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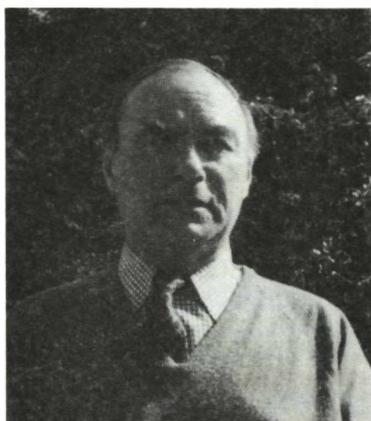
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NEWSLETTER no. 115

November - December 1988



This issue's contributor of the month is Richard Wright. Richard was born in London in 1931 of a naval family, and had made his first visit to Hong Kong by the age of one. He joined the Royal Navy in 1944, and served in ships out in the Far East at regular intervals from 1949. He first took an interest in the Chinese coinage in 1960, at a time when genuine silver dollars could be purchased in the back streets of Hong Kong – nowadays they are usually fakes – and bought his first Sun Yat-sen dollar for the equivalent of 44p or 72c US. He thus started collecting at the end of the range, and then worked back to the early machine minted coinage of the 1880s. As a result his interests, possibly unusually, do not include cast cash.

From collecting he moved on to research and writing, with his first article being published in 1970. China's modern numismatic history was more than a little confused as the result of a century of revolutions and wars, but although the country was virtually closed to the outside world at that stage, he found there was a surprising amount of source material to be culled from western mints, museums and publications; and in the process discovered new truth in the old saying that 'many of the exotic things to be found in the East turn out to have been made in Birmingham'. In recent years he has

travelled extensively for the Foreign Office, which has also given him access to libraries and museums abroad.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Numismatic Society, is married, and lives near the sea in Hampshire. An article by Richard appears on pages 6 and 7 of this Newsletter.

From the Secretary General

Members should note that membership of the ONS has been withdrawn from Dr Frank Timmerman ..., for conduct incompatible with the aims of the Society.

ONS News

The ONS American Region will have its annual meeting at the New York International Numismatic Convention on Saturday 11 December 1988 (most likely in the afternoon). The venue will be the Sheraton Centre Hotel. This year's guest speaker will be Col. Joseph E. Boling, ONS member and presently president of the International Bank Note Society. His talk is entitled "Japanese influence on Korean currencies". Because of the poor attendance at last year's post-meeting dinner it is requested that members who plan to attend from either abroad or the Americas and want to attend the dinner, should contact Bill Warden about two weeks in advance. Members are welcome to bring guests for both the meeting and the dinner.

Obituary

We regret to report the death of member Hans Meyer of Stolberg, West Germany, who passed away on 12 June 1988.

Members' News

Steve Album has sold his entire personal collection of Islamic coins to the Karl-Eberhards-Universität in Tübingen, West Germany. In its new location, the collection will serve as the basis for extensive research projects in Islamic numismatics. Perhaps we can look forward to a detailed catalogue in due course.

Other News

i. Eleventh International Numismatic Congress.

This congress will take place in Brussels on 8-11 September 1991. It will be held at the Palace of Congress in the centre of the city, close to the old town and important museums. The formal sessions will last from the Monday to the Thursday, with the Friday being available for excursions. The organising committee hope that this congress will provide the opportunity for an exchange of information on recent scholarship in all areas of numismatics and illustrate the relationship to neighbouring disciplines such as archaeology and art history. The congress coincides with the centenary celebration of the international numismatic congresses (the first was held in Brussels in 1891) and the sesquicentenary of both the Royal Numismatic Society of Belgium and the *Revue Belge de Numismatique et de Sigillographie*. A full programme will be available in 1990. Those wishing to read a paper will receive notification in due course.

Any member wishing to receive further information about the congress or be considered for presenting a paper should write to Miss Ghislaine Moucharte, Secretary General of the Eleventh International Numismatic Congress, Collège Erasme, Place Blaise Pascal 1, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

ii. ANS

The ANS is having to reduce its operating costs. It has therefore made the painful decision to cut four of its staff positions including the Associate Curator of Far Eastern Coins, Dr Rose Chan Houston (mentioned in Newsletter 114), and Assistant Editor, Candace Carter. Ms Carter was International Editor of the ANS's excellent publication *Numismatic Literature*; hopefully this publication will survive the cuts, but confirmation is awaited.

Auction News

On 29 September, Sotheby's held an auction of Islamic coins comprising 278 lots. Of note amongst these were:

- i. an extremely fine dinar of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, year 77 h.
- ii. a dinar of the independent Governor of Sfax, Mansur al-Barghawati, from Madinat Safaqus, year 450 h.
- iii. a dinar of the Fatimid usurper, al-Afdal abu-'Ali Ahmad as vizier, Misr, year 526 h.
- iv. a dirhem of the Abbasid, al-Muktafi, Mecca, year 292 h.
- v. a dinar of the Zaydi Imam, al-Mansur billah al-Qasim b. 'Ali al-'Ayyani and the Sharif al-Qasim b. al-Husayn al-Zaydi as Governor of Dhamar, from Dhamar, year 391 h.
- vi. a dinar of the Amirs of Bisha, year 339 h.
- vii. several dinars of the Amirs of 'Aththar.
- viii. a dinar of the Sulayhid, 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Sulayhi, from 'Aththar, year 459 h.
- ix. a dirhem struck by the Rasulid, al-Mansur 'Umar in the name of the Ayyubid, al-Kamil, at Mecca in the year 631 h.
- x. a dinar of the Burid of Damascus, Shihab al-din Mahmud, Dimashq, year 530 h.

Recent Publications

- i. W. Findeisen and H. Wilski have published an article entitled "Gegenstempel der Insel Thasos" (countermarks of the island of Thasos) in *Geldgeschichtliche Nachrichten*, vol. 123, January 1988.
- ii. Steve Album has been busy writing articles for *The Celator* as follows:
 - "Calligraphers created dies for Islamic coinage" (vol. 2, no. 2, February 1988)
 - "Islamic conquerors adapted local Byzantine coinage" (vol. 2, no. 4, April 1988)
 - "Sasanian motifs used in Islamic coinage" (vol. 2, no. 7, July 1988)
 - "Arab-Sasanian copper presents varied typography" (vol. 2, no. 8, August 1988)

The Celator is a monthly newspaper on the numismatics and art of antiquity and the mediaeval period. Subscriptions are \$15 in USA, \$18 for Canada and \$35 outside North America from P O Box 123, Lodi, WI 53555, USA.

- iii. The following articles have appeared in recent issues of World Coin News:
 "Claud Martin, Soldier of Fortune" by John G. Humphris (vol. 15, no. 39, September 27, 1988)
 "The Study of Chinese Coins" by Percy J. Smith (vol. 15, no. 35, August 30, 1988)
 "Tipu Sultan, The Tiger of Mysore" by John G. Humphris (vol. 15, no. 35, August 30, 1988)
 "Historic Herat survives many rulers" by Joel Hettger (vol. 15, no. 38, September 20, 1988).

iv. Vol. XII of the Numismatic Digest (1988) will soon be available for US \$ 20 from the Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, P.O. Anjaneri, Dist. Nasik, Maharashtra 422213, India. Previous volumes are also available at the same price. Payment should be sent in advance by 'demand draft' in favour of the above institute drawn at any bank in Bombay or at the State Bank of India, Trimbakeshwar branch (code 6292).

v. A book entitled "Méthodes statistiques en Numismatique" is available for 1500 Belgian francs (plus postage etc.) from Dr. J. Trizna, Collège Erasme, Place Blaise Pascal 1, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

Indo-Scythic and Indo-Parthian Coin Hoards – Part 2 by R. C. Senior

Continued from Newsletter 107 (July/August 1987)

Hoard D

This hoard was found near Chakadara in Swat on the Mardan to Bajaur road. It consisted of 99 tetradrachms and 388 drachms that were possibly part of a larger hoard though no similar group surfaced on the bazars. Its importance lies in showing the development of the post-Azes II coinage and its relationship alongside the Indo-Parthian coinage of the Gondopharids. I have seen several hoards (including one in 1988 with c. 50 tetradrachms of Abdagases/Sases M1125/6 base types with c. 300 Azes II Helmeted Zeus Nikephoros drachms) that indicate that certain coins bearing the name of Azes were issued alongside the issues of Gondophares/Abdagases/Sases and probably even by them. The drachms issued in the name of Gondophares and Abdagases are extremely rare and Aspavama/Sases rare and I believe that the drachms that were meant to circulate alongside Gandharan tetradrachms of these kings are those principally with helmeted Zeus Nikephoros reverse in the name of Azes II.

TETRADRACHMS



(1) Pallas type as M867(a) - 28 coins, 19 with 7 control mark, 4 with 7 and 5 with 7 and Ξ under horse. These were all in virtually uncirculated condition and of debased silver with what seems to be a silver wash, except one coin. This exception is slightly more worn, is better silver and a much better style, showing the proper drapery for Pallas and an intelligible Greek legend beginning at 11 o'clock on the obv. reading continuously: BACILEI BACILEWN MEGALOY AZZOY (illus.3). Another coin in the group (illus.4) is a transitional type between this and the usual type (ill.5) where the drapery is stylised and reduced to dots.

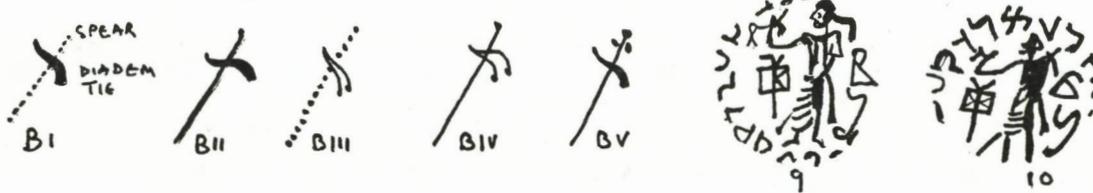
For comparison I illustrate a coin of Azes II which I think is possibly the prototype (ill.1) and also the rare Pallas right type of Gondophares that is contemporary with it (ill.2). The latter is of good silver unlike most of Gondophares' tetradrachms and I feel that both the coins illustrated (2 and 3) are contemporary with the Azes II coin or issued shortly after. Possibly the rare Gondophares coin signifies his conquest of the city where the Azes coin was issued and then the AZZOY coins replace it under the control of a local satrap. This posthumous coinage continues in a long unbroken series before the very base Indra-varma/Aspavarma coins fit into it. I feel that these facts indicate a much earlier date for Gondophares than previously supposed.

(2) Zeus Nikephoros types

2.1 See ill.6. Corrupt Greek legend, nandipada between horse's legs and crescent before, unusual style reverse with 'raja-rajasa' legends and in unusually nice condition. The latest coins in this hoard and the best preserved are the Abdagases coins and this coin must be contemporary with them. I have previously seen this same coin in another Abdagases hoard indicating that it is contemporary and of late date. One specimen.



REVERSE TYPES



2.2 Azes II issues, all quite worn. See table 4; total 7 coins.

2.3 Azes II posthumous issues bearing control marks as ill.7.

I feel that all coins with these control marks are posthumous and they are amongst the commonest 'Azes II' coins. In this hoard they range from worn to virtually EF condition and I am sure that they were issued throughout the Gondophares to Abdagases period. From this and other hoards I have tried to classify the coins into groups and will publish this more fully in a later article. In the illustration group 8 I have summarised part of this classification. 8i - obverse with no additional letters, 8ii and 8iii show additional letters on obverse. A - reverse with rajarajasa legends, B - reverse with rajaD'Irajasa legends and is subdivided into 5 subgroups stylistically according to how the spear and diadem ties are depicted. These 5 groups thus identified are very distinct in fabric and style.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 table the coins in this hoard according to these groupings and their kharosthi control marks. 37 coins.

2.4 Two very crude coins, one with unusual monogram in EF (ill.9) and the other worn (ill.10).

(3) Gondophares 9 coins - see table fig. 5.

(4) Abdagases 14 coins - see table 6. Because of their condition one can see rosettes and letters on the die picked out in tiny dots that would normally disappear with the slightest wear. Ill.13 shows an example. There are no very base issues and no Sases issues, showing that the hoard was deposited during but before the end of Abdagases' reign.



DRACHMS

All the drachms are of the Zeus Nikephoros type and, with the exception of the Abdagases coin, they fall into three groups; Azes II and posthumous types, helmeted Zeus Nikephoros of dumpy fabric, and crude types with control marks corresponding to the tetradrachms in the hoard.

(1) One extremely rare drachm of Abdagases in EF condition showing clear control marks (M1141) ill.12 and next to it I illustrate (ill.11) a unique tetradrachm of the same type in my collection.

(2) Azes II and later issues - the majority of these are scarce varieties I associate with provincial, north Gandharan mints - some of distinctly local style. See table 7 - 113 coins.

(3) Helmeted Zeus Nikephoros types - 123 coins, table 8, ill.14.

(4) ^B type - many complement the tetradrachms in figures 1, 2 and 3 and even add a few control letters but the majority are so blundered in execution as to be of uncertain classification. They warrant a separate listing at some date. 152 coins.

	8i/A	8iiiA
obv	☐	☐
rev	☐	☐
8i/Bi	☐	☐
8i/Bii	☐	☐
8i/Biii	☐	☐
8i/Biv	☐	☐
8i/Bv	☐	☐

FIG. 1: TWO COINS SHARE OBV. DIE

ob	4	1	1	1	1	1	1
8i/Bi	1					1	4

FIG. 2

MIT. TYPE	OBV	BETW' LEGS	REV.	POST-RI	No
854f	4		☐		1
854g	4		☐		1
"	6		"		1
853f	4		☐		2
858L	4		☐	?	1
858M	4		☐		1

FIG. 4

MIT. TYPE	OBV	REV.	No	COMMENTS
1116	☐	☐	1	
"	☐	☐	1	
1128	☐	☐	1	BACINEL...MEF.
1129	☐	☐	1	? REMOVED FROM DIE?
"	☐	☐	1	
"	☐	☐	1	+ ☐ ON OBA BPT. LEGS
"	☐	☐	1	
"	☐	☐	1	OVERSTAMP ON OTHER TYPE?

FIG. 5 GONDOPHARES

	8iii/Bii							8iii/Bv			
obv	4	7	5	4	4	7	7	7	4		
rev	1					1	3	1			
"		2									
w	1		1	1	1				1	2	

FIG. 3

TABLE 4

2: TWO COINS WITH DIFF. & MORE LEFT SHARE SAME OBV. DIE

M. TYPE	OBV.	REV.	NO	COMMENTS
1117	☐	☐	1	
1126a	☐	☐	2	
--	☐	☐	1	OBV. ↑ CUT OVER P?
1120	☐	☐	2	□ INEX. BAZIAEHMY
--	☐	☐	1	+ 3 BETW. FR. LEGS ON OBV.
1132(2)	☐	☐	1	
--	☐	☐	1	☐ BOTTOM LEFT ☐ TOP RIGHT
--	☐	☐	1	☐ TOP RIGHT
1140	☐	☐	1	
☐	☐	☐	1	NO B ON R BUT DET. LEGS
☐	☐	☐	1	NO EXTRA LETTERS
☐	☐	☐	1	

FIG. 6 ABDAGASES.

	RAJARAJASA							RAJADIRAJASA						
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	3													1
☐		1		1	4	4				2				
☐				1		3					2		1	25
☐				1										
☐					1									
☐					3			2				1	1	31
☐								3						6
☐														1
☐								1						
☐									2					
☐										1	1	3		
☐											1			
☐					1									
☐						1								
UNC						2					2			2

FIG. 7 AZES II TYPE DRACHMS * = DISTINCT ANGULAR STYLE 2 = SEE TET. ABDAG. PERIOD

OBV.	REV.	NO	COMMENT
☐	☐	1	KA. LEG. UPON 1st COLUMN.
☐	☐	2	
☐	☐	41	
☐	☐	2	OBV. ? UNC.
☐	☐	1	CRUDE
☐	☐	1	STYLE
UNC	☐	1	
☐	☐	73	

FIG. 8 ZEUS HELMETED

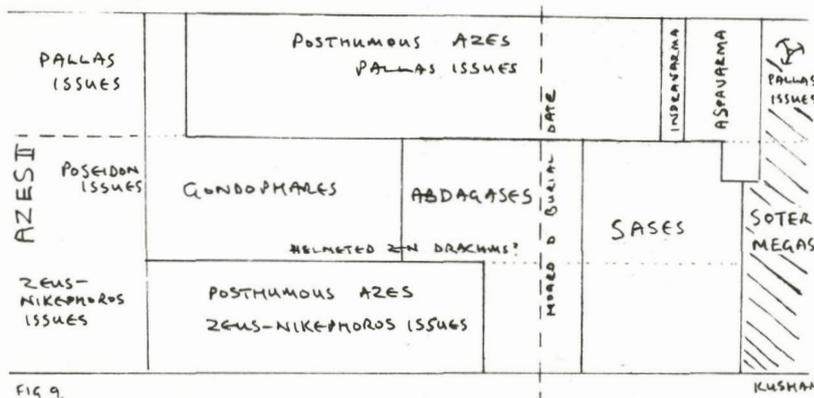


FIG. 9.

This is a very interesting hoard because it illustrates the coinage that immediately follows the better-silver issues of Azes II, struck by Gondophares and his satraps, followed by the Abdagases coins in still fairly good silver. The Pallas coinage has several baser issues to run before the Indravarma/Aspavarma issues come along and they must have ruled quite some time after Abdagases. Sases on the other hand follows Abdagases immediately in the Gandharan and Jammu series and it is probably a mistake to equate Aspa (Sases' uncle) with Aspavarma. The Zeus Nikephoros issues in the name of Azes II in this hoard with control marks are followed immediately by the Abdagases issues of this type then those of Sases. The extremely rare Arsakes Dikaioi (and a few other extremely rare varieties with BACILEONTOC obverse legends in my collection of uncertain kings) fit in probably before the Abdagases coinage. I have detailed photographs of all the coins in the hoard. The final table summarises my feeling about the sequence of issues and though I cannot assign dates to the start and finish of these coinages I feel that the commencement is in the last decades B.C. and the burial date possibly 40-50 A.D. at the latest.

Late Auction News

On January 29 - 31, 1989, Joel L. Malter and Co. Ltd. (P.O. Box 777, ENCINO, CA 91316, USA) will be holding an important auction of Islamic gold coins and glass weights from the collection of the late Dr. Frank Linville. Catalogues (Auction XXXIX) are available for \$20 from the aforementioned address.

Jital, the thousandth part of Akbar's rupee by Prashant P. Kulkarni

The credit of introducing the Jital goes to the famous Turk ruler Iltutmish. During his reign, the Jital was the 48th part of a silver Tanka, in the form of billon coins containing 2 rattis of silver.¹ During the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the Jital retained its value at 48 to a Tanka in the Delhi area but was slightly cheaper in South India being a 50th part of the Tanka.² It was equal to the smallest denomination, the Gani. One of the interesting coins of Muhammad bin Tughluq bears the legend Tankah-i-Panjah Gani, i.e. the Tanka of 50 Gani or Jital.³ It was a common coin during the Sultanate period.

By the time of Akbar, the Rupaya had taken the place of the Tanka, and the name Tanka had been given to a copper coin equal to 2 Dams or the twentieth part of the Rupaya. The Jital still remained the 50th part of the Tanka and accordingly became the smallest denomination of Mughal coinage - the 1000th part of the Rupaya (50 Jital x 20 Tanka = 1 Rupaya).

Abul Fazl tells us in the *Ain* that, "For the purpose of calculation the dam is divided into twenty-five parts, each of which is called a Jital. This imaginary division is only used by accountants."⁴ Thus according to Abul Fazl the Jital was not struck during Akbar's period. But now a copper coin has turned up weighing only 730 mg. and measuring 10.5mm. It bears the word Jital on one side and Sanah 43 on the other.



This unique coin is the smallest denomination of Akbar's coinage. But why did Abul Fazl say that it was an imaginary division of the rupee? Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that the *Ain-i-Akbari* was almost completed in the 42nd year of Akbar's reign. Abul Fazl was sent to Deccan in the 43rd year⁵ and may therefore not have been aware of the striking of the Jital (at some mint which is not mentioned on the coin).

The coin clearly bears the word Jital spelled as on certain copper coins of Muhammad bin Tughluq, and conforms to the theoretical weight of the Jital at 1/25th of a Dam. The Dam weighed 1 tola 8 mashas and 7 surkhs; i.e. 323.56 grains or 20.96 gms. making a Jital of 0.838 gms. The coin published here leaves an appropriate margin for wear and tear at 0.730 gms.

What prompted the striking of this coin is not known. It was, however, the smallest coin of the mintless Damra and Damri series and may have been used for small payments and alms.

1 H. N. Wright, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, p.74.

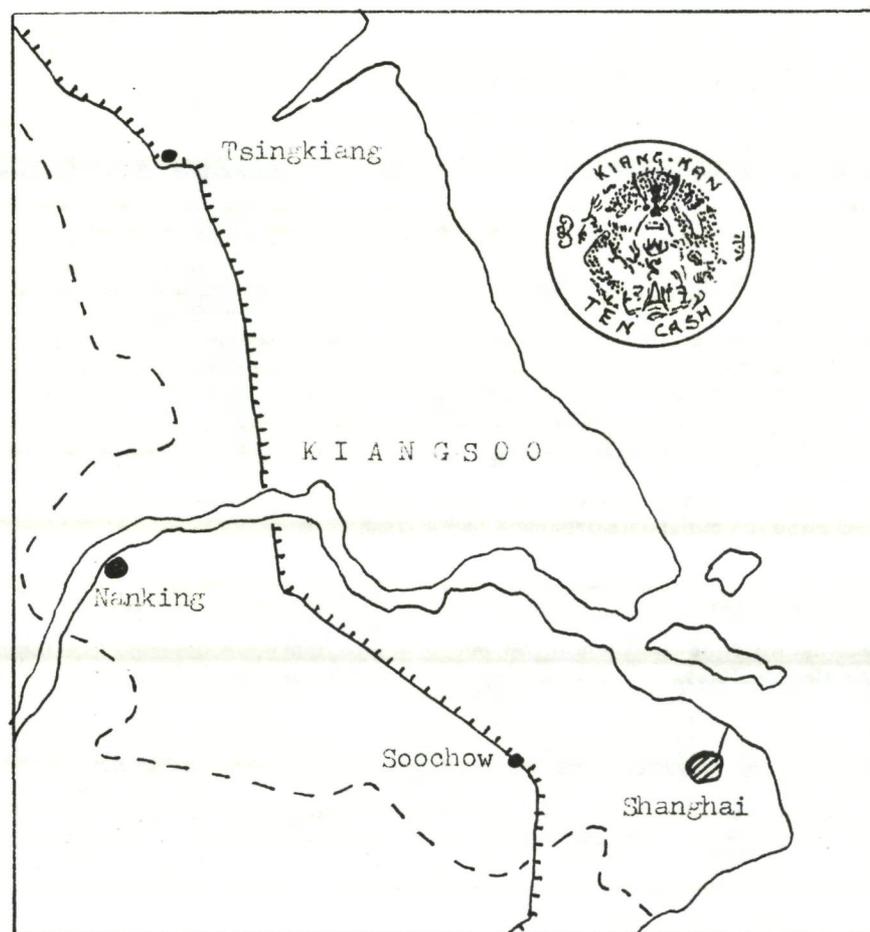
2 *Numismatic Supplement*, XXXVIII, article 248.

3 Wright, *op. cit.*, No. 587.

4 *Ain-i-Akbari*, trans. Blochmann, p.32.

5 *Ain-i-Akbari*, Biography of Abul Fazl, p.xliv.

The Case for the Kiangnan Arsenal Copper Mint at Shanghai, 1905 by Richard Wright



In 1904 the Chinese province of Kiangsoo possessed two machine mints; one, at the provincial capital of Nanking, established in 1897 for the minting of brass cash and silver coin and later enlarged for the minting of copper 10 cash, which struck coin under the name 'Kiangnan'; the other at Soochow, originally a brass cash mint set up in 1898 and converted in 1904 to the coining of 'Kiangsoo' 10 cash pieces. The machinery for these mints, apart from that for the Soochow cash mint, had been provided by Heaton's.

The minting of the 10 cash coin, which was a token with an intrinsic value of about 3 cash, provided the provincial authorities with much profit, and 1904 saw a period of proliferation of copper mints which led to a massive oversupply of the coins in 1905, and a clamping down by Central Government in 1906.

In 1904 the Governor of Soochow decided that one mint was insufficient for his needs, and work was started on a second mint outside the city which, when it opened in the autumn of 1905, also produced coin under the name of 'Kiangsoo', although from different dies.

Clearly a market could be seen in the province for the products of a further mint, as in November 1904 Heaton's received an order for a complete set of minting machinery, ranging from steam engines and boilers, rolling mills for producing

the copper strip, down through all the paraphernalia for making blanks, ending up with six No. 2 coining presses, all for a new mint at Chingkiang (Tsingkiang), a small town up the Grand Canal in the northern portion of Kiangsoo province. The 6 Heaton presses were, however, only part of a much larger consignment, as there is a reference to another 54 presses, presumably obtained elsewhere. These 54 presses were probably in place early in 1905; statistics show that over 300 million coin blanks were shipped north from Shanghai to the mint (which is quoted as being established early in the year), as well as copper ingots equalling another 40 million blanks when processed, which would have been available for use once the Heaton machinery had been installed. The mint is reported to have struck 310 million coins in 1906 before being shut down, and appears to have been a completely separate entity. It struck coin, most unusually for China, under the town's name of 'Chingkiang' or 'Tsingkiang'. This fact helps to pinpoint its products with particular precision.

All of which makes it difficult to understand why it had been considered necessary to establish yet another mint, which seems to have been intended as a branch of the main Kiangnan mint at Nanking - just as the Hanyang Arsenal was a branch of the Wuchang mint - but situated way down river in the Kiangnan Arsenal at Shanghai. (Names have tended to confuse the issue. The mint at Nanking minted coins named to 'Kiangnan'; the arsenal at Nanking was called the Nanking Arsenal; the

arsenal at Shanghai was called the Kiangnan Arsenal, but was still under the provincial government at Nanking.) Heaton's records show quite clearly that a complete copper mint - excluding the power plant - for 45 No. 2 presses, rolling mills, plus 34 other items concerned with the making of blanks and dies was ordered for 'The Kiangnan Arsenal Mint' in July 1904: and this mint, by definition, must have been at Shanghai.

The time scale for delivery was for 6 presses in 4 months (November 1904), and for 6 per month thereafter (completing in June 1905); while the rolling mills and other items for the manufacture of blanks were to be delivered in part in 5 months (December 1904), with the remainder in 8 months (March 1905). Thus, with 6 presses being delivered in November, with power available in the arsenal, a set of dies and a barrel or two of blanks purchased locally, the Kiangnan Arsenal Mint should have been in the business of striking coins early in the new year, producing 1905 dated 10 cash coins named to 'Kiangnan' (Y.138), but of a different pattern to the 'flying' dragon type struck by Nanking since 1901.¹

Yet the Kiangnan Arsenal Mint at Shanghai is neither mentioned in any of the reference books, nor in two of the three invaluable repositories of source material for this period, the *British Consular Commercial Reports* and the *Imperial Maritime Customs Annual Trade Reports*. Only in the third, the *U.S. Mint Reports*, has the writer been able to find confirmation that the mint actually existed, and this provides one vital clue as to what happened. The 1905 Report² reprints a letter from the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce addressed to the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps at Peking, dated June 2 1905, in which the Chamber of Commerce writes about the enormous expansion in the coining of 10 cash pieces, and requests the Doyen to impress on the Chinese authorities the importance of regulating the supply and standard of the coins. A table of mints was included in the letter; and the following is an extract of those appertaining to Kiangsoo province:

Mint	Machines		Total	
	Old	New		
Soochow	18	56	74	
Nankin	32		32	
Chingkiang			60	a. Transferred to Nankin.
Shanghai		45	a 45	

It could be said that the note (a.) might have been added when the Mint Report was compiled at the end of the year, in order to bring the information completely up to date; but examination of another copy of the letter in the Foreign Office files³ shows that this note was on the original of June 2 1905. On the other hand, this is a help, as the information was obviously added at the last moment, and it may therefore be inferred that the machines had only recently been transferred in May.

To sum up, it could well be that the Kiangnan Arsenal Mint commenced striking and issuing new style Kiangnan 10 cash early in 1905. This fact may have been picked up by the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, a powerful body which would have been rightly concerned about having a 10 cash mint opening up in its backyard, and quite capable of having it shut down: which is probably what happened.⁴ The dies would then have travelled with the presses to Nanking, where they were possibly re-used (the reverse dies certainly appear muled with Tai-ching 1906 obverses (Y.140)), and this has tended to obscure the real origins of the dies. On the other hand, the rolling mills and machinery for preparing blanks may well have remained in the Kiangnan arsenal for use in a profitable sideline, as Heaton's was supplying spares to the 'Kiangnan Arsenal Mint' as late as July 1905.

Bibliography.

- Imperial Maritime Customs Annual Trade Reports.*
- British Consular Commercial Reports (British Parliamentary Papers)*
- U. S. Mint Reports*
- Records from the Birmingham Mint Group plc.
- Foreign Office Files in the Public Record Office, London.
- Lord Charles Beresford, *The Break-Up of China*, London 1899.
- John L. Rawlinson, *China's Struggle for Naval Development*, USA 1967.
- A. M. T. Woodward, *The Minted Ten-Cash Coins of China*, USA 1971.
- Y. Numbers from R. S. Yeoman, *A Catalog of Modern World Coins*, USA.

Notes

1. This is only reasonable assumption, as no specimens of the coins, or dies, have been retained by Heaton's. However, the *Coin Book* shows two different entries for 10 cash dies for Kiangnan; and both the 'flying' dragon and 'front view' dragon Kiangnan reverses are well executed Heaton types of design.
2. U.S. Mint Report, 1905, p.202.
3. PRO, FO-228-2212.
4. But see also Woodward, p.10, first footnote. If 'the Mint' referred to was, in fact, the Kiangnan Arsenal Mint, the rapacity of the Arsenal's Director may have been a contributing cause.

The Missing 1305 Quarter Qiran of Iran by Michael L. Bates

In the *Standard Catalog of World Coins*¹ a quarter qiran ("1/4 kran") is listed (Y.100) for Reza Shah with the date 1304 Solar Hijri (SH) era (C.E. 1925-26). The coin is similar in a general way to the quarter qirans of Reza Shah's predecessors, and is the last listing for that denomination under the old-style machine coinage of Iran, which was replaced by the present system of denominations in 1932. Under the listing is a note: "8,000 reported struck in 1305, but that year not yet found and presumed not to exist."

In the catalog of Iran's new system coinage (introduced in S.H. 1310/C.E. 1931) further along, there is a listing (Y.104) for a "1/4 rial" with only one date, 1315 (C.E. 1936-37). A note to this listing says "The second '1' is often short, so that the date looks like 1305."



Y.100, SH 1304



Y.104, SH 1315



Y.99, SH 1310

This coin of 1315 sticks out like a sore thumb among the other coins on the same page. Its design and inscriptions are exactly like the quarter of 1304, except for the date, and quite different from all the other coins of the new system. A quarter rial equals 25 dinars, and there is a listing for 25 dinars, but those coins are quite different, being larger and made of copper-nickel instead of silver (Y.99). The other new system coins have the denomination in numbers or Persian words, while the 1315 "1/4 riyal" has the same Arabic denomination as the 1304 quarter qiran, *rub'i* ("quarter").

The 1315 listing is headed "1.2500 g, .828 silver, .0332 oz ASW", but these figures must be calculated from the other silver coins in the system, because two examples of the 1315 quarter in the ANS collection weigh only 1.209 and 1.207 grams, not much different from the ANS 1304 quarter which weighs 1.186. Even the physical fabric of the 1315 coin is different from that of the other coins of 1310 and afterward.

The gap in issues between 1304 and 1315 puzzled the late Robert L. Clarke, who lived in Teheran in the 1970's and built up an enormous expertise in the 20th century coinage of Iran. In his regular column² in *Numismatic News Weekly*, 12 October 1971, he mentions the irregularity without offering a definitive solution. Soon afterward he visited the British Royal Mint, then in London, and consulted the annual reports of the mint, which, until 1938, gave mintages of foreign coins for each year in an appendix.³

In a later column, "Iran's Coins Reveal Deviations From Monetary Law Provisions" (*Numismatic News Weekly*, 4 January 1972, p.21), he proposes an explanation for the 1315 *rub'i*: "There is yet another silver coin to be accounted for - Y104, called (in error) a quarter-kran and further linked with both 1305 and 1315 dates. I assure you no 1305 exists, and since 1315 was the rial era, this "robi", as the Iranians call the coin, belongs to the latter series. The law of 1309 specified no such denomination, and you won't find it in the Royal Mint records either, yet the coin is very common here, probably the cheapest silver coin on the market. After studying the mint records (the published Royal Mint reports, as he explained earlier in the column), I believe I've cleared up the mystery. The mint reports refer to the half-rial as a coin of 50 dinars in reports for the four years in which the coin was struck. However, in 1937, the report does list a 1/2-rial of silver, with a mintage of 600,000. My theory is that somewhere between the consular office in Teheran and the printed mint report, a typed 1/4 was misread as 1/2."

This is a lot of theory, especially since the Royal Mint report for 1937 lists no such 1/2 riyal. In fact, that report has no information whatsoever on Iranian coinage. In his earlier column describing his visit to the Royal Mint, Clarke says he was only there part of a Friday, his last chance to get the data before leaving London, and perhaps in his haste he confused his notes. In his useful little book written with A. Mohabat-Ayin⁴ Clarke does not even question the coin's official nature. He suggests that it was for an intended change in the denomination from 25 dinars Cu-Ni to the equivalent 1/4 riyal in silver. The mintage 600,000 and the weight and dimensions mentioned above are given without comment or explanation. Here as elsewhere, Clarke's book is the basis for the Krause-Mishler listing.

Clarke's original theory is ingenious, but does not stand close inspection. Not only is the coin, as he says, illegal under then-current laws and unmentioned in any report except the one he made up, but its fabric is completely anachronistic for SH 1315. The mint would have had to bring the old machines out of storage and restore them to action to strike such a coin, not a very plausible hypothesis.

It seems almost inescapable that the "1/4 riyals" dated 1315 are in some way really the missing 1305 issue. The quarters with the "short 1" (which I have not seen) must be just what they appear to be: quarter qirans dated 1305; and those apparently dated 1315 are probably the result of an engraver's error or some other irregularity. In this connection I may mention that the ANS has two quarter qirans of the Qajar Shah Ahmad dated 1313, which given his dates can be interpreted as an error for 1331 Hijra era (the latter date is listed "reported but not confirmed" in Krause-Mishler, but the ANS has one with 1331 as well as the two examples with 1313). Possibly the "1313" issue is related in some way to the "1315" issue, but at any rate it illustrates that mistakes were possible in the Teheran mint.

It remains to explain how a coin listed with a mintage of 8,000 could be as common today as Clarke says (Holland Wallace and Steve Album, both with vast experience of Iranian coinage, also consider the 1315 quarter a very common coin). First, it should be said that the mintage figures in Krause-Mishler, taken (through Clarke) from the British Royal Mint reports, have to be viewed with a certain scepticism. For one thing, the figure 8,000 is found in the Royal Mint reports for 1927, which should correspond to 1306, not 1305 (SH plus 621 = C.E.). The figure 24,000 given for 1926 by the Royal Mint report should correspond to SH 1305. This too, however, is not certain. The Royal Mint figures come from reports sent by consuls, which must in turn have come from the reports of the national mints. In Teheran, the mint report would presumably be for the solar Hijri year. 1305 ended in March 1927 and the Teheran report would not come out presumably until some time later. The consul or his staff would have to translate or summarize the report, probably not a high-priority item on their agenda, and send it to the Royal Mint - directly, or perhaps through the Foreign Ministry. In sum, the Teheran mint report for the year 1305/1926-7 would not reach the Royal Mint until late 1927 or even 1928, long after the Royal Mint report for 1926 had been published (presumably, though who knows how long that report was delayed after its putative year). So, when the data are given as "coinage for 1927", in what year were those coins actually issued?

Second, it is possibly relevant that no quarter qirans are listed in the Royal Mint reports for 1928, 1929, and 1930; the smallest denomination in those years is the half qiran. In 1931 and 1932 there are no listings for Teheran itself (some bronze coins for Iran were struck by the Belgian mint in 1931). These missing years were the first of the new coinage regime. Coins of 1310 in various denominations are well known, but are not listed for 1931 (the mintage figures for 1310 in Clarke's book and Krause-Mishler are either the Royal Mint data for 1933 or are for minting in Brussels and Berlin).

It is at least possible that the quarter qiran issue was much larger than the figures in the Royal Mint report would indicate. 1315 coins might have been struck not only in 1305/1926-27, but also in 1928-30 without having been reported officially; or even later, when the mint was ostensibly on the new standard but the machinery had not been installed. Or the statistics might simply be wrong. It would be useful to have the original Teheran mint reports, and until these are located and studied, mintage figures for Iranian coins should be regarded as tentative indications only. At any rate, it seems safe to say that the 1315 quarter qirans were struck before or just at the time of the coinage reform of 1310 despite their date. The variety Y.104 should be eliminated, and the 1315 quarters should be listed under Y.100 with the quarters of 1304.

Notes

1. Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, *Standard Catalog of World Coins*, 12th edition (Iola, WI, 1986).
2. These columns were brought to my attention by Mr. Holland Wallace, to whom I am most grateful not only for leading me to an explanation of Clarke's strange entry in the book cited below, but also for a delightful read. Clarke's columns on his experiences in Teheran and his numismatic discoveries ought to be collected into a pamphlet for republication, as there is much information to be found there and nowhere else.
3. A complete set of these printed reports is in the American Numismatic Society and most other large numismatic libraries.
4. *Modern Coinage of Iran, 1293 AH - 1353 SH, 1876 AD - 1974 AD* (Dallas; Numismatics International, 1974), p.66.