engraved dies. His coins show a close acquaintance with the coinage of the period which they purport to be. Emery produced coins of Anglo-Saxon kings for whom no coinage existed which were believed to be genuine for forty years, until condemned in the *Numismatic Chronicle* in 1905. There is also a forgery of a coin of Richard I purporting to have been struck at the mint of Ascalon in the Crusades, and a testoon of Mary Queen of Scots and the French Dauphin Francis (later Francis II), that was based on a genuine gold ducat. Sometimes Emery's coins, like his shilling of Philip of Spain and Mary dated 1554, and his Irish groat of



1553, were really too good to be true.

An Italian forger, Luigi Cigoï (1811-75), produced some particularly convincing forgeries from ancient through medieval to seventeenth century Venetian pieces. He concocted varieties and they also had a convincing fine fake patination.

As a last consideration of 'genuine forgeries' there is the work of two longshore men, 'mudlarks', William Smith and Charles Eaton. To supply a demand that outran the few genuine pieces they were finding in their work at Shadwell Docks and selling, they concocted medieval forgeries, many of a very bizarre nature and with even stranger dates on them. Controversy raged concerning the genuineness of these items, and even reached the courts. These objects are now well known as 'Billies and Charlies', collectable in their own right, and they have even reached the stage where modern forgeries of them are being produced!

#### **London Numismatic Club meeting, 4 February 1998**

Dr Andrew Burnett, Keeper of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, spoke to the Club on the subject of 'Medals as gifts in ancient Rome'. He said that the term 'Roman medal' does not, perhaps, convey very much to an audience today; it obviously refers to something Roman and distinct from coinage, but in what sense? In what way is a Roman medal like a modern medal?

'Roman medals' or, as they are usually called, 'Roman medallions', are not an easy class to define. We can start by saying that they were not. They were not awards for bravery; soldiers in the Roman army were rewarded with decorative discs (phalerae) which could be fixed to their uniform. Nor, indeed, were Roman medals in the modern sense – they were not privately produced metal objects intended to be sold as souvenirs of events like royal coronations or great exhibitions. Roman medals were – in contrast – officially produced by the State. They were made in the Imperial mint and by the same technique as that used for contemporary coinage – striking a piece of metal from dies (although the quality of die engraving was usually much higher than that for regular coin dies). They were not intended, at least primarily, to be used as currency; their main function was to be presented by the emperor to suitable recipients on suitable occasions.

If we drop the term medallion and just talk about medals we are left with three main categories of Roman medallion:

1. Medallions in 'bronze', made in Rome from about AD 110-350, and principally in the 2nd century AD.
2. The 'contorniates' — a modern name — named after their curious edges or rims, which were the direct successors of the bronze medallions and which were made in Rome from about AD 350 until the fall of the western empire in AD 476/480; some may even have been made subsequently in Ostrogothic Rome in about AD 500.
3. So-called 'money medallions', silver and gold objects much larger than contemporary coins, produced at a variety of mints, and made principally from the mid-3rd century AD onwards, indeed, until well after the fall of the Roman empire.

Bronze medals of the first type were first regularly made in the reign of Hadrian (AD 117-138). They continued to be made for some two centuries, until the middle of the 4th century. Their production, however, was not spread evenly throughout this period, and the most prolific period was in the 2nd century, especially under the emperors Antoninus Pius (138-161), Marcus Aurelius (161-180) and Commodus (180-192). They always have a portrait of the emperor on one side and the reverses generally have a scene drawn from classical mythology, and thereby often make an allusion to some contemporary event. Common to these examples is an extremely high quality of engraving, rather higher than we find on the contemporary coinage, and there is much greater subtlety or sophistication of design. For example, in the way that the mythological marriage of Bacchus and Ariadne is depicted on the medallions and is used to allude to and celebrate that of Marcus Aurelius to Faustina the Younger, whereas the contemporary coinage shows Marcus and Faustina simply clasping hands with the legend *VOTA PVBLICA*, 'public prayers'. The appearance of such symbolism on medals is, perhaps, another indication of the greater sophistication of the audience for which medals were aimed; an audience which might appreciate the polite allusion without taking it seriously at face value.

The most common occasion for presentation seems to have been New Year's Day, when it looks as if many medals were produced for the emperor to present to members of his court. Various pieces of evidence favour this view. The first concerns the emperor Commodus,

who had the dubious distinction of being murdered on New Year's Eve, AD 192. Now, Roman emperors held a number of titles, like consul, censor, etc. One of these titles concerned the Tribunician Power, a relic of the long vanished Roman Republic and a power which was renewed every year on 10 December. A very large number of medals — well over 50 are known today — have survived with the title TR P XVIII indicating that they were made in the short period of three weeks between the 10th and the 31st December of 192. In contrast, however, almost no coins were made during that period, so the conclusion seems inescapable that the mint was fully occupied at this period in making medals for the emperor to present on 1 January 192.

If January and other times were the main occasions on which medallions were made they could also perform other functions after their initial gift. For example, quite a lot of Roman medals are known with holes bored or gouged into them. The reasons for this have always been something of a mystery, but a few years ago one turned up attached in this way to a *diploma* or certificate of discharge from the army. In a very different way we can see how highly medallions were prized by their owners — for example, in the catacombs in Rome, specimens have been found set into the walls where the remains of their owners were buried. Indeed, it has been thought that a very large proportion of the surviving medallions from Rome, particularly many of those now in the collection of the Vatican Museum, may have originally been recovered from the catacombs.

Contorniates, category 2, are at once alike and unlike medallions. Apart from their edges, they are the same general size and metal, and were also made at the mint of Rome, as rare die links show. But they differ, for example, in design: they rarely show the reigning emperor and, instead sometimes depict former emperors — especially Nero and Trajan (rather odd choices), often in the late antique style — as well as historical figures like Alexander the Great and, interestingly, imaginary portraits of philosophers like Pythagoras or classical writers like Homer, Horace and Sallust. The reverses have a wide variety of scenes from mythology and legend and particularly to contemporary spectacles like gladiatorial shows or horseracing. We are seeing a very different sort of imagery here, one that is related to victory (Alexander the

Great), the games and the arts.

Contorniates probably had more or less the same function as the earlier medallions, although not everyone has thought so. Indeed, Alföldi himself used to have a bizarre theory that they were tokens of crypto-pagans at a time when the empire had officially converted to Christianity. Fortunately, this theory was not generally accepted, and one of the more recently discovered pieces has a depiction of the person (Helena) who was not only the mother of the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, but herself an ardent Christian. Moreover, not a single piece has been recovered from the Christian catacombs in Rome.

After just over 100 years contorniates died, probably with the fall of the western Roman empire in 480, and the establishment of Ostrogothic rule in the city of Rome from that date, although there is a case for regarding one or two pieces as dating from just after the Ostrogothic take-over.

The third type of Roman medal, objects of precious metal, gold and silver, were, in a sense, multiple coins, since they were struck to fixed weight standards as multiples of so many coins. Early pieces are very rare, and the production of large gold and silver pieces did not become standard until the middle of the 3rd century, because it became increasingly important from that period on for the emperor to secure the loyalty of his regime by transferring large quantities of gold and silver to his military and civilian commanders. This could, of course, have just been done with lots of ordinary sized coins, but the use of larger pieces allowed a greater flamboyance and explicitness in the gesture, conferring greater status on the recipient.

These gold and silver medallions follow the weight standards of ordinary coins, and often use a similar visual vocabulary but, while they undoubtedly did have a monetary value, their role as objects of exchange derived only from their previous metal content and seems secondary to their role as objects for presentation. We can see this in two ways. First of all, other non-coin-like objects were made, often at the imperial mint, for presentation; these might include silver candlesticks and bowls, or objects made of gold such as belt buckles, leaves, crowns and brooches. The second way in which we can see how these pieces had a presentational function is the explicit and almost only literary reference we have about them. This records how the early

Byzantine emperor Tiberius II (578-582) presented to the ambassadors of the Frankish king Chilperic two gold medallions each weighing 72 gold solidi or one Roman pound of gold. Chilperic later showed these to the Gregory of Tours who describes them in his *Historia Francorum*:

He showed me the gold medals which the emperor had sent, each of which weighed one pound and had on one side a portrait depicting the emperor and an inscription in a circle TIBERII CONSTANTINNI PERPETVI AVGVSTI and on the other side a four-horse chariot containing a passenger and the inscription GLORIA ROMANORVM'. (*Hist Franc* VI.2).

These pieces do not survive, nor do any of such a colossal size, save for the Justinian I medallion (stolen from the Paris collection in 1831), but many of these late imperial medallions have been found beyond the frontiers of the empire (even as far afield as Norway). It is clear that they performed an important diplomatic function as part of the bribes paid by late Roman and early Byzantine emperors to the barbarian tribes outside the empire in the effort to stop attacks being made on the empire. The occasions of issue within the empire were many — the accession of a new emperor, the anniversary of an emperor's accession, an Imperial visit, an Imperial consulship, a notable victory, and so on. These bribes, or to give them their contemporary and more neutral name, 'donatives', played an important part in maintaining the political and social structure of the Late Roman Empire. We can reconstruct some of the detail of the way in which they were given out by looking at the Arras hoard from northern France, deposited in about 315. It shows how its owner had been the recipient of donatives for some 20 years, receiving medallions on the occasion of several imperial accessions and, most spectacularly, on the occasion of the recovery of Britain from the usurpers Carausius and Allectus in 296.

Unlike the bronze medallions and contorniates whose production was confined to the mint at Rome, the gold and silver pieces were made at all mints producing gold coins. This more dispersed production does in fact reflect the way that, increasingly in the later empire, the minting of gold coins tended to take place wherever the emperor happened to be, since the emperors were keen to keep the empire's stocks of gold safe with them rather than at the mercy of others in some central storage

depository. Both this geographically dispersed production and the more general role of medals as a means of maintaining loyalty at home and abroad explain why their production continued well after the fall of the western Roman empire at the end of the fifth century.

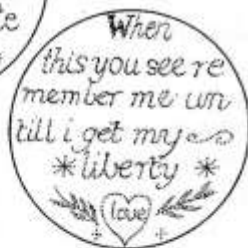
### **London Numismatic Club Meeting, 7 April 1998**

Tim Millett of A.H. Baldwin spoke on 'Tokens of Transportation (to Australia)'. It was a subject in which he was extremely interested and on which he had built up a not inconsiderable collection. Convict love tokens, or 'Leaden Hearts' as they were known by criminals of the time, are perhaps the most tangible relic left by the convict prior to his transportation. The pieces themselves were often rubbed down coin of the realm (often cartwheel pennies or the later pennies of 1806), which had been engraved by the unfortunates sentenced to transportation. Most of them had been held in Newgate Prison, and Sir Arthur Griffiths' book, *Chronicles of Newgate Prison*, tells a terrible tale of punishments, but it does also refer to the engraved tokens. Amongst the details learnt from *Chronicles* were that it cost a halfpence to hire a Sunday newspaper in the prison, and that an ounce of tobacco cost four pence.

The pieces were made to be given to loved ones before the inevitable separation - one prisoner had seven pennies rubbed down and engraved - one for each of his 'flash women' as their 'partners' were often referred to.

The problem in researching convict tokens lay in the difficulty of matching a name on a token with an identifiable person. Parliamentary Papers were a good source and, indeed, they had been a major source for Griffiths' *Chronicles*. From the Parliamentary Papers we can learn that some 160,000 souls were transported, and 10% of these were women (i.e. 16-20,000 women), yet, amongst the approximately 200 examples of such convict tokens known, only two were known for women. The engraving on the tokens varied; on some, professional engravers appear to be involved (but one wonders how a convicted felon could have access, let alone the money, to have this done), and others are extremely crude and amateur.

Just a few examples of the details that could be gleaned were such as John Campling transported for life in 1817 for stealing a silver



watch, who was freed in 1841. Elijah Swainson, aged 40, was convicted with two others for robbery. His confederates were hanged and he was sentenced to transportation. He died in 1827, aged 49. His token (see illustration) was on a uniface 1806 penny.

William Nicholson (see illustration) was transported for 14 years on the *Isabella* in 1818.

Thomas Spicer's token was cast (see illustration). He was convicted with William Kelly for forging £10 to £1 bank notes and sentenced to death. He was only 17 years old, and his sentence was commuted to transportation. We hear of him as a stockman in 1822 and he got his 'ticket of leave' in 1825.

For stealing a handkerchief in High Holborn, Robert Nichols was sentenced to seven years transportation on 16 September 1832.

The stories behind the tokens revealed an incredible side of Victorian England. It is interesting to note how 'felony' can become respectable in that nowadays many Australians are quite proud when they can trace their ancestry back to one of those who came unwillingly to the continent's shores.

[There will be an exhibition, 'Leaden Hearts: Convict Love Tokens', at the British Museum, 13 January to 12 April, 1999. It is formed largely from the British Museum and Timothy Millett collections and will include some 200 pieces, brought together for the first time, many of them researched with full biographical details and including some making links with relatives today. The collection has toured Australia throughout 1998 with exhibitions in Sydney, Perth and Hobart.

There will be an accompanying book, *Convict Love Tokens: The Leaden Hearts the Convicts Left Behind*, edited by Michele Field and Timothy Millett. Published by A.H. Baldwin with 128 pages and illustrations in colour and black and white, it is priced £12.99.]

### **London Numismatic Club Meeting, 5 August 1998**

This meeting was the annual occasion of a 'Members Own' evening, to which seven members of the Club contributed.

Michael Anderson spoke on 'The mint of Segovia'; Paul Edis on 'A Swansea token'; K.R. Moman on 'The ancient Indian site of Sunedra';



David Sealy on 'Numismatic allusions from general reading'; Philip Rueff on 'Powerful and Terrible'; Robert Hatch on 'Simon Bolivar: My second favourite coin', and John Roberts-Lewis on 'Twentieth century use of earlier token designs'.

Michael Anderson spoke on the mint of Segovia, a small walled city 50 miles north-west of Madrid, famed for its Roman aqueduct and cathedral but its sixteenth century mint building is hardly known, and certainly not sign-posted. Roman coins of Octavian had been struck in the city and it was in 1079 that Alfonso of Castilla captured the city from the Moors and established a mint there. It struck coins down to the reign of Alfonso VII (1123-1157) and then was dormant until re-opened in 1455 by Enrique IV (1454-74, known as 'Enrique the impotent'). He introduced the famous aqueduct mintmark.

The present building, 'El Ingenio', was commenced in 1582 to the design of the Spanish architect Francisco de Mora, was staffed by Austrian technicians and powered by four water wheels that generated 30 horsepower. Three of them powered the rolling mill and the fourth the coining press. It was not long before the mint was producing a full range of denominations from half maravedi to 16-maravedi in billon, half real to 50 reales in silver, and half escudo to 100 escudos in gold. They were of remarkable quality at a time when other Spanish mints were producing irregular and scarcely legible cob coins. The dies were engraved on rollers, each containing up to 16 dies for the half reales, but only one die was on the roller for producing the huge 50 reales and 100 escudos. The former, 72mm in diameter, weighed 170 gms (6 ounces), more than twice as much as a Charles I Oxford crown. The 100 escudos (center) was 78mm in diameter and 340gms (12 ounces). Twenty-five of the rollers from the mint are persevered in the Royal Mint Museum in Madrid - each roller containing up to 16 dies for the half reales but only one for the huge 50 reales and 100 escudos. The 50 reales weighed 170gms (6 ounces), over half as much again as a Charles I Oxford crown. The 100 escudos, or centén, minted from 1618 to 1682 weighed twice as much as the 50 reales - an example is displayed in the HSBC Money Gallery in the British Museum. Examples sold recently at an Ars Classica sale realised between £6000 and £140,000 each.

Segovia was the principal Spanish mint throughout the 17th century, although there was a period of some 70 years when Madrid,

with a real four-horse powered mill, took over. Segovia struck for Jose Napoleon until 1813, coppers for Fernando VII in 1815, and continued in production until the revolution of 1868. Thereafter the Mill machinery reverted to its original use - grinding flour !

Paul Edis displayed two Swansea tokens, a halfpenny and a silver shilling, issued by John Voss of Swansea. His interest lay, he said, not in tokens per se but in the depiction on them, the castle. Swansea Old castle was in existence before 1116, subsequently attacked and burnt and the New Castle, seen in an old print of 1741, shows it much as it is today. John Voss, the token issuer, was a draper, banker and printer at the sign of the Golden Key in Castle Square - this symbol appears on the reverse of his token. By 1793 he had issued a copper halfpenny, engraved by William Wyon, and the design was retained on his shilling. John Voss' son, John Matthew Voss, sold the drapery business to concentrate on banking, but it was skilfully robbed of some £24,000 in February 1818. Nevertheless, it survived, the thieves (despite a dramatic chase by Voss) were never caught and quantities of notes from the robbery eventually made their way back to the bank for redemption.

Philip Rueff showed a handsome commemorative medallion depicting the heavy battle cruiser *Terrible*, launched on 24 July 1895 at Barrow-in-Furnace by the Duchess of Devonshire (as recorded on it). It was made from bronze from HMS *Powerful*. The two ships were actually twins, built to counter two contemporary Russian cruisers. The two British cruisers, with a displacement each of 14,200 tons, crew of 894 and maximum speed of just under 22 knots had a range of 7000 miles at a cruising speed of 14 knots. The *Powerful* was completed in 1897. They were the first large warships to be powered by water tube boilers, and both suffered from engine and boiler problems throughout their careers. Indeed, they were described as 'White Elephants', expensive to build and not fulfilling their Royal Navy requirements. However, they did at least land naval brigades which assisted in the relief of Ladysmith in the Boer War. *Powerful*, after refit in 1902-4, entered the Naval Reserve, and so missed the Battle of Jutland. Subsequently used as a training ship renamed *Impregnable* at Devonport, 1915-20, she was finally sold by the Royal Navy on 31 August 1929.

Robert Hatch, in displaying the well-worn profile of Simon

Bolivar on his coin, noted that he loved it because of its quintessential South/Latin American appearance. Bolivia, since the setting up of the Republic on 6 August 1825 had been through more than 16 Constitutions, 69 Presidents and 160 revolutions ! The coin in question was a 4S, or four sueldos or soles, struck at the Potosi mint. It was dated 1830, the year when Bolivar died at the age of 47, riddled with tuberculosis. He was an embittered man who wrote: 'Treaties are scraps of paper; constitutions, printed matter; elections, battles; freedom, anarchy; and life, a torment'. Bolivia's history would seem to bear him out. John Roberts-Lewis spoke on the 20th century use of 18th and 19th century token designs, displaying four examples - two medallions and two replicas. The medallions were issues of Ironbridge Gorge Museum from the 1980s. The first, featuring the Iron Bridge itself, uses Shropshire D&H 7 for its base and commemorates the world's first iron bridge built by ironmaster John Wilkinson. The reverse featured the Severn trow, a small cargo vessel. The second medallion, a tribute to John Wilkinson (1728-1806), was issued by the Wilkinson Sword Company, and also commemorated the bi-centenary of the first iron boat in 1987. Wilkinson's bust was taken from his well-known Warwickshire tokens.

The first of the replica tokens copied Suffolk D&H 31, of Haverhill issued by John Fincham. The replica is in proof on a thick blank with a plain edge and dated 1784. It was struck to commemorate 200 years of Gurteens of Haverhill, but nothing on it indicates this. The second replica was of the 19th century, Cornwall, Davis 20, attributed to Scorner House. Dated 1811, it is marketed as 'The First Cornish Penny, A Unique Souvenir of Cornwall'. Both pieces clearly have a future potential in misleading collectors.

### **London Numismatic Club Meeting, 10 September 1998**

Ron Haller-Williams spoke on 'Treasure of the Rio Formoso: 17th Century Brazilian Siege Pieces'. In the late 1620s and early 1630s, the Geoctroyeerde Westindische Compagnie (the Dutch 'Chartered West-India Company') seized large tracts of the Portuguese colony of Brazil, from the mouth of the Amazon to beyond Salvador/Bahia (the then capital), with a view to obtaining large profits from growing and

processing sugar cane there.

From 1637 to 1644 this was under the leadership of Prince John Maurice of Orange-Nassau, who established Recife as his capital. Although things went well at first, the Portuguese, newly independent after 60 years of Spanish rule, fought back and besieged Recife from 1644 to 1654, when the Dutch surrendered and were driven out of the country, finally relinquishing their claim in 1661.

Meanwhile, the Dutch there had a shortage of money to pay for supplies and wages, including the mercenary soldiers. Their ships in the harbour had on board some 1251 marks of gold (about 308 kilograms) from Guinea, 50 marks of which they sold at auction. This did not, however, raise nearly enough money, especially bearing in mind local price inflation. Therefore, in the mid-1640s, they decided to convert some 715 marks into obsidional money (siege pieces) of approximately square 'klippe' format. Starting in January 1654, only days before the surrender, they made uniface silver coins from 23 pounds (some 11.3kg) of plate supplied by two prominent citizens.

Outside of the Company's archives, the earliest known mention of these coins is in vol. 2 of Gerard van Loon's *Beschryving der Nederlandsche Historipenningen* ('Description of the Dutch Historical Coins/Medals'), published in four volumes, the Hague, in the 1720s. A five-volume French version, *Histoire Metallique des [XVII Provinces des] Pays Bas*, was published there in the 1730s.

The gold coins, dated 1645 and 1646, were of denominations 3, 6 and 12 florins, or gulden, although the contemporary records speak of coins of 1, 2 and 4 Brazilian 'ducats of 3 florins'. The obverse had a mark of value in Roman numerals above the monogram GWC in a beaded circle. On the reverse appeared the legend ANNO I **BRASIL' I 1645** (or 1646), also in a beaded circle. Julius Meili, in *Die Munze der Colonie Brasilien 1645 bis 1822* (Zurich, 1895), mentions a copper specimen. Meili's protégé, Augusto de Souza Lobo, had two copper 'galvano-plastic reproductions', one of them gold-plated, and later he acquired at least one of Meili's own gold pieces. The Company's archives show that quite a number of dies were used, and also that Company headquarters in the Hague forbade the use of the gold in this manner, because it was required in the Netherlands.

The uniface silver coins of 1654 had a mark of value in Roman

numerals above and the date below the GWC monogram, in a beaded circle. Although the Company's archives specify pieces of 10, 20, 30 and 40 stuivers (1 florin or gulden = 20 stuivers), van Loon shows only a 12-stuiver piece. Opinion is sharply divided over whether all five values are legitimate, or just some - and which!

There are far fewer of these coins known than the quantities of metal would indicate, and the prices have reflected this. Sotheby's sale of Brazilian coins in Geneva in 1987 included one each of the above six gold coins, all recovered from the wreck of the *Utrecht* sunk in a battle in late 1648 (28 September according to the auction catalogue, but Varnhagen attributes the account to Schkopp's log of 19 December) at the entrance to the Baia de Todos os Santos (All Saints' Bay) near Salvador. The prices realised ranged from 12,000 to 30,000 Swiss francs (plus 10% buyer's premium) and, not surprisingly, there have been reports of forgeries of these coins.

In 1967, during land-grading for the construction of the state highway PE-1 (now part of the Federal BR-101), a clay pot was unearthed and broken by an excavator near the coastal town of Rio Formoso close to the river of that name and about 25 miles from Recife. The pot contained many hundreds, perhaps over a thousand, of square pieces of metal encrusted with some black substance. Although at first dismissed as sugar-mill tokens, they were later identified as being these siege pieces, and first publicised ten years later in 1977. They included the pieces mentioned above, also undated silver coins of all five values, gold coins of a hitherto unknown date (1647), what appear to be 24-florin coins (thus accounting for the enigmatic 'dies of 24' mentioned in the archives), and a large number of specimens in copper. There were also some stamped bars, in all three metals, which raise far more questions than they answer.

Opinion in Brazil is sharply divided regarding the authenticity of this hoard, with several books (of varying opinions) having been written on the matter, some better research or presented than others. However, most are written from a strongly partisan viewpoint, and cannot therefore give a full picture - it may well be that we shall never know the full picture.

## London Numismatic Club Meeting, 6 October 1998

Italo Vecchi spoke on the subject of 'Etruscan Dimes, denarii and Cents'. He said that mystery has surrounded the Etruscans for centuries - they have been variously defined as Sla<sup>y</sup>s, Basques, Celts, Canaanites, Armenians, Egyptians, Tartars and, finally, non-Eurasian prehistoric aborigines of Central and Northern Italy limited by the Celts to the north and the Latin tribes in the south and east to what is better known today as Tuscany, or 'Chiantishire'.

An ostentatious luxury-loving aristocratic society whose heyday was in the 5th century BC, when they were even kings of Rome itself, they were, by the 3rd century, all but in name clients of that city, which owed them virtually all its customs and civil institutions.

Unlike the capitalist Lydians and Greeks, but like the Babylonians and Egyptians, the land-owning society needed no coined money and serfdom or military service was compensated for by land grants or payments in kind. A form of bronze currency for transactions did circulate all over Italy in the form of rough lumps of metal (*aes rude*) and bars (*aes signatum*).

Legal transactions were confirmed by the formula *per aes et libram* (by bronze and scales). The weight system used to weigh this currency is called libral, after *libra* from the Greek *litra* (that which draws down). The Italic word was *pondius* or pound from *pensum* (*i.e.* weighed and not counted) *numeratum* by a *dispensatores* (cashier). Soldiers' pay, *stipendium*, heaped and weighed, payments were weighed out, *expensa*. Bronze lumps were also weighed out in *aestimatio*. All these terms lasted into Imperial times, by which time their origins had been forgotten, and have passed into modern languages with little change in their meaning.

From the Treaty of Apamea in 188 BC, we are informed that for practical purposes the *libra* was tariffed at 80 to the Attic talent of 25.8kg, giving us a pound of about 325g, subdivided in 12 *unciae* of about 27g and 288 *scripula* of about 1.13g.

Libra' period, c. 300-217 BC

Gold as 1/5-scruple = 0.225g.

Silver as of 2-scruples = 2.25g.

Bronze as of 288-scruples - 325g.

In c. 217 BC, in order to confront the Hannibalic invasion and subsequent financial crises, Rome and its allies devalued by half the bronze currency, and therefore its silver equivalent.

Semilibral period, c. 217-215 BC

Gold as 1/10-scruple = 0.113g.

Silver as of 1-scruple = 1.13g.

Bronze as of 144-scruples = 162g.

[Members are referred to Italo Vecchi's article, 'An Historical Introduction to Etruscan Numismatics', in *Minerva*, vol. 10, no.1 Jan/Feb. 1999, pp.48-53, for an illustrated overall view of Etruscan coins.]

**Revolutionary 'Cervantes' Bank Notes, by Trevor H. Stephenson**

Two thousand miles up the river Amazon is the Peruvian town of Iquitos. Until the Second World War, letters from Lima, the capital, had to be sent by river boat down river to Belem do Pam at the mouth of the Amazon. There they were transferred to a Booth Line steamer bound for Liverpool. Then they were transferred to a Pacific Steam navigation vessel heading for Callao, passing through the Panama Canal and, finally, to their destination.

In 1921 during full preparations for the celebration of Peru's 100th Anniversary of Independence, huge sums of money were being spent in Lima by the Government. In Iquitos, on the other hand, there was no money to pay the salaries of the public employees, nor of the armed forces. Being a frontier town, the army had a large base at Iquitos. The central authorities promised to send money by plane. There was no airport at that time in Iquitos, so the local authorities began to build a suitable airstrip.

Then rumours began to circulate that 5000 Peruvian Pounds would be arriving by plane. When the plane finally landed, it was discovered that there were only 2000 Pounds, barely enough to pay off the most pressing debts. No money was left to pay the soldiers.

On 5 August, Captain Guillermo Cervantes, at the head of the

'Cazadores del Orient No. 17' rose up against the local authorities who had paid out money to themselves but not to the army. The rebels marched against the Town Hall. The only life lost was that of the guard on duty. Seeing the soldiers advancing, he voiced the alarm. Those inside, scared out of their wits, slammed shut the Town Hall doors, leaving the guard outside. One of the soldiers fired and he fell dead.

The soldiers forced the doors, poured inside and Captain Cervantes promptly dismissed the authorities for abuse of authority in having paid themselves and not the armed forces.

After ransacking the Town Hall, the rebels then moved to the Banco de Peru y Londres where they seized all the money they could lay hands on. At that time both the English sovereign and the Peruvian gold Pound were equal in value, size, weight and both legal tender.

Captain Cervantes then ordered a series of bank notes to be printed by a local printer. The One Sol notes were printed on orange coloured wrapping paper, the fractional notes on low quality paper whilst the higher denomination notes were printed on better class paper. Cervantes then issued a Decree that these were to be accepted by everyone as legal tender. Only the Chinese merchants, of which there were a fair number in Iquitos, refused to accept them. Accordingly, they were rounded up and taken to a small island in mid-Amazon and left there until they changed their minds !

On 20 October 1921 Colonel Gonzales arrived in Iquitos having been sent by General Benavides to give aid to the rebels who he understood intended to overthrow the Government of Leguia who had himself taken charge of Peru by a coup. However, on 18 December, Major Santivanez at the head of Government troops met up with Colonel Gonzales and killed 30 of the rebels. Gonzales managed to escape and fled to Ecuador. Reinforcements arrived and the remaining rebels were quickly subdued - Captain Cervantes also managed to escape to Ecuador and the rebellion ended.

The new Government in Iquitos quickly instructed that only legitimate Peruvian currency notes were henceforth legal tender and that the Cervantes notes no longer had any value.

Large quantities of these notes remained in shopkeepers' hands, worthless until the late 1970s and 1980s when bank note collecting



became fashionable. Those merchants still with stocks managed to off load them on to collectors. The notes issued were for the values of 10, 20 and 50 centavos and half, one and five Libras (Peruvian Pounds).



## AUCTION REPORTS

by Tony Gilbert

97th Club Auction, 6th May 1998

Twenty members and one guest were present at the Club's Private Auction. eight vendors had submitted a total of 121 lots, giving a good representation of collecting areas - ancient and modern, English hammered and milled, European, Commonwealth and foreign, medals, tokens, forgeries, bank notes and books.

Marcus Phillips and David Sealy acted as auctioneers and 62 lots fell under the hammer, producing a sales total of £340.50, with £34.05 being the Club's commission.

An English silver penny of king John, Class 5b, fetched £17 against a reserve of £5. Six lots of Indian coin moulds, coins and medals, however failed to find a buyer. The late entry of 19 lots (the vendor's list not having been received by the event organiser) produced the two top bids of the evening - £31 and £20, though the auction clerk (the writer) did not have a description of the lots. The evening was dotted with some humour, especially in regard to the auctioneers' sometimes over-fussy description of lots without reserves!

## **98th Club Auction, 4th November 1998**

Fifteen members were present to bid on the 66 lots on offer, a goodly mixture as is usually seen. The total sales from the seven vendors was £226, although unfortunately 33 lots, exactly half, remained unsold. The highest price was £34, achieved by a Lindner coin case in 'as new' condition. Club commission, including £44 raised by lots kindly donated by Laurence Brown, amounted to £62.20.

The writer considers that 14 lots were overpriced, thus not allowing the auctioneer any room in which to manoeuvre or begin sensible bidding. One lot especially, of Greek bronze coins with a reserve of £60, could have been broken down with a much greater sales potential. Also, vendors should seriously look at the presentation of

25

their lots. The 'bulking out' of lots with what can best be described as junk material to a multiple coin lot does not necessarily increase its interest or potential sales value. Any prospective purchaser will discount such material and level his bid at only the price of the items he is interested in.

The 99th auction sale will be held on Wednesday, 5 May, 1999. David Sealy acted as auctioneer for the 98th auction and asked all those present (and this applies to all Club members) please put their thinking caps on and come up with some ideas for the Centenary Auction, only twelve months away. The writer's suggestion - how about members submitting lots weighing just 100g and priced at 50p; a lucky dip?

## **REVIEWS**

**A Guide to British Military Tokens for both collectors and military enthusiasts**, by John F. Yarwood. Available from the author, 72 Baillie Street, Horsham, Victoria 3400, Australia. Price \$A22, plus \$A4 postage.

Our long-time Australian member, Mark Freehill, writes; This new *Guide to British Military Tokens*, will be welcomed by both collectors and military enthusiasts alike. For the first time a comprehensive listing

of British and Commonwealth military tokens has been published in the one volume. The author has uncovered many recent discoveries and new information. Ranging from 18th century military related trade tokens to NAAFI, POW and munition tokens of the 20th century. Over 300 items are listed from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, Isle of Man, St Helena, South Africa and the West Indies. Nearly half of which are illustrated. The publication fills a long standing research gap in this area and will be a valuable addition to any numismatic library.

**Roman Coin Price Yearbook 1996/1997.** Compiled by Morten Eske Mortensen. *Grelbers Forlagsekspektion, Drejogade 26 F 501, DK-2100 Copenhagen 0, Denmark, 1998. 576pp. Hardback, \$83 post-paid.*

This book is an invaluable compendium of prices realised at public auctions for Roman coins from 31 BC (Octavian's victory at the battle of Actium) to AD 138, the reign of Hadrian. It is ten years since the publication of the last edition of David Sear's *Roman Coins and Their Values* (although a new edition is in preparation), so the present volume is extremely welcome for dealers and collectors who like to keep an eye on market trends. Sear has the advantage of more description of the emperors and the types, as well illustrations, but in the present volume there is the advantage of indications of grade and differences due to that and, by virtue of the greater or lesser appearance at auction there is a very good guide to rarity.

An initial glance at the close-packed tabulated pages may be daunting, but persevere because you will find the basic types listed with date, references to RIC, Cohen, BMC, Sear, and Kankelfitz, plus mint followed by auction sale identification, and specific comment, grade, estimate and hammer price realised in US dollars. There are over 10,000 auction prices listed drawn from some 200 world-wide public auctions held in 1995 and 1996. Obviously not all of the rarest Roman coins have necessarily appeared under the hammer in those years, this could not be expected, but the range and coverage is, nevertheless, quite incredible. Some coins that appear infrequently have a few lines of information added but other, commoner types can fill a page and therein lies the true

value of the compilation to the collector - he can assess a particular type or indeed the coins of a specific reign at a glance.

Not to be overlooked are the introductory pages which set out the way to use the book to best advantage, and describe the basic reference works cited and other details. Bearing in mind that coin lists in tabular form can be understood by almost anyone, the compiler has provided the introductory pages in English, German, French Italian, Spanish and Danish - that really is forethought for a work of international interest ! Hopefully, volume two which is promised and which takes the listing from AD 138 down to AD 253 will soon be available and there can be no doubt that a sequence of revised editions of the *Roman Coin Price Yearbook* will become an invaluable tool for dealer and collector alike.

*Peter A. Clayton*