

REVIEWS

Roman and Early Byzantine Gold Coins found in Britain and Ireland, by Roger Bland and Xavier Loriot, RNS Special Publication 46 (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2010); xxviii, 372 pp. (including 22 plates).

By any standards, this book represents a substantial and important contribution to Roman numismatic studies, consisting of 110 pages of copiously illustrated introductory essays and a catalogue of 889 items, both single finds of gold coins and hoards consisting of or containing gold coins. Not least amongst its virtues is the fact that it projects its listings well beyond the 'traditional' period of the Roman occupation of *Britannia*, and includes finds made in Ireland also. This serves to draw attention to both the chronological and geographical extent of the Mediterranean connections of the British Isles in the Classical and post-Classical periods.

The introductory essays provide a wide and illuminating spectrum of approaches to the data contained in the catalogues – from the purely numerical (ruler-by-ruler and century-by-century) and methods of discovery to comparisons between finds made at different types of site in Britain itself and between those made in Britain and in other parts of the Roman Empire.

In terms of numbers, gold coins of the first and early second centuries AD bulk largest, particularly Neronian and Flavian issues, whilst the second century in general exhibits a progressive decline – as it does for coin-loss as a whole in many parts of Britain. There may be a number of reasons for this: the first and early second centuries represented the most sustained period of military activity in the province's history, a fact which may have led to a higher than usual level of monetary reward to some of those involved. Secondly, as the second century progressed there was a considerable decline in confidence in a variety of aspects of the Empire's stability, an effect of which may have been to drive coins perceived as having higher purchasing and intrinsic value into hoards and out of circulation. Further, there is also the practical consideration that dropped coins were probably easier to detect on metallised surfaces than they had been on those of earth and turf.

It is also striking that, from the turn of the second and third centuries (and especially in the fourth), there is clear evidence of the more frequent discovery of gold coins on sites of urban than of military significance in the Roman period (as demonstrated in fig. 43). A number of factors may have contributed to this: the upgrading of towns certainly provides part of the explanation; as Bland and Loriot say (p. 53), every *civitas* capital in Britain has yielded gold coins, and the growing administrative and commercial importance of these towns must mark a change in organisational emphasis. It also appears to be the case that in later times towns may have housed military personnel; further, in the wake of the military reforms of Diocletian, those housed in the forts were to a degree lower in status and

reputation than had once been the case. Nor should we forget that, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the growth of major urban development will have provided more extensive opportunities for the discovery of coins and other artefacts than has been the case in rural contexts. Whilst most of the finds are associated with known Roman and Romano-British sites, there are some which at present have no such known association. The recording of such finds represents potentially an invaluable contribution to interpreting discoveries of the future.

It may come as a surprise that finds of gold coins in Britain in numerical terms run closely parallel to those in the Roman provinces in western Europe (pp. 16ff), although detailed comparisons (figs 8–18) show some interesting divergences, especially in the fourth century. It should also be noted (p. 17), however, that the numerical similarities are capable of sharply differing interpretations.

The catalogues are exemplary: full references are cited and relevant passages quoted in full. Our knowledge of many of the finds derive from antiquarian reports, which vary considerably in the amount of detail that they provide both with regard to the coins themselves and to the circumstances of their discovery. The entries do, however, together with the comparisons in chapter 5 (pp. 28ff), bring out the effects of the growth of metal-detecting in Britain, and particularly of the introduction of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The Scheme, served by its regional Finds Liaison Officers, not only provides a mechanism for the recording of metal-detected finds, but has created a context in which detectorists can play their part in the recording of the National Heritage. This, through the detecting clubs, provides a structured way in which detectorists can do what many of them always wanted – to be able to contribute to a developing picture of our history. Whilst (sadly) it will never completely outlaw the 'cowboys', the developing process has served to sideline them to a degree.

If there is anything to criticise about this book, it concerns the usefulness of some of the figures: the national maps (figs 29–36) are a little too dense for clear appreciation of the information that they convey – a point that comes out clearly when comparing them with the regional maps (figs. 37–41), which are far more informative.

The authors are to be congratulated on producing a work of very considerable scholarship; the book is immediately of enormous value to researchers and, because of the quality of the information which it contains and the stimulating ideas which it draws from that information, together with the prospects of the continuing relationship between detectorists and the PAS, it will retain and develop its value for a very long time to come.

DAVID SHOTTER

The Coinage of Offa and his Contemporaries, by Derek Chick, edited by Mark Blackburn and Rory Naismith, BNS Special Publication 6 (London: Spink, 2010), 230 pp., 29 plates.

It is quite astonishing to think that for this coinage, one of the most important and attractive of England, fifty years should have lapsed between Christopher Blunt's seminal study on Offa's coinage and this major publication of Derek Chick's work.¹ However, the waiting has certainly been worthwhile, and, for a number of reasons, the conjunction of the stars is just right for this thoughtful reassessment. First of all, Derek Chick's handling, careful recording and thoughtful interpretation of Offa's coinage, which began as early as the 1960s, has mainly coincided with the raise in the use of metal detectors and the discovery of very many new types and specimens. Thanks to the good relations he had established with the finders, Chick was able to gain firsthand experience of this new body of evidence, which has been growing exponentially.² The corpus included in this publication, which is based on Chick's card index, boasts as many as 728 coins, and at least another 63 have been recorded since.³ Secondly, the involvement of Mark Blackburn has meant that, thanks to his characteristic drive and scholarly leadership, what began in 2003 as Chick's legacy of notes, photos and plaster casts donated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, has been realised into a most sensitive, well-rounded and far-reaching project: the book that Derek Chick had intended to write. Thirdly, the success of the whole enterprise has been made possible by the dedication of Rory Naismith, a worthy disciple of Mark Blackburn's. The extent of Dr Naismith's role in the careful and patient editing of this material and his assiduous dedication cannot be underestimated. It is totally appropriate to pay glowing homage to his contribution, and not only to record his additional corpus and comments in 'The Coinage of Offa Revisited',⁴ but also to recommend his forthcoming books, *Money and Power in Anglo-Saxon England: the Southern Kingdoms, 757–865*, and *The Coinage of Southern England 796–865*, based on his doctoral dissertation. To echo Mark Blackburn's remark, 'the legacy of Mr Chick's work is already becoming apparent': how gratifying to see so much scholarly interest in this period.

In the foreword, Mark Blackburn sets forth the rationale behind the publication, which is intended as a testimony to Derek Chick's scholarly work on the coinage of Offa's times. The volume opens with the reprinting of two articles by Derek Chick based on two seminal

papers given by him, respectively in 1995 in Cambridge and 2000 in Manchester.⁵ These consider the sequence of the coinage to establish both a relative and an absolute chronology. Chick, importantly, was able to identify an early phase for the Light coinage at London and 'East Anglia', and did much to 'map' the chronology of the various moneymen working at the mints of London, Canterbury and 'East Anglia'. Discreet editing updates the articles where essential, with the added comments (in the footnotes) clearly indicated. The main intervention is in the illustrations: the coins discussed are reproduced in the margins at twice their original size, and the selection is of hand-picked, particularly fine or representative specimens. In addition, for the second paper, maps have been redrawn and brought up to date, and illustrations added. These are most welcome innovations. In spite of the generous cross-references to the Corpus, one might wish that more of the coins mentioned had been illustrated.

A short article by Mark Blackburn considers afresh the so-called 'Offa Sceat', a coin acquired from a French dealer by the Cabinet des Médailles in 1988. The coin had so far been considered to be Anglo-Saxon because of its design, and attributed to Offa on account of what might be read of the inscription; it was considered an important 'link' between the sceattas and his new reformed coinage. However, two new finds recently acquired by the Cabinet are seen to be closely related to this and to another coin illustrated twice by Belfort.⁶ All share a whorl of four birds on the reverse. The reconsideration of the 'Offa Sceat' in the context of this group of clearly Merovingian coins makes the old attribution untenable – but its ghost still lives on in the Catalogue as Type 4 (not used).

The catalogue, which is further supported by a number of scholarly appendices, tables and concordances, must be considered to be the heart of the volume. The coinage, which is divided according to the main phases (Light coinage and Heavy coinage, subdivided by mint, ruler and moneyer), is arranged over 186 types for the Light coinage, and over 58 types for the Heavy coinage. It must be noted that for ease of reference, the numbering of the Heavy coinage restarts at 200. For each type, designs and inscriptions are given, and all known specimens recorded with meticulously detailed entries. A real asset to the catalogue is that each type is illustrated with a life-size coin in the margin of the catalogue, while every specimen is illustrated on a series of 29 plates at the end: this editorial decision must be applauded, as one gets immediate engagement with the wonderful iconographic richness of the coinage. Quite apart from the wonderful portraits, its inventiveness in the countless permutations in presenting names in geometrical arrangements is truly outstanding: the corpus presents an excellent opportunity for further iconographical studies.

¹ Blunt 1961. This is not the place for bibliographical historiography; however, in addition to the contributions of many historians (principally F.M. Stenton and Simon Keynes), one should mention other important contributors to the numismatic understanding of the coinage, such as the collector R.C. Lockett, C.S.S. Lyon, D.M. Metcalf, H.E. Pagan and Lord Stewartby. One should also note the art historical interest in Offa's coinage, with contributions by I.H. Garipzanov and by the present reviewer.

² See Table 4 (number of coins appearing each decade), 185–6.

³ See the additions in Naismith 2010.

⁴ Naismith 2010.

⁵ Chick 1997; Chick 2005.

⁶ Belfort 1892–95, nos 6632, 6678. Of the four coins, two have inscriptions suggesting a Merovingian moneyer's name, and obverses with either a large single bird or two birds, one on top of the other. This design might be related to that of Series J, Type 36. See Gannon 2003, 114–15.

It is customary to mention typos – no doubt as an indication of careful reading on the part of the reviewer. In this spirit, I will point out the only oversight I have noticed: on p. 26 the reference to the unique new coin of Archbishop Iænberht is given as ‘p.0’. The editors must be applauded for their excellent work.

This is indeed a most splendid book: it is a joy for scholars, a stepping stone for future studies and a feast for eyes and minds. It is also pleasing to see recorded the web of human interests and interactions which forms the background to this scholarly publication. In addition to Mark Blackburn, the catalyst and the leader, and Rory Naismith, the painstaking researcher, I was very pleased to see a warm pen sketch of Derek Chick and his world recorded for posterity. To describe Derek as gentle and sensitive is totally appropriate – his generosity in sharing both knowledge and material equally shines through.

In 2000 I was fortunate to share a train journey from Manchester to London with Derek. We were both returning from the Manchester conference at which Derek had presented one of the papers reprinted in this volume. The conversation centred on coins, both ‘his’ Offas and ‘my’ sceattas – about which he knew much from first-hand handling and casting of specimens. We seamlessly moved on to other shared passions: birds, the countryside and the natural world. It was a most illuminating and entertaining conversation, which made the tedious journey fly by. A few days later I received a neat packet containing some plaster casts of sceattas... needless to say, they remain to this day a much treasured memento of a most kind gentleman scholar. It is a great pleasure to see his work so honoured.

ANNA GANNON

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English Coins 1180–1551, by Lord Stewartby (London: Spink, 2009), xii, 611 pp. including 39 plates).

LORD Stewartby’s new volume on the English coinage of the later Middle Ages is nothing short of a masterpiece. Broad in scope, lucid in exposition and clear in structure, it sets the standard for works of its kind. This form of critical numismatic survey is one with which the

author is already associated, as will be apparent to readers familiar with his classic volume on *The Scottish Coinage* (London, 1955) or his chapter on the Anglo-Saxon and Norman coinages in *A New History of the Royal Mint* (ed. C. Challis (Cambridge, 1992)). The present volume effectively takes up where the latter chapter leaves off in 1180, when Henry II (1154–89) undertook a major reform of the English currency. It pursues the coinage until another major reform in 1551 under Edward VI (1547–53). Its overall goal, as Lord Stewartby explains in his preface, is ‘to provide a general historical survey combined with a classified description of the coins’.

The later medieval English coinage is a subject which benefits mightily from such an approach. In its general outline the coinage was not complex. Denominations were relatively few, designs remained broadly fixed for long periods of time and the organization of minting was closely controlled. The bulk of minting was carried out at industrial-level facilities at London and Canterbury, supplemented by smaller ecclesiastical mints and, at times of more substantial recoinage, by a limited network of provincial mints. In the case of the English medieval coinage, the devil is in the detail. The key to the series lies in small permutations of design, particularly letter forms, mintmarks and details of the king’s bust. Determining the significance of these variations and tying them in with the extensive documentary and hoard data was an extraordinary overall achievement; one which will always be associated with the great names of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century numismatics. Stewartby quite rightly highlights their contribution at numerous points in this volume, which might fairly be said to provide a *summa* of numismatic scholarship on the subject. It should be stressed, however, that this is not simply a survey of literature. The author moves chronologically through the coinage, examining its divisions, listing their primary features and, at times, suggesting corrections or improvements. These are clearly signposted, such that the student emerges with a very well-rounded view of the (often highly intricate) structure of accepted wisdom on the various segments of later medieval English coinage.

Even in the hands of such an accomplished stylist as Lord Stewartby, this rich and complex subject still often results in dense prose; it is therefore very much to the author and editors’ credit that extensive supporting materials have been provided. Every one of the nine chapters concludes with a calendar of numismatically important dates and a summarized chronological list of the principal classes, types and sub-types for each denomination. Weight standards too are listed at the end of each chapter. These sections in particular will doubtless prove invaluable to users of all kinds: numismatists, monetary historians, archaeologists, collectors and dealers. Tables, similar to those of *The Scottish Coinage*, are numerous in the text of each chapter, and helpfully summarize mints, moneyers and the combinations of features which characterise various groups. Line drawings of the crucial letter-forms or other marks which distinguish varieties of the coinage are also frequently provided. In-text photographic illustrations of whole coins would on many occasions have been a useful complement to the plates, although the advantage of arranging coins of subtly varying design in one location

for easy comparison remains considerable. The plates as provided are clear and sensibly organized, though some individual images have a somewhat washed-out appearance. Maps are the only supporting feature not provided in abundance: just one, representing all mints active in England across the period, appears in the opening pages of the volume. The number of mints, admittedly, is small for much of the period; but this is a point which would have been very effectively made by the provision of additional maps.

The scarcity of maps is one manifestation of what this volume does not include. Matters of administration, mint organisation and circulation would, if scrutinised in the same level of detail as the structure of the coinage, have resulted in an unmanageable glut of material. As it stands, the volume is only concerned with such matters when they impinge directly on the study of the coins themselves. In no way is this detrimental to its purpose or achievement, but readers must be aware that this volume is a history of the English coinage rather than the English currency – a fact frankly expressed by Lord Stewartby in his preface. An important exception to this rule is the treatment of mint accounts. One of the gems of later medieval English coinage, these provide details of outputs, profits and other information from various mint towns from the thirteenth century onwards. Lord Stewartby refers extensively to publications of these accounts in his descriptions of the coinage, and each chapter concludes with a brief discussion and tabulation of the relevant data.

It should be stressed that the compass of *English Coins* extends beyond the mainstream coinage produced in the heartland of England. Many of the most intriguing and historically significant issues belong to the fringes of the kingdom, or were even made outside the borders of England. Lord Stewartby allots separate, dedicated sections to these special cases, highlighting their distinctive features. Berwick-upon-Tweed, for example, passed back and forth between English and Scottish control several times over the centuries under discussion, and its coinage reflects this complex and troubled history. Similar treatment is also given to the Welsh mint of Rhuddlan in the Short Cross period (1180–1247), which often lay under the control of Welsh princes rather than English kings. Its coinage generally followed English types, with some specific local differences. Ireland is the most outstanding case of technically non-English coinage included within this volume. Issues of Irish mints were always in the name of the English king, but frequently they drew apart from the English currency in design and other features.

There are precious few respects in which *English Coins* can be found wanting. It is handsomely produced by Spink, and has been made available in both hardback and paperback form to cater to different needs and pockets. However, given the exigencies of time and space, the author has elected not to include references to specific sources or publications. This unfortunate but comprehensible course is partially remedied by the provision of a select bibliography of the principal references, organized by subject. One suspects that similar demands lie behind the brevity of the index, which sometimes goes so far as to reference items only by chapter rather than by specific page. Its usefulness to the reader will consequently be limited. The conclusion

also might have benefited from expansion, perhaps to include comments on the general tendencies across the period as well as on future developments.

These and other complaints are, however, trifling. This is a book which ought to be in the collection of all those with an interest in medieval coinage, or in the development of the English coinage as a whole, for it was during this era that many of its characteristic features came into being. It is unlikely that another survey of such rigour, depth and clarity of thought will be written in a very long time.

RORY NAISMITH

Newton and the Counterfeiter, by Thomas Levenson (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), xii, 318 pp.

THE study of counterfeiters and their activities is usually little more than an analysis of their products, often long after the fact. Those counterfeiters that do make it to public notice often do so only at their trial where some error in their operation has come to the attention of the authorities. Having been caught in the act or in possession of counterfeit coins or tools for counterfeiting was the usual method by which the smaller and less skilled operators were brought to justice. The bigger fish were much more careful and required more effort from the authorities and significant evidence for the charges to hold.

In the late seventeenth century, William Chaloner was one such high profile counterfeiter who tried to maintain the outward appearance of a gamekeeper, when all along he was a poacher. Whilst Chaloner first came to the attention of numismatists over a century and a half ago, it was for his proposals to the Mint for improving the state of the coinage and making counterfeiting more difficult.¹ His suggestions for adjusting the weight of the coinage and for introducing a security edge were well considered, and compare well with the other suggestions of the time.² However these were just a ruse to gain access to the Mint and its machinery on the pretence of carrying out trials. In the same proposals he openly accused the moneyers and mint masters of misconduct and being complicit in counterfeiting. As his reputation preceded him these attacks were seen though quite quickly, but he could not be cornered, and after a short stay in Newgate, was released. Whilst the Mint was not the best run organization, with accumulated sinecures at the top, it had Isaac Newton as Master, and with the recoinage complete, he turned his energies to counterfeiters in general.

At this point the hanging of William Chaloner at Tyburn on 22 March 1698/9 might have become just another footnote in numismatics.³ However, shortly afterwards, an anonymous author produced a short pamphlet entitled *A Short View of the life of Will Chaloner, the notorious Coyner... with a brief account of his trial, behaviour and last speech*. With just ten pages

¹ Ruding 1840, II, 53.

² Li 1963, esp. Ch. 6, but Chaloner only appears in the Bibliography on p. 244.

³ Craig 1946, 17; Craig 1963; Challis 1992, 358, 360.

of text, this forms the keystone to the book that Levenson has carefully crafted.⁴

The book contains two main strands, the life of Newton and how he came to be prosecuting counterfeiters, and the life of Chaloner and how he came to lock horns with and finally be hanged by evidence supplied by Newton. The book is written as part biography, part historical detective story and part social history. The extensive notes (pp. 253–91), bibliography (pp. 292–301) and comprehensive index (pp. 302–18) confirm that Levenson, a Professor of Science Writing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has left few stones unturned in the reconstruction of this story.

The book begins with the early life of Newton and his arrival in Cambridge in June 1661, his Lucasian Professorship of Mathematics in 1669 and his life at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he would spend almost twenty years working on his *Principia*. The first mention of a position at the Mint can be found in a letter from Newton to Locke on 30 June 1691, possibly in reply to a conversation or letter now lost.⁵

The next section considers William Chaloner's early life and his journey to the small town of Birmingham, then well off the main thoroughfares, for an apprenticeship in nail-making. It was here that his skills in metalurgy, casting and engraving were developed. The area was already well known for producing false coins which had entered common parlance as 'Birmingham Groats'.⁶ Levenson considers this to be referring to counterfeit groats; however, from the description in the original *Guzman Redivivus*, this is more likely a counterfeit shilling that contained no more than a groats' worth of silver. Chaloner is then found in London, where his fortunes rise and fall as his schemes for making money from false gold and silver coins, and from false lottery tickets amongst other things, initially flourish and then wane. What sets Chaloner apart from all of his contemporaries was his awareness of the legal system and his ability to argue his way out of some very tight corners. On several occasions he simply turned King's evidence on his collaborators, received the substantial reward (£40), and walked free.

It was during 1696 that Newton and Chaloner first crossed paths; just another counterfeiter, amongst the many that had been investigated by the Mint's officers. Most broke under interrogation and were quickly removed from circulation. Chaloner stuck to his story that his coining equipment had been supplied by corrupt mint workers.

The Great Recoinage distracted Newton for a couple of years, and Chaloner fell on to hard times. In 1698, Chaloner petitioned Parliament on the grounds of a Mint conspiracy in false coining and that he had been made destitute after his previous petitions had resulted in his imprisonment. Chaloner had now put his head (or neck) into plain view and Newton started to bring together all of Chaloner's past, so that when the trial came there would be no escape. At the trial, Newton's case was water-tight, and on 4 March 1699 Chaloner was found guilty and was sentenced to death by hanging.

The story finishes with Chaloner feigning madness and writing letters from Newgate, directly to Newton, pleading for clemency.⁷ With Chaloner's execution came the end of a very colourful character who had played and lost a game of the highest stakes. Whether Newton would have seen Chaloner as such a special case is not as clear from the original sources as Levenson paints in his book. However Levenson has achieved a very original spotlight on the crime of counterfeiting, the criminals and their interactions with the authorities in the last decade of the seventeenth century. The book has also brought Newton's activities at the Mint to a much broader audience than previously.

In all, an excellent read with many thought provoking points, all highlighting the difficulties of studying the activities of counterfeiters.

GARY ODDIE

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The Token Book: British Tokens of the 17th 18th and 19th Centuries and their Values, compiled by Paul and Bente Withers (Galata Print Limited, Llanfyllin, 2010 2009). 512 pp., col. ill.

In 2010 Paul and Bente Withers were awarded the Society's North Medal, an honour conferred by the Society for outstanding services to British numismatics and in the Withers' case a reflection of their remarkable achievements in numismatic publishing over the past two decades or so. Since the 1990s an impressive range of books on a variety of aspects of British coinage have poured out of the Old White Lion in Llanfyllin with a rapidity that has become increasingly breathtaking. The Withers, with their eye for good design and impeccable photography, have not only provided a ready outlet for the work of specialists such as David Rogers, Elizabeth Pirie and Tim Everson,¹ but have produced a stream of significant publications based on their own research and the systematic collections they have built up over

⁷ Turnbull, Scott, Hall and Tilling 1959–77, V, 305, 307.

¹ And, one should add, for D. Brown, C. Comber and W. Wilkinson whose *The Hammered Silver Coins produced at the Tower Mint during the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Llanfyllin, 2006) is the definitive authority on this series.

⁴ Anonymous 1699.

⁵ Turnbull, Scott, Hall and Tilling 1959–77, V, 152.

⁶ Anonymous 1699, 4.

the years. Outstanding among the latter have been their authoritative catalogues of coin weights and of nineteenth-century copper tokens which are established as the standard works on their respective subjects. At the same time the Withers have put students and collectors in their debt with their admirable guide to Edwardian pennies and their invaluable series of 'introductory' volumes on 'small change' – six published so far and one on Scottish coins soon to come – which have done so much to elucidate and bring order to a seemingly intractable area of coinage.

The Withers' publications have been conspicuous for the excellence of their photography which has so greatly facilitated the identification of even the shabbiest of material. This same standard of photography, most of it, as usual, the responsibility of Paul Withers and now in colour, is carried through to their latest offering which provides a compendium and price guide to the major series of British tokens from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, including a section on the 'evasions' of the last years of the eighteenth century. The most striking part of the book is that dealing with seventeenth-century issues. Of the 20,000 or so tokens put out between 1648 and 1680 the Withers have listed some 17 per cent and illustrated in the region of 12 per cent. These may seem small percentages but anything greater would have been totally impractical in the compass available. The selection the Withers have made, embracing not only many of the commonest tokens but also rarities and pieces of interesting or attractive design, together with a substantial profile of Irish issues, provides a first-class overview of the series enhanced with exceptionally crisp and clear illustrations of tokens which elsewhere, even in the most prestigious of publications, can often be of very variable quality. The Withers have chosen well and sought out 'photogenic' pieces from a variety of collections including those of the British and Fitzwilliam Museums. To take only one example – from the British Museum – this reviewer has never seen such a good reproduction of the very elusive and usually poor-condition Swansea farthing of Isaac After (*BW*, Wales 70). And searching through the *embarrass de richesses* he could find only one instance where the Withers must have nodded with two reverses reproduced for Richard Ballard's Monmouth halfpenny (*BW*, Mon. 15).

The Withers, of necessity, follow the methodology and numbering systems of the major reference catalogues: Williamson's Boyne (augmented by Dickinson), Dalton and Hamer, Dalton, and their own work on nineteenth-century copper. By and large this approach facilitates a quick and convenient identification of the issuers of the seventeenth- and nineteenth-century series but it is not so readily adaptable in a simplified catalogue for the eighteenth-century tokens where one is frequently dependent on the edge readings to establish the issuer and where the tyro can so easily be confused by the unscrupulous use of unrelated or falsely-edged blanks. Clarification might be achieved if the substantive edge was printed in bold type and perhaps thought should be given to this in a second edition.

Prefacing the catalogue proper is a twenty-page introduction setting out the historical background of the tokens, an explanation of the iconography of the seventeenth-century series and a consideration of con-

dition criteria made especially helpful through the use of greatly enlarged images. The book concludes with a select bibliography supported by an instructive commentary in Paul Withers' inimitable style.

The Withers set out to produce an up-to-date price guide to British tokens. This is a task fraught with difficulties for the market never stands still but, while there will be some who will carp over specific valuations, the Withers have succeeded in their purpose of establishing a base for prices at the date of publication, a feat requiring a considerable degree of painstaking research in itself. Yet it is not as a price-guide that *The Token Book* should be gauged. A single volume handbook to British tokens has been needed for a long time and the real value of this book will lie more generally in its undoubted merit as a modern introduction to the various series, as a spur to both students and collectors and not least as a first port of call for the non-specialist numismatist or harassed museum official called on to identify some obscure 'token-like' object. All in all *The Token Book* is a first class production of a standard never achieved before for a like catalogue and the Withers are to be congratulated on their skill and vigour in adding yet another splendid publication to their stable.

D.W. DYKES

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The Tokens, Metallic Tickets, Checks and Passes of West Sussex, 1650 to 1950, by Ron Kerridge; photography by Rob de Ruiter ([Worthing (31 Sheridan Road, BN14 8EU)]; R. Kerridge, 2009), 244 pp.

A problem with this book is that the present West Sussex was constituted only in 1997, which is too recent for most non-residents to know what belonged in that part of the ancient county. Brighton was in East Sussex, yet it appears here for its Co-operative Society (branches in West Sussex), its market (for West Sussex growers), and its railway (pp. 156–9, 182–5, 215–17). There is a clear map of token-issuing parishes, but one looks forward to a companion volume covering the eastern parishes, and to a book which is not so tightly bound that it has to be held open.

The coloured illustrations are superb, and the *Cat passant guardant* in East Grinstead may be the only occurrence of that punch by Ramage. All the tokens are reproduced at 4.5 cm, but actual diameters are given, with a weight. Had the authors referred to the Norweb Collection (Part V not IV, and pls 41–45), they would

have added die axes, a greater range of weights, and a British Museum specimen of their no. 44 with a ghostly presence in Cheshire (see Norweb 5210). Number 19 was given the reverse of no. 80, but the authors have produced a *cancellans*.

In addition to Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (which seem not to have been tapped), one may note that Matthew Weston in Billingshurst, mercer, in 1669 left a will and an inventory (PROB 4/675). His token actually reads **BILLINGSHVST**, and other errors of transcription likewise may be corrected from the illustrations.

In Cuckfield Thomas Overman's 'robed figure under an arbor(?) with a cross-bar and lion(?) above' is actually *A pavilion between two mantles and on a chief a lion passant guardant*, from the Merchant Taylors' arms, as on Norweb iii.2450, vi.5615, and vii.7830. His token must be a decade earlier than the 1669 marriage in Southwark.

In Henfield the initials on Elizabeth Trunnell's token dated 1657 (on both sides) indicate that she had married a man whose first name began with **I/J**, not with **T**, and he might well have been the John Trunnell mentioned in 1633 and 1647. There is also confusion over Thomas Aylwin in Midhurst, whose then wife's initial should have been **R**, not **A**.

Thomas Donstall of Hurstpierpoint does not bear a wool-comb but a hair comb, as corrected for the Norweb specimen, and more appropriate to his trade of mercer.

A brother of Samuel Blunt of Lindfield, bearing the Grocers' arms, was an ancestor of our late lamented Christopher Blunt, who had a specimen.

In John Taylor the Water Poet's visit to Petworth in 1653 it probably is relevant to the issuer that: 'I was kind Mr Barnards costly guest: To me he shew'd his bounty from the mint',¹ but from the illustration, sadly, it is clear that John Barnard's token is too late to have been that 'bounty from the mint', which the authors do not suggest, but others might.

The reattribution to Steyning made by Kerridge himself is of course included,² but soon after the book was published an addition long misplaced in Leeds was

identified, Norweb viii.9480 under Warninglid in Slaugham parish: *White [Lion]*: Allum, Thomas, 1668, who had married Susan Jeale in 1658.

The text for late eighteenth-century tokens adds something to Dalton & Hamer, but if the authors had followed the D&H transcription of the legend around Spence's Cat (203c, see Middlesex 680), they would have respected its punctuation, and revealed a sort of rhyme. Early nineteenth-century silver tokens are much the same as in Davis and James Mays, although there is new information for Steyning.

Those traditional categories of trade token constitute Part 1. Part 3 covers leaden tokens classified by David Powell's system, and Part 2 other tokens, which exhibit a fascinating range of well-documented types. Notable are the numbers for markets (including Covent Garden), for growers in the developing glasshouse industry, and for Lancing Carriage and Wagon Works. No. 735 adds Haywards Heath to the locations of auctioneers' tokens.³ On no. 805 the 'two lions and a shield' are the royal arms supported by a Lion and a Unicorn. However, the illustrations more than make up for such textual infelicities.

So, a very well-illustrated, thorough, and interesting contribution to one county's paranumismatica over three hundred years, revealing the economic influence of London as far as the south coast.

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¹ Chandler 1999, 288.

² Kerridge 2007.

³ Whitmore 2009.