PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
1984

HUGH PAGAN

It is exactly eighty years this week since our Society held its first anniversary meeting, and it is both a privilege and a responsibility to follow in the steps of the many numismatists who have addressed you on these occasions over the last eighty years. At our first anniversary meeting the labour of the evening was divided between the Secretary, W.J. Andrew, who read a report on the Society's first year of existence, and the President, P.W.P. Carlyon-Britton, who read a paper on a subject of his own choosing; but for many years now it has fallen on your current President to perform both functions, and I must therefore begin by reviewing our Society's current state.

As of tonight our ordinary membership numbers 486, of whom 365 are personal members and the remaining 121 are institutions. We also have eight junior members under the age of twenty-one. During the year we have elected twenty-seven new members, a larger figure than for some years past. Although in numerical terms this is largely counterbalanced by deaths, resignations and amovals, in reality our position should be rather stronger, for new members bring new enthusiasm and I am especially pleased that five of our new members are junior members.

Our losses by death have been few, but they included Antony Gunstone, Director of the County Museum Service for Lincolnshire, who was elected to our Society in 1972 and served on Council from 1978 to 1981. His most enduring numismatic memorial will be the volumes on Anglo-Saxon and Norman coins in provincial museums that he produced for the Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles series; three were published during his lifetime and a fourth exists in typescript and will be published posthumously. His numismatic interests were wide and he had a gift of being able to take the study of comparatively modern numismatic material just as seriously as that of older coins, as can be seen from the three catalogues he compiled of tickets, checks and passes in local museums and from his lasting interest in the issues of the Soho and Heaton mints. Hugh Jessop, who died this autumn, had been a member of the Society since 1962, and had made a good general collection of English hammered coins; he was in the silver trade and his expertise in this field enabled him to contribute a useful note to our Journal on the mint mark of Charles I's Chester coinage. He had also written on the Newark siege pieces. H.L. Gilbert, a member since 1973, lived at Rye in Sussex, but was not known to us personally; and Dr Harold Egan, a member since 1955, was a distinguished biochemist who had held the position of Government Chemist between 1970 and 1981.

I must also mention the death of Mrs Emery May Norweb, of Cleveland, Ohio, on 27 March at the great age of eighty-eight. Mrs Norweb was never a member of our Society, but this was for technical reasons only - her husband paid the subscription - and it would be wrong not to pay tribute to a remarkable woman who was for some thirty years the foremost collector of British coins in the United States and who, together with her husband, amassed the largest study collection of English seventeenth-Century trade tokens that is ever likely to be put together. I understand that that part of the Norweb collection will remain intact until publication of it by our member Robert Thompson is completed.

Finally, although it is not normally our practice to list those who resign from the Society, I should note that resignations this year include Mr J.R. Asheton, who had belonged to the Society since 1936 and was among the three or four most senior names on our list.

As an incoming President I have relied very much on the support that I have received from our Secretary, and from others of my colleagues. Wilfrid Slayter has been our Secretary for twenty-two years and like all my predecessors over that period I am deeply appreciative of his devotion to the interests of the Society and of his natural common sense. At the other end of the scale our Treasurer, Tom Stainton, has only been in office for a year, but he has been following up the good work done by his predecessors, and I believe our finances are in capable hands. Our Director has as usual provided an excellent programme of speakers during the past year; and our Librarian acted for us in making the arrangements for the colloquium on the coinages of Carausius and Allectus which was held at the British Museum on 17 November under the joint auspices of our Society and of the Department of Coins and Medals. He tells me that 499 books were borrowed from the RNS/BNS joint library in the year ending 30 September 1984, which is a larger number than in the previous two years.

One important decision that your Council came to at the beginning of the year was that for volume 53 of our Journal we would revert to having it properly typeset rather than having it printed from camera ready typewritten copy. This has been possible because printing costs, which were rising very steeply three years ago, have now fallen and we calculate that the current cost of having the volume typeset is well within our means.
Prophecies about the future are obviously uncertain, but if the rise in printing costs over the next two years is not greatly more than the currently predicted rate of inflation over that period, we shall have no cause for concern.

Production of volume 53 has been the special responsibility of our new joint editor Mark Blackburn, and, all being well, the volume should be in members' hands at the end of the year. Our other joint editor, Christopher Challis, has continued to carry the main burden of editorial responsibility for our Journal. Having been editor of the Journal myself, I know that it is in some respects a thankless job, but it is a necessary one and the editors deserve and should receive our full support.

During the year we have held eight meetings in addition to the Carausius/Allectus colloquium. The subjects covered have ranged from the coinage of Roman Britain in the fourth century, discussed by Mr Casey in October, to the coinage struck at Indian mints during the early years of Queen Victoria, discussed by Mr Stevens in September. I was particularly pleased that our Director had had the foresight some months beforehand to persuade Dr Michael Metcalf to address us at our meeting in May, for this is the meeting at which every three years your President hands over the Society's John Sanford Saltus Medal to the lucky recipient, and by happy coincidence Dr Metcalf was your choice. He is the twenty-sixth person to receive the medal since 1910, but, as I said at the time, he is the first to have a striking of it from our new reverse die, which we owe to the kindness of Messrs Spink, the old reverse die having broken at the first attempt to strike Dr Metcalf's medal. The paper which Dr Metcalf read to us was on the thorny subject of 'porcupines', and Dr Metcalf persuaded us all that these supposedly English coins of the early eighth century were in reality struck on the European mainland. I will not list all the other papers read to us, but Mr Jones, Dr Mitchell, Mr Besly and (I believe) Mr Mitchell were all addressing us for the first time and we were impressed by their command of their subjects and by the light they shed on some very neglected areas of numismatics.

I should also record that our senior Vice-President, Christopher Blunt, celebrated his eightieth birthday on 16 July this year, and that the occasion was marked by the presentation to him by his numismatic friends of a portrait medal.

Another of our Vice-Presidents, Ian Stewart, has been in the unique position for an officer of this Society in that during 1984 he has carried ministerial responsibility for the Royal Mint. As his President I welcome what must I think essentially have been his conclusion that the pound note should be replaced by the pound coin, but I welcome it for the practical reasons that the Government has given rather than on sentimental numismatic grounds; if numismatics teaches us anything, it is that the objects that we use as currency go through an endless process of change and that they must continuously adapt to the requirements of the time. I am glad that our Vice-President managed to convince the Prime Minister of this, and I will not speculate on whether he found this easy.

So much for the year that has passed. Our Society is currently in a sound position financially and administratively, and we can look forward with confidence both to the coming year and to 1986, when we and the Royal Numismatic Society will be joint hosts to the International Numismatic Congress, which will take place in London for the first time since 1936. This will be a significant event for us all, and I am keen that we should do everything that we can to make the occasion a success. The Organising Committee for the Congress is now meeting regularly, and although we have not as yet done more than agree the outlines of what should happen, all seems to be going well.

Our responsibilities in 1986 will be to the international numismatic community. We have other more permanent responsibilities, for although we are, as learned societies go, a small society, we are inclined to forget that we are literally the only organisation which exists specifically to encourage the study of the coinage of the British Isles, and we are under an obligation to do whatever is in our power to advance research into British coinage. It is in this spirit that our Presidents have from time to time expressed views on matters of general concern to British numismatists, and provided that what we say is constructive I am sure that it does good. I am therefore going to speak briefly on three matters.

The first has to do with the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum. As most of you will know, the Department has been in temporary premises for the last few months while its permanent quarters are being extensively modernised and replanned. It will return in due course to its old place, but things will not be quite the same as they were before. For one thing, the Trustees of the British Museum have just appointed a new Assistant Keeper, Mr Cook, a history graduate of Manchester University, with several years postgraduate experience, and he will take responsibility within the Department for coinage between 1180 and 1660, concentrating on the coins of the later Middle Ages. Although his training has been as a mediaeval historian rather than as a numismatist, this is something we should welcome, for there has been too much of a division between historians and numismatists, and I am sure that he will have much to contribute to our subject in years to come. I also warmly welcome the shift of resources within the Department from classical to mediaeval coinage that this appointment involves, for we shall now have both Marion Archibald and Mr Cook working on the mediaeval series, and I think that we should congratulate the Trustees and the Keeper on this initiative, which I believe will soon be followed by a further announcement of considerable significance for the study of British coins.
That said, I come to the matter that I want to raise. Those of you who visit the Department of Coins and Medals for the purpose of serious numismatic study will know that on weekdays the Department will admit students in the morning and in the afternoon, but that between 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm its doors are closed. The loss of this hour and a half of the time that the Department might reasonably be expected to be open to scholars is a relatively recent development—many of us can remember when the Department was open throughout the lunch hour—and I do very much hope that when the Department moves back to its proper place, the opportunity will be taken to revert to the older practice. In many series numismatic research necessarily involves the handling of a large number of individual coins, which is a time-consuming business, and it is thoroughly unfair to the serious student that a working day at the Department should have to be divided into a morning session and an afternoon session separated by a lunch break not that far short in length of either period. It is no less unfair that the Department's opening hours should effectively prevent scholars who are in full-time employment elsewhere from using their lunch hour for serious numismatic research.

There are today more than enough academically qualified staff in the Department to operate a lunchtime duty roster, and although there may be administrative complications about the availability of staff in the lower grades, I do not think that these need be insuperable, for scholars using the students' room during the middle of the day would no doubt be prepared to call on the full range of services offered by the Department provided that they could sit quietly working at the coins.

I believe that this view is widely shared, and I have told Dr Kent, who cannot be here tonight, that I shall be writing to him in his departmental capacity to draw his attention to what I have just said. I want to raise two other subjects. One is a suggestion arising from the processes we nowadays have to go through when we do numismatic research. Thirty years ago numismatists who wrote articles for our Journal would still do so essentially on the basis of their own collections, the stock held by dealers and the holdings of the British Museum, supplemented when necessary by the illustrations in a few famous sale catalogues and by flying visits to Oxford and Cambridge. Today numismatics has moved on, in the sense that our articles are expected to be more scholarly and our coverage of the material more thorough, but simultaneously the availability of the actual coins for study has diminished, for dealers hold less stock, and our private collections, as well as being smaller, are often inaccessible in bank vaults. The result is that we have to rely increasingly on photographic illustrations of coins in books, sale catalogues, dealers' lists, and the like, and although at the moment it is still just about possible for an individual to cope with this kind of material, the number of catalogues and so on that one has to search is increasing month by month, and we are not far from the time when the number will be quite unmanageable.

It was our Society that in 1946 was the first organisation in Britain to set up a fund to finance the photographic illustration of coins, and I think that we should now see what we can do to index the great number of photographic illustrations of British coins that now exist. Coins in museum collections will no doubt be put on computer, and many will in time be published in the Sylloge series, but coins which pass through the sale room or through the hands of the trade, many of them interesting and all of them relevant to our studies, are not going to get this kind of treatment, and I would suggest that we should ourselves begin to build up a card index to coins illustrated in Spink's Circular, Seaby's Bulletin and the catalogues of London coin sales that would tell us that Oxford pounds of Charles I, for example, are illustrated in various named sale catalogues and in various issues of the Circular or Bulletin. The index would be housed in our library, and therefore need not itself be photographic, for the illustrations could immediately be found in the volumes on our library shelves, and it would require virtually no expenditure beyond the time and effort put in by our members in building it up. In an ideal world we ought no doubt to be more ambitious, and aim for a photographic index, but my feeling is that schemes of this nature, for instance the index of Anglo-Saxon coins begun at Leeds University in the 1960s, tend to be conceived on too grand a scale, and that in this context small is beautiful.

Lastly, a suggestion as to something positive that our Society can do to encourage younger numismatists. Historically our record on this front is good—I have among my colleagues two Vice-Presidents and at least four other members of Council who were elected to the Society before they reached the age of twenty-one, and I was myself elected to the Society as a junior member—and it is against that background that I would urge us to consider what we can do for our younger members. A former American member of the Society, Mr E.V. Buxton, gave us a sum of money a good many years ago to finance an annual prize for them, and members may not realise that although we have not awarded this prize for many years, there was until a couple of years ago a small sum of money available for this purpose. It was then decided to amalgamate it with our general purposes fund, for it was too small a sum to do anything constructive with, but it was felt at the time that at a suitable opportunity we should look at the subject again.

One of our difficulties with the Buxton Prize as originally conceived was that it could only be awarded to junior members, of whom we only ever have a handful, and I am sure that were we to start awarding a prize again we should have to make a wider range of members eligible for it. What upper age limit we should set I do not know, but were we, say, to award such a prize every three years, as we do with the Sanford Saltus medal, we should be able to find a suitable recipient each time and be able to make the prize a reasonable amount financially.
I am well aware that prizes in themselves do not work miracles, but I feel strongly that younger numismatists need encouraging and not just when they are beginners at numismatics. One of the central difficulties that our subject faces is that there are still virtually no jobs for numismatists as such, and consequently it does very definitely fall on our Society and the Royal Numismatic Society to provide welcome and backing for those who do serious numismatic work while pursuing other careers.

I shall come in a moment to the second part of my address, but before I do so I must read to you the list of coin hoards found in 1983–84 in England and the Isle of Man which Miss Archibald and Dr Burnett have kindly supplied me with:

HOARDS FROM ENGLAND 1983-4

Cheriton, Hants, Apr-Nov 1983. 30 Celtic (27 staters, 3 quarter staters). Deposited c. 50 BC.

Wanborough, Surrey, March 1984 and subsequently. 270+ Celtic and Roman gold, silver and copper. Deposited c. 55 AD.

Aldworth, Berks, Sept 1984. 77 Roman (75 silver, 2 bronze). Deposited c. 177.


Olivers Orchard, Colchester, May 1983. 6,029 Roman base silver. Deposited c. 274.


Ashdon (Steventon End), Essex, March–Oct 1984. c. 70 (many fragmentary) pennies of Ælfred, Æthelstan (Guthrum), and Carolingian rulers. Deposited c. 890-5.


Blencogo, Cumbria, 1983-4. 15 groats, half-groats, pennies Richard II–Henry VI. Deposited c. 1435.


Pershore (area), Worcs, summer 1983. 18 silver Elizabeth I–Charles I, shillings and sixpences. Latest coin 1646.

Ashdon, Essex, March 1984. 2 gold, 1,201 silver Edward VI – Charles I, gold crown and half-crown, range of silver denominations from half-crowns to half-groat. Latest coins 1644-5.

Dersingham, Norfolk, July 1984. 129 silver Philip and Mary – Charles I, shillings, found in a silver cup. Latest coins 1641-3.


HOARD FROM ISLE OF MAN


(Since the delivery of this address Dr David Caldwell of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland has kindly supplied me with a note of hoards from Scotland in 1983–84, from which I take the following details: Two Edwardian hoards from Aberdeen, one of approx 4,500 coins, one of approx 2,500 coins. Both found in pots and likely to be connected with the scale of the town in 1336.

Gatehouse of Fleet (near), Galloway. 74 Edwardian pence, ending Edward II.

Ncraboll, Islay, 1984. 10 coins (9 placks, 1 groat Henry VIII), fused together, from a churchyard.

Mr George Boon of the National Museum of Wales tells me that the only hoard from Wales in 1983–84 was the following:


For the second part of my address I am going to turn from the state of numismatics today to its state earlier this century. In two and a half weeks’ time, on 14 December 1984, we shall pass the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dr George Brooke, who I think we would all recognise as one of the major figures in the history of the study of the British coinage, and
as 1984 is also the fiftieth anniversary of his death, it seems wholly appropriate to say something tonight about him and his numismatic work.¹

George Cyril Brooke was born at Sutton, Surrey, on 14 December 1884. He was the younger son of George Brooke, a barrister employed in the Solicitor’s Department of the Inland Revenue, by his wife Alice Elizabeth, daughter of Rev. Tressilian George Nicholas, Vicar of West Molesey.² His mother died when he was still very young, and he and his elder brother Zachary Nugent Brooke grew up in a household in which the dominant figure was their father, who, as Z.N. Brooke later bore witness, ‘had been brought up in the old Victorian way – patriarchal – and firmly believed that the Father was everything and the children entirely subservient beings, taking their ideas, thoughts, and actions from him’.³ But both boys were clever and their academic abilities were soon apparent, the elder brother winning scholarships first to Bradfield College and then to St John’s College, Cambridge, and George scholarships successively to Westminster School and to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Z.N. Brooke remained at Cambridge as a history don and ultimately as Professor of Mediaeval History, becoming recognised as the leading authority on Thomas à Beckett and the English church in the twelfth century; but George’s career took a different course. The immediate reason for this was that although George did well in his final examinations in 1906 he failed to secure the first-class degree that would have launched him on an academic career; it is not now known for certain how he was directed to the museum side of the civil service, but he spent the following year, 1907, learning German in Heidelberg in order to qualify himself for a museum appointment,⁴ and on 3 April 1908 he joined the staff of the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum.⁵

In 1908 the staff of the Department comprised the Keeper, H.A. Grueber, who had worked in the Department since 1871 and was due to retire within the next three or four years; two Assistant Keepers, Warwick Wroth and George Hill; and one young man Brooke’s own age, John Allan, who had been taken on a year earlier to take charge of the Museum’s oriental coins. At first the intention seems to have been that Brooke, who had read classics at Cambridge, should help out with the Roman series – his very first publication was on a Constantinian hoard from Manchester and one of his next dealt with a second-century hoard from the West Midlands⁶ – but it was soon decided that the Department should take on another new recruit, Harold Mattingly, and after Mattingly’s arrival in February 1910 Brooke was free to work full-time on British coins. His first serious contribution to our subject was a paper on ‘Chronology in the Short Cross period’, read to the Royal Numismatic Society on 17 March 1910,⁷ and this paper, which combined epigraphical and documentary evidence to redate the earlier classes of the Short Cross coinage, is I think the best first paper that any numismatist working in the British series is ever likely to deliver. He followed it up in the same year by a more polemical paper which

¹ I have taken the opportunity to make some minor revisions to the text of this part of my Presidential Address in the light of fresh information that has come to hand since it was delivered at our Annual General Meeting. I am particularly indebted to Wilfrid Slayter for putting at my disposal a group of letters received by Brooke following the publication of BMC Norman Kings, and I have acknowledged other help in the appropriate places below.


³ As quoted by Cam, p. 381.

⁴ For this and other personal information about Brooke I am indebted to Brooke’s two sons, who kindly answered a number of queries put to them. It is believed that Brooke may have been led to apply for a post in the Department of Coins and Medals because Grueber was personally known to some one in his family or university circle.

⁵ I owe this date to Dr J.P.C. Kent, who also supplied me with information on Brooke’s later official career from Museum records.


⁷ Printed NC 4th series, 10 (1910), 291–324.
demolished brick by brick H. Alexander Parsons’s arrangement of the types of Æthelred II, and although this paper cannot be read with quite the same pleasure today, for Brooke’s own views on Æthelred’s coinage were wrong, the two papers together gave notice that the British Museum now possessed a thoroughly competent scholar working on the British series; and this was new, for Grueber, who had previously carried the principal responsibility for British coins within the Department, was, as Brooke later wrote, ‘a cautious student rather than a progressive one’, and it had been Grueber’s lack of enthusiasm for research that had contributed as much as anything to the emergence in 1903 of our own Society as an initially unfriendly rival to the Royal Numismatic Society.

By the late spring of 1911 Brooke was working on the coinage of William the Conqueror, on which he spoke to the Royal Numismatic Society in May, and in June Sir Henry Howorth was able to announce in his Presidential Address to the RNS that Brooke ‘had in hand the beginning of the British Museum catalogue of post-conquest coins’. The William I paper was notable for Brooke’s use of the evidence of die-links, and for his attempt to determine the order in which the coins involved in the die-links were struck, and his recognition of the value of die-study in numismatic research was further illustrated by another paper of 1911 in which – I believe for the very first time in British numismatics – he made a complete die-study of a coin hoard, the East Raynham hoard of Edward III nobles.

He was now nearly twenty-seven, and in a position to marry, which he did on 7 September 1911 to Florence Parsons, daughter of Dr Henry Franklin Parsons, who had had a distinguished career as a medical officer with the Local Government Board. Brooke and his wife cannot have been well-to-do – the salaries paid by the Museum in 1911 were scanty and still so low a generation later that in 1934 Humphrey Sutherland was compelled to decline the offer to succeed Brooke at the Museum purely on financial grounds – but the sudden death of Warwick Wroth three weeks after Brooke’s marriage opened up promotion prospects, and when Grueber finally retired in the following year, Brooke found himself when still in his twenties junior in the Department only to the new Keeper, George Hill, and to John Allan, who was the same age as he was.

For the next five years Brooke’s energies were concentrated on what was now explicitly described as the Norman Kings volume of the catalogue of English coins in the British Museum, and his published articles on ‘Monetagium’, on ‘Epigraphical data for the arrangement of the coin-types of William II, Henry I and Stephen’, and on ‘Irregular coinages of the reign of Stephen’ foreshadowed sections of Norman Kings. Articles on the Steppingley and Slype hoards of Long Cross coins of Henry III reflected his increasingly friendly co-operation with L.A. Lawrence, who was to become in later years his closest collaborator, and in December 1912 Brooke’s standing as a numismatist was recognised by his selection as one of the editors of the Numismatic Chronicle.

When Sir Henry Howorth referred to the progress of Norman Kings in a further Presidential Address to the RNS in June 1914 he spoke particularly warmly of Brooke, “whose presence at our meetings is as welcome to those who love the sunshine as to those who wish English coins to be treated according to the very latest methods of analysis”.

* ‘Mr. Parsons’s arrangement of the coin-types of Æthelred II’, NC 4th series, 10 (1910), 370-30.
* In his obituary notice of Grueber, NC 5th series, 7 (1927), 388-9.
* 10 Printed as ‘Notes on the reign of William I’, NC 5th series, 11 (1911), 268-90.

13 “For the career of Dr H.F. Parsons (1846–1913) see Who was Who 1897–1915, 546-9.
14 Information from Dr C.H.V. Sutherland.
15 NC 4th series, 12 (1912), 98-106; NC 4th series, 13 (1912), 399-412; NC 4th series, 15 (1913), 105-21.
16 ‘A find of coins at Steppingley’, NC 4th series, 14 (1914), 60-76 (under the joint names of Brooke and Lawrence); ‘A find of Long-Cross coins at Slype’, NC 4th series, 14 (1914), 256-9.
17 Proc. of the Royal Numismatic Society, 1913-14, p. 33.
The events of August 1914 had no immediate impact on the Department of Coins and Medals, and Brooke must have spent the first eighteen months of the 1914-18 war bringing Norman Kings to completion. When it finally appeared in April 1916 it set new standards for a British Museum catalogue, combining a masterly treatment of such physical features of the coinage as lettering and die-engraving with a much more considered discussion of the documentary evidence for the coinage than that given by W.J. Andrew fifteen years before; as Charles Johnson remarked in his review of Norman Kings for the Numismatic Chronicle, Brooke showed 'a wise discretion in dealing with the various hypotheses which have been put forward'.

George Hill's introductory note to Norman Kings indicates that Brooke's next task was to have been the compilation of a similar catalogue dealing with the early Plantagenet coinage, presumably covering the Tealby and Short Cross series, but this was not to be, for early in 1916 the government had decided to close most of the British Museum for the duration of the war, and Brooke had already been transferred on 28 February that year to a post in the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic), where he was to remain until the Board's abolition in August 1921.

Why Brooke was transferred to this particular branch of wartime administration mystified some people at the time – Sir Arthur Evans referred wonderingly to Brooke's transference to an office where 'his principal function seems to have been the consideration of light beers' – and it has puzzled numismatists ever since, but the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) was a much more significant body than might be supposed simply from its name, and the effects of its actions are still indirectly felt today.

It is not generally realised that before the First World War there was virtually no restriction on the hours between which alcohol could be sold, and it was directly due to the activities of the Central Control Board that the sixteen-seventeen hours per day during which alcohol could be sold in England in 1914 were reduced during the war to a mere five and a half hours, from which they have only very slowly increased since. This had a dramatic effect on the consumption of alcohol, which fell from 76 million gallons in 1913 to 30.6 million gallons in 1917-18, and associated measures by the Board to restrict off-licence sales and to reduce the alcoholic content of spirits and beers sharply reduced drunkenness and the diseases associated with it. What exact part Brooke took in the Board's operations I have not been able to discover, but it is recorded that he showed an unexpected talent for administration, and there is some reason to think that he seriously considered remaining with the Board rather than returning to his duties at the Museum; the pay was no doubt better – a relevant factor when he had a family to support – and because he was just junior to John Allan he was not likely ever to become Keeper of Coins and Medals.

But events again took a hand, for it proved politically impossible for the Central Control Board to carry on in peacetime, and Brooke, declining the option of transferring to the Home Office, finally returned to the Museum on 18 October 1921. He had done very little numismatic work since 1916 and while he coped with an accumulated administrative backlog his published work was effectively confined to a series of articles dealing with

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18 NC 4th series, 16 (1916), 198-9. Johnson also remarked in his review that Norman Kings 'recalls Aristotle's comparison of Anaxagoras with the earlier natural philosophers' (it must be remembered that it was Johnson who with C.G. Crump had written the withering criticism of W.J. Andrew's study of the coinage of Henry I that had precipitated hostilities between the Royal Numismatic Society and the founders of our Society). His secondment to the Central Control Board was extended for a further period on 13 December 1919.

19 The best account of the work of the Central Control Board seems to be that given by Arthur Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922, a lesson in control (London, 1923).

20 It is remembered that Brooke only took the decision to return to the British Museum after a good deal of anxious deliberation.
accessions to the Museum's holdings of Anglo-Saxon coins since the publication of Keary and Grueber's two volume catalogue of the series thirty years previously.23 A paper on a Henry VIII hoard from County Down read to the Royal Numismatic Society in 1923 took him into new numismatic territory, and there are a number of other shorter notes, 24 but it was not until 1927 that he again made a major published contribution to English numismatics, in the form of an important paper on the classification of Henry II's Tealby coinage.25 1927 also saw a paper from him on the Chute and Westerham hoards of Ancient British staters.26

The discovery in 1929 of a hoard of fifteenth-century gold nobles at Horsted Keynes in Sussex produced a full-length paper on the hoard itself, 27 followed in 1930 by a discussion in detail of the evidence Brooke's work on it had produced for privy marking on the gold coinage of Henry V.28 Here Brooke was building on a theory first developed by L.A. Lawrence in relation to the coinage of Henry VII to the effect that in the century and a half after 1351 the coins carried privy marks that were changed every three months and that by working out the order of these privy marks numismatists should be able eventually to date any given coin to a particular period of three months.29 The theory itself is now discounted 30 but Brooke's paper remains valuable for his very careful discussion of the occurrence of initial marks, broken letters and other possible privy marks on Henry V's coinage. He rounded off his work on this series with a further paper in 1931 on a similar hoard from Borth in Cardiganshire.31

During the 1920s Brooke had been thinking about the publication of a major work on the English coinage, for although our Society and the Royal Numismatic Society had contemplated producing an updated version of Ruding's Annals of the Coinage of Britain as a joint project just before the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, nothing had come of it and there was an obvious need for an up-to-date reference book on the subject. Brooke's projected volume, portions of the manuscript of which survive, would in fact have been closer in character to Edward Hawkins's Silver Coins of England than to Ruding, but he was well qualified for the task and he had already agreed to write a shorter book on the subject for the Methuen series of Handbooks on Archaeology. Unfortunately Sir Charles Oman, the President of the Royal Numismatic Society, had similar aims, and the appearance of Oman's Coinage of England a few months before Brooke's Methuen volume on English Coins came as a heavy blow. Oman's book was based on a series of lectures that he had delivered at Oxford University in 1928, and Brooke should no doubt have anticipated that Oman would write them up for publication; 32 but Brooke seems to have felt that Oman should have been more open about his intentions, and it was an additional irritation that Oman's book was somewhat inadequate. Oman was a fluent writer, and conscious of the wider historical background against which the coinage should

23 'Anglo-Saxon acquisitions of the British Museum', NC 5th series, 2 (1922), 214-44; NC 5th series, 3 (1923), 243-59; NC 5th series, 4 (1924), 86-95, 239-53; NC 5th series, 5 (1925), 243-65.
24 His note on the Henry VIII hoard appeared under the slightly misleading title, 'The English and Irish coinages of 1542-1544', NC 5th series, 3 (1923), 260-69.
25 'The first coinage, or "Tealby" type, of Henry II', NC 5th series, 7 (1927), 313-41.
26 'Two finds of Ancient British coins', NC 5th series, 10 (1929), 44-87.
27 'A find of nobles at Horsted Keynes, Sussex', NC 5th series, 9 (1929), 284-95.
28 'Privy marks in the reign of Henry V', NC 5th series, 10 (1930), 44-87.
29 The theory was originally enunciated in Lawrence's article, 'The coinage of Henry VII', NC 4th series, 18 (1918), 205-57. Although Brooke and Lawrence collaborated in the following year to produce a short note on 'The martlet and rose half-groats of Henry VII', NC 4th series, 19 (1919), 257-64, Lawrence's 1918 article appeared at a time when Brooke must have been fully occupied by his Central Control Board duties, and it may be that had Brooke been involved in discussion with Lawrence in 1918, some fallacies in the reasoning leading to the theory might have been spotted.
31 'A find of nobles at Borth', NC 5th series, 11 (1931), 53-56.
32 Professor Grierson has emphasised this point to me.
be set, but his knowledge of the coins was patchy and he was not accurate on points of detail. Brooke's immediate colleagues and friends took Brooke's own view of Oman's book - it was sharply criticised by an anonymous but well-informed reviewer in the *English Historical Review* and it was never reviewed in the *Numismatic Chronicle* at all - and when *English Coins* appeared in February 1932 they gave it deservedly generous notices. Its main virtues, and the ones which have kept it in print almost ever since, are its lucidity, its accuracy, and its author's skill in addressing himself both to the general reader and to the specialist. This he could do the more easily because he possessed the very special gift of being able to treat even the most junior and inexperienced student as an equal, a gift also possessed by that very different numismatist, our friend and colleague Michael Dolley.

By then Brooke had begun to play some part in the affairs of our own Society - the state of war that had existed between the Department of Coins and Medals and our founding fathers had prevented him from joining us until 1919, and it was not until 1930 that he contributed to our *Journal* and accepted nomination to our Council - and the appearance of *English Coins*, dedicated to Lawrence and read in proof by our Vice-President Miss Helen Farquhar and our President Col. H.W. Morrieson, sealed a general reconciliation, although it was not for another year that Christopher Blunt could be persuaded that we were a sufficiently respectable body to join.

Brooke was now in his late forties, and was beginning to receive more general recognition in the world of scholarship. He had been a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries since 1927; in 1930 he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Letters by the University of Cambridge (this was not an honorary degree but a degree awarded on the strength of his published writings); and in April 1932, following George Hill's promotion to the Directorship of the British Museum, he became Deputy Keeper of the Department.

Although he was still writing on mediaeval English coinage, in our *Journal* as well as in the *Chronicle*, he had now begun work on a catalogue of the Ancient British coins in the British Museum, and the first results of this were seen in two articles published in 1933, one in the *Chronicle* on 'The Philippus in the West and the Belgic invasion of Britain' and the other, in *Antiquity*, on 'The distribution of Gaulish and British coins in Britain'; these were quite different in character from anything he had written previously and they showed a capacity for broad historical exposition and an appreciation of the value of archaeological evidence which promised well for the intended catalogue.

He had always appeared to be in good health, but he had not in fact long to live, for he fell ill with anaemia in 1934 and died on 11 October that year. It has been suggested to me that his death may have had an occupational cause, for he was accustomed to clean coins, which in those days was a hazardous business; our President for 1922, Mr John Sanford Saltus, died from cyanide poisoning while cleaning coins in his room in the Savoy Hotel the night before he took up his Presidential duties.

It is fifty years since Brooke died, and there are few people alive today outside his own family who have any personal recollection of him - Christopher Blunt and Professor...
Christopher Hawkes are, I believe, the only survivors of the contributors to a memorial fund set up immediately after his death\textsuperscript{41} – but 1934 is not impossibly far away in the history of the study of our subject, and English Coins still remains the most widely read textbook on it. He should be judged, though, not so much by English Coins, which has its deficiencies – he knew little about milled coins, and his remarks on Anglo-Saxon coins, although sensible enough, are usually wrong on the really important issues – but by his work on Norman and Plantagenet numismatics. This is valuable in its own right; valuable in that the emphasis it put on close study of lettering and privy marks inspired the next generation of scholars (Blunt, Whiston, Raymond Carlyon-Britton, Winstanley, Potter); and valuable in the wider sense that Brooke set a standard of professionalism in the study of the English coinage that had previously been lacking.

He brought this professionalism to bear in difficult circumstances, for it cannot have been easy to do his particular job at the Museum while the leading figures in our Society were still those who had quarrelled with the Department and the Royal Numismatic Society a few years earlier. Nor can it have been easy to defend the current scholarly standard of British numismatics to non-numismatists; I have quoted Charles Johnson's approving comments on Norman Kings in the Chronicle, but J.H. Round made some distinctly ungenerous remarks elsewhere which made no allowance for Brooke's need to deal tactfully with the views on Norman coinage previously expressed by W.J. Andrew.\textsuperscript{42} By 1934 Brooke's own example had improved the position very substantially, and although he died too young to see his achievement fully recognised in his lifetime,\textsuperscript{43} he lived long enough to know that he had set us on the right lines.

I may perhaps be allowed to end by saying where I would place Brooke in comparison with other numismatists who have specialised in the British series. It is clear that the strength of his published work lies in his careful study of the coins themselves and in his capacity to use the evidence of dies, lettering, punches and so on to reach wider conclusions about the coinage. His two articles on Ancient British coinage suggest that he also had the capacity to make fruitful use of historical and archaeological evidence relating to coins, but these articles stand on their own and his early death prevents one coming to a proper judgment on the point. What I would claim for him is that as an accurate student of coins he ranks with Lawrence, the Fox brothers and Elmore Jones – he did not perhaps possess quite Elmore Jones's eye for a die, but that was a gift special to Elmore Jones – and that in the capacity to turn the physical data provided by coins to scholarly use he ranks above all these and almost at the topmost level among British numismatists.

\textsuperscript{41} The list of contributors to the memorial fund (which was used to purchase a heavy noble of Edward IV for the British Museum collection) is printed NC 5th series, 15 (1935), 136.

\textsuperscript{42} EHR 32 (1917), 430–33. Among the letters that Brooke received after the publication of Norman Kings there is a generous but carefully phrased letter from W.J. Andrew, in which Andrew records his gratitude at the 'removal of all passages of discord from its pages': the implication is that Brooke had emended his original text to meet points raised by Andrew.

\textsuperscript{43} The Royal Numismatic Society paid its own tribute to his memory by awarding him posthumously its medal for 1934. The British Numismatic Society was inhibited from doing the same by the fact that our John Santhor Salmus Medal is awarded only for papers published in BNJ, to which Brooke had only very recently become a contributor. The obituary notice in NC by Allan and Lawrence provides what seems to be a satisfactory bibliography of Brooke's published writings; the most significant of these are all referred to above, but there are a number of short notes and reviews in NC which I have not drawn attention to. His departmental responsibilities embraced seventeenth-century and later English coins, leading him to write on the Constable Burton, Winterson and Elland hoards of coins of Charles I, as well as on various other treasure trove hoards of this or later date; while a commission in the late 1920s to complete the catalogue of the Marquess of Milford Haven's great collection of naval medals, of which one volume remained to be published at the Marquess's death, gave him familiarity with an area of numismatics previously rather foreign to him. Allan and Lawrence list various smaller contributions by him to numismatic literature, e.g. a note on 'The coinages of Africa and Australasia' in the Everyday Historical Atlas of Africa.