

## PRESENTATION OF THE SANFORD SALTUS MEDAL TO MR JEFFREY NORTH, 28 MAY 1996

*In making the presentation, the President said:*

WHEN I spoke to Jeffrey North last week to confirm that he would be present tonight, he asked me not to say anything that would cause him embarrassment. This is difficult when the President is being required to present the Society's premier award to someone as worthy of that distinction as Mr North, and I must therefore to some extent seek his indulgence for what I am about to say.

Jeffrey North was elected to membership of our Society in September 1957, nearly forty years ago, and it is more than thirty years since he published the first edition of his *English Hammered Coinage*. That work, a formidable achievement of distillation and synthesis, was immediately recognised as an extremely useful guide to a complex subject, and its practical value to archaeologists and historians as well as to numismatists explains why its popularity has extended into subsequent editions. And by it, I am sure, Mr North has achieved numismatic immortality.

In speaking of *English Hammered Coinage* I am reflecting the fact that for the first time, under the revised rules for the award of the Sanford Saltus Medal, members may take into consideration contributions other than in the Society's publications. But that is in no way to devalue the important papers which Mr North has contributed to our *Journal*: there have been five substantial papers in his own name, and a joint paper with Lord Stewartby, covering significant aspects of the medieval coinages of England, Scotland and Ireland. For them alone Mr North would be a worthy winner of the Sanford Saltus Medal, but I return to *English Hammered Coinage* for the final point I want to make. What caught my eye in the early reviews was the comment that Mr North had properly and wisely sought the assistance of those with specialist knowledge of particular coinages. Tonight we return the compliment and acknowledge, thirty years on, the generosity that he himself has long shown in sharing his knowledge with others.

And now, as required of me by the rules, I say formally to Mr North: you have been awarded the John Sanford Saltus Medal for the year 1995, by the vote of the members of the British Numismatic Society, for your contributions to the *British Numismatic Journal*.

*Accepting the award, Mr North replied:*

I would like to thank our President for his most generous remarks and my fellow members for the great honour which they have bestowed upon me in the award of this medal. A recent perusal of the latest list of past medallists reminded me how distinguished a company I have now joined. The names of the early recipients are a roll call of the numismatists whose works I have known and consulted since my first interest in English coins. Amongst the more recent ones are many who have assisted me during the past forty years either with their advice or indirectly through their published works. They include my mentor Michael Dolley who received his medal in 1959 and, of course, Christopher Blunt, who was an inspiration to so many of us.

One of the most pleasant aspects of English numismatics is the readiness of its devotees to share without reserve their knowledge and unpublished findings. Without the generous assistance of so many of you it would not have been possible for me to produce *English Hammered Coinage* in its present form and I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge publicly my considerable debt for this invaluable support.

It only remains for me to thank you again for this handsome medal which I shall always prize.