



# NEWSLETTER

## The Journal of the London Numismatic Club

*Joint Honorary Editors of Newsletter*

DM M. S. PHILLIPS, M.A.,  
P.H.D. Miss S. TYLER-SMITH,  
A. L. A..

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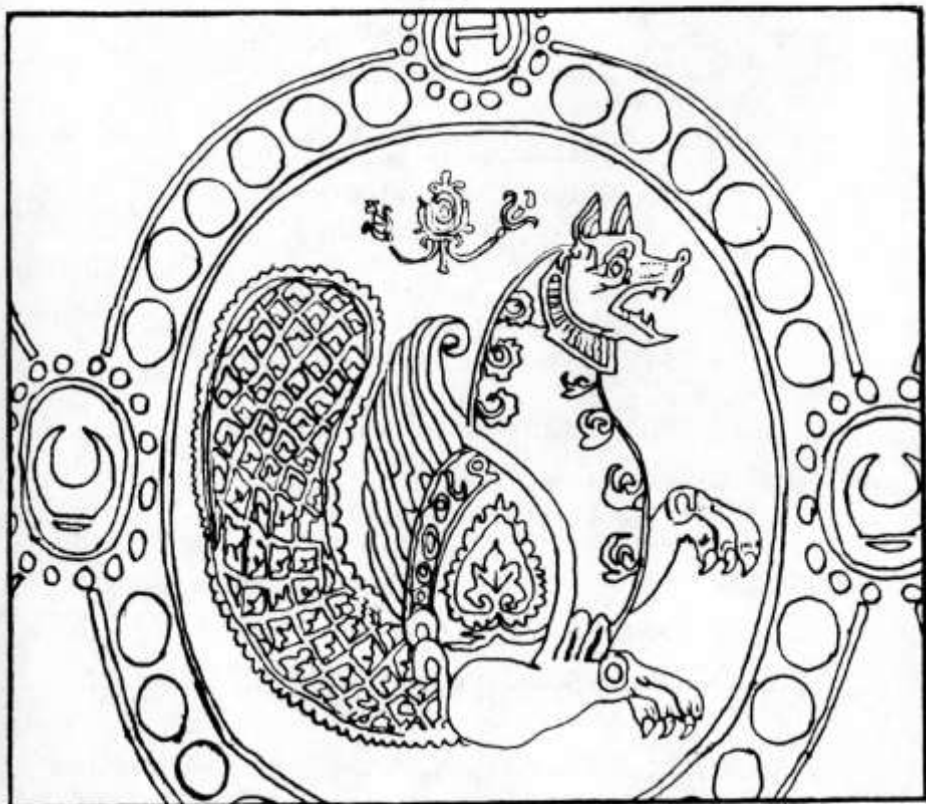
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## PRODUCING THE NEWSLETTER by the Editors

This is our 9th issue (and 10th number as one was a double issue) so we felt it was time to let Members know *a* bit about the production of the NI.

### Appearance

Our last issue (vii.13) was the first one we typed on our Amstrad PCW 9512 (future contributors please note - if you have a compatible word processor you could save us a lot of time by sending us your talk or article on disc). That was on 10 point type face whereas this issue is on 12 point. The advantage of 12 point is of course that we can get more words per page and the NL is therefore cheaper to produce. We would be interested to hear Members' reactions to the differing type sizes.

Since taking over editing in 1984 we have tried to improve each issue. We introduced illustrations in our second issue (only used occasionally before that date) and have had them in every one since then. In the same issue *we* began the practice of putting a frontispiece opposite the contents page. In vii.9 we redesigned the contents page to include the Club emblem whilst in vii.10 the NL acquired an ISSN thanks to our President. Improvements in the quality of photocopying have been enormous during the past few years and this has particularly helped in the matter of illustrations. Articles on coins without pictures are of limited value. Our tiny print run makes it uneconomic to use any process for the plates other than photocopying. This is quite satisfactory for reproduction of line drawings but not for photographs. For the last issue, since we had two papers illustrated by particularly fine photos we decided to have them *screened* (broken up into dots) courtesy of Seaby and Galataprint. We thought the results very good. Did anyone else notice? Our thanks to Steve Mansfield for proof reading the current issue - any remaining errors are entirely our responsibility!

### Contents

As well as publishing the texts (or summaries) of talks given to the Club *we* have tried to increase the number and quality of short articles, reviews and reports of events. Our thanks to Members who are prepared to write for the NI. and especially to all contributors who supply illustrations.

### Economics

As the NL is the most costly of the Club's recurring expenses we are always looking for ways of reducing expenditure without lowering standards. One of the best ways of doing this is to increase the number of advertisements. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our regular advertisers for their continued support and to ask Members to encourage reputable dealers to advertise in the NL.

## CLUB NEWS

Results of the 79th Auction held on 7th December 1988

69 lots were offered for *sale*, of which 12 were withdrawn unsold.

Total sales:	£359.50
Club commissions/donations:	£53.60
After auction <i>sale</i> of donated catalogues:	£0.75
Less payment for catalogues	£2.20
Total proceeds to Club:	£52.15

Our thanks to Tony Gilbert for providing this information.

A surprising number of the coinages in the Indian subcontinent are of silver, even though there are no silver mines in India. Similarly, in Tibet, to the north of the Himalayas, the coins were usually of silver, even though there were no silver mines. The object of this paper *is* to trace the development of silver coinage in or near the Himalayas, and to indicate the light that the existence of these coinages sheds on the trade links across the mountains.

When *a* silver coinage exists in *a* place with no silver mines, we can consider how the metal reached the mint. Normally this must have been as a result of trade. There were only *a* limited number of viable trade routes across the Himalayas, and there were only *a* limited number of articles that it was worth transporting across them. The existence, or absence of a silver coinage in a particular place in or near the Himalayas can shed considerable light on the trade routes in use at the time.

The map shows the area under discussion, stretching from Ladakh in the west, through Garhwal, Nepal, Cooch Behar, Bhutan, to Assam with Tibet to the north of the mountains. As can be seen, all the trade routes that I will discuss join Tibet and India. The main exports of Tibet are wool, gold, musk and salt, while Tibet imports grain, cloth of various sorts and silver.

Ladakh lies on the trade route between Kashmir and Western Tibet, but a route also exists from there to Kashgar. Garhwal lies on the shortest route between Delhi and Western Tibet, and on no other route. Nepal controlled important trade routes between central Tibet and India, particularly Patna. Bhutan lay on the shortest route from Lhasa to Bengal, passing through Cooch Behar. Finally trade routes existed from Assam to Tibet, to Yunnan in China and to Northern Burma.

The first silver coinage to be struck in the area was *a* short-lived issue of small silver "Dams" in the Kathmandu Valley around 1100 AD. At the same time some small gold coins were issued there, and it is interesting to note that while the gold coins have been found in the Indian plains south of Nepal, the silver pieces have not yet been found outside the Valley. Locally mined gold, in bullion form, was circulating as currency in Tibet at this time, and there is evidence of trade between Nepal and Tibet. Presumably gold was among the items exported from Tibet, while silver was probably sent north from India - in both cases some of the metal was converted into coin on the way, allowing the Nepalese king to benefit from the seigneurage.

While the existence of this coinage provides evidence of trans-Himalayan trade about AD 1100, its short term nature indicates either that the trade totally ceased after *a* short period, or more likely that its nature changed in that silver and gold were no longer traded.

Apart from that one exception, silver coinage in the Himalayas began in several different places about the mid 16th century, at a time when the Moghuls were extending their power across northern India, and when the

Europeans, particularly the Portuguese, were bringing silver to India from the recently developed mines in Germany and Mexico. It is not clear whether this latter development had a direct influence on the Himalayan coinages, as Bengal, the main economic centre of eastern India, struck a large and continuous coinage in silver from the 13th to the 16th centuries, presumably using silver imported from Burma.

By the early 16th century, Muslim power in northern Bengal was beginning to decline. Husain Shah had managed to conquer the area of Cooch Behar and western Assam in about 1494, but had suffered a defeat soon after, and from then on the Kingdoms in this area developed free of Muslim control until the Moghuls reached the area around the end of the century.

The common destination of all trans-Himalayan trade routes was Tibet, so it *is* worth looking at the situation there during the 16th century.

By this time, the importance of the monasteries, as centres of economic power in Tibet, was well established. Political power was, however, still in the hands of secular rulers. For most of the 15th century Tibet was ruled by the Phagmotru-pas, but before 1500 the power of that dynasty waned, and rivalry developed between the two central Tibetan provinces of U and Tsang. Generally speaking it *was* the Governors of Tsang, the rulers of the southern part of Tibet, bordering on the Himalayas, who were dominant, but the civil wars continued until 1642. In that year the Mongol leader, Gusri Khan, defeated the ruler of Tsang and installed the 5th Dalai lama as ruler of all Tibet.

The late 16th century was therefore a period of instability, but one when an army had to be maintained and hostilities were confined to an area well away from the Himalayas. Trade with India would not, generally, have been disrupted and would have been necessary to support the army maintained by the rulers of the Tsang Province.

The first European account of trans-Himalayan trade confirms this basic picture. The English traveler Ralph Fitch mentions trade from Bengal in 1583 passing through Cooch Behar and thence over the mountains, presumably through Bhutan to Tsang Province. He mentions several exports from Tibet, such as musk and gold, and these must have been paid for by the Bengalis with grain and silver. Cooch Behar kept *a share* of the profits and struck coins with the silver. (fig.1)

Before Cooch Behar struck coins in AD 1555, the small Nepalese Kingdom of Dolakha had struck silver coins about AD 1550 - indicating that the trade route up the Kosi river was used for a short time.

The Portuguese missionaries Cecelia and Cabral travelled through Cooch Behar and Bhutan to Tibet in 1626, but found the route not frequented and made their return journey to India through the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal, which was by then the most important trading route.

The evidence of the coins allows this change in trade route to be dated more accurately:-



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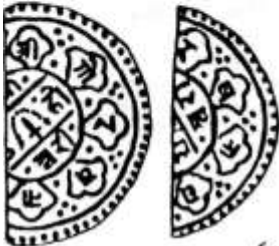
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The evidence of the coins allows this change in trade route to be dated more accurately:-

1550 Coins in Dolakha - so that was a major route for *a* few years. 1555-1605  
Coins of Cooch Behar very common, so this must have been *a* major trade  
route.

1560 A few more coins struck in Kathmandu, but these are very rare. Presumably this  
was an unsuccessful attempt to attract trade away from Cooch Behar?

1605-1633 Coins of Cooch Behar are rare - but more silver coins struck in Kathmandu.  
The trade route has shifted presumably because of political disruption caused by  
the takeover of Bhutan by the Tibetan lama, the Shabdung Rimpoche. The Nepalese  
merchants established trading houses in Lhasa to encourage trade through Nepal.  
(fig.2)

c1630-1640 Nepalese silver coins become seriously debased - perhaps because the  
trade route was cut due to fighting between Kings of Gorkha and Kathmandu.

1633-1661 Cooch Behar coins become more common again - trade returns to Cooch  
Behar route, perhaps due to disruptions in Nepal. 1640-1768 Major increase in  
silver coinage in Nepal.

This increase of silver coinage in Nepal about AD 1640 must have been due to a major change in  
trading patterns, and such a change can be found. The main export from western Tibet was the  
extremely fine shawl wool, which was taken to Kashmir to be woven into the famous  
shawls. Formerly it was taken through Ladakh to Kashmir, but in 1640 the King of  
Ladakh closed his country for the transit trade, because of *a* dispute with the Moghul rulers of  
Kashmir. The Kashmiri merchants managed to circumvent this problem by setting up trading  
posts in Patna, and routing the wool through Nepal.

Hence, by AD 1642, when the great 5th Dalai Lama was installed in the Potala in Lhasa as  
undisputed ruler of all Tibet, Nepal had *a* virtual monopoly of trade with Tibet. This situation did  
not, however, go unchallenged.

In about AD 1648, the Ahom rulers of Assam began to strike fine octagonal silver coins,  
including one with a strange Chinese inscription, reading "Tsang Pao", which can be  
translated as "Tibetan coin". (fig.3) This may have been an attempt to open up *a* trade route  
across the mountains further east, and to have Assamese coins accepted as currency in Tibet. The  
attempt at introducing Assamese coins into Tibet was not successful, but the Assamese  
silver coins continued from then until about AD 1800. I am not certain, however, whether the  
silver for the coins came from Bengal, from Burma, or perhaps even from Yunnan in China.

About AD 1650, there was a border skirmish between Nepalese and Tibetan forces, and the  
Nepalese forced the Tibetans to sign an agreement, officially granting Nepal *a*  
monopoly over trans-Himalayan trade.

From then until about AD 1754 large quantities of trade passed through the Kathmandu  
Valley. Not only did Nepal strike many beautiful silver coins, but also large numbers of fine  
temples were built using the profits of the trade. In Tibet, the Nepalese coins became an  
accepted medium of exchange *as* Tibet had not started to strike coins of its own.

In AD 1720 a large Chinese army arrived in Lhasa, carrying with them 5 years advance pay  
in silver ingots. Silver ingots were a standard medium of exchange in China at this period,  
but they were very inconvenient, as the

weight had to be checked before each transaction was completed, and each one tended to be rather heavy for the day-to-day needs of the average Tibetan. For these reasons, the Nepalese coins circulated at a considerable premium over the silver ingots, and the Tibetans found it worthwhile to send the ingots to Nepal, have them struck into coin, and then bring them back to Tibet.

This arrangement, with the Tibetans bringing silver to Nepal for striking into coin, continued for several years, but after about AD 1736 the Nepalese took undue advantage of the Tibetans and began to debase the alloy of the coins supplied to 67%, and later to only 50% silver. Very large numbers of these debased coins were sent to Tibet. (figs.4 and 5)

After AD 1754, however, Nepalese coins become very rare, and the reason can be traced to trading patterns. In the late 1740's, the ruler of Gorkha, a small kingdom to the west of Kathmandu, embarked on a campaign to conquer the Valley. His main tactic was to block the trade routes, and by AD 1754 he had succeeded in doing this. It took him another 14 years to fulfill his ambition, but gradually the siege of the Valley weakened it sufficiently to give him an easy victory.

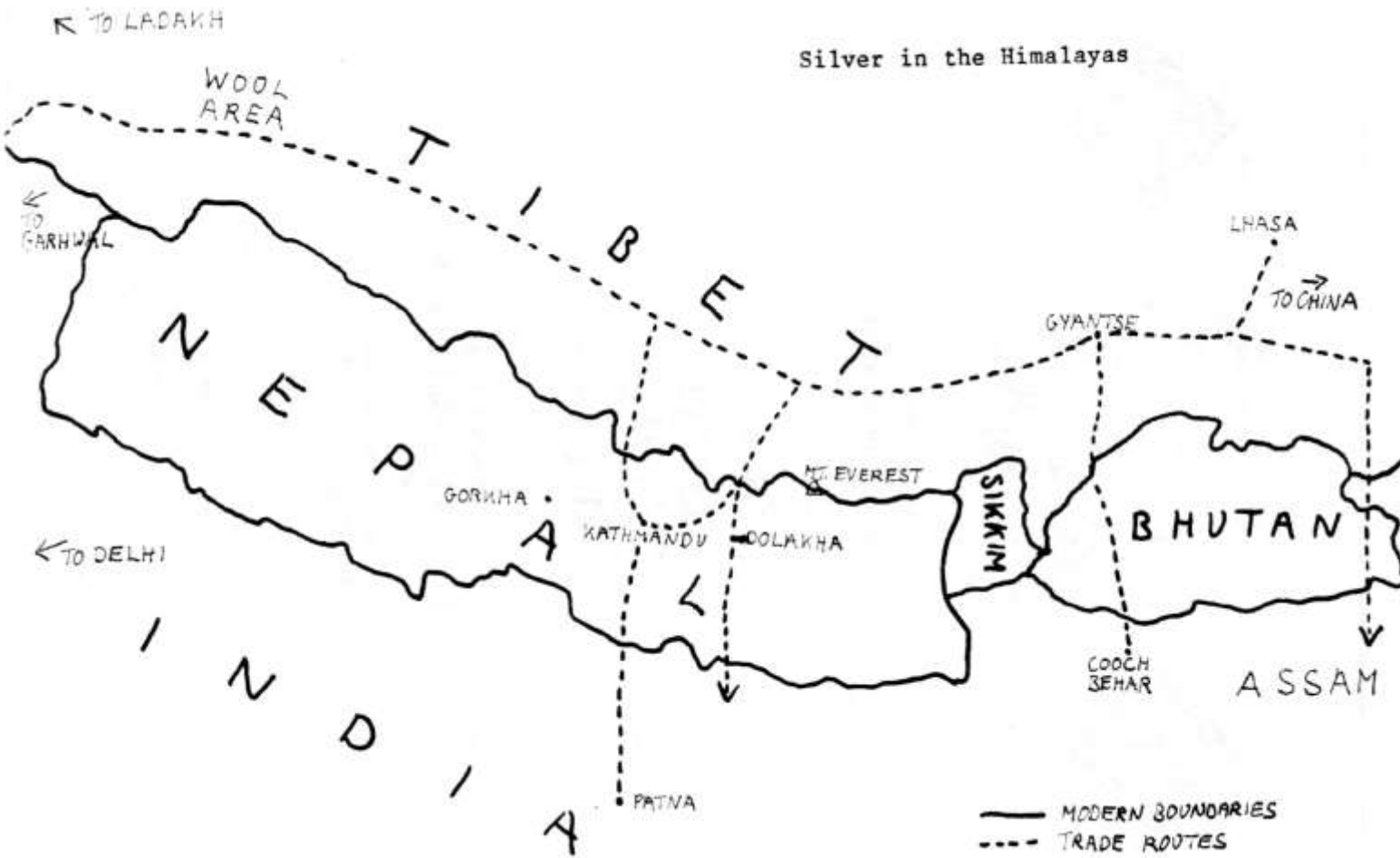
This blocking of the trade routes in AD 1754 did not please the Kashmiri traders in Patna, who relied on their supply of wool from western Tibet, which had been passing through Nepal. The wool was still being produced in Tibet, so another trade route had to be found. The evidence of the coins shows that three routes were used; one through Bhutan and Cooch Behar, one through Garhwal, and one direct to Kashmir through Ladakh.

In Garhwal silver coins were struck in the periods AD 1760-1771, 1774-1780 and 1804-1814. In Ladakh, dated coins were struck in AD 1772-1773, and although the other coins struck in Ladakh are undated, they can almost certainly be attributed to the periods when Garhwal was not issuing silver coins - i.e. AD 1781-1803, and after AD 1815 until about AD 1850. The coins show, therefore, that the major part of the trade in wool from western Tibet to Kashmir passed along one trade route each year, and numismatic evidence can show which route was used each year.

The use of the eastern route through Bhutan and Cooch Behar cannot be traced in such detail, as the coins are not dated. Certainly after about AD 1760 the silver coins of Cooch Behar become rather more plentiful than they had been in the previous century. Also, it was not long before the British East India Company, under the able control of Warren Hastings, began to eye the potential trade with Tibet. Gradually Cooch Behar was drawn into the British sphere of influence, and in AD 1783 the British severely restricted its right to strike coins, in an attempt to ensure wider circulation of the British Indian rupee. Until then, the coins of Cooch Behar had circulated freely in Bhutan, and Bhutan had even sent silver to Cooch Behar to be struck into coin. After Cooch Behar ceased striking coins, Bhutan began to copy them locally, but although the Bhutanese copies were at first struck in fine silver, by the early years of the 19th century they were becoming very debased - presumably the trade route through Bhutan had ceased to provide Cooch Behar and Bhutan with silver.



# Silver in the Himalayas



Turning now to the situation in central Tibet; in AD 1754 the supply of silver coin from Nepal had ceased because the trade route had been cut by the King of Gorkha. This caused a shortage of coin in Tibet, and in AD 1763 the Tibetan Regent tried to rectify this by striking coin of his own. For some reason these were not popular, and few have survived. In AD 1768 Prithvi Narayan of Gorkha conquered the Kathmandu Valley, and established the Shah Dynasty, which still rules Nepal today. Unfortunately the debased coins supplied to Tibet by the previous Malla Kings caused a dispute between the two countries, as the Tibetans insisted that the debased coins circulate at the same value as the new fine silver coins. While this was a matter of principle to the Tibetans, who had exchanged the coins for fine silver (so all the additional profit had remained in Nepal), King Prithvi Narayan could not agree, as he would then either have to debase his own coins, or incur considerable loss by buying in the old coins at face value. On the other side, the Tibetans routed most of their trade with India through the Bhutan route.

The problem could not easily be resolved. In AD 1775-1777 the internal shortage of coin in Tibet was relieved when the Nepalese agreed to supply specially debased coins to Tibet (fig. 6), but these pieces were not acceptable at face value in Nepal. In AD 1785 another unsuccessful attempt was made by the Tibetans to strike their own coins, but fine silver *was* used and they disappeared quickly into the melting pot. Then in AD 1789 matters came to a head, when the Nepalese decided to invade Tibet. After the Nepalese had enjoyed some successes, the Tibetans called upon the Chinese for assistance, and in AD 1792 the Nepalese were defeated. In AD 1791 the Tibetans started striking their own coins (fig.7) purely for internal use, and were never again dependent on the Nepalese for their coins. Trade from Tibet through Nepal to India recommenced, but never became *as* important *as* it had been in the years before AD 1750.

During the early 19th century the British became more and more powerful in northern India, and began to trade directly with the Tibetans, initially using various routes to the west of Garhwal, and later the route through the Chumbi Valley, between Bhutan and Sikkim. Particularly after AD 1840, large numbers of British Indian rupees entered Tibet. These circulated freely in Tibet, but the Tibetans needed silver to buy tea and various luxuries such as silks from China. As the silver content and weight of the rupees was reliable, they could be used for trading with the Chinese, so they gravitated eastwards, and became a popular currency in western China. So popular did they become that the Chinese copied them, substituting a portrait of the Emperor for that of Queen Victoria!

I have tried to show in this paper how the existence of *a* silver coinage in the Himalayas demonstrates the existence of *a* trade route. Sometimes knowledge of the trade routes used at particular times can help to date the coins, sometimes the dates of the coins can indicate exactly when particular trade routes were used. More often, perhaps, the coins provide useful confirmation of what historians already know about the trade routes. In any case, this type of analysis can probably be applied in other places and at other times. Naturally the absence of coin does not indicate absence of trade, as balanced barter trade can always exist, but silver coins without silver mines or trade are hard to imagine.

THE DISTRIBUTION BY PLACE AND DATE OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PENNY  
TOKENS by Stella Greenall.

1. Two years ago I gave a talk on the impact of the 1665 Great Plague of London on the numbers of different types of trade token listed by G.G. Williamson as issued in London. This was published in our Newsletter. (1) One point this showed up was that not only about a third of London tokens *were* dated - about 38%; the same turned out later to be true of tokens issued in Southwark.

2. The following winter I went through the whole of England in Williamson (2) and counted all the tokens by date and denomination. I found that overall, except in London, Southwark and Northumberland nearly two thirds were dated. The results were published in the Token Corresponding Society Bulletin (3) where I suggested that five groups of counties might be put together, based on different features of their token types. These were:

1. Small number of farthings, starting late, and few halfpennies - Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Monmouthshire, Rutland, Westmoreland.
2. Small number of farthings, starting late, and many halfpennies - Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire.
3. Many farthings, starting early, few halfpennies - Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire.
4. A fair number of pennies - Cheshire, Lancashire, Shropshire, Yorkshire.
5. A large proportion of undated farthings - London, Southwark (Tables 4&5)

3. I next thought of looking at the impact of the Plague of 1665 on the main provincial towns. Beginning with York, I noticed that York tokens dated from 1665 - although of course the 17 undated ones among the 67 tokens issued by traders in York might have appeared earlier. However, when I also found that York did not have a single penny token type although Yorkshire is one of the 4 counties with "a fair number of pennies" I decided to look further into the distribution of penny tokens by place and date.

4. Wales has no fewer than 41 penny token types of which only 3 are undated, so I included Wales in the survey. However, I did not attempt to study Ireland in detail, even though a lot of Irish token pennies were issued there. For England I have used my own counting of Williamson and with a few exceptions I have not added in the several hundred new types of token listed by Michael Dickinson, (4) which include a few penny types. For the Welsh token pennies I have relied on Boon's invaluable book. (5)

5. The results are given in 12 maps. The first shows the places where all the penny token types of England and Wales were issued (the dots are not closely related to the numbers issued in any particular place). The second shows the places where undated penny token types were issued, with the numbers of different types:

To summarise the numbers:

<u>Numbers of different penny token issued in:</u>					
Place	Dated	Undated	Total	% dated	
London	27	44	71	38%	
Elsewhere in England	c.125	c.15	c.140	89%	
Wales	38	3	41	93%	
Total	c.190	c.62	c.252	75%	

DISTRIBUTION BY PLACE AND DATE OF PENNY TOKENS 1648-1672

MAP 1



DISTRIBUTION OF 17 PENNY TOKEN TYPES IN ENGLAND (WILLIAMSON) AND WALES (BOON).

MAP 2



Undated Penny Tokens: London 44, Newington Green 1, Holyhead 2, Conwy 1, Chester 2, Preston 1, Chobent 1 Bolton 1, Bradford 1, Eastburn 1, Otley 1, Bemarket 1 (?), Shrewsbury 1, Tewkesbury 1.

MAP 3



Dated Penny Tokens: 1665 - Conwy 1.

MAP 4



Dated Penny Tokens: 1664 - Caernarvon 1, Denbigh 1.

DISTRIBUTION BY PLACE AND DATE OF PENNY TOKENS 1648-1672

MAP 5



Dated Penny Tokens: 1665 - Ruthin 1, London 1.

MAP 6



1666 Dated Penny Tokens: London 1, Denbigh 4, Pwelli 2, Ruthin 2, Holyhead 1, Mold 1, Wrexham 1, Oswestry 1, Chester 1

MAP 7



Dated Penny Tokens: Anglesey 1, Bala 2, Bangor 1, Arvon 2, Lisangollen 1, Pwelli 2, Ruthin 1, Chester 4, Oswestry 1.

MAP 8



1668 Dated Penny Tokens: Douglas IoM 2, Oswestry 2, Chester 7, Conwy 1, Abergelle 1, Caerwys 1, Ruthin 1, Wrexham 1, Northop 1, Settle 1, Sheffield 1, Leeds 1, London 5.

From Map 1 I have omitted the Ross-on-Wye 1680 token (outside the period); the Southwark (W.101) which appears to be a 6d; and the Nottingham token (W.77) where I had misunderstood Williamson's listing. I would also like to mention the three tokens placed in Suffolk: one in Dennington, *a* tiny village near Framlingham, dated 1669; another dated 1669 at Bury St. Edmunds; and *a* third undated, which is often attributed to London, but was perhaps issued at the fashionable town of Newmarket in Suffolk.

Map 2, of undated tokens, includes the only Middlesex penny, issued at Newington Green, and the Gloucestershire Tewksbury penny, issued jointly by Samuel Holland and Robert Porter. The subsequent maps each have a list below them, identifying the place dots.

6. Map 3 shows just one penny token, the first dated penny token issued in 1663. Remembering that penny tokens are often associated with the new, fashionable coffee houses, it was quite *a* surprise to find it in the far north of Wales, at Conway, issued by a grocer, Henry Hughes.

7. Map 4, 1664 - two more issuers in North Wales; Edward Davice in Denbigh, and Ellis Jones, mercer, in Caernarvon. Boon lists three varieties of this 1664 token.

8. Map 5, 1665 - A Welsh apothecary, Basil Wood of Ruthin, issues another penny token. This year also sees the issue of the first dated token in London. Map 6, 1666 shows another London penny token issuer, with quite a crop in North Wales: no fewer than 4 different issuers in Denbigh alone - a grocer, two mercers, and *a* glover, Thomas Shaw, who also issued another penny token three years later. There are two penny tokens issued in Pwelli; two more issuers appear in Ruthin, Peter Edwards mercer and *a* grocer Richard Wynn; one issued in the island of Holyhead off Anglesey; one in Mold; one in Wrexham - issued by Lawrence Cooke showing *a* tobacco roll. Also in 1666 for the first time - always excepting possible undated London penny tokens - the fashion or demand for them spread across the border: one *was* issued in Oswestry about 12 miles south of Wrexham, and another about 12 miles north of Wrexham, in Chester.

9. Map 7 1667 shows that no dated London tokens were issued in this year, but ten new types appeared in North Wales, including four new sites - two were issued in Balls, and one new token penny type each in Bangor, Llangollen and Anglesey. Across the border in England, four new penny types appeared in Chester; Oswestry has a new issuer also. One more appears even further afield at what the token describes as "Newton near Manchester", issued by William Williamson, who also issued *a* halfpenny token in 1669. So by 1667 we have penny tokens thickly scattered in North Wales, and also emerging in Shropshire, Cheshire and Lancashire - three of the four counties which show "*a fair* number of pennies".

10. Map 8 1668 we see merchants in Yorkshire starting to issue penny tokens: one in Sheffield (its only penny token) issued by Robert Boughton; one in Leeds (the first of nine); one in Settle, a small town on the main road to Kendal, issued by William Taylor, *a* draper probably involved in the local wool trade. No fewer than seven new penny token issuers appeared in Chester this year, and five in London. We also find two pennies issued in Douglas, Isle of Man, by John Murray (Williamson *says* that the second is

larger than the first and has a different reverse; Dickinson suggests that the second is an altered engraved reverse.) New issuers appeared also in three new towns in North Wales: Northop, issued by Richard Williams ("4 hearths for Richard Williams and his forge"); Caerwys, issued by Thomas Wynne, surgeon and a prominent Quaker; Abergele, issued by John Humphreys, mercer.

11. Map 9 1669 shows that, like 1667, this is another year with no dated penny tokens issued by London tradesmen. Outside London it is a bumper year. In Canterbury Thomas Hutten, pewterer, issued that rare combination, an octagonal token penny; the only Surrey penny token was issued in Rotherhithe at the Waterman's Arms. We have already noted the two Suffolk penny tokens dated 1669, by Edward Stubbs at Dennington, and by Ro Stanton at The Coffee House in Bury St. Edmunds. The third token penny I suggest is Suffolk and is also issued by a coffee house, John Renob or Rende of Newmarket. Chester had six new issuers in 1669, and Nantwich "14 long miles from Chester, the wayes being deepe" *as Celia* Fiennes (6) said in 1698, and Audlem, 5½ miles south of Nantwich both had penny token issuers. About eight miles west of Audlem, in Shropshire, Humphrey Rowley issued an octagonal penny token with a ship (perhaps a vintner) at Whitchurch. About 20 miles due south of Whitchurch, in Shrewsbury, three different issuers of penny tokens appear in 1669. Also in Shropshire, Oswestry appears again. About 20 miles north west of Oswestry, Robert Wynne, mercer at Corwen, issued a token penny. Thomas Wynne of Caerwys issued his second penny token this year; he was a surgeon toothdrawer; one *was* also issued by John Hughes, device a fox. Griffith Wynn, also a mercer, issued a penny token at Caernarvon. Traders living in the island of Anglesey produced another two penny tokens, this time in Beaumaris. Liverpool appears on the map for the first time this year - a penny token issued by Charles Christian, a grocer; about 15 miles away at Chowbent north east of Leigh, an undated penny token issuer *is* listed by Williamson, whilst Dickinson lists a second penny, dated 1669. Over in Yorkshire six different types of penny token were issued by traders in Leeds; also one at Carleton five miles south east of Leeds and one at Almondbury, near Huddersfield. Dickinson (but not Williamson) lists a heart-shaped penny token - a very rare combination - with the apothecaries' arms for Symon Marshall of Ashby-de-la-Zouche in Leicestershire.

12. 1670. (Map 10) shows no new Welsh token pennies, but a whole new crop of issuers in Yorkshire. Anthony Fawcett who issued a penny token in Dent, also issued its other token, a 1665 farthing. In Skipton, Ann Greene issued a penny token with the Grocers' Arms and Samvell Greene displayed the Drapers' and Mercers' on his. John Dyson issued a penny token at Slaithwaite, four miles west of Huddersfield; he also issued an undated penny token. Token pennies were also issued in Haworth, showing a tankard (might this have been issued by the landlord of the pub Branwell Bronte frequented nearly 200 years later?); in Halifax (a dolphin); Stainland, three miles west of Halifax, (a rose), Otley (a heart), Gildersome near Leeds (showing a woolpack and scales) and fifty miles or more away across country, a penny is issued this year at Bridlington. If we imagine a traveler going round drumming up orders, he might have travelled to Bridlington *by sea*. (Four of the tokens issued by Bridlington traders are marked 'BRIDLINGTON KEY'.) And finally there is one token penny issued by a London trader which is dated 1670.

DISTRIBUTION BY PLACE AND DATE OF PENNY TOKENS 1648-1672

MAP 9



1652 Dated Penny Tokens: Canterbury 1, Rotherhithe 1, Dennington 1, Bury St. Edmunds 1, Chester 6, Liverpool 1, Audlem 1, Nantwich 1, Shrewsbury 3, Whitchurch 1, Oswestry 1, Beaumaris 2, Caerwyn 2, Caernarvon 1, Corwen 1, Denbigh 1, Leeds 6, Carlisle 1, Almondbury 1, Ashby-de-la-Zouch 1.

MAP 10



1670 Dated Penny Tokens: London 1, Chester 3, Shrewsbury 1, Liverpool 1, Dent 1, Skipton 2, Leeds 2, Slaithwaite 1, Raworth 1, Halifax 1, Gildersome 1, Otley 1, Stainland 1, Eridlington 1.

MAP 11



1671 Dated Penny Tokens: London 10, Beverley 1, Otley 1, Kirkstall 1, Skipton 1, Long Preston 1, Lancaster 1, Ormskirk 1, Manchester 1, Anglesay 1, Dolgellau 1, Ashford 1, Birchover 1, Shrewsbury 1.

MAP 12



1672 Dated Penny Tokens: London 4, Liverpool 1, Warrington 1, Settle 1, Sedburgh 1, Machynlleth 1.



GROUP 5: A LARGE PROPORTION OF UNDATED FARTHING.

	1d.	1d.	1d.	ND	1d.	1d.	1d.	ND
1648	12				1			
9	20			1	5			
1650	26			1				
1	25			1	8			
2	27			2	4			
3	30			1	1			
4	4				1			
5	9				1			
6	33	2		3	3			
7	91	1		4	8			4
8	54	3		3	7	1		
9	48	4		1	8			1
1660	8	4				1		
1	5				1			
2	13	4			1			
3	21	7		5	1			1
4	43*	41		2	4			1
5	16	26	1		4	5		1
6	34	181	1	2	3	19		1
7	17	157		2	4	30		1
8	2	174	5	2	1	32		
9	3	103	5	1		14		
1670	3	24	1	1		1		
1	2	11	10	2		2		
2			4					
DATED:	547	742	27	34	66	103		10
UNDATED:	1,418	644	44	72	195	94	1*	33
TOTAL:	1,965	1,386	71	106	261	197	1*	43
<u>L O N D O N</u>					<u>S O U T H W A R K</u>			
*Inc. WRo. 2202					*W101			

13. In 1671 ([Map 11](#)), however, London traders suddenly issued 10 dated penny tokens. And again we find a scatter around Yorkshire and Lancashire, including issuers in several new places - a coffee house penny appears in Beverley ("a very fine towne for its size", Celia Fiennes says); George Wilson of Kirkstall near Leeds issued one with a representation of the bridge; and also Thomas Lambert of Long Preston, seven miles north west of Skipton; and Mary Fenwicke of Skipton. In Lancashire issuers appear in three new places - William Prockter in Lancaster, showing an eagle and child; William Haydock of Ormskirk showing a church, and also Henry Atherton is listed by Dickinson issuing a 1671 penny token with family arms. In Manchester Andrew Bury issued a penny token, apothecary, with the City of London Arms. Traders in two Derbyshire villages, Birchover and Ashford, produced their only tokens dated 1671. Traders issued penny tokens this year from two places in Wales, Dolgellau and the town of Anglesey.

14. In 1672 ([Map 12](#)), issuers appear in three more new places - Warrington, with a penny issued by Matthew Page showing a dolphin and ship; Machynlych in Wales where William Owen, mercer, issued a penny; and in the extreme north west of Yorkshire, six miles east of Kendal, Nicholas Corney issued a penny in Sedbergh, the last of his three tokens - a farthing in 1666 showing the Grocers' Arms; his second an octagonal halfpenny of 1671, and finally a penny showing a Turk's Head - which reminds us of the earlier observation associating penny tokens with coffee houses.

15. Partly because numismatic knowledge is still in need of more certainties about the manufacture and supply of C17th tokens in general I do not feel able to draw firm conclusions at this stage, but a few comments arise, and many questions, from the data I have so far assembled.

16. For example, to my eye the maps clearly suggest a traveler gradually extending his rounds from year to year. If so, was he based in London? And if so, is it strange that he failed to drum up any orders in the Midlands? Or did he travel by boat? If so, should token pennies turn up in say, Hull, or Exeter, as well as Chester and Bridlington? May we be looking at two circuits, one based in London, the other elsewhere in the north west? Or did still unidentified local requirements in some regions generate demand for pennies rather than halfpennies?

17. The first finding, that York had no penny token issuers, whilst so many were issued in Leeds and smaller towns and villages nearby, is interesting. Are differences in the patterns of demand the only reasons for this? It is worth noting that county boundaries can obscure differences between towns within a county.

18. Fifty miles due west from Anglesey *lies* Dublin, where traders issued around 150 tokens - roughly two thirds of them pennies - including about 40 dated penny tokens running well back into the 1650s. But then of course an Irish penny token was not necessarily the equivalent of an English penny token. From 1663 onwards, Charles II passed several Acts restricting and prohibiting exports of livestock to this country from Ireland. Might the abundance of token pennies in north Wales - small pieces like so many of the Irish penny tokens - mark the path of Irish drovers and traders?

19. Finally, there is no apparent reason why farthing tokens, and halfpenny tokens, should not yield as much interesting material as penny tokens seem to do; but as there are so many more of them, unravelling it will be more laborious. I hope that eventually it will be possible to *see not* only yet further vistas of questions, but also some answers.

Notes

1. S.Greenall, "London tokens in the plague year 1665", LNG Newsletter vii,10, Jan. 1987.
2. Wm.Boyne (rev. by G.C.Williamson), Trade tokens issued in the 17th century, London, 1889-92.
3. S.Greenall, "Dates of English 17th century tokens 1648-1672", TCS Bulletin iv,7, June 1987.
4. M.Dickinson, Seventeenth century tokens of the British Isles, London, 1986.
5. G.C.Boon, Welsh tokens of the seventeenth century, Cardiff, 1973.
6. The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685-c.1712.

GROUP 4 : A FAIR NUMBER OF PENNIES

Date	1d.	1/2d.	1d.	WD	1d.	1/2d.	1d.	WD	1d.	1/2d.	1d.	WD	1d.	1/2d.	1d.	WD	
1640																	
9													1				
1650													1				1
1					1												
2					6												
3					1												
4																	
5					1			1					1				
6									3				1				
7					1								1				
8									1								
9																	
1660																	
1					1								1				
2					1												
3	1				1	1			1	4			2				
4					2				2	6			14	4			1
5		1	2							4			6	10			
6			14	1	2	27		1		12	1		17	60			
7			15	4	29	1				4	1		1	50			
8			3	7	12					3	2		3	60			5
9			4	8	13	1				12	5		2	34			7
1670			1	4	3	2				4	1			16			12
1					4	2				1	1			n			5
2			2		1	2							1	1			2
DATED:	2	39	24		17	92	8	2		8	50	11		52	243	29	2
UNDATED:	5	6	2	1	11	10	3	2		24	12	1	1	54	55	4	6
TOTAL:	7	45	26	1	28	102	11	4		32	62	12	1	106	298	33	8
CHESHIRE				LANCASHIRE				SHROPSHIRE				YORKSHIRE					

THE LONDON NUMISMATIC CLUB'S LIBRARY - a short talk given to the Club on 2nd August 1988 by Philip Rueff, Honorary Librarian.

For the first time in his short and undistinguished career your Librarian is about to address the Club not from a point of moral superiority, which would be arrogant and unjustified, but rather from the standpoint of comparative moral parity. For the first time he can look members squarely in the *eye* (a rather inexact and mixed metaphor!)

The reason is that at long last I have completed, in manuscript form, an up-to-date catalogue of books in our library. Our Treasurer, Philip Mernick, has kindly offered to try to put this catalogue on computer (if he can read my writing). I would like to thank a number of members who industriously helped - a. to transport books from Bible House to the Institute of Archaeology, b. to put them away, and c. to catalogue them. These include Sue Tyler-Smith and Marcus Phillips, Michael Anderson, David Sealy, Steve Mansfield, Tony Portner and others. Thanks are also due to our President for arranging the location and housing of the library, and for his patience and encouragement during the reorganisation of the library.

The catalogue, as I said earlier, will soon be computerised and copies will be available for a small fee to Members. The lay out, suggested by Sue Tyler-Smith, will be in 12 sections, though there will be some over-lap:

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Rare, antiquarian and sets | 8. Great Britain                           |
| 2. Greek                      | 9. Commonwealth                            |
| 3. Roman                      | 10. America and Africa (Rest of the world) |
| 4. Byzantine                  | 11. Medals and tokens                      |
| 5. Oriental and Islamic       | 12. Bank notes and<br>paranumismatica      |
| 6. Europe                     | 13. General and residual                   |

I can now actually tell you what we have got in the library, but cannot, *save* with difficulty, actually find a book for you. I will be coming back to this point later on.

A few statistics might interest you. We have 375 volumes, which means that there *are* about four per member. The largest sections are 1. Antiquarian and sets with 69 volumes, 7. Great Britain with 63 volumes, and 12. General and journals with 80 volumes. Our oldest volume is Arbuthnot on Coins published in 1754. Other rare, interesting and potentially valuable books of antiquarian interest are:

- a. Silvestre de Sacy, Memoires sur diverse Antiquites de la Perse, Paris, 1793.
- b. S. Pegge, Assemblage of coins fabricated by authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1772.
- c. T. Simon, Essay on the Irish coins of Dublin, 1810.
- d. Rev. Roger Ruding, Annals of the coinage, London, 1819.

Other fine and interesting treasures amongst the more modern works are:

- a. The British Museum catalogue of Greek coins. 29 vols. (Forni reprint edition.)
- b. Colin Kraay and Max Hirmer, Greek coins, New York, 1966, with magnificent illustrations.

- c. J.P.C.Kent and M. & A. Hirmer, Roman coins, 1978, again with magnificent illustrations.
- d. P.Grierson and M.Blackburn, Medieval European coinage, vol.1 1986
- e. J.J.North, English hammered coinage, vols 1 and 2.
- f. Sir G.Hill, Medals of the Renaissance, Oxford, 1920.

For a relatively small Club we possess *a* good and varied selection of books, but there is no room for complacency. A number of gaps and weaknesses exist including:

1. No modern book on Parthian, Sasanian or Persian coins.
2. Weak on medieval and early modern European, especially France, Germany and Italy.
3. Nothing specific on Spain, mainland Portugal, Switzerland, Austria or bracteates.
4. Weak on U.S.A. and Eastern Europe.

Suggestions of titles to strengthen our holdings in these areas would be most welcome.

We have a comparatively well stocked library and *a* well-stocked fund. What then is wrong? It is kept in two metal cupboards in a students' changing room in the basement of the Institute of Archaeology. It is therefore very difficult to get access to the books, to see what *we* have got, to keep the books in order, to keep the books safely so they do not get damaged. No one visits the library apart from a few hardy souls.

What then is the solution? I would like to suggest five options.

1. Sell the library and cupboards and abolish me! No animal willingly agrees to its own destruction and this one goes with a mild squeak of protest.
2. Carry on in the present lethargic *way*.
3. Distribute the books amongst individual members to be kept in their houses. One would then have to speak to *a* particular member for information about the section they hold.
4. Look for another permanent home for the library.
5. Nag the authorities here for more space. The President has already tried this, but so far with no favourable results.

Editorial note: The Librarian's report was followed by *a* lively discussion with a number of suggestions being put forward. There is no easy solution to the problem of access to the library and Philip Rueff would be pleased to hear any ideas members may have.

#### QUOTE ... compiled by the Editors

A Reflection by J.Pearson Andrew, from Coin and Medal News Nov. 1988, p.20. In this reflection I have concentrated upon the high prices achieved in the London sale rooms - or by British auctioneers in conjunction with overseas auction houses. However it must be remembered that the greater proportion of coins offered either by dealers, or at auction, **sell for four or three figure sums** (our emphasis). What coins and which dealers and auctions we wonder.

"Not so good today."

"No, too many \*\*\*\*ing collectors."

Conversation between 2 BNTA members overheard in the Gents at COINEX, 1988.

## SASANIAN DEVICES ON BYZANTINE BULLAE by Susan Tyler-Smith

When considering the question of artistic copying one *has* to distinguish between vague "influence" and direct copying from a known prototype. The instances discussed below are of the latter type, when a specific original can be suggested and the copy is very close to that original.

The late Roman/Byzantine and Sasanian Empires were in dynastic, diplomatic and commercial, as well as military, contact for about 430 years. Although they both exerted great influence on the arts of adjacent and subsequent cultures their direct influence on each other is not as evident as one might expect. Both civilizations had very strong artistic traditions of their own - Rome and Byzantium looking back to classical *Greece* and Sasanian Iran to Achaemenid times - and *were* perhaps resistant to outside influences, especially when they emanated from an hereditary enemy. The Byzantine lead bullae discussed below, however, are sufficiently close to Sasanian prototypes that it seems safe to say that they were directly inspired by them.

Sasanian *seals* (matrices) survive in great numbers and bullae are quite common. Their method of use was rather different from that in the Byzantine Empire where a metallic obverse and reverse die *was* pressed onto a *piece* of (usually) lead. Typically, Sasanian bullae were made by stamping lumps of clay with engraved stones. Bullae can bear up to at least 20 impressions, some occurring more than once. (1) Designs are very varied, human heads and figures, mythical and real beasts, insects and "devices" all occur with and without inscriptions, and there are also purely epigraphic seals. The latter are important numismatically as they can help in the reading and interpretation of mint abbreviations on Sasanian coins, but do not enter into the present discussion.

Byzantine seals, though surviving in vast numbers, tend on the whole to show a limited range of designs, mostly revolving around Imperial or religious subjects, the style of which is usually stiff and formal. An unusual treatment or subject therefore calls for comment.

Two of the plates of seals classified by Zacos (2) as "Iconographic seals with circular invocation: non-religious subjects" show some of the more lively designs included in his massive work. In particular nine stand out as being influenced by eastern prototypes. Others are taken from Roman originals.

A circular border of large dots occurs on several of the seals (fig. 1) (Zacos p1.88.910, 917, 920, 89.941, 945, who dates them to the late C9th and first half of C10th) with differing central motifs. This border is characteristic of designs on some Sasanian silks and stucco (3) and it seems likely that Byzantine seal engravers were inspired by silks brought back from Iran through trade or plunder. Two other seals (Zacos p1.88.920 (fig. 1) b 89.942, dated to early C9th and first half of C10th) depict a duck with Sasanian style wings, and ribbons flowing out behind. These latter are familiar from both the King's crown and dress on the obverse, and the fire altar on the reverse of Sasanian coins, but they also occur elsewhere. (4)

Another very characteristically Sasanian design is found in the same group. The central design (fig.2) (Zacos p1.88.911, dated to first half of C10th) is described as "In centre, forepart of griffin r.". The animal depicted is not a griffin, but rather the mythical *senmerv* or *simurgh* of Iranian legend which has the forepart of a dog and the wings and tail of a peacock. Though not common on Sasanian *seal* stones (fig.3) (5) it occurs on silks, rock carvings and stucco (fig.4) (6) and one again suspects that a silk of Sasanian or later Sasanian inspired design was the means of transmission.

One particularly striking case of direct borrowing from the Sasanians (fig.5) probably does not come from a silk. It is described by Zacos thus "In centre, cross with semi-circular ornaments at ends of arms and on flanks of lower shaft" and is placed amongst the "cross on steps" series. In reality there is neither cross nor steps but a so-called "device". These form a major class of design on Sasanian seals though they do occur elsewhere. Bivar (7) considers these to be marks of ownership derived from cattle brands and they were also used as insignia on armour. (fig.6) They were to some extent inherited but we do not know exactly how the system worked. In some instances letters of the Pahlevi alphabet are included in the design in which case they can be considered monograms representing the owner's name.

The "cross" on the Byzantine seal in question is taken directly from such a "device". (figs.? & 8) All the elements are there - the crescent at the top, the "inverted pi" , and at the base an upside down daleth. The outlining of the design is found on Sasanian representations of "devices". The "steps" at the bottom of the seal are wings, similar to those occurring on the crowns of Sasanian monarchs, but also often found on Sasanian seals. (fig.9) Although we have not been able to find one Sasanian seal incorporating both elements of the design - the "device" and the wings - it is quite probable that one originally existed and is the most likely means of transmission. One could go a stage further and suggest that the decorative foliage found growing out of the steps on a number of the "cross on steps" type is perhaps inspired by these wings. (Fig.10)

The Byzantine seals discussed above, along with some similar types published by Laurent (8) are all dated to the 9th - 10th centuries. The Sasanian prototypes from which they are derived must have been produced before the Muslim conquest of Iran in 652. What is the reason for the apparent 200 year time gap? Three conclusions are possible. The dating of the Byzantine *seals* may be wrong, or perhaps a cache of Sasanian artefacts brought back by Heraclius after one of his successful incursions into Sasanian territory was rediscovered and provided inspiration for Byzantine workmen. More generally, it may be that Byzantine design in the late 9th - early 10th century looked back to a *classical* tradition influenced by Sasanian Iran.

I hesitate to question Laurent and Zacos' dating of Byzantine seals but I am not aware of any marked increase in Sasanian influence in other C10th forms of Byzantine art (it had of course been there for several centuries in textile weaving). The second alternative might sound plausible if we were dealing with a *less* sophisticated (and less hidebound) artistic tradition. Does any reader have any ideas?

#### List of illustrations

1. Byzantine lead bulla. Duck walking right, ribbon flows out behind, within border of pellets. Zacos 88.920.
2. Byzantine lead bulla. Senmerv looking right, Greek inscription around. Zacos 88.911.
3. Sasanian *seal* stone. Senmerv looking right, Pahlevi legend below. Bivar EG20.
4. Silk textile, C7th. Senmerv looking right, border of large dots. After Ghirshman fig.275.
5. Byzantine lead bulla. Sasanian "device", two wings below, Greek inscription above. Zacos 31.241.
6. Sasanian seal stone. "Device" on helmet of Sasanian nobleman, taken from Bivar AD2.
7. Sasanian clay bulls. "Device". Frye D 415.
8. Sasanian *seal* stone. "Device". Bivar NH 1.
9. Sasanian seal stone. "Device", two wings below, Pahlevi inscription above. Bivar Nil 4.
10. Byzantine lead bulla. Patriarchal cross on steps, foliage rising from base, Greek inscription around. Zacos 26.172.

#### Notes

1. R.N.Frye, Sasanian remains from Qasr-i Abu Nasr: seals, sealings and coins. Cambridge, Mass., 1973, p.42.
2. G.Zacos, Byzantine lead seals. vol.2, Berne, 1985, p1.88-89.
3. R.Ghirshman, Iran, Parthes et Sassanides. Paris, 1962, figs. 211, 273, 275 for instance.
4. Ghirshman, op.cit. figs. 273, 277, 278.
5. A.D.H.Bivar, Catalogue of western Asiatic seals in the British Museum: stamp seals. vol. 2, The Sasanian dynasty, London, 1969, p1.13, EG20.
6. Ghirshman, op.cit., figs. 270-272, 275-276.
7. Bivar, op.cit., pp.27-28.
8. V.Laurent, Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin. vol. 2, L'administration centrale, Paris, 1981.

#### P.S.E.U.D.S.: Plastic Slabbing Exploits Uneducated Dunces' Stupidity by the editors.

"As the market continues to refine itself - the "slab" has taken over as the primary selling tool of the US dealer. As a result these dealers only come to shows to exchange material between themselves - shunning the retail collector totally." Victor England, "Historical Coin Review", vol.xiii, no.8, October 1988, p.1.

We did a quick survey of London Numismatic Club members and found that none had come across the term "slab". As so many Americanisms find their way *across* the Atlantic we thought LNG members should be forewarned about this one, You have probably come across the American grading system MS70 etc. - well, having bought your expertly (and no doubt expensively) graded coin with its certificate how can you guarantee that when you want to sell, it will be graded to exactly the *same* MS number by the prospective buyer? Slabbing is the answer. Embed your coin in plastic, its grade enclosed with it, and it cannot be marked, re (or de) toned, scratched, finger marked or any other horror, and no one can quibble about its grade or fiddle its



certificate. No, this is not *a* joke, it does actually happen, and lots of people must be making a mint out of slabbing.

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Lt. Col. Oliver North,  
Special Coin Account,  
Bank of Zurich.

The above "Special Announcement" is an extract from *a leaflet*, written by Jerry Bobbe, which circulated at the Chicago Fair last year. Even this innocuous satire was refused publication in Coin World and several other US numismatic magazines *we have* never heard of, though it was published in Penny-Wise, the official publication of the Early American Coppers Club.

### BROTHEL TOKENS by Susan Tyler-Smith

Just as soon as we got the money from the customer *we went* out and bought aluminium checks from Margaret, similar to the old-time brass beer checks. A two-dollar check was marked "Five Cents in Trade", and a three-dollar check was a little larger and said "Ten Cents in Trade". If there *was a* ten-dollar trick she'd give us two threes and two deuces....At half-past six Margaret sent me into the office to cash in. I had a hundred and thirty-three checks and naturally thought I was to get half that much, or \$66.50. Instead Pollack and Rudy counted my checks and handed me \$40.

Sister of the Road: the autobiography of Box-Car Bertha, as told to Dr. Ben L. Reitman, London, 1941. (Written in 1936)

It is usually assumed that brothel tokens would have as their design on one side at least *an* erotic scene or symbol. There is a well-known series of Roman pieces, spintriae, in bronze or brass which have an erotic scene on one side and a number on the other. There is a parallel, reverse die-linked, series which show the head of a Roman Emperor or member of his family. Ted Buttrey (NC, 1973, pp.52-63), while not explaining their purpose, does fairly conclusively show that they were not used as brothel tokens.

A series of small medieval pieces in pewter show on one side the male or female sexual organ and on the other a cross. These have sometimes been assumed to be brothel tokens. It has also been argued that they may be prophylactics against impotence/sterility or gambling tokens specifically issued by the fools' Pope during the Feast of Fools. (Labrot,J., "Mereaux au type sexual", Numismatique et Change, March, 1986, pp.24-27.)

One also *sees* from time to time clumsy objects with obscene designs or language purporting to come from the Wild West or similar romantic locales. These are surely modern concoctions.

No one has explained satisfactorily how these "brothel tokens" were used. It seems to be generally assumed that they were used by clients but how, or indeed why they should be necessary, is not clear. Their use might presuppose a highly organised bordello system such as the maison close or the Yoshiwara but *we* are not aware of any genuine literary references to the practice. The Yoshiwara had its own language but we have never heard that it had its own tokens. In Luis Bunuel's film Belle de jour a Japanese client in an up-market Paris bordello tries to pay with a "Geisha Club" credit card. The madame (surprise, surprise!) insists on cash.

It seemed to me to be worth reproducing the above passage from the account given by Bertha Thompson of her experiences in a Chicago brothel (possibly controlled by "Bugs" Moran) in the 1920's or 30's for two reasons. First, it explains exactly how the tokens were used. Second, it shows that the tokens were simple and did not have sexually inspired designs. The Chicago brothel was a business venture designed to make money - the tokens were used only by the prostitutes and their employers so there was no need to make them attractive. One rather suspects that the latter bought whatever tokens *were* cheap and readily available since the amounts on the tokens do not coincide with the sums of money received by the prostitutes.

## THE 1988 TOKEN CONGRESS by Christopher Brunel

The annual Token Congress, held in the autumn, is now an established event in the numismatic calendar. The 1988 week-end was in September in Leeds, with over 80 taking part. Appropriately, the opening talk was on J.Ardill, the Leeds manufacturer of Co-op tokens, Philip Meldrum giving a comprehensive survey not only of the local scene - he had recorded 63 Co-op Societies, whose tokens had Ardill's signature on them - but widening the subject with information on Other makers of Go-op pieces, such as William Leonard, Henry Smith and James Hinks, all of Birmingham.

The Yorkshire connection was continued by David Griffiths, speaking on Samuel Hamer of Halifax, who wrote the historical sections of the standard work, The provincial token-coinage of the 18th century by R.Dalton and S.H.Hamer, and Robert Bell who gave a well-researched talk about Myers Adams, a Leeds die-sinker and dental mechanic. Still drawing inspiration from the locality, Alan Humphries spoke on the Leeds minting machinery makers, Greenwood and Batley (established 1856), and J.D. Percival took us back to the 17th century and the 29 token issuers in Kingston-Upon-Hull.

Alan Judd widened the field with an amusingly challenging address on 18th century evasions - "Imitations of the regal coinage" as Atkins called them in his Tokens of the eighteenth century (1892); contrary to Wilson Peck, Mr. Judd maintained their manufacture was almost entirely from 1771-97 and in Birmingham.

Heik Groenendijk gave an historical survey of British telephone tokens, illustrating not only the tokens but the equipment in which they were used. Gavin Scott gave a fascinating insight into just a few of the countermarked pieces he had recorded since his British countermarks on copper and bronze coins was published in 1975, including the recent discovery of forged countermarks of Pears Soap and Spence's Plan.

This account of an interest-packed two days may read like a catalogue - apace dictates this. But mention must be made among others of Andrew Wager's talk on Birmingham workhouse tokens and Henry Laughner, and how half the Token Congress's organising team, Peter Moffat, managed to find time to speak on Albert Smith of Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, fame and his relationship with Dr. Eady of nearby Soho.

The other half of the team, Mrs. Joan Moffat, must be thanked for her sterling work in ensuring the beer-drinkers had their favourite brand and the spirit-drinkers their preferred tipple. I guess that both the Moffats did much, much more behind the scenes to make the Congress the efficient and enjoyable event it was. Increasingly, participants are finding it useful and entertaining to arrive a day early on the Friday.

Next year: probably in Warrington.

## THE 1988 BM SYMPOSIUM ON TECHNIQUES OF COIN PRODUCTION by Steve Mansfield.

This took place at the Museum over two days in September last year; an earlier symposium (in 1983) having addressed an associated subject - Metallurgy in Numismatics. The thematic approach employed for both permits

coverage of an unlimited range of monetary systems - in this case from Greece during the 5th century BC to late 20th century Britain and from Boulton and Watt's role in the development of Russian coinage to the composition of moulds for casting ancient Chinese cash.

There were probably between fifty and sixty symposiasts, including a good number from the LNC. Perhaps the majority (of the former!) were academics and this triggered once again, a long-standing curiosity of mine about the value of numismatics to historical studies. Coins themselves, and often their metal content, can tell us much about the geographical limits of political control, changing trade routes and the development of internal economies. But with the making of coin, surely we are deep in the realm of pure numismatics? I can only really recall one paper - Dr. Collin's fascinating account of how the new technologies required larger and more permanent premises in Paris and the provincial towns of 17th and 18th century France - which could easily find a significant place in the wider historical context.

This implies no criticism of the symposium, however, which was faultlessly organised and represented excellent value for money - lunch on Friday, and a *social* evening, an exhibition featuring many of the items illustrated in the talks and altogether, 24 short papers, all of which I think offered a learned and novel approach to the subject.

Some personal and chronological highlights:

The practical experiments, undertaken by Dr. Leslie Beer Tobey (USA) in striking about 2,000 copies of the staters of Aegina, which suggest that the use of lubricants (presumably vegetable oils) was unlikely to have been effective. Mr. M.Peres's account of the remains of a forger's workshop *discovered* at Augusta Rauricorum, near present day Basle. Two factors may have contributed to the counterfeiter's downfall - the production of plated denarii, muling a Commodus obverse with a reverse type of Marcus Aurelius and the location of his premises, evidently in the main street of the ancient town.

On a *similar* theme, but rather later in time, Mr. S.G.Minnitt described a counterfeiter's hoard found at Taunton and now in the local museum. The coins are royal issues of Louis XI (1423-83) and their discovery in England suggests that forgery of foreign coins was not an offence in this country at that time. Not a notion much in line with 1992.

On the morning of the second day, Edward Besly and Professor Gaspar delivered separate papers on the development of coin making machinery in England in the early 17th century. Following each talk there was a lively and sometimes esoteric discussion of the relative merits of the screw, rocker and roller presses. During the Civil War, Royalist *controlled* towns seem to have employed a variety of methods best suited to their circumstances, but overall there is no consensus on which *produced* the better coinage.

The final contribution was made by Dr. P.Hatherley, a metallurgist at the Royal Mint, who speculated on the future of coinage in the age of plastic. Unexpectedly, he revealed that use of coins in the developed world has

approximately doubled in the last ten years. The major problem confronting national mints is the development of a cheap, durable coinage for smaller transactions. Trials involving non-metallic materials have not so far proved successful anywhere, and although the Royal Mint has experimented with electroplated steel blanks, any radical change in our (fairly) traditional coinage seems *a long way off*.

The proceedings of the symposium are to be published.

(Thanks are due to Tony Holmes for the use of his notes, made during the symposium.)

JETONS, MEDALETS AND TOKENS. vol. 1. THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD AND NUREMBERG by Michael Mitchiner. Seaby, 1988. pp. 704, illus. in text, valuations. £95. A review by Gerry Buddle.

Until about fifteen years ago the study of that curious assortment of reckoning counters, political medalets, spielmarke and gaming counters, collectively known as jetons was something of a numismatic Cinderella. In the main, this *was* probably due to the lack of any easily accessible reference: the standard work by Barnard (1), published in 1917 had been out of print for many years, *as* had any other useful works on jetons such as Snelling (2) or Rouyer and Hucher (3). With the advent of metal detectors large numbers of jetons began to come to light and to find their way onto the market and this acted as a stimulus to the publication of two books, one new one by Berry (4) and *a* reprint of Barnard's oeuvre.

Whilst Berry's work offered an elegant extension to the understanding of the English jetons of the 13th to 15th centuries it was by definition very limited in scope, and Barnard's book never aspired to be a complete type catalogue. It was with great interest then that I heard of *a new work* in preparation by the redoubtable Dr. Mitchiner.

The result is certainly a colossal achievement. Dr. Mitchiner's ability to paint on a vast canvas, *as* evident from his previous publications, is again demonstrated in this 704 page, 7 lb corpus spanning six centuries and listing over 2300 jetons. All the pieces are illustrated (at double size), the majority chemically analysed, and each section of the book begins with an explanation of the historical and numismatic background to the items catalogued. Given all these heavy guns, why then does the overall broadside seem rather disappointing?

One reason is perhaps the viewpoint from which the book is written, particularly as regards the mediaeval section. Dr. Mitchiner has drawn very heavily on British finds, especially from the Thames, and has produced an excellent archaeological analysis. The problem is that exactly because of this British bias, the book is numismatically very patchy. A cursory glance either at earlier works or indeed into other collections reveals any number of types unrepresented in Mitchiner, yet the book includes illustrations of duplicates on many pages - justifiable in an archaeological context perhaps, but numismatically of very little value. This patchiness may also be exacerbated by the book's ambitiously wide range. There can be few numismatists whose interests span the whole run of jetons from the 13th-19th

centuries and the book might well have been broken into two or three volumes at more moderate prices.

As another consequence of the approach used, the book's layout is slightly confusing and makes it difficult to use *as a catalogue*, the strict chronological arrangement of each section necessitating constant leafing back and forth to compare very similar types. This is especially so for the part on Nuremberg where some types remain fixed for more than 160 years.

Although theoretically *a good idea*, I cannot confess to liking the double size illustrations. Many of the pieces shown are in poor condition and are not improved by enlargement. The value of increased size for points of detail is obvious, but its indiscriminate use here seems rather *a waste of space*, and only serves to hinder direct comparison of jetons with the plates.

There are numerous points of detail in the text which will undoubtedly provoke discussion for some years to come: one might, for example, question the identification of the standing figure on the Sigismund/Burgrave of Nuremberg type (M.976,977) *as the Emperor*. (Having examined a better specimen the figure seems more spiritual than imperial and appears to be vanquishing *a dragon* - but perhaps this is *a discrete type*.) Nonetheless, such a book should provoke discussion and there can be little argument concerning the quality of Dr. Mitchiner's scholarship or the painstaking way in which the book has been researched and compiled. He has largely succeeded in bringing order to *a difficult series* and has suggested some interesting and generally sensible reattributions. One which comes to mind is the assignment of the "crowned sterling head in treasure" type (M.329) to an Anglo-Gallic connection: although Rouyer and Hucher record this obverse linked with a reverse die of the Chambre des Comptes, this cannot be the whole story from stylistic considerations whereas "Anglo-Gallic" fits rather better.

A word on valuations:- these are already creating something of a convulsion in the market, and indeed I have heard one dealer describe his pricing policy on jetons as "Mitchiner divided by four". Valuations in any case are ephemeral so do not mean very much in themselves. As a general observation, the implied relative rarities seem about right, with few obvious outliers.

Despite the criticisms above the overall impression is of a remarkable and impressive piece of work, and Dr. Mitchiner is to be congratulated on his contribution to our understanding of this broad and complex subject. At £95 it is unlikely that the book will do much to popularise the subject but those of us already hooked will need to grasp the nettle and acquire *a copy*: even though we might wish that numismatically it covered a little less ground in *a little more detail*.

1. F.P.Barnard, The casting counter and the counting board. OUP, 1917, reprinted by Fox, Castle Cary, 1981.
2. T.Snelling, A view of the origin, nature and use of jettons or counters. London, 1769.
3. J.Rouyer and E.Hucher, Histoire du jeton au moyen age. Rollin, Paris, 1858, reprinted by Leopard d'or, Paris 1982.
4. G.Berry, Medieval English jetons. Spink, London, 1974.