THE MEDALS OF THE ART UNION OF LONDON

By G. K. BEAULAH

The Art Union of London was founded in 1837 as a society for fostering interest in the fine arts and, as a side effect, to encourage British artists and manufacturers of decorative wares, whose products at that time were thought to be inferior to similar things made on the continent. The two objects were achieved together by an ingenious scheme, the model for which had been seen working in Germany.

The members paid a subscription of a guinea a year. For this, all received annually a large engraving said to be at least equal in value to their subscription and in addition they had the chance of winning valuable prizes at a yearly ‘draw’. Mass-production of the engravings made possible by the new process of facing the plates with steel by electro-plating gave the council of the Art Union a large surplus which went on the purchase of original paintings at London exhibitions, on the manufacture (specially for the Art Union) of ‘art objects’ such as statuettes, vases and plaques and on the production of the medals here described. In the heyday of the society the money spent on one year’s prizes totalled £9,000, then worth at least five times its present value. Painters benefited considerably, and manufacturers such as Copeland, Ellington and the Coalbrookdale Foundry were put on their mettle to produce things good enough to get the Council’s approval. The society in fact, during its most influential period, aspired to a role similar to the one performed today by the British Council, the Contemporary Art Society and the Council for Industrial Design.

The ‘medallie series of the History of British Art’ was planned in 1842, primarily for use as prizes but also to further the society’s twofold aim—in this case to revive interest in the medallist’s art and to encourage British die-engravers. The silver medals, generally to the number of 30 each year, were allotted to winners not qualifying for the more valuable prizes. The same medals in bronze were available to any subscriber who might prefer one to the annual engraving. The Secretary’s own annotated copies of the printed Annual Reports of the Art Union are in the British Museum and show that most people were satisfied to accept the engraving and that relatively few wrote in for bronze medals. In later years stock remaining was offered for sale to any member, and was gradually disposed of. In their best year, 1876, the membership stood at over 20,000; so in spite of the relatively few applicants, some hundreds of bronze medals would be distributed. Silver medals from existing dies were issued in some years when no new medal had been struck; for example there were issued in 1850 thirty silver medals at the choice of the prizewinners; in 1852 twenty-five sets of the five previous medals; in 1856 forty of Flaxman and thirty of Vanbrugh; in 1857 twenty of Flaxman; in 1873 six of Etty. ‘Six of Etty’ rather looks as though these were all that were left. In 1866 a complete set of medals, then numbering sixteen, was presented by the Council to the Royal Academy. Those medals were in bronze, which can perhaps be taken as a pointer that the silver medals were rather strictly confined to the 30 annual prizewinners whose names and addresses are printed in the Reports, year by year. The weight of the silver medals is 3½ oz. more or less.

A reason given in 1842 for the desirability of promoting the medals was that, through insufficient work, native die engravers were a dying race; and to justify their policy some
years later a member of the council said that in 1858 when the Government wanted a national medal ‘they had to go to a foreigner to produce the work by another process’. Having decided to proceed, William Wyon, R.A., chief engraver at the Royal Mint, was called in for advice. He reckoned that £100 would pay for the dies for their first medal and offered to start the series with one of Sir Francis Chantrey the sculptor. W. Wyon was an engraver who evidently was very far from being under-employed, since he took four years to deliver the first medal. Other engravers also were dilatory, and a vexed Secretary must often have reflected that such independence was not what he had expected from a depressed craft.

The Art Union’s last commission was placed with Alfred Gilbert (later R.A. and Knight) for a medal to commemorate the jubilee of the Art Union as well as that of the Queen. Although 1887 was the date of this last medal, the Report of 1894 lists twenty-five names ‘entitled each to a silver medal’ while the last mention of medals occurs in 1895 when twenty persons received ‘a medal’, by which time subscribers were down to below 5,000. The last two mentions, we may surmise, could have been the last of their stock of medals from all earlier dies. The Art Union of London was wound up following a resolution passed in 1912.

The council of the Art Union seems to have ordered the medals from the die engraver, and the striking and delivery of them would be his responsibility. Mrs. J. S. Martin of the British Museum and Mr. Anthony Gunstone of the Birmingham City Museum independently suggested that the Royal Mint was a likely place of manufacture. In response to an enquiry by Mrs. Martin, Mr. G. P. Dyer of the Royal Mint kindly examined a manuscript notebook of private commissions accepted by the Chief Engraver and found that 80 medals had been struck for the Art Union in June 1848 and 81 in November of the same year. The only other mention was of 18 being struck in July 1850. W. Wyon was then Chief Engraver, and the 1848 entry probably refers to medals of Hogarth undertaken by his son, L. C. Wyon. The work in 1850 would be for meeting the demands of subscribers who had been offered medals from earlier dies—it would appear that the Art Union found themselves a few short.

It was the privilege of the Chief Engraver to use the Mint machinery for private commissions. That post was held throughout the period of the Art Union medals by the two Wyons, father and son. The father had been instrumental in launching the series, and the son would be well disposed towards it for sentimental as well as for business reasons. Three other members of the family who made the Art Union medals would have access to the Mint through their successively holding the office of Chief Engraver of Her Majesty’s Seals. Until more information turns up, therefore, it is tempting to think that more of the medals emanated from the Royal Mint than are mentioned in the notebook. That of Barry (1862) by L. and J. Wiener can be excepted. It is a larger size and of a different patina, compared with the rest, and may have been struck by Elkington & Co. of Birmingham, who in 1861 produced five medals of English cathedrals of the same diameter, the dies of which were by Wiener. A list of these and other die engravers will be found subjoined.

As works of art these medals would be condemned by some because the subjects on the reverse are borrowed ones. However, the promoters thought that to show an example of the work of the man commemorated outweighed that consideration, and indeed their choice did afford the diesinkers maximum scope for their superlative technical skill, and that we may enjoy, together with the expertise of the medallists in achieving flawless high relief and excellent colouring. With ample funds the Art Union engaged the best die engravers and for the most part succeeded in the aim avowed—when the project was first mooted—to promote ‘dignified simplicity of composition . . . calm expression . . . purity and correctness
PLATES

THE MEDALS OF THE ART UNION OF LONDON
of drawing, and severe beauty of form’. Only two of the medals exhibit reverses designed by the die engraver or modeller for this specific purpose, namely No. 7, Wyon, who follows the Greek ideal; and No. 30, Gilbert, who with a characteristic design, a sort of neo-Baroque, foreshadows Art Nouveau. The last medal is a faithful pantograph reduction of the original wax model with no attempt to conceal unevenness of surface. All the rest, including the Wyon, while using the pantograph for the main cavities, are finished by hand engraving, by the punch, chisel and hone to achieve that degree of perfection then considered essential. Of the portraits on the obverse, fifteen were painters, seven were sculptors, six were architects and there was one die engraver (W. Wyon). Twelve of the twenty-nine historical medals were issued within a decade of their subject’s deaths; and the rest were in honour of figures such as Wren, Hogarth, etc., whose reputations had already stood the test of time.

The following medals are illustrated in the Annual Reports:—Wren, Chantrey, Hogarth, Inigo Jones, Flaxman, Wyon. The engravings were produced by a forgotten process on a machine called the Anaglyptograph, which was operated by tracing across the surface of the actual medal in a series of parallel tracks. An etching needle at the other end of a pivoted arm produced a kind of contour map.

Because of uncertainty arising chiefly from the blank years when no medal was issued, it has not been established definitely until now how many medals comprised the series. Medals have been listed as ‘Art Union’ which were not; and medals of this series which had escaped having Art Union of London stamped on the edge have not been recognised as belonging to it. Perhaps because of this lack of certainty few complete sets have been assembled. There is none, as far as I know, in any public collection. The only one, in fact, that I have heard of has been completed quite recently by a member of this Society, Mr. Tom Stainton.

Of the photographs, the British Museum has contributed Bacon, Westmacott and Cox; the Fitzwilliam, Scott; the Ashmolean, Dyce and Leslie; the rest are from medals in the author’s incomplete collection.

The numerical order is that of dates on the medals, not the order of issue.
Description scheme is as follows:
(a) Name and date on medal
(b) All inscriptions
(c) Size
(d) Portrait on the obverse with a biographical note
(e) Subject of the reverse
(f) Circumstances of the issue.

The author wishes to thank Mrs. J.S. Martin of the British Museum; Mr. Anthony Thompson of the Ashmolean; Mr. Graham Pollard of the Fitzwilliam, and in particular Mr. Anthony Gunstone of the Birmingham City Museum for valuable advice and information.

I. CHANTERY (1843)  
Obv.: CHANTREY SCULPTOR ET ARTIUM FACTOR W: WYON. R:A: FEC:  
Rev.: On plinth, WATT; in exergue, FRANCISCI CHANTREY OPUS. W. WYON. R.A. FEC. 1846.  
On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1843. (Some specimens have nothing on the edge). Diam.: 55 mm. The profile looking right, portrays Sir Francis Chantrey (1781-1842), donor of the Chantrey Bequest, a noted sculptor, who was among the first to depart from the frozen classicism fashionable in the early 19th century. The reverse subject shows Chantrey’s sculptured memorial to James Watt in Handsworth Church, Birmingham.

This was the first medal planned by the Art Union and was intended for issue in 1843 when allotment was made of silver medals to 30 prizewinners. In that year however, when asked about progress, Wyon could only report that he had completed the plaster model, which, to reassure prizewinners, was exhibited
along with other prizes of the year in 1843. 1844, Wyon reported delay due to pressure of work for the Government on the Indian campaign medals. 1845, Council still unable to get Wyon to complete. 1846, after five dies had cracked in hardening a pair of sound ones were at last obtained. 1847, issued to the prizewinners of 1843.

2. REYNOLDS (1845).  
Obv.: REYNOLDS: STOTHARD (on neck).  
Rev.: ART UNION OF LONDON 1845.  
Nothing on edge. Diam.: 58 mm. The profile head, looking left, is from the bust now in the vestibule of the Royal Academy. Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) was the first President of the Royal Academy. The reverse represents 'The Infant Hercules', after one of Reynolds' paintings, 10 ft. square, then (1845) in the Imperial Collection at St. Petersburg 'in deplorable condition'.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1845, distributed 1846.

3. WREN (1846).  
Obv.: WREN: WILSON SC.  
Rev.: CHRISTOPHER WREN ARCHITECT MDCCX.  
In exergue: SI MONUMENTUM REQUIRIS CIRCUMSPICE. B. WYON s. On the edge: ART UNION OF LONDON 1846.  
Diam.: 57-7 mm. The portrait, looking to right, depicts Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723), architect responsible for the design of many of London's public buildings after the Great Fire. The reverse subject, St. Paul's Cathedral, was considered at the time to be 'one of the most successful medallic representations of a building ever executed'.

Thirty medals were allotted in 1846. In 1847 it was reported that work had not been completed because of illness of Wilson. In 1848 work was still in abeyance, so was given to B. Wyon. In 1849 work was further delayed through cracks appearing in both dies after a few medals had been struck, which rendered them unfit for further use. 1850, medals distributed. The medal in the author's set shows a crack. The explanation may be that the crack became worse and that the medals not too badly marked were distributed. The sum allocated for medals this year was £200, presumably to cover both engraving and striking.

4. HOGARTH (1848).  
Obv.: HOGARTH. Signed L. WYON.  
Rev.: HE THROUGH THE EYE CORRECTS THE HEART.  
In exergue: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1848. On plinth: HOGARTH DES. L. WYON SC.  
Nothing on the edge. Diam. 54-6 mm.  
The bust, looking right, is after a sculpture by Roubilliac. William Hogarth (1697-1764) is the first considerable genre painter of the truly English School. The reverse shows a scene from Hogarth's painting 'The Election'. Two rival canvassers are soliciting a voter.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted to prizewinners in 1848.

5. INIGO JONES (1849).  
Obv.: INIGO JONES, C. F. CARTER F.  
Diam.: 54 mm. The bust, looking left, portrays Inigo Jones (1576-1651), architect. He brought to England the designs of the Italian Palladio and started the taste for imitative styles which has lasted until recently.

Thirty medals in silver allotted to winners of 1849; but in 1851 they were still undelivered 'delayed by other engagements'. 1852 distributed to winners.

6. FLAXMAN (1854).  
Obv.: FLAXMAN. HENRY WEIGALL SC.  
Rev.: H. WEIGALL FECIT.  
On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1854.  
Diam.: 56 mm. The profile bust, looking left, depicts John Flaxman, R.A. (1755-1826), sculptor, but foremost a designer in the neo-grecian mode of his day. He had a great influence on artistic ideals, which lingers in corners even now. The reverse shows a bas-relief of Flaxman's 'Mercury and Pandora'. Designed as one of a series of illustrations for Hesiod's Works and Days it was the only one of the series ever modelled. A cast of the 3 ft. roundel is at Castle Howard, Yorkshire, and an engraving of it appears in the Art Union Journal of 1848, p. 52.

This medal was intended for issue in 1847 when it had been in the hands of the engraver, W. Wilson, for some time and when the thirty prizewinners were notified of their silver medals to be forthcoming soon. In 1848 they were still undelivered and winners were given the option of either Chantrey or Reynolds instead. In 1849 the Council lost patience and turned the work over to W. Wyon. In 1851 Wyon reported that the work had been delayed by an accident. Later in the year he died, so the work was given to Henry Weigall. Since the dies are signed Weigall it seems as though no useful progress had been made by the others. In 1854 thirty new prizewinners were allotted this medal and received it the same year. Presumably most of the thirty in 1847 had had to be satisfied with the alternative offers.

7. WYON (1854).  
Obv.: WILLIAM WYON R:A. Signed L. O. WYON.  
Nothing on the edge. Diam.: 55-7 mm. The profile head and shoulders on the obverse, looking right, portrays William Wyon, R.A. (1795-1851). He was the most notable of the family of die engravers connected with the Royal Mint and was Chief Engraver from

1 Art Journal 1850 p. 191.
1824 until his death. The reverse subject of Britannia driving four sea-horses was designed by W. Wyon and is, with No. 90, alone of the series specifically intended for a medal. The original wax model, in tinted wax on slate, is in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

The medal was commissioned in the year of Wyon’s death, 1851. Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1855.

8. VANBRUGH (1855). 
   Obv.: SIR JOHN VANBRUGH. BENJ. WYON SC. 
   Rev.: In exergue: BLENHEIM BENJ. WYON SC. On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1855. Diam.: 55 mm. The obverse shows a three-quarter bust. Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726) was the architect of Blenheim, continuing the Palladian style introduced by Inigo Jones—a style more concerned with effect than with convenience. The reverse shows the central block of Blenheim Palace.

The medal was commissioned in 1853; thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1856.

9. CHAMBERS (1857). 
   Obv.: CHAMBERS 1725-1796. B. WYON AFTER WESTMACOTT. 
   Rev.: SOMERSET HOUSE 1781 SIR WILLIAM CHAMBERS R.A. ARCHITECT. Signed B. WYON. On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1857. Diam.: 54.5 mm. The head-and-shoulders in profile, looking right, is based on a drawing by Sir Richard Westmacott, R.A. (See medal No. 18). Sir William Chambers (1726-1796), architect, was a foundation member of the Royal Academy, and was the architect of Somerset House which is represented on the reverse.

The medal was commissioned with L. C. Wyon in 1855 but was passed over to his second cousin, B. Wyon. Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1857, together with twenty of Flaxman.

10. BANKS (1858). 
    Obv.: THOMAS BANKS R:A: L. C. WYON F. 
    Rev.: Nothing on the edge. Diam.: 54.6 mm. The head-and-shoulders looking left is based on a drawing by George Dance, R.A. Thomas Banks, R.A. (1735-1805), sculptor, has been called ‘an apostle of perfect craftsmanship’. The reverse shows part of the decoration of the tomb of Sir Eyre Coote.

This medal was commissioned with B. Wyon in 1855 but was completed by L. C. Wyon. It would appear that they exchanged jobs (see No. 9 above). Thirty-two medals in silver were allotted in 1858.

11. GAINSBOURGH (1859). 
    Obv.: T. GAINSBOROUGH R.A. BORN 1727. DIED 1789. E. ORTNER FEC. 
    Rev.: E. ORTNER FECIT. On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1859. Diam.: 54.9 mm. The profile head-and-shoulders, looking right, is a portrait of Sir David Wilkie who achieved fame as a painter of village life. The reverse of this medal, ‘The wood-gatherers’, is a detail from one of his paintings now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The medal was commissioned with Henry Weigall in 1855, completed by E. Ortner 1858. Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1859.

12. LAWRENCE (1860). 
    Obv.: LAWRENCE. G. G. ADAMS F. 
    Rev.: ART UNION OF LONDON. 1860. On the plinth: WELLINGTON. In exergue: G. G. ADAMS F. Nothing on the edge. Diam.: 56 mm. The head, looking left, is a portrait by E. H. Baily, R.A. Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), President of the Royal Academy, spread the fame of the English School of portraiture throughout Europe. The reverse shows the Duke of Wellington, full length, from a Lawrence portrait.

The medal was commissioned with C. F. Carter in 1853, who however failed to make progress. It was transferred to G. G. Adams in 1859 who completed successfully. Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1860.

13. WILKIE (1861). 
    Obv.: SIR DAVID WILKIE R.A. 1785-1841. LEONARD C. WYON FEC. 
    Rev.: Nothing on the edge. Diam.: 54.9 mm. The profile head-and-shoulders, looking right, is a portrait of Sir David Wilkie who achieved fame as a painter of village life. The reverse of this medal shows part of his picture, ‘The Rent Day’.

The dies were commissioned in 1859. Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1861.

14. BARRY (1862). 
    Obv.: SIR C. BARRY R.A. ARCHITECT. ART-UNION OF LONDON. Signed LEOPOLD WIENER. 
    Rev.: COMMENCED 1837. INAUGURATED 1847. Signed J. WIENER. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 59.5 mm. The profile bust, looking to right, portrays Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860) who was one of the last exponents of the classical revival. The reverse shows the Houses of Parliament, his principal work.

Thirty silver medals were issued in 1862.

15. BACON (1864). 
    Obv.: J. S. WYON SC. 
    Rev.: Nothing on edge. Diam.: 55 mm. The profile head and shoulders, looking to right, portrays John Bacon, R.A., a monumental sculptor of high repute. The reverse depicts Bacon’s statue of Samuel Johnson.

The commission for this medal was placed with J. S. Wyon as early as 1850. There were reports of progress, or the lack of it, in 1860 and 1863. Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1864.
16. **West (1866).** *Obv.*: WEST 1738-1820 SIGNED W. WILSON. *Rev.*: 1759. WILSON LONDON. On the edge: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1866. Diam.: 54.8 mm. The profile head, looking to left, portrays Benjamin West R.A. West was born in Pennsylvania and came to London in 1765, becoming President of the Royal Academy in 1792. He was the most successful of the 'History Painters'. The reverse shows the central group from his picture 'The death of Wolfe at Quebec'.

W. Wilson was working on the dies in 1863. One hundred silver medals were allotted in 1866.

17. **Dyce (1867).** *Obv.*: DYCE 1806-1864 G. G. ADAMS SC. *Rev.*: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1867. G. G. ADAMS SC. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 57 mm. The profile head, looking left, portrays William Dyce, R.A., who was largely instrumental in setting up a national system of art training in this country. The reverse shows a detail from one of his paintings, 'The Good Shepherd'.

The medal was commissioned with G. C. Adams in 1866. Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1867.


Thirty silver medals issued to prizewinners in 1868.


The dies were commissioned in 1866. Thirty in silver were allotted on completion in 1871.

20. **Etty (1872).** *Obv.*: ETTY 1787-1849 G. G. ADAMS SC. *Rev.*: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1872. G. G. ADAMS SC. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 56.9 mm. The profile head, looking left, is based on a self-portrait in the Manchester City Art Gallery. William Etty spent his whole working life in mastering the subtleties of modelling and colour in painting the nude. The reverse shows his work 'Venus and Cupid descending' (See Farr *William Etty*, pi. 18).

Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1872; six more in 1873.

21. **Gibson (1874).** *Obv.*: JOHN GIBSON R.A. 1789-1866. J. S. WYON SC. *Rev.*: ART UNION OF LONDON 1874. J. GIBSON R.A. J. S. WYON SC. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 55.1 mm. The profile head, looking left, portrays John Gibson, R.A. Gibson's sculptured works include, among many others, the monuments to George Stephenson and Sir Robert Peel in Westminster Abbey. The reverse of this medal shows his group 'Grecian Hunter and his dog'. In 1851 this group was exhibited at the Crystal Palace by its then owner Lord Yarborough.

The dies were commissioned in 1866. Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1874.

22. **Roberts (1875).** *Obv.*: DAVID ROBERTS R.A. 1796-1864 G. MORGAN SC. *Rev.*: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1875. Nothing on the edge. Diam.: 56.4 mm. The profile head, looking left, portrays David Roberts, a painter of architectural subjects and near-eastern scenes, such as the Moorish scribe with seated female figure on the reverse of this medal.

The medal was decided on in 1865. Commissioned with G. Morgan ('a young sculptor and die engraver') in 1873, thirty silver medals were allotted in 1875. It is a matter of interest that of the thirty winners eight were resident overseas—an indication of the Art Union's wide field.

23. **Turner (1876).** *Obv.*: JOSHDUB MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER R.A. 1775-1851. L.C. WYON FEC. *Rev.*: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1876. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 55.1 mm. The head and shoulders in profile, looking to left, is from a drawing by Charles Turner. J. M. W. Turner has been named as England's finest painter. The reverse of this medal is a detail from his painting 'The Fighting Temeraire being towed to her last berth'.

Thirty silver medals were allotted in 1876.

24. **Mulready (1877).** *Obv.*: MULREADY 1786-1863 On the neck: G. G. ADAMS SC. *Rev.*: ART-UNION OF LONDON 1877. G. G. ADAMS SC. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 55.3 mm. The profile head, looking left, portrays William Mulready, R.A., a painter of landscapes and figure subjects. The reverse depicts a detail from one of his pictures 'The Haymakers'.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1877.

profile head-and-shoulders, looking left portrays Daniel Maclise, a painter of genre best known for his picture 'The death of Nelson'. The reverse of this medal shows a part of his painting, 'The Play Scene from Hamlet'.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1878. A bronze medal in the Birmingham City Museum has the number 398 stamped on the edge. This medal may have been the 'office copy', bearing a note of the number struck.

26. Cox (1879). Obv.: DAVID COX. G. MORGAN F. Rev.: In exergue: ART UNION OF LONDON 1879. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 57 mm. The head and shoulders portrait is from a painting by Sir John Watson Gordon, P.R.A. David Cox, (1783-1859), was a renowned painter in water-colour. The subject on the reverse is a scene from one of his paintings 'Returning from market'.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1881.


Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1890. There is no previous mention in the Art Union Annual Reports, and we are unable to account for the delay of ten years.


29. Scott (1884). Obv.: SIR G. GILBERT SCOTT R.A. 1811-1878 G.G. ADAMS SC. Rev.: ART UNION OF LONDON 1884 EDINBURGH. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 57 mm. The profile head, looking to left, portrays Sir George Gilbert Scott, one of the chief architects of the Gothic revival. The reverse of this medal depicts his design for St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh, opened in 1879. The western towers shown on the medal were not however built until 1917.

Thirty medals in silver were allotted in 1884.

30. Queen Victoria (1887). Obv.: VICTORIA QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND & EMPRESS OF INDIA. At base of bust: ANN. IVBIL. 1887. Rev.: ART SAILETH THOUGH LIFE FAILETH. ART UNION OF LONDON 1837-1887. Nothing on edge. Diam.: 63 mm. The reverse subject shows a winged figure testing the direction of the wind standing on the stern-castle of an ancient ship, symbolising Art. Sir Alfred Gilbert, R.A. 1854-1934, was Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy and among many other works modelled the statue EROS. This medal is not signed, perhaps because Gilbert felt that its main purpose was to commemorate the two jubilees and not, as in the case of the other medals, to exhibit a sample of named work.

Thirty medals in silver and forty in bronze were allotted. The same number in the two metals were also allotted as prizes in 1888.

### THE DIE ENGRAVERS OF THE ART UNION MEDALS

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