



THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

ISSN 0048-1815

Volume I6

February 1977

Page IO

1975-1977

O.N.A. OFFICERS

Past Presidents

R.R. Rekofski (1962-65)
L.T. Smith (1965-67)
W. English (1967-69)
D. Flick (1969-71)
C.B. Laister (1971-73)
W.E.P. Lambert (1973-75)

President

ELLIOTT JEPHSON

First Vice-President

BRUCE WATT

Second Vice-President

GERALD ALBERT

Secretary

MRS. STELLA HODGE

Treasurer and Membership

BRUCE H. RASZMANN

Mailing Address

Box 33, Waterloo, Ont. N2J 3Z6

DIRECTORS

Area 1 Howard Whitfield
Thomas Masters
Area 2 Ken W. Wilmot
Area 3 Mel Fiske
Area 4 Bruce Petch
Area 5 Wm. J. Gordon
Area 6 Gordon M. Culbert
Area 7 Fred Jewett
Area 8 Vacant
Area 9 Vacant
Area 10 Roland Albert

Historian

Walter Griggs

Publicity

R. N. Voaden
Ontario Paper Co.
Thorold, Ont.

Audio-Visual Service

Chas. B. Laister
No. 3 Highway,
Tillsonburg, Ont. N4G 3J1

Editor

Gerry Albert
158 Dunvegan Court,
Sudbury, Ont. P3E 1Z2

Award of Merit

This is just a reminder to all the Executives and members of all Ontario Coin Clubs that this is your last opportunity to nominate someone for the O.N.A. Award of Merit.

This Award is a prize highly thought of in Numismatic circles. Any person that you feel has done much to improve our hobby, worked hard to promote it's qualities and spread the word as to the merits of belonging to a Club which specializes in making our hobby a healthy and worthwhile pastime, this is the person who should receive your individual consideration. Then take this name to your Club for their support. Make sure that your nomination is signed by your Club President or a member of your Club appointed by him.

All nominations for this Award should be mailed to: Chairman of Award Committee, W.E. Pat Lambert, Box 311, St. Catharines, Ontario. L2R 6T7

Let's make it rough for the Chairman this year and give him some real opposition from which to choose the final Candidate for the Annual Award of Merit.

1977 is also an Election year for the O.N.A. This will be your last opportunity to nominate someone. So do it to-day.

THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST is published by the Ontario Numismatic Association. The publication can be obtained with membership in one of the following categories: Regular Membership \$5.00 annually, Husband and Wife (one journal) \$7.00 annually, Junior (up to 18) \$3.00 annually, Club Membership \$10.00 annually. Life Memberships available for \$50.00 after 3 years of regular membership. O.N.A. Silver Lapel Pins \$2.50 each.

Remittances payable to the Ontario Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 33, Waterloo, Ontario. N2J 3Z6.

Authorized second class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for

A Survey of English Coinage: George III to Victoria, by Stanley Clute.

INTRODUCTION:

It will be most appropriate to begin our quick survey of the coinage of nineteenth century England by briefly summarizing the most important coinage developments of the eighteenth century, as this will provide the background for the following developments. First of all, the bimetallic system of currency, precarious even at its best, collapsed. After 1700, the great shortage of silver in England was accompanied by an abundance of gold which continued to be minted into coin at a fairly high rate and in a large range of denominations. It was therefore possible to hold the price of gold steady and the guinea retained its value of 21 shillings and its weight of 129 39/89 grains. But the price of silver rose uncontrollably; it was impossible to coin enough silver to reflect the values of gold coin. ①

GEORGE III

The failure of the bimetallic system was accompanied by the ever-present need for a small-change copper coinage. But copper coins were prolifically forged, probably due to the less severe penalty at this time for forging copper coins than for ② imitating gold and silver. In the first part of the reign of George III, copper coinage, like that of silver, virtually dried up. No copper coin bearing his portrait was struck until 1770, although a small number of farthings was struck in 1762-63 from 1754-dated dies of George II. Halfpennies and farthings to a total value of £46,455 were struck from 1770 to 1775: they were steadily melted down and remade into lightweight counterfeits. According to Peck (p. 214) :

"In 1787 the Mint reported that only 8 per cent of the coin then in circulation had some tolerable resemblance to the king's coin' and as a remedy they recommended the issue of a copper coin struck at 12 d to the lb., ie about double the previous weight."

Specimens were made but the coinage was never carried through. This led many exasperated tradesmen and manufacturers to counter the desperate need for small change by issuing their own tokens. The first of these were the famous "druid's head" pennies of the Anglessy Copper Company, dated 1787. They were soon followed by many other token issues between 1787 and 1797. Most of these tokens were made by firms in Birmingham (though many were issued in Scotland, Ireland and Wales, as well as England), especially Lutwyche, Kempson, Westwood, Hancock, Jordan, and Mathew Boulton. Boulton deserves special mention, for he was the first to harness James Watt's steam engine to a coining press (which he designed, himself), thereby being able to strike coins with much greater speed and uniformity than was previously possible. In the years to come, he was also to exert great influence upon the Royal mint. One of Boulton's greatest ambitions was to develop a coin that could not be counterfeited. His three main ideas were: that each coin should contain its intrinsic value of metal, minus only the cost of

manufacturing that coin; that a retaining collar around the edge of the coin when it was struck would maintain a constant diameter; and to use incused legends on a wide and flat rim. Boulton set up a new mint at Soho in 1788 and in 1797 finally convinced the government to give him a contract to strike official copper coins. The contract provided for the minting of 20 tons of twopence and 480 tons of pennies, the penny to weigh one ounce and the twopence (3) to weigh 2 ounces. These 1797-dated coins are the so-called "cart-wheels" familiar to all numismatists. The government later contracted with Boulton to manufacture 550 tons of 1799-dated half-pennies and farthings. Early in 1805, the government began to rebuild the Royal Mint which, until then, had been housed in the Tower of London. A new building was erected on Little Tower Hill. Most of the internal planning for the building was done by Boulton and an associate, John Rennie. Boulton also built and supplied coining presses similar to his own, and which remained in use at the Royal Mint until 1882. The new building was ready in 1810 but the final stage of transfer from the tower was not finished until two years later.

Between 1805 and 1807, Boulton received government orders for the striking of a total of 1800 tons of pennies, half-pennies and farthings, all underweight (ie not containing full intrinsic value; copper prices were rising). Thus ended the obsession by the government and the populace for intrinsic value in the coins.

Now we must look at the gold coins of the period. Changes in obverse and reverse design of the gold guinea were under consideration by the government, in 1787. This year saw the issue of the famous "spade guineas", popularly so-termed because of the spade-shaped shield of arms on the reverse. These were minted until 1799, at which time the production of guineas was suspended; it was to remain suspended until 1813. This was due to the interruption of gold supplies; England had been at war since 1793 with Spain, whose American colonies were a chief source of gold, and trade with other gold-producing regions, such as Africa and India, was frequently interrupted as a consequence of the war with France. Half-guineas were minted in 1798 and again in 1800. From 1797, gold third-guineas were struck (sometimes intermittently) to help relieve the shortage of smaller coinage. Guineas, half-guineas and third-guineas were struck for the last time in 1813. Paper money, not a wholly new phenomenon at this time, came into more general use when the issue of guineas ceased in 1799.

As an emergency measure, to help relieve the shortage of silver coins, the government, in 1797, had a large number of Spanish eight reales silver coins counterstamped with the king's head in an oval. They were then tariffed at four shillings, ninepence (4) and placed into circulation. In 1804, due to the manufacture of counterfeits, the countermark was changed, the king's head being enlarged and its surrounding oval being changed to an octagon.

Also in the same year the government overstruck a large number of these Spanish dollars with new obverse and reverse types (designs) and issued them as Bank of England dollars, current for eight shillings.

In 1816, the government decided to issue a complete new coinage. An act was passed on June 22, 1816, establishing the gold standard and reducing silver coins to token status, like the official copper coinage; they were still legal tender but no longer a part of the economic standard. A transition in this direction had begun in 1811, when the Bank of England issued "bank tokens" in the denominations of three shillings and one shilling, sixpence for circulation. They were not legal tender but were officially approved and circulated widely. (5)

An Order in Council of August 3, 1816 decreed that henceforth gold coinage should be comprised of sovereigns of 20 shillings each, and half-sovereigns of 10 shillings each. The weight of the sovereign was fixed at 123.274 grains and the fineness continued at 22 carats.

It was also at this time that the brilliant engravers, the Wyon family, whose artistry contributed so much to the pleasing appearance of English coins in this century, began their association with the Royal Mint. In 1815, Thomas Wyon was appointed chief Engraver and, in 1816, William Wyon became Second Engraver. In 1828, William Wyon was appointed Chief Engraver and was succeeded at his death in 1851, by his son, L.C. Wyon, who had held the post of Second Engraver since 1844. Also in 1851, a cousin of L.C., James Wyon, became resident engraver and, when he retired in 1860 was succeeded by his son, George Wyon, who died two years later.

It was also in 1816 that an Italian gem engraver was employed to engrave models for coins at the Royal Mint - Benedetto Pistrucci, one of whose greatest lasting monuments is his design of St. George-slaying-the-dragon, which has been used on the sovereign intermittently right up to modern times. It is also said of Pistrucci that he "played a large part in transforming British coin-portraiture from the Germanic forms of the eighteenth century to the more elegant neo-classical forms of the nineteenth". (6)

There is not much point in saying too much about the many portraiture changes during the reign of George III, except to note that not all the coin portraits were popular with the king, himself.

From 1816 to 1820, half-crowns, shillings and sixpences were struck in silver; Maundy money was struck, for distribution at the Maundy ceremony, in 1817; and from 1818 to 1820, crowns were also minted. The weight of the silver coins was now reduced from 62 to 66 shillings to the pound troy. This size and weight continued throughout the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century until the replacement of silver by base metal in British coins.

Before we leave the reign of George III, it is worth saying something about the nineteenth century British tokens. With the issue of copper coins in 1797, private tokens were suppressed. The rising price of copper during the Napoleonic War had caused a great deal of copper coinage to be illegally melted down and the end result was, once again, a shortage of small change. No more copper coins had been issued after 1807, so in 1811 private tokens once again appeared; this time some silver tokens were issued, as well as the more usual copper ones, sixpences, etc. When certain rather unscrupulous persons issued tokens and then refused to redeem them in legal tender, the government decided to put a stop to them, and an Act of Parliament in 1816 declared private tokens illegal, with two exceptions (7)

George IV

In January, 1820, George IV ascended to the throne. The next ten years are not greatly notable for radical coinage changes, but the highlights are worth reporting. All sovereigns struck in 1820 bore the head of George III, since orders had been given to continue using the old dies. After this year, new dies were prepared with a likeness of the new king.

In 1823, a gold two-pound piece was issued for the first time for general circulation.

A pantograph was introduced into the Royal Mint in 1824, and became a standard part of the Mint's equipment. This machine transforms the design on a large-scale relief into a pre-determined (much smaller) coin-size relief model from which can be made a master punch; this, in turn is used to make a large series of identical dies. The pantograph was an important step in the fact that it did away with the immense toil of engraving master-dies by hand. It made available for use on coins many designs by sculptors who were not also engravers. (8) Modern pantograph machines are still in use in mints throughout the world.

The mint began striking copper farthings again in 1821 and pennies and halfpennies were recommenced in 1825.

William IV

Once again there is little novelty in the seven years of this reign. There were no silver crowns struck for William IV. The fourpence, or groat, was reintroduced after a long lapse (they had last been struck in 1800 and like the other small denomination silver, had been minted sporadically and in very small quantities, on account of the silver shortage.) The year of this reintroduction was 1836. The three-half-penny coins first issued in 1834 were for the West Indies and Ceylon, and were never used in England.

Victoria

When Victoria ascended the throne it was necessary to change the reverse design of the sovereign and its half, which at that time was the royal coat of arms, to delete the arms of Hanover, the right to

WHICH DEVOLVED on Victoria's uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the brass medalets or gaming counters which were privately struck satyrizing the Duke's departure for Hanover, usually depicting him as St. George in a mock version of Pistrucchi's sovereign design. Suffice it to say that these innumerable "to Hanover" tokens exist.

Aside from design changes there was no great innovation in the gold coins. Five and two-pound gold pieces were struck in 1887 and 1893. The gold and silver coins were redesigned for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and a new middle-aged portrait was used until 1893, when it was again redesigned and the "old head" of the Queen was used until her death.

A few interesting occurrences took place in the silver coinage. The four-pence was minted from 1838 to 1855, and was recalled from circulation in 1887. Threepence in silver were reintroduced into the coinage in 1845 for general circulation and continued to be minted throughout the reign except for 1847 and 1852. In the early part of Victoria's reign there was strong agitation for a decimal coinage and a coin in the value of one-tenth of a pound was first issued as an answer to this demand, in 1849 - the florin or two-shillings. An attempt was made to have a silver double-florin accepted into circulation but the coin was not successful and was discontinued in 1890, after only four years.

One great technical innovation was made in the copper coinage: it stopped being copper. In 1860, the heavy copper penny was replaced by a lighter bronze penny.

In order to assist the production of gold coins, branch mints were set up in Australia, at Sydney, Melbourne and later Perth.

Before closing, I want to say a few more words about paper money. We saw that it had come into widespread use in England during the Napoleonic War. The gold standard raised a problem with the paper money - how the government could control the issue of paper money and avoid overissue. (9) Coinage was no great problem in this respect; it was monopolized by the government already. The government answered the paper money problem by centralizing banknote issue. In 1844, the Bank Charter Act was passed, by which only the Bank of England could issue legal tender notes. Hobsbawn says of the Act that it; "Was then quite beside the point, because non-monetary means of payment (bills of exchange, cheques, and so on) were increasingly being used for all except petty cash transactions. They were quite unaffected by the control of the banknote issue." (10) It should also be noted that the Act did not apply to Scotland where, under Scottish law, chartered banks still have the right to issue notes, though few now do. One of these institutions still issuing its own notes is the Clydesdale Bank.

In conclusion, I have tried to sketch verbally the development of English coinage throughout the late eighteen and the nineteenth century, with emphasis upon the reign wherein the greatest change in the coinage took place in this period - that of George III. I have not recounted the many, many changes in coin designs which took place, in much detail, due to insufficient space. Also, have not

ATTEMPTED TO GIVE an account of the currencies struck for the colonies or that struck especially in proof condition for presentation. It is my hope that this extremely brief survey will convey some of the interest to be found in a study of the coinage of this period.

Footnotes.

1. C.H.V. Sutherland, English Coinage 600-1900 (London, 1973), p. 178
2. C. Wilson Peck, English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum, 1558-1958 (London 1964), p. 214. The act of 1742 which made the counterfeiting of copper punishable by two years imprisonment had never been strictly enforced. In June, 1771, it was enacted that counterfeiting copper was a felony and that suspects' premises could be searched under warrant, but this new law apparently had little effect.
3. Peck, op. cit., p. 217
4. H.A. Seaby and P.A. Rayner, The English Silver Coinage From 1649 (London, 1968), p. 21. The authors state that these captured coins easily circulated as currency in England, due to the desperate shortage of silver coins and that, although this was illegal, the government ignored the situation until 1797 they legalized it by using the counterstamping scheme.
5. Jerome Remick, Somer James, Anthony Dowle & Patrick Finn, The Guidebook & Catalogue of British Commonwealth Coins 1649-1971 (Winnipeg, 1971), pp. 233 & 242.
6. Sutherland, p. 184
7. This Act expressly provided for the continued circulation of the penny tokens of the Birmingham Workhouse until 1820 and for the penny tokens of the Sheffield Overseers of the Poor until 1823.
8. Sutherland, p. 182
9. E.J. Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975), p. 236
10. Ibid.

Bibliography

- Clarke, William N., "The Coinage of Hanoverian England," in The Canadian Numismatic Journal, Vol. 9, No. 1, Toronto, 1964.
- Duveen, Sir Geoffrey & H.G. Stride, The History of the Gold Sovereign, London, 1962.
- Hobsbawm, E.J., Industry and Empire, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975
- Peck, C. Wilson, English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum, 1558-1958, London, 1964.
- Porteous, John, Coins, London, 1964
- Remick, Jerome, Somer James, Anthony Dowle & Patrick Finn, The Guidebook & Catalogue of British Commonwealth Coins, 1649-1971 Winnipeg, 1971
- Seaby, H.A., British Copper Coins and their Values, London, 1963
- Seaby, H.A., Coins of England and the United Kingdom, London, 1975
- Seaby, H.A. & P.A. Rayner, The English Silver Coinage From 1649, London, 1968
- Sutherland, C.H.V., English Coinage 600-1900, London, 1973

My thanks to Stan Clute, for this interesting article, which is easy to read and interesting to type. Keep sending these along. Ye Ed.

Proposed Coin Shows

The following are the Annual Coin Shows proposed for the next few months, that we have received notices for, or taken from Club Bulletins. We advise you to check this list as you debate the date of your Club's Show, to ensure that your date does not conflict with any other coin show.

- Mar. 12 - N.Y.C.C. Annual Coin Show, Displays, White Elephant and Book Sale, Auction by Frank Rose. Enquiries: North York Coin Club, Box 294, Station A, Willowdale, Ont. M2N 5P0
- Mar. 19 - A one-day Symposium and Exhibit will be sponsored by the Ancient Coin Society, at the Academy of Medecine, New Quarters, Toronto, Ontario. Further information from Mr. Stanley Clute, P.O. Box 672, Station B, Willowdale, Ont.
- April 14 - 17th., Torex '77, Spring Show at the Westbury Hotel, 475 Yonge St., Toronto, Ontario. For enquiries write to Torex, 347 Bay St., Suite 1000, Toronto, Ontario. M5H 2R7
- April 24 - The Nickel Belt Coin Club's Annual Coin Show, to be held at the President Motor Hotel, from 10 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. in Sudbury, Ont. For enquiries write to Gerry Albert, 158 Dunvegan Crt., Sudbury, Ont.
- May 13 - 15th., The Ontario Numismatic Association Convention for 1977 will be held at the Holiday Inn in Oshawa. All enquiries re Bourse etc., should be sent to the Oshawa Coin Club, P.O. Box 212, Oshawa, Ontario.
- June 19 - Brantford Centennial Coin Show - Senior Citizen's Centre, Bourse - Exhibition - Auction - 25 Charlotte St., Brantford.
- Aug. 3 - 7 - The 1977 C.N.A. Convention and Show will be held in Vancouver. More details next month.
- Oct. 22 - The St. Catharines Annual Coin Show and Banquet will be held on this date. More details will follow later. This will be their eighteenth consecutive Show.

***** ***** ***** ***** ***** *****

Smile : Judge: "You've been appearing before me in this court for twenty years." Thief: "Can I help it if you never get promoted?"

Wife: "Didn't I tell you to notice when the soup came to a boil?" Husband: "I did. It was half-past ten."

Just how do you ORDER foreign coins ?

I have had quite a few request from the newer collectors wanting this information.

So Here's How..... The Easy Way.....

Order the "How to Order Foreign Coins" reference guide book from Coin World, P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45365. Send a cheque or money order for \$2.50 per copy.

This updated reference gives you the addresses to order coins directly from countries around the world. Plus a lot more information you will refer to, such as, international mint marks, book lists, and coin dealers.

If you have never ordered Canadian Coins from the Mint Here's How

Write to ... Coins Uncirculated,
P.O. Box 470,
Ottawa, Ontario. K1N 8S5

and ask them to send you some reservation forms and to put you on their mailing list. The Mint tells us we can expect to learn of some interesting items that will commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Queen this year. So if your not on their mailing list, you should get on it right away. Do NOT ORDER YOUR COINS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE THE RESERVATION FORMS.

If you have never ordered coins from the United States Mint, Here's How.....

Write to ... Bureau of the Mint,
55 Mint Street,
San Francisco, CA 94175.

and ask them to send you a notice of when the coins will be available and the price. They will immediately put you on their mailing list, and you will receive notices well ahead of all deadline dates.

Did You Know : The largest gold object in the world to-day is King TuTankhamen's coffin in Egypt. It is 6 feet 2 inches long, and weighs 2450 lbs, of solid gold.

Did You Know : An Asterisk * preceeding the serial number on a bill indicates that the notes are replacements for defective ones removed and destroyed in the printing process.





I receive some nice letters this month and three articles for printing in the Bulletin. The article from Stan Clute, I hope, you've read thoroughly, and to those of you who may find the article long, I say, it's a much better article when you read it all at one sitting.

I also received articles from Ray Gregory and Ross Irwin which will be printed in next months Bulletin.

Ray Gregory also sent along some information telling me about the new Educational series "Heritage Coins Tokens and Medals", to be presented to the Newmarket Numismatic Society. A terrific idea, and I wish you well. Regarding your question, you are doing it properly.

Ross Irwin, sent along a little note saying, "To make your last days as Editor of the O.N.A. Journal happy ones, here is another article." I must say I appreciate the article, but I also enjoy the kind words. Thanks.

Next months bulletin may be the last one that your present Editor will look after, but we shall let you know next month. Till then happy hunting.....

Just a small reminder that the Oshawa District Coin Club will host the 15th Annual O.N.A. Convention at the Holiday Inn, Oshawa, IOII Bloor St. E., just east of Harmony Rd., Bloor St. interchange of 401. The dates are May 13, 14, 15, 1977. For any information write to Show Chairman ... Henry Burke; or Deputy Chairman... Bruce Watt; or Bourse Chairman ... Derek Gillette; or to Display Chairman... Don Cole; c/o O.N.A. Convention, Oshawa Coin Club P.O. Box 212, Oshawa, Ontario.

Ontario Numismatic Association

15th Annual

Convention