

# GUERNSEY COINAGE

"COIN  
MONTHLY"  
JUNE 1969.

by *W. Exley*

Guernsey, along with Jersey, Alderney, Sark and other small islets making up the Channel Islands, is situated off the Cherbourg peninsula. These islands, part of the Duchy of Normandy at the time of the Norman Conquest, were united to the Crown of England after that event. Originally part of Brittany, Guernsey's predominant language for hundreds of years was French, and even today country families still speak the local Guernsey *patois*, a mixture of French and English. When England lost sovereignty over Normandy during the reign of King John, Guernsey nevertheless pledged its allegiance to the English crown and was guaranteed the continuance of its ancient laws and privileges, and today it still has its own ruling body, known as the States of Guernsey.

The States of Guernsey incorporates unpaid elected members of the public who have the power to authorise the issue of currency. Guernsey has £5, £1 and 10s. promissory notes issued by the States, and these bear the legend "The States of Guernsey promise to pay the bearer on demand (£5, £1 or 10s.) value received." Guernsey has had its own unique coinage since 1830, the unit of account being the double, there being eight doubles to the Guernsey penny, which is equivalent to

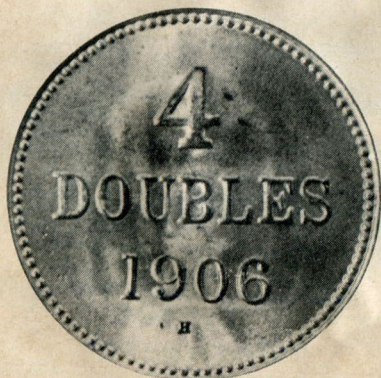
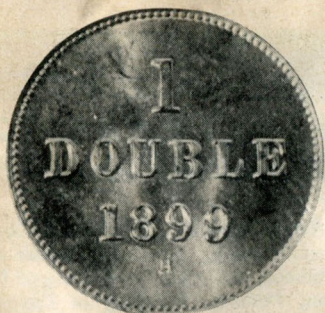
the English penny. The denominations are four doubles equal to the halfpenny, two doubles equal to the farthing, and a small coin equalling one double or one eighth of a penny. However, the last striking of this latter occurred in 1938, and that of the two doubles in 1929.

Incidentally, there is copper in the soil of Herm (a delightful, unspoilt islet 2½ miles off Guernsey), and Sark and Guernsey possess silver. It is also interesting, perhaps, to note that this metal, silver, was the last of gold, silver and copper to be used for coinage.

Between 359 and 336 B.C. gold staters of Philip II of Macedon were introduced to the island through the Greek trading colony at Massalia (now known as Marseilles) and were used not only in Guernsey but in western Europe in general. Then, between 75 and 50 B.C., Armoric staters were used. They were of billon—a mixture of silver, copper, tin and lead. The name "Armorica" stems from the ancient name for Brittany which, being a coastal country, was called "Ar-Mor" by the Celtic tribes which inhabited it.

These tribes possessed gold and silver but the metals became scarce and an alloy termed "billon" was developed.

A find of 982 specimens of Armorican



coins was made in 1820 on the island of Jersey. These pieces were later purchased by a German officer who eventually published an account of them, complete with illustrations, in 1838. The most important discovery of Armorican numismatic art occurred in 1935, however, when a cache of 11,000 coins came to light on a Jersey farm, and at present there is an archaeological excavation on the west coast of Guernsey at a spot where it is believed a Norseman's Long House existed.

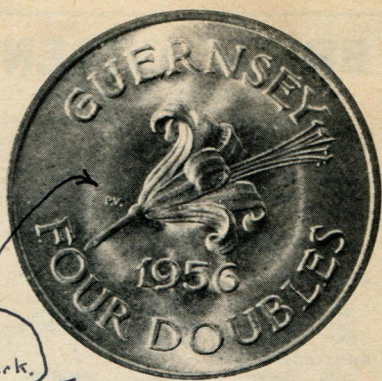
In the ninth century A.D. the Norsemen invaded Guernsey under the leadership of "Rollo," also known as "Rolf the Ganger." Later, in A.D. 911, the then King of France gave them the land known as Normandy (Norse Man's Land) and "Rollo" became the first Duke of Normandy. There is a direct continuity of Dukes after this up to William the Conqueror through William Longsword, Richard the Fearless, Richard the Good, and Robert the Magnificent.

### ROYAL SEAL

In 1279 came the introduction of the "arms" into Guernsey history, later to be used on the obverse of the island's coins. Edward I kindly loaned the arms in the form of a Royal Seal to the bailiffs of Guernsey and Jersey to save dispatching legal documents to Westminster for sealing. The arms of the King of England engraved upon the seal became in course of time popularly recognised as the arms of both Guernsey and Jersey. The Duchy of Lancaster has similar arms.

These arms—at present the first and fourth quarterings on Elizabeth II's coat of arms—were used by England from 1198 until 1340. The design of the arms of Guernsey until 1911 is as follows: an ornately outlined shield with three lions *passant guardant* therein and, above, a sprig of leaves which formed the "stop" in the original seal. In 1911 the leaves were added to and the lions changed to leopards, it being thought that this was more heraldically correct. (See photographs on previous page.) A "Royal Sanction" given by Edward VII ensured the continued use of the coat of arms claimed by the people of Guernsey.

In the second of this series on Guernsey coinage the coins issued between 1307 and 1830 and the modern series from 1830 to date will be dealt with.



note the  
P.V. mintmark.  
DE.

# GUERNSEY COINAGE

by W. Exley

In 1307, the year Edward I died, a coin known as a freluque was introduced to the Guernsey coinage. Silver and "billon" coins were then in use. But the freluques (sometimes called ferluques) gained popularity and must have been in use in Guernsey for at least 200 years, as it was not until 1535 that the Royal Court forbade their manufacture.

During 1537 liards and denier, carolusis and vache formed the legal tender. Later, in 1553, an islander called Collas Guillemotte was authorised to mint some brass coinage called pallyn or en seignes de pallin, no one else being allowed to do likewise. In 1575 Henry II of France introduced copper deniers in replacement of the original silver and "billon" pieces and these remained in use with the double until the middle of the seventeenth century. Then in 1586 came the franc and half-franc (the word franc derives from a gold piece of Charles V (the wise) dated 1360 and inscribed Rex Francorum), the quarter-crown and eighth-crown, the teston of France, the sol tournois, the gros and the escu.

During 1605 half-testons, francs and half-francs were in use. An ordinance was passed in 1619 prohibiting the mintage of

freluques because of a large circulation of unauthorised specimens. However, in 1623, the governor of the island was asked to appoint someone to coin these so as to preserve the denomination and also to offset the importation of denier tournois by the Normans. But there is no record relating to the person appointed nor to whether any new freluques were struck at all. The coin—worth a quarter-double or thirty-second of a penny—is now unknown in the numismatic world and indeed there is now no trace of the coinage, if any, struck in 1553 by Collas Guillemotte. But there is speculation that a locality in the Guernsey parish of St. Andrews called La Monnaie may have been the site of the mint.

Around 1626 the currency consisted of foreign doubles and sou tournois. But in 1672 English denominations made their début on the island with an issue of copper halfpennies and farthings. Tin farthings followed in 1684. These had a square copper plug in their centre. It was not until 1st May, 1848, however, that English pieces and paper currency were declared legal tender.

The liard or grande double of France entered the monetary system in 1763 and was followed in 1797 by Spanish silver

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## HALFPENNIES

1964	10 for 11/-	50 for 50/-	100 for 90/-
1966	10 for 4/6	50 for 17/6	100 for 30/-
1967	10 for 3/-	50 for 12/-	100 for 20/-

## PENNIES

1963	10 for 18/-	50 for 80/-	100 for £7½
1964	10 for 11/-	50 for 50/-	100 for 95/-
1967	10 for 3/6	50 for 14/-	100 for 25/-

## SIXPENCES

1955	12/6 each	5 for 50/-	10 for 90/-
1956	25/- each	5 for £6	10 for £11
1959	3/- each	5 for 14/-	10 for 25/-
1967	50 for 40/-	100 for 75/-	

## SHILLINGS

1960E	12/6 each	5 for 60/-	10 for 100/-
1963E	10 for 35/-	50 for £6½	100 for £12½
1965E	10 for 30/-	50 for £6	100 for £10½
1966E	10 for 30/-	50 for £6	100 for £10½

## FLORINS

1955	40/- each	5 for £9
1960	32/6 each	5 for £7
1963	9/- each	5 for 42/6
1964	7/6 each	5 for 35/-
1965	7/6 each	5 for 35/-

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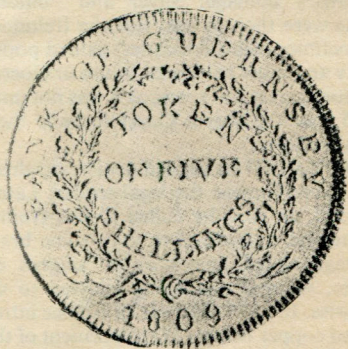
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EF ..... £3.5.0	
1902 ¼ of Farthing	
EF ..... £2.7.6	
1838 Half Groat	
NEF ..... £4.10.0	
1863 Groat GF ..... £3.10.0	
1688 Maundy II	
NVF ..... £3.10.0	
1687 Maundy III	
GF ..... £2.12.6	
<b>Pennies</b>	
1797 Fair ..... £2.0.0	
1831 F ..... £2.5.0	
1854 F ..... £3.0.0	
1950 NEF ..... £12.0.0	
<b>Sixpences</b>	
1817 GF ..... £1.10.0	
1867 Fair ..... 15.0	
1888 Fair ..... 7.6	
1893 VF ..... £2.5.0	
1894 Fair ..... 7.6	
1896 Fair ..... 7.6	
1897 Fair ..... 7.6	
1903 Poor ..... 10.0	
1906 Poor ..... 7.6	
1908 Poor ..... 10.0	
<b>Shillings</b>	
1834 NVF ..... £3.0.0	
1872 Fair ..... £1.0.0	
1874 Fair ..... £1.0.0	
1875 GF ..... £1.17.6	
1879 Fair ..... £1.12.6	
1880 NF ..... £1.17.6	
1881 NF ..... £1.5.0	
1883 F ..... £1.5.0	
1884 F ..... £1.5.0	
1887 Y.H. F ..... £2.12.6	
1888 GF ..... £1.15.0	
1890 NVF ..... £2.2.6	
<b>Florins</b>	
1893 GF ..... £3.0.0	
1899 F ..... £3.0.0	
1901 GF ..... £3.0.0	
1910 F ..... £3.0.0	
<b>Halfcrowns</b>	
1889 Fair ..... 30/-	
1890 F ..... 35/-	
1893 GF ..... 40/-	
1899 F ..... 35/-	
1908 GF ..... 120/-	
1909 NVF ..... £7	
1910 NVF ..... £9	
<b>Crowns</b>	
1822 NVF ..... £15	
1845 GF ..... £9	
1889 NVF ..... £8	
1890 NVF ..... £7	
1891 NVF ..... £11	
1893 NVF ..... £9	
1935 Unc. .... £8	
1953 Unc. .... 45/-	
<b>RB Halfpennies</b>	
1860 F ..... 25/-	
1861 Fair ..... 10/-	
1862 GF ..... 30/-	
1875 Fair ..... 10/-	
1877 Fair ..... 15/-	
1885 F ..... 22/6	
1887 GF ..... 22/6	
1891 VF ..... 30/-	
1893 F ..... 20/-	
1899 NVF ..... 30/-	
1905 Half Sovereign	
VF ..... £6.10.0	
1909 Half Sovereign	
Unc. .... £7.0.0	
1884 Half Sovereign	
VF ..... £8.5.0	
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1612 Double Tournois.



1770 Liard.

dollars which were valued at 4s. 9d. sterling.

In 1799 an ordinance was passed forbidding the export of specie as war had broken out between Britain and France. This measure did not alleviate the situation, however, as in war time all metal coin tends to disappear—especially silver. By 1803 only francs and centimes—and not much of this tender either—existed for use in Guernsey. Many realised that something should be done about this and accordingly private firms commenced the issuance of their own tokens.

The first such issue took place in 1809 under the organisation of Bishop de Jersey & Company, who styled themselves the Bank of Guernsey. These tokens (see photograph left) were unique in that they were struck over silver Spanish dollars by Boulton and Watt of Birmingham.

With tokens and a little French currency constituting the monetary system, the States of Guernsey believed the time was ripe for the isle to have her very own coinage and permission to fulfil this desire was proposed to the Privy Council of England on 8th November, 1799. This met with complications, however, and a second proposal had to be registered in 1813. But again complications arose. The Privy Council stipulated that the minting could only be done in London, while the States wished to confine the process to the isle itself. Agreement could not be reached and so again nothing was achieved.

In 1829 the new French coinage (as we know it today) was issued and all old material called in. This was a great move in the direction of standardisation as the liards—or “doubles” as we now call them—were made of various metals and in diverse dimensions and weights. They consisted of old English farthings, Dutch, Flemish, French and Spanish coins.

The following year the States acted independently and decided to proceed with the mintage of a coinage peculiar to Guernsey. They employed Messrs. Boulton and Watt of the Soho Mint, Birmingham, to strike the 1830-dated coins. The denominations issued were the one double, equivalent to one-eighth of an English penny, and the four double pieces.

The obverse bears the arms of Guernsey and the legend GUERNESEY (note the French spelling of the island's name).

The reverse incorporates the name of the old French coin, the double. So the

ancient coin was not to disappear for another 139 years, until 24th February, 1969, when Guernsey's first decimal coinage was introduced.

A table of different dates and denominations would read as follows:

Denom.	Dates	Total
One double	1830, '68, '85, '89, '93, '99, 1902, '03, '11, '14, '29, '33, '38,	13
Two doubles	1858, '68, '74, '85, '89, '99, 1902, '03, '06, '08, '11, '14, '17, '18, '20, '29.	16
Four doubles	1830, '58, '64, '68, '74, '85, '89, '93, 1902, '03, '06, '08, '10, '11, '14, '18, '20, '45, '49, '56.	20
Eight doubles	1854, '58, '64, '68, '74, '85, '89, '93, 1902, '03, '10, '11, '14, '18, '20, '34, '38, '45, '47, '49, '56, '59.	22
Three pence	1956, 1959	2
Ten shillings	1966	1
Five pence	1969	1
Ten pence	1969	1

Two Proof sets of the 1830-1969 denominations were issued, one in 1956 and the other in 1966.

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