



Programme Abstracts

2018

Please note: Meetings for 2018 are held in **May** and **November** at **Spink**, 69 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4ET, in **October** in the Library at the Travellers Club, 106 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EP in **early January** in the Uris Room on the Conference Level of the **Grand Hyatt Hotel**, 109 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017 and in **other months** at the **Warburg Institute**, Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AB.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings commence at 6pm and finish by 7.30pm.

**SATURDAY 13 January, Uris Room, Grand Hyatt Hotel, New York, 4pm
in conjunction with the 46th New York International Numismatic Convention**

David Vagi (Certified Collectibles Group, Sarasota, FL), *Roman coins and the province of Britannia*

When the Roman emperor Claudius invaded Britain in AD 43 he encountered a thriving Iron Age culture that often has been described as 'Celtic'. Once a Roman presence was established, Rome's coinage began to circulate on an increasingly large scale. Soon it displaced local currencies and came into common usage. Like any of Rome's provinces, Britain was the site of periodic uprisings and a wide range of imperial concerns. On some occasions this led to special coin types referencing Britain, notably under Claudius, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Commodus and the Severans. In the later 3rd century AD a variety of new coinages began to circulate in Britain. They include imitative issues (often called 'barbarous radiates') and coins of the rebel-emperor Carausius, who established Roman-style mints in Britain. After his successor, Allectus, was defeated in 296/7, the Romans continued to strike coins in Britain well into the 4th century.

Tuesday 23 January, Warburg Institute

Dr Tony Abramson (independent scholar, Leeds), *Re-assessing the York gold shillings*

Humphrey Sutherland's seminal *Anglo-Saxon Gold Coinage* condemned the York gold shilling as 'quite devoid of sense', and later than seventh-century southern shillings. Philip Grierson and John Kent concurred and Mark Blackburn felt the issue was likely to be late in the gold coinage. Since Charles Hall first published his interpretation of one of the two legends in 1773, various attempts have failed to capture the true significance of the coinage. The first breakthrough came in March 2015 with Jonathan Mann's reading of the first part of one of the legends as SANCTE. In April 2016, Tony Abramson was able to reveal the other inscription not only identifying the issuer, but the precise date of issue and the likely events commemorated. This places the York shilling at the forefront of native English coinage with significant consequences, not only for the chronology of early Anglo-Saxon issues, but also for our understanding of the history of Northumbria. With the inscriptions on the coinage now better understood, the iconography can be considered afresh. Some plausible explanations will be discussed.

Tuesday 27 February, Warburg Institute

Dr Donal Bateson (Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow), *A tercentenary dissection: the cabinet of Dr William Hunter (1718-1783)*

Three hundred years ago, William Hunter was born near Glasgow. After study at its university he made his way to London where he pursued a remarkable career in medicine and built up an even more remarkable coin cabinet. Anatomist, man-midwife and teacher, he was a royal physician whose museum was a 'must' for important visitors to the capital. His interest in numismatics came late but between 1770 and 1783 he built up a cabinet which was the best in Britain and second only to the French royal collection. This analysis looks at its contents, sources, methods of collecting, his numismatic books, archive and pioneering catalogue.

Tuesday 27 March, Warburg Institute

Dr David Dykes (independent scholar, Dorchester), *Anglo-Saxon Dorchester and the mystery mint of Eanbyri*

In 1955, in the course of an important *BNJ* article 'Three Late Anglo-Saxon Notes', Michael Dolley reattributed a Cnut 'Quatrefoil' penny given by Hildebrand to the emergency mint of Cadbury to a new location EANBYRI, a reading already made by Dr George Galster for a second coin of the same type at Copenhagen. Dolley pointed out that the responsible moneyer (Swet) later struck the next two types for Cnut at Dorchester and that stylistically the EANBYRI coins were from Wessex. Other than suggesting a West Saxon derivation for the coins, however, Dolley was unable to posit a conclusive location for EANBYRI. After a space of six decades the present paper sets out to re-examine the evidence for EANBYRI and seek more positively to locate the mint in the light of what is known about Anglo-Saxon Dorchester and the activities of the moneyer Swet.

Tuesday 24 April, Warburg Institute

Matthew Ball (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge), *Three unlisted miliarenses in the name of Theodosius I*

In late 2016 a rare heavy miliarensis struck at Trier for Theodosius I (AD 379-95) was uncovered by a metal detectorist in Cheshire. It is the latest addition to a very small group of similar coins, distinguished by the unlisted reverse type VOTIS V MVLTIIS X, which have not yet been satisfactorily dated or placed within the Trier series. This paper will show that they are the first known miliarenses to have been

struck in Theodosius' name by the usurper Magnus Maximus (AD 383-8). The importance of these pieces within the context of Maximus' initial drive for legitimacy, as well as the probable significance of their (primarily British) find-spots, will be explored in further detail.

Tuesday 22 May, Spink

Dr Joseph Bispham (Secretary, UK Numismatic Trust), *The changing face of English coinage: artistic influences 1485-1551*

A number of medieval English kings had their true likenesses recorded by contemporary artists, but it was not until the start of the sixteenth century, during the reign of Henry VII, that a true likeness of a king was to appear on an English coin. A series of coins showing a profile of the king were issued and adopted as common silver currency. For the first time it was possible for the wider public to be able to recognise the king. This talk illustrates the artistic influences on portraiture that contributed to the design of the English coinage from the reign of Henry VII, through the reign of Henry VIII and for the first four years of Edward VI.

Tuesday 26 June, Warburg Institute

Emma Herbert-Davies (University of Leeds), *Unlocking the Winchester cabinet: an eighteenth-century collection*

The talk focuses on the eighteenth-century 'Winchester' coin cabinet sold to the University of Leeds in 1954 by the Dean and Chapter of Winchester Cathedral. The collection was compiled by William Eyre, a sergeant at law who died in 1764, and contains over 3,000 coins, medals and tokens. Much of the collection is ancient Greek and Roman but it also includes coinage from the Iron Age to the mid-1700s. The cabinet contains an interesting number of fakes and gives an insight into the history and motivations of eighteenth-century coin collectors.

SATURDAY 14 July

**Summer Meeting, Education Room No. 3, Museum of Liverpool, Liverpool Waterside, Pier Head, Liverpool L3 1DG
Coinage and the Irish Sea**

The full programme, details of costs and how to apply for a place, will be circulated nearer the date.

Tuesday 25 September, Warburg Institute

Jeremy Cheek (Royal Collection, Windsor), *The coins and medals in the Royal Collection*

This paper will give a brief background to the Royal Collection and its activities, beginning with the history of the first Royal Collection of coins and medals, and what became of it – major purchases by Prince Henry, losses and additions under Charles I, Van der Doort's catalogue, Cromwell's Parliament selling off most of it, Ashmole's catalogue, and the fire of Whitehall. George III restarted the collection and his collection was given to the British Museum; subsequent accessions through purchases, gifts, hoards and discoveries are also noted. The most important pieces are described and discussed, along with their backgrounds.

**Tuesday 23 October, Travellers Club
The Howard Linecar Memorial Lecture**

Lord Macpherson (Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, 2005-16), *The relationship between the coinage, state and the economy*

In his lecture, Nicholas Macpherson will explore the relationship between economic prosperity and the coinage. In particular, he will examine the forces which led to the reform of the Treasury, the creation of the Bank of England and the modernisation of the Royal Mint. He will chart the impact of the industrial revolution on the coinage, and how the golden age of British coins coincided with the peak in Britain's commercial and political power. He will also examine how relative economic decline, inflation and technological change has affected the Royal Mint and the coinage, and set out some thoughts for the future.

**Tuesday 27 November, Spink
Anniversary Meeting and Presidential Address**

Dr Kevin Clancy (Director, Royal Mint Museum), *The arrival of the gold standard*

The coinage reforms of the 1690s can be seen as setting, albeit unintentionally, the monetary groundwork for Britain's adoption of the gold standard, but it would take more than a century for this to be enshrined formally in law. In many practical respects it was effectively in place from the first half of the eighteenth century and there are a number of key staging posts which give substance to this interpretation. Newton's adjustment of the value of the guinea in 1717 was certainly one, the withdrawal of hammered gold in the 1730s was another, but the gold recoinage of the 1770s was a defining moment towards a fully operational gold standard. This lecture will explore the transition from the primacy of silver to that of gold, culminating in the post-Waterloo currency settlement of 1816.