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The CCNB Newsletter is supported by the British Museum, the Royal Numismatic Society and the British Numismatic Society. The Newsletter appears three times a year, in January, April and September, and is received by those members of the RNS and BNS resident in the United Kingdom, and by others with an interest in numismatics. Under an agreement with the British Numismatic Trade Association, copies are also sent to the BNTA for despatch to its members.

Contributions and information will be gratefully received. Items for the January issue should arrive by 5th November 1999, and should be sent to Gareth Williams or Amanda Gregory, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG, tel. 0171-323 8322, fax. 0171-323 8171.

Anyone in the UK wishing to be added to the CCNB Newsletter mailing list should send their name and address to Amanda Gregory at the above address, or alternatively e-mail her at agregory@british-museum.ac.uk

FOCUS: PROVENANCE

It has become customary to include, where possible, the provenance of coins both in sales catalogues and in academic catalogues. The articles in this issue explain the value of provenance for collectors (whether private or institutional), for numismatic study, and for the trade, and discuss some of the ways that the provenance of newly-discovered coins is being recorded today.

SOUTH ASIAN COINS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The foundation of the British Museum's South Asian coin collection was really laid from the late 1830s onwards, with substantial acquisitions being obtained from the British East India Company or Europeans returning from India. Two major 19th-century sources predominate: the India Office Collection of 2420 coins, transferred from the Museum of the East India Company in 1879-80, and 4656 coins acquired in 1893-4 from the collection of Sir Alexander Cunningham, the first Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India.

The growth of the British Museum collection seems to have benefited from a sudden blossoming of interest in Indian numismatics in the 1830s. This owed much to the enthusiasm of one man, James Prinsep, who, as editor of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, actively encouraged the collection of coins and the publication of information on the subject. One of the key people in this regard was Charles Masson, an English deserter who became a spy for the British in Afghanistan. With funds from the East India Company, he bought large quantities of coins in Kabul bazaar, uncovered significant numismatic finds in many of the Buddhist remains of the region, and amassed some 80,000 coins from the ancient city site of Begram, north of Kabul.

The reconstruction of the history of India and its adjoining regions is heavily dependent on coins, as many rulers and dynasties are known only from this source. The question of provenance is therefore one of overriding importance in determining the patterns of coin distribution throughout the subcontinent. The potential



Sir Alexander Cunningham, drawn by C. W. Walton and co.

of the Masson material as a rich source of information for the coinages of the north-west was never realised. The collection was split up and much of it sold at auction in 1887, without its contents ever being fully recorded, but a comprehensive manuscript and published record of his finds survives. This has enabled the identification of a large number of his coins in the Museum's India Office Collection. As a result, a specific site provenance can now be assigned to many of them. In addition, the association of diverse issues in the closed context of the relic deposits provide an important dating tool for some of the problematic coinages of the region.

The archives of the Museum and elsewhere are an extremely rich source of provenance information. Delving into records led to the discovery in the British Library of the residue of some 15,000 coins primarily from Masson's collection. These are now on permanent loan to the Museum as an invaluable study collection. As is to be expected, the majority are of bronze and they

conform to the types he recorded finding at Begram. Other finds tend to be less spectacular, but nevertheless contribute to a better knowledge of provenances for the collection. For example, we now know that two-thirds of the gold coins of the Kushan king Huvishka, donated by the Punjab Government in 1879, came from a single hoard found in Peshawar. Similarly, James Prinsep's collection was acquired by the Museum without any records, but his own comprehensive list of the coins survives in the Ashmolean Museum. Finally, an important contribution was made by Douglas Saville of Spinks, who discovered three small books of coin rubbings in a provincial book sale in 1994. These have revealed that some 250 coins in Cunningham's collection originally belonged to Claude-August Court, a French general in the service of the Sikh Maharajah Ranjit Singh, who, according to Masson, cleared Peshawar of copper coins in his enthusiasm for collecting in 1835.

Elizabeth Errington

A CHANGING FUTURE FOR GENEALOGICAL NUMISMATICS IN BRITAIN

A distinguishing feature of British numismatics between the middle of the 19th century and the final years of the 20th century is that British numismatists have manifested greater interest in coin provenances than has been the case with their numismatic counterparts elsewhere in the world. More specifically, there has been an unspoken consensus among scholars, dealers and collectors in Britain that in certain series a statement of the previous collections through which any particular coin has passed is necessary to a proper description of the coin concerned. Such an attitude has so far prevailed that auction catalogues have frequently ascribed provenances to individual coins even where the coin is common and the provenance stated is merely the coin's appearance as part of an unidentified property in a relatively recent previous sale.

Although this state of affairs has assisted scholarship and has reflected the openness and honesty which has accompanied the sale of coins in Britain, British numismatists in general probably do not realise how lucky they have been to be so well informed about the past histories ('genealogies') of what they buy or study. It is true that Old Master paintings and Old Master drawings also customarily come with provenances, often carefully checked and researched, but there are few other areas in the world of collecting where provenances come as a normal accompaniment, and many valuable books, objets d'art and items of furniture change hands each year without a second thought as to their origin.

We seldom reflect on how it is that we assign importance to the fact that a particular coin once belonged to R C Lockett, or derived from the Park Street hoard, or was published in some now forgotten paper by H Alexander Parsons. When we come to think about it,

however, we are likely to agree that two separate factors make provenances appealing. One is the entirely understandable pleasure that all of us take in the fact that a particular coin originates from some celebrated collection or celebrated coin hoard of the past, and that factor will continue to play its part as long as coins continue to be studied or collected. The other is of a more intellectual character. Numismatists have long recognised that there are a number of series in which the number of surviving coins has historically been supposed to be relatively finite, and that by paying attention to provenance we can not merely identify a particular coin as Lockett's but can thereby distinguish it from other examples of the same variety that never belonged to Lockett. In this way we have often in the past been able to suggest that no more than such-and-such a number of coins exist of any given variety, and arithmetic of this kind has provided enlightenment to scholars and pleasure to collectors since the dawn of modern numismatic science.

Yet as the 20th century draws to its end we have been able to see with increasing clarity that the precise arithmetical calculations that so appealed to our predecessors are no longer as valuable, for the advent of the metal detector has meant that the number of known examples of any particular coin can no longer be thought of something that will remain constant or exactly calculable. It has always been recognised that the discovery of hoards is likely to affect calculations of this nature, but the view that historically has been taken is that if, say, six examples of a coin are known before the discovery of a hoard, and a new hoard contains thirty more, the basic arithmetical exercise will remain of permanent merit and all that will have changed is that scholars must draw conclusions from thirty-six specimens instead of from six. That is not an attitude that we can maintain in an age when virtually any calculations of such a kind that we may make will be overturned or refined by the routine activities of detectorists. Moreover, it becomes ever clearer that the number of coins struck, even in the reigns of the most obscure and short-lived Anglo-Saxon kings, was very large indeed, and we can no longer deceive ourselves that the six or thirty-six known examples of any particular variety represent more than the tiniest percentage of the original issue.

How necessary is it then that students and collectors of Anglo-Saxon and Norman pennies, and of other British coins of series hitherto studied genealogically, should continue to bother noting, counting, distinguishing and tracking individual specimens once the existence of any particular pair or combination of dies has been recorded? The answer is that we still must but that we should have our purposes more clearly in mind. Metrological research certainly requires the student to record as many specimens as possible and to be able to distinguish between them so that the evidence of each individual coin is only used once. The study of coinages specimen by specimen also serves to show which die-combinations are normal and which are exceptional, and there are some coinages where internal die-linking is so extensive that the study of individual specimens enables numismatists not merely to distinguish rare die-combinations from common ones but to determine the order of die use. More generally, there are still vast areas of the British coinage which are not yet fully understood, and where a careful tally of the known coins of a



Silver penny of Harold I, Long Cross and Trefoil type. Recently acquired by the British Museum, ex Stack; ex Lockett; ex Murdoch; ex Montagu; ex Murchison; ex Martin.

particular reign or period remains essential, not least because it may reveal the nature of dispersed coin hoards that were not properly recorded or declared to the authorities at the time of their discovery.

Nonetheless, there have always been areas of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman coinages where the recording of pedigrees and the distinguishing of individual coins has not been particularly rewarding. Who, for example, has ever been able to draw any useful scholarly conclusion from the provenances of individual coins of the Paxs type of William the Conqueror, since all but a small percentage derive from the great Beauworth hoard of the 1830s, whether or not a Beauworth provenance in each instance is explicitly recorded? We must brace ourselves for the realisation that what is true of the Paxs type today will eventually become true of many other types. Although this is not going to happen next week, or next year, or even in our own lifetimes, it is as well that we should face the fact that the systematic recording of the back histories of individual early mediaeval coins may be of dwindling importance as we proceed into the next millennium.

Realism about such matters cuts both ways. In an era when detectorist activity has added very significantly to the known numbers of almost every category of coin from the Celtic period onwards, patterns for the coinages of the 16th and 17th centuries, seldom casually lost and almost never hoarded, are as rare as ever, as indeed is the case with some varieties of high denomination currency issues of the same period, particularly those struck after the close the English Civil War. Commemorative medals of the 16th and 17th centuries also survive in no greater quantity than they did thirty or forty years ago. The rarities in these series are thus much rarer now relatively to, say, coins of King Offa of Mercia than was ever the case in the time of our numismatic predecessors, and if these are to be the real rarities of the coming millennium, we ought to take them more seriously. All of us can recognise how few proper corpuses have yet been compiled for most of the issues involved, and how little scholarly investigation has been carried out into the back histories of the known specimens.

Pessimists may well observe that in some of these series the mere distinguishing of specimens will not actually tell us anything useful about the coins and medals concerned, but these were items intended for circulation and handling among a limited number of high status individuals, and a tracking of their provenances back to owners and collections of the later 17th and early 18th centuries could indeed be enlightening on how widely they were distributed and whether the coins issues concerned were genuine currency issues or not, just as the tracking of similar item of late 19th century or early 20th century date to the collections of William Saward and Sir Robert Johnson has shown that these were items produced within the Royal Mint which ought never to have escaped into the wider world. As regards commemorative medals, Marvin Lessen's series of articles in the *British Numismatic Journal* on Thomas Simon's medals of the Cromwellian period has already shown both the potential value of listing every known specimen and the real loss to scholarship which has occurred when provenances of comparable specimens have become inextricably confused.

Hugh Pagan

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES AND PROVENANCE

The recently published first annual report of the Portable Antiquities scheme states that in its first year the original six pilot schemes recorded some 13,500 archaeological objects found by members of the public, mostly metal detector users. Most of these objects are recent finds which, prior to the scheme, would probably have never been seen by archaeologists or museum personnel. Large numbers of records such as this represent a considerable amount of potentially valuable archaeological data, which is likely to increase significantly should the scheme be successful in its bid to expand nationwide in 2000.

The records will allow detailed study to be undertaken on many different types of object from all periods, but for the data to be of most value, the record must also include a provenance. Information about where the find was made is vital if the study of 'stray' finds is to assist in our understanding of the various activities of our ancestors. The Portable Antiquities scheme is ultimately striving towards being able to attach at least 6 figure grid references to all its records. Currently however, some finders are only willing to part with a four figure grid reference (1km²) or parish name. Even this level of precision is useful though - depending on what the data is to be used for. For the researcher wishing to produce a general distribution map of say the spread of Celtic coinage across England, a parish or general location will normally suffice. On the other hand, the archaeologist plotting finds at a 'site' level in order to recognise possible concentrations of activity, or even to distinguish particular activities within a site would need precise and reliable findspot information.

Those who have had any contact with detector users will know that there are a variety of reasons why they may be reluctant to reveal exact findspots. These include:

- the archaeologist will recommend to the landowner that they do not allow further detecting on their land;
- being requested by the landowner not to report finds for fear of the archaeologist scheduling their land;
- archaeologists will take their finds from them;
- fear that other detector users will poach their sites.

Reluctance to pass on findspot information however, does not necessarily mean that they are detecting without permission. These views, whether valid or not, are currently held by many detector users.

The main recipient of the Portable Antiquities data is the local Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) where precise findspot information can play an important role in the development control process. The information is also being made available through the schemes website (www.finds.org.uk), although here the findspot information is limited to a parish location. It is presently expected that data passed to the SMRs will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality as the site and findspot data they already hold.

Greater levels of precision are desirable for the findspots of those finds which are considered important or unusual due to their age and/or rarity. For example, in the North West effort is being made to obtain at least a six figure grid reference for all Roman coin finds due to their relative scarcity here. However, as one of the aims of the scheme is to encourage and promote better recording practice, Finds Liaison Officers (FLO) are

emphasising the importance of recording provenance for all finds.

The level of success the FLOs have had with obtaining precise findspot information varies from pilot area to pilot area. In the North West roughly half of all findspots recorded have at least a six figure grid reference. In comparison, Norfolk and Suffolk can expect almost all findspots to be recorded to at least six figures. East Anglia has a tradition of co-operation between archaeologists and detectorists, whereas in the North West there was very little contact between detectorists and archaeologists prior to the scheme being introduced. Educating metal detector users on the importance of recording findspots will be a very long task considering the strained relationship which has existed between the hobby and the profession. It is hoped the Portable Antiquities scheme can go some way towards healing this rift as well as assisting our understanding of the past through the study of stray finds.

Nick Herepath

North West Finds Liaison Officer, Liverpool Museum

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING PROVENANCED: THE CASE OF CELTIC COINS

The Celtic Coin Index holds records of approximately 29,000 British Celtic coins, of which almost exactly two-thirds are provenanced. Of the c. 19,000 provenanced coins, almost 11,000 (58%) are single finds, made by chance, through archaeological excavation, or (predominantly) by metal detecting. The remaining 8,000 coins are incorporated into more than 160 hoards. Together these various types of provenance provide invaluable assistance in unravelling the complex development of coinage in Britain in the century before the Roman conquest; development which could not be properly understood without the benefit of this information.

Two very different case studies can serve to illustrate the value of findspot information to quite distinct aspects of the study of Celtic coinage. On the basic question of attribution, the example of the Thurrock potin shows how accepted wisdom can be rapidly overturned by diligent and thorough recording of findspots. This cast bronze coinage was attributed by RD Van Arsdell (*Celtic Coinage of Britain*, 1989) to the north Thames tribes of the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni, following the discovery of a hoard of some 2400 coins at Thurrock in Essex in 1987. At that time single finds of the type were scarce, with no obvious centre of concentration. Since the early 1990s, however, recording of metal detector finds in Kent by David Holman, and more recently by the introduction of the finds liaison officer for the county, now paints a very different picture. More than 90% of almost 400 single finds of Thurrock potins have been made in Kent. There is little evidence here for an attribution to the north Thames territories. The evidence of provenance thus supports the typological argument, which suggests that these coins were the predecessors of the flat linear potin coinage, also originating in Kent.

Although the Kentish bias in the distribution of these coins seems convincing, it is important to observe that the introduction of recording finds in Essex to the standard achieved in Kent might lead to further reassessment. The archaeological maxim that 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence' should always be borne in mind.



Gallo-Belgic E uniface stater, of a type widely imported into Britain.

The same observation holds equally true for our second case study, which concerns the Gallo-Belgic uniface stater. This coin was minted in Belgic Gaul, probably immediately before and during the early years of the Gallic War. It was struck in colossal quantities, and many thousands were imported into Britain, possibly as payment for British mercenaries fighting on the side of the Gauls. The coin is found almost everywhere that Celtic coinage is found in Britain, with one exception: the territory of the Durotriges, in west Hampshire and Dorset. In this specific instance, the value of provenanced coins - or lack of them - is not particularly relevant to typology, but in the light it sheds on the political conditions at the time of the Gallic War. This negative evidence is surely indicative of very different allegiances and relationships both amongst British tribes, and with their continental neighbours. Why did the Durotriges provide no mercenary support against Caesar? Was it linked to their close relationship with Armorica, already conquered by Rome? Or were they paid by some other means, unrepresented or unobserved in the archaeological record? Could they really have melted down and reused every single uniface stater which entered their territory? None of these questions can be fully answered by the coins alone, but it is true to say that without the coins - and specifically without the evidence provided by their provenances, whether positive or negative - we would not even be able to ask the questions in the first place. A coin with provenance allows us to ask so much more than one without, and ultimately allows us to understand far more as well.

Philip de Jersey

Dr Philip de Jersey runs the Celtic Coin Index at the Institute of Archaeology, 36 Beaumont Street Oxford, OX1 2PG (tel. 01865 278240; email philip.dejersey@arch.ox.ac.uk). The Celtic Coin Index website is at <http://info.ox.ac.uk/~archinfo/ccindex/ccindex.htm>.

A VIEW FROM THE TRADE

I have just spoken to a colleague in Europe who has had a man arrested for offering him some coins which he identified as stolen. He was able to do this by establishing their pedigree from the sale catalogue they had appeared in. As a result, a ring of corrupt postal workers has been rounded up. This tale underlines the importance of provenance in a thoroughly practical way. Dealers usually love researching the provenance of a coin, especially when a good piece comes their way with an old tone that 'reeks' of an old collection, yet was sold with no mention of its history. It certainly adds to the value of a coin if its provenance can be traced to a famous collection. Even if such a coin has been overtaken by a recent hoard of superior specimens there is usually a collector who will think 'if it was good enough for (say) Sir Arthur Evans, it's good enough for me'. For certainty of identification, provenance goes hand in hand with photographic reproduction of the item, for only then can the unique individual characteristics of the coin (off

centring, die wear, etc) be recorded sufficiently to distinguish it from another, perhaps from the same dies.

One of the most useful by-products of a provenance is the help it gives in authentication. For instance, if it is known that there is a group of well made recent forgeries around, and one has a coin which can be traced back sixty years, then it can be confidently distinguished from anything recently discovered or made - not that all old collections are comprised entirely of genuine coins. In addition, if a particular issue is known from perhaps only five specimens, it would be important to discover if an offered example was one of the five or a new discovery (perhaps indicating a new find).

Hoard provenance also concerns the dealer. If possible he will certainly record it, since collectors want as much information on coins as can be provided. Indeed, some only collect coins with hoard provenance. It should be said that large numbers of ancient coins have appeared in the market in the last twenty years or so from uncertain find spots - the result of many source countries not having in place any system to reasonably recompense finders for their discoveries, thus tempting finders to illegally export what they have found. Of course, under the new Treasure Bill, all coins found in UK soil require an export licence, so it is important to keep provenance on the coin ticket, if only to remind the dealer of his obligation with regard to export.

Old coin tickets help the numismatist, who may well recognise the writer's hand and thus identify the firm who sold the coin and, roughly, when. We recently took in a collection of Greek and Roman coins for auction which were purchased in the 1950's. Many of the coins are modest in terms of condition, but as a result of the original tickets accompanying them, we were able to establish auction pedigrees for most of the coins - even though several were part of unillustrated multiple lots. We urge collectors to retain any tickets they acquire with their coins - they are part of their history.

It is probably true to say that a dealer's stock-in-trade is to put coins into context, if only to be able to price them. It can be seen then that provenance for him is of paramount importance.

John Pett

British Numismatic Trade Association

EXHIBITIONS

THE STERLING POUND

Bank of England Museum, 7 June - 27 October 1999

This is the latest display to occupy the Bank of England's temporary exhibition space, and one can see why the idea of such a subject, 'tracing the origins and history of sterling', should be in the air. On one side the Prime Minister warily scans Middle England's focus groups, while on the other the Leader of the Opposition takes up Agincourt and Battle of Britain rhetoric in pursuit of a vote-winning cause. Not that any of this concern is apparent in the exhibition itself. With an elegant reticence taken perhaps to an extreme, it holds itself aloof from controversy to the point of not recognising that any exists. Given the careful position the Bank of England must hold by necessity, such caution may be understandable. As a result, however, the visitor is left, at least to some extent, to judge the significance and circumstances of the exhibition from what it doesn't say and show, as much as from what it does. One would

not propose that such an display should have a partisan approach, either proselytising for the onset of a European currency or staunchly upholding the pound as a bastion of national sovereignty, but the fact of the controversy might have been acknowledged and addressed.

The exhibition's reticence does lead one to look for hidden significance. Is its very title a subtle defence of the pound?: calling it *The Sterling Pound*, rather than simple *Sterling* does put the stress on the pound rather than the old penny, the true foundation-stone of sterling, which was decimalised out of existence a quarter of a century ago. For well over half of the period of sterling, from the obscure origins of the term in the 11th century to the present day, the pound did not exist as a coin or note, being a simple accounting term used to express the value of existing coins. The display's sub-title, 'the origins and history of sterling', as expressed on the lead-in panel, proposes a broader scope than the title itself.

The exhibition which follows is subdivided into seven themes, one to each case, surrounding a central case which contains a pile of 19th century sovereigns, representing the thousand million sovereigns struck between 1817 and 1932. The thematic cases begin with the origins of sterling, focussing on the imaginative theories which have been put forward over the years: that the word comes from *star*, from *Easterling*, or from the *starling* bird. The background of the £sd system itself is covered separately in a case which contains 240 Long Cross pennies of Henry III on loan from Baldwin's (perhaps from the Brussels hoard?), along with a group of Roman coins (a rather odd selection of a couple of unidentified denarii and some solidi of Theodosius II, clearly not part of the same coinage system) and a fascinating 18th century Bank ledger.

The next case is about the international role of sterling, albeit in a brief and partial way, surprisingly avoiding the imperial role of sterling, and here one begins to notice a worrying under-labelling of the objects. Now it is true that one of the most deflating moments of a museum curator's life is when observations and surveys reveal just how little of the text sweated over is actually read by a visitor, but to have such information available, should an object attract particular attention, is surely essential. However, here we have a 16th century Dutch coin guide without any descriptive label; plus foreign imitations of the sterling penny and the noble without proper identifications. Some other entire cases are practically without any information at all. One is devoted to sterling silver as a standard for metalwork, and includes a group of very attractive objects with no descriptions whatever, whether of date, function, or origin. Similarly, a case about standards and testing includes several varieties of balances and weights, but if you do not already know that *that one* is a Victorian sovereign balance and *this* is a 18th century pan balance, there is nothing there to enlighten you.

Sterling is far more a concept than an object or group of objects, certainly this is how it has evolved from a descriptive term for the English penny into a designation of the national currency. It follows that producing a display which reflects this transformation is always going to be a difficult task. The objects on view here are often well-chosen for their purpose, and this reviewer's impatience with the labelling is in that respect a compliment to the selection: I just wanted to know more (or, in a few cases, anything). Probably the most

entertaining case is one not devoted to money at all, but to the use of the word 'sterling' as a term of approbation and would-be guarantee of quality. Its contents reflect the range of goods and services seeking to piggy-back on the strength of sterling's good name, from golf balls to Panadol. It gathers together far too many cheap puns and allusions to sterling to allow me to follow suit in ending this review.

B.J. Cook

NEWS

A NEW KEEPER FOR THE HEBERDEN

Following the retirement last year of Michael Metcalf, Nicholas Mayhew has been appointed Keeper of the Heberden Coin Room at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, with effect from October of this year. Nick joined the Heberden in 1971 and has played an active part in British numismatic study. He has published widely, particularly in the field of late medieval numismatics; his most recent book, *Sterling: the rise and fall of a currency*, is currently in press. We wish him every success in his appointment.

DR SHAILENDRA BHANDARE

Dr Shailendra Bhandare (Bombay University), who has recently been working at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, has been awarded one of the first two Post-Doctoral Fellowships of the Society for South Asian Studies (British Academy), London. The fellowships are designed to promote the study of South Asian history, culture, art and archaeology in Britain and to foster international academic relations between Britain and the countries of South Asia.

Dr Bhandare will be working on the British Museum's collection of coins of the post-Mughal kingdoms and princely states of India and contemporary European issues for India, with the aim of creating a new arrangement and publishing a catalogue. He will also study related collections and archives in Europe, North America and South Asia.

PROFESSOR IAN CARRADICE

Congratulations to Ian Carradice on being awarded a personal Professorship by the University of St Andrews. Ian is well known for his study on the *Coinage of the Reign of Domitian*, and more recently his studies of Persian and Greek numismatics. Later this year will see the publication of his co-authored *Roman Provincial Coinage* Vol. II, and his next numismatic project will be the revised *RIC* volume for the Flavian Period.

MONEY WEEK '99: A WEEK OF MONEY EVENTS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM, 23-31 OCTOBER

A hobby, a source of amusement, a diversion from the stresses of everyday life, a passion, a means to a living. Coins and banknotes might be any or all of these things to you. The fact that you receive CCNB, though, suggests that they matter. If this is the case, then you may well be concerned about the future of numismatics and of coin collecting. People have been questioning the future of coin collecting for two decades, and probably with good reason. Over the past twenty years, dozens of British numismatic clubs have decreased in size or disappeared completely. In this context, the question 'does numismatics have a long-term future?' must be a valid one. The answer, of course, is yes, but not a future we can take for granted. Coins are wonderful, fascinating

things; they provide an insight into the past unparalleled by almost any other class of objects. But it's not enough to know this, it is up to us to persuade others.

At the British Museum, we're doing our bit to promote the history of money through a new initiative that we're calling 'Money Week '99'. The last week in October (a school half-term) will see a wide range of events that strive to make coins and banknotes accessible and interesting. There will be events for the specialist, events for a family audience and events for the general public. An identification 'roadshow', a medieval moneyer, gallery tours, handling sessions, practical workshops: all will be available at no cost to the visitor.

If you want more information about Money Week events, or alternatively are able to help us publicise them, call the Dept. of Coins and Medals on 0171 323 8607.

WESSEX NUMISMATIC SOCIETY GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

A total of 37 members and guests partook of the Society's coach trip to London from Southbourne on Easter Tuesday, April 6th. First port of call was the British Museum and the HSBC Money Gallery, where we were warmly welcomed by Joe Cribb and John Orna-Ornstein from the Department of Coins & Medals. Quite apart from being enthralled by the superb displays with something for everyone, we were also able to view the well-publicised neighbouring Gallery 69a exhibition, *Leaden Hearts: Convict Love Tokens*. All too soon it was time to leave for the short trip to our lunch stop in the private Tudor Room of The Clarence in Whitehall. Our next visit was to the Bank of England Museum, where the curator, John Keyworth, gave a short talk on the history of the Bank of England note. He then passed round several albums of notes from the Museum's collection among the party - those who were privileged enough to handle the £1 million note inside one of the albums won't forget the thrill in a hurry! We then dispersed to peruse the Museum's highly interesting and visually effective displays of coins, notes and related banking memorabilia before returning home.

On Thursday May 6th we held our Golden Jubilee Dinner at the Burley Court Hotel, Bournemouth, attended by 29 members and distinguished guests, including the Mayor of Bournemouth. Following a drinks reception, an official welcome by our patron Yvonne Johnstone and a superb meal, we were privileged to hear the Society's 44th Founders' Memorial Lecture, an address by Professor Michael Metcalf, president of the Royal Numismatic Society. Prof. Metcalf's lecture, *Coins and Geography - Fifty Years On*, was given on the exact 50th anniversary of his first-ever talk to a numismatic society - the Wessex - as a 16-year old schoolboy member, on May 6th 1949. Such an anniversary in British numismatic circles is believed unique (in the present century at least) and the speaker was warmly thanked by Marion Archibald on behalf of the guests present. The evening also featured a slide show tribute to Vivian du Bédat Smythe (1889-1954), Dr Edward Burstal (1879-1967) and the Society's other founding fathers, given by Peter Preston-Morley; special awards of the Society's Golden Jubilee paperweight to George Insley, the Society's oldest surviving president, and to Marion Archibald; and an award of a bronze specimen of the Wessex Medal to the Mayor. Guests were also privileged to view the unique set of three Wessex Medals, in gold,

silver and bronze, presented to the Russell-Cotes Museum & Art Gallery by our late member Fred Jeffery in 1974 - the first time they had ever been publicly displayed.

The Society extends a warm welcome to all with an interest in coins and medals in the Bournemouth area, whether resident or visiting on holiday. Further details may be had by telephoning the secretary on 020 7731 1702 or by visiting the coins and medals page at www.dorset-cc.gov.uk/DORIS/NEWDORIS.

Peter Preston-Morley, Secretary

THE PRESVEIS EXHIBITION

Presveis means "ambassadors" in Greek, and is an appropriate name for an internet exhibition, funded by the European Commission, on the subject of earlier monetary unions.

The Exhibition Map divides the site up into eight sections, which are arranged thematically (e.g. International Coinages in Antiquity, or Imperial Coinages in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages). Within each section (aethoussa) a general introduction precedes specific examples. The text is illustrated with pictures of coins, other artefacts and sites, which are shown parallel to a menu which offers further help (e.g. information about techniques, glossaries, and selected texts from literature). This exhibition has been mounted by the Numismatic Museum of Athens and the British Museum and can be found on the Greek Ministry of Culture's website. The full address is www.culture.gr/nm/presveis. This does not always work directly and you can also try going to www.culture.gr, scrolling down the menu to "Special Issues", and clicking on "Presveis" there.

Dr Andrew Burnett

ROYAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

The RNS medal for 1999 has been awarded to Joe Cribb of the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum.

The Society expresses warm thanks and good wishes to Michael Metcalf, who stands down after serving as President for five years. We are delighted to welcome Harold Mattingly as our new President. He is replaced as Vice-President by Andrew Burnett.

Visitors to our web-site can now consult a complete index of all Articles and Notes appearing in the *Numismatic Chronicle* from 1971 to 1998. It is hoped that earlier volumes may be added in the future. Find us at www.users.dircon.co.uk/~rns/

Three awards have been made from the Nicholas Lowick Memorial Fund (Oriental numismatics) and two awards from the Martin Price Memorial Fund (Greek).

Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Vikram Chand, the Society is pleased to announce the creation of the Chand A&Z Fund for Indian Numismatic Studies, to promote the study of coins of the Indian tradition in southern Asia. The primary purpose of the fund is to support research, for example by helping with travel costs or photographic expenses. For information on this and other funds, please write to the Secretary, Royal Numismatic Society, c/o Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, or e-mail us at rns@dircon.co.uk

BRITISH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Honorary membership of the British Numismatic Society has been awarded to Peter Woodhead, in recognition of services to the Society over many years. Peter, a Vice-

President and former President, has been a member of the Society since 1952.

The Society's Special Meeting was held in the Old Municipal Buildings at Taunton on Saturday 3rd July. Forty-five participants enjoyed papers on West Country themes by Paul Robinson, Michael Metcalf, Edward Besly, Stephen Minnitt and Graham Dyer. Particular thanks are due to Stephen Minnitt and Somerset County Museums Service for their hospitality and organisation of a memorable day. The next special one-day meeting will take place at Colchester on Saturday 8th July 2000.

LECTURES, SEMINARS, COLLOQUIA AND CONFERENCES

1999 BANS Autumn Weekend

This will be held from Friday 17th September to Sunday 19th September at Hartford College Oxford. The programme will include illustrated talks by Christopher Comber, Prof Michael Metcalf, David Sellwood, Prof T V Buttrey and Edward Besly, as well as the Annual Royal Mint Lecture. Full residential cost is £118 (deposit £25). For further details contact J. Bispham, 103 Ferry Road, Hullbridge, Essex, SS5 6EL. Tel: 01702 230950

7th Century Syria Numismatic Round Table

The meeting arranged for 27th November 1999 at the British Museum is having to be postponed. It will now take place in late January/early February 2000. Details will appear in the next edition of CCNB Newsletter.

Counterfeiting: Ancient and Modern : 14-15th September 2000

This joint RNS-BM symposium is organised through the Scientific Research Committee of the RNS and will be held in London at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly. The theme will be counterfeiting in its broadest sense, including all aspects of the technology and scientific investigation of the manufacture and context of unofficial currency issues. This would include, for example, plated and cast coin forgeries, false dies, semi-official copies (e.g. Roman issues from eastern Europe), banknotes, forgers' workshops, materials associated with forgery production, experimental replication of processes, examples of anti-forgery practice and novel techniques of forgery examination and detection. It is expected that the proceedings will be published by the RNS in its series 'Metallurgy in Numismatics'.

For further details contact: Mike Cowell, Department of Scientific Research, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG. tel: 0171 323 8277 / fax: 0171 323 8276/ e-mail m.cowell@british-museum.ac.uk

LECTURE DIARY

September

28 BNS

The engraving of seals in the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV

John Cherry, Keeper of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum

October

12 BAMS

The universe in your hand: globes on medals 1440-2000

Peter Barber, Deputy Map Librarian, British Library

- 19 RNS
Numismatic Publications in the 17th Century: An Appraisal and a Survey
Christian Dekesel
- 26 BNS
The single currency in historical perspective
The Linecar Lecturer: Professor Glyn Davies

November

- 16 BAMS
Figuratively speaking
Alison Branagan, artist sculptor
- 19 RNS
Women of the Middle Ages: depictions on coins from East and West
Samir Shamma
- 23 BNS
Anniversary Meeting and Presidential Address

December

- 14 BAMS
Into the Millennium
Frances Simmons, dealer and medal enthusiast
This talk will take place at 6pm at the Simmons gallery, during a reception and private view of the gallery's millennium exhibition, 5.30-7.30pm, to which BAMS members are invited.
- 21 RNS
Aesthetics and Numismatics: The Case of Seltman and the Incuse Coinage
Alastair Blanshard

Contacts:

British Art Medal Society (BAMS)
Philip Attwood, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG, tel. 0171-323 8260. Unless otherwise stated all meetings held at 5.30pm, Cutler's Hall, Warwick Lane, London EC4

British Association of Numismatic Societies (BANS)
Mr P H Mernick, c/o Bush, Boake, Allen Ltd, Blackhorse Lane, London E17 5QP, tel. 0181-523 6531

British Numismatic Society (BNS)
Charles Farthing: correspondence: c/o Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AB; tel. 01329 284 661. Unless otherwise stated all meetings held at 6.00pm at the Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London WC1.

British Numismatic Trade Association (BNTA)
Mrs Carol Carter, General Secretary, PO Box 474A, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0WJ. Tel: 0181-398-4290; fax: 0181-398-4291

Oriental Numismatic Society (ONS)
Mr Peter Smith, 9 Grandison Road, London SW11 6LS, tel. 0171 228 2826

Royal Numismatic Society (RNS)
Ms V Hewitt, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1 3DG, tel. 0171-323 8228. Unless otherwise stated all meetings held at 5.30pm, Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London WC1.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

Rebels, Pretenders and Impostors: Political Fictions on Coins and Banknotes

Gallery 69a, British Museum, 13 April - 3 October 1999

The Sterling Pound

Bank of England Museum, Bartholomew Lane, London EC2, 7 June - 27 October 1999

The Metal Mirror: Coin Photographs by Stephen Sack

Gallery 69a, British Museum, 5 October - 5 December 1999

AUCTIONS AND FAIRS

September

- 2 *Taisei-Baldwin-Gillio Auction, Singapore*
Far Eastern Coins, Medals and Banknotes
Contact Baldwin's for details
- 9 *Coin and Medal Sale*
Bonham's
- 10 *The London Coin Fair*
Carlisle Suite, Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch, London W1
Enquiries: Frances Simmons 0171 831 2080
- 14 *Auction of Scottish Banknotes*
Christie's, Glasgow (contact Spink for details)
- 29 *Auction of Ancient, English and World Coins, Historical Medals and Tokens*
Glendining's (NB this date may be changed)
- 30 *Banknotes Auction*
Spink

October

- 6 *Auction 136 - the George Zacos Collection*
Spink
- 9 *Sale 16 - Ancient, modern and mediaeval coins*
Italo Vecchi Ltd
- 6-7 *Auction 137 - Ancient English and Foreign Coins and Commemorative Medals (Coinex)*
Spink
- 8-9 *Coinex London, Marriot Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London W1*
- 11-12 *Auction 20 - the A L T McCammon Collection of Channel Islands Coins, Tokens and Paper Money*
Auction 21 - Ancient, British and World Coins, Commemorative Medals and Banknotes
Baldwin's
- 13 *Auction of Islamic Coins (Turath Collection part 2)*
Spink
- 14 *Auction of Ancient Islamic, English and Foreign Coins, including coins from the John J Slocum Collection*
Sotheby's

November

- 6 *The London Coin Fair*
details as September 11th
- 10 *Auction of Orders, Decorations and Medals*
Glendining's
- 13-14 *Arabian Coins and Medals LLC/Baldwin's Auctions Ltd, Dubai*
Emirates Coin Auction 2 - Islamic coins and regional coins and paper money
Contact Baldwin's for details
- 16 *Auction 138 - English and Foreign Coins and Commemorative Medals*
Spink

December

- 2 *Baldwin's/M&M/Vecchi - New York Sale II*
Greek, Roman, Byzantine Mediaeval and later coins, Commemorative Medals, Banknotes and Numismatic Books
- 15 *War Medals Sale*
Bonham's

Unless stated otherwise all auctions held at addresses listed. Dates may be subject to alteration.

Baldwin's: Royal Society of Arts, John Adam St, London

Bonham's: Montpelier St, Knightsbridge, London SW7 1HH

Glendining's: 101 New Bond St, London W1Y 9LG Christie's/Spink & Son: 5-7 King St, London SW1Y 6QS Tel: 0171 930 7888

Sotheby's: 34 New Bond St, London W1A 2AA

Italo Vecchi Ltd: 35 Dover St, London W1X 3RA