

AUSTRALIAN NUMISMATIST



2003

Publication of the
NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA
(Incorporating the Numismatic Society of Victoria, founded 1914,
and the Association of Australian Numismatists (Melb.), 1939)

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Founded 1946

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P.O. Box 615D, G.P.O. Melbourne

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THE ESSENDON RIVER LEAGUE MEDAL

by David Likar, NAV 1072

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Saltwater River, renamed the Maribyrnong River in 1913, had for many years been generally an undesirable and polluted stretch of water. With the metropolitan sewage scheme coming on line in 1906, the Essendon Town Major, Cr Downing saw an opportunity to clean up the river and attract recreational pursuits to the area. Hence, after some lobbying he called a public meeting for the 15 May 1906 in the Town Hall, Moonee Ponds to discuss the formation of a river league. At that meeting the Essendon River League was born and fittingly Mayor Downing was elected as the League's first President. The specific aims of the Essendon River League were to improve and beautify the Saltwater River. The League's area of operation was restricted to the stretch of river between the Flemington Racecourse and what today is Canning Reserve in Avondale Heights.

EARLY ACTIVITIES OF THE ERL

In the early years, the League was primarily involved in general river clearing, tree planting and the establishment of Maribyrnong Reserve. The Reserve, situated on the north east bank at Maribyrnong Bridge became the main focal point and base for the League's operations. To help fund its activities the League ran Monster Fetes and other social activities and events. To further supplement its fund raising, the Essendon River League began running river carnivals, along the lines of the famous Henley on the Yarra regattas. The first ERL "Regatta" was held on 29 February 1912 on the banks of the Saltwater River at Maribyrnong Reserve. The Regatta was an outstanding success with a reported crowd of over 20 000 in attendance. On the day the spectators were treated to live bands and to a variety of events such as rowing and swimming races, decorated boat competitions and fancy dress. The 1913 regatta met with similar success as that of 1912.

Buoyed with the success of the previous two years, the ERL council named the 1914 regatta the "Henley on the Maribyrnong". The council extended the number of competitive events from nine to thirteen, and introduced what was hoped to be a permanent prize for future regattas - a gold medal for the successful competitors.

THE 1914 MEDAL

The design and commissioning of the ERL medal was placed in the charge of Cr John Goldsworthy of Goldsworthy & Davey, Artists & Designers of 366a Bourke Street, Melbourne. At a council meeting held on the 29 February 1914 the President reported that Cr Goldsworthy had drawn up the designs for the special Henley on the Maribrynong medals of which there were to be two types. One type was for first place, and another for second place. Both medals were to be made in gold. It is not known if both gold medals went ahead. However, the 1st prize medal did, an example of which recently surfaced in a numismatic auction where the medal was described as being an "Essendon Rowing League medal".



Figure 1 - Essendon River League Medal awarded to J W Rees

Cr John Goldsworthy's design was both simple and elegant. The medal takes the form of a handcrafted 35 x 28 mm gold fob. Unhallmarked, and weighting 8.5 g, the medallist employed alternating finesses of gold for the different facets of the medal to good effect. On the obverse, we find a 15 ct gold laurel wreath surrounding a 9 ct ring engraved "HENLEY ON MARIBRYNONG". In turn the 9 ct ring surrounds a central hub engraved with the letters "ERL". The engraved "ERL", standing for Essendon River League is enamelled in the colours of the Essendon Rowing Club, alternating Red, Black and Red. On the medal's reverse is found engraved in six lines the words "1914 / SENIOR CADETS / SWIMMING CHAMP / 100 YARDS / Won by / J. W. REES". (J. W. Rees stands for James Watson Rees.)

THE ESSENDON RIVER LEAGUE MEDAL

JAMES REES

The 15 year old James Rees was certainly no average swimmer. His two older brothers were swimming champions and he himself had just finished competing in the finals of the City of Melbourne Junior Championships. The Senior Cadet 100 yards Swimming Championship was a new event for the regatta and was only open to trainees based north of the Yarra. Rees was a senior cadet from Area 64, which presumably was north of the Yarra although the Post Office Directory of the day shows his family living at Fishermen's Bend. To win his ERL medal Rees had to swim two races. The first race was a heat which he won easily by 3 yards; and the second, a final, which he won with a winning time of 62.67 seconds.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

As for the success of the 1914 Henley on the Maribyrnong, well it wasn't - at least not financially. The committee of the Essendon River League considered the 1914 Henley a financial failure netting a meager profit of some £65. The committee identified two causes for the poor return. First, the lower than expected attendance which was put down to the very hot weather on the day. The temperature reached 30°C before noon, topped 36°C with a northerly at 3:00 pm. Secondly, the majority of the spectating public failed to pay the sixpence admission fee! At the tout of the tram drivers many of the public choose to cross the Maribrynong Bridge over to the Braybrook side. From there spectators were able watch the river events free of charge from the comfort of the Angler's Hotel or surrounding private lands. The League did hold an official presence on the Braybrook side as well as on the Reserve, however; the area was relatively small and easily avoided. Gate proceeds amounted to £95 which accounts for only 3800 paying spectators. There were many more than that number present on the day. In contrast, and to the dismay of the League's committee to learn, a local ice-cream vendor made £40 and the Angler's Hotel took over £100 on the day. The League felt hard done by and resolved for all future regattas to have full control of the Braybrook side of the river.

1915

Under the new president of the Essendon River League, Cr Goldsworthy (now Mayor of Essendon), the 1915 Henley on the Maribrynong was cancelled. As the 1914 Henley had proved to been a financial failure, the

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league deemed it not worth the effort of running. After much debate within council a motion was carried to rescind the Henley. Prominent local citizens where outraged at the ERL decision and formed a breakaway group to run an alternative river regatta. With the patronage of the Victorian Amateur Swimming Association the breakaway group ran a regatta called the "Maribrynong Water Carnival" on 25 February 1915. The ERL opposed the regatta and refused permission for use of the Maribyrnoug Reserve. This forced the organisers of the "Water Carnival" to stage the event on the opposite bank next to the Angler's Hotel. Despite the obstacles placed by the ERL and the reduced size of the regatta, the event was a modest success netting a profit of £80 to £90.

Under pressure to raise funds to support the war effort, and possibly out of shame, the Essendon River League did stage a regatta in 1915 described as the "Aquatic Carnival" on the 4 December 1915. The proceeds, which amounted to £550, went to the Sick and Wounded Soldiers Fund and the Red Cross Fund.



Anglers Hotel Saltwater River

Figure 2 – Anglers Hotel, Saltwater River, ca 1907

THE ESSENDON RIVER LEAGUE MEDAL

DECLINE OF THE ERL

The Essendon River League continued to stage successful river carnivals right through the 1920s, 30s and 40s with the peak of popularity being in the 1920s. By the late 1940s the League was in decline and so was the Henley. After a history of over 50 years and with most of the original founders long gone the Essendon River League seemed to peter out and ceased sometime in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Other than for the 1914 Henley on the Maribrynong there appears to be no record of medals being awarded by the ERL. So, the 1914 Essendon River League Medals may have been a one off effort.



88 FROM THE ANNALS OF LONDON

by Len Henderson, NAV 409¹

1088

London suffered a revolt stimulated by Bishop Odo, half-brother of William the Conqueror; it was he who was responsible for the Bayeux Tapestry. Although a bishop, he had fought at Hastings and had been created Earl of Kent and had been given the castle of Dover. He thought he should have succeeded William on his death, but William Rufus (the second son of the Conqueror) was made king. Bishop Odo was accused of treason and was one of the few excluded from William's deathbed pardon. Bishop Odo then had the idea of raising an army to invade Rome, but died before this could be carried out.

1188

Newgate Prison was founded.

1288

A lion was presented to the king, Edward I, as well as a lynx, and the king sent them to the Tower with a few other animals. He allowed ten pence a day for their keep and three pence each to a man and his three sons who were their keepers. There is a Lion Tower at the Tower of London, but this received its name much later. There was also an elephant and a white bear.

1388

The Tyburn Gallows were set up. Nicholas Brembre, four times Mayor of London, was hanged because he had planned to kill the Duke of Gloucester and set himself up as the head of the City which he would name "Little Troy".

¹ Len presented this short paper at NAV meeting No 888 on 21 June 2003 where the theme was "The Number Eight"

1488

Nothing much happened.

1588

A Thanksgiving ceremony for the defeat of the Spanish Armada was held.

1688

Flight of King James II who had tried to issue a “Declaration of Indulgence”, but the vast number of people who had fled from Catholic bigotry in France and Holland encouraged the Bishops to oppose the Bill. Seven bishops were imprisoned in the Tower but they were acquitted. (Their trial was a bit reminiscent of the execution of Archbishop Sancroft and seven other bishops in the reign of “Bloody” Queen Mary.) The 1688 incident led to an invitation to William of Orange, who was married to Princess Mary, to come over to England.

Another thing to happen that year was the establishment of Edward Lloyd’s Coffee House, later the famous insurance firm.

1788

The last public burning in London occurred. Jeremiah Grace and Margaret Sullivan were convicted of Low Treason. They had coloured copper coins to pass them off as silver. They were hanged before they were burnt.

The Linnean Society was formed by James Edward Smith, a medical student. He had bought the extensive library of the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus who had died in 1775.

1888

The match girls who worked in the Bryant & May factory went on strike – the first strike by women. They were encouraged by Annie Besant of the Theosophical Society. 1200 women went on strike because of the proposal to change the making of matches which would have interfered with their “piece-work” pay. The women’s trade union was recognised.



WESTERN DESERT DIARY

by Frank Robinson, NAV 713¹

My father, Frank Leslie Robinson (known as “Les”), was born in 1909 and was the fourth son and fifth child in a family of eight. His early life was spent on an orchid in Ringwood East. After leaving school, he completed a five year apprenticeship as a motor engineer; however with the commencement of the Great Depression, he left the trade shortly after completing his apprenticeship in 1930. During the late 1920s, he served in the Militia and won several prizes for marksmanship.

Les was called up for war service in July 1940 and joined the RAAF on 16 July 1940 at Mildura. As a member of Squad 214, B Squadron, No 1 Recruit Depot at Laverton, he was a member of the Guard of Honour at the State Funeral of a Federal Minister who had been killed in a plane crash on 13 August 1940.

Due to his marksmanship, the “powers that be” wanted him to be gunner; however Dad told us that he said to them that “you’ve got plenty of men wanting to be gunners, but how many have you got that know engines?” As a result he was taken on as a motor mechanic / engineer. He also told us that his references from AMI² also helped him get this position. Initial training was at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds and at Laverton where he was posted to the No 1 Air Ambulance Unit (1AAU) on its formation in February 1941.

THE DIARY

Members of the Armed Forces were not supposed to keep diaries in case they fell into enemy hands and gave information to the enemy. However various servicemen did, one of these being my father. Les used two notebooks, one after the other. After the war, they were kept for some years in a cupboard in a shed; while there, they got wet during a major flood. As a result the pages are somewhat water stained and the staples of volume 1

¹ Frank presented this paper at the NAV meeting on 11 April 2003 and with it won the Max Stern Trophy for 2003.

² Australian Motor Industries, Hawthorn, Victoria

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

are rusting and the cotton threads of volume 2 are giving way and some pages have come loose.



Figure 1 – Les Robinson, RAAF 18009, pre-embarkation photo

The diary commences with his departure from Laverton on 31 March 1941 and finishes on 26 May 1944 while on board ship on his return to Australia. There are entries for most days with occasional gaps. I will give a number of extracts from his diary – these are printed in italics.

As well as the diary, Dad also kept various documents relating to his service; I was unaware of many of these until after his death in 1999. Some other documents and paraphernalia that he had, has since gone.

DEPARTURE FROM AUSTRALIA

Les' diary commenced on 31 March 1941, the day he departed from Melbourne to travel to Sydney by train.

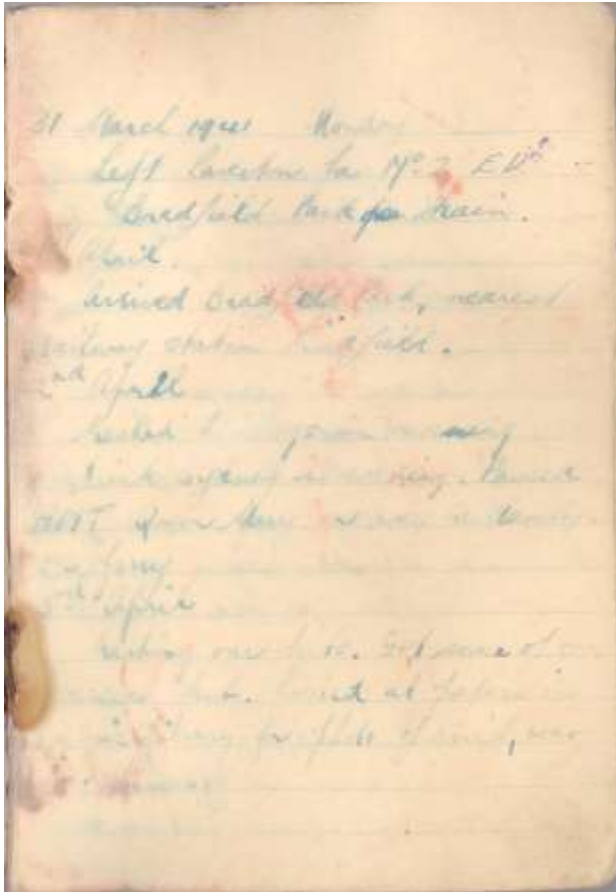


Figure 2 – The first page with the first entries of the diary

**31 March 1941 Monday Left Laverton for No 2 ED
Bradfield Park per train.**

There, he was one of 7000 troops who boarded the steamer “PP77”, otherwise known as “Queen Elizabeth”. They departed from Sydney on 11 April 1941.

*11 April 1941 Queen Elizabeth left while we were
having breakfast. By the time we were up on deck we were almost*

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

*out of the harbour. Followed by a large number of small boats. The other boats, Mauretania, Nieuw Amsterdam, and Ile de France followed us out of the harbour. Also three war boats. The Queen Mary joined up during the morning. The "Australia" is the only war boat left with us.*³

After stops at Fremantle (WA) and Trincomalee (NE Ceylon), they arrived at Port Tenfiq (near Suez, at the southern end of the Canal) on 3 May. (Originally, they had been going to change into smaller boats at Trincomalee, but these boats were evacuating troops from Greece.)

MILITARY OUTLINE

An outline of the military events in North Africa at this time will be helpful. The area which is usually referred to as the "Western Desert", is the coastal strip of North Africa between Tripoli (Libya) [in the west] and Alexandria (Egypt) [in the east] – a distance of approximately 2250 km.

At the outbreak of World War II in September 1939, French Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia were French colonies, while Libya was occupied by Italian forces. Egypt (a former British Protectorate) had granted Great Britain the right to station troops there to guard the Suez Canal, and also the right to maintain a naval base at Alexandria (on the western edge of the Nile delta).

With the fall of France in June 1940, the French North African territories recognized the rule of the Vichy regime and agreed to co-operate with the Axis Powers.

For the Axis, the objective was to capture the Suez Canal and gain access to the oil fields of the Middle East. For the Allies, the initial objective was to prevent this from happening and then to remove the Axis forces from North Africa.

In September 1940, Italy attacked Egypt from Libya; a British counterattack (launched in early December) reached Benghazi (in Libya) in early February 1941. The German *Afrika Korps* launched their first offensive in March and pushed into Egypt (placing Tobruk under siege).

³ Diary has "Canberra" crossed out and replaced by "Australia". Elsewhere "Australia" is crossed out and replaced by "Canberra".

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Germany invaded Yugoslavia and Greece in early April, and Crete in mid May 1941.

After a failed counterattack in May, the Allies launched a more successful counter offensive in mid November and advanced west of Benghazi by the end of 1941. In late January 1942, the Germans counterattacked and, by early July, they reached a line west of El Alamein in Egypt.

A new British offensive commenced in late October 1942 and began pushing west. In early November, British and French forces landed in the French Morocco and Algeria. In May 1943, the remaining German forces in North Africa surrendered to the Allies. The Allies invaded Sicily in July, and Italy in September, 1943.

My father's movements need to be seen against this background. He was initially stationed at Heliopolis (an airport outside Cairo) before going to Fuka for about a month. With the push into Libya, 1AAU moved to LG 10 (Landing Ground 10) (near Gawler), El Adem (south of Tobruk in Libya), and Mersa Matruh (in western Egypt). With the German counterattack, it was back to LG 10 and then Heliopolis.

With the final Allied offensive, he was on the move again traveling to Tunisia. After the German surrender, he was based near Tunis. During this time, he also made several trips to and from Cairo.

Dad finally left Tunis in February 1944 to return to Cairo, then in April he left Egypt to return to Australia.

RETURNING TO THE DIARY

After stopping briefly in Ceylon, they steamed on to Egypt. One week prior to disembarking, on

*29 April 1941 Talk on foreign monies and customs, also
one on first aid by M.O.⁴*

After arriving in Egypt, they spent some time in transit camps. Some early leave was used to visit the last remaining of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

14 June 1941 Hitch hiked to Cairo on leave.

⁴ MO = Medical Officer

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

15 June 1941 Went out to see pyramids and Sphinx. Rode from train terminus by camel. Wandered round the streets in afternoon.

16 June 1941 Walking round streets again. Left by 6 p.m. train to return to camp. Got back about 1 a.m. On way back heard Len T. was prisoner of war. Left behind at Crete.

This was Len Toogood, a first cousin of Les; Len was also at one time member No 483 of the NAV. It appears that Len was reported missing and believed to have been taken POW, but he had actually managed to get off Crete.

Eventually, they went to Heliopolis and got down to their work.

16 July 1941 12 months from date of call up. Started 60 hr. inspection on A31-7⁵.



Figure 3 – Painting of DeHavilland 86 A31-7

There are only a few references in the diary to money, here is one.

3 August 1941 No work today (Sunday). Went to zoo in afternoon. Charge 5 PT⁶ to take camera in there. Went to

⁵ This was one of their aircraft, a De Havilland 86 – see Figure 3

⁶ ie 5 piastres

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pictures at night in Heliopolis. Saw "The Invisible Woman". Alert went at 2140 hrs. Pictures stopped till 2300 hrs when all clear went.

Entertainment for the Troops was necessary to keep morale high. On

23 August 1941 Cricket match again. Saw Hammond make a century⁷.

Les met up with his brothers Bert and Keith (who were both in the Army) several times.

13 September 1941 Had dinner at an Arab village with Bert after touring orange grove etc. Saw Keith in afternoon. He came over in evening. All three of us together. Had tea in Sergeants mess.

Then came a promotion.

2 October 1941 Promotions to LAC⁸ from yesterday out today.

While at Fuka, they were under aerial attack most nights. In order to minimise the effects of these attacks, they would disperse; dispersal meant that all the planes would be flown out of the airfield to various suitable locations a few miles away early in the evening and return again in the morning, thus limiting aircraft damage during a bombing raid.

29 October 1941 Started pulling off No 3 cylinder of SI⁹ of A31-3 to fit new gasket against crankcase and fitting new push rod cover gaskets. Dispersal again tonight. Bombs dropped behind us on way out, so just scattered. Altogether 6 incendiaries, 32 eggs, 9 parachute flares and 2 ground flares dropped.

Les gives an idea of the routine work that he did with these entries.

17 November 1941 Started on A31-3 P.O¹⁰. Removed No 4 head, valve head broken. Head, piston and cylinder damaged. Removed both carburettors to put in new ones.

18 November 1941 Raining this morning. Quite a stream of water in waddy. Decided to use old carburettors on engine.

⁷ England Test Cricket Captain, W R (Wally) Hammond

⁸ LAC = Leading Aircraftman

⁹ SI = starboard inner (engine)

¹⁰ PO = port outer (engine)

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

Tested float levels. Was appointed fitter in charge of A31-3. Found out later the push started this morning¹¹.

19 November 1941 Replaced front carburettors on engine and assembled new cylinder head.

20 November 1941 Sorting out spare parts in store. Air raid at Mersa Matruh at night. Letter from home.

He then went up on a test flight.

2 December 1941 Very cold today. North winds, dust in morning, drizzling rain in afternoon. Went up in A31-3 on test flight in afternoon (15 min). Oil pressure on P.I¹² engine alright in air dropped to 20 lbs at idling on ground. Bought petrol stove today (92 PT.)

Some bad news came shortly afterwards.

8 December 1941 A31-3 off at 0700 hrs. First away of all three. Cleaning spark plugs during day. [Original entry is: "Reported A31-8 shot at, crash landed and caught on fire." Changed to read as follows.] A31-8 shot at, came down in flames. All crew safe. A31-7 back with five bullets through rear, 14 holes in all.

The book *They Flew Through Sand*¹³ has this to say about this incident:

One day near Maddalena we were awaiting the arrival of a Lockheed from Cairo, when we saw a Red Cross aircraft shot down in flames. Two minutes later nine ME.110's screeched over us, crackling with machine-gun fire.

Les has noted in the margin:

DH86 A31.8 RAAF. Nursing orderly injured 8.12.42.

Until then the Red Cross had been respected.¹⁴

A traditional treat on Christmas Day.

25 December 1941 Xmas day. Officers and Sergeants waited on us in Mess at dinner. Windy and dusty again.

Two days later they flew west.

¹¹ Auchinleck's counter offensive

¹² PI = port inner (engine)

¹³ Houghton, G W, *They Flew Through Sand*, 4th edn, April 1943, p233

¹⁴ This was less than one day after the attack on Pearl Harbour.

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27 December 1941 Left LG 10 at 0720 hrs for Bu Amud after getting up about 0430. Landed at 0950 hrs. Out on scrounge in afternoon. Looking at Tobruk's fireworks in evening. Looked like one machine exploded in midair. Were flying through rain storm part of time.

ON LEAVE, AND OTHER EVENTS

Even servicemen enjoy a holiday, and some tourist facilities don't see many civilians in war time.

8 March 1942 Started 14 days leave. Booked tour to Luxor at Jolleys's tourist office. Stayed night at Imperial House.

9 March 1942 Left Cairo at 7:50 pm for Luxor.

10 March 1942 Arrived Luxor at 7 am. Booked in at Savoy Hotel. In morning visited Temple of Karnak (including avenue of Sphinxes, the great court with its gigantic columns, the wonderful Hypostyle Hall, the obelisks of Queens Nefertiti and Thutmose, Temples of Amon and Mot, the Sacred Lake. In afternoon visited the Luxor Temple and the town and went for a sail on the Nile to watch the sunset.

11 March 1942 Crossed the Nile by sailing boat to the west bank of Thebes. Proceeded by Motor car to the Temple of Deir El Medina, Tombs of the Kings (went in tombs of Tut-ankh-amon, Rameses II and Seti I), Valley of the Queens (went in tomb of prince who died aged 17), Ramesseum, Colossi of Memnon, Medinet Habu and Deir-El-Bahari. Had lunch at Anglo-American rest house. Motor cars as well as ruins were antiques.

12 March 1942 Left Luxor at 7 am. For Aswan arriving 10.30 a.m. Visited granite quarries, Aswan dam and by sailing boat to Philae, Elephantine Island, Kitcheners Gardens on Paradise Island, where we had lunch. Back by boat and car to station and caught train to Luxor at 3.40 pm arriving at 7.15 pm.

My father told me that when he was in Luxor, he had photographed a shoeshine boy. Dad gave a copy of this photo to Keith and asked him to give it to the same boy.

27 March 1942 Went with Keith to Zoo in afternoon and saw him off by train to Luxor.

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

Form 255.
(In code of 8815)

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

LEAVE FORM

No. 16 / AIR AMBULANCE UNIT
Rank: P.L. Name: ROBINSON, P.L.
Official No. 15009 (Rank) L.A.C. (Name) ROBINSON, P.L.
Has permission to be absent from his quarters, from 07.30
Arrives on 18th March 1942
at 07.30 leaves on 22nd March 1942
for the purpose of proceeding on "Leave"
(Date) 8.3.42

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Figure 4 – Leave Form from 8 to 22 March 1942

One day at Heliopolis, a Beaufighter was taking off when it hit one of their De Havillands.

*19 April 1942 A31-3 burnt out when Beaufighter
crashed into it taking off.*

The story of the crash is told in part of a poem¹⁵ written by one of the Unit's members:

*Now, sad to relate, when all looked so right,
Fate decided to wipe off a kite.
Old "Three" was standing on Helio. 'drome,
Just waiting to take off for our new home.
The day was a scorcher, two hundred in the sun,
The Beaufighter approached, near the end of it's run;
The port motor cut, the rudder broke free -
The Beau. swung round, and ran straight into "Three".*

¹⁵ Towser, No.1 Air Ambulance Unit, Royal Australian Air Force, Middle East, - 21/4/42

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*The force of the knock broke the old lady's back;
Her wings left the body with a terrible crack.
"Loila" was "Three's" original name¹⁶ -
She gave up the ghost in a dense wall of flame.
Though sorry we are to lose such a kite,
We all spend many a restless night.
Adolph's in Berlin, and Musso's in Rome.
Now, why the hell can't we all get home?*

In the desert, water supply is very important.

29 May 1942

Out for water in morning (at well).



Figure 5 – Les drawing water at LG 10, 1942

In August Les had some more leave. It appears that he just kept brief notes on a single sheet of paper during this trip and then wrote up the details in his diary when he returned.

19 August 1942 *Left LG 10 on 7 days leave (plus travelling). Caught train at 1600 hrs for Palestine.*

25 August 1942 *Went on trip from Services Club to Jerusalem. Went to Bethlehem before lunch. back on our way to Tel-Aviv.*

Then he had to get back to his Unit in western Egypt and the adventure began.

¹⁶ pre-war when this aircraft was flown by Holyman Airways and, from 1936, by Australian National Airlines (ANA) after its formation from Holyman and two other airlines

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

26 August 1942 *Heard not much chance of getting on train back to Egypt so went to Lydia to see about catching plane. Quite a number waiting, so did not stop, as had to be back at RTO¹⁷ office at Tel-aviv at 1500 hrs. Could not get on train, so went back to hotel for night. Went to pictures. Saw "Northwest Passage".*



Figure 6 – Theatre ticket for 26 August 1942 (English date stamp on back), cost 40 mils; text is partly in English and partly in Hebrew

27 August 1942 *Left hotel at 0700 hrs to hitch-hike back. Just went to WD¹⁸ vehicle park but none going for a while. Took taxi to main road then lifts in other vehicles to border of Egypt and Palestine where we got on the goods train and went as far as El Quantara, arriving there shortly after midnight, about 13½ hrs on train.*

28 August 1942 *Caught passenger train at El Quantara for Cairo. Went to Toc H for shower and N.Z. club for a feed. Started hitch-hiking back to LG 10. Arrived about 1400 hrs (18 hrs late). They had had air raids on 25th & 26th and one of the DA's went off about 1700 hrs.*

Montgomery launched his offensive on 27 October, however there is no mention in the diary. As the Allies pushed west, 1AAU followed.

4 December 1942 *Left Martibu about 0900 hrs by road. Drove till about 1230 hrs just on to the main road. By pass very rough. Sitting on back of truck in afternoon. Held up for a while on Barce pass. Very pretty view looking through pass to flat country. Camped for night between hills and town of Barce.*

¹⁷ RTO = Rail Transport Officer

¹⁸ WD = War Department (or possibly Western Desert)

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5 December 1942 On road again about 0830 hrs. Light fog hanging round. Drove down Toera pass. Arrived Benina aerodrome about 1230 hrs. Unpacking truck in afternoon.

8 December 1942 Went to Burka airport in morning. Had a look around the drome and hangers. Looked around Benghasi railway station and township. Visited the cathedral.

No mention in the diary but, from the unused rail tickets that Les kept, it appears that a bit of souveniring occurred at the railway station!



Figure 7 – Unused Cyrenacia Rail tickets (Italian spelling):

1st class “Bengasi” to “Soluk” (22.40 lire each)

3rd class “Nauaghia” to “Bengasi” (2.90 lire)

3rd class “Predappio/C.” to “Sferi” (unpriced)

More travel so that Les could do more routine work.

2 January 1943 Notified leaving tomorrow by plane to Cairo for 240 hourly inspection on AK829. (Departure was from Marble Arch in Libya.)

6 January 1943 Left Helio for Brazili, picked up patients and took them to Suez, landing on Egyptian Air Force drome. Later left for Helio. Went to HQ in evening. Flying time 3 hr 15 min.

Christmas mail didn't always arrive on time as this entry (from near Tripoli) shows.

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

6 February 1943 *Letter from Mab (his sister). (29 Nov) also card from Gwen and Janet (his nieces).*

Another promotion and benefits occurred in April 1943.

20 April 1943 *Told had been made acting Sgt. Moved to Sgts tent and Off. / Sgts Mess.*

The Allies captured Tunis on 7 May and the remaining Axis forces in North Africa surrendered on 13 May.

17 May 1943 *Went for trip to Tunis by truck and had a look round the streets.*

With the hard work in North Africa over, they had some more leave.

29 May 1943 *Left Sorman in Bombay¹⁹ en route to Cairo for leave, arriving there at 1900 hrs. Landed at Marble Arch and El Adem. Most of boys arrived on second stage. Flying time 10 hrs.*

1 June 1943 *Left train at Rehoveth and took bus to Tel Aviv. Booked return passage on train.*

After the problems he had returning from his previous trip, he wasn't taking any chances!

5 June 1943 *Strolling round promenade in morning. Caught train for Cairo in afternoon.*

Les was sent from Tunis back to Heliopolis with a "shopping list" from his CO to obtain various items of equipment. Les' CO knew that he wouldn't be able to get a lot of the items requested. However he was very pleasantly surprised when he saw how much Les had been able to obtain.

16 July 1943 *Helio again in morning, and 111 MU²⁰ by truck in afternoon for engines for Bombay. Out to 216 Group again to report. Told machines had been ordered away by A.O.C. and saw two of them leave. Made arrangements to have spares loaded on third aircraft. Arrived back in Cairo to find phone messages had arrived, and later truck to move some of us to LG 224. Gave driver note covering him, and we all stayed the night in Cairo.*

¹⁹ Bombays were a type of small aircraft that 1AAU used as air ambulances

²⁰ MU = Maintenance Unit

AUSTRALIAN NUMISMATIST 2003

Les told his family of this incident. The driver was acting on orders from a Lieutenant; these directly contradicted the earlier orders that Les was working on. The earlier orders were from a more senior officer and made better sense. Whichever way Les decided to act, he would be disobeying one set of orders. So he decided to stick with his original orders and give the driver a written explanation. At the time, Les was an Acting Sergeant.



Figure 8 – Les working at the lathe in his “travelling workshop”

20 July 1943 *Left Castel Benito for Foch airport in morning. Flying time 3 hrs 20 min. Found unit had acquired travelling workshop (including lathe, power drill, saw-bench, electric grinder, etc. Had to fix up generator and engines in place.*

In October Les had some more leave, this time heading west.

23 October 1943 *Left Tunis by truck for a few days in Algiers, travelling all night. Left about 14.45.*

26 October 1943 *Wandering round streets again. Prices very high in shops and most things scarce. Pictures again in evening.*

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

RETURN HOME

Some of 1AAU had gone to Italy, but Les had remained in North Africa.

10 January 1944 *C.O. and party back here from Italy for a few days.*

After being away for nearly three years, Les may have been wondering when they would return to Australia.

3 February 1944 *Heard unit being returned to Australia.*

After packing everything up, the Unit then had to travel back to Egypt from Tunis.

13 February 1944 *No chance of air transport to Bari so sent down by road to Cairo. Went for travelling rations to DID²¹. Left Tunis at 1530 hrs and stopped near Sousse to boil the billy at 1800 hrs. Weather bad so decided to push on driving by night.*

It appears that they travelled around the clock, stopping only for meals or fixing mechanical problems. The roads were not the greatest (very little, if any, bitumen).

15 February 1944 *Took over driving again, sharing with Topley for morning shift. (One stage did 68½ kilo in one hour including two diversions.)*

After arriving in Alexandria on the morning of 18 February, they had a two day break before travelling on to Cairo. They had covered a distance of well over 3000 km (cf 3400 km from Melbourne to Perth).

20 February 1944 *Left Alex for Cairo about 1030 hrs. Arrived about 1715 hrs, then on to 22 P.T.C.²²*

After seven weeks in Cairo, it was time to leave Africa.

12 April 1944 *Called about 0430 hrs. On trucks about 0600 hrs for Port Said arriving about 1230 hrs. On board "Strathaird" about 1500 hrs. H.5.*

After disembarking at Bombay, they had shore leave for nearly three weeks.

25 April 1944 *Arrived Bombay 1800 hrs.*

26 April 1944 *Off the Strathaird 0830 hrs and taken by truck to Work transit camp arriving 0900 hrs. Drew mosquito*

²¹ DID = Detail Issues Depot

²² 22 PTC = 22 Personnel Transport Control (?) unit

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nets in morning. Talks by the CO, MO and Security Officer in afternoon. Pictures in evening "Counter Espionage".

15 May 1944 *Lined up with kit at 0830 hrs on board about 1000 hrs. In dormitory with other Sgts & WO's. Eating in main dining salon. Embarked on Highland Princess.*

Although not mentioned in the diary, they were treated to a ship's concert.



*Figure 9 – This "Berthing Card" was effectively Les' ticket for the "Strathaird"
– refer to diary entry for 12 April 1944*

The last entry in the diary was made on 26 May.

26 May 1944 *On duty 0800 hrs to 1200 hrs. Alternate sun and clouds.*

Dad told us that he landed in Melbourne the same week as D-Day (6 June 1944).

SOME DOCUMENTATION

Les received various documents, a number of which he kept. The following are a few of these.

Les' Driving Authority for the period 11 March to 30 April 1943 is shown in Figure 10. I assume that he must have had a series of these as the diary records him driving at many different times and he told us that he had a military driving licence throughout the war.



Figure 12 – Les' Interim Certificate of Discharge

NUMISMATIC ITEMS.

Like most servicemen who served overseas, Les brought back a small bag of coins. Some of these are shown in figures 13 – 17, 19 and 20.



Figure 13 – Coins of Egypt (bronze 1/2, 1, & 5; cupro-nickel 1, 2, & 2 1/2 milliemmes)

First up are some coins of Egypt where ten milliemes is equal to one piastre. He kept some bronze coins of 1/2, 1, & 5 milliemes, cupro-nickel 1, 2, 2 1/2, 5 & 10 milliemes, and a bronze 1/4 qirsh from the World War I period. Egypt had been under British influence since the mid 19th century, and was a Protectorate from 1914 until 1922. From 1922 until after World War II, it was an independent monarchy.

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Figure 14 – Coins of Palestine (bronze 1 & 2; cupro-nickel 5, 10 & 20 mils)

In 1922, the League of Nations had granted Great Britain a mandate over Palestine. In Palestine, 1000 mils were equal to one pound. Les' coins from here are bronze coins of 1 & 2 mils, and cupro-nickel 5, 10 & 20 mils.



Figure 15 – Coins of Tunisia (nickel-bronze 25 centimes & aluminium-bronze 2 francs)

Tunisia had been a French Protectorate since 1881. A decimal currency system was introduced in 1891 with 100 centimes equal to one franc. Les kept a nickel-bronze 25 centimes coin and an aluminium-bronze 2 franc coin from Tunisia.



Figure 16 – Coins of France used in Algeria (aluminium-bronze 50 centimes & 2 francs)

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Algeria had been annexed to France in 1848 and, as a result, French coinage was used in Algeria with 100 centimes equal to one franc. Les kept three French aluminium-bronze coins from Algeria – two 50 centimes coins and one 2 franc coin.



Figure 17 – Coins of Italy (nickel 20 centesimi & silver 5 lire)



Figure 18 – 5 lire Allied Military Currency note for Italy (shown at 60%)

A nickel 20 centesimi coin and a silver 5 lire coin came from an Italian POW; in Italy 100 centesimi was equal to one lira. The 5 lire Allied Military Currency note was probably brought back from Italy by one of the Unit members who then gave it to Les.



Figure 19 – Coins of Great Britain (bronze farthing and halfpenny, nickel-brass 3 pence, silver 6 pence)

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

British coins were used on the ships going home with 12 pence equal to one shilling and 20 shillings equal to one pound. Les kept bronze farthings, halfpennies, and a penny, a nickel-brass threepence, and silver sixpences.



Figure 20 – Coins of India (bronze 1 pice, nickel-brass $\frac{1}{2}$ anna, 1 anna, & 2 annas, and silver $\frac{1}{4}$ rupee)

In India, there were three pies to one pice, four pice to one anna, and 16 annas to one rupee. Les kept a bronze 1 pice, nickel-brass $\frac{1}{2}$ anna, two different 1 anna (one cupro-nickel and one nickel-brass), two different 2 annas (one cupro-nickel and one nickel-brass), and a silver quarter rupee.

The propaganda note shown in figure 19 has had some recent publicity in *Australian Coin and Banknote Magazine*²³. I had this translated many years ago, but I couldn't put my hands on the translation when I needed it for my talk; however I have since located it. The text is:

“Signs of Decay

“When (or if) you have a look at this banknote, you would remember the time when you used to get several times its weight in glittering gold.

“This was because this little note was guaranteed by the great British empire with all its might, wealth and glory, but now its might, wealth and glory has perished like this piece of paper.

“So what is the value of this piece of paper now? I am sure you would know.

“For every day of the war which was started by Britain, the power and glory of the British empire has gone down, and every battle

lost by Britain was the cause of this deterioration in the value of the British currency.

“The time will come when the beggar on the street corner will refuse to accept the British pound as a ???²⁴

“Its God’s will that the British empire to decay and this will happen.”

Quite an interesting propaganda text.



Figure 21 – Propaganda note issued by the Germans (shown at 60%)

SERVICE STARS AND MEDALS

Les’ service stars and medals are a story in themselves. He told us that after the war, he filled in a form and stated that he was a member of

²⁴ my translator had problems with this bit

WESTERN DESERT DIARY

No 1 AAU and that “the Unit had served in the following places”. He included Italy in this list and as a result he received the Italy Star in addition to the 1939-45 Star and Africa Star. However these stars were sent his father’s pre-war address in Tunstall (now Nunawading); the new owner forwarded them to Lilydale and my grandfather sent them to Dad at Nichols Point.

A form with these stars stated that he had also earned the Defence Medal and War Medal and that they would be forwarded to him at a later date. After joining the NAV, I found out from Reg Williams (then of Regal Coin Co) that Dad could still get these medals, and that he was also eligible for the Australia Service Medal.



Figure 22 – Les’ service stars and medals: 1939-45 Star, Africa Star and bar, Italy Star, Defence Medal, 1939-45 War Medal, Australia Service Medal

I eventually persuaded Dad to write to the address that Reg supplied and he was sent the three medals with his name and number on them; they also offered to name the stars for him if he returned them. Once he had them all named, Reg recommended were I could get them properly mounted. The next time I was at Nichols Point, I got them out on Sunday afternoon when he was dressed up, pinned them on him and photographed him! (Talk about the cat that got the cream!)

In later years, Les nearly always wore his “Returned From Active Service” badge.

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In March 1999, Les died suddenly in his 90th year.

Back in the mid 1970's, I gave a paper on *Numismatics and Genealogy* and I included a piece on Dad and his service stars and medals. When I was preparing it, Dad said to me "*Don't make me out as a hero, because I wasn't one*". He may not have been a hero, but he was one of many who served his country.



Figure 23 – Les Robinson wearing his Service Stars and Medals for the first time

SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL COINAGE

by Gillian Davis, NAV 913¹

Symbols are meant to tell us what we already know, or should know. They can be advertising, propaganda, or education for the people, reinforcing what we are supposed to know, believe, or want. Think of a red heart meaning love - I don't know who did it first, but everyone knows it now. Think of the badges on expensive cars, animals on the coat of arms, the cross and the crescent for major religions. Communication would be slower without symbols, and much harder for those without a major language.

That is why these simple messages appeared on early coins, and why I thought it worth examining them, as they show us what mattered to people then, and what their leaders believed. When a tribe's totem appeared on a coin, everyone understood.

Although most early currency showed the bust of a leader, and/or a deity, I do not see them as symbols of leadership because they were simply authentication of the currency, or deference to the local god. I will therefore examine plants, wild life, and artefacts.

GREEK AND ROMAN COINS

The earliest coins were Greek, exhibiting an amazing range of creatures: bulls, dogs and wolves, pigs and boars, goats and rams, horses, lions, sea creatures - especially dolphins - one hippopotamus, griffins, and more. Considering that the art work had to be reduced in size and fitted into a round space, it is excellent, and the animals are often shown in action - especially fighting - and there is no confusion about which animal is shown and what it is supposed to be doing.

Greek coins also showed plants such as corn, flowers, fruit (mainly grapes) and trees such as palms, olives and laurels. The plants included some very well drawn poppy seeds, and a bush named silphium which came from North Africa and produced a valuable resin. And all those pictures were there for a purpose. About a thousand coin issues, from all parts of the Grecian world including Roman colonies in the eastern Mediterranean, are

1 Gillian delivered this paper to the NAV/NSSA symposium on 12 July 2003

involved: a substantial part of circulating currency in a major trading area, and presumably everyone involved knew exactly what they were handling. The plants were chosen to show a colony's trading strength or specialty, to symbolise its worthiness, and to represent its culture. (One does wonder about poppies combined with wine? But they were a strong people, and they survived.)

According to the excellent reference book by Richard Plant, "Greek Coins and Their Identification", there are 81 issues showing lions. Symbols of strength and power, associating the king of the animal world with the king of a certain territory. But what about the ones showing a lion's scalp? One of these, very lifelike and quite awesome (on a silver triobol from Lesbos) shows Athena on the obverse. Is it saying "I am Woman" and all the rest of it? The scalp of a lion appears on six other issues, ranging from the clinical and gory detail of Rhegium and Samos to the kitten-like parody of the Crimea, where real Greek artists may not have travelled, but no doubt the message is the same: "Beware, we can beat even lions!" A similar message comes from the King of Macedon about 400 BC, with the forepart of a wolf devouring its prey, and a club above, with Hercules on the obverse. But we have to be careful. One coin from Phrygia Laodiceia, 244 AD, shows a boar seated back to back with a wolf, but all it represents is the two local rivers which were named the Kapros and the Lykos, meaning the boar and the wolf respectively. Probably very wild rivers. And there is one from the Aegean Islands with a dog within the sun's rays, but this is only a symbol of Sirius, the dog star.

The one and only hippo was on Claudius's issue from Egypt, just a few years before he invaded Britain. Was he showing the ignorant population what it was like on the Nile, or was he showing what he could overcome, establishing his credentials as a general? Only one guess allowed.

Early Christian churches commissioned religious frescoes, murals and stained-glass windows to show an illiterate population some of the Bible characters. The Greeks had already tried this on coins, such as the didrachm from Tarentum in Calabria with the founder of the city who was allegedly shipwrecked and carried ashore by a dolphin. It shows him naked, riding the dolphin, holding a cup and trident. The reverse has an armed horseman thrusting with a spear. I think this message, from about 250 BC, is something like: "I am invincible, the gods are on my side and I can fight too!" This message is reinforced by a later issue where the famous founder, Taras, is on the dolphin carrying a statue of Nike, the winged victory. In my

SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL COINAGE

humble opinion this is a lot more exciting than Romulus and Remus drinking wolf's milk.

After those wonderful Greek and eastern Mediterranean coins we can only go downhill artistically. The following creatures appeared on ancient or mediaeval coins from the remainder of the Mediterranean to the north of Britain: birds, boars, bulls, a centaur, dolphins, deer, doves, dragons, eagles, eels, griffins, horses (also Pegasus), hounds or hunting dogs, a lamb, lions, a porcupine (perhaps - but it could be a peculiar head-dress), a ram, ravens, reindeer, serpents, bird-headed serpent, wolf-headed serpent, bull-headed snakes, swans, and wolves, plus various fantastic animals, a triple-tailed horse, and the like. Julius Caesar showed elephants to illustrate victory over Hannibal.

ENGLAND AND SCANDINAVIA

Plants included stereotyped flowers, fleur-de-lis or lily, floral scrolls, roses or rosettes, trefoils and quatrefoils, sprigs of cumin (a herb related to aniseed and fennel), ears of wheat, and trees. As the Nordic and Celtic cultures developed their similar art styles of entwined vegetation with small animals, the plants started to become more important than the animals. In the early 10th century Edward the Elder² issued a penny with a flourishing blossom on the reverse, unidentified but very graceful, and this must have meant something special in his area of NW Wessex.

It is interesting that Harold I, between 1037 and 1040, used the fleur de lis, which later became known as the French national symbol, yet the first Harold had no connection with that tradition³. It was the Bishop of Carlisle during Stephen's time who featured the cumin⁴ and I wonder why. Could it have been used in anointing ceremonies in the church?

One of the Scandinavian traditions, similar to Anglo-Frankish art from the Rhine, was spread by Anglo-Saxon missionaries and traders. It featured small compact animals apparently hiding in the leafy borders of their work. The connection with coinage is that the favoured styles were successfully adapted to small circular designs like pennies.

² North 658

³ See North 803 and a few more

⁴ North 915

Artefacts could be objects such as an axe or a hammer. The hammer was the sign of Thor, the Scandinavian god, and is the only pagan symbol to be identified with certainty on northern European coinage. The axe was a sign of St. Olaf (sanctified because of his role in bringing Christianity to the Nordic world, the battle-axe being his main tool in doing this), so you could almost say that the axe and the hammer were two sides of the same coin! Viking coins from York carry a sword, a banner, a bird and Thor's hammer. The Vikings did not do things by halves.

Both Roman and Celtic series showed vehicles ranging from the simple Celtic battle chariot to the elaborately drawn Roman quadriga, the object in both cases being to flaunt power and skill. They were not just drawing horses, they were showing who controlled them, and how.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Turning to specific examples of animal symbolism, it is interesting to see how many themes are still recognisable today. Some are obviously religious, such as the dove of peace on coins of Edward the Martyr, and a similar idea behind the bird holding a twig (Edward the Elder, King of Wessex) and the Paschal lamb of Ethelred. These were acknowledgements of the established religion, just as the Romans put votive shrines or statues of their gods on the reverse of denarii.

During the period of Belgic migration, horses were the big favourite. Not only were they useful for both battle and trade, and much loved as a tribal or personal possession, there was the religious connection with gods such as Hengist and Horsa. Different styles competed: the "disjointed", the "spirited", etc, even the triple-tailed complete with horned god from Whaddon Chase (in England). Among the English tribes, the Coritani, Icenii, and Dobunni used these designs in the north and north-east coasts and the Midlands. The Coritani in North Kent favoured a boar; the Icenii had deer as well as horses; Norfolk had a wolf, and the Thames area a bull⁵, in bronze and tin.

The Atrebates and Regni ruled what is now Berkshire, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex - good rich country, thickly wooded ("The Weald" in Sussex originally meant "The Forest") but with plenty of room to cruise over the downs in a chariot. Commius, who ruled from 35-20 BC, displayed a triple-tailed horse on a stater, the first inscribed British coin. Local artists put a

⁵ shown on Seaby 83

SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL COINAGE

horseman with his javelin on a stater of Tincommius, other issues featuring more horses, an eagle and a charging bull. In those crowded years before the Romans pushed their way in, Eppillus issued bronze coins with a hound, a horse, and a floral design. His successor Verica stuck to horses and horsemen, with or without spears, a boar, and a bull butting an eagle - not a really naturalistic pose, that one. Then Epatiscus reversed that with the eagle standing on a snake (AD 25-13), plus a boar.

It goes on. Without listing every Celtic chieftain, it is obvious that native animals meant a great deal to their culture, although they were not above introducing a little mythology such as the griffin, or Pegasus. Cunobelinus, AD 10-40, produced an amazing variety of designs including allusions to Mediterranean myths such as Hercules and the Sphinx, although this was before Britain was occupied by Rome, which shows how their culture preceded the advance of the legions. One of Cunobelinus' coins showed someone carrying a dead animal, the reverse with an archer and his dog.

Another one has two dolphins. But all these artistic flourishes were in the south, while in the northern midlands they stuck to horses, and in the far north had no coins at all. However, the Picts from what is now Scotland drew wild life on boulders - fish, birds, bulls, boars and deer.

Some of the art was beautiful and finely detailed, such as the very clear illustration of a dragon in the "London connected" series in early Anglo-Saxon times⁶, and other coinage from that period was rich in wolves, "wolf-whorl" designs, serpents with wolf's heads, and the like.

So what does it all mean? What does it tell us about these people?

Firstly, looking at religious symbols, we find doves, lambs, and crosses for the early Christians, compared to various stylised goddesses, altars, winged victory, etc., for the rest. These showed that the ruler was a true believer and deserved his success, did the right thing and expected his subjects to do the same, anticipating that his chosen deity, in return for a constant supply of new portraits and sacrificial offerings, would continue to support him. Great. A really neat quid pro quo.

This reminds me of my children who, as Christmas approached, would say: "Mum, I'm still a good boy, aren't I?" apparently trusting me to pass the message on to Santa who might not have noticed. I always feel that an omnipotent god should be aware of these things for himself, but people still

⁶ see North 82

think this way, especially in war, when both sides quite illogically pray for victory. Either your god can't do anything, in which case it's all a waste, or he can, in which case he has already made up his mind. But if it encourages the civilian war effort, great. I do believe that Caesar could see all this too.

The Romans were prolific in their use of religious or national symbols. Some of the animals on early coins illustrated myths, like the wolf with Romulus for the founding of Rome, the legionary eagles, and the peacock which belonged to Juno. Several emperors showed Salus, representing health, with her serpent, but this pious act was not reflected in his actions. For instance, when Nero escaped from a plot to get rid of him, he erected a temple to Salus, but also sacrificed hundreds of Romans in revenge, and Commodus issued a bronze medallion of Salus to record his vows regarding the safety of the commonwealth which he totally misgoverned, to quote Stevenson. The public was supposed to know what it all meant.

Other animals, such as the wild boar being speared on a denarius of Durmius, or the wide selection on the smaller coins of Gallienus, typified successful hunting and, at the same time, various minor local deities. The dolphin was sacred to Apollo, Neptune and Venus - and so it goes on. The depiction of a wild untameable animal demonstrated the power of the current ruler, who had got this creature under control just as he would control the warlike tribes which might threaten the state. It would save a great deal of newsprint if modern rulers could express their policies so cheaply and quickly, but this dogged Roman adherence to the official line is why I prefer to escape to the wild, organised chaos of the Anglo-Celts.

The best known Roman symbolism through plants, still used today, is probably the laurel wreath to indicate success or honours. The reason for the choice of this shrub may be the long time its leaves stay fresh after picking, also because it was said that lightning never struck a laurel bush, with obvious reference to the current boss.

Rather than laurel wreaths, who but the northern tribes would provoke a catalogue description such as "Celticized" horse (Van Arsdell) - a free-moving animal prancing against a background of stars, flowers or wheels; happy in its natural surroundings. A people who were praised by the Romans for their horsemanship, tribes who respected talent wherever it was found, so that Prasutagus' widow Boudicca could lead the Iceni into battle, and Cartimandua spoke for her enormous tribe in negotiations with the invaders. These people would not be unduly influenced by foreigners when they finally decided that coinage of their own might be a good idea.

ANGLO-SAXON COINS

Moving to the early Anglo-Saxon period, the mixture of styles in the so-called London issues of 740-50 includes men with crosses and birds, the "wolf-head whorl" types combined with semi-classical designs, then a "monster" on the reverse of an 8th century sceatta, probably Frisian⁷, with a Wodan head on the obverse, which suggests a very wide awareness of Scandinavian mythology in spite of the official adoption of Christianity. East Anglian or northern types may be inscribed in runes.

The animals listed in Tree of Life mythology are eagles, falcons, squirrels, stags, and a dragon. Some of the dragons are very clearly depicted, especially in the London series. Stags, a symbol of Woden, appear in the Sutton Hoo hoard of buried treasures dated between 620 and 660. The raven was not only a symbol of Odin or Wodan, but a symbol of death, because they pecked the bodies left on the battlefield, and "feeding the ravens" was taken to mean dying in battle. The point was that the tribe which exhibited this bird was equally capable of leaving its opponents lying on the battlefield.



*Figure 1 – 1 Penny, ca. 1056-1059, Edward the Confessor (England)
left: Winchester Mint; right: Hordon mint (copy) (both shown at 100%)*

This style of artwork should be seen in the context of northern styles, rich in stylised animals including snakes and birds. The animals on coins are echoes of the ones from legends or carved on runestones, such as the dragon Fafnir. In the legend about Fafnir, the hero Sigurd kills the dragon and cooks its heart. In the process he gets some dragon blood on his finger and puts it in his mouth, as you do, and then he understands the song of the birds, who sit on a tree and warn him of any treachery. I wonder if this type of design reminds the population that their leader, too, is alert to any treachery?

Among the floral types, things are not always what they seem. It can be hard to work out whether a flower is someone's idea of space-filling or a tribal identification. Then there are the personal names which refer to a

⁷ Seaby 843

plant, the best known being the Plantagenet kings whose emblem was called the *Planta Genista* in Latin, hence the family name; but this bush is simply "broom" in English. Its tough stalks made fine broom handles, but the real point was that it grew everywhere and you simply could not kill it. Unfortunately broom is an ordinary looking bush with anonymous leaves which would not look impressive on a coin, but the Plantagenet kings from Henry II in 1154 to Richard III in 1485, were certainly very hard to get rid of - a very long-lived dynasty by mediaeval standards. The roses of York and Lancaster did not last nearly so long.

However, we can observe the trefoils and quatrefoils on English reverses over a long period, noting that according to mediaeval thinking their three leaves or four, respectively, added up to seven which was the symbol for Man, which is why we see these together in Gothic cathedrals. Some of the plants shown had healing powers, for instance the herb cumin provided a liniment for congestion and an oil to combat nervousness; sweet clover is an antibiotic, and ordinary clover made a detoxifying tea and a body cleanser; myrrh was an important medicine. All these plants could indicate either the protective role of the leader or the spice trade which he promoted.

Perhaps this preliminary exploration of the topic will lead someone to more detailed investigation, maybe covering other mediaeval European issues. I hope so. I love to find out what people think, and why, and how they express it, and these little pieces of ancient metal can tell us so much.

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BANKNOTES OF NORTH RUSSIA

by Len Henderson, NAV 409¹

With the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917, a number of conflicting groups arose. Some wanted the revolution to continue, some wanted the continuation of the monarchy but with a modified role, some wanted independence of the various areas in the Empire – Caucasus, the Ural Mountains region, the area around Archangel, Siberia, White Russians and Red Russians. As Karl Marx had written in one of his essays *“revolution is an on-going process; you cannot have a revolution and expect it to stop”*.

NORTH RUSSIA PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

One of the Provisional Governments that was set up was in North Russia. For finance they used the Tsarist style notes of 1909 but dated 1918 and with the inscription “СЪБЕРНАЯ РОССІЯ” (North Russia) across the top. The Russian crowned double eagle was maintained. This government opposed the Bolsheviks (“Majority Party”, even though they were never a majority).

These North Russia banknotes were printed in England and, instead of the usual inscription that “1 Rouble = 1/15th of an Imperial and contains 17.424 dolyas of pure gold”, reads “The State Emission Caisse exchanges Credit Notes into Pounds Sterling without limit at the rate of 40 Roubles = 1 Pound Sterling.”

As Peter Howlett² pointed out *“this must surely be one of the very few occasions where a bank note guarantees its own convertibility into a foreign currency”*. The note also says that it is guaranteed by deposits in the Bank of England.

¹ Len delivered this paper to the NAV meeting on 16 May 2003

² “Banknotes of Northern Russia” in Coins, April 1972, p17

POLITICAL AND MILITARY EVENTS

This area of North Russia comprised the area of the Kola Peninsula, south and east of the port of Murmansk, and the port of Archangel.

British Marines landed there in April 1918, partly because Murmansk had its own “Soviet” (or Council) and was under attack by the Germans under General Duke von der Goltz who had landed in Finland. The British feared that Murmansk might become a base for the German Navy and the local authorities had been ordered by Trotsky (then Peoples’ Commissar for War) to accept aid from the British.



*Figure 1 – Government Bank, Archangel Branch – Red Regime, 10 Rouble note, (1918)
(shown at 60%)*

A Royal Navy squadron under Rear-Admiral Kemp had already been operating in the Baltic and, in May, Major-General Poole was sent there in command. A British Expeditionary Force of 1500 troops was sent there in June.

When this British force arrived it coincided with an anti-Bolshevik uprising which drove off the local government (Soviet). A right wing government was formed led by an elderly university teacher, Nicholai Vassilievich Chaikovsky (who spelt his name in a different way to the composer and who is not known to have had any children). This particular Chaikovsky had been in America where he had tried to set up a “perfect society” in Kansas.

BANKNOTES OF NORTH RUSSIA

The military leaders of the White Army did not think much of the idealistic “do-gooders”, rounded them up and exiled them to an island. They were reinstated after an American force arrived in 1918.

General Poole was replaced by Brigadier-General Ironside, who much later headed the General Staff.

CHAIKOVSKY’S NOTES

In November 1918, Chaikovsky’s government announced that new banknotes would be issued at the still fixed rate of 40 roubles to the pound – the pre-revolutionary rate had been only 16.2.



Figure 2 – North Russia, Chaikovskii Government, 10 Roubles 1918 (shown at 60%)

AUSTRALIAN NUMISMATIST 2003

These new notes were printed in London and surcharged in Archangel with the signatures of I A Kurakin and Thomas Hardy. If anyone wanted to transfer money to Russia (which seems unlikely) they could do so through the Bank of England.

Four members of the State Emission Caisse were announced as part of the Provisional Government with Ernest Musgrave Harvey, Chief Cashier of the Bank of England appointed as the Financial Advisor. Collectors of English banknotes will recognise the name of Ernest Harvey which appeared on Bank of England notes from 1918 to 1925.

In January 1919, Barclays Bank was added to the number of British banks prepared to accept these North Russian notes.

The first series of notes were for 5, 10, 25, 100, and 500 roubles. They were similar in appearance and colour to the Tsarist bank notes. The 25 rouble note also exists with the crown blacked out.

The second issue, coming out in 1919, showed an uncrowned eagle and the values were for 1, 3, 5, 10, 25, 100, and 500 roubles.



Figure 3 – North Russia, Chaikovskii Government, 1 Roubles 1919 (shown at 60%)

A type set consists of 13 notes. All that I have are five different types, so I still have a long way to go to complete the set. If one includes the revalidated notes of 1 to 100 000 roubles, the number increases to 56 – some of these never come onto the collector market.

The revalidated notes were done so with the perforation “TBCO” – bank note collectors would know that perforations are usually used for

BANKNOTES OF NORTH RUSSIA

cancellations or specimens. The notes that were revalidated were ones that had been issued by the Tsarist and Provisional Governments.

Apart from the rouble notes, there are also fractions of a rouble for 10, 20, and 50 kopeks, all dated 1919. I have not been able to find out where they were printed – probably England or Germany – so there is still an opportunity for further research.



*Figure 4 – North Russia, Chaikovskii Government, 10 and 20 Kopeks (1919)
(shown at 60%)*

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EIGHT PIECES OF EDWARD VIII

by Frank Robinson, NAV 713¹

One of my collecting interests for many years has been Edward VIII, the uncrowned king of Great Britain. As the numismatic items relating to him are quite numerous, I have selected eight pieces so as to fit in with the theme of the number eight.

PRINCE EDWARD

Edward was born in 1894 and was the eldest son of HRH Prince George, Duke of York. His first numismatic appearance was on a series of medalets, depicting four generations of the British Royal family, for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897.



Figure 1 - Medalets of Prince Edward, from left: Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, 1897; Investiture as Prince of Wales, 1911; Visit to Australia, 1920 (obverses above, reverses below).

¹ Frank presented this short paper at NAV meeting No 888 on 21 June 2003 where the theme was "The Number Eight"

EIGHT PIECES OF EDWARD VIII

After his father's accession to the throne, Edward was invested as Prince of Wales in 1911 at Carnarvon Castle in Wales. The official medal is struck in silver.

Following World War I, Edward became an unofficial ambassador travelling much of the British Empire. A large series of medalets were issued for his visit to Australia in 1920. Some medalets, like the one shown above, were issued with ribbons. Here is a close-up of the medalet itself.

In 1935, as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the reign of George V, the Bank of Canada issued a series of bank notes depicting various members of the British Royal family; the five dollar note has a portrait of Edward.



Figure 2 - Bank of Canada 5 Dollar note, 1935 (shown at 60%)

KING EDWARD VIII

On the death of George V, Edward became king on 20 January 1936. Amongst the many changes that were necessary, was a change to the currency of the various countries of the British Empire. Because of the time necessary to prepare portrait dies, all 1936 British Empire portrait coinage continued with the portrait of George V. However some countries, that issued non-portrait coins with holes, issued 1936 dated coins in Edward's name, eg British West Africa.



Figure 3 - One penny coin of British West Africa, 1936; medalet for the proposed coronation, 1937; Hearn fantasy "crown", 1936 (1960s restrike)

Preparations had been progressing for his coronation which had been set for 12 May 1937. Because of the refusal of the Government and Church to accept an American divorcee as his Queen, Edward abdicated on 12 December 1936. However a large number of medalets had already been struck for his proposed coronation; they depicted Edward as either uncrowned or crowned, and either facing right or facing left. The medalet shown here is the piece that starting me collecting this large series.

As his abdication meant there would be no portrait coinage of Edward, one of his supporters (probably Geoffrey Hearn) arranged for the private striking of a small series of crown size unofficial "patterns" in gold, silver and bronze. The silver pieces were restruck about the 1960's.. A number of other series of these pieces have also been struck at various times.

DUKE OF WINDSOR

After Edward's abdication, his brother George VI gave him the title Duke of Windsor. Edward married and lived most of the rest of his life in exile in France. He died on 28 May 1972.

EIGHT PIECES OF EDWARD VIII



Figure 4 - Medal commemorating the life of Edward



MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

by Bill Xynos, NAV 1112¹

~~[THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE NUMISMATIC
ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA'S MEETING ON 17
OCTOBER 2003 AS THE CONTINUATION OF THE FIRST
PART, PRESENTED ON 18 OCTOBER 2002]~~

PROLOGUE

The subject of ~~the m~~Modern Greek ~~c~~Currency covers a lifespan of 175 years, full of historical events that shaped the political, social, economical and numismatic life of this small European country. Primarily, this paper is focused on the period from the establishment of the Bank of Greece in 1927 until October 1944 (towards the end of World War II) ~~by October 1944~~; however, it's prudent to have a good understanding of the political background leading to it.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The strong national unity since the successes of the Greek forces during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) was counteracted by the political schism between the Prime Minister Venizelos and King Constantine I. The King's advocacy on neutrality was diametrically opposite to Venizelos's support of the Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia), a powerful ally that could favour Greece's ambitions with her eastern borders. Even with Venizelos's victory at the elections, this bitterness caused him to resign twice in 1915; and by October 1916, he formed a rival government based in Thessalonica. Being the brother-in-law of the German Emperor William-Wilhelm II, King Constantine's pro-German tendencies alarmed the Western Allies (British and French), who eventually forced him to abdicate his throne to-in favour of his second son, Alexander, on 12 June 1917. ~~Then, the~~ Allies then convinced Venizelos to form a government.

¹ Bill presented this paper at the NAV meeting on 17 October 2003; this was a continuation of the first part, which was presented on 18 October 2002.

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

Under his administration, efforts were made to improve the economy. In 1918, the tax system was revised and the collection of taxes lifted the revenue dramatically. Further, the economy improved in the following year during which the ratio of currency circulation to reserves was improved to above 87%, at the time when other countries were placing into circulation banknotes not being covered by the central banks.

ASIA-MINOR CAMPAIGN

Italy's switching alliance from the *Triple Alliance*² to the *Triple Entente*³ in 1915 was rewarded by the promise of administering rights in Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean region. However, at the Paris Peace Conference (January-May 1919), the Allies decision of allowing the landing of Greek forces in Smyrna⁴, for apparently protecting the Christian population, was proof of their growing concerns about Italy's expansion plans. As soon as it was revealed, it was too late for Italy's Premier, Vittorio Orlando, to reverse it. Furthermore, Turkey's negotiating position after the Great War was extremely weak after its surrender on 17 October 1918.

The 15 May 1919 landing of the Greek forces on Smyrna, a city with a population of 165 000 Greeks and 80 000 Ottomans, was unique to the patriotic feelings and hopes of many Greek-speaking inhabitants of Anatolia. With the adverse, for Turkey, resolutions reached at the conference, the emergence of nationalists was an expectation of the political turmoil in Turkey. Their leader, ~~named~~ Mustapha Kemal, would play an influential role to the history of the region. Realising the weak position of Sultan Mohammed VI, he demanded, and succeeded in gaining the post of inspector-general of the 3rd Army. With the dismemberment of the remaining armies upon demand by the Allies, the 3rd Army remained intact near the Russo-Turkish front. Four days later, Kemal created and started expanding his Nationalist Party movement despite the Sultan's objections and orders for his arrest.

² The Triple Alliance was initially based on the defensive alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary at the 1879 Treaty of Vienna. It was completed when Italy joined in 1882.

³ The Triple Entente was based on the Franco-Russian alliance of 1893 and was completed when Great Britain joined in 1907 after negotiations with France on colonial settlements.

⁴ Smyrna (Izmir), a coastal city located on the western Turkish coast.

By January 1920, Kemal's political strength was shown at the parliamentary adoption of his 'National Pact' plan for reclaiming independence from foreign influence. This was quickly subdued ~~when~~ in March; when the Allies sent troops into Constantinople and dissolved the Parliament. The San Remo Conference of April 1920 ~~reached~~ resulted in ~~to~~ an Allied Supreme Council agreement on the future of the Ottoman Turkish Empire's eastern Mediterranean territories, the Arab peninsula and Iraq. These developments put further pressure on Sultan Mohammed VI's attempts to reconcile and salvage his Empire's remaining territories. By 20 August, the terms of the Sèvres Treaty were accepted and, obviously, the Nationalists repudiated both the treaty and the Sultan and organised national resistance.

By now, Greece's successful campaigns during the Balkan Wars and the Great War ~~had~~ ve seen her territories expanding, with a considerable growth in population. The National Bank of Greece⁵ (**ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ**) deemed necessary to increase the banknote circulation by 300 million, reaching to 463 million drachmas⁶ by May 1920. This decision was supported by the merging of the Bank of Crete and by the absorbing of the Ionian Bank's right of issue paper currency. The need for covering the government expenses for the Asia-Minor campaign influenced the decision too. The National Bank continued to cover its banknotes and the increase had no adverse effect to the economy, due to the strength of the drachma and the availability of lines of credit promised by the allies.

The results of the Sèvres Treaty rewarded the skilful negotiations made by Greek Prime Minister Venizelos; he gained the right to temporary administer Smyrna and her districts under the supervision of the Ottoman Empire for five years. In addition, Eastern Thrace and the Italian-held Dodecanese were also planned for unification with motherland Greece in the near future. Two days later, Venizelos survived an unsuccessful assassination attempt to his life by pro-royal fanatics at the Lyon railway station.

On 25 October, King Alexander died from the bite of a pet monkey. Despite this unfortunate event, a confident Venizelos declared new elections on 1 November 1920. However the outcome resulted ~~to~~ in his fall

⁵ The National Bank of Greece was established in 1841 (also, see the complementary paper "George Stavrou – More than Just A Face" in the Australian Numismatist 2002).

⁶ Drachma (s.drachmaⁱ / pl. drachmai) – the basic unit of the modern Greek currency, divided into 100 lepta.

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

as the pro-royal political forces influenced the public with the propaganda of promising the recall of long-servinged troops. With King Constantine being reinstated back to the throne after a referendum, the Anglo-English and French gradually withdrew their political and military support to-of Greece.

Since the landing, the Greek troops had started their consolidation by occupying the territories as assigned by the Treaty and met constant Turkish militia resistance with some military and civilian loss of life. From late 1920, attempts to capture a key town of Eskisehir⁷, that controlled the important Ankara-Istanbul railway line, were strongly resisted by the Turkish forces.



Figure 1 – Modern map of northwest Turkey (note Smyrna shown as Izmir)

The summer recruitment in Greece was well planned and the forces in Anatolia were reinforced. Despite being weakly equipped, the Greek troops launched the offensive at several fronts and this time, they successfully captured Eskisehir. The nearby cities of Kutahya and Afyon were also captured but the Turkish forces were not entrapped.

In Greece, the need to raise additional capital for the needs of the Asia-Minor campaign allowed the National Bank to issue an emergency

⁷ Eskisehir – a town located about 200 miles (320 km) ENE of Smyrna.

banknote issue on 25 March 1922. In many ways, this was courageous and original in concept because it did not add to the public debt. This was because one-half of the floating debt, which existed in the form of banknotes in circulation, was converted into new banknotes without augmenting the amount of paper money in circulation. With this issue, many notes were cut in half at half face value each. The left-hand portion of the notes remained legal tender until 1927 at half face value; whereas the right-hand portion of the notes was considered a compulsory loan, equally valued at half face value, exchangeable with debentures. The notes affected were dated as early as August 1897 (25 ~~drachmas~~ ~~dr~~ Athena/Hermes note) and as late as December 1918 (100 ~~drachmas~~ ~~dr~~ Parthenon note).

With the coins, the Law ~~Nº~~ 2546 of 24 September 1920 allowed the ordering of the 50 lepta⁸ copper-nickel coins in June 1922. The total minting of 2 524 227 coins was shared between Heaton with 1 million and King's Norton Metal with the remaining coins. These were not released for circulation because upon their arrival, their metal value exceeded their inscribed value.

Back ~~to-on~~ the Turkish front, the Greek troops reinforced their positions but Kemal was emerging now in command of the Turkish troops, deciding to ~~await~~ 300 ~~kilometres~~ ~~km~~ behind the Sarragios (Sakarya) River with allied military support. In ~~Kuy~~tahya, King Constantine presided ~~over~~ the military meeting on 28 July 1921. It was decided go forward beyond the Saggarios (Sakarya) River and over a desert territory (locally known as the Salty Desert), in an attempt to outflank the Turkish forces and capture Ankara. This was contrary to the warning that the forces would extend beyond the reinforcement lines and, with limited supplies, make them more vulnerable. Despite all odds, the Greek forces managed to overcome the difficult conditions of the desert and within close proximity to the mountains circling Ankara, their advance met stiff resistance. Lacking artillery support, they broke through the first line of Turkish defences and sections of the second line but, after 21 days of gruelling battles, the order to retreat was given. The date was 11 September 1921.

The Greek troops slowly retreated to Eskisehir with the loss of 23 520 men. The frontier of 700 kms was now being weakly held. With Kemal's Turkish forces on the offensive, the 26 August 1922 battle at Afy~~on~~ saw the entrapment of the Greek troops, resulting ~~to-in~~ their slaughter at the

⁸ Lepton (pl.lepta) – part of the country's monetary system; 100 lepta is equal to 1 drachma.

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plains of Aliveran four days later. The remaining troops stationed west of Afyon managed to escape and, with limited supplies, retreated to Smyrna with most of them crossing to the islands of Chios and Mytilene.

As the Turkish forces approached Smyrna, many Greek-speaking inhabitants from the region retreated towards the city. On 10 September 1922, the defences of the city were breached and the Turkish forces trapped, captured and slaughtered most of the remaining 7,000 Greek troops. The same fate was waiting for the Armenian residents two days later, and very few were able to escape. The Turks started the burning of that section of the city; and, according to their plan, it should spread towards the remaining sections the following day as the wind was expected to change direction. So it happened and the panic was now evident. Thousands of people were evacuating ~~with-by~~ whatever means they could find, including many Greek ships of all kinds. The Allied ships of England, France, Italy and United States actually watched thousands of people at the harbour waiting for ships to take them away, but did not assist. With no ships available, many of them could not escape and were captured and killed by the Turkish forces. It has been estimated that about 700 000 people lost their lives.

Without doubt, the magnitude of this catastrophe was similar to that of Constantinople's fall many ~~four hundred and sixty three~~ years ago⁹. With 1-½ million Greek ethnics being expelled from Anatolia, the event has also been described as a demographic revolution for the Greek nation. In all fairness, some prejudice was encountered but overall, their integration into the Greek population of 4-½ million was remarkably peaceful and successful. Certainly, the economy benefited from their entrepreneurial skills in the long term. From 1912 until the end of 1926, the country had to deal with the relocation, feeding and housing of the refugees following the Great War and the Balkan Wars. Also, by taking into account the support of the orphan children of refugees and other costs on the exchange of population after the Asia-Minor catastrophe, the country absorbed the additional total cost of 2-¼ billion¹⁰ drachmas. This impacted greatly to the country's fragile economy for many years.

⁹ [in 1540.](#)

¹⁰ Throughout this paper, the term 'billion' is a thousand million.

DECLARATION OF REPUBLIC

The failed Asia-Minor campaign resulted ~~to~~ⁱⁿ the Plastiras-Gonatas military revolt and King Constantine ~~was~~ abdicated on 27 September 1922. The political volatility reached new heights when five politicians and an army officer were charged with treason and were executed on 28 November at Goudi. King Constantine died of heart failure in Palermo (Sicily) on 11 January 1923 and the monarchy continued under his son George II.

On the numismatic side, the Law No. 2886 of 1922 had already decided on the issuance of the 5, 10, 20 and 50 lepta coins. With the ascendance of George II to the throne, expectations of a new coinage series with his effigy, or an inscribed proclamation of his reign, were assumed. But with the political instability, only the 10 lepta aluminium coin was minted at the Paris Mint and released in March 1923. It was engraved by G. Iakovidis and minted at Poissy with a mintage of 120 million. Furthermore, the same law allowed for the withdrawal of the 5, 10 and 20 lepta nickel coins of 1912 from 1 July for the next five years.

The Treaty of Lausanne₂ concluded on 24 July 1923₂ obliged Greece to return Eastern Thrace and the islands of Imbros (Gökçe) and Tenedos (Bozca) with no further claims to Anatolia. Allowance was made for the exchange of populations based on the criterion of religion. The ecumenical patriarchate was allowed to remain in Constantinople, as were the Greek inhabitants of that city and of the two islands.

This was the heaviest price Greece had to pay and was very painful and humiliating. The instability brought in another military revolt in October and₂ with strong anti-royal accusations, the elections of 16 December forced George II's dethronement₇ three days later.

Papanastasiou's government was formed on 12 March 1924 and₂ thirteen days later, the declaration of ending the country's reign by the monarchy was announced. After parliamentary support followed by a referendum, Greece was proclaimed as a republic. Naval hero Koundouriotis was voted as the President. Papanastasiou's revolutionary reforms aimed towards agricultural progress and improvements of social infrastructures₃; ₋ reforms that were based on economical restructuring that annoyed certain high social classes and political opposition. The opposition grew stronger and with parliamentary support and a surprising political retreat by Papanastasiou, Pangalos formed his government on 25 June 1925.

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However on 29 September, he dissolved the Parliament and proclaimed his dictatorship.

The Emergency Loan of 23 January 1926 arranged for the division of banknotes of 1921-23 issues to be divided with the $\frac{3}{4}$ left-hand portion remaining in circulation at $\frac{3}{4}$ face value and with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ right-hand portion exchanged with debentures. These cut notes are listed in Table 1.

With coins, the law of 11 May 1926 opened the way for arranging the mintage of 20 and 50 lepta, and, later, of 1 and 2 drachmas coins, as identified two years earlier. But at the same time, it took into consideration the recent political changes, which necessitated ~~to~~ some design changes.

Table 1

Dates on cut banknotes used during the Emergency Loan of 1926

Pick No.	50 Drachmas	100 Drachmas	500 Drachmas	1000 Drachmas
P66	16/9/1921 to 24/2/1922			
P67		8/2/1922, 17/2/1922		
P68			13/10/1921, 25/1/1922	
P69				15/6/1921 to 25/1/1922
P72				5/1/1923
P75	12/3/1923			
P76		1/3/1923		
P77			8/1/1923	
P79				4/4/1923, 14/7/1923



Figure 2 – 20 Lepta of 1926, Hellenic Republic, [Krause No.67] *(shown at 150%)*

The dies were engraved by the Vienna Mint's engraver E. Placht based on initial work by Gilleron at Gilleron Fils Company. The coins have the same reverse of the helmeted goddess Athena and their obverse has a simple design style showing the denomination value, year and the rounded inscription of 'ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ' (Hellenic Democracy, or Hellenic Republic). The 20 and 50 lepta coins struck had the a mintage of 20 million each, whereas the 1 and 2 drachmas coins had the a mintage of 15 million and 22 million respectively. By the authority of the May 1926 law, most of the metal needed for the 2 drachmas coin came from the melting of the unreleased 50 lepta coin of 1921 at Arthur Crupp in Berdorf, Austria.

As far as banking activities are concerned, the confusing conditions of the foreign exchange market from 1923 offered an opportunity to gain profits from foreign exchange rate differentials. In 1923, the Property Bank, the Brokerage Bank and the Anglo-American Bank were founded. The Hellenic Commercial Credit Bank became the successor to the Bank of Kalamata (Costopoulos Bank) in 1924 and, in the following year, many banks such as the Bank of Attica, the Bank of Larissa, the Real Estate Bank of Crete and the Bank of Messinia started their operations. In 1926, the Agricultural Credit Bank, the Union Bank, the Bank of Laconia and the Serb-Hellenic Bank were also founded. In 1927, the Securities Bank was merged with the Bank of Industry and the General Bank with the Popular Bank. Finally, the National Bank set up a specialised bank, the National Mortgage Bank of Greece for separating its real estate credit activities.

BANK OF GREECE IS EESTABLISHED

With many economic advantages being given to foreign monopolies, the unpopular economic policies of the Pangalos government were the catalyst for his downfall, after a military coup by General George Kondylis on 22 August 1926. Soon, the date of 7 November was set up for new elections. Its winner, Alexandros Zaimis, formed his government that

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

accomplished the rehabilitation of the economy and the restoration of normal conditions to the political life of the country for the next two years.

From early 1927, the country's accounts with its allies were settled; and in July, the government requested for a structured loan from the League of Nations. The financial committee of the League of Nations studied carefully the state of the Greek economy and the League of Nations approved the loan. The signed protocol on 15 September 1927 settled the loan amount to 9 million pounds, with a third covering part of Greece's public debt, another third to cover its budgetary deficits and the remaining for the rehabilitation of the refugees from Asia-Minor.

The loan was conditional upon the establishment of a separate bank of issue, as it would supervise the entire banking system. ~~In that,~~ The committee could not accept the operation of the existing National Bank of Greece as a commercial bank and as a bank of issue. It also felt that at the time, the growing separation of currency reserves from the issue of banknotes at many banking institutions would risk the delicate regulation of monetary and credit operations.

So, the government introduced the necessary legislation for this establishment of a central bank, the Bank of Greece (ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ), which was passed as Law No- 3424 by the Parliament on 7 December 1927. The Bank of Greece took over the licence of issuing currency from the National Bank of Greece (ΕΘΝΙΚΗ ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ) from 27 October 1927, and commenced its operations on 14 May 1928 with a capital resource of about 11 million English gold pounds and its ownership of gold-denominated currency reserves of over 53% in relation to potential note circulation. So, its first resolution was to link the drachma to the English gold pound (sovereign) ~~to-at~~ the rate of 375 drachmas.



Figure 3 – The last issue 100 Drachmas banknote, 25.5.1927, ‘National Bank of Greece’ with the red curved overprint of ‘Bank of Greece’ [Pick No 98] (shown at 60%)

Its decision to avoid the issuance of new currency was justified by the existing circulation of the National Bank’s banknotes, as well as these being held in reserves. Eventually, these were released for circulation with the red overprint of ‘ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ’ without introducing an issue date. The new Bank overprinted circulating and reserved notes that were released in three provisional issues during 1928. The Bank also obtained the licence to arrange the minting of coins up to the denomination of 20 drachmas, as well as each denomination released to the public and the percentage of these being used for currency exchanges.



Figure 4 – ~~The~~ 1000 Drachmas banknote, 4.11.1926, ‘National Bank of Greece’ with the red curved overprint of ‘Bank of Greece’ [Pick No 100] (shown at 60%)

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

With the 1928 elections, Venizelos emerged again as a-the greatest political force since 1920 and until 1932; his government ensured the continuation of the political stability achieved by Zaimis. In fact, he managed to restore good relations with the neighbouring countries of Italy, Turkey and Yugoslavia, including and also with England and France.

The economic stability and development was important to Venizelos as he concentrated on infrastructure, development and self-sufficiency in food with special attention to agriculture. The Agricultural Bank was also established in 1929 for the sole purpose of providing banking, financial assistance and structured loans to this growing sector. Proof of Venizelos's dedication was in the area of compensation ~~to-for~~ past war damages. For the period of 1920 to 1928, the agreed repayments totalling 115 million gold pounds were not eventuated as only about 37 million gold marks were paid to Greece. Venizelos renegotiated settlement terms for a much fairer outcome for Greece and after the Hague Convention, the country's receipts were increased by an additional 40.2 million gold marks.

In late 1929, local coin shortages were emerging and orders were placed in February 1930 for the minting of the 50 Lepta and 1 Drachma coins with mintages of 20 million each. By using the same die designs for the 1926 coins, they were minted by the Vienna Mint but carried the date of 1926 B. The Bank released these coins on 7 August 1930 for circulation, including the large nickel 5 drachmas 'Phoenix' coin, the silver 10 drachmas 'Demetra'¹¹ coin and the silver 20 drachmas 'Poseidon'¹² coin.

The last three coins were minted in London and engraved by Michael Axelos and Percy Metcalfe, under the supervision of George F. Hill, the director of the London Mint. They have the mintage of 23.5 million, 7 million and 11.5 million respectively.

¹¹ Demetra - the goddess of fertility and protector of agriculture by-in Greek mythology.

¹² Poseidon - ruler of the Seas after splitting the world with Zeus and Pluto by-in Greek mythology.



Figure 5 —~~The~~ 5 drachmas nickel coin, 1930, Hellenic Republic [Krause 71.1] (shown at ~~60~~100%)

The reverse design of the 5 drachmas coin was inspired by the early Kapodistrian coins with the phoenix rising from the ashes, the Holy Cross and the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, the 5 drachmas coin was also minted in Brussels with a lesser mintage of 1.5 million.



Figure 6 —~~The~~ 10 drachmas silver coin, 1930, Hellenic Republic [Krause 72] (shown at ~~60~~100%)

The silver coins were gradually hoarded due to their metal content and rising inflation, especially towards the end of 1930s. These five coins ~~will~~ bewere the last circulating coins for the period ~~in~~ under discussion; ~~the next~~ and new coinage ~~will~~ would appear ~~in~~ 24 years later.

GREAT DEPRESSION

In the autumn of 1929, the worldwide financial depression eventuated after the collapse of the American corporate stock market. By September 1931, the crisis reached its climax when England went off the gold standard. Greece severed her currency with the gold pound on 21 September, in preference to the United States dollar at the rate of 77.05 drachmas. To control its balanced budget and avoid making key changes on the eve of the elections, the country remained on the gold standard and within a few days, the foreign exchange loss amounted to over 3-½ million dollars. For the government to protect the currency, the enacted law of 28 September 1931 placed foreign exchange restrictions, but with limited effect.

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Further attempts by the Venizelos government to obtain foreign financial assistance were fruitless and after a dramatic meeting with banking representatives, the Law No: 5422 of 26 April 1932 was enacted and ~~the~~ compulsory circulation was re-introduced, including credit restrictions. All foreign currency accounts were 'drachmafied' and all commercial banks were instructed by law to surrender all foreign exchange holdings and related control mechanisms to the Bank of Greece. In March 1933, the United States of America went off the gold standard. This was favourable to the Greek economy as there was an inflow of about 30 million Swiss francs in that month. The Bank of Greece followed the actions of other central banks in converting its monetary reserves to bullion gold.

Nevertheless, Greece was dependant ~~of~~ on its exports of agricultural products and on migrant remittances and, by now, the depression and the worldwide trade slump had destabilised the economic and agricultural achievements of the Venizelos government. On top of this, the currency control measures taken since September 1931, especially after the 'drachmification' of foreign currency accounts, did not help. Neither did the emerging accusations of abuse of office by his political allies. The vitriolic campaign against him did not stop, even when he lost the elections of 5 March 1933. In fact, the assassination attempt on his life on 6 June 1933 was the climax of the ongoing political campaign against him.

Tsaldaris, a moderate man, was elected as the new premier. The parliamentary debates were still focused on Venizelos's previous conduct and Lieutenant-General Metaxas demanded that Venizelos be brought to trial before a special court. The debate was so bitter that Venizelos was not able to complete his speech in defence of his actions. He was never seen on the floor of the Chambers again.

With the currency, the Bank of Greece released its first two banknotes on 3 May 1933, in denomination ~~on~~ of ~~in~~ 500 and 5000 drachmas. The American Bank Note Company (ABNC) was chosen with their familiar heavy engraving style. Dated 1 October and 1 September 1932 respectively, these notes have design elements from mythology and ancient architecture.



Figure 7 —~~The~~ 500 drachmas, Bank of Greece, 1.10.1932 [Pick No 102] (shown at 60%)

During 1934, many currencies were devalued but Greece was not affected as her reserves had already been converted to gold bullion.

RESTORATION OF THE MONARCHY

Despite the international recession, the year of 1935 saw Greece having an increased economic activity; when ~~but~~ consumer demand lifted imports with an overall trade deficit increase of 8%. Further, the monetary reserves ~~to~~ for the note circulation dropped~~d~~ from 70% to below 55%.

The pro-Venizelist forces were attempting to regain power in fear of the monarchy being restored by the opposing forces. With Venizelos being forced into exile in France after allegations of his involvement, Metaxas took advantage of the political confusion. With the support of Vice-Admiral Oikonomou and Air Commodore Repas, he stopped Tsaldaris's car on the morning of 1 October forcing him to relinquish his premiership. His replacement, General Kondylis, and his co-regent, Theotokis, abolished the Republic by joint decree. Kondylis's pro-royal party proposed the return of the monarchy through the Parliament and after a dubious plebiscite on 3 November 1935, his action was endorsed. Twenty two days after the plebiscite, King George II returned to Greece marking the official restoration of the monarchy. The deaths of key political figures including Venizelos didn't bring any political accord and, the King was compelled to call upon Metaxas to form a temporary government.

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)



Figure 8 —~~The~~ 50 drachmas banknote, Bank of Greece, 1.9.1935 [Pick No 104] (shown at 60%)

In the meantime, the Bank of Greece decided to issue a new series of banknotes based on the French printing style. With denominations of 50, 100 and 1000 ~~drachmas~~~~Dr~~, these were dated 1 September 1935 but, most likely, released after the restoration of the monarchy. The above denominations were also-probably chosen ~~for, probably, to~~ complementing the Bank's 500 and 5000 ~~D~~drachmas notes and the hoarding of the silver coins. These notes used the traditional French banknote design that utilises light pastel colours that blend so well. The design themes are taken from the Greek mythology, agriculture and traditional costume (50 drachmas note - ~~A~~gricultural ~~G~~girl with sheaf of wheat and a marble relief from the 5th century BC¹³; 100 drachmas note - Hermes¹⁴ and woman holding basket full of grapes; 1000 drachmas note - Woman in national costume and workers).

The elections of 1936 were held under the system of proportional representation, resulting ~~to-in~~ an almost equal allocation of Parliamentary seats between the royalists and republicans. The balance of power was resting with the Communists (15 of the 300 seats). The following secret negotiations with them did not reach a solution that would ensure the emergence of a coalition government. Under these circumstances, King George II had no other option than to dissolve the Parliament on 4 August

¹³ This relief, from Elefsina, depicts a scene from Greek mythology where Triptolemos (a young man who became a mythical hero connected to the propagation of wheat) receives grains of wheat from Demetra (goddess of fertility and protector of agriculture), and is crowned by her daughter Persefoni.

¹⁴ Hermes – the protector of pastoral life and, later, the messenger of the gods, protector of messengers and of commerce

without fixing a date for new elections. He then suspended the main provisions of the constitution and permitted General Metaxas to establish a military dictatorship. Metaxas remained dictator until his death in 1941.

ITALIAN INVASION

Meanwhile, with Italy's aggression in Ethiopia and the Spanish Civil War, conditions were ripening for another conflict. Despite the 1938 Munich agreement, England and France's attempts for peace were in vain as Germany invaded Poland and, consequently, World War II broke out on 31 September 1939.

On the domestic front, Greece continued using its foreign exchange reserves for strengthening its military forces and thus, weakening its economy. While Metaxas had good relations with Germany, he was still aligned to England and France. With the military activities of the Italian forces in Albania, Greece's neutrality was under extreme pressure. The torpedoing of the cruiser "Elli" off the shores of the island of Tinos on 15 August 1939 and the Albanian border incidents left no doubt about Italy's involvements and intentions.

The gradual decline of the economy and, most likely, the hoarding of small denomination coins forced the ordering of replacement notes by the Ministry of Finance. These were printed by Giesecke and Devrient (G&D) and are inscribed with the title '**ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ**' (Kingdom of Greece) and were dated 6 April 1940.



Figure 9 – ~~The~~ 10 drachmas, Kingdom of Greece banknote, 6.4.1940 [Pick No.314] (shown at 60%)

FinallyHowever, on 28 October 1940, Greece became embroiled ~~to~~in World War II by responding to the Duce's demands of surrender with a resounding and unanimous "~~NO~~" ("OXI" ("NO"). The following Italian invasion was shortly lived as the Greek forces pushed them back deep into

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

Albanian territory and held them for six months. The Greek forces were heavily outnumbered and poorly equipped but the population support was enormous and the morale was high. As Winston Churchill declared in the House of Commons: *"We used to say that Greeks fought like heroes. Today we can say that heroes fight like Greeks."*¹⁵



Figure 10 —~~The~~ 1000 drachmas banknote, 1.1.1939, Bank of Greece [Pick No.110] (shown at 60%)

On the numismatic side, with the exception of the 100 Drachmas note, the 1939-ordered banknotes of 50 drachmas (green note with Greek epic poet Hesiod), 500 drachmas (purple note with woman in national costume) and 1000 drachmas (green note with woman and Athena/_Parthenon ruins) arrived from London. Dated 1 January 1939, they were placed into circulation a year later. Thomas De La Rue printed the first note with the remaining two printed by Bradbury Wilkinson. The delay to their arrival was attributed to the problems encountered since the beginning of the War.

The year of 1940 also marked the anniversary of 5-five years since the restoration of the monarchy. By order, the Heaton Mint struck two denominations, being the 20 and 100 drachmas. The mintage was 200 and 140 respectively for these gold proof coins. The 100 drachmas coin was also struck in silver with the mintage of 500 and all three coins are dated 25 November 1935. They are classed today as rare coins.

By the end of the year, the Greek-Italian War was consuming considerable resources with the inflation rising steadily. The note circulation increased

¹⁵ The Banknotes of Greece, p178

from 9.5 billion drachmas in October 1940 to a staggering 15.5 billion by the end of the year.

GERMAN INVASION

EFinallyeventually, the 1939-ordered banknote of 100 drachmas, printed by Waterlow, arrived from London and was released in late 1940.



Figure 11 —~~The~~ 100 drachmas banknote, 1.1.1939, Bank of Greece [Pick No.108] (shown at 60%)

Germany came to the aid of the Italian troops on 6 April 1941, when the German forces infiltrated the northern defences of the country, being valiantly held by the weaker Greek forces. During the first days of the Occupation, the population was in such a panic, that they withdrew their money in mass. So, on 25 April, the Bank of Greece was forced to re-circulate older banknotes, which were initially had previously been cancelled (*holed*) and assigned for destruction. These were circulated for almost a year until their redemption on 1 April 1942.

Also, due to increasing inflation, the Bank of Greece was forced to overprint the new denomination of 1000 drachmas over the 1939 Waterlow's 100 drachmas note and release them on 9 April 1941.

Twenty-one days after the invasion, the German forces reached Athens despite meeting fierce local resistance. The surrender of the country and its administration was unavoidable, but not without continuous counterattacks by local underground forces. The local and allied heroic resistance in Crete marked the last resistance to the invasion, forcing the withdrawal of the convoy of Allied and Greek ships to Egypt. Greece was fully occupied by 2 June 1941.

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)



Figure 12 —~~The~~ 50 drachmas National Bank of Greece (24.5.1927), released in 1941 as emergency currency [Pick No.112] (shown at 60%)

There is an interesting fact relating to the 100 Drachmas Waterlow banknote. At the time of withdrawal to Crete as the German forces approached, the reserves of the Bank of Greece in gold and foreign banknotes were shipped for London via Cairo and Johannesburg. For some unknown reason, it was decided that the rest of the banknotes that were not marked should be retrieved and saved. These notes were loaded on the ship 'Zakynthos' which was accompanied by the torpedo boat 'Kydoniai'. On 26 April, they were spotted and bombed by German planes ~~at-in~~ the ~~B~~bay of Monembasia, a meeting place for the retreating Allied ships. Being half-~~sinkedsunk~~, local rescue efforts were concentrated on saving people and the Bank's gold reserves, without considering the load of 100 drachmas banknotes. Later, the villagers discovered the small fortune....



Figure 13 —~~The~~ 1000 drachmas overprint on the 100 drachmas banknote (dated 1.1.1939) [Pick No.111] (shown at 60%)

Greece was one of the very few occupied countries during World War II to successfully withdraw its gold bullion reserves safely. The gold yielded 608 350 ounces of 790-/-1000 purity. There was the loss of one sovereign coin only.

DISAPPEARANCE OF METALLIC COINAGE

One result of the first days of the German Occupation was the disappearance of metallic coinage. It has been confirmed that the Germans had ~~ve~~ collected them through their controlled ~~ed of the~~ Bank of Greece and melted them or sent them for the needs of other occupying countries. The Greeks also hid the coins as one of their first resistance moves to the Occupation. Hence, the banknotes with the value of 50 lepta, 1, 2 and 5 drachmas were printed by Aspiotis-ELKA and ~~issued-dated on~~ 18 June 1941.



Figure 14 – ~~The~~ 5 drachmas banknote, Greek State, 18.6.1941 [Pick No.319] (shown at 60%)

One of the first acts of the occupying forces was the appointment of a German and an Italian commissionaire to head the Bank of Greece. This would ensure their full control of the monetary system, including the drachma and the occupation currencies. Needless to say, the Germans saw the unique opportunity to control the German-Greek clearing accounts and systematically confiscated vast amounts of primary and other agricultural produce for export to Germany and other countries.

FORGERY OF THE 1000 DRACHMAS NOTE

A few days after the withdrawal of the Allied forces, the Greek know-how mentality on immediate monetary gains took new dimensions. During the occupation, the Bank of Greece was issuing simply designed notes without using the intaglio method. Armed with this fact, the forgers took advantage of the chaos and confusion following the invasion and the 1000 drachmas

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

overprinted Waterlow 100 drachmas banknote appeared with forged markings. These can be identified by the crude design and the manipulations on the prefix and serial numbers but, during the confusion, the population was somehow unable to distinguish the difference on the forged notes.

GERMAN AND ITALIAN OCCUPATION NOTES

With the Bank under control, the German and Italian occupation banknotes were circulated: the German reichsmark was worth 60 drachmas and the Mediterranean drachma was worth 1 drachma.



Figure 15 —~~The~~ Italian-issued Mediterranean ~~One~~ 1 drachma banknote [Pick No. M11] (shown at 60%)



Figure 16 —~~The~~ German-issued 20~~One~~ reichsmark banknote [Pick No. PR139] (shown at 60%)

The economic stripping of Greece was done methodically as the Reichskreditkassen¹⁶ issued reichsmarks in unsigned notes with no legal face value. The Italians, who started circulating their notes on the Ionian

¹⁶ State Credit Treasury

Islands from April 1942, participated too. The third partner of the occupational forces, the Bulgarian army that occupied ~~the~~ Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, simply forbid the circulation of Greek banknotes and coins, which were replaced with those from Bulgaria. By the end of March 1941, the banknote circulation stood at 19.3 billion drachmas.

COMBATING FORGERY

On 16 May 1941, the Bank of Greece attempted to combat and circumvent the operations of the forgers. The public announcements on the existence of the forged notes with serial numbers listings appearing on genuine notes were unsuccessful as the forgers were able to quickly issue forged notes by using the serial numbers of the genuine notes. The internal war between the Government and the forgers didn't slow the increasing mistrust of the public with the notes, forcing their validation by the local banking authorities. As a result, stamping or signatures from courts and banking authorities on these notes did occur and examples have been found.

The forgery issue did not stop with the Waterlow banknote. The 1000 drachmas note dated 1 October 1941 (Alexander the Great) was forged on a massive scale. Among other identifying changes to the design and colour, the forged note has the series letters at the front of the serial number. In the end, the solution to the forgery was the massive inflation that devalued the worth of legal and forged banknotes, which were effectively useless ~~at-in~~ the hands of the holders.

Towards the end of the War, the issues were prepared so crudely, ~~so~~ that the serial number became part of the design, and only the one side of the banknote was printed. For example, identical notes can be found on the 10 billion drachmas banknote dated 20 October 1944. Eventually, counterfeiting became time wasting and ineffective as the value of the banknotes was decreasing within days!

INCREASE IN BANKNOTE CIRCULATION

The Bank issued ~~the a~~ 100 drachmas (Kapnikarea church) note in July 1941 and the already mentioned 1000 drachmas (Alexander the Great) note in October. These complemented the emergency circulation of the holed notes, ~~issued-dated~~ between 1927 and 1935.

MODERN GREEK CURRENCY (1927 TO 1944)

With the inflation rising steadily during 1942, the Bank of Greece issued the 5000 drachmas note (Nike of Samothrace) ~~dated in~~ 20 June, the 1000 drachmas note (statue of Amphipolis's Lion) ~~dated in~~ 21 August and the 10 000 drachmas note (young farm couple) ~~dated in~~ 29 December, the ~~first~~ highest denomination issued by the Bank so far. From 1 December 1942, payments in excess of 30 000 drachmas were made compulsory by bank cheques (TAMIAKA ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΑ). For the purchase of farm products, payment had to be made 25% in cash and 75% in Treasury bills maturing in ~~3~~three, ~~6~~six and ~~9~~nine months. By the end of September 1942, the banknote circulation reached 180 billion drachmas, in comparison to 19.3 billion drachmas in March 1941.

~~The~~~~A~~ reduction of the size of the banknotes is observed on ~~the year~~ 1943 issues. The Bank released ~~the a~~ new 50 drachmas note (woman in costume) in February, a note that effectively replaces the old and worn-out emergency and French ~~printed~~ 50 drachmas notes. On 19 July, the reduced 5000 drachmas note (Athena) was out and on 12 August, the largest value of 25 000 drachmas note (bust of nymph and ruins of Olympian temple) was released.

The short period of ~~8~~eight months between the issue dates of the highest denominations was an indication of the monetary situation becoming uncontrollable. In fact, the printing presses were working overtime to supply the demand for cash. By the end of September 1943, the banknote circulation reached 1.3 trillion¹⁷ drachmas compared to 180 billion drachmas a year earlier.

To face this deterioration, a meeting was held at the Bank of Greece head office, attended by key economists and past Bank governors, including the professor of economics X. Zolotas. A consensus was reached on the state of the run-away inflation, of food supply, ~~and~~ of the deteriorating public finance; but, ~~the reached~~ proposals ~~that they reached~~ were not acted upon as the attitude of the occupying authorities became harsher. In ~~fact~~, when Italy ~~was~~ capitulated the Germans started selling gold coinage brought into Greece via the Clearing Account. By the end of the year (1943), its debit balance was 80 million reichsmarks and five months later, it reached about 188 million reichsmarks.

In 1944, the Bank was forced to meet the demand for cash by issuing following denominations in chronological order:

¹⁷ The term ~~of a~~ 'trillion', in this paper, is ~~a~~one 'million million'

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- 50 000 drachmas (athlete) and 100 000 drachmas (ancient silver tetradrachm) in January,
- ~~half million~~500 000 drachmas (head of Zeus) in March,
- ~~one~~ 1 million drachmas (youth from Antikythera) in June,
- 5 million drachmas (Arethousa dekadrachm) and 10 million ~~drachmas~~Dr (plain brown fringe) in July,
- 25 million drachmas (ancient coin) in August,
- 200 million drachmas (Parthenon frieze) in September,
- 500 million drachmas (Apollo), 2000 m**illion** drachmas (Parthenon frieze / black) and 10 000 m**illion** drachmas (Arethousa dekadrachm) in October, and last,
- the 100 000 b**illion** drachmas (bust of nymph) in November.



*Figure 17 –100,000,000,000 drachmas banknote (the highest denomination),
Bank of Greece, 3.11.1944 [Pick No.135] (shown at 60%)*

Towards the end of the war, local branches of the Bank were issuing treasury notes, with some being provisional by stamping larger drachma values on existing old notes. The last provisional treasury notes were issued from Kerkyra (Corfu) in December 1944 on three Italian banknotes.

Another strange group of banknotes was issued in Thessaloniki, where the Occupation was extended until the end of October. These were German reichsmarks used by the Occupation forces for food and other low-value purchases and were stamped with German and Greek stamps and the local population was forced to use them under a currency rate defined by the German Administration.

Finally, by October 1944, due to the demand for more banknotes, the printing presses could not cope with their numbering and the prefix and

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serial number became part of the overall design of the note. This has been observed on the 2 billion drachmas note of 11 October with the serial number of KZ 295697 and the 10 billion drachmas note of 20 October with the serial of 927008 AA. Also, for the 2, 100 and 500 billion drachmas notes, suspicions of duplicate notes with prefix KZ with serial numbers ending 697 could fall under the same observation.

WAR EFFECT ON LIVING CONDITIONS AND ECONOMY

The following summary allows the reader to understand the economic effect of the War. With some details for comparison purposes, indices are reset to one unit (1) at the start of the occupation, in April 1941.

- The banknote circulation increased to 15.7 by December 1942, to 135.5 by December 1943 and to 8 276 320 by October 1944.
- The price of the gold pound (sovereign) went to 127.7 by December 1942, to 1319.2 by December 1943 and to 1 633 540 989 by October 1944.
- The cost of living index went to 156.5 by December 1942, to 1527.7 by December 1943 and to 2 305 984 911 by October 1944.
- Total losses suffered by the country during occupation until 1 October 1944 ~~are~~ amounted to an estimated US \$549 million (of early 1945 value).
- Occupation reichsmarks circulated in Greece reached the equivalent of 531 000 sovereigns and the Mediterranean drachmas were equal to 574 081 sovereigns.
- Conservative estimates suggest that the total volume of credits ~~&~~ and occupation expenses taken from Greece was over US \$211 million.
- Supporting data indicate that by 1943, wheat production dropped from ~~(the pre-war period)~~ volume of 900 000 tons to 300 000 tons; tobacco from 56 000 tons to 4000 tons; dried raisins from 150 000 tons to 50 000 tons; and; olive oil from 125 000 tons to 80 000 tons. Industrial production fell to 15-20% of pre-war levels.

However, the above economic misfortunes are somehow insignificant, if one considers the social impact of the war. Reliable data indicate that despite the relief assistance from the International Red Cross since 1943, Greeks were taking no more than 29% of minimum amount of calories

required for subsistence, compared with French having 55%, Norwegians 59%, Belgian 67%, Poles 72% and Dutch 81%. For most of the population with no access to scarce farm produce or livestock, the occupation period was absolute hell. The mortality rate was large, especially with the infant and the elderly population as illnesses such as tuberculosis were running rampant among the population. Many tens of thousands were lost by illnesses during the war.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE GERMAN FORCES

The local underground forces had continued their attacks on German forces since August 1941 with some assistance by the Allies. Under the leadership of the E.Λ.Α.Σ. (Hellenic Popular Liberation Forces), their tenacity against constant German reprisals and executions was rewarded by the liberation of one-third of the country by the autumn of 1943. Also, the capitulation of the Italian forces by-with the Allied invasion in Sicily, and, the demand for resources needed for the Russian front, left the Germans into a vulnerable position.

The German occupying forces gradually withdrew from controlled territories and, on 12 October 1944, Athens was returned to Greek administration. Within two weeks, the whole country was liberated.



Figure 18 —~~The~~ 1 drachma Kingdom of Greece, 9.11.1944 [Pick No.320] (shown at 60%)

On 9 November, the Bank introduced the New Drachma to the public that which was equal to 50 billion old (occupation) drachmas. The new small-denomination banknotes of 1, 10 and 20 drachmas have the inscription of 'Kingdom of Greece' and complemented the 50 drachmas note, issued by the Bank. Their designs have the elements of the phoenix 'rising from the ashes' phoenix, labourer- / church, angel / glory (ΔΟXA) and statue of Nike of Samothrace (victory).

EPILOGUE

The designs used for the production of the coins and banknotes reflect the turbulent times of this country and always strive to capture the national identity. For instance, the 1925 proclamation of the Republic reinforces the classical designs of the 1926 coins. The banknotes of 1927 use ancient elements such as temples and coins. The coins of 1930 (10 and 20 drachmas) and the banknotes of 1935 (50 and 100 drachmas) reveal themes of mythology and agriculture; while the banknotes of 1939 (500 and 1000 drachmas) continue to show the importance of national costumes as also strongly shown on the beautiful 1935 note of 1000 drachmas as well.

While under occupation, the designs have not deviated from previous ones; and, in a sense, they kept the ‘Greek’ identity alive during these difficult times. Finally, as the country was liberated, the designs on the November 1944 banknotes captured the symbols of resurrection, reconstruction, religion, glory and victory; symbols that have always strengthened the morale of the Greek population.

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RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA

by Frank Robinson, NAV 713

I grew up on the banks of the Murray River. Our house was only a few hundred metres from the river and we could hear, and sometimes see, the paddle-wheelers on the river as they turned to head back to Mildura with a load of tourists on board. We sometimes took the two hour trip ourselves, particularly when we had visitors.

Paddle steamers first operated on the inland rivers of Australia 150 years ago. They brought trade to the inland areas before railways and good roads made them redundant for trade purposes. The rivers of the Murray – Darling system were the river highways of inland Australia and the paddle steamers were the vehicles that operated on them.



Figure 1 – PV Rothbury at Mildura

BEFORE THE PADDLE STEAMERS

For millennia, the Aboriginal peoples of Australia had known, and made use of the great inland river system of Australia. However when European settlement of Australia commenced, these newcomers were completely unaware of it. The Murray - Darling basin covers 910 000 square kilometres -approximately 12% of the continent and contains Australia's

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longest and biggest rivers. But much of the area drained by this river system has a higher evaporation rate than rainfall. The mouth of the Murray is shallow and treacherous and when seen from the ocean, there is nothing to suggest that a great river system drains through the mouth.

EARLY EXPLORERS

By the end of the 18th century, most of Australia's coast had been explored; the missing, or unknown, section was the eastern two thirds of the southern coast. One theory existing at that time was that there might be a strait or gulf deep into the Australian continent, possibly dividing it into two separate parts; another was that there was a large inland sea (like the Mediterranean Sea). The first Europeans to explore this area were Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin in April 1802. Flinders, in particular, was looking for this deep gulf and for the entrances to significant rivers; however both explorers failed to observe the Murray Mouth although they encountered each other only a short distance away.

After the conquest of the Blue Mountains in 1813, explorers quickly moved inland. They soon found a number of westward flowing rivers which seemed to end in marshes. These discoveries encouraged the theory of the inland sea. However in 1829, during a drought, Charles Sturt found his way around the Macquarie Marshes and, following the Bogan River, became the first European to see the Darling River. After following the Darling for a considerable distance, Sturt formed the view that the various westward following rivers all flowed into the Darling.

In order to check this theory, late the same year Sturt led a party down the Murrumbidgee River. They launched two boats and continued by water; after observing the Lachlan River joining them from the north, they soon joined a larger river coming from the east; Sturt named it the Murray River. Nine days later, they saw the Darling River joining the Murray from the north. After following the Murray downstream, they eventually came to a shallow lake which he named Lake Alexandrina. Sturt found the Murray Mouth, but realised that it was almost impassable, except in calm weather. To quote from Sturt's own writings:

“the passage is at all periods of the tide rather more than a quarter of a mile in width and is of sufficient depth for a Boat to enter especially on the off side but a line of dangerous breakers in the bay will always prevent an approach to it from the sea – except in the calmest weather – whilst the Bay itself

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will always be a hazardous place for any vessel to enter under any circumstances”¹

SETTLEMENT

European settlement in Victoria commenced in 1834 at Portland and in 1835 at Melbourne. In South Australia, Adelaide was founded in 1836 and Victor Harbor in 1839. As well as these coastal settlements, there were numbers of people who moved inland to establish cattle and sheep stations and, later, to farm crops. With water important, most of the early inland settlers established themselves along the various rivers. In due course, various towns were established in the inland areas of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia.

The discovery of gold in 1851 brought a surge of people, particularly immigrants, to these auriferous areas. The movement of large numbers of people from the coast to the mining towns led to tracks (and eventually roads) of varying qualities being made. However few of these roads reached the stations along the Murray – Darling River system. The first public railways in Australia did not commence until 1854.

As New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia were all separate colonies (until federation in 1901), they each had their own Customs. All trade between the different colonies had to pass through Customs of each colony.

PROPOSALS FOR RIVER TRADE

Because of its proximity to the Murray Mouth, there were moves for Victor Harbor to be the capital of South Australia instead of Adelaide. An Adelaide newspaper, the *Register*, on 30 June 1838 in reference to the proclaimed port of Victor Harbor stated:

“To this district we have good reason to know the attention of several of the most wealthy and discerning merchants and stockholders of the neighbouring colonies is directed. It has already been described by them as a landing place for stock. It is now a legal port. In a few years it must become, if not the capital of South Australia, the seaport of the Murray and the

¹ Quoted in Swan and Carnegie, p70.

RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA

commercial metropolis of the vast western territory of New South Wales.”²

However those traders who already had interests established in Adelaide made certain that Victor Harbor and the South Coast did not progress at the expense of Adelaide. It was to be a long and bitter fight.

Another Adelaide newspaper, the *Observer*, in its editorial on 1 June 1844 said (under the heading “Our Great Internal Line of Communication”) that the neglect of this potentially important waterway was “negligent to say the least”.³

Another town in the area was Goolwa which was situated at the eastern end of the south eastern part of Lake Alexandrina and only a short distance by land to the ocean. It was to become an important town for the River Murray trade.

The arrival in 1848 of a new Governor of South Australia, Sir Henry Fox Young, saw the dreams of the colonization commissioners for the development of the Murray River as a trade route revitalised. In 1851, he persuaded the South Australian Legislature to offer a premium of £4000 to the first two iron-hulled steamboats to succeed in navigating the Murray from Goolwa to the junction of the Darling River. The Government also offered encouragement by building a jetty at Goolwa and erecting navigational markers and beacons across Lake Alexandrina between Goolwa and Wellington.

THE FIRST PADDLE STEAMERS

Initially there were no takers. However the lure of supplying provisions to the Victorian goldfields acted as an additional incentive. (At its nearest, the Murray was 90 km from Bendigo and 40 km from Beechworth.) The Randell brothers, William and Thomas, constructed a small paddle steamer at Mannum (upstream from Murray Bridge) which they named *Mary Ann* after their mother. Loaded with groceries and flour, the *Mary Ann* left Mannum in March 1853 and steamed downriver to Goolwa to obtain a Customs clearance; here it was inspected on 4 March by the Governor who promised the Randell brothers a bonus of £300 for being the first to steam on the inland river system. The *Mary Ann* left Goolwa on 25 March and

² Quoted in Hodge, p10

³ Quoted in Parsons, p15

reached a point about 50 km below Lake Bonney before a low river forced it to turn back to Mannum which it reached on 14 April.

Meanwhile Capt Francis Cadell submitted an alternative proposal to the Government – he would build a steamboat and barge if the Government would pay him £1000 when his “fleet” reach the Darling River junction plus £500 for navigating the Murray Mouth plus £250 per quarter that he kept the vessels operating on the rivers to the amount of £1000 – a total of £2500. This proposal was accepted by the SA Government. He initially checked the river by rowing a canvas boat from Swan Hill to Wellington. He then built a paddle-steamer, which he named the *Lady Augusta* after Governor Young’s wife, in Sydney and brought it through the Murray Mouth on 16 August 1853. With the barge *Eureka* (which had been built at Goolwa) in tow, the *Lady Augusta* left Goolwa on 25 August with an official party on board which included Governor Young and his wife as well as Capt Cadell.

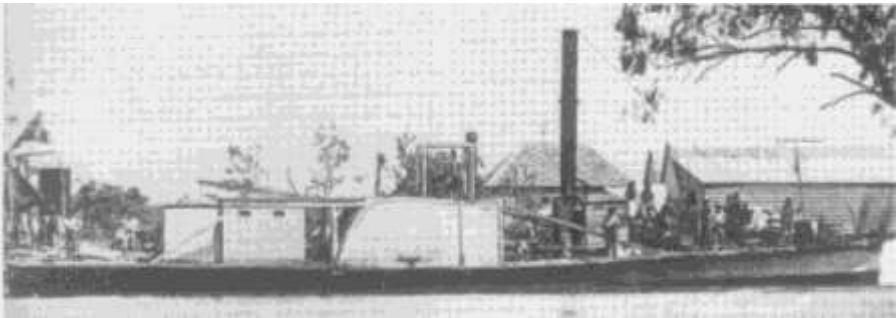


Figure 2 – PS Lady Augusta

The *Mary Ann* again left Mannum on 15 August. A month later, while moored for the night, the crew of the *Mary Ann* were woken about 11 pm by the unexpected sound of the *Lady Augusta* approaching. They followed a few hours later and passed her the next morning. While they didn’t actually race each other to Swan Hill (as has sometimes been claimed), they did overtake one another several times; both boats reached Swan Hill on 17 September.

Two days later, the *Mary Ann* continued up-river and reached Maiden’s Punt (now Moama, just upstream from Echuca) on 24 September. As Cadell had made a commitment to pick up a load of wool by a particular date on his return trip, he was unable to follow Randell. Both boats returned safely to the lower parts of the river.

RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA

CONNECTION TO THE SEA

For purposes of trade, it was necessary to be able to transfer the cargo from the river boats to ocean vessels, and vice-versa. Although various attempts were made to make the Murray Mouth navigable, the bar kept shifting. Thus if cargoes could not be transferred from one type of vessel to the other at Goolwa, some other means was necessary.

One proposal was to cut a canal from Lake Alexandrina at Goolwa to Encounter Bay. Another proposal was to build a railway/tramway from Goolwa to Port Elliot. This railway was commenced on 21 June 1852 and opened on 18 May 1854 and was the first public railway with steel rails in Australia. The man who surveyed and superintended its construction, and was then appointed Engineer and Traffic Superintendent (until the line was leased in 1870-71), was my great-great-grandfather, Thomas Jones.⁴ After Port Elliot was found to be unsatisfactory as a port, the railway was extended to Victor Harbor (then known as Port Victor).

DIFFICULTIES OF THE RIVERS

Unlike the major rivers of other continents, the rivers of the Murray-Darling system are all relatively narrow and shallow. The rivers have many bends which means that distances travelled by river are about three times (on average) the distance travelled by road between two points on one of the rivers.

Australia is the world's driest continent. The major sources of water for the system are the subtropical northern tributaries of the Darling River and the mountains of the Great Dividing Range along Australia's eastern coast which includes the melting snows of the "Australian Alps". As some of these rivers flow through the dry "outback", water is lost both by evaporation and by absorption into the soil.

There were also many "snags" – old trees that have fallen into the river, particularly in the deeper channel at the outside of a river bend. The inside of a river bend usually had a sandbar. When the steamboat trade started, the rivers were uncharted and full of snags which had to be cleared before proceeding.

During the summer and autumn, the upper portions of the rivers were un-navigable due to the low water level; even the middle portions were

⁴ Loyau, pp237-8

often un-navigable during the summer. At these times paddle steamers were forced to lay to wherever they were. During drought the rivers could remain low all year round.

Floods brought different challenges. The Darling, in particular, spreads a long way once it breaks its banks (my father used to say that it spread a mile for every inch it rose⁵). With “out-of-the-river navigation”, skippers took their boats over 30 km from the Darling in the 1870 and 1890 floods⁶; bad luck if the river fell before you were able to get back to it – the boat could be stranded for many years.

EXPANSION OF THE RIVER TRADE

Cadell and Randell were both trying to open up the river trade and were pushing as far up the Murray River and its many tributaries as possible. However, they had their problems.

Cadell formed the River Murray Navigation Company in 1856. In October 1854, Cadell had pushed the *Lady Augusta* up the Murray as far as Howlong (70 km below Albury). Cadell built two new iron-hulled steamers, the *Albury* and the *Gundagai*. The *Albury* reached its name-sake on 2 October 1855 and Gundagai (on the Murrumbidgee River) on 16 August 1858. The following year, the *Albury* steamed about 800 km up the Darling River to Mount Murchison (near Wilcannia).

After converting the *Mary Ann* into a twin-hulled boat (in 1855) which he renamed the *Gemini*, Randell went up the Murrumbidgee River before September 1858 and steamed 1600 km up the Darling to Nonah (now Brewarrina) which he reached on 23 February 1859. In 1861 he steamed up the Barwon River beyond the junction of the Namoi River (near Walgett).

Soon other steamboats were on the rivers. Robert Napier had the *Moolgewanke* on the river in 1856. Acraman, Main & Co launched the *Leichhardt* in 1856. A Mr Masson launched a small steamer (variously described as a paddle steamer and as a screw steamer) called the *Mosquito* on 21 April 1857; on its first voyage it went up the Murrumbidgee River as far as Balranald in September 1857 and was the first steamer on the Murrumbidgee.

⁵ ie spreads 1.6 km for every 2.5 cm (about 640 m per 1 cm rise)

⁶ Hill, p24

RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA

More than 5600 km of inland waterways were opened up and the rivers literally became the highways of inland Australia, at least in the eastern part of the continent. In 1859, 28 vessels transported 3434 tons of cargo upstream and almost as much downstream.⁷

The Murray was not another Mississippi – the Murray was rather winding with many short reaches (the distance between each bend) whereas the Mississippi was a much wider river. The American sternwheeler was not suited to the Murray River system (except in the lower portion of the Murray) as it had a relatively large turning circle. The sidewheeler on the other hand had a very small turning circle as it could reverse one wheel while the other went forward.

Despite this, an unsuccessful attempt was made in the early 1860's to introduce sternwheelers to the Murray-Darling system. P W Jackson and his partner Capt A S Murray launched the *Settler* in June 1861, the *Lady Daly* in June 1862 and the *Lady Darling* in 1864.

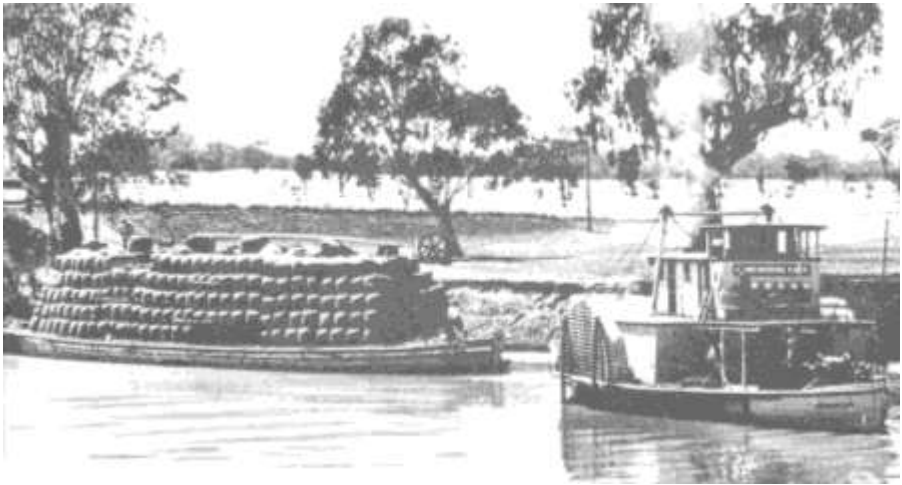


Figure 3 – PS Lancashire Lass towing a barge loaded with bales of wool on the Darling

CUSTOMS

It must be remembered that until 1901, what we now call Australia consisted of six separate colonies. Each of the three colonies along the Murray River had different policies that also varied over the years. By 1861, the Victorian economy was based more on manufacturing industries

⁷ Kerr, p36

than on the primary industries (pastoral and mining); thus Victoria developed a policy of protectionism. New South Wales believed in free trade and had lower customs duties. South Australia had even lower duties. A complicated tariff problem developed.

Eventually, in 1864, the New South Wales Government opened Customs houses at Wentworth, Swan Hill crossing, Moama, Corowa and Albury. Victoria followed suit with six “Ports of Entry and Clearance” situated at Cowanna (with the Customs officer at Yelta, just upstream from the Darling River junction), Nar(r)ung (just upstream from the junction with the Murrumbidgee River), Swan Hill, Echuca, Wahgunyah and Belvoir (Wodonga). After the establishment of Mildura, the Cowanna Customs house was moved to that town. The Mildura Customs House stood, until the early 1970’s, on the nearest high ground to the wharf.

South Australia had at least three Customs Houses. One was at Goolwa, another was at Morgan, and a third less than 1 km from the Victorian border at a place appropriately called Border Cliffs (it is now a homestead).

An idea of the effect that the customs tariffs had on inter-colonial trade can be seen from the following figures.

Table 1 Value of Inter-Colonial Trade⁸

Year	1859-1862	1867	1868
SA to Vic	£57 388	£164	?? ⁹
SA to NSW	£229 606	£94 919	£47 147
Vic to SA	£11 066	nil	nil
NSW to SA	£306 098	£412 348	£86 121

The goods from South Australia for 1859-1862 were mostly alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea and sugar. South Australia received skins, hides, tallow and wool. The 1867-1868 goods from South Australia also included implements, jewellery, timber, leather, saddlery and snuff in addition to the earlier goods.

Despite the drop in inter-colonial trade, the boats were kept busy carrying thousands of pounds worth of wool, wheat and other produce up and down

⁸ Kerr, pp36-37

⁹ Information not given

RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA

the rivers. By 1870 there were in excess of 100 steamers and 200 barges operating on the rivers.

RIVER TOWNS

The advent of the paddle steamers brought about development along the rivers. About every 30 km along the river there were woodcutters cutting fuel for the boats. Soon towns started appearing at strategic locations.

Mannum, 152 km upstream from Goolwa, was founded in 1852 by Captain William Randell (of the *Mary Ann*). During the years of the river trade, Mannum was a major port.

Situated on the great bend where the course of the Murray River turns from west to south, **Morgan** (366 km upstream from Goolwa) was surveyed in 1878 and connected to Adelaide by rail the same year. The railway took the trade coming down the river and by 1900 it was South Australia's busiest river port. However within a decade the river trade had diminished.

Wentworth, where settlement had commenced in the 1840s, became an important port due to its location on the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers 987 km upstream from Goolwa. When the proposal for the location for the Australia's national capital was being debated, Wentworth was one of the candidates.

Mildura, 52 km upstream from Wentworth and 1040 km from Goolwa, was founded as an irrigation colony and town in 1887, but had been a sheep station since 1858. Mildura and its district became the centre for the Australian dried fruits industry. Although the arrival of the railway in 1903 saw the paddle steamer trade diminish, the paddle boats have continued at Mildura but now cater for the tourist trade.

There was already a settlement at **Swan Hill** before the era of the paddle steamer. This town, 572 km upstream from Wentworth and 1560 km from Goolwa, was the destination in 1853 for both the *Lady Augusta* and the *Mary Ann*. The railway arrived in 1890.

Echuca, on the junction of the Murray and Campaspe Rivers and 880 km upstream from Wentworth, was surveyed in 1854. With the development of both the river trade and the railways (which reached Echuca in 1864), Echuca had a wharf over 1 km long and became Australia's largest inland port and Victoria's second largest (after Melbourne).

Wilcannia, 808 km upstream from Wentworth on the Darling River, was surveyed in 1865. It eventually became Australia's third largest inland port. During the 1880s, Wilcannia was the "Queen City of the West"; eg in 1887, 222 steamers loaded 26 550 tons of wool from the wharves.¹⁰

Bourke, 1433 km upstream from Wentworth on the Darling River, was established in the early 1860s as a river port for the surrounding pastoral industry. The railway reached the town in 1885. It is a major centre for transhipment of wool (it has claimed to be the largest centre for wool shipment in the world). Bourke also had a maritime court – the farthest inland in Australia.

Hay, on the Murrumbidgee River 654 km from its junction with the Murray River and 1062 km upstream from Wentworth, was established in 1859 and is the commercial centre for the Riverina (a huge area of semi-arid grazing country). Cobb & Co coaches crossed the Murrumbidgee River at Hay (until 1901); the railway arrived in 1882.

STORIES OF THE PADDLE STEAMERS

Almost 600 vessels have been recorded as working on the Murray-Darling river system. As well as the paddle steamers, there were also a large number of barges. These had the advantage that nearly all of their space could be used for cargo as they did not have an engine; they were towed along the rivers by a paddle steamer. Wrecks of various paddle steamers and barges may still be seen along the various rivers.

JANE ELIZA

The *Jane Eliza* was built in 1867 at Moama (near Echuca). It was used on the Morgan to Wentworth passenger service in the 1870s. In 1876, she collided with the *Queen* about 30 km above Mannum and sank, but was raised about two weeks later. There was a fire on board in September 1881 which badly damaged about 40 bales of wool. In 1883 the *Jane Eliza* collided with the *Paringa* in Old Murkbo Reach on the Murray; her bow was stove in, but managed to reach the bank before sinking; she was raised three days later.

¹⁰ Readers Digest Illustrated Guide . . . , p238

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A legend of the rivers was the three year voyage of *Jane Eliza* from Goolwa to Bourke. According to Hill,

“The *Jane Eliza* left Goolwa with 350 tons of timber for the Railway Hotel at Bourke. Fifty miles¹¹ up the Darling she was stranded on a falling river, and spent nearly a year there. The next took her on to Wilcannia¹², where she spent another, and then a pleasant little rise carried her a few miles farther, where she spent another. When she arrived at Bourke¹³, it was to find the Railway Hotel doing a flourishing business, and the contractor that built it gone and forgotten. The captain made the consignor pay the freight, advertised the timber and sold it at Broken Hill, which had been discovered and mined in the meantime¹⁴”¹⁵.

Parsons states that no contemporary evidence has been located for this voyage which he describes as “legendary” but also says “it probably has some basis in fact”.¹⁶

From 1888 to 1890, the *Jane Eliza* was used by the Chaffey brothers as a pumping pontoon for the new irrigation settlement at Mildura until their new steam pumps arrived from England. After a refit at Goolwa, she returned to Mildura where she was allowed to rot away and eventually sank off the Mildura wharf.¹⁷

PEVENSEY

The *Pevensey* started life as the barge *Mascotte* in 1910 at Moama before being fitted with an engine, etc and converted to a paddle steamer in 1911. She was almost destroyed by fire at Koraleigh (near Swan Hill) in 1932, but was rebuilt at Morgan before running a regular service between Morgan and Mildura (from about 1939). By mid 1958 she was moored above Renmark and reported not to be working.¹⁸

¹¹ 80 km

¹² 505 miles or 813 km above Wentworth

¹³ 896 miles or 1442 km above Wentworth

¹⁴ Silver was discovered at Broken Hill in 1883 and mining commenced in 1885

¹⁵ Hill, p25

¹⁶ Parsons, p86

¹⁷ Parsons, pp85-6

¹⁸ Parsons, p116

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A report in the *Riverlander* in June 1963 stated that the vessel was to become a floating museum. In the mid 1960s the *Pevensey* was moored at Gol Gol (upstream from Mildura); I remember seeing it there on one occasion when I was in my father's row boat (we lived a short distance upstream from Gol Gol on the opposite side of the river). In 1967 it was sunk by vandals, but raised the following year. In 1973 it was purchased by the Echuca City Council as a floating museum. The *Pevensey* featured as the *Philadelphia* in the TV mini-series "*All the Rivers Run*".

AVOCA

The *Avoca* has had a varied life. Built in 1877 at Milang (South Australia), she was snagged and sunk 50 km downstream from Wilcannia. In 1891, she left the inland rivers and worked as a lighter in Spencer Gulf and St Vincents Gulf (South Australia). The *Avoca* was laid up at Port Adelaide for some years but in 1922, under new owners, she commenced work transporting supplies to the locks that were then being built on the Murray. In 1934 she went to Mildura to work as a local cruise vessel; from 1957 she continued this work at Murray Bridge. In 1963 she was refitted with diesel engines. In 1976, after an extensive refit, she returned to Mildura where she now operates as the *Showboat Avoca*.

GEM

The *Gem* was built in 1876 at Moama (New South Wales) and after initial work as a cargo boat; it was refitted for the passenger trade on the lower part of the river. In 1879 an advertisement claimed that her passenger accommodation was unsurpassed¹⁹. In 1882, she was sawn in half and extended by 40 feet (12 m). The *Gem* operated between Morgan and Wentworth (and later Mildura) until 1953. Her ownership changed eleven times until she was sold to Swan Hill (where she forms the entrance to their Pioneer Settlement) in 1962.

¹⁹ reproduced in Parsons, p77

RIVER HIGHWAYS OF INLAND AUSTRALIA



Figure 4 – PS Gem (before being lengthened)

MARION

The *Marion*, built in 1897, was one of seven hawking steamers owned and operated by William Bowring.²⁰ William Bowring was one of a number of country storekeepers who decided to have a floating general store that would travel up and down the rivers. Bowring had come from Jersey (in the Channel Islands); after a time as a shop manager in Balranald, he purchased a Wentworth business in 1874 which he later transferred to Mildura.²¹

Bowring sold the *Marion* in 1908 to Benjamin Chaffey of Renmark who converted it carry passengers and cargo; it was later owned by the Gem Navigation Co (1915 – 1919), and Murray Shipping Ltd. It was rebuilt several times and by the 1920's it had three decks and was a passenger boat only. In 1953 she passed to L M Arnold, 1958 A H Wilkins and then Murray Steamers Ltd before being purchased by the National Trust in 1963. The *Marion* was then moored in the dock at Mannum. From 1990 to 1994 her hull was largely replaced and other restoration work undertaken before she was relaunched and now works in the tourist trade.

²⁰ *Undaunted* (1882 - 1897), *Blanche* (188? - 1888), *Emily Jane* (1888 - 1899), *Marion* (1900 - 1908), *Prince Alfred* (1901 - 1903), *Excelsior* (1908 - 1914), *Florence Annie* (1908 - 1914).

²¹ Bowring's continued as a local department store in Mildura until the 1980s.

ETONA

The *Etona*, built in 1898 for Church of England Missions, was one of two river boats on the rivers that were used for missionary work. The *Etona*'s aft (ie rear) cabin was fitted with an altar, font, etc so that it could be used as a chapel. Stationed at Mannum, the *Etona* worked the South Australian section of the Murray as far as Renmark bringing the Church to the people living along the river. The *Etona* continued in this role until she was sold about 1912-13 to A H Connor.

Connor used the *Etona* as a fishing boat until about 1944; she then remained idle until the 1956 floods when Capt Connor (by then 70 years old) used it for mercy missions on the Murrumbidgee River in the Balranald area. In 1961 the *Etona* was purchased by a group of Echuca residents, was steamed to Echuca and restored.

DECLINE OF THE RIVER TRADE

RAILWAYS

When the era of the paddle steamers began, Goolwa was the outlet for the river trade. However to connect it to the ocean, it was necessary to build an ocean port (due to the difficulties of navigating the Murray Mouth) and building a railway between the two. This resulted in Australia's first public railway which was between Goolwa and Port Elliot (as mentioned earlier).

A railway from Melbourne reached Echuca in 1864 and this captured much of the trade from the upstream end of the Murray River. However this area of the Murray could be low for months at a time and trade suffered as a result.

In 1878, a railway from Adelaide to Morgan was opened and most of the river trade was directed along this railway instead of through Goolwa.

As more railway lines reached the rivers, the trade on the rivers declined. Added to this were the successive drought years during the World War I period when you could walk across the river without getting wet feet!

TOURIST TRADE

Even in the early days of the paddle steamer, some boats were offering "day excursions" which could be considered to be catering to tourism. In the 1890s the Melbourne office of Thomas Cook regularly advertised a "tourist

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trip” to Mildura; passengers travelled by train to Swan Hill and then by paddle steamer to Mildura (which at the time was in its infancy as an irrigation settlement).

Between the two world wars, Murray Shipping Ltd arranged “excursion” tickets by combining rail and river travel – Adelaide to Morgan by train, then to Mildura by paddle steamer (usually the *Marion* or the *Gem*); from Mildura the traveller could either travel to Melbourne by train or return to Adelaide.

Since World War II, a number of the paddle steamers have found a new life catering for the tourist trade. Many of these boats converted from steam to diesel engines; however the *Melbourne*, at least, remained a steamer (see below).

Some of the tourist boats, and the ports that they operate from in South Australia are: Goolwa (MV *Aroona*, PS *Mundoo*, and PS *Oscar W*), Murray Bridge (PS *Captain Proud*, and PS *Proud Mary*), Mannum (PS *River Murray Princess*, PS *Marion*), Morgan (PS *Mayflower*), Waikerie (PS *Akuna Amphibious*) and Renmark (PS *Industry*).

Along the Victorian and New South Wales section of the Murray, some of the tourist boats, and the ports that they operate from are: Wentworth (MV *Loyalty*), Mildura (PS *Melbourne*, PS *Avoca*, PS *Coonawarra*, and PV *Rothbury*), Swan Hill (PS *Pyap*), Echuca (PS *Alexander Arbuthnot*, PS *Pevensey*, and PS *Adelaide* - the oldest wooden hulled paddleboat still operating), and Albury (PS *Cumberoona*).

MURRAY RIVER FLAGS

Several variations of the Murray River Flag have been used. The first of these flags was hoisted at Goolwa in 1853 by the Winsby brothers (who were building the barge *Eureka*) when the *Mary Ann* departed on her maiden voyage.

The flag illustrated consists of the Union Jack in the top left corner, the five stars of the Southern Cross arranged on a red cross which is on a blue background, with three white stripes on a blue background forming the lower half of the flag. The three white stripes represent the three main rivers navigated by the paddle steamers – the Murray, Murrumbidgee, and Darling Rivers. This flag is still in use.

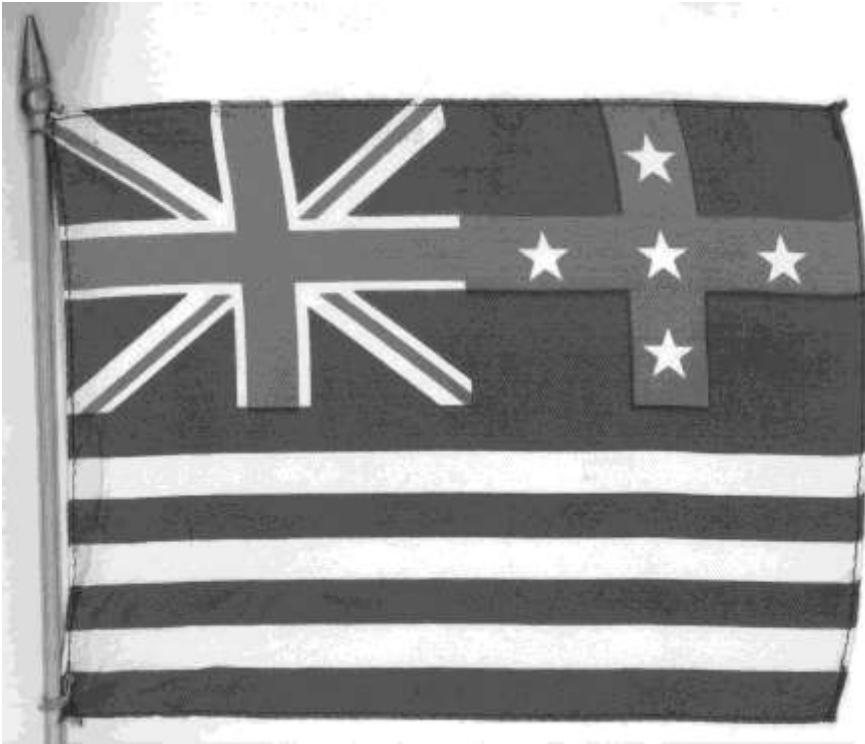


Figure 5 – River Murray Flag

PUNTS, BRIDGES, LOCKS & WEIRS, DRY DOCKS, SLIPS

To enable both road and rail traffic to cross the rivers, many bridges have been built across the rivers, particularly the Murray River. However to allow the paddle steamers to pass under when the river was high, they usually included a single lane lift span. Two effects of this were that traffic could only cross the lift span in one direction at a time, and if a paddle steamer needed to pass under the bridge during a period of high water, traffic in both directions had to wait. Some bridges, particularly the modern ones, were built higher above the river which meant that traffic flow across the bridge was uninterrupted. The first bridge over the Murray River was at Murray Bridge which opened in March 1879.

Before the bridges, punts were used to cross the rivers. At least two places (Wellington and Tailem Bend, both in South Australia) still use punts. At these crossing points, one or two heavy chains are laid across the river and

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the ends are secured on opposite sides of the river. The chain(s) pass through a drive mechanism on the punt and are used to guide and convey the punt across the river.

In order to allow the paddle steamers to use the rivers all year around, it was proposed to build a series of locks and weirs along the three main rivers. Each lock and weir would be built at locations to give a ten foot²² fall in the river level. A large series of locks and weirs was proposed in 1902; 40 on the Darling/Barwon River between Wentworth and Walgett, at least 26 on the Murray River, and nine on the Murrumbidgee River. On the Murray, only the first eleven and numbers 15 and 26 were built during the period 1920 to 1937. By this time the paddle steamers were being supplanted by rail and road transport and the need for all year round navigation of the rivers had passed. However the pools formed by the weirs have been an advantage for irrigation.

The completion in 1939 of the Yarrawonga weir (forming Lake Mulwala), without a lock, prevented boats passing beyond this obstacle in either direction.

A dry dock was built at Mannum and was originally a floating dock. Originally built for A H Landseer, it was sold to Captain Randell who established it as a graving dock in 1876. Because of its attempts to float, piles were driven through the floatation tanks to anchor it in place. Its last commercial use was in 1927.

I don't know how many places along the rivers had slips for removing the boats from the river, but I suspect there were many. I do know of two at Burunga; one is opposite Mildura wharf and the other about 1 km upstream.

NUMISMATIC ITEMS

RIVER MURRAY MEDAL

In 1855, the South Australian Government struck three gold medals to commemorate the successful opening of the Murray River for trade. One of these was presented to Governor Young, another to Captain Cadell; the third had its edge inscribed with the wording: "To be deposited with the records of the Legislature of South Australia; by authority of the honourable

²² ie 3 metres

John Morphett – Speaker”.²³ This third piece was in the Art Gallery of South Australia from where it was stolen in 1914. The other two pieces have also disappeared – perhaps they were melted for their gold value?



Figure 6 – River Murray Medal

²³ Carlisle, p4

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According to Carlisle, an unknown number of bronze medals were also struck; these were sold to the general public. Although the dies were very corroded, an unknown number of bronze restrikes were struck in Melbourne by Stokes. All medals are 72 mm diameter.

The obverse depicts the *Lady Augusta* with the legend “INTER RITAS FLUG” above, “A.B. WYON / RIVER MURRAY” below; “NEW SOUTH WALES • SOUTH AUSTRALIA • VICTORIA” around above, “• TRIA JUNCTA IN UNO •” around below.

The reverse has joined oak wreaths with the legend “THE / STEAM NAVIGATION / AND COMMERCE / OF THE RIVER MURRAY / OPENED / 1853” in six lines inside the wreath; “L.C.WYON” below.

STOKES TOURIST DOLLARS

In the early 1980s Stokes issued a series of “Tourist Dollars”; two of these depict paddle wheelers. One was issued for Mildura, the other for the Riverland area of South Australia. Both of these pieces are 47 mm diameter and are apparently struck in bronze with a bright copper finish.



Figure 7 – Stokes Tourist Dollar for Mildura featuring the PS Melbourne

The Mildura piece depicts the PS *Melbourne*, although the boat is unnamed. The *Melbourne* was built in 1912 at Koondrook for the Victorian Government; it was sold about 1940 to the Echuca Saw Mills and again in 1965 to Alby Pointon of Mildura. Parsons states:

“Built as a snagging steamer, but used on any public works along the river, as required. When sold to the sawmills was employed in towing timber barges but upon sale to Mildura was completely refitted – almost rebuilt – and emerged as a tourist vessel capable

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of carrying about 300 passengers and now measuring 69gt²⁴. She is one of the few remaining wood burning steamers left on the rivers.”²⁵

The *Melbourne* continues to operate as a tourist boat at Mildura.



Figure 8 –PS Melbourne at Mildura

The Riverland area of South Australia stretches from Renmark to Morgan. A number of paddle wheelers were built in the late 20th century for the tourist trade. One of these was the *Murray Explorer* which is probably the vessel named as the M V *Explorer* and shown on the Riverland tourist dollar.



Figure 9 – Stokes Tourist Dollar for Riverland, South Australia showing the MV Explorer

²⁴ 69 gross tons; this is an insurance measurement and relates to the cubic capacity of all enclosed areas – 100 cubic feet equals 1 ton (Parsons p9)

²⁵ Parsons pp102-3

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The *Murray Explorer* was built at Goolwa in 1979 and operated on the lower Murray until 1987. It was a diesel powered stern wheeler capable of accommodating 122 passengers. After numerous changes, it is now a cruising restaurant on Sydney Harbour operating as the *Sydney Explorer*.

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NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Founded 1946

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J FARINGDON-DAVIS	1985 - 1986
G FARINGDON-DAVIS	1987 - 1988
H J PRANGE	1989 - 1990
Dr J M CHAPMAN, FRNS	1991 - 1992
P SHIELDS	1993 - 1994
T DAVIES	1995 - 1996
J O'RILEY	1997 - 1999
F J ROBINSON	2000 - 2002

NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Founded 1946

OBJECTS:

- To encourage the study of Numismatics in all its branches
- To represent generally the views and interests of all Numismatists
- To provide education in the field of Numismatics
- To encourage sound and methodical collecting practice

ACTIVITIES:

- Discussion at monthly meetings
- Reading of papers
- Assisting members in the study and acquisition of numismatic specimens
- An annual publication containing articles of interest to all Numismatists
- A quarterly Newsletter
- Stimulating research into the currency of Australia

Meetings are held on the third Friday of each month at 7:45 pm
in the

Celtic Club,

Corner of Queen and Latrobe Streets, Melbourne