



ORIENTAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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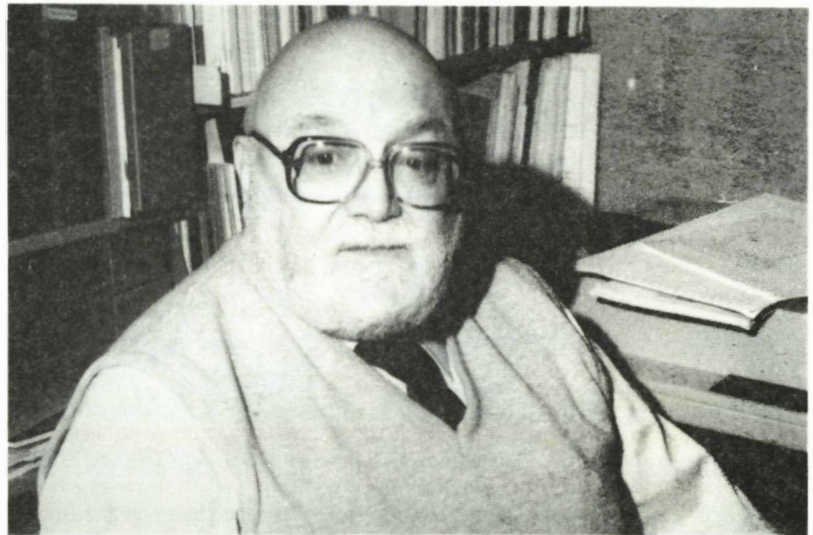
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NEWSLETTER No. 119 July - August 1989

This month we feature Ray Hebert, one of our North American contributors.

Half-jokingly Ray likes to say that his wife, a Turkish lady, brought him into Islamic numismatics. Like most of us, he had collected coins – principally U.S. in Whitman folders – since childhood. His wife brought to their marriage a small collection of relatively common Byzantine, Rupenid, Artukid, Ayyubid, Seljuq of Rum, Beylik, Ottoman, etc. coins which he found fascinating since they represented metallic evidence of dynasties and names he had been studying in his graduate classes he had been taking at Georgetown University and later the University of Washington. They were in part the spur that resulted in his collecting “Eastern” coins during four decades of rummaging through U.S. and foreign dealers’ “junk boxes” in search of new material to add to an ever-growing collection.



Ray was born in 1928, and after a three-year tour of duty in the U.S.A.F. where he worked in Photo Interpretation, he took a B.A. in International Relations at Clark University, an M.S. at Georgetown University in Linguistics, plus an additional three years work in Central Asian Studies under Nicholas Poppe and Omeljan Pritsak at the University of Washington. He has worked for academia, private industry, and the U.S. Government for varying periods of time in Turkey, Iran, Jordan, India, Mexico, Haiti, San Salvador, and Puerto Rico, and at present is responsible for the care and growth of the so-called “Oriental Cabinet” of the Smithsonian Institution. For some time now, he has been engaged, with the help of interested correspondents and his own files, in reworking and expanding Zambaur’s *Die Münzprägungen des Islams* onto computer.

He has two sons, neither of whom up to now, has shown any interest in numismatics or the Middle East.

Ray’s non-numismatic interests include a strong interest in Acadian and French-Canadian history and genealogy, and in Biblical archaeology.

Ray is currently recovering from a heart-attack suffered earlier this year. We wish him a full and speedy recovery.

ONS News

1. The Oriental Numismatic Society are planning a Symposium on Oriental Coins to be held in Nagpur, India from the 25th to the 31st of January 1990 under the auspices of the South Asia Region of the Society. The theme of the Symposium will be the coinages of the Indian Sub-continent and adjacent countries. A number of parallel sessions will be arranged to give opportunities for discussion of specific series and numismatic problems.

Prospective delegates should register their interest in attending by writing as soon as possible to the Regional Secretary, Mr. P. P. Kulkarni, ..., stating whether they would like to present a paper.

2. For the third consecutive year an ONS-sponsored conference on Islamic coinage was held in Tübingen (Federal Republic of Germany) during the weekend of April 29-30. As in '87 and '88 the venue was the guest house of the Max-Planck Society, with Dr. L. Ilisch responsible for the scientific program and Dr. Cl. Pelling in charge of local arrangements. About 20 active participants came from Austria, France, Germany, Switzerland, the USA and Yugoslavia. In addition to the two sessions of papers, slides and discussion on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, participants and dependants met for dinner Saturday and lunch Sunday and enjoyed the usual new-book browsing, old-coin trading and wine-drinking Saturday night.

Seven papers were given, all but one in German.

The next conference is already set for April 28-29, '90. It is expected that, in the meantime, the recently purchased, 30000 strong collection of Islamic coins (formerly S. Album’s) will be made accessible to researchers and even the general public.

G.H.

Summaries in German of the papers given at last year’s Tübingen meeting will be published in this and future newsletters.

3. The next London ONS meeting will be held on Saturday 4 November at 9 Montague Street WC1, commencing at 2.15pm. Michael Legg will give a talk on the coinage of Tipu Sultan of Mysore.

4. The collection of Islamic coins formed by the late Tony Webdale will be coming up for auction at Glendinings on Tuesday 10 October this year. Catalogues of the sale will be available three weeks prior to the auction from the auctioneers at 7 Blenheim Street, New Bond Street, London W1Y 9LD. Members should note that the collection contains many interesting coins from a very wide range of dynasties.

Other News

1. The Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Nasik, is planning an International colloquium for January 1991 on the subject of Numismatics and Trade & Economy. The institute writes:

"Studies in Indian Numismatics have so far generally moved along a unilinear direction, i.e. towards the study of the surface of coins and their associated aspects and their utilisation for the reconstruction of political history. Coins as a source of economic history have largely remained neglected. For instance, *the role of coins as a medium of exchange, in trade and transactions, in the monetary system, the functioning of the currency system, reflection of trade-relationships in numismatic records*, are aspects that have scarcely been worked upon.

It is an indubitable fact that coinage played an important role in the economy of a period. In fact, it was evolved out of the basic needs of trade and transactions to have a suitable medium of exchange. So it is imperative that we know about this economic role of the coin. As a result of research carried out in Indian numismatics during the past two hundred years, we have, today, before us a large amount of numismatic data regarding typology, distribution etc. Now what is needed is that these are studied, analysed and researched with a view to investigate their main function for which they were issued, that is the role played by them in trade, transactions and in the overall economy."

For further information, members should write to Mr. A. K. Jha at the Institute (P.O. Anjaneri, Dist. Nasik, Maharashtra 422213, India).

2. **Auction News** On 20 June, Spink & Son, Zürich held an auction of Islamic coins. There were many rarities in the sale, mainly gold. Major highlights, according to the catalogue, were what is probably the finest known example of 'Abd al-Malik's year 77 dinar and the even rarer year 132 dinar of al-Saffah, the earliest Abbasid gold coin. In addition there was a fine group of Rasulid coins from the Yemen, including a dirhem from the hitherto unrecorded mint of Mina and two dirhems of the ruler al-Ashraf 'Umar II.

3. **Lists** In recent weeks Omar Hamidi has published list no. 25, of Ancient Central Asian, Islamic & Indian coins (Persic Gallery, P O Box 10317, Torrance, CA 90505 USA); Steve Album has published list no. 58 - May 1989 (P O Box 7386, Santa Rosa, CA 95407, USA); C J Holcombe has published his Spring 1989 list of ancient & oriental coins (240 Castellain Mansions, London W9 1HD, UK).

Latest News

The Smithsonian Institution is about to publish its collection of Graeco-Indian coins and is apparently willing to supply a copy of the work free to any interested member who writes forthwith to Ms Francine C. Berkowitz, Director, Office of International Relations, Smithsonian Institution, S. Dillon Ripley Center, # 3123, Washington D.C., U.S.A. 20560.

New & Recent Publications

1. Two new publications from the Royal Numismatic Society, London

i. **THE COINAGE OF NEPAL** from the earliest times until 1911. By N. G. Rhodes, K. Gabrisch and C. Valdetaro.

This important book is the first comprehensive catalogue of Nepalese coins ever attempted. It covers the period from the earliest issues, made during the Lichhavi Dynasty (c.576), until the end of the reign of Prithvi Vir Vikram Shah in 1911. More than 1400 coins are described and most are illustrated in the 51 plates.

The first chapter is devoted to a new and detailed classification of the coins of the Lichhavi Dynasty (c.576-800), and subsequent chapters deal with the few coins attributable to the medieval period (c.1100-1560) and to the fine series of silver coins struck by the Malla rulers in the Kathmandu Valley (1560-1768). Finally, two chapters are devoted to the

coins of the Shah Dynasty; the first deals with the coins struck for the Kathmandu Valley and the second with the coins with Arabic inscriptions struck in the hill region, coins never described in any previous numismatic work.

A very large number of coins are published for the first time in this book, and many aspects of the coinage are discussed in the text, including the historical and economic background to their issue. This is a truly pioneering work which will be of interest to historians and numismatists alike.

Special publication no. 21. 250pp, 1 map, 51 plates. Publication date: July 1989.

Normal price: £50. A special price of £37.50 is available to ONS members who order the book before 31 October 1989. Other charges apply (see below).

ii. ROMAN COINS FROM INDIA. By Paula Turner.

This book takes a fresh look at the finds of Roman coins from India, and publishes much new evidence for the flow of coins from Rome to India and their hoarding there. The work is based on the author's personal examination of the material in Indian museums and her re-examination of the previously published material.

The book gives detailed documentation of the finds themselves, which are divided into three periods: Republican, Julio-Claudian and later Imperial. The author presents a new discussion of the phenomenon of Roman coins from Indian soil. A chapter providing the historical background is followed by a detailed analysis of the coin finds themselves; the discussion of the historical significance of the finds takes account of the relative scarcity of Republican coins, the absence of base metal issues of the early Empire, the predominance of early imperial denarii, and the difference in composition between the Julio-Claudian gold and silver hoards. Special attention is given to the slashed gold coins and defaced silver coins and to the locally made Indian imitations of Roman coins.

The core of the book is the detailed and up to date gazetteer of all the hoards of Roman coins found in India; there are also appendices giving the present location of Roman coins found in India and a listing of the Roman coins in the Madras Central Government Museum.

Special publication no. 22 (jointly published with Institute of Archaeology Publications). Publication date: June 1989. 150pp, 3 maps, 8 plates.

Normal price: £18.00 A special price of £13.50 is available to ONS members who order before 31 October 1989. Orders should be sent to Spink & Son Ltd. (Book Dept.), Distributor of RNS Publications, 5-7 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QS, quoting ONS membership. Please note the following extra charges: postage & packing per order—£3 UK; £5 elsewhere. If payments are not made in £ sterling, the equivalent of £5 should be added to cover bank conversion charges. Cheques should be made payable to Spink & Son Ltd.

2. Spink & Son Ltd announce the publication of facsimile editions of three important, rare and out-of-print Russian numismatic works, as follows

i. MARKOW, A. *Inventarny Katalog Musulmanskikh Monet*, St. Petersburg, 1896, with supplements I, II, III and IV (this final supplement not noted by Mayer), 1082 pages. Cloth.

Markow's inventory catalogue of Islamic coins belonging to the Hermitage in Leningrad, with its four supplements, is the only glimpse that most numismatists will ever be able to gain into this large and most important collection. In order to save expense, Markow prepared the catalogue in handwritten form using Cyrillic script, which is a modified version of the normal bookface, and which did not include legends in Arabic. The inventory is the only work of its kind in Russian, and is an important tool for those interested in examining the holdings of Russian museums.

No. of copies: 100, each hand-numbered. Price £275, plus £5 postage & packing.

ii. MARKOW, A. *Katalog Djalairskikh Monet*, St. Petersburg, 1897. (v) lxxxii, 68 pages, map, illustrations and 9 plates. Card covers.

Markow's catalogue of the Jalayrid coinage is still the best available description of the coins struck by this little-known dynasty. Although the book is in Russian, the coin legends themselves are given in Arabic and can be linked to the excellently produced plates without difficulty, which makes it a valuable aid to identification and cataloguing. It includes a useful historical introduction for those who are fluent in Russian. Spink's reprint is on high quality paper, with clear copies of the original plates and a three-colour map.

No. of copies: 100, each hand-numbered. Price £175, plus £4 postage & packing.

iii. TIESENHAUSEN, W. *Monnaies des Khalifes Orientaux*, St. Petersburg, 1873. liv, 374 pages, 4 plates. Cloth.

Although this was published over a century ago, Tiesenhausen's catalogue is still a very important one for the numismatic history of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. The text is in Russian, with coin legends in Arabic and many hand-drawn illustrations of individual coins.

No. of copies: 100, each hand-numbered. Price £250, plus £4 postage & packing.

Markow's Jalayrid catalogue is already available; the other two are now being prepared for publication. The set of three facsimiles can be ordered for £600 (post free).

3. World Coin News for 18 April 1989 had the following item of interest: Silver coins from the 29th year of Guang Xu, based on an article in Chinese by Dr. Chang Kwun-peh. The 16 May edition had the following items: The New Chekiang Province Dragon by Tom Keener; The Many Names of the Chinese Emperors by Alvin P. Cohen. The 23 May edition included an article by Albert Galloway entitled 'Chinese discover silver coins', which gives a short history of such coins as well as transliteration of the Chinese characters found on them. One of these editions also contained an illustrated listing by Colin R. Bruce II of Annamese gold coins.

4. The April edition of Numismatics International contained part V of Ray Hebert's 'Donation of dies'; while the May edition contained part VI and details of a small Samanid hoard of coins of Nuh I bin Nasr from Bukhara & Nisapur obtained by Mr Hebert in Teheran in 1964.

5. Spink's Circulars for June and July 1989 contain an article by Samuel Lachmann entitled 'The Coins of the Zaidi Imam al-Mutawakkil 'ala Allah Isma'il b. al-Qasim, 1054-87H/1644-1676.

6. The June 1989 edition of Numismatics International (vol.24, no.6) has an article by Dr Safwan Khalaf al-Tell entitled 'Development of coinage in Jordan throughout history.'

1. Stephan Heidemann (Berlin): Ökonomie des Kleingeldes und Münzverfälschungen in Nordsyrien zwischen 1150 und 1237 AD:

Herr Heidemann legte anhand der Kupferprägung Nordsyriens Probleme des Kleingeldes und der Münzverfälschungen in der zangidischen und ayyubidischen Zeit (ca. 1150-1237 AD) dar. Die Kupferprägung Aleppos und Nordsyriens dieser Zeit ist ein Verbindungsglied zwischen der Praxis der Münzverfälschungen der bildlichen Grosskupfermünzen in Nordmesopotamien und dem ausdifferenzierten System der mamlukischen Syriens. Eine Münzverfälschung wird als eine Form der Marktsteuer für Geld-/Münzbesitzer innerhalb von Märkten interpretiert. Diese Märkte kommen im islamisch-arabischen Orient in Form von räumlich konzentrierten Geschäftsbezirken, den "Suq's", vor, die einer bestimmten staatlichen Kontrolle, der Marktaufsicht ("Hisba"), unterliegen. Bei einer Auswechslung von Kleinmünzen sind nicht die politisch und ökonomisch mächtigen Besitzer grosser Vermögen betroffen, sondern vor allem Kleinhändler und die unteren Bevölkerungsschichten. Islamische Kupfermünzen sind von Anbeginn des islamischen Rechtes und des Münzwesens als Geldzeichen angesehen worden. Ihr Wert wurde allein durch gesetzliche Konventionen und die Autorität lokaler Institutionen festgelegt. (In Europa kam der Gedanke des Ersatzes von Kleingeld durch Geldzeichen erst im 16. bzw. 17. Jahrhundert auf). Die Angaben der Chroniken über Kupfermünzverfälschungen in Syrien in dieser Epoche sind spärlich; sie erwähnen nur eine einzige in Damaskus. Grabungsberichte liegen grösstenteils nur aus Nordmesopotamien und nicht aus Nordsyrien vor. Die Hauptquelle für das Kupfermünzwesen bildet deshalb die Untersuchung der Münzen selbst. Insgesamt 15000 syrische Kupfermünzen wurden auf Identitäten und Veränderungen der Typen in der aleppiner und in den benachbarten Münzstätten untersucht, ebenso die Überprägungen und deren Untertypen, sowie die zeitgenössischen Beischläge. Auf diese Weise konnten Münzverfälschungen in Aleppo nachgewiesen werden. Aufgrund der Gleichheit der Münztypen wurde vermutet, dass der kontrollierte Münzumlauf der aleppiner Münzen auch das benachbarte Fürstentum Hamah umfasste, welches zeitweise unter der Herrschaft Aleppos stand. Aufgrund der Überprägungen von Münzen benachbarter Staaten ist für die Märkte Aleppos und Hamahs ein geschlossenes Kleingeldumlaufgebiet zu vermuten. Wie sich der Umlauf in den ländlichen Gebieten, ausserhalb der kontrollierten Märkte zusammensetzte, lässt sich aufgrund der Untersuchung nicht sagen. Diese Umlaufverhältnisse spiegeln sich jedoch in gewisser Weise in den Ausgrabungsberichten wieder. Die häufigen Funde aleppiner Kupfermünzen in Nordmesopotamien sind deswegen mehr im Zusammenhang mit den spezifisch regionalen Währungsverhältnissen zu sehen. Schliesst man sich der Marktsteuer-Theorie an, so waren in der untersuchten Periode die Münzverfälschungen keine regelmässige Steuer, da die Zwischenintervalle zwischen ca. 4 und 18 Jahren betragen. Die konkreten historischen Anlässe für die Münzverfälschungen sind bisher noch unbekannt.



1. Vgl. H. Wilski, GN 122, 284 (1987)

The Initial Pallas Coinages of Azes II by R. C. Senior

In the Bunir hoard (SWAT) of 1987 the coins of Azes II were entirely of the Pallas left or Pallas facing varieties. 19 tetradrachms and 86 drachms - perhaps the largest group of these scarce coins ever found. The tetradrachms of these types, particularly the first type, are very rare, the drachms much less so (apart from particular monogram varieties). These are the very first issues in the Gandhara province of this monarch and the hoard enables me to complete the table (1) as fully as I have. I suspect that several gaps in the table will be filled eventually.

These first five columns probably show a sequence of issues from left to right with their corresponding Elephant/Bull copper issues. Table (2) shows a related group with the first two columns being of Pallas facing and the last column Pallas to right - the last two columns being distinguished by the use of the DOT privy mark on the coins - virtually the only Azes II Pallas coins to use them. The tetradrachms of Pallas facing with these monograms are rare but less so than those in table (1). The corresponding copper issues are more complicated starting with Elephant/lion types (including DOTs), then more commonly the enthroned City goddess/ Hermes type and also issues of Bull/Lion which latter continue alongside the series in the last column.

The Bunir hoard contained coins of this group in the first column only (albeit with one coin having a DOT on the OBERSE above the changing control mark). The second column shows a drachm coinage only (?) with a DOT below the reverse monogram in the right field. This issue is followed by the Pallas right series with monograms as shown in column three and the DOT on the obverse by the king's elbow. It has a corresponding copper Bull/Lion issue.


Table (3) shows the extremely rare drachms of Pallas left with  monograms for which I know of no tetradrachms nor copper issue of the Elephant/Bull type (unless it is perhaps those with  though there are Bull/Lion and possibly small Elephant/Lion coppers indicating a possible later date for this issue than usual for the type.

One other issue of Pallas left exists, that with rajaDIRajasa in the legend; see table (4). There are no known drachms nor Elephant/Bull or Bull/Lion coppers but Hermes/City goddess coins figured and possibly some of the mounted king/Pallas facing coppers correspond. I only know of 5 tetradrachms of this very rare type and the three in my collection all came from Quetta at different times indicating an Arachosian mint far removed from the previous coins.

Another Pallas coin of very similar issue is also very rare and from this more southerly region. It seems to correspond to the Elephant coppers Mitchiner type 820 (See table 5). Pallas faces right, there is a DOT by the horse's head on the obverse and this is the ONLY coin in the Pallas series to have a kharosthi control letter on the reverse bottom right as on the City issues of Azilises/Azes, also indicating a very early date. Both copper and silver issues have rajaDIRajasa legends.

Finally there is one other Pallas issue that could be very early and that is the only other issue to carry DOT privy marks on the obverse on some coins and of which two examples in very good condition were in the Mir Zakah (1987) hoard. (Table 6). These coins are slightly base and have corrupt legends but the fact that the hoard was buried very early in Azes II's reign and the other connections with the above lead me to believe that this rare issue was minted sometime shortly after the beginning of Azes' period of rule. The unusual monogram has affinities with earlier issues of Ghazni by Azes I and this might possibly have been a short-lived coinage by local artisans from that mint.

This leaves one other Pallas issue before the commencement of the general and much commoner series with Pallas right. Table (7) shows this extremely rare (for tetradrachms) issue with Pallas, arm at side, and the issue with Pallas right that I believe follows it. Both have corresponding Bull/Lion coppers, indicating an issue date at the end or after the Pallas facing series.

These Pallas types to the left and facing generally succeed the Pallas issues of Azes I directly (those bearing monograms  and particularly those with DOTs above right monogram) though the coins of the isolated Arachosian types in tables 5 and 6 are more problematic. The DOT privy marks are significant in dating these issues of Azes II as being early since they were in use by Azes I and Azilises towards the end of their respective rule and only appear on a few Azes II coins before being phased out. These DOT issues must therefore be placed at the beginning of the period.



OBVERSE



1a



COPPER 1



1b



	PALLAS LEFT a			PALLAS FACING b	
	7A	7A-7A	7A	7A	7A
P-7	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
7	● ▲	● ▲	▲		▲
7	● ▲	● ▲	▲		● ▲
7	● ▲	▲	▲		● ▲
7		▲			
NONE	●				

TABLE 1 ● = TETRADR. ▲ = DRACHM



2a dot



DOT



2b

	PALLAS FACING			
	a		b	
	7A	+ DOT	7A	7A
P-7	● ▲	▲		▲
7	● ▲	▲	● ▲	▲
7	● ▲	▲	● ▲	▲
7		▲		
7	● ▲	▲	● ▲	▲
7			●	
7			● ▲	
7				▲

TABLE 2

PALLAS LEFT	
	7A
7	▲
7	▲



3

TABLE 3

PALLAS LEFT	
	7A
7	●
7	●



4

TABLE 4



COPPER

PALLAS RIGHT	
	7A
7	●



5

TABLE 5

PALLAS RIGHT		
	7A	+ ●
7	●	
7		●
7-7		●



6

TABLE 6



COPPER



7a



7b

	PALLAS RIGHT RIGHT ARM	
	DOWN	UP
7	● ▲	●
7	● ▲	● ▲
7	▲	● ▲
7	▲	
7	▲	▲
7		▲
7		● ▲

TABLE 7

The Imperial Chinese Specimen Coins, Advertising Pieces, Medals and Medallions Struck at The Birmingham Mint

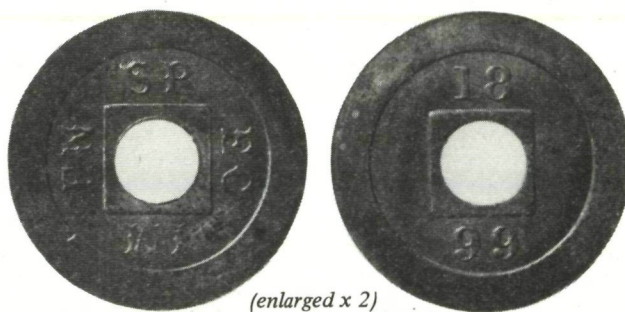
Richard N. J. Wright and James O Sweeny

Long after much of the rest of the world had adopted modern methods of coinage, China continued to rely on its so-called 'cash' coinage, produced by casting processes which had seen little change for many centuries. Finally, in the 1800s, contact with the western world brought about a recognition of the existence of more efficient methods of coinage, and the need for something different from the ancient cash coinage which had served the country's internal needs for so long. This recognition grew very slowly, but in the last decade of the nineteenth century it culminated in a pell-mell rush by China's provinces to change both the coinage and the coinage methods.

To make the change, China had to look to the outside world for equipment and expertise. Sources in both Europe and America were utilized. Foremost amongst them, however, was a firm in England known then as 'The Mint, Birmingham, Limited'.¹ That company, which itself had been in the minting business only since the middle of the century, probably shipped more minting machinery, coin blanks and coin dies to China in the period between 1888 and 1905 than all the other sources combined.

Coinage by the new provincial mints reached a peak in 1905, after which the central government stepped in to restrict production, and the volume of new imports from The Mint, Birmingham Ltd. and others dropped dramatically in consequence. The Mint retained a number of pattern coins from this period, and, although grey areas still remain, from these and rather fragmentary records it has been possible to piece together most of The Mint's involvement with China. That story, to the degree known, is now in the public records.²

There are, nonetheless, a diversity of odds and ends which require listing. These include specimen cash and coins, advertising pieces, medals and medallions. They are seldom dated, and sometimes the sole link with The Mint was the presence of a piece, invariably unexplained, in one or other of the Birmingham collections. In only one case has The Mint any documentation about them – apart from the odd die – and occasionally it is not clear whether the piece was intended for Hong Kong or Chinese purposes. The object of this paper is to record and attempt to interpret them.



A. '1866' Dated Specimen Cash

Description: (Central *round* hole, flat raised border)

Obv: S P E C I M E N around;

Rev: 18 above, 66 or 99 below.

Diameter: 20 mm.

Weight: 1.5 grams.

Metal: Brass.

This coin is linked to The Mint by a piece located in the Chinese coin collection of the Birmingham City Council Museum and Art Gallery. The coin is capable of misinterpretation, i.e., is it dated 1866 or 1899, and was it intended for China or Hong Kong? Dated as 1899, it makes little sense in either a Chinese or a Hong Kong context; and dated 1866 (as it is if the reverse is read in the same way as the obverse, by rotation) it is similar in shape and size to the Hong Kong pattern cash, but a little late for date, as The Mint had been coining the Hong Kong currency mils since 1863. On the other hand, with this date it does fit neatly into a Chinese context.

In 1866 the Mandarin Pin (Pin Ch'un or Pin-tu-jen) made a tour of Europe, in the course of which he had a programmed visit to the Paris Mint, where there is now a *T'ung Chih* brass cash attributed to 1866, weight 1.42 or 1.48 grams, diameter 20mm, which appears to have been a specimen struck specifically for the visit.³ The mandarin then visited Britain, and on 8/9 June 1866 undertook a tour of Birmingham's industries. According to the newspapers The Mint was not included in his itinerary, but the similarity of size, weight, shape and date of this specimen 'A' compared with the Paris Mint cash leads one to conclude that it was likely to have been prepared by The Birmingham Mint, in anticipation of a visit by the mandarin when the tour was in the planning stage.

B. Specimen Cash (1866?)

Description: (Central *round* hole, denticle border)

Obv: Gothic style S P E C around;

Rev: Gothic style I M E N around.

Diameter: 20 mm.

Weight: 1.55 grams.

Metal: Brass.



This piece is linked to The Mint by the dies formerly in its possession.⁴ Although very similar in appearance to the Hong Kong Mil and Cash pattern pieces, its Mint context is definitely Chinese. Because of the coincidence in size and style, it may well have been produced as an alternative to 'A', to demonstrate to an influential Chinese visitor the capabilities of a potential supplier; or, at least, as a memento of a visit which did not materialise.

C. Uniface Specimen Cash (1877-1887?)

Description: (Central *square* hole, flat raised border)

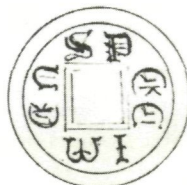
Obv: Gothic style S P E C I M E N around;

Rev: blank.

Diameter: 23 mm.

Weight: unavailable.

Metal: Brass.



This piece is linked to The Mint by a specimen and the die, both formerly in the Mint's Chinese collection.⁵ It is difficult to pin-point for date, but because of the larger size and square hole – similar to the more traditional Chinese cash – it was most probably struck for demonstration purposes sometime between 1877 (when the first Chinese Legation was established in London) and 1887 (when the contract for complete equipment for the Canton Mint, which was primarily a cash mint, was

awarded to The Birmingham Mint). A concise history of The Mint quotes a meeting with Mint officials by two Chinese gentlemen during their visit to Birmingham in September 1879. While no records are known which would relate this piece with that visit, it is unlikely that The Mint would let such an opportunity slip by without producing a demonstration coin. (cf. Spink-Taisei auction, 4-5 April 1986, lot 193).

D. Ralph Heaton Advertising Piece⁶ (c.1877-1887)

Description: (Central square hole, flat raised border)
 Obv: Ch'ien Lung T'ung Pao around;
 Rev: RALPH HEATON & SONS, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND.
 Diameter: 23 mm.
 Weight: 4.1 grams.
 Metal: Brass.



The legend 'Ralph Heaton & Sons' places this piece in the bracket 1854 to 1889 (when the name was changed to The Mint, Birmingham, Ltd.). It was the most refined and probably the last of the specimen cash, possibly produced in the latter part of the decade 1877 to 1887. The reign title of Emperor Ch'ien Lung (1736-1796) appears to have been 'borrowed' from a cast cash.

E.1. Uniface Specimen Piece⁷ (c.1895)

Description: (Denticle border, plain edge)
 Obv: CENT within wreath, SPECIMEN PIECE above;
 Rev: Blank.
 Diameter: 37 mm.
 Weight: c. 21 grams.
 Metal: Nickel-silver.



E.2. Advertising or Trial Piece⁸ (c.1895)

Description: (Denticle border, plain edge)
 Obv: THE MINT BIRMINGHAM around shield;
 Rev: As obverse of E.1.
 Diameter: 37 mm.
 Weight: 20.9 grams.
 Metal: Bronze.



Information furnished by The Birmingham Mint in 1977 indicates that E.1 and E.2 were somehow involved with the production of dies or presses for China in 1895, although certain specific points in that 1977 letter are questionable in the light of other factual information. It is the authors' opinion that both may have been produced in the course of demonstrating that dollar presses ordered by China performed to specifications. The mating of these particular obverse and reverse dies would seem to support such a conclusion.

F.1. Large Li Hung-chang Medal (1896)

Description: (Imitation Greek border, plain edge, with loop)
 Obv & Rev: Dragons facing fiery sun, Chinese inscription:
 Great Ch'ing Dynasty Special Envoy Noble Minister,
 Award for Special Service.⁹
 Diameter: 43 mm.
 Weight: 37.2 grams.
 Metal: Silver.



F.2. Small Li Hung-chang Medal (1896)

Description: As F.1, but 29 mm silver.

Both pieces were formerly in the Mint collection, together with the matrix of the larger medal,¹⁰ and were marked as 'Legation medals'. They appear to have been ordered from The Mint by the Chinese legation in London for use by the Chinese statesman Li Hung-chang during his tour of Britain, the United States and Canada in 1896. The medals, probably presented to lesser persons who rendered service during the tour, may have been suspended by a blue ribbon.

G.1. Medallion - 1900 Mint Visit by the Minister for China.¹¹

Description: (Plain border, raised rim, plain edge)
 Obv: Bust, legend: SIR CHIHCHEN LO FENG LUH, K.C.V.O. : MINISTER FOR CHINA:
 Rev: TO COMMEMORATE THE VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE MINISTER FOR CHINA
 TO THE MINT, BIRMINGHAM, LIMITED. -- JANUARY 1900.
 Diameter: 39 mm.
 Weight: 24.7 grams (Ar).
 Metal: Silver, white metal.



G.2. Specimen Tael (1900)

Description: (As G.1 above)

Obv: As G.1 above;

Rev: Imperial dragon, HEATON'S COINING MACHINERY,
BIRMINGHAM – SPECIMEN TAEI –.

Diameter: 40 mm.

Weight: ?37 grams.

Metal: Silver.



Loh Feng Luh was First Secretary of Li Hung-chang's Special Embassy to the West in 1896, and was appointed an honorary K.C.V.O. by Queen Victoria in August of that year. He was later appointed Minister (Ambassador) for China in London, and made a tour of the industrial north in 1899/1900.¹² In the course of that tour, he discussed with The Mint a proposition for the supply of minting equipment for a new mint in Peking, for which a contract was formally signed in March 1900.

The reverse (dragon) die was formerly retained at the Mint¹³; the dragon punch appears identical to that used for the Shensi/Hunan dollars. Note that the term 'Heaton's Coining Machinery' is used hereon, probably to emphasize The Mint's long-time involvement with the Chinese mints.

H. Specimen Coins (c.1905)¹⁴

Description: (Denticle border, plain edge, nickel)

Obv: (numeral) THE MINT BIRMINGHAM LIMITED: ENGLAND:

Rev: Imperial dragon, SPECIMEN NICKEL COIN above,
(numeral) GRAMMES below.



H.1 Obv: 10; Rev: 6.

Dia: 22 mm, Wt.: 6 grams.

H.2 Obv: 5, Rev: ?

Dia.: 20.5 mm, Wt.: 4 grams.

H.3 Obv: 2, Rev: 2½.

Dia: 17 mm, Wt.: 2½ grams.

These specimen coins appear to be related to an unaccepted tender made by The Mint to China in November 1905 for nickel blanks of weight 6, 4 and 2½ grams.

The 10 'cent' reverse (dragon) die was formerly retained at the Mint.¹⁵ The 6 and 2½ gram dies utilise Heaton 20 and 10 cent dragon punches. It is not clear which dragon punch would have been used for the 4 gram die; specimens with the 4 gram reverse have not been observed by the authors (the obverse shown above is mated with a reverse showing the bust of Sir John Muir, identical with that on Pridmore 49.¹⁶

These, then, are the numismatic ephemera which were associated with The Mint's extensive role in the modernisation of Chinese coins and coinage nearly a century ago. None of them are in the numismatic mainstream, but individually and as a group, they add detail and colour to the story of how one relatively small British enterprise played a most prominent part in taking western technology to China.

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Illustrations

- A. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.
B. The Money Company, 6/7 Sept. 1985 auction, lot 963.
D, F.1, F.2, G.2 The Birmingham Mint.
E.1, E.2, H.1, H.3 Sweeny.
G.1, H.2 Wright.

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