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THE COVID-19 EDITION

The COVID-19 virus is disrupting the entire world and has brought our Society's activities to a halt for the last few months. But it doesn't mean that we have to stop all our numismatic activity. We can continue to work on our collections, research our coins and communicate with fellow enthusiasts from home.

Alan Walker of Nomos AG in Zurich had an interesting take on the pandemic in a recent online newsletter, and it is worth quoting part of it:

'But the coins you collect, we trade in and provide, and all of us study, enjoy and learn from, well, some of them certainly went through events like this: Athenian tetradrachms were there when the plague ravaged Athens at the start of the Peloponnesian War, killing Pericles himself in 429 BC; gold solidi of Anastasius I, Justin I and Justinian I were there during the great plague that occurred in 541-542; and, of course, all sorts of late Byzantine and Medieval issues were being struck at the time of the Black Plague, or the Black Death, which wiped out a significant number of the Old World's population, devastating Europe from 1347, when it arrived in Constantinople and Sicily on Genoese ships that sailed from Kaffa in the Crimea, to 1351/1353 when it began to subside. For now, all we can do is follow the rules and advice of the medical experts who know far more than we do, stay at home, and enjoy our coins, since so many of them have seen it all before, and are still here to tell us about it.'

Source: *News from Nomos*, 20 March 2020. <https://nomosag.com>

Of course, many other coins were also around during similar crises. For example, one of the last outbreaks of plague in Europe began in the southern French city of Marseilles in 1720 and spread north. French and Italian coins of the period would have been circulating there. And, of course, many coins of the world, including Australian coins, were in peoples' pockets when the terrible Spanish Influenza pandemic hit in 1918-1920.

Let's hope that we will soon be able to resume our normal meetings and events.

In the meantime, good luck to everyone.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (1542-1587) HER COINAGE AND CERTAIN COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS AND JETTONS

John Wheatley

Mary Queen of Scots (“Mary”) led a turbulent and tragic life. She was a polarising figure but I believe that she has been judged unfairly by early historians, who accused her of adultery, murder and conspiracy to replace Elizabeth on the English throne. No concrete proof has been produced to substantiate these claims. A modern historian, Jenny Wormald, concluded that Mary was a tragic figure who was unable to cope with the demands placed upon her.ⁱ Other modern historians argue that Mary was simply a pawn in the hands of scheming noblemen.ⁱⁱ Perhaps Mary’s greatest enduring legacy was that her son, James VI of Scotland, succeeded Elizabeth 1 to become James 1 of England.



Image of Mary, courtesy of Wikipedia

For the history buffs, I have included in the Schedule, a Timeline of important dates and events in the life of Mary Queen of Scots.

According to contemporary accounts, Mary was beautiful and clever and tall, being 5 feet 11 inches (1.80 Metres.) Elizabeth of England was said to be exceedingly plain. Mary and Elizabeth never met, contrary to what was shown in the recent film about Mary.

During Mary’s reign some particularly fine gold and silver coins were issued, particularly portrait silver testoons.

Table of Mary's Coinageⁱⁱⁱ

Gold	Silver	Billon
Abbey Crown or Ecu. First issued at 20 shillings then later at 22 shillings ten pence.	Testoon (Type one). Issued at four shillings.	Bawbee. Issued at sixpence.
Forty four shilling piece or Lion.	Testoon (Types two and three). Issued at five shillings	Half Bawbee. Issued at threepence.
Twenty two shillings piece or Half Lion.	Half Testoons of Type one and Types two and three.	Penny.
Three pound piece or Portrait Ryal. Issued at 60 shillings.	Ryal. Issued at 30 shillings.	Lion or "Hardhead". Issued at one and one half pence.
Thirty shillings piece or Half Ryal.	Two-thirds Ryal.	Plack. Issued at fourpence.
Ducat. Issued at sixty shillings.	One third Ryal.	Twelvepenny Groat or "Nonsunt".
Half-Ducat. Issued at 30 shillings.		

Mary's coinage, commemorative medals and jettons are divided into five periods that are closely linked to historical events and Mary's marital status.

First Period, 1542-1558 (Before Marriage to Francis)

During this period the coins usually showed the legend MARIA REGINA or the letters MR. Gold coins issued during this period included an Abbey Crown or (Ecu) issued at twenty shillings in 1542 and 1543, followed by twenty two shillings and forty four shillings both dated 1553.

Each of these three coins were non-portrait designs.



Gold Abbey Crown (20 shillings), undated.

Obverse: Crowned Scottish arms, cinquefoil either side, beaded inner and outer circles with legend surrounding, initial mark star, MARIA.DEI.GRA.REGINA SCOTORVM

Reverse: Inverted die axis, pellet at centre of quatrefoil, cruciform lis topped pillars, thistles in angles, initial mark crown, beaded inner and outer circles with legend surrounding, CRVCIS. ARMA. SEOVAMVR

*Image courtesy Ex Archbishop Sharp Collection,
sold by Morton & Eden, 7-8 December 2017.*



Gold 44 Shillings, 1553

Obverse: Crowned Scottish arms, I to left and G to right for JACOBVS GUBERNATOR (James Earl of ARRAN, Regent and Governor of Scotland) linear circle and legend surrounding, initial mark cross pattee, +. MARIA. DEI. GRA. R. SCOTORVM

Reverse: crowned monogram of MARIA REGINA, cinquefoil either side, linear circle and legend surrounding, initial mark cross pattee, DILIGITE. IVSTICIAM. (Observe Justice) 1553

Image courtesy of Heritage Auctions.



Gold Half-Lion (22 Shillings), 1553

Obverse: Crowned Scottish arms, I to left and G to right for JACOBVS GUBERNATOR (James Earl of ARRAN, Regent and GOVERNOR of Scotland), linear circle and legend surrounding, initial mark cross pattee, MARIA.D.G..R,SCOTORVM.

Reverse: Crowned monogram of MARIA, central pelleted cinquefoil either side, linear circle and legend surrounding, initial mark cross pattee, DILIGITE. IVSTICIAM (Observe Justice) 1553.

Image courtesy of A.H. Baldwin & Co.

Rare portrait Ryals (three-pound pieces) and Half Ryals were issued dated 1555, 1557 and 1558. The portrait of Mary on these coins did not receive the acclamation of all modern numismatists. Ian Halley Stewart, (now the late Lord Stewartby) stated “*The engraver hardly made the most of his opportunity, for his portrayal of one of the most beautiful young ladies of his time would do no credit to a woman of middle ages.*”^{iv}



Gold Ryal (3 pound piece), 1555

Obverse: Bust facing left, legend and outer toothed border surrounding, .MARIA.DEI.G.SCOTOR.REGINA.

Reverse: Crowned Scottish arms, date in legend, . IVSTVS.FIDE.VIVIT. (The just man lives by faith) 1555.

Image courtesy of Sovereign Rarities.



Gold Half-Ryal (30 shillings), 1555

Obverse: Bust left wearing necklace, legend
. MARIA.DEL.G.SCOTOR.REGINA.

Reverse: Crowned shield surrounded by legend
. IVSTVS.FIDE.VIVIT (The just man lives by faith) 1555.

Image courtesy of Hunterian Museum GLAHM:38995

All the gold coins of this first period are very rare and form the greater part of the gold coinage of Mary's reign. The only other gold coins issued by Mary were the gold Ducat issued during the second period (Mary's marriage to Francis) and the Crown issued during her first widowhood. I understand there is only one specimen of the latter, in the British Museum.



Gold Ducat (3 pound piece), Second Period, 1558

Obverse: Facing busts of Francis and Mary, crown above, legend
+.FRAN.ET.MA.D.G.R.R.SCOTOR.DELPHIN.VIEN (Francis and Mary by the grace of God, King and Queen of Scotland, DAUPHIN of VIENNOIS)

Reverse: Cross made up of interconnected dolphins, cross of Lorraine in each angle, legend +.HORVM.TVTA.FIDES. (The faith of these is whole) 1558.

Image courtesy of Heritage Auctions

Silver issues in this first period included a magnificent portrait Testoon of four shillings dated 1553. This was followed by Testoons of five shillings dated 1556 – 58.



Silver Portrait Testoon, first period, 1553

Obverse: Crowned bust facing right, legend, initial mark cinquefoil followed by MARIA DEI GRA R SCOTORVM

Reverse: Crowned shield with cinquefoil each side legend + DA PACEM DOMINIE (Give peace, O Lord) 1553.

Image courtesy of w.w.w.petitioncrown.com (Spink London sale 161, Lot 140)

Billon coins were struck using a metal alloy comprising mostly copper or bronze with a small amount of silver.

Billon Bawbees (sixpence) and billon Half-Bawbees (threepence) were issued in great numbers throughout the early part of Mary's reign and formed the basis of the working currency. These were followed by a Plack (fourpence), a Lion or Hardhead (penny halfpenny) and a Portrait Penny.

The earliest of the pennies show a crowned facing bust with very young features. Later coins show an older face but with the same reverse.

New pennies issued in 1556 no longer have a portrait, but instead have the cross potent and smaller crosses as on the Testoons. The reverse is simply VICIT VERITAS (Truth has conquered) in two lines with a crown above, and below the date 1556.



Billon Bawbee (sixpence), First Period

Obverse: Crowned thistle dividing MR, legend
+.MA.D.G.R.SCOTORVM

Reverse: Plain saltire cross through crown with cinquefoil each side.
Legend, lis initial mark followed by OPPIDVM EDINBVRGI

Image courtesy of AMR Coins



Billon Penny, First Period, c. 1547

Obverse: facing infant head, legend, +MA(RIA).D.G.R. OTORVM

Reverse: long cross fourchee, mullet of five points in first and third angles, crowns in second and fourth angles within beaded inner circle.
Legend OPIDVM EDNBVR

Image courtesy of AMR Coins

So many forgeries were made of the billon plack, because of the poor metal of the originals, that in 1572 their circulation was halted until 1574, when any genuine pieces were counter stamped with the heart and star.



Billon Plack (fourpence), First Period, 1557

Obverse: Crowned shield between M and R with legend + MARIA .DEI. G .SCOTOR. REGINA (Mary by the grace of God Queen of Scots)1557

Reverse: A cruciform design with a crown in each angle and the legend SERVIO. ET. VSV TERROR (I serve and am worn by service) 1557

Image courtesy of Lloyd Bennett

Second Period, 1558-1560 (Francis and Mary)

In addition to the gold Ducat, previously referred to, silver Testoons and Half Testoons were issued during this period. They all featured the crowned arms of Francis as Dauphin and Mary on coins dated 1558-1559. The arms of Francis were changed to those of King of France on coins dated 1560 – 61. A crowned FM monogram with crowned lis and thistle beside it was on the reverse.



Silver Testoon, Second Period, 1560

Obverse: Crowned shield with arms of France and Scotland, a cross and saltire each side, legend FRAN.ET.MA.D.G.R.R.FRANCO.SCOTORO

Reverse: Crowned monogram, lis and thistle beside it, legend +.VICIT.LEO.DE.TRIBV.IVDA.1560

Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group LLC.

During this period commemorative medals and jettons were issued to celebrate Mary's marriage to Francis and to commemorate Francis and Mary becoming King and Queen of France following the death of Henry II (Francis' father) in July 1559.



Medal of Marriage of Mary to Francis, 1558

Obverse: busts vis a vis crown above

Reverse: Shields of the couple between F and M and date 1558

Image courtesy of National Museums of Scotland



Medal Commemorating King and Queen of France, 1560

Obverse: Two crowns on earth and the stars in heaven form another with the legend ALIAMQUE MORATUR: (And Awaits Another) and date 1560.

The medal hopes for heaven and the coin has the journey.

Image courtesy of National Museums of Scotland



Francis and Mary Silver Jetton or counter, 1553

Obverse: Crowned FM monogram between two stars, linear circle surrounding legend DILIGITE. IVSTICIAM. (Observe Justice) and date 1553

Reverse: Crowned Scottish Arms, linear circle around legend DELICIE.DNI.COR.HVMILE. (An humble heart is the delight of the Lord)

Image courtesy of New York Sale. Auction 32, lot 355

The date of this jetton is interesting since Francis and Mary were not married until 1558.

Only two denominations of billon coins were minted during the second period. The Lions or penny halfpenny were continued from the first period except for an FM monogram and dolphins instead of simply a crowned M.

A new billon coin was introduced called a twelve-penny Groat. These were issued with dates 1558-9 and were often called “Nonsunts” in consequence of their inscription.



Twelve-Penny Groat (“Nonsunt”), Second Period, 1559

Obverse: Crowned FM monogram.

Reverse: Panel with the legend IAM NON SUNT DUO SED UNA CARO (They are no more twain, but one flesh)

Image courtesy of Mark Rasmussen (www.rascoins.com)

Third Period, 1560-1565 (First Widowhood)

Attractive rare silver Testoons and Half Testoons were issued in 1561-2.



Silver Testoon of Third Period (First Widowhood), 1562

Obverse: Left facing bust in French bonnet and high-necked dress and the date below .

Reverse: Crowned arms of Scotland and France and a crowned M either side and the legend +.SALVVM.FAC.POPVLVM.TVVVM DOMINE (O Lord, save Thy people)

Image courtesy www.petitioncrown.com (Spink London Sale 206, lot 973)

Fourth Period, 1565-1567 (Mary and Henry Darnley)

No gold coins were issued in this period. Silver Ryals of thirty shillings and two-third Ryals dated 1565, 1566 and 1567 were issued. In addition, one third Ryals dated 1565 and 1566 were issued.

The earliest issue of the ryal, struck in 1565, showed on the obverse the two portraits face to face.

The following coin was intended for general circulation but withdrawn soon after minting. It seems the Scottish Nobles resented that Darnley's name was before Mary's name with the implication that his status was equal to hers. I understand that there are only two known coins in existence, one held by the British Museum, the other held by the National Museums of Scotland. The latter was purchased at Spink Auction, Sale 161, lot 141 for 99,750 English pounds, thanks to Lottery cash and an American benefactor.



Extremely Rare Silver Ryal, 1565 (Marriage Issue)

Obverse: The two portraits face to face, and the legend HENRICVS.&.MARIA.D.GRA.R.&.R.SCOTORVM.

Reverse: Escutcheon between the two crowned thistle heads around which is the legend in the form of a prayer, +.QVOS.DEVS.COIVNXIT.HOMO NON SEPARET. (Whom God has joined let no man put asunder)

Image courtesy of National Museums of Scotland.

The sequel to this coin is that an Act was passed by the Privy Council of Scotland on the 22nd December 1565 which ordered a replacement issue of coins on which Mary's name appeared first and possibly an allegorical design on the reverse depicting Darnley with inferior status.^v

Some people interpret the tortoise on the reverse of the new coin to be representative for Darnley, whilst the palm tree is meant to represent Mary, symbolising Darnley's pretensions to the Crown Matrimonial.^{vi}

This remained the design of this coin for three years, with Henry's name being dropped after his death in 1567.

These coins were popularly known as "Crookston Dollars" on the false assumption that the tree was meant to be a yew tree under which Mary and Henry sat during their courtship at Crookston Castle in Renfrewshire.



Replacement Silver Ryal, 1565

Obverse: Crowned Scottish arms with thistle either side (as on reverse of the marriage ryal) and legend MARIA.&.HENRIC.DEL.GRA.R.&.R.SCOTORV following the initial thistle mark

Reverse: Crowned palm tree with a tortoise on the stem. A scroll across the tree is inscribed DAT.GLORIA.VIRES (glory gives strength) and the date is below. The legend is .EXVRGAT.DEVS.&.DISSIPENTR.INIMICI.EI (Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered)

Image courtesy of Heritage Auctions

In 1565 a medal was struck to commemorate the marriage of Mary with Henry Darnley. Five specimens of this medal are known to exist, two in which Mary and Henry are crowned and three without crowns^{vii}. The design is taken from the silver Ryal issued earlier in 1565.^{viii}

The obverse of the crowned version shows the busts of Mary and Henry facing each other, both crowned. Darnley is shown on the left wearing armour and a medal while Mary faces him on the right, wearing a doublet, high collar and earrings. The date 1565 is directly underneath their portraits.

The legend is MARIA&HENRIC.D.G.REGI&.REX.SCOTORVM. (Mary and Henry by the grace of God, Queen and King of Scots).

The reverse shows the shields of Scotland crowned the lion rampant and with two Scottish thistles on either side. The legend is QVOS.DEVS.COIVNXIT.HOMO NON SEPARET (Whom God has joined let no man put asunder)

Except for the missing crowns on the obverse, the uncrowned version is the same.



Crowned Marriage Medal of Mary and Henry Darnley, 1565

Image courtesy of Hunterian Museum of University of Glasgow



Uncrowned Marriage Medal of Mary and Henry Darnley, 1556

Image courtesy of Hunterian Museum of University of Glasgow

Fifth Period, 1567 (Second Widowhood)

No gold coins were issued in this period. Silver Ryals, two- thirds Ryals and one- third Ryals were issued dated 1567. Some one-third Ryals dated 1566 exist. The designs and legends are almost identical to those issued in the fourth period, however the legend on the obverse is now MARIA.DEL.GRA.SCOTORVM.REGINA. Many of the Ryals and their parts from this period bear the crowned thistle countermark of 1578 used to increase their nominal values due to inflation.

At least two Jettons (counting tokens) were issued by Mary during this period.



Undated Silver Jetton

Obverse: Shield of Scotland surrounded by the legend MARIA.DEI.G.SCOTOR.REGINA (Mary by the grace of God, Queen of Scots)

Reverse: Celestial hand from the clouds pruning a withered vine branch and the legend VIRESKIT . VVLNERE . VIRTVS+ (Virtue is strengthened by affliction.)

Image courtesy Sovereign Rarities Ltd.

It is claimed that this jetton was used in Mary's first widowhood (1560 – 65) because of the presence of the Scottish shield on the obverse rather than the combined shields of France and Scotland which she used during her imprisonment in England.^{ix}

It is also claimed that the withered branch of the vine would represent Mary after the death of her husband.^x Mary, herself embroidered a cushion with the image of the reverse of this jetton and motto, "Virtue is strengthened by affliction" in 1569. It also features on a silver gilt bell belonging to her.^{xi}

There are several theories regarding the meaning of the second jetton, shown below.

One theory is that it refers to her widowhood, particularly her first, and that grief can be overcome.^{xii} Another theory is that the jetton refers to Mary's condition as a prisoner in England and that despite all Mary's setbacks she was able to gather strength and get on with life.^{xiii}



Silver Jetton, 1579

Obverse: Crowned shields of France and Scotland surrounded by the legend MARIA.D.G.SCOTOR.REGINA.FRAN.DOI (Mary by the grace of God, Queen of Scots, Dowager of France)

Reverse: vine with two branches, one withered and the other receiving water from an urn in the clouds, dated 1579 with surrounding legend MEA.SIC.MIHI.PROSVNT (Thus are my own profitable to me).

Image courtesy of A.H.Baldwin & Sons Ltd.

These jettons were probably struck in France during Mary's reign and apart from the two referred to above, bear some resemblance in size and type to Mary's Testoons. They should not however, be confused with Mary's coins, their style and production being very fine and their reverse designs and legends being unusually distinctive.^{xiv}

Whilst Mary was imprisoned by Elizabeth she probably used these jettons for her personal finance as well as gifts to visitors and retainers.^{xv} The jettons can also be regarded as advertising pieces, reminding supporters and Elizabeth 1 that Mary was the legitimate Queen of Scotland and/or Queen Dowager of France.^{xvi}

Schedule - Timeline of important dates and events in the life of Mary Queen of Scots

- 1542 8 December: Mary is born.
 14 December: Mary's father James V of Scotland dies. Mary becomes Queen of Scotland
- 1543 1 July: The Treaty of Greenwich is signed whereby it is agreed Mary will marry Henry VIII's son Edward

- 1548 7 July: the treaty of Haddington is signed whereby Mary is to marry the heir to the throne of France, Francis
7 August: Mary leaves Scotland to live in France
- 1558 4 April: Mary signs a secret agreement bequeathing the Scottish Crown (and her claim to England) to the French if she dies childless
24 April: Mary marries the French king's son Francis in Paris
- 1559 10 July: Mary becomes Queen Consort of France when her husband's father Henry II dies in a jousting accident
- 1560 11 June: Mary's mother, Mary of Guise, Regent of Scotland, dies
August: The Reformation Parliament meets. Scotland is now a Protestant country.
5 December: Mary is widowed when her husband King Francis dies.
- 1561 19 August: Mary returns to Scotland
- 1565 29 July: Mary marries Catholic Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley
- 1566 March: Riccio (Mary's private secretary) is murdered
10 June: Mary gives birth to a son, James, the future King of Scotland and England
- 1567 10 February: Lord Darnley is murdered. James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell is chief suspect
15 May: Mary marries Earl of Bothwell and provokes a rebellion by the Scottish Lords
15 June: At the battle of Carberry Hill Mary's forces are defeated. The Earl of Bothwell escapes but Mary is captured and sent to Loch Leven Castle
July: Mary, pregnant with twins, suffers a miscarriage
24 July: Mary is forced to abdicate the Scottish throne in favour of her infant son, James. James Stewart, Earl of Moray is to be Regent
- 1568 May: Mary escapes from Loch Leven Castle and tries to reclaim the throne but is defeated in the Battle of Langside. She flees to England seeking Queen Elizabeth I's help to regain her throne.

Mary is imprisoned by Elizabeth 1 and is never granted an audience with Queen Elizabeth 1.

1569 Mary arrives at Tutbury Castle in Staffordshire, placed in the care of the Earl of Shrewsbury and his wife Bess of Hardwick.

1578 14 April: The Earl of Bothwell dies in a Danish prison.

1585 March: Mary's son King James, rejects her proposal that they should rule Scotland together

1586 After years of imprisonment Mary is implicated in the Babington plot to kill Elizabeth 1 and place Mary on the throne.

25 October: Mary is found guilty of treason and is sentenced to death. Queen Elizabeth 1 however is reluctant to sign the death warrant.

1587 Queen Elizabeth 1 signs Mary's death warrant and she is executed at Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire. She was forty four years old and had been imprisoned in England for nineteen years.

Acknowledgements

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To the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, University of Glasgow for its kind permission to reproduce images for the two marriage medals of Mary and Lord Darnley and the Mary gold thirty shilling piece (half-Ryal).

To the National Museums of Scotland for its kind permission to reproduce images of the silver Ryal of Mary and Lord Darnley dated 1565 and the two medals for Mary and Francis

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End Notes

ⁱWikipedia and Wormald (1988) Mary, Queen of Scots, London: George Philip at pages 188-189

ⁱⁱ Wikipedia and Weir, Alison (2008) Mary Queen of Scots and the Murder of Lord Darnley London: Random House at page 4

ⁱⁱⁱ Coinage of Great Britain. Celtic to Decimalisation by Ken Elks. Part 12, Scottish Coins

^{iv} Stewart, Ian Halley (1955) The Scottish Coinage with Supplement. London. Spink & Son Ltd. At pages 82 and 90

^v Holmes, Nicholas. The Coinage of Mary & Darnley. History of Scotland, Magazine, Vol.4, No.1, January-February 2004 at page 23

^{vi} Analysis of the marriage medal of Mary Queen of Scots and Henry Darnley 1565 posted on April 18 2018, April 17 2018 by stevenreid2013-
<https://glasgowuniscotrenaissance.wordpress.com/2018/04/18/analy..he.marriage-medal-of-mary-queen-of-scots-and-henry-darnley-1565/> at page 6

^{vii} Ibid at page 1

^{viii} Ibid at page 2

^{ix} Analysis of four Mary Queen of Scots counters, posted on February 23, 2018 February 22, 2018 by stevenreid2013
<https://glasgowuniscotrenaissance.wordpress.com/2018/02/23/analysis-of-four-Mary-queen-of-scots-counters/> at page 4

^x Ibid at page 4

^{xi} Sovereign Rarities Ltd. <https://www.sov.co.uk?medals/sold-archive/mary-queen-of-scots-1579-bg02148.html>

^{xii} Analysis of four Mary Queen of Scots counters, ob.cit. at page 4

^{xiii} Ibid.

^{xiv} Ibid

^{xv} Ibid

^{xvi} Ibid

FOREIGN COINS AS SMALL CHANGE IN 18TH CENTURY ENGLAND

Jonathon de Hadleigh

It was once a custom in England, now forgotten, to nail counterfeits or other unacceptable coins to the shop's counter. The practice was still carried out in the 19th century, but its heyday was throughout the 18th century, especially no doubt in London, a teeming metropolis with its recently arrived monarch, King George I (1714-1727). With him, in his court, came many German people with their pockets full of North German money. The gold and silver were soon converted to English coin. However, the lower denominations have a tale to tell.

Always in short supply was "small change". The copper halfpence and farthing were being regularly struck, but a shortage still existed throughout the country. Old coins continued to circulate, and into the mix came billon, copper-looking, North German fractions of a thaler. The thaler being worth almost 5 shillings, the 1/12 thaler coin shown below should have been worth about 4 or 5 English pence and the 1/24 thaler about 2 pence. The 1/6 thaler also shown might have been about 10 pence.



Some 18th Century Fractional Thalers

But each of these coins are pierced in the centre, where they were nailed to a counter.

They are billon coins, composed more of copper than silver, and although their face values might have been higher than a penny, they were not accepted at those levels. Possibly many of them did pass, but at lower than their nominal values, until some merchant stopped their circulation.

The coins illustrated are from the period of King George III (1760-1820), when ships arrived and departed constantly in London bringing foreign goods and foreign coins, many of which were then transported to America where there was a terrible shortage of any sort of change and foreign coins from many countries found acceptance. But many foreign coins would have remained in London.

The gold, being at the top of the tree, found universal acceptance once a value had been set by local authorities. Many coin weights were produced for checking these coins. With the coins circulating in London it was natural that many of the weights should emanate from London makers. They tell us which gold coins would have been encountered in that city, and sometimes in the countryside, during the 18th century.

Following a trade treaty with Portugal in 1703, many of their coins came to circulate in England. Coin weights indicate which of them were in circulation in the 1700 to 1770's period.

There are two series. One consisted of the gold Moidore, half Moidore and quarter Moidore, valued at 27 shillings, 13 shillings and 6 pence, and 6 shillings and 9 pence respectively.

The second series began to appear in 1722. They were for the gold Johannes (or "Joe") and its fractions, with values set at 3 pounds 12 shillings for a double Johannes, then 36 shillings, 18 shillings, 9 shillings, and 4 shillings and 9 pence for the Johannes and its fractions.



English coin weights for the Double Johannes & Johannes

Images courtesy of Walter Bloom

Some of the coins circulating as “small change” in England would have found their way to Australia and would have been in circulation along with our New South Wales Proclamation Coinage of 1800. But, at the time of this proclamation not much attention was paid to the “small change”, other than noting that there was a lack of it. Even today, these humble little everyday coins often pass unnoticed in dealers’ boxes, unless uncirculated when they can have a high resale value.

Many of these coins, although of low value (both face and numismatic), are rare survivors. Some, now “damaged”, may be generally disregarded by collectors. However, they can have the greatest tales attached to them, possibly circulating far and wide until one fateful day they were rejected by a merchant and nailed to his counter. Now, even the shop and its counter have gone, but somehow the holed coins survive, perhaps to take their rightful place in numismatic history.

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1892 Double Shaft 5 Shillings PCGS MS63

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN QUEEN VICTORIA DIAMOND JUBILEE MEDAL

Walter R Bloom

The Diamond Jubilee celebrations for Queen Victoria were held across the British Commonwealth with much fanfare. In Great Britain the main day was the Queen's birthday 22 June 1897, in Western Australia the main celebrations were over the two days 21-22 June 1897. An important part of the celebrations was the issuing of coins and medals by a range of jurisdictions across the Commonwealth. In Western Australia just one such medal was issued, to school children in silver and a few presentation ones were struck in 15ct gold. Note that the gold version isn't holed!



Western Australia Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal in Gold, 1897
23.7 mm, 8.33 gm.



Western Australia Victoria Diamond Jubilee Medal in Silver, 1897
23.7 mm, 5.72 gm.

There was also a special ribbon version of the silver medal, shown below. Note the blue ribbon on the medal itself, which adorned the original medals. It isn't known why there is such an ornate addition in this particular example.



The Carlisle reference (Leslie J Carlisle, Australian historical medals 1788-1988, Ligare Book Printing 2008. ISBN 978-0-98040-615-3) is:

1897/87



Obverse

VICTORIA QUEEN AND EMPRESS 1837. 1897

Reverse

*IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 60th YEAR OF H.M.
REIGN*(West Australia)



Size: 24mm Metals: Silver - Gold Mintage: n/k Mint: Stokes & Sons.

Distribution of the Silver Diamond Jubilee Medals

The first reference to the planned silver medal can be found in NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, March 20). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3109354>):

'THE QUEEN'S "DIAMOND" JUBILEE - It has, we understand, been decided by the Minister for Education to have upwards of 10,000 silver medals struck for distribution amongst the children attending the public Schools of the colony, in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The medals will be ordered from London.'

As it turns out this announcement was incorrect in three aspects; the number presented was higher, the distribution wasn't restricted to children at the Government schools, and the medals weren't ordered from London. In the developments over the following three months, whether it was pragmatism or pressure, the Education Department found itself changing its planning considerably.

The first chip in the armour came at the end of March (DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS. (1897, April 1). Kalgoorlie Miner, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article87858782>):

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

DISTRIBUTION OF SILVER MEDALS.

The tender of W. Dobbie and Co has been accepted by the Minister of Education for the supply of about 10,000 silver medals for distribution amongst the children attending the public schools of the colony as a memento of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. The medals will be struck in Adelaide, and the price is 1s each.

Perhaps it was quickly realised that the medals wouldn't arrive from London in time for the June celebrations, or alternatively that the correspondent made an error in the report? In any case the medals were ordered from W Dobbie and Co, but they weren't struck in Adelaide. In fact Dobbie was acting as an agent for Stokes & Sons in Melbourne where the dies were engraved and the medals struck before dispatch to Adelaide.

It should be mentioned that the then-named firm of Stokes & Martin had also struck a range of medals for the Golden Jubilee in 1887, including for Western Australia.



Examples of Western Australia Victoria Golden Jubilee Medals, 1887

These were of relative uniform style across Australia and New Zealand. The firm, now called Stokes & Sons, did the same in 1897 for the Diamond Jubilee, again of more-or-less uniform style. So, it was interesting that before the Dobbie tender was accepted, letters from Stokes & Martin were received by the Coolgardie Municipal Council (COOLGARDIE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL. (1897, March 25). Coolgardie Miner, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article216691008>), and by the Cue Municipal Council (CUE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL. (1897, March 27). The Murchison Times and Day Dawn Gazette, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article233233547>) forwarding sample medals, together with prices, ‘... which it was thought the Council might wish struck for distribution in the celebrations attending the Queen’s long reign’.

At the end of the month (NEWS IN BRIEF. (1897, March 31). The Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84558945>) it was reported that:

‘The Education Department has not yet decided whether to have the medals commemorating the Queen’s longest reign made in Perth or in London. It is doubtful if the necessary dies could be made locally.’

The last sentiment was most likely quite accurate. Western Australia’s noted 19th century diesinker and engraver, William Muller (alias William Millor, William Mueller, William Miller, William Müller, C William Miller, Wilhelm Muller) had died in 1885, and the next such artisan, Richard Stanley Cumpston, only became active in the early 1900s. In any case the report on the successful tenderer was only a day later! Already the Press was reporting on the slight to Western Australia (LATEST CABLES. (1897, April 2). The Miners’ Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article257482919>):

‘Apparently West Australian silversmiths were not equal to the necessities of the epoch, as a tender submitted by a South Australian firm (Messrs A. W. Dobbie & Co.) to supply discs.....was accepted.’

Another report on the following day included a nice pun (POINTS. (1897, April 3). The Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84560749>):

*‘So it is said that Jubilee medals could not be made in Perth. Bunkum!
“Never say die.”’*

The next chip in the armour came with the opening up of the medal distribution. First it was to children in public schools, then restricted to those who have attended 80% of the possible half-days between February 1 and the 30th April (NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, May 8). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3111731>), then to every child whose name appeared on the school rolls of the colony (NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, May 12). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3111891>). This latter article also stated that the widening of the distribution necessitated making the number ordered up to 15,000, and included the first description of the proposed medal:

'It is the size of a shilling. On the one side there is an impress of the Queen's Head, surrounded by the words "Victoria, Queen and Empress, 1837-1897." On the reverse side is the figure of a swan, around which is inscribed, "In commemoration of the 60th year of H.M. reign."'

The controversy didn't end there. In a letter to the Editor of the Geraldton Advertiser in May 1897 (THE DIAMOND JUBILEE MEDALS. (1897, May 17). <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article252771833>) a Northampton correspondent asked about *'...the children who do not attend the public schools, because they are beyond the 3 mile limit.'* By the end of the month the number of silver medals had increased to 15,250 with 3,000 to be distributed to children attending denominational schools (NEWS AND NOTES. The West Australian, (1897, May 31), <http://nla.gov.au/nla.newsarticle3112843>).

The silver medals ordered by the Government reached the Education Department in early June (MEDALS FOR CHILDREN. (1897, June 7). The Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84555444>) and were then dispatched to the more distant schools. A few days before the celebrations there appeared a curious report (THE QUEEN'S REIGN. (1897, June 18). The West Australian (1879 - 1954) <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3177660>):

'It was pointed out by Mr. Rooney (a member of the City of Perth Citizens' Committee) that the arrangements for the presentation of medals did not comprise the pupils of certain schools taking part in the procession. It was accordingly decided that a number of extra medals should be procured from Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, not to exceed 30 dozen, and costing 18s. per dozen, in order that each child might receive a medal.'

It is not clear where the international firm of Gordon and Gotch enters the picture or how they were able to obtain 360 medals at relatively short notice; perhaps directly from Stokes & Sons? Note the increased price of 1/6 per medal, which would not be unusual for an extra striking. Anyway, this would bring the number ordered up to 15,610. This number included some 500 that were surplus and given to members of Parliament to distribute to children in their districts other than those attending the public schools (THE QUEEN'S REIGN. (1897, June 18). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3177660>). In the same article, Lady Smith was to present '*... a special medal to a pupil of the blind school who had shown special proficiency and aptitude for acquiring instruction imparted by the school.*'

There must have still been some surplus silver medals as by the end of the celebrations Members of both Houses of Parliament have been presented by the Education department with eight silver Jubilee medals '*... for some deserving persons in district* (LOCAL AND GENERAL. (1897, June 24). Coolgardie Miner, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article216699141>).'

And then came the great anticlimax, the proceedings on the second day (Wednesday 23 June) were spoilt by heavy rain! (WEDNESDAY'S PROCEEDINGS. (1897, June 24). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3177958>).

Finally, even in July, the Fremantle District Board of Education was requesting more medals for those private schools where students had missed out (NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, July 10). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3179157>).

Distribution of the Gold Diamond Jubilee Medals

In mid-July it was reported that the Perth City Council had decided to present the city councillors with a gold medal each, in commemoration of the diamond jubilee (NEWS IN BRIEF. (1897, April 14). The Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84555153>).

The 15 members were: Cr. Thomas George Anstruther MOLLOY, Cr. Richard Henry BARRETT, Cr. William James GEORGE, M.L.A., Cr. John HURST, Cr. Alfred LEE, Cr. Henry LYALL HALL, M.L.A.,

Cr. Charles Henry OLDHAM, M.L.A., Cr. Charles Antony PATERSON, Cr. Timothy Francis QUINLAN, M.L.A., Cr. Charles Jeffery REEVE., Cr. Charles Augustus SAW, Cr. James Montgomery SPEED, Cr. Joseph Angus THOMSON, Cr. Frank WILSON, M.L.A. and THE MAYOR (Hon. Henry John SAUNDERS, M.L.C.).



Then in early June (NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, June 7). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3113214>) it was reported that:

'Three Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Medals similar in design to those to be presented to the school children by the Education Department, but made in gold instead of silver, have been received by the educational authorities. It is intended that these medals shall be presented to the Acting-Premier, the Minister of Education, and the Under-Secretary for Education.'

These men were: Sir Edward Horne Wittenoom, Acting-Premier.
Henry Lefroy, Minister of Education.
Owen Pennell Stables, Under-Secretary for Education.

The Premier (Sir John Forrest) was on his way to London for the British celebrations.

On the same day it was reported that (MEDALS FOR CHILDREN. (1897, June 7). The Daily News, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article84555444>):

'Several of these medals have been cast in gold for presentation to the Premier, the Minister for Mines, and several others.'

Sir John Forrest, Premier.
Sir Edward Horne Wittenoom, Minister for Mines.

The presentation of the first three medals was made '*... by A. W. Dobbie & Co., the contractors for the supply of the silver medals*' (NEWS AND NOTES. (1897, June 8). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3113283>).

There are a couple more references to the gold medal, but for the first it isn't clear if this was the Diamond Jubilee medal as it refers to a gold medal being purchased and presented to little Mary MacDonald, the first child born in Coolgardie (THE FREMANTLE CELEBRATIONS. (1897, June 24). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3177960>). The second is just as curious (THE CITY COUNCIL. (1897, July 3). The West Australian, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article3178588>):

Cr. GEORGE protested that the jubilee medals which had been specially struck for the councillors were being worn by outsiders, the jeweller who made them having sold two to gentlemen who were not councillors. Lady Robinson wrote expressing

There is no doubt that the medals that were specially struck for the councillors were in fact the gold Diamond Jubilee medals, but what is meant by *the jeweller who made them*?

Finally, it would be expected that one such medal would have been presented to the Governor, Gerald Smith (Governor 1895-1900).

The above indicates that at least 20 gold medals were struck, but the exact number is unclear. However, the answer might be found in the Stokes Day Book for 1897, for which photocopies of the medal pages are held at the Mitchell Library in Sydney. With the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, consulting this source could be some time away.



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CALENDAR OF PNS MEETINGS FOR 2020

PNS meetings are held at 7.30pm on the last Wednesday of each month, except December, at The Collins Street Centre, corner of Collins Street and Shaftsbury Street, South Perth. Meeting dates for 2020 are as follows:

29 January	Short talks. Tender Sale.
26 February	Short talks. No-reserve tender Sale
25 March	Cancelled.
29 April	Cancelled.
27 May	Cancelled.
24 June	Cancelled
29 July	Cancelled
26 August	Invited speaker. Graeme Stephens: <i>Some medallions from Charles I to Edward VII.</i> No-reserve tender Sale
23 September	Invited speaker. Ed Robinson: <i>Commonwealth medals.</i> Tender Sale
28 October	Short talks. No-reserve tender Sale
25 November	Invited speaker. Jonathon de Hadleigh: <i>TBA.</i> Tender Sale

NOTE: Due to restrictions imposed as a result of the corona virus outbreak PNS meetings have been suspended until further notice. The meetings listed above may or may not proceed. Please monitor the PNS website for further information.

The next meeting that we are able to hold will become the Annual General Meeting. Until then the current committee and office holders will remain in place.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Adult	\$15
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Junior	\$7
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Dr Walter Bloom	2013

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Edward Rintoul †	1968-1969
Edward Gibbs †	1969-1970
Clive Stronach †	1970-1971
Karl Hawelka †	1971-1978
Haydn Powell †	1978-1988
Dr Walter Bloom	1988-1991
Jiri Just †	1991-1994
Colin Meikle	1994-1997
Haydn Powell †	1997-2005
Dr Walter Bloom	2005-

CALENDAR OF FAIRS

Perth Numismatic Society Coin, Medal and Banknote Fairs:

Saturday 7th November 2020

Saturday 26th December 2020

Peel Region Numismatic Group / Mandurah Philatelic Society Fair:

Sunday 9th November 2020

Perth Stamp & Coin Show:

Friday 18th - Sunday 20th September 2020

Phoenix Auctions:

Sunday 27th September 2020

Sunday 6th December 2020

Militaria Swapmeet (Cannington):

Sunday 21st June 2020

Annual Militaria Fair (Cannington):

Saturday 12th – Sunday 13th September 2020

Cannington Antiques & Collectors Fairs:

Sunday 28th June 2020

Sunday 16th August 2020

Sunday 20th September 2020

For more details see: <http://www.pns.org.au/events/>

NOTE: The Fairs listed were scheduled prior to restrictions imposed as a result of the corona virus outbreak. At this stage we do not know which of them will proceed on the dates indicated.

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