REVIEWS


The name of Richard Reece is well known to both numismatists and archaeologists whose field of endeavour includes the Roman period in Britain. Between 1970 and 1999 he taught at the Institute of Archaeology in London, and during this period he developed analytical techniques which enabled him – and subsequently other scholars – to extract the maximum possible information from coin find assemblages from individual sites and from the comparison of assemblages from different provenances. Reece's scientific background – as a student of Biochemistry and then as a teacher of Chemistry – led him to the application of mathematical and statistical procedures rarely available to more traditional numismatists.

This volume brings together thirty-eight papers published by Reece in journals, conference proceedings and Festschriften, some of them now quite difficult to obtain, between 1971 and 1999. Although the subject matter belongs exclusively to the Roman period, this should not be taken as an excuse for numismatists working in other fields to ignore the publication, for many of the methods of analysis described and the ideas formulated could equally well be applied to the coins of later periods.

The author's foreword explains that the papers are arranged 'very roughly by subject and within subject, by development', and goes on to explain the various subject headings. (It is perhaps unfortunate that the list of contents which follows does not indicate these, even if the titles of the individual papers are fairly self-explanatory.) Only five papers (nos 25-29 concern hoards, and Reece explains that this is because 'they have rarely reached my hands'. Reaction to this must be one of regret, since our understanding of the significance of many Romano-British hoards would undoubtedly have been enhanced if Reece's techniques had been applied to them. Nonetheless, the papers which appear here are essential reading for those who do work on them. It would be interesting to see what would happen if the same sort of comparison of the internal distribution of coins within large groups of hoards were to be applied in the mediaeval or post-mediaeval period. Is there such a thing as a 'normal' Edwardian or Civil War hoard by the same criteria?

The first four papers are examples of Reece’s reports on large single-site assemblages from Britain – those from Richborough, Fishbourne and Portchester – published between 1971 and 1981, with a more recent revisiting of the latter. These are still models of how such things should be done, and were important at the time in demonstrating to archaeologists that numismatics had a great deal more to offer than simply the provision of the odd terminus post quem for a buried soil deposit.

After this come three papers which examine site assemblages from Britain and compare them with those from other western provinces of the Roman Empire. All date from the 1970s, and show the development of the author's statistical methods of analysing large amounts of data from a wide geographical area. They contain numerous distribution charts and cluster diagrams, which may be offputting to some (including this reviewer), but fortunately it is possible to take the mathematics on trust and turn to the discussion in two at least of the papers.

There are then two articles which cover the subject of coin finds from specific types of site in Britain – villas and temples – and five further ones which look at Britain in a more general way, with and without external comparisons. Of these, two in particular – 'Mints, Markets and the Military' and 'Coins and Frontiers – Or Supply and Demand' – are perhaps of the greatest interest to the more general reader, as they attempt to explain how coinage may actually have circulated and been used in Roman Britain.

Strictly for the 'supernumerary' are two papers written jointly with Jan Houlder on the distribution of coins in the western Roman Empire, and after these come a group which deals with finds from Rome, Carthage and Malta and a single review-article on the subject of four books on coin finds from particular regions of Europe.

After the five hoard-related papers mentioned above come the final nine, which are more general in nature and comprise – in the author's own words – '... ideas about coins, their production, use, loss and finding. This merges into tentative essays on economic history from site-finds, and a look at coins and the third century AD.' Several of the papers consider the relationship between coins minted and coins found, and this is clearly an important topic in numismatic studies of all periods.

If you want to know what this collection of articles is all about, and indeed one might even venture to say what Richard Reece's work has been all about, you could paradoxically do a great deal worse than to read the last three pages, entitled 'Where Next?'. In this short postlude he first uses the famous Falkirk hoard of denarii, as an example of how the numerical analysis of such an assemblage can aid our understanding of how and why it came to exist in that form, and then sets out his regrets that for so long there has been a gap in understanding and a lack of communication between ancient historians and archaeologists – i.e. between those who attempt to reconstruct the past from written sources and those who rely on the physical evidence provided by excavated buildings and artefacts. This dichotomy, he fear, reflected to some extent amongst numismatists, with the gap falling between the field of 'pure numismatics', i.e. the typological study of coins themselves and consideration of their function as products of a minting system geared to the requirements of those who controlled it, and that of 'applied numismatics', i.e. what coin finds can tell us about the people who used, abused, lost, hoarded and counterfeited them. Reece concludes with an expression of hope that others will get
ideas from his book which will help in their own research, and as one who has utilised at least some of his less complicated methods of analysis for many years, I can only echo this sentiment.

N.M. McQ. Holmes


Anna Gannon's book quarters the same ground as the fourth volume of E. Salin's La Civilisation mérovingienne, published in 1959. Whereas his interest often centred on images drawn from the pagan mythology of the Germanic peoples, hers focus much more on the representation of biblical and classical themes and stories. With an art-historian's erudition she has discovered many interesting antecedents and parallels for the pictorial designs seen on the sceattas, especially of the secondary phase (c.715 onwards). She also devotes attention to the coinage of King Offa. Alongside numerous enlarged photographs of the coins she gives us illustrations from illuminated manuscripts, Anglo-Saxon metalwork, sculpture, textiles, gold-glass, classical gems, celtic coins, and much else; never was it more true that a picture is worth a thousand words. This is a very learned book. Dr Gannon brings a breath of fresh air into a subject that tends to be too inward-looking, and blinkered. The art-historical comparisons which she adds are generally compelling, often to the point of being self-evidently correct. The core of the book is structured in terms of the categories of design elements which make up the coin types: the bust, human figures, animals, crosses, standards, and so on. Two or three examples, drawn from a rich text, will give the flavour of her remarks.

No clearer example could be found of the merits of Dr Gannon's work than her commentary on Type 42, which shows a hound-like animal with a plant or bush in the background. 'The prototype for this iconography', she observes, 'is derived from representations of Bacchus' panther leaping in front of the thyrsus, a motif found on many Roman artefacts in Britain.' She illustrates a gemstone (found in Somerset), on which the panther is shown wearing its traditional collar, a detail reproduced on the sceattas. The two photographs side by side prove, beyond any doubt, that some similar gemstone, perhaps found accidentally in the soil just as the Somerset piece was, was in the hands of an eighth-century Anglo-Saxon (presumably of high social standing), who showed it to the craftsman die-cutter and said, 'Copy this'. It indicates an awareness, on the part of the owner, of the achievements of classical civilisation, and a willingness to be impressed by them and by what they stood for. In a word, it illustrates the owner's taste. That is perhaps the most significant contribution which Type 42 can make to Anglo-Saxon studies in general, although one may add that its localization to Kent is also of interest.

But then we come to much deeper and wider questions of the transfer of an image from one cultural context to another, with a possible shift in the way it was understood. The owner of the gemstone, and certainly the craftsman, and most certainly the users of the coins, had never seen a panther (even in Somerset, from where recent newspaper reports claimed that a large black panther had been sighted): what did these eighth-century English people, severely, think the image represented? On the coin, the domed forehead and elongated snout (unpanther-like) and of course the collar all suggest a dog. To say that in no way detracts from or disparages the identification of the classical prototype. But the same image can have different meanings to people in different cultural contexts, and the art-historian needs to establish a methodology which never allows that out of the reader's sight. There are layers of meaning, and one must try to keep clear which layer one is focussing on.

A second example: of equal interest is the zig-zag truncation of the animal's neck which one sometimes sees on the sceattas of Type 33, and which, Dr Gannon suggests, is 'presumably derived from the serration border of an original gold-glass piece'. The serration, she explains, is characteristic of the so-called Dignitas Amicorum gold-glass group. She illustrates a fragment of gold-glass with a fierce panther's head, and the band of triangles, which shows very persuasive similarities with the best specimens of Type 33. Here, intriguingly, we have a conflict of interpretation with Michel Dhênin's suggested prototype of a Celtic coin, about which he wrote, memorably, 'Cette tête de loup ressemble dent pour dent à celle qui figure au droit de bronzes des Bituriges Cubi (BN 4220-4285), elle aussi orientée tantôt à droite, tantôt à gauche; gueule ouverte, babines retrouvées, crocs apparents, dents figurées par des gloseules, grande langue pendant sous la tête, souvent enroulée en S, oreilles pointées vers l'avant, chaque détail concorde.' The cultural transfer from panther to wolf would be readily understandable again; but who has correctly recognized the prototype, Gannon or Dhênin? — or could they both be right? The row of triangles is very persuasive; and it is rather difficult to imagine how coins of the Bituriges Cubi became familiar in Kent. The reader will find much on which to meditate in this vein, and much to enjoy in Dr Gannon's book.

The copying was not all in one direction. For example, a gold bracteate pendant from Winkel, in Hessen (illustrated on p.112) manifestly copies (or even is embossed from?) a sceatt of Type BIIB, alias Type 85 — which one would be inclined to attribute to York, early in the secondary phase. Dr Gannon, while recognizing that the find-spot is not decisive, and that the pendant could be Anglo-Saxon or Continental, judiciously sets it into a context of trade across the North Sea, and of ties of cultural affinity strengthened through Anglo-Saxon missions — with mention of St Boniface. She sees in BIIB 'a Christian image that must have been ascribed with apotropaic qualities'. That quotation is expressive of her mind-set throughout. The word apotropaic is applied to numerous coin types throughout Dr Gannon's book, and one confesses to a mental image of the craftsman saying to his apprentices, 'Now, lads, let's try to make it a bit more apotropaic'.

Long ago Ted Buttrey, in a celebrated lecture entitled 'Soft shoe shuffle on an Indian Head cent', deduced (with tongue in cheek) what sort of a country an archaeologist in the far future might imagine that the United States had been, on the basis of the iconography of a humble
one-cent piece — its population consisted of Red Indians, and so on. In her general historical conclusions (chapter 6), Dr Gannon is perhaps somewhat over-reliant on the iconography of the sceattas and on their (?) intended propaganda value, as evidence of the general character of monetary circulation in eighth-century England. She speaks, rightly, of 'the eclectic use of a great variety of sources beyond those of purely numismatic derivation' but goes on to claim that 'the particular choice of idiom was symptomatic of the change in the perceived function of the coins.' That should provoke serious hesitation. One would wish to caution that, rather than a single line of logic from iconography to function, the use of the coins need to be assessed by a concerted analysis of all aspects of the numismatic evidence — changing weight-standards, silver contents, etc. — in a regional context. How the coins were used is mediated to us chiefly by the evidence of how they circulated, as revealed by finds.

Dr Gannon is to be warmly congratulated on a fine volume, containing much that her colleagues and friends will find new and stimulating.

D.M. METCALF


This volume contains (with one substitution) the papers delivered at a conference held in Oxford in December 2000. The introductory chapter, by the editors, sets out the rationale of the book — to present the "first survey of inland markets and smaller trading sites in Early Medieval Northern Europe between the seventh and ninth centuries". This is a period marked by the revival of international trade, based on great emporia like Hamwic, Dorestad and Quentovic, but the past two decades have also seen the recognition in Britain and on the Continent and in Scandinavia; and to establish a broad, interdisciplinary forum to discuss the sites.

The main body of the book is divided into three parts. Part I, "History, Numismatics and the Early Medieval Economy", gives some general background before the more geographically specific papers in Parts II and III, and contains the contributions that are likely to be of particular interest to readers of this journal. It begins with a paper by James Campbell (pp. 12–19) on production and distribution in the Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon period, which makes the important point that we need to recognise what we do not know before we can properly assess the evidence that we do have. For example, he calculates that, if the population of England in Bede's time was half a million, then they could easily have required something like 1.3 million square yards of cloth, three-quarters of a million pairs of shoes and two million metal brooches, buckles and pins simply to dress themselves. The implication is that in a rich country like England there must have been an enormous amount of trade going on for which we have virtually no archaeological evidence.

The next contribution (pp. 20–36) is by Mark Blackburn. He begins by pointing out that, while it may seem the obvious solution to see 'productive sites' as the locations of markets or fairs, it is unlikely that such a simple, single explanation is correct, since they occur in a wide range of contexts — urban and rural settlements, monastic sites, on important routes, and so on. He then uses a quantitative-chronological approach (i.e. how many coins were deposited on a particular site over time) to examine the finds from three excavated sites (Hamwic, Tilbury and Royston) and from a series of 'productive sites' that all exhibit a broadly similar pattern of coin loss (typically, some gold thrymsas and primary sceattas, then a dramatic rise in the number of sceattas c.700 and an equally dramatic decline c.750, with many fewer coins from the later periods. Northumbria is peculiar in producing large numbers of base stycas until late in the ninth century.) As he observes, the geographical spread of the sites suggests that this pattern cannot be the result of local factors, but must be telling us something more general.

He also points out that these recently discovered 'productive sites', and centres like Hamwic, are actually the sites that failed; the successes are those that developed into later towns and cities. If the evidence for these successful sites is examined, then we find a generally similar pattern up to the later eighth century, but a larger number of later coins (although even then the peaks are lower than for the secondary sceattas). Interestingly this is the same pattern that is produced by a histogram of 3,552 'isolated' finds from across Southern England (p. 32, Fig. 3.6), which probably illustrates the 'normal' pattern for this region.

What both these coin patterns seem to be reflecting is a rise and fall in the number of coins in circulation in the eighth century which seems to parallel the thirteenth century expansion and fifteenth century contraction of coin supply. Since this was probably the result of a fluctuation in the amount of silver available, it is arguable that the same might be true of the eighth century, with a new silver source (the Harz mountains?) coming on tap at the start of the century, followed by a contraction of supply and then a positive shortage taking hold in the later eighth and ninth centuries. The similar pattern of coin loss at places like Dorestad and Domburg suggest that this really is a European trend. (Interestingly the coin evidence does not tell the whole story. Although the coin finds decline, other metalwork finds suggest that activity continued strongly at many sites into the ninth century. Presumably traders and craftsmen were using other methods to overcome the comparative lack of silver coins.)

Michael Metcalf (pp. 37–47) rounds off Part I by examining what comparing of the composition of the currency at each site might be able to tell us. As a rule of thumb he suggests that roughly 10% of the sceattas minted in England were struck at York, 30% in East Anglia, 50% in Kent and London and 10% at Hamwic. In addition about 20% of the sceattas found in England were struck on the continent. Although coins from each area circulated throughout England, each wic has a different
range of types and Metcalf sees a broadly similar mix in that we’s hinterland. The material from these hinterlands is disparate in nature (being drawn in some numbers from the ‘productive sites’ and in ones and twos from chance finds), so grouping it in a meaningful way for study is problematic. This is where regression analysis comes in. This technique will already be familiar to many from Metcalf’s recent articles in this journal, but in essence the data are manipulated so that contour lines can be drawn on maps to represent the relative frequency of a particular coin type. Applying the technique to primary phase porcupine sceattas, Metcalf shows that these occur in unexpectedly high proportions in the Oxford region (40%, as opposed to the expected 20%) and at Bidford-on-Avon in Warwickshire (50%). Tentatively he wonders whether these hot-spots might reflect trade in wool well before we have any documentary evidence for such trade.

Although each contributor to Parts II and III uses numismatic evidence to some degree, these papers are much more firmly archaeological, and in at least one case some familiarity with current archaeological jargon would stand the reader in good stead. Part II, “Trading and ‘Productive’ Sites in the British Isles”, comprises 8 papers that address the first of the conference’s stated aims, to survey/assess current knowledge of “productive sites” in Anglo-Saxon England. Palmer (pp. 48–60) kicks off by looking at the evidence for traded goods at rural sites in the hinterlands of Ipswich, Lundenwic and Hamwic, to try and set these emporia into their contemporary context. Like Blackburn he sees ‘productive sites’ as having a variety of explanations. He also suggests that they served as ‘inland central places’, each with its own hinterland, as elements in a complex and multi-tiered system of trade (surely a sensible suggestion).

Griffiths (pp. 62–72) gives a western perspective on ‘productive sites’, which are much less common there than in the south and east, and concludes that this reflects the lower circulation of coins and non-ferrous metalwork in that region rather than any lack of market activity per se. Ulmschneider (pp. 73–83) deals with a ‘productive site’ on the Isle of Wight that may have had links with Hamwic, while Brookes (pp. 84–96) compares the distribution of imported grave goods in Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in East Kent (taken as indicators of wealth) to the distribution of Middle Anglo-Saxon coins in the same area. Perhaps his most interesting observation is that some areas of low coin loss may represent regions where surplus produce was removed by estate owners rather than sold by the producers, meaning that there was no influx of coin to be lost.

The next three papers form a linked group. Newman (pp. 97–109) examines two sites near Ipswich, while Rogerson (pp. 110–21) sets out the archaeological evidence for six sites in western Norfolk. Pestell (pp. 122–37) then considers the ‘afterlife’ of these eight sites, and another five in East Anglia, to see if their landscape and documentary history in the later Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods can help throw light on why they may have been important in earlier times.

To round off Part II Leahy (pp. 138–54) considers the evidence for ‘productive sites’ in Lincolnshire (they are found in Lindsey, but not in Kesteven, even though metal finds are common in both areas), while Richards (pp. 155–66) argues against the use of the term ‘productive site’ at all on the grounds that it generally reflects “a method of finds recovery, based upon the use of metal-detectors rather than a distinct activity in the past”. However, when he goes on to point out that not all ‘productive sites’ are especially rich in finds, were necessarily involved in artefact production or were primarily markets, he is basically making the same point as several other contributors in this volume.

Part III, “Markets and Settlements on the Early Medieval Continent”, contains 5 papers chosen to represent recent or ongoing research projects in their respective regions. First Sawyer (pp. 168–74) assesses the evidence for early fairs and markets in Norway and Sweden. In areas where towns were few these were often focussed on churches, which can produce large numbers of coins when excavated. (The most extreme case being Alvastra in Sweden, with 1,380 coins of the sixteenth century or earlier.) The reason is simple — many markets were held in winter, and the churches provided suitable sheltered space.

Jørgensen (pp. 175–207) gives a fascinating and important summary of the evidence from southern Scandinavia, which supports the suggestion that sites with a number of different functions can all be ‘productive’ (or in the local terminology, ‘metal-rich’). (Denmark is in the unusual position that many such sites have been excavated, so it is possible to evaluate surface finds against more complete data.) The paper also contains an account of a new seventh-eleventh century site on the shore of Lake Tissø on Zealand.

Tummuscheit (pp. 208–20) describes the recent excavations of an Early Slavonic trading/manufacturing site at Gross Strömshöfen, on the Baltic coast of Germany, which is probably the site of Reric, a trading settlement destroyed in 808 by the Danish king Godfred. The wide range of burial rites found in the cemetery suggest that the inhabitants were drawn from very disparate cultural backgrounds. Tulp (pp. 221–33) also describes recent excavations, in this case of a terp (dwelling mound) in the north-west Netherlands that was occupied from the second to tenth centuries.

To end, Le Maho (pp. 234–47) examines the impact of the later ninth century Viking raids on the Lower Seine valley, while Moran (pp. 248–63) describes the remarkable site of San Vicenzo in the foothills of the Italian Appenines, near Monte Cassino. This was the location of a monastery founded c.700 by the Lombard Duke Gisulf I of Benevento. It has produced evidence for workshops connected with the production of richly decorated, high status liturgical objects and items of personal adornment. The monastery was raided and burnt down in 881 by Saracen mercenaries sent by the Bishop-Duke of Naples.

This is a generally well produced book, with only the occasional typographical error, but it is clear that one or more lines of text have been lost at the top of p. 224 and it is hard to guess what should be restored. Other complaints are more technical or editorial. An interesting map (Fig. 8.1) on p. 87 is seriously marred because many of the place names on it are scarcely legible — it was not a good idea to print them in mid-grey on a light- to dark-grey shaded map! Further, throughout the ‘Introduction’ (and to a lesser extent elsewhere) contributions are cross-
reviewed as 'X, this volume', which can result in a time-consuming (and irritating) search for the particular reference – it would have made the reader's life much easier if page numbers had been given.

Since this is a report of a conference, it is perhaps inevitable that the papers are rather disparate and not all of them fit happily into the stated thrust of the volume. The Italian paper in particular sits a little uneasily with the other contributions. It is also noticeable that, while the Introduction poses a number of questions about 'productive sites' and some of the authors come to quite varied conclusions about them, there is no summary that assesses the current state of play, to see if any common ground or obvious future lines of research could be discerned. This is a distinct weakness. What this volume does show, however, is that the term 'productive site' covers a multitude of sites and that much more work will be required before we begin to understand what these sites really represent.

D.J. SYMONS


When the Anglo-Saxon coins in the Hunterian Museum of the University of Glasgow and the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland in Edinburgh were published as the second and sixth volumes of the Sylloge in 1960 and 1966 respectively, the enumeration of both envisaged that their coins of later periods would continue to appear in independent fascicules. After the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland had joined the Royal Scottish Museum to form the National Museums of Scotland, uniting the mainly Scottish and Scottish-founded material of the former with the overlapping but more wide-ranging 'universal' collections of the latter, it was decided to publish their English coins from 1066 to 1279 along with those in the Hunterian Museum as one volume, incorporating the holdings of this period from other public institutions in Scotland. This change of plan is to be welcomed as a period-based approach, increasingly followed in the sylloge series, is generally more helpful to numismatic students although, for Scotland, it leaves in limbo a number of Anglo-Saxon and local coins not covered in the earlier volumes produced in accordance with the original location-based policy.

The present joint sylloge detailing 1055 coins has been compiled by the curator of the Hunterian cabinet, whose coins make up considerably more than half the total. The National Museums account for the major share of the remainder, but Dr. Bateson has checked all potential sources and has brought together 170 additional coins from fifteen other collections, ranging from sizeable groups in Perth and the Marshalchi Museum of the University of Aberdeen to single pieces in each of five smaller museums. The introductory pages are fewer than in many syllogies because the pedigrees and sources of the principal components of the collections in the National and Hunterian Museums have already been discussed in the earlier volumes (SCBI 2, 6 and 35), although useful summaries are provided here. Elsewhere, details of provenance for older acquisitions have rarely been preserved, although recent acquisitions of local finds are fully documented. The richest source for the Hunterian material, and so for the volume as a whole, is the bequest of Doctor William Hunter (1718-83), augmented by the non-Scottish element of the collection assembled by Thomas Coats (1809-83) and presented by his son in 1921. Coats is known to have bought extensively through agents at leading sales, and it is a pity that it has not been possible to establish any earlier pedigrees. The National Museums contribute fewer coins with early provenances, but four pennies of William I derive from the Faculty of Advocates collection based on its 1705 purchase of the late seventeenth-century cabinet of Professor James Sutherland. From Glasgow the sylloge includes twelve coins which had belonged to Professor John Anderson (1726-96), housed from 1886 in the Kelvingrove museum until their recent transfer across the city to the University of Strathclyde, successor of the Institution founded in Anderson's name after his death. The University of Aberdeen's coin collection, which totals about 40,000 pieces originating in the cabinets of its colleges founded in 1495 and 1593, contributes seventy-five coins to the sylloge. Although the previous history of these coins is once again largely unknown, almost all were acquired before 1900. The foundation of Perth Museum dates back to 1784, and coins were listed in its catalogues of 1827 and 1850, but the descriptions are not detailed enough to allow extant pieces to be identified with them. The collections in other museums have been built up largely from antiquarian donations and local finds in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Relatively few of the coins are derived from hoards found on Scottish soil. The only hoard of the Norman period, found in Bute in 1863, was the source of three pennies of Stephen in the National Museums. The Hunterian Museum has acquired small groups of Norman coins from recent English and Welsh treasure trove including the 1989 Wicklewood, Norfolk, and the 1980 Coed-y-Wenallt, South Glamorgan finds, and two coins of Henry I were purchased from the dispersed 'Beaumaris' hoard found in c.1887 at an uncertain location in the Paris region. Even Short and Long Cross hoards are comparatively rare in Scotland, here providing twenty-four English coins from the 1698 Short Cross hoard from Dun Lagaidh, Ross and Cromarty, and ten from the 1924 Long Cross hoard from Balmacellan, Dumfriesshire. None of the other Short Cross coins has a hoard provenance. The majority of the Long Cross coins originate in parcels from the Slatey, Belgium, hoard purchased for the Hunterian and Royal Scottish Museum collections shortly after its discovery in 1914. While some of the Short and Long Cross coins without provenance may represent undocumented local finds, it is likely that others originally came from the more plentiful English hoards of the period or contemporary continental deposits.

Apart from the Bute hoard pieces, none of the Norman coins in the volume has a Scottish find-spot, but in England also isolated earlier Norman finds are rarer than those of preceding and especially later issues. Even so, it is disappointing that there should be no coins which might have helped to illuminate the monetary situation in Scotland in the seventies years prior to the introduction of mintsing by David I in 1136. Unprovenanced Norman coins may again conceal the odd unrecorded local find, but the predominance among them of Paxs pennies of
William I suggests that most were acquired as representative pieces ultimately from English sources. Some later coins, as usual mainly smaller denominations, are from excavations, such as a Tealby cut-halfpenny from Eyemouth, Berwickshire, and three cut-halfpennies of Short and Long Cross types from Aberdeen. The counties of two finds spots are not quoted: Fenmore Sands, near Tam, Ross and Cromarty, and Prestwick which is in Lanarkshire. Metal-detectorists have been active in Scotland as elsewhere, and several important groups including those from the abbeys of Inchkaffrey, Perthshire, and Cambuskenneth, Stirlingshire, have been added to museum collections, although details of other coins from the sites influencing currency aspects may be sought in the original publications to which the reader is referred. It is surprising at first sight that no finds of English coins are recorded in the volume from the prominent burghs of Berwick, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Roxburgh, St Andrews, Stirling and Perth, despite the archaeological work carried out recently in many of them. This is probably a reflection of differences in medieval population size and related levels of trading activity and wealth, as well as in the scale of modern excavation in the urban centres of Scotland compared with those in England.

The plates open with an exceptional run of 184 coins of William I from a wide range of mints, featuring such rarities as Dorchester, Launceston and Marlborough. The profile of the classes here is strikingly different from that in other sylloges. There are only twenty-one coins of the Paxs type (BMC viii), Hunter having owned only two, but thirty-one of Two Sceptres (BMC iv) and twenty-eight of the following Two Stars (BMC v) type, most of which were Hunter's. This reflects the fact that Hunter's collection was formed before the discovery of the large 1833 Beaufort, Hampshire, hoard which closed a new type. No coins of the Paxs type (BMC vii) are known from this hoard, so it may be that others of his coins of types i-iv also had this source, as a parcel from it is known to have been in the hands of one of his London suppliers, the notorious John White. Coins of the most numerous type v, in contrast, are not known to have been present in this find. A preponderance of types iv and v is also found among coins in the British Museum from the collection of Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), most of which were acquired before 1730 and none of which can have originated in St Mary Hill (Sir Hans Sloane, Collector, Scientist, Antiquary, edited by Arthur MacGregor, London 1994, p. 163). It seems likely therefore that some of both Hunter's and Sloane's coins of types iv and v were derived from the same hoard, probably unearthed before 1730. The country-wide distribution of the mints represented and the absence of any clear geographical bias suggest that it had been of considerable size and that the coins in the cabinets of these collectors had apparently been selected on a one-of-each basis, thus giving no indication of its findspot.

Of the rare issues of William II there is the high total of 143 coins, many the type-specimen of their moneyers at mints such as Leicester, Rochester and Warwick. Syllage no. 200 corrects a rare error in Brooke's British Museum Catalogue: Norman Kings where the table of Hertford moneyers had aligned this Hunter coin of BMC iii wrongly with Ælfgar instead of Ælfgar. There is again a marked bias in favour of one type, the Cross Voided (BMC iii), and the previous Cross in Quatrefoil type (BMC type ii) is marginally the next most common. A similar pattern in the Sloane collection points to the existence of another early find. The issues of Henry I are less plentiful, with just forty-seven coins, but include the 'unique' Tamworth penny of type xii and the celebrated mules of BMC types ix/x and xi/x which Dr Bateson has carefully re-evaluated and, as Brooke, accepts as genuine. The sixty coins of the period of Stephen are rich in the rare types: two Erased Dies, two Pererics, one each of Matilda, Robert of Gloucester and Robert de Stuteville and three of Eustace Fitzjohn. The mace- and lozenge-headed sceptre varieties of Stephen type i acquired by the National Museum in the nineteenth century are rightly consigned to the forgeries section. The existence of the Norman rarities was already well-known to specialists, having been cited in Norman Kings and in papers such as Mack's study of Stephen in BJN 35 (1966), but many had not been described or illustrated, so the syllage often provides their full details for the first time. Just as importantly, many less immediately spectacular coins have not been previously published at all. Most have been out of antiquarian circulation since the eighteenth century and others, like those in the Coats collection, last surfaced in the nineteenth century when even Norman pennies were sold in minimally described multiple lots and largely unillustrated, and purchases made directly from trade and private sources rarely left any record.

Seven hundred and twenty-one coins, more than half the syllage contents, belong to the Cross and Crosslets and more plentiful Short and Long Cross types. By their nature these mass-produced immobile issues, involving a dramatically-reduced complement of mints and moneyers, contain fewer coins which are individually significant to the extent of those in the preceding series, but the studies now being based on them require that they are made available in the same detail as has long been taken for granted for earlier periods. It is particularly welcome that every one of these later coins is illustrated and that the plates, as throughout this volume, are made up from good photographs suitable for die-study. Hunter possessed examples of these issues, but they constitute a much lower proportion of the total than his Norman coins had done. Forty-nine coins from all sources represent Henry II's Cross and Crosslets coinage and they are fairly representative across the type. (The header at the start of the series has dropped out, so that the first two coins appear in the text at the end of PI. 12 under the previous sub-heading of Modern Forgeries.) Several were noted in Allen's British Museum Catalogue of the series, and die-identities with other coins in this standard work are recorded, as are links and identies among the syllage coins themselves. The Short and Long Cross types number 295 and 376 coins respectively and are classified accordingly to the latest detailed systems. They are again broadly representative, although Long Cross class VI, plentiful after the dispersal of large numbers from the 1969 Colchester 2 hoard, is lacking. The plates end with three coins of Long Cross class VII, one owned by Hunter, struck at the start of the reign of Edward I.

This syllage makes available much little-known material, often of exceptional importance, as well as providing a rich body of evidence for early hoards and the history of
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collecting. Curators north of the border have frequently urged more students of the medieval English series to come and study the coins of their period in Scotland, and it is ironic that with his excellent publication Dr. Bateson has made that journey less necessary. Nothing, however, can substitute for seeing the coins themselves, so a visit remains as academically advisable as it will be pleasurable.

M.M. ARCHIBALD


It is important to make clear at the outset what this book is not. It is not a corpus of coins complete with die study, as readers familiar with Mossop’s *The Lincoln Mint* might expect. For this type of thing you need to consult the various articles that Allen has published over the past few years (on the period c.1080–1180, on Short Cross coins; and on Henry VII), although Appendix 3 in this volume does give a very full discussion of coin issues from Durham.

Instead, this book, a revised version of Allen’s doctoral thesis, is a thorough study of the working of an episcopal mint active from the PAXS issue in the 1080s to 1541. It is divided into six chapters and five appendices. Chapter 1 charts the history of the mint and gives a full account of the openings, closings, episcopal problems and royal interference. This is all usefully summarised on pp. 14–15. A review is not the place to follow this story in any detail, but it is worth pointing out how frequently the mint was closed for longer or shorter periods and how intermittent the production of coins probably was, even when the mint was open. This is an important point that has implications well beyond Durham: at most of the smaller mints active in the tenth to thirteenth centuries minting must have been virtually a part-time activity, although moneyers probably operated their exchanges on a more regular basis.

Chapter 2 looks principally at the mechanics of die supply. With rare exceptions in the 1140s, c.1300 and in the period c.1460–83, Durham’s dies were supplied from London (at a cost of 7d each from the thirteenth century onwards), transported in sealed bags by messengers sent for the purpose. Old dies were returned in the same way. The number of dies allowed to the Durham moneyer was strictly controlled and it is clear that new dies were generally only supplied on the surrender of old ones. However, it was not always necessary to return a full set of dies at one time – if a partial set was surrendered, a partial new set was obtained and the retained old die(s) continued in use with the new ones – an event which is reflected in the mules struck at the mint (p. 28). The weight and fineness of Durham’s coins was also, as one would expect, carefully controlled, although they were sometimes tested in Durham rather than at a Trial of the Pyx in London.

Although chapter 3 is titled ‘The Personnel and Customers of the Mint’, it actually deals overwhelmingly with the former. Indeed, apart from some references to merchants bringing silver to be coined, we know only one customer by name – Robert Bennett, bur- sar of Durham Priory in the 1530s. The bulk of the chapter examines the varying nature of the men who ran the mint, from the single moneyer with one set of dies in the eleventh century, through a variety of Italian business- men and episcopal officials, to the minimasters who formed the mint in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There is a particularly interesting passage on p. 33, where Allen demonstrates that the interests of the twelfth century moneyers also extended to leasing mines, selling wine and dealing in wool, exactly as we should expect if moneying was a part-time business as already proposed.

Chapter 4 examines the profits that the mint produced (neatly summarised in Table 4 on pp. 43–44) and assesses their importance against the wider revenue of the Bishops of Durham. Allen points out that it is hard to produce accurate figures for this wider income but Table 5 (p. 48) gives his estimates, the mint profits, and what percentage these profits were of the total income. This makes it clear just how little the mint contributed to the Bishop’s income – frequently as little as 0.1% to 0.3%, rising to a maximum of just over 1% in 1306/7 and 1472/3. As Allen rightly emphasises, the mint was less important economically than as an element in a package of rights and privileges that conferred prestige upon the see and its holder. This said, it is clear that the Bishops always had an eye on maximising their profits from the mint. The indenture of 1367 leasing out the mint (p. 7) specifies that the contract is to be terminated if there is a change in the coinage: although Allen estimates the mint output at that time at only c.£1,000 a year, just sixteen years earlier annual output had been c.£30,000 as a result of the 1351 coinage reform – and if the opportunity for large profits returned, the Bishop intended to have them.

Full details of Allen’s estimates of annual output will be found in chapter 5 (see p. 66 for a summary tabulation). Combining evidence from coins, hoards, and surviving documents, he suggests that until the mid twelfth century Durham’s contribution to England’s coinage was low, rising from less than 0.1% in the late eleventh century to 0.5–1.0% at the reccoinage of 1158–60. From that date he attempts to provide estimates of annual output in £ sterlimg. Where there are no documentary sources, this is necessarily an inexact science, involving the acceptance of a ‘normal average output’ of 24–48,000 pence (i.e. £100–£200) for an obverse die (and half that for a reverse). Allen produces his estimates for annual production figures by multiplying these figures by the number of known dies used in a production period, and then dividing the total by the number of years the period lasted. (He is aware that this method is fraught with problems – see, for example, his comments on p. 49 above – but he is probably right to make the attempt since his figures are likely to be of the right order of magnitude, even if they are not spot on. Those for the period 1280–1351 command particular confidence since he is able to use board data and the known output of the London and Canterbury mints to

refine his estimates.) The results suggest an annual output of some hundreds of pounds (or less) prior to 1280 and after 1377, with production between those dates generally in the low thousands. The high points are annual production levels of £17,500 in 1299/1300 and an astonishing £30,000 in 1351-1352.

The final chapter examines the factors that may have influenced Durham's output. This is necessarily speculative, since it is generally hard to prove conclusively that any particular factor had specific effects. One obvious exception to this is the importance of the periodic recoinages, which lie behind the major peaks in production. For example the £17,500 produced in 1299/1300 reflects the removal from circulation of foreign creakards and pottlards. Beyond that Allen suggests that Durham's output reflects a complex interaction of widely varying factors, including the gradually increasing monetisation of the northern economy; the variable production of silver from the argentiferous lead mines of Weardale; the variation in the import of foreign silver coins in exchange for exports such as wool (itself radically affected by the creation of the Calais Staple); the mint price offered for silver; political factors (e.g. the need to buy off Scottish raids in the 1310s and 1320s); the increasing use of gold coins from the 1340s onwards; and possible bullion famines (for example, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries).

The first three appendices occupy more than half of the book. Appendix 1 gives summaries of 227 published and unpublished documents (royal letters, exchequer records, local administrative records, etc.), ranging in date from 1158x1167 to 1580/1, although nos 183-227 all post-date the closure of the mint and are simply records that no payment has been received from the farmer. Appendix 2 lists (in alphabetical order) 328 hoards which contained English pennies minted 1279-1544 and provided much of the raw data for Allen's analyses. (This list has now been supplemented by Allen's article in last year's Journal.)

Appendix 3 (plus plates 1-9 illustrating 212 coins) gives a full listing of the coin issues produced at the Durham mint throughout its history, in chronological order and attributed (where possible) to the relevant bishop. All known reverse legends are listed to the end of Long Cross and all known types thereafter. This is much more than a simple list of coins, however, for the accompanying discussion goes into details of classification and chronology. For example, Table 27 on pp. 178-9 sets out a revised chronology for the issues of 1279-1344. Appendices 4 and 5 consist respectively of one page each, the one coin evidence for the place name Durham, and 3 pages by R. Churchill and R. Thomas summarising their die study of the Durham Long Cross coins in the Brussels hoard. The volume closes with a full bibliography and index.

This is an attractive and well-produced book, with remarkably few typographical errors. Only two seem worth noting. One concerns the first Durham moneyer, Cuthbert. On pp. 3, 33 and 166 his name is said to appear on his coins as cut brht, but it is clear from the transcription of the legend on p.166 that a d has been omitted on each occasion and that the name should appear as cut dbht. The second is in Table 20 on p. 62, where the dates for the second period should be '1361-1369', not '1361-1399'. Finally some of the plates are rather too dark, which can make it difficult to see detail on occasion.

Despite these quibbles Allen and his editor are to be congratulated. This is a fine book, which deserves to be on the bookshelves of everyone with an interest in later mediaeval coins.

D.J. SYMONS


SEABY'S familiar, and indispensable, green book on the coinages of Scotland, Ireland and the Islands has now become Spink's blue book. Although updated and revised, it is unchanged in format and more importantly the numbering system remains as before.

The most obvious revision is that of Alexander III's second coinage from 1280, the single-cross sterlings, where account is taken of the recent important work of Stewart and North in BNJ 60. The main class C becomes M and takes in the former classes F and G; their new class R appears, after Mc, as 3055A to preserve the numbering. Otherwise more has been added on the number of points on the stars and mutlets on the reverses, which continue to be regarded as most probably indicating the mints, not named on the Alexander sterlings. An end date of 1292 could perhaps be given in the heading for the issue if classes H and J are posthumous, as suggested by Stewart and North.

A considerable number of varieties and errors have been added to the listings of the post-Restoration milled issues from Charles II to the end of the Scottish coinage in Queen Anne's reign. The touch pieces of Charles III and Henry IX continue to be included, but the illustration accompanying the former example has been corrected by deletion – in the previous edition both illustrations were of pieces of Henry IX. The Scottish bibliography has been brought up to date, although the 1977 Oxford Symposium proceedings, Coinage in Medieval Scotland 1100–1600, continue to be omitted. The map of the Scottish Mints is as before and could be enhanced by the deletion of Forres and the insertion of Dumfries.

A change, noted in the subtitle, is that the catalogue no longer includes decimal issues. This, of course, is irrelevant to Scotland but for Ireland, with a thirty year period of decimal coins up to the recent changeover to the euro, it is more regrettable.

It is balanced, however, by the insertion of proof issues into the main lists and the addition of mintage figures. Only North's paper on the coins of Edward I and III in BNJ 67 has been added to the Irish bibliography, but this is due rather to a lack of new published research in this series. Much refining of the Gunmoney issues of James II has occurred and is reflected in the number of varieties, which has more than doubled in this new edition.

Again the decimal issues have been dropped for Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Mintage figures for the
Jersey and Guernsey coinages have been added and the layout of this section on the Islands has been much improved.

A major part of the revision, especially of use to the collector, is the complete upgrading of the prices. Three conditions are now given for the post-1660 Scottish and Irish coins, while four appear for the 1928 Irish issue and for most of the Island issues. Many coins formerly described as merely extremely rare now have specific prices attached – though probably outside the reach of most collectors.

Overall the appearance and production is better and this much improved second edition of the catalogue will continue to be essential for those interested in the Scottish, Irish and Islands series.

J.D. BATESON