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WORN AND DEFACED SILVER COINS

Ray Hargreaves, FRNSNZ

From the earliest days of organised European settlement in New Zealand there were complaints, not only about the scarcity of small coins, but also of the poor condition of those lower denomination British coins that were in circulation. In 1843 the *Auckland Times* deplored the fact that “every second or third shilling or sixpence one is lucky enough to get hold of in these hard times, has a hole punched through it” (*Nelson Examiner*, 15 April 1843: 231). The paper suggested that such coins should be refused by the public and the banks.

Besides such mutilated coins, there were those which were badly worn, due primarily to continual handling over time. In 1862 a British periodical, the *Mechanics' Magazine*, claimed that “deterioration among ten-year old silver coins in Britain varied from 12 per cent. for half crowns, 30 per cent. for shillings, 45 per cent. for sixpences, and as much as 50 per cent. for threepences” (*Daily Southern Cross*, 4 June 1862: 4). In the 1860s and early 1870s there were reports that worn silver coins, which apparently could not be passed easily in Sydney or Melbourne, were being purchased at a cheap rate, and shipped to New Zealand (*NZ Herald*, 7 Feb. 1870: 6; *North Otago Times*, 10 June 1870: 2; *Otago Daily Times*, 16 March 1880: 12). Even though the banks in this country often refused them, or at best were hesitant to accept them, these worn coins were passed from hand to hand in the community.

In 1868 it was reported that the Royal Mint had declared silver coins were “legal tender so long as a vestige remains on the surface of the coin of its origin from the Mint” (*Grey River Argus*, 24 March 1868: 2). Many New Zealand coins were in such poor condition, or even worse. One northern newspaper reported that the silver in circulation “is so worn that no mark of the mint is left on it” (quoted by *West Coast Times*, 6 March 1884: 2).

In 19th century New Zealand worn and defaced silver coins circulated widely – a reflection of the shortage in particular of lower-denomination silver coins in the Colony. In Dunedin at least, some of the larger retail stores imported small change directly from the Royal Mint, but the shortages continued (*Otago Guardian*, 29 May 1875: 2).

The situation was so bad that an Auckland newspaper went so far as to state that many of the silver coins in circulation were in such poor condition “that even an accomplished numismatist would be completely at fault to decipher either the image or superscription that embellished the coins in their original state” (*Daily Southern Cross*, 6 July 1875: 4).

“Any one who has seen a tradesman poising a half-crown curiously upon his finger, and wondering whether that ancient relic was an antique half-crown or a worn florin, will have recognised the difficulties under which we labour. Still harder is it to detect the difference between a fourpenny and a threepenny piece. When the groat becomes a little worn, it is little less than impossible to tell the difference” (*Otago Witness*, 18 Oct. 1873: 1).

The Colonial Treasurer told Parliament in July 1880 that there was estimated to be £80,000 to £100,000 worth of silver coins in New Zealand, of which £60,000 to £70,000 worth was worn, that is over 60 percent at the very least (*NZ Parliamentary Debates*, v36, 1880: 280).

Defaced Coins. Newspapers could complain about the quality of the silver coins, but little improvement was achieved. In the 1870s there was also growing frustration over the defaced silver coin in circulation, for the banks and post offices refused to accept them, but even so they continued to be passed in everyday commerce. One purpose of deliberately defacing coins was primarily to obtain small amounts of silver, which when aggregated over time would be sold. In Christchurch it was stated that half-crowns and particularly shillings which were being so abused (*Daily Southern Cross*, 2 March 1869: 5). The silver was obtained either by clipping, or more usually by boring holes in a coin. In the latter instance, the holes, if not left as they were, were filled by some base metal, as for example lead obtained from the lining of tea chests, or alternatively by white lead, or putty.

The most extreme holed coin reported appears to have been a threepence which had four holes drilled through it (*Thames Star*, 8 May 1894: 2). Chinese were at times blamed for making holes in coins, but no evidence was ever provided to back this assertion. They were an easy target, given the anti-Chinese feeling in New Zealand in the latter years of the 19th century.

The last occasion, so far found, of a holed coin being successfully passed was in 1933, when it was reported that a worn fourpenny piece so defaced had been accepted at New Plymouth's Pukekura Park tea kiosk (*Evening Post*, 2 Aug. 1933: 6). The hole was interpreted as being the result of the coin having at one time being attached to a gentleman's watch chain.

Another means of defacing coins to obtain a profit was the practice, indulged in occasionally, of hammering a silver coin so that, when passed, it appeared in size to be a well-worn coin of a superior denomination.

As many businesses and some of the general public grew more hesitant in accepting defaced coins, holders of such who wished to unload their coins turned to using them as donations. Churches appear to have been the worst hit, with ministers in the 1880s to the early 1900s complaining that such offertories could not be banked, and had to be held until sufficient had been collected so that they could be sold as used metal. A church in Leeston sold defaced coins as scrap metal for just 8s 9d, even though they had a face value of 30s. St Peter's Anglican Church in Caversham, Dunedin, put its defaced silver to good use – it was melted down and made into an altar cross. In 1905 it was suggested that about a quarter of threepences placed in church collections were "battered to death" (*Tuapeka Times*, 24 June 1905: 2).

Besides churches, bad coins were also given at meetings and lectures where collections were taken, and as donations in street appeals for worthy causes. In Wellington in 1894 a public appeal for the *Wairarapa* Appeal Fund (the object of which was to help those affected by the wreck of the vessel) included the following defaced coins: one half crown; one florin; 14 shilling pieces, 8 sixpences; 16 threepences, as well as a defaced sovereign and penny (*Feilding Star*, 4 Dec. 1894: 2). Two years earlier a collector for the Dr Barnardo Homes deplored the number of defaced coins he had received.

Not all defaced coins were got rid of in collection boxes. Attempts, on occasions successful, were also made to pass them on the trams during rush hours, or at night, or when a new conductor started on the job. However, experienced "trammies" who did receive them passed them back to other passengers when an opportunity occurred.

In 1892 an advertisement for a lost carved stick recorded that a defaced shilling had been placed in the top of the stick's knob. Small coins defaced by a hole bored through them, if not done for the sake of the silver so removed, were often added to women's bracelets. Also men, at times, carried a holed silver coin on their fob.

A "bent and battered shilling" was instrumental in proving the claim of Harry Birley that he was the first to reach the summit of Mt Earnslaw in the Otago Lakes district. There was local doubt, and even direct denial, that he had conquered the mountain. In early 1892 Birley's claim was verified by Malcolm and Kenneth Ross, who on reaching the summit, found a cairn in which was embedded a small Irish Moss bottle containing a defaced shilling, just as had been described by Birley. This shilling was later presented to Mrs Malcolm Ross, who had been one of the climbing party but

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*Young head sixpence - merely defaced,
or a modern take on clipping?*

who had been unable to reach the mountain's summit (*Otago Witness*, 25 Feb. 1892: 35; 12 May 1892: 16).

Defaced coins at times provided evidence in burglary cases. Whilst good-condition coins were difficult to identify, coins with some particular disfigurement were not. Coins with holes were picked out by witnesses as having been stolen, as was the case of a robbery at Whangamata in 1897 (*Thames Star*, 25 May 1897: 2). Other ways included a stolen coin in Auckland being identified because a bit had been cut off the side, whilst in Southland a sixpence was identified because of "notches on one side and by being crooked" (*Daily Southern Cross*, 28 June 1870: 2; *Southland Times*, 16 July 1864: 6). In a Central Otago case, the only piece of money taken in a robbery that could be identified was a defaced sixpence. What the defacement was, was not specified (*Otago Witness*, 11 May 1865: 12).

However, such identifications were at times suspect. On one occasion this was recognised by the Court. A youth was arrested on suspicion of robbing a till in a Cambridge hotel. Two barmen separately recognised a holed threepence found on the youth, but the Magistrate considered the identification was "somewhat too fine" and that the barmen "had sworn too positively to the coin being the same as that which they had handled the previous day". As a result the prisoner was discharged (*Waikato Times*, 24 Oct. 1882: 2).

The various trading banks did not consider the importation of low-value silver coins as a priority, so that the condition of these coins in New Zealand was only improved when the Government took some action. However, governments of the day were always concerned about the cost of replacing worn and defaced coins; namely, the expense of freighting the old silver to Britain and of the new to New Zealand.

Complaints regarding the state of silver coins in New Zealand were on-going. The *Otago Daily Times* (16 March 1880: 12) lamented that

"The defaced and mutilated silver coin now circulating in Dunedin is becoming an intolerable nuisance. Whenever a messenger is sent out for some small article the chances are that he brings back, among the change, either a shilling with a hole in it, ... or, worst of all, a half-crown in which there is a great patch of lead."

The state of the country's coins was as much the responsibility of its citizens as it was of the banks and the government. A columnist of the *Nelson Evening Mail* (5 Sept. 1897: 2) wondered why

"Nelson people as a rule will take a thing that looks like a piece struck by lightning from a corrugated iron roof and accept it for coin of the realm almost as soon as they will accept a brand-new threepenny bit with a Jubilee date on it."

The last instance of clipping appears to have been in early 1920, when it was reported that "Many half-crowns and florins at present in circulation have had their edges cut" (*Stratford Evening Post*, 19 Jan. 1920: 4). No doubt this was a last attempt to obtain silver, the price of which had soared over the previous few years. Britain, and thus also New Zealand, was changing from coins with 92.5 percent silver to just 50 percent silver.

Fixing the Problem. Widespread concern over the state of silver coins occasioned Parliament in 1872 to vote £800 for the importation of new coins to replace worn and defaced coins. The money

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was not spent, and in 1873 the same amount was voted for the same purpose. The Colonial Treasurer, Julius Vogel, in explaining why neither had been spent, stated that the amount voted would have been insufficient for the purpose. The 1870s were years of expansion of the New Zealand economy, and there was a need to add *more* silver coins to the existing currency rather than merely replacing worn and defaced coins. Vogel argued that “the disadvantage of defaced coin in circulation will be looked upon as comparatively light” (*AJHR*, 1873 (H.20): 1).



Badly worn Young Head threepence

The scarcity of silver was also partly blamed on its re-export to the islands of the Pacific, an act described by one newspaper as “a continued drain” on New Zealand supplies (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 10 June 1874: 2). The “drain” at this time, however, is not borne out

by the official returns of exports of specie. Between 1868, when the first detailed statistics became available, and 1874 inclusive, no exports of silver coin to the Islands are recorded, except in the latter year, when they valued £510, though travellers and traders could well have carried small amounts on their persons. From 1876 onwards, however, the re-export of silver coins to such places as Fiji, the South Sea Islands, and later Tonga, became a regular occurrence.

In 1880 a concerted effort was made to withdraw the poor silver coinage. In the House of Representatives Major Atkinson, the Colonial Treasurer, stated that it was the Government’s intention to “immediately” send to the Melbourne branch of the Royal Mint for a large supply of newly-minted silver coins. At the end of 1880 Auckland welcomed “a large supply of new coins” (*Observer*, 18 Dec. 1880: 123). In 1880 over £73,000 worth of new silver coins was purchased, followed by almost £40,000 worth the following year. Admittedly we cannot tell from the published figures what percentage of these were new coins intended to upgrade the existing currency. The Government’s strategy was to have new coins swapped for those worn and defaced, and it appears to have been successful to some degree in that over £33,000 worth of silver coins were exported to Victoria in 1881. While a difference had been made, the problem had not disappeared.

In late 1885 the Colonial Treasurer was advised by the Royal Mint branch in Melbourne that only worn silver coins would be received at their nominal value, and that defaced coins would be taken at their bullion value (*NZ Gazette*, 5 Nov. 1885: 1287). The attempt to improve the silver coinage was not as successful as had been hoped. Defaced coins had been included in the withdrawal, but their bullion worth decreased the amount of return. One, perhaps extreme, example, was that coins with a nominal value of £100 were only worth £60 as bullion. Once again, it was stated that in future only worn coins would be received (*West Coast Times*, 10 July 1886: 2).

In 1893 the Colonial Treasurer was asked if he would have worn coins called in, and replaced with new ones. He, however, replied “that there was no necessity for calling them in”. A major cause of his unwillingness to act was concern about the cost to New Zealand of such an exercise, for the country was in the beginning years of what has been termed “the Long Depression” (*NZ Parliamentary Debates*, v79, 1893: 143-4). When worn and defaced silver coins were sent to the Royal Mint in London, or a branch in Australia, the New Zealand Government was responsible for collection costs, transport charges both ways, and any other associated costs, although the replacement coin was not charged for.

In 1896 £13,526 worth of silver coins was exported to Victoria. Much of this could well have been worn and defaced, as the export of silver coins to Victoria was the first to have occurred since 1889. A further attempt to improve the quality of the country’s silver coinage was in 1905, when the Government caused worn and mutilated coins to be collected by the banks.

In 1910, the Sydney Mint announced that its hitherto lax attitude to accepting holed or otherwise defaced silver coins was at an end – a reflection of the fact that with a unique Australian coinage being produced, profits that would now accrue would be kept by the Commonwealth (*Hawera & Normanby Star*, 23 Aug. 1910: 8). This probably made little difference to New Zealanders as banks in this country would not accept such coins anyway. However, the public were once again advised that such coins could be refused if offered as change.

The last concerted effort at taking worn and defaced coins out of circulation occurred in 1924. The Royal Mint agreed to take silver coins whose weight had been reduced by at least eight percent, and which had been issued before 1920 – namely the coins minted before the debasement of silver coins. The Royal Mint also agreed to take a limited quantity of pre-1920 defaced coin, and to give New Zealand the coins' nominal value, replacing them with new coins. Australian coins were excluded from the Royal Mint offer.

New Zealand in 1924 was not suffering from a shortage of silver coins, thanks to a greater use of paper money. One estimate of the primarily worn coins sent to England gave a value of between £70,000 and £80,000. Some of the silver coins were so worn that they were very thin, and it was almost impossible to recognise design or wording on them. It was stated that sixpences and shillings were the coins most worn (*Otago Witness*, 16 Sept. 1924: 4). Interestingly, defaced coin made up only a very small proportion of the coins sent to the Mint.

Law. Amongst the provisions of The Coinage Offences Act 1867 were clauses relating to the defacement of current coins. Stamping words or names on coins was prohibited, as was the passing of such coins, for defaced coins were no longer considered to be legal tender. Gold and silver coins were not to be impaired, diminished or lightened, such as by having holes bored through them, or by clipping. Anyone offered such a coin could legally destroy it on the spot. Also, a person committed a felony who was found to have coin filings or clippings in their possession.

Despite this law, and subsequent renewals of it as noted below, I have found only one instance of a prosecution for defacing coins. This was of one Samuel Keys, but at his Supreme Court trial in Auckland in 1881 he was acquitted.

Similar provisions were included in the Criminal Code Act 1893, and the Indictable Offences Summary Act 1894, the Crimes Act 1908, the Crimes Amendment Act 1952, and the Crimes Act 1961. In the Crimes Amendment Act 2003, the clause relating to defacing coins by stamping names, words or figures on them was repealed. Thus it is now apparently legal to add your name, or even your place or type of business, on coins, and then put them back into circulation. And what if we are offered a silver coin that has been defaced, or even had a hole bored through it? Is it still legal tender? A letter from the Reserve Bank states that "It is difficult to say what the exact legal position is concerning whether a coin with a hole in it or other mutilation is legal tender. It depends on the extent of mutilation". However, if you receive such a coin, all is not lost for "the [Reserve] Bank will pay face value on damaged and mutilated coins submitted to it, provided that the coin is still recognisable as a coin and that there is nothing suspicious about the circumstances in which the coins are submitted to the Bank" (Personal correspondence, 16 July 2010).

Are They Collectible? Numismatists are generally advised to collect only the finest example of coins that they can find or which they can afford, and that worn and defaced specimens should be ignored. But in a collection of currency that has circulated within New Zealand there is surely a place for Victorian and Edwardian silver coins with holes in them, that are bent, or on which the design is almost gone. After all, these coins were commonly passed from hand to hand in the 19th century, and even through to the early 1920s at least. They are part of our numismatic history, even though their monetary value is close to zero.

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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY MINTING OF THE 1780 MARIA THERESA THALER

With particular reference to the 1935 – 1962 period

Ian Fenn

Introduction

Various aspects of the 1780 Maria Theresa Thaler (MTT) have been presented to New Zealand collectors in recent New Zealand numismatic literature¹. The coin's story has been told often, with varying degrees of accuracy, and a review of literature on the coin highlights contradictions between authors and disciplines. The less than consistent histories of the coin are perhaps indicative of this coin's "nature" in numismatics. Although the MTT has a unique place in numismatic and economic history, for the majority of coin collectors world-wide the MTT lacks importance. This was illustrated to the author recently, when enquiring in a New Zealand dealer's shop as to whether the seller had any MTTs. The advice received was that the only MTTs held were "just restrikes". However, an examination of those coins quickly revealed one was a high grade London mint example with a likely European value of €60 - €100. To be fair to the dealer concerned, even when correctly identified it is most likely that that coin will be purchased in New Zealand for its bullion value rather than its numismatic importance.

Over the period 1935-1962 the coin was legally produced by a number of countries. One of the significant producers of the MTT in this time period was the Royal Mint and its subsidiary mints in India, which together produced almost 40% of the total 1935-1962 mintage. This production supported both British economic interests and military campaigns, yet it is absent from British coin catalogues, as also the Brussels, Paris, Utrecht and Rome Mint MTTs are absent from the catalogues of their respective nations

This article covers the story of the 20th century minting of the MTT, which was influenced by "last-gasp" colonialism, war, espionage and international trade and diplomacy.

Primacy of the Vienna Mint's production

In the mid-19th century the Austrian Habsburgs lost the last of their possessions in the Italian peninsula. The effect of this on the MTT was that the Vienna Mint became the sole producer. From 1853 to the First World War, Vienna Mint MTTs were, in the main, exported to Aden from Trieste. The coin, well established in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf environs, was an important facilitator of trade with and within that region. Its importance was such that a number of non-Austrian authorities looked at producing the coin.

In the 19th century, Italy, Florence, Marseilles and possibly the UK² either produced the coin or seriously considered doing so. During the first part of the 20th century the Austrian monopoly was "tested" on a number of occasions. The first 20th century record of non-Austrian interest is reported by Hans (1954) who noted that in 1912 the Austro-Hungarian monarchy rejected a formal request from Italy for the right to mint MTTs.

Following the First World War, the UK received the first documented request to produce MTTs³. On 1 August 1919 John Terry & Co. wrote to the Secretary of the Foreign Trade Department enquiring if they might be able to produce the MTT legally. Their letter enclosed an MTT and quoted a request for the supply/production of 50,000 thalers for Aden and/or Mombasa.

That 1919 enquiry also prompted an enquiry from the Bank of Abyssinia in early 1920. As a result the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs investigated the possibility of British production. The resulting submission to the Secretary of the Treasury set British Government policy on the MTT for the next 15 years. The submission "Minting of the Maria Theresa Dollar" concluded:

1. There was no objection under British law
2. That the Austrians under Article XXII of the law (Austrian) of 2 August 1892 maintained that the Vienna Mint only was entitled to produce the coin.

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3. It was recommended that it would be undesirable, for diplomatic reasons, for the coins to be minted in the United Kingdom.

The 1920s also saw the Italian interest in minting rights resurfacing⁴. The London Times (17 April 1923) reported that a meeting between Dr Siepel (Chancellor of Austria) and Mussolini (as Prime Minister) included discussion of an Italian request for MTT minting rights.

In 1925 Johnson Matthey & Co (JM) tested the already established British policy. A letter dated 5 August 1925 from JM requested that the Royal Mint produce MTTs for the company. As Semple (2005) notes, there is no record of an answer to JM. It is likely that a verbal response was probably sufficient. Subsequent events show that JM then developed a close relationship with the Vienna mint. From 1926 JM supplied practically all the silver required for the production of MTTs (by the Vienna Mint), and in 1932 JM obtained a wholesale monopoly over the supply of MTT. The monopoly ended in July 1935 when JM was given three months' notice that the contract with the Vienna Mint would be cancelled⁵.

The London Times (12 August 1933) noted that there was an ongoing shrinkage in demand for the coin due, in part, to the introduction of autonomous currencies in the Middle East and the Depression. A review of the confirmed mintages of the MTT from the early 1920s shows that, with the exception of 1927, the demand for the coin was steadily falling. This situation changed remarkably in 1935 and is clearly marked by the milestone of the Vienna Mint/JM contract cancellation.

Italy's 1935 request for minting rights (*Be careful what you ask for, you might just get it*).

Italy, with some encouragement from the UK, had joined the colonial scramble for Africa in 1885. In 1889 Italy and Ethiopia had signed the Treaty of Wichale (Ucciali) and, as is not infrequent with such treaties, the two versions (Italian and Amharic) differed in meaning in at least one crucial section. Italy used the treaty to claim Ethiopia as a protectorate while the Ethiopians regarded it merely as a document of friendly association. This soon led to conflict and ultimately the humiliating defeat of the Italians at the Battle of Adowa (1 March 1896). Following that defeat the Italians developed Eritrea and Italian Somaliland as physically and administratively separate colonies.

In both Italian possessions the MTT was a well established coin and on two separate occasions⁶ Italian authorities unsuccessfully tried to displace the MTT with an Italian equivalent. The separation of the two colonies was not ideal and although not recognised at the time⁷, in the early 1930s Italy looked to consolidate its empire in East Africa by planning the conquest of Ethiopia. The MTT was an important consideration in the planned invasion and this importance led to the third (documented) and successful request for Italian MTT minting rights.

The literature offers two explanations of how Italy gained the right to produce the coin:

1. Hitler was directly involved in applying pressure to Austria, or Hitler directed Austria to hand over the dies (Behrens 1969, Gervais 1982⁸, James 2002, Starck 2004, Stride 1956)⁹
2. Italy and Austria formally negotiated an agreement for the MTT minting rights. (Broome 1972, Lelart 2007, Pankhurst 1970, Coupland 2009).

The second explanation is the correct account. Kurt Von Schuschnigg, last Chancellor of the 1st Austrian Republic, clearly indicated he agreed to Italy's gaining the rights to the MTT in exchange for Mussolini's support of an Austria independent from Germany. On 16 March 1934 the Rome protocols were signed between Italy and Austria¹⁰. A follow-up accord was signed on 9 July 1935 and this saw the Austrians reluctantly handing over the dies for the MTT to Rome. This also required the cancellation of contracts with, as reported by Schuschnigg, "British Silver Firms". The accord gave Italy a 25-year concession to the coin and limited Vienna to a maximum domestic mintage of 10,000 coins per year.

Once the Italians had received the tooling they set about producing the MTT. In June 1935¹¹ all silver was withdrawn from circulation in Italy. Time magazine (22 July 1935) reported that silver collected from Italians in the previous week was used to produce Maria Theresa Thalers.

The invasion of Ethiopia began on 3 October 1935 and Addis Ababa fell to the Italians eight months

LEVIN INTER-CLUB MEETING 2010

Twenty-eight members from the Manawatu, Wanganui and Royal Numismatic Societies attended the annual get-together at the Red Cross Hall in Levin on 13 March.

Manawatu was the host Society for 2010, and Keith Wrigley presented a quiz set by Doug Carian for our entertainment and edification. The result was a tie between the RNSNZ and Wanganui, with the five-member RNSNZ team (members Ian Birdling, Chris Scrimshaw, Martin Purdy and co-opted participants Merle Sneddon and Peter Hennessey) winning on a 10-question tie-breaker set by Keith.

The Societies gave a run-down of their recent activities, with David Galt detailing some of the lobbying work done by the RNSNZ with the Reserve Bank and NZ Post to promote circulating commemoratives and with on-line auction provider TradeMe to accommodate numerous collector requests.

Four displays were shown: English coins from Richard II to Victoria; Palmerston North-related medals/funny money etc.; Service Medals; and Odd and Curious Items.

The host numismatic society for the 2011 Levin Inter-club Meeting will be Wanganui, and the meeting will be held on Saturday 26 February 2011.

NZ Historical Medals

From 1968 to 1971, the "Historical Medal Society of Australia and New Zealand" struck a series of crown-sized (38 mm) commemorative medals on a range of themes including the Wahine, James Cook (NZ Bicentenary), 1970 Royal Visit and the Auckland City and Harbour Board centenaries.

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later (5 May 1936). During the conflict Rome-minted MTTs were distributed in great quantities. However once the war was “won” Italy could no longer afford the expense of such a large silver coin. The Italians then tried to demonetise a coin they had previously failed twice to replace with Italian silver. The result was a period of monetary chaos.

Italian attempts to gain control of the Ethiopian economy

On June 15 1936 the thaler was officially tarified at 5 lire. This was well below the regional exchange rate of the time (11 lire to the thaler). The 5-lira coin (backed by gold) contained 0.1342 oz of silver, while the Maria Theresa thaler contained 0.7517 oz silver. In the predominantly rural economy of Ethiopia the average Ethiopian could not accept such a revaluation of the MTT.

The chaos began in earnest on 2 July 1936 when it was decreed that the lira was the official currency of the Empire and the MTT was to be exchanged for lire. The decree also applied the exchange restrictions that were current in the Italian peninsula (a maximum of 350 lire could be exported). The result was that MTTs disappeared from circulation and the lira was despised. The situation was then made worse by the methods the Italian authorities used to enforce the demonetisation of the MTT. These measures included compulsory searches with any discovered MTTs being forcibly exchanged for lire.

Fraud (such as passing expired lottery tickets as lira bank notes) and corruption of poorly paid Italian nationals exacerbated the situation. Where it was perceived they were not getting the true value for their wares, traders simply stopped taking their goods to market. Those sellers that did continue trading raised their lira prices to a level that matched the black market exchange rate.

Evelyn Waugh illustrated the situation¹². Following the Italian victory he decided to return to Addis Ababa to report on the aftermath of the war. On arrival in Djibouti a Greek informant advised him:

“Mr Waugh, do not go there. You have no idea what the conditions are up country. The Italians are starving. The soldiers live on a piece of bread a day. Nothing can be bought in the shops. No one will accept the Italian money.”

The Italians’ actions effectively closed the local markets. They had also constrained Mussolini’s hoped-for profits. Labourers would only trade their services for thalers and when lire were offered they walked off the job. This led to Italian nationals performing functions that the Fascists had expected local labour to satisfy.

It was not long before the demonetisation order had to be partially rescinded. Throughout 1936-1937 the Italian occupation of Ethiopia saw almost continuous appreciation of the Maria Theresa Thaler. The numerous changes in currency valuation and legislation do not lend themselves to ready description and are summarised in Table 1 instead (details sourced from Dr Pankhurst’s 1970 paper).

The Italian actions created the ideal environment for money smuggling. Within Ethiopia the lira was undervalued while the thaler was overvalued. Even more encouraging for a smuggler was the fact that thalers disappeared from circulation once sold in Ethiopia, thus limiting the risk of oversupply. The Italian government’s failure to pay Italian officials regularly also encouraged corruption, greatly assisting the smugglers’ efforts. In April 1938 the British Consulate in Djibouti advised the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (UK) that the Banque de l’Indo-Chine estimated 35 million lire per month was being exported out of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The level of smuggling was such that the Italians were forced on a number of occasions to purchase lire in the currency markets of Geneva and Aden. The lire purchased at these times were often circulated back into Ethiopia to continue the vicious cycle. This unsustainable situation was likened by some¹³ to the German/Austrian inflationary period. Effective control of the situation was finally gained when lira banknotes specific to East Africa were issued in 1938. This action frustrated Mussolini’s goal of a single empire-wide currency but it was successful in curtailing the smuggling. A review of MTT mintage numbers for 1939 shows a sharp drop in the total number of thalers struck.

Table 1 Italian Actions/revaluations in respect to the MTT

Location	Date	Decree/edict/action	Comment
Eritrea This section is provided to indicate the pre-invasion value of the MTT as set by the Italians	28/11/1934	Exchange rate set at MTT1 = 4.75 lire	Official exchange rates (market rates were often higher)
	27/04/1935	Exchange rate set at 6.5 lire	
	31/07/1935	Exchange rate set at 9 lire	
	26/10/1935	Exchange rate set at 12.5 lire	
Ethiopia	11/05/1936	Exchange rate set at 6 lire	As announced by Italian Radio
	15/06/1936	Exchange rate set at 5 lire	Decree by Governor-General. Within a month the black market rate was 10 – 11 lire per thaler
	2 /07/1936	Lira declared the only legitimate currency in Ethiopia with effect 14/07/1936	
	10/07/1936	Previous edict amended allowing for limited issuance of thalers through approved banks.	Only 50 thalers could be obtained per person. Commercial entities could apply for greater quantities
	16/07/1936	Prohibition on use of thalers for purchase of imports	Maximum penalty: 1 month's imprisonment or a fine of 500 lire
	31/07/1936	The issue limit on thalers was reduced to 20 thalers per person	Black market value of the MTT increases
	19/10/1936	Thaler re-valued at 9 lire	This was forced by the devaluation of the lira against gold in Italy
	19/02/1937	Exchange rate set at 10.5 lire	Decree issued 16/02/1937 By this time the black market rate was 13.5 lire to the thaler
	11/06/1937	Exchange rate set at 13.5 lire	Edict also noted persons buying or selling at anything other than the official rate liable to suspension from their jobs, repatriation to Italy, and imprisonment Black market rate increased up to 18 lire to the thaler (this provided over 100% profit on coins produced in London)
	25/09/1937	Exchange rate reset at 10.5 lire	This was an attempt to control money smuggling. It was partially successful; the black market rate dropped to 14 lire to the thaler
	5/01/1938	Decree suspending provisions for exchanging MTT for Lira. MTT were to be accepted in banks at silver value	This was the first effective (relative term) attempt at demonetising the MTT.
	18/03/1938	Issuance of East African lira bank notes	This was a major shift in the approach to managing the currency problems in East Africa.

International reaction to the Italian MTT minting

The Italians' refusal to allow commercial interests access to the thaler had other consequences. The coin was not just necessary in Ethiopia and the Italian actions threatened British and French economic interests in neighbouring states.

When JM was advised that the Vienna Mint would no longer supply them with MTT, they approached¹⁴ the Royal Mint requesting that the MTT be produced by that mint¹⁵. The Royal Mint made enquiries to the Foreign office as to whether they might be able to produce the coin. The enquiry served as fuel to the fire in regard to Foreign Office concerns with Italian plans for a Middle Eastern empire. From the early 1920s the Italians had been waging a propaganda war against British interests in the Middle East/ Red Sea/Persian Gulf regions. It seems that the Italians' success in gaining the rights to the MTT was perceived as another "Italian victory". The issue was referred to the Foreign Office's legal Officer; Sir W Malkin whose advice, subsequently adopted, concluded:

1. By surrendering the minting rights to the Italians the Austrians had given up the legal right to the MTT (see point 3 below).
2. There was no legal bar to the Royal Mint producing the MTT so long as the coins were intended for a country (other than Austria) where the Government concerned approved¹⁶.
3. Should the Vienna mint produce MTTs for supply to British territories it might be necessary for the Royal Mint to discontinue striking the coin.

In 1936 the Royal Mint commenced producing the coin. The 1936 demand level, a mere 150,125 coins (struck on 15 September 1936), gave no indication of the huge increase in orders that was to occur in 1937.

One firm is recorded as predicting the increase in demand: Antonin Besse & Co (AB) of Aden. Footman (1986) records in the biography of the firm's founder that in December 1935 Antonin Besse recognised the potential profit that could be made in MTTs¹⁷ (comment in italics added):

"... the demand which keeps it so high (*i.e. the value of the MTT above its production and shipping costs*) emanating from Port Sudan, whence thalers find their way to the Italians in Eritrea, where they are exchanged for lire, which in their turn, find a ready market in Aden. The profits realised on this traffic are so enormous that the risks it entails – of depreciation of the dollar and of being caught – are cheerfully run."

The statement indicates that money smuggling was occurring prior to the Italian conquest. It also lends weight, albeit small, to a later assertion by the Italian authorities that AB was directly involved in the smuggling.

In 1937 the Royal Mint produced 3,719,415 MTT. The demand for thalers and the resultant profit for traders were so great that Brussels (supplying Samuel Montagu & Co.) and Paris¹⁸ (supplying AB, amongst others) mints also struck the coin that year (3,145,000¹⁹ and 2,023,530 respectively). According to Leybold (1988) there was a private Swiss striking of the MTT by Huguenin in 1937. This striking was commissioned by a Swiss bank that required the MTT for Africa. It is unknown how many were minted and issued. What is known is that some "circulated". The production was stopped by the Swiss Government at the request of Austria and the tooling was transferred to the Vienna Mint. Leybold was provided with an example of this strike by Huguenin and the photographs of that coin show strong similarities with a gold MTT that is known to be Swiss. The combined mintage of thalers in 1937 was almost three times the total mintage of 1935²⁰ and indicates the scale of the problem the Italians had created for themselves. In current NZ\$ terms (valuing an MTT at NZ\$20.00) the 1937 production exceeded the 1935 production by close to NZ\$178 million.

Royal Mint difficulties

The Royal Mint, geared to supplying coins to a single customer, faced a distribution problem with the MTT. The demand for the coin was high and a significant number of firms placed orders. The Royal Mint Refinery noted the problem in a letter dated 25 May 1937 where it was recorded that

the Royal Mint preferred that the distribution, on an agreed basis, be made through JM. A meeting of interested parties had been set up and the following arrangement resulted:

1. Distribution of Royal Mint MTTs was to be made through JM.
2. The distribution of the Royal Mint thalers would be as follows:
 - a. JM 20%
 - b. C.S. Collier 20%
 - c. Mocatta & Goldsmid 12%
 - d. Samuel Montagu & Co (SM) 12%
 - e. Pixley & Abell 12%
 - f. Sharps & Wilkins 12%
 - g. N.M. Rothschild & sons 12%
3. JM for its role of distributor was to receive a handling fee of 5/- per 1000. This fee was to be adjusted downwards should the thaler decrease in value.

C.S. Collier was supplied directly from the Mint while all other members of the pool received their allotment through JM. The difference in treatment may reflect on the fact that C.S. Collier had been the last Governor of the Bank of Abyssinia (1919-1931) and Governor of the Bank of Ethiopia (1931-1935).

AB, which had been in regular contact with the Royal Mint for some considerable time, was omitted from the pool. On complaining, it was advised to procure thalers from one of the pool members. This resulted in, at least, Mocatta & Goldsmid and Collier and Co. each offering to supply MTTs at a 6d per coin premium above what the members of the pool were paying (1s 6d). AB was unhappy with this inequity and wrote to the Mint and members of the pool, and visited the Treasury Chambers²¹. Footman (1986) indicates that the firm's founder and CEO also seriously considered legal action. By 20 October 1937 the situation was partially resolved with the Royal Mint agreeing to supply AB when the "requirements of the pool" were satisfied. The Treasury wrote to the Mint²² expressing concern:

"But what interests me most is to know what is the right of reply to critics in parliament or elsewhere who ask why is it necessary that the requirements of the "Pool" must be satisfied before traders can get anything."

According to Footman the matter was finally fully resolved to AB's satisfaction in January 1938. It seems likely the Treasury's concern had caused action.

The impression gained from a review of the relevant files is that at times the Mint found itself having to defend its actions, and the MTT subjected it to considerable administrative work beyond what was normal. Accordingly, when JM approached the Mint with a request for the supply of dies so that JM could have the coin produced elsewhere, Mint officials were not amused, especially in view of JM's preferred status. JM's reply (22 June 1938) to the Mint's response amply illustrates the Mint's reaction:

- JM was sorry that the Mint had decided not to supply them with the tooling.
- JM was sorry that the Mint deprecated their intention to approach another mint or mints.
- JM understood that Imperial coinage must take precedence but this condition was precisely what was hampering the company's activities in Aden.
- The Royal Mint was divided between JM and others who were newcomers in the thaler business, and;
- Those newcomers had taken no share in the building up and fostering of British Arabia and East Africa in connection with the MTT as JM had done for so many years.

This incident, perhaps, sheds some light on the actions of SM and their use of the Brussels Mint. With even JM dissatisfied with the pool it is not surprising that another company was similarly

concerned and sought an alternative supply.

The Other Mints

Although Samuel Montagu & Co. was included in the “pool” the firm is more often associated with Brussels and Birmingham strikes. The records discovered to date do not mention much more about this firm, and as it has since been swallowed by other banking groups there has been no success in locating relevant records.

What is known is that Samuel Montagu negotiated a separate agreement with the Brussels Mint. According to Regoudy (1992), the first 50,000 thalers for SM were produced by Brussels on 7 August 1937, and were dispatched from Antwerp²³ on 9 August 1937. Brussels Mint produced a further run of MTTs in 1938 (6,700,000) and then the Second World War intervened and production ceased until after the end of the war. After the war the Brussels Mint produced MTTs in 1954, 55, 56 and 57. These post-war strikes were produced for SM who supplied at least part of the production to the Royal Air Force, which needed the coins to support its operations in Oman. Broome (1972), amongst other authors, notes there were problems with these coins as the engraver (M. Tramaux) omitted the left-most pearl in the diadem on the obverse of the coin.

Paris Mint production occurred in 1937 and 1938 and again in 1957. Hafner and Regoudy separately identify two Paris Mint varieties, although each used different identifiers to reach their conclusion. Regoudy’s editor, in a footnote, comments that the cause for the two different varieties lay in problems with acceptance of the first variety.

In 1938 the Utrecht Mint²⁴ received an order for MTTs. That Mint developed tooling and in 1939 116,000 MTT were struck. However the events of the 2nd World War saw, apart from 62 examples, the whole mintage returned to the melting pots. The 62 survivors had been issued as follows:

- Hollandsche Bank Unie NV: 10
- Pierson & Co Amsterdam 50
- Utrecht Mint Museum 2

According to L.M.J. Boegheim (1991), the 60 examples sent to the two firms were shipped on to the Red Sea Region. The two remaining coins are still held at the Utrecht Mint Museum and are, in all probability, the only extant examples. One could hope that one or more of the 60 coins might still exist; however, given the normal life cycle of an MTT it is a very slight chance. It is more likely that after circulating for a time they were melted down in a silversmith’s forge or shipped to India to suffer a similar fate.

Italian reaction to non-Italian production

The non-Rome strikes exacerbated the situation for the Italians in Ethiopia. The Italian Government made diplomatic complaints to the relevant governments. On 15 June 1937 the Italian Embassy in London raised the issue with the UK Government, advising the UK authorities that²⁵ (comment in italics added):

- The exclusive right to produce MTTs had been given to the Italians.
- Italian banks and officials had been instructed not to accept non-Italian mint MTTs (*One wonders how those banks and officials were to identify non-Italian strikes, as the directives did not include instructions on how to discriminate between the varieties*).
- “The Italian Government would appreciate appropriate action by his Majesty’s Government to prevent these dollars being struck in the United Kingdom”.
- The need for these dollars in British territories might be dealt with by means of a request to the Italian government for the Italians to strike sufficient dollars to meet British needs.

The response (6 January 1938) informed the Italian Ambassador, amongst other reasons, that as the coins did not form part of the official currency of any Italian territory and that, as the British production was solely for the “purpose of trade in certain British-administered and other territories” they would continue producing the coin.

The Italians had also approached their allies of the time. The Czechoslovak and Austrian representatives also challenged the British production (1936²⁶ and 28/09/1937, and 30/01/1937 and 5/03/1938²⁷ respectively). It appears the Austrian complaint was never responded to; a letter to Brussels from the Foreign Office²⁸ notes the Anschluss (12 March 1938) occurred prior to any reply being formulated. The response to the Czech Government assured that the MTTs produced were not being sent to Italian-controlled areas.

The Italians even contacted AB, apparently to ask them to cease trading in thalers. The Italians suspected the Aden-based company of involvement in money smuggling. Footman's 1986 account makes no mention of this approach. Instead it is Richard Pankhurst (1970) who recounts a communication with David Footman that recorded that "the Italian consul in Aden, Campini, tried to lure Mr. Besse away from this trade". The full substance of the vehemently anti-fascist Besse's reply is not recorded, only that in it Besse sent "all the contempt which you so richly deserve"²⁹. Pankhurst cites letters from another ex-AB staff member that suggested that Johnson and Matthey and the Banque de L'Indo-Chine were also suspected of being complicit in smuggling. British documents from 1938 suggest that Italian nationals were active participants in the two-way smuggling.

Behind the diplomatic scenes the British administration took a number of steps to reinforce its position. The members of the "Pool" and relevant UK diplomatic missions were written to, so as to ensure/confirm British thalers were not being supplied directly to Italian possessions/interests. All responses assured that the coins were being sold in Aden to local purchasers. Collier & Co noted that it was possible those coins might be then on-sold for smuggling into Italian possessions but that this was beyond their control.

A might-have-been producer

To complete the pre-World War II story there is an interesting could-have-been producer of the MTT. In the middle of 1937 the Royal Mint entered into discussions with the Royal Canadian Mint (RCM) with a view to the RCM producing the MTT. After reviewing the costs of tooling and operator training the RCM decided not to proceed.

In retrospect the RCM's decision appears to have been the correct one. With the Italians issuing banknotes specific to East Africa, 1938 was the last year of high demand. Nineteen thirty-nine saw demand levels for the MTT fall to pre-1935 levels. AB, being long established in Aden and well acquainted with the local markets, was well aware of the potential for depreciation in the thaler's value. Footman (1986) reports that Antonin Besse thought it likely there would be a steady depreciation in the value of the MTT. He had already had the foresight to build in a cancellation clause into his contract with the Royal Mint. He invoked that clause in November or December 1938³⁰. It is quite possible that had the RCM entered the market at the beginning of 1938 (as initially proposed) and, by doing so, increased the supply of MTTs, the depreciation might have occurred earlier and more precipitously than it did. In 1939 the demand plummeted to 935,000 coins. With the Second World War the Brussels and Paris Mints stopped producing the coin until the war's end.

The Second World War

With the UK's entry into the Second World War the free minting by the Royal Mint effectively stopped. In preparation for the liberation of Ethiopia the War Office took over the control of MTT production. This concerned JM, which wrote to the Royal Mint in February 1941 enquiring as to when its rightful position in respect to the Maria Theresa Thaler might be restored³¹.

With the War Office involved, a good part of the production was shifted to the Bombay and Calcutta Mints. This shift was necessary to limit loss through naval encounters.

Later in the war there is the story of American involvement with the MTT. Stanley P. Lovell (1963) reports³² that the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) produced MTTs to support espionage actions in Java and Sumatra. Lovell's team was informed the only coin that could be effectively used to pay Indonesian "agents" was the MTT

which, they were informed, had not been produced since 1870 (possible number transposition error?), and were unobtainable. Lovell's group obtained three examples from collectors and a New York numismatist. An analysis of the alloy was undertaken and moulds were produced with which the required coins were cast. Lovell notes that it was "the most honest job they ever did". As well as the date of the last minting there is a further error (perhaps due to memory) that raises some questions about this account. Lovell reported the coin concerned was about the same size as a quarter or an Italian 50 lira piece³³. Although the OSS worked along side their British counterparts (BSC), Stevenson's (1976) account of the BSC notes that at times the relationship was strained, so it is understandable that the OSS did not make enquiries with their ally, who could have so easily supplied Indian-minted MTT.

As yet, separate mintage numbers for both years have not been discovered for the two Indian mints. The combined mintage for the two years was just a little over 22 million coins. A review of the relevant Foreign Office file shows that in April 1941 the Foreign Office was already considering an alternative currency in Ethiopia. A possible decimal currency was being discussed³⁴ based on pounds sterling. It was noted that the MTT was expensive, unsuitable for foreign trade, and undesirable as its value fluctuated with the silver price. It was also noted that Haile Selassie I was also of a mind to introduce a new currency.

Following return of Haile Selassie I to Addis Ababa (5 May 1941), at the request of the War Office, Barclays Bank set up a branch in that City (Barclays Bank 1948, author not specified). The branch opened on 1 July 1941 and immediately previously hoarded MTTs were dug up and deposited in the bank. At that time four currencies were made legal tender in Ethiopia, East African shillings, MTT, Egyptian pounds and Indian rupees. The MTT seems to have created the most work.

MTTs deposited with the bank had to be counted and receipted. After the first day, staff had to work till 9 p.m. counting the MTTs received, and the following days were "equal to or worse than that day". The bank staff soon had to require depositors to pre-count and place their thalers on provided trays, tellers would issue provisional receipts until the count of the deposited coins (conducted after hours) could be confirmed. This occurred in a cloud of dust (due to the thalers predominantly coming out of ground storage). The dust was such a problem the cashier, at night, performed his work using a home-made gas mask. The fact that the previously hoarded thalers were now being deposited voluntarily is substantive evidence of the earlier distrust of the Italians.

After confirmation counting, the coins deposited by the customers were bagged (500 to the bag) and placed in the bank's vault. Unfortunately, by the end of the year (1941) the bags in the vault, containing 200 tonnes of MTTs, had, due to damp weather conditions, suffered mildew and some 2000 bags had rotted completely requiring a complete recount. By the end of 1942 the need for the bank's work was coming to an end and Barclays left Ethiopia, closing the branch on 15 April 1943.

Barclays Bank history, the 1941 War Office records, and the Italian experiences demonstrate the MTT was not a particularly user-friendly coin for bankers and governments. Even thieves had a problem with the coin; Antonin Besse³⁵ is recorded as commenting his company's holdings of MTTs in Aden warehouses were reasonably secure for the simple reason would-be thieves were faced with a daunting transportation task.

The end of the MTT as an official currency in Ethiopia

In the 1920s Regent Ras Tafari (who became Haile Selassie I) had, with the Empress Zauditu, introduced new coinage as well as thaler-denominated banknotes. With the Italian invasion these notes and coins were successfully demonetised. The restoration of self-rule saw the need for a new monetary system. Initially, as the War Office had planned, the British Government negotiated with Haile Selassie's administration seeking to establish a Currency Board and issue a currency backed by sterling. From 1941 to 1943 London was able to exert considerable control over the Ethiopian economy (Gill 1991). Reading the various accounts, it is not hard to believe that the Ethiopian Government might have gained the impression that the British might succeed, albeit peaceably³⁶, where the Italians had struggled.

In 1943 Ethiopia turned to America and, following a review and recommendation period (during which a number of the key American aid advisors were recruited into Haile Selassie's own administration), a dollar-based currency, more familiar to the Ethiopians, was introduced. The MTT was withdrawn from circulation in July 1945. To produce the new coinage and provide for the necessary foreign reserves MTT were shipped to America. As late as 1947, the New York Times reported (14 September 1947) the arrival of the steamer "Cape John" in New York carrying 1000 cases of MTTs valued then at just under US\$1,000,000.

Although the introduction of a new currency in Ethiopia was successful, the MTT persisted in more rural parts of the country. Some writers have reported it as still being in use in 1982.

Following the Second World War the minting of Maria Theresa thalers continued at Brussels, London and Paris Mints, and a new mint was added to the list: Birmingham. Current opinion holds the view that the 1949 Birmingham production used dies produced by the Royal Mint. A London Mint variety (listed in part 2) has been "recognised" as that strike. The research for this paper led to clear questions about the veracity of this belief (based on Stokes 1980). Further research discovered Customs and Royal Mint correspondence that clearly shows that the MTT tooling was transported from Brussels to the Birmingham Mint on behalf of Samuel Montagu and Co. On 10 May 1949, at Northolt Airport, UK Customs, on examining the bags of a Mr Vansittart (passenger ex flight GAJD1) found and temporarily impounded dies for Maria Theresa taler coins. These were forwarded under seal to the Royal Mint, which returned the tooling for release, confirming there was an import license for the tooling which was needed by the Birmingham Mint for the production of Maria Theresa thalers. Table 2 lists the dates and mintages from these mints from 1935 to 1962.

End of non-Austrian MTT strikings

The 25-year concession to Italy ended in July 1960. On 21 June 1961 the Austrian Embassy in London submitted a formal request that the UK government cease production of the MTT. The arguments put forward by the Austrians were:

- The Italian agreement had been formally terminated;
- The Austrian monopoly of the MTT was legally restored and;
- By the Austrian Law of 1862³⁸ Austria was the only entity legally able to produce the coin.

It is clear from a review of relevant Treasury documents that from receipt of the request until November 1961 the British worked to justify continued minting of the coin.

In the process of legally challenging the non-official production of British sovereigns the Treasury's lawyer undertook a considerable legal analysis³⁹ comparing the legal standing of the sovereign and MTT. This analysis was then used to support the preparations for justifying continued British production of the MTT. The analysis noted:

- The MTT was the legal coin of the now non-existent Austrian Empire.
- The sovereign was still legal tender in the UK while the MTT was not legal tender in any country.
- Since 1935 (at least) the MTT had become solely a trade token.
- The MTT was not covered by:
 - o The 1929 International Convention against counterfeiting.
 - o The UK Counterfeit Currency Convention act of 1935

In preparing their response, the British government also referred to French decisions in relation to the MTT (despite the French already having decided to agree to the Austrian request). During the 1930s, the French had determined that the MTT had ceased being "cours légal" and therefore could not be counterfeited. For the UK the decision point occurred in a meeting on 3 November 1961 between Mint and Treasury staff. In that meeting the Deputy Master of the Mint apologised that they had not communicated their views earlier. Those views were that, as they would object

Vienna	Rome	London	Paris	Brussels	Bombay	Birmingham
1935	300					
1936	2,765	150,125				
1937	9,800	3,719,415	2,023,530	3,145,000		
	1938	5,086,085	2,489,220	6,700,000		
	1939	945,000				
		1940	3,766,391		8,020,056	
1946	4,397	1941	2,002,000		10,844,520	
1947	8,684		5,222,750			
1948	6,704	1949	500,000			475,000
1949	3,296					
1951	1,953					
1952	6,291					
1953	48,082					180,000
1954	11,057					2,434,000
1955	17,800					339,500
1956	37,707					
1957	651,520					
1958	235,181	272,429	2,074,456	431,500		
1959	166,405	340,171		318,500		
1960	812,176	202		200,000		
1961	2,107,301	213,180		200,024		
1962	520,940	749,072				
Total	4,652,359	20,159,070	11,809,956	10,995,024	18,864,576	3,428,500
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MINTAGE For 1935-1962	5%	22 %	13%	12%	21%	4%
		1 st type 5%	2 nd type 8%			

to another authority producing late 18th century British coins, they recommended in favour of the Austrian request. This resulted in a reversal of the planned response.

In February 1962 the Austrian Government was formally advised that, although the Royal Mint had the legal right to continue producing the coin, in the spirit of good Anglo-Austrian relations the UK would agree to cease production. The UK was careful to note it reserved the right to resume production should English firms be unable to obtain the MTT from the Vienna Mint. The Belgians also agreed to the Austrians' request. This part of the story is notable as it is a clearly documented case of a moral principle overruling a combination of commercial interest and a strong legal position.

Although the end of non Austrian MTT production officially occurred in February 1962, there is a further intriguing and unconfirmed chapter.

There is a reference to the possibility that Russia also produced the MTT. The Dublin-based Irish Independent newspaper may have been the source of these accounts. Published on 13 September 1965 is the story that the discovery of fake MTTs in Vienna had been tracked, by Austrian investigators, back to the Kremlin. The article suggests the coins had been produced for supply to both Egypt and Syria. Apparently the Russians replied to the accusation in classic Cold-War double-speak; they denied production while concurrently stating that it was perfectly legal under Russian law to produce the coin. Soviet involvement with both Egypt and Syria at that time lends some circumstantial support to the article's claim. As yet no other confirmation of this story has been found.

Had it not been for the Italian invasion of Ethiopia the MTT would likely have reduced in importance far sooner than it had. Ethiopia had been successfully introducing a more modern monetary system prior to 1935. Saudi Arabia had demonetised it for commercial purposes, and banned its import in the early 1930s.

Aden, as a British protectorate, used the East African Shilling as the official currency, yet in the rural areas the MTT was still traded regularly. Yemen on a number of occasions tried to introduce an alternative currency. It seems civil war in Yemen continued the need for the coin through most of the 1960s, as both Yemeni Royalist and Egyptian forces required the coin on a regular basis to support their action in that country. However by the end of that decade the MTT's importance was reduced considerably. Oman is recorded as being the last country to demonetise the coin in the early 1970s.

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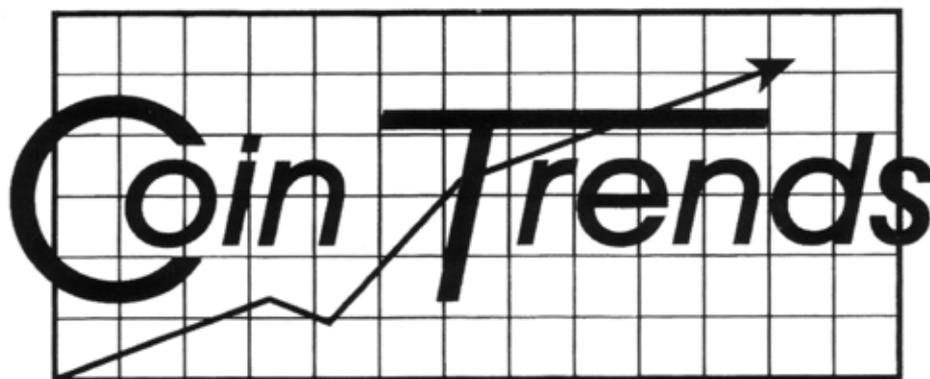
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2 This possibility was raised by Graham Dyer of the Royal Mint Historical Services.

3 Treasury Mint (TM) F/187 8 July 1920 & 1 August 1919.

4 This is one documented occurrence. It is possible that the Italians may have made other attempts to gain the minting rights before this time.

5 Royal Mint Minute dated 13/11/35.

6 Current opinion holds to the view that Emperor Menelik II also unsuccessfully tried to displace the MTT in Ethiopia. This view is reported by Howland Wood (1937) and Pankhurst (1967). In EE1885 (AD1893) a decree created a national currency. Menelik may well have desired, as is currently held, to replace all foreign coins in the country, but this desire was not comprehensively followed up by action. MTT, Ethiopian Birr, and payment in kind remained acceptable currencies for the payment of tax, and there was no order demonetising the MTT. Menelik was unable to issue his silver Birrs in any quantity necessary to create the critical mass necessary to supplant the MTT. Both Wood and Pankhurst note that it was not uncommon for the large Birrs to have holes bored in them so that they could be worn as a talisman. This suggests that the coin was being incorporated into the culture in a very similar way to the introduction of the MTT 100 years earlier. Perhaps a higher mintage and a longer period of time would have seen Menelik's Birr supplant the MTT. Given the numismatic importance of that 1-Birr coin it is surprising that Hafner (1984) omitted it from his lexicon while including the 1891-1896 Tallero, 1918 Eritrea Tallero and the 1948-1962 Yemen Ahmadi Riyal.

7 Jones and Munro (1935) provide a contemporary discussion of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. It is clear from their analysis that although there were inconsistencies in the Italians' international actions and statements it appeared to many that the Ethiopians were responsible for provoking the conflict. Mussolini, in his introduction to De Bono's book *Anno XIII*, makes it clear that the invasion of Ethiopia was in no small part an effort to regain the honour that was lost at Adowa in 1896. De Bono makes it clear that as early as 1932 Italy was planning to invade Ethiopia.

8 Gervais states the dies were handed over under the combined pressure of Mussolini and Hitler. Although he does not state Hitler was directly involved, that interpretation is easily gained from his text.

9 This incorrect first scenario may have arisen from Royal Mint records. One paper written by the Deputy Master of the Mint states that following the annexation of Austria Hitler directed that the dies be handed over to Italy.

10 The accord was signed by the then Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss who was soon after assassinated by Austrian National Socialists on 25 July 1934.

11 Time, Monday 22 July 1935, "Ethiopia's Week", cites an earlier article, 24 June 1935.

12 Evelyn Waugh, "Waugh in Abyssinia", Penguin edition 1985, p. 46.

13 Evelyn Waugh, amongst others.

14 JM were not the only commercial entity to approach the Royal Mint. Antonin Besse and Co. of Aden also approached the Royal Mint in late 1935. Besse and Co.'s perspective was that the Royal Mint proceeded too slowly so they also approached the Paris and Brussels Mints.

15 Letters from Johnson and Matthey to the Deputy Master of the Royal Mint dated 5 August 1925 and 6 December 1935.

16 Treasury F 817/2 letter dated 2 April 1936 & FO J 9694/1400/01 Minute dated 22 January 1936. As the British Government recognised the Italian government as the *de facto* government of parts of Ethiopia it was recognised the Royal Mint could not legitimately produce MTTs for supply to Ethiopia if the Italian government objected (which it was assumed they would).

17 David Footman, "Antonin Besse of Aden", pp. 120-121

18 Although Paris Mint only began production in 1937 the matrices are dated 1935 so indicating that the French authorities had possibly determined the legality of the situation before their British counterparts.

19 Semple (2005) reports the respective mintages of Brussels and Paris as (approx.) 10 million and 4.5 million in 1937. Semple based this on Tschoegl's 2004 paper. Unfortunately Semple appears to have misread Tschoegl's mintage numbers. For example: Tschoegl reports that for "1937-1938" the mintage of Brussels mint was 9.8 million, meaning that number represented the total mintage for both years; Semple appears to have interpreted it as referring to 1937 only.

20 1935 is used as the comparison. This is a questionable comparison as this was the year the Italians started MTT production in preparation for the conflict. However as in 1934 no MTTs were produced the 1935 baseline was used to indicate how serious the monetary situation became after the Italian victory.

21 The visit to the Treasury occurred on the morning of 18 October 1937.

22 Letter from S.D. Waley, Treasury Chambers dated 20 October 1937.

- 23 In the literature there are references to Antwerp producing MTTs. To date no conclusive evidence of this has been found (post 1780). Royal Air Force records of the 1950s/60s refer to MTTs supplied by SM being produced in Antwerp (and Vienna). At that time SM procured MTTs from Brussels so it is assumed that the Royal Air force was in error and that the MTT they received from Antwerp were actually produced in Brussels. The safe assumption is that at least in the 20th century Antwerp was not a producer of the MTT. Peetz and Raudnitz writing in 1898 make reference to Antwerp producing the coin.
- 24 As recounted by L.M.J. Boegheim 1991.
- 25 As reported in Foreign Office letter dated 1 Sept 1937 from J.H.U. Lambert to N.E. Young Esq., MC.
- 26 A draft letter to Karel Lisicky of the Czech legation in London from the Foreign office. This draft refers to an earlier response to the Czech Legation on 12/06/1936. The final letter was sent on 6 January 1938 with the reference to the previous response removed.
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- 29 Richard Pankhurst, "The Perpetuation of the Maria Theresa Dollar", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol 8 part 2 1970, page 111.
- 30 The months are inferred from Footman's narrative.
- 31 Letter from Johnson & Matthey to Royal Mint dated 19 February 1941.
- 32 Stanley P. Lovell, "Of spies and stratagems", Prentice Hall International (London, Tokyo, Sydney Paris), 1963, pages 27-29.
- 33 Unfortunately Lovell does not specify which 50-lira coin he is referring to. Given the publication date and reference to a quarter it is perhaps safest to assume Lovell is referring to the smaller diameter 50-lira coin which is indeed of similar size to the US quarter, and of course far too small for an MTT.
- 34 Secret Cipher telegram, 61993 Cipher F.1 17/4 dispatched 18 April 1941 from the War Office to Chiefpol Force Nairobi.
- 35 Footman 1986 reports AB experienced only one theft of MTTs. One case was broken into and all the thieves took was 50 thalers. Footman states the coin's very weight was a protection against theft.
- 36 H. Marcus, in "A history of Ethiopia", records that the British administration did attempt to repeat Italian mistakes. British administrators were paid in East African shillings which then had to be exchanged for MTTs in order to buy basic necessities of life. Like the lira before it, the East African shilling devalued against the MTT in the local markets.
- 37 The main utility of the table is to illustrate the relative rarity of the variants. Mintage numbers are recorded as accurately as possible, but even so the reader should treat the figures with a degree of caution. In collating the data from a variety of sources differences, mainly minor, were clearly evident between authors. Only in one case was the discrepancy major (Vienna 1954), for which one author reported a mintage of 12,524,000 while another, assessed more reliable, gave a mintage of only 17,800. The records for London, Paris, Brussels and Birmingham are the most reliable. In the case of the Vienna mintage numbers it has not been possible to confirm mintage numbers officially as it appears that those records no longer exist. Following the privatisation of the Vienna Mint a particularly hard winter saw Mint records being used as heating fuel. The mintage numbers for Calcutta have not been confirmed so have been omitted from the table. The reviewed literature suggests the combined mintage of Bombay and Calcutta Mints was around 22 million.
- 38 It appears the reference to 1862 was an error and the Embassy was in fact referring to the 1892 Austrian monetary legislation.
- 39 T & M, 1/50817/RJBA dated Sept 1953, and T & M 50817/RJBA dated 17 August 1961. Both papers contained in Treasury file T326/118.

PART 2: COLLECTING AND IDENTIFYING THE COINS

In the main developing a collection of 20th century struck MTT is not necessarily an overly expensive exercise. Although some varieties are of considerable scarcity (e.g. Paris Mint first type 1937-1942; a good example was obtained for USD 153 in October 2010), it is possible, due to seller ignorance, to obtain good examples via eBay at not much more than bullion value. In European auction houses high-grade examples of well attributed non-Vienna Mint coins can demand prices of up to (and sometimes in excess of) €100.00.

The sequence of main varieties includes the following:

- Vienna Mint 1853 -1930
- Vienna Mint 1932 - 1935 (produced for JM)
- Rome Mint 1936 -1939
- Royal Mint, London 1936 - 1961
 - o Bombay Mint (very hard to identify and some confusion in current literature as to full identification features)
 - o Calcutta Mint (no clear identification features have been confirmed by the author)
- Paris Mint 1937 -1942 (Difficult to find)
- Brussels Mint 1937- 1957
- Utrecht 1939 (assumed unobtainable)
- Birmingham Mint
- Paris Mint 1949 - 1955/60 (common type)
- Birmingham mint 1952-55
 - o Copper trial strike
 - o Piedfort copper trial strike

Error coins:

- Vienna Mint 1920 or 1960 Hafner 55 “ARGHID” instead of “ARCHID”, rare
- Edge error: 2003/2004, one edge iron was placed in the minting machinery upside down, scarce

Known gold strikes (20 and 50 ducat¹)

All gold strikes are rare (R3-R7) and in all markets command prices at a considerable premium over bullion value.

- Vienna Mint 1926 presentation piece to Haile Selassie I 73.65 grams (assumed lost)
- Vienna Mint 1926 produced two coins (51.87 g) for a Mr Avazey. One is in the British Museum; the second was known to be held by a British dealer a few years ago.
- Bombay Mint commissioned by King Farouk: one example.
- Swiss private strike 1950-1960 of 300 examples; 30 believed to be still in existence (one example was included in Noble's 1998 auction no. 57 lot 2292, but was misattributed as the Haile Selassie piece).

There are also primitive gold reproductions of the MTT from North Africa.

As the Royal Mint noted to the RCM, the ultimate customers of the MTT were very discriminating about how the MTT should appear. Variance from the accepted form in most cases saw the coin concerned rejected or at best accepted at significant discount, so all non-Vienna Mint producers

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attempted to ensure that their output was as indistinguishable from the accepted Vienna Mint type as possible. That said, there are clear differences that allow attribution to the various mints.

Knowing how to identify the varieties is important should a purchase of a counterstamped MTT be considered. It is not uncommon to see 19th century and early 20th century countermarks placed on MTT that were produced well after the range of dates to which the countermark applies. Unfortunately, too often the countermark is regarded as an authentication feature and clearly false examples can still successfully command €300.00 (and much higher) at auction. Any purchaser of counterstamped MTT should be extremely suspicious of Nejd, Hejaz, Mozambique and pre-20th century countermarks and as a first step must ensure that the base coin is of the correct vintage.

Identifying the varieties:

This section provides an overview of the main identification features. As the MTTs have complicated reverse details, there are many more identification features than are listed here (e.g. number of dots between the upper and lower beak halves on the double headed eagle). The author is in the process of confirming some of the more difficult identification features and when able will produce a more detailed list. Given space restrictions, photographs of every variety mentioned above will not be provided; instead, pictures of the key identification features are shown. In some cases, well accepted identification features have been omitted so as to avoid confusion, e.g. Rome Mint coins are often identified by double pin feathers on the reverse, but such double pin feathers are found on a number of other MTT varieties and relying on that feature alone may lead to misattribution (see chart p. 32).

Vienna Mint 1932-35 / Rome Mint 1935-1939

The Vienna Mint and Rome Mint coins are almost exactly the same due to the coins being produced by the same dies. The Vienna Mint coins' edge markings are high and blurred; the author speculates that these coins were struck using a collar which caused the blurring.

Regoudy identifies three Rome Mint varieties; a) 39.5 mm, b) 40 mm c) 40 mm with circumferential die crack (die crack highlighted by white lines in Table, p. 33).

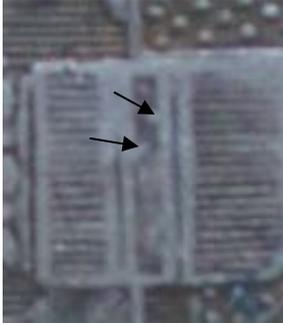
All of these are exactly the same in design as the Vienna Mint variety in this table. However, lira silver (835/1000) was used so the Rome Mint coins are heavier than the Vienna-struck examples (833/1000). High-grade Rome Mint coins weigh between 28.07 and 28.14 grams. Reading Royal Mint reports on analysis of Rome Mint coins suggests strongly that Regoudy's description of three varieties is correct. Leypold noted that Italian dealers identified Rome Mint MTT by means of a circumferential die crack on the obverse (partially pictured in second example). Royal Mint reports also record similar die cracking on the reverse of Rome Mint coins. It appears from reading reports of Italian directives that the Italians used only the Vienna Mint dies and did not cut replacements; This might justify identifying a separate variety based on the die crack² (see chart p. 33).

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<p>Hafner 54: Vienna 1853-1930</p>				<p>Two small dots in centre shield</p> 	<p>Double pin feathers either side of tail formation. top pin feather very faint</p>
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<p>Vienna mint</p>			<p>Comment</p> <p>Typical identification feature. Legend on both sides of the coin is very close to the edge of the coin. Diameter of the coin is 39.5 mm (earlier varieties were often 40-41 mm). The dies for this coin were transferred to Rome in 1935. The first Rome Mint variety is exactly the same as the example here except it has a weight range of 28.07-28.14 grams.</p>
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Rome Mint (Regoudy's third type)	Notes
	<p>The second and third Rome Mint types are on a larger blank (40mm). The only difference between the two types is the third type has circumferential die cracks on one of both faces. The die crack of the third type often extends around the full circumference of the coin. It might be inappropriate to list a die cracked coin as a separate variety as Regoudy has; however, the die crack evidences the Italian insistence of continuing with the genuine dies and as such tells an important part of the story of the Italian Invasion of Ethiopia.</p> <p>Pictures shown to illustrate the more normal distance between the legend and the edge of the coin, and the distinctive die cracks (Regoudy's second type does not have the die cracks).</p>

Royal Mint Dies

The Royal Mint (London) developed its tooling for the MTT in a unique manner. A Vienna Mint coin (1853-1930 type) was used to develop an electrotype from which a plaster model was developed and then finished by the Mint's engraver. London coins are distinctive in that they have a 1-2-1 tail feather formation on the reverse. An examination of the coin used to develop the tooling shows that the middle feather of the "three" vertical feathers is indistinct through wear. That middle feather is not apparent on the electrotype and is completely absent in the matrix used to produce the dies. The missing feather makes the identification of London coins easy. The London die coins are the easiest non-Vienna variety to find; the greatest difficulty comes in correctly identifying Calcutta and Bombay Mint coins.

Just prior to this journal going to print a fellow collector advised the writer that a "London mint" MTT sent by the writer had been assayed by x-ray fluorescence spectrometry at the Hanover Coin Fair. The assay revealed the MTT was made of a "dirty" silver alloy containing, in addition to copper, tin, lead and 0.04% gold. This dirty alloy matches the Royal Mint assay of the Bombay Mint variety and confirms that the MTT was from the Bombay Mint. That specific coin was of 40+mm and evidenced strongly fishtailed letters and numerals around the rim of the coin. The table on page 34 shows a clear example of this fish-tailing. Therefore it is most likely that this fish-tailing combined with a diameter of 40-41 mm is indicative of Bombay (and perhaps Calcutta).

London-minted coins are 39.5mm in diameter. The London type was accepted in all regions into which it was sold despite the 1-2-1 tail feather formation. The author believes two factors made this coin more acceptable than the other non-Austrian strikes (including Rome):

1. The London MTT was used by JM, the usual supplier; accordingly the coin entered the market through the already well established supply routes and as a result may have been subject to less scrutiny than the coins from other mints.
2. The tail feather formation has never³ been recorded as being an important authentication feature. This is perhaps due to the fact that the tail feather formation is subject to more wear than the diadem and brooch, which are well recorded as being the most frequent authentication features.

One might have supposed the Rome Mint coins would have been readily acceptable; however those coins entered the Ethiopian market through the despised conquerors, whose less than adequate monetary management and vicious occupation created considerable distrust and fear.

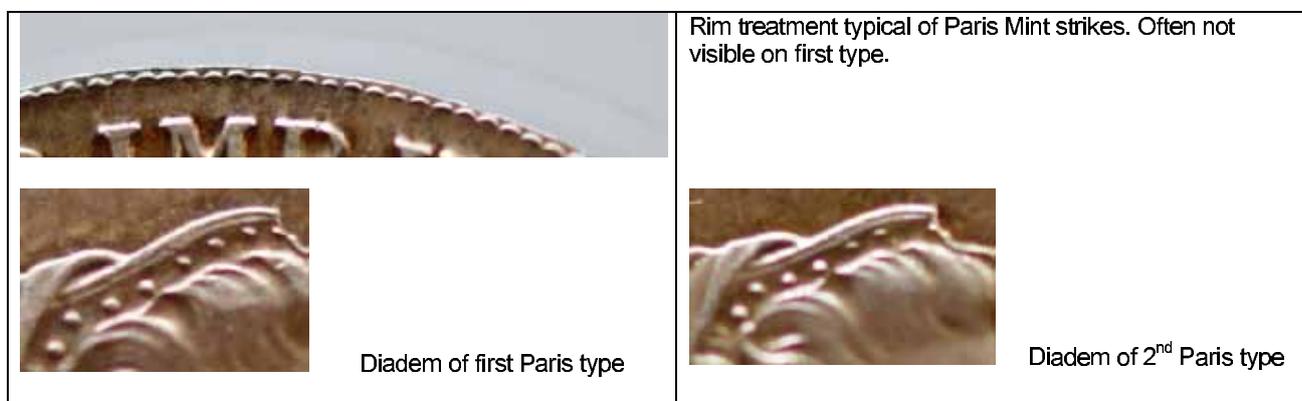
		<p>The dots within the eagle's beak can also be used as an identifier: as identified by Juan Mercadante (personal correspondence with the author)</p>
<p>1-2-1 Tail feather formation typical of London Mint (also Bombay and Calcutta) dies.</p>	<p>The figure "1" in the date is typical of early London Mint strikes. MTTs in London were not struck with collars. However the method by which the edge was struck at the time hardened the outer part of the blank which then acted as a collar when the coin was struck. Broome (letter to the Royal Mint) identified that "later strikes" evidenced strong fish-tailing of the letters and numerals. The Royal Mint hypothesised that this may have been due to a change in how the edge was impressed, which allowed the blank to expand, with the fish-tailing being a result of poor metal flow. It seems more likely that the fish-tailing may be indicative of one or both Indian mints (see previous page).</p>	
		<p>The picture to the left is from a coin purchased as a 1949 Birmingham Mint example. The base of the "1" is flatter and significant fish-tailing of the numerals is in evidence. As noted in Part 1, the dies for the 1949 Birmingham Mint production were shipped from Brussels. However, this fish tailing is observed on an MTT confirmed to be from the Bombay Mint. Accordingly this fish-tailing, of letters as well as numerals, is indicative of Bombay (and perhaps Calcutta) Mint product. Further research needs to be undertaken to confirm whether this fish-tailing is an exclusively Indian mint marker. A discussion with Graeme Dyer (Royal Mint Historical Services) confirmed that the fish-tailing could be linked to a larger size blank (amongst other factors) which is a feature of the Indian Mint MTTs.</p>

It may well have been prudent for Ethiopians to refuse coins from official Italian sources so as to protect themselves from potential future action on the part of the invaders.

[See chart p. 34]

Paris Mint

There are two varieties from this Mint. The main identification for either of the two strikes is the edge treatment which is unlike all other MTTs (of any vintage). The rim was marked by separate squashed dots; all other MTT variants have some form of saw tooth decoration. The rarer first type does not always have these dots present. Accordingly it can also be identified by the edge arabesque (see table, p. 37). The differences between the two varieties are the pearls in the diadem and broken arabesques on the edge of the second type. Although the Paris Mint officially stopped producing the MTT in 1961, it continued to sell the coin to collectors from its Mint shop until 1965. As a result of this the second Paris type is the one that is most easily (relatively speaking) found in BU condition.



Brussels/Birmingham Mints (1937-1955)

Both mints supplied Samuel Montagu & Co. As the same matrix was used to produce the dies the coins are almost identical. The only differentiation point between them is the edge markings. The key identifiers for the type are:



1. On the obverse the diadem contains only seven pearls with a space at the left end of the row where the eighth pearl should be.

- On the reverse the Patriarchal Cross in the arms of Hungary contain only two cross-bars rather than the three which are standard for all other post-1853 strikes.

The edge markings are shown in the table on p. 37.

Utrecht

This variety is identified by the saltire, Patriarchal Cross in the Hungarian arms, and the edge rosette. The pictures below are copyrighted to the Utrecht Mint Museum and are reproduced with their permission.

	
Very symmetrical well defined saltire	Asymmetrical top cross bar.

Edge Comparisons

The differences between the edge decorations are best perceived when the different varieties are compared with each other. Accordingly the edge markings were not included in the previous section and are covered in the table on page 37.

As intimated earlier, Bombay and Calcutta Mint coins are extremely difficult to identify. In five years of searching, the author has found only one coin (while finalising this paper) that can be definitely attributed to one of the Indian mints. A previous coin identified by Walter Hafner from photos is now regarded by the author as a standard London strike. At the moment, the only conclusive identifier is the diameter of the coin. Where London coins are 39.5 mm (40 mm if the high points of the edge script are included in the measurement), the MTT produced by the two Indian Mints are closer to 41 mm in diameter.

Conclusion

As this article was being completed a copy of a 1990 work, "The Most Beautiful Coin in the World", arrived and again amply illustrated to the author the problems associated with this coin in the literature. Unfortunately the content of the small book was, in too many places, as arguable as the title. Having reviewed many other works on the coin, I was surprised to find significant and new variance with other works on the MTT. One contradiction, when traced back to the quoted reference, was a quotation error. Other contradictions could not be so quickly dismissed and, because they are significantly different to other reports on the coin, they will require significant research to validate the claims. In noting this example, one of many, the author advises the reader that although every effort has been made to present an accurate history and numismatic report on the 1935-1962 striking of the MTT, the reader should not be surprised if at a later date some of the story has changed.

For the author the MTT has been both a rewarding and frustrating collecting focus. The MTT is certainly not a common collecting interest but even those with a more mainstream interest should

Mint	Arabesque (Three sets of two on the edge)	Rosette	Edge iron meeting point (after "CLEMENTIA")	Comment/Other
Vienna 1900				Note: Edge iron meeting point photo is of a worn example. Left-hand leaf is the least worn.
Vienna 1932-35				
Rome				
London				
Paris	First type 			Circle on Arabesque is "squashed" (applies to both types)
	Second type 			Four out of six arabesques are broken as seen in the far left picture
Brussels				
Birmingham*				
Utrecht				Photos supplied and used with the permission of the Utrecht Mint Museum

respect the coin as being the “Empress” to the “Emperors” of trade dollars (The Spanish and later Mexican dollar). It is perhaps that significance and ubiquity, combined with the different “eyes” viewing it, that have created so much variance. Those “eyes” include economists, economic historians, social historians, military commanders, politicians, travellers/explorers, spies, journalists, bullion dealers and numismatists.

A final note:

The fascination with the MTT lies with the economic, social and military history of the coin. At times the MTT appears to have been a factor in historical events that have shaped our modern world. For example, in conducting the research on the Rome minting of the MTT, I was struck by the fact that when Austria gave the MTT to Italy it was trying to preserve its independence. Yet the very action of giving up the coin may have hastened the Anschluss. This hastening would have been due to the unanticipated financial stress on Mussolini’s regime, ultimately making an Italian alliance with Germany more attractive; however, had Austria refused it was just as likely, Mussolini being offended, that Italy would abandon Austria to its fate.

Credit

In conducting the research for this paper the author visited the UK twice to view records at the National Archives at Kew and visited the Royal Mint’s Historical services in Wales. The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Dr Kevin Clancy (Secretary to the Royal Mint Advisory Team and Head of the Mint’s Historical Services) and his team at the Royal Mint in Llantrisant. Of particular assistance was Graham Dyer (previously Librarian and Curator at the Royal Mint Museum and now, though retired, a consultant to the Historical Services). Mr Dyer commenced working at the Mint at the same time that the Royal Mint’s involvement with the MTT was coming to a close and was able to give first-hand impressions of some of the personalities involved in the decision-making at that time. Further invaluable assistance was provided by Juan Mercadante, a fellow collector of MTTs, who was able to provide photographs and invaluable observations from his collecting of these coins. Credit must also go to Martin Purdy, Editor of the NZNJ, for his patience and feedback.

Postscript: the 1937 Swiss strike

Leypold’s 1988 article includes photographs of the obverse and reverse of this strike. Unfortunately the photo quality is such the reproduction here is not possible; however, the quality was enough to establish that many of the identification features for that strike are almost the same as the known Swiss gold strike. The relevant features found on a gold example, which should also be present on the silver coin, are listed below:

Obverse:



Distinctive 'G' in “REG”



Small “S.F.”

Reverse:



Distinctive saltire - Patriarchal cross with two cross bars - Unique cross above top crown



Two dots in centre shield as seen in Vienna Mint strikes

Unfortunately the gold strike available was one more commonly found that lacks the edge inscription, therefore it is not possible to provide a comparison in this paper.

Notes

- 1 Author's designation based on weight, 20 ducats being the lighter weight coin of 51 grams
- 2 Die cracks are not limited only to Rome Mint strikes, however the die crack combined with a diameter of 40 mm and a weight of 28.07 – 28.14 grams clearly indicate a Rome Mint coin.
- 3 The term “never” is used cautiously. The reader should interpret it only to mean that, in the literature reviewed to date, no reference has noted the use of the tail feather formation for authentication.
- 4 Photographs of the Birmingham identification features were kindly provided by Juan Mercadante, an Italian MTT collector. The coin photographed is the copper trial strike.

CHARON'S FEE

An earlier version of this poem by Doug Carian FRNSNZ appeared in NZNJ 74 (December 1996)

All the time I was in Greece
I kept an obol,
or at least its modern equivalent,
loose in my pocket
where I could touch it a dozen times a day.

Worry beads in hand,
I needed to be sure
the Ferryman had no excuse
to leave me on the wrong side
of the river Styx.

I didn't think he'd accept my credit card.

The Society still has a number of enamelled silver membership pins in stock. These were produced in the 1960s and are still in the original sealed plastic packets as received from the manufacturer.

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NEW FELLOWS

Leslie John Carlisle, OAM, Hon. FRNSNZ

Les Carlisle was born in country New South Wales, Australia, in 1929. After fifty years of interest in numismatics he was awarded the Order of Australia in January 2010 for “the study and documentation of Australian Coins, Medals, Tokens and Memorabilia”. In 2008 he published *Australian Historical Medals 1788-1988*, following twenty-five years of on-going research to update the earlier *Australian Commemorative Medals and Medalets from 1788*.

Over many years he has contributed articles to numerous magazines for the Australiana Society, Australian Numismatic Society and the Numismatic Association of Australia. An Honorary Numismatist to the Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales for over thirty-five years, he has an ongoing interest in agricultural history and awards, helping to collate and record their collections, as well as documenting the history of the various country Show Societies in Australia.



Les Carlisle receiving his OAM award from NSW Governor Marie Bashir

The award of an Honorary Fellowship of the Society was made in recognition of Les’s lifetime of contributions to Australasian numismatics and for raising the prominence of numismatics through his many achievements.



Hamish Craig MacMaster, FRNSNZ

Born in Christchurch in 1961, Hamish MacMaster is currently Secretary of the Society. From an early age his primary numismatic interest has been New Zealand commemorative medals, inspired by the wonderful medal collections in the Canterbury Museum. In 2009 the Society published the *Catalogue of New Zealand Commemorative Medals 1941-2007*, authored by Hamish and edited by Martin Purdy, FRNSNZ. The Catalogue is a follow-up work to Leon Morel’s classic *Medallic Commemoratives of New Zealand 1865-1940*. Commented Hamish at last year’s launch, “Many of these commemorative items are not only of considerable significance to New Zealand national, provincial and family history, they are works of individual art and deserve to be fully recorded.”

Hamish is a regular contributor of articles to the Society’s Journal, mainly on the issue of New Zealand commemorative medals. In 2010 he delivered the Allan Sutherland Memorial Lecture on this topic, only the sixth time the lecture has been given since its inception in 1969. Hamish is currently working on a second publication, this time on New Zealand Challenge Coins, which is planned for publication in mid-2011.

COLLECTOR ISSUES BY NZ POST 2009 - 2010 (mid-year to mid-year)

New Zealand Decimal Coin Collection – various mints

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage	Price
New Zealand Decimal Coin Collection	Bronze, Cu-Ni, Aluminium-bronze	Brilliant Uncirculated	Various	Various	1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2	Card with images	1,000 <i>limit reached</i>	\$35.00

2010 FIFA World Cup – produced by BH Mayer's Kunstprägeanstalt GmbH

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage Limit	Price
2010 FIFA World Cup	Silver – 0.999	Silver Proof	1oz	40.0mm	\$1.00	Jewellery Box	10,000	\$99.50

2010 Icons of New Zealand – produced by BH Mayer's Kunstprägeanstalt GmbH

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage	Price
2010 Icons of New Zealand Gold Proof Coin	Gold – 0.999	Gold Proof	1/4oz	26.0mm	\$10.00	Jewellery Box	1,300	\$650.00
2010 Icons of New Zealand Silver Proof Coin	Silver – 0.999	Silver Proof	1oz	40.0mm	\$1.00	Jewellery Box	8,500	\$89.00
2010 Icons of New Zealand Silver Bullion Coin (specimen quality)	Silver – 0.999	Silver Bullion	1oz	40.0mm	\$1.00	Card with images	10,000	\$60.00

2010 Maori Art – Heitiki Coin – produced by BH Mayer's Kunstprägeanstalt GmbH

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage	Price
2010 Maori Art – Heitiki Coin Gold Proof Coin	Gold – 0.999	Gold Proof	1oz	40.0mm	\$10.00	Wooden Designed Waka Huia (treasure box)	500 <i>limit reached</i>	\$2,650.00
2010 Maori Art – Heitiki Coin Silver Proof Coin	Silver – 0.999	Silver Proof	1oz	40.0mm	\$1.00	Wooden Designed Waka Huia (treasure box)	4,000 <i>limit reached</i>	\$129.00

2010 Ancient Reptiles of New Zealand (set) – produced by BH Mayer's Kunstprägestalt GmbH

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage	Price
2009 Giants of New Zealand Silver Bullion Coin Set (5 coins)	Silver – 0.999	Silver Bullion	5 x 1oz	5 x 40.0mm	5 X \$1.00	Leather Journal	1,500	\$450.00

2010 Annual Coin – Maui's Dolphin – produced by Royal Dutch Mint

Name	Alloy	Finish	Weight	Diameter	Denomination	Case	Mintage	Price
2010 Maui's Dolphin Silver Proof Coin	Silver – 0.999	Silver Proof	31.10g	38.70mm	\$5.00	Jewellery Box	4,000	\$89.00
2010 Maui's Dolphin Brilliant Uncirculated Coin	Cupro-nickel	Brilliant Uncirculated	31.10g	38.70mm	\$5.00	Card with images	2,000 <i>limit reached</i>	\$35.00
2010 Maui's Dolphin Silver Proof Coin Set	Various*	Various	Various*	Various	10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2	Wallet display	1,500 <i>limit reached</i>	\$149.00
2010 Maui's Dolphin Brilliant Uncirculated Coin Set	Various*	Various	Various*	Various	10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2	Card with images	2,000 <i>limit reached</i>	\$59.00

*Note differences in the "Collector set" coins for 2010 compared to circulation strikes (and previous years' "collector set" issues):

- \$2 Brass 11.25g (was Aluminium Bronze 10.00g)
- \$1 Brass 8.60g (was Aluminium Bronze 8.00g)
- 50c Copper Nickel 5.59g (was Nickel plated steel 5.00g)
- 20c Copper Nickel 4.45g (was Nickel plated steel 4.00g)
- 10c Copper 3.73g (was Copper plated steel 3.30g)

SIMPSON, THE VC AND THE DONKEY

John Cresswell



Simpson and His Donkey (photo).

The image has been reversed. Donkeys, mules and horses are approached and mounted from the rear, or left side.

In a great revival of sentiment, sense of history and nationhood, every Australian and New Zealand child has at least a vague idea of Gallipoli and the heroic deeds, not only of the Anzacs, but also of the Turks. Gallipoli was the first time Anzacs tasted 'real' war. Previous campaigns had been treated more as recreational events. True, the odd soldier got killed, but generally, the Sudan, New Zealand and South African Wars had been treated by the participants as a great adventure. Gallipoli and, later, France were different. People got killed in huge numbers and wounded in the most ghastly fashion. It was not fun any more.

The Gallipoli landings on 25 April 1915 were heralded by a colossal bombardment by the big guns of British warships and initially some 34,000 soldiers of the Australian, New Zealand, British, French and Indian Armies landed in the face of the machine guns of 62,000 Turks defending their homeland.

The Anzacs landed at what was to become Anzac Cove and the killed and wounded literally piled up on the beach. There were thousands of non-combatants among the soldiers (my uncle, George Clay, as Orderly Sergeant for the 3rd Australian Field Ambulance, claimed to be the first unarmed man to land. His job was to establish the First Aid Post on the beach). The military commanders were occupied with war and the responsibility for collecting the wounded lay with the Chief Medical Officer of the Division. Every company had its stretcher-bearers. These men were relieved of all regular fatigues and other duties but, on the down side, were expected to bring in wounded under fire.

The main problem for stretcher bearers was that they could not take cover and had to walk upright, protected only by a Red Cross arm band. They were at the mercy of Turkish snipers. If one bearer fell the other man and the wounded soldier could go no further. It was also a campaign that had no facilities for prisoners and on both sides, those who were captured were usually despatched by gun or bayonet.

An Australian Army Medical Corpsman, John Simpson (actually John Simpson Kirkpatrick), caught a donkey and put soldiers with limb wounds on it and led the docile animal back and forth to the clearance station on the beach. He made many trips, always under fire, saved many lives and spared another soldier to help carry a stretcher. Simpson was permitted to stay in the Indian Army camp to be with his donkey. It was only a matter of days before he was shot through the heart, but not before he had been photographed at least twice and had become a hero to the Australian troops.

Simpson landed from the destroyer HMS Ribble with Sergeant Clay and other stretcher-bearers. The main supply problem was water, as the Gallipoli Peninsula was very dry. The Officer Commanding the Australian and New Zealand troops, Lieutenant-General Birdwood, had foreseen this and had engaged Greek muleteers in Alexandria to bring their animals to Gallipoli. He also arranged for a large supply of kerosene tins to hold water and be carried on either side of each donkey in a sort of saddle. The Greeks were not happy about being in battle and were returned to Alexandria and the project was abandoned, with the donkeys being set free or taken to the Indian lines. It was one

or more of these animals that Simpson commandeered. Most of the donkeys found their way into the camp of the Sikhs of the Indian Mule Cart Transport and also the Indian mountain batteries and others. There was also a Zion Mule Corps with the 29th British Division (240 men and six officers of this unit landed at Anzac Cove). Mules and donkeys played a major part in the transport of ammunition, water and wounded. Later, the New Zealand Division in France was to stage a "horse show" where not only horses but mules took part in flat and steeplechase races. The use of donkeys was also common during the World War II desert campaign in North Africa.

John (Jack) Simpson Kirkpatrick was born in 1892 in South Shields, County Durham, England, the son of a merchant seaman. He worked as a milk boy for four years to 1903 and later spent a year with the Durham Territorial Regiment. In 1909 he joined the merchant navy and in 1910 he jumped ship at Newcastle, New South Wales. He worked as a cane cutter in Queensland, a coal-miner in New South Wales and gold-miner in Western Australia. He volunteered for the Australian Army in Perth and was posted to the 3rd Field Ambulance of the Australian Army Medical Corps. He landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and soon found his donkey. Less than a month later he was killed in Monash Valley. He had carried water up to the troops on his way to collect wounded, and this lost him Red Cross support as their rules forbade giving assistance to troops engaged in fighting.



Henderson and His Donkey by Moore-Jones

Simpson became known as "The Man with the Donkey".

He was mentioned in despatches but not awarded any other honour, perhaps because Henderson and others followed his example but did not receive the publicity he had. His commanding officer, Colonel Howse, the first ever Australian VC, in spite of recommendations from Colonel Monash for the award of a Victoria Cross and from Lieutenant-Colonel Sutton for a Distinguished Conduct Medal, believed that a soldier should not receive the award for just doing his job. A British stretcher-bearer, Lance-Corporal W.R. Parker, was later awarded the VC for bravery under fire. No other "donkey man" appears to have been recommended for a special award. In 1967 the suggestion was again raised but a request for a VC award by the Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt and the Governor-General was rejected on the grounds that it would set "a dangerous precedent".

Many medical corps stretcher bearers also used donkeys and Simpson was not the only one. The slaughter of ANZAC troops was tremendous and few of the survivors escaped desperate wounds, dysentery or shell-shock. Of those killed in battle at Gallipoli, 2721 were New Zealanders and 7300 Australian. The most famous New Zealand donkey man was Private Richard Alexander Henderson, a schoolteacher of Auckland. He was immortalised in the painting "Murphy and His Donkey" based on a photograph of Henderson with a donkey and wounded soldier. And here the confusion starts. Reports and rumours built on the story of the donkeys and the hero was variously called Simpson, Murphy or Henderson.

Henderson died in 1958 aged 63, totally disabled from his wounds. By 1940 he was an alcoholic and a chain-smoker. He became a born-again Christian in 1954. When Simpson was killed in 1915,

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ANZAC Commemorative Medal 1967 (MM1967/6; C1915/3). This was Instituted by the Australian and New Zealand Governments and awarded to surviving veterans of ANZAC. It was designed by the Australian artist Raymond Ewers who based it on the Moore-Jones painting of Henderson. The depiction is named "Simpson and His Donkey."

is now in the National Gallery of Australia. Drawings were made from the painting (which had been made from a photograph) and included in school books. Statues were erected at the National War Memorials in Australia and New Zealand and variously labelled "Henderson (or Simpson) and his (or Simpson's) Donkey." Stamps were issued to commemorate Simpson.

Henderson took over the donkey. He was photographed and the soldier artist H. Moore-Jones painted his picture. After the evacuation of Gallipoli, Henderson served in Flanders and won the Military Medal for bravery in the field at the Battle of the Somme in 1916, He was then wounded and gassed at Passchendaele. When he was demobilised he became a blacksmith, a gold assayer and then went back to teaching. By 1934 his wounds forced him to give up work. "My chest, heart and almost total blindness made me unfit for anything." He related that "With a joke and a smile I often looked death in the face in Gallipoli and later in France. The calmness was only on the outside as inside I had nothing but fear and absolute terror".

The story of Simpson inspired the soldiers of ANZAC and the public of Australia. Writers who had never been near Gallipoli added exaggeration and rumour and the true history of events became buried in a wave of misinformation. Photographs were printed with erroneous captions such as "Simpson of Red Cross, recommended for VC". The man was named Simpson, Kirkpatrick, Henderson, Murphy and Scotty. The donkey was variously named Murphy, Duffy, Abdul and Queen Elizabeth (Simpson and Henderson used a number of donkeys). Photographs were reversed with the soldier on the right instead of the left side of the donkey.

When the painting of "Henderson and his Donkey" was done by Moore-Jones in 1926, it was immediately adopted by Australian authorities as "Simpson and his Donkey" and even "Murphy and his Donkey". The painting, or one version of it,



A postcard with a scene almost exactly the same as on the ANZAC Commemorative Medal 1967. It is thought to be genuine photo of Simpson. He was in the Australian Army, not the Red Cross.



This sculpture at the New Zealand National War Memorial is entitled "Henderson and His Donkey" and is based on the Moore-Jones painting. It was unveiled on Anzac Day 1990 by Henderson's son.

2010

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The final word (1934) was left to the Commander of the 19th Turkish Division at Gallipoli, Mustapha Kemal Bey, who, under the titular name of Kemal Ataturk, became President of the new Republic of Turkey. Few, if any, victorious commanders have ever offered such magnanimous words to men of an enemy of a hostile religion who had invaded his country and caused a quarter of million deaths and untold misery to the rest of the population.

"There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments," he said. "To us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers who sent your sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now living in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."

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The Gallipoli Star was struck privately in 1990 to mark the 60th anniversary of ANZAC by Ross Smith of Canberra and presented to survivors. It had been approved by George V but



*Simpson's Grave at Anzac Cove
Author's photo 2009*



The Purple Cross of the RSPCA awarded posthumously to Simpson's donkey "Murphy" and for all the donkeys used by Simpson.



Stamp for the 50th anniversary of Anzac. It represents Simpson and his donkey, designed by Carl Andrew and based on the Simpson Shrine of Remembrance statue in Melbourne by Wallace Anderson.

ROLL OF FELLOWS

The following is the current list of Fellows of the Society.

	Appointed
A.G. Barker	1967
R.P. Hargreaves	1977
L.G. Morel	1977
A.F. Robb	1982
F.K. Gottermeyer	1987
K.A. Rodgers	1988
A.W. Grant	2003
C.R. Libby	2003
M.L. Purdy	2003
J.B. Duncan (Hon. Fellow)	2004
J.A. Brook	2005
D.M. Carian	2005
B. Delahunt	2005
S. de Young	2007
H.C. MacMaster	2010
L.J. Carlisle (Hon. Fellow)	2010

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SPLIT NOTES

Ray Hargreaves, FRNSNZ

In 1849 the Auckland newspaper the *Southern Cross* (21 Aug. 1849: 4) carried a report on how the Directors of the Bank of England had given a Mr Baldwin, who was known to split newspaper pages, an old bank note, which he took home. On the following day he amazed the bankers by returning the note split in two - that is, the obverse side had been carefully separated from the reverse side - with no apparent damage to the printed sides. Baldwin was paid a fee, but he refused to divulge how he had achieved the split.

In New Zealand there seems to have been no further interest in paper splitting until in the mid-1860s when the *Otago Daily Times* reported that one of the attractions at the forthcoming International Exhibition to be held in Dunedin was a display of split pages from various London newspapers, and from an old Bible. It was being sent from England by a Mr Millard, of the Windsor Castle Royal Library (*ODT*, 12 Sept. 1864: 5). Splitting paper was regarded as particularly valuable for use on old engravings which, when separated from printing on the reverse, could be mounted with greater effect on plain white paper.

In the 1890s some New Zealand newspapers published information on how paper could be split in two. For example, the following appeared in the *Bruce Herald* (21 Feb. 1890: 5):

There are two ways of splitting a piece of paper. One is to lay the sheet of paper on a piece of glass, soak it thoroughly with water, and then press it smoothly all over the glass. With a little care the upper half of the sheet can be peeled off, leaving the under half on the glass. Let this dry and it will come off the glass easily; of course the glass must be perfectly clean. The second way is a better one, but it requires some good practice. Paste a piece of cloth or strong paper on each side of the sheet to be split. When it has thoroughly dried pull the two pieces of cloth apart suddenly and violently. The paste can then be softened with water, and the two halves of the sheet easily taken off the cloths.

Interestingly, a French writer suggested that with the second method, which he described more fully, the two parts should be pulled apart gently! (*North Otago Times*, 25 Nov. 1892: 1).

Although the occasional illegal splitting in England of Bank of England notes, along with the uttering of a split note in Melbourne, was reported in the 1860s, (*Daily Southern Cross*, 2 Sept. 1864: 4), and the splitting of notes in Europe and the USA during the later decades of the 19th century noted, there appears to have been no successful attempt at such in New Zealand until after the First World War. At least none were reported widely in the press of the day.

A spurious note discovered in Eltham is the earliest recording of a split note in New Zealand that I have traced. The term "split note" is not used, but the description of it as "a piece of parchment with a perfect imitation of the back of a £1 Bank of New Zealand note printed on each side", suggests that it probably was (*Stratford Evening Post*, 21 Oct. 1919: 4). Some four or so months later the *Ohinemuri Gazette* (3 March 1920: 2) reported that a split note had been handed in by a local businessman to the Eltham branch of the Bank of New Zealand. Note-splitting was, the paper said, "a by no means uncommon swindle".

The 1920s was the heyday of note splitting. Instances were reported not only in Eltham, but also in Masterton, Gisborne, Dunedin, Christchurch, Ashburton and Wellington. However, it

is clear that not all cases known to banks were necessarily reported in the press. In some instances tradesmen and others who detected an attempt to give them a split note merely refused to accept it, and thus the “splitter” was free to try and pass it somewhere else. Apparently there was no legal requirement to inform the police of the attempted swindle.

In newspaper reports, a consistent observation was that neither side of a successfully split note had in any way been mutilated, and that the undertaking had been done with great skill.

In 1924 the Associated Banks in New Zealand followed what the Bank of England had done three-quarters of a century earlier - they paid a man three guineas to demonstrate to them how splitting was done. The purpose of the demonstration is not clear, as it did not result in any diminution in the number of notes split. In July 1924 it was reported that a Wellington bank had received three split £20 notes, whilst another bank had had 12 or 13 split 10 shilling notes plus an unspecified number of £1 and £5 notes. (*NZ Herald*, 3 July 1924: 6.) In August 1924 a bank official stated that his bank had had 18 split notes handed in over the previous four months. Interestingly, he remarked that all had been faces of notes - not one back had been received (*Evening Post*, 19 Aug. 1924: 8).

Passing a split note was achieved in similar ways to passing counterfeit notes. Any place that was busy, as for example a crowded hotel bar, or at a racecourse, was ideal, particularly if the former location was poorly lit. A split note placed in the centre of a roll of notes generally meant that a quick count of the ends of the notes usually missed that a note in the middle was but single-sided. A single split note folded in half would often go unnoticed when passed. Businesspeople, and the public at large, were advised that a folded note should always be opened out, and in all circumstances both sides of a note should be examined before change was given. A Chinese fruiterer in Wellington did this when he was given a folded pound note in payment for a packet of cigarettes. On opening it out he discovered that it was only the back of a note. The customer hurriedly threw down some coins and departed. However, while the fruiterer had not been swindled in this instance, a later examination of his till revealed that a second split note had been successfully passed in the shop earlier (*Evening Post*, 15 July 1924: 8).

Other ways of detecting a split note included whether a proffered note felt thinner and flimsier than usual, though “splitters” at times pasted tissue paper on the plain side in order to give the note a more normal feel. In other instances part of a lower-value split note would be pasted on the back of a higher value note, so besides feeling normal, a quick glance would not make the receiver suspicious.

The last report found so far is from Dunedin where three split £1 notes had been passed during rush hour at a local hotel in mid-1949 (*ODT*, 29 Aug. 1949: 4). But as late as September 1961, there were reports of split 10s and £1 notes in circulation in South Australia (*ODT*, 26 Sept. 1961: 11).

There appear to have been a limited number of arrests of people for note splitting. One case was of Edward Jack Cromer (who had a couple of aliases) who split a Union Bank £1 note using a pin in a hotel bar, an action which he claimed was to win a bet for a bottle of whisky (*NZ Truth*, 5 July 1924: 6). Unfortunately his efforts were witnessed by a detective and a plain-clothes constable. At the police station a partially split Bank of New Zealand 10 shilling note was also found on him. In the Magistrate’s Court hearing Cromer’s counsel claimed that “splitting a note was no more forgery than tearing a note,” and in any case his client had had no intention of attempting to pass the split note but intended to have it replaced at a bank. At the Supreme Court trial the jury decided that the accused had

had no intent of using the split notes to defraud anyone, so Cromer was found not guilty (*Evening Post*, 20 Aug. 1926: 11).

At his Supreme Court trial In 1939 a 23 year-old labourer, James Arthur Kilmartin, faced charges of forgery, uttering, and attempted uttering of split notes in Wellington and Hutt Valley. Surprisingly, his only punishment, when found guilty, was that he was placed on probation for two years (*ODT*, 19 May 1939: 13).

Note-splitting was a means of creating false money which required a high degree of care and patience. Added to this was the problem of the time which was necessary for creating a number of false notes, as each note had to be split individually. As a result, this means of creating further illegal notes did not appeal to many would-be forgers. In recent times note splitting has apparently become a lost art, as it became much easier, and quicker, to use a photocopier. With the advent of plastic notes splitting has no doubt become impossible.

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THE IMPOSTER

An earlier version of this poem by Doug Carian FRNSNZ appeared in NZNJ 45 (January 1968)

It's genuine all right - the dealer said,
Almost uncirculated, look at the sharpness!
Found last year in a Roman hoard,
Must have been hidden for centuries - he said.
If only it could speak, what stories it could tell.

I turned it over,
Better fickle Felicitas than deceitful Caesar.

Stories?
Did you see the real Rome,
The nobility and the corruption?
Were you there when the eagles weakened
And Attila knocked at the gates?
Were you at Golgotha, or even in Gaul?
Did you freeze in the north on Hadrian's Wall?
Did you see Byzantium and pyramids from the Nile?
Did you revel in eastern markets,
Feel the hands of merchants, beggars and slaves?
Did the colours and sounds excite you?
Did you cringe from the stink?
What did you buy?
 Where?
 When?
 For whom?

No!
You have no stories to tell.
You were safe in your pot-bellied sanctuary,
The frightened talent of a forgotten man.

Almost uncirculated!
Honour's demolished with such a term.

THE MEDALS OF ROBERT (BOB) GILLAM

Hamish MacMaster FRNSNZ



One of the most versatile, prolific and gifted New Zealand engravers has been Robert (Bob) John Gillam. He is also one of the least known.

Gillam & Gillam Industrial Engravers, Frankton 1969

Born in 1946 in Rotorua, Bob Gillam completed a five-year hand engraving apprenticeship in 1966 with Laurence Engravers in Hamilton. This was followed by a number of years spent training as a manufacturing jeweller, patternmaker and stone-setter in Auckland and in 1968/9 he opened a business at 67 Kent St, Frankton, with his cousin Ted Gillam *“who had some capital, but no engraving experience”*. Known as Gillam and Gillam Industrial Engravers, this business operated from the premises at the front of the second-hand auction house of Lugton & Lloyd.

The cousins purchased a pantograph engraving machine and learned how to use it. Bob drew and hand engraved line patterns in plastic that were copied with the pantograph. He engraved a lot of badge dies for RF (Dick) Senior of Auckland and so learned the

basics of die cutting and combined that with the traditional hand engraving techniques to produce three-dimensional effects.

It was while at Gillam and Gillam that Bob engraved his first medals for the Waikato Mint, including the 1970 Rugby Centennial Medal (MM1970/3). Noted Waikato Mint's George Hawkins, *“Bob certainly engraved every one of my early medals, Ted focused on the repetition work. Bob did them all. His system was working on a brown industrial piece of Lino, he would then hand-engage that at about a diameter of 18 inches. Using that as a pattern, he would then pantograph as a one dimension into a die, which was then literally dug out with chisels.”*

By the following year (1971) the attribution for engraving (on the information sheets accompanying the Waikato Mint medals) is clearly that of R Gillam alone (rather than Gillam and Gillam) with the medals being struck by an Auckland firm, Brass Forgings. Bob Gillam's association with Waikato Mint lasted until 1977, by which time he had engraved the dies for twelve further Waikato Mint medals. Dies were also cut for Auckland medal manufacturing firm Hansen and Berry and replacement dies for the Fire Service Medals of Mayer and Toye.

Westside Manufacturing, Waihi 1979

In the late seventies Bob and Ted opened two jewellery shops in Commerce St, Frankton, which Ted managed while Bob operated the engraving business. In 1978 they purchased Frankton Jewellers and sold the engraving business. A year later Bob sold his jeweller's shop interests to Ted and went back to contract badge die making and established his own New Zealand-wide jewellery lines, all hand engraved. It was at this time that Bob moved and settled in the Waihi area and became a major supplier of silver engraved and die-struck pendant jewellery to Michael Hill Jewellers, an association that was to last for ten years.

Also at this time Bob designed and built his first press, a 200-ton hydraulically powered ram specifically designed for coin pressing. He worked from the old Waihi PYE factory which housed a collection of specialised small manufacturing businesses, including precision engineers and tool makers. Under the name Westside Manufacturing, he developed the first large 46 mm copper souvenir medals depicting major NZ areas both north and south. These met a ready market,

but were withdrawn in favour of commemorative medallions for the 1990 150th Commemoration celebrations. While this venture was not a commercial success with low public sales, the number of different medals produced between 1989 and 1991 exceeded sixty and commemorate a wide variety of local and national events.

Coin Link NZ, Christchurch 2000

After the 1989-91 issues, Bob went back to the tourist collector coin market with a 30 mm diameter brass medal and made the first NZ make-your-own coining press. People paid \$2 and stamped their own 'coin'. This was superseded with the development of vending machines that Bob placed at major tourist centres that sold a pre-minted medal of that area for \$2. These were 30 x 1.6 mm solid brightly struck brass tokens and Bob covered New Zealand's major tourist attractions with issues depicting images of those locations using dies designed and cut by him. This business was called Coin Link NZ and, following Bob's shift to Christchurch, it was sold to a Christchurch firm, M&S Brooks, in 2000. (See 'New Zealand "Tourist Dollars"', NZNJ 83, Dec. 2005: 24-28.)

During this time in Christchurch Bob struck a 30 mm brass medal for the Otago air show with milled edge. In 2001 he was associated with a commercial venture called the Chatham Island Note Corporation to issue coinage for the Chatham Islands which was later stopped by the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. That saw the striking of a \$5 copper 'coin' depicting the last Moriori Tommy Solomon and a 38 mm \$50 in fine silver. Only 20 of the silver coin were ever made.

In 2005 Bob moved to Sydney where he again established a souvenir coin business. Already he has produced over 80 collector medals / tokens in Australia. His present business uses a 230-ton coining press and is called Custom Coins PTY Ltd, operating from Lawson NSW.

The outstanding features of Bob Gillam's work are its sheer variety and prolific number. In looking back at his career, Bob commented on the difficulty of making medal production commercially viable and contrasted his approach to that of the well known New Zealand coin, stamp and medal designer James Berry. In the 1970s Berry *"took lots of time to design and hand craft the master plaster patterns that were used by a machine engraver to produce a die"*. Bob noted wistfully that *"the mint engravers have had the luxury of a lot of time to enjoy many cups of tea, a guaranteed wage and eventually a high quality production."* Bob did not enjoy this luxury. *"I have generally had to learn to draw and make an average pattern in 2-3 hours and cut a die in similar time to be able to keep a low volume medal viable."* It is time that his achievement in doing so and at the same time creating an incredible range of interesting commemorative medals receives the greater recognition that it so richly deserves.

New Zealand Commemorative Medals of Bob Gillam

The reference number denoting individual medals is taken from the [Catalogue of New Zealand Commemorative Medals 1941-2007](#). Since the publication of the Catalogue the full extent of Bob Gillam's output has become apparent and a number of his medals were not recorded in the Catalogue. Where this has occurred these new additions are recorded by their year of issue and NEW. They will be assigned a catalogue number in the forthcoming supplement to the Catalogue due for publication in 2012 which will record all new additions. Note that some details of metal composition have been updated compared to the information published in the Catalogue of NZ Commemorative Medals 1941-2007.

Waikato Mint period 1970-1977, during which time Bob Gillam did the engraving and manufactured of dies for the following Waikato Mint medals:

- 1970/3 Rugby Centenary**
- 1971/1 New Zealand Bred Racehorses**
- 1971/10 One Ton Yachting Cup**
- 1973/1 Steam Locomotive Class JA**
- 1973/2 Steam Locomotive Class AB**

1973/3	Locomotive Class KA
1973/4	Thames Borough Centenary 1973
1974/1	New Zealand Motoring Pioneer
1974/2	Commonwealth Games Christchurch
1974/9	Manchester Block Centenary
1974/10	Death of Norman Kirk
1976/2	Centenary of Waikato County
1977/1	Elvis Presley

Waitangi Mint

Following his time preparing dies for the Waikato Mint, Bob Gillam worked on the following medal for the Waitangi Mint.

1977/3 Royal Visit

“This Royal Visit was a joint venture between Hansen and Berry with me making the three-dimensional portrait pattern of the Queen and Prince Philip. Engraved by Max Elbe I regard this as one of my best efforts as the Queen’s profile is so well known and had to be correct.”

Waihi period 1989-1991, during which time Bob designed and engraved over sixty medals, many associated with the 1990 Commemoration.

Lake Coleridge Power Station 75th Jubilee

1989/2

Obverse	In inner circle Lake Coleridge Power Station. Inscr above 1914 and below 1989. In outer circle around LAKE COLERIDGE POWER STATION and below 75 th JUBILEE
Reverse	Company logo. Inscr above SOUTH ISLAND and below HYDRO GROUP
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Silver-plated copper (1000)
Issue	Dies cut and struck by R Gillam

Hansen Family Reunion

1989/5

Obverse	The Brig <i>Active</i> in an inner circle sailing to the left and inscr 175 / ANNIVERSARY / REUNION / NZ. Around outer circle inscr above * THE HANSEN FAMILY * and below 1814 - 1989
Reverse	Map of the Bay of Islands and inscr THE BRIG ACTIVE LANDED / RANGIHOA BAY / 22-12-1814. . Also issued with New Zealand Map as in 1990/20 obverse
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Copper
Issue	Designed and struck by R Gillam

1989-90/NEW

Obverse As 1989/5
Reverse New Zealand Map as in 1990/20 obverse
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Chisholm Family Reunion

1989-90/NEW



Obverse In centre Chisholm family crest with FORTROSE N.Z. CHISHOLM REUNION DEC 29-31 1989 inscr around.
Reverse As in 1990/20 obverse: In centre map of New Zealand between 1840 and 1990 and inscr above around 150 YEARS and underneath ANNIVERSARY
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper (max 50)
Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

1990 Commemoration Celebrations

Bob Gillam's medals for the 1990 Commemoration can be divided between three types of obverse: the White Heron obverse (1990/2), the White Heron design with COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION inscr above (1990/5) and the Map of New Zealand obverse (1990/20). Most, if not all, of the medals issued with the White Heron CM (Commemorative Medallion) obverse were also issued separately with the Map obverse.

1990/2

Obverse White Heron Logo and inscr underneath NEW ZEALAND / 1990
Reverse Inscr PARTICIPANT / 75TH / ANNIVERSARY / GALLIPOLI
Diameter 30.5 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/3

Obverse As 1990/2
Reverse Inscr PARTICIPANT / 150TH / ANNIVERSARY / TREATY OF WAITANGI
Diameter 30.5 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/4

Obverse As 1990/2
Reverse Map of New Zealand between 1840 and 1990 and inscr above 150 YEARS and below ANNIVERSARY
Diameter 30.5 mm
Metal Copper Gilt, Aluminium
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

“COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION” series
(see after 1990/19 for similar medals with NZ Map obverse)

1990/5

Obverse As 1990/2, but with inscr COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLION around above
Reverse In centre guitar and South Island showing Gore. Inscr NZ GOLD / GUITAR AWARDS / 4ZG / GORE / 558 KHZ / HOKONUI RADIO 4ZG and around NEW ZEALANDS COUNTRY MUSIC CAPITAL
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper (max 100), Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/6

Obverse As 1990/5
Reverse Inner circle blank. Outer circle inscr around above * WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL 1990 * and below CHRISTCHURCH N.Z.
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Aluminium
Issue Dies cut and struck by R Gillam

1990/7

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse Events portraying 150 years of New Zealand History
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/8

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of Auckland. Inscr around AUCKLAND MUSEUMS * ZOO * BEACHES
* CITY OF SAILS * LAND SEA * & AIR TOURING
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/9

Obverse As 1990/5
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around WAITOMO * TE KUITI * UNDERGROUND
RIVERS * GLOWWORM GALAXY * EXPLORING THE CAVES *
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/10

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around ROTORUA * THERMAL ACTIVITY * MAORI
CRAFTS * SCENIC TOURS * BOATING * FARMING
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/11

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around TAUPO * WALKWAYS * SKIFIELDS * MAORI
ROCK CARVINGS * STRIKING UNUSUAL SCENERY *
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/12

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of Wellington. Inscr around WELLINGTON * MUSEUM * ARTS *
CULTURE * THE CAPITAL CITY * NATIONAL ART GALLERY
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

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ALL Pacific Island banknotes.

1990/13

Obverse As 1990/5
Reverse In centre scenes of Christchurch. Inscr around CHRISTCHURCH * TRANQUIL
ROMANTIC BEAUTY * CITY OF GARDENS * BACK COUNTRY TOURING
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/14

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around MT. COOK REGION * BENMORE * TEKAPO
* TIMARU * ASHBURTON * OKARAMA * CARDRONA * MT ASPIRING
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/15

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around QUEENSTOWN * RIVER ADVENTURE *
SKIING * SCENIC FLIGHTS * SPECTACULAR BEAUTY*
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/16

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse In centre scenes of area. Inscr around MILFORD * TE ANAU * FIORDS * LAKES *
RIVERS * MOUNTAINS * MILFORD AND HOLLYFORD TRACKS *
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/17

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse Divided into quarters: scenes of West Coast, Queenstown, Dunedin, Invercargill
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/18

Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
Reverse Divided into quarters: scenes of Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch

Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
 Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW



Obverse As 1990/5. Also issued with Map obverse as in 1990/20
 Reverse Divided into quarters: scenes of Auckland, Bay of Islands, Taupo, Rotorua
 Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
 Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Scottish Celebrations Christchurch

1990/NEW



Obverse As 1990/5
 Reverse Inner circle Scottish thistle. Outer circle inscr around SCOTTISH CELEBRATIONS CHRISTCHURCH N.Z. 1990
 Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper
 Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/19

Obverse As 1990/5
Reverse Blank
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Fine Silver (1)
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

“NZ MAP” SERIES

(see 1990/5 and subsequent for similar medals with 1990 logo obverse)

1990/20



Obverse In centre map of New Zealand between 1840 and 1990 and inscr above around 150 YEARS and underneath ANNIVERSARY
Reverse Events portraying 150 years of New Zealand History, as 1990/7
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam. Struck for Harlington Holdings. The 1990 commercial rights were purchased from the Government for medals by Chris Harlington of Harlington Holdings, based in Auckland.

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse Auckland reverse as 1990/8
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Waitomo reverse as 1990/9 [*Believed likely to exist; not yet attested*]

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Rotorua reverse as 1990/10

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Taupo reverse as 1990/11

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Wellington reverse as 1990/12

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Christchurch reverse as 1990/13 [*Believed likely to exist; not yet attested*]

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Mt Cook reverse as 1990/14

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20

Reverse Queenstown reverse as 1990/15

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse Milford reverse as 1990/16
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse NZ lower third reverse as 1990/17
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse NZ middle third reverse as 1990/18
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/NEW

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse NZ upper third reverse as new entry following 1990/18
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Xerox Challenge 1990

1990/21

Obverse Small 1990 Heron motif in top right half. Inscr in centre THE XEROX CHALLENGE.
1990 / NEW ZEALAND
Reverse Flower stem
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Wellington Football Club 120th Anniversary

1990/22

- Obverse Club logo in centre and inscr above around WELLINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB (INC) and below 1870 - 1990
- Reverse Lion with an axe and inscr underneath GIVE 'EM THE AXE and around NEW ZEALAND'S OLDEST PLAYING THROUGH RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB
- Diameter 46 mm
- Metal Copper, Aluminium Gilt (max 200)
- Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

West Coast Rugby Union Centennial 1990

1990/23



- Obverse Club crest in centre and inscr above around WEST COAST RUGBY UNION CENTENNIAL and below 1890 – 1990 / JUNE 1 - 4 1990
- Reverse Rugby player in front of goalposts and inscr around IN CELEBRATION OF WEST COAST RUGBY UNION 100 YEARS
- Diameter 46 mm
- Metal Copper (max 100), Gilt
- Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Officers' Club 150th Anniversary 1990

1990/24

- Obverse Club emblem in inner circle and inscr above around THE OFFICERS' CLUB INC. AUCKLAND and below 1840 - 1990
- Reverse Picture of Fort Britomart in inner circle. Inscr in outer circle around above * 80TH REGIMENT 16 APRIL 1840 * ENSIGN RAISED 19 SEPTEMBER 1840
- Diameter 46 mm
- Metal Copper, Copper Gilt
- Issue Dies cut and struck by R. Gillam

Kaihere School and District Reunion 75th Reunion

1990/25

Obverse	School Building with motto in centre. Inscr around - KAIHERE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT 75 REUNION - MARCH 17 1990
Reverse	Inscr between two stylised borders Foundered [sic] / November 1914 / first teacher Miss I.A. Robson / 20 School pupils attended / the Wool shed / Class room
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Copper, Aluminium Gilt
Issue	Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Waihi School and District Centennial Reunion 1990

1990/26

Obverse	School Building in centre and inscr underneath 1890 - 1990. Inscr around above CENTENNIAL REUNION and below WAIHI & DISTRICT SCHOOLS
Reverse	A scroll line in the middle. Inscr around above CLOSED SCHOOLS and underneath WAITEKAURI / CENTRAL * DISTRICT HIGH / GOLDEN CROSS * INTERMEDIATE / MATAORA BAY * WAITAWHETA / WHAREKAWA * OWHAROA. Inscr above PRESENT SCHOOLS is BEACH * COLLEGE * WAIKINO / OPOUTERE * ST. JOSEPH'S * SOUTH / WHANGAMATA * EAST / WAIMATA
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Copper
Issue	Designed and struck by R. Gillam

KA Locomotive Restoration 1990

1990/27

Obverse	In inner circle steam engine. In outer circle inscr around KA942. BUILT HUTT SHOPS 1940 – RESTORED G.V.R. WORKSHOPS, PUKEOWARE 1990
Reverse	In inner circle a map of upper North Island. In outer circle inscr around COMMEMORATING IT'S [sic] FIRST RE-RUN AUCKLAND TO KINLEITH JUNE 16, 1990
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Copper (low issue), Aluminium Gilt
Issue	Designed and struck by R. Gillam

1990/28

Obverse	As 1990/27
Reverse	In inner circle a map of Northland. In outer circle inscr around FIRST KALOCOMOTIVE TO ENTER NORTHLAND JULY 28 1990 * GLENBROOK - WHANGAREI
Diameter	46 mm
Metal	Copper (low issue), Aluminium Gilt
Issue	Designed and struck by R. Gillam

1990/29

Obverse As 1990/20
Reverse As 1990/28
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Aluminium
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1990/30

Obverse In inner circle White Heron Logo and in outer circle inscr above around NZI LIFE and below around 1990 HUIA TUIA TUI TUIA
Reverse Blank
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

National Highland Games 1990

1990/31

Obverse Thistle and city emblem in centre and inscr 17 – 19 MARCH 1990 in the middle. Inscr around above NATIONAL HIGHLAND GAMES and below TAURANGA NEW ZEALAND
Reverse City emblem and inscr around above TAURANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL
Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Silver
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Tauranga Numismatic Society 25th Anniversary 1990

1990/32

Obverse In inner circle sword fish emblem of Society. In outer circle inscr around * TAURANGA * NUMISMATIC * SOCIETY * INC
Reverse In inner circle inscr 25TH / ANNIVERSARY / 1965 - 1990
Diameter 38 mm, octagonal shape
Metal Silver (50), Copper (100)
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Maori Arts & Crafts Institute Medals Rotorua

1990/33

This medal was made from a press that Bob Gillam designed and built for people to mint their own medal on site. The venture was a great success, as evidenced by the subsequent production of **1992/8** and **1995/10** *“both being a new size and new design, from a more powerful press on site.”* Diameter was 23 mm.

Obverse In the centre symbol. Inscr around * NEW ZEALAND MAORI ARTS AND CRAFTS INSTITUTE ROTORUA.
 Reverse Pa gateway and inscr underneath WHAKAREWAREWA 1990
 Diameter 23 mm
 Metal Brass

American Airlines Inaugural Flight

Medal designed for Air America airlines inaugural flight from Auckland to Sydney 1990. Every passenger received one medal.

1990/NEW



Obverse In centre American Airlines Company logo with American Airlines below.
 Reverse Inscr In celebration of / American Airlines' / inaugural flight to / Sydney, Australia, / February 04, 1990. / "Something Special / in the Air"
 Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper (1000), Copper Gilt
 Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Blair Family Reunion

1991/3

Obverse The Ship *Arima* in an inner circle sailing to L and inscr underneath ARIMA. Around outer circle inscr above BLAIR FAMILY REUNION and below 1863 - 1991
 Reverse Coat of Arms and inscr above BLAIR and below JANUARY 4-6 1991
 Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper (50)
 Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

Te Kopua Marae 50th Anniversary

1991/4

Obverse In centre Marae between two fern leaves. Around outer circle inscr above TE KOPUA MARAE and below GOLDEN JUBILEE
 Reverse In centre inscr 50th. Inscr around above 1941 – 1991 and around below ANNIVERSARY

Diameter 46 mm
 Metal Copper (low issue), Aluminium
 Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam. Versions of this medal exist (noted only in aluminium to date) without the A in KOPUA on the obverse

New Plymouth 150th Anniversary

1991/5

Obverse Map of New Zealand in centre and inscr underneath 1991. Inscr around * IN CELEBRATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW PLYMOUTH. Stylised mountain behind

Reverse In inner circle Mt Taranaki (Egmont), cow, oil well, N.Z. Flag and inscr underneath 150. In outer circle inscr around * SPORTS AND RECREATION STADIUM AND COVERED POOL SUPPORTER

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Dies cut and struck by R Gillam

1991/6

Obverse In inner circle flags, planes, trumpeters and inscr 1991. In outer circle inscr around ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AERO CLUB RALLY 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF NEW PLYMOUTH 1841-1991

Reverse In inner circle map of New Zealand and inscr NEW PLYMOUTH / START-FINISH and AIR B.P. / 8 DAY / FLIGHT PATH. In outer circle inscr around 1st AIR B.P. RACE AROUND NEW ZEALAND AVIATORS AND OBSERVERS MEDALLION FEBRUARY 1991

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed by 'an Auckland pilot' and struck by R Gillam

Kerepehi Milk Powder Factory

1991/NEW



Obverse In centre a roped anchor in a square border. Inscr above around KEREPEHI SITE STAFF REUNION and below 1991

Reverse In inner circle Kerepehi Milk Powder factory. Inscr above around N.Z.C.D.C. KEREPEHI MILK POWDER FACTORY and below 1956-1991

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper (low issue)

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

**St Patrick's School 75th Jubilee
1991/NEW**



Obverse In centre school building with 1916-1991 inscr underneath. Inscr around above ST PATRICKS SCHOOL TAUMARUNUI and below 75th JUBILEE

Reverse In centre school crest with LABORARE EST ORARE inscr underneath and 11th - 13th OCTOBER 1991 above.

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper (75)

Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

**Turangawaewae Silver Jubilee
1991/NEW**



Obverse In centre Maori canoe in front of bridge. In outer circle inscr around above TURANGAWAEWAE and below NGARUAWAHIA NEW ZEALAND

Reverse In centre stylised bird flying in front of moon and stars. Above inscr SILVER JUBILEE and underneath 1966-1991

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

**Harley Davidson Easter
1991/NEW**



Obverse In inner centre a Harley Davidson motorbike under the Southern Cross stars. In outer circle inscr above around EASTER MEMORIAL RUN 1991 and below WAIKINO NEW ZEALAND. 'N' in Waikino reversed.

Reverse Harley Davidson logo inscr underneath MOTOR / HARLEY DAVIDSON / CYCLES

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

1991/NEW



Obverse A motorcycle tyre between NZ and US flags below an eagle. Inscr below EASTER

Reverse Harley Davidson logo inscr underneath MOTOR / HARLEY DAVIDSON / CYCLES.

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper
Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

**Lake Taupo Cyclethon
1991/NEW**



Obverse In inner centre a stylised cyclist against an outline of Lake Taupo. In outer circle inscr above around GIANT BICYCLES and below LAKE TAUPO CYCLETHON

Reverse In inner circle of laurel leaves inscr 15 th / 160 km / LAKE TAUPO / CYCLETHON / NOVEMBER / 23 RD / 1991. In outer circle inscr around PARTICIPANTS AND SUPPORTERS MEDALLION

Diameter 46 mm

Metal Copper, Aluminium. 1 struck in silver

Issue Designed and struck by R Gillam

**Bungy Jump
I/1**

Obverse In middle top of Kawarau Bridge and inscr above AJ / HACKETT / Bungy / QUEENSTOWN and below a bungy rope. Inscr at left the / world's / first and at right Kawarau / Bridge

Reverse Inscr The / Originals / AJ / HACKETT / Bungy / QUEENSTOWN / bungyjump@ajhackett.co.nz

Diameter 30 mm

Metal Brass

Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

**Brian Boru Hotel
K/1**

Obverse In centre hotel building and stage coach in broken dotted circle. Inscr around above BRIAN BORU HOTEL and below ESTABLISHED THAMES 1868

Reverse Inscr in centre "to / VICTUALS & / BEVERAGES / at the" in decorative surround; inscr around above "this entitles the bearer" and around below BRIAN BORU HOTEL, THAMES

Diameter 30 mm
Metal Brass
Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Bungee Jump Auckland

These were never issued as the venture never started.

L/1

Obverse In centre inscr BUNGEE / Bats. Inscr above around SURVIVAL MEDAL and below BUNGEE JUMP

Reverse Inscr This medal is / awarded to those courageous / souls who have survived / two bungee jumps from a platform / 148 feet above the waters of / Freemans Bay, Auckland N.Z. / It is certified that the only / support was a rubber band / attached to the ankles / [signature] / JUMP MASTER / BUNGEE BATS LIMITED 2 SCARBORO TCE MAIRANGI BAY AUCKLAND

Diameter 46 mm
Metal Aluminium Gilt
Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Waihi and District Pipes and Drums

M/1

Obverse Thistle in centre. Inscr WAIHI AND DISTRICTS PIPES AND DRUMS

Reverse Plain

Diameter 46 mm
Metal Copper, Gilt

Issue Designed and struck by R. Gillam

Christchurch period 2000-2005, during which time Bob Gillam was involved with Coin Link NZ and moved back into the souvenir coin business

Millennium First ANZAC Day 25 April 2000

2000/12

Obverse In centre a hologram and inscr around MILLENNIUM FIRST ANZAC DAY * 25TH APRIL 2000 *

Reverse ANZAC soldier in middle. Inscr on left LIMITED / 1 OF 1000 and on right LEST / WE / FORGET. Below ANZAC / GALLIPOLI. Outer circle inscr around AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS 1915

Diameter 30 mm
Metal Brass (1000)

Issue Designed by Clint McInnes of Timely Marketing Christchurch and struck by R Gillam. Issued by Coin Link NZ Christchurch

Catalogue of New Zealand Commemorative Medals 1941 - 2007

Hamish MacMaster



Published by the Royal Numismatic Society of New Zealand Inc. (including the Wellington Coin Club)

Now available from the Society. \$45 ea. incl. p+p. Overseas: A\$50, US\$50, £30 incl. p+p.

**Canpex
2000/14**



- Obverse** The medal is unusual in that it incorporates a special Canterbury 150th Anniversary hologram as part of its design. Inscr CANPEX 2000 in centre; CHRISTCHURCH at L; NEW ZEALAND at R; NATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION around below
- Reverse** Magnifying glass over New Zealand on a stamp inscr 5-8 OCTOBER 2000. Inscr around 150th ANNIVERSARY OF CANTERBURY
- Diameter** 48 mm
- Metal** Brass with Gold plate (20), silver plate (100) and bronze finish (100)
- Issue** Designed by Clint McInnes of Timely Marketing Christchurch and struck by R Gillam. Issued by Coin Link NZ Christchurch

**International Air Show
2000/15**



- Obverse** In centre a pilot and underneath a WWII fighter plane and inscr between WARBIRDS / OVER / WANAKA and below 2000. To left of pilot inscr SIR / TIM / WALLIS. In outer circle around INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW
- Reverse** In centre a Hawker Hurricane against fern and \$3 and inscr underneath HAWKER / HURRICANE and to left in small letters LIMITED / 1 of 2000 In outer circle inscr around THREE MILLENNIUM DOLLARS NEW ZEALAND
- Diameter** 30 mm
- Metal** Brass (2000)

Issue Designed by Clint McInnes of Timely Marketing Christchurch and struck by R Gillam.
Issued by Coin Link NZ Christchurch

**Omaka Airshow
2001/NEW**



Obverse In inner centre air force wings with OMAKA inscr in middle and 2001 underneath. Inscr above around COMMEMORATING THE and below FIRST CLASSIC FIGHTERS AIRSHOW. In outer circle inscr above around EARN YOUR WINGS and below AT OMAKA

Reverse In inner circle two biplanes flying to right and inscr above OMAKA AIRFIELD and below MARLBOROUGH NEW ZEALAND. In outer circle inscr above around * CLASSIC FIGHTERS * and below around AIRSHOW

Diameter 30 mm

Metal Brass

Issue Designed by Clint McInnes and struck by R Gillam

**Auckland War Memorial Museum
2002/1**

Obverse Auckland Museum frontage. Inscr below AUCKLAND MUSEUM / TE Papa Whakahiku / CELEBRATING / 150 / YEARS OF / COLLECTING and around AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Reverse Map of New Zealand, with a compass rose to the left. Inscr around the rim NEW ZEALAND TOURIST DOLLAR

Diameter 30 mm

Metal Brass

Issue Issued by Coin Link NZ and struck by R Gillam

New quiz book on New Zealand coins, banknotes, tokens and medals - test your knowledge with these 32 ten-question tests compiled by Keith Wrigley of the Manawatu Numismatic Society.



Soft cover, 76 pp, A5 format. Available from the Manawatu Numismatic Society, c/- 15 Troup Road, RD 3, Woodville 4999, for \$15 each including postage.

Some VIP Coin Issues from the Society's Collection



Left: 1977 "Royal Visit" proof set in plush case, ten of which were prepared in this form as a special VIP issue. One was presented to the Society. These items are rarely seen on the market or listed in catalogues, and are shown here to bring greater attention to their existence. Note that the proof sets themselves are the same as the regular issues sold to collectors.

Right: Slipcover for a similar VIP set of 1981 proof coins. The card insert says that "a small number" were produced in this form for presentation. The exact number is



Left: VIP "Twin set" of 1983 "Charles & Diana" proof dollars in plush case.

RNSNZ ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

I have much pleasure in reporting on another active and successful year for the society, in which we were able to provide for members' enjoyment of their hobby, support serious numismatic research and further members' wider interests.

Our ordinary meetings remain at the core of what we do. They included:

April 2009: No Wellington meeting but members were encouraged to attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Numismatic Society of Auckland at the beginning of May, which many were able to do.

May 2009: Annual General Meeting

June 2009: Michael Humble presented on the New Zealand Centennial, including the associated issue of the 1940 half penny, penny and half crown, new Reserve Bank banknotes and centennial medal in bronze and silver.

July 2009: Auction of 208 lots, well organised by Clint Libby and Flemming Sorensen. Once again, the postal component of the auction provided for wider membership participation as well as lively room bidding.

August 2009: Garry Craig showed many of the Zimbabwe inflation banknotes, with particular emphasis on the prefix variations in the series.

September 2009: Alistair Robb discussed BNZ banknotes and in particular, the lithographed signed notes of A E Hempton, including showing both banknotes and the war medals of the family.

October 2009: Brett Delahunt talked about awards for maritime rescues associated with the shipwrecks of the SS Drummond Castle (1886), SS John Taylor (1861), Republic (1909) and Titanic (1912), illustrated with examples of the medals.

December 2009: The end-of-year dinner was shifted to December, to follow the launch of Hamish MacMaster's authoritative and original catalogue of New Zealand commemorative medals from 1941 to 2007. Some 50 members and guests attended the launch.

January 2010: Ian Birdling showed and discussed many fascinating examples of error coins.

February 2010: Dave Annals from TradeMe spoke about how TradeMe manages the safety of online auctions and other issues. He offered to assist in resolving difficulties members had with TradeMe's policies by working in conjunction with the Society.

March 2010: Alistair Robb spoke once again on bank notes. The meeting saw the proposal to elect two new Fellows, Les Carlisle for outstanding services to numismatics in Australasia as an honorary Fellow and Hamish MacMaster, for many contributions, most notably research, publications and producing his catalogue of New Zealand commemorative medals.

Typical attendances at ordinary meetings in 2010 so far have been around 20 or more members, including junior members in the All BLACCs (Bill Lampard Academy of Coin Collecting) children's group. The junior members' meeting is held adjacent to, and sometimes merging into, the main meeting.

There were several special events.

Members attended the Numismatic Society of Auckland 50th anniversary celebrations in May 2009, where we received a warm welcome. Alistair Robb was able to speak as a

member of the Society. The event was very well organised with excellent talks, a great dinner, fair and social events.

The second Society Drinks and Nibbles function was held on 6 November 2009 in association with the Mowbray International auction, sponsored by Mowbrays, Martin Purdy (Translate Ltd) and Alistair Robb. The event was very well attended and provided an opportunity for formal presentation of Society and fellowship badges and long service badges to members with 25 years, 40 years or 50 years of total membership.

The biggest highlight of the year was the launch of Hamish MacMaster's **Catalogue of New Zealand Commemorative Medals 1941-2007**. This authoritative book was the result of years of research and effort by Hamish. It was an honour for the Society to be able to support the launch financially as well as for a number of members to be able to assist with editing, sales, information and illustrations. Both hard cover and soft cover editions were produced and have sold well to date.

On Saturday 13 February 2010, the Society held a numismatic fair and talks about error coins and banknotes in Christchurch at the Holiday Inn City Central. The attendance of four dealers made the event a success for collectors present and the presentations by Alistair Robb and Shane Collins, who also leads the New Zealand Coin Collectors Association online forum, were fascinating. Overall attendance was disappointing though, limiting the commercial success for the dealers present, and prompting an evaluation of the publicity needed for such events in centres other than Wellington. More and different publicity is needed. It was still a good opportunity for some of the Society's North Island members to meet South Island members from Timaru, Geraldine and Christchurch.

On 13 March, the Manawatu Numismatic Society successfully hosted the annual get-together of the three southern North Island societies. The highlight of the day was that we won back the quiz trophy which had been missing for several years from display in Wellington. A notable feature of discussion was a precautionary display of imported replica coins by Kevin Mills. These are improving in quality and liable to deceive inexperienced collectors, even if originally sold as imitations.

The Society again produced 2009-dated medals for services, with 63 struck by Mayer and Toye in bronze. These were engraved with the date on the reverse and continued with the same obverse design as in the first year of production, 2008. Twenty-four medals were presented or sent to members who had made particular contributions to the Society's activities and the balance were made available for sale at \$15 each. We are grateful to Alistair Robb for underwriting this issue again.

It was a pleasure to be able to present long term membership and Fellowship badges to eligible members. So far, more than 30 badges have been presented or sent to members. Members are invited to apply as they become eligible or at any time if they have not already done so, as the badges are free for Fellowships and the highest number of years for which the member is currently eligible (25, 40 or 50 years), with badges for additional periods of entitlement (e.g. 25 years for a 40-year member) available on payment of a charge of \$15.

The Society Council met twice, in September 2009 and March 2010, to manage the overall business of the Society. Matters considered included how to make the website work better for members, the continued availability of service medals and long term membership badges, and the overall planning of Society events and meetings.

The Council decided at its September meeting to proceed with the formal winding up of the Otago Branch of the Society. While the branch has had a proud history and long outlasted

the Society's other branches, it has been in recess for some years with few prospects of re-establishment. The Council agreed to co-opt Brian Connor as the last Otago President to help ensure a further Otago perspective remains in its deliberations, in addition to Ray Hargreaves' continuing Council membership. Both have made outstanding contributions to the Society over the years in its Otago activities.

The Society takes seriously the challenge of advancing the interests of numismatists and collectors in New Zealand. We have continued productive discussions with New Zealand Post and the Reserve Bank on the development of circulating commemorative coins and other matters of interest to collectors.

We have renewed the arrangement with New Zealand Post allowing legal postage of numismatic material to overseas destinations and discussed with TradeMe the scope for allowing members on official postings overseas with the armed forces of diplomatic service to be able to trade.

I am pleased to say TradeMe has indicated a willingness to consider allowing such trading. Any members who are interested in following up this possibility are invited to contact the President.

The publication of three Newsletters in January, May and October and a Journal in December continued to provide an outlet for research and to inform members of news and developments.

Financially, the Society remains in good heart. Subscription rates were held again at the level of the previous year.

Membership at 31 March was 182 paid-up members, 12 junior members and 22 life members. A steady inflow of applications for membership has been received through the year. Sadly, we learned of two deaths of members – Ron McQueen of Upper Hutt and Ian Madden, a life member.

We remain affiliated to the Numismatic Association of Australia, represented on its Council by the President. NAA journals from the 2007 conference were distributed during the year and Martin Purdy was able to represent the Society at the 2009 conference. A number of Wellington members were able to host Peter Lane, Secretary of the NAA, during an extended visit to New Zealand and Brian Connor was also able to show him some of the impressive Otago Museum numismatic collection.

Once again, many people have contributed to the Society's year. The award of 24 service medals speaks for itself. Several outstanding contributions must be acknowledged in particular. Clint Libby continued as acting Secretary for a further period until Hamish MacMaster was able to take over as Secretary following his return to New Zealand from Iran. Both ensured the effective administration of Society meetings. Gary Weston Webb had a heavy load as Treasurer which he carries out well and Martin Purdy once again edited an excellent Journal. To all our supporters, speakers, meeting and event organisers and participating members, thank you once again. We value your continuing support and look forward to doing our part in turn to advance your interests.

David Galt

31 March 2010

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 2010-2011
(Elected A.G.M. May 2010)

PATRON:	His Excellency the Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand
PRESIDENT:	Mr DA Galt
VICE-PRESIDENTS:	Dr RP Hargreaves *, Dr MW Humble, Messrs FK Gottermeyer *, AW Grant *, CR Libby *, KB Mills, LG Morel *, ML Purdy*, AF Robb* and Mrs A Lampard
SECRETARY:	Mr HC MacMaster*
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:	Mr C Kitchen
TREASURER:	Mr G Weston-Webb
ASSISTANT TREASURER:	Mr F Sorensen
AUDITOR:	Mr AW Grant *
KEEPER OF COLLECTION:	Mr F Sorensen
ASSISTANT KEEPER:	Mr ML Purdy *
LIBRARIAN:	Mr D MacNeill+
JOURNAL EDITOR:	Mr ML Purdy *
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	Mr DA Galt
COUNCIL:	President, Vice Presidents, Society position holders and Dr B Delahunt *, Messrs PL Bicknell, JR Eccles, JH Johnson and DM Russell; B Connor (Otago)

* FRNSNZ; + Subsequently resigned

PUBLICATIONS AND MEDALS AVAILABLE
(all prices in NZ dollars at current rates, plus postage)

- Catalogue of New Zealand Commemorative Medals 1941-2007 (published December 2009)	\$40
- 2006 Anniversary medal (38mm, bronze)	\$35
- Special publication, "The Numismatic Birth of the Dominion, The 1933 New Zealand Coinage", by Dr Mark Stocker (2005), 36pp, A5 format (issued to members as Journal 82A, June 2005)	\$8.95
- Transactions of the Society, 1931-1947 (three vols, photocopied, fcp reduced to A4, unbound), indexed	\$40 each
- Set of Journals, nos. 1-52, 54-59, 61-82 (including three volumes of Transactions and reprints of out-of-print issues)	\$350
- Set of Journals, nos. 4-52, 54-59, 61-82 (as above, minus Transactions)	\$250
- Full set of Journals, nos. 1-52, 54-88 (December 2008), incl. Transactions + Vol. 60 (Lampard Catalogue), on CD in PDF format	\$95
- Individual numbers	\$5
- Index of nos. 4-42 (published 1966)	\$3
- Index of nos. 71-85 (published 2007)	\$3

MEETING DATES

The Royal Numismatic Society of New Zealand Inc (including the Wellington Coin Club) meets at 7:30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month, January to October, at the top floor, Turnbull House, Bowen Street, Wellington (opposite the Beehive). Visitors welcome. The November meeting is usually an early Christmas function at a different venue. See www.RNSNZ.org.nz. Contact e-mail secretary@RNSNZ.org.nz.

The RNSNZ is a sponsoring society of the Numismatic Association of Australia, PO Box 3664, Norwood SA 5067, Australia. Website www.naa-online.com. RNSNZ members can opt to receive the annual NAA Journal for a small extra charge with their annual subscriptions.

Other clubs and societies in New Zealand:

The Numismatic Society of Auckland, mailing address PO Box 818, Shortland St, Auckland 1140. Meets at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of every month except January in 'Discovery 3', a room within the MoTaT complex. Anyone wishing to attend a meeting should contact either Jim Duncan (09-428-1338) or David Baird (09-846-7463) for directions.

Manawatu Numismatic Society, c/- 15 Troup Road, RD 3, Woodville 4999. Meets at the RSA, Broadway Ave, Palmerston North, second Tuesday of each month except January; meet in foyer 7:15 - 7:30 pm to be signed in.

Tauranga Numismatic Society, PO Box 202, Seventh Avenue, Tauranga 3140. Meets Wesley Church Centre, first Wednesday of month, 100 13th Avenue, 7.30 pm. Phone (07) 533-1881.

Waikato Numismatic Society, 203 Waite Road, RD 5, Hamilton 3285. Meets 3rd Wednesday of each month (Feb-Nov) at 7:30 p.m. at Rostrevor House, 113 Rostrevor St, Hamilton.

Wanganui Numismatic Society, PO Box 123, Wanganui Mail Centre, Wanganui 4540. Meets 7.30 pm last Tuesday of every month except December. Contact (06) 345-6587 for details.

GUIDE FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Submissions for the NZ Numismatic Journal are welcome at any time; however, copy received after about August may be too late for the current year's issue and may have to be held over.

Please submit copy electronically if possible, preferably by e-mail or on disc or CD, in Word or RTF form. To assist the Editor, please use Arial 11pt or 12pt for body text, which should be fully justified. Titles should be in Arial 14pt, in capitals and centred. The author's name should be on the next line and right-justified. Footnote numbers should precede full-stops. Illustrations should be in TIFF or JPEG format.

Advertising: Copy should be provided in Word or PageMaker (up to Ver. 7.0) where possible, or as a high-resolution TIFF file. Advertisements in PDF form are also acceptable.



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