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# The Mystery of the Missionaries' Money

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The Griqua Coinage of the London Missionary Society



Pierre H. Nortje





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## Introduction

The Griqua coinage was introduced in South Africa by the London Missionary Society (LMS) in the first quarter of the 19th century at their mission station at Griquatown, situated in what is known today as the Northern Cape Province. The series consists of four denominations, a quarter and half pence struck in copper, and a five and ten pence in silver. Some numismatists refer to the coinage as “tokens” while others see them as “coins”. Although there are various definitions of the two terms, the general consensus is that coins are issued by governments for use as money while tokens are issued as a substitute for coinage, usually by private individuals, businesses or organizations.

The London Missionary Society referred to them as tokens. In this book, the words coins and tokens are used interchangeably. Although the denomination does not appear on the coins (only the inscriptions  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , IIIII and 10 surrounded by the words Griqua Town), most numismatists agree that they are penny (pence) pieces. Note that on the coins the name of the town is depicted as two words, but in modern times it is written Griquatown. The obverse of all four coins depicts a dove with an olive branch in its beak, the so-called Dove of Peace.

In the late 1800s, penny-size issues were struck on instruction of Otto Nolte & Co. in Berlin for usage as salesman samples for the Cape of Good Hope, Orange Free State, Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek and Griquatown. Of the latter, two varieties are known, one bearing the date 1890 and the other dateless. These Victorian-era patterns are not part of the original Griqua series.



Source: Numista (© apuking (CC BY-SA) & © Heritage Auctions)

The scarcity of information around the Griqua coinage adds to its mystery. Three quarters of a century after their minting, some prominent Victorian-era numismatists still were not aware that there were four denominations in the series.

As late as 1910, almost a hundred years after they were introduced in South Africa, Dr. J.W.B. Gunning, who was the Director of the Transvaal Museum from 1897 to 1913, wrote that *“De geschiedenis dezer munten is min of meer in duister gehuld”* (The history of these coins is to some extent shrouded in mystery) and ends his article with three questions.

- In what year were they coined?
- In what years were they in use?
- What amount was circulated?

These questions, and more, still intrigue coin collectors and historians in the present day and have led to many a fierce numismatic debate.

But what is, and was, always known about the series, is that the coins are rare and command high prices when examples trickle onto the

international coin market. Since the late 1800s, when pieces started to appear in numismatic sale lists of the time, they were invariably described as very rare. As an example, at the turn of the previous century, Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge sold a Griqua  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny for the sum £6 12s 6p in one of its London sales in 1901. At the same sale an equally humble copper token was sold for the same price being a Carolina halfpenny of 1694 that today would fetch many thousands of US dollars.

Nine years later at the 1910 Chicago Numismatic Society meeting, members exhibited some very rare coins in their collections that warranted mention in *The Numismatist*, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association. The exhibition included, amongst others, two Japanese gold Obans, a gold 100 Ducat of Bohemia, a Broad and Crown in gold of Charles I of England and an uncirculated U.S. Half Dollar of 1796. Proudly displayed were also a  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny of Griquatown. These two coins belonged to Virgil Brand, who many believe owned the largest private collection of coins ever assembled in the world, some 368 000 pieces (see Chapter 6). For the two humble missionary tokens to be picked for exhibition from such a huge coin cabinet, was truly a significant achievement.

Until fairly recently, collectors did not have much more information than what was already known a 100 years ago regarding the series. However, in recent times, earnest attempts were made by a few numismatists to study the Griqua coinage and unwrap the enigma of these intriguing pieces. This culminated in a series of events in 2021 and 2022 that solved part of the mystery.

The author would like to acknowledge the contributions and support of Derick Rabe, a Cape Town numismatist who has walked this long road with him for many years, Professor Francois Malan of the University of Pretoria, Dr. Morgan Carroll, a patron to South African numismatics in so many ways, Bruckner de Villiers, my English tutor, and of course Allyn Jacobs, the doyen of token collecting in South Africa. Finally, this book



would never have been written if it was not for Quinton Ferreira, a metal detectorist from the Northern Cape, who made key discoveries that he shared with the author.

Pierre H. Nortje

Cape Town, South Africa

March 2023



*Picture top left: The author with Sarah Mokokong, the administrative assistant at the Mary Moffat museum in Griquatown during his visit there in September 2022. Picture top right and bottom: A couple of hundred meters down the main road, lies the site where the old mission station was situated.*



# Chapter 1

## Historic Documentation and Research

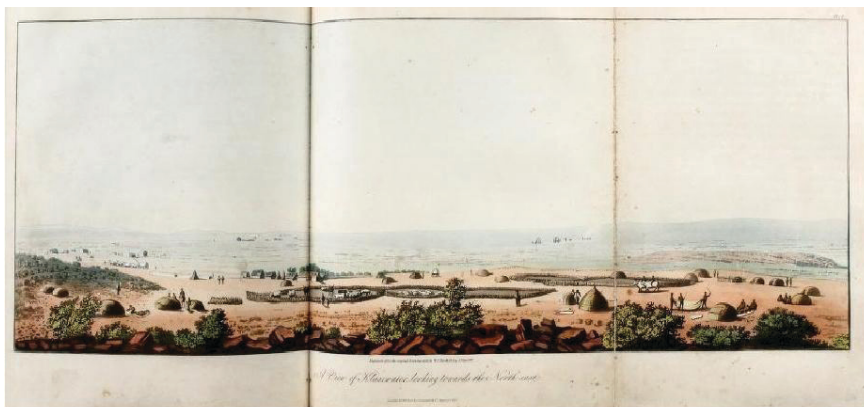
### **Background**

The London Missionary Society (LMS) was a Christian evangelical missionary society formed in England in 1795. It was initially only known as the Missionary Society and had the “London” added in 1818. In 1796, only one year after its establishment, the first missionaries were sent abroad. Many missions soon followed and in 1799 it commenced work in Southern Africa.

The LMS appointed a General Superintendent of the Southern Africa stations in December 1811 and seven years later, by 1818, there were fifteen mission stations in what is today known as the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape Provinces. One of the first stations to be established was at Leeuwenkuil in 1802 amongst the Griqua people by the missionaries William Anderson and Cornelius Kramer. The mission was soon moved further up the valley to Klarwater, which was later renamed Griquatown by the missionaries.

The Griqua, formerly called Bastard Hottentots, were Dutch-speaking people of mixed ancestry. They descended mainly from intermarriage and sexual relationships between indigenous Khoikhoi, slave mothers and European male colonists who had left the Cape Colony to settle north of the Orange River, free from racial discrimination and colonial rule. It was here that the Missionary Society established a mission station in the early 1800s around which the town (named Griekwastad in Afrikaans) developed.

In October 1811 it was visited by the English explorer, naturalist, artist and author William Burchell, who reported extensively on the village and its inhabitants in his *Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa*, a two-volume work appearing in 1822 and 1824. The settlement consisted, he writes, of the “...huts of the Hottentots, their own (the missionaries) dwellings; the house for religious meeting and school instruction, their storehouse, and their garden...”



\* The view of *Klaarwater*, represented in *Plate 8*, was taken from the rocky ridge above-mentioned, and shows the whole of the village, and the surrounding country. The *hut-houses* of the Hottentots may be distinguished by their hemispherical form. The largest oblong building is the *church*, or *meeting-house*; in a line with which stand the dwellings of the missionaries, and their *storehouses*. In a line just above the church, are seen the trees of the *garden*, the tallest of which are the *Carolinian willow*; the rest are peach-trees. The wagon on the left, is proceeding on the road towards *Ongeluks Fontein*, a part of which is seen crossing the ridge in the distance. Above the wagon is the *willow-tree*, the history of which is given under the date of the 9th of December following. Behind the wagon, the foundations of a new *meeting-house* are conspicuous; near which is the conical thatched hut used as a *storehouse*. Another round thatched building, in a line below the fire, is also a *storehouse*. Various huts of the Hottentots are scattered in the distance. Near the church and dwelling-houses, the missionaries' waggon is according to the practice of the Cape colony, stationed in the open air; sheds for such purposes being very rarely seen among the boxes. The centre of the picture is occupied by the *knobs*, or

pounds, for oxen and sheep, fenced in with large branches of trees. The *wood* is distinguished by a more verdant coloring. In the distance, my own *station* is pointed out by the two waggon, and the party of visitors assembled round our fire. Behind a low rocky hill on the right, in the middle distance, the top of a wagon marks the spot of the *stopping scene* represented in the engraving at the end of this volume; and the wagon a little farther to the left, at the point of the same hill, shows the place where my waggon was stationed during my absence to *Grassfontein*. On both sides of this rocky hill, the waters collected in the road find an outlet along the valley to *Leucocornell* (Lion's-den). The *valley* from the *Asbestos Mountains* descends just behind the bushy ridge on the left of the picture. In the foreground, various groups of *Hottentots* are seen basking in the sun; some sitting smoking or conversing at the shore of their huts, some stretched out upon sheepskins spread on the ground; one on the left of the picture preparing a skin for leather; three on the right, heaving a large *velum-hut* (or sheepskin coverlet), a frequent and very necessary operation. Of the bushes on the foreground, some are of the kind described at page 318, under the name of *Spartium europaeum*, and others, a new *Rhus*, specifically designated by that of *coccinifera*.

Drawing made by William Burchell on 5 June 1812 of the settlement, as published in his *Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa*.

Expecting a “neat little village” Burchell was confronted by reality “... the church sunk to a barn-like building of reeds and mud; the village was merely a row of half a dozen reed cottages; the river was but a rill; and the situation an open, bare, and exposed place, without any appearance of a garden, excepting that of the missionaries.”

He continues “The number of (Khoikhoi) houses immediately round the church, is not greater than twenty-five; but at a distance, within the same valley, nearly



*as many more are scattered about; and there are three or four at Leeuwenkuil, a place between the mountains, and about a mile and a half distant. Within fifty miles, in various directions, are nearly a dozen other out-posts; but they are not always inhabited... The aggregate number of inhabitants at Klaarwater and the out-stations, amounted in the year 1809, as I was informed, to seven hundred and eighty-four souls...*

On a subsequent visit in 1812, Burchell commented upon the slight increase in size of the settlement at Klaarwater (later named Griquatown). *“At my former visit to this village, the number of mat-huts was twenty, it was now twenty-five. This increase of population was occasioned by the return home of those families who had been residing with their cattle on the banks of the Gariep during the dry season.”*

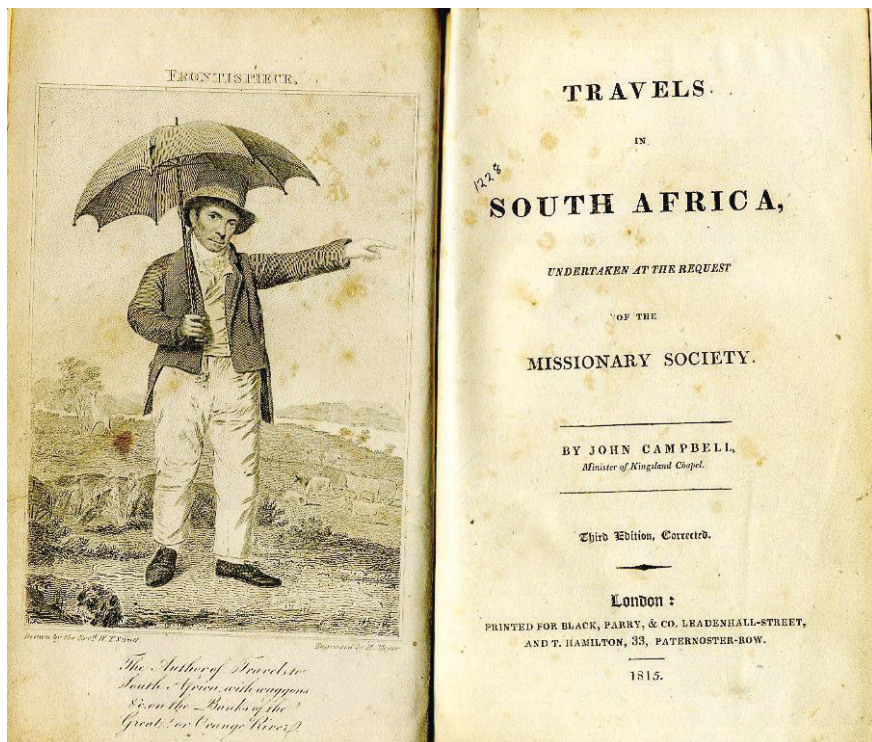
In June 1812, the London Missionary Society sent one of its directors, John Campbell (1766-1840), to the Cape Colony to inspect and report on its mission stations in South Africa.

Campbell left Cape Town in February 1813, visiting places like Bethelsdorp, Grahamstown, Graaff-Reinet and Klaarwater and then travelled further north. He arrived back in Cape Town at the end of October 1813. He left the Cape early in 1814 and arrived back in London on the 7th of May. His report on his findings was delivered at the annual meeting of the Missionary Society on the 11th of the same month.

He wrote an account of this trip, which was published in 1815 as *Travels in South Africa, undertaken at the request of the Missionary Society*. During his visit to the Griqua living at the mission station at Klaarwater (Griquatown) in August 1813, he discussed various issues with them. On 7 August 1813 he writes:-

*“It was likewise resolved that as they had no circulating medium amongst them by which they could purchase any small article, such as knives, scissors, etc. supposing a shop to be established amongst them – which they were anxious there should be – they should apply to the Missionary Society to get silver pieces*

of different value coined for them in England, which the Missionaries would take for their allowance from the Society, having the name of Griqua town marked on them. It is probable that if this were adopted in a short time they would circulate amongst all the nations about, and be a great convenience.”



*Travels in South Africa, undertaken at the request of the Missionary Society published by Black, Parry & Co., London, 1815.*

On 10 May 1816 at the 22nd annual meeting (covering the 1815-1816 period) of the London Missionary Society, it was reported that:-

*“An Auxiliary Mission Society has been established in Griquatown, the subscribers to which, having no money (for money is utterly unknown in that part of the world) have contributed property which is to be sold for the benefit of the Society. ...To remedy the inconvenience sustained by the people, (who have now made*





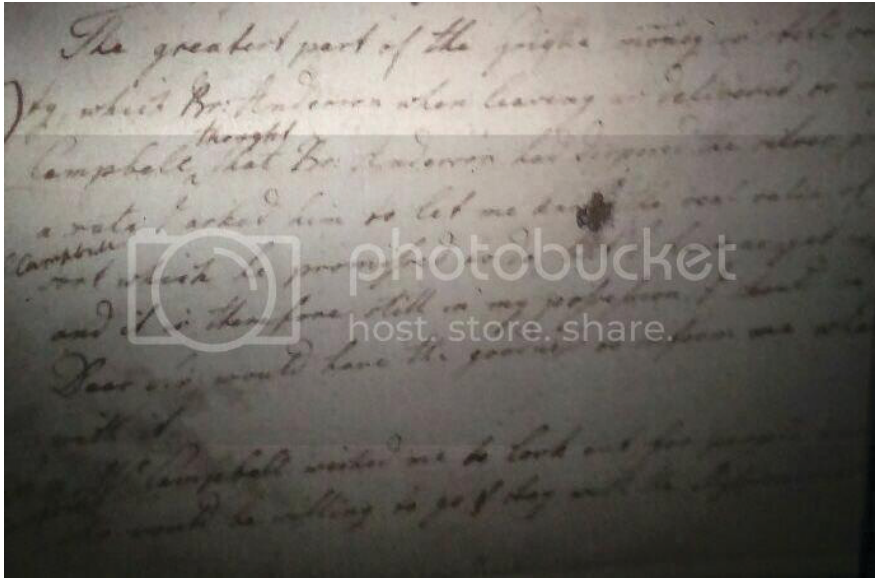
*Reynet and Beaufort districts.”*

Four days later, on 12 August Campbell wrote “*Conversed also on the coin. They said if it would pass in the colony the Griquas would readily take it. I promised to apply to the Governor to sanction its passing in the districts of Graaff-Reynet and Beaufort.*”

Less than a year later, on 21 June 1821, Griquatown missionary Heinrich Helm wrote a letter to his superior, Dr. John Philip in Cape Town and mentions:-

*“Br Anderson made the agreement with him (Andries Waterboer) that he would receive for payment 60 Rijksdaalders a year from the society. Having no money, he has for the last two years received nothing except 13 Rijksdaalders 4 Schillings. As most of the members of our Auxiliary Society have paid their contribution for the past year partly in money and partly in corn, sheep and goats, I have been able to give him about 36 Rijksdaalder more. He has therefore still to receive 70 Rijksdaalder 4 Schilling. Will you be so good as to send for him that sum by a safe opportunity. Of what I have received from the Griquas for our society I shall give an account as soon as all is paid. The greatest part of the Griqua money is still our Society’s property by which Br Anderson when leaving delivered to my care. As Br Campbell thought that Br Anderson had disposed the silver pieces at too cheap a rate I asked him to let me know the real value of a piece of each sort which he promised to do, but I have as yet received no answer and it is therefore still in my possession. I would be glad if you Dear Sir would have the goodness to inform me what I am to do with it.”*

These extracts quoted above (Campbell’s diary entries of 7 August 1813 and 8-12 August 1820, the LMS annual report of 10 May 1816 and the Heinrich Helm letter of 21 June 1821), is the only information we had until very recently, on the Griqua coinage from then-contemporary reports.



Picture taken on 2 June 2017 by the author of Helm's letter on microfilm at the Cape Archives.

### Early references

In the early 2010s a hectic and heated discussion of the Griqua coinage continued for months on a South African numismatic internet forum (<https://forums.bidorbuy.co.za/>) with many comments (and some participants) being blocked and deleted by the moderator. The main protagonist was an Australian numismatist, Scott Balson, an ex-South African, who claimed that the Griqua coinage had no relevance to South African numismatics at all, as they were never intended for circulation and only handed out by the missionaries as keepsakes and freebees. Balson went so far as to question the account of Rev. Campbell calling him a drunk and a liar, and was later of the opinion that the Griqua coinage was struck in much later Victorian times.

The author was intrigued by the various arguments and started research on the Griqua coinage and in 2016 published a paper entitled *The Truth*

*behind the Griqua Town Coinage*. This won him the Merit Medallion that was awarded by the National Numismatic Society in Johannesburg on 5th March 2016. In his paper, the author referred to previous writings regarding the Griqua coinage of which a summary is given here with substantial new information added.

The first reference to the Griqua coinage from a non-LMS source was in 1843 by John Centlivres Chase in his book entitled *Natal: A Reprint of All the Authentic Notices, Descriptions, Public Acts and Documents, Petitions, Manifestoes, Correspondence, Government Advertisements and Proclamations, Bulletins and Military Despatches Relative to Natal with a Narrative of Events at that Settlement. In Two Parts*. The coins are referred to in part 1 that covers the period up to 1837. Chase was very sceptical of the acceptance of the coins by the Griqua as they had little understanding and need for money, and the inscription “Griqua Town ” on the coins was in English while they were only proficient in Dutch. He believes that not a farthing entered into circulation. Thirty-three years later, H. J. Hofstede in his *History of the Orange Free State*, published in 1876, virtually copied Chase’s reference to the coins verbatim (translated from English to Dutch) with only the slightest acknowledgment.

In 2017, Dean McClelland wrote an informative piece on Chase in the *Casual Observer* entitled *Port Elizabeth of Yore: John Centlivres Chase – Father of the Eastern Cape*. He tells us that Chase (1795-1877) came to South Africa aboard the *Chapman*, as one of the original 1820 British settlers. He wrote and co-wrote several articles and books on South Africa. After his retirement, Chase was elected as the member for Port Elizabeth of the Cape Legislative Assembly (1864-1865), and then as a member of the Cape Legislative Council for the Eastern Divisions (1866-1875). McClelland mentions in his article that in June 1825 Chase and another settler, James Collins, undertook one of the earliest trading expeditions to Griquatown. Chase was the first person that we are aware of that mentions both silver



Griqua Coinage

HOFSTEDÉ Geschiedenis van den Oranje Vrystaat

p 89 De Bastaard of Griqua neersetting te Klaarwater of Griquastad.

In 1812 werden zy door eerwaarden John Campbell bezocht, die een reeks van zeer wyze regulatien voor hen samenstelde, waar door het Londensch genootschap en het godsdienstige publiek in Engeland zoodanige gedachten kregen van den buitengewonene vooruitgang der beschaving van de Bastaards, dat zy werkelijk de kosten en moeite niet ontzagen om zilveren en koperen stukken gelds voor hen te doen munten in een tyd, toen de gekleurden niet het geringste denkbeeld hadden van het nut van een metalen standaard voor waarde en toen hun geheele handel met de Kolonie niet zoo hoog ging als £50 stg in het jaar.

Om de dwaasheid dezer menschlivend heid nog te vergrooten, was er een Engelsche inscriptie op, terwyl zelfs de Kolonisten niets anders dan Hollandsch verstonde-Engelsche woorden, terwyl de eenige taal door de Bastaards gebruikt en door hunne zendingen onderwezen, was de Hollandsche. Op den eenen kant stond de waarde der munt, op den anderen Griqua town, en de voorstelling van een duif met een olyftak in haar bek. De duif des vredes vloog spoedig weg en het geld ging mee, waarvan nooit een enkele "farthing" in omloop was. En de wetten van dat volk? Jezers die zyn slechts te vinden in de beroemde reisbeschryvingen van dien Eerwaarden Heer zelf.

*A typed copy of Hofstede's referral, in Dutch, to the Griqua coinage found in the Jacob Roos collection that is mentioned later in this chapter.*

and copper Griqua pieces and gave a description of their obverse and reverse being the wording "Griqua Town" and the depiction of a dove with an olive branch in its beak, the so-called Dove of Peace.

The second reference that we found by a non-LMS source to the Griqua coinage was from William Boyne in his book *The Silver Tokens of Great Britain & Ireland, the Dependencies, & Colonies* (1866) who refers to them and states:-

*"I cannot learn on what occasion these were struck, but it seems likely, from conversation I have had with residents of our South African colonies, that they were issued by the London Missionary Society for the Griquas ..."*

## GRIQUA.

62. *O.* No legend. A dove flying with an olive branch in its mouth.

*R.* GRIQUA TOWN = IO. (Plate II. no 10.) 1s. size.

63. *O.* No legend. A dove flying with an olive branch in its mouth.

*R.* GRIQUA TOWN = IIIII. 6d. size.

I cannot learn on what occasion these were struck, but it seems likely, from conversation I have had with residents of our South African colonies, that they were issued by the London Missionary Society for the Griquas, a bastard nation of mixed Dutch, Hottentot, and ~~English~~ blood. The nation is now settled, under their leader Adam Kok, near the colony of Natal. They have wandered about for many years.

William Boyne (1814-1893) visited South Africa in the 1850s and travelled to the interior of Natal and the Cape Colony. It was most probably during this visit that he learnt of the Griqua pieces and their connection with the London Missionary Society. Boyne only mentions the silver 5 and 10 pence and not the copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  pennies (his book was intended to only cover silver tokens). When his vast collection of coins and medals were sold in January 1896 by Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, lot number 1414 contained eleven coins and tokens of Africa, including a Griqua 10 pence. The second time a copper piece is recorded that the author is aware of, was in 1870 when the numismatic collection of Dr. Pieter Otto van der Chijs was sold by the bookdealer Gerardus Theodorus Bom in Amsterdam. Lot number 3176 was described as two coins from Griquatown, a 10 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  followed by a question mark. The cataloguer obviously did not know what their denominations were, nor on which continent Griquatown was situated, as they were listed under the *Americas* section. Van der Chijs died in 1867, so the two coins must have been added to his collection before that date.

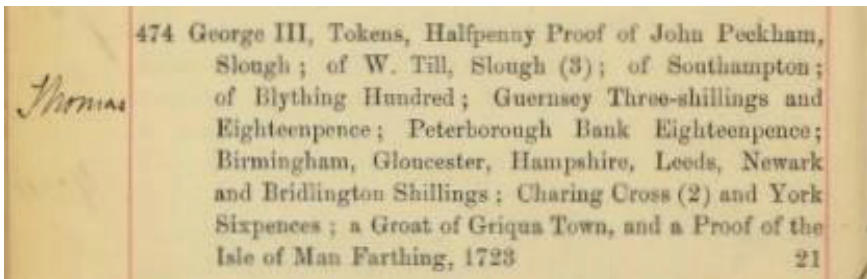
In April 1886, the *Coin Collector's Journal* published in the USA, featured a short article by an unknown author, entitled *Coins of the Diamond Fields*. The writer recalls that whilst he stayed in Boston, USA, he saw local miners embarking for the Cape of Good Hope to search for diamonds at the newly discovered diggings in Kimberley in the late 1860s. He wrote:-  
*“Diamonds and all that relate to them are a subject of interest to everyone, coin collectors not excepted; especially interesting to the collectors should be the coins of the wild mining camps, which grew up around the fields upon which the South African diamonds are found. Fresh in (my) memory is one scene in particular, when (I) stood upon the string piece of T wharf, and watched a little band of comrades fully equipped for digging the precious stones, waving farewell on the deck of the clipper ship Rover, as she hoisted sail and bore away for the Cape. Some of that little band returned; others found a grave upon the South African plains. Two only out of the entire number – a round dozen, if we remember aright – came back richer than they went. From one of these latter we received the gift of two tokens issued at Griqua Town in the heart of the diamond fields; as they are the only ones we ever met with and of great rarity, we have had them engraved for the benefit of our collecting friends.”*

The two coins were a copper ½ and silver 10 pence, the latter unfortunately pierced. The writer ends his short article by stating that *“To us these tokens possess the additional interest of being, to the best of our knowledge, the only coins ever issued at the Cape of Good Hope”*.

After the Amsterdam sale of 1870 mentioned above, the second time that we could find a Griqua coin on offer was in the Fonrobert sale of 16 September 1878 in Berlin when a pierced 10 pence coin was offered (according to the information supplied in the Wayte Raymond Public Auction Sale – Part IV – a century later, on 8 December 1978). Jules Fonrobert, born 1831, was a German coin collector who passed away in 1879.

A month later, in October 1878, also in Germany, a Griqua 5 Pence was offered as lot number 3345 in the Adolph Hess sale in Frankfurt.

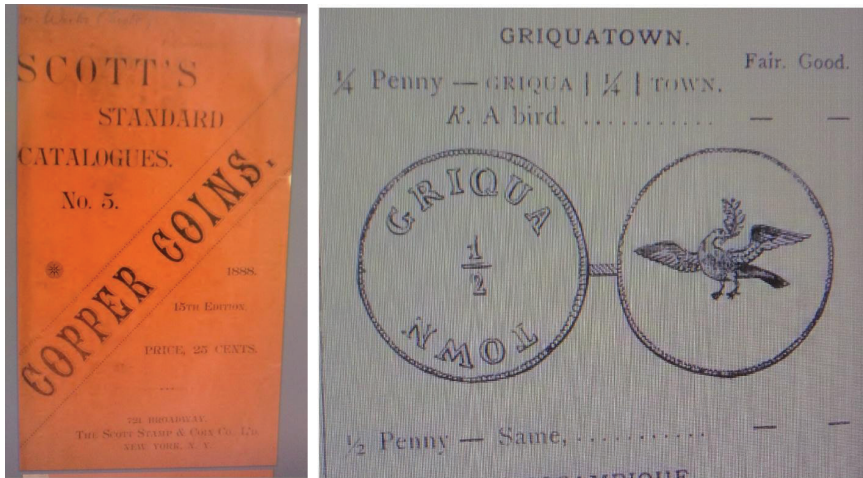
In June 1884, Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge (London) sold the coin and medal collection of John Kermack Ford from Southsea in England. Lot number 474 was 21 tokens from the era of George III, including what was described as a “*Groat of Griqua Town*”. A Groat is an archaic term for a 4 pence piece, and as far as we know, the copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  Griqua penny was not yet recorded in any catalogue at that stage, so the sales compiler probably thought the  $\frac{1}{4}$  refers to a 4 pence. How he (rightly) knew that it dates from the George III period is a mystery; except of course, if he had insight into Reverent John Campbell’s African travel account, published more than half a century earlier.



In 1889, James Atkins, in his book *The Coins and Tokens of the Possessions and Colonies of the British Empire*, refers to Boyne’s 1866 publication ... “*Boyne supposes the following tokens to have been issued by the London Missionary Society for the Griquas ...who settled near the Colony of Natal. I have made inquiries of the Society’s agents, but have learned nothing to justify this supposition*”. In his book, Atkins also mentions the copper  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny but not the  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny. However, the year before, in 1888, Scott’s Standard Catalogues, No. 5. 15th Edition published in New York, USA, did indeed mention both the copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny.

In 1893, Scott’s Standard Catalogues also mentions the silver 5 and 10 pence pieces, but as in their 1888 catalogue regarding the copper pieces, no values are given.





In 1895, a silver 5 and a 10 pence Griqua piece were listed for sale in *Spink & Son's Numismatic Circular* (page 1074). For some reason, as was the case with the Scott's Standard Catalogues mentioned above, the coins are not priced, but only marked as RRR (very rare). It is interesting to note that a query was received by this London coin company in the late 1800s (exact date unknown) of a coin "issued by Andries Waterboer" (who was elected the Griqua leader in December 1820). Spink wrote directly to the owner (Spink & Son enquiry numbered 628). However, one has to access their records to view the reply. In their catalogue of 1907, page 9934, a half and quarter penny, also marked RRR, were offered at £4 and £4.1 respectively, significantly high values for coins then.

In 1910, Dr. J.W.B. Gunning, who was the Director of the Transvaal Museum from 1897 to 1913, wrote that he acquired three Griqua pieces (a 1/4, 1/2 and 5 pence) in 1892 in the Orange Free State. Dr. Gunning wrote an enquiring letter to Dr. Ralph Wardlaw Thompson, who was a director of the London Missionary Society from 1874 to 1880 and their foreign secretary from 1881 onwards.

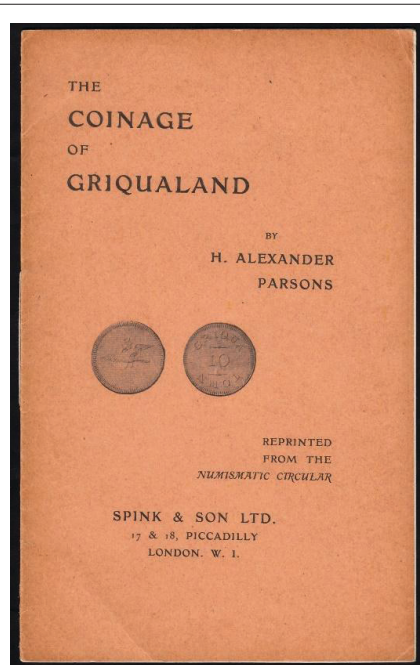
Dr. Thompson responded in writing to Dr. Gunning's enquiry as follows (translated from Dutch) ... "Some years ago I heard about the tokens that were

*minted by the Society when the Griqualand State was still known as Griqualand West. I believe that these tokens were used in large numbers, as other coins were not available. The dove and the olive branch on the tokens depict our Society since the beginning of its history ...”*

(Dr. Thompson’s father, Rev. William Thompson, also worked for the LMS and succeeded Dr. John Philip as the London Missionary Society’s principal agent in South Africa. It was to Dr. Philip who the Griqua missionary Heinrich Helm wrote the letter in 1821 regarding the issuance of the Griqua silver pieces).

In 1927, H. Alexander Parsons (1890-1953) wrote the most detailed account we have (up till 2016) on the Griqua pieces for Spink & Son, the London-based coin dealership. He relays information of the die-maker, Thomas Halliday of Birmingham, and tells us that two consignments of coins were sent to South Africa in 1815 and 1816 by the London Missionary Society. He says that the coins were not a great success and that the bulk was returned to England and later melted. One of the reasons he states for their failure was the fluctuating prices of metals at the time.

The booklet is attached as an addendum to this book and the reader is urged to read this account before continuing.



## Later references

Almost all books written on the general history of South African money, refers to the Griqua coinage, but much of the information is taken from Parsons' publication of 1927, i.e. *Banking and Currency Development in South Africa* by E.H.D. Arndt (1928), *A History of Currency in South Africa* by Miss. E.M. Shaw (1956), *From Real to Rand* by J.T. Becklake (1960s), *From Barter to Barclays: Some Facts about Southern Africa's Old-Time Coins and Banks* by Eric Rosenthal (1968), *Ons Gelderfenis (Our Money Heritage)* by Matthey Esterhuysen (1980) and *Money in South Africa* by C.L. Engelbrecht (1987). Various articles were also written over the years including *Griqualand Coinage* by Dr. J.I. Sneider (1969), *The Coinage of Griqua Town – Missionary Coinage of South Africa* by F.K. Mitchell (1978), *The Currency and People of Griqua Town* by Peter Wilson (2005) and *The Early Griqua Coins* by Peter R. Thompson (2007).

Newsletters by South African Numismatic Societies and related publications also published accounts of the Griqua coinage i.e. *De Nummis, Journal of the Transvaal Numismatic Society* (1955 and 2017), *South African Numismatic Society Magazine – Notes from our Scrap Book* (undated but probably 1940s), *The Association of South African Numismatic Societies Journal Number 2* (undated) and *Bickels Coin and Medal News* (July 1967 and February/March 1968).

Very few of these numerous writings shed new light on the subject, although Dr. Frank Mitchell's mentioning of a worn halfpenny piece that was picked up on a small hill at Matjiesfontein in the Karoo was an interesting revelation. Likewise, was Dr. J.I. Sneider's remark that the Griqua discarded the copper issues as they became tarnished, although no supporting reference is provided for this assertion. The Wayte Raymond Public Auction Sale of 8 December 1978, Part IV, also referred to this matter by stating that copper coins were discarded by the natives when they turned brown. Regarding the Griqua series, the catalogue states

*“These are among the most important coins of Africa, and among the rarest coins of the Commonwealth.”*

### **The Roos collection**

Prior to there being widespread interest in South African numismatics (pre-1940s), one of the “old school” collectors was Jacob Roos.

According to the University of Pretoria’s repository, Jacob de Villiers Roos (1869-1940) was a journalist, advocate, Secretary of Justice for the Transvaal, Director of Prisons, Auditor-General of the Union of South Africa from 1918-1929, financier and founder of the Transvaal University College and Chairperson of the Mapungubwe Archaeological Committee from 1934-1938. Roos bequeathed not only his extensive library and Africana book collection, but also his personal document archive to the University of Pretoria.

In this collection is a vast sub-collection of numismatic material (e.g. personal correspondence and cut-outs from old newspapers and magazines dating from the early 1920s and 1930s). At the beginning of 2022, the author contracted a student at the Pretoria University to scan the whole numismatic library in Roos’s collection.

The material was vast and ranges from ancient Greek and Roman coins to the late 1930s, but with the majority of the Roos material relating to South African coinage. Roos was also a collector of Griqua coins. A cut-out newspaper article on the Griqua Coinage in his collection makes for interesting reading, especially as it is dated 15/10/1926, thereby predating the Parsons booklet. It is named *Griqua Money of the Early Days – Special Coinage issued about a century ago when the race was supplanted by Europeans*. The author is not mentioned, but was probably Roos himself who was known for writing articles on coins for local magazines. Even this article does not reveal anything new, as it relied heavily on earlier writings of Campbell, Hofstede (that copied Chase) and Gunning.



P.O.Box 446  
Pretoria,  
28th. October, 1929.

Dear Mr. Royle Baldwin,

I duly received your interesting letter of the 17th. but had no time to reply before my annual report to Parliament was completed, which event has just taken place, hence this letter.

Many thanks for the information given as to the coins which I acquired through the good services of Mr. Pearson.

I was much interested in what I recently read with regard to the Angel coin of Great Britain and how Queen Anne gave one to Dr. Samuel Johnson to apparently cure him of Kings evil. I have never seen an "Angel".

I have for some time been wishing to get a Griquatown silver sixpence with the numeral 5 on it. I have the other Griquatown issues. Have you by any chance got it?

I try to specialise in oddities of coinage.

I have five or six coins of different parts of the world which intrigue me. May I send you rubbings to see if you can aid me in deciphering?

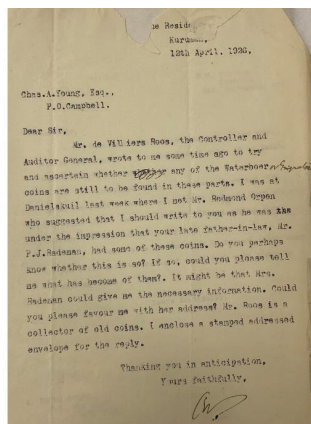
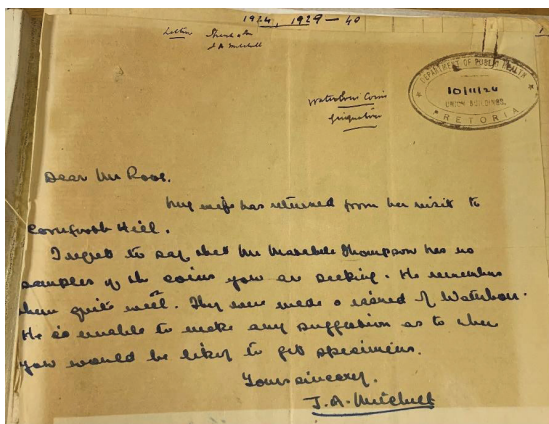
Yours sincerely,



Picture at top: An interesting document from the Roos collection addressed to Royle Baldwin in 1929. At that stage Roos was still missing the 5 pence in his collection and he refers to it as a Griquatown silver sixpence with the numeral 5 on it. Picture at bottom: A photograph of part of the Roos coin collection published in the Afrikaans magazine Die Huisgenoot of 2 June 1933. Note that Roos acquired the 5 pence in the interim period, completing his Griqua collection. (Source: Francois Malan).

However, an interesting piece of information in the Roos collection did come to the fore. It was a handwritten response to a request by Roos, dated 10/11/1924, regarding inquiries made by a Dr. J. A. Mitchell to a certain Francis “Matabele” Thompson about the Griqua coinage. Thompson was a well-known figure who in 1874 was given a farm by the imperial authorities on the Harts River, about fifty miles from Barkly West. Apparently it was the very first farm acquired and occupied by a European in Griqualand West. Thompson named it Cornforth Hill.

Thomson’s daughter was married to Dr. Mitchell. Roos requested that she ask her father if he had any of the Griqua coins in his possession. Thomson responded that he had not but said that he remembers them quite well and that they were issues of Waterboer. Dr. J.A. Mitchell was incidentally the father of the well-known numismatist Dr. Frank Mitchell (1918-1991).



Source: Roos collection

Another interesting letter in the Roos collection was this inquiry (above right) in 1926 to a certain Chas. A. Young Esq. of Campbell (a small hamlet near Griquatown, which was named after the LMS director John Campbell, who initiated the Griqua coinage) to ask if his late father in law, P.J.

Rademan had some of the coins. According to ancestry.com, Charles Allen Young was married to Ann Eliza Rademan, whose father Petrus Jacobus Rademan (1846-1908) presumably had some of the Griqua coins in his possession. The Redmond Orpen referred to in the letter was Redmond Newenham Morris Orpen (1864-1940), a well-known figure in farming and military circles in the Northern Cape. Unfortunately, there is no correspondence in the Roos collection confirming that Rademan indeed possessed some Griqua coins.

### **The Carroll & Stuart report (2017)**

As mentioned previously, until only a couple of years ago, the number of original documents mentioning the Griqua coinage could be counted on the fingers of one hand. This all changed in 2017 when Dr. Morgan Carroll funded a research program by Ann Stuart and himself resulting in the publishing of a report entitled *The Failed Community Coinage of Griqualand – a research into Missionary-issued Community Coinage of Griqualand, South Africa in the 1800s*. Their research shows fascinating and previously unpublished then-contemporary references to the Griqua coinage.

Please note that the following is copied verbatim from Wikipedia with the sources stated as from the Carroll & Stuart Report. It was co-written by the author and the researcher Derick Rabe and submitted by the latter to Wikipedia.

At the weekly meeting of the Directors of the London Missionary Society held on 15 January 1816, it was “*Resolved that the following Gentlemen be a Committee for considering of the best mode of furnishing a Silver Coinage for Griqua Town viz Messrs Campbell, Muston, Steven & Bateman.*”

Two months later, at a meeting of the Directors held at their meeting rooms in the Old Jewry on 22 April 1816, it was “*Resolved that £100 be voted for a Silver Coinage as a circulating medium at Griqua Town & its Vicinity in So Africa – that this business be referred to Messrs Bateman and Muston.*”

On 15 July 1816 it was “Resolved that £200 in Coins [struck through] Tokens for use...as inflation...Griqua Town be forwarded to the Cape of Good Hope instead of £100 only – as before ordered.”

At a meeting held on 21 October 1816 it was recorded that “The following bills were ordered to be paid...William Westall...Silver Tokens £191.12.”

The LMS Home Board Minutes recorded that at the meeting on 23 December 1816 it was “Resolved that Mr Bateman be reimbursed by this Society for the loss sustained by him in consequence of his boy being robbed of a quantity of Silver, for Tokens, gratuitously procured by Mr Bateman for the use of the Settlement at GriquaTown.”

In the following volume, it is recorded that at a meeting of the Directors on 27 January 1817 “The Sum of £49 [was] voted to Mr Bateman on the 23rd of Decmbr last in compensation for his loss, by the robbery of his boy of the Silver, for Tokens, ordered”.

On 21 July 1817 a letter was sent by P.F. Hammes and R. Beck (the LMS agents in Cape Town) to David Langton in London. An excerpt from the letter reads: “Sir, We acknowledge the receipt of Yours dated 20 March last and have the honor to return for Answer, that we have received the two Cases, containing small Silver Specie and Copper pieces in good order, and we will act with the same according to the intention and wish of the Society.”

### **Further reports**

After the Carroll & Stuart Report was published in 2017, two more period-based references to the Griqua coinage were discovered, the first by the Cape Town numismatic researcher Derick Rabe. It relates to the donations register for the London Missionary Society for the period March 1816 to March 1817 that reports “Cash in Exchange for Griqua Tokens, per Mr Langton £3.8” (David Langton was the assistant secretary and treasurer of the London Missionary Society during this period.)

The second discovery was made when the author, just before this book



was published, came upon information, which probably indicated the end of the line for the Griqua coinage: In the fortieth report of the London Missionary Society covering the period May 1833 to May 1834, there is an appendix section entitled *Contributions received at the Missionary Stations*. For South Africa, contributions from six auxiliary societies (LMS mission stations) were received from Paarl, Pacaltsdorp, Bethelsdorp, Graham's Town, Kat River and Griquatown. From the latter an amount of £121-2-4 was received. This amount came from two sources, the first being from the Auxiliary Society itself (£22-16) and then the second amount (£98-6-4) was received from Griquatown for coin(s) sold. In the next chapter, we will take a closer look at this fascinating entry in the books of the LMS.



## Chapter 2

### Timeline of Events

The following is a timeline of events based on documents dating from 1813 to 1834.

**Date:** 7 August 1813.

**Source:** John Campbell, a LMS director, wrote an account of his trip to South Africa that was published in 1815 as *Travels in South Africa, undertaken at the request of the Missionary Society*. During his visit to the Griqua living at the mission station at Klaarwater (Griquatown) in August 1813, he discussed various issues with them.

**Original text:**

*“It was likewise resolved that as they had no circulating medium amongst them by which they could purchase any small article, such as knives, scissors, etc. supposing a shop to be established amongst them – which they were anxious there should be – they should apply to the Missionary Society to get silver pieces of different value coined for them in England, which the Missionaries would take for their allowance from the Society, having the name of Griqua town marked on them. It is probable that if this were adopted in a short time they would circulate amongst all the nations about, and be a great convenience.”*

**Comments:**

1. Only silver pieces are mentioned.
2. There should be more than one denomination.

3. These pieces should be issued first to the local missionaries as part of their allowances who would then circulate them to the Griqua.
4. The name Griqua Town should be displayed on the coinage that were to be minted in England.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 15 January 1816.

**Source:** Weekly meeting minutes of the LMS Directors.

**Original text:**

*“Resolved that the following Gentlemen be a Committee for considering of the best mode of furnishing a Silver Coinage for Griqua Town viz Messrs Campbell, Muston, Steven & Bateman.”*

**Comments:**

1. Only silver pieces are mentioned.
2. The identity of the other three members of the coinage committee are known.
3. William Bateman (1774-1850) was a member of a well-known family of silversmiths in London.
4. James Muston (1771-1849), was a feather bed and mattress manufacturer, who lived in Hatton Garden Street in Holborn, London. A contemporary of his, Rev. John Boutet, described him and his wife as *“...indeed well known to the friends of missions, and of evangelical religion in the metropolis...”* [1]
5. Robert Steven (1754-1827) of Shacklewell is included in a LMS Directors list of 1824. When he died, the Rev. John Campbell, in a letter to Dr. Conquest (Steven’s son-in-law), observes, *“It was no small relief to my mind, when last travelling in Africa, to have such*

*pious and wise men members of the church at Kingsland, as Robert Steven, Joseph Reyner, David Langton, and some others that I could name.” [2] David Langton was also involved with the Griqua coinage – see following pages.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Date:** 22 April 1816.

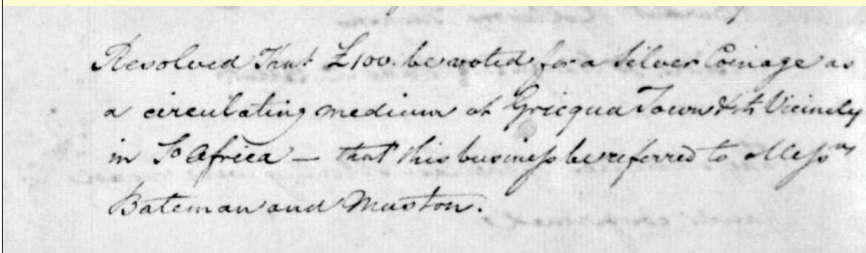
**Source:** Weekly meeting minutes of the LMS Directors.

**Original text:**

*“Resolved that £100 be voted for a Silver Coinage as a circulating medium at Griqua Town & its Vicinity in So Africa – that this business be referred to Messrs Bateman and Muston.”*

**Comments:**

1. Only silver pieces are mentioned.
2. The intention was made very clear that the coinage was intended as a circulating medium.



*Resolved that £100 be voted for a Silver Coinage as a circulating medium at Griqua Town & its Vicinity in So Africa – that this business be referred to Messrs Bateman and Muston.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Date:** 10 May 1816.

**Source:** Annual meeting report (covering the 1815/1816 period) of the London Missionary Society.



**Original text:**

*“An Auxiliary Mission Society has been established in Griquatown, the subscribers to which, having no money (for money is utterly unknown in that part of the world) have contributed property which is to be sold for the benefit of the Society. ...To remedy the inconvenience sustained by the people, (who have now made considerable progress in civilization) by their want of a circulating medium, the Directors are now procuring for them a coinage of silver tokens.”*

**Comments:**

Only silver pieces are mentioned.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 15 July 1816.

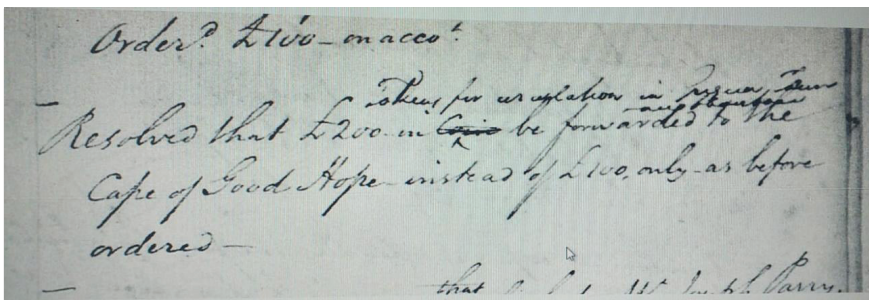
**Source:** Weekly meeting minutes of the LMS Directors.

**Original text:**

*“Resolved that £200 in Coins [~~struck through~~] Tokens for use...as inflation... Griqua Town be forwarded to the Cape of Good Hope instead of £100 only – as before ordered.”*

**Comments:**

1. The word “coins” are corrected to “tokens”.
2. The researcher Derick Rabe is of the opinion that the words “as inflation” transcribed in the Morgan & Carroll report most probably read “for circulation”.



\*\*\*\*\*

**Date:** 21 October 1816.

**Source:** Weekly meeting minutes of the LMS Directors.

**Original text:**

*"The following bills were ordered to be paid...William Westall...Silver Tokens £191.12"*

**Comments:**

1. Only silver pieces are mentioned.
2. The identity of William Westall could not be established with certainty by modern researchers, but it is assumed that he was involved in their manufacture, placing the date of their minting in October 1816. The Carroll & Stuart report speculates that he was a well-known British landscape artist (1761-1850) but there is no conclusive evidence confirming this.
3. Two other possibilities are the Westall names that are recorded in *Johnstone's London Commercial Guide* and *Street Directory* updated to August 31, 1817:-
  - a. The one is William Westall of Westall & Co. which was a wholesale haberdashery in the Borough of Southwark. William retired in 1815 but family members continued at the

firm renamed Baggallays, Westall & Spence.

- b. The other is W. Westall & Son, who were button makers. Their address is given at number 2 Sheffield Street and also Clare Market in the parish of St Clements Dane. The reason why two addresses are given in the directory is probably because they relocated to their new premises within a short period.
4. Haberdashers and button makers were in those days sometimes involved in die-sinking and the manufacturing of tokens, e.g. Sir Edward Thomason, one of the most prominent medal, coin and token manufactures of the period, actually started out as a button maker. [3]
5. However, the author is of the opinion that most likely the bill received from a William Westall for £191.12 was for silver bought from him. This was melted and used for the manufacturing of the tokens. If this was the case, he was only indirectly involved in their manufacture, and could have been anyone with that name in England during the period.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 23 December 1816.

**Source:** Weekly meeting minutes of the LMS Directors.

**Original text:**

*“Resolved that Mr Bateman be reimbursed by this Society for the loss sustained by him in consequence of his boy being robbed of a quantity of Silver, for Tokens, gratuitously procured by Mr Bateman for the use of the Settlement at GriquaTown.”*

**Comments:**

1. According to the court proceedings, William Bateman, a silver-smith, sent a 15-year-old boy named Thomas Spicer, with two hundred ounces of silver worth “*forty-eight pounds and upwards*” to a Joseph Clementson, who was a silver caster. The boy was robbed on the 25th of September 1816 of the silver. The robber, John Miller (alias White) was sentenced to death for highway robbery at the Old Bailey in London on 30 October 1816. [4] His sentence must have been commuted, as he was transported to Australia, arriving in New South Wales on the 30th September, 1817. [5]
2. The court proceedings show that the boy testified that he took the (melted) silver from the premises of his master, Clementson, to Bateman, but Bateman sent him back to Clementson, because “*there were two gentlemen with an order for it.*” The two gentlemen were most probably in the employ of the manufacturer of the Griqua tokens.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 27 January 1817.

**Source:** LMS Home Board Minutes.

**Original text:**

*“The Sum of £49 [was] voted to Mr Bateman on the 23rd of Decmbr last in compensation for his loss, by the robbery of his boy of the Silver, for Tokens, ordered.”*

**Comments:**

1. William Bateman, the owner of the silver that was robbed, lived in Bunhill Row, London, and was married to Ann Wilson, the

daughter of a wealthy London silk manufacturer. A contemporary of Bateman, described him as “... a name long, and well, and honourably known in connection with metropolitan philanthropy, missions, and religion – a name indissolubly associated with the churches and congregations...” This was written by John Campbell, the reverend who initiated the Griqua coinage, about one of his fellow directors at the London Missionary Society. [6]

2. William Bateman was also a well-known silversmith, and donated silver for the Griqua coinage. When the silver was stolen, the LMS decided to refund him for his loss.



*A painting of William Bateman (Source: <https://www.geni.com>) and an example of one of his silver hallmarks.*



\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** March 1816-1817.

**Source:** Donations register for the London Missionary Society for the period March 1816 to March 1817.

**Original text:**

*“Cash in Exchange for Griqua Tokens, per Mr Langton £3.8.”*

**Comments:**

1. David Langton was the assistant secretary and treasurer of the London Missionary Society during this period.
2. The total mintage of the Griqua coinage (to the value of approximately £200) were therefore not sent to South Africa, as tokens to the value of almost 2% of the total, were sold locally in England, presumably to a collector or dealer. However, it is possible that some of the LMS directors bought tokens as keepsakes or as gifts to family and friends. We also know that as far back as 1814, the LMS established a museum at the old Jewry to display artefacts and curiosities sent back to England by missionaries and friends of the society – especially from Southern Africa. It is not known if some of the Griqua tokens were displayed there, but beads used as currency in Africa in those days, were indeed kept by the museum. [7]
3. As a hypothesis, it can be noted that as the amount of £3.8 in tokens was exchanged for cash, one would presume that the tokens were not sold at a premium. This then would indicate that it was **impossible** that only silver 5 and 10 pence pieces were exchanged for the amount of £3.8 (68 shillings or 816 pennies). Copper tokens must have been included to equal 816 pennies. A possible number would for example be 48 pieces each of the

copper ¼ and ½ pence tokens and 52 pieces each of the silver 5 and 10 pence tokens – exactly 200 tokens in total.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 21 July 1817.

**Source:** Letter by P.F. Hammes and R. Beck (the LMS agents in Cape Town) to David Langton, the assistant secretary and treasurer of the London Missionary Society during this period.

**Original text:**

*“Sir, We acknowledge the receipt of Yours dated 20 March last and have the honor to return for Answer, that we have received the two Cases, containing small Silver Specie and Copper pieces in good order, and we will act with the same according to the intention and wish of the Society.”*

**Comments:**

1. The assumption is that David Langton wrote to Hammes and Beck at the Cape on 20 March 1817 informing them that the coinage had left England.
2. It is also assumed that the silver specie and copper pieces are indeed the Griqua coinage, the first time the copper issues are mentioned.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 8 & 12 August 1820.

**Source:** John Campbell's diary while visiting the Griqua mission station during his second visit to South Africa.

**Original text:**

*“The Landdrost (Andries Stockenstrom) thought it important to establish*

*a regular communication between Griquatown and Graaff Reynet; also advised to apply to Government for sanction to the passing of the Griqua money in Graaff Reynet and Beaufort districts.”*

*“Conversed also on the coin. They said if it would pass in the colony the Griquas would readily take it. I promised to apply to the Governor to sanction its passing in the districts of Graaff-Reynet and Beaufort.”*

**Comments:**

1. The districts of Graaff-Reinet and Beaufort were situated in the Cape Colony whilst Griquatown was in no man’s land and not under colonial rule. Trading fairs were held in the two districts in 1819 and 1820 between the Griqua / neighbouring nations and white colonists from the Cape Colony. [8]
2. Campbell arrived at Griquatown on 2 August 1820 on his return journey from New Lattakoo. Three days later, on 5 August, Landdrost Stockenstrom also arrived there and had talks with the Griqua regarding some of their grievances, [9] of which one was certainly the acceptance of the Griqua coinage south of the Orange River. His advice was that they should apply to the Cape Governor. Campbell then promised that he would make the application on behalf of the Griqua, but whether he did this, we do not know. In any case, as we will see at the end of this chapter, the Governor would never have sanctioned the Griqua coinage for usage in districts of the Cape Colony, as copper tokens were outlawed by an act of parliament two years earlier.
3. The words “readily take it” indicate that the Griquas were apprehensive of the Griqua money because they could only spend it north of the Orange River. It however, does not imply that they totally disapproved and rejected it.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Date:** 21 June 1821

**Source:** Letter of Griquatown missionary Heinrich Helm to his superior, Dr. John Philip in Cape Town.

**Original text:**

*“Br Anderson made the agreement with him (Andries Waterboer) that he would receive for payment 60 Rijksdaalders a year from the society. Having no money, he has for the last two years received nothing except 13 Rijksdaalders 4 Schillings. As most of the members of our Auxiliary Society have paid their contribution for the past year partly in money and partly in corn, sheep and goats, I have been able to give him about 36 Rijksdaalder more. He has therefore still to receive 70 Rijksdaalder 4 Schilling. Will you be so good as to send for him that sum by a safe opportunity. Of what I have received from the Griquas for our society I shall give an account as soon as all is paid.*

*The greatest part of the Griqua money is still our Society’s property by which Br Anderson when leaving delivered to my care. As Br Campbell thought that Br Anderson had disposed the silver pieces at too cheap a rate I asked him to let me know the real value of a piece of each sort which he promised to do, but I have as yet received no answer and it is therefore still in my possession. I would be glad if you Dear Sir would have the goodness to inform me what I am to do with it.”*

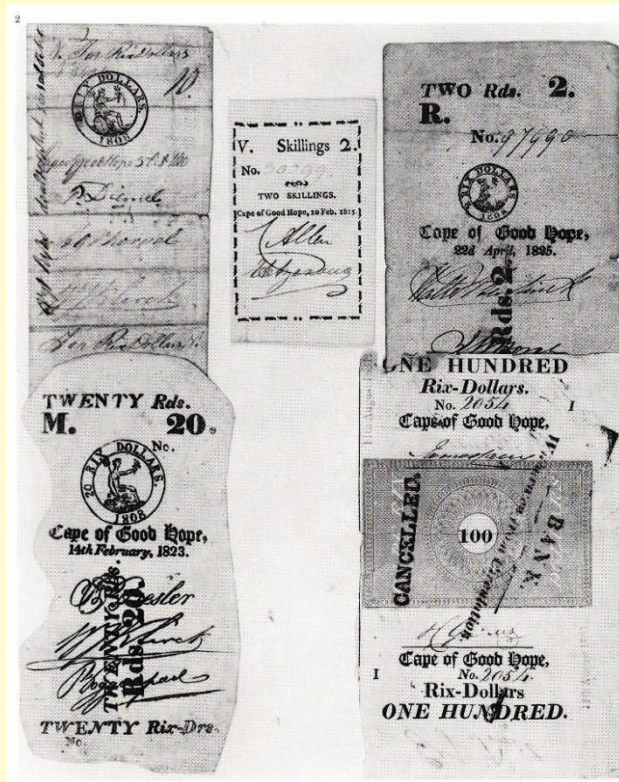
**Comments:**

1. The Griqua congregation paid part of their contributions to the Mission in money. Waterboer’s salary was 60 Rijksdaalders a year, approximately £5. Most of the amounts that were paid were probably in Cape Rijksdaalder (Rixdollar) paper notes – see

picture below.

2. The greatest part of the Griqua coins were not disposed of by mid-1821.
3. The smallest part was disposed of at a **too cheap rate**, which means that they were offered for something in return, being either labour or goods, or both.
4. The missionary Anderson left Griquatown in February 1820, so the arrival of the coinage at Griquatown, and the disposing of the smallest part thereof, must have been prior to that date.
5. Shortly after Anderson left, he met John Campbell when their wagons crossed paths near the Brak River. Campbell, on his second journey to South Africa, was trekking northwards towards Griqua Town, while Anderson and his family travelled southwards towards the Cape. They outspanned together from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 1820, and it was possibly during this sojourn that they discussed Anderson's disposing of some of the Griqua pieces. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, Campbell arrived at Griquatown and was met by Rev. Helm. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of that month, Campbell left again towards Kuruman. On his return journey to the Cape, he again visited Griquatown in August. [10] We may assume that during one of these encounters (either in March or August) he told Helm that he thought that Anderson had disposed of the silver pieces at too cheap a rate. It was most probably during the second visit, because we know for a fact that the passing (circulation) of the coinage was discussed then as is recorded in his journal entries of 8 and 12 August 1820.





Examples of Rixdollar and Schelling notes used at the Cape during the period of their continuous depreciation (Source: Engelbrecht, C.L., *Money in South Africa*, Tafelberg Publishers Ltd, Cape Town, 1987).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Date:** Period May 1833 to May 1834.

**Source:** 40th Report of the LMS dated May 1834.

**Original text:**

“Griqua Town Auxiliary Society ... Coin(s) Sold £98-6-4”

## South Africa.

### Cape Town.

Union Chapel.....	26 9 1
Collected for Native Teachers.....	14 3 0
	40 12 1
£ The Paarl Auxiliary Society .....	23 17 0
Paarltsdorp Auxiliary Society .....	4 10 2
Bethelsdorp Auxiliary Society .....	12 3 0
Graham's Town Auxiliary Society .....	82 0 6
Theopolis Anniversary Society .....	6 10 2
Kat River Auxiliary Society .....	30 0 0
Griqua Town Auxiliary Society .....	22 16 0
Coin sold .....	98 6 4
	121 2 4
	320 15 3

#### Comments:

1. The amount of £98-6-4 that was received from Griquatown for coin(s) sold was a substantial amount for those days, and although Griquatown was its source, it is unlikely that the coins were sold at the mission itself. It was probably dispersed in Cape Town to a silversmith or scrap metal dealer. The report actually states that the total South African contribution of £320-15-3 was "*Received and Expended in South Africa*". So, neither the coins nor the funds raised from selling them were sent back to England.
2. We know that an amount of £200 (equal to 48 000 pence) was initially approved for the Griqua coinage of which £3-8 (816 pence) were sold in England before the shipment was dispatched.

So we presume that the value of the coins that were sent to South Africa was 47 184 pence. The value of the coins received from Griquatown in the early 1830s and sold to the benefit of the society was 23 596 pence. This means that coins to the value of 23 588 pence (£98-5-8) were not sent back from Griqua Town to the Cape to be sold. This is as close as one could get to a 50/50 split.

3. Peter Wright, the resident Missionary at Griquatown, visited Cape Town towards the end of 1833 and met up in October of that year with the acting Governor, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Francis Wade. He was accompanied by Dr. John Philip who was the superintendent of the LMS in South Africa.[11] It was probably Rev. Wright who returned the remaining coins to Cape Town.
4. Heinrich Helm was the custodian of the Griqua coinage after Rev. Anderson left the mission in 1820. Helm himself left the station in August 1824 and the next year Peter Wright was appointed there, becoming its principal missionary in 1827. [12] When Wright visited the Cape in 1833 as we have mentioned, he met up with Dr. John Philip, the LMS superintendent. It was to Philip that Helm originally wrote to in 1821 to enquire what to do th the remaining Griqua coins at the missionary station in Griquatown.

\* \* \* \* \*

Based on the above reports, we can now create the following timeline:-

The Griqua coinage was struck in the last quarter of 1816 to be used as a circulating medium by the missionaries and congregation at Griquatown and surrounding areas. The total value of the consignment, at least for the silver issues, did not exceed £200. The coinage was sent to South Africa in February or March 1817 and arrived in Cape Town by July 1817. It was then forwarded, presumably but not necessarily, in that same year to Griquatown. We know from a then-contemporary record [13] that a wagon trip from Cape Town to Griquatown took two months via “*the most direct route*” so for the two cases to reach the mission station before the end of that year (1817) it must have left Cape Town on the latest by the end of October. This would have given the LMS agents three months to dispatch the Griqua coinage since their arrival at the Cape of Good Hope in July 1817.

By February 1820 some of the tokens were dispersed to the Griqua during the intervening years (1817-1819), but the process was halted due to the missionaries’ inability to establish the correct rate of exchange; most certainly due to fluctuating metal prices during this period and the rapid depreciation of the Rixdollar at the Cape.

Regarding the arrival of the coins in South Africa, a historian (using the pseudonym Demmrein) wrote on the BidorBuy coin forum:-

*“I had an indirect line of thinking as to when the coins arrived. The missionary register of 1816 stated that the LMS Directors were at the same time procuring the tokens and organizing a printing press for Griquatown. I could find proof that the printing press had arrived in Griquatown by May of 1817. From this I inferred that the coins might have arrived simultaneously. The unbelievably important quote from Hammes and Beck discovered by Ms. Stewart dated March 1817 is close to that assumption. I went on to speculate on what ship the coins and the printing press might have been transported on. Derick (Rabe) brought up the fact that the ship Alacrity left England in October 1816 and arrived in Cape*

*Town January 1817. Though the missionaries on board (John Taylor and Evan Evans) were prevented from going to Griquatown, I found that Robert Hamilton travelled to Cape Town in December 1816 to collect supplies for the Griquatown mission and he might have met up with the missionaries and taken the coins and the printing press back to Griquatown in January 1817. This, of course, remains speculation.”*

In the author’s view, these dates do not correspond to the information supplied in the letter of 21 July 1817 sent by P.F. Hammes and R. Beck to David Langton in England. According to this account the coins left England in March 1817 and arrived in South Africa in July that year. If the consignment was onboard the *Alacrity* and arrived in Table Bay in February 1817, why would Langton only write to the agents in Cape Town in March 1817, telling them that the consignment left England – six months after the ship actually departed in October 1816? And why did Hammes and Beck only confirm the shipment’s arrival in July, six months after the *Alacrity* reached Cape Town?

Nevertheless, there could have been two shipments (as recorded by Parsons) that were sent six months apart, so that by December 1816 when the ship left England, the tokens were already struck and ready for shipment as the first of two consignments. If, however, as Parsons claims, the first shipment was actually sent to South Africa in 1815, this could only have been copper coins as the LMS Griqua Coinage Committee was only established in January 1816. If so, Campbell must have acted in his private capacity, procuring the copper tokens. Evidence of this is however lacking.

Regarding the dates involved, we should consider that in 1817, Sir Edward Littleton, member for Staffordshire, introduced a Bill in the Parliament of Great Britain to prohibit the making of copper tokens, and to render the circulation of such tokens illegal after January 1st, 1818. The Government succeeded in passing the Bill on July 27th, 1817. [14] This law also applied



to the colonies, as for example, all copper tokens issued in Canada were illegal after that date. [15] Although Griquatown was situated in no man's land in Africa, the striking of the tokens in England would have been *contra legem* after the act came into effect.

We are certain that at the end of 1833, the remaining coins at the Griqua Mission were sent back to the Cape and were sold to a local metal scrap dealer or silversmith with the funds donated to the London Missionary Society.



*An East Indiaman ship off Table Bay, Cape Town, painted by William John Huggins, 1819 (Source: Askart records)*

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## Chapter 3

### Some Unresolved Matters

The reports of the period are mute on the following aspects: The exact denominations the coins were struck in, who manufactured them, how many of each were struck and why they seem to be a decimal currency as opposed to English money that only opted for decimalization more than 150 years later. Let us take a closer look at these and other questions.

#### **In what denominations were they struck?**

Although the reports do not refer to the specific coin denominations, we can be certain that there were four denominations minted being the quarter, half, five and ten pence. The first reference to the copper issues is when the assignment arrived in South Africa in July 1817. Even then the consignment is not 100% verified as indeed being Griqua coinage, as it could have possibly been English coins intended for use at other mission stations. One must however point out that England stopped striking copper coins in 1807 and only started again in 1821 [1], so the copper coins were probably Griqua issues. Before July 1817, the LMS records exclusively refers to silver coinage when its metal content is mentioned.

#### **Why was the coinage apparently decimalized?**

During the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, it became apparent to the new authorities that there was an acute local shortage of hard currency. The only British coins available at the time were copper denominations augmented by whatever arrived by foreign ships in the form of small change. The visiting seamen probably took more coins away from the Cape than what they brought into the local economy. For larger

transactions in cash, the Cape had to rely on printed notes, being the fast depreciating Rixdollar denominations, inherited from the previous Dutch rulers and continued to be printed and issued by the British. [2] From 1816 onwards, things started to change due to the so-called *Great Recoinage* when for the first time in many decades, silver coins were struck in England in large numbers. [3] As we have seen, 1816 was also the year when the Griqua coinage was procured by the London Missionary Society. But supplying English coins for usage at Griquatown was not what the Rev. Campbell envisaged, and in any case, copper coins were not included in the *Great Recoinage*.

Moving forward to 1823.

On 8 April 1823, Lord Charles Somerset, the Cape Governor, wrote a letter to his superior in London, Earl Bathurst. [4] His request was for £4000 worth of coins to be struck for the Cape Colony of which £500 should consist of penny pieces (120 000 pennies) and £1500 worth of halfpenny pieces (360 000 half pennies). The other half of the money to the value of £2000, should be struck in silver pieces. One would expect these coins to be the English denominations of sixpences and shillings, but the Governor specifically asked that these coins have an intrinsic value of five and ten pence each:-

*“...I beg also to submit to your Lordship that £1000 worth of silver pieces of the intrinsic value of about ten pence English be likewise sent out, and a like amount of smaller pieces, of about the value of five pence ...”*





Picture left: Lord Charles Henry Somerset, Governor of the Cape from 1814 to 1826 (Source: Helderberg News) Picture right: Henry Bathurst, 3rd Earl Bathurst, was appointed Secretary of State for War and the Colonies in 1812. (Source: Royal Collection Trust)

Lord Charles Somerset thus asks Earl Bathurst that 40 000 5-pence pieces and 20 000 10-pence pieces be struck for the Cape. The question must be asked why did he not ask for 6-pence (Sixpences) and 12-pence pieces (Shillings) as the Cape was a British colony. Lord Charles Somerset specifies the reason for this in his letter. So that the coins can “...pass in Colonial currency at four and two skillings respectively.”

So the Cape Governor wanted the silver coinage to be aligned (brought on par) with the Cape currency of Rixdollars and Schellings (that circulated as paper notes locally and were also the monetary bookkeeping unit of the period) and definitely not English sterling currency. If Somerset thought it important to align the currencies in 1823, the same rationale would probably have been applied to the Griqua coinage a decade earlier. As the

years went by the urgency faded and by the early 1840s the Rixdollar, as both a paper currency and bookkeeping unit at the Cape, fell into disuse. It is interesting to note that it seems that the Rixdollar and the usage of beads as currency in South Africa, met its fate somewhat simultaneously. The Comaroffs [5] wrote “... *after Britain introduced its own silver and copper coinage to its imperial possessions ... paper dollars were replaced by sterling ... (when) the new supply had stabilized, and had filtered into the interior, its effect on bead money was devastating.*”

As a footnote to this, as tokens were issued by private organizations and institutions as opposed to coins that are struck by governments, token-issuers were not obliged by law that their tokens' metal content correspond with the “value” thereof; which sometimes they did not, when issued by the unscrupulous. Nevertheless, the Griqua tokens did indeed correspond to their value, as would have been expected from a respected issuer like the London Missionary Society. When Great Britain, through the *Great Recoinage*, introduced silver sixpences and shillings in 1816, their weight were 2.82 grams and 5.65 grams respectively, or 0.47 gram of sterling silver per pence (penny). When one takes the average weight of the Griqua silver pieces being 2.37 grams and 4.90 grams for the 5 and 10 pence respectively, the former also contains exactly 0.47 gram of silver per pence and the latter virtually the same equaling 0.49 gram per pence.

So not only was the Griqua silver coinage most probably decimalized to be aligned with the local Cape currency units, it also corresponded in fractional (penny) value to the sterling currency of Great Britain. However, the copper pieces do not correspond in terms of their weight, but a comparison would be difficult, as Great Britain did not strike any copper coins, as mentioned, during that decade.

The need for alignment of newly introduced coinage to the established currency units in foreign countries and colonies, was in any case not a new phenomenon. Towards the end of the rule of King George III, the

British Government “... turned its attention to the perceived need for a colonial coinage based on the Spanish dollar” [6] (in colonies where the dollar was the unit of currency) and so-called Anchor dollars were struck for usage in Mauritius, being coins of  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{8}$  and  $\frac{1}{16}$  dollar in 1820, and a  $\frac{1}{2}$  dollar in 1822. The coins were made in fractional values which refer to equivalent portions of the Spanish dollar, i.e. a half Anchor dollar was equivalent to four reales, quarter dollar to two reales, eighth dollar to one real and the sixteenth dollar to a half real. These coins were also introduced to the British West Indies, but failed as this was based on an unrealistic exchange rate to the Spanish dollar of \$1 = 4 shillings 4 pence.[7]

### **Were the Griqua acquainted with money and its use and were they proficient in accounting?**

Indeed, some were. We have already mentioned that members of the Griquatown mission in 1821 paid their contribution partly in money and that someone like Andries Waterboer's salary was paid in money, most probably in Cape Rixdollar paper notes. Legassick [8] writes that the Griqua fair in 1819 at Beaufort West alone netted 15 000 Rixdollars (approx. £750). The fair was attended by the Griquas “*in number one hundred and twenty souls, with twenty-five wagons and about fifty teams; they brought with them 200 ivory tusks, 700 cattle as well as skins, soap and 38 muids of salt.*” We actually have a record by the Missionary Moffat of what the Griquas were charged for certain items at the fair (e.g. 70 Rixdollars for a great coat, 10 to 14 Rixdollars for a hat, a handkerchief cost 3 Rixdollars and a knife 2 Rixdollars). Even as early as 1811, as reported by Legassick (see reference above) the Griqua leader Berend Berends, visited Cape Town “*with 1000 pound of ivory that he traded for clothes, horses, wagons, flints, knives, beads, arms and powder.*” We also know that the Griquas traded with beads and that a certain number of beads would equal a man's daily wages or the price of certain goods. This all points to their understanding of money as a medium of exchange.

### **How many of each denomination were struck?**

According to the LMS Directors' meeting minutes of 22 April 1816, £100 was initially approved for silver issues. On 15 July 1816 it was recorded that the amount was doubled to £200 (the word silver is not mentioned here) so one might speculate that the extra £100 was approved for the copper coinage. But, on 21 October 1816, the minutes read that an amount close to £200 (£191.12) was to be paid to a William Westall for silver tokens. Which begs the question, with whose funds were the copper issues then paid for?

Let's review the Somerset request of 1823 for a coinage for the Cape of Good Hope being £4000 worth of coins of which £2000 should be for copper pieces and the same amount for silver pieces – 50/50 thus. The copper should then be split up 25/75 between the larger denomination (pennies) vs. the lower denomination (half pennies) while the silver should be split 50/50 between the 5 and 10 pence pieces.

If the same formula (split) was applied to the Griqua coinage and £200 was available for silver coinage, then approximately 4800 5-pence and 2400 10-pence pieces could have been struck with the funds. However, if £200 were available for both the Griqua copper and silver pieces, and the same Somerset formula is used, then the following numbers would have been struck.

Copper pieces split 25/75 ( $\frac{1}{2}$  vs  $\frac{1}{4}$  pence) worth £100 = 12 000 half pennies and 72 000 quarter pennies. Silver pieces split 50/50 (5 vs 10 pence pieces) worth £100 = 2400 5-pences and 1200 10-pences.

Lastly, evidence shows that the boy was robbed of nearly £50 intended for the mintage of the Griqua coinage. If that amount was all that was intended for the silver coinage, the amount of approximately £150 could have been used for the copper tokens. Then our calculations would look like this:-

Copper pieces: - 18000 half pennies and 108 000 quarter pennies.

Silver pieces: - 1200 5-pences and 600 10-pences.

The number of coins in our three scenarios above is as follows:-

Scenario	¼ Penny	½ Penny	5 Pence	10 Pence
1.	–	–	4800	2400
2.	72 000	12 000	2400	1200
3.	108 000	18000	1200	600

Scenarios 2 and 3 however provide a quandary in that the percentage of copper vs. the silver issues are at least 95.9%. The number of surviving specimens recorded in the combined NGC and PCGS population statistics (coins graded and certified by the world's two largest numismatic verification companies) shows a totally different picture (proof coins excluded but “details” [damaged] coins included) with a ratio of copper to silver coins of nearly 60/40.

Grading company	¼ Penny	½ Penny	5 Pence	10 Pence
NGC (Numismatic Guaranty Corporation)	15	21	13	12
PCGS (Professional Coin Grading Service)	2	2	0	2
Total	17	23	13	14
% of total	25.37%	34.33%	19.40%	20.89%
Metal	Copper		Silver	
% of total	59.70%		40.29%	

Assuming that the surviving number of coins as recorded by the NGC and PCGS is an indication of the original mintage figures, the number of coins struck with a total value of £200 would have been the following: -

¼ Penny	½ Penny	5 Pence	10 Pence
3688	5002	2827	3044

We know that on 21 October 1816, a payment of £191.12 was to be made by the LMS to a William Westall for silver tokens. We also know that the budget in total for the coinage was £200 which left a surplus of almost £9. If this lesser amount was used for the striking of the copper issues and we use a 50/50 (not 25/75) split, the number of coins in terms of their value that could have been struck was 2160 ½ pennies and 4320 ¼ pennies.

The mintage figures (when rounding the amounts off to £9 worth of copper and £191 worth of silver) would then look as follows:-

¼ Penny	½ Penny	5 Pence	10 Pence
4320	2160	4584	2292

This leaves us with a final scenario: -

It is noted that the original value of the certified surviving pieces is in total worth just under £1. Comparing this to the £3.8 that was paid for coins before the bulk left England, many more coins remained in England than the coins that survived as certified specimens today. As we have recorded previously, a possible split in the denominations that were sold at the old Jewry is 48 pieces each of the copper ¼ and ½ pence tokens and 52 pieces each of the silver 5 and 10 pence tokens – exactly 200 pieces in total. If this constitutes the same percentages as the total mintage of the 4 denominations to the amount of £200, the figures would look as follows:-

¼ Penny	½ Penny	5 Pence	10 Pence
2526	2526	2737	2737



In our calculations where we used either the £100/£100 split for copper versus silver pieces, as well as the £50/£150 split, the number of copper pieces that could have been struck is proportionally way too large compared to silver pieces when one considers modern day certified surviving percentages. To be able to make an even remotely satisfactory comparison, the split must have been more than 90% of the available funds used for the striking of the silver pieces.

In 1959, J. Vinkenborg wrote an article in a Dutch Numismatic publication [9] which mentions that the first shipment of Dutch Scheepjesgulden sent to the Cape in 1803 was to the value of 100 000 Gulden. There were five denominations in silver and two in copper (doits and half doits) and the number sent in each denomination is recorded. In terms of the number of coins sent, the ratio is approximately a third in silver issues and two thirds in copper. In terms of the value of the consignment sent, the ratio is 97.27% for the silver and 2.73% for the copper issues, which differs completely from the Somerset request for the Cape two decades later, but does compare favourably to the Griqua coinage ratios (in terms of value) in our last 3 scenarios.

Nevertheless, in our view and based on their records, the LMS approved £200 for the manufacture of silver tokens and we have given the number of 5 pence and 10 pence tokens that could have been struck if this was the case. Not once in the minutes of the society were there any mention of Griqua copper pieces. We only assume that the copper coins that arrived at the Cape in July 1817 were Griqua issues, but are certain that at some stage, copper pieces were indeed struck. Based on the number of recorded specimens that survived, indications are that the copper coinage was struck in at least the same numbers as the silver issues, but probably more.

Recall that one of the reasons that the circulation of the coins was halted was due to international fluctuating metal prices during that period.

This would have particularly affected the silver coins much more than the copper pieces. If the bulk of the coins were returned to England to be melted, as Parsons has claimed, one would assume that the majority of these were silver issues. In such a scenario, we should assume that the surviving number of specimens would not be a true reflection of the original mintage figures, as there would be percentage-wise far fewer silver issues remaining today than the copper pieces, which probably circulated for a longer period.

This assumption is partly corroborated by the NGC and PCGS population statistics showing that silver pieces that underwent actual circulation are much scarcer than copper pieces. However, the population statistics do not show a significant difference between the number of surviving specimens – roughly a 60/40 split for copper vs. silver issues.

### **Who manufactured the Griqua coinage?**

The only reference we have in this regard is Parsons' (1927) statement that "*Supplies of the coins were made by the well-known die-sinker, Thomas Halliday, and sent out to South Africa ...*" He also says that "*This is evident from old correspondence emanating from Mr. Halliday in a private collection, formed before 1820, which included figures 2 and 4 hereafter shown. These were given by the maker to the original owner and were not part of the consignments sent to Griqualand ...*" (Parsons' is referring to his own booklet published in 1927 where the images are shown - see the appendix to this book).

According to the British Museum [10], Thomas Halliday (1771-1844) was a medallist / token-engraver and manufacturer of items such as buttons and studs. He originally worked at the Soho Mint before setting up his own business in Birmingham, first at Islington Row and Ann Street and then at 69 Newhall Street for some 30 years until his death in 1844. Although Halliday was a manufacturer himself, it seems that (at least as far as tokens are concerned) he is mostly remembered by numismatists today as a die-sinker on behalf of other token manufactures like Henry

Morgan of London, Younge & Co of Liverpool, Young & Deakin of Sheffield and especially Sir Edward Thomason (1769 –1849) of Birmingham. [11]

The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge houses a large collection of silver and copper token pieces from the early 1800s. [10] Hundreds of these are engraved by Halliday as the die-sinker, and a few are attributed to him as the maker/manufacturer. It is interesting that Halliday did not always make the dies to engrave the coins he manufactured. In 1811 for example, Benjamin Patrick of Bath Street, Birmingham sank some dies for Halliday. Roger Dixon of St Philip's Churchyard in Birmingham also performed the same function on occasion for Halliday. [12]

Comparisons of Halliday's known work and the Griqua coinage are interesting, but does not necessarily prove anything:- For example, the following silver token in the Fitzwilliam Museum collection in Cambridge was engraved by him for the manufacturer Henry Morgan, circa 1811/1812. The toothed border, the bird with an olive sprig in its beak, the large sprig itself and the letters "T", "O" and "N" in the words TOKEN and TOWN shows clear similarities (the 2 insets indicated are of a Griqua coin).



Some numismatists in the past have pointed out that the design of the Griqua tokens differ from the norm for the period in that the specific denomination (e.g. penny) and date of manufacture (e.g. 1816) are not depicted on them. Reviewing the Halliday design above, the token shows neither a denomination nor a date. In fact, none of the coins of Great Britain struck for circulation during the period 1800 to 1820 show a denomination.

Halliday frequently engraved birds on tokens and medals – the two examples on the right are his handwork, a XII pence Buckinghamshire token of 1811 (note that the denomination is in Roman numerals as seen on the IIIII pence Griqua token) and a Liverpool silver election medal of 1816.



Regarding the Griqua coinage being procured by a religious institution, the LMS, and issued for use in Africa, we emphasise the close working relationship between Sir Edward Thomason (as manufacturer) and Thomas Halliday (as die maker) in Birmingham. This arrangement produced silver coinage in 1818 for the African Company of Merchants in the Gold Coast (Ghana) and later a series of biblical medals, as an example. [13]

Despite what Parsons wrote, we still do not have concrete proof that Halliday was indeed involved with the Griqua coinage. However, there might be a clue with his assertion that the coins were sent out to South Africa in two batches in 1815 and 1816. This information was obtained from the old correspondence belonging to a collector who was given a few specimens by Halliday, before the bulk was shipped out to South Africa.

The two coins he is referring to are a ¼ and a 5 pence and these coins appeared in Parsons' own collection in later years. When, and from whom he bought the coins are not known, but their provenance must have accompanied them for Parsons to know that they were given by the maker (Halliday) to the original owner. Did this correspondence regarding their provenance accompany the coins when Parsons sold his collection? Probably not, as no mention is made thereof when the two coins were sold by Sotheby's in a sale entitled *Catalogue of the Collection of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, English, Irish, Scottish, Anglo-Gallic & Colonial Coins, the property of H. Alexander Parsons, 28 October - 1 November 1929, 907 lots, 10 plates.*

There actually were six Griqua coins in the Parsons collection.

GRIQUALAND.		
872	<b>GRIQUA Tows, Tenpence</b> , in <i>silver</i> , <i>obv.</i> dove flying bearing olive branch; <i>rev.</i> <b>GRIQUA TOWN</b> , divided by 10, ornaments between, <i>a brilliant proof, toned and very rare</i> [Pl. X]	1
N.B.—This and the next five lots comprise a coinage issued, in 1815, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society for use in the mission field in Griqualand; see Parsons' <i>The Coinage of Griqualand</i> , 1927.		
873	<b>Fivepence</b> , in <i>silver</i> , as last, but 11111 for 10, <i>brilliant toned proof, very rare</i>	1
874	<b>Halfpenny</b> , in <i>copper</i> , as before, but ½ in centre of <i>rev.</i> , edge milled, <i>an extremely fine specimen, with a bluish tone, very rare</i>	1
875	<b>Farthing</b> in <i>copper</i> , as before, but ¼ for ½, edge milled, <i>extremely fine, very rare</i> [Pl. X]	1
876	<b>Halfpenny</b> , in <i>copper</i> , as previous halfpenny, but edge plain, <i>extremely fine, and of highest rarity with edge plain</i>	1
877	<b>Farthing</b> in <i>copper</i> , as previous farthing, but edge plain, <i>in equal condition and of equal rarity to the preceding</i>	1



## Why a crested pigeon?



*An old London Missionary Society flag in the collection of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, showing a crestless dove.*

Doves of Peace shown on coins and tokens date back from ancient Greece up to modern times and are frequently encountered, but the birds are crestless. The following are examples of pre-Victorian copper tokens of England and Ireland.



The Dove of Peace depicted on the Griqua coinage shows similarities with the Australian crested pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*), one of only two pigeon species, both from Australia, showing this type of pointed crest. According to an internet source, the species was described for the first time by ornithologists in 1822. [14]



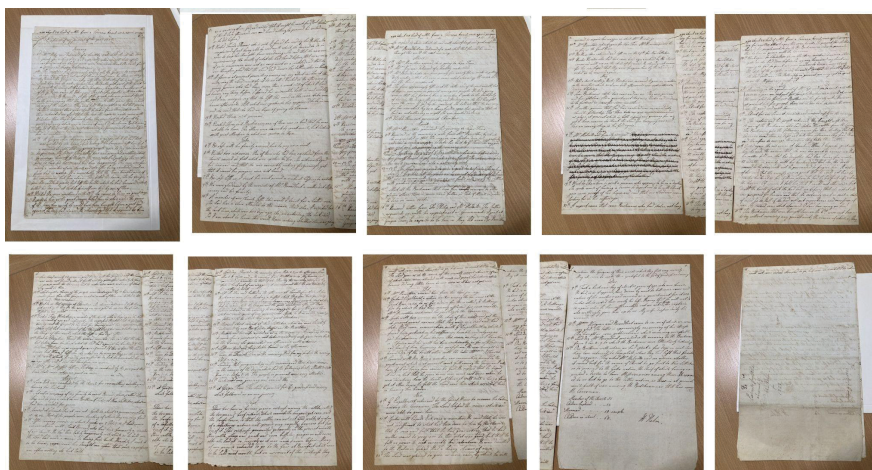


We will remember the Carroll & Stuart report mentioning that William Westall, who was involved with the Griqua coinage, was possibly the well-known landscape artist of that era. Westall was on board the ship *Investigator* during the circumnavigation of Australia by Captain Matthew Flinders (1801-1803). Although he probably encountered some of these crested pigeons, as a landscape artist he seldom if ever did close-ups of birds and animals. [15]

It is also worth noting that the crest of the dove, as depicted on the Griqua coinage, differs due to die differences. Sometimes it is more bun-like (rounded) and other times pointier. Could this be due to the “crest” actually being an extension of part of the olive twig showing behind the pigeon’s head, with some dies showing an olive (picture below left) and others a leaf (picture below right)?



There are of course still many other unanswered questions regarding the coinage that will hopefully be answered in future studies, but the availability and accessibility of period-based documents will always be problematic, especially for South African researchers. For instance, when the author attempted to pursue the possibility that some of the coins were sent back to England to be melted, the documents dated after Helms letter of 1821 became relevant. The author was extremely grateful when he received pictures taken with a smart phone by an employee of SOAS (University of London) of extracts of Helms' journal of 1822. The ten-page document, probably never been published before, makes for some interesting reading, but does unfortunately not refer to the coinage. The full document, as shown below, is available from the author.



*Source: SOAS (University of London)*

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## Chapter 4

### Did the Griqua Coinage Circulate?

#### Background

We know from records of the period that money circulated at Griquatown. The meagre contributions of some of the congregation was in the form of money and the salary of some, like the assistant teacher Andries Waterboer, who was also paid in physical money.

It seems however that there was a persistent shortage of money. The mission was unable to pay Waterboer's full salary, him only being paid 13 Rijksdaalders and 4 Schellings, and later an additional 36 Rijksdaalders over a period of 2 years in lieu of his agreed annual salary of 60 Rijksdaalders, as recorded by Rev. Helm in 1821. The payments were most probably in Cape Rixdollar notes.



A photograph of Andries Waterboer with his sons. The silver medal on the right was awarded to him in 1825 as a token of friendship from the English Government. The obverse reads *Wij zyn alle Broedren* (we are all brothers). [1]

With the Griqua coinage being available, why was Waterboer not paid with the Griqua tokens?

- Either Helm was unable to establish the real value of the pieces and this barred him from further spending them. Previously, when some of the pieces were used, the rate was wrongly calculated to the detriment of the Society which had short-changed themselves.
- Or, the Griqua money was never intended for paying salaries, but was rather, according to Campbell, needed for purchasing “*small articles, such as knives, scissors, etc.*” Using it to pay salaries would have depleted the available number of tokens much faster than intended.

Although it is recorded that at least some of the Griqua coinage was disposed of, albeit at the incorrect rate by the missionaries, we have no records from that time that indicate how many of each of the four denominations were circulated. What we do know is that the smaller portion of the Griqua coinage was circulated **for something in return**, it being either labour or goods or both. This can only mean that some coins were indeed put into circulation. If the coins would have been handed out as mere freebies and keepsakes, their exchange rate would not have been an issue. If we look at the condition of the modern-day surviving coins in terms of the NGC and PCGS population statistics, we see that more than half of the copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  pence pieces are in circulated condition. Regarding the surviving copper  $\frac{1}{2}$  pences in uncirculated condition, we find that these are actually scarce compared to the total certified. But few of the circulated pieces of both the  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  pence denominations show extensive wear. (In general, collectors are apprehensive to send very worn coins to grading companies to be certified).

The situation is remarkably different regarding the silver pieces with only one of the non-details (undamaged) 5 pence pieces showing any sign of circulation. Of the 10 pence pieces, although half shows some sort of circulation, only one single coin is graded in less than AU (almost

uncirculated) condition.

These statistics tell us that there could be no doubt that the copper Griqua coinage was indeed circulated, but regarding the silver pieces, it appears that their issuance, at best, was very limited and that those few pieces that were possibly issued, circulated only for a very limited time. Not one single silver Griqua coin, bar those with “details” (problem) grades, has been certified by the NGC or PCGS showing very extensive wear. It seems probable that this was due to the inability of the mission station to determine their correct value and were thus hesitant to circulate these.

As a postscript to this issue: – the circulation of token coins at mission stations in Southern Africa was not unheard of during this period. According to Beck *“Workmen and servants were usually paid in beads, though at Wesleyville in 1825, William Shaw was paying wages with a kind of tin token – about the size of a sixpence and stamped with a W, each token passes current, on the place and neighbourhood, for five strings of beads, the daily wages of a man”*. [2] The Wesleyville Missionary Station was founded by William Shaw in 1823 among the Gqunukhwebe, the first Methodist Missionary Institution in Xhosaland. At the end of that century, missionary money was also issued at the Dutch Reformed Church’s mission station at Mvera in Nyasaland, the current Malawi. Circular tokens were cut from old tin cans and stamped with the letters MM (Mvera Mission) with dies made in South Africa. [3] The locals called the money “chamkono” (meaning “of the arm”) because with one token, one could buy an arm’s length of cloth. While no surviving pieces from Wesleyville are known to exist, it is recorded that four Mvera tokens were in the collection of Jacob De Villiers Roos who we know was also a collector of the Griqua coinage. Some of Roos’s coins were donated to a South African museum after his death in 1940, but the current whereabouts of his Mvera tokens are not known.





Source: Esterhuysen, M., *Ons Gelderfenis* (1980).

### **The hard facts**

Until two years ago, the number of Griqua coins recorded as being found locally after originally being lost accidentally, numbered exactly one. In his previously mentioned article, Dr. Frank Mitchell tells us that a worn halfpenny piece was picked up on a small hill at Matjiesfontein, a Karoo hamlet on the main route from Cape Town to the town of Beaufort West, where the Griqua had a trading fair with Cape colonists during the period. This single find was truly unique, leading to some sceptic numismatists doubting the actual circulation of the coinage. Why were no more Griqua coins found afield in the intervening period of more than half a century? This all changed in late July 2021, when the author received correspondence from Lukas van der Merwe, the owner of a private museum on his farm Mount Ingwe in the Eastern Cape. Van der Merwe said that two Griqua tokens were found in the Northern Cape by a metal detectorist who was an acquaintance of his. The tokens, a quarter and halfpenny, were

found on two different days in two different locations, but on the same general site. The discoverer, Quinton Ferreira, did not want to reveal the locations of his finds, fearing an overrun of treasure seekers.



Source: Quinton Ferreira

Another interesting item found on the site (above right) was a pendant or brooch, probably dating from the later Victorian era, showing the Dove of Peace with an olive branch in its beak, a symbol that also appears on the Griqua coinage. The two coins were later certified and authenticated by SANGS (South African Numismatic Grading Services).



Source: Quinton Ferreira

In December 2021 the author had another call from Lukas van der Merwe with astonishing news: a **third** Griqua coin, a half pence, was found on the same site by Quinton Ferreira who generously donated it to van der Merwe's museum in the Eastern Cape.



The discovery site of the three coins was later revealed to the author. It was near the old mission station at Kuruman, a town that lies approximately 180 kilometres to the north of Griquatown.

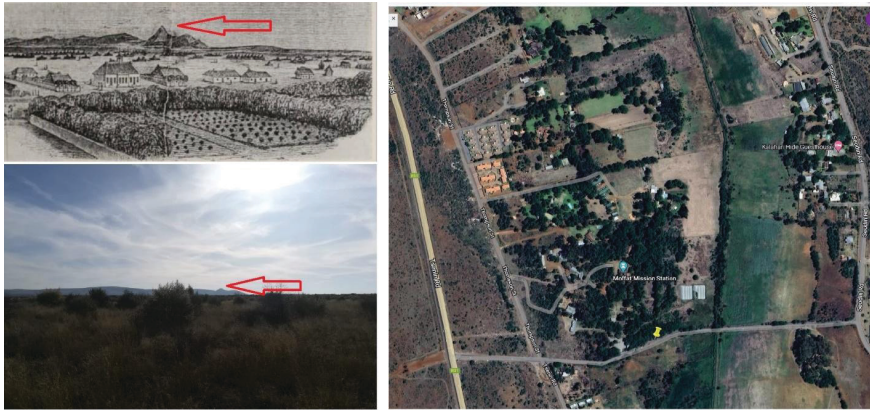
In 1816 the Rev. James Read of the London Missionary Society started working at Dithakong, a Tlhaping (Tswana) settlement approximately 90 kilometres to the north-west of Kuruman. Soon afterwards in 1817, the local chief, Mothibi, decided to move to a new site on the Kuruman river,

about 15 km north-west of the current town of Kuruman. Read and his team of Griqua and Khoi helpers and translators accompanied Mothibi's community to settle at Maruping. According to one source, the actual site was near the current hospital at Batlharos, a community adjacent to Maruping. The missionaries called the place New Lattakoo. [4]

In 1820, Rev. Read was transferred by the LMS from the Tswana Kingdom to Bethelsdorp, near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape. The New Lattakoo mission assistant, Robert Hamilton, was afterwards joined by Robert Moffat in May 1821, who was transferred from the Griquatown mission where he worked for a year with Heinrich Helm.

In late 1823 an agreement was struck with the local tribes to purchase a piece of land of about 500 English acres on payment of "*sundry useful articles to the value of 50 sterling*" – the property was only a couple of kilometres to the south at Seodin, and adjacent to where current day Kuruman was later founded. After Moffat consulted with his superior Dr. Philip, in Cape Town on the matter, it was settled and in 1824 the mission was re-established. [5] The site is today called the Kuruman Moffat Mission where Robert and his wife Mary laboured for many years until 1870. It was here that he produced a complete translation of the Bible by 1857 that was printed on the mission press, the first time that the Bible had been printed in its entirety anywhere in Africa, and the first time in a previously unwritten African language. [6] Incidentally, the museum in Griquatown is named after their daughter, also Mary, who was born there in April 1821. She later married the famous explorer, David Livingstone. The three Griqua coins were found at different spots on private land adjacent to the mission station. The first two coins were only about 200 meters apart but the third coin was found on a spot a kilometre away.





The top left picture (drawing) of the mission station at Kuruman dates from after 1838 when the church was built, while the bottom one was taken from the spot where the 3rd Griqua coin was found. Notice the same mountain peak (Kurumankop) in both pictures. The Google earth picture on the right shows the grounds of the mission station and surrounding private lands.

The question that arises is why were the coins found there, 180 kilometres to the north of Griquatown?

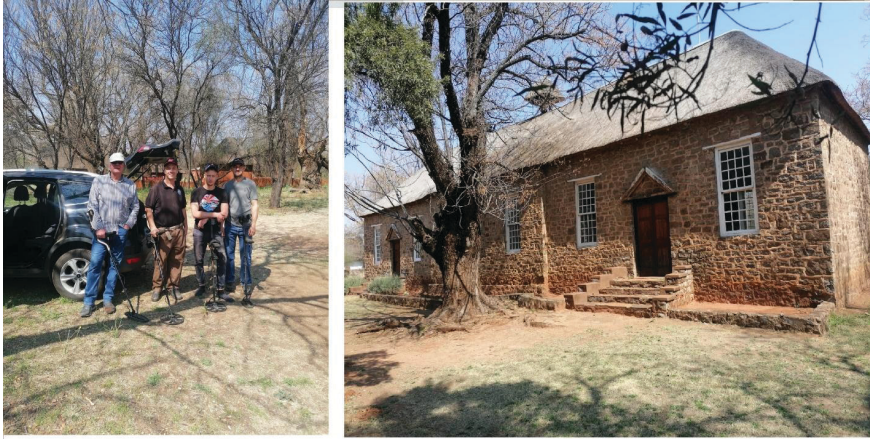
Although both the mission stations at Griquatown and Kuruman belonged to the same institution, the London Missionary Society, the former was predominantly a Griqua station while the latter served the Tswana nation. We know that the missionaries at Kuruman were assisted by Griqua helpers, but their number must have been small. When John Campbell conceived the idea of a Griqua coinage in 1813, he wrote that if a coinage for the Griqua was adopted “... *in a short time they would circulate amongst all the nations about, and be a great convenience*”. Therefore, it is possible that there was a limited circulation amongst the Tswanas.

However, according to the Carroll & Stuart report, as late as 1820, John Campbell referring to the mission at Lattakoo, wrote “*A good parcel of small black and white beads would enable local interpreters whose cattle had been stolen by Bushmen, to purchase the same number of cows from nations beyond – for beads are the only current money here*”.

Although the mission station at Seodin, Kuruman was established 4 years later in 1824 and the usage of coins could have sporadically occurred in the area by then, it could be that the tokens were rather lost by the Griqua helpers at the station, or by Griqua visiting the area for other reasons. For example, the Griqua and Tswanas not only traded with each other during the period, but sometimes joined together to trade with third parties. In April 1821, the missionary Stephen Kay, met a caravan of 19 wagons comprising two to three hundred people, principally Griqua and Tswanas, on their way to the Graaff-Reinet fair in the Cape Colony. [7] When Campbell visited Griquatown in March 1820, an ox wagon from New Lattakoo arrived with Jan Hendric, a Griqua teacher at that station, who was accompanied by 30 Tlhaping men (Tswanas) on their way to the trade fair at Beaufort. Hendric acted as their “*conductor and adviser*”. [8] There were also constant visits by traders, merchants, transporters and the missionaries themselves between the two stations. For instance, in 1823, the mission station at Kuruman was visited by a large commando of Griqua horsemen that rode up from Griquatown to assist Moffat and the local Tswanas to repel an attack by marauding Sothos at the battle of Lattakoo. [9] Incidentally, only 6 years after the Kuruman mission was establishment at Seodin, a store was opened there. [10]

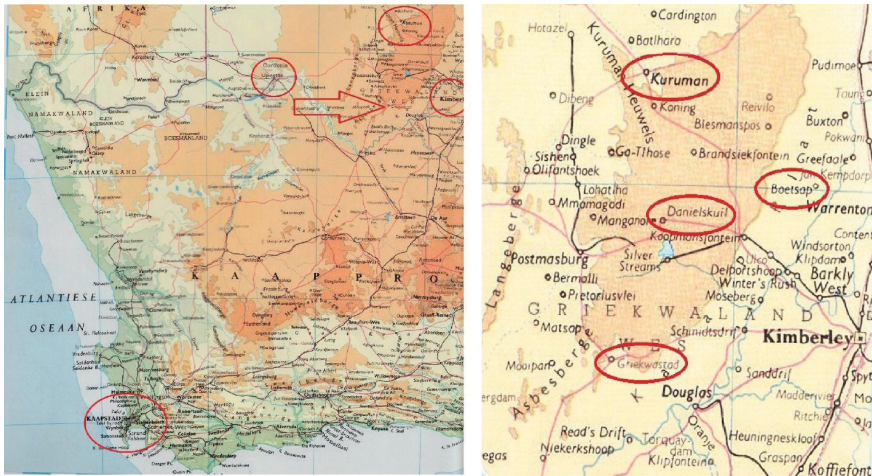
Historical records show that there was a mini exodus from Griquatown by the locals aligned to leaders other than Andries Waterboer. In 1820, when Waterboer was elected as “Kaptyn” (Dutch for “Captain”, i.e. leader) Barend Barends, together with his followers, moved to Danielskuil and later to Boetsap to form a Captaincy in the Transorange while Adam Kok II took his group to settle in an area between the Vaal and Riet rivers. [11] Two years later, in 1822 a third group left Griquatown to settle in the mountainous area between the Riet and Orange Rivers (later named the Fauresmith district). They were called the Bergenaars, a group of marauding bandits. [12]





*The author (left) standing next to Quinton Ferreira, the discoverer of the three Griqua coins, and two of his detecting friends behind the old mission church on the picture on the right. The author metal detected with them at the Moffat mission in September 2022, but no more Griqua coins were found.*

As discussed above, by 1820 some of the Griqua coins were already dispersed by the missionaries at Griquatown. It seems reasonable to assume that when these breakaway groups left, some coins probably accompanied them. Some of these new Griqua settlement areas like Danielskuil and Boetsap were also much closer to Kuruman than Griquatown was – see the map below. Side note: Shifting allegiances are a fascinating topic. The breakaway leaders Kok and Barends with some of their men, assisted Waterboer's commando at the battle of Lattakoo in 1823. [9]



Map left: Western part of the old Cape Province with Cape Town to the south and Griquatown, indicated by the arrow, surrounded by the towns of Upington, Kimberley and Kuruman.

Map right: To the right of Boetsap runs near the Harts River which is across the river from the town of Warrenton, where Francis “Matabele” Thompson later farmed along the river’s bank. Many years later, he recalled the Griqua coins as being “Waterboer’s issues”.

### Other Finds

The above section refers to Griqua coins being found locally in South Africa after they were accidentally lost. However, other Griqua coins have indeed been found locally, but these were not necessarily lost accidentally.

An article in the *Coin Collector’s Journal* (1886) was mentioned earlier where the writer refers to Americans who brought back two Griqua tokens, a copper half and silver 10 pence piece, from the diamond diggings in Kimberley in the 1870s. There is also a reference by J Comaroff [13] of “a few examples (of the coins) turning up in places like Kimberley in later years”.

The author has also already referred to Dr. J.W.B. Gunning, the Director of the Transvaal Museum from 1897 to 1913, who wrote that he acquired three Griqua pieces (a quarter, half and 5 pence) in 1892 in the Orange Free State that was adjacent to Griqualand West.

Parsons (1927) records “A few circulated specimens have trickled over to this country (England) of which figures 1 and 3 (in his booklet) are examples. The former (a 10 pence) was obtained in Kimberley, and is now in the collection of R. Donald Bain Esq.”

A much worn and holed silver five pence piece was recently offered on the South African website BidorBuy. The seller was contacted and asked where he acquired the coin. According to him it was bought together with another Griqua coin, a copper piece, from a person in the Free State a couple of years ago who originally owned three Griqua pieces. This silver five pence weighs 2 grams, is 20.33mm in diameter and has a thickness of 0.63mm. It shows considerable wear and tear.



Source: *Unieke Antieke*

Significantly, Kimberley frequently features in previous accounts in which the discovery of some Griqua pieces are mentioned. Kimberley is 150 kilometres east of Griquatown and was only established in the early 1870s consequent to the diamond rush. This area was claimed by the Griqua who at that time was captained by Nicolaas Waterboer, the son of Andries. Several other parties also laid claim to the area but Waterboer was favoured by the mediator, Robert Keate, the Lieutenant Governor of

Natal. Unfortunately, this decision did not help the Griqua in the long run as the area was eventually annexed by Britain. [14] Nicolaas Waterboer died in Griquatown on 17 September 1896.

As in the case of Francis “Matabele” Thompson, who remembered the Griqua coins as “Waterboer’s issues” – 50 years after their issuance, the coins found at Kimberley were (also) at least 50 years old when encountered, as the town was only established in the early 1870s. What is uncertain however, is whether the coins were still in circulation at that time, or kept as keepsakes or family heirlooms by Griqua working on the diamond diggings, or perhaps picked up by workmen after accidentally been lost many years earlier in the veldt, before the town was established. Parsons’ booklet shows a picture of the 10 pence, in excellent condition, which was in the collection of R. Donald Bain and acquired in Kimberley years prior. It seems unlikely that a high-grade specimen like that would have been found buried in the fields.

With regards to the coins found at Kuruman, where the mission was established only a few years after the Griqua coinage was struck, we know that the coins must have been accidentally lost as they were only recently found buried under the ground. All three coins show environmental damage with the 3rd coin found in a terrible state and hardly recognizable. According to the finder, the coin was detected near an old ash pit, so probably suffered some additional fire damage. The Moffat mission station was established in 1824, and therefore the three coins were almost without a doubt lost after that date. As we stated earlier, all indications are that the remainder of the coins left at Griquatown were only sent back to Cape Town in 1833. In which case it is possible that the coins (we believe the copper issues at least) could have circulated for a decade after the date that the Moffat station was established in 1824.

The conclusion is that the approximate circulation of the coins occurred between 1818 and 1833.

John Centlivres Chase who mentions the Griqua coins in his book published in 1843 (see Chapter 1 of this book) provides a contrary opinion that not a farthing circulated. Chase visited Griqua Town in 1825 on a trade mission and probably met up with the Cape Government agent at Griqua Town, John Melville. Chase describes the design of the coins in detail, so we believe he had sight of some of them, and that it was either Melville or the resident missionaries who told him that Campbell's experiment of establishing a local circulating medium was a failure.

When Chase visited Griquatown in 1825, both Rev. Anderson (who dispersed some of the coins at the incorrect rate before February 1820) and Heinrich Helm, who was unsure what to do with the remainder of the coins, had left Griquatown. So, it is possible that in 1825, when Chase visited Griquatown, the issuance of the coins had already ceased more than half a decade earlier, with Anderson's departure.

This leaves us with a few last questions: What happened to the nearly £100 worth of coins that were not sent back to Cape Town in 1833? If we use any of the scenarios in our section on the numbers that were originally struck, a hundred pounds constitutes a couple of thousand coins. Could there have been a second attempt to introduce the coins in the region? Could a large part of the coinage left at Griqua Town have been sent to the LMS station at Kuruman, especially after a trading store was opened there in 1830? We do not know, but speculate that the vast majority of the coins returned to the Cape were silver issues, and those that were indeed circulated in the Trans-orange were mostly copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  pence pieces.





*A Griqua Town ¼ Pence (graded VF 25) and 10 Pence (graded XF 45) certified by NGC and PCGS respectively. For a coin to be worn down to VF condition, it must have seen fairly extensive circulation and passed from hand to hand for quite a few years. (Source: Dr. Georg Jacobs)*



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## Chapter 5

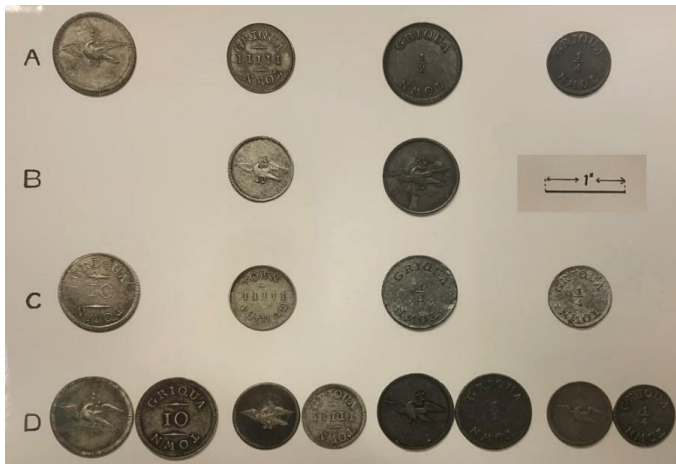
### Technical Matters

#### The Becklake comparisons

In January 1940, Mr J.T. Becklake, the Deputy Master of the Royal Mint in Pretoria, wrote to Mr Jacob de Villiers Roos supplying him, per his request, with comparisons he did (in terms of weight and size) between Griqua coinage in four different collections being the

- Pretoria Mint (4 pieces being a  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 5 and 10 pence)
- Spink of London (2 pieces being a  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 5 pence)
- Roos Collection (4 pieces being a  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 5 and 10 pence)
- Africana Museum (8 pieces being two each of the  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 5 and 10 pence)

An old picture of the tokens and the original typed page with the comparisons were found in the Roos collection.



The results were the following (1 gram = 15.4324 grains and 1 inch = 25.4 millimetres) with Becklake's comments copied verbatim, as supplied in De Nummis of 1955 [1] on the dies used.-

### Quarter Pence

Provenance	Weight (grams)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)
a) Pretoria Mint (obverse worn)	3.33	20.56	1.22
b) Spink London	---	---	---
c) Mr Roos (a worn piece)	3.38	20.73	1.40
d1) Africana Museum	3.5	20.42	1.26
d2) Africana Museum	4.33	21.46	1.44
Average	3.63	20.79	1.32

#### Becklake's comments:

c and one of the d's from the same obverse and reverse dies.

d1 and d2 different reverse dies (different lettering, positions).

### Half Pence

Provenance	Weight (grams)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)
a) Pretoria Mint	5.28	25.40	1.10
b) Spink London	6.71	24.69	1.51
c) Mr Roos (a worn piece)	6.36	24.63	1.55
d1) Africana Museum	6.57	24.74	1.64
d2) Africana Museum	6.10	24.82	1.51
Average	6.20	24.85	1.46

#### Becklake's comments:

b, c and both d's from the same obverse and reverse dies.

a reverse from different die (differences in lettering, size etc.).

### Five Pence

Provenance	Weight (grams)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)
a) Pretoria Mint	2.19	21.34	0.51
b) Spink London	2.09	20.68	0.60
c) Mr Roos	2.38	21.11	0.64
d1) Africana Museum	3.03	21.15	0.88
d2) Africana Museum	2.16	20.51	0.66
Average	2.37	20.96	0.66

Becklake's comments:

a and c same reverse dies.

b and d2 from different reverse dies.

b and both d's from different obverse dies to a & c (not b as wrongly stated) (different wing positions).

### Ten Pence

Provenance	Weight (grams)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)
a) Pretoria Mint	5.33	27.94	1.14
b) Spink London	---	---	---
c) Mr Roos	3.90	24.61	0.97
d1) Africana Museum	5.38	25.55	1.10
d2) Africana Museum	4.99	25.51	1.05
Average	4.90	25.90	1.06

Becklake's comments:

a and both d's same obv. & rev. dies. C has a different reverse die (differences in lettering, size, etc.).

### General comments

It is noted that **not one** of the 4 denominations were struck with only one pair of dies. Usually a die is replaced because of it becoming worn or broken. Sometimes many thousands of coins can be struck with the same dies, as was the case with the comparable dated 1815 USA quarter dollar of which the total mintage of 89 235 was struck with only one pair. [2] In other instances as was the case with the Burgerspond, various dies were used for the striking of less than a thousand coins. [3] So it would be difficult to deduce how many Griqua coins were struck even if it were known how many dies were used.

In an article written in Culna, a publication by the South African National Museum, Sudre Havenga states that Thomas Halliday engraved the dies (as originally recorded by Parsons) and only two dies (“stempels” in Afrikaans) were used, one for the copper ½ pence and silver 10 pence, and one for the copper ¼ pence and silver 5 pence. [4] She was referring to the dies for the obverses of the coins as the reverses of all four denominations are different.

*In his booklet, Parsons in 1927 says that “...only one instance (is) recorded, or known, of a difference in die, namely the five pence comprising lot 408 in the famous Murdoch collection of colonial coins, dispersed in 1903. The slight difference lies mainly in the form of the olive branch held in the beak of the dove, and occurs on the farthing, the obverse die of which is the same as that of the five pence”.*

However, because of the Becklake comparisons in 1940, we now know that this is not correct and that all four denominations show die differences. Some of the denominations show quite remarkable differences in terms of their weight, diameter and thickness. If for example, the Roos and Mint specimens of the 10 pence are compared, (both showing virtually no circulation), the Mint specimen is 37% heavier, has a 14% wider diameter and is 18% thicker than its Roos counterpart. The question here is that

if both coins were struck to the value of 10 pence worth of silver, why does the one contains so much more silver than the other? If the Roos specimen equaled 10 pence then the Mint specimen was worth almost 4 pence more which would make them the same denomination only in name. The only answer the author can surmise is that some of the coins in these four collections were patterns and not struck for circulation purposes, or as the Numismatist Derick Rabe speculates, the coins could have been struck at different periods, which would support Parsons' record that two consignments were sent to South Africa, and if so, could have been struck by two different manufacturers in England.



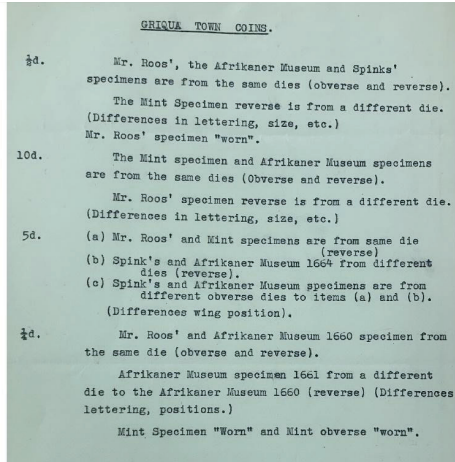
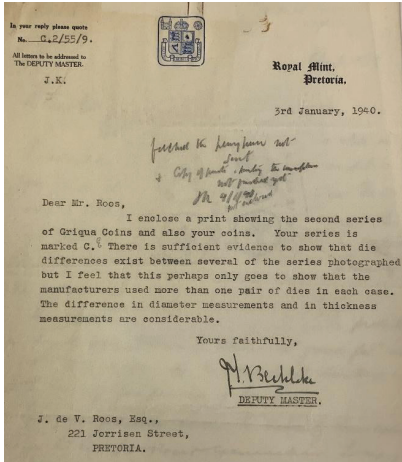


These three pictures are all of the Griqua 10 pence piece taken of the obverses of three different coins. The coin on the left differs clearly from the two coins on the right. See for example the attachment of the olives to the twig in the dove's mouth. The coin on the left shows all the olives to be part of the twig, but on the two coins on the right some olives look detached. Another clear difference is that the feet of the dove on the left looks almost web-like (like a duck) while the toes on the other two are clearly separated (crow-like). A third difference is the shorter and plumb tail of the dove on the left compared to the longer and thinner tails of the two doves on the right.

Closer inspection of the copper  $\frac{1}{4}$  pence reveals that there are also significant differences regarding, for example, the head of the dove. On the coin on the left, it looks more like a bird of prey. The feet also differ as in the pictures above, showing the crow-like versus duck-like feet.



The following is correspondence written in January 1940 by Becklake to Roos regarding some die differences he noticed when examining the Griqua coins in the collections of Spink, himself (Roos), the Mint and the Africana Museum.



Source: Roos collection

## Patterns

A pattern coin is in essence a trial strike of a coin which has not been approved for general release, but produced to evaluate a proposed coin design. Patterns are often struck in different metals for testing purposes. *Hern's Handbook on South African Coins and Patterns* [5] identifies fifteen Griqua patterns of which all are unique and not one of them struck in proof (although NGC did certified some of them as proofs, as we will see in the next section on proof coins). Hern uses Becklake's averages for the normal issues' specifications.

## Quarter Pence

Specifications	Normal (GT4)	Pattern (GT11) ***	Pattern (GT12) ***	Pattern (GT19)
Weight (grams)	3.63	---	6	5.95
Diameter (mm)	20.76	---	21.5	22.61
Thickness (mm)	1.33	---	1.5	2.03

Edge	Reeded almost vertically	Smooth	Smooth	Reeded Fine
Metal	Copper	Copper	Lead	Copper Gilt

### Half Pence

Specifications	Normal (GT3)	Pattern (GT8) ***	Pattern (GT9)	Pattern (GT10) ***
Weight (grams)	6.20	---	---	8.8
Diameter (mm)	24.86	---	---	26
Thickness (mm)	1.46	---	---	1.5
Edge	Reeded almost vertically	Smooth	Reeded struck on thick	Smooth
Metal	Copper	Copper	Copper	Lead

### Half Pence (Continued)

Specifications	Pattern (GT16) Matt Finish	Pattern (GT17) Thick figures	Pattern (GT18) ***
Weight (grams)	---	---	10.09
Diameter (mm)	---	---	26.42
Thickness (mm)	---	---	2.29
Edge	---	---	Reeded / Oblique
Metal	Copper		Copper Gilt

### Five Pence

Specifications	Normal (GT2)	Pattern (GT7) ***	Pattern (GT14) Unable to trace	Pattern (GT15) Previously gilt
Weight (grams)	2.37	4	---	---

Diameter (mm)	20.96	21.5	---	---
Thickness (mm)	0.66	1.5	---	---
Edge	Reeded obliquely	Smooth	---	Smooth
Metal	Silver with small amount of tin	Copper	Gold	Copper

### Ten Pence

Specifications	Normal (Hern) (GT1)	Pattern (GT5) *** 8 mm hole in centre	Pattern (GT6) ***	Pattern (GT13) Unable to trace
Weight (grams)	4.90	?	5	---
Diameter (mm)	25.90	26	26	---
Thickness (mm)	1.06	1.5	1.5	---
Edge	Reeded obliquely	---	---	---
Metal	Silver with small amount of tin	Copper	Copper	Gold

\*\*\* Pictures of these patterns are shown in the sales catalogue of *City Coins (1985)* of the collection of Richard J. Ford, and their Hern numbers (GT) above corresponds with the sale catalogue numbers as follows: -

GT5 = 8

GT6 = 9a

GT7 = 9b

GT8 = 3

GT10 = 10a

GT11 = 6

GT12 = 10b

GT18 = 4 (presumed)

THE COLLECTION OF THE COINS OF SOUTH AFRICA FORMED BY RICHARD J. FORD, DETROIT, MICHIGAN, U.S.A.											
<b>Griquatown</b>											
Lots 1-12 ex "W.V. Royle Baldwin Collection"											
<b>COINAGE</b>						<b>PATTERNS</b>					
1	10 Pence silver "TREND" ref no. G.7	FDC	1,300			8	10 Pence copper	rare	VF	950	
2	5 Pence silver G.2	FDC	1,300			9a	10 Pence copper		EF	2,250	
3	1/2d copper (iron wire) G.4	good	EF	1,000		9b	5 Pence copper				
4	1/2d copper (metal chip) no black line document		EF	1,650		10a	1/2d		VF	2,750	
5	1/2d copper (metal chip) G.4	good	EF	900		10b	1/4d				
6	1/2d copper (iron wire) G.4	good	EF	900		11	Pattern 1d 1890 Obv. Bust of Victoria. Rev. Dove of Peace. Austro. "Orange Tree" and "1890" 18th edge 1/2 S. 19th edge 1/2 S. 20th edge 1/2 S. 21st edge 1/2 S. 22nd edge 1/2 S.	FDC		550	
7	1/2d copper (metal chip) G.4	good	EF	900		12	Pattern 1d 18th edge 19th edge 20th edge 21st edge 22nd edge	FDC		550	

Note: Larger pictures of these patterns are shown in Chapter 6 of this book.

## Comments

It is noted that with a few exceptions, all the patterns were struck in copper, even the patterns for the 5 and 10 pence that were eventually struck in silver. The exceptions are a 1/4 and 1/2 penny in lead and a 5 and 10 pence in gold, although Hern was unable to trace the gold specimens. This information he probably received from the Parsons booklet with Parsons in 1927 writing "Mr Henry Garside informs me that he is under the impression that he saw, years ago, gold proofs of the tenpence and fivepence. Mr. W.C. Wells has also seen a specimen of the fivepence in gold. I have, however, not been able to trace the whereabouts of these coins."

A 100-pence piece in gold weighing 16.2 grams was sold by Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles in 2013. The coin was described as a "fantasy piece" which it most certainly was.



*Picture at top: A lead trial strike of the halfpenny (Source: Thomas van der Spuy).*

*Picture below: A 100-pence reverse striking in lead is also recorded, probably as a trial strike for the fantasy gold piece that was mentioned above. (Source: Baldwin's of St. James's).*

An interesting Griqua quarter penny was offered in the Noble Numismatics' (Sydney, Australia) sale 88 of 22–24 July 2008 as lot 3931. It is described as "...overstruck with the letters "F.A" on obverse. Fine for issue, unpublished and possibly unique. Ex A.H. Baldwin with their ticket..." The obverse of the coin actually does not look overstruck (counter stamped) where the letters "FA" should then be incused **below** the surface of the coin. It seems like it has been struck with a die showing these crude letters raised **above** the surface. Alternatively, the obverse could have been modified by hand as sometimes seen on so-called trench art and prisoner of war coin pieces. It is truly a mystery coin and sold for \$750 at the auction.





*Source: Noble Numismatics (Australia)*

### **Proof coins**

A proof striking usually involves the polishing of the dies (punches) with which the coins are struck with. Proof coins can be distinguished from normal circulation coins, also called business strikes, by their sharper rims and design, as well as much smoother “fields”, the mirror-like blank areas that are not part of the coin’s design.

This poses the question: why were proofs struck for the Griqua coinage? Today proof coins are predominantly struck to be sold to collectors, but historically, proofs were struck to check the dies and for archival purposes. In Victorian times, they were generally struck for coronations and jubilees and towards the end of the 1800s also as salesman’s samples / presentation pieces. Proof coins and especially proof tokens dating from the late 1700s and early 1800s are rare.

If the Griqua proofs were struck for checking the dies, they were merely patterns, but we do not know this for a fact.

Regarding the quarter pence, seven proof coins are recorded by NGC, the one being in gilt-copper. For the half pence, six proofs are recorded, one also in gilt-copper. The two gilt copper specimens are without doubt, pattern coins that were originally in the Royle Baldwin collection (see

next chapter) and were described, with pictures of their cast impressions, by S. Gordon in *Africana Notes & News* in 1960 [6]. They are the patterns numbered by Hern as GT18 and GT19 (see above) but Hern does not believe that they are proofs. For the silver issues in proof, there are seven 5 pence pieces and nine 10 pences recorded by the NGC whilst PCGS has certified one quarter penny, two 5 pence pieces and one 10 pence in proof.

Adding the number of certified proof coins to the number of non-proof coins, the total is exactly 100 with 67 coins being non-proofs and 33 proofs. This proof ratio is unexpectedly high.

If the proof coins were indeed struck in the same time period as the normal Griqua issues, the reason for their high surviving numbers (compared to the normal issues) is most probably that the original proof coins were not sent to South Africa. There would have been no reason for this as the LMS headquarter was in London where the Griqua coinage committee sat, consisting of Messrs Campbell, Muston, Steven & Bateman, while the bulk of the non-proofs would have been shipped off to Griquatown. Of these, a large percentage probably ended up in the melting pot or were lost, with very few saved in numismatic collections of the period – the exception being the £3.8 worth of coins sold at the old Jewry in London before the shipment took place. Also the coins, that according to Parsons were given by the maker to the original owner and were not part of the consignments sent to Griqualand.

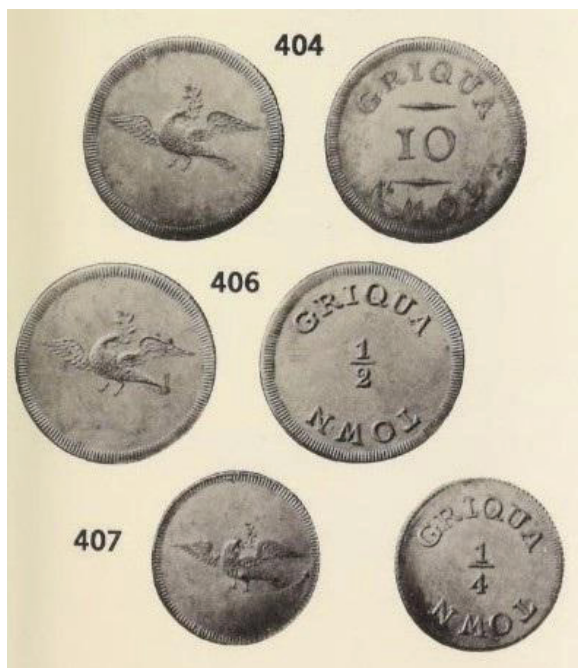
There is of course the chance that the proof Griqua coins were actually struck at a later period as collectors' pieces. Parsons in 1927 states "*It is probable that the proof-like specimens in our cabinets were never intended for Griqualand and may not have been struck with the initial supplies*".

In a footnote to the article *Griqualand Coinage* by Dr. J.I. Sneider in Spink's *Numismatic Circular* (June 1969), the editor notes that "*During the 1940s, we saw a number of the currency pieces offered as 'proofs' they looked what they were, too-good-to-be-true*".

In a similar vein, in a sale by the New Netherlands Coin Company on 27 & 28 June 1962 in New York, all four denominations of the Griqua pieces were offered as lots 404 to 407 and described as very rare to excessively rare. The cataloguer states *“The four (proof) pieces above are unquestionably early restrikes, issued in such small quantities so as to be as hard to locate as the originals (on the order of the U. S. 1873-75 Gold Three Dollars)”*.

The four proof restrikes mentioned above, are probably the same as those offered in the Count Ferrari sale by Sotheby’s on 31 March 1922 where lot number 628 consisted, amongst other Griqua coins, of *“four modern reproductions”*. Lot 627 consisted of a 5 and 10 pence in proof, so “proof” certainly did not equate to “restrrike” in the cataloguer’s view. Philip Ferrari de La Renotière (1850–1917) was a noted French stamp and coin collector, who also owned the extremely rare Paul Kruger gold three pence of 1894. [7]

La Renotière died in 1917. Therefore, both the so-called Griqua restrikes and the other proof Griqua coins (that were not considered to be restrikes) must date prior to the Great War. Although the pictures (plates) of the restrikes were not shown in the catalogue, three of the four restrikes in the 1962 catalogue of the New Netherlands Coin Company were indeed pictured – see below.



*Source: New Netherlands Coin Company*

The surviving proof issues are indeed rare today, with the combined NGC/PCGS certified total being only thirty-three coins. It seems fairly plausible that some of these restrikes (if they were indeed struck at a later stage than the originals) have in the interim period been certified and encapsulated as proofs. With the help of the pictures above, a future researcher should be able to identify the coins and scrutinize the modern-day pictures available from grading companies and auction houses to determine whether there are clear differences between the restrikes and other proof Griqua coins. This task might prove to be difficult if the pictures were captured of cast impressions of the coins, a practice that was still in use during the early 1960s when the catalogue was published. [8]



*Complete sets of both proof and mint state NGC-certified Griqua coins in the collection of the prominent South African numismatist Thomas van der Spuy.*

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## Chapter 6

### Past Collectors and Sales

As we have seen in Chapter 1, some of the first post-period references we could find regarding the Griqua coinage was by William Boyne in his book *The Silver Tokens of Great Britain & Ireland, the Dependencies, & Colonies* published in 1866 and in the sales catalogue of the numismatic collection of Dr. P. O. van der Chijs in 1870. A review of these two numismatists' acquaintance with the Griqua series may indicate an earlier involvement.



**Dr. Van der Chijs (1802 - 1867)**



**William Boyne (1814 -1893)**

Sources: Picture left: [www.nederlandsemunten.nl](http://www.nederlandsemunten.nl) Picture right: Leeds Libraries

Pieter Otto van der Chijs, who would become one of the most prominent Dutch numismatists of his era, was born in 1802 in Delft into a wealthy family. A contemporary of his wrote [1] that van der Chijst started collecting copper coins of various countries when he was only a boy of nine or ten. In his early life he was interested in charity and subscribed to the newsletter (*De Star*) of a local charity organization called *De Maatschappij van Weldadigheid* while still a school boy.

In 1826 he started writing articles for *De Star*, which in the previous year, quite interestingly, published long extracts from the Rev. Campbell's visit to South Africa and Griquatown. In 1827 Van der Chijs was appointed as its editor, with a name change of the publication to *de Vriend des Vaderlands*. Two years later he published his first of many numismatic works entitled *Beknopte Verhandeling over het nut der beoefening van de algemeene, dat is oude, middeleeuwsche en hedendaagsche Munt- en penningkunde*.

In 1835 he was appointed director of the meagre coin cabinet of Leiden University and throughout his life built it up into a world class collection. In 1862 he published his last work *Notice sur le Cabinet Numismatique de l'Universite de Leyde*, which was a catalogue of this cabinet. No references were made to the Griqua coinage, but some paper money of the Cape of Good Hope is referenced.

He died in November 1867 and his private collection was sold three years later in Amsterdam. This included two Griqua pieces, a ½ and 10 pence wrongly listed under the Americas section in the catalogue. The sale was for some reason held by a book (not coin) dealership (G. Theod. Bom) who presumably listed the coins as they were recorded and catalogued by Van der Chijs before his death. He had started collecting coins more than half a century earlier, hence it is impossible to establish when he acquired the two coins. However, it is fairly clear that when they were catalogued, they were unknown to him. The section they were listed in contained mostly coins of South America dating from the 1810s, 1820s and 1830s.

One year before Van der Chijs died, William Boyne in 1866 recorded the Griqua silver 5 and 10 pence pieces in his book on silver tokens. As mentioned earlier, he visited South Africa in the mid-1800s and travelled to the interior of Natal and the Cape Colony. It was most probably during this visit that he learnt of the Griqua pieces. In 1992, William Harshaw, a descendant of Boyne's sister, donated a collection of papers relating to William Boyne, to the University of Toronto in Canada. [2] It consisted of a collection of manuscript volumes, published works, albums of plates, family correspondence and other papers. Only a summary of the contents of the papers are available from the University, the documents themselves are boxed and not digitally available.

For the research purposes, the author wanted to establish which places Boyne visited in South Africa as these may provide an idea where he learnt about the Griqua coinage's connection to the London Missionary Society. The Harshaw papers tells us that in his holograph (hand-written) volumes, pages 119 to 151 relates to “... *a voyage to Port Natal and Cape of Good Hope colonies, with journey into the interior of both, and return home, 1853, 1854 and 1855*”. In his book on tokens, Boyne actually refers to the conversations he had with “*residents of our South African colonies*” regarding the Griqua issues. The Cape Colony and Natal were indeed separate colonies of the British Empire during that period. We do not know if Boyne visited Griqualand West, the non-colonized area north of the Orange river. If he had indeed come into contact with the Griqua, some of them would have remembered the coinage, as it was introduced approximately 35 years earlier, and many of the elderly would have had recollections thereof. Andries Waterboer, for example, only died the year before Boyne's arrival in South Africa.

What we do know is that during the long period that Boyne visited South Africa from 1853 to 1855, he travelled widely, as there is a description of a vast variety of items [3] that he brought back to England and donated to

the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, of which he was a member. *“In 1855 he donated a very large and varied natural history collection comprising of skins, skulls, teeth and horns of African mammals, four eggs of the ostrich, specimens of snakes, a bat, 30 skins of birds and several insects from Port Natal. In 1856 this theme continued with the donation of another skull, that of the gnu from South Africa and more snake specimens (of the Boa) from Port Natal. His final donation was made in 1861, which was a preserved head, foot and skull of the two horned rhinoceros of South Africa, the skull of the African elephant, the jaw of the Asiatic elephant and skulls of the spotted hyena and teit bok (?) of South Africa. Also recorded in this year is an ethnographic donation (...) consisting of a number of items, such as milk bottle, wooden milk jar and K(bantu) spoons from Natal.”*

In Boyne's token book of 1866 there is only one other South African token catalogued, being a brass Sixpence from Natal dated 1860. Boyne mentions that before these pieces were introduced in Natal, small change was so scarce that small counters (tokens) of bone had to be used. He most certainly learnt this information during his visit to Natal a few years earlier. In his description of the Griqua tokens he also mentions Natal by saying that the Griqua nation, under their leader Adam Kok, recently settled near the Colony of Natal after wandering about for many years. This trek from Griqualand West to the territory that became known as Griqualand East happened in 1861, a couple of years after Boyne's visit to South Africa.

(The Natal piece that Boyne mentioned is actually a unique token, as it is uniface struck, reading SIX PENCE NATAL 1860. However, pieces also exist with the other side reflecting DURBAN CLUB 6d. Some sources state that this is South Africa's oldest dated token, but the honour belongs to another piece, also with a religious connotation like the missionary Griqua tokens, it being a Cape Town communion token of the Presbyterian church dated 1829.)

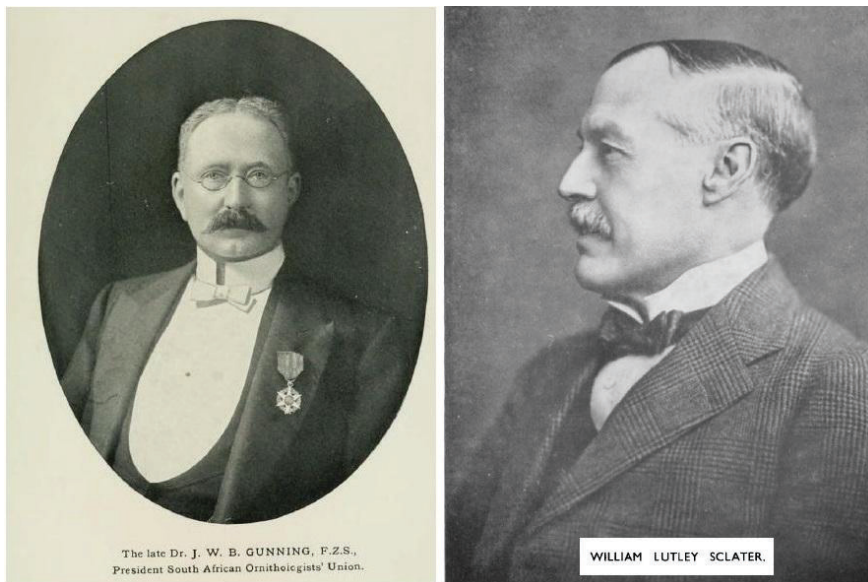


Source: *South Africa's Tokens* by Dr. Morgan Carrol & Mr. Allyn Jacobs, published in 2021.

In his *The Coinage of Griqualand* (1927) H. Alexander Parsons mentions a few collectors of the series. The pictures (plates) of the four denominations in his booklet are accompanied by the names of their owners. The 5 pence and  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny were in his own collection, the 10 pence was owned by a R.D. Bain and the  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny by Dr. A.N. Brushfield. Both Richard Donald Bain (1850-1927) and Archibald Nadauld Brushfield (1870-1960) were members of the Royal Numismatic Society. [4] Parsons also mentions that in the coin sale by Sotheby and Co of 23 and 26 November 1925, “proof impressions” of the  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny and  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny were offered, which were described in the catalogue to have come from the collection of the late Mr. Saxty of Bath. In an advertisement in 1895, George Mackey, a Bric-and-Brac dealer of Birmingham, says that he purchased the entire collection of over 50 000 coins, medals and tokens of the late E. Saxty of Bath. According to one source, Edward Saxty (born 1833) was an antiquities dealer at 6 Wood Street, Bath. [5]

The British Museum has five Griqua coins in their collection that were donations from a W.L. Sclater in 1900 and T.B. Clarke-Thornhill in 1935. Thomas Bryan Clarke-Thornhill (1857-1934) worked in the British diplomatic service. His coin collection was bequeathed to the museum after his death. William Lutley Sclater (1866–1944) was a British zoologist who became the Director of the South African Museum in Cape Town in 1896. A few years later, he returned to England and subsequently worked at the British Museum. [6] He was an authority on African birds, which probably

is one of the reasons he owned some bird-depicting Griqua coins. He was an acquaintance of fellow ornithologist Dr. J.W.B. Gunning, who was the Director of the Transvaal Museum from 1897 to 1913 and owner of three Griqua coins.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*

Earlier, we identified some sales of Griqua coins in the 1800s, with the first that we know of being in 1870 in Amsterdam and the second in 1878 in Frankfurt.

Two other sales of the 1800s, both by Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge (hereafter named Sotheby's), were a 5 pence in July 1890 (lot 376) that was owned by a "Gentleman, who is relinquishing the pursuit" and on 29 April 1898, a ½ penny (lot 239) owned by the "late Mrs. Unwin" and described as "a very rare piece in fine preservation." In the same year as the latter sale, a copper ¼ penny was offered as lot 426 in the collection of Col. Walter Cutting (1841-1907) of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He was a collector of copper coins and tokens. The sale was held on 23 and 24 May 1898 by



Lyman H. Low at the Collectors Club in New York.

The collection of Lieutenant Colonel H. Leslie-Ellis was sold on 18 June 1902 by Sotheby's, containing amongst others, what was described in the catalogue as "*Probably the finest set of these very interesting pieces ever offered*". Colonel Henry Leslie-Ellis (1852-1918) was a member of the Royal Geographical Society, the Society of Antiquarians and also the Royal Numismatic Society from 1893. [7] In 1911, the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh received by bequest the numismatic collection of the late Major Donald Lindsay Carnegie (1840-1911). Two of the coins, a Griqua  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny were included with the provenance given as from the Lieutenant Colonel H. Leslie-Ellis sale mentioned above. The museum also has the 5 and 10 pence in their collection thought to emanate from the same source. [8]

When John G. Murdoch's famous collection was sold in May 1903 by Sotheby's, there were 5 Griqua pieces included, being a  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny, two 5 pence and two 10 pence pieces. One of the 5 pences was described as being from the Deakin cabinet. George Deakin's collection of English & colonial coins & tokens were sold in November 1899 by Sotheby's. Two of Murdoch's Griqua pieces, a 5 and 10 penny, ended up in the collection of Bernard Roth (1852-1915) who was Vice-President of both the British Numismatic Society and the Royal Numismatic Society. [9]

When Sotheby's sold the collection of Richard Starkey on 14 May 1903, lots 111 and 112 were, according to the Burlington Gazette, a 10 pence and 5 pence that went for £2.2 and £1.13 s. respectively. These prices seem like a bargain when compared to the Clarkson sale two years earlier – see below. The coins had presumably earlier been part of the collection of James Atkins, the author of *The Coins and Tokens of the Possessions and Colonies of the British Empire* (1889).

The collection of J.E.T. Loveday was sold by Sotheby's on 15 & 16 November 1906. Lots 247 and 248 were a  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny and  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny with the latter's

provenance given as from the W.N. Clarkson collection sold by Sotheby's in 1901. The Clarkson sale of 16 April 1901 included all four Griqua denominations with the buyers (their names and prices realized are hand written in a copy of the catalogue) being Spink & Son of the silver pieces (lots 524 and 525) and a certain Stoner of the copper pieces (lots 526 and 526). The prices realized were  $\frac{1}{4}$  penny (£6 12s 6p)  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny (£3 12s 6p) and £3 each for the 5 and 10 pence pieces. This Stoner presumably sold the  $\frac{1}{4}$  pence to J.E.T. Loveday mentioned above.

Two other sales were those of Thomas E. Tatton on 6 & 7 November 1911 (lot 345 being a 10 pence) and Dr. Herbert Peck on 29 October 1920, lot 143 being a 10 pence with the provenance given as lot 136 from the Sir Robert Chambers (1737-1803) sale of 1906. For some reason, coins were added to Sir Robert's collection after his death in 1803, presumably by a family member who kept on collecting.

In June 1912, the coin and token collection of J.B. Caldecott was sold by Sotheby's. All four denominations of the Griqua coinage were offered as lots 292 (10 pence), 293 (5 pence) and 294 (both the  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  penny). The 10 pence sold for £7 12s 6d. John Barton Caldecott (1862-1947) was a member of the Royal Numismatic Society which he joined in 1886. [10] He was the co-author of *Money and Illustrations of our Colonial Coinage*.

A Griqua 10 pence piece was included in the world-famous Virgil Brand collection. Brand was a wealthy American businessman and a beer baron, born in 1862. He started collecting coins in 1879. It is said that he gathered the largest private coin collection of all times. [11] When he died in 1926 he left 368 000 items in his estate. When his collection was sold after his death, Mr. Royle Baldwin, a numismatist from England bought his South African coins, including the extremely rare ZAR gold sixpence of 1897 and the Griqua 10 pence. William Victor Royle Baldwin (1893-1967) was not only a partner in one of Britain's most respected coin dealerships in his time, but also assembled a matchless private cabinet of the rarest South African coins, tokens and early trial pieces. He arrived in South Africa for

health reasons in the late 1920s and stayed for a couple of years before returning to England. [12] His collection of Griqua coins was probably the best ever assembled – see the sale of the Richard J. Ford collection below. Many South African numismatists are aware of the coin collection of King Farouk of Egypt that was auctioned off by Sotheby's in Cairo in 1954. The reason for this was lot number 902 consisting of 19 gold coins of the Zuid Afrikaansche Republic that included the world famous “single 9” ZAR gold pond. Due to various restrictions by the military government in Egypt, the ex-King’s collection was broken down into lots of coins, often mixing rare and common coins in a single lot with a very vague and poorly conceived catalogue. Lot 2412 was described as *GRIQUALAND, five pence [1890] two specimens, halfpenny, farthing, pattern penny with head of Victoria, undated (2) and 1890. Nearly all extremely fine.* The lot thus consists of three of the Victorian-era Griquatown pennies and four coins of the original series, the two five pence pieces being wrongly dated as 1890.

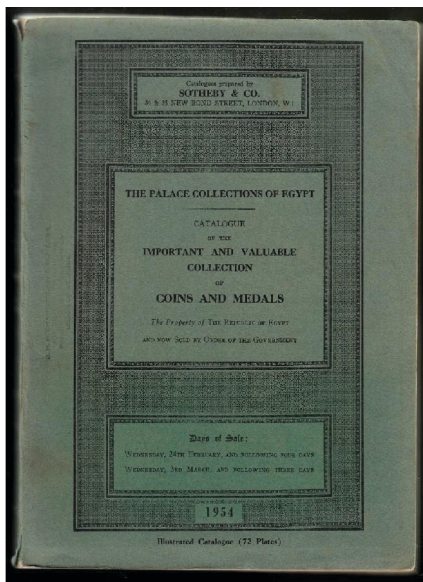


Photo left: Front page of the Palace Sale (Authors own copy). Photo right: King Farouk of Egypt inspecting some coins in his collection (Photo by Tulipe Noire).

When part IV of the vast collection of Wayte Raymond (1886-1956) was sold in December 1978 by NASCA in New York, his Griquatown holdings were described as a “*COMPLETE SET OF THE EXTREMELY RARE GRIQUATOWN COINAGE issued in 1815-16 by the Rev. John Campbell. The first coinage for South Africa. The only coinage ever of a Christian missionary. Struck by Halliday. Recalled after about two years of circulation and melted down. Remick writes: ‘Only a very few specimens are known of the higher denominations’. (The Fonrobert catalogue of 1878 illustrated a holed 10 Pence). The copper coins were thrown away by the natives when they turned brown. These are among the most important coins of Africa, and among the rarest coins of the Commonwealth*”.

There were actually six Griqua coins in this collection offered as lots 4090 to 4095. Lot 4094 was a ½ penny described as “*Badly cut planchet. We believe the coin was struck this way. Ex-F.C.C. Boyd*”.



*Source: NASCA (New York)*

According to a source [13] F.C.C. Boyd is primarily known to the numismatic world today through the sales of the John J. Ford Collection, the latter having acquired many numismatic items from Boyd.

John J. Ford, of Detroit Michigan, had a fabulous collection of South African coins, of which many were sold by City Coins in Cape Town on 31 May 1985. Included in the sale were twelve Griqua coins, mostly extremely rare patterns, which previously were all in the Royle Baldwin collection - see picture below of the City Coins sales catalogue..

1 10 Pence silver  
"TRENDS" ref. no.



2 5 Pence silver  
G.2

3 1/2d copper  
(plain edge)  
G.3 (a)

4 1/2d copper  
(milled edge)  
on a thick flan  
Unrecorded

5 1/2d copper  
(milled edge)  
G.3

6 1/4d copper  
(plain edge)  
G.4 (a)

7 1/4d copper  
(milled edge)  
G.4

8 10 Pence copper  
with centrally pierced  
hole (8.5 mm dia.)  
Undated. See "Trends"  
p.141, G.7. Only  
known example.

9a 10 Pence copper  
(plain edge).  
Undated.  
"Trends" G. 8  
Only known example.

9b 5 Pence copper  
(plain edge).  
Undated.  
"Trends" G. 9  
Only known example.

10a 1/2d  
as currency, see lots 5 and 7,  
but struck in lead.  
"Trends" G. 10  
Only known example.

10b 1/4d  
as currency, see lots 5 and 7,  
but struck in lead.  
"Trends" G. 11  
Only known example.

11 Pattern 1d 1890  
Obv: Bust of Victoria,  
facing left  
Rev: Dove of Peace.  
Above, "Griqua Town"  
and below "1890"  
(plain edge) G.5  
small carbon spot on bridge  
of nose; superb mint bloom

12 Pattern 1d  
Undated  
"Trends" G.6  
choice mint bloom



City Coins sales catalogue of 1985. For the "Trends" references mentioned in the catalogue, see our reference #14.

Another sale held locally in South Africa worth mentioning, was Phoenix postal auction number 20 that closed on the 17th of November 1979. It featured the collection of the late Mr. Selig Gordon of Johannesburg. The following tribute to him was published in the catalogue.





*Mr Selig Gordon with his collection of South African coins, rated among the finest in the world.*

### A TRIBUTE

**A**gainst the word 'occupation' on the dozens of forms he was required to fill in throughout his lifetime, Mr Selig Gordon F.R.N.S. had often toyed with the idea of entering the single word 'numismatist' instead of writing 'musical instrument dealer'.

If he had done so, the description would not have been far off the mark, for he was that rare type of man whose hobby of coin collecting had grown to be as much of an occupation as his daily business.

Mr. Gordon was probably one of South Africa's foremost authority on South African Coinage and Patterns. His private collection of money of this country is considered to be the finest in South Africa, and perhaps the finest in the world as well.

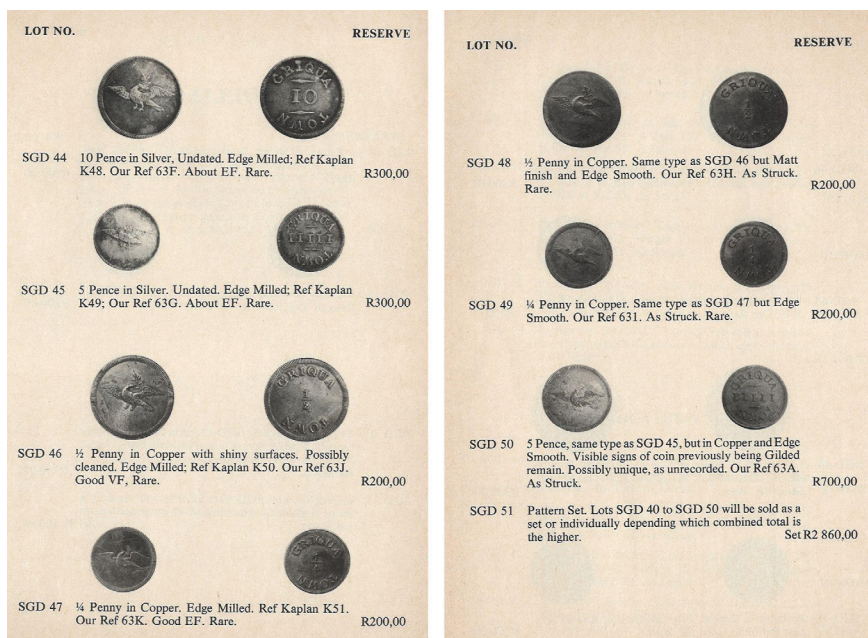
There is in the collection at least one copy of every coin minted in this country. Most of the time this unique collection has rested in the silent confines of a Johannesburg safety deposit vault, and only on rare occasions did it ever leave the bank premises. The reason for this measure is that the coins would have been virtually irreplaceable had they ever been lost or stolen.

This collection is the accumulation of almost 50 years' work. He was a collector in the true sense of the word, in that he knew the complete history about each coin, and in many cases the circumstances or special reasons for their being minted.

*Source: Francois Malan*



The following pieces were offered on auction. (Comparing the then reserve prices with current prices is difficult, firstly because of the effect of inflation over more than 40 years and secondly, the fact that in 1979 the South African rand was still stronger than the American dollar with the US\$1 equaling 84 South African cents).



Source: *Francois Malan*

There were of course many more collectors of the series, but the examples we have provided above will suffice to show that the humble coinage of Griquatown is highly prized and proudly found its place in the cabinets of some of the most eminent coin collectors of their era, since the late 1800s. Till now they are eagerly sought by numismatists worldwide, but due to their scarcity, there being only 100 NGC and PCGS certified coins in existence, only a lucky few will have the privilege to possess even one of these enigmatic coins in their collection.

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# Chapter 7

## The Griqua Coinage Debate

During the first decade of this century, a certain Scott Balson, an ex-South African who emigrated to Australia towards the end of the previous century, began what can only be described as a shameful onslaught and world-wide smear campaign against the Griqua coinage. Every conceivable

The screenshot shows a website interface with a central image of a young man with dreadlocks. The page is divided into several sections:

- Research**: Includes links for "Who are the Griqua?", "Important Historical Figures", "The Griquatown Coin Fallacy", and "Hundreds of Printed Books".
- Coins**: Includes links for "Griqua Coins", "ZAR Coins", "South Africa's First Indigenous Currency", "Selected Token Coins", and "Coins For Sale".
- Key Historical Griqua Settlements**: A row of six thumbnail images with labels: "Hardcastle (1799-1812)", "Danielskuil (c1814-)", "Griquatown (c1800-)", "Campbell (c1805-)", "Phillipolis (1823-)", "Kokstad (1970-)", and "Kranshoek (1930-)".
- Interactive Map of East Griqualand**: A link to a map of the region.
- Options for Navigating this web site:** A box containing:
  - "This web site contains over 100 pages..."
  - Links to "Text based site map to all links", "History of S Africa's pre-1923 coinage", "Latest additions to this collection", and "Articles".
  - A Google search bar with the text "Search entire tokencoins.com website .....for direct info on your area of interest".
- Click on coins below for more background.**: A row of various historical coins with labels: "Tabora Pound", "Durban Club Id", "F C Larkan token", "St Faltus token", "Griqua Town Penny", "Barbers Pond token", "Griqua & Co token", "Griqua Een Pond note", and "Veld Pond".

Source: <http://www.tokencoins.com/>

platform available was deployed. He relentlessly launched his attacks through articles written in numismatic magazines, letters to coin societies, postings on internet forums, television interviews and the most damaging of all, never ending comments on his own prolific website.

The onslaught never ebbed and during the second decade, in the 2010s, it reached fever point. Balson was on the war path and vented his venom on anyone who opposed his views, including the author.

Most numismatists that knew Balson from the days when he was still active and welcomed in South African numismatic circles, especially in his then home province Natal, could not understand his actions or motives. In his younger days, before emigrating to Australia, he was regarded as a respected numismatist and author of various numismatic articles and publications.

However, something had fundamentally changed and the reason was initially somewhat of a mystery.

A participant to the then very active South African numismatic forum (<https://forums.bidorbuy.co.za/>) ventured an opinion as to Balson's motivation: The hidden agenda was to discredit the Griqua coinage, thereby promoting his own investment in thousands of Strachan & Co tokens, by cleverly falsifying the facts at every turn. He falsely declared to anyone who would listen, that the Strachan & Co issues were the first coinage to be put into circulation in South Africa and therefore much more collectable than the Griqua coinage, that the latter had never been circulated and at best were handed out as freebies and trinkets to the Griqua. They were, in Balson's view, totally irrelevant to South Africa's numismatic heritage and not worth collecting.

The actual posting by the contributor named “Tulley” from Walkerville, Johannesburg, on the BidorBuy forum (now closed) reads as follows:

***“Look, Balson is sitting on a truckload of these Strachan tokens. One day his brain clicked and he realized that if he could convince people that the Griqua tokens weren’t circulated, he could then say that the Strachan & Co coins were South Africa’s first circulating indigenous currency.***

***By removing the Griqua tokens from the picture as South Africa’s first indigenous currency this would drastically increase the value of the Strachan tokens sitting in the so-called Balson Family Trust.***

***This isn’t about a passion for collecting, or a passion for the Griquas.***

***It is all about economics.***

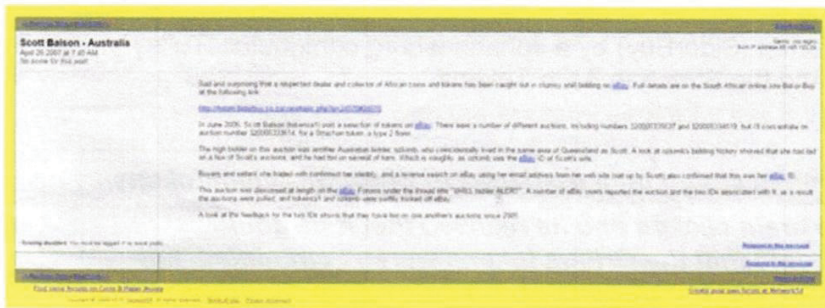
***The book, the website, the videos, the visits to Griqualand and the postings on coin forums is all part of the process.***

***Very clever actually.”***

Source: <https://forums.bidorbuy.co.za/>

Balson shrugged this comment off, and his attacks grew more vicious. Then another contributor on the BidorBuy forum provided another clue for his unprincipled behaviour, that very few people would be aware of. In 2006 Balson was caught out “shill bidding” on eBay on his own Strachan & Co tokens. (Shill bidding is defined as bidding on one’s own items in an auction under a false name to push the prices up and is a punishable crime in Australia). An internet report on numismatic scammers reads





*"Sad and surprising that a respected dealer and collector of African coins and tokens has been caught out in clumsy shill bidding on eBay.*

*In June 2006, Scott Balson (tokensa1) sold a selection of tokens on eBay. There were a number of different auctions, including numbers 320005335637 and 320005334519, but I'll concentrate on auction number 320005333614, for a **Strachan token**, a type 2 florin.*

*The high bidder on this auction was another Australian bidder, ozkimb, who coincidentally lived in the same area of Queensland as Scott. A look at ozkimb's bidding history showed that she had bid on a few of Scott's auctions, and he had bid on several of hers. Which is naughty, as ozkimb was the eBay ID of Scott's wife."*

*Source: eBay numismatic discussion forum*

This temporary setback unfortunately did not stop Balson's scam, as he continued to belittle the Griqua coinage and glorify the S & Co tokens in an attempt to boost their sales. When he was blacklisted on eBay, he simply re-registered under the new name numis2006.

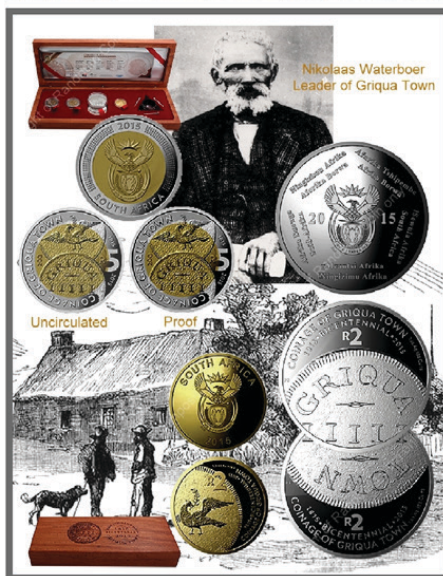


In 2015, the South African Mint announced that the bi-centenary of the Griqua coinage will be commemorated by striking both a R5 coin for circulation purposes and various commemorative sets. This official recognition by the South Africa government infuriated Balson as never before. The sudden public exposure to the general public, and the interest it evoked regarding its history and importance, were things Scott Balson never anticipated in his wildest dreams when he started his smear campaign.

Shortly after this, in 2016, the author published a paper entitled *The Truth behind the Griqua Town Coinage*. Many of the lies and inaccuracies that Balson has spread for many years were refuted in this paper. On 5th March 2016, at a function in Johannesburg, the author was awarded the Merit

Medallion of the National Numismatic Society (NNC). On hearing this, Balson's fury grew limitless and his dignity and reputation sank to new depths. Renewed and vicious attacks were launched on his website on people like Brian Hern (regarded by many as the doyen of South African numismatics and the secretary of the NNC) as well as its President then, the late and much respected Peter Wilson.

Balson spared his best efforts for the author, dedicating many pages on his website to him entitled *Pierre Henri Nortje aka P.H. Nortje - Cape Town Coin Dealer and a fraud*.



Source picture top: South African Reserve Bank.

Source picture bottom: RandCoin



It is very clear that the so-called obscure token Balson is referring to is the Strachan & Co issues of the series he so desperately wishes to offload on the internet (especially after his eBay fraudulent bidding became public knowledge). What the surfer of the promotion obviously could not know, was that through subterfuge and false information, the Strachan & Co price was being artificially boosted at the expense of the humble Griquatown coins and of course the gullible investors in the Strachan & Co tokens.

This sordid saga resulted in a fortunate end: Balson's antics motivated the forces to rally, to stand up and defend South Africa's numismatic heritage resulting in renewed interest, public awareness and academic research - in the face of the alleged fraud and falsification. It is thus no surprise that in the past decade, we have learnt more about the Griqua coinage than was known in the preceding almost two centuries. For this, Scott Balson, unintentionally can rightfully claim the honours for elevating the Griqua coinage to its rightful place in the South African heritage.



*The author (left) receiving the Merit Medallion of the National Numismatic Society (NNC) from its President, the late Peter Wilson, who himself also studied the Griqua coinage. The event took place in Johannesburg on the 5th of March 2016.*



## Chapter 8

### Modern-day Griqua Coins for Collectors

#### The South African Mint issues

In 2015, the South African Reserve bank released the following statement: *A new R5 coin was launched as part of the circulation and numismatics range to commemorate 200 hundred years of the Griqua Town coin. The Griqua coin was originally created as currency for the people of Griqua Town in 1815, and the first local currency of a South African people. The new Griqua Town R5 is a regular legal tender coin, holding the same value as the existing R5 coins, currently in circulation throughout the country. The new R5 coin will therefore not hold any special or superior value to existing R5 coins.*



Griqua Town R5 commemorative circulation coin  
Reverse



Griqua Town R5 commemorative circulation coin  
Obverse

Source: SA Mint

For the coin collector, a numismatic coin range, available from the South African Mint, comprises of a proof quality R5 coin, two R2 sterling silver, crown-sized coins, and a R2 ¼ oz 24 ct gold coin. The proof-quality R5 coin bears on the reverse, a rendition of the two sides of the original five 'pence' 1815 Griqua coin, slightly overlapped. The obverse of the new coin features the national coat of arms, the year '2015', and "South Africa".

The two R2 sterling silver crown-size coins are uniquely designed, featuring part (half) of the obverse design of original Griqua Town coin, each capturing part of the words Griqua Town, numeral five and beading of the 1815 coin. When the two coins are overlapped, one complete image of the original Griqua Town coin is formed.

The third product in this range is a R2 ¼ ounce 24 carat gold coin which bears on the reverse, the partial image of the obverse 1815 coin which bears the image of a dove with an olive branch in its beak, the words "1815 bicentennial 2015" and "Coinage of Griqua Town" along the perimeter of the coin. The obverse of the gold coin has the South African coat of arms, the words "2015 and "South Africa".



Source: SA Mint



*Each coin combination is sold with a magnifying glass, symbolising and reinforcing the theme of going back into history, and looking deeper into the history of coinage in South Africa.*

*The Griqua numismatic coins are available in the following limited combinations:*

- *2000 R5 proof-quality coins packaged with a magnifying glass in a PVC box;*
- *1815 sets comprising of a proof R5 coin and two R2 sterling silver crowns, also packaged with a magnifying glass in a hand-crafted wooden box; and lastly,*
- *200 sets consisting of a R5 proof coin, two R2 sterling silver crown coins, and a special R2 ¼ oz pure-gold coin in a hand-crafted wooden box, with a magnifying glass.*

*Introduced in 1815, the original Griqua Town coin series consisted of a five and ten ‘pence’ made of silver as well as a half and quarter ‘pence’ made of copper. The common obverse of the four coins featured the emblem of the London Missionary Society, a flying dove with an olive branch in its beak. The reverse of each coin featured the words ‘Griqua Town’ and the denomination of the coin.*

*The 2015 Griqua Town numismatic range depicts these various elements from the original coin designs: a replica dove with olive brand in its beak, the words ‘Griqua Town’ and the numeral five portrayed as five single lines. The idea of taking a closer look at the history of our coinage and magnifying the intricate detail that numismatists seek out in coins, is symbolised by the magnifying glass that is included with each coin purchase. According to Tumi Tsehlo, the Managing Director of the South African Mint, “we are proud to bring to life the country’s coinage history with this range that essentially tells the story of other coins. The 2015 Griqua Town coins are “coins about coins””.*



On 27 November 2015 the coins were officially gazetted by the government and signed off by the Minister of Finance.

4 No. 39459 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, 27 NOVEMBER 2015

2015  
200 Year Anniversary of the Coinage of Griqua Town

GENERAL NOTICES • ALGEMENE KENNISGEWINGS

SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVE BANK  
NOTICE 1181 OF 2015  
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Memorandum No.

SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVE BANK ACT, 1989

THE DIMENSION OF, DESIGN FOR, AND COMPILATION OF,  
2015 COMMEMORATIVE GRIQUA TOWN SERIES

By virtue of the powers vested in me by section 19 (1) (a) of the South African Reserve Bank Act (Act No. 90 of 1989), I hereby declare -

- that the above R5 circulation coin, the R2 (1 oz) sterling silver coin and the R2 (¼ oz) gold coin as set out in Section (b) of the Second Schedule to the said Act, which will be manufactured and issued by virtue of the section 16 (1) of the said Act, will be legal tender as from 1 October 2015, and
- that the dimensional designs of the said coin will be the designs as shown and which is attached to this notice, and
- that the specifications of the said coins remain as follows:

DENOMINATION	DIAMETER	MASS
R5 (bi-metal alloy)	26.00mm	9.5g
R2 (1 oz) sterling silver	38.725 mm	33.626 g
R2 (¼ oz) 24 ct gold	22.00 mm	7.777 g







Reverse: R5 circulation coin      Obverse: R5 circulation coin

Reverse: R2 (1oz, Ag 925 Cu 75)      Reverse: R2 (1oz, Ag 925 Cu 75)

Reverse: R2 (1/4oz, Au 999.9)

*NHLANHLA IBENE, MP*  
MINISTER OF FINANCE

Source: South African Government Gazette 22 November 2015



The Mint arranged an official launch on 9 February 2016 at the Reserve Bank. Amongst the important delegates was the Governor of the Reserve Bank, Lesetja Kganyago. Each delegate was presented with one of the new R5 circulation coins in a blue pouch. Source: Francois Malan.

## Pattern designs


Before the final issues were struck, there were some proposed designs by the SA Mint, two each of the following: a R5 circulation coin, a R5 sterling silver collectors' coin and a R200 gold collector's coin. These six designs, as shown below, were not accepted.

**200 Year Anniversary of the Coinage of Griqua Town**


	R5 circulation coin	R5 collectors' coin	R200 gold collectors' coin
Metal Content	Bi-metal alloy	Sterling silver, 24ct gold plated	1oz, 24ct gold
Diameter	26 mm	33 g	31.107 g
Mass	9.5 g	38.725 mm	32.69 mm

**Option A**


R5 bi-metal circulation coin



R5 bi-colour collectors' coin




R200 gold collectors' coin




**Option B**


R5 bi-metal circulation coin



R5 bi-colour collectors' coin



R200 gold collectors' coin



Source: SA Mint



*Source: Francois Malan*

This is the only pattern that the author is aware of that was actually struck by the SA Mint. The bottom picture shows the pattern on the left and a normal R5 on the right. See for example the “200” that is larger than on the production coin and runs over both metals. Apparently, eight of these patterns were struck but all are still in the possession of the Mint.

### **Private issues**

In 2015, a private Johannesburg company, the Gold Reef City Mint in association with the National Numismatic Society, struck two sets of Griqua coins – one a commemorative set and the other a replica set, each consisting of four coins..

The sets (with accompanying pictures) are described as follow by Prof. Michael Laidlaw on his website [southafricanmedals.com](http://southafricanmedals.com)

## Bi-Centennial of the Griqua Town Coinage - Commemorative Set



**Form:** Circular. Proof-like.

**By:** Gold Reef City Mint / National Numismatic Society

**Date:** 2015

**Ref:** Laidlaw: 1041a

**Variations:**

Size	Metal	Mass
38.6 mm	Fine Silver (10 Piece)	31.3 gm
32.7 mm	Fine Silver (IIIIII Piece)	15.7 gm
38.7 mm	Copper (½ Piece)	29.7 gm
32.7 mm	Copper (¼ Piece)	17.7 gm

**Edge:** Upright reeded

**Obverse:** Within a toothed border, replica of the obverse of the Griqua Town coinage. Emblem of the London Missionary Society, dove with outstretched wings, front, head turned right with olive sprig in beak. Legend outside above: “BI-CENTENNIAL OF THE GRIQUA TOWN COINAGE” and below: “1815-2015”.



**Reverse:** Within a toothed border, replica of the reverse of the Griqua Town coinage. Denomination (10 between horizontal lines, IIIII between horizontal lines,  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$ ) between: "GRIQUA (in an arc above) TOWN (inverted in an arc below)". Legend outside above: "THE FIRST COINAGE FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN PEOPLE". At the foot: "GRC-NNS".

**Notes:** Comes in a heavy oblong wooden fitted case lined on the inside with white silk-like and red velvet-like material. Embossed on the outside of the lid with the image of both sides of the 10 piece and below: "1815-1816".

Made at the Gold Reef City Mint for the National Numismatic Society and issued at their annual dinner on 5 March 2016 together with the replica set (Laidlaw 1041b). Souvenirs of off-metal and off-size medallions were given to those attending the dinner.

There are die errors on the obverse of the larger-sized medals. CENTENNIAL is spelled CENTEN(N)IAL and the Letters A are the inverted V. Also: "GRC-NNS" is missing at the foot on the reverse of the IIIII piece.

### Bi-Centennial of the Griqua Town Coinage - Replica Set



**Form:** Circular.

**By:** Gold Reef City Mint / National Numismatic Society

**Date:** 2015

**Ref:** Laidlaw: 1041b

**Variations:**

Size	Metal	Mass
26.6 mm	Fine Silver (10 Piece)	6.4 gm
21.4 mm	Fine Silver (IIII Piece)	4.5 gm
25.8 mm	Aged Copper ( $\frac{1}{2}$ Piece)	6.7 gm
21.4 mm	Aged Copper ( $\frac{1}{4}$ Piece)	4.6 gm

**Edge:** Plain.

**Obverse:** Replica of the obverse of the Griqua Town coinage. Within a toothed border round the rim, emblem of the London Missionary Society, dove with outstretched wings, front, head turned right with olive sprig in beak. Legend at the bottom: “1815-2015”

**Reverse:** Replica of the reverse of the Griqua Town coinage. Within a toothed border round the rim, denomination (10 between horizontal lines, IIIII between horizontal lines,  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$ ) between: “GRIQUA (in an arc above) TOWN (inverted in an arc below)”.

**Notes:** Comes protected inside a transparent soft-plastic holder with pockets for each coin. The holder is labelled: “GRIQUA TOWN UNCIRCULATED SET” with an image of the reverse of the 10 Piece.

Made at the Gold Reef City Mint for the National Numismatic Society and issued at their annual dinner on 5 March 2016 together with the commemorative medal set (Laidlaw 1041a). As a souvenir for those attending the dinner, a fly-press was used to stamp the obverse of the  $\frac{1}{4}$  Piece with: “GRC NNS” above the dove.





*The replica Griqua coins minted in 2015. This illustrates the original packaging of the coins.*

*Source: Francois Malan*



## Conclusion

With the finding of three Griqua coins recently near the site of an old London Missionary Society station in the Northern Cape, the chapter on the circulation question finally ended. It is unequivocal that some of the coins were spent locally and then were lost, only to be found again many years later after the mission station was closed.

There is documented proof that the silver Griqua coinage was struck in the year 1816, and that the coins were shipped to South Africa in the following year. We are uncertain exactly when the consignment arrived at Griquatown, or was forwarded from Cape Town, but it was either towards the end of 1817 or the following year. At least some of the coins were placed into circulation, but the process ceased either in early 1820 or the year prior. There is sufficient evidence to indicate that the Griqua coinage's limited circulation took place in the years 1818 and 1819. It then continued to circulate up till at least the year 1824 when the fellow mission station at Seodin near Kuruman was established, but most probably up to 1833, when those remaining in the coffers of the Griquatown mission station, were returned to the Cape where they were sold to the benefit of the London Missionary Society.

Some vexing questions still remain.

Why are there no reports by the London Missionary Society's coinage committee that mentions anything about copper tokens? Why do they only seem to specify the issues in silver? We are unable to explain this. Possibly the copper issues were struck and paid for by someone else, maybe the Rev. Campbell in his private capacity. We know that when his *Travels in South Africa* was published in 1815, the LMS allowed him to

keep all the royalties from its sale for himself, so he may have funded their manufacture from this source, to honour his undertaking with the Griqua in 1813.

Why was a one penny denomination never struck leaving such a large gap between the ½ penny and the 5 pence, and regarding the latter, why was the “IIII” used to indicate its value, and not the correct Roman numeral “V”? Could it be that the Griqua would not have been able to recognize the Roman numeral “V” (and “X” for the 10 pence)?

It is of course possible that the copper issues were struck at a later stage than the silver issues and put into circulation after the silver issues were withdrawn. This however is highly unlikely, as we know that the striking of copper tokens was outlawed in England in 1817.

What seems more likely is that a limited number of coins, either in proof or non-proof condition, or both, were re-struck many years later during the late Victorian or Edwardian period, but their numbers must have been extremely low. Whoever struck them then, must have known that they would command high prices from collectors due to their scarcity. The first known sales of any Griqua coins were only recorded in the late 1800s, hence it must have been during the turn of that century that these were manufactured.

Taking the surviving certified number of NGC and PCGS coins, and five-fold the figure to compensate for coins that may still exist in collections, and not certified yet, we arrive at a survivable figure of only 120 to 155 coins per denomination. This underwrites what numismatists have known for almost a century and a half; the Griqua coinage are truly scarce and deserve their much-respected status and the high prices that collectors are prepared to part with. It was surely a blessing in disguise that the coinage of the London Missionary Society was a failure in so many ways and had seen only limited circulation for a short period before they were recalled. It was *because* they were a failure that they are so scarce and are

so precious to our South African numismatic history.

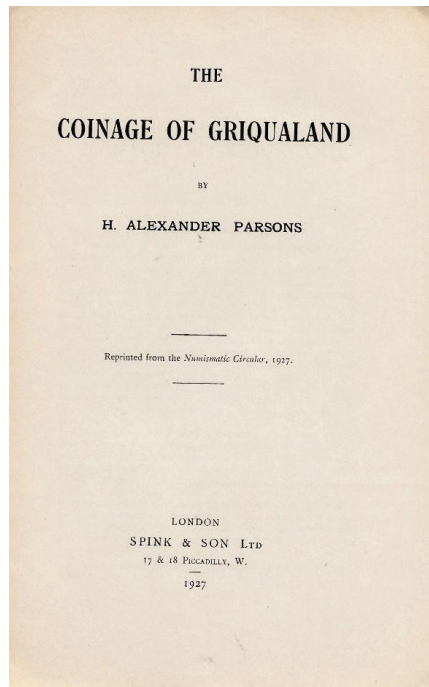
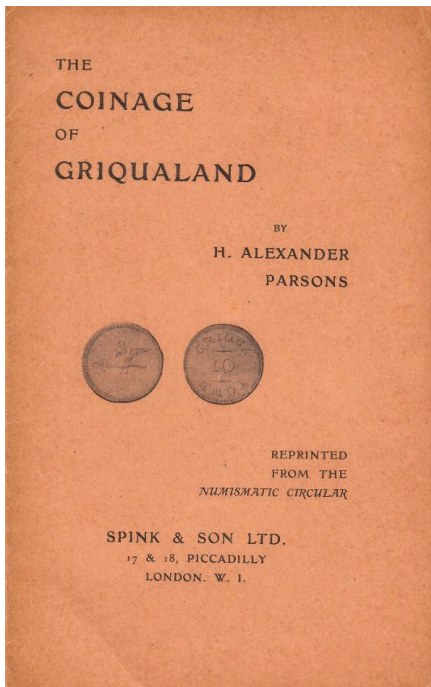
Who could have imagined the incredible journey that these modest pieces would undertake – conceived more than two hundred years ago in a faraway empire for the benefit of a humble people residing on the plains of Southern Africa, in a territory that no government laid claim to. From their initial conception in the dark boardrooms of the LMS in Georgian London, a highway robbery, the resulting death sentence at the Old Bailey, a three-month journey by sailing ship to the Cape of Storms on the southern tip of Africa, followed by a two-month journey by ox wagon through lion invested country in sweltering hot conditions, later vilified by an opportunist, these coins left their indelible mark. Never really accepted by those for whom they were intended and obstructed shortly thereafter from further circulation due to unforeseen international economic circumstances, these humble pieces surely stood the test of time and have prevailed as rare numismatic jewels.



## Appendix

### The Coinage of Griqualand by H. Alexander Parsons

**Note:** The appendix is copied verbatim from Parsons' publication by Spink & Son in 1927.



Griqualand, of which the more important part is called Griqualand West, in South Africa, is situated immediately north of the Orange River between the Kalahari desert on the west and the Orange River Colony on the east. To the north stretches Bechuanaland and the Transvaal. It is celebrated

mainly for its large diamond fields of which Kimberley is the centre and it takes its name from the native population, the most important of which were called the Griquas, a mixed people descended from Dutch Boers and their Hottentot slaves or servants, with an admixture of K. blood. The land was, indeed, often called the country of the Bastards. These people originally maintained a precarious existence by hunting and plunder. They showed but slight traces of civilisation, were unclothed and unhoused, wretched in appearance, disgusting in their habits, and with no moral or religious beliefs or conceptions <sup>1</sup>.

The transformation of these unfortunate peoples into a pastoral community enjoying all the real benefits of civilisation, with food in plenty, with houses to live in, with clothing to wear and even money to spend, is one of the many romantic episodes of missionary enterprise. For proof of the time of issue and the reasons for the introduction of their coins a brief review of the circumstances which led up to this transformation is necessary.

The two previous writers on the coins of Griqualand, Boyne and Atkins, had, indeed, but hazy notions concerning the matter. The former says "I cannot learn on what occasion these were struck" adding, "it seems likely that they were issued by the London Missionary Society" <sup>2</sup> whilst Atkins, commenting on Boyne's reference, states, "I have made enquiries of the Society's agents, but have learned nothing to justify this supposition".<sup>3</sup>

Like many of the great accomplishments of the world the mission to the Griquas was the result largely of an accident. It had its origin in the organisation, in 1799, by the London Missionary Society, of an evangel to the K., but a deputation of Bushmen, which arrived at Cape Town at the

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1 For an extended account see "Missionary labours and scenes in Southern Africa" by Robert Moffat, t846, p. 52, et sq.

2 The Silver Tokens of Great Britain and Ireland, the Dependencies and Colonies, 1866, p. 17.

3 The Coins and Tokens of the Possessions and Colonies of the British Empire, 1889, p. 245.



time, and which pleaded- for consideration on behalf of their countrymen, was fortuitously the cause of a deflection of part of the little company of workers from the proposed mission field in Kaffraria to the Bushmen of the Zak river. Three missionaries started for that field on the 22nd May, 1799, but it had not been long founded there before it included within its operations the Bastards, or Griquas, and the Corannas of the Orange River. Ultimately the work was chiefly devoted to those tribes, for in 1803 the Zak river mission was moved north to Klaar Water, afterwards known as Griquatown. This place, which appears on the coins of our title, was situated some distance from the north bank of the Orange river, and by 1804 many of the people of the country had consented to cease from their wandering habits and settle down permanently. At the same time they adopted the dress of Europeans and, after much trouble and care, were trained to cultivate the ground, and to erect houses, schools and mission halls.

By the year 1809 the members of the mission church numbered about 800 persons, whilst many acres of land had been brought under cultivation and the country made to produce cattle, sheep and goats in plenty. The conditions of life which rendered necessary, or at least desirable, a metallic medium of exchange had been reached.

The above very brief account of the mission to the Griquas was characteristic of missions in other parts of South Africa and constituted what might be called the pioneer period of missionary work there. Early in the nineteenth century, however, it was felt in England that the various missions in South Africa required coordination and, late in the year 1812 the Directors of the London Missionary Society, under whose auspices much of the work had been done, sent out the Rev. John Campbell of Kingsland, himself a Director of the Society, with a view to reorganisation of the existing stations and to select sites for new centres of work. It spoke well for the progress of the mission in Griqualand that Mr. Campbell, early

in 1813, first proceeded to Klaar Water, the number of whose Church members had by then reached a total of upwards of 2 600 persons, and, in conjunction with the resident missionary there, he concerted measures for extending the field of work.

This is, however, not the place to recount the details of the journeys made, of the establishment of fresh mission stations and of the reorganisation of the existing ones, however interesting their story may be. It need only be stated that this inception of what might be called organised mission work in South Africa was incidentally the direct cause of the issue of the coins of Griqualand ; for, in addition to important developments further afield, the original station at Klaar Water was reorganised, rules and regulations were drawn up for the more thorough maintenance of peace and order and for the material well-being of the community, including consideration of the introduction of a metallic medium of exchange.

Leading up to this latter point I cannot do better than quote, in full, from Mr. Campbell's own account of his work in South Africa given in his now very scarce book, published in 1815, called "Travels in South Africa undertaken at the request of the London Missionary Society ". This work was compiled in diary form and, under the date 7th August, 1813, we have the following remarkable evidence of the time of issue of what is probably the only missionary coinage in our long and varied numismatic history, together with the circumstances which gave rise to it.

"We had a meeting with all the male inhabitants of the settlement who were in the town (i.e. of Klaar Water) to consider various points, especially about regulations for the protection of the lives and property of the community". After explanations, "every person present considered that laws should be made... The whole people likewise resolved that henceforth they should be called Griquas instead of Bastard Hottentots and the place called Griqua-town instead of Klaar Water".

Mr. Campbell then drew up some general laws, mainly concerning

punishments for crimes. At the same meeting it was resolved that Judges should be appointed and a Court of Appeal constituted. It was further decided to mark out the limits of the country “in the course of a month”. The above references serve to show the high state of social well-being and advancement to which the inhabitants of Klaar Water had attained, a condition ripe for the introduction of a coinage. They also indicate the circumstances under which the name of Griquatown displaced that of Klaar Water with the consequent introduction of the former, instead of the latter, name on the coins to be hereinafter described. As to the published evidence for these the following remarkable resolution made at the same meeting of the inhabitants of Klaar Water bears directly on the subject, and clearly shows the origin and approximate time of issue of the coins under consideration.

“It was likewise resolved that as they had no circulating medium amongst them by which they could purchase any small article, such as knives, scissors, etc. supposing a shop to be established amongst them – which they were anxious there should be – they should apply to the Missionary Society to get silver pieces of different value coined for them in England, which the missionaries would, take for their allowance from the Society, having Griquatown marked on them. It is probable that if this were adopted in a short time they would circulate amongst all the nations about, and be a great convenience”.

By the early part of 1814 Mr. Campbell had completed his labours in South Africa and, on the 13th February in that year, he set sail for England from Cape Town. On his arrival home he took early steps towards provision of the coins required by the inhabitants of Griqua Town, as Klaar Water should now be called. He seems to have acted on his own initiative in the matter without consulting his fellow Directors of the London Missionary Society. Mr. David Chamberlin, the present Managing Editor under the Society, informs me that he is strongly under the impression that Mr.

Campbell negotiated the manufacture and supply of the coins privately, for no correspondence or resolutions on the subject have been discovered in the archives of the Society.

This would be in accord with the virile and independent character of the famous divine, as witnessed by his drawing up, on his own initiative, of laws for preservation of the peace and the punishment of crime in Griqualand.

Supplies of the coins were made by the well-known die-sinker, Thomas Halliday, and sent out to South Africa in 1815 followed by a further consignment in 1816. This is evident from old correspondence emanating from Mr. Halliday in a private collection, formed before 1820, which included figures 2 and 4 hereafter shown. These were given by the maker to the original owner and were not part of the consignments sent to Griqualand and brought back again to this country, the bulk of which, after a short period of circulation were, through fluctuating prices of metals at the time, and like other colonial emissions of the same period, melted down. A few circulated specimens have trickled over to this country, of which figures 1 and 3 are examples. The former was obtained in Kimberley, and is now in the collection of R. Donald Bain Esq. The latter is in the cabinet of Dr A. N. Brushfield. It is probable that the proof-like specimens in our cabinets were never intended for Griqualand and may not have been struck with the initial supplies. The absence of the date on the coins indicates that the dies were, probably on the grounds of economy, intended to be used indefinitely until worn out. They were, in fact, used for two years as there is only one instance recorded, or known, of a difference in die, namely, the fivepence comprising lot 408 in the famous Murdoch collection of colonial coins, dispersed in 1903. The slight difference lies mainly in the form of the olive branch held in the beak of the dove, and it occurs also on the farthing, the obverse die of which is the same as that of the five-pence.

It will be noticed that I have throughout adopted the wider term of coins, instead of the more restricted name of tokens hitherto used, and the reasons for this are that the record of Mr. Campbell's labours shows that they were provided for a governing body of people, however humble, living a self-contained existence, and that it was intended that they should form a national issue of money not only for Griqualand but also for the tribes round about. Indeed, the position of the Griquas was at the time of our survey, and for many years after, one of independence of the Government at Cape Town. Under their elected chief, Waterboer, who afterwards by treaty received a sum of money per annum from the Colonial Government for the support of schools in his country, they made their land an effective buffer State to the North West boundary of Cape Colony<sup>4</sup>.

At the time Boyne published his reference to these coins, in 1866, only two denominations, in silver, called by him the shilling size and the sixpenny size, were known. When Atkins referred to them in 1889 the halfpenny in bronze was added; but since that time the farthing has been discovered, and it seems not unlikely that the penny was intended to be struck.

Mr. Henry Garside informs me that he is under the impression that he saw, some years ago, gold proofs of the tenpence and fivepence. Mr. W. C. Wells has also seen a specimen of the fivepence in gold. I have, however, not been able to trace the whereabouts of these coins. In the sale of coins held in the rooms of Messrs Sotheby and Co., 23rd to 26th November, 1925, proof impressions of the half-penny and farthing in gilt metal appeared. They were stated in the catalogue to have come from the collection of the late Mr. Saxty of Bath.

The copper coins of Griqualand appear to be scarcer than the silver ones for the farthing was unknown to Atkins. This may be due to the native predilection for bright silver currency in preference to the duller copper coins. It is significant that the Griquas asked the Rev. John Campbell

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4 Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa, by David Livingstone, LL.D., D.C.L., Chapter V.

only to obtain silver pieces for them. I can find no evidence that any further currency was made for use in Griqua Town after 1816. The country went through many political troubles caused by marauding Corannas, Hottentots and other tribes, and finally a dearth of water was the cause of the original site being abandoned.

The following is a description of the coins:



Fig. 1, Tenpence, R., R.D. Bain Collection.

Obv. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth.  
 Rev. The place name, GRIQUA TOWN, divided by the figure 10, for value in pence : an ornament above and below the figure.  
 Edge : Milled with oblique lines.



Fig. 2, Fivepence, R., H.A. Parsons Collection.

Obv. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth.  
 Rev. The place name, GRIQUA TOWN, divided by the numerals V for value in pence : an ornament above and below the numerals. Edge : Milled with oblique lines.



Fig. 3, Halfpenny, E., A.N. Brushfield Collection.

Obv. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth.  
 Rev. The place name, GRIQUA TOWN, divided by the fraction  $\frac{1}{2}$  : no ornaments in the field.  
 Edge : Milled with nearly straight lines.  
 A specimen of the halfpenny with plain edge is in the author's collection.



Fig. 4, Farthing, E., H.A. Parsons Collection.

Obv. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth.  
 Rev. The place name, GRIQUA TOWN, divided by the fraction  $\frac{1}{4}$  : no ornaments in the field.  
 Edge : Milled with oblique lines.



The copper coins of Griqualand appear to be scarcer than the silver ones for the farthing was unknown to Atkins. This may be due to the native predilection for bright silver currency in preference to the duller copper coins. It is significant that the Griquas asked the Rev. John Campbell only to obtain silver pieces for them. I can find no evidence that any further currency was made for use in Griqua Town after 1816. The country went through many political troubles caused by marauding Corannas, Hottentots and other tribes, and finally a dearth of water was the cause of the original site being abandoned.

The following pieces purporting to be of Griqualand should be mentioned. They have not, so far, been published or illustrated, at least in this country.



Fig. 5, Penny, Æ., H. A., Parsons Collection.

Obv. Head of Queen Victoria to left surrounded by an inscription as follows : VICTORIA D : G : BRITANNIAR : REG : F : D :  
 Rev. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth, between the place name, GRIQUA TOWN, divided by two stars forming stops.



Obv. Head of Queen Victoria to left surrounded by an inscription as follows : VICTORIA D : G : BRITANNIAR : REG : F : D :  
 Rev. A dove flying, with an olive branch in its mouth. Above, the place name, GRIQUA TOWN. Below, the date, 1890. The inscription is divided by six stars, three to left and three to right.

It will be observed that the date of issue of these pieces is 1890, but, as Griqualand was established as a British Colony in 1871 to afford protection to the diamond seekers, and British currency was then used, as in other parts of South Africa, they can have no authorised connection with the country. It is understood that they were fabricated in Berlin. All the specimens I have seen are in uncirculated condition.

Although the coins of Griqualand are of no great age (and it is indeed curious that the circumstances of their issue have for so long eluded correct explanation), they form one of the most interesting emissions in the numismatic history of the British Empire and they are unique in the sense of being the only missionary coinage of Christianity. Their designs are pleasing and appropriate.

They have long been eagerly sought after by collectors and as they are of very uncommon occurrence they realize high prices when, now and again, specimens come into the market. This may have been one of the reasons, actuating the motive for their imitation in 1890, or at least for the use again of the main design of the dove of peace carrying the olive branch of hope.

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**PROTAT BROTHERS, PRINTERS, MACON (FRANCE) ----- MCMXXVII**



Who could have imagined the incredible journey that these modest token coins would undertake: – conceived more than two hundred years ago in a faraway empire for the benefit of a humble people residing on the plains of Southern Africa, in a territory that no government laid claim to. From their initial conception in the dark boardrooms of the London Missionary Society in Georgian London, a highway robbery, the resulting death sentence at the Old Bailey, a three-month journey by sailing ship to the Cape of Storms on the southern tip of Africa, followed by a two-month journey by ox wagon through lion invested country in sweltering hot conditions, later vilified by an opportunist; these coins left their indelible mark. Never really accepted by those for whom they were intended and obstructed shortly thereafter from further circulation due to unforeseen international economic circumstances, these humble pieces surely stood the test of time and have prevailed as rare numismatic jewels.

**About the Author:** Pierre H. Nortje studied Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Stellenbosch earning his Masters degree in 1993. In 2016 he won the South African National Numismatic Society’s Merit Medallion in recognition of “his outstanding research and publication” of his paper on *The Truth behind the Griqua Coinage*. After studying the Griqua coins for a further 7 years, this book is the result. The author has also written two other books on numismatics entitled *The Scarcity of the Coins of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (2020) and *The Rarest of the Rare: Unique and Very Rare Gold Coins of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (2022). Pierre and his wife Mariana have been married for 37 years and have three children and two grandchildren. They stay in the beautiful town of Durbanville near Cape Town, South Africa.

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