

THE SOUTH AFRICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY.

Vol. 5 No. 3.

June, 1957.

NEWSLETTER.EDITORIAL :

To judge from the quite considerable number of letters we have received since the February number, not a few of our members look forward to this little paper and appreciate it when it does appear in their post. That makes our effort worthwhile. And apparently the seed sown by our postscript last time fell on good soil, for we include in this number very welcome and valuable contributions by Dr. P.J. du Toit of Pretoria and Mr. E.A. Hohmann of Grootfontein, South West Africa. Thank you both - may others follow your good example!!

OBITUARY :

It is with very real regret that we record the death of Mr. R.F.M. Pearson, who died in Durban last November. Those of us who had had the privilege of meeting him will remember him as a charming gentleman with a very genuine affection for English coins. Though not an active collector in recent years, he retained his interest, and frequently put in a word of encouragement for our Newsletter. To his family we offer our sincere sympathy.

MEETINGS :

Regular monthly meetings have continued. In March we visited Mr. des Vages who showed us his interesting "Early Cape" collection, and told us about his numismatic exhibit at the Exhibition organised in connection with "Rondebosch down the Years". In April, Dr. Mitchell was the host, and put out his very full collection of Union Specimen Sets, Union Circulation Coins (complete and in quite remarkable condition) and a nice selection of "Early Capes". He gave a chat on these pieces and little time was left for those members who wished to see his War Medals and his Krugers. In May, we again visited Bergvliet - Mr. Day acting host this time. As always, we had a particularly good meeting, and thoroughly enjoyed the English coins he had put out. Many of us got lost in his excellent numismatic library and the meeting broke up at an exceptionally late hour.

We have again had a few welcome visitors to the Cape - Dr. Machanik who came to the March meeting and who tells us the Transvaal Society's "de Nummis No. 2" should be out soon; Mr. P.J. Roux from the Mint - to whom Cape Town most inhospitably gave a bad bout of "flu"; and Dr. Froehlich from Port Elizabeth.

NEW MEMBERS /....

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NEW MEMBERS :

We bid welcome to the following new members elected since the most recent List of Members was compiled in September :-

Mrs. S. Jacobs, P. O. Box 3127, Cape Town.
Master D. Gregory, 3 Park Court Flats, Park Lane, Port Elizabeth.
Mr. J. Maher, 4 Marais Street, de Aar.
Mr. L.C. Ransley, P. O. Box 121, Nelspruit, E. Transvaal.

SOUTH AFRICAN BANK NOTES.

We are informed by the Editor of "The Bankers Journal" that within a few months that Journal will publish another profusely illustrated article by Mr. R.F. Kennedy, Director of the Africana Museum, Johannesburg - this time on bank notes of the Transvaal Republic. We have ordered forty copies of this Journal and will offer them to members interested in due course.

BANK NOTES OF THE FEDERATION.

We are indebted to Mr. K. Verdon of Gwelo, Southern Rhodesia, for the information that new bank notes have been issued for the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland.

In brief, the notes are as follows :-

	<u>Obverse.</u>		<u>Reverse.</u>
£10 :	The Queen : A Lion	:	Three Elephants.
£5 :	The Queen : The Sable Antelope of Southern Rhodesia	:	The Victoria Falls.
£1 :	The Queen : The Nyasaland Leopard	:	Zimbabwe.
10/-:	The Queen : The fish-eagle of Northern Rhodesia	:	Part of Lake Nyasa.

EARLY COPIES OF THE NEWSLETTER.

As a result of several requests, the possibility of re-printing some of the early numbers of this Newsletter to enable members to complete their Volumes, is being investigated. Please let the Editor know :

- (i) if you have early numbers spare -- if so, which;
- (ii) if you want copies of any of the early numbers -- again, if so, which.

It is also hoped to produce an index soon. The following numbers have been produced since Vol. 1, No. 1 of 10th September, 1948 :-

Vol. 1, Nos. 1 to 10
Vol. 2, Nos. 1 to 7
Vol. 3, Nos. 1 to 5
Vol. 4, Nos. 1 to 12
Vol. 5, Nos. 1 and 2.

KRUGER SPECIMEN PROOFS

by E.A. Hohmann.

Members will have read with interest Dr. Mitchell's description of some of the rare pieces in Mr. Royle Baldwin's collection. Mr. Baldwin, of course, is an authority on these unusual pieces and on South African patterns, and as far back as 1934 Mr. J.T. Becklake made reference to some of the rarities in Mr. Baldwin's collection.

An attempt should be made to list all known patterns, unusual strikings of coins, etc. to include the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Cape of Good Hope and Griqua Town series. If published on de luxe paper and with photographic reproductions of the pieces, the publication would receive widespread support. Details should include weight, thickness of flan, metal content, etc. etc.

One item in Dr. Mitchell's list of Mr. Royle Baldwin's collection calls for comment, namely the proof of the 1892 Penny. In his "Catalogue" Dr. Kaplan states that there is only one copy known. This is obviously incorrect.

A set of 1892 proofs from the 5/- to 1d. was recently advertised in the United States. Some time ago a similar set was offered by Jacques Schulman in Holland. Mr. Royle Baldwin has one in his collection, whilst I have TWO of these proofs in my collection. Both are brilliant and have perfect mirror-like surfaces.

It must be borne in mind that the first 1892 issues of Kruger coins were struck at the Royal Prussian Mint in Berlin. It would have been contrary to the practice there at that time to have struck only one proof. This was brought to my notice rather forcibly in collecting German Colonial coins. Dr. Hugo Hammerich and Herr Kurt Jaeger have published authoritative works of reference on this series, and in the case of some coins have stated the number of proofs issued. It was not long before I obtained proofs of German Colonial coins not listed in these works.

Enquiry to Herr Jaeger received the reply that he had listed the number of proofs, where this was known, but that it could be safely assumed that the German Mints strike proofs of every coin which is struck. Thus, of the considerable total of coins struck for German East Africa there are only three coins of which proofs do not appear to exist.

We must remember that the striking of the first Kruger coinage in Berlin was quite an event. The far-away South African Republic was associated with many romantic notions in Europe, there were numerous important personalities to be honoured by presentation of a proof set of the first set of coins issued, whilst employees of the Mint no doubt sought to secure proof sets for themselves. In fact, the various proof specimens of the 1892 coinage in my collection, including my two pennies, come from collections of former employees of the Royal Prussian Mint in Berlin.

South African collectors should thus not despair that proofs of the 1892 coinage, including the Penny, may never come their way. Diligent search and patience may well be rewarded in time.

There /...

There is one other item in Dr. Kaplan's list of 1892 "specimens" that calls for comment, namely the 5/- single shaft. I doubt if proof specimens exist. It will be remembered that the first Kruger coins were struck in Berlin, including the double shaft 5/-, and for reasons I have cited above the striking of proof specimens was common practice in Berlin. This would not appear to have been the case at the Pretoria Mint, and I have found no mention of specimen proofs of the single shaft 5/- in any sales catalogues.

It is not impossible that specimens of this coin may be found with a particularly mirror-like surface, without their being proper proof specimens. As an instance I would mention that in addition to an undoubted "proof" of the 2/6 I have another specimen of exceptionally brilliant surface. The S. A. Mint have advised me that it is not a proof, but that it may have been one of the first of the regular issue to have been minted. The dies would then have been new, causing coins coming from the minting press to have a smoother surface than usual. It is my opinion that this will also have been the case with the single shaft 5/-, and that such "first strikes" with a particularly smooth surface may have been erroneously looked upon as "proofs".

Should any collectors have undoubted "proofs" of the single shaft 5/-, proving my theory incorrect, I would be grateful to see them reported in the "Newsletter".

DECIMALIZATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN COINAGE

(Memorandum presented to the Government Commission on South African Coinage)

by P. J. DU TOIT.

I presume that it is unnecessary to put forward arguments in favour of the decimalization of our coinage. I shall therefore confine myself to a brief discussion of the Unit which we ought to adopt and the manner in which it should be subdivided.

It is my firm conviction that the unit which would suit our conditions in South Africa best is the two shilling piece. I have no special views about a name for this unit and I propose therefore to refer to it provisionally as a Florin and to its subdivisions as Cents.

I assume that there would be great advantages, in changing our coinage, to adhere as far as possible to the size and relative value of existing coins and I hope to be able to show that, by adopting the florin-unit, this object can be achieved to a surprising degree.

First of all/...

First of all the obvious fact must be stressed that the present pound would represent 10 florins. I can see no reason why the term 'pound' should not be retained. I am sure that even the less educated sections of our population would soon learn that the price of an article may be expressed as 100 florins or 10 pounds. Even to the average young school child this should present no difficulty. The word pound would simply be a collective term for ten florins. I believe that in some other currencies collective terms are used to denote a larger number of units.*

The objection has been raised that the florin would be too small a unit. I do not agree with this viewpoint. I believe that the cost structure in a country stands in some relation to the size of the monetary unit. Today everything is topsy-turvy, but in the days before the First World War, when currencies were relatively very stable, there definitely seemed to be a correlation between cost and the monetary unit.***

The other objection that with a smaller unit very large figures have to be used, for instance in pricing articles, is to my mind quite unimportant. I am sure it does not disturb a Frenchman in Paris more to see a fur coat marked 300,000 francs than it does an Englishman in London to see the same coat priced at £300. And a South African would presumably react in approximately the same manner if he saw the coat marked 3000 florins. Even in our calculating machines it would make a difference of one digit only.

Coming now to the subdivisions of the unit I want to emphasize that in practice it must be divided into 100 parts and no more. In other words, one-hundredth part of the unit must be small enough to make a further subdivision in practice completely unnecessary. The reason for this stipulation is of course that in our decimal coinage system we want to go to two decimal places and no further.

In this respect the florin seems to have the ideal value. One-hundredth part of the florin, one cent, would be almost the exact equivalent of one farthing in our present coinage - which is small enough in all conscience.

The possible objection that this fraction is too small to be of any practical value, is to my mind of no great consequence. If in future it is found that there is no demand, or very little demand, for one cent pieces they need not be minted at all or only in small numbers.

We must also bear in mind that there may in future be big changes in values, also in the value of money, and the small coin may again "come into its own". We do not want to change our coinage every time there is an economic upheaval.

If now/...

* In the U.S.A. it was suggested (perhaps not very seriously) that a million dollars might be called a 'megabuck'.

*** It must be remembered that in British currency the real unit was the shilling.

If now we look at our present coins and see how they would fit into a decimal system, with the florin as the unit, my suggestions would be:

- (a) that the half-a-crown disappear altogether. Obviously this coin would not fit into the system here advocated.*
- (b) that the two shillings piece, the florin, becomes the unit. The existing coin to remain unchanged in size and value; only the inscription to be altered.
- (c) that the shilling be retained as a fifty cent piece.
- (d) that the sixpence be retained as a twenty-five cent piece.
- (e) that the "tickey", that is to say a coin of the same size and appearance as the threepenny piece, be retained as a ten cent piece!^{***} I suppose there will be an outcry against this suggestion because it means a "devaluation" of the "tickey" by twenty percent. But why should that disturb us? If the intrinsic value of the coin is an important consideration I suppose it would be possible to substitute a portion of the silver by some cheaper metal. But in any case it seems to me far more important to retain this useful and popular coin and to continue to use the slot machines (e.g. telephones) into which it fits than to worry unduly about the actual profit that accrues from the minting of these coins. After all our coins are largely tokens and people will very soon get used to the fact that five "tickeys" (ten cent pieces) - and not four - make one fifty cent piece (shilling).
- (f) that the penny be retained as a five cent piece. This would of course mean a slight increase in value of the "penny" since ten "pennies" would make one shilling (fifty cent piece) and not twelve. But again I consider it far more important to retain the present coin in the same size and weight than to worry too much about the intrinsic value. The thousands of "penny-in-the-slot" machines alone would justify such action. If necessary an adjustment could be made in the "value" of the coin.
- (g) that the half-penny be retained as a two cent piece. It will be noticed that the values correspond almost exactly. Twenty-five "ha'pennies" (instead of 24) would make one "shilling" (50 cent piece).
- (h) that the farthing be retained as a one cent piece. The same remarks apply as to the half-penny. See also the remarks earlier in this memorandum.

Our new /...

* The present five shillings piece or crown would fit quite well into the decimal system and would become a two-and-a-half florin piece, but this coin certainly has not become very popular in S.A. If, in future the need should be felt for a larger silver coin than the florin a double-florin (equivalent to 4 shillings) could be introduced.

^{***} Perhaps even the name "tickey" could be retained.

Our new coinage would thus consist of :

New Coins	Equivalent in Size in Present Series.
10 florins (gold)	one pound
5 florins (gold)	ten shillings
(possibly 2 florins (silver)	double florin in Queen Victoria Jubilee series)
1 florin (silver)	two shillings
50 cents (silver)	one shilling
25 cents (silver)	sixpence
10 cents (silver)	"tickey"
5 cents (bronze)	penny
2 cents (bronze)	half-penny
1 cent (bronze)	farthing

16th December, 1956.

1957 SOUTH AFRICAN COINAGE.

Proof and circulation sets dated 1957 have been received from the South African Mint. As has become usual, the Mint has issued the following sets :-

11 coin "long" proof set : £1, £½, 5/- to ¼d.

9 coin "short" proof set: 5/- to ¼d.

2 coin gold proof set : £1 and £½.

Apart from the change in date, the coins appear identical to those of the four preceding years. Once again the gold coins in the "long" sets are "copper gold" in colour, while those in the pairs are "yellow-gold". They are all 22 carat gold, but in order apparently to make for easy discrimination, the former are a copper-gold alloy, the latter silver-gold.

It has /...

It has been observed that some of the coins in the "circulation" sets issued for 1957 have a new type of milling. It is finer and not so deep. In the crown for instance, the latest issues are "milled" 50 to the inch, as compared with the former 40 to the inch. (The "selected" crowns of 1957 already issued have the old milling, the "circulation" coins, the new.) Similar new milling is to be found in the 2/6, 2/-, and 1/- pieces issued with the circulation sets, and it seems the 6d. will also be changed in due course.

Enquiry to the Director of the Mint reveals that the reason for this change in milling is a technical one which has been made for reasons of economy. Up to now coin blanks have been put through the "upsetting" machine - a spinning wheel which rolls the blank against a hardened steel block to give it a raised rim. Experiments were made at the Mint with a view to eliminating this stage in production, but it was found that the normal pressure used in the coining presses was not sufficient to cause the metal to flow properly into the collar unless this preliminary process had been carried out. It was found, however, that if the indentations in the collar (the milling) were made finer and less deep, then this difficulty did not arise. Now the collars have been adjusted, and one machine and the half-dozen personnel required to operate it have been rendered redundant.

FESTIVAL MEDALLIONS : JOHANNESBURG FESTIVAL 1956.

Three medals have reached us which were struck in connection with the Johannesburg Festival last year, held to mark the City's Seventieth Anniversary.

(1) The Pioneer Medal : Struck for presentation to "pioneers" who apparently qualified for it if they were in Johannesburg by 1889. It is oxidised bronze, 38.2 m.m.; number struck - 520. Obverse : Arms of Johannesburg. Pioneer - Pionier above; below, 1886-1889, Johannesburg. As decoration the special Festival monogram JF in three places. Reverse: The "JF" monogram and dates 1886-1956.

(2) & (3) Sports Medals - European and Native respectively.

These two medals are identical except that the former is of oxidised bronze and has no ear, while the latter is of bright bronze and has an ear and suspender pin. Obverse: The Johannesburg coat-of-arms - above and on either side, the Festival monogram "JF". Above: "70 GOLDEN YEARS - 70 GOUE JARE". Below: JOHANNESBURG. Reverse: JF, left: 1886; right: 1956. Above: "Ontspanning en Sport". Below: "SPORTS AND RECREATION". Diameter: 32.1 m.m. Number struck : European - 850. Native - 600.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Wanted to Sell : Z.A.R. £100 Notes : 25/- post free.
Lt.Col. J.L. Knobel, Box 776, Cape Town.

THE SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL 1835-53 and 1877-79

by Dr. F.K. Mitchell.

In a recent number of Seaby's "Coin and Medal Bulletin", Mr. Purves, President of the Orders, Decorations and Medals Research Society, makes a statement which I fear may help to perpetuate an error which is already to be found in several books on War Medals. Describing the difference between the two medals, he states: "if it has a date bar, it must be the later medal" (i.e. S.A.G.S. 1877-79). Now that is not strictly correct.

The medal for the "Wars against the Kaffirs" was originally authorised by General Order No. 634 of 22nd November, 1854 (see W.O.100 Vol.17, Public Records Office, London). That Order covered the award of the Medal to "every surviving Officer, Non-commissioned Officer and soldier, of the regular forces who actually served in the field against the enemy in South Africa" in the various Kaffir Wars between 1834 and 1853.

Army Order 103 of August 1880 (a copy is to be found in the War Office Library, Whitehall) authorises the award of a Medal for service in the various operations of the Basuto and Zulu Wars between 1877 and 1879. Paragraph V of that Order states :-

"The Medal will be that granted by Her Majesty to commemorate the successful termination of previous Wars in South Africa; and those officers, non-commissioned officers and men who are already in possession of this medal will, if they have been engaged in the operations referred to in paragraph 11, receive the clasp with the year or years inscribed thereon, in accordance with paragraph 111."

Nothing could be clearer than that; it was clearly intended to be the same medal and while I know that medals issued as a result of the 1880 Order have a Kaffir cow-hide shield and crossed assegais in the exergue in place of the date "1853" of those issued earlier, this minor change was apparently not considered of any consequence. Neither Order, incidentally, describes the design of the Medal or the colour of the ribbon about which so much has been written.

Of course at least 24 years elapsed between the actions which earned the 1853 and the 1877-79 Medals respectively, and as far as I know, no Imperial units of the earlier Wars were in South Africa for the later, so that it is quite likely that no Imperial regulars received the 1877 to '79 clasps for fixing to 1853 Medals previously earned, though I cannot speak with authority on this point. Reference to the Medal rolls for the 1877-79 Medal at the Public Records Office (W.O.100 Vol. 48) will, however, show that at least two members of the Cape Mounted Rifles (Commandant Griffith and Trumpeter Bristner) were awarded clasps only, both having previously been awarded the 1853 Medal. Would that I could locate one of those two Medals!!

Editor :

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