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# LONDON PRIVATE MUSEUMS AND THEIR TOKENS, 1784-1802

Peter Lane and Peter Fleig

## INTRODUCTION

Around the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Britain was making new discoveries throughout the world and explorers were returning home with many exotic plants, animals and other objects. Many hitherto unknown specimens were collected, brought back and then distributed to interested parties, most notably the private museums and menageries that existed in London at the time. These museums were able to pay high prices for worthwhile items and the public that frequented these establishments, was ever eager to view these bizarre, alien, oddities. The period was a boom time for the operators of the museums and menageries.

This article traces the history of three museums and menageries which issued their own passes and tokens. Some of the tokens depicted a kangaroo; the first time ever that Australia's most recognized fauna had appeared on any form of currency.

A number of other, similar museums in the London area also used passes during this period, but apart from the details recorded on the passes themselves, little is known about these establishments. The most well known of these museums were Bayly's Museum, in Piccadilly and Richard Summer's Museum, at 24 Cavendish Street.

Museums and menageries in those days had a burlesque and carnival atmosphere about them - they relied heavily on sensationalism and had little regard for any scientific order in their displays. An opportunity to quote from learned men, however,

was always eagerly exploited by the owners. Such statements would be put to their fullest use in the museum's banners and advertisements.

Most of the live animals exhibited in the menageries were often confined indoors in relatively small cages. This was an ideal way to ensure the public could see the animals to best advantage, but undoubtedly the creatures suffered in this unnatural environment. Such caged animals and birds frequently died prematurely and were rarely able to breed.

Many artists spent much of their time drawing and painting the animals in these privately run establishments; the most notable of these artists were probably Sarah Stone, Thomas Beswick and Edwin Landseer. It was one of Edwin Landseer's drawings that was eventually adapted for the medal issued by the Acclimatization Society of Victoria (established in 1861). This society incidentally, introduced many European flora and fauna species into Australia.

The eventual demise of the privately run museums and menageries was largely due to the fact that the public lost interest in seeing exotic animals. The exhibitors thought by reducing entry fees, which they did repeatedly, their turnover would increase. This enticement may have worked in the short run but the continual high cost of buying and feeding the animals remained constant and this burden eventually took its toll. The reduction of the entry fees simply delayed the inevitable.

By 1828, the few surviving private museums could no longer continue to operate economically, due to the opening of the highly successful public London Zoo. This zoo charged only a modest entry fee and visitors could spend a full day leisurely strolling through its park setting. Although living conditions for the animals here were still very basic, they seemed to be an improvement on those provided by the private museums. The public also seemed to enjoy the new setting much more.

### SIR ASHTON LEVER AND HIS MUSEUM

Sir Ashton Lever's museum - called the Holophusicon - was a privately owned and run museum of minerals, stuffed birds and animals and ethnological specimens. These exhibits included many newly discovered

exotic finds, which had been collected in the Pacific Islands and Australia by naturalists, colonists and explorers and brought back to England on some of the voyages.

Lever's museum was a London land-mark and just about everyone was eager to see the curiosities tucked away within its walls. Although it was open to the general public, however, only the relatively affluent could afford the initial entry fee of ten shillings and sixpence.

In 1786 Lever disposed of his museum, which was then acquired by James Parkinson who kept it going for another twenty years. The remarkable story of how Parkinson acquired the museum is explained later in this article. He renamed it the Leverian Museum and moved it to another site in London.

Ashton Lever was born in 1729 at Alkrington Hall near Manchester, from landed gentry stock. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Already at an early age, he was collecting live birds and his reputation as a collector and ornithologist grew steadily. At the age of thirty he started to collect curiosities and ten years later he made his collection available to the public. By 1774, he had moved to Leicester Square in London, where he planned to exhibit his collection on a commercial basis. After eventually disposing of his museum in 1786, he spent his last days at Alkrington Hall, where he died early 1788.

The building in Leicester Square that Lever had chosen as his museum was already some one hundred and fifty years old when he moved in, yet in spite of its age, he managed to cram all its sixteen rooms with exhibits. Even the corridors were lined with showcases. He opened the building as a museum with much fanfare and publicity on



Sir Ashton Lever, 1787 *Peter Lane Collection*

## SIR ASHTON LEVER'S HOLOPHUSICON PASS



**Obverse:** Inscription in centre. S.R.A.L. with a radiating device above and below the inscription.



**Reverse:** Inscription in centre. HOLOPHUSICON, with a radiating device above and below the inscription.

Size: 38mm. Metals: bronze and silver. Engraver: not known. Mint: not known. Number struck: not known, considered very rare. Reference: Davis & Waters 1976:221.

The word Holophusicon comes from two Greek words, "holos" meaning whole, complete, entire and "phusis" meaning nature, natural being, product of nature. An alternative for the latter word could be "phusiskos" meaning natural or belonging to nature.

the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1775. Discretely displayed in a separate and clearly marked room were some "*curious monkies and monsters which might disgust the Ladies*". When the museum opened, the initial entry fee was half a guinea, but by 1778, some three years later, the entry fee had already been halved. In 1784, when the museum was known as the Holophusicon, entry had been halved yet again to "*HALF A CROWN each, and subscriptions as usual*".

The museum acquired thousands of artefacts from Captain Cook's third voyage (1776-1780). Many of the officers and crew who sailed the Pacific on other voyages during this period also sold artefacts they had acquired during their travels to Lever, as well as to other private museum owners

in London. By 1783, some twenty thousand specimens collected from all over the world and valued at £53,000, were held in Lever's museum.

The "in-house" artist of Lever's museum, Sarah Smith, known by her maiden name Sarah Stone, completed a series of drawings and paintings of the museum specimens between 1777 and 1806. Three authors, Thomas Pennant, George Shaw and John White, commissioned her to illustrate their books, of which the most famous is no doubt, John White's *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales*. Of the sixty-four plates in this volume, thirty-six were signed by Sarah Stone and about a further ten unsigned drawings are attributed to her.

There are several factors which help to

indicate a date of manufacture for the pass used in Lever's museum. In 1778 Lever was knighted for duties carried out as High Sheriff of Lancashire and because the Holophusicon pass acknowledges his knighthood with the inscription Sr. A. L (see illustration p.3), we can assume that the pass was not made before 1778. A second factor is the use of the term Holophusicon. On the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1784, the phrase "*Sir Ashton Lever, Holophusicon*", was used for the first time in an advertisement for Lever's museum, in "*The Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*". This advertisement continued to be run until the 25<sup>th</sup> March of that year. The term Holophusicon, was not used again after this date. Although Davis and Waters date this piece circa 1774-1778, there seems to be a strong case for dating the manufacture of the piece 1784, going by the limited time the term Holophusicon appeared in the newspaper advertisements and supported by the fact that the pass itself carries this term.

Like many entry passes of the period, Lever's pass simply records the initials of the owner and the name of the establishment. These passes rarely record the full address, possibly because patrons were familiar with the venues.

When the museum collection was eventually sold by Parkinson in 1806, the auction catalogue made no mention of any passes. Perhaps the bulk of Lever's passes were either "souvenired" by the public or disposed of in bulk, at the time when the museum changed hands, or a little later.

Lever's passes were not intended to circulate as currency like the passes of Hall and Pidcock, which are dealt with later in this article. They were in fact not in use anymore, by the time the currency tokens circulated between 1795 and 1802.

## TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

Although Lever's museum appeared to be popular, it was proving to be a financial burden for its owner. To make the museum more profitable, the entry price was reduced substantially, but this did not have the desired, positive effect. The museum continued to lose money and by 1786, Lever was obliged to take more drastic action. He decided to put the museum up for sale.

An act of parliament allowed him to sell the collection as a whole by lottery and he proceeded to print 36,000 tickets, which he intended to sell at one guinea each. In order to encourage sale of the tickets, he allowed any ticket holder free entry to the museum up to the lottery closing date. By the 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1786, the date set for the lottery draw, Lever had only sold about nine thousand tickets, leaving three quarters of the total tickets still unsold. Lever decided to proceed with the draw anyway and hoped that the roughly twenty thousand tickets remaining in his possession held the winning number, but he was not to succeed.

The winning ticket was bought by a Mrs. Parkinson, who ironically died a short time afterwards, before she was able to claim the lottery prize. Her husband was unaware that his now deceased wife had bought the winning ticket and that is why nobody came forward immediately after the draw to claim this rich prize. People began to wonder about this delay and the idea was seriously entertained that the winning ticket holder was not going to claim the museum, out of sympathy for the luckless Sir Ashton Lever. It took the widower James Parkinson five weeks before he came across the winning ticket while sorting through his late wife's effects. He immediately laid claim to his prize.

## THE NEW MUSEUM OWNER

James Parkinson, a “*law stationer*”, was born in 1730 in Shrewsbury and was now fifty-six years old when he claimed the prize and became the new owner of the museum. Initially, he was not at all interested in keeping this huge establishment and wanted to cash it in as soon as possible. He therefore made approaches to the Queen of Portugal and also the Empress of Russia, in an effort to convince either (or both) of them to purchase it outright, but nothing came of these negotiations. He then made the decision to keep the museum and manage it himself, but he needed to make it financially viable.

As an initial step, Parkinson attempted to gain public sympathy and favour by naming the museum the “*Leverian Museum*”, in honour of its founder. He also had to obtain cheaper premises and that same year, moved the contents of the museum to the Rotunda in Albion Place, on the south side of the River Thames. This was a new building of one thousand square yards of space, divided into seventeen compartments.

## PARKINSON DISPOSES OF THE MUSEUM

A series of catalogues of the museum’s collection was circulated to help stimulate public enthusiasm. By 1794, however, general interest in the exhibits had waned and the admittance fee was reduced from half a crown to one shilling.

Twelve years later, Parkinson was losing money and decided to dispose of the museum. In 1806, he offered the museum collection as a whole to the government. Parliament sought the advice of Sir Joseph Banks, at that time president of the Royal

Society, but Banks was not in favour of the deal and recommended against it. The government followed his advice and declined Parkinson’s offer. At this, Parkinson complained that Banks had a bias against him and his museum and that this bias had clouded his judgement in assessing the true worth of the museum and as a consequence, Banks had not fully appreciated the importance of the collection. It was common knowledge at the time, that Banks did not like the fact that the museum’s specimens were arranged in such a non-scientific order and this may well have influenced his judgement.

Unable to find a single buyer for the museum as a whole, Parkinson decided to sell the collection by auction. The numerous specimens were grouped into lots and catalogued by the author and naturalist, Edward Donovan. The auction was spread over a fifty day period, from May to July, 1806. The catalogue for the auction lists the first 6,840 out of a total of 7,879 lots. A typical lot description reads: “*A curious long carved war club, Friendly Islands*”. Other lots go into more detail, like lot 6140, “*Sledge and dog-harness presented to Sir Ashton Lever, by Captain King, and by him particularly mentioned in Vol III. P.202 of Capt. Cook’s last voyage*”. The sale netted just under £6,650, leaving about £1,600 worth of lots unsold. Parkinson’s original winning lottery ticket was purchased in one of the lots by Lord Weymouth, for 11/6 (eleven shillings and sixpence).

The main buyers of the auction lots were Edward Donovan the cataloguer, Leopold von Fitchel on behalf of the Imperial Museum in Vienna, the bird collector Lord Stanley, William Bullock, proprietor of another museum in London and Captain

- 5 6 6135 A handsome set of tesbiks, or Mahometan devotional beads, and two others *Prout*  
 2 — 6136 Two large quill feathers of the condor, and the great wing bone of ditto *L*  
 2 — 6137 The Lord's Prayer, written in an extremely small compass, and three specimens of writing, by Sarah Smith, of Kilburn; born without hands or arms  
 9 — 6138 A case, mounted with silver, containing a variety of curious cutting instruments *Laskey*  
 4 6 6139 A small Chinese steatite box, with a carved joss on the lid; and imitation of a snake  
 14 — 6140 Sledge, and dog-harness complete, presented to Sir Ashton Lever, by Captain King, and by him particularly mentioned in Vol. III. p. 202, of Capt. Cook's last voyage *Smith*  
 5 — 6141 Handsomely carved ivory cane head, bracelet made of red Chinese oil beads, &c. *Latham*  
 2 6 6142 Two beautiful feather ornaments, Sandwich Islands *Prout*  
 2 6 6143 Three various ornamented daggers, from ditto  
 2 6 6144 A beautiful scarlet and yellow feather-helmet, from ditto *Athens*  
 4 6 6145 A fine academy chalk drawing, handsomely framed and glazed *L*  
 7 6 6146 A large sleeping stool and a meat dish, from Otaheite *South*  
 9 6 6147 An elegant small olive-green feather cloak, and a feather fly-flap, Sandwich Islands *Scotton*  
 7 6 6148 A handsome four-legged sleeping stool, and a basaltic adze, Otaheite *Trimmer*  
 3 6 6149 Two curious boxes, a metallic funnel, and ten pieces of Chinese money *Athens*  
 3 6 6150 Two clubs, and a bone patapatoo, New Zealand *Smith*  
 3 3 6151 Finely worked spoutoon of a New Zealand chief  
 1 13 6152 A beautifully carved club, Friendly Islands *Brogden*  
 1 4 6153 Another very curious ditto, of singular shape, from ditto *Whe?*  
 3 6 6154 War club, made of whale's bone, Nootka Sound; and large basaltic adze, Otaheite *Rally*  
 9 6 6155 A bezoar stone, and two porcelain mouth-pieces, for Turkish pipes *Latham*  
 0 6 6156 Cap, Nootka Sound; a small meat dish, a bowl, a dagger, hemp beater, and shark's tooth instrument, S. Sea Islands *Smith*  
 1 5 6157 A curious long carved war club, Friendly Isles *W*  
 1 6 6158 An uncommonly large and perfect scarlet and yellow feather idol, with pearly eyes, Sandwich Isles *Prout*  
 10 6 6159 Malay creese, in a handsome sheath *W. Tab*  
 10 6 6160 A Turkish lady's eyebrow pigment case, made of gold and silver *L*  
 1 12 6161 A fine specimen of trochilus cristatus, crested humming bird, on the nest *Black*  
 3 6 6162 White and grey tody *Black*  
 4 6 6163 White-throated, mountain mouse and another *Randall*  
 10 6 6164 Hazle grouse, m. and fem, *Tetrao bonasia* *Thompson*

Laskey, who was buying on behalf of the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow. There was no representative from the British Museum; obviously Banks had been so outspoken against the collection, that no one from that institution dared to bid openly at the auction, for fear of publicly offending Banks and perhaps risking their future employment prospects.

After having disposed of his museum, Parkinson was employed as a diplomat in Brazil and also in France. He died at the age of eighty-three in Somers Town in London. The museum building was converted into a library by one of Parkinson's sons, an architect.

A few copies of the museum auction sale catalogue have survived, one of which is in the collection of the State Library of Victoria. This copy is historically valuable, as it is annotated by hand and records the prices realized and the names of the buyers.

## AUSTRALIAN CONNECTIONS TO THE MUSEUM

Both Parkinson and Lever played an important role in promoting the collection of specimens brought back from the Australian and Pacific regions. They were responsible for displaying these specimens and thus making them accessible to the public for viewing and studying. Perhaps deliberately, they were also instrumental in having competent and well-known artists record many of the specimens in the form of drawings and paintings. Some of these drawings and paintings were used to illustrate important, contemporary books relating to Australia.

One such book was the "*Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales*", kept by the "First

Fleet" surgeon, John White and published in 1790, by Debrett of London. White had kept this journal at the suggestion of his friend the naturalist, Thomas Wilson, who had been responsible for delivering to Parkinson's museum, a male kangaroo that White had collected in New South Wales. A drawing of this kangaroo by a Charles Catton Junior appears in the journal. White's journal also includes drawings and watercolours by the museum artist Sarah Stone, as well as works by Mortimer and Frederick Poydore Nodder, two artists who had frequented the museum while Lever had been owner.

Apart from his journal, John White is also remembered for his contribution to Australian numismatics. In January 1788, whilst the "First Fleet" lay at anchor in Botany Bay, White had a silver medal engraved, recording the nautical details of his voyage and also an image of the ship he sailed on, the *Charlotte*. This medal is today known as the "*Charlotte Medal*" (Refer Vol. 9 of this journal for an article on this medal).

Another contemporary publication, Governor Arthur Philip's account of his "First Fleet" travels, "*Voyage to Botany Bay*", includes drawings by the artist Sydenham T. Edwards, of bird specimens held at the time in the Leverian museum.

During Captain Cook's last and fateful voyage many specimens were collected from Nootka Sound on the Pacific coast of Canada, and many of these items were eventually acquired by Parkinson for his museum.

Captain George Dixon, who had also sailed with Captain Cook on his third voyage in the *Discovery*, wrote an account of his travels on another expedition, "*Voyage round the World*" (1789), which has a



number of drawings by the artist William Lewin. This artist had been a regular visitor to the museum under both Lever and Parkinson.

One of William Lewin's sons, John William, wrote and illustrated the first book published in Australia on Australian birds, "*Birds of New South Wales with their Natural History*" (1813).

Sarah Stone is today represented by her artwork in five major institutions in Australia and New Zealand. The earliest recorded collection of her water-colours to come to Australia was acquired by George Robertson of the booksellers, Angus & Robertson. In 1928, he donated one hundred and thirty two of these water-colours to the Australian Museum. Fifteen examples of Stone's work were acquired by the National Library of Australia in 1992. The Dixson and the Mitchell libraries each have one signed work and a small number of unsigned examples that are attributed to her. The Alexander Turnbull library in N.Z. has one example of her work.

## THOMAS HALL'S EXHIBITION TOKENS

Thomas Hall was a London taxidermist by trade. He exhibited deformed, living, human beings or "freaks", as well as exotic, stuffed birds and animals and also bought and sold curiosities. During the summer months, he would tour the countryside in a carnival-like fashion with his exhibition of living and dead specimens.

In 1795, Hall issued entry passes to his show. These passes were also accepted as penny and halfpenny tokens in general trade, due to a current severe shortage of copper coins for use as change. This shortage of

currency so hampered trade in England at the time, that many businesses had their own copper tokens minted in an attempt to overcome this problem. There were also other benefits for the traders who issued their own tokens, such as free advertising and a profit in the selling of the tokens; Hall would certainly have been aware of these benefits.

Hall's token reverses record his London premises, which were at Curiosity House in City Road, near Finsbury Square. The token obverses depict a number of stuffed animal exhibits: a kangaroo, an armadillo, a rhinoceros and a toucan; the two living humans portrayed are a knock-kneed male dwarf and an albino negress.

The dwarf went by the pseudonym, *Sir Jeffrey Dunstan, Mayor of Garrat*. The background to this name is as follows: Garrat was a small hamlet in Surrey, in which the landed gentry had earlier that century, taken over some of the parklands. This possession became known as, *Encroachment of the Common*. The local residents objected to this high-handedness and took action by electing a Mayor, who was then able to successfully reclaim the Common for them. After this success they continued with the annual election, but now only as a mock re-enactment. In 1781, Dunstan was one of the candidates and was elected Mayor. At the time, he was working as a travelling salesman selling old wigs. He was evidently popular with the locals and was re-elected as Mayor for another three terms, until 1795. After the following year, these elections were abandoned.

When Hall's exhibition was shown at Bartholomew Fair, Dunstan was employed by him as a huckster. This seemed to suit his character, as he was generally considered a wag and a comic. He would, for in-

stance, wear his shirt open to the waist and appear bareheaded in public, apparently things not done in those days.

When not working for Hall, Dunstan could be found in the public houses of London, giving renditions of his election speeches. He died an alcoholic in 1797 and was buried at St. Marys, in Whitechapel.

The albino negress, a native of Kingston, Jamaica, emigrated to England and through marriage to an Englishman became Mrs. Newsham. The marriage produced six children. It seems that she may have appeared in one of Hall's penny shows, at Bartholomew Fair.

The images of the animals on Hall's tokens were based on the preserved remains of animals, originally brought to England from their various countries of origin. The rhinoceros, for example, had been shipped over from its birthplace in the East Indies as a five-year-old. It was brought to England in 1790 at a cost of £700 and sold to George Pidcock, about whom we shall hear more of, later.

This rhinoceros is depicted on one of the obverses of Hall's tokens, together with an armadillo and a kangaroo. The kangaroo image on this token is significant, because it represents the first appearance of this marsupial on any form of currency or medal. The word for kangaroo is written, "*kanguroo*", one of the various ways it could apparently be spelled at the time. The tail of this animal is incorrectly pointed upwards and highlights the typically uninformed way the kangaroo was pictured – sometimes resembling a rat - in this early period.

## DIE-SINKER AND MANUFACTURER

According to R. C. Bell and several other English token authorities, the die-sinking of Hall's tokens is attributed to Roger Dixon and the striking of the tokens, to William Lutwyche.

Roger Dixon worked as a die-sinker in Birmingham from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century and was mainly involved in cutting token dies for William Lutwyche. William Lutwyche conducted a highly successful token manufacturing business during this period. He employed (or contracted ) a number of other engravers , including Arnold, Jacobs, James Ponthon and P. Wyon (of the well known English engraving family). Lutwyche's business was well established and he even produced his own advertising token which featured the minting press he was using to strike all of Hall's tokens.

The quantity of tokens that Lutwyche eventually produced for Hall was said to weigh a total of just over nine hundred-weight. Apart from fulfilling the regular orders for tokens, Lutwyche is strongly suspected of also having manufactured numerous *collector rarities* on the side. The significant number of die mulings and examples in different metals that exist today, seem to attest to this suspicion. Hall himself, very likely knew of this side practice and may even have encouraged people to collect his tokens, with profit as well as publicity in mind.

## OBVERSES



**Negress, no necklace.** A negress standing to left, (without a necklace). Legend, MRS NEWSHAM THE WHITE NEGRESS.



**Quadrupeds.** A Kangaroo above right, an armadillo centre left and a rhinoceros bottom right with a curved caption above each quadruped, THE KANGUROO / THE ARMADILLO / THE RHINOCEROS The "OO" in KANGUROO shows signs of recutting (double image).



**Negress, with necklace.** A negress standing to left, wearing a necklace. Legend, MRS NEWSHAM THE WHITE NEGRESS.



**Small Toucan.** A toucan perched on a branch to left, head turned right. Legend, TO THE CURIOUS OBSERVERS OF NATURAL PHÆNOMENA . The eye of the bird is below "O" in CURIOUS.



**Dwarf.** A male dwarf standing, with shirt open at the front, with head facing right. Legend, SIR JEFFERY DUNSTAN MAYOR OF GARRAT.



**Larger Toucan.** A toucan perched on a branch to left, head turned right. Legend, TO THE CURIOUS OBSERVERS OF NATURAL PHÆNOMENA The eye of the bird is below first "U" in CURIOUS.

## REVERSES



**Address in six lines.** Six line inscription in centre. T. HALL / CITY ROAD / NEAR / FINSBURY SQUARE / LONDON / 1795. Legend. THE FIRST ARTIST IN EUROPE FOR PRESERVING BIRDS BEASTS &c



**Address in four lines.** Four line inscription in centre. NEAR / FINSBURYS SQUARE / LONDON / 1795. Legend. TO BE HAD AT THE CUROSITY HOUSE CITY ROAD.

## THOMAS HALL'S TOKENS



**Address in circles:** Four lines inscription in centre. THE 1<sup>ST</sup> / ARTIST / IN / EUROPE. Inner Legend. CITY ROAD NEAR FINSBURY SQUARE. Outer Legend. T. HALL PRESERVER OF BIRDS BEASTS OR REPTILES.

Diameters: 30 to 31mm.

Thickness: pennies 4mm, half pennies 2mm.

Metal: copper.

Engraver: attributed to Roger Dixon.

Mint: attributed to William Lutwyche.

Number struck: total weight of pennies and half pennies; 12 cwt.

Reference: Dalton & Hamer (D & H).

The words in bold type are the key words referred to in the charts.

## THE COLLAR DIES

The collars with edge inscriptions and millings were arbitrarily mated with the striking dies, resulting in numerous alignment variations. Collar details are as follow:

The words in bold type are the key words referred to in the charts.

MANUFACTURED BY W. LUTWYCHE BIRMINGHAM  
ON **DEMAND** WE PROMISE TO PAY ONE PENNY  
PAYABLE IN LANCASTER LONDON OR **LIVERPOOL**

PAYABLE AT **LONDON** . . . . .

PAYABLE IN **DUBLIN** OR LONDON ∞ ∞

PAYABLE IN LANCASTER LONDON OR **BRISTOL**

Milled

**Milled** to Left

**Milled** to Right

**Plain** (square smooth edge)

**Collar not used.** (uneven edge)

## OBVERSE, REVERSE AND COLLAR DIE COMBINATIONS

The following three charts record the coupling of the die combinations for Hall's penny and half penny tokens. The numerals used in the charts are D & H Middlesex penny and half penny reference numbers. The letters in capitals after the reference number, denotes the rarity: C common, S scarce, R rare, RR very rare, and RRR highest rarity.

### HALL'S PENNIES

OBVERSE - REVERSE	Collar DEMAND	Collar LUTWYCHE	Collar Plain	Collar not used
Quadrupeds - Address 6 lines		25 C		
Dwarf - Address 6 lines	26a S		26 C	26b S
Negress no necklace - Address 6 lines		27 S		
Negress no necklace - Address 4 lines	28 S			28a S
Negress with necklace - Address 4 lines	29 RRR			29a RRR
Negress with necklace - Address 6 lines		30 RRR		

### HALL'S HALF PENNIES: with edge inscriptions

OBVERSE - REVERSE	Collar LIVERPOOL	Collar BRISTOL	Collar DUBLIN	Collar LONDON
Dwarf - Address 4 lines	315b RR			
Small toucan - Address in circles				318 RRR
Large toucan - Address in circles		319b RR	319a C	

### HALL'S HALF PENNIES: without edge inscriptions

OBVERSE - REVERSE	Collar Plain	Collar Milled	Collar Milled L	Collar Milled R	Collar Not Used
Quadrupeds - Address 6 lines	313 C				
Quadrupeds - Address 4 lines	314 C				
Dwarf - Address 4 lines			315 C	315a RR	315c C
Dwarf - Address 6 lines	316 C				
Negress no necklace- Address 4 lines	317 C	317a RR			
Large toucan - Address in circles	319 C	319c RR			

## PIDCOCK'S MENAGERIE EXHIBITION

All of London would have been familiar with Pidcock's Menagerie. People were fascinated by the weird animals and freaks of nature on display here and came from all regions to view this strange exhibition. The many alien animals on show here, were of course the most recently imported creatures from the newly discovered world of Africa, Asia, Australasia and the Americas.

The menagerie was first owned by a J. Pidcock who later formed a partnership with Gilbert Pidcock. About 1795, Gilbert took over as sole owner.

After touring the countryside as a travelling exhibition, the menagerie was eventually, permanently located in the city of London. The well-known artist, Thomas Bewick, made sketches of the animals whilst the exhibition was in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1788. A number of these sketches were later published in a book written by Ralph Beilby titled, "*General History of Quadrupeds*".

A rather lengthy advertisement appeared in the London Chronicle of 29<sup>th</sup> January 1791, proclaiming Pidcock's latest acquisition, a two-headed cow:

*"Now exhibiting at the Lyceum, Strand. The surprising Heifer, with two Heads. This very remarkable creature has two Heads, Four Horns, Four Eyes, Four Ears, Four Nostrils, through each of which it breathes, &c. This truly wonderful Curiosity is the only one of its kind in Europe: and what is more astonishing, it takes its Sustenance with both mouths at the same time...it is the...opinion of John Hunter Esq., Professor of Anatomy, that she has two hearts. One of the Heads, together with the horns, rep-*

*resents that of a Bull, and the other a Cow. ( etc. etc. )."*

In 1793, J. Pidcock purchased a large four-storey building in the Strand, called Exeter Exchange (or Change). This building had been an "exchange" station for stagecoaches for over a hundred years and was a prominent and well-known landmark. Pidcock either had this place demolished and rebuilt, or had the place substantially renovated. The Pidcock tokens bear this address, Exeter Change. Surprisingly the exhibits were housed on the upper floors of the building, even though they included an elephant and a rhinoceros. The ground floor served as a shopping arcade.

Initially the Exeter Change was intended to house the exhibition only during the off-season winter months, when the weather was too inclement for touring the countryside. Patronage proved to be so satisfactory through the winter, however, that Pidcock was able to make this place an all-year-round exhibition.

Measures taken to promote the exhibition included covering the outer wall of the premises overlooking the street with pictorial advertising posters; attendants wearing beefeater costumes, helped to add colour and atmosphere to the menagerie. Entry was two shillings and six-pence, or one shilling to see just one of the animals, such as, for example, the two-headed cow.

Whilst the entry fee was high, so too were the running costs. The animals were very rare and costly and also expensive to feed. For example, the five year old East Indian rhinoceros, mentioned on page 8, was purchased by G. Pidcock for £700. It was fed on a daily basis a quarter hundredweight of clover, the same amount of navy-biscuits, a large quantity of "green meat" (fruit and

vegetables) and sweet wines. But this expensive animal lived for only another three years before it died and then had to be replaced. Its replacement was another rhinoceros, which died within two months. The menagerie overheads were indeed high.

The story of the first rhinoceros involves another menagerie owner and token issuer Thomas Hall, and goes briefly as follows: this animal was captured somewhere in the East Indies in 1790 as a five year old and shipped over to England, where it was acquired by Pidcock and probably became a major draw-card in the Pidcock menagerie. Two years later it dislocated a foreleg, which became inflamed and infected and within nine months, the animal died. Pidcock apparently got in touch with Thomas Hall the taxidermist, to offer him the carcass, but it seems that Hall's arrival may have been delayed. Meanwhile, Pidcock allowed the dead animal to rot above ground. The stench became so unbearable that the Mayor of Portsmouth ordered the carcass to be immediately buried. When Hall finally arrived, he was obliged to dig the rotted carcass up under cover of darkness.

As already stated, the second rhinoceros, acquired as a replacement for the first, lasted only several months before it too, died. Such was the fate of many of the animals kept in captivity in those early days.

Gilbert Pidcock died in 1810, aged 67. There is some uncertainty about his successor and it seems that the menagerie was either acquired by a Thomas Clark in 1810, or it was purchased at auction by the veteran menagerie manager Stephen Polito, in the same year. In *Tradesmens Tickets and Private Tokens 1785-1819* p. 97 the author, R.C. Bell, states that Pidcock "was succeeded by Thomas Clark, who in turn died in 1816" and by 1826 the proprietor was Mr. Edward

Cross. Author, Jan Bonderson states in *The Feejee Mermaid...* p.68 that Edward Cross was Pidcock's deputy, and on the following page, that "Stephen Polito bought the whole establishment at auction." Then "Cross bought out old Mr. Polito in 1814". To confuse the matter even further, this latter date is also in dispute; author, Wilfred Blunt in *The Ark in the Park*, p. 8, implies that in 1816 the establishment was known as "Polito's Royal Menagerie".

When Edward Cross, took over as sole proprietor, the establishment was known as "Exeter Change Royal Menagerie". At this time many more exotic animals were added to the menagerie, including lions, antelopes, a bison, camels, crocodiles, an elephant, hyenas, jaguars, llamas, an orangutan, sea lions, tigers, as well as a vast collection of unusual and rare birds.

Probably the most celebrated animal in the menagerie at this time was an elephant named Chunee. Chunee was a trained animal which had - prior to its entering the menagerie - taken part in a pantomime of *Harlequin and Columbine* at the prestigious Covent Garden theatre. In 1826, however, while in the menagerie, Chunee underwent a personality change and became a threat to the public and Cross had to have it put down. It was decided that the only way to destroy an elephant was to shoot it and a firing squad was quickly organized. The animal was not to be killed so easily, however, and only died after 152 bullets had been pumped into it. The execution was immortalized in a wood engraving, much publicized at the time.

By the mid 1820's zoologists and others considered it cruel and inhumane to keep animals confined indoors. This concern for wild and exotic animals gained momentum as the years passed and no doubt Cross's Menagerie would have felt the impact of the pub-

lic's changing attitude. On top of this, in 1829, Cross's exhibition building was condemned and demolished (the present site of the Strand Palace Hotel). Cross at that time decided to sell his collection and offered it along with his own services to the recently opened London Zoo. The zoo declined his offer.

That same year, 1829, having failed to sell his collection of wild animals, he moved his exhibition to the King's Mews (the present site of the National Gallery). With animal rights campaigners creating adverse publicity and seeing the success of the park-like setting of the London Zoo, he sought an outdoor setting for his menagerie.

He acquired 13 acres at Walworth including a manor house, a few miles outside London, and set up the Surrey Zoological Garden. This zoo seems to have been administered by the Surrey Zoological and Botanical Society. To fund this zoo Cross received financial backing from a number of prominent individuals including Queen Adelaide, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Duke of Devonshire. By 1831 the zoo had opened and immediately became a respected and successful establishment. In 1844 Edward Cross, at the age of 70, retired.

The zoo was taken over by William Tyler, who had worked at the Exeter Change Royal Menagerie. During his period of directorship the zoo fell into decay; the premises received little maintenance and the aging animals were not replaced. This resulted in the zoo losing its reputation and its general appeal diminished to such an extent that it was forced to close in 1856. The animals were auctioned off for a mere pittance due to their age and infirmity. The bears were sold to a hairdressing firm simply for their grease which was going to be used for balding pates.

## THE TOKENS

From 1795 to 1801, Pidcock, (presumably Gilbert) had halfpenny and farthing entry-passes made for the menagerie exhibition. These passes depict many of the birds and animals that were on show. From an Australian perspective, the pass that has on it a female kangaroo carrying a joey in her pouch, is probably the most significant. The other token that stands out is perhaps the token that pictures the two-headed cow; the one that shows an elephant does not, apparently, portray the famous Chuneo.

## THE DIE-SINKERS AND MANUFACTURERS

The Pidcock token dies were cut by Roger Dixon, C. James and possibly also B. Jacobs. The dies attributed to Jacobs are reasonably easy to distinguish, as they are considerably cruder in style than those of the other two engravers. The production of the tokens was done by either C. James or William Lutwyche.

C. James was a London die-sinker and manufacturer of tokens, who signed his work with his surname. He also sometimes had other manufacturers like Lutwyche (of Birmingham), or Peter Skidmore (of London) strike tokens for him. B. Jacobs was based in London and worked for the two token manufacturers Lutwyche and Skidmore. While striking the menagerie passes for Pidcock, Lutwyche managed to produce a significant number of collector varieties in addition to the regular token issue by mixing obverse, reverse and edge dies and using two flan thicknesses. He had done this with Thomas Hall's tokens, but now managed to produce an even greater range of varieties.



## PIDCOCK'S HALFPENNY DIES

The words in bold type are the key words referred to in the chart on page 21.



**Antelope.** An antelope standing to left. Legend, ❖ **PIDCOCK'S** ❖ **EXHIBITION** ❖ **ALIVE** , in 1795, in exergue.  
Diesinker and Manufacturer: James.



**(b) Cow.** A two headed cow standing to right. Legend, ❖ **EXETER CHANGE** ❖ **STRAND LONDON** . Similar to previous die, but diamond shape in legend.  
Diesinker and Manufacturer: James.



**Cockatoo.** A cockatoo on a perch to left. Legend, **ORANGE CRESTED COCKATOO** 1801  
Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**(a) Crane.** A crane standing to right. Legend, **THE AFRICAN CROWN CRANE** ★ **PIDCOCK'S EXHIBITION**.  
Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**(a) Cow.** A two headed cow standing to right. Legend, ★ **EXETER CHANGE** ★ **STRAND LONDON**. Stars between name and address.  
Diesinker and Manufacturer: James.



**(b) Crane.** A crane standing to right. Legend, ★ **THE AFRICAN CROWN CRANE** ★ **PIDCOCK'S EXHIBITION** (sic).  
Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche



(a) **Eagle.** An eagle soaring with head turned to right, with sun rays above. Below eagle, ★ 1795 ★ BIRDS ★ AND ★ BEASTS.  
 Diesinker: James.  
 Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



(b) **Elephant.** An elephant walking to left. Above, ★ PIDCOCK'S ★ ★ ★ and below elephant, EXHIBITION. (No signature.)  
 Diesinker: Possibly Dixon.



(b) **Eagle.** An eagle with wings open, head to right, standing on a rock. Legend, BIRDS . AND BEAST.  
 Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



**Kangaroo.** A kangaroo with joey in pouch, standing to left, head turned right. Legend, THIS . KANGA-ROO'S . BIRTH . SEP . 10 . 1800 , and a small engravers initial, J, below kangaroo.  
 Diesinker: Possibly Jacobs.  
 Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



(a) **Elephant.** An elephant walking to left. Above, ★ PIDCOCK'S ★ ★ ★ and below elephant, EXHIBITION . Engravers name, JAMES , in small below truncation.  
 Diesinker: James.  
 Manufacturers: unknown.



(a) **Lion.** A lion recumbent to left, head turned partly right, and supporting an oval tablet with inscription, EXETER/CHANGE/LONDON. Legend, PIDCOCK'S EXHIBITION. Engravers name, C. JAMES, in small below lion.  
 Diesinker: James.  
 Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



(b) **Lion.** A lion recumbent to left, head turned party right, and supporting an oval tablet with inscription, EXETER/CHANGE/LONDON. Legend, PIDCOCKS EXHIBITION (sic). Engravers name, C. JAMES, in small below lion. Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



**Wanderow.** A sitting wanderow facing front and holding a stick in its left hand. Inscription left of animal THE WAN- and to its right -DEROW and below the wanderow, the date 1801. Legend, ★ PIDCOCKS ★ GRAND . MENAGERIE . EXETER . CHANGE . LONDON. Diesinker: Dixon. Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



(c) **Lioness.** A lioness standing to right, head turned, with a small dog on her back. Legend, LION AND DOG • 1801 • . Diesinker: Possibly Jacobs. Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Nylghau.** A nylghau standing to right. Legend, ★ PIDCOCK'S ★ EXHIBITION and JAMES in small in exergue. Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



(d) **Lion.** A Lion recumbent to right, head facing front, with a small dog in paws. Legend, • PIDCOCK'S • GRAND . MENAGERIE . EXETER . CHANGE . LONDON . Diesinker: Possibly Jacobs Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Ostrich.** An ostrich walking to left. Legend, ❖ EXETER CHANGE STRAND LONDON❖ and engravers name, JAMES, in small in exergue. Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



**(a) Rhinoceros.** A rhinoceros standing to right, a small bush near front legs. Legend, EXETER • CHANGE • STRAND • and in exergue • LONDON • .  
Diesinker and manufacturers: James.



**Toucan.** A toucan perched on a branch to left, head turned right. Legend, TO . THE . CURIOUS . OBSERVERS . OF . NATURAL . PHÆNOMENA . The eye of the bird is below the "U" in CURIOUS.  
Diesinker: Dixon. Manufacturer: Lutwyche (this die was also coupled with Thomas Hall's tokens, with the circular address die, reference D&H Middlesex Halfpennies 319, 319a, 319b, 319c) .



**(b) Rhinoceros.** A rhinoceros walking to left. Legend, PIDCOCK EXETER CHANGE LONDON  
Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Zebra.** A zebra standing to right. Legend. ★ PIDCOCK'S ★ GRAND . MENAGERIE EXETER . CHANGE . LONDON  
Diesinker: Dixon .  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Tiger.** A tiger walking to left. Legend, ♦ ROYAL MALE TIGER ♦ 1796 ♦ . Engravers names, JAMES, in small between the date and tiger  
Diesinker: James. Manufacturer: unknown.  
( This die was also coupled with the diesinker's own advertising die - reference D&H Middlesex Halfpennies 344 and 344a).



**Royal Arms.** Royal coat of Arms in centre. Legend, LONDON AND MIDDLESEX HALF PENNY  
Diesinker: Possibly James.  
Manufacturer: Possibly Lutwyche.  
(This die was also coupled with a die depicting George Prince of Wales reference D&H Middlesex National Series 952).



**Bust of Louis.** Head facing right  
Legend, LOUIS REX.

Diesinker: James. Manufacturer: James.

(This piece was also coupled with a die depicting fleur-de-lys with the date 1790. Reference D&H Middlesex Halfpennies National Series 1003.

Incidentally the fleur-lys die also was coupled with a PS Co. 1797 die, reference D&H Middlesex Skidmore's 516).

## THE HALFPENNY COLLAR DIES

Pidcock's collar-die edge impressions are aligned at random to the obverse and reverse images, resulting in the existence today of numerous alignment variations. These have not been recorded here, as they are of minor interest only. Collar details are as follow:

**Plain** (square smooth edge)

**No collar Die** (ragged edge)

**Milled**

**SPENCE X DEALER X IN COINS**  
LONDON X

**PAYABLE IN DUBLIN OR**  
LONDON + +

The words in bold type are the key words referred to in the chart opposite.

### Die Combinations

The obverse and reverse dies of Pidcock's tokens appear to have been arbitrarily coupled and because there is consequently no

way of telling which is which, token obverses and reverses have not been identified.

Two "ring-in" dies that were muled with Pidcock's regular dies were the *Royal Arms* and the *Bust of Louis, Rex*. The *Toucan* die appears to have been used for both Pidcock and Hall, probably out of convenience.

## PIDCOCK'S HALF PENNIES

### Die Combinations

The chart is to be used as a guide to quickly identify D & H numbers. Numbers in the collar die columns denote D&H Middlesex halfpenny numbers. The letters in capitals after the reference number, denotes the rarity; C common, S scarce, R rare, RR very rare, and RRR highest rarity.

† The first two couplings in the list were struck for J&G Pidcock and all the others G. Pidcock.

\* Also struck in tin

\*\* Also struck in brass

\*\*\* Struck in white metal  
(not listed in D&H)

COUPLING OF THE MAIN DIES	EDGE PLAIN	NO DIE COLLAR	EDGE MILLED	SPENCE DIE	DUBLIN DIE
Lion (a) Eagle (b)	414 C †				
Lion (b) Eagle (a)		415b C †	415a RR †		415 C †
Elephant (a) Rhino (a)		416b C	416a C	416 S	
Elephant (a) Rhino (b)	417 C				
Elephant (a) Tiger				418 C	
Elephant (a) Nylghau	419 C				
Elephant (a) Antelope		420a RR	420 C		
Elephant (a) Zebra	421 R				
Elephant (a) Cow (a)	422 S *				
Elephant (a) Cow (b)	423C **		423 C		
Elephant (a) Kangaroo	424 C				
Elephant (a) Wanderow	425 RRR				
Elephant (a) Toucan	426 C				
Lion (c) Rhino (b)	427 C				
Lion (c) Zebra	428 R				
Lion (c) Cow (a)	429 RRR				
Lion (c) Kangaroo	430 C				
Lion (c) Wanderow	431 C				
Lion (c) Cow (b)	432 R				
Lion (c) Kangaroo	433 RRR				
Lion (d) Cockatoo	434 C				
Lion (d) Cow (a)	***				
Lion (c) Crane (a)	435 C				
Ostrich Tiger				436 C	
Ostrich Antelope		437a C	437 R		
Rhino (a) Kangaroo	438 RR				
Rhino (a) Cow (b)	439 C				
Rhino (a) Cockatoo	440 RRR				
Tiger Cow (a)			441a RR	441 RR	
Tiger Ostrich			442a RRR	442 S	
Tiger Eagle (a)				443 C	
Nylghau Cow (a)	444 RR				
Nylghau Ostrich	445 S				
Nylghau bust of Louis	446 R				
Antelope Ostrich		447a C	447 C		
Antelope Eagle (b)	448 C				
Zebra Cow (b)	449 S				
Zebra Cockatoo	450 S				
Zebra Crane (b)	451 S				
Cow (b) Kangaroo	452 R				
Cow (b) Wanderow	453 S				
Toucan Cow (a)	454 C				
Cow (a) Royal Arms	455 C				
Kangaroo Cockatoo	456 R				
Wanderow Cockatoo	457 R				
Lion (c) Crane (b)	458 S				
Lion (a) Eagle (b)	414 C †				

## PIDCOCK'S FARTHING DIES

\* The words in bold type are the key words referred to in the chart on page 24.



**Beaver.** A beaver standing on hind legs to right.  
Legend, THE BEAVER 1801.  
Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**(b) Cow.** A two headed cow standing to right.  
Legend, • EXETER CHANGE • STRAND  
LONDON . Similar to above piece, but horns of the  
cow come into the word CHANGE.  
Diesinker: Possibly by Jacob.  
Manufacturer: Probably James or Lutwyche.



**Cockatoo.** A cockatoo perched on a branch to left,  
head turned right. Legend, EXETER CHANGE  
STRAND  
LONDON .  
Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



**(a) Elephant.** An elephant walking to left, above •  
PIDCOCK'S • • • below the elephant, EXHIBI-  
TION . and engravers name, JAMES, in small be-  
tween the elephant and EXHIBITION.  
Diesinker: James. Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**(a) Cow.** A two headed cow standing to right.  
Legend, • EXETER CHANGE • STRAND LON-  
DON . The cow's horns divide the two stars.  
Diesinker and manufacturer: James.



**(b) Elephant.** An elephant walking to left, above •  
PIDCOCK'S • • • below the elephant, EXHIBI-  
TION . Similar to die above but without engravers  
name.  
Diesinker: Possibly Jacob.  
Manufacturer: Possibly James or Lutwyche.



**Lion.** A lion recumbent to right, head facing front, with a small dog in paws. Legend, • PIDCOCK'S • GRAND . MENAGERIE . EXETER . CHANGE LONDON.

Diesinker: Dixon. Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Pelican.** A pelican standing to right. Legend, • PIDCOCK • EXETER CHANGE LONDON.

Diesinker: Dixon.  
Manufacturer: Lutwyche.



**Wanderer.** A sitting wanderer facing front and holding stick in its left hand.

Legend, THE WANDEROW 1801.

Diesinker: Dixon. Manufacturer: Lutwyche.

Sizes: pennies 30-31mm diameter, thickness 2mm.  
half pennies 30-31mm diameter, thickness 1mm.  
farthings 21mm, diameter, thickness 1mm and 2 mm.

Metal: copper

Engravers: Dixon, James and possibly Jacobs

Mints: James, William Lutwyche and unknown

Number struck: not known

Reference: D & H Middlesex farthing numbers as per chart overleaf.

## THE FARTHING COLLAR DIES

Details of these are as follow:

**Plain** (square, smooth edge)

**Milled**

**No collar die** (irregular edge)

## THE FARTHING DIES

As with Pidcock's halfpennies, the dies for the farthing obverses and reverses were arbitrarily coupled and there is no way of differentiating between the two. All the dies have therefore been listed under the one heading.

The farthing tokens were struck on thick and on thin flans, but in line with other cataloguers of the series, such thickness differences have not been detailed in the listing that follows.

## A LIST OF COLLAR DIES USED IN STRIKING PIDCOCK'S FARTHING

**Plain** (square smooth edge)

**Milled**

**No collar Die** (ragged edge)

## DIE COMBINATIONS OF PIDCOCK'S FARTHING

The chart overleaf is to be used as a guide to quickly identify Dalton and Hamer token reference numbers. Numbers in the collar die columns denote D&H Middlesex farthing reference numbers. The letters in capitals after the reference number, records rarity scale; C common, S scarce, R rare, RR very rare, and RRR highest rarity.



COUPLING OF THE MAIN DIES	COLLAR PLAIN	COLLAR NOT USED	COLLAR MILLED
Elephant (a) Lion	1064 S		
Elephant (a) Cow (a)	1065 a RR		1065 C
Elephant (a) Cow (b)	1065 Bis RR		
Elephant (b) Cow (b)		1066 C	
Elephant (a) Cockatoo		1067a C	1067 C
Elephant (a) Pelican	1068 R		
Lion Beaver	1069 S		
Lion Wanderow	1070 C		
Beaver Cockatoo	1071 RRR		
Beaver Pelican	1072 S		
Wanderow Pelican	1073 S		

\* The Lion and Beaver dies have been coupled and struck on a cartwheel half penny dated 1799. This counter stamp has been catalogued by D & H as number 1069Bis, Middlesex Farthings, rarity RRR.

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