
This set of studies by nine authors from different backgrounds is particularly valuable for the new light it throws on the role of London in the changing fortunes of Mercians, West Saxons and Danish Vikings during the half-century after c.840. It includes detailed numismatic studies of two scarce coinages: one of Berhtwulf of Mercia (840–52) by James Booth and the other of southern England during the reign of the last Mercian king, Ceolwulf II (874/5–879/80), by Mark Blackburn and Simon Keynes. Interdependent with the latter and with each other are important papers by Dr (now Professor) Keynes, “King Alfred and the Mercians”, and Dr Blackburn, “The London mint in the reign of Alfred”.

In a group of general articles about the period, Professor Thomas Charles-Edwards writes on the significance of baptismal relationships between dynasties and shows that those recorded in treaties between Viking raiders and Frankish or Anglo-Saxon kings have origins as far back as the beginnings of Christianity in Wessex. Lord Stowarthy demonstrates a number of probable identities between moneymen and ministers named as grantees of land or witnesses to charters. Paul Bibire discusses linguistic features of the names of kings and moneymen as reproduced on the coins, and finds strong Kentish influence on the moneyer-name forms on Mercian coins that numismatists attribute to London.

Professor Michael Metcalf provides a detailed topographical analysis of the monetary economy of ninth-century England south of the Humber, based on 450 single finds recorded up to the late summer of 1991 and published here by Michael Bonser. The pattern which emerges is of a plentiful scatter almost everywhere in southern and eastern England and the east Midlands, but virtually nothing from Wales or the Marches or from south-west England beyond Exeter, and very little in the Severn Basin or the west Midlands. By using regression analysis, Metcalf demonstrates two contrasting types of mint-profile, with Canterbury, Rochester and London together accounting for two-thirds of the finds, seemingly more involved with long-distance trade than the mints of East Anglia and, especially, Wessex, which on this evidence had a more local function.

For his essay “Monetary Alliance or Technical Cooperation”, Dr Booth assembled in April 1989 a corpus of eighty six or eighty seven coins of Berhtwulf (the eighty seventh possibly attributable instead to Beornwulf) and while retaining the division by style of bust adopted by J.J. North, shows that they comprise significant groupings from either end of his coinage – Group I, from dies apparently cut by Æthelwulf’s Rochester engraver (Bust A, 32 coins), and Group III, with no stylistic link to the coinage of the West Saxon king (Bust G, 21 coins) – and between them, Group II, which is a series of smaller varieties (Bust B, 3 coins; Bust C, 7; Bust D, 1; Bust E, 7; Bust F, 12, including no.83 which is from the same dies as no.57). In addition there are three (or four) coins from non-portrait obverses (Group IV).

Booth dates the start of this rare but evidently quite substantial coinage to c.845 and discusses the question of whether the style of die-cutting in Group I implies that Berhtwulf was initially given minting rights in Rochester (including the services of one of Æthelwulf’s moneymen there, Brid, who is known for coins of both kings) or alternatively that he arranged with the West Saxon ruler for the Rochester engraver to cut dies for new moneymen appointed in London (and for Brid to be transferred there temporarily to assist them). Booth prefers the latter explanation, concluding that the arrangement must have been of some duration and could have involved the movement of either the dies or the engraver.

As has been mentioned, Booth essentially follows North in dividing the coinage according to the style of portrait, though in Group III he adopts a subdivision by reverse design in preference to North’s division by the number of bands in the king’s diadem. Nevertheless it is doubtful whether it is justifiable to continue designating two of the busts in Group II as forming separate subgroups. Thus although Bust D is distinctive it is found on only one coin, the reverse design of which (a cross with an annulet in each angle) is featured also on some coins of Groups A, C and E. Again, Bust B is at best transitional between A and C since it is clear from the illustrations that the three recorded specimens (nos 33–5) are in fact all from the same obverse die. The first of the reverses is from a die of regular style naming Brid; the second names another established moneymen, Deneheah, and could be irregular because the legend is retrograde; but the third is from an undoubtedly irregular die which inexplicably copies the obverse of Æthelwulf’s Kentish Cross-and-Wedges issue to the extent of naming the West Saxon king. Booth is rightly reluctant to accept this latter coin as evidence for some attempt at monetary union.

The volume passes over the coinages of the immediate successors of Æthelwulf and Berhtwulf, and detailed attention is next turned to the issues of the middle and later 870s, in particular the type known as Cross-and-Lozenge.

When Alfred succeeded his brother Æthelred in 871, the Lunettes type begun nearly twenty years earlier by Burged of Mercia and adopted by Æthelred was still in issue, becoming progressively lighter and more debased. There is no reason to think that the type was discontinued before Burged’s expulsion by the Danes in 874, and if it was continued for a time by Alfred there is no evidence that Burged’s successor, Ceolwulf II, took part in it. He was apparently required by the conquering Great Army to hold Mercia at their disposal in preparation for settlement, much as the ephemeral characters installed as successors to Osberht and Ælla in Northumbria and Eadmund in East Anglia seem to have had to do (in the latter case they are known only from their coins). Ceolwulf is assigned a reign of five years in the surviving Mercian regnal list from Worcester, but he had to agree to a partition of his kingdom in 877 and is not known to have played any part in Alfred’s decisive victory at Edington in 878.
which the Viking army retired to its base at Cirencester in south-west Mercia. He may of course have been required by the Danes not to take up arms against them.

Nevertheless Ceolwulf participated with Alfred and Archbishop Æthelred of Canterbury in an issue of fine silver and good weight which from its reverse design is nowadays referred to as the Cross-and-Lozenge type. Given Ceolwulf’s disappearance from the scene c.879/80 it seems impossible to link this reform of the coinage with the victory at Edington, and Blackburn suggests a date of 875/6 ‘when Alfred might reasonably have thought that his worst troubles were behind him’ (p. 120). It appears that the issue did not immediately follow the Lunettes issue, as a tiny number of specimens exist of types which appear to be intermediate between them, one (Two Emperors) struck by Ceolwulf as well as Alfred.

In their corpus Blackburn and Keynes record details of fifty-one Cross-and-Lozenge coins, and a lead weight impressed with a pair of dies not represented among them. Thirty-six coins and the lead weight (the latter found in St Paul’s Churchyard, London) name Alfred, while eleven are of Ceolwulf and four of the archbishop. Eleven of the coins (seven of Alfred and all those of the archbishop) are of distinctive styles that can be associated with Canterbury die-cutting; twenty-one (twelve of Alfred and the lead weight, nine of Ceolwulf) with London, plus the lead weight; eleven (ten of Alfred and one of Ceolwulf) with Winchester; and eight (seven of Alfred, one of Ceolwulf) of uncertain die-cutting.

On stylistic grounds Blackburn and Keynes conclude that in London the issue was initially in Alfred’s name and later in Ceolwulf’s. However, two pence of the principal moneyer Liafwald have since come to light, one of Ceolwulf (Fig. 1a) and the other of Alfred (Fig. 1b) (Num. Circ. Feb. 1999, 326 and Mar. 1999, 743), which seem to be at variance with that opinion. The Ceolwulf coin is of fine style and good weight (1.45 g) and depicts the cruciform limbs of the Lozenge coin with London with London and Ceolwulf’s name CEOLVVLF, whereas both the London Monogram and Two-Line issues clearly were. This could mean that the Danish settlement which would have created a demand for local minting had not developed sufficiently before the end of Cross-and-Lozenge. The bust on the obverse of which is poorly executed and the coin is struck c.875/6 (Plate 10) and, like that coin, gives Alfred the Saxonic title. Its weight is light (1.17 g) but that does not necessarily denote lateness, since no. 59 weighs 1.38 g. Nor can the title be added as evidence of an early date, since it is also found on the rare non-portrait mint-signed coins of Winchester and Exeter later in Alfred’s reign and Bath in his successor’s.

Blackburn, in his review of the London mint, concludes that the Cross-and-Lozenge coinage and earlier intermediate issues were struck from c.875/6-c.879/80 and that the Two-Line issue began soon afterwards, preceded at London by the Monogram issue and at Gloucester by another portrait issue, known from a single surviving specimen which names the town (AT GLEAPA) but not the moneyer. This has several design features in common with Cross-and-Lozenge, but superimposed on the pelleted long-cross limbs is a large central cross instead of a Lozenge. The weight (1.59 g) is too high for the coin to have been minted during that issue, nor would one expect Alfred to have had minting rights in Gloucester during Ceolwulf’s lifetime, but a date not long after the end of Cross-and-Lozenge seems likely.

The Monogram issue is curious in breaking with tradition in the south-east by generally not naming a moneyer, the only significant exception being Tilewine. This may perhaps have been the successor of the commonest Cross-and-Lozenge moneyer Liafwald, who is otherwise known only for Burgred. The normal engraver of London Monogram obverses seems not to have been the person who had cut Cross-and-Lozenge dies of moneyers attributed to London, for the busts are fuller in the face and engraved in finer detail. Despite the inclusion of some twenty-five Cross-and-Lozenge coins in the Cuerdale hoard there is little evidence, if any, that the issue has been imitated in the Danelaw, whereas both the London Monogram and Two-Line issues clearly were. This could mean that the Danish settlement which would have created a demand for local minting had not developed sufficiently before the end of Cross-and-Lozenge, but it might also indicate that London Monogram, being apparently a limited issue, did not immediately follow Cross-and-Lozenge c.880, as Blackburn suggests. On the other hand the Monogram issue was struck to a higher weight-standard, as was Two-Line, so there could well have been a recoinage at the end of Cross-and-Lozenge which would explain why hoards deposited during the Monogram issue do not contain coins of Cross-and-Lozenge, and would also mean that the current coins available thereafter for imitating in the Danelaw would not have included them.

Nevertheless there are grounds for exercising caution before accepting Blackburn’s interpretation of the evidence of the Cross-and-Lozenge and London Monogram issues for the situation in London, namely that after Burgred’s exile in 874, Alfred’s authority was recognised by the moneyers there: that in the later 870s the situation changed and the Mercian king was recognised as ruler of London; that the Monogram type was struck c.880, soon after Ceolwulf’s demise; and that the coinage shows that the Vikings were not in control of London during the later 870s and early 880s, as had hitherto been thought.

First, there is the problem of the Two Emperors type which appears to have preceded Cross-and-Lozenge: although known from only two surviving coins, one of these is of Alfred and the other of Ceolwulf. The latter’s moneyer, Ealdwulf, had previously worked for Burgred and is also named on the lead weight that was found in St Paul’s Churchyard impressed with Cross-and-Lozenge dies of Alfred. Blackburn thought that spelling the king’s name CEOLVVLF militated against an attribution to London, but now that a Cross-and-Lozenge coin by the

(a) 
(b) 

Fig. 1
moneyer Liafwald has been discovered with that spelling instead of the usual COLVVLF, this objection falls away. It seems therefore that London could well have minted for Ceolwulf soon after Burgred's expulsion and without first passing into Alfred's hands. Whether Alfred exercised authority in London from early in the Cross-and-Lozenge issue until towards its end is a debatable point: Ceolwulf's moneyer Liafwald has been discovered with that spelling seems therefore that London could well have minted for instead of the usual ClOLVVLF, this objection falls away. It would, of course, preclude the issue having marked the end of the siege, still less the restoration of the city in 886. It would have begun before 883 and would perhaps have been intended as a proclamation of Alfred (not described on this issue as king of the Saxons) as undisputed overlord of the principal town in Mercia and, indeed, in the land.

This is a volume that should be on the shelves of everyone interested in Anglo-Saxon coinage. It is well produced and the plates are quite acceptable given the diversity of the sources from which the photographs were obtained. A few small errors have escaped detection: for example London was latinised as Lundonia, not Londonta (p. 73); in the source quoted the Dorking hoard of 1817 is given a date of deposit c.862, not c.857 (p. 80); on Plate 10 the obverses of nos 59 and 60 have been transposed (see above).

The editors are to be congratulated, not only on their own contributions but also the complementary articles they commissioned from the other authors. We can now look forward to a definitive publication by Dr Blackburn of the Two-Line types that constituted the coinage of the second half of Alfred's reign. This reviewer hopes it will restore to near the end of the reign the non-portrait Oxford type of the moneyer Bernwald, which in this volume, on the evidence of an ill-recorded find in about 1880 from Thames Street, London, has been aligned with the Gloucester and London Monogram issues.

STEWART LYON
I look forward to seeing Pirie's next inventory to see how, if at all, finds recorded after 1997 alter this picture of Northumbrian coinage, especially in the wake of increasing numbers of recorded metal-detector finds. Until then, I will certainly be using this study as my reference work for comparative Northumbrian material, and with much appreciation. I would not hesitate to recommend it to anybody working on this type of material.

CEINWEN PAYNTHON


Michael Metcalf is one of the most stimulating scholars currently working on medieval coinage and currency. His work is always challenging and innovative. This book is no exception. It is full of detailed information, often connected in a quite novel way to shed light on problems that might have been thought insoluble. The questions he poses of the material are in themselves thought provoking, and Metcalf, the teacher, takes pleasure in sharing with us his thought processes, step by step, as he considers a problem and explores various alternative approaches, explaining why some are unprofitable but others successful. This book will be a stimulating read for those interested in methods of interpretation, whether or not they are concerned with medieval England.

An image I particularly liked was one he invoked to convey the wealth of detailed information the late Saxon coinage can offer. With thirty-one consecutive types struck at upwards of fifty towns, the coins can be spread across a grid containing more than 1,500 boxes, and he invites the reader to imagine building columns on top of those boxes with heights varying according to the number of surviving specimens of each mint for type. It conjures up an image of Manhattan sprawling for miles in every direction. It would be quite something to actually build this as a three-dimensional model. However, the model becomes quite impossible to construct physically if one goes on to incorporate data based on the estimated production at each mint, rather than coin survival, and the occurrence of the various types and mints in hoards and single finds, not to mention weight standards, moneymakers or die-cutting styles. It is all too easy, with such an excess of detailed information, to get stuck looking at the trees and never see the wood. Yet it is precisely this body of data that Metcalf takes pleasure in exploring both in the round and borrowing deeply into certain aspects.

Not only are some of the ideas and approaches in this book novel, even its structure is unconventional. It is divided into three main sections, each about a hundred pages in length. The first consists of a series of thirty-nine interconnected questions which the author poses and then proceeds to answer, drawing in part on the reference material presented later in the book. The second section considers the coinage chronologically, issue by issue, looking at features such as the dating, the hoards and single-finds, weight standards, and the number of mints active in each type. The third section takes a geographical view of the coinage, region by region, focusing on the mints and their relative output and on the pattern of coin finds. The actual Gazetteer of finds is relatively short, twenty pages, and forms effectively an appendix to the main work. The second and third sections are essentially for reference, to be dipped into, while the first has to be read as a narrative since the arguments deployed in one answer are often developed in another.

The title does not do the book justice: a more informative, if duller, name might have been 'Aspects of Coin Production and Monetary Circulation in the late Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods'. Quite reasonably, the intended audience is principally historians and archaeologists rather than numismatists, and the thirty-nine questions have been chosen to address topics of wider historical interest. As Metcalf explains in the Foreword, this is a book about monetary history and 'not one about everything we know about late Anglo-Saxon coinage'. But whether it succeeds in helping historians as it intends is am ser very doubtful. The structure is really too complex, and there is too little internal cross-referencing or citation of other literature, with the result that it is often unclear what is new and what is derived from other works. For those with a reasonable knowledge of Anglo-Saxon coinage the arguments can be followed, but too few historians would be in this position and some may at times find themselves lost. More could usefully have been said at the outset about the coinage, for example a succinct statement of the achievements of Edgar's coinage reform, and the purpose of the periodic recoinages, at least in so far as we can discern them (a discussion in the Conclusions, pp. 280-2, is not indexed). Also, the book could have been more readily used for reference later if it had been arranged in chapters by topic, rather than in the form of questions and answers, many of which are very specific.

These are quibbles over presentation, but in terms of substance there is so much that is novel that one can only mention a few topics. One of the main conclusions is that the Anglo-Saxon coinage was produced in large quantity and was used widely, even in rural areas. In most parts of England coins of the local mint are in a majority, and the velocity of circulation within and between regions was impressive. The exception is Yorkshire, where, because of its isolation, more than three-quarters of the single finds are coins of the York mint. It is gratifying to see how much the find data has grown since 1980, when Metcalf first explored these issues in his 'Continuity and Change' article in this Journal. Then there were some 260 single finds of the period 973-1086, compared with nearly 700 in Metcalf's present study, or 914 now registered on the EMC Database. Expanding on the 1980 statistics for the Ranking of the Mints, which were based on the relative number of coins of each mint and type in Scandinavian collections (17,000 coins), Metcalf here compares them with the proportions found among English single finds. Even though these are now much more plentiful, c.700 finds (or 588 with mint attributions) is too small a sample to spread over the grid of 1,500 boxes if one is to attempt to rank the mints within each type. The best that can be done is to amalgamate all types, and show that the results are in broad agreement with the Scandinavian ranking. We know, however, that over the hundred year period some of the larger mints changed their position, while smaller mints came and went. At present, until we have more detailed studies of mints available, we have to rely on the
Scandinavian data, even though in reality that is no more than a measure of the composition of the coinage exported to across the North Sea.

Another fundamental topic is the variation in weight standards within each type. While there is a general stepped decline in the standard in most types, the pattern is proving to be much more complicated than was originally thought (pp. 56–66). There are undoubted variations between regions, mints and even moneyers, but it is difficult to know which issues are contemporary at different mints or between different moneyers. Recognition of developments within die-cutting styles can be a useful tool in dating, if used with care, and Johnsson’s discussion of the styles and weight pattern in the Reform Small Cross issue (New Era, pp. 95–100) suggests a more orderly arrangement than Metcalf implies (pp. 66–9). If discerning the patterns is difficult enough, understanding the system that lay behind them is still more bewildering. Metcalf argues that we are simply unable to offer a reliable interpretation (pp. 280–1) – there are too many unknowns – though he does float the idea (p. 69) that where dual standards operated, the choice may have depended on the ownership of the metal being minted, whether royal or private.

Particularly welcome is what must be the first discussion in depth of the practice of cutting coins to make halfpennies and farthings (pp. 76–84). Metcalf addresses the thorny question of whether the cutting was done at the mint or in the market-place, by comparing the distributions by mint and by type of fractions and whole coins, hoping to find some anomalies that could suggest that the cutting of coins was subject to the whim of administrators. Unfortunately the number of fractions on record with secure mint attributions is still only 93 for the period c.973–1086, and these have a broadly similar mint profile to the coinage in general, although there seems to have been a decline in the ratio of cut to whole coins after the Norman Conquest. The evidence is not decisive, but taking account of other factors he inclines to the view that most of the fractions were cut in the mint. This is reinforced by Kristin Bornholdt’s recent work showing that cut fractions were virtually unknown in England before Edgar’s reform, and their introduction was evidently a deliberate policy. Here, as elsewhere, Metcalf has set an agenda for future research, and I hope that we may take forward these ideas with the help of the collection of the late David Rogers (now made available for study by Paul and Bente Withers), which almost doubles the material previously available.

The volume concludes with a short bibliographical guide (no substitute for proper footnotes!), and a statistical appendix which updates figures for estimated mint output published in ‘Continuity and Change’, though one has to refer back to the article to understand them. Finally there are three plates of line drawings illustrating the coin types which contain some unfortunate errors: Æthelred’s First Small Cross is of Last Small Cross type, the Last Small Cross is a Crux/ISC mule and Cnut’s Quatrefoil type is a Scandinavian Quatrefoil/Late Small Cross mule.

This volume offers a rich feast for anyone concerned with the late Anglo-Saxon and early Norman state. Those unfamiliar with the numismatic evidence and with Michael Metcalf’s work, may be surprised at the range of issues he has managed to address. By their nature, they are at the cutting edge, and the interpretations are often speculative. But as the evidence continues to grow, we will be able to test and refine the proposals, and so gradually move towards a more secure understanding of the economy of the later tenth and eleventh centuries.

M.A.S. BLACKBURN

The English Mark. A History of the Mark, Marke or Marc, an English ‘Currency of Account’ from Domesday to the 18th Century and Possibly to the 20th by John Baudrey, 34 pp. Published by A4 Media Services

There has been a gap in our literature, in that we lacked any work on the mark, and the author deserves our gratitude for supplying one which is compellingly readable. It contains many interesting contemporary quotations and examples, of various kinds, but never so numerous as to become boring. The theory that the mark was used by upper-class people and pounds and shillings by the lower orders will not be accepted by all, but it is a fascinating suggestion. The reviewer would tend to see money of account as not so much a separate system from the coinage, but rather as the total system of value, part of which is represented by coin and part not. It is true that we tend to refer to the pound and mark as units of account only, until inflation and increasing commerce make it practical to strike coins of those values. These developments do not really change the system, but only the way settlement is made. Even today we do not have a £1,000 note, but have no difficulty in thinking of £1,000 as a kind of unit, and we sometimes call it a ‘K’. As the author says, different sources give varied dates for the making of particular denominations, and one could go on for a long time about this but it would be quite inappropriate for a booklet of this type.

These considerations however, simply make this slim volume more stimulating, and it is recommended for all who are prepared to look at our coinage and the way it was seen at the time, from a slightly different but more interesting angle.

A.J. HOLMES


It has been a long gestation period for Alex Wilson and Mark Rasmussen’s book on the proof and pattern gold coins. Now it has finally arrived, in its detail it is rather disappointing. It is highly priced at £85 and weighs, incredibly, just over 4 lbs or 1.83 kilograms. To put it another way, each of the 456 entries cost nearly 20 pence and weighs 4 grams. The reason for this soon becomes obvious for each of the 456 entries (WR nos) has a separate page, “to fill the book out”, one understands. When a 1911 proof set is allotted 4 pages, it certainly does that. Page 347 contains 33 words including reign heading and page number, and many other pages contain little more. What this book does do is to illustrate every piece (where possible), providing an invaluable work of
reference, for the illustrations are very good, but even good illustrations can have their limitations.

At the top of each page is the illustration, below is the reference number, denomination and date, obverse and reverse type and legend (for the hammered issues stops are omitted, for the milled issues sometimes inconsistent), mint mark and edge where applicable, weight in grams and rarity guide on a scale of 1–7. This reviewer would have liked to see weights given in grams as well, for the coins were struck to a grain standard and when checking to a previous work of reference, the weight will be given in grams. WR 14 at 3.45 g ‘is 10 grains heavier than usual’. Enough said.

At the bottom of each page below an ‘exergual line’ (above for WR 166) one is given a reference to an earlier work or sale catalogue, or the location of the specimen illustrated, especially if only one or two are known. One is sometimes confused as to what is actually meant.

A major omission is that no die identities are given. Do WR 42–44 share the same obverse die and WR 108–110 have the same reverse die? One could pose very many such questions. We know some pieces are from the same dies but with different edges, and so have a different WR number and thus a separate page, but page by page we are not told. WR 4 is MI 3, but a similar piece, MI 4, is not listed. WR 3 is MI 5 where two varieties of legend are noted, as is noted for MI 6 (WR 7). WR 3 is noted as ‘Struck ex medaille from crown dies’ This appears to be meaningless until one realises that half-sovereign dies (WR 6) is meant. Also, WR 3 reverse is from the same die as WR 4 obverse.

There are inconsistencies and errors aplenty. To mention a few (and only a few)-personal names, such as engravers and provenances vary in presentation and some are inaccurate, e.g. Locket (WR 35); the style of reference to NC, BNJ and others varies considerably: inscriptions on the coin appear in lower case (WR 164, 173); WR 8 reads FIDEI; PART ONE (p 223) should read PART TWO; Request (WR 52) is Donation (WR 29); WR 213 and 214 should read IV, not VI; often British Museum Catalogue should read British Museum Catalogue (WR 52, 53), giving rise to “Hunterian Museum ex British Museum Collection 442 (WR 56)—surely time for the Keeper to have a diplomatic word with young Bateson!; Rarity 1 for R (WR 130); semée for semée (WR 69); fine gold is actually pure gold, i.e. 1000 fine; where is the scroll ornament (WR 110) or has it strayed from WR 108?

The weight of the George III shilling 1816 is 7.98 grams.

The Banks Catalogue (WR 99) is not listed in the Select Bibliography and would it not been useful to give Eimer references to the Pingo pieces (WR 54 is not listed by Eimer). Proofs and patterns in gold are not met with every day and only with regular usage will additions and corrections be made. The reviewer admits to not having checked specialist papers in BNJ by the likes of Lessen and Dyer. A surprising omission is Seaby 3904A, a George IV proof half-sovereign, 1826, with extra curl.

What would have been most useful would have been a comprehensive concordance, say, with Montagu, Douglas-Morris, L & S/ESC/ BMC, British Museum and Others, and perhaps a complete list of auction sales quoted. Undoubtedly the work will become the standard work of reference for the series, niggling inconsistencies and shortcomings (and high price) or not. What the book obviously lacked, rather surprisingly in view of the professional status of the authors, was a numismatic editor and publisher. Any experienced proof reader, in the reviewer’s case of auction sale catalogues, could have so easily made it a much more competent piece of work without too much effort.

P.D. MITCHELL


With the welcome publication of this, the sixth volume in the series, Thompson’s and Dickinson’s coverage of the English trade tokens in the Norweb Collection is now nearing completion. The present volume covers the tokens of the counties of Wiltshire, Worcestershire and Yorkshire. In addition, the Irish, Scottish and Welsh tokens in the collection are catalogued, as are the issues of the Isle of Man and Sark.

The new volume adopts a familiar format, with details of weight (in grams and grains), metal, issuer and die axis being provided for each entry. Williamson references are also provided, as are details of provenance and in many instances other notes. Obverse and reverse designs or types are described through reference to a classified index, with type 5.14.136, for example, being described as ‘On a shield three pears: cf. the “modern” arms of the City of Worcester Argent a fesse between three pears sable’ (Briggs 1971, p. 422). The use of such a standardised shorthand has allowed the authors greatly to reduce the bulk of the text in the catalogue section of the work and, although the system seems initially to be clumsy and to require the reader to make continuous cross-references between the bulk of the descriptive text and the classified index, it can nevertheless quickly be mastered.

As a record of a single collection, the coverage cannot be fully comprehensive. This is freely acknowledged by the authors in their preface, wherein the coverage of Wiltshire is described as ‘fairly comprehensive’ and that of Worcestershire as ‘reasonably strong’. Yorkshire, we are justly informed, ‘is superb’. There is much to be gained from the fresh coverage of the tokens of Ireland contained in this volume, and this particular section benefits greatly from the inclusion of Thompson’s well-researched essay on Sir William Petty. The coverage of the Welsh tokens (including those of Monmouthshire) mirrors that previously undertaken by George Boon, whilst the coverage of the Isle of Man and Scotland is of necessity restricted to the single rare types issued there. Of great interest is the reattribution of two types of octagonal tokens to the island of Sark.

On a practical level, it is the inclusion of comprehensive indices and legible photographs which make this volume such a valuable addition to the collector’s or curator’s bookshelf. As anyone who has had the experience of attempting to identify metal-detector finds with the assistance only of Dickinson and Williamson will concede, the opportunity to compare a well worn and
Corroded token with a photograph of a well preserved specimen of the same issue is a positive goodsend. That having been said, it is probably fair to warn would-be readers that many of the tokens illustrated are themselves worn and, in some cases, the level of surface damage has defeated the best efforts of the photographer to produce a clear and readily usable image of the piece in question. That notwithstanding, the volume represents not only a worthy piece of scholarship but also a practical and generally user-friendly aid to both curators and collectors.

CRAIG BARCLAY


This, the fourth and latest book in the projected series of eight volumes covering a prolific period of medal making in Britain reflects this by cataloguing just under a thousand medals concerning Royalty issued during the reign of Edward VII. Of these, 31 commemorate the Accession in 1901 and 698 mark the coronation in the following year. That the medal manufacturers produced such a prodigious number of different medals on this latter occasion is some indication of the joy with which this event was greeted and the popularity of the King. Further evidence of this comes from the fact that the Royal Mint alone manufactured and sold 141,310 examples of the official coronation medal in gold, silver and bronze in four different sizes.

All of this information and much else besides can be gleaned from this latest volume which also lists medals struck to commemorate other events such as visits to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Richmond in Surrey, Ireland, Austria and Midsummer Norton in Somerset. The royal tours to the Colonies, the investiture of the Prince of Wales, the opening of various exhibitions and other miscellaneous medals connected with royalty are also catalogued, including, particularly, those struck for local authorities and issued with means of suspension, this latter category being deliberately omitted from BHM.

The catalogue is arranged in chronological order and the medals numbered consecutively with the first digit, No. 4 representing the volume number. Different reverses for each medal are listed where applicable and are numbered as rev. A, B or C etc. Where a medal was struck in a variety of metals and sizes these too are given with an estimate of their retail price.

Thus it will be seen that a great deal of detailed work was required to bring the book to publication and the authors are to be congratulated for persevering.

It is inevitable in such a work that some errors or faults should slip through but these are few and hardly detract from the value of the catalogue. One in particular, however, should be corrected here to avoid confusion: No. 4205, reverse HH does not, as listed, commemorate the coronation but the Coronation Spithead Review which took place on 16th August 1902. The date 28th June 1902 shown on the medal was that originally intended for the Review, which was postponed due to the King's ill health.

The description of the very rare medal struck to commemorate the visit of Princess Henry of Battenberg to the Royal Mint (No. 4884) could be improved upon by the authors noting that the obverse was struck from the crown coinage die.

In common with the preceding volumes, the reproduction of some of the illustrations is rather poor; indeed, in a number of instances the detail is missing completely. Perhaps in future volumes a more rigorous quality control could be exercised. The difficulty probably lies with the quality of the paper and the method of printing rather than with the photographs, the majority of which were taken by Andrew Whittlestone.

There are five indexes: medals of uncertain attribution; makers, designers, die cutters and publishers etc; general index; registered design numbers and, finally, an index of obverse legends. These are an indispensable part of such a work although the index of makers, designers, die cutters, publishers etc is perhaps the least likely to be used since the alphabetic arrangement of these people within a particular event is perfectly clear.

Four volumes remain to be completed by the authors; the first, Medals issued during the reign of Queen Victoria excepting those struck for the two Jubilees, will no doubt prove to be the most daunting. It is to be hoped that work is proceeding apace and that the volumes will not be long delayed. If the succeeding volumes maintain the standard of those already in print; the authors, on completion of the project, will be able to feel justly satisfied with the completion of a long and perhaps tedious, but very worthwhile project.

LAURENCE BROWN


Once inserted, the National Museums of Scotland CD-Rom is exceedingly easy to use and a couple of clicks brings the reader to the main menu where there is a choice of four topics: introduction, coins, tokens and banknotes. The introduction is short, consisting of an illustration and concise paragraph on five aspects of the Scottish coinage - early issues, mints and moneys, designs, values and its end. There is a further note on tokens, and also two on banking in Scotland.

Moving to 'Coins', the menu consists of a linear chronology from 1100 to 1800 which, when dragged upon, moves a second bar with the contemporary monarch's name. Clicking on the name takes one into the coins of that reign. Each reign starts with a historical resume accompanied by a portrait from a coin and is followed by a numismatic synopsis along with it. coin reverse. After come the coin entries, ranging from a pair for Malcolm IV to over sixty for James VI. Somewhat over three hundred coins from David I to Queen Anne are described and illustrated.

Each coin record consists of an illustration with a description beside it and a number of details below. The description includes a transcription of the legend and a translation. The details consist of the type, date, value in Scots, mint, weight, size and the National Museums of Scotland registration number. All the major issues are
covered giving a comprehensive view of the Scottish coinage.

The specimens illustrated have been carefully chosen and the images are of excellent quality, though some towards the end of the series are somewhat dark. One side is displayed at a time and a quick click of the 'Flip' function spins the coin over to show the second side; at the same time the description also changes though the details remain. The normal size image is very good, but a 'Zoom' function allows an enlarged image to fill most of the screen. This permits an enhanced examination and enjoyment of the coins, especially such rarities as the Francis and Mary ducat. The light issue great of James IV wearing a beard is most striking. Equally the legends on the earlier medieval coins can be better seen and understood, and small coins such as the 15th-century billon on pennies, the copper of James III and the first period pennies of Mary gain much from this facility, which to check detail on any of the coins included is extremely useful. Such complete enlargement would make a book prohibitively expensive.

The descriptions are full and it is helpful to have the legend given beside the coin, especially with those specimens where it is not fully clear. Likewise the accompanying translation saves time checking a list. The translation of Scottorum as 'of the Scots' rather than 'of Scots' sounds slightly odd and jars in the case of Mary. All necessary details are included. A slight quibble may be that the weight is rendered only in grams and not also in grains. Also the "Type" is somewhat inconsistent in the information given. This ranges from a Burns reference, sometimes a Stewart reference, other references, coinages, issues, periods and so forth. Thus the four short cross pennies included have 'third coinage' for the two of William I, 'Stewart a' for that of Alexander II and 'Short Cross' for the Alexander III example. Equally the term 'long cross' is not given to the two Alexander III specimens of Edinburgh and Berwick which follow. Of minor note, the first short cross penny of William I should have 'minted: 1195–1205' not 1245. Also all the Robert III coins, of both the heavy (1390–1403) and light coinage (1403–1406) are dated 1390–1406.

Overall there is provided a very comprehensive survey of the Scottish coinage over the six hundred years of its issue. Texts are brief but concise, interesting and informative. The images are of top quality and are accompanied by a wealth of description and detail. This section is particularly successful.

The 'Tokens' section is rather brief being confined to an introduction and only fourteen 13th-century half-penny examples. Each can be viewed by clicking on the appropriate name of one of the major towns and cities indicated on a map of Scotland. Most of the images seem darker that they should be but are accompanied again by full descriptions and details, which include manufacture and a Dalton and Hamer reference. There is an additional 'History' function which provides a brief background to each token.

The third section deals with 'Banknotes' and provides a good introduction to their issue and development in Scotland with some thirty-five specimens, divided into three groups: pre-1800, 1800–1900 and post-1900. The images are very good but generally are better looked at using the 'Zoom' facility because of their size and fine detail. The 'Flip' facility is provided only for the later notes printed on both sides. The image is accompanied by the name of the issuing bank and the denomination with details below consisting of date, type, size, NMS registration number, engraver, and signatures. The 'Type' throughout gives a reference to the excellent and standard Scottish Banknotes by James Douglas. The 'History' facility is not provided for the banknotes, which is a pity for there is much of interest which could be added. Also the number of 20th-century notes included, merely six, is disappointing.

However, for those with the technology and an interest in numismatics or history this CD-ROM will appeal greatly. It is to be hoped that other specific areas of the subject will soon also receive such admirable treatment.

The British Museum's World of Money CD-ROM is a much more ambitious and complex project covering all aspects of money and accompanied by sound, video, printing and games. Again it is very successful in both its content and ease of use. The opening image of the facade of the British Museum is followed by one of the foyer with the sound of the hustle and bustle of visitors and a notice-board. This offers directions to the History of Money, Information Centre, Activities and Options.

'Options' ranges from a Bibliography to an Index and includes a Glossary and Galleries. The inclusion of a comprehensive bibliography is useful. However, the main standard references on ancient coins such as BMC, Crawford and RIC are not included though Oriental Coins in the British Museum is. The only work relating to Scotland is Checkland's Banking in Scotland: A History. There is no sign of Burns or Stewart – nor indeed is North listed. The Society might quibble at the inclusion of the Numismatic Chronicle but not the British Numismatic Journal. However, for the most part someone wishing further reading or greater detail will be well served.

The Glossary, too, is wide-ranging and on clicking the desired word a succinct paragraph appears. The Galleries, of which there are seven, initially present a set of up to forty images. After selecting a Greek, Roman, Chinese or other coin, an enlarged image appears with text. A further enlargement is accompanied by basic details of the coin. On the images in general the basic ones are often quite small and of mixed quality, but the enlargements are excellent and many quite superb. Zooming in and out is easily and quickly accomplished by the use of a magnifying glass icon. Another icon allows an easy return to the Options board.

The core of the work is the 'History of Money' which is accessed by highlighting the required letter of the alphabet and then scrolling through its contents. This section contains a huge amount of information which is well presented and illustrated – not just with coins though there are ample numbers of these. The letter A alone gives a good idea of the range of material included. Over 120 listings include Athens, Alexander the Great and Augustus for the Ancient World. Africa is well covered as is Australia; so too are archaeology and art; nor can one omit ant-nose money (a variety of Chinese bronze cowrie) or Aquinas (medieval economic thought).

Augustus has three entries, the main one 'Augustus, emperor' having five pages dealing with background, portraiture and propaganda. 'Augustus, accounts of empire',
however, is merely a small reference to Augustus within ‘Greek and Roman Economy’ while ‘Augustus, Cistophoric coinage of’ refers to one issue in ‘The Attalids and Cistophori’, but the latter is well worth looking at since it is an excellent summary of the introduction and development of this type of coin. One of the good aspects of this project is that one coin, one topic, leads to a related one and then to another, and another. It is at times almost overwhelming, and occasionally one can get lost, but generally it provides a fascinating journey through numismatics.

There is no indication when the ‘Introduction’ is searched whether the entry has a section to itself or merely appears briefly in one covering a related topic. The reviewer thought it might be interesting to check for Scottish coinage to see how this is dealt with in comparison to the NMS CD-Rom. It isn’t. There are three entries relating to the establishment of the Bank of Scotland, modern Scottish paper money, and the Viking-age Scottish economy but none is a topic in its own right. The last is part of ‘The Viking Kingdoms’ but neatly sums up the use of coin in Scotland at that time with reference to ring-money and the Skalli hoard. There is an excellent image of ring-money from that hoard, but the map icon merely repeats the map of Anglo-Saxon England.

Most of the Irish coinages are omitted with only one entry ‘the earliest coinage’. This takes the viewer back again to ‘The Viking Kingdoms’. There is a good image of a Sihtric crux penny of Dublin but the map is again only of Anglo-Saxon England. Medieval English coinage fares no better, however, with the nine England entries consisting of five Anglo-Saxon, two Civil War and two banking.

On a lighter note there is also an ‘Activities’ or games section. The reviewer is not a fan of computer games but showed willing. ‘Treasure Ship’ involves sailing across the sea to bring home the treasure through a variety of obstacles, but generally the reviewer did not get very far before being looted and sunk by the pirates. However it is fun to fire a broadside and on at least one occasion the pirates were sunk. ‘Budget Power’ is a test of spending government income wisely in order to balance the budget while ‘Pig Fortunes’ is basically a multiple-choice quiz based on the contents of the World of Money. ‘Money Gallery’ is a visual quiz whereby the jumbled contents of numismatics have to be re-united with their labels, twenty minutes before opening time. ‘Money Maker’ gives wide scope to design a coin, banknote, cheque or credit card. This section is actually quite enjoyable but it depends much on subjective taste and may appeal more to the younger viewer.

The other main section is an ‘Information Centre’ which is about the making, use and saving of money. The viewer is first presented with a lift door with appropriate floor buttons. Pressing B takes one to the entrance of a mint, 4 a Coin Room, 3 a bank. The Coin Room deals with the ‘Study of Money’ by numismatists, historians and archaeologists, and their various methods of research. Hoarding is dealt with in ‘Saving Money’ and the art in ‘Money and Society’. The manufacture of money is well dealt with and includes a blank moving of its own accord to the die, a hammer blow and the exit of a finished coin. There is much of interest here, well illustrated with a mixture of coins, drawings and various art works.

Both CD-Roms have much to recommend them and are well worth viewing. Great advances are being made in this direction and it is good to see two of the major institutions at the forefront of such technology. That they have done so well, both technically and curatorially, is a matter of congratulation. Not only will these be of interest to collectors but to a much wider audience and, hopefully, will engender an interest in coinage, especially among younger parts.

J.D. BATESON