
Cuddeford’s book is the latest in the revamped series of Shire publications and marks the welcome return of numismatic subject matter to the series. The old Shire Archaeology series (before its acquisition by the military history publisher Osprey) had a pedigree of including numismatic titles in its stable with books on Greek coins (Keith Rutter), Iron Age coins (Philip de Jersey), Roman coins (John Casey) and Roman hoards (Richard Abdy). ¹ In its new format the last volume to focus on a numismatic theme was a publication on early Anglo-Saxon coins in 2008 (Gareth Williams). ² The volume under review here marks a shift from a focus on a discrete historic period and rather looks at coins as finds and collectables. The introduction tells the reader that the book is a guide to the common coin types that are found by metal detectorists. The book consists of seven chapters which discuss the material chronologically (from Iron Age to post-medieval) and thematically, with one on ‘tokens, counters and medals’ and another giving advice on ‘recording coins’. In the main each chapter comprises two to three pages of text followed by between four and ten pages of images.

The first chapter provides a general overview of the methods by which ancient coins were lost and what accumulations of single finds are representative of. In just a few pages the chapter covers the principal mechanics of loss and the impact of modern farming techniques on finds and their distribution. My only issue is a small one and relates to the use of the term ‘immobilised’ in describing coins that were kept out of circulation in hoards before coming back into use relatively unworn compared to coins that were changing hands continuously over the same period. For the numismatist immobilisation, as Philip Grierson once wrote, is ‘the retention of a coin design long after its details have ceased to be appropriate’, ³ such as the English Short Cross coinage, which spanned the reign of four kings with little change to the inscription or design.

The second chapter covers the Iron Age and rightly warns the reader of the dangers (derived from classical writers and misappropriated by some numismatists) of attributing coins to British tribes, and rather follows the regional groupings laid out as long ago as 1864 by Sir John Evans and later used by Colin Haselgrove and in Richard Hobbs’ British Museum Catalogue for Iron Age coins. ⁴ The text tracks the stylistic origins of the Iron Age coinage from Macedon and the Mediterranean through the Gallo-Belgic staters of Gaul and illustrates how they became the prototypes for the British Iron Age coinage. It also tells us something of the ways in which Iron Age coins were produced either by striking or casting and the transition from uninscribed to inscribed coinage – although this was by no means a distinctly chronological change from one to another. ⁵

The chapter on Roman coins is largely an overview of the Roman currency system that was imported to Britain after the Conquest of AD 43, which comprised denominations in gold, silver and base metal. The text then tracks how this system developed over the period of Roman rule through the reforms of Caracalla and Diocletian and the emergence of new gold and silver denominations under Constantine. The problem of forgery, from the earliest asses of Claudius right through to the fourth-century nummi, is introduced and is a theme recurring in all the subsequent chapters.

The chapter on nearly 1,000 years of medieval coinage is covered in just three pages of text. This begins with a discussion of the first English gold coins which were inspired by Gaulish tremisses and leads on to the emergence of the sceat as the gold became debased. The introduction of the broad-flan penny is mentioned and then we jump to the Normans and the number of mints that were active at the time of the Conquest. When discussing Edward I’s reform Cuddeford states that just four mints were active from 1279, but the truth is there were more. In Edward I’s reign there were twelve mints: most of these were in the major recoinage classes following the 1279 reform (classes 2 and 3) and the 1299/1300 partial recoinage (class 9). The new denominations in silver and gold which were introduced under Edward III and later under Edward IV are outlined as is the debased nature of the Scottish currency and the many denominations that appeared in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A section on imported coins tells us of the trends which started with the Vikings and ran throughout the medieval period at different scales. There is no mention in the text of the large scale importation of Venetian soldini in the early 1400s (although it is referenced in the following chapter) or the double patards of the Burgundian Netherlands and Portuguese chinsfroes of the fifteenth century, which are relatively common as single finds and in hoards of the period, although both are illustrated. Finally this reviewer was happy to see mention of folded coins as a phenomenon.

The post-medieval chapter covers everything from the Tudors to the twentieth century. One of the major developments in coin design of the period came with the shift to realistic humanist portraiture inspired by the Italian Renaissance. The bust of James III of Scotland, although a realistic rendering, is mentioned as part of this movement but it was an isolated instance and not linked to developments in Italy. ⁶ In the wake of these artistic improvements came the development of a new

² Williams 2008.
³ Grierson 1975, 194.
⁴ Hobbs 1996.
⁵ Hurst and Leins 2013.
technology for coin production in the form of the screw press which forever changed the look and feel of the coinage. The chapter then gives a précis of the sorts of coins, both native and imported (and their relative quantities) that are recovered as finds from the seventeenth century to the reign of Victoria. Interestingly, Cuddeford links the drop-off in coin finds with the enclosure acts and alternative manuring regimes that followed.

A chapter on tokens, counters and medals is welcome in a book covering coinage, as these objects, while common, receive less coverage in the literature than they should. Tokens emerged in lead in the thirteenth century and were at their most prolific in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They clearly filled a gap in official currency and thus are an important part of the story of coinage. Finds of jettons, which are found in large numbers in the UK and were used as reckoning counters, are dominated by those from France from the fourteenth century, but as one approaches the sixteenth century Nuremberg becomes the focal production centre. Their role as unofficial small change is hinted at here and is a subject which has yet to receive appropriate study; however, metal detector and excavation finds certainly support the idea that they played a role in the currency at some level. A short paragraph mentions the presence of medals, usually commemorative pieces, which are occasionally recovered.

The final chapter lays out the best practice for how to record and look after coin finds. It is rightly stated that poor quality coins are as useful in any serious dataset as mint condition ones, because each piece of evidence adds to the overall picture of human activity at any site. Anyone who has worked with PAS data in research will vouch for this point. The use of GPS equipment and pointers to websites which provide recording and conservation advice are indicators of how far metal detector material has come as a research tool. A development since the publication of this book is that British coin hoard listings have moved from the Numismatic Chronicle to the British Numismatic Journal.

This slim volume is beautifully illustrated throughout with fine specimens from the trays of dealers and collectors. It is not an identification guide and is significantly less detailed than previous Shire volumes which focus on defined periods of history, but it does provide a good introduction to what might turn up as finds on a site and gives something of the context in which they were lost. I would have liked to have seen separate early and late medieval chapters, as the Anglo-Saxon coinage is not covered in much detail. The fact that there are more pages of images than of text indicates why the discussion is limited. That said, the author manages to summarise a mass of information into a readable volume with a proportioned and thoughtful insight into use and distribution. This very affordable book provides a useful general overview of the numismatic objects one finds in Britain for detectorists, general collectors and non-specialists.

RICHARD KELLEHER

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*Britain’s First Coins*, by Elizabeth Cottam and Chris Rudd (Aylsham: Chris Rudd, 2013), 56 pp., illus.

Described as a ‘crisp and colourful introduction to a fascinating series of ancient coins’, this little book delivers exactly what it says. In many ways it is an introductory text to the very good *Ancient British Coins (ABC)* published in 2010 and highlights many of the facts, hypotheses and other interesting ideas included in the parent volume. There are many unanswered questions in the field of Iron Age numismatics and the authors give their own suggestions, often included as interesting anecdotal captions to illustrations (e.g. ‘Gold stater of Vepo [ABC 1854], son of Cor and one of the most powerful rulers of the Corieltavi, c AD 15–40. Vepo may have acknowledged the supremacy of Cunobelinus, high king of the Catuvellauni and Trinovantes.’ (p. 41, Fig. 120)).

If you are looking for an introduction to Iron Age coinages and ideas about who produced them and why then this book is recommended. It is superbly illustrated in full colour throughout with large, clear photographs to help explain the narrative, which is delivered in a non-academic, almost conversational, tone. This helps it to be more accessible to those not familiar with terms that specialists in the field often take for granted. Although the design and style of presentation superficially appears simplistic the content is not, and it explains a lot of the basic ideas relating to the coinages that some other works either avoid or find difficult to explain, perhaps fearing that they are venturing into disputed territory – there is no such fear here.

As a guide, the book has around 300 enlarged coin photographs to help identification of various denominations and some of the more common issues. It starts off by clarifying why the coins are termed British rather than Celtic, before suggesting how the coins were used, who may have issued them, and when. The authors demonstrate how the coins, including forgeries, were made. This is followed by an interesting discussion on the design of the coins and conjecture that some may represent druidic symbolism. For those thinking about collecting the coins (and the authors are Iron Age coin dealers) there are some pointers for getting started. The majority of the book is devoted to describing the main coin issuing areas, associated tribes, denominations and issuers, again all illustrated in full colour and with *ABC* catalogue numbers. It ends with a section for those wanting to know more, but this lacks a bibliography of basic texts.

1 Cottam, de Jersey, Rudd and Sills 2010.
Overall this is a good and colourful introduction for those wishing to gain a basic overview and understanding of Iron Age coinages. Perhaps it is best read in conjunction with *Celtic Coinage in Britain* by Philip de Jersey, which approaches many of the same themes but from a more 'traditional' point of view.²

MARK CURTEIS

BIBLIOGRAPHY


*Identifying Roman Coins* by Sam Moorhead (Witham: Greenlight Publishing, 2013); 219 pp., illus.

Dr. Moorhead’s latest book is in essence a compilation of his series of popular articles on coinage in Roman Britain that were published in the hobbyists periodical *Treasure Hunting Magazine* between 2008 and 2011. As the brief introduction explains the book is primarily concerned with the evidence of single finds, which Moorhead is excellently placed to comment upon, given his position as the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) Finds Advisor for Iron Age and Roman coins.

The volume consists of a seemingly excessive twenty-eight chapters, based on the individual magazine articles and six new chapters which introduce the reader to various aspects of the Roman coinage. Chapter I reveals the author’s passion for the proper recording of all coins, no matter how scruffy they look or how unimportant their finders deem them to be, and outlines some of the results which recent research into single find data has produced. The number of late Roman base ‘grots’ that have been recorded with PAS since Moorhead started telling detectorists of the need to record everything is astonishing. The second chapter takes the reader through the different currency systems that operated over the period of Roman coin use in Britain, beginning with the Republican coinage (c.227–12 BC) and moving through the reformed currency system of Augustus, which endured for so long and encompassed as many as eight denominations (c.27 BC–AD 260), the debased radiates of the third century (c.238–96), and finally the fourth century trilingual system of *solidi, siliquae* and *nummi*. The short chapter III briefly considers the numbers of coins known for each ruler on PAS, thus providing an index of relative frequency for finders.

Chapters IV and V are intended as a guide to help the reader identify the various types and read the inscriptions on coins, and in many ways replicate the purpose of the handy Reece and James volume published in 2000,¹ but using photographs rather than line drawings. Chapter IV lists and translates all but the rarest obverse inscriptions, and illustrates the many varieties of bust seen on the coinage, also giving helpful descriptions of the terminology used for the various types of headgear, armour and clothing. Chapter V takes a thematic approach to reverse types grouping them under simple headings such as ‘The Emperor and his family’, ‘Geographical types’ and ‘Architectural types’. A comprehensive listing of the many gods and personifications is also included here. Chapter VI discusses the Roman mints, instructing the reader on how to identify the mintmark and *officina*, and includes a biographical entry for each of the known mints of the empire from London to Judaea. A table of frequency of PAS finds shows that of the coins that circulated in Britain the majority were from Rome and Trier (over 10,000 known), followed by Arles and Lyon (4,000), then London and the Gallic mints (2–3,000), and a large number of lesser mints ranging from the 712 coins from Siscia to the single specimen from Viminacium.

Chapters VII to XXVIII are comprised of the magazine articles and they provide a chronological framework through which Moorhead presents the coinage. Each chapter introduces the rulers for whom coins were struck by providing a short history of the reign and then looking at the impact they had on the currency (if any) and any other interesting aspects of the reign. So for Trajan we are told of his campaigns in Dacia and Arabia and his building projects in Rome. Importantly each chapter gives us an outline of the relative impact of the coins in Britain. Distribution maps are used throughout the volume to good effect to chart the growth of coin use, and in comparing the findspots of coins of Claudius (p. 61) with those of AD 348–64 (p. 193) the visible expansion of coin use is stark. The book is illustrated with hundreds of good quality photographs, primarily recorded with the PAS but also drawing on the British Museum collection for those rare or very fine examples that are not common as single finds. Several maps and site photographs help provide the reader with context. One criticism of the book concerns the scaling of the coin images. These are produced at a set size so that the small, clipped 11 mm diameter *siliqua* (p. 206) appears as the same size as the 30.5 mm *sestertius* of Domitian (p. 9). Although the diameters are provided in the caption this is potentially misleading to the reader. This volume will be useful for a variety of users, most notably those new to the subject of Roman coinage, and it has already been recognised as such by the award of the Royal Numismatic Society’s Lhotka Prize for the best introductory numismatic book. It will also be vital for metal detector users (the audience for which the articles were originally written), and the tables of relative frequency of types, mints and rulers interspersed within the text should be well received by finders wanting to know more about their own finds. The prose is very accessible and Moorhead’s enthusiasm for his subject flies off the pages. At £25 the volume is very affordable and I would certainly recommend it as an introduction to the subject.

RICHARD KELLEHER

BIBLIOGRAPHY


² de Jersey 1996.
¹ Reece and James 2000.

The famous series of illustrations of English coins printed under the names of Robert Withy and John Ryall in 1756 included, on one of the supplementary plates, an array of small and enigmatic silver coins which did not carry any inscription. Below them was printed the caption ‘This plate of ancient and singular coins, which were lately found near and in the Isle of Thanet, is presented to the curious collectors of English money … in hopes that it may be a means of discovering by whom, in what age, or part of Europe they were minted.’ In later times numismatists identified the coins in question as early Anglo-Saxon silver pennies, the so-called sceattas minted c.675–750, but the basic difficulties of exact attribution and chronology remain as great as ever. Recently the challenges have proliferated, thanks largely to the voluminous new discoveries made by metal-detector users. Hoards – the bedrock of numismatic analysis – remain few, however; almost all the new coins represent isolated finds, or stem from a number of ‘productive sites’ known from numerous single-finds. Quite simply, the sceattas are kaleidoscopic in their variation on every level: literally hundreds of designs are known, with consideration of metrology, fineness and find-distribution adding further layers of complexity.

Attempts to bring order to this coinage go back to the catalogue of the British Museum collection made in the 1880s by C.F. Keary and Henry Grueber. This was little more than a numeration of the major varieties the museum possessed, and included 54 types, divided into ‘Roman’, ‘Frankish’ and ‘Native’ segments on an iconographic basis. Philip Hill and Lord Stewartby supplemented the numbered list of types in 1953 and 1984 respectively, bringing the total up to 109. However, in the meantime a second organisational scheme had been put forth by Stuart Rigold. His arrangement relied on lettered ‘series’, of which he identified 27 (some series being referred to by a combination of two letters). The value of Rigold’s series lay in their accommodation of the series’ letters were assigned on a mnemonic and/or chronological basis. Philip Hill and Lord Stewartby supplemented the numbered list of types in 1953 and 1984 respectively, bringing the total up to 109. However, in the meantime a second organisational scheme had been put forth by Stuart Rigold. His arrangement relied on lettered ‘series’, of which he identified 27 (some series being referred to by a combination of two letters). The value of Rigold’s series lay in their accommodation of the grounds of fabric, style, weight and other criteria. Some of the series’ letters were assigned on a mnemonic and/or chronological basis: A, B and C were among the earliest, while K and L were distinguished by attribution to Kent and London, and knotted and loose ties on the diadem bust. Notwithstanding the obvious problem that adding in new series was impossible on the basis of the Roman alphabet, Rigold’s series have stood the test of time remarkably well, and there is general consensus that his breakdown approximates many of the major divisions of the coinage. There were however some coins (individual specimens and small groups) which did not fit comfortably into a series, and which by default continued to be referred to by their British Museum typology number or by a purely descriptive name. Misfits like these have multiplied with the growth in finds and expansion in study of the coins; indeed, some of the most diverse types – the so-called ‘eclectic’ series – are the most intriguing in numismatic art historical terms. These have pushed the traditional systems of classification up to and beyond breaking point. Only a small number of scholars can claim real familiarity with the coinage as a whole, or indeed to understand the full range of series, British Museum types and other designations.

In short, the deficiencies of the existing numismatic classification of the early Anglo-Saxon silver coinage are clear, and a new and more rational system of organization is badly needed. This is the – very reasonable – case made in the introduction to the volume under review. Its author, Tony Abramson, will be well known to all those with a serious interest in early Anglo-Saxon coinage. He is the proud owner of a major collection of these fascinating coins, the author of several books on the subject, and the driving force behind the Symposia in Early Medieval Coinage: a series of conferences held in Cambridge and Leeds over the last decade, which have sparked some of the most exciting research in the field. Abramson possesses a profound knowledge of the coins themselves, and is admirably up-to-date on the number and range of new varieties (more than a few of which make their way into his collection). He has also been one of the leading advocates of revising the old system of classification, and lays out its failings very critically in the introduction to Sceatta List. The rest of the volume presents a new organisational structure for the coinage.

Before addressing the strengths and weaknesses of Abramson’s proposed restructuring of the sceattas, it is worth highlighting the technical execution of the book. Although printed as a paperback, and so less durable than one might have wished, it includes profuse enlarged images printed (in black and white) to a very high standard. It is a model for the quantity and quality of illustration one should expect in numismatic publications. The text is printed in rather small type, especially for a volume in A4 format. There are quite a number of typographical errors, though not so many as to be distracting. One frustrating feature is the use in the volume’s subtitle of ‘sceats’ as the plural of sceat. The normal Old English plural of sceat is sceattas (sceatta represents the genitive plural, pressed into adjectival service in modern literature). Readers should bear this in mind, and use sceattas in preference to the idiosyncratic neologism ‘sceats’. Sceat (the sc being pronounced like modern English ‘sh’) as applied to these coins is in fact probably a misnomer. It describes a fraction of a gold shilling (OE scilling), and is most famously associated with the early-seventh-century law-code of Æthelberht, king of Kent (d. 616), written long before these silver coins had been produced. The best available evidence suggests that already in the late seventh century the latter were known as pennies (OE pæningas). But, rightly or wrongly, sceat has been entrenched in the literature describing these coins since the end of the eighteenth century, and is unlikely to be

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1 Withy and Ryall 1756. The coins in question are said to have been supplied by John White: a famous forger, though there is no reason to doubt the group illustrated here.

2 BMC I, xvii.

3 Hill 1953; Stewart 1984.

4 Rigold 1977.

5 Key studies include Metcalf 1993–4; Gannon 2003.

Abramson 2008; Abramson 2011; Abramson 2014.
displaced now. If it is to be used, it should at least be with full respect to the word’s proper Old English form.

What, then, of the new arrangement of the early silver coinage which is the central contribution of Sceatta List? Abramson lays out the criteria behind it in his introduction. The top level of the system is an iconographically-based sorting of coins into what he terms ‘themes’. Nine of these are identified specifically, together with a tenth grab-bag theme of assorted minor varieties. These themes are (in his order):

1. Radiate Bust/Votive Standard (3–14)
2. Profile Head (15–22)
3. Diademed Busts (23–44)
4. Bird and Branch (or ‘Pecking Bird’) (45–51)
5. Backward-Looking Beasts and Other Animals (52–68)
6. Northumbrian Coinage (69–86)
7. Continental Quilled Crescents (a.k.a. ‘Porcupines’) (87–101)
8. Facing Bust (102–5)
9. Helmeted Bust (106–7)
10. ‘Orphans’ (108–14)

Abramson stresses that the themes exist for organisational purposes, and does not expect them to be used for reference. Yet by governing the overall structure and numeration they have a powerful effect on the catalogue. The two earliest groups of coins – the so-called ‘Pre-Primary’ phase which emerges from the final debased gold issues of the 660s and 670s – are not included in a theme, but stand alone at the head of the whole catalogue.

Each of the main themes is divided into at least two ‘groups’ (the numbers of which are given after the theme above), which correspond roughly to Rigold’s series and the standalone British Museum types. Groups in turn contain one or more ‘varieties’ (each of which is illustrated with a specimen example). Over 600 varieties are identified in total. For the most part each group is treated as a separate chapter, with a few exceptions. Groups 18–20, for example, represent the old Series I, divided into British Museum types 85, 37 and 36: each of these three types becomes a group in Abramson’s system, although all of them are treated together. In such cases one wonders if it may have been useful to allow for additional levels of sub-type within a group, rather than having to treat each of the three segments as a somewhat confusing partially distinct group. The same is true of about nine other associations of groups. Including these, Abramson has identified 114 distinct, numbered groups, together with an assortment of ungrouped individual types at the end of the catalogue. An elegant decision on his part was to number the themes and groups. Often these reflect associations made using the older scheme, and wisely kept in place by Abramson. But the result of this mixing of methodologies is that some of the ‘coins listed within a particular theme do not actually carry a design which in any way relates to that theme. For example, ‘theme 2’ (profile heads/busts) includes among its eight groups one (17) which corresponds to Series BZ of the former system: this has a crude facing bust on the obverse, but a bird and cross design on the reverse reminiscent of that on other specimens of Series B. There is not a profile bust/head in sight. A related problem is the definition of, and division between, themes. The characteristic features of Theme 3 (‘Diademed Busts’) does not distinguish them fully from Theme 2, most of the heads (and busts) of which also have diadems. In practice the difference is that the coins in Theme 3 correspond to the former Series K and L and associated types, but anyone basing a search for a coin on the thematic headings might be misled. In other words, a certain amount of knowledge of the coinage and its former numismatic classification is still required to get the most out of the catalogue. To begin with, one must know what part of the design (usually one face of the coin) determines its placement in a particular theme and group; the other face might or might not conform. The ‘saltire standard’ (group 13) is a case in point. Its name is derived from the face conventionally taken to be the reverse. Yet its position in the catalogue (in theme 2 – profile heads/busts) is based on the obverse of a portion of the types, whereas the inclusion of other varieties in the same group depends on combination with the same reverse. The same is true of some of the coins with the inscription MONTASCORVM (group 24, theme 3). Among these are some with no bust on the obverse, and an annulet cross on the reverse, which one might have felt inclined to place with the ‘annulet cross’ group (14, theme 1). In principle these and several other types could have been assigned to other places in the catalogue. Also, most of the themes end with a group of ‘mules’: this is not an entirely satisfactory arrangement, for the line between a ‘mule’ and a small variety related to other types remains fluid (cf. group 30, integrated into the main run of theme 3, but identified by Abramson as a ‘Celtic Cross/Series K mule’), and closer integration into the mainstream ‘groups’ would have been welcome. Abramson is aware of difficulties such as this, and overcomes them to some extent with cross references between interrelated types (though these do not always go both ways). But, in general, the arrangement into themes creates as many contradictions as it resolves.

There are two underlying difficulties. One is that, in a sense, Sceatta List does not go far enough. Tellingly, with groups which one might have considered dividing or arranging differently, the choice here usually reflects the grouping familiar from older arrangements. In
many cases this is for good numismatic reasons, and presentation as a list precludes detailed comment on all of Abramson’s decisions. Yet one would have appreciated more room for discussion, including of what advantages there might have been in a different arrangement. In other words, Sceatta List is not a wholesale restructuring of the sceattas, but in many ways a rationalization of the old typology. As such it is extremely valuable, though one is unsure to what extent it will therefore replace existing terminology; most likely it will provide a helpfully consistent unifying reference to be used alongside the more heterogeneous older scheme (“Series U, Type 23b (Abramson 45.10)”). The matter of a more thoroughgoing re-evaluation of the structure of the sceattas leads to the second major concern of the volume: the uneven weight assigned to iconography. Abramson is not afraid to break his own rules of iconographic division, as outlined above, to keep coins together which are associated on other criteria. But in so doing he highlights the central difficulty: that the images on coins are only one component in their interpretation and arrangement, and not always the most helpful. Adherence to an iconographic superstructure can mislead and confuse at every level below. A fundamental reorganisation of the sceattas would need to take account of iconographic permutations, and minutiae of style which mark out smaller divisions, but also weight, metal standard, find-distribution and chronology. This last criterion remains problematic in detail, but important overall. In Sceatta List, chronology is handled quite loosely. The earliest coins are put first, outside the thematic structure, but thereafter arrangement by approximate chronology is only within each theme. A structure based on the broad primary/secondary division (or at least more prominent recognition of it) might have been useful. The same goes for distribution and likely origin. Abramson provides comments on this aspect of many groups, but it has little discernible effect on the structure. A valuable point could have been made by grouping the coins – notwithstanding difficulties of attribution – into those associated with the southeast, East Anglia, the Thames valley, the midlands, Wessex and Northumbria, as well as Frisia. These roads not taken would have offered problems of their own, but perhaps circumvented some of those produced by the uneasy compromise between iconographic and numismatic arrangements used here.

All of this should in no way detract from what is undoubtedly the most important book on early Anglo-Saxon coinage in many years, and an essential handbook for any serious scholar or collector. Yet Sceatta List is more an opening salvo in reorganization of the sceattas than a definitive conclusion. It will serve students of the coinage extremely well, for existing literature on the subject is scattered and not always as lucid as it could be. Abramson’s presentation is clear, thorough and well informed. He has added fuel to the fire which will eventually melt and reshape scholarly understanding of the early Anglo-Saxon silver coinage.

The covers of Sceatta List also enclose a second (much shorter) volume, Stycas Simplified, with its own colour front cover and separate pagination. This unorthodox arrangement may be a cause of confusion to future readers, who will need to be directed with great care to the second part of the volume. Again, Abramson has brought clarity to a series notoriously marred by complex organisation. The kingdom of Northumbria maintained the small, thick format of coin from the seventh century until its demise in the 860s. In the middle of the ninth century these coins became badly debased, and also expanded significantly in number. Multiple large hoards have been found, permitting detailed research into the series, including debate on how far the coinage might allow the historical chronology of the period to be rewritten. Recent research has transformed understanding of the stycas, and so Abramson begins Stycas Simplified by summarising the scholarship of the last fifty years, particularly the flawed scheme put forth by Elizabeth Pirie. He draws extensively on unpublished letters and reports written in connection with her project, which show the misgivings felt by the rest of the numismatic community even during preparation of Pirie’s key publications. Incidentally, calling these coins stycas is again a modern rather than Anglo-Saxon custom, established by William Nicholson in the 1690s (and indeed the plural form he used, derived from that of the tenth-century gloss to Mark 12:42 in the Lindisfarne Gospels, is anomalous). The first vowel is soft (as in German ‘ü’) not hard (as in Modern English ‘by’), and the correct singular is not ‘styca’ but styce (cc pronounced like Modern English ‘ch’).

The rest of the volume is taken up by a rearrangement of the stycas in two series. The first runs through kings, and moneyers alphabetically within each reign. The second proceeds alphabetically through the moneyers as a whole, with multiple illustrations for each showing permutations of style and orthography. Reference in the latter sequence is to the number of each coin in a collection only (some of them unpublished), meaning that it is not always possible to ascertain to which reign a coin belongs. Nevertheless, Stycas Simplified is another valuable tool to the numismatist: a systematisation of a daunting-seeming coinage.

Both Sceatta List and Stycas Simplified conclude with a well-informed guide to pricing, clearly showing its author’s expertise in economics. It is also a valuable reminder that Abramson has written this pair of books with a broad audience in mind: his aim is to lay out a rational, comprehensible framework for understanding the coinage that reflects cutting-edge academic research, but which is at the same time accessible to others, among them new collectors and finders of coins. He has succeeded admirably in this endeavour.

RORY NAISMITH

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This volume has taken a long time to come to print, emerging over forty years after the original conception for a study of the Winchester mint and the end of the excavations it also covers. It has been worth the wait, as it can be described as the most important work of reference for the study of Late Saxon coinage to have been published in recent times. The time taken in its publication can in part be attributed to the diverse range of authors, twenty by my count, but also to the incredible level of detail the volume contains. At its heart is a dazzlingly detailed corpus of coins struck in Winchester between the reigns of Alfred and Henry III. This is as near comprehensive as possible and includes die-links, weights, diameters and provenance of over 5,000 coins, in addition to images for virtually all die combinations. It was compiled by the late Yvonne Harvey and the scale of her efforts in its production is staggering, with tens of thousands of comparisons needed to complete the die study alone. Students of Late Saxon coinage should be grateful to her for producing such a tremendous resource and it will be a fitting legacy that her work is likely to act as the foundation and inspiration for a whole new generation of scholars.

The book is the seventh in a series which has published results from, and related to, the excavations in Winchester. Martin Biddle – the excavator and general editor – has overseen the publication of these volumes, which cover a range of topics in a broadly thematic manner. For example, Winchester Studies 1 contains historical data related to the town, including much that is pertinent to the topography and administration of the town’s medieval mint. This volume considers the excavated numismatic material from the town, placing it within the wider context of minting in Winchester between the late-ninth and mid-thirteenth centuries. The book is divided into two sections, with the first focusing upon the production of coinage in Winchester. The second is concerned with material found during the course of the extensive excavations in Winchester between 1961 and 1971. The volume is weighted towards the first section, with over 600 pages devoted to analysis of the scale of production, moneymen, exchanges and etymology.

The first section is dominated by Harvey’s catalogue. This is particularly strong for the years at the beginning of the eleventh century, when Winchester was producing large volumes of coinage, much of which was ultimately buried in Scandinavian hoards. This is most clearly illustrated by Æthelred II’s Gielo type, struck for a number of years during the 990s, with the catalogue containing details of over 600 coins. This data is marshalled by a series of superb indices which allow it to be approached by those interested in moneymen, hoards or provenance.

The second section also includes contributions from a number of other scholars. The late Margaret Gelling and Veronica Smart discuss the form and types of names of the mint and moneymen respectively. Smart’s analysis focuses upon the arrival of foreign names, Danish and Continental, in the mints of Anglo-Saxon England and how that relates to our wider interpretation of immigration in the eleventh century. Both her work and that of Gelling highlights the possibilities of detailed numismatic study to those in related disciplines, a point which emerges time and again in this volume. Martin Allen considers the historical evidence for minting in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in his contribution. This evidence is strong and it allows for discussion of the Winchester mint’s relationships to the crown and also the scale of coinage that it produced. The latter theme is also picked up by Stewart Lyon, who takes a statistical approach to the moneymen and dies used at the mint. He is able to trace, and to a certain extent quantify, peaks and troughs in production at Winchester. The analysis highlights a number of issues, with perhaps the most startling being the enormous scale of production around the year 1000 and subsequent decline during the following century. This analysis is contextualised through comparison with the published Lincoln material and unpublished data from York. The combination of these three mints, amongst the largest in England, means that patterns detected across all three can, to a degree, be regarded as occurring across the whole of the country. This is very important, given the fact that much recent work in the field has focused on the national picture provided by metal-detected evidence. This volume makes it abundantly clear that only by combining the data of finds with the ebb and flow of production can a better understanding of the use of coinage be arrived at.

The second, and shorter, section has thirteen chapters, which each focus upon a different type of numismatic evidence. Most of these are brief, with a catalogue detailing the material and a short section of analysis. The types of material, reflecting the excavations, are diverse and eclectic. Highlights from this section include the listing of excavated coins and four chapters on Byzantine material. The former lists over 160 coins founds during the course of the excavations. This is a substantial body of material and can be placed alongside York, Lincoln and London as important numismatic corpora from urban excavations. Much of the focus of the discussion revolves around the issue of residuiality of coinage in urban contexts which has proved a challenge in a number of urban excavations. Raising the question of the extent to which coinage can be taken as good dating evidence, the suggestion being that often it cannot, is welcome. It suggests that numis-
mantic evidence should not only be used as a means of
dating archaeological sites but also mobilized to eluci-
date a range of other issues, including the economy,
social interaction and royal power. It is thus something
of a pity that there is not more of this type of analysis
in the book, although this does leave the field open for
readers to delve into the Winchester material and draw
their own conclusions.

There are very interesting contributions from a number
of scholars in the other parts of the second section.
Many of these emphasize the exotic and international
connections of the town. There are several chapters
which discuss the finds of Byzantine coins, seals and an
intaglio. These finds from an urban excavation are not
surprising given the increasing number of similar finds
that have been unearthed through metal detecting, but
the fact that these examples are from sealed archae-
ological contexts can conclusively put to bed the notion
that Byzantine material is always of modern import.
The authors are able to demonstrate that a connection
to the east was present in the early medieval period, an
important and often overlooked finding. The outward-
looking nature of the town is also attested by the finds
of papal bullae, jettons, an Islamic coin, a Jewish token
and imitative Islamic coin brooches. The day to day life
and administration of the town comes through in the
discussion of a lead seal and a small number of lead
tokens.

Everything within this volume is well documented,
clearly presented by expert authors, and illustrated to a
very high standard. It is an exemplary record of the
numismatic material from the excavations with a
detailed catalogue and discussion of how coins were
made in the town. While more could be said about how
the coins relate to other excavated evidence or the shift-
ing topography of the town, the volume is very rich in
data, much of which is yet to be fully explored or ana-
ysed. As such, the book will continue to be important
and relevant as a foundation for much further work for
many years to come. Any collector or scholar of the
period should have a copy on their shelf.

ANDREW WOODS

The Brussels Hoard of 1908. The Long Cross Coinage of
Henry III, by Ron Churchill and Bob Thomas, BNS
Special Publication 9 (London, 2012), xx + 320 pp., illus.

SEPTEMBER 2012 saw the long awaited publication of
this comprehensive study of the 1908 Brussels Hoard.
The prolonged gestation has lent this volume an almost
mythical status, although not quite to the same extent
as that surrounding the hoard itself. That this volume
was a long time coming is hardly surprising, bearing in
mind the sheer size of the hoard as well as the extra-
ordinary diligence required of the authors, Bob Thomas
and Ron Churchill, to complete the task.

At the heart of this immense work lies the extremely
detailed listing of the contents of the hoard. The
authors have gone to a great deal of effort to identify
and include those coins which have been released to col-
lectors over the years and those no longer present for
other reasons. Inevitably, some coins remain untrace-
able, but there is every reason to believe that this listing
is as definitive as it can be.

The authors have provided a clear and well presented
summary of the current classification scheme of the
Long Cross coinage, based on that originally proposed
by L.A. Lawrence and subsequently updated and
amended by Robin Davis. This classification has for a
long time provided a perfectly acceptable basis for stu-
dents of the series; however, it has also long been felt
that there remained considerable scope for further
refinement and reorganisation of the current scheme.
This has now been taken forward with a new classifica-
tion principally based upon the various combinations
of legends, both obverse and reverse, and the initial
marks. The initial marks appear in five basic forms
although, perhaps inevitably, there is considerable vari-
ety within each specific ‘type’. Whether these are actual
variations or due to the vagaries of the hand-striking
process is of course a matter for debate. These ‘initial’
or ‘mint’ marks had of course been noted from the out-
set, but no serious attempt seems to have been made to
make sense of them until now.

Thomas and Churchill offer a new ‘proposed’ classi-
fication, derived from their findings. This classification
remains based on the current familiar numerical design-
ation, albeit with the introduction of some new sub-
classes and the reallocation of some coins to different
sub-classes. The authors readily accept that this new
classification is not without its problems, the chief of
which they see as being the fact that three of the classes
(2, 3 and 5) bridge over two distinct successive phases of
the coinage. In order to overcome this perceived weak-
ness they have also formulated what they refer to as
their ‘Ideal’ classification. This confines each full class
number to its own phase on the basis of numismatic,
historical and chronological sequences of the issues.
This would of course require numerous changes to the
numbering system.

The authors acknowledge that it is unlikely that any
other scholars will ever again have access to such a large
study group. It seems odd therefore that they have drawn
back from putting forward their ‘Ideal’ classification as
the definitive arrangement. Whilst the ‘proposed’ classi-
fication is eminently acceptable, the decision not to go
with the more comprehensive reclassification might be
seen as something of a lost opportunity. The authors
readily accept that it was with a certain reluctance that
they allowed themselves to be ‘persuaded’ against the
‘Ideal’ classification. Why this was so is not altogether
clear. Certainly the opportunity for future scholars to
revisit their proposal remains, although it is hard to see
what event or future discovery might prompt such a far-
reaching reassessment. The fact that a number of collec-
tors would be faced with a considerable re-labelling task
should not be seen as any sort of hindrance.

Of particular interest is the well considered discus-
sion of the problems and challenges posed by the coins
of classes 5d and 5e, and their place within the series.
This group remains one of the most persistent problem
areas. The authors have provided a clear summary of
current thinking in this respect. It seems likely that the
uncertainty regarding this group will eventually be
resolved, but it is possible that the essential clues may
well come from documentary sources rather than the
coins themselves.
Perhaps the least well known and least discussed element of the Long Cross portion of the hoard are the numerous Continental imitations. The authors have gone to extraordinary lengths to list and describe the nearly 4,000 coins in the hoard. This is an extremely important element of the hoard and an unprecedented and probably unique opportunity to study such a large group of important issues within the same context. It is therefore essential that, if at all possible, this group is kept together for future study. The authors have provided us with an exhaustive list of readings and where relevant, descriptions of salient features. This listing would of course provide the ideal foundation for a more exhaustive study at some future date, following on from Jeffrey North’s study of the Long Cross imitations and Professor Mayhew’s 1983 publication of *Sterling Imitations of Edwardian Type.*

A detailed summary of the Scottish coins is provided by courtesy of Lord Stewartby, whilst in an appendix is a brief summary of class 7, noting the fact that although this is a scarce class at best, the number of dies known, at least for the more common issues, is considerable. A closer look at this particular class may be in order, alongside a reconsideration of the ever-increasing number of class 5h dies of Renaud of London known. The volume is copiously illustrated throughout, including no less than twenty-two high quality plates, as is the normal practice with publications such as this.

Much in the same way as Jeffrey Mass’ publication of his collection of Short Cross coins became a key reference for collectors of that series, this volume will undoubtedly become the essential reference for students and collectors of the Long Cross issues of Henry III. It is only right to acknowledge finally the inestimable contribution of Messrs A.H. Baldwin & Sons Ltd, without whose continuing support this very important work would not have been possible.

MIKE SHOTT

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Bedfordshire Seventeenth Century Tokens, by John Gaunt, edited and expanded by Gary Oddie (Llanfyllin: Gaunt Print, 2011), 149 pp., illus.

JOHN GAUNT worked on seventeenth-century tokens for many years, carrying out the first part of this study from the late 1960s until the early 1980s. This was followed up as a background project in the late 1990s and, with additional analysis, brought together by Gary Oddie for publication in 2011. John died in 2010 so the book is a fitting memorial. The (albeit unplanned) joint approach has ensured a thoroughgoing study covering all aspects of the subject. It is an excellent volume and essential reading for anyone interested in seventeenth-century tokens from a local or national perspective.

The book comprises four sections. There are introductions to seventeenth-century coinage and tokens in general and to Bedfordshire tokens, with a section on past work, including illustrated accounts of collectors and collections; also a general observations section which includes relationships with token issues in other counties, dates on the tokens, their geographical distribution and the devices on them. The second part is the main catalogue which lists tokens of 98 personal and 2 town issuers, with illustrations at twice size and information on issuers. This is followed by abbreviations, references and suggestions for future study and the final part of the book comprises appendices with tables and concordances including a ground-breaking analysis of the initial marks found on Bedfordshire tokens.

The introductory sections are particularly useful as they provide valuable context not often included in works on seventeenth-century tokens. These cover questions often asked by people approaching the subject for the first time, including how the tokens could have been manufactured, sold and distributed as well as the context of coin issues, lead tokens, mint history, and events in national history. More detailed coverage of seventeenth-century tokens in Bedfordshire includes discussion of the incidence of token issue in the county through the period of their use, and this section also has a list of occupations, with useful discussion of overlapping trades and signs on tokens. Grocers, drapers and innholders were the most frequent token issuers in Bedfordshire; each of these trades involves high numbers of small transactions, which may be a significant feature behind token issue in general.

The general observations section includes a salutary reminder that county boundaries were not important to token issuers, who issued them for their own convenience. As the tokens have been collected on a county basis for so long, it would be next to impossible to change now, but what can be done is done in this volume, for instance there is a comparison of population, county size and number of issuers for a selection of counties. The spatial distribution of Bedfordshire seventeenth-century tokens shows issues in villages some distance from main routes; incidentally providing evidence for shops in small villages at this time for which there is no other evidence.

Details of issuers, their trades and families provides insight into the lives of the better sort of people who tended to be token issuers, drawing on wills, parish records, hearth tax records and other local sources. For instance, the continuing controversies over matters of faith in people’s lives at this time are reflected, with John Clarke, token issuer of Bedford summoned by the archdeacon for not attending church, and fined (which he refused to pay) for attending meetings of the Congregationalists; while Edward Chester, token issuer of Dunstable, was the first in Dunstable to receive Richard Hubberthorne of Lancashire, a Quaker leader,
in 1654. There is a fascinating documentary account of a labourer in Shefford, who stole twelve brass farthings in 1669 from a grocer who was a token issuer. At the beginning of each town or village section there is valuable context and insights on the location’s function, population and trades, for instance the practical point that in Bedford shops facing north sold perishable goods while those facing south sold non-perishable goods. At Bedford, no less than eight token issuers appear on a list for a meeting of the Corporation, and the page from the minute book is illustrated, where a number of council members issued tokens, and at Dunstable four token issuers appear in one document, showing they were all active in the local administration. This is a pattern noticeable elsewhere, for instance in my own preliminary research on Leicester where a number of issuers were active in the Corporation. As is pointed out in this book, it is likely that token issuers often knew each other and that their tokens were interchangeable; it is also probable that there were trade and personal rivalries. Tokens could have been issued when people achieved freedom of the borough status, as Robert Thompson points out in his review of this volume, and that in itself prompts a further question for anyone publishing token issues of major towns. Local sources may yet provide more evidence for how tokens were ordered, manufactured and distributed.

Seventeenth-century tokens are a fascinating though difficult subject, and it is worth noting that most mainstream historians of this period rarely consider tokens, which means that references in documents are less likely to be shared with the numismatic community. The work involved in identifying, allocating to issuer/town/county and similar detailed activities is so considerable that it can inhibit broader thinking. This situation is improving, however: helpful modern trends include the popularisation of family history with internet sources more readily available, improvements in reproduction of documents and token images and the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which funds the sharing of results of the metal detector finds network. The example of this Bedfordshire volume, with excellent images and which covers both numismatic needs and the kinds of contextual discussion and analysis that inform broader thinking sets a new standard; it is an excellent approach that other publications on this subject would do well to emulate.

YOLANDA COURTNEY

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Illustrated Catalogue of the Tokens, Medallions and Banknotes of Cumbria, by C.R.S. Farthing (Llanfyllin: Galata, 2013), 328 pp., illus.

Following on from last year’s _Northamptonshire and the Soke of Peterborough Tokens and Checks_ by Peter Waddell, Galata have now published a similar book by Charles Farthing for Cumbria. This book is however bigger in every sense. It is A4 size, like Peter Waddell’s book, but runs to a colossal 328 pages. It covers more than one old county by featuring Cumberland, Westmorland and the parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire that make up today’s Cumbria. Finally, as can be seen from the title, it also delves into the realms of medallions and provincial banknotes.

Is bigger, better? Slightly stunned by the number of categories contained, I turned first to the seventeenth-century tokens, which is my main field. These are beautifully illustrated in colour (like all the illustrations in the book), larger than life size and with copious biographical notes about the issuers. Certainly, it would be hard to improve on this section. The same can be said for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sections, although these are mainly a relisting of Dalton and Hamer with little additional detail, and the tokens have of course recently been summarized in _Token Book_ 2.1

Commemorative medallions are also listed. These are cross referenced to both Cresswell and Burzinski, illustrated in colour and with further notes on the places of issue. In the Retail and Trading section, Charles Farthing pulls together both unofficial farthings and higher value checks for the first time and they are again well illustrated with plenty of background research where available. The same goes for the separate Co-op section and the Transport section, the latter mixing in medals with tokens. The Industry section, mainly Barrow-in-Furness, also combines tokens and checks with commemorative medallions which may not work for some collectors but, with twenty sections in the book as it is, further sub-division was perhaps thought unnecessary. Medallions make up close to 100 per cent of the sections on Politics, Agriculture, Education, Music, Sport and many other sections. In all these, like the tokens, the listings are alphabetical by town and it is generally easy to find what you are after. An ARP medal (no. 2.37) is listed under Institutions and Political rather than War and Peace for some reason, and there will be other examples where one may have catalogued an item in a different section from that of the author.

So what else is in this book? It provides the first comprehensive listing of Cumbrian pub checks. The medals in the section on Music, The Arts and Theatre, Sports and Recreation and Civic events have never been as methodically and comprehensively published before, especially with colour illustrations and some background research. Other areas are not so novel. The Carlisle siege pieces from the Civil War are listed along with Jacobite pieces also relating principally to Carlisle. These are all published elsewhere, but comprehensive is what this book is intended to be. Similarly, there is a large section on Mining and Quarrying, already covered

1 Withers and Withers 2013.
2 Cresswell 1985; Burzinski 1999.
by Finlay in 2006, but perhaps the author felt that it was better to have this in than out for completeness sake. There are also examples of national awards listed simply because it can be illustrated with an example awarded to a local man, especially in the Gallantry and Rescue Awards section (the stories are fascinating). At the end of the book, the banknote section is well illustrated by many examples from the British Museum which are worth seeing. You will probably not see them illustrated anywhere else.

There is a good index and keyword tracer at the end of the book and indexes for dates and shapes. There is also a comprehensive bibliography, including a useful listing of the available local directories. So, a very comprehensive book, covering literally everything known in the field of tokens, medallions and banknotes for Cumbria. If you collect co-op tokens, unofficial farthings, pub checks, communion tokens, or any of the other series, then this book will give you extra details and excellent illustrations of those found in Cumbria. Its very comprehensiveness makes it a useful book for other areas (for example, modern elongated pennies). Are there any omissions? Local shopping trolley tokens is one possibility. A final small drawback is that it is a large, heavy book in a soft cover and will need looking after carefully if it is to last as long as its usefulness surely will.

TIM EVerson

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Irish Tavern Tokens. The John Sweeney Collection Supplemented by Other Collection, by Gerald Rice (Dublin: Numismatic Society of Ireland and National Museum of Ireland, 2013), xii + 113 pp., illus.

Collectors and researchers everywhere will give a warm welcome to this long-anticipated and eagerly awaited catalogue of Irish paranumismatica. Its impact seems to have been immediate with a reawakened interest in the series, reflected in a sudden jump in the prices being realised at auction.

The book is based on the large collection, originating in the nineteenth century and added to by various eminent collectors, that was eventually owned by the late John Sweeney and passed by him to Fr Gerald Rice, the author of this work. The catalogue draws substantially on the pioneering work by the late Dr Neil Todd in Tavern Tokens of County Dublin, circa 1850–1900, published in 1977, and supplemented by later studies and by the separate fresh collections built up by Mr Barry Woodside and others.

To British readers, the term ‘tavern tokens’ in the title may seem somewhat unfamiliar, in spite of its use by Dr Todd, as a description for what are more generally known as ‘public house tokens’ or ‘pub checks’. In addition, the Irish series is substantially different in nature due to the differing structure of the licensed trade in Ireland. The definition is much wider than ‘across the water’, with many outlets, even in recent times, combining a retail shop with an in-house drinking facility under the one roof. This means that many of the tokens were issued by vintners, grocers, wine and spirit dealers, etc., and could perhaps be defined more accurately as ‘liquor trade tokens’ rather than the narrower term ‘tavern tokens’.

Turning to content, each token is numbered and described, with provenance, dates and details of the issuer (where known), metal and diameter, and most are illustrated. There is valuable work on the die classification and dating of the totally dominant Parkes workshop, background information on the collection, and useful indexes. The production is adequate, the illustrations are a little faint but perfectly clear, and the book is being offered at a reasonable price. However, it is somewhat let down by what might appear to be signs of undue haste by the editorial team in its final stages. For example, to my personal knowledge, there are a number of tokens for which details were provided on request and which were duly researched by Fr Rice but have been totally omitted from the catalogue. There are others for which ancillary information (e.g., metal and diameter) was available but recorded as ‘unknown’ or ‘n/a’. The proof reading also seems to have been wayward at times. Examples include Brittain, Bermingham, IPC for ICP (393) and 1893–1885 (367), whilst the crediting of the late Mr Dennis Vorley as ‘Derek’ is unfortunate. Perhaps the most obvious mistake is the repeat of the illustration of 123 (Dove Society) as 125 (Doyle, Haddington Road). These errors are disappointing, given the work’s long gestation period.

In spite of these criticisms, the book is an extremely valuable addition to the token literature, essential for all those interested in Irish numismatics or in pub tokens generally.

ANDREW CUNNINGHAM


The term ‘unofficial farthings’ was devised by Bell for farthing-size tokens of c. 1820–70, and retained for the supplement by Whitmore et al.1 Now, with a dedication to John Whitmore, and an extension of the coverage to the death of Queen Victoria, the series has been re-arranged and published with coloured illustrations and much new documentation in this new book. Pub checks have been relegated to an appendix (Appendix 6). Where the Queen’s head is catalogued as a reverse, this

1 Bell 1975; Bell, Whitmore and Sweeney 1994.
is not an act of lèse-majesté but of respect for the logic of privately-issued tokens, as pointed out by Whitmore himself.2

The alphabetical arrangement by place-name is reasonable, given the reorganisation of the counties in 1965–74, and there is an index of counties on p. 310. ‘London’ includes Southwark (pp. 77–104), without subdivision. However, COVE (5910) and QUEENSTOWN (6710) were successive names for the same place (now spelled Cóbh), so the Swanton & Co. farthings would have been better catalogued in the same place, under an appropriate heading. Indeed Macalister reports, what is not visible on 6710, that the obverse die had been altered from COVE.3 Little is said about the makers, even for 5461 with letter H in the reverse legend; but 5945 is signed DÜNKELSBUHLER, and 7544 by KIRKWOOD.

There are impressive die-studies of ‘Columbia’ farthings, and Crystal Palace and Queen Victoria dies, on pp. 253–76. A number of entries incorporate a die-study, e.g. Dr Eady (2490–96). Some corrections are necessary: D.G. Berri, engraver (2355), was not Daniel Berry but David Garden Berri, fl. 1856–1901.4 HIM’s HOUSE, HOTEL FRANÇAIS (2600), repeats a suggestion by the present reviewer which he hoped would lie buried in obscurity; Ralph Hayes found the true explanation in the rare surname of Charles Him, fl. 1837.5 Reference to a Peerage would have shown that H.G. Perry, merchant in Rathdowney (6730), could not have become Viscount Ashbrook, whose family name is Flower. Queen’s County, in which Rathdowney lay, has been called Co. Laois (Leix) since 1920.

As an example of how knowledge has moved on, let us take 7550 on p. 245, J. GOLLEDGE, Cardiff, grocer. In 1972 one could only guess from directories that the issuer might be John Golledge, fl. 1855–58.6 Thanks to the Cox brothers we know now of a Jane G. and a James G., both grocers, while Withers & Withers add James G. from the 1851 Census. As so often, none is recorded at the address on the token.7

Many sources are now online, but the documentation of issuers nevertheless has taken years. The findings reveal the size of middle-class households, e.g. (3990) a married linen draper with three children, four shop assistants, an apprentice, a housemaid, a nursemaid, and a cook. Trades (tabulated on pp. 259–60) include a manufacturer of pudding powder (2554), of reviver for faded mourning (2753), a herbalist (3897), and PRIVATE ADVICE (5280). Depictions include a truss (681) and a grasshopper (3310). Edwin Steer, cheese factor in Wolverhampton (5148), had an address in New York in 1876, and 1881 in Stafford prison. The issuer of 7520 founded Glasgow’s Mitchell Library.

In support of the limited evidence on how the tokens functioned, Joshua Rushbrooke’s Willenhall farthings were sold at 4s. 9d. for 5s. nominal to shopkeepers and traders (p. 164). Subsequently the Spring Vale Hotel in Willenhall was re-named by Messrs Courage ‘The Rushbrooke Farthing’.8

This is a superb addition to the literature, which has opened up another series to serious study.

R.H. THOMPSON

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2 Whitmore 1990.
3 Macalister 1931, 162, no. 909.
4 Thompson 1989.
6 Thompson 1972.
7 Cox and Cox 1994, 28, no. 13.
8 Stevens 1977.