
BRITISH 18th CENTURY TOKENS

From the Historical "Baldwin Basement" Stock of A H Baldwin & Sons Ltd

Part One

PREFACE

This is the first of three scheduled auctions offering 18th Century Provincial Tokens from the Baldwin's historical stock: "The Baldwin Basement". The tokens have been acquired over the many generations at Baldwin's and have been off the market for at least a half-century, and most quite a bit longer. Baldwin's have been the privileged custodian of what has probably been the largest and most complete collection of tokens in the world, but the decision has been made finally to offer them to collectors via public auction. Many of the individual tokens can be traced directly to well-known collections, including the John Dudman Collection (acquired privately by Baldwin's in 1914), the F S Cokayne Collection (acquired in its entirety in 1946), the A W Jan Collection (purchased by Baldwin's in 1955), and other sources, both private and public, including the Hamer Sale in 1930, Waite Sanderson in 1944, and Longman in 1958.

Of particular note is the collection formed by Francis S Cokayne who assembled an astounding number of tokens, probably the finest, and most extensive collection ever formed. He began collecting, along with his brother, Morton, in the late 1880s, had the pick of James Atkins' cabinet, traded regularly with many of the noted collectors of the period, and seems to have participated in every public token auction in the United Kingdom for over 50 years, either directly or through a representative (it was a standing rule at Baldwin's that staff could not leave on Friday until a new parcel of tokens was posted to Mr Cokayne's offices on Montagu Square). A number of the tokens in this auction can be further traced through him to William Norman, Frederick Lincoln, Samuel Hamer, Lionel Fletcher, William Davis, and, of course, James Atkins, among others.

This offering contains a substantial variety of tokens connected with Skidmore's shop, including those issued by, or associated with, Thomas Spence, Matthew Denton, and Thomas Prattent. Other issuers are represented as well. Included in this sale is the Lloyd-Hamer-Cokayne example of Robert Orchard's Sawbridgeworth Penny; Milton's own die trials of David Rebello's private token; a pair of Jorden's trials for Meymott and Son's Halfpenny; and a number of concoctions including quite a few overstrikes that are both technically interesting and excessively rare, if not unique.

The provincial tokens issued in the late 18th Century in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland form a complex series, essentially composed of a variety of types (as circulating coinage, store cards, political and social commentary, private tokens, and those made for collectors) and for a variety of purposes. There are genuine issues, counterfeits, medley tokens (mules and edge varieties), specious fabrications, restrikes, off metal trials and presentation pieces, odd concoctions, as well as surviving artist's proofs and die trials. As a result, they may be organised, arranged, catalogued or collected in any one of a number of ways.

The tokens in this auction have been arranged alphabetically by issuer. This was a choice made early on in the cataloguing process and was done to place a greater emphasis on the individuals responsible, instead of their assigned geographic location. This arrangement provides for a different sense of the quantity and variety of tokens issued by a specific individual, or individuals, or a company as the case may be, as well as facilitating the tracing of die links and states. Clearly there may be some concerns and for this, we can only hope that you will take the time to explore a path less travelled.

Citations are listed, where available, for Conder Pye, The Virtuoso's Companion and Atkins, as well as Dalton & Hamer. There is reason for this. While Dalton & Hamer seemed to have had access to part of Cokayne's collection prior to their publications, there is evidence that that may not have been the case with others. Nor were their efforts universally accepted. As late as 1936, Glendining's Sale of Frederick Lincoln's Collection was listed only according to Atkins and not Dalton & Hamer's *Provincial Token Coinage*, although the latter had been completed and in print for nearly two decades. I was fortunate to have had access to Baldwin's extensive library that included not only annotated reference volumes and auction catalogues, but also Cokayne's personal notes that were invaluable in bridging the gap between James Atkins' Tradesmen's Tokens and Dalton & Hamer, as well as confirming provenance and dates of acquisition.

These tokens have been well cared for, many having accumulated a patina from a century, or more, of storage. For the most part, the level of preservation is remarkable. As a result, it was possible to identify under-types and die states where it might have been impossible, had the tokens been subject to more extensive handling. They are being offered untouched and as a result some have a little dust and detritus adhering to them, some with the remnants of red casting wax (used to take an impression of the token to make plaster casts for early photogravure illustrations), and as a result much of the lustre and original colour can be well disguised. We have graded the tokens with this in mind and along international standards, mentioning the beautiful hidden lustre where it is evident.

It has been great fun, and an extraordinary privilege, exploring "Baldwin's Basement" and handling tokens that were once the prized possessions of dedicated collectors long passed. Now it is time for them to find new homes. The tokens will continue to be offered by auction in September for each of the next two years.

Gary Groll

Collections Cited

Atkins, James	Sotheby's, 18-20 June 1903, and by private sale
Bliss, Thomas	Private Sale
Clements, Luther	Sotheby's, 17 November 1936
Cokayne, Francis Stewart	Collection acquired by A H Baldwin, c.1946
Dalton, Richard	Private Sale
Daniels, James Herbert	Glendining's, 25-26 March 1936, and by private sale
Davis, William John	Sotheby's, 11-15 March 1901; Glendining's, 29-30 April 1920; Glendining's, 21-23 July 1920
Dudman, John	Collection acquired by A H Baldwin, 1914
Fletcher, Lionel Lawford	Glendining's, 14 March 1934
French, Edward John	Glendining's, 6 July 1936
Hamer, Samuel Henry	Glendining's, 26-28 November 1930, and by private sale
Jan, A. W.	Collection acquired by A H Baldwin & Sons Ltd, c.1955
Lincoln, Frederick	Glendining's, 12 February 1936, and by private sale
Lloyd, Thomas	Sotheby's, 10 May 1878
Longman, William	Glendining's, 12 March 1958
Norman, William	Sotheby's, 13-15 July 1903
Sanderson, W. Waite	Glendining's, 16 November 1944
Tatton, Thomas Egerton	Sotheby's, 6 November 1911
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	'Tokens Having Reference to National and Home Defence', The Numismatist, January 1918
Longman, W.	Tokens of the Eighteenth Century Connected With Booksellers & Bookmakers, London 1916
Lusk, Jon	British and Irish Tradesmen and their Copper Tokens of 1787 - 1804, Ypsilanti, Michigan, USA, 2014
Pye, Charles	Provincial Copper Coins, Birmingham, 1801
Rudkin, Olive D.	Thomas Spence and His Connections, New York, 1927
Samuel, Richard T.	'Provincial Copper Coins and Tokens', The Bazaar, Exchange and Mart and Journal of the Household, 1880-1889
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