

FOREWORD

This is the fourth edition of the catalogue, written in Lincolnshire in 2015. Throughout, I have benefitted from the advice given by many colleagues and fellow students of this series. These include Gerry Buddle, Timothy Crafter, Peter Donald, Niall Fairhead, Tony Goodwin, Andrew Oddy, Alan Penn, Saúl Roll, Marcus and Susan Phillips, Henri Pottier and Andreas Urs Sommer. The fifth named, in particular, has, over the years, provided much needed information on Pseudo-Byzantine and Arab-Byzantine coins on which I am far from expert. Errors are those of the cataloguer alone.

As background to the development of this collection, and for reasons of personal satisfaction, the forewords to three unpublished editions of this catalogue are reproduced below.

Foreword to the first edition and acknowledgements.

This catalogue describes the collection of an English amateur of modest means engaged in the study of the Byzantine base metal coinage in the 1980s and 1990s.

The origins of the collection go back a few years before 1981. At that time, the present owner of the coins, having completed his university studies and taken up paid employment in Government service, noticed that Roman bronze coins of the Tetrarchy could be bought for a few pounds each. This marked the beginning of his coin collecting interests. Subsequently, during a visit to a London bookshop, the first edition of David Sear's *Byzantine Coins and their Values* was examined and he was immediately struck by the primitive vigour of the Byzantine copper coinage, a series which has since offered limitless fascination.

The first Byzantine coin was acquired in 1981 – a year 12 Justinian follis of Constantinople, since un sentimentally sold. The title of the catalogue is a mild misnomer since it records Byzantine coins in silver and lead (the former now disposed of) as well as copper. The heart of the collection really lies in the copper issues from Anastasius I (491-518) to Michael III (843-867) and, within that group, a large number of anomalous coins (forming almost exactly 30% of the whole collection) are scholastically the most interesting.

It is exceptionally unlikely that such a collection could now be replicated at anything like the same outlay in time and money. The collector has been exceptionally fortunate in his dealings with the numismatic trade, from whom he has received almost universal friendliness. Four particular individuals, all of them close friends, must be acknowledged here. Niall Fairhead has, on more than one occasion, stood aside to allow a significant coin to join the collection and in 1995 offered for private sale a highly interesting group of anomalous coins at a favourable price. Marcus and Susan Phillips have offered a large number of coins over nearly two decades and their generous patience (in more than one respect) requires particular acknowledgement. Peter Donald, both as scholar-collector and latterly at A H Baldwin and Sons, has supplied many coins and has been a source of both sound advice and encouragement.

Peter Hale deserves great thanks for photographing the coins that appear in this edition.

It is hoped that the cataloguing of the collection may provide some insight into the world of these often visually undistinguished but powerful, satisfying and challenging coins.

Hertfordshire, November 1999.

Second edition.

A catalogue of this collection was first prepared during the last few months of 1999. Since that time, a further 300 or so coins have been acquired and the time seems right to produce a further edition that, hopefully, incorporates some improvements in presentation.

In comparison to the years 1981 to 1999, relatively fewer anomalous and imitative specimens have been added to the collection – reflecting, possibly, the increased interest in these coins. But some rarities and many unusual or unpublished varieties have been added to it.

Thanks are due to friends and colleagues as before and also to my much loved wife Katie who tolerated my frequent bouts of Sunday afternoon cataloguing fever.

Essex, August 2004.

Third edition.

At the time of completion of the first volume of the illustrated catalogue in mid 2007, the collection stood at about 1350 coins¹. Over the five years between the second edition and the present, new specimens were acquired at a steady rate. At the time of revising this Foreword (June 2010), there are a little more than 1500 coins. A notable acquisition (in 2006), almost certainly in its entirety, was the so-called “Sarrhine hoard” of 236 coins, which is due to be published in a forthcoming Numismatic Chronicle. In 2008, in very fortuitous circumstances, a specimen of the rare, and highly desirable, Heraclian follis of Jerusalem (bearing that mint signature) was acquired for the collection. A number of coins of the mints of Rome and Ravenna also entered the collection, an area where it remains relatively weak, however.

Collecting the copper coinage is, it seems, increasing in popularity all the time. Yet collectors and scholars of the series are not in every respect well served by the literature. *Moneta Imperii Byzantini* (MIB) is a type corpus where only a single image of an issue is usually given. Even the *Dumbarton Oaks* catalogue, probably the best of those covering national collections, does not pay generous attention to the copper. With this in mind, it was felt that a catalogue of a substantial private collection where every coin was illustrated

¹ Currently (January 2014), there are about 2000 coins in the collection.

would be of value. This would enable, for example, study of die chains and variations in style.

Such an illustrated catalogue has been made possible through the use of an inexpensive flat bed scanner.

At some point in the future, a catalogue in traditional book form may be produced. For the present, the form is electronic only. This has benefits, including the opportunity, when examining an entry in the catalogue proper, to download an enlarged JPEG image of the same coin - each coin having a unique accession number by which it is referenced both in the catalogue and in the JPEG data base.

Essex, June 2010.