REVIEWS

Coinage in Iron Age Armorica, by P. de Jersey (Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Monograph 39, Studies in Celtic Coinage 2, 1994), 266 pages, 29 maps

PHILIP de Jersey's book on the Iron Age coins of Armorica is, in many ways, a model of its kind. Developed from his 1992 Oxford D. Phil. thesis, it represents one of the fullest surveys of any series of Iron Age coinage available in any language. Writing as one who is currently undertaking the publication of the British Museum's collection of these coins, this reviewer can say from first-hand experience that this is both a splendid aid to improving one's limited knowledge of the wide and potentially confusing variety of types from this Continental series, and a judiciously cautious guide to their interpretation.

De Jersey begins by introducing us to what is known about the Iron Age context within which these coins circulated. Useful pages on the ancient physical environment and political boundaries of the region and the recent history of archaeological and antiquarian research add greatly to the value of the book as a whole. Too seldom does numismatic research pay much more than lip-service to the idea of 'putting the coins in context'. In the past, this was largely because the questions of how coins developed and how they were used in any particular place or period were either not regarded as issues requiring discussion or as ones on which contextual information had nothing important to say. Neither of these are tenable opinions nowadays. The more information we recover about Iron Age coinage, particularly good quality information with a secure context, the less certain many of our most cherished assumptions appear to be.

De Jersey is dealing with a region where the contextual evidence is minimal owing to a relative lack of directed archaeological research, as he explains in the introduction. But he succeeds both in making the most of what little there is and, mostly, in avoiding the tendency wilfully to shoehorn the numismatic evidence into those pseudo-historical schemata which have restricted previous chronologies and explanations: from Colbert de Beaulieu's Arvernian hegemony hypothesis which, apparently, still holds sway in many a recent French work, to the explanatory tyranny of the Gallic War, a period which is comparatively so dense in seemingly factual information about the late Iron Age Gaul and Armorica that it exerts a magnetic attraction on numismatists, both Continental and Insular, and leads them to try to date as much of their material as possible in relation to it.

Yet de Jersey does seem to be persuaded of the significance of the Gallic War as a general terminus post quem non for the production and circulation of most of the series he deals with. This notion seems to rest on the following positions: that the coinages of Armorica were not employed in commercial exchange and were used primarily to pay soldiers and act as a store of wealth; and that the Roman conquest so disrupted these indigenous patterns of behaviour that coin-production and use among the Gauls ceased as a consequence, there being no more soldiers to pay or wealth to store. It is clear that the Iron Age coinage tradition petered out in this area of Gaul during the late first century BC, but whether this was directly because of the violent events of the Gallic War or a second-stage development of the post-Conquest period is not. It is not disputed that indigenous coinages continued to be produced after the conquest in Belgic Gaul. But these coinages are now commonly, and rather restrictively, interpreted as having been produced to pay Roman troops and Gallic auxiliaries in Belgica where there was continued military activity. The military construction placed on Gallic coinage in the post-Conquest period is no more than an explanatory hypothesis and in itself cannot be used as an argument to provide a conclusive date for the end of Armoricano coinage.

This is not just a matter of a few years either way. It involves important questions of interpretation, which the author does address. He rightly counters the unreflective view that coinage is always and everywhere to be understood as a means of commercial or market exchange. In its place, however, he sometimes tends to lean too heavily on Daphne Nash's and Barry Cunliffe's 'centre-and-periphery' model of the development of late Iron Age Gaulish societies (the classic statement of which is to be found in Cunliffe's 1988 book Greeks, Romans and Barbarians; Spheres of Interaction) as a means of imputing non-economic meaning to the coinage. Measuring Armoricano society and coin-use against a scale of social complexity and political centralisation along which, at some point, coinage becomes more like Dalton's 'all-purpose' money and less like his 'primitive valuables', is problematic, as it assumes that there is a single scale of development along which all Iron Age societies and their coinages moved and can be placed. This, however, is an assumption that is implicit in world-systems theory and, though de Jersey shows that he is aware of the need to take regional variation into account (p. 24), he does not manage to break free from the conceptual bonds imposed by the theory. The author admits in the conclusion that the contextual evidence which would allow us to assess the social structures of Armoricano society is generally lacking, but also suggests that their position on the periphery relative to the band of 'semi-peripheral' so-called archaic states among the tribes of Gaul situated next to the Roman province of Narbonensis makes it 'unreasonable to expect the societies of the of the [sic] peripheral areas to have
developed to the same extent.' (p. 127). Theories and models should only serve to make sense of the existing evidence, and not to fill the inevitable gaps in our knowledge.

To turn to the more strictly numismatic aspects of the book, the coins are arranged into three major phases of development rather than plotted along a strictly chronological axis. This is reasonable as precise dating is unattainable and, in the field of Iron Age coinage, usually misguided and distorting. Each type is surveyed in detail and accompanied by a gazetteer of known finds spots and a distribution map. There is also a list of known hoards and temple deposits from Armorica. The maps are extremely useful as a means of orientating oneself within an unfamiliar region and liberating one's understanding of the coinage from those persistent tribal attributions. One knows they are wrong, or at least limiting, but does not quite know what else to do to make some sense out of the variety of different coinage traditions. De Jersey is rightly sceptical about many of them. All these appendices betray extensive and meticulous research, as does the bibliography which is full of useful references (altogether, they take up 135 of the total 266 pages). The separation of all this material from the main body of the text makes the whole much more readable and usable. A considerable service has been done to numismatics and archaeology in bringing this material together in such an accessible and concise form.

The technical side of this work is, then, outstanding in its thoroughness and the manner of its presentation. The theoretical side is also innovative within the context of Iron Age numismatics. There is much here that can be agreed with. That is, however, in itself an excellent thing. It is rare to read a book that is both comprehensible and interesting. This one is both.

J.H.C. WILLIAMS


RICHARD Hobbs' catalogue of British Iron Age coins is a welcome addition to the publications by the late Derek Allen of the British Museum's collection of continental Celtic coins.1 Allen himself is given a fitting tribute in the acknowledgements (p. 7): 'The completion of this catalogue would never have been possible without the work of the late Derek Allen... even two decades after his death, much of his basic organisation of the collection remains intact, simply because his insight into the layout and development of the British series remains unsurpassed'. The introduction (pp. 9–46) includes a brief discussion of British Iron Age coins, together with a map of the principal hoards and site finds (p. 11), and tables setting out the denominations, metrology and metallurgy of the various coinage groups. This provides a good starting point for anyone wishing to obtain basic information about any particular coinage group. Reference is given to research already undertaken, and the bibliography cites further background material.

Chronology is a notoriously complicated and sometimes divisive issue. Hobbs provides a summary of some of the main problems and two figures (pp. 12–13, based partly on Haselgrove's work2), which offer an overview of the dating of the British coins; further details are given in the discussion of the regional coinage groups.

The index of sites (pp. 36–40) is placed at the end of the Introduction, rather than with the other indexes after the catalogue section. These sites are the provenanced coin groups (hoards, excavation site finds and temple deposits) in the British Museum collection; as mentioned earlier, there is also a map (p. 11) to which reference can be made. The index provides much useful information: as well as details of the site and circumstances of finding, it includes bibliographical references and the British Museum catalogue numbers of all coins from each site. It does not, however, include stray finds, and it would have been helpful to have been given a basic index of these.

Turning to the catalogue section, this is set out succinctly in sylloge format, with each coin illustrated in the high-quality plates at the back of the volume. A standard layout is followed, with bold section headings for broad coin type and denomination, followed by any contemporary forgeries. The type description includes a 'main design element', details of the exergual line, field objects and any inscription. There are references to Allen,3 Evans,4 Mack,5 Van Arsdell,6 and other published sources.

The obverse and reverse descriptions are supported

4 J. Evans, The coins of the ancient Britons (London, 1864) and Supplement (London, 1890).
by meticulous line drawings and descriptions in the seven Symbols Plates and the corresponding Index of Symbols (pp. 229–34). The great advantage of this system is that any new coin type with a common field object such as a crescent or wheel may now be described without ambiguity, if it is among the symbols on the plates.

Each coin entry includes a unique British Museum catalogue number, weight in grams, registration number, source, provenance (when known) and any previous British Museum catalogue references. Of immense value is the presence of metallurgical analyses (with percentages of gold, silver and copper) where they have been performed. Published die-links are included in context, but die axes have not been recorded.

The catalogue is divided into nine main geographical sections (Early Uninscribed, Potin, The Southern Region, The Northern Region, The South-Eastern Region, The South-West, The West, The North-East and East Anglia), thus avoiding the traditional tribal attributions which have been shown to distort and confuse many issues. The contents of the catalogue, as listed on pp. 5–6, are detailed enough to enable one to locate the relevant section for most coins at first glance.

In addition to indexes for inscriptions and symbols, there is also a concordance (pp. 235–46) compiled by Derek Harrison, and revised by the author. This cross-references Van Arsdell,7 Mack,8 Allen,9 and Evans10 with the British Museum catalogue numbers, and it also refers to a few recent articles which cite specific types in the collection.

One of the interesting features of British Iron Age coins is the surge of new finds in the past twenty years or so.11 This is borne out by the sources of the 4584 coins of the British Museum collection, which includes 1949 coins found in the last two decades from the temple deposits at Waltham St. Lawrence (Berks.) and Wanborough (Surrey), and the hoard from Field Baalke (Cambs.). While more coins and relevant archaeological evidence will undoubtedly come to light in the future, they will not detract from the value of this book, which records the essential details of coins in such a way as to be valid regardless of what framework they may later be placed in.

At the beginning of the introduction (p. 9), Hobbs states that the catalogue 'aims to put the study of British Irish Age coins on a solid base, which has been lacking to date, by providing a comprehensive, accurate, and fully indexed catalogue of the most important collection. Both the introductory sections and the catalogue listing aim to give a clear idea of what can be said and to what degree of certainty about the dating and attribution of British Iron Age coins'. These aims have been achieved admirably, and I have no hesitation in recommending this book to all those who have a genuine interest in British Iron Age coins, as well as to those who would like to start exploring this field and are looking for an authoritative reference book.

MELINDA MAYS


These three volumes are the crowning achievement of Michael Metcalf's enduring interest in the earliest currencies of Anglo-Saxon England. He first brought order to one of its most intractable series more than thirty years ago and, despite fruitful excursions into a wide range of other periods and places, he has returned to the subject in many ground-breaking articles, and in particular as the principal contributor to the BAR publication on Sceattas in England and on the Continent which he co-edited with David Hill in 1984.

The title of the present work promises only the publication of the coins in the Ashmolean Museum, but the details of its 478 coins in fact form almost an appendix to a magisterial discussion of the entire series. It covers the Anglo-Saxon coins, which the author happily still calls by their succinct conventional names, issued from the early seventh to the mid-eighth century, together with the silver issues of Frisia and adjacent areas with which they were inextricably associated in English currency. The first volume deals with the increasing-base gold coins, identifiable in the Anglo-Saxon laws as gold shillings and descended, via Merovingian issues, from late Roman light-weight tremisses. It also covers the primary series of silver coins of similar weight which are metrologically similar but known as sceattas to distinguish the coins of this denomination on small thick flans from the later broader and thinner issues. The second deals with the continental series of silver sceattas mainly of the Intermediate period, with a few English derivatives, and the third with the later English secondary sceattas of increasingly lighter weight and base silver.

The Oxford coins are described in sylloge fashion opposite plates of exceptional quality where each coin is shown in photographs twice life size. In addition to the usual information on provenance, weight etc., the percentage of the principal metal constituent is quoted for virtually all the gold, and for most of the silver coins. The analyses of the thrymsas are mostly by Dr Andrew Oddy of the British Museum, while those of

7 Van Arsdell, as in n. 6.
8 Mack, as in n. 5.
9 Allen, as in n. 3.
10 Evans, as in n. 4.
11 As mentioned, for example, by Haselgrove (1993), as in n. 2, pp. 31–2.
The discussion follows the alphabetical order of types foundation of all numismatic study, in great and provenanced widely from sites throughout England. From the important 'productive' sites at Tilbury, Essex, collection, but an index of all find-spots represented in number in the introductory section on the growth of the main text of each volume is a general survey of the to-find 1945 monograph. For each type, the author deals with typology, the eclectic groups distinguished by Metcalf himself. Established by S.E. Rigold, with additional chapters on the system which Metcalf has christened the 'eclectic' groups. Some coins are local finds, but most are acquired by Sutherland. It is a pity that the opportunity was not taken to illustrate all the Anglo-Saxon coins, as it would have taken only two extra plates in the comparatively slim first volume to show the English element in its entirety. Admittedly, the twenty-nine plates, but those interested, for example, in recording and publication of detector finds.

The Ashmolean Museum is pre-eminent in the number of gold thrymsas in its cabinet, eighty in all, largely as a result of the acquisition of the Crondall hoard, few of whose Anglo-Saxon types are duplicated elsewhere. Naturally, only the seventy-three English coins are included here; for the Merovingian tremisses, students must still consult the 1945 publication by Northover. It is a pity that the opportunity was not taken to illustrate all the Anglo-Saxon coins, as it would have taken only two extra plates in the comparatively slim first volume to show the English element in its entirety. Admittedly, the twenty-nine coins omitted are all die-duplicates of others on the plates, but those interested, for example, in manufacturing technique or secondary features such as test-marks (not mentioned in the descriptions) still have to rely on the dim plates made from casts in the hard-to-find 1945 monograph.

The Oxford sceatta collection, now totalling nearly 400 coins, has been transformed into a truly representative series by Metcalf's carefully-selected acquisitions, twenty-five by his own gift. Some have featured in the 'Coin Register' in our Journal, but many are previously unpublished. The cabinet is particularly strong in unusual varieties and in the coins falling outside the main alphabetical classification system which Metcalf has christened the 'eclectic' groups. Some coins are local finds, but most are provenanced widely from sites throughout England. Included is a representative group of coins from the Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire, hoard, and major series from the important 'productive' sites at Tilbury, Essex, Bawsey, Norfolk, and Caistor-by-Norwich. The coins from these most prolific sources are listed by catalogue number in the introductory section on the growth of the collection, but an index of all find-spots represented in the volumes would have been helpful.

Preceding the lists of Ashmolean Museum coins, the main text of each volume is a general survey of the coinages concerned based on material from all sources. The discussion follows the alphabetical order of types established by S.E. Rigold, with additional chapters on the eclectic groups distinguished by Metcalf himself. For each type, the author deals with typology, the foundation of all numismatic study, in great and illuminating detail. His keen eye identifies different styles and groupings, and then debates their meaning as either chronological or geographical pointers. Most importantly, he distinguishes substantive coins from imitations, the potential non-local origin of which would otherwise confuse the evidence of distribution patterns. With his deep knowledge of both the coins and the literature, Metcalf sets out all the available evidence from site-finds and hoards, both English and continental, and guides the reader in a carefully weighed discussion, warning of the pitfalls, considering the interpretations of other students, as well as reviewing his own earlier opinions, before arriving at his present, often inevitably tentative, conclusions. The resulting text is not for beginners, or those seeking a quick check on mint attributions and dates. It is a complex subject with no easy solutions, and the discussion is dense, with many references to outside sources; to follow it fully requires close concentration, frequent checking back on previous sections and access to earlier numismatic literature. Currency considerations are specifically excluded by the introduction and art-historical connections are not stressed, although both are touched upon from time to time. These aspects have an important bearing on other aspects of the coinage, and would have merited fuller treatment, but have perhaps been reserved for another occasion.

The text is illustrated by hundreds of meticulous drawings made by the author himself which brilliantly capture the style of the originals. This is particularly welcome in the case of sub-divisions of the main types where the drawings are often labelled with the alphabetical sub-group for easy identification. As these volumes will long remain the standard work of reference on the series, it is unfortunate that none of the drawings are given a number by which they might be cited. Some, but not all, of the drawings have below them 'Fig.' with no number following, suggesting that a numbered scheme was envisaged at some stage, but later abandoned. (The histograms etc. in the metallurgy section are given fig. numbers.) In their absence, it may be proposed that a form of citation be adopted which gives the page number followed by the number of the coins or variety enumerating from the top left across and down to the bottom right of the page as in 'Metcalf p.348, 4'. Many of the coins drawn are metal-detector finds in private hands and not easily accessible, but it would have been useful if those which had passed into the other principal public collections, at least, could have been identified to assist future reference by students. Good drawings have the advantage of showing varieties much more clearly than photographs for identification purposes, but can never quite be a substitute for them in die-studies. While the eye of the artist can add to clarity by the omission of extraneous marks, it can also eliminate unrecognised vestiges of some significant feature.

The discussion of each type or alphabetical group is accompanied by a map showing find-spots. It is striking how much fuller these are than comparable maps even in the 1984 BAR volume, thanks largely to the recording and publication of detector finds. Archaeologists and others interested in particular localities will be disappointed to discover that the find-spots marked on the maps cannot be identified as there
is no index or gazetteer. All the place-names, or general areas, must have been to hand in order to create the maps, so it is a pity that these lists of locations under each type were not included as an appendix. Although it is not mentioned, it is possible that a find-index is being reserved for the volume on coin-rich sites now in preparation, of which Metcalf is the editor and principal contributor:

The enhanced distribution patterns have allowed more types to be securely located (as noted in the sections on particular volumes below) but, despite the large numbers of new finds, the distributions of many groups are hardly more strongly nucleated than they were. This is evidence of the velocity of circulation and lively internal trade in the pre-Viking age, but the distributions are less helpful than might have been hoped in the secure identification of regions of production, far less minting places. A case in point is Series J (the later bird-on-cross group) which the author attributes to York. Although there are a number of find-spots in Northumberland, the concentration does not seem strong enough to outweigh the difficulty in interposing a type very different in style to the similar issues of Aldfrith (685–704) and Eadberht (677–85), and also the anomalously widespread distribution of the type throughout England, at variance with that for Series Y, undoubtedly struck in York.

It is impossible in a short review to comment on all the many fresh insights these volumes contain, or to raise more than the occasional query, but a few points on each volume may be made in turn. Volume one begins with two introductory essays of unusual importance. The first on ‘Where, when and how many’ places the coinage in context and discusses common problems of interpretation. It is full of perceptive comments valid not only for the thrymsa and sceatta series but for numismatic studies generally. The second, entitled ‘Coinage as a royal and episcopal prerogative before Offa’s reform’, tackles the core questions of the issuers and the organisation of the coinage, particularly difficult in a series which is almost entirely lacking in literate inscriptions. Metcalf has at his best here pulling together the different classes of evidence, and bringing to bear his wide experience of this and other coinages. His main thesis is that in England the coinage was, from the beginning, royal and in a much more real sense than in Francia, and that we should not seek to impose what we know of the Merovingian arrangements on the English evidence. Some may feel that there is more in common than he would allow, but Metcalf has certainly set out the parameters in which the discussion can be carried forward.

It is worrying to find that the only regally-explicit coin known in the English series of this period, Metcalf regards as no more than ‘tentatively’ attributed to King Eadbald of Kent (616–40). Like Sutherland, he reads the personal name with the final letter as an ‘eth’, giving the name as ‘Audvarlth’. The last letter is, in my view, a ‘D’ as the horizontal line extends from beyond the left side, right through it and out the other side, and is clearly a scribal contraction mark denoting the omission of the genitive ending of the personal name agreeing with the title ‘reges’ (p. 41, not ‘rex’ as on p. 61) which follows it. Philological opinion has hitherto been that this name is an acceptable form for Eadbald in Frankish orthography. While certainty is not possible, it seems more reasonable, unless expert opinion on the name should change, to accept an attribution to the King of Kent rather than postulate an unknown. The precise weight given to this attribution is particularly important as, if it is secure, it provides the only internal and fixed date-bracket in the English thrymsa series. With literate inscriptions so rare, it is curious that the author does not even mention the mint-signed Canterbury coin, reading EVSEBI MONITA / DOROVERNIS CIVITAS, in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris, and probably the earliest extant Anglo-Saxon tremissis/thrymsa of them all.

The transition between the early Anglo-Saxon gold and silver coinages is not straightforward as the metrological evidence does not appear to be reflected in that of the typology. Metcalf classifies all the coins of Series Pa (the ‘Padas’) and Va (the Vasinundas group) which span the transition under the Primary Sceatta series. Some late Padas do contain no more gold than some sceattas, and the Northover analyses show that some coins which are normally described as sceattas occasionally contain unexpectedly high amounts of gold e.g. a coin of Primary Series A with 12 per cent. The earliest Padas may look virtually silver but, containing between 13 per cent and 20 per cent of gold, they are undoubtedly the higher denomination. Bearing in mind the variability in the alloy that was apparently tolerated, and the still relatively small number of analyses available, it might seem preferable to retain the traditional division until there is fuller evidence on which to reach a decision.

The Intermediate series covered in volume two is now on a much more secure footing thanks to Metcalf’s own research and that which he has inspired in others. He considers the continental as well as the English evidence and is able to propose minting places, more or less confidently, for the major series. He confirms his revised view that all the substantive coins of Series E, the ‘porcupine’ sceattas, are continental, probably minted at Dorestad, and argues that Series D (the ‘continental runic’ type) originated at Domburg, and Series G at Quentovic. His earlier attribution of Series X, the ‘Wodan/Monster’ type, to Denmark, once controversial, has been vindicated by more recent finds and now seems established. Series F (the so-called ‘helmet’ type), copied directly from a Frankish issue and formerly believed to be of continental origin, is attributed by Metcalf, with due caution, to Middle Anglia. This area is perhaps becoming rather surprisingly productive, and further provenances are badly needed.

The last and largest volume of the three deals with the English secondary series of sceattas when the volume of coinage becomes much larger and its production more widespread. Metcalf uses the enlarged corpus created by new finds to define the major series more clearly and to distinguish contemporary from successive
varieties within them. Particularly notable is his ordering of Series L (London) and K (Kent). The 'eclectic' groups which Metcalf has defined are important beyond their numbers. He demonstrates that they are distinct series, not simply aberrant imitations, and regionally located like the major series. New finds have confirmed Metcalf's earlier identification of Series S (the female centaur group) with Essex, and has firmly placed Series Q (the bird/beast group) in Norfolk. Some former attributions, on the other hand, have had to be abandoned, the new evidence showing that Series G, formerly given to the South Saxons, is a continental of a separate 'Hwiccian' coinage is no longer tenable.

The secondary runic coins of Series R have long been recognised as East Anglian from their unequivocal distribution pattern, but the primary runic coins of the same general type, Series C, have in recent years been attributed to Kent. Metcalf's map clearly differentiating the groups C and CZ from one another and from probably imitative coins is particularly instructive. Although the distribution of Series C is more diffused than Series R, it is still essentially East Anglian, the three Kentish provenances all being virtually coastal. Metcalf points out, however, the close stylistic association between Series C and the earlier and undoubtedly Kentish Series A. As style essentially defines die-cutter or die-cutting school rather than mint, the distribution evidence is perhaps the stronger. A primary sceatta coinage for East Anglia would also be the more plausible if the 'Constantine' type thrymsas with their distinct East Anglian distribution were attributed to Suffolk rather than to Medeshamstede (Peterborough) as Metcalf prefers. He is no doubt right, however, in his judicious comment that 'It would be prudent to reserve judgement, in a case where the arguments are so finely balanced'.

There are few certainties in the thrymsa and sceatta series and fellow-students will inevitably disagree with the author on particular points of interpretation, ironicallish basing their arguments on the rich mine of factual information and thought-provoking scholarship contained in these volumes. But further research and discussion are just what Professor Metcalf, with his customary generosity, will wish his great work to promote. He deserves our warm thanks and congratulations on a major advance in the study of yet another field of coinage.

MARION ARCHIBALD


It is now over 20 years since the excellent volume 21 of the SCBI series turned its spotlight on the early coins held in collections in Yorkshire. That volume concentrated on the coins in the collections of the Yorkshire Museum, Leeds City Museum and the University of Leeds. James Booth has produced a complementary work which casts its net far wider and incorporates material housed in no fewer than thirty-two collections on both sides of the Pennines.

A total of 1942 pieces are described, the majority being illustrated on sixty-four plates. Many of the coins illustrated are held in major and well-known public museums, such as those at Manchester, Blackburn, Doncaster and Hull. Where less familiar collections were found to contain even small quantities of relevant material however, the author has ensured that they are also represented, with for example a scarce Olfa/Eadberht penny from the Dales Countryside Museum being included.

The layout of the volume will be familiar to all users of the SCBI series, the bulk of the work being taken up with the catalogue and associated plates. In addition a useful index of hoards and single finds is provided, together with an index of collectors, dealers, donors and detectorists. Brief summaries are likewise provided of the collections represented, as is a substantial bibliography. A useful contribution has also been made by Martin Allen, in the form of an essay on the arrangement of Short Cross class III.

In compiling the volume, the author has brought together a wide range of provenanced material from across northern England. As one might expect, Northumbrian issues are well represented, with well over 500 specimens being illustrated and catalogued with reference where appropriate to Coinage of the Kingdom of Northumbria. In part as a result of several of the museums represented having acquired material from the Prestwich hoard, the volume is also strong in its coverage of later Norman pennies, including some 200 pieces from the reign of Stephen.

When reviewing SCBI 42 in this Journal (1995), John Davies rightly commented upon the difficulties of reviewing a volume which adheres to a proven and highly successful format. In compiling the present catalogue, James Booth has produced a work which fully lives up to the standards set by previous volumes in the series and which will doubtless prove to be of the greatest value not only to those studying the coinage of northern England, but also to all scholars working in the field of early English numismatics. The only serious criticism which may be made is that, at £80, the volume is far from cheap. In fairness however, it must be said that neither are the coins which it covers. Anyone finding themselves hesitating before committing themselves to purchasing this work would be well advised to recall the sage advice, 'buy the book before the coin'.

CRAIG BARCLAY


WHEN in 1978, Dr Mark Blackburn and the present reviewer visited Riga to see Anglo-Saxon coins in local
museums, the possibility of a Sylloge publication of that material seemed too unrealistic to be even worth mentioning. Now the situation has wholly changed: Sylloge volumes are being prepared for the collections of St. Petersburg and Tallinn, and a Riga volume of very good quality has already been published.

That this publication was to be the first of the three is not only due to the diligence of the author but also to the smallness of the material: there are only 272 coins in all, 155 of them (mostly without find provenances) in the City Museum of Riga and the rest divided between the Historical Museum and the Institute of History, both also situated in Riga. One coin is listed as belonging to a private collection. All three institutions are given short presentations, and there is also a useful presentation of the written sources concerning the finds. The finds themselves are also presented: 14 Viking-Age hoards, with only 85 identifiable British coins; 25 excavation finds from cemeteries and hill-forts from the same period, with 67 coins; and 9 finds of later medieval coins. About 119 further coins are also said to have been found on Latvian territory but they are no longer available; some were lost during the last war.

The 'late' character of the East-Baltic finds of West-European coins is shown by the scarcity of Anglo-Saxon coins earlier than the Crux type of Æthelred II; in addition to a penny of Edgar, there are only two 'Hand' coins. In all, there are 82 coins of Æthelred, 72 of Cnut, 19 of Harold I and Harthacnut, 14 of Edward the Confessor and one of Harold II. The Norman kings are represented by 7 coins, the Plantagenets by 15, and there are also 9 English and 2 Scottish coins from the later medieval and Tudor period—mementoes from a time when Riga was one of the major ports in Europe.

As usual, there are a few Hiberno-Norse coins (3 from Dublin, one Hiberno-Manx) and a number of imitations (46). The imitations of the earlier types have also been noted by Brita Maimer in The Anglo-Scandinavian Coinage c. 995–1020 (1997), although she has not included all of them in her catalogue. In most cases this is due to fragmentary condition, but a few of the imitations may be of Latvian origin, as is suggested by Berga. (They are discussed in her article 'Grobe Nachahmungen . . .' in Sigtuna Papers, edited by K. Jonsson and B. Malmer, Stockholm/London, 1990.) The concept of 'Anglo-Baltic imitations' thus apparently should be added to the numismatic vocabulary. One hopes to learn more about them in Berga's Finds of Viking-Age Coins in Latvia which is announced to be forthcoming in the Swedish series Commentationes de Nummis.

As a curiosity can be mentioned the Crux penny (no. 15) which is clipped down to the inner circle. There are similar pieces in Oxford (SCBI 9, no. 510) and Helsinki (SCBI 25, no. 149), as was noted by Hugh Pagan in his review of the Helsinki Sylloge (BNJ 49, 1979, 129). A further similar centre piece of Edgar or Edward the Martyr can be found in Liverpool (SCBI 29, no. 512) but other types of late Anglo-Saxon pennies do not seem to have been subjected to this kind of clipping. The fact that such pieces are known both from England and from different shores of the Baltic gives reason to suspect that the clipping was done in England.

Following the precedent of the Berlin volume (SCBI 36), the number of 'pecs' on the pre-Plantagenet coins has been noted in the catalogue. An even more conspicuous feature concerning the 'secondary individual data' is that more than 60 of the 272 coins have been worn as pendants, and there are several with broken edges, possibly caused by forcible removal of a suspension loop. According to the author, the widespread use of coins as ornaments reflects the under-development of local 'monetary relations'. As regards the coin import, she notes that during the Viking Age coins entered Latvia mainly along the Daugava River and 'partly either from the north-east of ancient Russia via Pskov, or through Estonia'. If the find map on p. 7 is to be believed, the Pskov connection does not, however, seem to have been very significant.

The publication fills its purpose admirably, and here we must thank both the author and the editor. On one occasion, though, the (apparent) translation from another language has led to a curious statement: it is said that 'comprehensive data on finds of British coins coming from archaeological monuments can be found in the publications of F. Kruse (1842) and F. Bähr (1850). I am not sure about Bähr, but the information contained in Kruse's felicitously named Necrolironica from 1842 could better be called 'interesting' than 'comprehensive'.

Despite the poor condition of some of the coins, most of the photos are excellent. It is to be hoped that in this as well as in other respects the more extensive Russian and Estonian publications will maintain the same standard.

TUUKKA TALVIO


NUMISMATISTS in the last century described the imitations of Anglo-Saxon coins as 'monstrous products'. The crude characteristics of many of these coins have, of course, not changed, but they are no longer considered to be outcasts in the saga of early Scandinavian monetary history. On the contrary, they are now reckoned to be one of the major sources of our understanding of the monetary development which led to independent national coinages.¹

¹ Denmark and Norway established national coinages in the 1060s and 1070s, while Sweden did not establish such before the 1140s.
Forty years ago Brita Malmer started collecting material for a study of these imitative coinages. Altogether 3,704 coins are described in the catalogue. Together with the 1,097 coins described in her study of ‘The Sigtuna Coinage c. 995–1005’, published in 1989, the total number approximates to an impressive 5,000 coins, of which 752 obverse and 1,218 reverse dies are recorded. The numbers of dies suggest large numbers of coins in circulation. How coins were used in Scandinavia in the late Viking Age is still an open question. Even so, the volume of silver involved is of such proportions that anyone studying Viking Age economics would benefit from using these series for the understanding of money and exchange.

During recent decades Scandinavian imitations of Anglo-Saxon coins have been a field of dynamic numismatic research. A number of innovative studies have been published by numismatists on both sides of the North Sea. Discoveries of links between official English dies and dies within the imitative Scandinavian series have altered the understanding of these coinages considerably. In the same period intermittent die-linking has been recorded in England and Denmark. One source for the movement of moneys within Scandinavia is the spectacular career of Godwine, the English moneyer who struck coins in the names of the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian kings around the year 1000. If we have understood Godwine’s monetary mission the right way, contact between Scandinavian mints in the imitative period certainly took place. This practice of transferring dies over long distances both within and outside Scandinavia obscures the framework for stylistic analysis. To what extent it took place is uncertain, but Malmer makes it clear that the degree of linking is considerable, so considerable that one can wonder whether new finds one day will link up the major chains, and thus make the Scandinavian coinages interrelated.

In her volume on the Sigtuna coinage, Malmer was concerned about ‘The blank period in Scandinavian coinage history, c. 1005 – c. 1018’. During the eight years since then several chains have been enlarged to contain imitations of the types Crux, Long Cross, Helmet, Quatrefoil and Pointed Helmet, and thus span twenty to twenty-five years. The blank period in Scandinavian coinage has been transformed into a period where minting was taking place on considerable scale. Worth noticing is the overrepresentation of the Long Cross type in the material. It constitutes approximately 60 per cent of the total material. Comparably are the official equivalents found within Scandinavia known to be 25 per cent. This skewed distribution is considered to reflect the Scandinavian demand for good quality coin, of which the habit of pecking is another testimony.

The catalogue is split into two sections: 1) obverse and reverse dies containing detailed data of each coin, and 2) finds listed by country with relevant data of each find and concordances to the catalogue of coins and die-links and chains. This way it was possible to incorporate all relevant data for each coin listed. By using the plates it should be fairly easy to identify new specimens in the future. One unusual feature is the arrangement of the numbering system. Only figures are used: one each for obverses, reverses and for the coins themselves. Using the plates as a starting point, one should be aware that one has to combine the number for the reverse die with that of the obverse die, and vice versa, which are presented in separate columns, to get the number of the actual coin in the main catalogue. At first glance it might seem confusing, but for the most part it works very well. It is only when one comes to the five so-called ‘additional series’ that problems can occur. The introduction to the numbering system will guide you through the catalogue, and is thus recommended. The magnificent drawings of die-chains at the back of the book, where every die-link is presented with a reference to its catalogue-numbers, invites anyone who wants to analyse this work to do so by comparing the photos of relevant specimens. The plates contain photos of all the dies presented in ×2 enlargements of superb quality, together with detailed drawings of the legends and pictorial variants on the opposite pages with references to die-combinations and chains for each coin. This is an arrangement which can very well serve as a model for future numismatic scholarship, and which makes it an excellent source for future studies.

While the section on legends and styles proves an important account of the system for classification and attribution, a general survey of the coinages is only presented superficially. Having published two books on the Anglo-Scandinavian coinages, a survey of the Scandinavian coinages before the year 1000 [Nordiska mynt före år 1000], and editing the Swedish CNS-project for a generation, few, if anyone, know the early Scandinavian coinages as well as Brita Malmer. It is therefore with great pleasure that we receive the announcement of a more extensive survey of the early monetary history of Scandinavia in the forthcoming volume: ‘The Anglo-Scandinavian coinages c. 1020–1030’. The maps, tables and indexes which would sum up a number of aspects concerning these coinages, and which would facilitate the use of this book, will certainly appear in the forthcoming, and thus the third, catalogue of the Anglo-Scandinavian issues.

In the past we have depended on studies of imported coins for an understanding of monetary movements within Scandinavia. Malmer’s work paves the way for in-depth analysis of coin circulation and other monetary issues within Scandinavia in the late Viking Age. The catalogue presented breaks new ground and is certainly going to prove itself immensely useful. Its virtue is to make so much material generally available before presenting the analysis, not only inviting others to take part in new discoveries; it deserves to be used and commented upon.

SVEIN H. GULLBEKK
THE first edition of this book, which pre-dated volume 1, was published in 1960 and was seen to fill a gap between Brooke’s English Coins, a popular but scholarly, narrative history with an un-numbered summary listing of varieties at the end, and the contemporary version of Seaby’s Standard Catalogue, a simple but useful numbered listing of main varieties with values. Reviewing the first edition in BNJ 30 (1960), Ian Stewart (now Lord Stewartby) recognised it as an extremely important addition to the literature of English numismatics, particularly taking account of the substantial advances in scholarship that had been made since the publication of English Coins in 1932 (even though that had been partially updated by Whittow in 1950). At the same time he made some suggestions which he felt could improve the book if the full potential of its underlying conception were to be realised. In fact, some of his ideas had already been perceived by the author and were embodied in the first edition of volume 1 which was published two years later.

The second edition of volume 2 was published fifteen years after the first and took full account of numismatic developments in the intervening period. It was also improved in many other ways, particularly by including more references to source material, thus greatly strengthening its value and authority. The third edition again takes account of a further sixteen years of numismatic research. As in the earlier editions, the author has acknowledged that he has been able to draw on the specialised knowledge and friendly co-operation of other leading students and scholars so that the work, as it now stands, is a skilful distillation of three decades of English numismatic scholarship.

Important changes in the third edition include a complete rewriting of that part dealing with the coinage of Edward I, II and the early years of Edward III in the light of the detailed studies published in SCBI 39 by the author, himself, and others. The civil war coinage has been reorganised to take into account the work of the late George Boon which is set forth with exemplary clarity in SCBI 33. Much of the on-going work of Brown, Borden and Comber on the coinages of Elizabeth I has been taken into account, although Brown and Comber’s culminating conclusions on the gold coinage, published in BNJ 59 (1989) appeared just too late to be included.

This, of course, demonstrates an unavoidable limitation of a book of this type; that the process of ongoing study and research, as recorded in this and other journals, will progressively make it more out of date. The fact that it is now six years since this edition was published makes one particularly conscious of this, for in the intervening period we have seen the publication of important new discoveries in the field. Brown and Comber’s work has already been mentioned. A glance at the volumes of BNJ published in the last six years reveals several articles including those by Besly, Allen, and by North himself, all of which would have to be taken into account in any future edition. Equally, of course, we must not forget the work of Webb Ware revising the attribution of coins to Edward V that is recorded in SCBI 47. But this is all inevitable and does little to detract from a valuable and dependable work. It merely emphasizes that the serious student must keep up with the serious literature as well as with the work of quick reference.

Inevitably, the production of a numbered listing of varieties has its own problems and a work of this nature, if it is to be kept to a manageable size, inevitably faces the author with questions of what to include and what to omit, and equally, what simplifications and compromises are permissible. The author’s judgements on these points are invariably sound, and he takes care to provide the necessary references for those who wish to delve more deeply.

Of course, further editions of the book could take account of new developments, and, indeed, an interval of fifteen years seems not a bad one for this purpose, taking into account the need to balance both scholarly and commercial considerations. But new editions have their problems, too, particularly with regard to the numbering system used. Clearly, once a book starts to be used as a standard reference coins start to be identified with North numbers and it becomes very inconvenient if those numbers are changed in successive editions. Indeed, this can fatally undermine the value of the book as a reference. As was done in the second and third editions, new discoveries are accommodated by inserting alphabetical suffixes. Although this presents no great problems in the third edition, one has seen in other publications how the complications and difficulties resulting from successive amendments of this sort can eventually lead to the point where it is better to start again. Be that as it may, there can be no real doubt that North’s English Hammered Coinage will continue to be a necessary and thoroughly reliable reference for many years to come.

PETER WOODHEAD
elsewhere by consulting a very wide range of separate sources.

The first two chapters are concerned with the period before Scotland had a coinage of its own, and so are entirely based on records of coins found in Scotland (with accompanying maps). Up to 10,000 coins of the Roman period have been found in Scotland, and are invaluable to archaeologists for dating purposes. They chiefly belong to the period from the arrival of Agricola in 79 to the Severan campaigns of the early third century. Detailed records of Roman coins from Scotland have been kept for many years, first by Sir George Macdonald, then by Professor Anne Robertson and more recently by Dr. Bateson himself. Scotland was not very much Romanized, and the coins largely come from the frontier, or from the vicinity of forts and roads. The local population does not seem to have had any normal use of coin except possibly in the vicinity of some of the forts. Roman coins are from time to time found at native sites, and such as they are probably had no monetary purpose. For example, one of the latest late Roman silver buried early in the fifth century, of some of the forts. Roman coins are from time to time come from the frontier, or from the vicinity of forts and roads. The local population does not seem to have had any normal use of coin except possibly in the vicinity of some of the forts. Roman coins are from time to time found at native sites, and such as they are probably had no monetary purpose. For example, one of the latest late Roman silver buried early in the fifth century, which included clipped siliqua of the 390s and in which the coins like the other silver had probably arrived as loot.

After the departure of the Romans there is a gap of more than four hundred years until coins again arrived in Scotland. In the first half of the ninth century some of the small copper coins produced in the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria found their way northwards to the Borders and other lowland areas of Scotland. These were followed, in the tenth century, by silver coins brought by the Vikings to the islands around the north and west of Scotland. Like Viking hoards from Scandinavia and England these mostly consisted of English, continental and Islamic coins, often accompanied by hacksilver, and culminated in the very important coin hoard from the island of Iona buried in the 980s.

A further interval ensued before a Scottish coinage proper was launched by David I. The third chapter treats the period of the sterling or penny, during which English and Scottish coins were struck to the same standard and were interchangeable in the currency of both countries.

The next three chapters cover the period of the silver groat, from the 1350s to the reign of James V. Reflecting his interest in currency and coin circulation as well as in coinage itself, the author has chosen to devote a chapter each to silver, gold, and billon plus copper. As before, each chapter contains an account of the contents of relevant hoards. This treatment perhaps involves more repetition than would be the case in a chronological division, but it does provide a valuable dimension which is not always easy to obtain from other literature.

The last four chapters revert to a chronological scheme, treating in turn the politically disturbed reign of Mary Queen of Scots, the complex coinages of James VI in a period of rapid inflation, the English-style issues of Charles I, and finally the milled series from Charles II to Anne.

This book will provide a reliable introduction to the coinage and currency of Scotland, and for the most part it takes into account the more recent literature of the subject. The reader should be aware, however, that there are one or two material omissions from the bibliography cited by the author. Perhaps the most important of these is the article by Mrs. Murray on 'Some placks and base groats of James III of Scotland' (Metallurgy in Numismatics, 1980), in which she argued convincingly that the 'alloyed groat' mentioned in 1471 was not the early James III portrait groat (group II) but the new base coin better known as the plack. This discovery not only enables the introduction of the portrait groat to be dated considerably later, but also revives the possibility of a direct relationship between the coin portrait and the very similar representation of the king on the Trinity College altarpiece, an association which had seemed problematic when the portrait groat was dated as early as 1471 (PSAS 98, 263–4).

Perhaps the reviewer might also be allowed to express a tinge of personal disappointment that, although the author carefully describes the many and varied coin types of James VI, he does not allude to the political interpretation of many of these types and their accompanying inscriptions published in the Stevenson Festschrift (1983). There may, however, be a lesson here, that articles published outside the mainstream periodicals do not always reach their intended numismatic audience.

None of this should detract materially from the usefulness of Dr. Bateson's book. It is well produced and easy to read and should find a place on the shelves of anyone interested in the coinage and currency of Scotland.

LORD STEWARTBY


This book has an importance beyond the value of the essays it contains. Such a tribute is a high one, for the distinction of most of the papers it presents is immediately apparent. In fact the volume will have a place in the history of art-historical literature.

The reason why is simple: the range of writing on medals has been extended. What is more this has been done in a systematic fashion. Already the results are apparent, for since the volume under review appeared various other articles have been published, notably in The Medal, the Journal of the British Art Medal Society, clearly following the aims and methodology of those who contributed to Designs on Posterity.

What has been achieved with this book is in fact a
notable example of the interaction between numismatics and other branches of art history.

The importance of preliminary studies for clarifying our comprehension of the work of artists, sculptors, and architects has long been recognised. Not only do they provide a crucial tool in facilitating an understanding of an artist's chronology and of the influences upon his work, but they also throw a revealing light upon other more esoteric considerations. From preliminary drawings we can learn much concerning the working of the mind of the artist, sculptor or craftsman. Thus we are taken beyond purely technical spheres, being induced to probe artistic aims and sensibilities. That this is something which in the past numismatists, and especially students of medals, have all too often tended to ignore will immediately be apparent.

Such reminders make Designs on Posterity vital. It was issued to publish the papers read at the 23rd Congress of the Fédération Internationale de la Médaille held in London in September 1992. That congress was organised by the British Art Medal Society and we owe the volume to the British Art Medal Trust. It is, indeed, a typical example of how the British Art Medal Society encourages the study of medals both of the past and of the present, the essays spanning the centuries from 'The Circulation of Drawings for Medals in Fifteenth Century Italy' by Luke Syson to 'Royal Medal for Poetry: A Design Competition of the 1930s' by G.P. Dyer. A further point of interest was that the authors ranged from museum men and well known scholars to Christopher Eimer, who combines the role of serious student with being a dealer.

Yet what must above all be stressed is that this was the first time that studies specifically concerned with the part drawings play in the production of medals have been published together. Nor is this the only reason why the volume is impressive. In particular two issues should be noted. As Mark Jones, the Editor, points out in his Introduction, often accepted assumptions are challenged. Thus it is salutary to be reminded that preliminary studies for medals frequently differ radically from the preliminary studies made by artists. Where the former are concerned many individuals are often involved, whereas with the latter one of the most crucial things about them is the way they enhance our understanding of the idiosyncrasies of particular artists.

Equally valuable is another point made by Mark Jones in his Introduction. This is when he reminds us that certain of the essays in this book make it clear that we also need to abandon the assumption that the creative idea necessarily has preeminence. A striking example of this is noted by Anthony Griffiths when he recalls that Bergeret was paid 48 francs for his drawing for Denon's medal for the battle of Jena while Galle received 3000 francs for engraving it. Such revelations place our understanding of medals on a surer foundation.

TERENCE MULLALY

Benedetto Pistrucci, Principal Engraver and Chief Medallist of the Royal Mint, 1783-1855, by Michael A. Marsh, Cambridge, 1996

The view that Benedetto Pistrucci was a man touched by greatness is etched on virtually every page of Michael Marsh's biography of the Italian engraver and sculptor. This is an undeniably personal account and Marsh almost seems to have been caught in the act of offering up his gratitude to Pistrucci for the pleasure the artist's work has given him over many years. His opinions in defence of his subject drive the narrative forward and the result is a biography that strives to be and is no more nor less than a genuine expression of admiration.

Far from aiding a wider appreciation, however, such an approach can operate against the very achievements that are being praised. Merely to proclaim a composition as self-evidently without fault, as Marsh does, is of service neither to the composition nor to the reader. It might on occasion have been more instructive to have subjected Pistrucci to criticism of a more engaged and dispassionate kind, and in so doing release his reputation from the confines of a panegyric and allow it to fight for itself.

Slightly more worrying though, is the omission from some passages of details that might have contributed to a more rounded view of the man. The process by which Pistrucci thought the Waterloo Medal dies ought to have been hardened is dealt with at length and Marsh reserves the most fulsome of his praise for, as he sees it, this masterpiece of intaglio engraving. Yet the crucial point that the dies on which he worked off and on for some thirty years were never actually hardened, nor a medal ever actually struck from them, is not recorded. It is indicative of Marsh's approach that this crushing irony, in a way the most tragic episode of Pistrucci's career, is passed over in silence. Nevertheless, it is possible to grasp something of the drama and controversy of his life, a good example of which is the story, drawn by Marsh from the article by Mark Jones in BNM 54, of his very nearly coming to blows with Berkley Westropp, Secretary of the Royal Humane Society, over the design of the Fothergillian Medal. But too often the opportunity to dwell on the character of his temperament and how this might have determined the nature of his work is not explored.

On other occasions, rather than helping to clarify the record of Pistrucci's life, Marsh effectively muddies the waters. Even the description of Pistrucci in the title as 'Principal Engraver' of the Royal Mint, never a position as such but rather an opinion that may or may not be accepted, is misleading and reads like a plea to give Pistrucci the recognition he failed to receive officially. It is also difficult to ignore the inaccuracies liberally scattered throughout this book - the sepulchral figure of Sir Joseph Banks ordering medals from Pistrucci well into the 1820s, a number of years after his death, is but one example - and, collectively, they tend to dissipate the impact of Marsh's enthusiasm for his subject.
The perspective on the whole is that of a eulogy—a heartfelt tribute, devotional in its tone. For those who may question this reverential treatment, the fairly extensive series of plates, some illustrating pieces by Piozzi that have seldom been published in Britain, offers a means of formulating an independent judgement. The most welcome contribution that Marsh has made is in displaying the breadth of Piozzi’s work in a modern and colourful format, though there should be no doubt that a comprehensive English-language biography of this prodigal and gifted man has still to be written.

KEVIN CLANCY


This small volume has been published as part of the celebrations held to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Numismatic Society. It therefore starts with a short, but interesting, history of that society from 1947 to 1997 before moving on to the main subject of the work. This concerns those tokens used in the Glasgow fruit and vegetable and fish markets during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

The tokens represented cash deposits paid to the wholesaler on the containers, mainly boxes, for the produce. This seemingly cumbersome transaction involving the return of the token along with the container to secure the return of the deposit had the advantage of making the customer take greater care of the boxes and avoided payment on stolen boxes. However, because there were also separate stores for empty boxes the redeemer was not given cash but a voucher or chit to be presented when paying the account. Thus the tokens were often referred to as ‘chitties’ in Glasgow though here the authors use the more common numismatic term of tallies throughout.

The Glasgow tallies are found in a variety of shapes, sizes, metals and values ranging from 3 pence up to 10 shillings. The latter seems to have represented the most expensive type of box, for bananas, used at the fruit market while the majority of fish market tallies are for one shilling, representing the value of the smaller fish box. Apart from the value, each tally usually only gives the name of the issuing wholesaler along with the location at the ‘Bazaar’, or ‘Bazaar Glasgow’ or ‘Glasgow’. The word bazaar refers to the earlier market known as far as can be ascertained, obverse and reverse descriptions, edge, metal, shape and size. Seventy-four obverses and thirty-five reverses are clearly illustrated from carefully chosen examples.

Unfortunately little has survived of the records of the Glasgow markets, but much labour has been fruitfully spent on the local directories. Very fortunately the experiences of a fruit wholesaler, who started in 1937, are recorded by the authors. Not only was he able to explain the working of the tally system but even produced a banana box with the marking for a 10 shillings deposit.

Over sixty per cent of the tallies listed are only known from single specimens and more may come to light, not least because of this work. This is the reason why the catalogue entries are not numbered and this lack of catalogue numbers, making referencing a little less easy, is the only quibble the reviewer has with the publication.

It is very well researched, written and produced and hopefully will not be the only such catalogue to come from the large amount of knowledge built up on local issues by members of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Numismatic Society. It will be through such work by local societies that the corpus of paranumismatica will be greatly expanded.

J.D. BATESON


In the early 1970s the National Museum of Wales—now rather cumbersomely, if more appropriately, renamed the National Museums and Galleries of Wales—to reflect the institution’s geographical and disciplinary spread—launched a series of small ‘picture’ books to interpret its collections to the general public in what was hoped would be an ‘accessible’ but authoritative manner. Thematic in approach, the booklets were, at the time, a radical departure from the Museum’s existing, somewhat taut, publishing style and, ranging over subjects as diverse as ‘Welsh Scenery’, ‘Seashells’, ‘China’ and ‘Coalmines’, they proved to be an immediate success.

Among the earliest contributions to the series were Welsh Industrial Tokens and Medals and A Hundred and One Coins, two companion volumes compiled in 1973 by the late George Boon, then the Museum’s senior assistant keeper of Archaeology. Both booklets have been out of print for many years and have been...
sorely missed. Now, at long last, the latter, ostensibly an illustrated guide to those coins all too frequently brought into the Museum for identification, has been succeeded by Edward Besly’s *Loose Change*.

Besly describes his book as ‘in effect, a second edition’ of *A Hundred and One Coins*: ‘revised, expanded and updated’. He is too modest. While, conceptually, *Loose Change* is obviously in the same mould as its predecessor it stands very much on its own. It is still, as its sub-title tells us, a guide to common coins, and to the stray medal too, since local commemorative medals and the ubiquitous campaign medals of the two world wars have been added to its tally. In common with Boon Besly sets out not only to describe specific coins and suchlike objects but to put them into their historical and cultural context. But he has taken advantage of the remarkable enrichment of the Cardiff collection over the past quarter of a century to draw upon material not available in 1973 and has impressed his own personal stamp on his choice of specimens.

*Loose Change* is handsomely put together with a wealth of illustration, both in colour and black and white, and with helpful maps. Chronologically arranged, it is a useful and alluring beginner’s introduction to numismatics and something of a simplified vade-mecum to the author’s coin and medal gallery at Cathays Park.

Of course readers will have their criticisms. No doubt some will feel that ‘Loose Change’ is a curious title for a book that contains coins, especially in the classical series, that could never have been thought to be such by contemporaries. And some of the coins illustrated are today far from ‘common’ in terms of the average collector’s pocket but, as Besly points out, the odd rarity can usefully serve to illustrate a common class. Yet the stress is properly on those types of coins, neither particularly rare nor valuable, which time and again are brought in for identification. The descriptive commentaries are short and succinct, more concise than those in *A Hundred and One Coins*, and on the whole the better for it even if, in some instances, they are almost too perfunctory. The coin photography is first class and the supporting illustrations well chosen and apposite. It is good to see Lawrence’s splendid portrait of that old scoundrel Thomas Williams of Llanidan now at home in the Museum’s Art department after years in the wilderness; but why waste a whole page towards a chronology for Offa’s coinage (760s–796), used for periodic fairs). In what the editor terms ‘probably the most interesting, of the five papers are on Northumbrian coinage. James Booth summarises present knowledge of Northumbrian coins c. 670–867 and examines in detail the South Newbold site, which has yielded 124 coins lost c. 740–c. 855. Mike Bonser reviews the types of coins found at eight “productive sites” (typically open field areas, most likely used for periodic fairs). In what the editor terms ‘probably the major work’ Derek Chick presents an interim study towards a chronology for Offa’s coinage (760s–776), based on a paper delivered at the British Numismatic Society’s one-day meeting at Cambridge in July 1995 – ‘New Developments in Anglo-Saxon Numismatics’.

E.J.E. Pirie re-examines an enigmatic penny of Eanred from the 1774 Trewhiddle hoard, rejecting the proposed date of c. 850, which would require a new, unknown, King Eanred or a drastic revision of Northumbrian chronology, in favour of a date of c. 830, which accords with Eanred’s accepted dates. In the final Anglo-Saxon paper Veronica Smart revisits the challenge of names on coins, particularly on Northumbrian ‘stycas’, and defends her selection of discrete names among variant spellings.
Medieval

In the sole medieval entry Ian Dowihwaite outlines the known facts of Henry III's Long Cross moneyers, die-custodians, assayers and clerks, as found on the coins and in various types of rolls.

Post-Medieval

Editor Tony Abramson's account of the so-called 'Yorkshire Coiners' of 1765-83 reviews the deplorable monetary situation of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and basically blames governmental financial and legal incompetence for the widespread diminishing and counterfeiting of gold coins. Brian Robinson links Captain James Cook with Maundy Money presented during his Pacific voyages.

Seventeenth-Century Tokens

In spite of Pinkerton's well-known fatuous comment, for the past century and a half there has been an increasing interest in seventeenth-century tokens, recently spurred by the Norweb Sylloge volumes. Five articles here contribute to their study. Geoff Percival provides personal histories of two issuers, but unfortunately Ian Taylor's identification of another either has lost its concluding paragraph(s) or has been drastically over-edited.

R.H. Thompson convincingly re-attributes ten Yorkshire tokens, and Jim Halliday lists fifty-one recent finds in Yorkshire (twenty-five illustrated). C.E. Challis discusses and lists the acquisition of tokens of this type in the University of Leeds collection.

It is well known that Boyne and Williamson (BW) 'filled in' legends on worn tokens - sometimes correctly, sometimes not. Issuers also often had a second or third striking, differing slightly in date or legend. Thus it may be difficult to determine whether a new date or legend is truly a variety or merely a correction from a clearer specimen. The Challis corpus of more than 900 tokens is particularly valuable in giving readings that vary from BW. It would be useful if more institutional collections could be published in this manner.

Medals

Two articles explore little-known medallic series: David Pickup's notes on the 1807 York parliamentary election and F.W. Mellor's United States presidential awards for lifesaving at sea, especially those given to British seamen.

Northern Register

Finally Craig Barclay lists coin finds reported to the Yorkshire Museum 1992-96, and John H. Rumsby notes Yorkshire checks and passes in the Kirklees Museum.

As with most collections of articles and notes, the widely varying styles, sometimes unclear explanations and uneven writing can put one off, especially when obvious errors creep in (e.g. 'OF' as in the text, or 'IN' as in the drawing?). However, different approaches can also be a source of strength, particularly from authors who have previously published little and, through specialised studies, present fresh views.

The only serious criticism of YN3 results from what must have been a rush to meet a printing schedule. Using a computer 'spellchecker' will not pick up such mistakes as 'feed' for 'feet' (p. 125) nor make sense of this paragraph.

'Traders' accounts are full of refer presumably the fruits of his own research, as the names do not correspond to those he notes from other sources (p. 134).

Whilst one can sympathise with having to meet a deadline, especially when authors are slow to return copy, mistakes in print live on. It is hoped that for YN4 (which this reviewer impatiently anticipates) an extra day or two may be granted for one last editorial read-through.

H.E. MANVILLE


This impressive tome is the latest part in Manville's Encyclopaedia of British Numismatics. The material presented here covers four basic categories: the national journals such as the Numismatic Chronicle and British Numismatic Journal; dealers lists like Spink's Numismatic Circular and the now extinct Seaby's Coin and Medal Bulletin; magazines, for example Coin News and Irish Numismatics; and small journals of local numismatic societies, which are often overlooked.

Naturally, Manville has concentrated largely on the NC, BNJ, NCirc and SCMB, and his listing of these four accounts for three quarters of the whole work. However, their contents are so well presented, highlighted and indexed, that the volume is invaluable for this alone. It will certainly save regular users of these publications a great deal of time. In particular he makes the numerous small but significant articles and notes in SCMB immediately accessible. The same applies to the listing of the contents of the underrated Irish Numismatics, a labour of love for the owner/editor Derek Young from 1968-1983.

Manville has the great skill to be able to pick the bones out of all these publications without making his volume into a simplistic tedious listing and index. It is a remarkable achievement and one marvels at his vision, presentation and that ability to distil such a vast amount of information into 600+ pages. It is hard to think of anyone else with the same combination of imagination, knowledge and energy to have undertaken it.

It is another wonderful volume in this series which is essential for all serious numismatists and even seems cheap at £60 in these days of inflated coin prices.

PATRICK FINN