

FACTS THE COINS CAN REVEAL

MR. BILL EXLEY, one of the leading authorities on Channel Island Coins addressed a meeting of the Bedford Numismatic Society last Wednesday.

The discussion raised several interesting points including the following:-

William the Conqueror united the Channel Island to the crown of England as a result of the battle of Hastings (1066); and were part of the Duchy of Normandy that conquered England.

A century or so later, when the belief was that King John had murdered his nephew Arthur, Normandy turned against the Monarch, and town after town surrendered to the French.

The Channel Island remained faithful to John, who it is said in return, guaranteed the continuance of ancient laws and privileges, and so have self government still existent today.

In 1279 the birth of the Guernsey Crest, which is used on Guernsey coinage. Edward I loaned his Royal Seal to the Bailiffs of Guernsey and Jersey to use on Legal Documents, for save taking or sending legal documents to Westminster for sealing.

The arms of the King of England engraved on the seal, became in course of time popularly known as the arms of both Islands. The Duchy of Lancaster has similar Arms.

7-1-71

NEW PAINS

CHANNEL ISLANDERS face a triple decimal headache because Jersey and Guernsey will each have their own set of new pence circulating with Britain's.

"Evening Press"

9-4-65

Guernsey coins

"WANTED — all Guernsey coins." So reads a newspaper advertisement, with illustrations of doubles, halfpence, pence and threepenny pieces, all of which may be sold at well above their face values. Why? Because they have become rarities.

One never sees the old Guernsey coinage in circulation but, until recently, it was common to encounter the 1956 and 1959 money in one's change. Today it is sometimes possible to acquire a local threepenny piece, but practically everything else has passed into the hands of collectors and those who deal with rare coins.

Obviously, Guernsey is not going to issue any more of its own coinage, presumably on the score of cost. If this is so the fact that this money has a prestige value and is a tourist attraction must have been forgotten. The States spend much money every year in advertising Guernsey and in other forms of publicity, yet this is never counted as wasteful.

For well over a century

Guernsey has enjoyed the proud distinction of issuing its own currency, like Jersey. Now, it seems, this is to be reduced to paper money only and, if this is the case, a great many islanders and visitors are going to be disappointed. We used to take pride in telling them that we had our own money and they, in turn, delighted in handling it.

Is it not possible for the States to sanction another issue of our "doubles" money and some more of those highly attractive threepenny bits? If they cost more than their face value is not their publicity value ample compensation? If a profit is made on note issues cannot this be made to offset any loss on the coins?

Have we entirely lost our national pride by immediately surrendering a privilege if it does not pay dividends at once? If other communities can issue their own coinages must Guernsey lag behind?

"Treasure" find coincidence

■ IN 1968, soon after making the decision to retire and live in Guernsey, I was digging my main potato crop in the village of Hawkell, Essex, where I was living, and my keen eye, always looking for treasure, spotted an earth-covered disc in the soil.

I scrubbed the disc clean, hoping that I had unearthed a Roman coin, but to my surprise it was a Guernsey 1914 eight doubles piece!

This is only half the story, as this week I was planting the last of my main crop potatoes and unearthed another corroded disc.

Remove the doubts about that sprig

■ I HAVE been most interested to see the recent Guernsey stamps bearing the heads of the two Elizabeths with between them the Arms used by the Bailiwick of Guernsey upon the ancient seal of the Bailiwick showing the Arms of the Plantagenet Kings of England ensigned by a "sprig".

I agree with Mary-Eily de Putron that the sprig is not heraldically correct and indeed, over the years its use and the manner in which it should be depicted has often been the sub-

ject of comment and also of query.

It seems to me most desirable, if I may make this recommendation as an English Officer of Arms, that past uncertainties and present inconsistencies should be removed, once and for all, by the Bailiwick asking that this should be done by Royal Warrant of the present Sovereign, exemplifying the Shield of Arms in the form so long used and ensigning it with laurel sprig depicted in an Heraldic manner, defining its tinctures and proportions. If this is done, then in the future all will know exactly what is meant and indeed, what was meant by Edward I when he sent his Royal Seal to the Bailiwick for its use.

A. COLIN COLE,
Windsor Herald of Arms and
Registrar,
College of Arms,
London.

That sprig — addition or subtraction

■ WITH respect I fear that the letter (April 14) from Mr A. Colin Cole, Windsor Herald of Arms, may have increased rather than dispelled our uncertainty.

It has hitherto been widely held that the "sprig" did not appear in the original seal granted by Edward I, but that it was introduced by the engraver who made the first separate Guernsey seal.

Regrettably, your distinguished correspondent, while making no comment on that belief, seems to imply that the sprig was always there. If that is the case, we must now wonder why Jersey should have suppressed it in the designing of her successive replacement seals.

If the Bailiwick were now to seek a Royal Warrant, as proposed by the Windsor Herald, that, in effect, would be only to repeat Sir Ambrose Sherwill's request of 1949, except that the correspondence of that year referred to a sprig of genista rather than of laurel. The Bailiff asked that an approach be made to His Majesty "through the appropriate channels." Those channels were not indicated to him, and no approach appears to have been made on his behalf by the Home Office.

Would a new application be any more likely to succeed?

T. H. M. HUGO.
Harcourt,
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Rare Guernsey 5s. token sold

AN extremely rare Guernsey 5s. token was recently sold by the Jersey Coin Company to a Channel Islands buyer. The price paid is unknown, but the last example heard of in private hands is reputed to have been sold for a sum exceeding £1,200 several years ago.

The token is of silver, overstruck on a 1794 Spanish dollar. It was issued in 1809 by Bishop de Jersey and Company, the firm being two families which ran the Guernsey Bank, but it was then forbidden to be circulated by an ordinance of the Guernsey States dated October 2, 1809. Two years later, Bishop de Jersey went into liquidation.

Lt.-Col. Marshall - Fraser, in "The Coinages of the Channel Islands", says that as the 5s. token was "immediately pro-

hibited on issue by the States, it is doubtful whether any but a very few were retained by the customers."

There are at the most some half-dozen specimens now in existence, one of which is in the British Museum. Of the others, the one just sold is the only example still in the Channel Islands.

(I know
of 4!)
E.F.

N.B.

I know who
has this one
and have 2 photos,
also I have seen
a specimen in
"E.F." at a London
Collector Friends'
house. Also another
house. Also another

I'm told, also exists in Col. Springs, U.S.A. E.F.

Varieties

by W. Exley

Die variations in the coins of Guernsey continually come to light, and when one thinks that this must surely be all, someone else writes pointing out yet another variety. I have come to the conclusion that to obtain any varieties at all, one must have accumulated Guernsey coins in great numbers for comparison. I have compiled my most comprehensive list to date for the benefit of *Coin Monthly* readers and those who possess a copy of my book *Guernsey Coinage*.

In most cases, authentication of varieties is borne out by the findings of at least three other independent collectors. A listing follows of all varieties from 1830 to date; this is not just a list of new varieties but includes old accepted ones too, making it a useful aid to the novice and veteran collector of coins from Guernsey.

All references to E. numbers are taken from *Guernsey Coinage*

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|----------------|--|
| 1830 1 Double | Dot in relief, to the left of the 1 in date. (E1A.) |
| 1834 8 Doubles | First inner, top left berry on the Obv. wreath, stem is disconnected. (E3B.) |
| 1834 8 Doubles | Close crosslet on the four. (E3A.) |
| 1858 4 Doubles | The three leaves surmounting the shield are well clear, also legend is well spaced out. (E5.) |
| 1858 4 Doubles | Shield leaves low and nearly touching, legend closely spaced. (E6.) |
| 1858 8 Doubles | The bow on the Rev. is normal. First inner, top left berry on Obv. stem is attached to wreath support. (This is the rarer of the three types.) (E7.) |
| 1858 8 Doubles | The top of the bow on the Rev. is squashed down, also the berry as noted in E7. Stem is attached to the top of a leaf. (E7A.) |
| 1858 8 Doubles | No berry to left of bow on Obv. (E8.) |
| 1864 4 Doubles | One stalk to shield leaves. (E9.) |
| 1864 4 Doubles | Three stalks to shield leaves. (E10.) |
| 1864 4 Doubles | Three stalks to shield leaves and also a 'ghost' 5 over 4 in the date. (E10A.) |

1864 8 Doubles The following eleven varieties, were first noted by Sealy. This was a great help to those seeking 1864 8 Doubles varieties, who were instantly released from the task of trying to complete almost mythical earlier variety lists. There are six different obverse dies to be distinguished and seven reverse dies. Certain ones are inter-linked and exist in two states as follows:-

- 1864 8 Doubles**
- Obv. 1. No berries either side of bow, shield leaves on one stalk.
 - Obv. 2. As Obv. 1. except three stalks to shield leaves, also bow is shallower.
 - Obv. 3. Two berries to right of bow and one at left. Extra leaf in left section of wreath. Arranged 3-5-4.
 - Obv. 3A. Berry missing to left of bow, but slight traces of stalk. (Probably temporarily filled die.)
 - Obv. 4. One berry each side of bow. Twelve leaves in left half of wreath as 3-5-4.
 - Obv. 5. As Obv. 4, but only eleven leaves in left half. Arranged 3-4-4.

The different reverse dies are classified as follows. Note the triad of leaves on the right near the S of DOUBLES.

Rev. A. Centre leaf of triad on top, bar in 8 of the date weak.
Rev. A. A second state of Rev. A. exists showing deterioration in the outlines of the letters which are blurred and irregular, note the BLE of DOUBLES. The bar of the 8 is usually weak or missing.

Rev. A. only occurs paired with Obv. 2, while Rev. A being the clearer die occurs with Obv. 1 and 2. This gives a direction in time to these die 'linked' series.

Rev. B. Left leaf of triad on

From "Coin Year Book 1971 -

island coinage

Until quite recently, coins from the islands off the English coast were the interest of very few collectors indeed. There was an abundant supply and an equally abundant variety to recommend the collection of the mainland coinage, and, for further variety, there was always the Irish coinage, republican or otherwise. For one reason or another, however, in the late sixties, interest in Island Coinage has undoubtedly increased considerably. The coins are often very attractive, rarely numerically common, and usually inexpensive.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

These islands, Jersey, Guernsey, and sundry smaller islands, lie a few miles off the French coast to the west of the Cherbourg Peninsula. They have been associated with England since the Norman Conquest for, as their geographical position might indicate, they were part of the Norman Duchy. When the Duchy of Normandy was captured from King John by Philip Augustus of France in 1204, the islands escaped that fate and remained possessions of the English Crown. Nevertheless, the islands retained a certain measure of independence, regulating their internal affairs and leaving the mainland government responsible only for their defence.

The independent character of the islands is reflected in their coins. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the currency circulating in the islands was an extraordinary mixture of French and English together with a few local tokens. Then, in 1830, Guernsey started to issue its own coinage, shortly followed by Jersey in 1841. Perhaps predictably the coins differed markedly from the mainland issues of the time. The Guernsey coins did not bear the head of the reigning monarch, the

obverse having the island coat-of-arms within a wreath and headed by the word GUERNESEY (the French spelling), and the reverse, the denomination in 'doubles', the local unit of currency (again French). The Jersey coins did bear the head of the reigning monarch; in the first issue, it was William Wyon's beautiful Young Head Victorian design. On the reverse there appeared the island arms surmounted by the legend STATES OF JERSEY. Beneath the arms, 1/13TH OF A SHILLING appeared. In Jersey, there were thirteen pence to the shilling. The Guernsey denominations were 8 doubles (corresponding roughly to a penny), 4 doubles (halfpenny), 2 doubles (farthing), and the double (half-farthing). The more unwieldy Jersey denominations were 1/13th of a shilling (penny), 1/26th of a shilling (halfpenny) and 1/52nd of a shilling (farthing).

To many collectors the coins of Guernsey appear dull. Nevertheless, two factors explain perhaps why they are in roughly equal demand to those of Jersey. The first is that since 1956 the design which had remained virtually unaltered for over a hundred years was radically altered. Since then, the arms have been stylised and the old obverse has been superseded by flora (the lily) and fauna (the cow). These new designs are as elegant as those of Percy Metcalfe which adorn the Irish coinage and they certainly improve the appearance of the series. The second factor is perhaps more interesting. The abundance of wreaths on the early coins has revealed a whole host of variations in numbers of leaves, numbers of berries and their alignment. What is more, there is an excellent monograph by W. Exley on the subject (see Bibliography). Besides listing varieties, this includes a short essay on coins circulating on the island

before the nineteenth century. Above all else, it is clearly and fully illustrated.

No doubt there are varieties in the Jersey series, but alas there is not yet a 'Jersey Exley'. The only major variety noted so far is to be found on the 1866 1/13th of a shilling which occasionally is to be found without the letters LCW (L.C. Wyon-designer) on the truncation.

HERALDRY

At first sight, the coat-of-arms which appears on Channel Island coinage is the same as the Royal English arms—'Gules, three lions passant guardant in pale or'. As with everything else, however, the island arms are different, at least they are some-

times. A careful examination of the copper and the first bronze issue of the Jersey series will reveal that the lions are beardless; they are in fact leopards. The second and subsequent bronze issues clearly show three lions. There is a similar change in the Guernsey series. The explanation is bound up with France. In French heraldry, a lion is the English lion rampant, and the English lion passant guardant (as in the English royal arms) is the French leopard. So in heraldry as in other things, the Channel Islands have gradually come round to the English way of doing things. Thus, even Guernsey has issued five, ten and fifty new pence pieces, and in 1966 the monarch's head appeared on their coinage for the first time on the ten-shilling piece minted to commemorate 1066.

MINTAGE FIGURES

At first sight, the mintage figures appear to be staggeringly low. For example, there are four 'pennies' in the Jersey series which are rarer numerically than the 1951 English penny. These are 1841 (116,480), 1844 (24,040), 1881 (75,153) and 1926 (82,800). In the Guernsey series, there are no less than ten—1858, 1868, 1874, 1885H, 1893H, 1903H, 1910H, 1911H, 1934H and 1938H (the 'H', as in the English series, is the Heaton mint-mark). But if the 8 doubles series is rare, the 2 doubles series is even rarer, having five coins with mintage figures less than 20,000 (1902H, 1903H, 1906H, 1908H and 1917H, the last being the lowest of all at 14,524). Yet in spite of this, prices remain fairly low with very few exceptions. Even so, in common with the world trend, prices are getting higher all the time, and while a type-set would be relatively easy to acquire, the complete series is by no means easy to compile. Even the type-set collector would find difficulty in finding the two Jersey farthings whose high price in comparison with the pennies of the same years is explained by the scarcity of the coins on the market.

" COINS DIGEST." P69
SEPT. 1970

READERS LETTERS

GUERNSEY COINAGE

Dear Sir

I wonder if you know of my book *Guernsey Coinage*, which I wrote in 1968 and revised in May 1969 for decimal inclusions? I would be grateful if you could mention it somewhere in *Coins Digest*, as I am keen to create more interest in Channel Island coins. I have a collection of coins from both Guernsey and Jersey, but with an emphasis on my native Guernsey.

The two articles in your recent issue (number 10) were very interesting indeed, and I wondered if their authors knew of my book, the very first written on the subject, and still the most comprehensive source of information to collector. I've tried to promote it as much as possible in England, but not being in the trade, and having written and published it myself, I'm finding it a hard task! However, I have already sold 1,700 copies, an indication of how much interest there is in Guernsey coins. The book sells for 6s, or 7s p&p paid (trade rates are welcome at usual wholesale prices) I have shipped quite a few copies to America and Canada, too.
W. Exley, 4 The Hill, Blunham, Bedfordshire.

"Guernsey Press" May '69.

■ **OUR COINS.** The revised edition of the only comprehensive work on Guernsey coinage is published today.

Produced by 30-year-old Guernseyman Bill Exley, the book, "*Guernsey Coinage*," is recognised by coin experts as the "Bible" for specialist collectors of local coins.

This updated version includes the recently introduced decimal coinage for the Island besides a wealth of historical detail of interest to others outside the coin collector's world.