REVIEWS


This volume, recently printed by the Oxford University Press, may well be considered the crowning work of Mr. Lawrence’s long career as a scholarly and prolific writer on numismatic subjects. Not only is it the longest and most complete story of the coinage of any one reign (and that not a short one!) that has ever been written, but it also embodies an entirely new factor in the study of English medieval coins. This discovery was made by Mr. Lawrence about the time when he was just deciding to write in conjunction with Mr. H. B. E. Fox a complete history of the coins and coinage of Edward III after 1351 until the end of the reign. Briefly, the discovery was this, that there existed at the time under consideration an elaborate system of marking the coins with a privy mark so that their origin could at any time be ascertained by the authorities charged with carrying out the Trials of the Pyx which were ordered to take place every three months. Mr. Lawrence realized that if the officials could recognize the coins by their marks so also should we be able to to-day, and he at once set to work to try to find them. Students of the period had long been aware of various peculiarities such as malformed or mutilated letters, the presence of small pellets, annulets, or crosses in various unexpected places, and so on, but it remained for Mr. Lawrence to turn these to account and endeavour so far as possible by their aid to place every coin to its proper three-monthly period.1 A formidable task indeed for any one to attempt!

It will be noticed that the book is dedicated to the memory of H. B. Earle Fox and George Cyril Brooke. It was with the former that the work was begun, but his premature death in 1918 robbed Mr. Lawrence of his collaborator and left him to carry on alone. That he received valuable assistance from G. C. Brooke, he is the first to admit, but once again

1 Dr. Brooke had previously published a valuable article on Henry V in Num. Chron. Ser. V, vol. x, applying Mr. Lawrence’s theories to that reign.
death intervened and he was obliged to put the final touches to his great work by himself. What this meant probably only those who have been familiar with it from the start can ever realize. The hunt for some missing coin, theorized to exist but so far undiscovered! The chase for some scrap of evidence to be sought for in the contemporary documents, sometimes off the original skins! A chance reference in some obscure "foreign account", or a letter to or from a bishop! All these things had diligently to be sought for, and when discovered their proper meaning interpreted. The amount of patience and labour required to carry through such a work is almost inconceivable.

Some twenty-five years ago the late Sir Henry Howarth, in a Presidential address to members of the Royal Numismatic Society, remarked that so far as English coins were concerned there seemed very little more to be discovered or written about them! Since then the coins of almost every reign have each been dealt with separately, in a most complete and elaborate manner, in many cases by Mr. Lawrence himself. But this last work of his stands in a class by itself on account of his discovery of the "privy mark" system, which has enabled a closer and more accurate classification of the coins to be made. It can well be imagined that students of the reigns subsequent to that of Edward III may be able by this method to rearrange the coins in a definite and accurate manner never before attempted. In spite of Sir Henry's rather depressing forecast we may yet hope for some interesting work from future writers, which Mr. Lawrence's remarkable discovery will have made possible.

J. S.-F.


This book is a catalogue of the large collection of naval medals of all countries in the new Museum of Greenwich. It is excellently prepared and the price, 2s. 6d., is astoundingly low. The medals are all described in some detail with references to Medallic Illustrations and to Lord Milford Haven's works. In some cases historical notes are added.
The seventeen collotype plates would alone be worth the price.

*Coins of the Modern World*. By M. COMENCINI. Methuen & Co. 1937. 185 pages, 299 illustrations in the text, price 7s. 6d.

This book gives a general list with brief descriptions of the coinage throughout the world since 1870. The book is the first to cover this ground, and it therefore fills a long-felt want. It is, however, not entirely satisfactory from the collector's point of view. It is far from complete and is not always clearly arranged. Fluctuations in foreign exchanges had already made the relative values suggested for coins out of date by the time the book appeared. Probably the best sections are those on China and the Far East.

**Periodical Literature**


The following papers on British numismatics are included in the above volume:

"The Boyton Find of Coins of Edward I and II", by Derek Allen. This hoard of pennies is typical of many that have turned up at various times. A single long-cross penny is recorded out of a total of 4,147 coins, the remaining Edward pennies showing an almost complete series of the known types from 1279 to 1320. Perhaps the most valuable part of this paper is the outline of a classification of the Irish coins. It claims to be no more than an outline, but may pave the way for a more detailed classification, of which there is great need. The paper is accompanied by a detailed list of the coins in the hoard which, it is suggested, was deposited about 1324.

"New Light on Thomas Simon", by Miss Helen Farquhar. Papers from the pen of Miss Farquhar are always welcome items in the *Chronicle*, and the present one is no exception. Much new information regarding the Simon family is placed on record, not the least interesting being the discovery of the entry for his baptism in April 1618. This gives us the approximate date of his birth, and from it Miss Farquhar makes certain interesting deductions. Thomas Simon was apprenticed to the mint for a period of seven years from 1635 and had, at the latest, in 1637, and perhaps even earlier, engraved the beautiful little silver seal for the Privy Council.
It was not previously realized that he must have been at most nineteen years old at this time. In 1638, at the age of twenty, he engraved an important Admiralty seal for the Earl of Northumberland as Lord High Admiral. His ability must, therefore, have been soon recognized for such work to have been entrusted to him so early in his apprenticeship. Among the numerous illustrations accompanying the paper are two representing the obverse and reverse of a hitherto unpublished seal made by Simon for the Governors of the School and Almshouses of Westminster in 1649–50.

"A Small Hoard of Silver Pennies found in Dunfermline in 1896", by L. A. Lawrence, F.S.A. Mr. Lawrence recently acquired this hoard and the jug in which it was contained. There were 269 coins, of which all except four were pennies of Edward I and II, but a few Scottish pennies and continental coins may have been removed. Of Edward III there were three pennies, one of Fox type XV d of London and two of the "Florin" type of London and York. Mr. Lawrence discusses briefly the vexed question of the Durham coins of type XV d and gives it as his opinion that the coins of this type, which have latterly been regarded as struck by Bishop de Bury, who received the temporalities of the See in December 1333, should in fact be ascribed to his predecessor, Bishop Beaumont. Probably owing to limitations of space, he does not set out fully the reasons for his attribution.


*British Museum Quarterly*, vol. x, no. 4: "The Clarke-Thornhill Collection of British Coins."

Vol. xi, no. 1: "Rare English Medals."
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Vol. xi, no. 2: "English Coins from the Lawrence Collection."

The English Historical Review, October 1936: "Wood's Halfpence", by A. Goodwin.


Vol. lxvii, part 1: Coin hoard in co. Clare. (Coins of Edward I, II, and III. The description is too brief to be of much value.)

Archaeologia Cambrensis, vol. xcii, part 1: "Bracelets and coins found at Braich-y-Dinas, Penmaenmawr."


The Essex Review, October 1936: "Cymbeline and his Coins."


Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol. xliv: "Ancient British Coin."

Sussex Notes and Queries, vol. vi, no. 6: "Treasure Trove at Selsey." (Ring-money.)
