

Volume 53 Number 4

November 2021

# Perth Numismatic Journal



*Official publication of the  
Perth Numismatic Society Inc*  
[www.pns.org.au](http://www.pns.org.au)

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Printed by Uniprint

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## COLLECTING ELIZABETH THE FIRST

### Jonathon de Hadleigh

When reading about the silver coinage of Elizabeth the First we find that it is divided into seven issues, with a wide variety of mintmarks determining which issue a coin belongs to, since many coins were not dated. Each issue contains a range of denominations, but never a complete set. So, one must content oneself with only partial uniformity.

For example, in the fifth issue of 1578 to 1582/3 one can find a shilling, sixpence, threepence, three halfpence, penny and three farthings. Except for the penny, each denomination is a double multiple of the one below and they are marked as belonging to a set by the addition of a rose on the obverse and the date on the reverse. But this is only a partially complete denominational set for Elizabeth the First.

The penny was a traditional denomination dating back into the Middle Ages and it had multiples, being the half groat (two pence) and the groat (four pence). The shilling and the penny were the traditional denominational ends of the silver coinage, but the inclusion of the groat and half groat form another denominational set.



***Elizabeth I, Penny, 1558-1603 (14 mm, 0.53 gm)  
and Shilling, 1560-1561 (33mm, 6.04 gm), natural size.***

*Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group ([www.cngcoins.com](http://www.cngcoins.com))*

The shilling was first issued in Henry VII's time (1485-1509) and was initially known as a '*testoon*'. This name was derived from the Italian word '*teste*' for heads and was adopted from a 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian coin that carried a realistic portrait. All European countries had their own testoons. The name shilling has an older, more obscure, Anglo-Saxon origin.

The first issue of Elizabeth the First's silver (1558-1560), with no rose and no date, would impoverish you, but the second issue (1560-1561) is less expensive. The third and fourth issues can be considered together, dated from 1561 to 1577. The sixpences are the most common with the lesser denominations harder to find the lower one goes. The threepences are all dated and trying to find them all might take a lifetime. The sixpences, while being the easiest to find, have several portrait varieties, one of which is quite scarce, and an undated specimen is quite rare.

Within these issues are also the coins machine struck by the French moneyer Eloye Mestrelle, the first milled coins to be produced in England.

As no farthings were produced by the mint the public made do with a variety of measures. First, the old debased coins of Edward (VI?) were 'cried down', the shillings countermarked with a portcullis or greyhound to make them fourpence halfpenny or twopence farthing. The debased penny and halfpenny issued in 1550-1553 were used as a halfpenny and farthing respectively. The public also used tokens of lead, tin and brass ('lateen'), or even leather.

The question of small change was often raised and by 1574 a number of solutions had been proposed; a debased issue, a copper issue or a copper pledge issue. A silver farthing would be too small to be practical, but a silver halfpenny would be possible and indeed was issued later, from the sixth issue. However, the queen would not hear of a debased issue, having just removed all base coins from circulation.

A copper farthing would weigh 24 grains (1.56 gm) or 1 pennyweight (dwt). The pledge coins would be one dwt for a halfpenny and 12 grains (0.78 gm) for a farthing. Patterns exist for the halfpenny struck in silver but are rare and expensive. The problem was solved by the issue of three halfpence and three farthing coins, which had been issued since 1561 but in low numbers that were insufficient to meet demand. Lead tokens persisted until 1613.

The fifth issue of 1578-1582 had a slight reduction in fineness and weight, with a nominal shilling at 95.6 grains (6.19 gm) compared with 96 grains (6.22) grams for the previous issue, although no shillings were actually issued. The previous issue of shillings was presumably enough to suffice for everyday transactions.

The sixth issue (1582-1600) will give you an easier time. By then things had settled down denomination wise, with a shilling, sixpence, half groat, penny and halfpenny. Only the sixpence carries the date. These were the denominations needed for everyday commerce, all that is but farthings, which were not made by the mint. Tradespeople made their own tokens, usually of lead.

The seventh issue in silver includes all the denominations of the sixth issue plus a crown and a half crown (both of which would require a new mortgage), with two new portraits.

**Table 1 - Silver Issues**

Issue	Dates	Silver Denominations	Comments
1	1558-1560	Shilling, sixpence, groat, half groat, penny	Mintmark: Fleur de Lis
2	1560-1561	Shilling, sixpence, groat, half groat, penny	Mintmarks: cross, crosslet & martlet
3	1561-1572	Sixpence, groat, threepence, half groat, three halfpennies, penny, 3 farthings	Mintmarks: pheon, rose, portcullis, lion, coronet, castle, ermine, acorn, eglantine.
4	1572-1578	Sixpence, threepence, three halfpence, penny, 3 farthings	Milled coins only: star & lis.
5	1578-1582/3	Sixpence, threepence, three halfpence, penny, 3 farthings	Mintmarks: Greek cross (1578-1580), Latin cross (1580-1581), sword (1582/3)
6	1582/3-1601	Shilling, sixpence, half groat, penny, halfpenny	Mintmarks: bell (1582-1583), 'A' (1582-1584), escallop (1584-1586), crescent (1587-1589), hand (1590-1592), tun (1592-1595), woolpack (1594-1596), key (1595-1598), anchor (1598-1600) & 'O' (1600)
7	1601-1603	Crown, half crown, shilling, sixpence, half groat, penny, halfpenny	Mintmarks: '1' or '2'

I have seen a complete date run of Elizabeth the First sixpences which was quite a sight and had taken years to complete.

Something must also be said of Elizabeth's portraits. Although they may look the same to an untrained eye, there are indeed a multitude of varieties, five on the first issue alone, and four on the second issue shillings, with three more on the first issue groats.

In the north of England, Scottish copper, mixed with French pieces, also circulated. Shakespeare mentions Dutch doits, which must also have been seen in London and the south, along with some French double deniers, both of which were copper. None of these copper coins were officially sanctioned. Incidentally, in the southwest it was usual practice to break coins to make small change.

Now, if one has the money, the desire, and is foolhardy enough to attempt the gold denominations, here they are.

The first to fourth issues (1559-1578) are grouped together by Spink and consisted of the sovereign (30 shillings, 1/2 ounce (15.55 gm)), angel (10 shillings), half angel or '*angelet*' (5 shillings) and quarter angel (2 shillings and 6 pence), all struck in fine gold (0.994 fine or 23 carat).

The half pound (10 shillings), crown (5 shillings) and half crown (2 shillings and 6 pence), which are all portrait coins with a crowned shield reverse, were in 'crown gold' (0.916 fine or 22 carat).



***Elizabeth I, Angel, 1558-1603 (29 mm, 5.10 gm), natural size.***

*Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group (www.cngcoins.com)*

The fifth issue consisted only of the angel, half angel and quarter angel in fine gold.

The sixth issue (1583-1600) was more diverse, including another denomination known as a ryal (15 shillings, 120 grains (7.78 gm)) as well as a pound, half pound, crown and half crown. There were various combinations of mintmarks and denominations. Not all denominations carried the same mintmarks, so a ‘complete’ and uniform set is impossible.

So, we come to the seventh and last issue of gold (1601-1603), consisting of angel, pound, half pound, crown and half crown. This short set in VF would cost you approximately \$60,000! But, of course for that sort of price you might prefer a two-coin set of both types of the Adelaide Pound.

**Table 2 - Gold Issues**

Issue	Dates	Gold Denominations	Comments
1-4	1559-1578	Sovereign, angel, half angel, quarter angel (all 0.994 “fine gold”). Half pound, crown, half crown (all 0.916 “crown gold”). Including milled pound and half pound (1561-1570)	Mintmarks: as on silver issues
5	1578-1582	Angel, half angel, quarter angel (fine gold).	Mintmarks: Greek cross (1578-79), Latin cross (1580-81), sword (1582)
6	1583-1600	Sovereign, ryal, angel, half angel, quarter angel (fine gold). Pound, half pound, crown, half crown (crown gold).	Mintmarks: bell (1582/3) to tun (1592-1595). bell (1582) to ‘O’ (1600) bell (1582) to anchor (1598-1600), tun (1592-1595) to ‘O’ (1600). Ryal; ‘A’ (1582-84) to hand (1590-1592)
7	1601-1603	Angel (fine gold). Pound, half pound, crown, half crown (crown gold).	Mintmarks: ‘1’ or ‘2’.

It is interesting to note that after 1601 there were 3 coins in circulation that were all worth 5 shillings; the gold crown, the silver crown and the gold half angel.



# **THE 1922 INDIAN OBVERSE PENNY, THE FIRST COPPER COIN THAT CAN BE DEFINITELY ATTRIBUTED TO THE PERTH MINT**

**Andrew Crellin**

Australia's monetary system was under a great deal of strain in the early 1920's – the population was growing strongly, and the national economy was recovering following the end of World War I. As a result, vast numbers of pennies and halfpennies were minted each year to keep pace with the general public's requirement for loose change. The increased and continual demand for small denomination coins placed a great deal of strain on the operations of the Sydney and Melbourne mints.

Several senior figures in the Commonwealth Government and the Royal Mint solicited ideas on how the needs of the economy for sufficient coinage could be met efficiently and effectively.

The history of Australian numismatics shows that several alternatives were explored, including:

- The introduction of smaller and more durable copper-nickel coins,
- Reducing the purity of silver in the higher denomination coins,
- The introduction of a five-shilling note.

The patterns and specimens related to these proposed changes are of immense interest to historians and collectors today.

## **The Perth Mint Called into Action to Cover the Western Half**

The shortage of copper coins in the monetary system was particularly acute in 1921, and as both the Sydney & Melbourne mints were working to full capacity at the time, the Commonwealth Government requested that the Perth mint share the burden by producing enough pennies to supply the Western half of the nation. Although the Perth Mint obviously had the machinery and staff required to perform this extra work, it was necessary to modify two coining presses before they could produce large volumes of pennies – the penny is a much larger coin than the sovereign, and copper is, of course, less malleable than gold.

The first penny dies arrived at the Perth Mint on November 18th, 1921. An examination of mint records indicates that reverse dies dated 1920, 1921, and 1922 were among those sent to Perth during this period.

The first production run of pennies was finished by mid-December 1921, with subsequent batches being produced intermittently until February 1923. All of the pennies produced by the Perth Mint during this period were distributed exclusively via the network of banks within Western Australia.

It seems that the increased output of copper coins by the Sydney, Melbourne, and Perth mints between 1919 and 1922 eventually satisfied the economy's demand for circulating coinage. In 1923, the Commonwealth Treasury reverted to its policy of forwarding all orders for copper and silver coinage to the Sydney and Melbourne mints. Perth was no longer considered for this work for several reasons:

- Due to declining gold receipts, the Sydney and Melbourne mints were operating below capacity, and therefore they had adequate capacity to handle the additional work of producing Commonwealth coinage;
- As Perth was far from the major population centres of the Eastern seaboard, it was more efficient to produce coins in Sydney or Melbourne whenever possible.

The production of King George V copper coins at the Perth Mint in the 1920s is therefore confined to the dates 1920, 1921, and 1922.

### **Problems in Attributing Pennies Dated 1920 and 1921 to the Perth Mint**

From a collector's point of view, there is an element of pride in owning one of the first coins produced by a mint, particularly when it remains in impeccable condition.

As the Perth Mint produced pennies dated 1920, 1921, and 1922, it is obvious that collectors would be most interested in obtaining one of the pennies dated 1920 - logic dictates they would have been the first pennies produced.

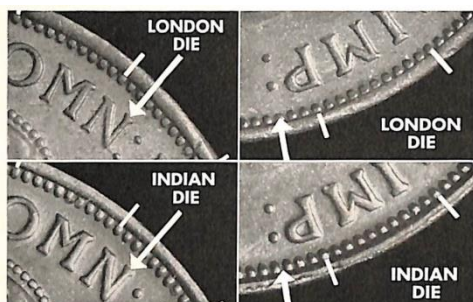
Unfortunately, it is not possible to definitively attribute a 1920-dated penny to the Perth Mint. The die combinations employed by the Perth Mint were also used at either Melbourne or Sydney (or both).

Discerning penny collectors will be aware that there are 8 different die varieties of the Australian 1920 penny. Some of these *can* be definitively attributed to either the Sydney or Melbourne Mints, the coins struck from the remaining die pairs were struck across more than one mint.

Research published (separately) by Fred Lever and Mark Duff touches on numerous factors that point to the Perth Mint being the *most likely* location for the production of the 1920 Penny with the English obverse and a dot above the lower scroll on the reverse. The records held in the various die registers of each of the branch mints do not support that being concluded definitively, but as most of the known examples of this date have been discovered in Western Australia, that is not an unreasonable conclusion to draw.

Although there are two different varieties of the 1921 penny (most with the Indian obverse, a smaller proportion with the London obverse), several mints used the same die combinations to strike pennies during this year also, so they cannot be attributed to a specific mint. It is only when we come to the pennies dated 1922 that some can be unequivocally attributed to the Perth Mint.

## The Indian and English Obverse Penny Dies



### ***King George V Penny Obverse Identification***

*Image courtesy of Renniks Publications*

There are two different types of King George V obverse die - they are known as the English and Indian obverses. Research of mint records indicates that the English obverse die of King George V came into use at the Melbourne Mint towards the end of 1921, meaning that all pennies made by the Melbourne Mint dated 1922 feature the English obverse.

However, research that has been based on the currently available records indicates that the obverse dies sent to Perth were the Indian type. Therefore, pennies made by the Perth Mint in 1922 feature the Indian obverse of King George V.

The Sydney Mint did not strike pence dated 1922, while the Melbourne Mint used only English obverse dies during 1922.

This subtle yet distinct difference allows collectors to simply and definitively identify the pennies produced by the Perth Mint in 1922 - the chart used by numismatists to do this is shown on the previous page. As the first copper coin that can be unequivocally identified as being produced by the Perth Mint, the 1922 Indian obverse penny is of immense interest to Australian coin collectors.

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## BILINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL COINS

# John McDonald

Not long ago I was shown a small silver coin from the ancient kingdom of Bactria, struck over 2,000 years ago by King Menander I, and I was intrigued to see that it was bilingual. It had an obverse legend in Greek, and a reverse legend in the local Kharoshthi or Gandhari script. Before then I had not given much thought to bilingual or multilingual coins, so I was surprised to discover how remarkably common they have been from ancient times until today.

In many cases, these types of coins resulted from conquest by an external power with a different language. Of course, the new ruler's language would be imposed as the official language of government, but it would remain necessary to convey messages and propaganda to the general population in their own language.

In other cases, countries with mixed ethnic populations have had to use more than one language as a practical necessity.

A third type of multilingual coin evolved to provide a convenient, mutually accepted medium of exchange for trade between different countries.

A comprehensive review of multilingual coins would be a major undertaking, well beyond the scope of this short article, so I will just present a handful of examples to illustrate their broad historical and geographical range.

## Ancient Bactria



*Image Source: Classical Numismatic Group (<https://www.cngcoins.com>)*

On the obverse of this silver drachm the Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ around a helmeted bust means 'King Menander'. The reverse legend in Kharoshthi script ('*maharajasa tratasara menamdrasa*') means the same thing. The reverse figure is Athena advancing left, holding a shield and hurling a thunderbolt, with a monogram in the right field. The coin dates from about 155-130 BC.

## Ancient Judea

In 103-76 BC, ancient Judea was ruled by Alexander Jannaeus, a member of the Hasmonean dynasty that imposed a process of Hellenisation on the region, including mandating the use of Greek as an official language.



*Image source: Classical Numismatic Group (<https://www.cngcoins.com>)*

On one side of this small bronze prutah is his name in Greek, wrapping around an anchor (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ or 'King Alexander'). While on the reverse, inside a stylised diadem, are ancient Hebrew letters that spell out 'Yehonatan' (or Jonathan, Jannaeus's Hebrew name) *the King*'.

## Medieval Sicily

Between 1068 and 1091, the Normans conquered Sicily, wresting control from its previous Muslim rulers. The subsequent Norman kingdom issued some bilingual coins with both Latin and Arabic legends, such as this small gold '*tari*' (c. 11 mm, 1.2 gm) struck by Roger II (1130-1154).

The coin pays homage to both of the major religions on the island at the time. On the obverse an Arabic legend surrounding pellets in a central circle reads '*al-malik Rujar al-mu'tazz billah*' or 'the powerful of God'.

On the reverse there is a central Latin legend (very much abbreviated) reading IC / XC/ NI / KA (standing for Jesus Christ Conquers), either side of a cross.



*Image Source: Classical Numismatic Group (<https://www.cngcoins.com>)*

## Some Modern Countries

A large number of countries have issued multilingual coins over the last couple of centuries. Just a few examples are shown below.

### Indonesia

Indonesia became a colony of Holland in 1800 after having been effectively controlled, in part or in whole, by the Dutch East India Company since the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Under colonial rule, which lasted until 1949, many coin legends were in Dutch, Javanese and Arabic.



*Image Source: Classical Numismatic Group (<https://www.cngcoins.com>)*

On this 1855 cent, the reverse legends both translate as ‘one hundredth of a rupiah’

### India

Similarly, India became a British colony in 1858 after more than a century of domination by the British East India Company.

It became independent in 1947, but English remains an official language and coins still carry both English and Hindi as a relic of colonial rule.

## Israel

The modern state of Israel initially issued coins with Hebrew and Arabic legends and subsequently added English to the mix. For example, the new shekel usually has the denomination in Hebrew and English, the date in Hebrew and the name of the country in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

## South Africa

Until 1966, South African coins carried the name of the country in both English and Afrikaans. In fact, they were mostly trilingual because the obverse legends were in Latin.

Today South Africa is one of the most extreme examples of a multilingual country, with eleven official languages.

It is obviously difficult to use all of these languages on the circulating coins at the same time, so they are rotated on an annual basis. Two of them are used each year with the combination changing from year to year, but only one language is used on each coin. So, while the country is extremely multilingual, and so is its coinage as a whole, the individual circulating coins are generally not.

However, a few non-circulating, commemorative coins have been multilingual. This 50 rand piece dated 2019 has the name of the country in 10 languages.





## British Trade Dollar

Between 1895 and 1935 Britain issued silver Trade Dollars to facilitate trade in the Far East.



*Image source: Classical Numismatic Group (<https://www.cngcoins.com>)*

The value of the coin was shown in English on the obverse and in Chinese and Malay on the reverse, so it could be used in many countries such as China, Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements (countries of the Malay Peninsula including Singapore).

## Australia

You might be surprised to see Australia included, but when I stopped to think I realised that even our Australian coins were all bilingual up until the introduction of decimal coinage in 1966, when we finally stopped using Latin for the obverse legends.

And, of course, there was the 2019 fifty cent piece that carried the word ‘coin’ in 14 aboriginal languages on the reverse.



*Image source: Royal Australian Mint*

## CALENDAR OF PNS MEETINGS FOR 2021

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 2021 are as follows:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 27 January   | Invited speaker (Robert Russell: <i>Arthur C Clarke, a shipwreck odyssey</i> ), no-reserve Tender Sale.  |
| 24 February  | Invited speaker (Robert Russell: <i>How to Value Coins &amp; Banknotes and Why Prices Differ</i> ). Tender Sale.                                 |
| 31 March     | No-reserve Tender Sale.  |
| 28 April     | Cancelled (Covid lockdown).  |
| 26 May       | Short talks & quiz. No-reserve Tender Sale.  |
| 30 June      | Cancelled (Covid lockdown).  |
| 28 July      | <b>Annual General Meeting.</b> No-reserve Tender Sale.   |
| 25 August    | Invited speaker (John McDonald: <i>The Rebel British Empire of the 3rd Century, history revealed by coins</i> ). Tender Sale.                    |
| 29 September | Invited speaker (Sandy Shailes: <i>Fifty cents worth of history – A history of Australia as told by the 50c piece</i> ). No-reserve Tender Sale. |
| 27 October   | Donation Sale.   |
| 24 November  | No-reserve Tender Sale.  |

More details of invited speakers and other matters will be provided as they become available.

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Adult	\$ 25
Pensioner	\$ 20
WA Country	\$ 20
Associate	\$ 10
Junior / Student	\$ 10
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Fully Paid Life Membership	\$ 400

## A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

**Dear PNS members,**

Please be advised that our membership year begins on 1st March each year, when membership fees become due. Advanced payments will be accepted in January and February and all fees must be paid within four months from 1st March.

Any membership unpaid by 1st July renders the member unfinancial and unable to vote in the AGM. Any membership fee paid after 30th June will be considered an advance payment for the following year's membership and the member will revert to Visitor status in the meantime.

This will bring us all in line with our constitution and public liability insurance requirements.

Thank you for your understanding and commitment to the Perth Numismatic Society.

If you have any questions, please see the Treasurer or Membership Secretary.

**Jonathon de Hadleigh.**  
**Treasurer.**



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## CALENDAR OF FAIRS

Perth Numismatic Society Coin, Medal, Banknote & Stamp Fairs  
(South Perth Community Centre):

- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2021
- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022
- Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022
- Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2022
- Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Stamp Coin & Banknote Fair (Bortolo Pavilion, Mandurah):

- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Phoenix Auctions (Canning Town Hall, Cannington):

- Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Militaria Swap Meet (Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds):

- Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2021
- Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022
- Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Collectibles Society of WA (South Perth Community Centre):

- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022
- Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022

For updates and further details please refer to the Perth Numismatic Society website: <http://www.pns.org.au/events/>

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