

I am here speaking as the current Secretary and General Editor of the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*. Firstly, I'd like to say that I strongly concur with everything that both Robin (via Peter) and Hugh have said – and that Hugh's words included an awful lot of what I had anticipated to say. I can only add a little to what has been said, so will not extend this more than I need to. What I do want to contribute is that my own personal experience of Stewart began when I was an undergraduate, also back at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the early 2000s, at which time I was already starting to work on all sorts of things related to early medieval coinage.

And one day, on coming into the Department [of Coins and Medals at the Fitzwilliam Museum], Mark Blackburn, who was Keeper at that stage, suggested that there was someone I should like to meet in the other room. And by this point Stewart's was already a name, a legend, to conjure with, and as I was working on coins of England from the early ninth century, the work that he [with Christopher Blunt and Ian Stewart] had published in the early 1960s was very much at my fingertips and on my mind,<sup>1</sup> so to meet him was an enormous privilege. And it was an even greater privilege to see just how interested he was in the work that I was doing.

This is something that characterised his approach in the great many subjects he approached all the way through his scholarly career and, I suspect, in his professional career as well. He was always very, very kind, generous and extremely interested in what others were doing; forbearing would be another way to put it, especially when dealing with beginners.

He was always willing to talk as equals, as someone who could both offer advice but also take a young whippersnapper (who didn't really know what he was doing) surprisingly seriously, and I have always been grateful for that.

From those days in the early 2000s, I was to talk with Stewart regularly, communicate by e-mail and see him at all sorts of events, including BNS meetings. From the time when I became involved in the *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* in 2009 or so, Stewart was a force on that committee, mostly by bringing his formidable expertise and experience to bear, providing a great many words of wisdom. It was a huge honour to work closely with him in producing the SCBI volume of his own collection that he chose to publish in the series.<sup>2</sup> I should like to say a few words about this because it is a seriously significant piece of work in its own right. The volume presents not only a seriously important collection, but also a major work of scholarship built around that collection, which Stewart began to assemble in the 1940s and more seriously in subsequent years. Eventually, his collection amounted to nearly 1,100 coins, which is very substantial for this early period. It runs across the whole Anglo-Saxon period, from a very rare and important seventh-century gold solidus, right through to the coinage of the period of the Norman Conquest itself. But within those 1,100 coins there are three main areas that stand out and which are especially richly covered. Those are the Northumbrian coinage of the ninth century, in which Stewart's collection was, if not necessarily the largest, probably the most carefully crafted and well executed. Secondly, there is a very rich and choice selection of early-tenth-century coins, particularly from the reign of

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<sup>1</sup> C. E. Blunt, C. S. S. Lyon and B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'The Coinage of Southern England, 796–840', *BNJ* 32 (1963), 1–74.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. S. Lyon, *The Lyon Collection of Anglo-Saxon Coins*, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles* 68 (Oxford, 2016).

Edward the Elder [(899–924)], on which Stewart wrote a wonderfully lucid chapter for what is now established as the classic study of English coinage in the tenth century.<sup>3</sup> Third, there is a wonderful, superb collection of coins from the time of Æthelred II [(978–1016)] and Cnut [(1016–35)]. The last type of Æthelred and the first of Cnut, known respectively as *Last Small Cross* and *Quatrefoil*, were another of Stewart's particular interests. In the published volume, you will see them broken down into dozens of regional stylistic variants. This is not normal practice in SCBI volumes, but it reflects Stewart's long work on the structure of these coinages. All adhered to a common basic type, but minor permutations in the execution of that type by different die-cutters, combined with fluctuations in other details such as weight and inscription, enabled him and Mark Blackburn to shed bright light on how some of the largest and most complicated late Anglo-Saxon coinages were issued.<sup>4</sup> Stewart had an unusually sharp eye for such details, and it was a great pleasure to be able to present a collection that embodied his research. This was a work that took him many years to complete, and represents a real labour of love.

Having checked the preface to his volume, I see that he was invited to begin writing in 1997. So, it took just under twenty years for his volume to be published, and I know he was extremely happy to see it finished, and I hope very much that future users of the volume will look back on him and everything he achieved for the subject with both respect and affection.

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<sup>3</sup> C. E. Blunt, B. H. I. H. Stewart and C. S. S. Lyon, *Coinage in Tenth-Century England, from Edward the Elder to Edgar's Reform* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 20–96.

<sup>4</sup> M. Blackburn and C. S. S. Lyon, 'Regional Die-Production in Cnut's Quatrefoil Issue', in *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History: Essays in Memory of Michael Dolley*, ed. M. Blackburn (Leicester, 1986), pp. 223–72; C. S. S. Lyon, 'Die-Cutting in the *Last Small Cross* Issue of c. 1009–1017 and Some Problematic East Anglian Dies and Die-Links', *BNJ* 68 (1998), 21–41.