THE PRESIDENT’S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

In this, my third Annual Review, I am glad to report that the membership of the Society stands at a record figure. As at 30th October 1968 we had 435 members, of whom 312 were ordinary members, 16 were junior members and 107 were institutional members. The number of new members elected in 1968, including those elected tonight, is 47, the highest for many years. Our indefatigable Secretary, Wilfrid Slayter, deserves to be congratulated on this achievement, though we must not be complacent about the size of our membership. Our finances would be strengthened by another hundred members, and our meetings would be even more lively if a higher proportion of our members attended them.

This last year was overshadowed by the sudden death of my immediate predecessor, Charles Wilson Peck. Elected to membership of the Society in 1947, Peck served on the Council almost continuously from 1956. He was elected President at the Anniversary Meeting in 1963 and held office for two years, after which he became a Vice-President. Peck was that rarity among our members, a serious student of modern coinage, and was always ready to help the younger student of his series. The culmination of his life's work was the publication in 1960 by the Trustees of the British Museum of his catalogue of English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum, 1558-1958. This great work will no doubt be revised in minor details over the years, and indeed has already gone into a second edition, but I cannot see it being superseded in this century. It earned him the Medal of the Royal Numismatic Society for 1960.

Peck was a keen photographer, and wrote in our Journal on the photography of coins. He also contributed a number of papers on subjects connected with his catalogue. It was your Council’s view that the members of our Society should be invited to approve a special posthumous award of the Sanford Saltus Medal to our former President, and I have no doubt that in the ballot tonight they will do so.

I have also to report with regret the deaths of L. S. Forrer and—though this should have been reported last year—W. V. R. Baldwin.

Of the papers discussed at our meetings this session I should like to single out for special mention that by Miss Marion Archibald on the Fishpool Hoard. It was, of course, a subject of great interest, but the account was given most fluently and lucidly and the colour slides with which Miss Archibald illustrated her paper were a lesson to us all.

For our guest speaker we had Major Donald Deane, coinage consultant to International Nickel Limited and formerly controller of the Indian mints. He gave us a fascinating account of the problems of designing coinage systems in inflationary conditions, mentioning throw-away paper money as a solution which had been adopted in Hong Kong for the smallest denomination. Another successful evening took the form of a symposium on the coins, medals and tokens of the 17th century, and the Director will be repeating this experiment but with a different period.

The Society’s finances are in good order under the watchful eye of Mr. Clifford Allen, and the Council has at last found itself able to vote funds to the Librarian for the acquisition of books. Suggestions from members will be welcomed, but a start has been made with the purchase of the Archaeological bibliography for Great Britain and Ireland (1940 .... 1966), which it is hoped will mitigate the problem of the 'scatter' of numismatic articles over a wide range of historical and economic periodicals. A full list of accessions of interest for British
numismatics will be published in *British Numismatic Journal*. Among other acquisitions are three medals, one of them the Decimal Coinage Medal donated by the Royal Numismatic Society of New Zealand; these have been deposited in the British Museum.

The *British Numismatic Journal* for 1967 is unfortunately still with the Press, having been held up because of difficulties with one major article, but should be published early in the new year. I am happy to tell you that Mr. John Porteous has agreed to become an Editor. Mr. Porteous, incidentally, deserves our congratulations on being appointed to the Royal Mint Advisory Committee. He has joined it at an interesting time, as new pence jostle with old in our pockets and the problems of impending decimalisation of our currency make themselves felt.

Returning to my theme, I cannot let this occasion pass without paying tribute to the other Editors, and in particular to the Senior Editor, Mr Blunt. Members generally may not realise that the first volume of *British Numismatic Journal* which Mr. Blunt edited bore the date 1938. He has certainly given us long and loyal service in this post. He has been instrumental, too, in securing the renewal for a further year of the grant from the British Academy towards the cost of the *Journal*, for which we are most grateful. I take the opportunity also of congratulating him on becoming President of the British Association of Numismatic Societies. Mentioning the British Academy prompts me to record with pleasure that Mr. Derek Allen, a past President of this Society, and currently President of the Royal Numismatic Society, will shortly be succeeding Sir Mortimer Wheeler as the Academy's Secretary. We wish him well in his new post.

Among numismatic publications this year are two more volumes of the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*. These cover the Anglo-Saxon pennies in the Ashmolean Museum and the Anglo-Irish coins from John to Edward III in the Ulster Museum, Belfast. The former was written by J. D. A. Thompson and the latter by Michael Dolley and W. A. Seaby. I must also mention an important piece of research by Dr. D. M. Metcalf and others entitled *Studies in the Composition of Early Medieval Coins*, published by Corbitt & Hunter as one of a series of Minerva Numismatic Handbooks: and a monograph by J. J. North on *The Coinages of Edward I and II* recently published by Spink. Our Director, Ian Stewart, has prepared a new edition of his book, *The Scottish Coinage*, with a supplement summarising the results of research into the series, largely his own work, since the original edition was published.

An important publication from outside the British Isles, but with material of great interest to students of the coinages of the Viking age, has come from the Royal Swedish Academy in the shape of the second volume in the series *Commentationes de nummis saeculorum IX–XI in Suecia repertis*. In particular there is an exhaustive treatise by Mrs. Veronica Smart on “Moneyers of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage 973–1016”, which will be an essential source for numismatists undertaking research into the coinage of Æthelred II quite apart from its primary value for the study of personal names in England at that time.

Last year I briefly recorded the hoards of non-Roman coins that had come to light in England during the previous twelve months. This year I am extending this to include the remainder of the United Kingdom. The English hoards during the last twelve months are as follows:

**December 1967**

Bolton Percy, Yorks.

In a field, about 1500 Northumbrian 'stycas', Eanred to Osberht, Archbishop Eanbald to Wulfhere, and derivatives. Deposit: c. 867.
February 1968  Barton, Lanes,  In the bank of a stream, Charles I shilling and two half-crowns, also two foreign coins.
April 1968  Mayfield, Sussex.  348 Sterling pence and 7 French gros. Deposition c. 1310.
April 1968  Harlaxten, Lines.  1 gold and 142 silver coins. Deposition 1643.

From other parts of the United Kingdom during the past two years there have been the following:

March 1967  Strandtown, East Belfast.  During reconstruction of a house, 31 Irish promissory banknotes, etc., 1904–1914. Short-cross pennies, 22 English (including 8 cut halves), 2 William the Lion (one cut half).
August 1968  Dun Lagaiddh, Loch Broom, Wester Ross.

I am indebted to Miss Archibald, and to Messrs. R. B. K. Stevenson, W. A. Seaby, G. C. Boon and R. H. Thompson, for supplying me with the information from which this list has been compiled.

In conclusion I should like to thank all the officers and members of Council for the services they have rendered to the Society in the past twelve months. Were it not for their efforts my report to you tonight would have been couched in much less optimistic tones. I have relied very much on their support and it has been freely given. In particular I would single out Wilfrid Slayter who has carried out the onerous duties of Secretary for yet another year despite severe trials and tribulations. We are very much in his debt.

S.L.