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FOCUS ON TOKENS

In this bumper issue on tokens, the first two articles show how the shortage of copper and silver regal coinage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was addressed by the introduction of copper tokens and countermarked foreign silver coins for use as small change. The other four articles concentrate on collecting and collections: the role of the Token Corresponding Society; the publication of the Norweb collection and its partial integration into the British Museum's collection of seventeenth-century tokens; and the British Museum's collections of East Asian and love tokens.

EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY TOKENS

A century or so after the introduction of a regal copper coinage in 1672, the monetary token reappeared on a substantial scale in Britain, for much the same reason that had occasioned its seventeenth-century predecessor. This time, though, it was not so much urban tradesmen or municipal authorities that sought to resolve the problem of a shortage of small change, but rather, newly-emergent entrepreneurs developing large-scale mining and manufacturing concerns in localities often remote from the nation's old economic centres. As the Industrial Revolution gathered momentum in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the need for hard cash to satisfy the monetary needs of growing, but out-of-the-way, industrial communities intensified, especially in the north-west. It was a problem compounded by government insensitivity to the economic and social shifts taking place, and by the absence of any systematic distribution of such regal coinage as it chose to have minted. Indeed, for more than two decades after 1775, no regal copper was produced at all. To alleviate local shortages, a variety of stratagems were resorted to during the century, including group payments, long wage periods and use of the country's perennial counterfeit currency. Private coinages, too, had been issued from time to time, but they had been sporadic and essentially isolated. In 1787, however, the copper magnate, Thomas Williams, only too aware of the severe cash handicaps that saddled large industrial concerns, issued his 'Druid' pennies and effectively began the eighteenth-century series of British tokens.



Thomas Williams's token of 1787 with its reverse 1d symbol.

Williams's tokens - initially pennies, to distance his private coinage from the traditional regal halfpennies - were introduced as much an earnest of his capability of executing a national coinage contract, as a means of meeting the more limited needs of his far-flung industrial conglomerate. Within two years, though, as the prospect of such a contract receded, he abandoned the manufacture of tokens to his arch-rival Matthew Boulton - but not before he had established the token as an increasingly familiar substitute for more regular currency. For the next three years, Boulton and another Birmingham coiner, John Westwood (with his partner, the die-sinker John Gregory Hancock), dominated the manufacture of tokens, producing money rooted in the demands of industrial society. But as tokens became more readily acceptable to the public at large, their issue extended from industry to commercial enterprises in the thrusting seaports and manufacturing towns at the spearhead of the economic revolution. By 1792, however, the hitherto large-volume orders from manufacturing and commercial firms began to decline dramatically and new markets, centred primarily on the smaller country towns south of the Severn-Trent divide, began to be opened up by newcomers to the token-making trade, such as William Lutwyche and Peter Kempson. The new men exploited a comparatively low-volume custom among local shopkeepers, actively peddling a commodity that was often as much shop-ticket as currency substitute. By 1795, tokens, because of problems of convertibility and of counterfeiting, rapidly began to fall foul of the public. At the same time, an enthusiasm for collecting emerged and most of the tokens manufactured from 1795 onwards - catering for a pursuit that had developed almost manic

proportions - tended to be more medallic, even if they still paid lip service to their original intention. Less respectably, many were produced merely to rook the besotted, or as tendentious political pieces to advance the ideologies of polemicists such as Thomas Spence.

The eighteenth-century token, predominantly a halfpenny in denomination, mirrored the size and weight of the regal copper coinage and many of the thousands that were minted (mainly in Birmingham) were exceptional examples of the die-sinker's art, illustrating the social, commercial and industrial life of the nation. The eventual award of a national copper contract to Matthew Boulton and the issue of his 'cartwheel' coinage in 1797 put a rapid end to the series, but over the ensuing decade or so, large rises in the price of copper saw much of the new coinage finding its way into the melting pot. A subsequent lighter-weight issue in 1806/7 did little to meet the resulting shortages of small coin, especially in the now burgeoning industrial areas of the Midlands and South Wales, but eventually, as the price of copper fell due to overproduction, industrialists turned once again to the issue of tokens. Production of this final series of private coinage began in 1811, reached its peak in 1812 and, although it continued throughout the decade, began to fall off rapidly by 1813. Like the eighteenth-century token, its successor was minted mainly in Birmingham, but more pennies than halfpennies were now struck, their size and weight a witness to the power of steam. Although lacking the artistry of the earlier coins and more utilitarian in conception, many of them are graphic records of the early Industrial Revolution.



Nineteenth-century penny of a Staffordshire ironworks showing a forge operated by a Boulton & Watt steam engine

Silver coin was even scarcer than copper throughout the later eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth century and, following the precedent of the Bank of England, a plethora of local silver tokens - and some gold - were issued by local shopkeepers, bankers and municipal authorities during 1811/12.



Nineteenth-century shilling of the Carmarthen Bank of Morris & Sons

In a sense, the silver token was a reversion to the urban phenomenon of the seventeenth century. Government reaction was quickly provoked, though, and the private silver token declared illegal in 1814. In due course, the copper token was also prohibited (1817) and both

gradually disappeared from general currency with the introduction of adequately regulated national coinages (silver in 1817 and copper in 1821).

The standard catalogue of the eighteenth-century token remains R. Dalton and S. H. Hamer, *The Provincial Token Coinage of the 18th Century* (1910-18 and various modern editions, especially those of Allan Davisson, 1990 and 1996). There is, as yet, no adequate modern commentary that takes account of current research. For the nineteenth-century token, see P. and B. Withers, *British Copper Tokens 1811-1820* (1999), R. Dalton, *The Silver Token Coinage...1811 and 1812* (1922), and the lively historical survey of the silver issuers: J. O'Donald Mays, *Tokens of Those Trying Times* (1991). A now dated, but illuminating, brief introduction to both series is P. Mathias, *English Trade Tokens* (1962).

David Dykes

TRADESMEN'S COUNTERMARKS ON FOREIGN SILVER COINS

As is well known, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a severe shortage of silver coins hampered trade in Great Britain - just at the time when manufacturing developments required increasing amounts of coin to pay factory workers in the new industries and other wage employees. The need was particularly great in cotton-spinning, which depended upon iron-smelting for its machinery, and which, in turn, depended upon coal-mining for its power source.

Throughout a forty-year period, 1787-1828, the lack of silver coin was partially met in these and other industries by countermarking foreign coins, chiefly Spanish dollars from the New World mines, which were available in millions from capture and trade. Most of these tokens were stamped with a valuation slightly below their bullion value, so that the coins could circulate and not be tossed into the melting pot. This innovation was particularly prevalent in Scotland, much less so in England - where the Bank of England tried extensive issues in 1797 and 1804 that failed under the massive weight of counterfeiting - and hardly at all in Ireland.

Many Scottish countermarking firms clustered in and around the industrial cities of Glasgow, Paisley and the shipping centre of Greenock, although tradesmen as far afield as Tobermory, on the Isle of Mull, and the famous Lanark Mills, at New Lanark, also issued countermarked tokens on foreign coins. A few English countermarked issues ranged widely from Northumberland and Lancashire to the Midlands. The two known Irish countermarks were issued from near Belfast and in County Kilkenny in the south. Even after the practice was specifically forbidden by several acts of parliament, it continued virtually unabated until sufficient regal coins of the New Coinage (1816-1820) became widely available.

The extant numbers of individual token types varies greatly. Many are known from only one or two surviving examples. This fact, as well as published references to issues not known today, suggest that many others may not have survived and are lost to history. The British Museum has the largest number of different types, and the National Museums of Scotland, Birmingham City Museum & Art Gallery and the American Numismatic Society in New York also have major holdings. Other specimens are scattered throughout provincial and world museums and private collections. Fewer than a thousand specimens are recorded, although an exact figure is

illusive due to overlapping pedigrees of the more common types. Several unique specimens disappeared when an important collection was stolen and presumably melted for bullion shortly after the First World War.



8 reales of Charles IV of Spain, 1796, countermarked with Chinese characters and 'Rothsay Cotton 1820'

A corpus of all known examples of countermarked dollars and their fractions, with their historical, economic and social background, will be published this April by the British Numismatic Society and distributed by Spink.

Harrington Manville

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY TOKENS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

In recent decades there have probably been two pre-eminent general collections in the world of seventeenth-century tokens. One is that of the British Museum - built up over many generations, if not always with equal concentration - which currently numbers around 10,000 items. The second - reputedly the largest in the world, while it remained intact at some 13,000 pieces - was that of the Right Hon. R. Henry Norweb and his wife Emery May Norweb of Cleveland, Ohio, whose joint collecting interest the collection represented. Inevitably, both these collections had absorbed other collections in their formation: e.g., specialist collections of Essex and Dorset tokens, and the Lionel L. Fletcher collection of Irish tokens in the British Museum; and the c. 3,000 tokens of A. H. F. Baldwin and the 8,000-strong Ralph Augustus Nott collection amongst the Norweb tokens.

The Norweb material has provided the opportunity for unquestionably the grandest publication project in the tokens series since the appearance of George C. Williamson's great catalogue in 1889-91. The collection is being recorded for posterity in the *Syloges of Coins of the British Isles* produced under the auspices of the British Academy, though the Norweb volumes of the series are actually published by Spink & Son Ltd. The project takes advantage of the unparalleled expertise in the field of Robert Thompson, recently the recipient of the British Numismatic Society's Sanford Saltus Medal for his contribution to numismatics. Six volumes have been published, with one remaining volume, to cover the London-Middlesex area, still to appear. Following the deaths of Mr and Mrs Norweb in October 1983 and March 1984, the Norweb family has continued to support the publication of the syloges. These now stand as the memorial to the collection and its collectors, as that part of the material is sold off as each volume is published.

Through the good offices of Spink & Son Ltd - and in particular of the late Patrick Finn and of May Sinclair - the late John Kent, as Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals, was given a unique opportunity. At the publication of each volume, the British Museum has

been given the chance to purchase material not represented in its existing holdings. The result has been that, to date, 1,240 tokens have been acquired by the Museum, while another 290 are currently being acquired. This process of rounding out a great public collection from a great private collection will hopefully be viewed as eminently sensible and desirable. The national reference collection is enhanced with what may be regarded as the type specimens of many pieces, while, at the same time, only a relatively small proportion (probably under 15% of the whole Norweb collection) has left the reach of the private collector. The result can stand as one amongst many memorials to the industry of the Norwebs, the expertise of Robert Thompson, and the initiative and goodwill of both Patrick Finn and John Kent, the loss of whom during 2000 has been such a blow to the British numismatic world.

Barrie Cook

EAST ASIAN TOKENS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The British Museum has a modest collection of Chinese, Japanese and Korean coin-shaped tokens. Within the respective nations, the tokens serve a variety of functions: as money, whether for daily life or for pleasure (e.g. gambling); some have a commemorative and/or advertising function; while others were issued as souvenir entry-tickets for zoos and parks.

The largest single group comprises over 60 bronze tokens issued in southern Jiangsu province, China, in the 1930s. Local firms recycled old Chinese, and occasionally Korean, milled coins, by polishing down the surfaces and restriking them with a new design. There is no doubt that this money-making business was profitable. For full details of these tokens, see my article 'Local bronze tokens issued in Jiangsu, China, in the 1930s', *Numismatic Chronicle* 157 (1997) pp. 157-77.

In addition to this group, there are over 30 Chinese tokens in various metals and coloured plastic, some with a square hole in the centre (resembling Chinese cash-coins), and some with coloured lacquer. The more obvious examples include a 20-cent Shanghai Race Club Token, a 3-cent China General Omnibus Co Ltd token, a 10-cent Venus Café Coupon, and a token issued by the Trans-Continental Novelty Co (Shanghai and Port Arthur). One inscribed 'King Kong Restaurant, rue Wagner' is presented as a 'coin of the Sichuan Cuisine Restaurant of Jinjiang Hotel' in *Currencies of Old Shanghai* (Shanghai 1998, ISBN7-5322-1774-4), one of the few Chinese publications to list tokens. More recent Chinese tokens include one from the Guangzhou (Canton) Zoo, another from a Shanghai park, and three tokens of the 1990s from the restaurant in the Yimin Department Store, Shanghai. There is a single token from the Casino de Macao (before Macao's return to China in 1999). The other Chinese tokens are not so easy to identify.

The collection of Japanese tokens comprises 16 pieces in various metals, including two with round holes in the centre. The oldest piece is in brown plastic, issued by Walsh & Co, Nagasaki, a tea establishment. However, most of the tokens are for entertainment or amusement arcades, probably for pachinko-game machines or the like, and have inscriptions such as 'a million dollars', 'only for amusement', 'Rotary-pulse', 'Three star - arrange ball', 'Karaoke Justment - B&V - Let's try'. The

commemorative tokens include an unidentified piece inscribed 'Heidihof - Kobe - Kitano' around a dove holding in its beak a flag with a cross on it (Red Cross?); and the reverse inscription 'Stadnick - Kobe - Kitano 1886' arranged around a cross. A larger token features the ferris-wheel known as Technocosmos at the Exposition held in Tsukuba, Ibaraki prefecture, in 1885.



Heidihof-Kobe-Kitano token, Japan.

The collection of Korean tokens comprises just four 'city bus - first class' tokens, made of brass, with a round hole in the centre. All were anonymous donations placed in the various collection boxes around the Museum between 1991 and 2000.

Many of the East Asian tokens have come to the Museum as donations, often anonymously, and this is a welcome opportunity to offer a broad token of thanks!

Helen Wang

TOKENS OF LOVE AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

'Love in the Students' Room? Is it to be a handling session?', asked a colleague. Yes, it was actually, although the official title of the event, which attracted a group of British Museum Friends to the Department of Coins and Medals, was 'Leaden Hearts and other tokens of love'. The date set was, of course, 14 February.

The principal objects of interest for the session, the 'leaden hearts', are, of course, the coins engraved in the first half of the nineteenth century by convicts awaiting transportation, and given as keepsakes to their loved ones. These pieces are very different from the majority of tokens studied by numismatists, in that most tokens were deliberately manufactured as such to fulfil one of a number of functions, whereas these pieces were created as coins, but then transformed into tokens through individual acts of engraving. And it is not money or goods that they betoken, but rather love and anguish, emotions which are not generally associated with numismatics. That each of these pieces is a one-off is perhaps somewhat daunting for the numismatist, who is used to series and types, and this may be why it is that, fascinating as they are, 'leaden hearts' have only recently become a serious object of study. Credit for this must go to the exhibition held in Australia a couple of years ago, and subsequently shown in a different form in the British Museum and Nottingham's Museum of Law, and also to the accompanying book, *Convict love tokens: the leaden hearts the convicts left behind*, edited by Michele Field and Timothy Millett, which also appeared in 1998.

The exhibition consisted largely of Tim Millett's private collection, but in the British Museum's collections there are some two dozen such pieces, and it was these that were shown to the group of BM Friends on Valentine's Day. One or perhaps two of the convicts named on the BM pieces have been discovered by Tim Millett in nineteenth-century court records. Thomas Walter, whose cartwheel penny was dedicated to Ann Everson and inscribed, 'May Love and Friendship Never be forgot 1818', may have been the Thomas Walters who

appeared at the Middlesex court that year charged with assault and robbery, and was acquitted. And Edward Kershaw, whose coin was engraved 'AUG 26 Edwd Kershaw 7 Years 1834' on one side and 'HONOR VIRTUS' on the other, was certainly the thirty year old bootmaker who was convicted of robbery on 25 August 1834, also in Middlesex, and sentenced to transportation, travelling to New South Wales on the *Royal Sovereign*.



Copper coin engraved by or for Edward Kershaw, 1834.

Many of the tokens in the BM make direct reference to the pain of enforced separation. The twenty-two year old Henry Preston promised his eighteen year old girlfriend Elizabeth Hamman: 'Tho' time may pass and years may fly, & every hope decay & die, and every joyful dream be set, but thee I never can forget'. Others speak even more graphically of the desolation of lives destroyed by transportation, a punishment that in its finality was in effect a sentence of death: 'O do not forget me though out of your sight to roam far away be my doom. My thoughts are still with you by day and by night and will be till laid in my tomb. Benjamin Elliss. Mary Elliss. A token of love from an unfortunate brother Samuel Elliss'; and, on a piece signed only with initials, 'if you wait till i return you may wait till the day of Doom. 1835. When this you take in hand think of your Cursed son in a forigen [sic] land'.

The date on Edward Kershaw's token indicates that the engraving of this piece happened the day following his conviction, but the existence of the Walter token may suggest that sometimes the work was done before the verdict was announced, in the fatalistic expectation of a conviction. The BM tokens illustrate the different techniques employed, and also the wide range of competence possessed by the engravers, some of whose designs are complex and skilfully executed, whilst others are simpler and crudely incised. As Tim Millett notes in his book, small groups of tokens with similar designs and techniques suggest that at least some of these pieces were engraved by skilled artisans for their fellow convicts. Tom Gretton's suggestion, in the same book, that the act of rubbing away the images of the king and Britannia prior to engraving was in itself a subversive act is less convincing, for this view would seem not to be upheld by a reading of the pieces themselves. The convicts generally identified themselves not as subversive rebels, but as 'unfortunate' or 'cursed' victims, and conventional morality is a key element in many of their messages. As noted above, Edward Kershaw's token invokes honour and virtue, and other transportees showed contrition and a sense of duty: engraved on a cartwheel twopence now in the BM are the words, 'Mother I hope you will think of my wife & child. For that is all my thought. Your undutiful son G. Johnson. March 1 1841.' Moreover, in many cases the regal or nationalist image was retained on one side of the coin. It would seem that, rather than engaging in an act of rebellion by engraving their messages on coins, the convicts, shocked and saddened at their impending removal from the world

they knew, may have welcomed a chance to link themselves with the legitimacy and permanence associated with coinage.

During the session we also looked at other love tokens of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, coins engraved with such messages as 'Our hands and heart shall never part' and the more literary 'Draw Cupid draw and make that Heart to know The mighty Pain its suffering Swain does for it undergo'. The ships on many of these show that they were engraved by sailors for their loved ones, but the very different circumstances of these men and their expectation of a safe return mean that the mood of these pieces is far removed from that of the leaden hearts. The session ended with a number of medals celebrating love and marriage, and, to avoid any accusations of heterosexism, a selection of lesbian and gay badges from the 1970s and '80s.

'How did it go?', asked another colleague afterwards. As Amanda Gregory, who helped with the event, commented, the 'erotic charge' in the room was not exactly great, but the Friends who came did learn a little more about the diversity of the Department's holdings, and were fascinated by these engraved coins, which speak so directly and so personally across the years.

Philip Attwood



Cartwheel penny, 1797, engraved by or for Henry Preston, about 1833.

THE TOKEN CORRESPONDING SOCIETY

The Token Corresponding Society (TCS) was founded in 1971 by Christopher Brunel and Jean White. Its original stated intention was 'to lift the standard of current literature on tokens, jetons and similar coin-like objects'. By 1975 the Society had lapsed, but with some encouragement I was able to resurrect it in 1984.

In the past, the collecting of tokens has been maligned. However, with the establishment of a corresponding publication, *The Bulletin*, serious students of the many thousands of little-researched tokens could reliably embark on an exchange of information and views. *The Bulletin* covers all aspects of token research: articles, compiler catalogues and supplements, comments, queries and answers, book reviews and members' advertisements. No contribution is too small. Judging from the sheer number of token publications - books, pamphlets, catalogues and listings - issued over the past twenty-five years, it is fair to say that the TCS has acted as a genuine influence on, and nurturer of, numismatic research into these fascinating series, and has thus fulfilled the original founders' intentions.

Completely separate from the TCS is the Token Congress, which is organised by individuals on an ad hoc basis, but acts as an annual weekend meeting for the TCS membership. The programme comprises talks, researcher queries and a Saturday evening Bourse.

There are approximately 140 members of the TCS. Membership can be obtained by paying a subscription to *The Bulletin*, currently £6 for three issues (one year). The Society is not formally constituted; its only 'officer' is the editor, Andrew Andison. Further details can be obtained from him at 31 Stanley Street, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 1RN (e-mail: andrew@tcsb.fsnet.co.uk).

Anthony Gilbert

EXHIBITIONS

From Alexander to Mark Antony: Images of Power on Ancient Coins

Gallery 69a, British Museum, 11 January - 6 May 2000

Ablly curated by Andrew Meadows and Jonathan Williams, this small exhibition serves three purposes. Firstly, it illustrates the ways in which Alexander the Great and the inheritors of his huge empire used his coin imagery to project their achievements and ambitions. Secondly, it illustrates the influence of Alexander, his Romance, and the deities and symbols which he associated with himself (Herakles, Dionysos, elephants, eagles, etc.) on succeeding civilisations from Rome to the Renaissance, from medieval and modern India to contemporary Greece. Finally, it celebrates the generosity of the American Friends of the British Museum and, in particular, of the late Charles Hersh, who bequeathed his collection of 8,000 Macedonian and Roman Republican coins to the Museum (54 of his coins are on display) and who figures on the placard of *dramatis personae* immediately underneath Augustus.

The intimacy of room 69A and the well-judged dark blue background of the display cases show off the coins - mostly gold and silver pieces of superb quality - to their best effect. The coins preserve the finest, indeed, sometimes the only images of the Greek and Roman leaders who form the core of the exhibition: potentates such as the Ptolemies of Egypt, the Seleucid and Bactrian rulers of the eastern part of Alexander's empire, Pompey the Great who annexed what remained of the Seleucid empire for Rome and whose portrait on coins deliberately recalls that of Alexander nearly 300 years earlier, and Mark Antony, whose stocky muscular head resembled that of Herakles, mythical founder of Alexander's house (Not everyone, incidentally, will relish the description of Antony as Julius Caesar's 'sidekick'). By way of emphasising some of the types on the coinage of Alexander and his successors, two ancient marble statues of Zeus Ammon and Herakles are prominently displayed, splendid pieces which normally lie overshadowed amid the riches of the Wolfson gallery.

All in all, a fine exhibition, which stimulates both aesthetically and intellectually. It has been accompanied by public lectures given by leading experts in Hellenistic and Roman history and art. The final lecture in the series will be by Chris Pelling (University College, Oxford): 'I want to be great too! The Romans and Alexander', on Thursday 26 April, at 6.30 pm, in the new BP Lecture Theatre, British Museum. Cost £6, BM Friends £5 (Conc. £3). For information and tickets, 020 7323 8181.

Richard Ashton

NEWS

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR ANCIENT NUMISMATIC STUDIES (ACANS)

The Australian Centre for Ancient Numismatic Studies has been launched at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. It is the first numismatic research institution in this country and was created at the wish of Mr Bill Gale and his wife Mrs Janet Gale, who have provided an extremely generous benefaction. Mr Gale, who has a Masters Degree in Ancient History from Macquarie University, has been a keen student of ancient coins. His remarkable collection of over 2,000 Greek and Roman coins, currently on loan to ACANS, has particular strengths in the issues of South Italian cities (notably Taras and Kroton), the Roman Republic and Hadrian.

The aim of ACANS is to promote the study of numismatics as a means of understanding ancient history and archaeology. The Centre plans to provide grants and scholarships to students and scholars who wish to undertake numismatic research at Macquarie University. The final guidelines for the various financial schemes will be released in 2001. The Centre also intends to provide support for numismatic studies within other Australian universities and museums, and encourages applications from overseas students and scholars who wish to undertake research at Macquarie University. It is expected that numismatic courses will be offered by the Ancient History Department from 2002.

The resources of the Centre are being rapidly developed. The ACANS coin collection is supported by a number of loan collections. Research is facilitated by access to the University library, as well as the Centre's own holdings of numismatic literature. The University expects to complete the Centre's operation rooms in early 2001. They will consist of a secure room for storage, an office in which coins may be viewed, and a library/study room.

Dr Kenneth Sheedy was appointed director of the Centre in July 2000. He was formerly a curator (for the SNG database) in the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum and before that, Deputy Director of the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens. His special interest is the numismatics and archaeology of the Cycladic islands.

ACANS plans to initiate a number of research programmes. At present, it is working towards the creation of a Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Australia series. The first volume will be devoted to the South Italian coins (c.1,200) in the Gale Collection. Further volumes will survey the various ancient coin collections around Australia.

For an overview of the aims, objectives and activities of ACANS, see its website: www.humanities.mq.edu.au/acans. For more information contact: Australian Centre for Ancient Numismatic Studies, Humanities Division, W6A - 517, Macquarie University, NSW 2109, Australia; e-mail: ksheedy@hmn.mq.edu.au.

A UNIVERSAL FASCINATION: THE MONEY ZONE AT THE MILLENNIUM DOME

In 2000, I *did* visit the much-derided Millennium Dome. Readers will be familiar with the press criticism the Dome attracted throughout the year it was open, but for those who actually went - 6.5 million visitors - satisfaction levels were high. One of the twelve themed displays was the 'Money Zone': how did it rate as an attraction and

how did it compare with what else was on offer?

The official guidebook described money as 'a universal fascination'. True, but was it translated into a fascinating theme? An initial indicator was the absence of a queue. Unlike, say, the Body Zone or the Play Zone, on the day my family visited, we walked straight in. The entrance certainly provided the initial 'wow factor': a glass tunnel lined with 20,000 £5 notes, adding up to £1 million (all marked 'Cancelled' on the reverse?). The tunnel led through to a 'Spend a Million Pounds' game. Gold 'credit cards' were handed out and visitors given one minute to 'spend' £1 million at screens built into shopping trolleys, though with no indication of the cost of the bizarre items on offer, such as diamond-studded football boots or solid gold spanner sets.

A further tunnel spoon-fed us the message that such prodigality had consequences: the colour theme changed from blue to red and pipes, representing the world's economies, buckled and twisted under the strain of global financial meltdown. Suddenly we emerged onto a glass bridge with comforting projected images of stability, progress and leadership, ramming home the message that we are safe in the hands of economists and financiers.

In one final game, 'Invest' - a reminder that the zone was sponsored by the City of London - players were offered investment choices on screens. Amazingly, selecting 'top up my pension' meant you were a careful investor, while 'put it on the horses' meant you were a gambler. Nearby, the 12 diamonds in the 'Millennium Jewels' display and the Millennium Coin Printing Press (punching out Millennium £5 coins) were attracting far larger crowds, especially after the attempted diamond theft.

The guidebook cooed that as we left the Money Zone, we would be 'in a better position to understand how money works'. In fact we had been treated to a well-meant but jejune attempt to explain global financial markets using poorly-designed displays and imagery which irritated adults and confused children. Money is a universal fascination, but this condescending zone failed to inspire.

Stephen Pewsey

AN INVENTORY OF ROMANO-BRITISH COIN HOARDS

Although the *Newsletter* does not carry reviews of books, the posthumous publication of Anne S. Robertson's *Inventory* is a matter for celebration. It is only sad that she died three years before publication. Professor Robertson began the work in the 1930s, painstakingly compiling data over many decades. It is an enormous work of reference, comprising almost 600 pages and with entries for almost 2,000 hoards, together with introductions and extensive indices. Anyone with an interest in Roman coins, in hoarding, or the history of Roman Britain, will find it a mine of information.

Andrew Burnett

Anne S. Robertson, *An Inventory of Romano-British Coin Hoards*, ed. R. Hobbs and T. V. Buttrey, published by the Royal Numismatic Society, 2000. ISBN 0 901405 48 5. Pp lx + 520.

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME WINS TOP PRIZE AT BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AWARDS

The biennial British Archaeological Awards are the most prestigious in British archaeology. Since their foundation in 1976, they have grown to encompass 12 awards covering every aspect of British Archaeology. The Silver

Trowel Award, sponsored by Spear & Jackson, was won by the Portable Antiquities Scheme for the best initiative in archaeology, at the latest award ceremony held at Edinburgh Castle in November 2000. The judges chose the Portable Antiquities Scheme because it demonstrated the potential to change public attitudes to archaeology through careful research, effective result dissemination and raising awareness of the importance of archaeological finds. The Scheme also won the Virgin Holidays Award for the best presented archaeological project to the public. Both awards recognised the crucial role the Scheme has played in improving relations between metal detectorists and archaeologists and in encouraging detectorists and other finders to report their finds voluntarily. Dr Roger Bland, co-ordinator of the Scheme, received the awards from HRH Prince Hassan of Jordan.

The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries is the lead partner in the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which is run by a consortium of bodies including English Heritage, the British Museum and the National Museums and Galleries of Wales. The Scheme is funded by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Further information is available from Richard Hobbs, Portable Antiquities Outreach Officer, on 020 7323 8611, and Roger Bland, Portable Antiquities Scheme Co-ordinator, on 020 7211 6924, or visit the website: www.finds.org.uk.

A NEW CURATOR OF ISLAMIC COINS

The British Museum has appointed Cécile Bresc, a French scholar, to succeed Venetia Porter as Curator of Islamic Coins in its Department of Coins and Medals. Venetia has moved to the Museum's Department of Oriental Antiquities, where she is now a Curator of the Islamic Collections.

Cécile Bresc is a History graduate based in Paris, where she is currently working on her Doctoral thesis on 'The numismatic history of Iran, ninth-thirteenth centuries, from the Tahirids to the Mongol invasion'. After graduating from the Sorbonne, her Master's dissertation was a study of the mint of Aleppo in the ninth-thirteenth centuries; she then completed a DEA (higher masters) on the monetary history of Syria during the same centuries. She has published three studies on Islamic coin issue and circulation in Armenia in the three volume series *History and Coin Finds in Armenia*, published jointly with G. Depeyrot, F. Gurnet and A. Mousheghian (Wettern 2000). Cécile has also studied Arabic and Arabic Studies at the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations in Paris and the French Institute for Arabic Studies in Damascus; and Arabic epigraphy at the École Pratique des Hautes Études and at the École du Louvre.

During last year Cécile worked in the Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris cataloguing their collection of Iranian coins. She has been doing research in the Cabinet since 1995. Cécile will begin working at the British Museum in May.

Joe Cribb

PLEASE TOUCH!

Visitors to the British Museum's HSBC Money Gallery are being given the opportunity to handle and discuss a range of monetary and medallic objects, including a hoard of Roman denarii. The 'Please Touch!' initiative is intended to engage a wide audience, from children to numismatists. Themes currently running in the gallery

are *What is Money?*, *Money of the Romans*, *Art Medals of the 1990s* and *Forgery*. Sessions run from 11.00 to 16.00, every Tuesday to Friday. The Museum is always looking to expand its collection of teaching material that can be used for such purposes, so any donations (ancient or modern) are gratefully received.

RNS NEWS

The Society has recently awarded three prizes: the Parkes-Weber Prize to E. Cheung for his essay 'The circulating Irish coppers in colonial America'; the Gilljam Prize to D. Gricourt for *Ripostiglio degli Venera - Caro-Dioleziano*; and the Lhotka prize to D. Sears for *Roman Coins and their Values, Millennium Edition, Vol I, 280 BC-AD 96*.

MICHAEL BROOME MEMORIAL FUND

The RNS is pleased to announce that a fund in memory of Michael Rowland Broome (1927-1997) has been established with donations from his family and friends, and the support of the Oriental Numismatic Society. The purpose of the fund is to encourage the study of numismatics in areas reflecting Michael Broome's own interests. These were widespread, concentrating on Islamic coinage, but also embracing Maria Theresa thalers, medals and broad areas of general numismatic method and interest. The fund therefore aims to support numismatic research in a range of fields not presently covered by other dedicated RNS funds.

Initially, it is intended that one grant of £250 will be made every two years. Applications are invited for the first award, to be submitted by 1 October. Please write to The Secretary, Royal Numismatic Society, c/o Department of Coins and Medals, the British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1 3DG.

BNS NEWS

THE BRITISH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY WEB-SITE
(www.britnumsoc.org)

In striving to keep abreast of the most recent advances in technology, the BNS is pleased to announce the formation of its own web-site which went on-line in late October 2000, thanks to help from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and, in particular, Dr Sean Miller.

The web-site gives a mix of permanent factual information about the Society, as well as up-to-date details of meetings, programmes, etc. Eventually, it is intended that the site will include a comprehensive database of reference information to be found in the series of *British Numismatic Journals* and also, possibly, an electronic form of the *CCNB Newsletter* for the benefit of overseas members. In time, it might also be possible to include a list of the many thousands of reference books held in the joint RNS/BNS library, the Warburg Institute, London.

Please forward any comments or suggestions concerning the site to the Hon. Secretary, The British Numismatic Society, Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AB.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

From Alexander to Mark Antony: Images of Power on Ancient Coins

Gallery 69a, British Museum, 11 January - 6 May

Between East and West: Influence and Change in Coinage

Octagon, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, 2 April - 17

June 2000

From Muslim Spain to Japan under the Shoguns, coinages have long been influenced by the movement of peoples, cultures and trade. At times these have led to radical changes in the monetary system, in other cases newcomers have seamlessly adopted the established local currency. This exhibition focuses largely on Asia and the impact of Western concepts of money.

Knots and Crosses: Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Coinage
Heberden Coin Room, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 24 April - 9 September 2000

The exhibition, prepared by Dr Anna Gannon, compares motifs on Anglo-Saxon coinage with those found on other contemporary art forms such as jewellery.

LECTURES, SEMINARS, COLLOQUIA AND CONFERENCES

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF NUMISMATIC SOCIETIES ANNUAL CONGRESS 2001

Woolton Hall, University of Manchester, 6-8 April
For further information, contact Keith Sugden or Phyllis Stoddart, Department of Numismatics, Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, tel. 0161 275 2661, fax 0161 275 2676, e-mail keith.sugden@man.ac.uk.

BNS SPECIAL MEETING: OVERSEAS AND COLONIAL NUMISMATICS

The BNS Special Meeting this year takes place on Saturday, 7 July, at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. The speakers will be Edward Besly, Shailendra Bhandare, David Dykes, Kevin Clancy, Peter Gaspar and Virginia Hewitt. To register and for further details, please send a cheque for £12.50, payable to the British Numismatic Society, to Edward Besly, Department of Archaeology and Numismatics, National Museum & Gallery, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NP.

LECTURE DIARY

April

- 10 BAMS Avril Vaughan, *My life and work*.
18 RNS Michael Matzke, *Mining and metallurgy in the Black Forest*.
24 BNS Tim Crafter and Nicholas Mayhew, *The Gayton hoard of Henry II Cross and Crosslets pennies*.

May

- 22 BNS Donal Bateson, *The medallic works of Neil MacPhail*.
15 RNS Graham Dyer, *Ten days that shook the British currency: the monetary crisis of 1797*.

June

- 26 BNS Jonathan Williams, *Ancient British coin types: new ideas, new interpretations*.

July

- 7 BNS *Colonial and Overseas Numismatics*: special one-day meeting at Birmingham City Museum.

September

- 25 BNS Robert Heslip, *Out of balance: weights and foreign coin in early eighteenth-century Ireland*.

Contacts:

British Art Medal Society (BAMS)

Philip Attwood, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG, tel. 020 7323 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. 020 8523 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. 020 8398 4290, fax: 020 8398 4291

Oriental Numismatic Society (ONS)

Mr Peter Smith, 9 Grandison Road, London SW11 6LS, tel. 020 7228 2826

Royal Numismatic Society (RNS)

Ms V Hewitt, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1 3DG, tel. 020 7323 8228. Unless otherwise stated all meetings held at 5.30pm, Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London WC1

AUCTIONS AND FAIRS

Sotheby's now sell coins on-line at www.sothebys.amazon.com. Lots are usually on for two weeks.

May

- 3 Auction World Bank Notes. Spink
8 Auction. The Ken Wiggins Collection: Coins of the East India Collection and British India. Baldwin's. Tel. 020 7930 9808, fax 020 7930 9450, e-mail auctions@baldwin.sh

8/9

- Auction British and World Coins, Commemorative Medals, Banknotes. Baldwin's. Tel. 020 7930 9808, fax 020 7930 9450, e-mail auctions@baldwin.sh

June

- 20 Auction Coins, Jewellery and Artefacts from the Santa Lucia Wreck, plus Ancient, British and World Coins, Tokens, Historical and Art Medals, Banknotes and Numismatic Books. Regus Conference Centre, 12 St James's Square, London SW1. Enquiries: tel. 020 7499 5022, e-mail auctions@dnw.co.uk

- 23/24 Auction Banknotes, Coins and Fine Stamps and Covers of South-East Asia. Spink (Singapore)

July

- 12 Auction Ancient, English and Foreign Coins and Commemorative Medals. Spink

August

- 30 Auction General Sale of Asian and Oriental Coins and Banknotes. Baldwin's (Hong Kong). Tel. 020 7930 9808, fax 020 7930 9450, e-mail auctions@baldwin.sh

September

- 5 Auction The Collection of Buckinghamshire Tokens, Medals and Paper Money formed by Peter Preston-Morley, plus Ancient, British and World Coins, Tokens, Historical and Art Medals, Banknotes and Numismatic Books. Regus Conference Centre, 12 St James's Square, London SW1. Enquiries: tel. 020 7499 5022, e-mail auctions@dnw.co.uk

- 19 Auction (Mail Bid Sale) Classical Numismatic Group Inc., 14 Old Bond Street, London W1S 4PP. Tel 020 7495 1888, fax 020 7499 5916.

October

- 5/6 Coinex London 2001. London Marriot Hotel, Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, London W1.

Enquiries: BNTA Tel. 020 8398 4290, fax 020 8398 4291. 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

Glendining's: 101 New Bond St, London W1Y 9LG

Christie's/Spink & Son: 69 Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 4ET