PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 1986

H. E. PAGAN

This is our eighty-second anniversary meeting, and the third at which I have addressed you as President. I am pleased to say that during the year we have elected thirty-five new members, the highest figure since 1971, and after allowing for four deaths, eleven resignations and the loss of nine members who we have just amoved for non-payment of their subscriptions, we still show a net gain of eleven, taking our total membership back up over 500. Of these, 378 are ordinary members, five are junior members and the rest are institutions.

The most distinguished name on our obituary list is that of our honorary member, Lieut-Col. J. K. R. Murray, who died on 8 November at the age of 76. Col. Murray's military rank was as a regular officer in the old Indian Army, but on returning to England in 1948 he entered the Foreign Office, and served in it until retirement, latterly at the Government Communications H.Q. at Cheltenham. As a numismatist, his interest lay in the Scottish coinage, for he came from an Aberdeenshire family, and he wrote on it both in our Journal and in the Numismatic Chronicle, either singly or in collaboration with our Vice-President Ian Stewart. He was particularly knowledgeable about Scottish coins of the sixteenth century, but his range extended down to the end of the independent Scottish series, and there is an excellent paper in our Journal written by him and Ian Stewart jointly on the Scottish copper coinage of 1642-97, which shows how much can be made of initially unpromising material by hard work and tidy minds. As a husband-and-wife partnership Col. Murray and Mrs Joan Murray split their numismatic allegiance, he joining the Royal Numismatic Society and she becoming a most valued member of our Society, but in 1983 we felt that we ought to give recognition to their contribution to Scottish numismatics, and we elected both of them to honorary membership. It is right that he should have had a connection with our Society, and I know that Mrs Murray has the sympathy of us all.

Two others of those who have died were also familiar names. Owen Parsons, who died on 2 May, had been an active collector since before the 1939-45 war, and a member of the Society since November 1946. His main numismatic interest lay in seventeenth-century medals, of which he had some fine examples which in his younger days he exhibited at our meetings, but he also kept a look out for any numismatic items which came to light in and around his native town of Gloucester, and it was he who effectively rediscovered the splendid collection of English coins formed at the end of the seventeenth century by John Sharp, archbishop of York, and still preserved by the archbishop's descendants.

William French, a member since 1950, died on 16 March at the age of 66. He had managed Glendinings, the coin auctioneers, with unobtrusive efficiency for some thirty-five years, and only the oldest of us can remember the firm without him. Although he played no active part in our Society's affairs, I ought to take this opportunity to record his helpfulness to the Society in 1978 when part of a Glendining sale was devoted to coins donated by our members for the benefit of our finances.

Our other death was that of a member senior to any of these, Mr J. Wallace of Blakeney, Norfolk, elected to the Society in 1944 and in fact our only remaining life member. He died some months ago but his death has only just been reported.

I should also refer to the death during the year of Dr Humphrey Sutherland, a member of the Society from 1950 to his resignation in 1963, and a member of our Council from 1954 to 1957. He spent the greater part of his working life in charge of the Heberden Coin Room at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and he enjoyed an international reputation as an authority on the coinage of the Roman Empire. Out of a lifetime's numismatic output I am only able to refer here to his work as a young man on the coinage of Roman Britain, pioneering in its day and flawed only by his erroneous belief that the imitative minimus struck in the fourth century belonged to a later, post-Roman period; and to his monograph on Anglo-Saxon gold coinage in the light of the Crondall hoard, published in 1948 and much superior in scholarship and in the application of numismatic method to anything previously written on the series. His abilities earned him the Presidency of our sister Society at the early age of 40, and his diplomatic skills and natural dignity did much to give our subject public recognition and status in the post-war period. I am myself under a particular debt of gratitude to him, for when I was a fourteen-year old schoolboy he and my grandfather came to an arrangement by which I received a selection of Ashmolean duplicates by way of exchange for a more valuable coin given to the Ashmolean, and it was these that led me to take my first serious interest in the English coinage.

During the year we elected two new honorary members, Prof Dr Peter Berghaus from Munster in West Germany, and Drs Gay Van Der Meer, who is currently in charge of the medals at the Royal Coin Cabinet at Leyden, in the Netherlands, but is well known to us for her work with Professor Michael Dolley on the Anglo-Saxon coins from Swedish finds. Both had been ordinary members of our Society for many years, and it seemed appropriate that we should give them honorary status.
The major numismatic event of the year was the International Numismatic Congress, held in London in the week of 8–13 September, and it was a small but significant milestone in our Society’s history that we shared the role of host to the Congress with the Royal Numismatic Society. It was generally felt that the Congress went well, and our numerous overseas visitors seemed satisfied with the arrangements and with the very extensive and varied lecture programme offered. The final total of delegates was 597, enabling Dr Ian Carradice, the Congress’s organising secretary, to win the Department of Coins and Medals’ internal sweepstake on the figure as a small reward for his cheerful and unselfish work on our behalf. Among well over two hundred speakers twenty-three were members of our own Society, discussing topics as various as sceattas, Matthew Boulton and silver in the Himalayas. Each of us who attended the Congress will have formed our own view on the merits of the papers that we heard, and I will not seek to pass judgment on them now, but to those of us who attended the papers on mediaeval subjects it was certainly a particular pleasure to listen to Philip Grierson, whether as speaker or as a contributor to discussions.

In my capacity as your President it fell to me to deliver a short speech at the Congress’s opening ceremony and to represent the Society at the general meeting of the International Numismatic Commission which took place on the morning after the official close of the Congress. At this meeting I was very pleased to receive on your behalf a striking in bronze of the medal of the Danish Numismatic Society from the hands of their President.

Finally, our society made its own individual contribution to the events of the week by providing a reception on the Monday evening in the Parliament Chamber of the Inner Temple. This was a truly international affair, with a good attendance both of our own members and of distinguished guests from overseas, and I believe that it was enjoyed by all. I must here express our thanks to those members of the Society who generously made donations enabling us to invite a larger number of overseas guests than we would otherwise have felt able to. I would like also to say that one of the pleasantest features of the week generally was that it gave us the opportunity to meet so many numismatists who had previously only been names to us, and we very much look forward to building on the contacts that have been made. The next Congress will be held at Brussels in 1991, and I hope that a number of us will be able to get there.

Our programme of meetings during 1986 took its normal course, and we heard from a number of speakers who were addressing us for the first time, most notably Dr Jørgen Steen Jensen from the Royal Coin Cabinet at Copenhagen. The range of subjects extended chronologically from a possible British-struck coinage for the Emperor Claudius, discussed by Robert Kenyon, to cast medals in late 19th century England, discussed by Philip Attwood, and as ever the programme reflected credit on our Director, Graham Dyer, who arranges it.

I am grateful to our other officers for their hard work and support during the year, and I am particularly obliged to our Treasurer for his labours in connection with our reception at the Inner Temple.

As I briefly reported last year, our Society was named as one of the residuary legatees in the will of our late member Howard Linecar. Subsequently it was agreed between the Linecar family, the Royal Numismatic Society and ourselves that our Society and the Royal Numismatic Society should each receive the sum of £5000 now from the Linecar estate, in return for foregoing our respective residuary entitlements under Mr Linecar’s will. The necessary legal formalities took some time to complete, but we received our cheque for £5000 last month, and we shall use it, in accordance with a wish expressed by Mr Linecar, as a fund from which to meet the expenses of a Howard Linecar lecture to be given biennially by a distinguished visiting speaker as part of our programme of meetings. Council has already framed regulations for the management of the fund, and it is envisaged that the first Linecar lecture will be in 1988.

We have also received a legacy of £100 from our late member Mr N. C. Ballingal.

Our Society is most grateful for any donations or legacies that we receive, for our reserves are small, and although we have recently added a little to our capital by prudent financial management, the cost of printing our Journal is never static. We are, as members will know, a registered charity, and bequests to the Society are one way in which we can ensure that the Society will continue to flourish long after we ourselves are part of its past history.

In my 1984 Presidential Address I touched on three matters where I felt an initiative might be taken, and I am pleased to say that we have now made progress on two of them. One of these was a matter within our own power to do something about, and I am able to tell you that Council has agreed to establish a prize that it will award every third year with the object of encouraging research by younger numismatists. We have fixed the level of the prize initially at £100. If there is no suitable younger candidate, the rules that we have drafted will allow us to award the prize to an older person, and we shall therefore avoid the difficulty in making an award that we faced with our former Buxton prize, and which the Royal Numismatic Society still faces with its Parkes Weber prize.

I am also pleased to be able to report that it is now possible for numismatists to work in the students’ room of the Department of Coins and Medals during the lunch hour, provided that they give some advance warning of their wish to do so.

The year has seen other numismatic events, including two unusually interesting exhibitions, one at the British Museum and the other an exhibition on the history of the Royal Mint at Goldsmiths’ Hall. It has also
seen the publication of the first of a series of volumes in the SCBI series devoted to the Anglo-Saxon coins in the British Museum, which will fill a long-felt need, and the publication of a volume of essays on Anglo-Saxon monetary history in memory of our friend and colleague Michael Dolley, to whom British numismatics owes so much.

Before I read out the year's list of hoards, I hope that I will be forgiven if I repeat the hope that I expressed last year that more hoards be published in our Journal. We have of course an affection for our Journal, and that may predispose us too much in its favour; but it does seem to me that BNJ, which appears annually and can carry hoard reports of any length, is a better place for new coin hoards to be published than the Royal Numismatic Society's periodical Coin Hoards, which is now appearing at best biennially and has a format geared towards publishing hoards in summary form only.

HOARDS REPORTED Nov 1985 – Nov 1986

**Ancient British**
- Chute, Wilts, Apr/May 1986. 55 Chute-type (= British B) staters.
- Selsey, Sussex, Feb 1986. 4 AV, 13 AR Ancient British, to Cunobelin.

**Roman**
- Norton, Norfolk (addenda), Apr 1986. 40 denarii to AD 41. Republic – Claudius.
- Postwick, Norfolk, summer 1986. About 40 denarii to c. 190, ending with Commodus.
- Great Melton, Norfolk (addenda), 1986. 6 denarii to 195, ending with Clodius Albinus.
- Kirkby in Ashfield, Notts, Apr 1986. 304 radiates to 282.
- Brough, Notts, Jan 1986. 1 aureus of Maximian, c. 290 (declared T. T.).
- Shipham, Somerset, date uncertain. c. 840 Constantine – Constantius II, to c. 355.

**Anglo-Saxon**
- Winterbourne Whitchurch, Dorset, Feb 1985. 7 pennies of Burgred, early and middle periods.
- Walmsgate, Lincs, Sep–Oct 1985. 2 pennies of Burgred, 1 of Æthelred I and 6 of Ælfred, all of lunette type.
- Miss Archibald comments ‘Late, but excludes latest of the lunettes’.
- Barsham, Suffolk. Mar 1986 and later. 60 Long Cross pennies of Æthelred II, and a damaged silver disc brooch. Miss Archibald suggests a date of deposit c. 1000–1004.

**Mediaeval**
- St John's Cemetery, Boston, Lincs, Sept 1984. 26 pennies of Edward I–II, of which I am told 14 are 'surviving'.
- Huntington, Cheshire, Apr 1986. 1 quarter noble and 41 groats, half-groats and pence, and a halfpenny, Edward I – Henry VI, deposited c. 1435.
- Bowley Park, Lichfield, Staffs, Feb 1986. 1 gold half-sovereign of Edward VI.
- Tatenhall, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs, Aug 1984. 26 silver coins Mary-Elizabeth, shilling to half-groat.
- Chudleigh, Devon, Mar 1986. 7 AV unites James I, deposited c. 1620.

**Modern**
- None (!).

The second part of the President's Address was devoted to a review of the state of the English coinage at the time of the Norman Conquest.