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PERTH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY Inc
PO BOX 8419, SOUTH PERTH WA 6951

www.pns.org.au

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THE 1772 SILVER RESOLUTION & ADVENTURE MEDALLION - CAPTAIN JAMES COOK & SIR JOSEPH BANKS SQUARE OFF

Andrew Crellin

The silver Resolution and Adventure medallion commemorates Captain James Cook's Second Voyage across the Southern Hemisphere, a pioneering journey that fundamentally changed the way the world was viewed.

It has long been regarded as a key item in Australian numismatics, and unequivocally rates as one of the most desirable items of Captain Cook memorabilia available. Not only does it remain a direct link to one of the greatest explorers the world has ever known, but it is also strongly connected to the man regarded by many as being "*The Father of Australia*"^[1], Sir Joseph Banks.



The Resolution and Adventure medallion, 1772, in silver

While the silver Resolution and Adventure medallion obviously brings to mind the exciting period of courage, curiosity and adventure of the late 1700s, what is less known is that it also embodies a showdown between two of the most formidable minds in 18th century England.

Although Sir Joseph Banks conceived the medals, played a key role in their design and planned how they were to be distributed, to his great disappointment he did not travel with Cook on his pioneering journey.

The story of the Resolution and Adventure medal adds back a human element to the larger than life men who played fundamental roles in the foundation of Australia.

Captain James Cook: the most able and enlightened navigator England ever produced.



James Cook

James Cook is known to every Australian schoolchild as captain of the “*Endeavour*” - the man who “discovered” Australia. A full description of Cook’s achievements is rather more detailed. Cook is respected by many as the world’s foremost explorer of his age, not only because he displayed a truly rare combination of skill and attention to detail, but also for his physical courage and ability to lead men under challenging conditions.

In an era when sons of the working class were rarely considered for promotion, Cook’s natural talent was so great that he rose from being a humble seaman to the commander of three great voyages. His achievements in mapping the Pacific, New Zealand and Australia, radically changed the face of the world as many knew it, and in the words of a contemporary, proved him to be “*the ablest and enlightened navigator that England ever produced.*”[2]”

Sir Joseph Banks - The father of Australia.

Sir Joseph Banks was an English naturalist, botanist and patron of the natural sciences. Because of his keen interest in the colony Banks has been called “*the Father of Australia*”.[3] When the Royal Society persuaded the Admiralty (the English Royal Navy) to send Captain James Cook on his first voyage to observe the transit of Venus, it urged that “*Joseph Banks ... a Gentleman of large fortune ... well versed in natural history*”[4] should be permitted to join the expedition “*with his Suite*”.[5] The First Lord of the Admiralty is thought to have intervened to ensure this request was granted, and Banks joined with a staff of eight.[6]

While they were in Australia on this First Voyage, Banks, Daniel Solander and the Finnish botanist Dr. Herman Spöring Jr. made the first major collection of Australian flora, and described many species new to science. These men discovered so much new plant life that "*Banks' Florilegium*", an incredible work that spanned some 35 volumes, took a decade to print complete and in full colour, and was only finished in 1990.

Banks returned to London from Cook's First Voyage in July 1771, to immediate fame. He went on to hold the position of President of the Royal Society for over 41 years, he advised King George III on the Royal Botanic Gardens, advocated the establishment of Botany Bay as a place for the resettlement of convicts, and advised the British government on all matters relating to Australia.

Preparations for the second voyage.

At the beginning of 1772, Banks and the Swedish naturalist Solander began making significant preparations to join Cook's Second Voyage. Their entourage this time was to include no less than 16 people (double the size of their staff on the Endeavour), and included a painter and two horn players, not to mention far more botanical equipment than the Endeavour had lugged.[7]

In his personal journal during this period, Cook noted rather dryly that "*it was found difficult to find room for the whole and at the same time leave room for her officers and crew and stowage for the necessary stores and provisions*"[8]. Extensive modifications had to be made to the Resolution in order to (literally) accommodate Banks - he not only demanded exclusive use of the Captain's cabin, but that a whole new deck be added on top of the existing deck (adding another level of accommodation), and that Cook instead be housed in a relatively small compartment built onto the new main deck.

While Cook had "*reason to think that she would prove Crank and that she was overbuilt*"[9], he "*suspended giving any other opinion until a full trial had been made of her*"[10]. (Cook uses the term "crank" to describe the Resolution's tendency to easily "heel" or tip over.[11])

The Resolution's maiden voyage.



The Resolution's maiden voyage was intended to run down the river Thames, and into the English Channel. So bad was the Resolution's tendency to "crank" however that it took no less than 4 days to reach the mouth of the River Thames, and the pilot in charge refused to take her into the English Channel for fear of capsizing.

After that short journey, one of Cook's senior staff reported to him that *"By God I'll go to sea in a grog tub, if desired, or in the Resolution as soon as you please, But I must say I think her by far the most unsafe ship I ever saw or heard of."*[12]

Cook immediately sought permission from Lord Sandwich (Lord of the Admiralty) to have the unsafe renovations completely dismantled - the new deck and sparhouse were removed, and within 48 hours, the Resolution was back to its original condition again.[13]

Not only would this mean that Banks and his party would now need to satisfy themselves with on-board accommodation that was rather more austere than they believed was appropriate, but as Banks had personally financed the renovations, he had in fact wasted £5,000.[14] To put that figure in perspective, the vessel had only cost the Admiralty £4,151 outright just a few months earlier.

Banks took the opportunity to personally inspect the newly-restored Resolution himself on May 28th, 1772. One account of that day's events states that when he *"...saw the changes for himself, he exploded. His tantrum was epic. Spectators said he "swore and stamped like a mad man." Banks ordered all his entourage off. Then he had his baggage and personal effects removed."*[15]

Banks and Cook square off.

The Admiralty and the Navy Board were asked to adjudicate – Cook commented: *“I shall not mention the arguments made use of by Mr Banks and his friends as many of them were highly absurd ... be this as it may the clamour was so great that it was thought it would be brought before the House of Commons.[16]”* Cook goes on to state in his journal that *“Mr Banks declared his resolution not to go the Voyage, alleging that the Sloop was neither roomy nor convenient enough for his purpose.[17]”* So there we have it, despite the existence of the Resolution and Adventure medal that indicates Banks had an intimate involvement with the planning of Cook’s second voyage, Banks did not travel with Cook on his famous Second Voyage.

The Mysterious Mr Burnett.

Cook’s opinion of Banks must surely have been dented further when the Resolution made it’s the first port of call at Funchal, on the Portuguese island of Madeira on August 1st, 1772. The Resolution’s crew learned of a “mysterious gentleman” by the name of Burnett who had apparently been unable to board the ship in England, and was waiting to join Banks’ party as a botanist. A letter by Cook at the time stated that *“Every part of Mr Burnett’s behaviour and every action tended to prove that he was a Woman. I have not met with a person that entertains a doubt of a contrary nature ...”*[18]

The inescapable conclusion was that Mr Burnett was in fact Banks’ mistress and that Banks had intended to smuggle her onto the Resolution. That Mr Burnett left Madeira on the first ship to England as soon as “he” heard the news that Banks was not on the Resolution did not help Mr Banks’ credibility. The poignancy of Mr Burnett’s efforts to join Banks on the Resolution is magnified further when we learn that Banks had departed London for Iceland some 3 weeks earlier.

“Testimonies of Being the First Discoveries...”

Prior to embarking on his Second Voyage, Cook wrote in his journal: *“their Lordships also caus’d to be struck a number of Medals, on the one side the Kings head and on the other the two Sloops & the time they were at first intended to sail from England, these Medals are to be distributed to the Natives of, and left upon New Discovered countries as testimonies of being the first discoveries”.*[19]

Sir Joseph Banks is known to have put the idea of a presentation medal to the Admiralty - he appreciated the political significance of issuing such medals as proof of discovery, and was aware that the French Admiral Bougainville had one struck for his voyage of 1766. *"The medal, funded by the Admiralty, reflects the British government's intentions to foster a good relationship with any indigenous people with whom Cook came in contact, as well as supporting territorial claims by providing evidence of being the first discoverers. In those times it was customary for Europeans to claim territory in the Pacific and elsewhere when seen for the first time by them.[20]"* Correspondence in the papers of Sir Joseph Banks shows that in early in 1772, acting as the agent for the Admiralty, Banks placed an order with the firm of Boulton and Fothergill for a series of medals and jewellery items, with the intention that they be used as gifts or in barter with Pacific islanders. Banks ordered 2,000 medals in a base metal, as well as 142 in silver and two in gold.

Production problems and the delayed voyage.

Dear Sir

I am fav^d with yours of 9th 14th Dec. by wh^{ch} I perceive you want 12 more Silver Medals &c. in all $\frac{15}{32}$ medals also 2 Gold ones. Now you must know that a flaw in a Medal eye like a hole in ones Stocking increases in a greater ratio than 9 squares of 9 sides or corners of it, so that 9 eye for 9 reverse is now so bad that I cannot think of disgracing the Cabinets of the King & your Friends with impressions of so tattered a dye. I have therefore come to a resolution this afternoon (I wish I had done a week ago) to have a new reverse dye grave & that I hope to get done so that the 2 Gold & 9^c 32 Silver ones shall be deliver'd to your order in London on Tuesday evening the 24th Dec. Although it will be attended wth some little expence yet it shall not be

Since it took five blows to strike the silver medals and only one for the much softer Platina, Boulton planned to strike the silver medals first, while the die was new and showed little or no signs of wear. Unfortunately, the reverse die cracked on the 'first blow' of the silver medal, throwing Boulton's production plan into disarray. A letter from Boulton to Banks shows that he did not want to supply Banks with medals showing any sign of a cracked die:

First page of Boulton's letter

“Now you must know that a flaw in a Medal dye like a hole in one’s stocking increases in a greater ratio than ye square of uses or wear of it, so that ye dye for ye reverse is so bad that I cannot think of disgracing the Cabinets of the King & your Friend with impressions of so tattered a dye.[21]”

As there was insufficient time to make a new reverse die before the date Banks was to depart, and as Boulton thought the medals would be good enough for the ‘natives’, Boulton decided to make all of the 2,000 Platina medals using the cracked die. If time permitted, he intended to make a new reverse die, and strike the silver medals using it. Fortunately for Boulton, Banks’ extensive customisation of the Resolution meant that the voyage’s embarkation date had been delayed by at least a month. This allowed Boulton enough time to strike all of the medallions well before the expedition departed.

A Fundamental part of Banks’ planning.

Many descriptions of Banks’ involvement with the Resolution & Adventure medals speak of Banks commissioning them almost as a benevolent patron – one far apart from the logistics of the voyage, but with a warm regard for the people and objectives concerned. The reality is however that these medals were a fundamental part of Banks’ planning for the Second Voyage – an expedition that he clearly intended to have a dominating influence over. Banks may very well have envisioned himself gifting medallions in exchange for new botanical specimens right across the Pacific, flora that he would have received further acclaim for upon his return to London. His conflict with Cook and the Admiralty over the available accommodation on the Resolution meant that Banks did not actually travel on the ships seen on the medals he commissioned. It is interesting to wonder whether Banks would have still commissioned Boulton to manufacture these medals had he never intended to travel with Cook on his Second Voyage, some might suspect the answer would be no.

With this in mind then, the Resolution and Adventure medals are a tangible reminder of the tumultuous and short-lived involvement of Sir Joseph Banks in Cook’s Second Voyage. Work on the medals did not begin until after the Resolution’s new deck was complete on February 2nd 1772, and Boulton had well and truly finished striking them at least a month before Banks withdrew from the expedition on May 28th 1772.

Once it became apparent that he would not be travelling back to the Southern Hemisphere with Cook, Banks departed on an expedition to Iceland in the company of Uno Von Troil, a Swede with an interest in Scandinavian antiquities, a man described as being “...one of his generation’s most knowledgeable and most learned men.[22]” Banks and Von Troil departed for Iceland on July 12th 1772. A cynic might say that is no coincidence that this was just one day before Cook embarked on his Second Voyage on the Resolution. Banks returned from Iceland by way of Scotland and it’s islands and did not set out to return to London from Edinburgh until November 19th, 1772.[23]

Personal distribution to friends and allies.

Banks is often described as having the silver Resolution and Adventure medallions struck for personal distribution to his friends, this can only have started following his return from Iceland in November 1772. The question of if and whether Banks actually did distribute the silver medals in the months following his return to London is an interesting one. His expedition to Iceland “scarcely warranted anything more elaborate than the description of Staffa that he gave to Pennant and the little map of the island...”[24] Similarly, “...the results of the Newfoundland journey, though important, were comparatively sparse...”[25] We can presume then, that Banks had a choice in how he spent his time after returning to London from Iceland.

His main focus after returning from Iceland is said to have been to publish the results of “...his great Endeavour voyage, with its hundreds and hundreds of totally unknown plants, insects, fishes, reptiles, birds and mammals, required an equally great publication for the benefit of the learned world.[26]” One of Boulton’s final letters to Banks regarding the Resolution and Adventure medals asks for instructions as to how they should be distributed if Banks were to depart before production on them was complete, however there is no record of a response from Banks to that effect.

While Banks had no involvement with Cook’s Second Voyage after it departed, we can imagine that while he was immersed in the task of compiling his “Florilegium”, the written record of the natural curiosities and other artefacts that he brought back from the Southern Hemisphere, Banks may well have also distributed the silver medallions to friends and dignitaries in London that had an interest in his work, as well as in the benefits that subsequent voyages might bring.

The silver Resolution and Adventure medallions are an incredibly rare link to one of the world's greatest explorers - the man that discovered Australia, and are a reminder of a project very dear to one of the world's greatest natural scientists, Sir Joseph Banks.

Comparative appeal and value of the Resolution and Adventure medallion in silver.

When we compare how the silver Resolution and Adventure medallion has fared through auctions in years past with other important Australian numismatic items sold at the same time, we can see their relative importance to Australian collectors.

One important auction was conducted by Spink (Noble) Auctions in Sydney in November 1981. Lot 423 in that sale was a Resolution and Adventure medallion in silver - it made a hammer price of \$4,200. Other items in the same sale that also had a hammer price of \$4,200 were as follows:

Lot	Item	1981 Hammer	2014 Value
423	1772 Silver Resolution & Adventure medallion	\$4,200	\$17,500
695	Queensland, Government 1902 Five Pound Issued Note MVR# 1 Fine	\$4,200	\$81,000
719	Australia 1913 Ten Shillings Cerutti / Collins R#1c Serials: M 413653 Uncirculated	\$4,200	\$315,000
941	Australia 1921 Melbourne Square Pattern Kookaburra Halfpenny Type 2 FDC	\$4,200	\$295,000
1314	Australia 1925 Melbourne Penny Uncirculated	\$4,200	\$17,500

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THE SYDNEY MAIL, SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1884.

A Relic of the Past.

We publish in this issue the fac simile of a medallion kindly shown to us by the courtesy of Monsieur Decour, the French Consul. These coins, struck in 1772 to commemorate Captain Cook's expedition in the *Resolution* and *Adventure*, were discovered on the beach at Koné, a settlement on the western coast of New Caledonia, more than 200 miles from Noumea. Could the accurate history of



FAC-SIMILE OF MEDAL DISCOVERED IN NEW CALEDONIA.

these coins be known, it would probably throw some interesting light either upon Cap'tain Cook's expedition itself or else upon the circumstances and history of some very early settlers. In the absence, however, of any such precise historical information, full scope is afforded for ingenious speculation as to when or how these coins came to find their grave on the beach at Koné. In order to allow our readers more clearly to discern their markings and inscriptions, we have made the engravings slightly larger than the originals.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/163271573#>

ENGLAND'S FIRST REGAL COPPER COINAGE

Raymond Palermo

In the third quarter of the seventeenth century, the English people were effectively being starved of officially sanctioned farthings. The smallest regular denomination issued by the Commonwealth (1649–60) was the rather plain and unattractive silver halfpenny. The situation was made worse when Charles II only issued coins down to the penny for his hammered silver coinage (1660–63). The demand for small change was desperate.

In response, a vast number of towns, merchants and tradesmen issued their own copper tokens. Pennies, halfpennies and farthings were struck in a variety of shapes including hearts (pennies and halfpennies), octagons and squares (halfpennies and farthings). These pieces found wide circulation, and are often found many miles from their town of issue. While the tokens attempted to compensate for the lack of officially sanctioned small change, they were technically illegal. Furthermore, they continued to be issued on an almost unlimited scale.



1669 heart-shaped copper halfpenny token

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

As early as 1665, the Government took steps to rectify the problem, which included experimenting with pattern halfpennies and farthings using several designs. One of the halfpenny designs had the laureate portrait of Charles II facing left on the obverse, with the legend, “CAROLVS A CAROLO”, meaning, “From Charles (I) to Charles (II)”.

The reverse featured the figure of Britannia facing left, holding a spear and olive spray, and resting on a shield emblazoned with the then Union Flag – the combined flags of England and Scotland.



Charles II, pattern halfpenny, 1665.

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

The legend on this pattern read, “QVATTVOR MARIA VINDICO” or “I claim the four seas” – a poor choice, considering that the English would be defeated by the Dutch at sea two years later! This legend is thought to have been discarded in deference to the French Sun King, Louis XIV, who was offended by this claim of conquest over the four seas.

This design was probably inspired by the second century Roman copper sestertii and asses that had first featured Britannia.



Antoninus Pius, As, AD 154-155.

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

When the regal copper coinage was ready for issue, use of the trade and city tokens was prohibited. Most people and municipalities complied but the cities of Chester and Norwich had to be threatened with legal action because they had continued to use their tokens some two years later.

The first copper farthings of Charles II for circulation were issued from August 1672, from an office in Fenchurch Street. Halfpennies were only available after Christmas of that year. This might account for the relative scarcity of halfpennies dated 1672. (It should be remembered that the 1672 halfpennies were struck until the following March, remembering that, in those days, the new year began on the 25th of that month). Both denominations were struck from pure Swedish copper because the English Royal Mint was unable to produce copper blanks of a suitable quality. The coins were designed by John Roettier, from the famous family of engravers brought to England by Charles II following the Stuart Restoration. On the obverse is a laureate portrait of the King with the legend “CAROLVS A CAROLO”. This is a reference to the succession to the English throne of Charles II following his father, Charles I. Britannia is on the reverse, turned to the left, dressed in a flowing robe, and holding a spray of olive leaves in her right hand, and resting a plain spear in her left. A shield embossed with the Union Flag of England and Scotland is located to Britannia’s right. The reverse legend reads “BRITANNIA” and the exergue contains the date.



Charles II, halfpenny, 1673.

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

The model who posed for Britannia was supposedly Frances Stuart, later Duchess of Richmond, and a courtier at Charles II’s court.

Samuel Pepys was obviously impressed with the artistic quality of Britannia, recording that it was, “...as well done as anything I have seen in my whole life”. Copper halfpennies were only issued with three dates: 1672, 1673 and 1675, while the farthings are dated 1672 to 1675, and 1679.

The introduction of Britannia in 1672 began the tradition of using this device on the base coinage of England that lasted over 300 years. In that period, Britannia has changed denominations, metals and even postures. The most famous examples of these transitions include her appearance on Kuchler’s 1797 “cartwheel” twopence and penny, appearing on the Bank of England’s 1804 silver dollar and George de Saulles’ standing Britannia on the florins of Edward VII. Decimalisation has seen Britannia grace the 50 pence piece and, more recently, ride a chariot on the British silver bullion coins of 1997 and stand proudly on the 2023 1 oz silver coin of King Charles III.

Although she began her career on lowly, base metal coins, Britannia has maintained a special place in the hearts of many collectors. May she grace the coins of Great Britain for many more years to come.

This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in Coin 2000 Yearbook, published by Token Publishing. Republished with their kind permission.



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THE BRITISH-AUSTRALIAN CONNECTION

Jonathon de Hadleigh

As a collector of Australian coins, why would you want to start to buy coins from the United Kingdom?

If your collection consists of decimal coins only, then the answer is; you would not. If, on the other hand, your collection includes pre-decimal coins then there are some factors you may want to consider in order to expand both your collection and your knowledge.

Australian pre-decimal coins go back to the year 1910. However, we need not go back that far quite so soon. The 1920's saw the world price of silver rise. Governments were still keen to go back to the gold standard, with the gold sovereign at the top of the denomination tree and silver subservient or token (face value) relative to gold. Up to this time Australian coins were valued the same as British coins. The pound sterling or sovereign was the same in each country. It held legal tender status the world over and was truly an international currency, accepted everywhere. But, during the 1920's the British pound sterling diverged from the Australian pound, to the point where an exchange rate was needed between them.

The silver coins already had different designs, but then the silver content also began to differ. From 1920 the British coins became only 0.500 fine (50% silver) while the Australian coins remained at 0.925 fine (92.5% silver) until 1946, which incidentally was the year that the British went totally silver free!

So, now back to Australis's first national coinage of 1910. The "Australian Set" consists of a Florin, shilling, sixpence and threepence. However, that does not reflect the currency in circulation. At the lower end, in bronze, there were a penny and a halfpenny struck in London, with the British design and dated 1910. Distinctive Australian designs for the bronze did not begin until 1911.

There were also gold sovereigns and half sovereigns on the pound sterling standard, dated 1910 and minted in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

One might argue that a full set of Australian pre-decimal coins would be from 1911. By design that would be correct: but by mint? The 1911 bronze coins were struck in London, as were the silver, for at the time we were much closer to Great Britain. British coins were still in circulation, mainly the bronze penny, halfpenny and farthing. However, the farthing was not included in the new Australian designs, nor had it been seen in the earlier token bronze coinage of the Victorian period in Australia. Was that because the lowest denomination that it would have been economic to produce for a country so far from the manufacturing base in England was the halfpenny?

British silver consisted of a threepence, sixpence, shilling, florin, half crown and crown. In Victorian times there was a penny halfpenny, or three halfpence, coin in silver struck for Ceylon. As many ships called in there before continuing to Fremantle, one may wonder how many of these small coins arrived in Western Australia.

A groat, a fourpence coin in silver, was also struck in Britain, but removed from circulation there from 1857, although it continued to circulate in the West Indies. An additional striking was made in 1888 to meet demand, before a distinctive issue was made for the West Indies in 1891. However, an 1888 groat was found in the goldfields near Ballarat, Victoria. What a journey that coin had made.

British coinage circulated worldwide in the sterling areas although the gold coins crossed over even into the dollar areas, having legal tender status in Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Caribbean and Canada.

The half crown was a popular coin with British banks, but when Australia chose the denominations for its national coinage in 1910 the half crown was absent. Was this because it did not circulate as much as the florin, or did Australians, Australian banks and the Government simply prefer the florin, which was a convenient decimal fraction of a pound?

The British crown was not a coin that seemed to have had heavy circulation. It was inconveniently large and heavy, and could be awkward to break into smaller denominations for change after a purchase. However, some must have circulated here, as early dated pieces do turn up in a range of grades, including very worn examples.

The crown was not required in 1910 and it was not struck in the Australian series until the special issue of 1937 and the small issue of 1938. So short-lived!

Pre-Federation Australia had local stamps and Australian banks issued their own notes for local circulation, but there were also three mints striking gold sovereigns and half sovereigns that could be spent here or anywhere in the English-speaking world. Silver and bronze coins were imported from the Royal Mint in London for circulation in Australia. In many ways these were just as Australian as the 1910 coins, which were also struck in London. So, why not include a pre-Federation type set of coins in your Australian collection?

Dr JOHN R. GODFREY
Numismatist
coinausjohn.com

COIN AUS JOHN
Australian Coins & Banknotes
0408 919 072
johngodfrey@westnet.com.au
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1892 Double Shaft 5 Shillings PCGS MS63

THE OBSCURE 'VESPASIAN JUNIOR'

John McDonald

Vespasian was a tough Roman general who was declared emperor by his legions in July AD 69 during a period of civil war. He won power, stabilised Rome, and became a respected emperor. He is well known to historians and to coin collectors, but few people are aware of another Vespasian known as 'Vespasian Junior'.

When the emperor Vespasian died in June AD 79 his highly regarded elder son Titus took his place, but Titus died prematurely in AD 81 at the age of only 41, leaving his younger brother Domitian to take over. At first Domitian was an effective, if not popular, ruler. But as time passed, he became cruel, obsessively fearful for his own safety and widely detested. He had many high-ranking men executed on suspicion of plotting against him.

Although Domitian was married, he had no surviving children. He is said to have been sexually promiscuous and to have impregnated his niece Flavia Julia, but she died before giving birth, allegedly after being forced to have an abortion by Domitian. He probably felt that the lack of a legitimate heir made him even more vulnerable to plots, so he adopted the two young sons of his cousin Flavius Clemens and grand niece Flavia Domitilla to be his successors. The two boys were renamed Vespasian Caesar (also known as Vespasian Junior) and Domitian Caesar. The date on which the adoption took place is not clear.

However, in AD 95 Domitian had Clemens executed on trumped up charges and Domitilla was exiled to a remote island. It seems that this event was the last straw for some of those close to the emperor and an assassination was planned. The conspirators included the commanders of his personal guard, his chamberlain, and even his wife Domitia. Domitian was killed on 18 September AD 96. The ancient Roman historian Suetonius, who was a contemporary, wrote that:

'The occasion of Domitian's murder was that he had executed on some trivial pretext his extremely lazy cousin Flavius Clemens, just after the completion of a consulship, though he had previously designated Clemen's two small sons as his heirs and changed their names to Vespasian and Domitian'.

What happened to the two boys is a mystery. There is no further mention of them after their father's execution, so it seems likely that their fate was not a happy one, whether at the hands of Domitian or those of his assassins.

Despite them being made the emperor's heirs and given the rank of Caesar, Domitian did not issue any imperial coins bearing their names or portraits, suggesting that the adoption probably took place only a very short time before he turned on their parents. The only material trace of them is a rare, small bronze or copper coin issued in the name of 'Vespasian Junior' by the city of Smyrna, now known as Izmir, Turkey. This coin is generally, if not universally, attributed to Domitian's unfortunate young adopted heir. There are no coins known for his brother Domitian Caesar.

If the attribution is correct, the coin must have been minted sometime before the execution of Vespasian Junior's father in AD 95.



Vespasian Junior, AE16, Smyrna, c. AD 94-95, 16 mm, 1.92 gm

Obverse: OYECPIAC[IANO]C ΝΕΩΤΕΡΟC, draped bust right.

Reverse: ΖΜΥΡ-ΝΑΙΩΝ, Nike advancing left.

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

The obverse legend translates as 'Vespasian the Younger', or 'Vespasian Junior'. The reverse legend is simply the name of the city in ancient Greek.

Some people have suggested that the person on the coin could be the emperor Vespasian's elder son Titus as a youth. Titus did use Vespasian as his principal name and his coins often name him just as T VESPASIANVS. However, Titus was already a 29 year old man when his father took power, and the portrait on the coin appears to be a boy, not a man in his prime.

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.

Remaining meeting dates for 2023 are as follows:

- 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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PAST PRESIDENTS

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Karl Hawelka †	1971-1978
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Prof Walter Bloom	1988-1991
Jiri Just †	1991-1994
Colin Meikle	1994-1997
Haydn Powell †	1997-2005
Prof Walter Bloom	2005-



CALENDAR OF FAIRS

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

- Saturday 12th August 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 18th June 2023

Collectibles Society of WA (South Perth Community Centre):

- To be advised

Militaria Swap Meet (Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds):

- 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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