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MARY TUDOR (1553-58) AND HER COINAGE

John Wheatley

Preamble - Two Marys

Mary Queen of Scots and Mary Tudor (Mary) were similar in many ways. They both had a tenuous relationship with Elizabeth 1. Mary Queen of Scots was a cousin of Mary's half sister Elizabeth 1. They both lived in the 16th century, were unlucky in love, neither of them could be considered as successful and popular rulers and each only reigned for a short period. They were both strong Roman Catholics and tried in each case to enforce their religious views on their respective unwilling subjects, who were for the most part Protestant.

Brief History of Mary

Mary was born on 18th February 1516. She was the only child of Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon.

The early part of her life was spent quite happily, but in 1527 Henry began proceedings for his divorce from Catherine, and shortly afterwards forced Mary to live apart from her mother.



Mary Tudor

*Image courtesy of
Wikimedia Commons*

Mary was a precocious child and was reported in July 1520, when she was four years old, as entertaining visitors by a performance on the virginal (a type of harpsichord.) When nine years old, she spoke Latin fluently and could also converse in Spanish, Italian and French.

In early 1533 Henry married Anne Boleyn, who was pregnant with his child, and in May the Archbishop of Canterbury formally declared the marriage with Catherine void, and the marriage to Anne valid. Henry broke with the Roman Catholic Church and declared himself Head of the Church of England.

Mary was deemed illegitimate; she relinquished her title of Royal Princess and was forced to acknowledge the illegitimacy of her own birth. Mary's place in the line of succession was transferred to her newborn half sister, Elizabeth, Anne's daughter.

Mary was banished to the Royal Residence at Hatfield to become lady in waiting to Elizabeth. Mary refused to acknowledge that Anne was queen or that Elizabeth was a princess, nor did she recognize her father as head of the Church of England in place of the Pope in Rome. Mary was frequently ill and suffered a great deal of anguish from the alienation from her father and the hatred meted out to her by Anne Boleyn.

In January 1536 Mary's mother Catherine died, but Mary was not allowed to attend the funeral. Shortly thereafter Anne fell from Henry's favour and was beheaded. Henry then married Jane Seymour. Mary was then bullied into accepting Henry's demands whereupon she was restored to Court, given a household and considerable expenses and restored to a position in the Royal Succession after Edward, son of Henry and his new wife, Jane Seymour.

In 1547 Henry died and the throne was left to Edward, a child of nine. Again, Mary was involved in conflict because of her religious differences with Edward. Mary was fiercely Catholic whereas Edward was Protestant.

Prior to Edward's death in July 1553 at the age of fifteen, he altered the succession to the Throne to disinherit Mary and Elizabeth and to appoint Lady Jane Grey (the granddaughter of Henry's younger sister, Mary) as his successor. Incidentally, one of Edward's chief advisors John Dudley, 1st Duke of Northumberland, helped frame this plan because it would greatly enhance his power, as Lady Jane Grey was the daughter of his ally Suffolk. but Mary and her supporters managed to overthrow Lady Jane and the Duke of Northumberland.

At the age of thirty-seven Mary looked to marrying and producing an heir to prevent her protestant half sister Elizabeth from succeeding to the throne. Charles V of Spain, a cousin of Mary, encouraged Mary to marry his son Philip. Mary married Philip on 25th July 1554 at Winchester Cathedral. It was feared that Mary's husband would become King of England, so under the terms of Queen Mary's Marriage Act:



Philip of Spain

*Image courtesy of
Wikipedia*

- Philip was styled King of England,
- all official documents (including Acts of Parliament) were to be dated with both their names,
- Parliament was to be called under the joint authority of the couple for Mary's lifetime only,
- but England would not be obliged to provide military support for Philip's father in any war, and
- Philip could not act without his wife's consent or appoint foreigners to office in England.

For Philip the marriage was for political and strategic aims.

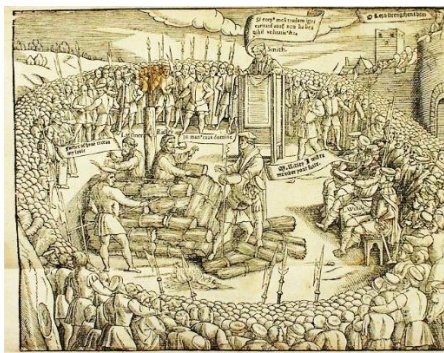
The average Englishman had an overwhelming aversion to Spaniards and many protestant factions arose all over England inflaming the people with hatred against Philip and his Spanish followers.



Cast Bronze Medal in Gilt to Commemorate Marriage of Mary and Philip II of Spain, 1555, by Jacopo da Trezzo.

Image courtesy trustees of the British Museum

The persecution of the Protestants did not begin until Mary had been on the throne for 18 months. Between February 1555 and November 1558, 300 men and women were burned at the stake for religious heresy. Most of these were massed in the main protestant areas, 238 in the London Diocese, East Anglia, Sussex and Kent. They included the aged and the blind and many of the remaining protestant clergy who had not fled abroad. Bishop Hooper was burned at Gloucester, Bishops Ridley and Latimer in the Town Ditch at Oxford and Archbishop Cranmer also perished. As a result of these atrocities Mary was often referred to as "Bloody Mary".



***Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley
being burnt at the stake.***

*A woodcut from John Foxe's Book
of Martyrs 1563.*

Image courtesy of Wikipedia

Mary had two phantom pregnancies but did not have any children. She was always a sickly person and with pressures from all sides both political and personal, her health deteriorated quickly.

Philip left her shortly after the marriage to pursue political and war conquests. Philip did not come to protect Mary and England from the advances of the Protestant Scots. He only returned to England in March 1557 to encourage England to declare war on France. The war against France was a disaster for England resulting in the French forces retaking Calais, England's sole remaining possession on the European mainland.

On 17th November 1558 Mary died aged 42. She was the first woman to successfully claim the throne of England despite competing claims and strong opposition. She enjoyed popular support during the early part of her reign. Some historians are of the opinion that Mary's reign was not a failure because she did not have sufficient time to implement changes to Catholicism and because events beyond her control, persistent rain and flooding, led to famine. Her marriage to Philip was unpopular, her religious policies resulted in deep-seated resentment and military losses in France increased public resentment.

Coins from the period of Mary's sole reign (1553-54)

Within two months of her accession Mary issued a proclamation deploring the '*great and intolerable charges that had chanced upon her loving subjects by reason of base monies made within the Realm*' and expressed her resolve to issue gold and silver of perfect fineness '*which should rebound much to Her Highness's honour and the wealth, commodity and profit of Her subjects.*'

All coins were therefore brought back to the Sterling standard and all gold coins were struck at the traditional fineness of 0.995. The mintmarks for Mary's coins usually appear at the end of the first or second word of the legend. They were a pomegranate, halved rose or castle.

In the first period of her reign Mary issued gold coins in four denominations:

- The sovereign valued at thirty shillings.
- The ryal valued at half a sovereign or fifteen shillings.
- The angel valued at ten shillings.
- The half angel valued at five shillings.

The sovereigns were either dated MDLIII (1553) or MDLIII (1554) or were undated. According to numismatic experts there are only five examples of the 1554 sovereign in private hands. The obverse of the sovereign has the portrait of the queen on her throne and the reverse shows a decorative Tudor rose with a shield bearing the Royal Arms in the centre. On the ryal Mary is shown standing in a ship and the reverse has a floriated cross with a Tudor rose on a sun in the centre. Like previous coins of the same name the angel and half angel depicted the Archangel Michael slaying a dragon. The half angel is incredibly rare.



Mary Sovereign MDLIII (1554)

Image courtesy of Stacks & Bowers

(the Thos. H. Law collection of British gold coinage, lot 20089)



Mary Ryal, Tower mint, mintmark pomegranate

Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group llc (Clearwater collection, lot 27)



Mary Angel

Image courtesy of Spink & Son London (Slaney Collection, part 11, lot 294)



Mary Half Angel

Image courtesy of St James's Auctions, auction 16, lot 49

The reverse of all gold coins also bore a Latin quotation from Psalm 108
‘This is the Lord’s doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.’

In silver there were no crowns, half crowns or shillings, only the groat or fourpence, the half groat and the penny. All had a left-facing profile portrait of Mary wearing a crown. The portrait on a well-struck groat is quite superb however it probably flattered the Queen who was rather plain. The portrait shows Mary with rather sharp features and long flowing hair with a string of pearls around her neck. The reverse of the silver coins has a Royal shield on a long cross and a Latin motto meaning *‘Truth is the daughter of time.’*



Mary Silver Groat, Tower mint, mintmark pomegranate

Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group LLC.

The only addition to the denominations of Edward VI is the ryal of fifteen shillings, which was a reversion to the type issued by Mary's father Henry VIII.

There were two innovations in the details of the coins:

- First the insertion of the Date on the sovereign and the ryal,
- Second the placing of the mintmark in the form of a pomegranate (the badge of Mary's mother, Catherine of Aragon) or a half rose among the words of the two legends instead of in the customary position before the first word.

Henry Symonds '*The Coinage of Queen Mary Tudor 1553-1558, Illustrated from Public Records*,' (BNJ Vol. 8 (1911) at page 185) speculates that the engraver and possible designer of the dies was Derick Anthony. According to Symonds the surviving mint accounts for this period of Mary's reign do not throw much light upon the quality or quantity of the coinage.

The half groats and pennies were produced in much smaller quantities. They have the same obverse and reverse designs as the groat, but upon the penny the obverse legend reads: M D G ROSA SINE SPINA (Mary, by the Grace of God, a rose without a thorn). The reverse inscription for these later denominations was taken from the groat, but shortened to VERITAS TEMP FILIA upon the penny, although on some pennies the name of the mint town is declared: CIVITAS LONDON.



Mary Ordinary Penny

Image courtesy of AMR Coins

There was also an issue of a base penny of 3 oz fine and 9 oz 'allay' coined from melted down testoons and base half groats.

They are similar to Edward VI's base rose pennies of 1550-1553, having a rose on the obverse and a long cross fourchee over a Royal shield on the reverse.



Mary Base Penny with Rose and Shield

Coins from the period after her marriage (1554-58)

When Philip of Spain came to marry Queen Mary in 1554, he brought with him a large quantity of bullion for coining at the Royal Mint. One account speaks of twenty cartloads but most of it must have been silver, for the gold angels and half angels minted after 1554 are extremely rare and no sovereigns or ryals were produced.

During this period the angel and its half were the only gold coins struck. They were virtually the same as the pre-wedding issues, the difference being the inclusion of Philip's name within the Royal Nomenclature and PM either side of the reverse cross above the square-topped shield.



Philip and Mary Angel

Image courtesy of Sovereign Rarities Ltd

The silver coinage of this period was a little more extensive, comprising shilling, sixpence, groat, half-groat, penny and a base penny. The portrait of Mary on these lower denomination coins looks much older than the portrait on the first period.

The shilling and sixpence show on the obverse the face-to-face busts of Philip and Mary while the smaller denominations revert back to the normal crowned bust of Mary.

The debased penny (which contained only 25% silver) had a halved rose on the obverse instead of the usual royal portrait. On the reverse of this coin was an inscription CIVITAS LONDON around a shield.

Peter Seaby (*The Story of British Coinage*, at page 95) surmises that the groats, half-groats and 'fine' pennies bearing the names or initials of the two monarchs were probably not struck until the latter part of the reign as only the bust of Mary is shown on the obverse and only the Arms of England appear on the reverse.

The legend proclaims the full titles of Mary and Philip, PHILIP Z MARIA DGR ANG FR NEAP PR HISP, but later issues of 1554 dispense with the foreign possessions of Naples and Spain and show the less contentious English titles.



Philip and Mary Groat

Image courtesy of Sovereign Rarities, London



Philip and Mary Penny

Image courtesy of Spink & Son, London



Philip and Mary Base Penny

Image courtesy of Christies.com

Upon the reverse a new intricate, crowned oval garnished shield is displayed incorporating the Arms of Austria, Castile, Aragon, Naples and Burgundy in the first and third quarters and the English Leopards and French Fleur de Lis in the second and fourth quarters. The legend is POSVI DEVM ADIVTOREM MEVM ('have made God my helper') but rendered in the plural form POSVIMVS DEVM ADIVTOREM NOSTRVM. The coins are dated either above or below the twin busts on the obverse and the mark of value X11 or V1 is placed above the shield. However, some coins are without the date and/or mark of value. Symonds suggests that the omission was due to negligence on the part of the graver or the moneyers.



Philip and Mary Shilling, full titles, 1554, Tower mint

Image courtesy of Spink & Son London

(Ex Lockett, Glendinning, 11-17 October 1956, lot 1939)

Not surprisingly, this revolutionary concept of Philip sharing the coin with Mary was the subject of much comment, both complimentary and derogatory. Anne, widow of Bishop Hooper (who perished at the stake in February 1555) scathingly remarked that the new coin bore the '*effigies of Ahab and Jezebel*'. Although the coins give the impression that Philip is sharing the kingdom with Mary, he was never crowned because Parliament, despite considerable pressure from Mary, refused to agree to the coronation.

Derick Anthony continued as chief engraver after Mary's marriage and doubtless engraved the dies for the new issue, although his responsibility for the obverse design for the shilling and sixpence, which was possibly based upon Trezzo's medal, is not so certain. The sixty four dollar question is; was Sir John Godsalue or Derick Anthony the designer of the 'Double Face' of the shilling and sixpence or did they work in collaboration? To date I have not been able to find the answer.

Helen Farquhar (in BNJ Vol. 1V, page 120) discusses the likely origin of the double face on the two coins. She surmises that the portraits were copied from the medallionic designs of Jacopo da Trezzo and displays copies of these medals on the page directly opposite page 120 of her article. The golden double eccellente (doubloon) of Ferdinand and Isabella (1474-1504) was probably the model for the Philip and Mary half crowns, shillings and sixpences, and for the Mary Queen of Scots and Darnley silver ryals of 1565.



Gold 2 Excellentes (Doubloon) of Ferdinand and Isabella

Image courtesy of Heritage Auctions

The following interesting comments are from the 'Petition Crown' website. *'The workmanship on the earlier undated coins is superior to some of the later 1554 and 1555 shillings where we find letter punches used on 6d. and 4d. dies are frequently mixed in with the shilling letter punches. Die sinkers errors occur on the later coins e.g. ADIVTORIVM for ADIVTOREM, POSVIMS for POSVIMVS and NOSTREM for NOSTRVM. Philip brought Spanish die sinkers and mint workers with him but when he left England these workers left with him and were replaced by inexperienced English Mint workers who had to adapt to the new style coinage with facing portraits.'*

The weight of this halfcrown is 252 grains (16.3 grams). On the obverse the legend reads PHILIPVS.D.G.R.ANG.FR.NEAP.PR.HISP. There is a bust of Philip facing right in armour; above his head is a crown; below his bust is the date 1554.



Halfcrown (Pattern), 1554 (S2497a)

Image courtesy of www.petitioncrown.com and the late Geoffrey Cope

On the reverse the legend reads: MARIA.D.G.R.ANG.FR.NEAP.PR.HISP. There is a bust of Mary facing left, in high embroidered dress, cap and veil; above her head is a crown dividing the date 1554.

It was recorded in BNJ in 1911 that there were only three specimens of this remarkable pattern known: two are in museums, the Hunterian Glasgow and the British Museum, and the third and best-formed and very finest comprised Lot 1935 in the famous Lockett sale in 1956. (Ex. Prince of Montenuovo, Bieber, A.D.Clarke, Montague, Murdoch, Wakely Collections, Lockett, Cope).

The half-crown is referred to in Wikipedia and in Edward Hawkins' book *'The Silver Coins of England'*, 1841. I also understand it is referred to by the following:

- John Pinkerton in *'Antiques And Collectibles'*, 1784
- Folkes, in 1763, says that the coin was in the cabinet of James West MP (c.1704-1772)
- Snelling, 1763, also shows it in his plate without comment.

Perhaps the reason this coin was never issued was hit upon by Helen Farquhar, on page 124 of her article in BNJ: *'The busts of the two monarchs appear on the opposite sides of the coin instead of face to face as on the shilling'*. This appears to be the logical reason for rejection of the design.

Irish coinage of Mary

When Mary came to the throne, she prohibited the currency of base metal in England and ordered gold and silver money to be made of a better standard.

Ireland, however, was excepted in the proclamation. Mary ordered in 1553 that shillings, groats, half-groats and pennies be struck for Ireland, but in base money. Mary's coins in 1553-54 had a base silver of .583 fineness with a groat of about 32 grains (2.07 grams). The mintmark on the coins was a fleur-de-lis.

The shilling has her head crowned, in profile, looking to the left, and inscribed MARIA.D.G.ANG.FRA.Z.HIB.REGINA. The reverse of the coins has a harp crowned between the letters M.R. likewise crowned and the legend VERITAS. TEMPORUS. FILIA. MDIII or MDLIII.



Irish Shilling of Mary, undated, mintmark fleur de lis

Image courtesy Of Dix Noonan & Webb



Irish Shilling of Mary, 1553, date in Roman numerals

Image courtesy of The New York Sale, auction 49, lot 1253

The groat is similar to the shilling and has the same inscription but no date. In 'Coins of Scotland, Ireland and the Islands' Seaby refers to two versions of this groat either dated MDLIII or MDLIII but the general consensus of experts in this field is that these are counterfeit.

In the second year of Mary's marriage to Philip (1555) base shillings and groats were produced. The half-groat and penny were not included in this later issue.

These coins are dated in Arabic numerals. The shilling has the busts of Philip and Mary face to face, with the date below. The reverse has a crowned harp with the letters P.M. also crowned and the inscription POSVIMVS DEVM. ADVVTOREM. NOSTRVM.



Irish Shilling of Philip and Mary, 1555

Image courtesy of John Stafford-Langan

The groats are similar to the shilling save that the date instead of being under, is above the heads. Groats were issued dated 1555, 1556, 1557 and 1558.

The base silver of the shilling was .250 fineness with the groat about 48 grains (3.11 grams). The mintmarks for these coins were portcullis or rose.



Irish Groat of Philip and Mary, 1558

Image courtesy of The Old Currency Exchange

On 19th September 1557, the English Rose-Pennies of Henry VIII and Edward VI mixed with copper, were by proclamation in England, prohibited there and sent to Ireland. On the obverse of the penny is P.Z.M.D.G. with Royal Arms. On the reverse there is a rose with the legend CIVITAS EBORACI (York).

It is interesting to note that the Irish groats issued for Mary and Philip have the joint busts of Philip and Mary whereas the English groat issued at that time only bears Mary's bust.

There was no mint in Ireland during the reign of Henry VIII and Edward VI did not coin Irish money. Whilst there is no evidence that Mary had a mint in Dublin, it is certain that the Irish coins of Philip and Mary were minted in England; as appears from the Indenture made in 1554 with the officers of the London Mint. Mint marks are halved rose and castle, or castle, for the London coins, the legend being CIVITAS LONDON.

Pennies were struck in York, also issued for use in Ireland. These bear the rose mark and the legend CIVITAS EBORACI.

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I would also like to thank www.petitioncrown.com and the late Geoffrey Cope for the use of their splendid images and for consenting to me using certain information on their website contributed by David H.

Finally, I would like to thank Michael Wade for consenting to me utilizing information from his article '*Restoring the English Coinage -Edward VI and Mary*'.

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SOME NOTES ON A PROCLAMATION COIN

Jonathan de Hadleigh

In '*Coinage and Currency in New South Wales 1788-1829*' by Dr W J D Mira, I read on page 12, under the heading 'The Coinage of the Proclamation':

'The English shilling.

There is no record of any shipment of this coin to the colony so one must assume that it arrived in the pockets of convicts, settlers, etc, or passed in trade from the private cargoes of the ships that touched Port Jackson. The pieces that turn up in Australia are invariably in excellent condition, a far cry from the extreme wear on the coppers and later dump issue. From this one can propose that they saw minimal use as a circulating currency. If this be the case, why were they listed? Perhaps an unrecorded supply arrived which King hoped would be of value to the populace! The value placed on this coin is in some dispute. The Historical Records of New South Wales series 1, p.256, gives the figure as 1/8, this is wrong – the original document quotes 1/1 – the same rating as in Canada in 1796.’

In this quote the line ‘*The pieces that turn up in Australia are invariably in excellent condition*’ begs the question; are these pieces found in archaeological contexts, or in the back of a drawer, a box or an old purse? Or could they be recent arrivals? Is the picture being distorted by the desire of the Australian numismatic community to acquire the best specimens possible so that dealers are bringing in highly sought after, high eye appeal coins that give them a better return for their money?



1787 English Shilling

Image courtesy of Noble Numismatics, Sale 123, lot 1070.

In 'The Counterfeit Story', Ken Peters comments (page 64):

'At the end of the eighteenth (century), the bulk of silver coinage in circulation was so worn that much of it looked like blank discs. John Cockroft in 1782 achieved the ultimate in counterfeiting ease by copying these worn shillings with no visible legend left on either side, thus requiring no counterfeit dies to produce. He just grained the edges and 'aged' silver blanks, probably obtained quite legitimately from Birmingham, presenting magistrates with the problem of whether silver blanks could ever be described as forgeries!'

I have also read that in 1786 a review revealed that the silver coinage was in a poor state, which was attributed to a lack of new issues. Shillings averaged 77% of their issued weight and sixpences only 64%. The 1787 issue of silver, which was intended to correct this, started disappearing into hoards because of the increasing value of the silver content.

The price of silver was rising due to the Napoleonic Wars which caused the new, full weight shillings to be hoarded. This could certainly account for the plethora of high-grade specimens now available to the numismatic market. However, most of the coins being brought to Australia at the time by convicts and settlers must have been worn specimens.

In 1797, pillar and portrait type Spanish and Latin American dollars (8 reales) were countermarked with a small profile of George III. They were to circulate at 4s 9d, although the silver content was worth only 4s 5¾p. Because the small 'countermark' raised the value of these dollars it was extensively counterfeited, and the situation got worse in mid 1797 when the value of silver fell, so the dollars were recalled.

This situation would also have encouraged release of some hoarded 1787 shillings, which are now found worn and circulated, and there were still 3 years for them to circulate before they might have made their way New South Wales to be included in the proclamation.

Another interesting quote, this time from 'The Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain and its Dependencies, Volume II' (page 93):

‘1792. The want of silver coins and bullion is said to have been very much increased in this year by the policy of the French who exchanged their assignats for as much of either kind as they could possibly procure, and so rapidly did they effect their object that in this year 1792 not less than the enormous quantity of 2,909,000 ounces of silver were purchased with assignats and sent into France.’

This would have further exacerbated the lack of good shillings.

The annals also comment (page 98) that:

‘In the course of this year the officers of the mint repeated the experiments, which they had made in the year 1787, respecting the actual wear of the silver coins, from which it appears that a considerable loss had been occasioned by the wear of 11 years only; for it was found that this deficiency amounted in the crowns 5%, half crowns 9%, shillings 24%, sixpences 38%.’

This was in 1798 and by it one can conclude that shillings and sixpences did most of the work in circulation. One may also conclude that the majority of shillings in early New South Wales would indeed have been worn specimens, and thus the desire of Australian coin collectors for uncirculated examples of high numismatic value may well be distorting the historical view of the English shilling, and possibly some of the other coins listed in the proclamation of 1800.

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THE GOTHIC CROWN

Raymond Palermo

By the mid 1840's, the denomination of the crown had become somewhat neglected and forgotten. The only crown pieces of William IV were the proof pieces of 1831 and 1834, and precious few of these were struck. These had the King's windswept bust facing right on the obverse, with a draped and crowned Royal shield on the reverse.

The next crowns to be issued were those of William's successor, Victoria, in 1839, for inclusion in the proof sets of that year. These had the Queen's so-called "Young" head, designed by William Wyon facing left on the obverse, with the date below. The reverse, which was probably the work of Jean Baptiste Merlen, consisted of a crowned shield within two laurel branches. The same designs were used for the crowns issued for circulation and dated 1844, 1845 and 1847. These pieces also had the edge inscription, "DECUS ET TUTAMEN ANNO REGNI" with the regnal date in Roman numerals. Although these coins were indeed, elegant, they would soon be eclipsed by a design to rival all others for balance and beauty.

The Gothic crown was so-called because its design reflected the neo-Gothic art movement that was making its influence felt in Britain. William Wyon designed the obverse. It shows the Queen, facing left, wearing a delicately embroidered bodice. She is crowned, and has her plaited hair tucked neatly into her crown. This was the first time since the reign of Charles II nearly two centuries earlier that a British monarch had been depicted wearing a crown on the coinage. The legend, inscribed in Gothic script in keeping with the overall style of the coin, reads, "VICTORIA DEI GRATIA BRITANNIAR REG: F: D." or "Victoria, by the Grace of God, Queen of Britain, Defender of the Faith".

The reverse is equally impressive. It was designed by the British artist, William Dyce, but engraved by William Wyon. While much has been written about Wyon, a few words on Dyce might be appropriate here. He was born in Aberdeen in 1806 and died in 1864. His best known work outside of the coinage include the Choristers' window at Ely Cathedral and the memorial window to the Duke of Northumberland at St Paul's Church, Alnwick.

It was, however, for his design of the Gothic crown's reverse, that Dyce found lasting fame.

Dyce's reverse consists of a crowned cruciform shields design, with the Garter Star in the centre. The angles are occupied with a thistle and a shamrock in alternate angles, and a rose in the remaining angles. The device is contained within a tressure of arcs. An outer ring encloses the design, around which is the legend, again in Gothic script: "TUEATUR UNITA DEUS ANNO DOM..." – "May God unite these United (Kingdoms), the year of our Lord...", with the date in Roman numerals. The edge of the coin is inscribed with the usual "DECUS..." legend, but, again in Gothic script.



Gothic Crown, 1847

Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group

The rich design, beautiful script and perfect balance of this coin has led to it being widely acknowledged as being one of the most handsome ever to be struck in Britain. Indeed, Queen Victoria herself was reported to have been delighted with the design.

The Gothic crown was struck as a pattern, with a plain edge, with the date 1846. It was then minted with the date, 1847, as a proof issue. It might have been issued at this time to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. Only eight thousand such crowns were released via the banks at this time. A smaller number of Gothic crowns were struck bearing the date, 1853, for inclusion with the proof sets of that date.

In addition to the pieces described above, proof pieces with the Gothic crown designs, dated 1847, were struck in gold and white metal.

The gold example, as illustrated in Linecar's Coins and Coin Collecting, is particularly attractive. Other examples with the same date, but in silver, are especially heavily frosted. These were struck at a later date for use as presentation pieces to select Royal Mint visitors. Still other pieces were struck and sealed in glass for the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Although relatively few Gothic crowns were struck, the collector can still obtain a coin with similar designs, the florin. This was a new denomination, tarified at one tenth of a pound. It was introduced, in 1848, as a first step towards decimalisation. The first issue was the so-called "Godless" florin. This had the Queen's portrait, as described, facing left, but with a new script (in plain style): "VICTORIA REGINA". The legend omits the traditional "DEI GRATIA" – "By the Grace of God", hence its nickname. The reverse had the Gothic cruciform shield design, but with a rose in the centre, and the legend, "ONE FLORIN ONE TENTH OF A POUND". Amid public outcry, the "Godless" florin was soon replaced with its Gothic counterpart, with the "D G" restored, and the inscriptions now in Gothic script. The reverse also underwent design modifications, which included a star replacing the rose in the centre. This issue was struck between 1851 and 1887.

The Gothic crown has maintained its fame as one of the world's most beautiful coins. It stands today as one of the most fitting legacies of the British Gothic Revival.

This is a modified version of an article that first appeared in Coin News, published by Token Publishing. Republished with their kind permission.



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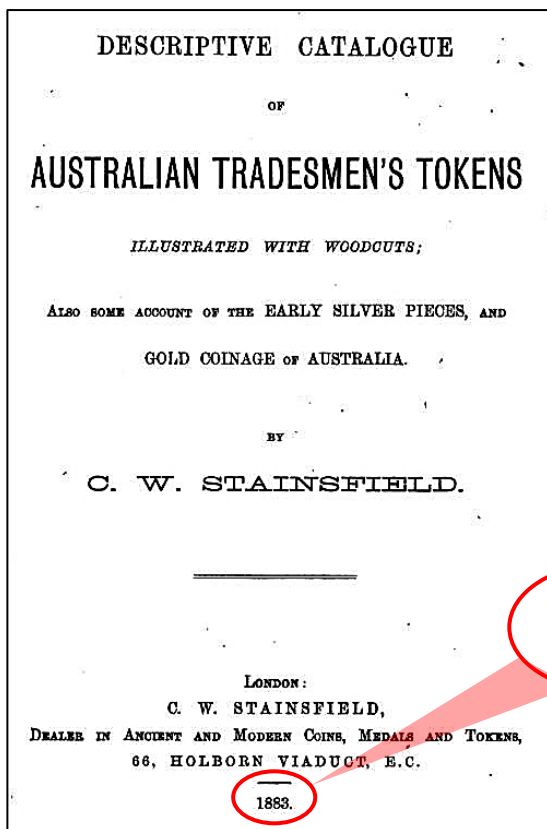
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IS THIS THE EARLIEST BOOK ABOUT AUSTRALIAN NUMISMATICS ?

This book on the subject of Australian merchants' tokens was published in London almost 140 years ago.



There are numerous references to an 1888 edition of Stainsfield's book, but this is dated 5 years earlier, in 1883. So, is it an earlier edition or are the references incorrect due to misreading of the rather small date?

Is this the oldest numismatic publication dedicated to Australian coins, tokens or banknotes? If you know of an earlier one, send the details to the Editor, or preferably write a short note about it for the journal.

JOURNAL DISTRIBUTION

The Perth Numismatic Society is moving towards electronic publication of its Journal. This is being done for a couple of reasons, firstly to save on printing and mailing costs, and secondly to speed up getting the journal to you, the reader.

While many members would be happy with an emailed electronic copy (and remember, it is downloadable from the PNS website), there are some who are either not electronically connected or prefer in any case to have a hard copy. At this stage we are giving members the choice for the planned February issue of 2023, and will then see what the best way forward is for the membership year commencing 1 March 2023.

So, in the first instance, please advise Membership Secretary Sandra Vowles (0422 276 350, sdd246@gmail.com) if you wish to continue receiving a hard copy of the journal. After the February issue it is quite possible that there will be a charge for the hard copy. Some societies levy such a charge via an increased membership fee for those electing for this.



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ANDA

CALENDAR OF PNS MEETINGS

PNS meetings are held at 7.30pm on the last Wednesday of each month, except December, at John McGrath Hall, 97 Hensman St, South Perth.

Meeting dates for 2023 are as follows:

25 January	Topic: My oldest numismatic items. Tender sale.
22 February	Topic: My rarest numismatic items. Tender sale.
29 March	Topic: Coin grading. Tender sale.
26 April	Topic: Banknote grading, Tender sale.
31 May	Topic: Historical medal grading, Tender sale.
28 June	Topic: Numismatic items with unusual denominations. Quiz: \$1 entrance, half money collected to winner, half to PNS. Tender sale.
26 July	Annual General Meeting, Topic: Famous people on numismatic items. Tender sale.
30 August	Topic: Numismatic errors and forgeries. Tender sale.
27 September	Topic: English numismatics. Tender sale.
25 October	Topic: Irish numismatics. Donation sale.
29 November	Topic: Scottish numismatics. Tender sale

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

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John Wheatley	2004
Prof Walter Bloom	2013
Joe Brizzi	2022
Rowley Butters	2022
Sandra Vowles	2022

PAST PRESIDENTS

Brian Siggs †	1965-1968
Edward Rintoul †	1968-1969
Edward Gibbs †	1969-1970
Clive Stronach †	1970-1971
Karl Hawelka †	1971-1978
Haydn Powell †	1978-1988
Prof Walter Bloom	1988-1991
Jiri Just †	1991-1994
Colin Meikle	1994-1997
Haydn Powell †	1978-1988
Prof Walter Bloom	2005-



CALENDAR OF FAIRS

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

- Tuesday 27th December 2022
- Saturday 11th February 2023
- Saturday 13th May 2023
- Saturday 11th November 2023
- Tuesday 26th December 2023

Perth Stamp & Coin Show (South Perth Community Centre):

- Friday 24th – Sunday 26th March 2023

Phoenix Auctions (Canning Town Hall, Cannington):

- Sunday 4th December 2022

Collectibles Society of WA (South Perth Community Centre):

- To be advised

IBNS Perth Chapter Fair (South Perth Community Centre):

- Sunday 11th December 2022

Militaria Swap Meet (Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds):

- Sunday 16th April 2023
- Sunday 18th June 2023
- Sunday 12th November 2023

Perth Money Expo (South Perth Community Centre):

- Saturday 15th - Sunday 16th July 2023

Annual Historic Arms & Militaria Fair (Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds):

- Saturday 9th - Sunday 10th September 2023

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

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