



NEWSLETTER

THE JOURNAL OF THE LONDON NUMISMATIC CLUB

HONORARY EDITOR

Peter A. Clayton

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EDITORIAL

The Club, once again, has been fortunate in having a series of excellent speakers this past year, many of whom kindly supplied scripts for publication in the Club's *Newsletter*. This is not as straightforward as it may seem; for the Editor still has to edit those scripts from the spoken to the written word, and then to type them all into the computer (unless, occasionally, a disc and a hard copy printout is supplied by the speaker). If contributors of reviews, notes, etc, could also supply their material on disc, it would be much appreciated and, not least, probably save a lot of errors in transmission.

David Berry, our Speaker Finder, has provided a very varied menu for our ten meetings in the year (January and August being the months where there is no meeting). All meetings are now held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Warburg Institute, Woburn Square. Auctions will continue to be held at not less than 12-month intervals, and will be appropriately listed in the programme and notified. As Tony Gilbert has remarked in his Auction Reports, the auction can only be as good and as interesting as, first, the lots which members offer and, second, the number of members who attend to bid on those lots.

The Editor's last plea is, as usual - this is the Club's *Newsletter* and, as such, is a forum as well as a reporting vehicle. Several pieces in this *Newsletter* are additional to the talks and auction reports, and others have taken up the Editor's challenge from the last *Newsletter* and submitted material. Do remember that many of our members are unable to visit the Club and hear the talks, so the *Newsletter* is their link - let us make sure that it is a continuing welcome and interesting one.

Peter A. Clayton, Honorary Editor

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 3 February 2004 (Part 2)

Continuing on his topic of 'Tokens, Medals and the Law (see *Newsletter* Vol. VIII, no. 8, pp. 5-9, for Part 1) , Philip Rueff said that the second part of his talk was essentially concerned with the 18th century Treason Trials. These came about in the 1790s because of the attempted suppression of the Constitutional Reform Movement by the British Establishment and authorities. Many of the relevant events and the personalities relating thereto are graphically depicted and commemorated on the contemporary tokens; resembling tradesmen's tokens they were in reality small medals manufactured and issued by a number of entrepreneurs, notably Thomas Spence and Thomas Skidmore. A particularly useful reference to these items is R.C. Bell's *Political and Commemorative Pieces Simulating Tradesmen's Tokens 1770-1802*. In his descriptions is a wealth of fascinating and detailed information on the events, personalities, political movements and organisations involved.

In late 18th century Britain the social structure was rigidly hierarchical, i.e. economic and political power was concentrated in the hands of a relatively small oligarchy of male property holders. They owned much of the land and the other sources of wealth and production and controlled both Houses of Parliament, and thus both the legislative and the executive power. The apex of this structure was the land-owning aristocracy and the Royal Family. The vast majority of the population, including most males, engaged in agriculture and commerce and all women had no vote, no representation in Parliament and therefore no say in how the country was governed. Their situation was exacerbated by what was perceived to be a considerable degree of complacency, corruption and extravagance amongst the ranks of the political establishment, best exemplified by the so-called 'Rotten Boroughs' where a small number of propertied electors had the power to send the local MP, or MPs, to Parliament.

At the same time the country had then and has even now a tradition of political 'radicalism' extending back to at least the revolt against the Monarchy in the early 17th century, e.g. the Levellers Movement. Accordingly, in the late 18th century as well, among both the enfranchised and the disenfranchised, there was a minority of intelligent and politically active people of both sexes who were affronted by what

they saw and experienced. Their deep-rooted desire for the dismantling of the economic, political and legal oligarchy which dominated the country, in favour of political participation - a share of the cake - for all, and specifically for full implementation of the Bill of Rights, universal and secret suffrage (at least for men!), representative elected parliaments and governments, freedom of conscience, expression and the press, and the abolition of discrimination against such groups as Roman Catholics, was reinforced by such radical and inspirational texts as Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*, and Richard Price's *Discourse*. The smouldering embers of radicalism were further fanned and invigorated by the examples of America and France - the successful American revolt and the War of Independence, followed by the French revolution. Both of these had a powerful impact on the growth of British Radicalism in the late 18th century.

Beginning in about 1770, a number of initially small groups or societies were formed to discuss and then promote political and legal reforms, specifically annual elections by secret ballot, universal male (only at this time) suffrage and the redistribution and parliamentary seats among equally populated electoral districts accompanied by payment for MPs so that all men, not just the landed gentry, could afford to hold that office. One idea floated was that lay juries, not professional judges alone; should decide what was legal, or illegal, in relation to agitation in order to promote reform. To many Britain seemed ready to follow France and plunge into violent revolution, but the execution (murder) of the French king, Louis XVI in January 1793, followed by the declaration of war on Britain by the revolutionary French Government in February 1793, and the wholesale guillotining of aristocrats and moderates, led to fear by the authorities in Britain. In May 1794 Parliament passed an Act suspending Habeas Corpus and permitting indefinite detention of suspected revolutionaries without trial. Many textbooks are still written with in-depth analyses of the background, but here we are concerned with the numismatic element.

Among the more prominent radical societies was the Corresponding Society of the Unrepresented People of Great Britain, later better known as the London Corresponding Society. It was founded in 1792 by a shoemaker called Thomas Hardy (died 1832) and eight friends of similar views. Hardy became its Secretary, Treasurer and 'leading

light'. By the autumn of 1795 the Society had spawned 70 divisions and had about 20,000 members. Another such group was the Society for Supporting the Bill of Rights, founded by John Horne Tooke (1736-1812). Initially a clergyman, then a law student, and publisher, Tooke eventually became MP for the 'Rotten Borough' of Old Sarum (near Salisbury).

In May 1794 Thomas Hardy and Daniel Adams (Secretary of the Society for Constitutional Information) were arrested in their homes. This was speedily followed by the arrest of Home Tooke, John Thelwall and a number of other notorious radicals. Hardy was interrogated, detained in the Tower of London, and subsequently charged with High Treason, as were the others arrested. It is thus evident that one of the main, if not the main weapon relied upon by the authorities in their attempt to suppress the reform movement and its leading lights was the law with its panoply of courts, judges, prosecuting lawyers and juries (the latter often illegally hand-picked sympathisers of the Government's case, and therefore predisposed to convict). The most powerful weapon was to invoke the Law of Treason, a capital offence, and its junior partner, Sedition. These two 'bedfellows' were legally expanded to virtually all and any offence that might threaten the status quo or the Monarchy. For those so accused acquittal or conviction was, literally, a matter of life or death. In the latter instance, by being hung, drawn and quartered, subsequently mitigated to simply hanging.

However, there were some lawyers prepared to use their skills to stem the tide of authoritarianism. Most famous of these was Thomas Erskine (1750-1823), the foremost advocate of his day, and possibly all later generations in the profession. He was the youngest son of the 10th Earl of Buchan (a Scottish title) who, unusually for the time, was poor. Young Thomas began life as a midshipman in the navy at age 14, serving in the West Indies; having acquired a little money, he purchased a commission in the army and married the daughter of an MP. Despite his lack of a formal education he impressed people with his intelligence, knowledge of English literature, and eloquence. Meeting Dr Johnson and James Boswell at a dinner party, the latter even recorded the vivid impression Erskine made in his *Life of Johnson*.

Erskine's life and fortune was transformed when, with nothing else to do that day, he entered the Court in a Assize town where his regiment

was temporally based. The court was presided over by Lord Mansfield, who had known Erskine's father, and Erskine was invited to sit on the Bench as a spectator. He listened to the two barristers conducting the case, felt that he could do better, and decided to read for the Bar and begin a career as a barrister, with the very useful encouragement of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield. (At that period, patronage in the law and the navy was a particularly useful step towards advancement, whilst not so in the army, which was by purchase - Editor).

Erskine was called to the Bar at the relatively late age of 28, where he suffered the traditional fate of young barristers without personal resources or commissions - no briefs meant consequent idleness and poverty. His luck changed one night when, during a rain storm, he took shelter in the house of a Mr Ellis, with whom a certain Captain Baillie was dining. Baillie, for his naval service, had been appointed as Governor of the Greenwich Hospital for invalid sailors. He discovered that various persons responsible, directly or indirectly, had abused their position, benefiting their friends and not providing properly for the sailors in their care. Baillie's efforts to reform and thwart their operations met with no success and he was reduced to publishing a pamphlet denouncing what was going on and, ultimately, the person responsible for the Hospital - the Earl of Sandwich. This resulted in his suspension from his post and prosecution for criminal libel, naturally engineered by Lord Sandwich. At dinner that stormy night in Mr Ellis's house the subject of the Greenwich Hospital and Captain Baillie's prosecution was discussed over the dinner table. Erskine launched into a spontaneous and vehement attack on the prosecution and the behaviour of Lord Sandwich. Baillie was impressed by Erskine's eloquence and decided to retain him as one of his defence counsel, the most junior, the fifth, at a fee of one guinea - but he had got his first brief.

Baillie's trial came before the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield, some other junior judges and a jury, in Westminster Hall. Towards the conclusion the other four counsel addressed the jury in defence of Baillie, and the trial was then adjourned overnight. The following morning no one expected Erskine as counsel number five to make a speech, but he insisted on doing so. Despite some discouraging interruptions from Lord Mansfield, he made a splendid and forceful speech denouncing the basis

of the prosecution and Lord Sandwich for sheltering behind it. Captain Baillie was triumphantly acquitted, the result for which Erskine got the credit, and his career accordingly took off.

Two years later, 1780, Erskine had risen to be Counsel number 2 for the defence in the sensational case of the trial of Lord George Gordon for High Treason, once more before Lord Chief Justice Lord Mansfield and a jury. Erskine's eloquence in emphasising the lack of evidence indicating that Gordon was responsible, even aware, of the violence that followed an initially peaceful demonstration, brought in a verdict of not guilty. However, those who could be shown to have actually taken up arms against their sovereign, some 20 of Gordon's followers, had not his advantage of being the son of a peer or access to Erskine's eloquence -they were convicted and hung.

Gordon's subsequent career was not so fortunate. In 1786 he was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury for refusing to give evidence in an ecclesiastical court. He abandoned Christianity, took the Jewish faith, embracing orthodox tenets. He was arrested again in January 1788, no doubt partly a whiff of revenge for his previous acquittal, and was sentenced to five years imprisonment for sedition, fined and ordered to find sureties of £15,000 for his subsequent good behaviour at the end of his sentence. In effect it was a sentence of life imprisonment as he died of fever in Newgate prison on 1 November 1793. This was commemorated on a token issued by Thomas Skidmore (engraved by James and Jacobs). The obverse bears a bust of Gordon with the appearance and clothing of an orthodox Jew, complete with long beard. The inscription reads: 'Ld Geo. Gordon died in Newgate Nov 1 1793.' The reverse shows the front of the 'Session House', i.e. the Old Bailey itself, spelt 'Old Baily'. In actuality it depicts, in the centre, the Governor's apartments, a building designed by George Dance in 1770. The building, completed in 1773, was partially destroyed in the Gordon Riots of 1780 and repairs to it were completed in 1782 - just in time to receive Gordon himself and other 'political' prisoners, although he himself was tried in Westminster Hall. Rebuilt and enlarged in 1809, the present building has little resemblance to the 1770 original.

In May 1794, with the peak of revolutionary fervour apparent in Europe, The British Government suspended Habeas Corpus, thus allowing the detention of suspects without trial. Amongst the nine or so

advocates of constitutional reform that were arrested, the three most prominent were Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwall (all mentioned above). All three were arrested on or about 12 May 1794 and committed to the Tower of London to await their trial at the Old Bailey. Fortunately for them, their supporters managed to retain Thomas Erskine as leading Counsel and Vicary Gibbs as Junior Counsel for their defence.

Hardy's trial; began on 28 October 1794 and lasted eight days, until 5 November - a long trial by contemporary standards. The Attorney General, John Scott (later Lord Chancellor) was the Principal Prosecuting Counsel for the Crown - his opening speech lasted nine hours (of which an ex Chief Justice acidly remarked, 'Nine hors - then there's no treason, by God!'). The incredible thing about the trials was the very long hours, compared to nowadays. On at least three days in Hardy's trial the court sat from 8am until after midnight. Erskine's closing speech in Hardy's defence was a masterpiece of eloquence and intellectual content, dwelling in detail on the natural, unembellished meaning and scope of High Treason, which essentially had to be an actual conspiracy to kill the Monarch; all Hardy and his associates had done was seek to reform Parliament and the system generally.

On the eighth day of the trial, and after three hours deliberation, the jury brought in the verdict 'Not Guilty of High Treason'. The result was greeted with jubilation by the waiting crowds, but the triumph was tinged with sadness as Hardy's wife had died in childbirth whilst he had been held in custody. Hardy died in 1832, the year of the Great Reform Act.

A number of tokens (some in reality medals) were issued by supporters of constitutional reform to celebrate the trial and its significance. Best known is the penny-sized token engraved by Thomas Wyon and manufactured in Birmingham, probably by Kempson. On the obverse is a three-quarter facing bust of Hardy and the legend around: THOS. HARDY SECRETARY TO THE LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY. NOT GUILTY NOVr 5 1794' The reverse lists the names of the jury, surrounded by the inscription: 'BY THE INTEGRITY OF THE JURY WHO ARE JUDGES OF LAW AS WELL AS FACT.'

A second contemporary half-penny token was issued and was in such popular demand that it exceeded supply. On the obverse is a profile bust of Hardy and 'TRIED FOR HIGH TREASON', with, in the exergue 'T. HARDY 1794'. The reverse has the legend: 'ACQUITTED BY HIS

JURY. COUNSEL HON. T. ERSKINE. V. GIBBS ESQR'.

The second of the treason trials was that of John Home Tooke, and it started shortly after the end of Hardy's case. Home Tooke, a more sophisticated, subtle and less straightforward man than Hardy, took an active part in his trial. He personally cross-examined one witness against him, despite having his legal team, and apparently caused William Pitt, the Prime Minister, to be called in order to demonstrate that their viewpoints on political reform were not that far apart. Erskine made his now usual eloquent speech, and Home Tooke was acquitted on 22 November 1794. In this instance the jury took only ten minutes to consider their verdict. In celebration at the nearby Cock and Anchor public house (still in existence today opposite the Law Courts in The Strand), toasts were drunk to 'Trial by Jury', 'Thomas Erskine', 'The Swinish Multitude - and may the honest hogs never cease to grunt 'til their wrongs are righted'. This was a 'payback' reference to a phrase in Edmund Burke's *Reflexions on the Revolution in France* - 'learning will be cast into the mire and trodden down under the hoofs [sic] of a swinish multitude. 'All three of the slogans were reproduced on the large number of tokens issued to celebrate Home Tooke's acquittal.

One of the tokens shows an elegant full face bust of Home Tooke on the obverse with his name. The reverse depicts a placard or tablet listing the names of the twelve jurors involved together with ERSKINE above and GIBBS below, surrounded by the inscription BRITISH JUSTICE DISPLAYED NOVr 22 1794. A second half-penny token was identical to the Hardy example save for the substitution of Home Tooke's bust.

Despite two defeats the authorities pressed on with the trial of John Thelwall. A story, probably apocryphal, relates that Thelwall indicated to Erskine that he would defend himself, saying that 'he would be hanged if he didn't'. Erskine's response was that 'he would be hanged if he did!' The trial started on 1 December, and was finished on 4 December with Thelwall's acquittal after the jury had retired for some two hours. A rarer half-penny commemorates the acquittal (cf. Bell, op. cit, pp. 220-1). The obverse carries a side profile bust of Thelwall and his name. The reverse reads: THOS .SPENCE: SIR THOS MORE: THOS SPENCE: NOTED ADVOCATES FOR THE RIGHTS OF MAN (note that there is no reference to Erskine on this token).

After three consecutive failures the Government gave in, no more treason trials were held in the immediate aftermath and all the remaining nine political prisoners were released. Erskine's successes had considerable later ramifications, quantifying the actual acts of treason -attempting to assassinate the monarch, urging civil war in the UK, and assisting foreign enemies in wartime. Certainly for the last 100 years or so, the very few treason trials held have been confined to such activities.

Bell (p. 116), aptly summarised Erskine's achievements: 'Erskine defended his clients in the State trials of 1794 with an enthusiasm that seemed insensible to fatigue; nothing was omitted to elucidate the innocence of the accused, nothing was overlooked by him that weakened the case presented by the Crown. Many considered this trial [i.e. the three] the pinnacle of his professional skill in a long and honourable career.' In his meticulous attention to detail, Erskine was well ahead of his time and an example to be emulated by modern advocates.

A series of rather more spectacular (and presumably more expensive) tokens were struck to honour both Erskine and Vicary Gibbs. One well known half-penny token depicts the two banisters on the obverse, holding a long banner inscribed BILL OF RIGHTS; one of them holds a second banner above their heads, inscribed MAGNA CARTA. They are surrounded by the inscription ERSKINE AND GIBBS and TRIAL BY JURY. The reverse carries the names of the nine men arrested and indicted, including, of course, Hardy, Horne Tooke and Thelwall. Wyon engraved the dies and Kempson was the probable issuer. Another token has a profile bust of Erskine on the obverse in wig, gown and band very similar to that still worn by banisters. On the reverse he is praised as A FRIEND OF FREEDOM & RIGHTS OF MAN - a reference to Thomas Paine's seminal and highly influential *The Rights of Man*. Following its publication, Paine was prosecuted and defended, for once unsuccessfully, by Erskine. However, by the time the verdict was announced, Paine had left England for France where he was elected a member of the National Convention representing Calais.

A penny-sized token, or medal, issued by Whitley, a diesinker and engraver of Round Court, St Martin's-le-Grand (and later of Old Bond Street), has a high relief obverse with the conjoined busts (left to right) of Hardy, Home Tooke and Thelwall. A small roundel in lower relief on the reverse represents Erskine and Gibbs, surrounded by three segments

recording the names of all the jurors who took part in the three trials. Interestingly, five of the named acted as jurors in both the trials of Hardy and of Thelwall. It occurs in white metal and more rarely in bronze.

The finest celebratory medal of the series is a large silver one, over 40mm in diameter. The obverse carries conjoined parallel heads (with necks) of Erskine and Gibbs in high relief, resembling in style the portraits of the late Roman Republic/Imperial period with more than a reflection (it seems) of the bust of Brutus on the famous Ides of March denarius. The inscription surrounding the two busts reads: HON. T. ERSKINE V. GIBBS ESQ. PATRIOTS WHO FOR SACRED FREEDOM STOOD. Below Erskine's neck are the letters IMF, standing for 'John Milton [a noted engraver] fecit. The reverse has the figure of Justice holding in one hand the scales of justice, and in the other a personification of Britannia swooning on the back of a lion. Above the group is RETURNING JUSTICE LIFTS ALOFT HER SCALE, with the date, 1794, in the exergue in Roman numerals.

Thomas Erskine, already a member of the House of Commons when he defended Hardy, was created a Baron in 1806, took his seat in the House of Lords and was, in the same year, elevated to the post of Lord Chancellor, i.e. head of the Judiciary. Sadly he was not regarded as a success in that position or as member of and orator in Parliament. He remained as Lord Chancellor for only 14 months and died in 1823. Vicary Gibbs was knighted and made Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas.

The verdicts in the aforementioned trials brought about a halt in the authorities use of High Treason as a weapon against fundamental reformists. They moved one step down, to Sedition or Seditious Libel, This had the advantage of covering words (written or spoken) done or published with intent against the sovereign personally, his or her heirs and successors, the Government, either House of Parliament, the British Constitution, etc. Sedition was punishable by an unlimited term of imprisonment or an unlimited fine, or both. In the 18th century there was the added refinement of putting the offender in the pillory or stocks.

One man who acquired more experience of the offence of sedition than most was Daniel Isaac Eaton (1744-1814). He was a radical and pro-reform writer, publisher and bookseller, a man of considerable determination and resilience. He undertook the publication of the major

treatises of Thomas Paine, such as his *Age of Reason* and *Rights of Man*, Thomas Spence's *Hog's Meat or Politics for the People*, and his own works including *A Political Dictionary*, and a sequel or supplement to Paine's *Age of Reform*. All of them advocated root and branch reform of the existing oligarchical system of government. A flavour of the contents of Eaton's *Political Dictionary* can be obtained from the entry defining the guillotine as 'a machine to be introduced into this country as a more merciful mode of punishing kings and queens than by the axe.' Ironically, it seems that Eaton knew King George III personally, advised him as an individual and remained on good terms with him. In the 18th century personalities could leap over the gap created by politics.

As a result of his various publications, Eaton was prosecuted on less than seven times for sedition and seditious libel between 1793 and 1812. His 'score sheet' contains four acquittals (the first four trials), one compromise (a no score draw ? - the fifth trial), and two convictions (the last two trials) before he was retired by the universal manager, Death.

In 1795 Eaton, or his supporters or both, defiantly issued a halfpenny sized bronze token celebrating his initial run of successes in court. On the obverse is Eaton in profile with, above, a ribbon inscribed in Latin FRANGAS NON FLECTES - 'You may break, you shall not bend'. The legend around reads: D. I. EATON. THREE TIMES ACQUITTED OF SEDITION. The reverse has a roundel showing the corner of a fenced farmyard. A cock is crowing on a fence below which are four pigs around a trough three are eating from it but the fourth is holding up a political pamphlet in its snout. The surrounding legend reads: printer to the majesty of the people. The diesinker was one Davies and the overall manufacturer was called Good. The reverse of the token contains at least two punning references. First, it refers to Eaton's address, a house he named 'The Cock and Swine' at 74 Newgate Street. Secondly, it refers to a passage in Burke's *Reflexions on the Revolution in France*, repeatedly targeted and lampooned by the Radical Left in the 1790s. After Eaton's fourth trial and acquittal in 1793, the London Corresponding Society passed a vote of approval and thanks in honour of the jury and then presented each jurymen with a silver medal to commemorate the verdict -without being prosecuted for receiving such gifts!

In 1812, just two years before his death, Eaton was prosecuted for seditious libel for the seventh and final time. This arose out of his

publication of his own supplement (Part III) to Paine's *Age of Reason*. At the end of the trial Eaton was found guilty and sentenced to 18 months imprisonment and to stand in the pillory outside the Old Bailey for one hour. That aspect of the sentence spectacularly backfired on the authorities. Instead of being booed and pelted, Eaton was cheered by the surrounding crowd. Furthermore, as a shrewd and professional publicist he and his supporters circulated a handbill amongst the onlookers glorifying his 20-year fight for the liberty of the press, freedom of speech and the rights on man and denouncing 'The Judges of the Land for their persecution of him. One of the two judges specifically named in this context was Chief Justice 'Sir Vickary Gibbs [sic], who had been a hero of the reform movement less than 20 years previously. The wheel of events had indeed turned through 90 degrees.

Finally, a number of half-penny sized tokens were issued showing Newgate Prison - symbol of the authorities' persecution of the reformers, and reminding the public of the imprisoned members of the London Corresponding Society and other political detainees. One example has a view of Newgate Prison on the obverse as it was before being burnt down in the Gordon Riots; it is dated 1794 in Roman numerals. The reverse simply bears the sardonic legend: PAYABLE AT THE RESIDENCE OF MESSRS SYMONDS, WINTERBOTHAM RIDGEWAY & HOLT. These were all detained at Newgate, having been convicted of publishing seditious libels and fined and given substantial terms of imprisonment. Symonds and Ridgeway were publishers and booksellers, Holt was a newspaper printer, and Winterbotham a dissenting minister who had preached fiery sermons (inter alia) praising the French Revolution and predicting its arrival here. Once again the manufacturer was Kempson, the diesinker Wyon, and over 500,000 specimens were apparently struck for circulation.

It is, of course, very easy and tempting to pour scorn on the fearful British Government of the late 18th century and its clumsy attempts to silence and suppress its radical opponents with draconian laws passed in haste, the suppression of Habeas Corpus, the use of detention without trial and the staging of State trials involving penalties of extreme severity. It was all done in response to perceived life threatening threats conceived abroad but taking root at home. Such things could never happen in 21st century Britain - could they?

London Numismatic Coin Club Meeting, 1 February 2005

The Club's first speaker of the year was Vincent West who has visited the Club on several previous occasions, and it was good to welcome him back. This time Vincent spoke on "Recent Research on Axumite

Vincent remarked that 'While my subject is the gold coinage of the early 4th century AD Aksumite king Ousanas, it would be as well to set it in context by sketching that of his predecessors. The first Aksumite king to strike coins, in gold and silver, was Endubis in about AD 290. His gold was of a single denominational unit with Greek inscriptions. It was struck to the weight standard of Diocletian's post-reform quinarius or half aureus of about 2.73gm - in 286 he had increased the weight of the aureus from 70 to the pound to 60. The Endubis' gold was almost pure at around 95%. It is comparatively well known today by well over 100 specimens coming from unrecorded hoards, and Hahn has carried out a die and weight analysis. The gold coinage of the following kings, Aphilas and Wazeba, is less well known. However it is clear that Aphilas was an experimenter, issuing gold in four denominations - whole, half, quarter and eighth units, the last at just over 0.3 gm, possibly the smallest ancient gold coin and hopelessly inconvenient - but the experiment was never repeated. Only the smallest coins have survived in sufficient numbers for die or weight analysis, but this has not yet been attempted. Wazeba's gold, known only from a single specimen in Paris, (and also his silver) have inscriptions in the local Semitic language Ge'ez, another experiment repeated only once on Aksumite gold a century later.

The gold coins issued by the next king Ousanas were until recently very rare, with only six specimens recorded by Munro-Hay and Juel-Jensen in their 1995 standard work *Aksumite Coinage (AC)*, one of which was doubly pierced. Since then the count has risen to 38 examples, many found in southern India and, characteristically, double-pierced (Chart 1). The Mangalore gold hoard (which began to appear in trade from 1998) contained 18 examples with coins of the following king Ezanas and later Roman coins (Chart 2). This presents an opportunity, unusual with Aksumite coins, to carry out a die study of the 37 coins for which specimens or photographs are available.

These coins are the first Aksumite gold coins to be found in India, in fact the first outside East Africa or Southern Arabia. Indian gold coins have been found on one occasion in Ethiopia - a hoard of 103 Kushan

Quansas Gold Piercings
(38 coins)

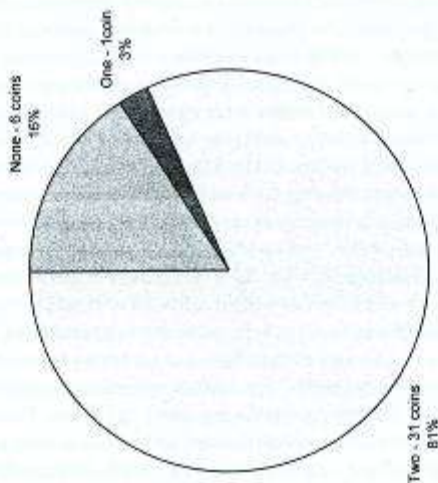


Chart 1

**Mangalore Hoard
(48+ coins)**

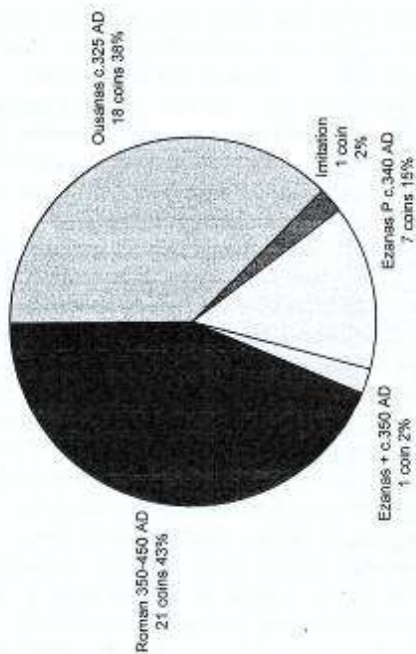


Chart 2

gold coins of Vima Kadphises, Kanishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva dated to the third century AD was found in the remains of its wooden box, also decorated in gold, at the ancient monastery of Debra Damo in Ethiopia in 1940 and published by Mordini in 1960.

While not having such high die relief as earlier Aksumite gold coins, the Ousanas gold is an attractive and appealing coin. As with other Aksumite coins, the portrait eyes are shown not in profile but facing, in Egyptian style. The obverse of the Ousanas gold shows a crowned and draped bust of the king facing right, holding a spear, between wheat stalks. The legend reads (in translation) reads 'Ousanas King' with a crescent and disk above the bust. The reverse shows a draped bust of the king wearing a headcloth facing right, holding a fly-whisk, also between wheat stalks. The legend continues, 'of the Aksumites man of Gisene' also with a crescent and disk above the bust - the *BICI* in the legend represents the Ge'ez (Ethiopic) word *b'sy* 'man of' and 'Gisene' being of uncertain significance. The die axis is always 12 o'clock.

Whereas AC listed the six Ousanas gold coins then known under five types, 20-24, and later articles added subtypes as more varieties turned up, these should all now be seen simply as die variants of a single type as in Hahn's arrangement (his type 12). This is a general criticism of AC which in this way unnecessarily inflates the number of distinct Aksumite coin types.

Both obverse and reverse dies may be distinguished by such features as the spacing of the legend, the number of 'dots' beside the disk and crescent (if not obscured by piercings), the form of the letters such as the N, whether there is a dot above the head and the details of the drapery. Additional distinguishing features for obverse dies are the details of the crown and whether the spear is plain or beaded; and for reverse dies the form of the fly whisk and whether there is a pellet by the hand. Hahn has speculated that the appearance of a star below the reverse crescent and disk on one reverse die may allude to a conjunction of Venus and the moon in AD 325. While it is impossible to rule out such suggestions, they must be regarded as unlikely, especially now that another reverse die has appeared with an inverted pyramid of six dots there. Maybe such symbols were simply control marks used at the mint.

The die study revealed 28 obverse dies (24 singletons represented by one coin only, two doubles each represented by two coins, 'one 3-ton'

Die Estimates with 95% Confidence Intervals

- after Esty 1986, Crafter 2002
- base data West 2004, Hahn 1998

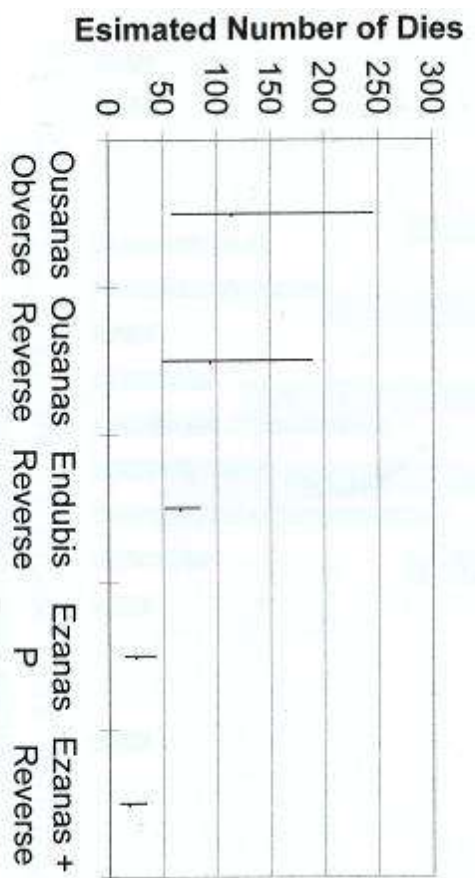


Chart 3 Reverse

Weight Ranges of Ousanas Gold
(Median 2.22 gm; Roman $\frac{1}{2}$ solidus of Constantine I = 2.27gm)

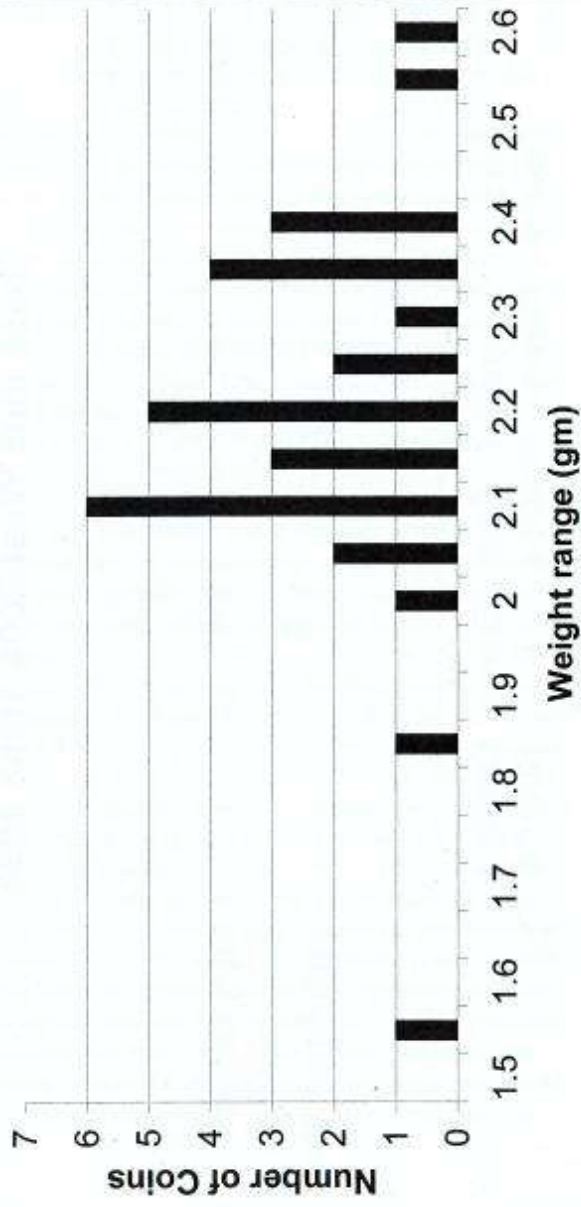


Chart 4

Weight Ranges of Ousanas Gold
(Median 2.22 gm; Roman $\frac{1}{2}$ solidus of Constantine I = 2.27gm)

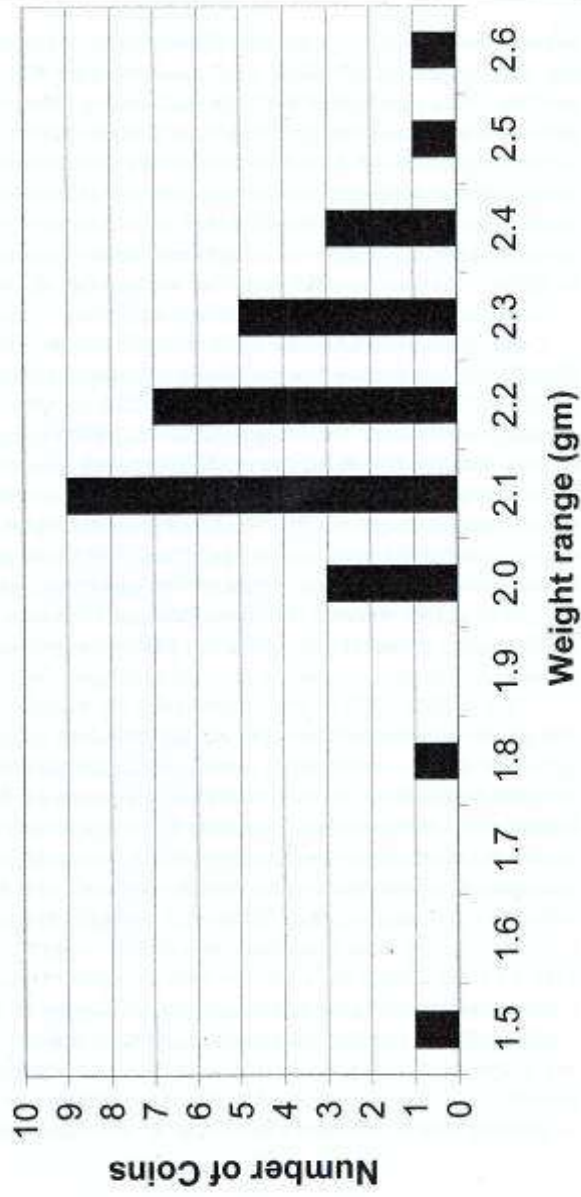


Chart 5

and one '6-ton'), and 27 reverse dies (22 singletons, two doubles, two '3-tons' and one "5-ton"). Using formulae devised by Esty in 1986 as modified in his unpublished 1997 handout cited by Crafter in 2002, we can estimate the number of obverse and reverse dies as 114 and 94 respectively, a ratio of 1.21 to 1. More precisely we can be 95% confident that the number of obverse dies is between 59 and 245, and the number of reverse dies between 50 and 189. This is a wide but not unexpected spread as the high percentages of singletons indicate that the coverage of our sample, the fraction of the coins that are from dies represented in the sample, is lowish (0.35 for obverses, 0.41 for reverses).

Using data published by Hahn in 1998 and the Esty formulae, Chart 3 compares the Ousanas gold die figures with those of the first king Endubis and the later Ezanas (pagan and first Christian type - not including coins from the Mangalore hoard). Hahn's figures for 96 Endubis gold show 41 reverse dies (21 singletons) - he gave no figures for obverses. The Esty formulae give an estimate of 66 reverse dies with a 95% confidence range of 52 to 84; these figures are higher than Hahn's who used earlier formulae proposed by Lyon. While the Endubis gold has been regarded by collectors as one of the 'commoner' Aksumite gold types, and much commoner than the Ousanas, we can now see that this was due to the accident of survival and the latter was probably the larger coinage.

The weights of 35 of the Ousanas golds are available for analysis. Though the majority are doubly pierced, this was done in a way, perhaps by a nail, which occasioned no loss of gold and consequently had no effect on their weights. The intention was to allow a mount to be attached by two rivets so that the coin could be worn as a medallion; later the mount and rivets were removed, sometimes carelessly, returning the medallion to a coin. Four coins must be excluded, one with a single drilled piercing now weighing 2.22gm but originally more, and three of the doubly pierced coins which have been doubly plugged (now weighing 2.00, 2.15 and 2.29gm but originally less). Few show signs of wear. So we can confidently use the present weights of 31 coins as close to their original ones. The weights range widely, with the majority between 2.0 and 2.4gm, and it is possible that more than one standard may have applied - this is the impression when intervals of 0.05gm are used but not at intervals of 0.1gm (Charts 4 and 5). It is noticeable that the two

heaviest coins, and one of the next three equally heavy coins, are from the only obverse dies with one final letter of the legend not two after the spear - they are not die linked to each other or any other coin - and it is possible that they constituted a, presumably earlier, heavier issue. The lowest weight of 1.55gm for a regular coin from the Mangalore hoard -not die linked to any other coin - is also surprising. Does it show poor mint control or was it struck to the later lower standard introduced by the next king Eznas? Perhaps the intention was rather to strike a standard number of coins from a standard weight of gold, not to achieve a standard weight for each coin. No link between weight and provenance has been established. The median weight (middle value of the weights arranged in order of size) is 2.22gm, which is close to the standard of the Roman semis or half-solidus of 2.27gm introduced by Constantine the Great in AD 324 and suggests a date for Ousanas shortly after. We can compare these weights with those of 57 Endubis coins recorded by Hahn in 1998. Those were struck to the earlier heavier standard and ranged from 2.26 gm to 2.82gm with a median weight of 2.68gm. Their weight was more strictly controlled, all but seven being between 2.6 and 2.8gm.

The fineness of three of the Ousanas gold coins has been checked (by specific gravity methods). These accord closely at 89.7%, 89.8% and 91%, though the first is unreliable as the coin is doubly plugged. This shows a significant drop from the 95% of Endubis, a trend which was to continue.

In addition to the 38 regular coins of Ousanas, I have recorded three contemporary imitations, all from different dies. Two, both doubly pierced, copy the types reasonably closely but with blundered legends. They are of good weight (2.28 for the Mangalore hoard specimen and 2.00gm for the other). The third, a half-weight 0.99gm reverse brockage from a London sale in 2004, has a good legend. It may be a regular coin from a new die but its pale gold suggests it is an imitation.

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London Numismatic Club Meeting, 1 March 2005

This meeting was the **Annual General Meeting** of the Club. The President, David Sealy, gave a resume of the Club's activities during the year, making especial mention of the excellent programme of speakers and talks that had been enjoyed through the efforts of our Honorary Programme Secretary, David Berry. He also thanked the other members of the Committee for their support and input during the year. The election of officers ensued, and all, having expressed their willingness to serve, were re-elected for the forthcoming Club year.

There followed the Club's Cheese and Wine Party at which several of the speakers who had addressed the Club during the year were guests, as were a number of other people notable in the numismatic world. As usual, it was a great success much enjoyed by all.

The following are the Club's Officers and Committee for 2005-2006:

President: David Sealy

Vice President: Philip Rueff

Secretary: Robert Hatch

Assistant Secretary: John Roberts-Lewis

Treasurer: Paul Edis

Programme Secretary: David Berry

Editor, Newsletter: Peter Clayton

Committee: Tony Gilbert; Harold Mernick; David Powell

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 5 April 2005

Paul Lewis has regaled the Club on several occasions on various aspects of coins, oriental and western. This time he took as his topic 'Some Aspects of European Coins'. Paul immediately made his parameters clear, saying that 'Such a vast field cannot be covered in an hour's presentation, which necessarily must be very selective. The chosen time period stretches from the 9th to the 15th centuries CE (Common Era), thus commencing after the Christianisation of a large part of Europe and also after the Muslim Arab conquest of southern Spain and parts of the Mediterranean littoral and islands. As the coins presented are taken from my own collection, silver is the chief metal represented. However, coins were also struck in gold and copper, bronze or, later, brass. The choice of metal depended upon local availability and the vicissitudes of trade and war. Most of the coins discussed were struck in France, Germany and Italy, but there are excursions into surrounding territories.

At the Meeting the coins were illustrated by slides, for the production of which Paul paid tribute to Susan Tyler-Smith, herself a professional numismatist and member of the Club. The individual specimens were available for inspection after the talk. Necessarily this summary is without photographs.

To set the scene, the Roman Empire began to collapse in the late 5th century in association with invasions by waves of Goths, Vandals, Alans, Suevi and then Huns. The 6th and 7th centuries witnessed the arrival of the Avars and Sla^ys. The Vandals had sacked Rome in 455, when Valentinian III was assassinated. The last Western Roman Emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed in 476 when the German troops in Italy elected Odoacer as king.

The earliest Roman Popes were solely religious leaders, but became important officials during the reigns of the Christian Roman emperors in the 4th century. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, they began to exercise some political leadership and control in not only Rome but also the surrounding area. By the mid-8th century the Lombards (6th century Germanic invaders from the Hungarian Plains) were obliged to recognise Papal rule in extensive lands in the centre of the Italian peninsula. The territorial area reached its maximum in the 16th century with annexation of Ferrara and Urbino.

The loss of the Western Roman Empire was offset by the rise in importance of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, based on its capital of Constantinople (originally known as Byzantium). Lands were recovered in Italy, Spain, North Africa and Syria in the 5th century, only to be lost to the Lombards and Muslim Arabs by the 7th century. Byzantium became the strongest and most civilised European power, controlling the Balkan region and Asia Minor until the battle of Manzikert in 1071, when the victorious Seljuk Turks occupied much of the latter region. Constantinople fell to the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and was finally sacked by the surrounding Osmanli (Ottoman) Turks in 1453; the capital being renamed Istanbul. The Bulgars had risen in revolt several times, but between 1187 and 1280 produced the Asen Dynasty of kings. In a similar manner the Nemanjich Dynasty rose to become separate rulers in Serbia between 1168 and 1371, the best known perhaps being Stephan (Urosh IV) Dushan in 1331. He assumed the title of Emperor in 1345.

In Western Europe, the Salian Franks became united under Clovis I, who founded the Merovingian Dynasty late in the 5th century, uniting the Frankish territories of the Rhineland and most of France. Weakened by internecine warfare and repeated division of the kingdom among themselves, power passed to the so-called Mayors of the Palace, one of whom eventually seized the throne to found the Carolingian dynasty.

The greatest of these was Charlemagne (Carolus Magnus), who came to the throne as king in 768 and was made Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day in 800. The Carolingians acquired extensive territory in Italy, where they balanced the power of the Lombards, as well as in the Netherlands and Austria. After the death of Charlemagne, his dominions were repeatedly divided between his descendants. Gradually the French, Italian and German components became separate states, other families replacing the dynasty. France, its last domain, passed in 987 to Hugh Capet, whose descendants in the male line ruled until 1789, the time of the Revolution. The main Capet branch was succeeded by the Valois branch in 1328 (a claim disputed by England and initiating the Hundred Years' War) and the Bourbon branch in 1589 in the person of Henry of Navarre and his descendants. Not only are there extensive and varied regal issues, but also those of duchies, counties and bishoprics, collectively known as French feudal coinage.

With the demise of the Carolingian dynasty, a German kingdom gradually emerged, the title of Holy Roman Emperor being likewise assumed. The first of these was Conrad I (of Franconia). Neither office (King or Emperor) was formally hereditary, but strong rulers would retain the titles in the family for several generations. In 1356 a formal electoral system was established within the Holy Roman Empire, the original Electorate numbering seven: the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne and Trier, together with the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatine of the Rhine and the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg.

The Hohenstaufen was an important imperial dynasty in the 12th and 13th centuries, becoming rulers of Germany in 1138 with the accession of Conrad III, followed by Frederick I Barbarossa and Henry VI. The last-named died just after adding Sicily to his possessions in 1197. Frederick II had a ruinous struggle with the Pope, and Manfred of Sicily was killed in battle in 1266. The Lombard duchies and Byzantine lands had been combined to form the Kingdom of Sicily (later Naples and Sicily, or The Two Sicilies) in 1130.

The Habsburg dynasty originated in Switzerland and later acquired extensive lands in south-east Germany, as well as the duchies of Austria and Styria. In 1440 the imperial crown was obtained and dynastic marriages added most of the Netherlands and, later, Castile and Aragon in Spain to their possessions.

Numismatically, the territories of the Western Roman Empire took Roman coinage as their models and the inscriptions were in Latin, whereas the legends of the Byzantine issues were in Greek. Mixtures of both scripts are common, even within a single legend. Dating of coins is rare before the 16th century, but variations in style and orthography may provide evidence of the period, and indeed the place, of mintage. The orientation of the long-axes of the letters is important. Whilst the majority are radial, some may be tangential, as in Bohemia. Characters are frequently reversed. Ligatures are common in the early part of the period under discussion. The name of the mint town is not always written in full: abbreviations and even monograms are very common. Sometimes there is only an emblem or portrait of a city's patron saint.

In the absence of illustrations, only the salient points of some of the coins will be described. A French Carolingian coin shown was a silver denier of Charles the Bald (843-877), minted in Melle [METVLLIO

so named because of its being a metal-mining town. The obverse marginal inscription is CARLVS REX FR, the crossbars of the 'A' and R's being absent. The reverse carries the 'Karolus' monogram within the central circle, alluding to Charles' being of the Carolingian dynasty: in fact, a grandson of Charlemagne. Another grandson, Louis the Pious (HLVDOVVICUS IMP) ruled in Germany (840-876). The reverse depicts a classical temple surmounted by a cross and containing a cross within. The marginal inscription is KRISTIANA RELIGIO in a mixture of Greek and Latin letters. A denier of Otto II (976-982), when Duke of Bavaria, again shows a temple/church, but the central cross is replaced by ELLN, representing Ellin, the name of the moneyer. The Latin [REGGNA] for the mint of Regensburg is strangely written and much ligated.

The Premyslid Dynasty (873-1306) ruled in Bohemia, initially as dukes and then from 1086 as kings. Silver was plentiful, being mined locally, but the module of the neat coins became reduced from 19/20 mm to 16/17 mm, and the weight fell from c.1.0g to c.0.8g. Two coins of Bretislav I (1037-55) with differing representations of St Wenceslas (who had ruled as Vaclav I, 921-929) were shown. On the obverse of one, the duke with a banner had the appearance of 'Punch'.

The obverse of a thin silver bracteate pfennig of Salzburg in Austria shows Archbishop Adelbert (1183-1200) with his crosier. The reverse depicts two pillars, J and L, each surmounted by a ball and either side of an altar. From Carinthia comes a pfennig of Bernhardt (1202-56) with the head of St Veit (the St Vitus of medical 'dance' fame) on the obverse and a coiled serpent on the reverse. The silver for both issues is likely to have come from the important mines in Freisach in Styria.

Slavonia, then a Hungarian dependency, produced small silver pennies ('banovci' or 'denarii banales') with the obverse of a running marten between two stars, and the reverse of a patriarchal cross flanked by the sun and moon and two crowned heads. The coin was most likely struck in the reign of Ladislav IV (1272-90). Two additional small letters may represent the initials of the mint-master.

Italy, following the demise of the Carolingian Dynasty, broke up into many city-states and republics, although there were regal issues under the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Immobilised coin types were common. A handsome coin is the silver fiorino of Florence. The type was minted

from 1182 to 1252. The obverse bears a central lys with FLORENTIA in the margin. The reverse has a three-quarter-length portrait of St John the Baptist with a marginal inscription of S. IOHANNE.B. The Genoese Republic was under the suzerainty of the Holy Roman Emperor Conrad III, 1139-52. The obverse has a central city gate and IANUA in the margin, the reverse showing a central cross and a marginal CVNRADUS REX. This style was used by other republics and states.

The First Republic of Milan (1250-1310) produced a silver coin with MEDIOLANVM on the obverse and a seated portrait of St Ambrose on the reverse. However, the grosso of Galeazzo Barnabo (1354-78) is much more in the Renaissance style with the well-proportioned saint on the obverse and an eagle above a serpent (wyvern) on the reverse. Pursuing this style further is the grosso of Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1468-76) with the unusual reverse of three firebrands and six buckets. A marginal inscription confirms that the coin was minted for Genoa under the suzerainty of Milan. A standing portrait of Rimini's patron, St Gaudecius, is depicted on the reverse of the Republican silver grosso of 1265-1385. The obverse margin declares the mint as DE ARIMINI, an unusual usage on coins of the Latin preposition 'de'.

Venetian silver grossi (also called matapans, named after the battle of Matapan, 1717) were produced by the Doges (= dukes), and are very common. They provided the style for some of the coinages of Serbia and Bulgaria. An example is that of the Doge Pietro Gradenigo (1289-1311), whose name and standing portrait appear on the left of the obverse where he is receiving the ducal banner from St Mark (SM VENETI, the first letters being an abbreviation for Sanctus Marcus). The reverse depicts a seated nimbate figure of Christ with the Greek letter groups IC, XC either side of the head, representing Iesus Christos. A mid-14th century Bulgarian issue of the Asen Dynasty shows an obverse with Ivan Aleksander and his son Mikhael. The reverse depicts a grotesque standing figure of Christ with a 'Pinocchio'-like nose. Some Serbian silver grosh issues were very like the Venetian matapan prototypes, but with St Stephen being substituted for St Mark, and the current ruler for the doge. Later issues, such as those of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan (1331-55), displayed Christ on the obverse but a Slav inscription in Cyrillic script on the reverse with the name of Stefan and his titles. An interesting matapan for the Republic of Ragusa (present-day Dubrovnik) depicts the head of

St Blaise, the city's patron saint, struck over a standing portrait of Christ on the reverse and a neat representation of St Blaise's Cathedral struck over the centre of an obverse that had originally celebrated the Venetian occupation of the city.

Many French coins have inscriptions only, some of which relate to local feudal mottoes. An example is the denier of the Seigneurie of Bearn in Gascony, the viscounts bearing the name Centulle (CENTVLLLO). The reverse has the central inscription ONOR FORCAS, relating to castle rights. The type was immobilised for nearly two centuries. Another immobilised type was that of Vienne (VIENNA) an archbishopric in the Dauphine, showing SM (for Sanctus Mavricivs) and the saint's bearded uncovered head on the obverse and MAXIMA GALLIARVM on the reverse. A 12th century denier of the Cluniac abbey of Limoges (inscribed LIMOVICENSIS) has the bearded head of St Martial (SCS MARCIAL) on the obverse and an unusual jewelled cross on the reverse. Many issues of the bishopric of Meaux (MELDIS CIVITAS) are inscriptional, but the deniers of Etienne de la Chapelle (1162-71) bear a portrait of his bearded mitred head and EPCO STEPILANVS.

By the 13th century, a larger silver denomination than the denier or sterling had come into circulation, namely the grosso in Italy and the gros tournois in France. An example of the latter was shown for the reign of Philip IV (1285-1314) from Tours mint (TVRONIS CIVIS) with a stylised representation of St Martin's tower. Coins of equivalent weight made a later appearances in Germany as groschen and in England as groats. A handsome 15th century gros of Strasbourg, in present-day Alsace, depicts a large fleur-de-lis on the obverse with GROSSVS ARGENTINENSIS whereas the reverse has a cross with two concentric abbreviated inscriptions: GLORIA IN EXCELS(is) D(e)O ET IN / T(er)RA PAX HO(min)IBVS.

At the same time, Barcelona had become a major seaport with trading connections throughout the Mediterranean. Separate from the Kingdom of Spain, the Catalan city (CIVITAS BARCHINONA) minted groats with a cross between three pellets and an annulet in opposite quarters of the reverse, and the crowned head of the king on the obverse. The type was fixed for 200 years, the only differences being the obverse marginal inscription giving the king's name. That depicted was of Peter/Pedro III (PETRVS DEI GRATIA REX), 1336 to 1387.

Majorca had been seized from the Moors by James I of Aragon in 1230. A dinero of a descendant, James III (1324-43) shows on the obverse the king's head surrounded by MAIORICARVM REX. The reverse bears a cross 'formy fitchy' and, in the margin, IACOBVS DEI GRA.

In the Low Countries, there was an extensive coinage contemporaneous with that of Edward I of England and his successors. The later sterlings weighed the same as a penny. Whilst many depicted the ruler's head, others had heraldic devices or stylised architecture. A ducal coin of Brabant (DVX BRABANTIE) was shown with a castle gateway on the obverse. The reverse legend of MONETA BRVXEL surrounded a central cross and pellets.

The Teutonic Order, founded on the model of the Knights of St John and the Knights Templar was rewarded to one of the Polish dukes for assistance against the Borussi or Prussians in 1225 with sovereignty of their territory. A schilling, equivalent to 12 deniers or pfennigs, of Conrad III von Jungingen (1393-1407) bears the Grand Master's arms (a spread eagle in escutcheon on an ornate cross) on the obverse with a marginal inscription of MAG(i)ST(er) CO(n)RADVS TERCI. The reverse shows the shield of the simple cross of the Order, surrounded by MONETA D(omi)NORVM PRVCI. The larger (halbskoter) and smaller (vierchen and pfennig) denominations were anonymous. The last Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights of Prussia, a Hohenzollern by the name of Albert, converted his lands into a hereditary Duchy in 1525. This region later came into the hands of the Brandenburg line and formed the basis of the Kingdom of Prussia.

Thus ends a 'taster' of the enormous range of medieval European coinage.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 7 June 2005

This meeting was the Members' Own, which for many years has been held in the so-called 'dead month' of August, but a change was made since it was decided no longer to hold an August meeting. Several members of the Club gave short presentations, as is our normal procedure, some of which appear here from texts supplied.

Robert Hatch, the Club's Honorary Secretary, spoke on a Victorian sovereign weight bought in October 1989.. He said: 'It has a pleasing appearance and feels nice and 'chunky' in the fingers. I took it to the BM Coins & Medals Department to be positively identified and I was provided with a photocopy from Paul Withers's book, *British Coin Weights*. It is number 2258: "Sovereign 1843 ROYAL MINT (incuse) on a raised rim around young head of Queen Victoria left. Reverse DW (pennyweight) GR (grains) above 5 . 2 1/2 in centre; CURL WEIGHT SOVEREIGN around, all incuse. 21mm 122 1/4gr".

Pennyweight: 24 grains of troy weight (the weight of a silver penny).
Grain: the smallest British weight (the average weight of a seed corn) 1/7000 of a pound avoirdupois. Avoirdupois, a system of weights in which the 1 lb equals 16 oz (Old French avoir de pes - to have weight). Troy: a system of weights used for precious stones and metals, the pound (no longer in legal use) of 5760 grains being divided into 12 ounces of 20 pennyweight also called troy weight (from Troyes, in France).

I quote from Withers under 19th Century Weights:

'In 1816 a new silver coinage was introduced and in 1817 the sovereign, which replaced the guinea, was struck. A new set of standard weights was therefore prepared and handed over to Joseph Sage (Stamper of Money weights). on 1st July, 1817, a proclamation specified that the least current weight of the sovereign should be 5dwt 2 1/4 grains. This allowed for very little wear before the least current weight was reached. On 6th February, 1821, a new proclamation was made and the new minimum legal weight was given as 5dwt 2 1/2 grains.'

On 13 May I went to the Coin & Medals students' room in the BM by appointment to see their collection of Victorian sovereign weights. Overall their general condition was pretty ropey, most were tarnished and some had verdigris on them. My 1843 specimen definitely looked better than their specimen. To begin with I weighed my specimen on their scales. It weighed 7.97 gr and, from a conversion table provided, this is the equivalent of 123 grains.

I then examined 26 sovereign weights of 1842 and 1843 vintage. Some bore the manufacturer's name: W T AVERY BIRMr; W CHAMBERS; I & C RATCLIFFE; R W WINFIELD. One carried the words WARRANTED CURRENT STANDARD. Instead of the young Queen's head a few bore a thistle, rose and shamrock. I was not able to

decipher the symbolic plant for Wales, if any. Leaves were possibly the leaves of the rose. I was offered four marvellous looking books on heraldry in order to solve this problem. One book, *An Introduction to Heraldry* by Hugh Clark (1845), has 22 plates of exquisite illustrations of heraldic devices.

I also examined some half sovereign weights, a miscellaneous FIVE DWt ACCORDING TO ACT OF PARLIAMENT 1775, as well as George IV guinea weights, halves, third guineas, and a double sovereign.

The Victorian sovereign weights varied very slightly in weight: 7.95gr (roughly 123 grains), 122.3gr, and 122.2gr. Some of the weights came from various bequests: V. B. Crowther-Beynon 1927; J. Jennings 1935, and Parkes Weber 1906.

One has a small F incuse on the reverse, why ?

George IV guineas varied in weight between 8.28 and 8.31gr compared to the Victorian sovereign of 7.98gr, therefore the guinea was heavier than the sovereign (but then, again, it was worth more, i.e. 21 shillings).

Finally, in another of Paul Withers's publications, *Lions Ships and Angels: Identifying Coin Weights Found in Britain* (1995), included in the Acknowledgements I found our own Peter Clayton as follows: 'Peter Clayton, our honorary editor, who wielded a mighty red pen, erased errors, smoothed syntax and smothered inconsistencies.'

John Roberts-Lewis gave a talk entitled 'Afghanistan and its British numismatic connections'. He had come across an article by William Barrett in the August 1971 of the magazine *Coins* whilst looking for British colonial references. two pieces were described, one of silver and rupee-sized, which Barrett thought might be a company advertising token. A second piece, a copper faluce apparently undated, but thought to have been issued during the First Afghan War, 1839-42, based on W. M. Valentine's *Modern Copper Coins of the Muhammadan States* (1911).

In May John bought a 39mm copper 'mint test piece' naming Abdur Rahman Amir of Afghanistan, Sir T. Salter Pyne and Martin & Co. These all occurs on Barrett's silver piece which has a blank reverse centre. John's example has, in addition, a monogram G A and B which is similar to a Hyderabad Proving Piece of Greenwood and Batley, which he also has. Spink's *Numismatic Circular* (October 1979) has 'Proving Pieces of Greenwood and Batley' including three pieces for Afghanistan, which the

author Dr G. H. L. Bullmore explains were made by the firm. Often when they obtained orders for coining presses, customers would not provide dies, which were necessary for machine trials before despatching the presses. In this case they went to Calcutta where Martin & Co, London Civil Engineers, had offices. They arranged packaging suitable for camel transport to Kabul, where Salter Pyne supervised the installation.

John's proving piece is for a silver 5-rupee dated 1896-7 (= AH 1314). No Afghan piece corresponds to Barrett's 29.5mm piece, but the third proving piece is 19.2mm which might have been for the Afghan half-rupee.

Another article on Afghanistan, a year later in *Coins*, October 1972, was by David Sealy (our current President). Under the title 'The British One That Got Away', and using enlarged photos of the copper faluce from the British Museum, he dates it to AH 1295. This places it during the Second Afghan War (1878-80). It differs from John's exhibited specimen in having some Persian figures under the inscription whereas John's has a Persian six after the script which translates as 'struck in Kandahar'. David concluded that as the faluce has a British-type crown on one side it had been issued under British authority and deserved a place in listings of the British Imperial coinage.

In *The Numismatic Chronicle*, December 1976, Major Fred Pridmore published an article where he reconstructed the complete design of the die. It was larger than the faluces something he had also encountered in his work on Indian coinage of the E.I.C. From this he showed that the first three numerals of the date, namely 1, 2, 9 are below the Persian script, the fourth, a 6, is separated and to the right. The date of AH 1296 was therefore between 26 December 1878 and 14 December 1879. This falls into the period of the British occupation of Kandahar, but he points out that the Afghan Governor was the minting authority. The Governor, appointed by Abdur Rahman, the British-supported Amir of Afghanistan, would be unlikely to be supplanted by the British Political Officer or the army on the minting of a minor coin for local use. Pridmore ascribed the use of the British crown as being a compliment to Afghan's British 'guests'.

John concluded by pointing out that Spink's *Catalogue of British and Commonwealth Coins* (1986) by Andre de Claremont and Wheeler includes the 'crown faluce' and notes Pridmore's interesting article. He

found it difficult to define what constitutes a colonial piece, without excluding items commonly found in catalogues. Providing there is a British connection of some sort, such information rounds out the story and collectors can decide for themselves what to include in their collections, as of course they do.

The talk was accompanied by slides and the faluce and two proving pieces were displayed, as well as photocopies of the articles referred to.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 5 July 2005

The speaker at this meeting was Stuart Adams who has addressed the Club on previous occasions, then usually on aspects of the token coinage. He had chosen as his subject 'Aluminium and its introduction into coinage'.

Stuart said that his interest in the use of aluminium in coinage originated when one day he unearthed an aluminium token from his collection dated 1894. This is illustrated below.



Figure 1. The aluminium advertising piece that started this research. 23.4mm, plain edge.

A number of questions had entered his thoughts such as, who were Van Wart Leighton? Who, or what, was the Balloon Society of Great Britain? but, more importantly, were there any coins and medals earlier than 1894 and, if so, when was aluminium first used?

History of aluminium

Metallic aluminium had eluded alchemists and scientists alike for centuries. The salt aluminium sulphate was known to the Romans, and is still known to us today as Stryptic pencils. This is simply a stick of the salt which, when rubbed onto open wounds, has astringent properties.

Between 1807 and 1809 Sir Humphrey Davy worked at the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street in an effort to isolate the metal from bauxite, which is the main mineral of aluminium. It contains between 30 and 35% aluminium and the metal is combined with oxygen and water, and often there is iron present. The main problem in isolating the metal is that it is very strongly bound to oxygen and requires a lot of energy to release it. The mineral is very stable, hence its abundance in nature.

Sir Humphrey's techniques included forming amalgams with mercury, fusing it with potassium and passing an electric current through the mixture and also a mixture of iron filings and potassium. The experiments were inconclusive.

In 1824 Hans Christian Oersted succeeded in producing an impure pellet, however, in 1827 Frederick Wohler finally managed to isolate the pure metal. In 1845 he described the properties of aluminium.

Aluminium remained a scientific curiosity until in 1854 when, after some research, Henri Sainte-Claire Deville produced an aluminium ingot and exhibited this at the Paris Exhibition in 1855. Napoleon III was so impressed with this metal for its lightness that he could see military implications and funded Deville to continue his research. The method Deville had developed, using the less expensive sodium to act as reductant, remained in use until about 1887.

The biggest breakthrough, however, came in 1886 when Paul Louis Heroult, a Frenchman, and Charles Martin Hall an American, simultaneously patented an electrolytic process. This occurred on either side of the Atlantic Ocean within three months of each other. It was a continuous process that allowed ore and a flux to be put in at one end, electrolyse the mixture, and tap off the pure aluminium. This made aluminium commercially available.

The price of aluminium

From various sources the market price of aluminium has been found and equated to pounds per metric tonne (tonne-1). This involved converting the prices by looking at the contemporary exchange rates. Some examples were \$ per pound, pounds per kilo and even \$ per cubic metre of aluminium.

In 1854 the price was near £42,000 tonne-I; in 1870 it was down to £5000, in 1885 to £3000 and by 1900 down to £1000 tonne-1. The latter price was a result of using the electrolytic method of production.

Coins and medallions

As early as 1860 the Royal Mint was experimenting with this new metal and produced a series of proof pennies, half pennies and farthings, and surely these must have been the earliest aluminium coins produced.

The price and scarcity of the metal in the 1860s must have given it some prestige for several medallions have been seen by the author. The first is one for the 1862 International Exhibition (SK-B220)¹ and the other for 1863, a wedding commemorative of Princess Alexandra Denmark to Albert Edward Prince of Wales.

A curious set of advertising tickets was issued by Websters Aluminium Crown Metal Co between 1884 and 1887, for although they traded in aluminium in the metal markets their tickets were made of an alloy of copper, nickel and zinc and contained in varying proportions traces of lead, cobalt and iron. In fact, a bit of a hotchpot.

The advent of cheaper aluminium in 1886 gave birth to a host of medallions. The Mint authorised experimental production of coins and Spink produced a sixpence that, curiously enough, was minted in Germany. The Mint also produced a set of coins in 1891 for India but it was not until 1906 that aluminium coins for circulation were made and this was for British West Africa (BWA). Interestingly, the 1906 coinage did not weather well in the humid climate but the composition must have been changed because the 1907 issue seems to have survived.

From about 1887 numerous medallions made in aluminium began to appear. There is toy money for schools (1887), a Conservative medallion (1887), an American piece commemorating the centenary of Christopher Columbus (1892). In 1894 Grueber took out a patent for making hollow tokens such as his perpetual calendars and advertising pieces.

The aluminium producers were also advertising their new metal issuing medallions from Foyers and Kinlockleven. Pre-1900 medallions were also issued by Germany, Switzerland and Sweden,

The coronation of Edward VII provided an opportunity for local authorities to issue the now inexpensive aluminium medals and medal-

lions and these were done in abundance. One nice example was issued in Heathfield, Sussex and claims on the medallion that 'Natural / gas / carried me / from / Heathfield / Sussex/ coronation day / June 26th / 1902:.' The actual coronation was delayed until August due to King Edward's ill health. Natural gas had been discovered at Heathfield in the 1890s and was used to light the local railway station. This ended in about 1935.

Many countries eventually adopted aluminium for its coinage but this seems to be confined to the lower denominations and started in 1906 with British West Africa. Seven countries issued low denomination coins up to 1935, but after that date usage expanded.

The Balloon Society of Great Britain and Van Wart Leighton.

Since the token issued by Van Wart Leighton (Figure 1) started off my research into this subject it is appropriate to relate the story behind these two groups.

Van Wart Leighton & Co. were metal traders and their offices were at 110 Canon Street, London EC. The company were there from 1894 until 1896 and it was then taken over by the Aluminium & General Foundry Syndicate in 1897. It is possible that the date 8 May 1894 was the start date of the Company.

The Balloon Society of Great Britain was established about 1880 and continued until about 1896. The members were balloon enthusiasts and it is believed that they were a well connected group of people. Their meetings were reported in *The Times*, albeit intermittently. They concerned themselves with subjects other than ballooning and held weekly lectures on topics such as cholera, what to do about the increasing death rate, and how to dispose of the bodies.

Their ballooning exploits included working with the meteorological office by sending balloons up in to clouds during thunderstorms to see what went on, and sending balloons out over the North Sea. Here they discovered that there were air streams and that it was possible to go out over the sea at one level and return on another. This was knowledge breaking information. They also issued silver medals for bravery and included a fireman for his lifesaving deeds, a balloonist for his expeditionary work, and a gold medal went to The Hon. George Curzon for political geography.

Acknowledgements

I gratefully acknowledge Robin Baker, Les Allen and Mike Ewing for loaning me some of the early aluminium medallions to photograph that have illustrated my talk.

Reference.

Allen, L.L. *Crystal Palace Medals & Tokens 1851-1936*. London, Coincraft, 2000.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 6 September 2005

Whilst a number of the members of the Club collect tokens *per se*, not that many narrow their field down to hop tokens, and this was the topic of David Pennock's talk, illustrated with not only the tokens but some fascinating contemporary photos of the hop pickers, largely taken from old postcards.

A series of old postcard images were used to highlight the major aspects of hop picking, drying and processing in pockets to market. Some questions previously raised about hop tokens were addressed and hopefully resolved utilising these images. Tokens illustrating the range of materials used and methods of construction were then shown. Around 50 hop tokens were brought to the meeting, along with an example unrecorded in Dalton & Hamer for Toke of Godington (D & H 23 in silver) and a hop samplers knife and fork, all of which brought searching and constructive questioning at the end of the talk.

David said his introduction to hop tokens as a series came when he moved down to Kent and visited a coin shop in Canterbury, his wife queried the function of a small group of lead tokens stamped with initials and the odd numeral - they could at best be described as ugly, crude, cheap and in no way pleasing to the eye. They became an introduction to a fascinating diverse series in which fresh examples are still emerging.

In England for a period of around 200 years an alternative currency flourished in Kent and Sussex, the tokens (known locally as hop tokens, tallies or checks) were highly localised, seasonal and both predate and survive the 18th century Conder series of tokens, in which examples of it also appear. The tokens, issued in exchange for each bushel of hops picked, include examples portraying oast houses, the Invicta horse of

Kent, family coats of arms, hop pokes and hop bins, other examples can consist of only an initial of the grower. Tokens were cast from lead, lead alloy, bronze and silver, punch struck on lead, copper, tinned iron or iron, manufactured by Midlands die sinkers, carved from bone or printed on paper. Denominations started with crowns (five shillings), shillings and pence, moved to numerical equivalents, 1, 6, 12, 30 and 60 and evolved into almost any sequence conceivable, including decimal, a hundred years before the regal coinage caught up. Fortunes were made and lost on growing hops, tragedies and disasters were frequent, outbreaks of cholera were common and in one instance were reputedly commemorated on a series of tokens. Vicars grew hops and issued tokens, also many a vicarage stands today raised from the additional hop tithe levied on the farmer, a vast 16 shillings an acre in 1841. Napoleonic prisoners of war appear briefly producing tokens around 1810 and research into the pickers and their lives uncovers our prudish Victorian ancestors involved in temporary marriages for the six weeks of the picking season. As with any token series, what hop tokens represent is a window into social history.

By the late 18th century the growth in demand for hops and subsequent expansion of the hop gardens had outstripped the available local labour supply of farm workers and itinerant gypsies. This shortfall was met by an annual influx, almost invasion, of hop pickers, predominantly resourced from the East End of London in the case of Kent and Sussex, and from Birmingham for the Hereford and Worcester pickers.

The Kent and Sussex pickers would initially have made their way down to the hop fields by horse and cart or boat down the river Medway, but with the coming of the railways, they became the main transport medium, to the extent that specific 'Hoppers Specials' would be laid on. A ticket of the Kent & East Sussex Railway issued by the Hop Marketing Board (Cheap) 3rd class to Tenterden via Southern Railway introduced a little railway memorabilia into the talk.

The influx of pickers was so large, consisting predominantly of women and children, that the schools in the East End of London were emptied and the hopping season is said to have been the cause of the school holidays. Living conditions were crude and initially comfortless but Church Missions and parliamentary enquiries eventually improved

the lot of the pickers, including purpose built hoppers' huts being provided for accommodation. Conditions and morality still failed to meet Victorian standards of that time with overcrowded huts, mixed sex occupation and 'Hoppers Marriages' lasting for the approximately six weeks duration of the picking season.

Hop tokens.

For each bushel picked the farmer would reward the picker with a token, which at the end of the picking season could be exchanged for cash. This allowed the farmer to dry the hops, transport them to market or a local hop factors, sell them for cash and generally improve his cash flow; it also tended to keep the pickers in one place, although the tokens became known as the 'currency of the Hop Lands', having an equivalent cash value in the local shops and pubs. Two early advertisements for pickers were displayed for remuneration of between 1 d and 3d a bushel.

With the exception of one specific early issuer, hop tokens were issued in Kent and Sussex in significant quantities between around 1780 and the early 1940s.

The tokens' values were initially monetary, i.e. penny, sixpence, shilling, half-crown and crown. By around 1820 to 1830 this series had become replaced by equivalent values in bushels, i.e. 1, 6, 12, 30 and 60, although almost any numerical sequence you can think of was used, i.e. 1 to 10, 1 to 12; 1 5 10 20 50, etc. Further series of 1 to 4, or 1 to 5, are also found in East Kent.

The conversion rate from bushels into cash depended upon the quality and quantity of the hops picked, i.e. whether or not there was a glut, etc, under extreme circumstances there was the odd year when the hops got ploughed back in.

The tokens themselves were initially made of lead, at first cast but later also punch struck, although the farmers used whatever came to hand. Later tokens of lead alloy were used, being a harder substance. Punched tin predominated in East Kent, and in one case old bell metal is said to have been used. Some paper examples exist, usually for the higher value 120 bushels, but in the case of Scott of Hunton, a complete series of paper values from 1 to 12 bushels has survived. Early tokens would have had the farmer's name or his initials and their value on later tokens, mid-19th

century, became more ornate. An oast house, the hop poke and Kent Invicta horse all appear on tokens with manufacturers from as far away as Birmingham producing pieces.

The tokens were also often used in conjunction with tally sticks, (*talea* - a rod; Latin) notched pieces of wood 9 to 12 inches long, to a flat ruler, split into two pieces and numbered, the 'tally man', the larger piece, and the 'picker' the smaller, every five bushels would be represented by a notch cut in both sticks, and which obviously had to match on both sticks.

The postcard images highlighted the pickers picking into cribs in Sussex and mid-Kent and into baskets in East Kent, the binmen and the tallyman with his tallysticks were also illustrated.

Farmers all seemed to delight in their individuality and the range of methods used to manufacture the hop tokens and the sequence of values on the tokens issued reflects this. Certain overall trends do however emerge and a comparison of the postcards was used to highlight some of the major differences between the regions and answer some anomalies in the range of values of tokens issued. An attempted correlation between the quantity of hops grown and the number of issuers for Sussex, mid-Kent and East Kent seems to show far more token issuers from Sussex than mid-Kent.

An interesting picture seems to emerge when looking at the use of the tally sticks and the known hop token issuers from different areas. A suggested explanation to this might be:

1. In an area, predominantly mid-Kent, where the tally stick recorded all the quantities of hops picked, the issue of any token would have been superfluous. This fits the picture recorded in 1838 by Lance in *The Hop Farmer* describing tally sticks as ... 'about 16ins long, 2ins wide, but one half thick at the end where it is fitted by various bevelled cuttings to the piece kept by the pickers. These two pieces numbered and fitted in such a way that no other one will correspond; being put together a notch is filed across the edge of both for every bushel and when twenty is counted on one edge it is cut off and a single notch is cut on the other edge.'

The Revd R. W. H. Acworth ('Hop-Pickers Tokens No 1', *Journal of the South Eastern Agricultural College Kent* No. 40, 14th July 1937, p. 159) mentions the hop tokens first being introduced to supplement tally sticks, so this region might be one where the hop token never caught on.

2. In an area, predominantly East Kent, where the tally stick was used in addition to the tokens. East Kent predominantly picked the hops into baskets, usually five-bushels, occasionally six. The tallyman cuts a notch for every complete basket picked. At the end of the day's picking, following the cry 'Pull no more poles', or a quick blast on a trumpet, the total number of bushels in any part-filled basket would be credited to the picker via the issue of tokens. The basket being graduated in bushels utilising a darker coloured band of stripped willow for the graduations to facilitate this.

The preponderant series of values of the tokens issued being 1 to 4 (for the five-bushel basket) with the occasional 1 to 5 (for the six-bushel basket). The farm ledgers for at least one issuer, Mr Hammon, quotes payment per basket.

3. In an area, predominantly Sussex, where the token series covered all multiples of one bushel and there was no need for a tally stick to be used by the tallyman. The series would have been 1d, 6d, 1s, 2s 6d, and crown, and later numerically, 1, 6, 12, 30, 60 and 120.

Having given a proposed explanation of the distribution of tokens in use, it is a certainty that tally sticks would have survived in exclusive use in Sussex and token series in East Kent and that for every rule established, every hop grower would have continued a long farming tradition of being an individual not bound by it. What also supports the suggested use of tokens and tally sticks, other than the surviving tokens, is the long established difference of East Kent picking into baskets and the other areas into cribs or bins; also, most of the photographs seen of the tallyman with his collection of tally sticks hanging around his neck originating in East Kent.

The explanation was qualified by the observation that tokens, being predominantly made from lead or lead alloy, would have been returned to scrap merchants, particularly during the periods of the two World Wars. The observations of the Revd Acworth that he had caught a young boy melting down the stock of tokens for use as bullets (!) and just managed to save one token ('Hop-Pickers Tokens No 2', *Journal of the South Eastern Agricultural College Kent* No. 44, July 1939, p. 148) was

compared to some of his private correspondence with a scrap merchant in Rye, where he thanks the merchant for allowing him to go through the stock and returns of two cwt of tokens for melting down.

A further anomaly in the tokens issued is the impossibly high values written in pencil on some of the East Kent tokens:

Henderson Issuer 224, Robert Golding 163.

Henderson Issuer 291, Richard Kennett 53.

(Alan C. Henderson, *Hop Tokens of Kent and Sussex and Their Issuers*)

This has now been put down to the basket used by the pickers, the baskets were numbered and the picker would use the same basket year after year until it wore out. Reference to pickers' books quotes the basket number used. A tallyman issuing tokens for each bushel (or even half bushel) for part baskets picked could easily have included the basket number on the token. It is impossible that any series of values of tokens issued would include 53, let alone 163. In addition, the chance of fraud would be immense and the explanation fits several tokens with the same number being found representing the stock issued to a specific picker.

Individual tokens were then discussed, each highlighting some aspect of the series.

- **John Toke of** Godington, Kent, Dalton & Hamer 25 & 26. A very early issuer and atypical in that the token, representing sixpence, is not part of a set. Mr John Toke succeeded to the estate in 1725 and died in 1746. The grandfather of this issuer was Mr Nicholas Toke, the 'Captain' who is said to have died at the age of 93 from a chill caught while travelling to London to seek a sixth wife in 1680.

- **John Toke**, grandson of the above. Succeeded to the estate in 1757. The name of the proprietor is in monogram. Godington hop token 1767. Bronze cast, reverse a basket of hops, 'No pains No gains'. These tokens are mentioned in Dalton and Hamer Kent DH 22/23/24, and also in Atkins, *Provincial Tokens of the Eighteenth Century*. In 1767, a remarkably fine year for hops, the Hon. Thomas Harrison, Attorney General and Advocate-General of Jamaica, was on a visit to Godinton where, during the hop picking season, he was so much struck with the novelty of the scene and the busy employment of so many people collected on the occasion that, on his return to London, he had a token made in commemoration of the circumstances that had given him so

much pleasure, and sent down 500 'sixpences' to Mr Toke.

- **John Toke.** Unlisted in Dalton & Hamer, silver token variety of 23. D & H 22 - no band (listed)

D & H 23 - band not listed

An example of each was brought to the talk.

- **Edward & Rosamund Monckton,** Catts Place, Brenchley Kent. One shilling, half-crown and crown (1774). An example of the earlier lead cast regal sequence, usually consists of crown, half-crown, shilling, sixpence, penny. Also the first of several women issuers of tokens.

- **Edward Jarman.** Crude lead cast pieces, showing die varieties,

- **E Catt.** Die varieties. Numerous small die variations exist for hop tokens, indicating that the moulds only had a limited life and many moulds could be necessary to provide sufficient stock. Examining in detail the tokens of E. Catt, nine minor variations become rapidly apparent. The search almost becomes one of trying to find two identical tokens. Close examination of many issuers shows the same pattern of replacement moulds with minuscule variations between them.

- William Jewhurst. Punch struck pieces. Hawhurst and other Farms **Kent.**

- **Colthup.** Tin punched. Howletts Farm Kent. Simple numbered pieces U, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, also B (bushel - two varieties). Colthup also issued tokens with HF (Howletts Farm) and holes punched to represent the number of bushels. U as a minimum measured value also appears in series.

- **William Cock.** Copper punched.

Appledore Kent. 2, 4 7 and 30 bushels.

- **Robert Ridge Ellis.** Zinc punched and painted. 1, 2 4 and 5 bushels, all painted red. Court Lodge, Yalding, Kent. Outbreaks of cholera among the pickers occurred in the early parts of the 18th century. Mr Ellis of Barming, the largest hop-grower in Kent at this early period (1835) who had some 500 acres under hops, employed from 3000 to 4000 pickers annually; cholera occurred among his pickers in 1834, and apparently in other seasons. (H. H. Parker, *The Hop Industry* - evidence at enquiry 1835. When he was able to supply the pickers with beer, 'Then we never had the cholera which we have been troubled with this last year. I am sorry to say we have lost more than I can bear to think of. Unless I give it to them, they never buy or drink beer, they drink water, and what little

money they spend is in spirits. Their food is principally potatoes, and sometimes a fellow will come along with bad fish and then we get the cholera. When they have nothing but water to drink and potatoes to eat it is very bad. They are mostly Irish? Yes, a very large proportion. Do the same people come year after year? Yes.'

Mr Ellis is also credited with inventing the hop press for compressing the hops into the large sacks (pokes) after they have been dried (H. H. Parker, p.81). At the time when Mr Ellis was growing 500 acres, no other single grower cultivated above 150 acres. (Parker, p.84).

A story exists that the colouring of his tokens in red was due to the 1834 cholera outbreak in which 34 of his pickers died, but it has proved difficult to trace the reference to this explanation.

- C. Edwards. Counter stamping - standard punch of name. One of several growers who punched his initials (in this case, name) on the stock of earlier issuers with varying amounts of his name visible depending on the size of the flan.

- **H.** Winsler. Zinc punched. 1, 2 50 and 100 bushels.

- T G Pilcher. Tin punched. East Kent type. Wooton Farm, Petham, the number of holes representing the number of bushels. Farm known, issuer not fully identified.

- John Day. Thin iron, punched holes only. 2, 3, 11 and 12 bushels, distinguished only by the number of holes punched.

- Elizabeth Day .Widow of John Day. Two varieties of 5 bushels, 11 and 12. It would seem inordinately easy to increase the value of an issued token by drilling a further hole in the piece, the two varieties of the 5 indicate the array of holes punched was either not standardised or represent such an attempt (thought to be far less likely).

- **H** Richardson. Bell metal. Brass cast pieces for 1 and 60 bushels, the latter dated 1819. One of several different issuers using the same material, in the case of this issuer sourced from what is reputed to be part of a broken church bell.

- Thomas Gower. Brass die stamped. Machine-struck with the value counter stamped on the reverse. A perfect token, quoting Thomas Gower, Woodchurch, Kent, on the obverse and Hop Token, 1838 and value on the reverse, covering issuer, location, use, year and value. From the machine-struck piece, punched values of 1 to 20 inclusive and 30, 40 50 and 100 bushels were struck.

Rev Rose Fuller Whistler. Lead cast pieces for 1, 6 and 60 Bushels. The contrast between the previous issuer and the Reverend Rose Fuller Whistler cannot be more extreme, one issuer issuing tokens cast as either R, RF or RW.

- **T Manwaring.** Copper die-struck and punched.

10 and 20 bushels.

- **F W Waters.** Lead cast.

An oast house depicted on the 30-bushel piece.

- **R Baker.** Lead cast.

A hop pocket displayed on the 60-bushel piece.

- **Edmund Barham.** Lead cast.

The inadvertent reversed E on some 12-bushel tokens, the square/diamond shape of the six bushels and the hare depicted on the 60 (Hare Farm).

- **Sir Anchitel Ashburnham.** Lead alloy.

The ornateness of some Sussex pieces with a coat of arms displayed. -

Walter J. Smith of Bexhill.

Brass struck in Birmingham by S. A. Daniell

- **Elizabeth Daws.** Lead punch-struck.

1, 6, 12 and 60 bushels - a woman issuer.

- HMS *Cesar* ! pictured from Dover Museum.

A model of a 74-gun ship, built around the beginning of the 19th century, about two feet long and is made almost entirely of bleached white bone. This model is reputed to have been made in Dover Castle by a French prisoner-of-war in about 1802. A story (probably apocryphal!) relates that the model was unfinished at the time of the short-lived Peace of Amiens in 1802 and so, rather than be repatriated, the prisoner stayed on in the Castle to finish it off. By the time he had done so, Britain and France had resumed hostilities!

A further non sequitur - a bone box followed by bone tokens of John Miller of Yalding, thought to have been again made by French prisoners-of-war.

- Hop tokens from Hampshire. Chalcraft and Henry Wheeler.

First known examples of hop tokens from Hampshire - attribution via the Acworth collection - Maidstone Museum.

- Hop tokens from Hereford and Worcestershire

- E. Scott . Card tokens.

Hunton 2, 3, 6 and 9 bushels.

Some issuers omitted a nine-bushel token from their series to prevent confusion between the six and nine.

– **Edmund Austen and John Pinyon.** Card tokens for 120 bushels. - **R Oliver.** Lead cast.

The Invicta horse.

– **JO** punched - representing one of many unknown issuers of tokens. Slides of the Kent and Sussex hop growing parishes in 1894.

– **William and John Kenward.** Moons Farm, Piltdown, Sussex. A mould for the 1d, 6d, s, 2s 6d, and 5s handed down within the family, along with the 5s and now supplemented by metal detector finds of all the remaining pieces. Metal detector finds have increased the total number of known issuers but as a general point only when the location of the find is known can such tokens be given a firm attribution.

- A series of images of the mould and the tokens, illustrating how they were formed.

- **Pickers books**

By the mid-20th century, where increased literacy made their use acceptable, the tokens had largely given way to pickers books, recording the picker, their basket number (for East Kent), bushels picked on a daily basis and also providing the rules and regulations associated with picking. -

Mechanisation

A series of photographs showing the hop bins being transferred to a vast mechanised hop stripping machine, manned by a handful of workers - one of the final nails in the coffin of a decaying industry.

A combination of developed higher yield of hop plants, lower concentration of hops in beer, cheap imports and blight all served to effectively bring the hop growing industry of Kent and Sussex to a close, a few scattered small hop gardens exist, some producing hops for ornamental purposes, but most UK production is now in Hereford and Worcester, although recent demand for Real Ale has led to hops being planted in Suffolk.

The talk concluded with a picture of the bank note issued by the Hop Planters Bank, Maidstone in 1799.

Questions from the floor:

Had I seen any fakes?

I have a token, which on initial examination I put down to Gregson, having 1D on the reverse and being roughly the same size; the obverse was thought to be worn, but on closer examination, turned out to be made out of wood. Other examples of fake or at least highly suspect one-bushel pieces exist, but the effort involved for so little gain is surprising.

Further series, referred to in Henderson as 'Appear to be of recent manufacture' appear to be aimed at the collector s of around 1950 -1960.

Members of the Kent Numismatic Society utilised moulds at Maidstone Museum to produce some generally uniface reproductions, but these appear to be made out of a different lead alloy than the originals. Manufacture? Many pieces would have been produced by the local blacksmith, a few known manufactured pieces exist but the major source of the high quality Sussex pieces was via Comports Engineering works of Northiam in Sussex, whose records survived up until Acworth in 1940.

Thomas Wakeham Richardson produced many of the finest examples of hop tokens known, in addition to being a meticulous draftsman, he incorporated his initials on all the pieces he produced. Referring to digital reference images of hop tokens on the laptop, it was possible to select those issued by Lord Harry Vane and zoom in until Mr Richardson's initials filled the screen, detail almost impossible to make out on a conventional slide.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 4 October 2005

John Roberts-Lewis, the Club's Assistant Secretary, is a well known for his interest in British colonial coinage, and has spoken to the Club on several occasions on different aspects of it and the East India Company's coinage. In his talk the time he moved more towards the west, presenting 'British Colonial Money in Africa to the End of the 19th Century.

British interests, south of the Sahara in Africa, began in the mid-16th century following P{Portuguese exploration of the western coasts. A series of voyages by groups of traders, and eventually by Chartered Companies, mostly unsuccessful, brought manufactured goods to exchange for gold and agricultural produce such as pepper. Under Charles ii they had the right to have bullion coined and in 1663 gold coins called guineas, after the Guinea coast, tariffed at 20 shillings were minted

with an elephant under the king's bust denoting the source of the gold. the company had changed its name in 1662 and to compete with the Dutch and others, in a triangular Atlantic trade, added taking salves from Africa to work plantations in the Americas. Their products were cared back to Europe and the cycle continued. Later in Charles II's reign an elephant and castle was used and then intermittently to 1717.

So-called 'primitive' money included cowrie shells and metal bars known as manilas and kisi pennies. These circulated alongside a variety of coins, especially Spanish-American and lasted into the 20th century due to the lack of small change available.

The first coins minted specifically for a British African territory were the Sierra Leone Company in 1793. Silver dollars and copper pennies were struck at Matthew Boulton's Soho Works in Birmingham; the coins were dated 1791, the date the Company was founded. Immediately they began circulating with British half pennies and Spanish dollars the problems were seen. The new dollars tariffed at five shillings had cost more to produce and were intrinsically worth less. A second issue of dollars of lower fineness with 100 on them, cents being understood, and copper cents together with fractional silver for 50, 20 and 10 cents were supplied by 'Boulton. This was one of the earliest decimal systems to reach practical use.

In 1808 Sierra Leone became a Crown Colony, returned by the Company, who were granted a seven-year lease. The British Governor abolished the decimal system in favour of sterling, but failed to obtain sufficient coin and primitive money, together with paper money, was again in greater use. Sierra Leone has an interesting coin which used to be classified as an anti-slavery medal. it has no stated value or area of use. its date of 1807 refers to the ending of the salve trade by Britain; it also has no named issuer and the reverse is in Arabic. When the Soho papers were released its production was found to be in 1814 for the firm of Macauley and Babington and it was to alleviate the lack of small change by circulating as a penny.

Gold Coast coinage developed in a similar manner, when Boulton struck silver coins for 'The Company of Merchants Trading to Africa'. The coins were dated 1796 and had no values stated, but were based on weight and names used for gold dust. An ounce was an Ackey and fractions of half, quarter and sixteenth (a Takoe) of the Troy ounce were

used for the silver. As with gold, values fluctuated but an Ackey was worth about five shillings. The coins carried a George III cipher and a later issue in 1818 from Thomason's Birmingham mint has the head of George III on it though these were not official British Government issues.

Whilst a policy of using British coinage in its West African states might have worked, given an adequate supply, the lack of coins caused the use of almost anything obtainable until near to the end of the century. Cut Spanish dollars were undermined by clipping and by forgery. The dollars themselves were over-tariffed as the silver price dropped. It became lucrative to import them and Birmingham mints even struck Mexican and Chilean dollars for this purpose.

South Africa has numerous 19th century tokens and there are also some for West Africa, but these are intended to be covered in a separate talk. However, a rare issue for Grigua Town was covered as an attempt to provide coinage at an early stage. Thomas Halliday produced silver and copper for the London Missionary Society using their badge of a dove for the obverse and with values on the reverses. They were struck in 1814 or 1815, but after two years were little used, so they were melted down. Surviving examples are extremely rare and are described as the only Christian Missionary coins.

Initial British involvement in East Africa concerned the Royal Navy attempting to prevent Arab slave trading. Treaties with the Sultan of Zanzibar helped with the Navy's efforts and some coins for local use were minted by Heaton of Birmingham for the Sultan. German Imperial aspirations at this time led to competition with Britain. In 1887 the Imperial British East Africa Company obtained a charter, and issued silver and copper coins under its name and its main office Mombassa. The Company was wound up in 195 and the area controlled became the East African Protectorate. Copper pice (quarter annas) were issued with Queen Victoria's head in 1897, 1898 and 1899. The Indian rupee and its fractions became legal tender in 1998, and Mombassa and Protectorate coins circulated within this system.

The talk was illustrated with slides of the coins and maps of the areas referred to.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 1 November 2005

This evening's speaker was Dr Michael Mitchiner, internationally known for his large and splendid publications on many aspects on ancient and Far Eastern coins, e.g. three volumes in the series *Oriental Coins and Their Values* (1977, 1978, 1979), tokens and jettons of Nuremberg, as well as a similarly-sized tome on *Medieval Pilgrim and Secular Badges* (1986). Dr Mitchiner spoke on 'Numismatic experiences along the Silk Route.'

The Silk Route was the overland trade route along which Chinese silks reached the west, and along which the Chinese imported such goods as horses from Ferghana and jade from around Yarkand. As in the case of many trade routes, the itinerary had several variations. The route leading north-westwards from Xian as far as the approach to Dunhuang was one of the few stages where geographical features constrained trade to a single route. This was the Gansu corridor, bordered on one side by mountains rising towards Tibet, and on the other side by the mountains separating China from Mongolia.

Three itineraries led towards the west from Dunhuang. The first skirted the south of the Taklamakan Desert, and passed Yarkand to reach Kashgar at the western edge of the Xinjiang plateau. The second route skirted the north of the Taklamakan Desert and passed the Aqsu oasis to reach Kashgar. The third, and more northerly, option was less popular. The route passed northwards from Dunhuang to the Turpan Depression, and thence via Urumchi and the steppe north of the Tianshan mountains to reach the Tashkent region, whence traders continued southwards across Uzbekistan.

The two itineraries across Xinjiang, which converged on Kashgar, continued westwards into Uzbekistan (Samarkand, Bukhara) via three principal passes through the Pamir-Tianshan mountains. The southern pass, which seems to have been favoured during the Kushan period, led to Penjikent in modern Tadjikistan. It continued the short distance westwards to Samarkand in modern Uzbekistan. The two northern routes ascended the 14,000 feet Torugart Pass, to the north of Kashgar. One route turned west at Narin and descended to the Ferghana valley. The alternative route continued northwards and descended, via Lake Issyk Kul, to reach the northern steppe near Bishkek (thence west to Tashkent).

Climate, local politics, and other local considerations, all influenced the choice of itinerary. Favour for the northern route across Xinjiang gave way to favour for the southern route after the River Tarim changed its course in the fourth century AD. Only one of the three routes west from Kashgar is practical at the present time, that starting off northwards via Lake Issyk Kul. The two alternative itineraries are inhibited by political problems in Tadjikistan and in the Ferghana valley. Local seasonal population movements promote trade in particular sectors and provide a different kind of influence on the choice of itinerary. Many farm labourers now pick the grape harvest in the Turpan oasis and then move south to pick the cotton harvest around Dunhuang. Similarly, many labourers migrate from Kashgar to the Aqsu oasis for the cotton harvest. Features, such as those just mentioned, influenced coin circulation along the Silk Route.

The bazaars in such towns as Luoyang, Xian and Kashgar, abound in Chinese silver dollars of all kinds, as well as in cast cash coins of all periods. These are nearly all modern forgeries made for the tourist trade, and only the Qing dynasty cash tend to be genuine. The principal manufacturing centres are said to be Beijing and Shanghai.

The museums in Luoyang and Xian have an impressive display of genuine ancient coins. These include gold and silver specimens of Wuzhu cash and of Tang dynasty Kaiyuan cash. Silk Route trade is exemplified by a scattering of Sasanian silver drachms and of Byzantine gold solidi. Coins accepted by traders along the Silk Route were subject to local imitation. The Byzantine solidi seen in Luoyang and Xian museums are Silk Route imitations bearing the designs of Phocas (AD 602-610) and Heraclius (AD 610-641). Sasanian silver drachms seen in Xian and Jiayuguan museums, and in Kashgar bazaar, include both genuine and Silk Route imitations of Peroz, plus genuine coins of Khusru II.

Further west, many Kushan copper coins were seen in Kashgar bazaar, and also in the bazaars at Samarkand and Bukhara. The coins span the reigns of Soter Megas, Wima Kadphises, Kanishka, Huvishka and Vasu Deva. They bear the common designs seen on coins of the same kings found in Northern Pakistan. Copper coins of the early post Vasu Deva period are common in Kashgar, but they were not seen in Uzbekistan. This suggests that the Kushans may have been expelled from Uzbekistan before they were expelled from Western Xinjiang.

The trade route leading westwards from Uzbekistan (Samarkand, Bukhara), had both northern and southern itineraries. The southern overland route across Northern Afghanistan, Iran and Mesopotamia, is well known. A silver coin of Persis, found near Samarkand, probably travelled this route. Parthian drachms are common in Uzbekistan, but Roman coins were not seen. Military conflicts in Mesopotamia between Parthians and Romans were not conducive to successful trade along this route. The alternative, northern, route passed up the land between the Aral and Caspian Seas, and around the northern end of the Caspian, to reach the Crimea, whence trade continued by sea. A silver coin of Panticapaeum found near Samarkand, and several coins minted in the Kingdom of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, would have travelled this route.

The Sogdians, with their principal seats at Samarkand and Penjikent, were great overland traders during the late pre-Islamic period. They were not suppressed until the middle of the eighth century AD. Many of their late copper coins have square holes and a fabric based on Chinese cash of the Tang dynasty. A few coins bear Chinese characters, but most have inscriptions written in Sogdian script. Sogdian, and related, copper coins are commonly found on the Afrasiab mound, which was the site of Old Samarkand. The Sogdians minted related cash-type copper coins with Sogdian inscriptions for use in their trading settlements among nomadic Turkish tribes living on the northern steppe (between Tashkent and Bishkek). The epic Battle of Talas, between Moslems and Chinese in AD 751, took place on this steppe. It took place in the roaming grounds of the Tiurgesh Turks (Qaganate AD 704-766). This phase of Moslem expansion marked the eclipse of the Sogdian trading network and its distinctive coinage.

London Numismatic Club Meeting, 6 December 2005

A Past-President of the Club, and a member well known for his wide ranging interests, Anthony Holmes took as his topic, 'Symbols on Coins'. Illustrating his points with slides, he said:

A symbol is something which means more than it actually shows. Probably half the coins that show anything have some degree of symbolic meaning, but some examples might be shown where the meaning was especially significant or more difficult to interpret.

The Romans were so strong on symbols that they used a variety of personifications on the reverse of their coins, such as Equity, carrying scales; Hope, raising the hem of her dress; Military Loyalty, holding a standard. Julius Caesar's denarius showing Venus (who might have been prettier!) on the obverse reminds people that he is descended from Aeneas, founder of Rome and son of Venus. The reverse shows the dutiful son, Aeneas, carrying his aged and lame father, Anchises to safety from the sack of Troy. When Constantine the Great has his head veiled, it means that he is dead and is now with the gods. A basin is a symbol of the games at Pergamon (the athletes washed at it), as are the three prize urns containing palms (at Nicaea). The Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, on the earliest Roman denarii (187-175 BC) are a symbol of divine protection for Rome - they were said to have been seen fighting at the battle of Lake Regillus, and watering their horses in the Forum in Rome afterwards. The Seleucid, Antiochos X (94-83 BC) uses the Dioscuri's conical hats, with stars on top, to convey the same message by their symbol alone (inexperienced collectors sometimes mistake them for jellyfish!). The club of Hercules, on a didrachm of Caesarea in Cappadocia, is a symbol of Roman strength.

An 'alliance coin of Byzantium and Nicaea (Gallienus, 253-268) shows two shopping baskets, meaning that citizens could buy and sell in either city, and could use this money in both. Priestly symbols on a denarius of Vespasian represent his election as Pontifex Maximus in AD 71. Parium in Mysia shows colonists ploughing with two oxen - they are ploughing to outline the boundary of the 'colonia' there, a Roman colonia being a town given to retired soldiers. The well-head in the Forum, the *puteal* (on a denarius of L. Scribonius Libo, 63 BC) symbolised the moneylenders who gathered there (Ovid: 'Let the outstanding principal of his debt torture the man who dreads the Puteal and the Janus, and the first of the month, swift in coming' - interest had to be paid on the first of the month, rather like a credit card now).

A silver jital of the Gurjara Pratiharas (Bhoja I, 862-882) shows an anthropoid boar, a symbol of Vishnu, the Hindu deity, who assumed that form to create the universe; when it was destroyed by Siva, Vishnu turned into a serpent and retired to the bottom of the primordial ocean for millions of years, until he assumed a fresh form and created a fresh universe. Similarly, a modern coin of Nepal (King Tribhuvana, second

reign, 1951-55) shows the hand of the Buddha, raised as if teaching. Herod Agrippa I (tetrarch of Judea, AD 37-44), concerned that his Jewish subjects would consider a portrait of him or the emperor on the coins an insult to their religion, put his canopy on a bronze prutah, as a symbol of his rule. King Chulalongkorn of Thailand, 1868-1910, put three special royal umbrellas on his silver tical (he was the little crown prince in the 'King and I').

A silver grosso of Pope Julius III (1550-55) shows a door; this is the fifth door of St Peter's, Rome, normally bricked up, but opened by the Pope to open a Holy Year, when the great crowd of pilgrims might need all five doors; MD on the doorway shows it is for the Holy Year of 1550. A copper coin of Shiraz in Iran, AD 1723, has a pair of scales with the word 'just' in Arabic, to indicate that (Muslim) just value is being given (this was taken up by the British East India Co., noted a comment from the audience).

A denarius of Pompey's son, Sextus Pompey, shows Neptune with Anapias and Amphinomus, who saved their aged parents from an eruption of Etna. This symbolises filial piety, which Sextus has shown by holding Sicily for his father's side in the Civil War, and also by winning a naval victory, hence Neptune.

A Riga schilling of Queen Christina of Sweden, 1632-54, has the Vasa sheaf within a C, to remind people of her lineage - she was the daughter of the great Gustavus Adolphus. Similarly Dungar Singh, Rajah of Bikanir (India) 1872-87, puts on his copper paisa the personal symbols of his four predecessors.

Symbols are often used to convey a political message. A *blanc aux ecus*, struck by the Duke of Bedford for France, as Regent for Henry VI, has the cross surmounting the English lion and the French lis; on the other side 'Henricus' surmounts the English and French arms. A fourdenars of Modena, 1702-1706, shows a crowned lis instead of St Gemignano or the crowned eagle; you could say 'Louis XIV rules OK' as Modena was 'under his protection' at the time. When Rome strikes a twobaiocchi with a liberty cap on a fasces, 1798-99, it is a clear sign that a republic has replaced papal rule. The French Revolution produced a five-franc piece with Hercules supporting two ladies; these are Liberty (with Liberty cap on lance) and Equality, holding a plumb-bob (perhaps she is equal to work on a building site ?). The type appears again under the

Second and also the Third Republics, and makes a fourth appearance under the Fifth Republic (1974-80 - now a 50-franc piece, one of the last silver coins), but it is never seen under the intervening monarchies.

A rouble of the USSR, 1924, shows a young factory worker urging a Tolstoyan farm worker (long hair, beard, high felt boots) towards the rising sun of Communism. Marx's prediction that the revolution would come from the agricultural workers had not come true, and factory workers were being sent around the farms to convince their workers that the revolution was to their advantage.

The 1913 three-marks of Wilhelm II of Prussia officially celebrates the centenary of the defeat of Napoleon, with the Prussian eagle killing the French snake (no, nothing to do with Wellington or Waterloo, 1815, this is for the battle of Leipzig in 1813). The other side is clearly marked in German 'Where the Emperor leads, the people follow', and the illustration of this is striking, just before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

A Spanish real of Ferdinand and Isabella (1474-1516) conjoins his symbol (yoke) with hers (arrows) to symbolise the political union of Aragon and Castile which resulted from their marriage. The same symbol can be seen on a 50-centimos issued by Franco in 1949 - it is now the symbol of the Nationalists, while a Republican 50-centimos carries the symbols of industrial work, to show their different appeal. New Zealand has a potent 'Tiki' (20-cents, 1990) symbolising its Maori heritage.

We are still at it, the Olympic five-ring symbol appearing (e.g. on the 100-yen of Japan 1964); and perhaps we may see it on our own coinage soon?

CLUB AUCTION RESULTS

by Anthony Gilbert

109th Club Auction, 3 May 2005

This auction, held as usual at the Warburg Institute, London, found 20 members present, and it was encouraging to see two members who had recently re-joined the Club as well as two new members being present to bid at their first Club auction. Three good supporters of the auctions, both in terms of submitting and also purchasing lots, were unfortunately away on long trips abroad. Their valued contributions were much missed.

As an experiment on this occasion bidders were asked to sign in for and, when appropriate, display their numbered 'paddles', which had been printed in the form of A4-sized sheets of paper. In the writer's opinion, a 'paddle' type of paddle as used in several of the major commercial auction houses, would have been better received by the bidders, and would also have been easier to raise, display or otherwise hang on to. However, this innovation by the Club's President, David Sealy, who was also the auctioneer for the first half of the auction, was an honest attempt to speed up the bidding process. The second half of the auction was taken by Dr Marcus Phillips.

The first 21 lots comprised a further selection of books from the Club's library. As the books were not presented on the night (they are held in the custody of the Treasurer), successful bidders were asked to arrange directly with him regarding their preferred method of delivery and payment. In this section of the auction only two lots failed to find a buyer, notably *Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain*, vols I-III with supplement and plates, 1817-19, by the Reverend R. Ruding. This aroused no interest with a reserve set at £60.

No less than three lots equalled the top price of £50. Lot 3, *A View of the Coinage of Scotland* (1839), bound by J. Lindsay Cork and with an ex-House of Commons library stamp went for its £50 reserve. Lot 8, *Oriental Coins and Their Values: The World of Islam* (1977), by Michael Mitchiner, and lot 13, *Coins of the Vandals, Ostrogoths & Lombards in the British Museum* (1911), by W. Wroth, both also went for their respective reserves of £50. Three copies of *The Numismatic Chronicle* and three of *The British Numismatic Journal*, all reached their reserves of £5. From this section of the auction the Club benefited to the tune of £265.

The next 18 lots, 21A to 38, comprised books presented to and for the benefit of the Club by the family of our late member Donald Fell, were all offered without reserves. Again, successful members were asked to deal directly with the Treasurer in regard to the method of delivery and payment. Of these 18 lots, only two remained unsold. The top price achieved was £60 for lot 26, *Coins of the Ottoman Empire* (1968), by Nuri Pere, against a reserve of £40. The second highest was lot 33, *The Gold Sovereign and Half Sovereign* (1980), by Michael Marsh, being no. 155 of a limited edition of 300 bound in half leather. The writer is of the

opinion that lot 37, *Art in Coinage* (1955), by Dr Humphrey Sutherland was an excellent buy at £5. This is a splendid work taking an overall view of the aesthetics of coinage and well earns its place in any numismatic library. The total sales in this section, all going into Club funds, amounted to £130.

With lots 39 to 100, the regular auction offered a good mixture across the numismatic collecting field. Seven vendors had entered material, together with one donated lot. Of the 62 lots on offer in this section, 27 remained unsold (44%). This was a disappointingly high percentage of unsolds, including Far Eastern silver forgeries, five large white metal medals depicting churches (which all sold), and a Montrose Lunatic Asylum halfpenny token, 1799 (D&H 31) which is described as 'rare'. Lot 69, described as a novelty item, was a gold-plated penny as used on the 19979 Mini, advertising the 20th anniversary of the British Leyland Mini automobile. This lot fetched £2, against no reserve. A higher price was the £26 offered for lot 99, *A New History of the Royal Mint* (1st edition, 1992) edited by Christopher Challis with the Editor's signature on the title page - this was against a modest reserve of £15.

The second highest price was £25 for lot 66, a Victoria 'godless' florin of 1849, no grade being cited, and against a reserve of £10. The total sales in this section of the auction amounted to £180.50, with the Club receiving £19.85 in commission which included £2 from the sale of the donated lot mentioned above.

David Sealy gave notice that he intended to step down from his role of auction catalogue compiler, a role which he has executed for more years than the writer can truly remember. So the Club is looking for a replacement and, although David will be a hard act to follow, he has very kindly said that he is willing to assist the new incumbent during the changeover period.

Altogether the auction was a very good Club meeting. the inclusion of lots from the Club's library certainly adds interest and spice to the proceedings., but soon the library will have been disposed of, and then we will be back to the 'regular lots submitted by members. This is the section which we are noticeably beginning to struggle with, and it is the main reason why the Committee, a few years ago now, felt to opt for only one auction per season rather than two. The writer would like to see a return to two auctions per season. mainly in order to encourage a higher average

attendance at the meetings and also to retain those members for whom, without criticism, the auctions are the main draw. Readers' comments and suggestions on these points would be most welcome.

LETTERS, from Roger Edwards

Dear Editor, I wish to say how much I enjoyed reading the backdated Newsletters kindly sent to me by Robert Hatch. The articles by both guest speakers and Club members were very interesting and varied, of very high standard, and I congratulate yourself, as Editor, of such a readable magazine.

As a newish member of the London Numismatic Club I wish to contribute this letter of my earliest memories of events, and obstacles, on how I started collecting coins. and maybe, if it is not too inappropriate or trivial, be considered for publication in the Newsletter [Editor's comment: *Expectate veni* - 'Come thou long awaited' (Carausius AR denarius reverse, *Roman Silver Coins V*, nos 37-9, adapted from Virgil, *Aeneid* -at last, an answer to the Editor's pleas for contributions).

Like many boys in my junior school I belonged to the school stamp club, but later switched to coins when I realised that coins went back in time much further than my penny red stamp.

At about ten years old whilst on holiday in Bognor with my parents I bought my first two coins, both early 19th century Italian from a junk shop from spending money given by an aunt. One year later a friend's father gave me a battered and holed 1797 'cartwheel' 2d - from that day onwards I was hooked. I cannot express just how thrilled I was at owning this 'treasure', which I carried in my pocket for months, proudly showing it to friends and strangers at every opportunity.

My parents had little money, my mother never worked and father was a factory labourer. My sisters and I seldom had pocket money. So, at age twelve, I went out with a bucket of hot soapy water and a cloth to wash cars at a shilling a time in my local streets in Wandsworth SW18.

This was the time I dreamt of Roman coins, and especially wanted one of Julius Caesar. I got to hear of a coin dealer in Putney, and I walked the three miles each way to save the bus fare. The dealer assured me that he had several Julius Caesar coins in stock, and proved it by showing me some very worn bronze coins with either Caesar or Caes on them. I then

bought one, and after raising enough money from my car washing business, I returned several times, always on foot, to spend every penny I had on more poor grade J.C. coins. I had no idea that Caesar/Caes were only titles on the coins. A harsh lesson was learnt - not always to trust others, he had taken advantage of my enthusiasm to 'unload' some of his unsalable rubbish. But, I do now have a nice Julius Caesar denarius with obverse head of Venus and reverse Aeneas carrying his aged father Anchises to safety from the sack of Troy - an allusion to Caesar's ancestry.

After starting work at fifteen as an office junior in 1961 in Shaftesbury Avenue, W1, earning £5 a week, of which £2.10s was given to mum as housekeeping, I used to walk home from work taking two hours to save the train and bus fares. From this saving I bought my first 'major' coin, a Philip and Mary full title undated shilling for £4. 5s from a dealer in Leicester Square. My favourite and most expensive coin was bought from Seaby in 1981, an Edward IV 1465 Coventry mint ryal.

Maybe in years to come I will have to dispose of my collection, but I could never part with the first three coins mentioned earlier as they gave me more pleasure than anything since. What does sadden me is that I have never met anyone amongst my family and friends who have any interest in numismatics to share this wonderful hobby.

[Editor's note: As we well know in the Club, there are very few younger people coming into numismatics and joining the clubs and societies despite the availability of financial grants for them to attend the weekend gatherings and the Annual Numismatic Congress of the British Association of Numismatic Societies. The average age of attendees is steadily increasing. On a personal note, I still have in my trays the first two Roman coins I ever bought, they small AE of Valens and of Gratian, the names still clear on them, costing 6d each, and chosen from a bowl that Mr Woodiwiss had in his shop in Victoria Street by Caxton Hall. Subsequently he took a small shop in Sicilian Avenue off Southampton Row and by the British Museum - I'll bet that brings back a few memories to some Club members! The Siciliaian Avenue shop is long gone (at one time Christopher Eimer had a gallery there dealing in commemorative medals) and several have taken its place, and also gone, in the intervening years.]

REVIEW ARTICLES

SHIRE PUBLICATIONS: COINS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

John Roberts-Lewis looks at some interesting and useful titles from a prolific publisher.

Currently there are three titles on coins in Shire's Archaeological Series and two others in its 'slimmer' Album Series - all are listed below. Our Editor reviewed Richard Abdy's *Romano-British Coin Hoards* in the January 2003 *Newsletter*, and Philip de Jersey's *Celtic Coin Hoards in Britain* in the November 1997 issue. For those not familiar with Shire Publications, they have a small format (21x15cm) with, in the Archaeological Series, an average of 64 pages. The card covers have a colour photograph on the front and inside are numerous black and white photographs and plans; more recent publications have now gone to colour throughout. This format provides for a useful and inexpensive volume costing under £6 on subjects which cover a wide range in other series and areas as well as archaeology. The great virtue, much praised in reviews, is the compact presentation of up-to-date specialist knowledge. This can be an end in itself, or a starting point for further reading and appropriate sites and museums to be visited.

Their popularity can be judged by the issue of updated editions and reprints. For example, John Casey's *Roman Coinage in Britain* was first issued in 1980; the second edition came out in 1984, was reprinted in 1988, and then a third edition in 1994, reprinted in 1999.

This summer I was pleased to encounter practical use, by archaeologists of the books by Abdy and de Jersey when visiting an archaeological dig at Silchester with other members of the Association for Roman Archaeology (ARA).

Silchester was extensively excavated between 1890 and 1909 by the Society of Antiquaries of London, revealing stone foundations of Roman third and fourth century AD buildings. Although competently excavated by the standards of the time, the first and second century buildings were not observed. Techniques were developed later to show these earlier phases in other Roman towns in Britain. Work at Silchester since 1974 has now revealed a long sequence for the site. John Casey, mentioned above, also excavated at Silchester. Between 1984 and 1986 a

team from Reading University re-excavated the Forum and Basilica in the town centre, also discovering pre-Roman remains under the Basilica. Since 1997 a training dig for Reading university students began, running for six weeks each summer and planned to last for ten years. Professor Mike Fulford, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Reading has recently written (*Current Archaeology* no. 200 (Nov/Dec 2005), pp. 4047, '30 Years at Silchester, in an overview and noting that much still remains to be investigated).

This modern work, some of which I saw, reveals a continuity from Celtic round houses c. 25-15 BC, through pre-Roman rectangular houses, c. AD 50-60, to Roman wood-framed construction from around AD 85. A later change of alignment saw a resurgence of building during the third and fourth centuries before the end of the town around the mid-fifth century. Unlike most Roman towns in Britain there was no further building on the site (other similar 'clear' sites are at St Albans (Verulamium) and Wroxeter).

The highlight of the ARA visit was to be able to handle the more robust small finds, which included coins. These would normally be recorded and then sent to a professional numismatist, but for the moment they were held by the Small Finds Officer and many being identified from the Shire books. One coin in particular rang a bell for me when it was handed round, with Philip de Jersey's book open at page 43. This shows the obverse and reverse of a cast bronze coin of the Durotriges. It has ten dots in three rows on one side and a forked line on the other dividing 14 dots into two dissimilar patterns of seven either side of it. I subsequently looked up our Editor's review and can do no better than to quote his comments on Celtic coins on the western periphery in southern Britain, 'where perhaps some of the worst examples of the series were produced by the Durotriges'. I had been looking at possibly the worst example with its dire design. However, its importance archaeologically, like other Celtic coins found in Silchester, is the support these discoveries provide in dating when found in excavations.

The town was named *Calleva Atrebanan* ('the market of the Atrebatas') and there is a gold coin of the Atribates inscribed EPPI on one side and CALLEV on the other. This is ascribed to a leader called Eppillus, one of several leaders known from coins and probably ruling from Silchester, although their history is far from clear.

De Jersey says that 'relatively low-value coins ... may finally have performed a function not unlike our coinage today.' He explains that how Celts used their coins is often controversial and that these questions will only be answered through archaeological excavation where the context is carefully recorded. Metal detector discoveries of Celtic coins have provided a wealth of new information in the last 30 years, both new types and altering distribution maps, but they don't address the fundamental question of use. Clearly where coins of the Durotriges, who occupied an area to the west of the Atrebatas, are found in Calleva Atrebatum, use of base metal can reasonably be concluded as being different perhaps from silver and gold coins whose high intrinsic value may reflect use as a 'wealth store' or for jewellery material.

My enthusiastic support for Shire Publications began in 1980 and over the years I have bought over 40 titles. For most of this time I did not live in Princes Risborough, where my house was about ten minutes walk from their head office in Church Street. It is not a sales outlet, but very useful for dropping orders!

I would also like to mention the ARA whose aim is to raise money to help fund excavations. This is done through subscriptions, donations to the Graham Webster Research Fund, profits from lectures, short tours and one-day visits. They issue a Bulletin twice a year as well as ARA News, the March 2004 issue reporting the discovery of a Roman coin of Augustus near Christchurch, New Zealand! Context is not always as straightforward as it may seem.

The books:

Shire Archaeology Series:

Celtic Coinage in Britain. Philip de Jersey. 1996.

Roman Coinage in Britain. P. J. Casey. 1999 (reprint of 3rd edition, 1994).

Romano-British Coin Hoards, Richard Anthony Abdy. 2002.

Shire Albums Series:

Coins and Minting. Dennis Cooper. 1996 (reprint of 2nd edition, 1990).

Scottish Coins. Donal Bateson. 1987.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND PORUS' ELEPHANT

Peter Clayton looks at the unusual issue of a coin with an animated fighting scene

The commonest and most widely circulating silver coin in the ancient Greek world before the advent of Philip II of Macedon (359-336 BC) was the Athenian silver tetradrachm (four-drachm piece). Its obverse with the helmeted head of Athena and reverse of her owl facing and the identification letters AOE not only circulated widely as coin but also as silver bullion (hoards from Egypt often have test cuts in the coins) and were also widely copied as being 'the coin' - examples made in Southern Arabia feature an owl that looks as if it has decidedly come off worst in a fight with a cat. The wealth of Athens, and thereby her prolific coinage, lay in her control of the vast silver mines at Laurium in Attica.

Once Philip had made his move into the Greek world he not only had his own rich mines for gold and silver in Macedonia but could then add to those the output of the Laurium mines. Philip issued gold staters with obverse head of Apollo and reverse a racing chariot. Like the 'owls' of Athens, these coins were also widely copied. After Philip's assassination in 336 BC his son, Alexander III, the Great, continued his father's military programme. Alexander introduced a new type for his tetradrachms with obverse head of young Herakles (an ancestor of the Macedonian royal house) and reverse Zeus seated with his eagle on his hand. As Alexander moved across the known world so this basic tetradrachm type was struck at many and different mints. They are generally identified by the various symbols that appear on the reverse beneath Zeus' throne. The late Dr Martin Price made sense of these many different symbols in his magnificent two volume study published in 1991, and identified new mints such as that at Memphis in Egypt.

Alexander's coinage consisted of gold staters and silver tetradrachms, and also some dekadrachms (ten-drachm pieces) with the same type as the tetradrachms. However, there were some other large rather enigmatic coins of dekadrachm weight that are often referred to as medallions. These large coins had an obverse type showing a mounted horseman, Alexander, on a rearing horse (Bucephalus) on the left who is attacking with a spear an elephant moving away to the right. On the

elephant's back are two figures, both turn backwards to their attacker; the *mahout* (driver) seated on the animal's neck turns to throw a spear, the other figure is to be identified as King Porus. In the field is a monogrammed letter like two superimposed Zs. On the reverse is a standing figure of Alexander holding a spear and an outstretched thunderbolt and wearing a tall-plumed helmet that is a mixture of a Greek helmet and the Persian satrapal headdress. Nike, the goddess of Victory flies from the left to crown him and in the field is a monogrammed *Bab*, indicating the mint of Babylon.

The first known example of these unusual pieces was bought by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks, one-time Director of the British Museum and arguably its greatest benefactor after Sir Hans Sloane its founder in 1753. Where Franks actually acquired the coin from is not known, although it has been suggested that it was associated with the fabulous gold Oxus Treasure. Franks donated the coin to the British Museum in 1887 and a line illustration of it appeared in the *Numismatic Chronicle*. From that point controversy began - first, there were the arguments as to which battle was represented, was it the Granicus since Alexander (in the guise of Zeus) on the reverse was wearing the tall plumes he sported at that battle; or was it the battle with the Indian King Porus at the Hydaspes River; therefore was the mint somewhere in Bactria, or was it Babylon, and so on. There were arguments about the monogram on the reverse: did it stand for the Greek word *basileus* (king, i.e. identifying Alexander), or was it the mint signature for Babylon? A second example was acquired by the British Museum in 1926 which clarified the superimposed Zs that had been obliterated on the Frank's specimen (Fig 1).

Professor Frank Holt's new book on the Alexander/Porus dekadrachms lists ten known specimens of this excessively rare coin. These were the numbers known up until 1973 when a new and incredible treasure burst onto the numismatic world. Known as 'the Iraq hoard', apparently some 1,800 silver coins had been found near Babylon. The Geneva-based numismatist Nicholas Duerr had been able to photograph many of the coins from the hoard or hoards, since there appeared, from the evidence of the patina, to be two deposits involved. Duerr said that there were at least three more genuine examples of the Porus 'medallions' in this hoard. Also, incredibly, the hoard contained at least six examples of a previously unknown coin that could be linked to the elephant

medallions. These were tetradrachms in weight and had a riderless Indian elephant on the obverse and a standing archer firing arrows on the reverse. These coins had exactly the same Greek letters/markings that appeared on the dekadrachms. At a Swiss auction in April 1975 some of the 'Iraq hoard coins' were offered. A poor example of the Alexander/Porus medallion realised in excess of \$20,000 whilst an example of the new elephant/bowman coins cleared \$14,000. Then, another new coin appeared which had two riders on the elephant and a quadriga chariot with a driver and a firing archer in its body. This example, which did not have the Greek letters/markings but was, nevertheless obviously associated with the 'elephant' series, went to the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, for \$11,000.

Of the total of 13 Porus medallions, known in 2003, five are in major public collections (Fig 2) and the remainder are often difficult to track through the various sales and private hands through which they have passed (Fig 3) [See **Postscript**, below]. It also seems that there are at least nine forgeries of the medallion that have surfaced from time to time, most of them apparently based on the original example bought by Franks in the British Museum - the quality varies, as indeed it does on several of the genuine original examples.

The consensus of opinion now is that the Porus medallions were struck in Babylon but the dies were cut by engravers not truly adept at dealing with their subject and the size of the piece, they weigh between 38.71 to 40.94gms (at 42.20gms the Franks specimen is the heaviest). This also led to striking difficulties as the die alignments are variable and, curiously for such a rare coin, of the ten prime known examples nine have the same obverse die whilst there are five die varieties for the reverse. Obviously the coins/medallions were not meant for general circulation as currency and may well have been intended as personal gifts by Alexander to those who had served him well, especially in the Indian campaigns. Only time will tell if more examples will be found in Iraq and, hopefully, will be properly examined and recorded before being dispersed in trade.

Alexander the Great and The Mystery of the Elephant Medallions, by Professor Frank L. Holt. University of California Press, 2003. xv + 198pp, 14 b/w pls, 6 figs, 3 maps. Hardback, £16.95.

Reprinted from *Minerva* vol. 15, no. 5, Sept/Oct 2004, pp. 46-7. There with three illustrations, their captions reproduced here for information.

Fig 1. Obverse and reverse of the second specimen of an Alexander/Porus dekadrachm acquired by the British Museum in 1926 (BM 1926-4-2-1; wt 39.66gms; diam. 30mm).

Fig 2. Obverse of the Alexander/Porus dekadrachm in the National Museum, Copenhagen, acquired in 1974. SNG Copenhagen Supplement, no.1269.

Fig 3. Obverse and reverse of an Alexander/Porus dekadrachm in commerce, 2002. Private collection. Photo courtesy of CNG.

Postscript. A 'Porus' tetradrachm was offered as lot 144 in the Gemini II sale on 10 January 2006 at the 34th Annual New York International Numismatic Convention. Estimated at \$100,000, and ex Nelson Bunker Hunt collection, it sold for \$90,000. This is Professor Holt's E/A 6 (p. 167), exhibited at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, 1983, and subsequently sold Sotheby's Auction 6043 , 19 June, 1990, lot 103.

THE LATE ROMAN GOLD AND SILVER COINS FROM THE HOXNE TREASURE

Peter Clayton examines the coins from the largest hoard of its kind from anywhere in the Roman Empire

Go out into a field with your metal detector looking for a lost hammer, and end up a millionaire - it is the stuff that dreams, and fantasy are made of, but it did happen. In November 1992 Eric Lawes was asked by a farmer friend to look for a hammer lost off the back of his tractor. Eric obligingly began the search with his metal detector and started finding a trail of Late Roman small silver coins (*siliquae*), and then he got the big signal. He began to unearth more coins and a number of silver spoons -he had found the main deposit. Fortunately Eric Lawes then got in touch with the Suffolk Archaeological Unit and a team under Judith Plouviez came out to carry out some excavation and to remove the whole of the

treasure *en bloc* so that it could be excavated under laboratory conditions at the British Museum, thus preserving much additional information about the hoard, its content and its deposition.

The Hoxne hoard of Late Roman gold and silver coins, jewellery and plate is the largest of its kind not only from Britain (where some splendid large hoards of plate have been found) but also from the whole of the Roman Empire (see *Minerva* vol. 4, no. 6, Nov/Dec 1993, pp. 225). The hoard fell into two distinct parts, coins and jewellery; there were 29 pieces of gold jewellery, and 124 silver table utensils, spoons, strainers, etc. The coins have now been published in an exemplary monograph by Dr Peter Guest, Lecturer in Roman Archaeology in the University of Cardiff. The publication of the jewellery and silver plate in the treasure, written by Dr Catherine Johns, is scheduled for publication later next year.

The final number of coins from the hoard (a few extra ones were found in subsequent examination of the site) was 15,234 (Fig 1). There were 580 gold coins (*solidi*) ranging in date from Valentinian I (364-375) to Honorius (393-423) (Fig 2); 60 large silver coins (*miliarenses*, which are quite rare, Fig 3) from the reign of Constantius II (337-340) to Arcadius (383-408); 14,565 silver siliquae (Fig 4), including 428 imitations (Fig 5); five half siliquae, and 24 poor condition bronze coins of the early fourth century AD. The excavation in the laboratory revealed that the hoard had been carefully packed into a small chest using cloth and hay padding to protect the silver items and the gold coins were all found in one area, suggesting that they had been deposited together in a bag that had since decomposed. However, it seems that the owners had miscalculated the size of the wooden chest as the silver coins were found scattered over the other items, indicating perhaps that when it was found that the bags holding them would not fit into the chest, they were emptied out and poured in around the other objects.

Having such an enormous number of coins, both gold and silver available, from a defined and sealed source opened the doors for much research to be carried out into the supply and treatment of coins and mints, especially of silver, in the Late Roman Empire. Virtually all the silver siliquae in the hoard had been carefully clipped around the edges at some time before they were buried. Clipping of Late Roman siliquae is a phenomenon particularly associated with Roman Britain, and a feature of

the coins from virtually all the British hoards of the late fourth/early fifth century. The clippers took great care to maintain the roundness of the coins, so they obviously wanted to keep the coins in circulation. Had they wanted to use the silver to make quantities of forged coins, they would have melted them down. Here they were taking silver but keeping the coins in circulation, and then adding to those by making the irregulars or copies. Dr Andrew Burnett has suggested that this was done in AD 409 during the short reign of the usurper emperor Constantine III (407-411) to provide additional bullion. Fortunately, the latest coins in the hoard are two siliquae of that usurper emperor struck at Lyons (Fig 6), and they thus give the date before which the hoard could not have been buried. It was probably hidden quite shortly after Constantine III was captured and sent for execution in Italy under the rightful emperor Honorius.

Obviously the hoard represented the wealth of a very highly placed family but curiously there is no evidence for an appropriate villa or estate nearby, or even any identification for the name of Aurelius Ursicinus that appears engraved ten times in the bowls of a matching set of five *ligulae* and five *cochlearia* spoons. Hopefully, further research may identify him as a late Roman official.

Dr Guest's book is far more than a mere listing catalogue of the coins, although this is the major research element. Study of the coins produced so much more evidence for the use of coinage, especially the silver, at the period. The book is divided into four parts, the first relating the discovery of the hoard and then discussing other Late Roman hoards from Britain and the use of gold and silver in the Late Roman Empire. Part Two gives the description and commentary on the denominations and their production and surveys the development of siliquae from 355 to 408, including the chronological arrangement of the reverse types. In Part Three, essays examine the production of siliquae in the Western mints, the imitation siliquae in the treasure (Fig 5), and the phenomenon of clipping siliquae in Roman Britain. Part Four consists of two Appendices detailing the scientific examination of the siliquae and then follows the detailed listing and catalogue of the hoard. Twenty-two plates illustrate the coins and an additional 20 illustrate some of the jewellery from the hoard, some other British hoards of plate and other parallels.

Dr Peter Guest's book is a major publication in the field of studies of

silver coinage in the Late Roman Empire and the Hoxne hoard and its analysis will be the groundwork which will provide the basis for much further research.

The Late Roman Gold and Silver Coins from the Hoxne Treasure. P.S.W. Guest. British Museum Press, 2005. 160pp, 42 b/w pls, 19 figs, 67 tables. Hardback, £60.

Reprinted from *Minerva* vol. 16, no. 6. Nov/Dec 2005, pp. 53-4. The article contains six illustrations in colour of the coins, and the captions to them are reproduced here for information.

Fig 1. Group of gold solidi and silver siliquae from the Hoxne hoard after initial cleaning. These are mostly of the emperor Honorius but also include one of the large silver miliarenses of Eugenius (392-394; center), of which there were five examples in the hoard (and one gold solidus and 454 siliquae).

Fig 2. Gold solidi of some of the emperors represented in the Hoxne hoard. Top row: Eugenius, Magnus Maximus, Arcadius; middle row: Valentinian Gratian, Theodosius; bottom row: Valentinian Arcadius, Honorius. Diams av 20mm.

Fig 3. Group of silver miliarenses of Magnentius. Diam. 23mm.

Fig 4. Pile of silver siliquae of Honorius (393-423), many of them clipped.

Fig 5. Examples of plated forged siliquae (left) and genuine siliquae (right) from the Hoxne hoard.

Fig 6. Obverse and reverse together of the only two silver siliquae (partially clipped) of the usurper emperor Constantine II (407-411) in the Hoxne hoard. Their presence (both rare coins) gave the terminus ante quem date for the hoard, i.e. before which it could not have been hidden. Diam. 13mm.

BOOK REVIEWS

Into The Land of Bones: Alexander the Great in Afghanistan

Frank L. Holt. California University Press, Berkeley. 2005. xiii + 241 pp, 4 maps. Hardback, £15.95.

History has the habit of repeating itself, albeit usually with an odd twist admittedly, but still recognisable. This is a point that is well reflected in Professor Frank Holt's new book on Alexander the Great and his campaigns in Afghanistan. Some 2,300 years separate those events and the current situation in this still largely inaccessible and inhospitable country. Alexander was without the aids of modern troops in the area and it is all the more to be wondered how his Greek army, after years in the field, could still press on towards the unknown. Here, following on from his book on the Porus medallions (see *Minerva*, Sept/Oct 2004, pp. 46-7), Professor Holt evokes Alexander's Bactrian and Afghanistan campaigns, through a meticulously researched and referenced book based on the ancient sources; a gruelling, brutal and inconclusive war that sees parallels in the British 19th century attempts to subdue the country, the 20th century Soviet attempts and the current American scenario. There are incredible parallels to be drawn, and Holt is a master of his material making very perceptive points. In fact, leaving Alexander aside, as it were, the book should be required reading for any modern personnel with military aspirations in the area.

The archaeological and numismatic evidence is tied in with the literary sources to give the fullest narrative in English of Alexander's campaigns. A series of eight chapters chart the story following an Introduction that clearly outlines and draws the parallels of history. Of particular interest and importance are the last two chapters, 'The Legacy' and 'Conclusions' — here is the sad account of the many incredible coin hoards that often produced new and hitherto unknown kings, and the remarkable archaeological excavations and finds, most of which went for 'safe keeping' to the Kabul Museum; the looting of that museum in the civil wars is one of the great tragedies of history, as well as the deliberate destruction of many unique monuments. And it is not only the Greek view that is presented but also that of the local warlords, pushing the Greeks to and even beyond their limits that at times resulted in mania and

mutiny. Professor Holt on Alexander the Great is always a delight to read, lucid and informative, and his new book is no exception.

Peter A. Clayton

The Tribes & Coins of Celtic Britain..

Rainer Pudill and Clive Eyre. Greenlight Publishing, Witham, 2005.
82pp, 143 colour illus. Paperback, £15.

Despite the academic arguments that rage in recently published books as to whether the 'Celts' as such existed, Celtic coins remains a fast growing subject of study with, in recent years, a number of doctoral theses submitted focusing on very specific tribal issues. There are the detailed listings and analyses by students of the series such as R.D. van Arsdell (1989) but there are also problems in interpretation since we are dealing with a people who left no written records and those that do exist are by their enemies, the Romans. Celtic coins, therefore, with their wealth of imagery and symbols, as well as the few that carry regal names, are one of the best ways of accessing these early Europeans and their culture. This book, in taking a broad sweep, excellently illustrated, of Celtic coins uses them as a gateway into a world full of ideas, imagery and religion before the heavy tramp of Rome obliterated them. The earlier Celtic coins in many instances copied Greek or Roman prototypes, and the series was struck for only a little over two centuries. Here Dr Pudill sets the coins in their context, explaining their background and their interpretation. It is only in relatively recent years that the beauty of the designs on Celtic coins has been recognised and appreciated, many of the earlier publications dismissed them as being abstract or, worse, designer's errors. That this is not so is seen here especially where all the coins are reproduced at twice actual size, the better to be able to understand and interpret them. The value of the book as a contribution to the study of coins may be well judged by the fact that the Foreword is written by Professor Anthony Birley, an internationally noted authority on Rome and her interaction with the peoples around her. A useful addition to the book is a loose inserted Price Guide and it is not just theoretical since the majority of the coins illustrated have been drawn from the market rather than illustrating yet again specimens in museum collections. It is a book that anyone with an interest in the 'Celts', numismatically, archaeologically or artistically will wish to have.

Peter A. Clayton

The Sedgeford Hoard

Megan Dennis and Neil Faulkner

Tempus, Stroud, 2005. 95pp, 28 colour pls, 46 b/w/ pls. Paperback, £12.99

Think 'Treasure', then think gold coins in a pot, but in a cow bone — hardly? That, however, is what happened at Sedgeford in Norfolk, and it is the fascinating story told here. SHARP — the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project — was set up in 1995 to investigate the settlement and land use in a fairly small and typical English parish. Essentially medieval in character, gradually a strong Iron Age element became apparent underlying the Anglo-Saxon deposits. The hoard was found in August 2003 by Ke^y Woodward, a volunteer and metal detectorist working on the site. It consisted of 20 Celtic gold coins of Gallo-Belgic E type (early to middle 1st century BC) hidden in the hollow interior of the broken upper right front humerus (leg-bone) of a cow. Other scattered gold coins had been found on the site in previous years, but this time the machine's signal brought to light five coins, yet the strong signal still continued. Realisation dawned that it was emanating from the nearby cow bone; careful examination revealed two gold coins in the mud of the end of the bone's shaft. An X-ray was imperative, and radiologists at the Sandringham Hospital came to the rescue. Twenty gold coins showed up clearly inside the bone and, added to the five new finds and those of previous years, made a grand total of 39 coins, almost certainly from the same group and scattered by the plough.

Normally 'treasure' finds are rapidly whisked away to experts at the British Museum, but SHARP isn't run like that, it is an unusual dig run by its director, Dr Neil Faulkner, as 'democratic archaeology', i.e. everyone is involved. Since the coins were gold there were no conservation problems, and it was decided that the coins would be excavated from their hiding place by their finder, with a detailed photographic record being made at every stage. The coins were then individually and accurately weighed by local pharmacist, Alan Stockley, and recorded.

Obviously the story of the hoard, but also of the overall excavation and the Iron Age background, the book is very unusual and refreshing. The fully illustrated presentation has diary-like contributions in their own words by many of those concerned. Not only is it rare for hoards to be

found by archaeologists, there is only one other known Iron Age bone hoard is known. Found at Honley near Huddersfield in 1893, it is later than the Sedgeford hoard as it included some Roman *fibulae* with the coins; sadly, it was stolen some years ago and its present whereabouts are unknown. As a book, *The Sedgeford Hoard* is a first, unique in its approach to publication and excavation — it will certainly cause a degree of apoplexy among many of the diehards in the archaeological fraternity, but with the present high profile of, and public interest in archaeology, it is a breath of fresh air. Sir Mortimer Wheeler once wrote, over 50 years ago, 'Dead archaeology is the driest dust that blows' — at Sedgeford archaeology is alive and well.

Peter A. Clayton

Numismatic Forgery: An Illustrated Annotated Guide to the Practical Principals, Methods, and Techniques Employed in the Private Manufacture of Rare Coins

Charles M. Larson. Zynus Press, P.O. Box 17810, CA 92623, USA. 2004. xv + 199pp. Profusely illustrated. Paperback, £18.

This book should frighten American collectors and any others who are attracted by 'newly discovered' rarities and high value coins. It describes how anyone with model-making skills of a light engineering nature and having a lathe and typical workshop, can make dangerous coin forgeries. Additional equipment commonly used by jewellery makers help to improve technique and various materials available in hobby shops, at least in the USA, also make forging easier.

The information comes from talks the author had with Mark Hofmann, serving a life sentence for murder, obtained by a plea bargain and full confession in exchange for a probable death sentence. The book is divided into eleven chapters and is extensively illustrated with black and white photographs in the text. The first chapter highlights coins most commonly forged, the second gives lists of equipment needed and useful tools. There follows five chapters of detailed and illustrated forgery, including coin alteration, plating, casting and die cutting. photographs of machinery used and constructed show how to mimic successfully commercial coin production. A further three chapters show how a forger can cover up diagnostic differences looked for in forgery detection. The author's experiments proved that the techniques work.

Paradoxically, this is a very useful; book to read for those who are

interested in specific details of how legitimate coin production works, since it is these the forger aims to simulate. I would like to report that the final chapter, 'Detection and Protection', has the answers - it hasn't. Larson points out that there is 'no reliable test capable of determining the date of manufacture of a metal artifact.' What he recommends are the practical actions familiar to those involved in buying and selling fine art and archaeological artefacts. Provenance; use of trusted dealers and firms; comparison with proved authenticate specimens are mentioned, but all, of course, can have shortcomings. Even skilled coin forgery can have evidence of something not quite correct and modern machine struck forgeries may be detected by minute differences in measurement revealed by electronic measurement to two decimal places. Metal analysis fails in cases where the forger has used worn coins, genuine but of common date, as his metal source for striking rare dates or better condition coins. Surprisingly, genuine blanks can be bought in the USA for some issues!

Finally, since many coin categories are mentioned in the book, I list a number of these:

- Small denomination US 19th and 20th century gold coins.
- Top condition US coins and 'well circulated' rare dates.
- Nicely struck, moderately worn Greek, Roman and 'Biblical' coins.
- Uncirculated commemoratives and non-circulated legal tender gold.
- Medieval and other hammered coins, which apparently are easily copied. Photographs of specific examples are included.

Postscript

Whilst reading this book a BBC TV programme, "The man who forged America", was shown on Wednesday 24 August 2005 on digital BBC 4. It covered the life of Mark Hofmann from his schooldays spent forging coins, through dealing in and adding forgeries of rare documents to a grand investment swindle. Supposedly purchasing rare documents for clients' portfolios and borrowing money to pay them for these items 'sold' he hoped to meet his shortfall by selling for a million dollars a forged Mormon document. When this failed to materialise, a client was killed with a pipe-bomb. A second death and an explosion in his own car didn't fool the police and, as they say - the rest is history.

John Roberts-Lewis

EDITORIAL TAIL PIECE

Doesn't anyone else in the Club beside John Roberts-Lewis and the Editor read books on numismatics? If they do, their views, i.e. a review, on what they have read, would be welcome material for the Newsletter.