Numismatic Oddities in Ipswich: Part Twelve - Dr. W.R. Vezin 16-6-2026

1) An unidentified AE 34mm, 19.18g medal of some age, probably mid 18th century (1) lot 1123, with obv. (?) unarmed griffin rampant l. / rev. A over 8. Described as possibly relating to Pomerania / Rostock, but the style nearer the latter. Possibly a road, transport or dock pass. A single similar specimen about 2g lighter has appeared online with a request for identification by one similarly mystified. £49.36 total vs. estimate £40 - £60

2) One from a group of ninety-nine oriental bronze coins, mostly Chinese but with a few Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese including an unidentified charm of the latter – with this one illustrated, 33mm., 9.72g - a charm in the style of a mid-19c. Xian Feng provincial 10 Cash piece (2) lot 427, but this having obverse Xian Yi Zhong Bao: 'Universally or entirely applicable strong currency' (?) with plain reverse – not seen before and not in the references previously cited, (3) or online. £296.16 total for 99 coins.

3) Apparently a Henry I annulets and piles type penny, S.1265 that had previously gone the rounds of a baffled dealer community, and was shown to two well-known collectors, John Sadler and another to identify the mint etc, who came to the conclusion independently in favour of Hythe, moneyer Sewensth (? my reading). The problem for forgers is that often although able to formulate reasonable lettering they lack the art of the portrait, even the crude one of this type. (4)

4) Cynethryth, Mercia penny AR 16mm., 1.14g. North 399. S.909. This coin appeared in BNJ 2005, Coin Register plate 17, 145. Consigned twice at Lockdales (5) (6) it failed to sell at £6000 & £5500 respectively. Photographs unfortunately gave a strong impression of its being a botched casting with consequent raised areas around EOBA, resulting in its failure to sell in London. High resolution enlargements show that these high areas are curiously deceptive flat discolourations on the field appearing impossible to counterfeit. Sold later in London, 2019, £3000 + premium (7).

5) The collapse of territorial control and formation of the reduced Kushan Kingdom AD 200 – 230+
   A) Probable Bactrian imitation AE 6.93g, 23mm bronze unit, Vasu Deva AD 195 – 230. Obv. Siva and rather reduced bull. / Rev. standing King; one of a lot of ten coins (2) lot 355, for the original type see M. ACW 3461 – 3 (8) £92.55 total.
   B) AE 6.43g, 23mm bronze unit of the Jouan – Jouan, Bactria AD 195 – 230 in imitation of ditto Juvishka 158 – 195, Couch Lounger type obverse with reverse Moon Goddess Mau. (8) 3363 – 4, one of a group of fourteen coins (2) lot 356. Coins of this series are often totally unrecognisable, and if unpublished and separated from their documentation, nobody would have a clue. £74.04 total.

6) Ptolemaic Egypt: Ptolemy IX probably, possibly X 116 – 106 BC AE ‘diobol’ 36mm, 35.39g. These coins weighed 13.2 – 35.48g, so could not have had a fixed exchange rate vs. goods. Considering the apparent losses it must have been one of the heaviest issued. There seems to have been a deliberate attempt to efface the reverse – no sign of the thunderbolt or falcon in the left field reverse. A most peculiar piece. (2) lot 301. £44.42 total, c.f. Lorber 755 and 774 (9) and Svoronos 1575 (10).

7) British India; Shroff – marked coins. At the time of independence, 1947 there were 565 separate administrative/political entities in the Indian Subcontinent – principalities, native states, kingdoms, speaking 720 languages. the UK never ‘ruled India’. It introduced the unifying British Rupee which slowly became legal tender throughout the Subcontinent. The native states still produced their own currencies, not legal in other states, right up to independence. Cross internal border trade and accounting was achieved by exchange of the ‘foreign’ currency at some discount through native bankers called ‘shroffs’. This would be weighed and stamped usually on the edge of the coin for reissue at some exchange rate within the host state. (11)
   A) British India, Bombay Presidency AR 15mm, 6.64g, Half Rupee, early 19c nominally Alamgir II (Mughal) 1754 – 9, year 5 = 1758 – 9, Pridmore 72 (12) ‘Surat mint’, one of six items in a single lot 591 (13) £197.44 total. British coins were not usually shroff marked as they were negotiable over the whole subcontinent, but this was a forgery, overweight by more than 1g.
   B) Unidentified, 21mm, 11.00g, most unusually heavily surface marked since the edges had filled up. one of three items, lot 597 (13) £44.42 total.
   C) Mughal Rupee, also 11.00g of correct weight but on a very small diameter flan, 20mm, with details consequently off edge, but of the unmistakable style of Alamgir II again, Shahjahanabad mint (14).

8) AR 23 – 26mm, 15.66g Tetradrachm of Phaselis, year 8 (c.210 – 9 BC) with marks ϕ with H (8) below, reverse left field with Seleukid anchor c/m on right. This type is in Price only without the countermark (15) 2843. The mark on the cheek of Heracles suggested plating but it is only a thin patch of dark horn silver: SG determination with a 2-place balance gave 95.5 +/- 2.5% Ag. XRF result on the reverse gave Ag 98.51, Au 0.975, Cu 0.261, Pb 0.252 percent, i.e. about £15 worth of gold, except that there may have been some electropositive surface depletion over time environmentally, and later from cleaning. (2) lot 300, n/s at £140.

9) Seleucid Kingdom AR 30 – 31mm, 16.005g Tetradrachm. Antiochos VIII. Reverse Zeus Ouranios nude standing forward facing left, crescent above, holding star, CSC 2292 – 2330. (16) The specimen is plated. The flan had been pre-coated with pure silver and the striking either loosened or detached some of the plating on the left field reverse removing the lower control mark and filling the die. This type was produced at a number of mints and the upper control mark is unidentified. The young Zeus looks like Damascus and the border and hairstyle of Antiochos, Sidon. Plated coins in Seleucid style are generally less convincing than this specimen. Specific gravity indicates 92 +/- 2% Ag. The two sets of photographs show standard numismatic with i = 40 - 50° against the other with lower angle of incidence i = 5 - 10°, the latter showing up specular reflective demarcated remaining Ag plating vs. the stripped core. Other photographs of the coin edge show compromised malleability. (14)

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