

## NOTES ON COLONIAL COINS

Mr. A. P. SPENCER, Artist/Engraver, His Majesty's Mint, Calcutta and the re-designed Coinages of King George VI British India 1938-1947.

*By* F. PRIDMORE

IN *The Daily Telegraph*, May 11, 1967, the death was announced of Albert Pearson Spencer, Artist Engraver. No other details were given but Mr. Spencer filled the position of Artist/Engraver at His Majesty's Mint, Calcutta, India, during the period 1926-1945. He was the Artist and Engraver responsible for re-designing the British Indian coinage of King George VI and considerable numismatic interest attaches to his work.

### BIOGRAPHY.

Albert Pearson Spencer, Artist/Engraver, His Majesty's Mint, Calcutta, 1926-1945, b. 12 June 1887, d. 9 May 1967.

Educated at the Carpenters' Company School at Stratford, London, E. Served a seven year apprenticeship with the Hampstead firm of Mansell, Hunt, Catty & Co. Ltd.

After his apprenticeship in 1909 he joined the firm of Messrs. John Pinches, Ltd, the London Medallists, serving as an improver and later as an engraver where he spent 13 years before setting up in business on his own in 1922. During his employment with Messrs. Pinches he engraved coinage dies for some South American countries. The dies were cut at Pinches but the actual coins were struck at The Mint, Birmingham, Ltd. Also during the period with Messrs. Pinches, Mr. Spencer became financially interested in, and undertook a considerable amount of work for, the now defunct firm of Frigout & Millbank, a firm of Engravers in Aldersgate Street, E.C.1. For many years he was also an Instructor in die sinking, engraving, drawing and modelling at L.C.C. evening classes.

In June 1923, he started engraving for the Royal Mint on a contract basis, at first working from his own premises and later at the Mint. On 5 June 1924, he was nominated to the Treasury for permanent employment and his 'Certificate of Qualification' was issued on 10 December 1924. He remained on the permanent staff of the Royal Mint as an Engraver until he resigned on the 16 December 1925, to take up the position of Artist/Engraver at the Calcutta Mint—a post which became vacant in 1922 through the retirement of F. K. Wezel, whose first appointment to the Calcutta Mint had taken place on 1st October 1893.

Mr. Spencer sailed for India on 24 December 1925, and in India he filled the post of Artist/Engraver at the Calcutta Mint from the 30th January 1926, until he proceeded on leave pending retirement on 12 June 1945. After his departure, Mr. P. W. M. Brindley, formerly the Assistant Artist/Engraver at the Calcutta Mint and who had been appointed to the post of Artist/Engraver at the Bombay Mint in October 1941, continued as Artist/Engraver for both the Bombay and Calcutta mints for the remainder of the British period.

Although not a numismatist, Mr. Spencer possessed a number of specimens of the coins and medals for which he was responsible and in addition his collection included some earlier British Indian coins supplied to him from the Calcutta Mint cabinet which he used and studied when preparing his models for the new coinage of King George VI. A number of the British Indian coins in Mr. Spencer's collection were incorporated in the writer's cabinet and

while there appears to be no published list or record of the many medallic works executed by this talented engraver, the British Indian coins can be recorded. The following notes are based entirely upon the coins from the Spencer collection.

#### IMPROVED NICKEL ANNA.

The first alteration made in the coinage during the period 1926-1945 occurred in 1933, when an improvement was made in the minting of the Anna denomination. The edge and rim of the Calcutta minted coin was somewhat rough and thick and steps were taken to produce a better finished article.



FIG. 1. *Pattern Anna 1921, Calcutta Mint.*

As early as 1921 consideration had been given to changing the shape of the Anna from a scalloped round to a lozenge and patterns for such a coin had been prepared at the Calcutta mint by F. K. Wezel. No attempt was made to change the design, only the shape, and the dies for the pattern were produced from normal punches. This 1921 Anna pattern occurs struck in cupro-nickel and bronze (Fig. 1). There are also modern restrikes in gold.

The intention behind the change was an attempt to achieve a uniformity in the coinage in general. In 1921, four cupro-nickel denominations were in circulation—an 8 Annas (round, Fig. 2); 4 Annas (Scalloped octagonal, Fig. 3); 2 Annas (Lozenge, see Fig. 14) and the 1 Anna (Scalloped round, see Fig. 4).



FIG. 2. *8 Annas 1919*



FIG. 3. *4 Annas 1920*

Of these coins the 8 and 4 Annas, introduced as an emergency measure in 1919, were no longer to be minted but the cupro-nickel 2 Annas which replaced the silver 2 Annas in 1918 was to be retained in the currency. Thus, there would be three different shapes of coins struck, viz. round for the silver and bronze and two shapes for the two cupro-nickel pieces.

The Finance Department considered that the 2 Annas and the 1 Anna could more usefully be of the same form and the lozenge shape of the 2 Annas was deemed that most suitable for the two cupro-nickel denominations. Nothing transpired from this plan and only the patterns remain to mark the intended change.

From 1907, when the Anna had first been struck for general circulation, the responsible mint was Bombay, but in 1923/1924 the Calcutta Mint shared in its production and the

Calcutta date series with the effigy of George V is continuous for the period 1924 to 1930 and 1933 to 1936, all dates inclusive.

Experiments towards the striking of a better finished Anna commenced in 1929. In that year some specimen coins were struck at Calcutta which show a different style. On one variety the rim is wider, quite pronounced, and flat on both sides. The obverse design is from a normal punch but the bust is smaller than on the currency issue, while the reverse has small fine letters and figures, particularly in the native inscriptions and date numerals (Fig. 4). Another has the pronounced rim but rounded and not so flat. The obverse still shows a small bust, and the reverse is almost identical with the normal currency issue (Fig. 5).



FIG. 4      *Specimen Annas 1929 Calcutta Mint*      FIG. 5

Calcutta suspended the minting of the Anna in 1931 and the experiments for a better coin ceased until 1933 when production recommenced. Further experiments started, the first of which was the use of an edged *circular* blank instead of the customary unedged *scalloped* blank, but this was not successful.

Changes were then made in the method of cutting the scalloped blanks and after some trials a satisfactory solution resulted. A greatly improved rim margin was achieved and all the Calcutta George V Anna coins bearing the dates 1933–1936 show the improvement.

#### 1937. STANDARD SIZES FOR THE 2 AND 1 ANNA INTRODUCED.

In 1936 when preliminary preparations were in hand for the task of producing new dies for the coinage, necessitated by the accession of King Edward VIII, an examination of the 2 and 1 Anna coins struck at the Bombay and Calcutta mints revealed slight differences in size and shape. This was eliminated by the production of master models of the 2 and 1 Anna formers. Formers from these models were sent to Bombay and the last coins of these two denominations issued from the Bombay and Calcutta mints bearing the effigy of George V were identical in size and shape.

Investigation into the probable cause for the differences in the coins of the two mints produced some interesting details.

The 1 Anna nickel coin was first struck at the Bombay mint in 1907 and continued to be struck there until 1924, when the Calcutta mint started to strike this value. The introduction of a 1 Anna coin, to be struck in cupro-nickel, had been provisionally determined in 1904, and preliminary experiments were made at Bombay with the object of introducing a singular shape for a nickel coin in order to prevent confusion with a higher valued silver coin.

The first idea was to produce a coin with a central hole and a pattern 1 Anna of 1904 shows the intended design. (See *Num. Circ.* July/August 1964, page 166, Fig. 1). This was not approved. Attempts were then made to produce a coin with an eccentric hole, but this failed and

further efforts were directed to producing a coin with a scalloped outline, the shape of which was suggested by Captain A. L. C. McCormick, R.E., then Master of the Bombay Mint.



FIG. 6. *Pattern 1 Anna 1905, Bombay Mint.*

Considerable difficulty was experienced in the Bombay Mint in the preparation of master tools for a scalloped shape. A pattern Anna dated 1905 has 16 sides (Fig. 6), but this number of scallops did not provide a sufficiently marked distinctive shape from a normal circular coin and a 12-sided shape was eventually determined as that most suitable. In their initial preparation of the master tools, the Mint could not get all the 12 sides equal—a scalloped blank, when cut from the metal strip, to be perfect had to be capable of being replaced in the hole at any point of its circumference. This called for a cutting tool engineered to a very high degree of precision and accordingly a request was made to the Royal Mint, London. However, a nickel Anna coin had been sanctioned for circulation by Act No. III of 1906, and it was imperative that production be commenced as soon as possible. Bombay persevered and finally succeeded in producing master tools for the desired shape. Formers from these tools were made and production of the nickel Anna commenced in June 1907. The Royal Mint tools arrived in Bombay in October, 1907, but were never brought into use in that Mint.

A point concerning the scalloped form of outline is the claim by the Royal Mint, London, that they pioneered this innovation for the coinage of India in 1907 (see *Annual Report of the Royal Mint 1939-1944*, page 4), but as related above, the idea originated in the Indian Mint and the first production formers were made there prior to the receipt of the Royal Mint models.

When the Calcutta Mint commenced the minting of the Anna denomination in 1923/1924, it would seem that their formers were supplied from Bombay but the differences arose in 1933 when Calcutta made improvements to the edge and margin of the coin.

Why there should have been differences in the size and shape of the 2 Annas coins cannot be determined. Experiments for a 2 Annas nickel coin commenced in the Calcutta Mint in April

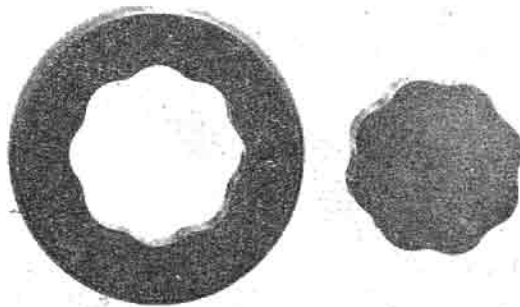


FIG. 7. *Brass test block cut with the model former made in the Calcutta Mint for the Ceylon 10 Cents in 1944.*

1917 and the design was approved in January 1918. It is noted in the records that the Bombay Mint were supplied with punches by Calcutta, and the 2 Annas coin from both mints ought to have been equal.

An item of some interest from the Spencer collection is a circular brass test block that has been cut by an 8 sided scalloped former and the scalloped shape can be replaced into the hole at any point. This was a test of the master model former made by Mr. Spencer for the nickel-brass Ceylon 10 Cents introduced in 1944 (Fig. 7).

#### 1937. PATTERN 2 ANNAS.



*Calcutta Mint Pattern 2 Annas 1937*

FIG. 8. *1st. variety.*

FIG. 9. *2nd variety.*

At the time of the comparative examination of the two nickel denominations, Mr. Spencer prepared new designs for the nickel 2 Annas. The reverse of the coin was completely altered and a modification was made to the obverse. The size of the piece was increased and the corners were rounded off.

Two reverse designs were prepared and the dies were cut by hand. The first variety shows the suggested design on a plain field, while on the second the same design, but with smaller figures and numerals, is placed within a toothed circular border and the four corners showing the decorative ornament are on a raised table (Figs. 8 and 9).

When the new 2 Annas coins were issued with the effigy of George VI in 1939 their design followed closely the second variety of the 1937 patterns, and for the reverse only minor changes were made in the arrangement of the native inscriptions and the size of the letters and numerals. On the obverse the toothed circular border was also incorporated (see Fig. 14).

It will be noted from the illustrations (Figs. 8 and 9) that the obverses of the patterns bear the effigy and titles of King George V. A 3 inch hardened steel model of the crowned effigy of King Edward VIII without inscription, for use in preparing coinage punches, was sent to the Calcutta mint by the Royal Mint, London, at the end of October 1936.

Mr. Spencer was on leave during the later part of the year and recollected having received a letter from the Assistant Engraver reporting that punches prepared from the model had split during hardening. No obverse dies were prepared bearing the effigy and titles of King Edward VIII, as by the time Mr. Spencer returned to India from leave, the King had abdicated in favour of his brother King George VI. The Edward VIII effigy master model and all reductions were returned to the Royal Mint in 1937.

A 3 inch reduction punch of the crowned effigy of King George VI was received in the Calcutta Mint from the Royal Mint on 15th March, 1937, but coinage punches from this model were not made until 1938.

As it was necessary for the new designs to be sent to Delhi for approval and the obverse of the coins also showed a difference from the existing 2 Annas obverse, Mr. Spencer used an existing George V punch in their preparation, thus creating two very interesting mule patterns.

#### 1938. THE NEW COINAGE OF GEORGE VI

George VI ascended the throne in December 1936 following the abdication of his brother Edward VIII.



FIG. 10. *Pattern Rupee 1910, Calcutta Mint.*

On the Imperial coinages of British India, it had become customary to make changes in the design of some denominations at the beginning of a new reign. In 1937 Mr. Spencer commenced work upon new or modified reverse designs for the entire series and as a guide for the silver denominations he used as his model the original design.

This was the pattern rupee of 1910, the reverse of which was engraved by F. K. Wezel from a design and model prepared by Mr. P. Brown, Principal of the School of Art, Calcutta (Fig. 10).

#### SILVER—REVERSE DESIGNS.



FIG. 11. *Rupee 1938.*



FIG. 12.  $\frac{1}{2}$  *Rupee 1938.*



FIG. 13.  $\frac{1}{4}$  *Rupee 1938.*

For the three silver denominations of Rupee,  $\frac{1}{2}$  rupee and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupee, only slight changes were made. On all values the available space in the central circular table was increased by the removal of the inner circle from the double line circle which separates the outer saracenic scroll work decoration from the text on the issues of George V. New forms of letters and figures were used and respaced to take advantage of the larger area. This produced a more balanced effect and imparted a distinctive modern style. (Figs. 11, 12 and 13).

## NICKEL-REVERSE DESIGNS



FIG. 14. 2 Anna 1939.



FIG. 15. 1 Anna 1938.

The two nickel denominations, 2 and 1 Anna, underwent more marked changes.

### 2 ANNAS.

As already noted, Mr. Spencer completely re-designed this coin in 1937 and, when the specimens were prepared for approval in 1939, only slight changes were made to one of the original pattern designs (see Figs. 8, 9, and 14).

### 1 ANNA.

On the 1 Anna, which had remained unchanged in its reverse design since it first appeared as a pattern in 1905 (see Fig. 6), the change consisted of new forms of letters and numerals in the central panel. The decorative frame and the native texts remained unaltered. A more balanced arrangement was achieved and, as on the silver coins, a distinctive modern style resulted. This, combined with the better method of cutting the scalloped blanks introduced in 1933, presented a considerably improved and pleasing coin (Fig. 15).

## BRONZE-REVERSE DESIGNS.



FIG. 16.  $\frac{1}{4}$  Anna 1938.



FIG. 17.  $\frac{1}{2}$  Pice 1938.



FIG. 18.  $\frac{1}{12}$  Anna 1938.

The alterations to the three bronze coins— $\frac{1}{4}$  Anna,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Pice and  $\frac{1}{12}$  Anna followed the same form as those introduced in the silver coins. The figures and letters in the central panel were of the new style and by careful respacing the heavy thick appearance of the Victorian design was modernized. No change was made to the encircling decorative floral borders. (Figs. 16, 17 and 18).

OBVERSE 1938/39 COINAGES. *Type I—High Relief Effigy.*



FIG. 19. *First or High Relief Effigy.*

For the obverse of all denominations the effigy of King George VI was obtained from the 3 inch intermediate reduction punch supplied by the Royal Mint in 1937.

This effigy has a somewhat excessive relief which was too great for normal coinage work but offered no difficulty in the striking of specimen coins. Specimens of the various denominations were forwarded to England for submission to His Majesty and were approved as follows:—

<i>Silver</i>	Rupee, $\frac{1}{2}$ Rupee and $\frac{1}{4}$ Rupee	—	}	July, 1938
<i>Nickel</i>	Anna	—		
<i>Bronze</i>	$\frac{1}{4}$ Anna	—		
<i>Bronze</i>	$\frac{1}{2}$ Pice and $\frac{1}{12}$ Anna,	—		November 1938
<i>Nickel</i>	2 Anna sent in February	—		April 1939
	1939 and approved	—		

Under a Government of India Finance Department Notification No. D-7340 F dated 29th October, 1938, it was ordered that all coins struck in the Indian Mints on and after the 1st November, 1938, would bear the effigy of King George VI. No coins bearing the effigy of King George V were struck after the 31st October, 1938.

All the coins struck for circulation in 1938 and the greater portion in 1939 have for the obverse the Type I or high relief effigy. Until a new model could be supplied Mr. Spencer prepared the new dies in lower relief from the original model. In doing so details of the effigy, such as the hair, disappeared and they had to be cut by hand, but working dies were produced and production commenced. (Fig. 19).

*Type II—Low Relief Effigy.*



FIG. 20. *Second or Low Relief Effigy.*



A new model of the King's crowned effigy was supplied by the Royal Mint early in 1939, but the work of producing matrices and punches from it could not commence until Mr. Spencer returned from leave in August. Most of the work was completed by the end of the year and small quantities of some denominations were struck with the year date 1939 from the new obverse dies (Fig. 20).

1938 PATTERN  $\frac{1}{2}$  ANNA.



FIG. 21. *Pattern  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna 1938 (nickel).*

Another interesting coin designed by Mr. Spencer is a  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna dated 1938. (Fig. 21). This value had been last minted for circulation in the reign of Queen Victoria in copper. It was a cumbersome coin and its minting for general use ceased in 1877. When the cupro-nickel Anna was introduced into circulation in 1907 it was also the intention of the Government to include a  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna denomination struck in the same metal and of a similar shape.



FIG. 22. *Pattern  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna 1908 (nickel).*

After consultation with local governments it was decided to defer the introduction of this value until the population had become thoroughly accustomed to the new nickel Anna, but a pattern  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna of 1908 shows the intended design (Fig. 22).

Subsequent events caused the matter to be shelved indefinitely, but in the preparation of models for the new coinage of George VI in 1938 a nickel  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna denomination was mooted. Mr. Spencer prepared a model and dies were cut for a pattern  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna.

This is a most interesting piece, as it was modelled by the artist after a study of two earlier pattern coins. The first was the Calcutta scalloped nickel pattern  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna of 1908 (see Fig. 22) from which an adaption of the central design was made by the artist, and the second pattern coin was the Calcutta 1 Anna of 1921, having a lozenge shape (see Fig. 1).

By a judicious combination of the design and shape of these two earlier patterns, a most pleasing style was achieved. Like the 2 Anna patterns of 1937, the head punch of George VI had not been prepared by the mint and Mr. Spencer used a George V head punch for this  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna, creating yet another unusual mule pattern.

The  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna did not materialize immediately and it was not until 1940, under the pressure of excessive war time demand for small coin, that the Government decided to restore the  $\frac{1}{2}$  Anna denomination to circulation.



FIG. 23. *Specimen 1/2 Anna, 1940*  
(cupro-nickel)



FIG. 24. *Currency issue 1/2 Anna, 1942*  
(nickel-brass)

In 1940 Mr. Spencer redesigned the reverse of the 1938 pattern by altering the encircling frame and adding the native texts, and specimen coins struck in cupro-nickel bearing the date 1940 were approved (Fig. 23).

The first issues of this denomination for general circulation were struck at the Bombay Mint in nickel brass and were released in January 1942 (Fig. 24).

#### 1940 QUARTERNARY STANDARD SILVER COINS.



FIG. 25. *Quarternary silver coins* OBVERSE.



FIG. 26. *Rupee REVERSE*  
*Lahore Mint, 1944*



FIG. 27. *1/2 Rupee REVERSE*  
*Calcutta Mint, 1943*



FIG. 28. *1/4 Rupee REVERSE*  
*Bombay Mint, 1943*

In 1939-1940 experiments were carried out at the Calcutta Mint with the use of quarternary silver alloy, the object being to introduce an experimental coinage of  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupees in that composition.

On the 11th March, 1940, the Indian Coinage Act 1906 was modified when, in view of the increase of the price of silver and the need to conserve silver resources, the government decided to adopt the fineness of one half silver and one half alloy for the silver coins.

All three silver denominations were struck in the new standard in 1940 but incorporated in the new rupee issued in that year was a new security edge. This device, consisting of a shallow

re-entrant in the centre of the grained edge, was considered to be a virtually absolute safeguard against counterfeiting.

In 1941 the half rupee design was altered to make it conform to the rupee and on July 15, 1943, orders were issued that the quarter rupee should have the same security edge.

These changes in metal content and the adoption of the security edge involved some modification to the existing designs and Mr. Spencer had to undertake the preparation of new dies for all three denominations.

*Obverse* The principal change on the obverses consisted of an enlargement of the rim decoration and a slightly wider margin. The letters of the King's name and title were of the same style as those of 1938 but somewhat thicker (Fig. 25).

*Reverses* All three denominations underwent greater alterations on the reverse. Like the obverses, an enlargement of the decorative rim and margin was deemed necessary to counter the pressures involved in the security edge marking. This resulted in less space being available for the saracenic scroll with its conventional representations of the rose, shamrock, thistle and lotus which encircled the central field.

On all denominations Mr. Spencer re-designed the outer decorative scroll work and thicker letters and numerals were used in the centre circle. These modifications appeared as each denomination came into production with the security edge (Figs. 26, 27 and 28).

#### 1941. PATTERNS FOR A DOLLAR COIN.



FIG. 30. *Dollar Pattern 1st Variety*      Obverse Fig. 29.      FIG. 31. *Dollar Pattern 2nd Variety*

Of more than unusual interest are two patterns prepared in 1941 for a Dollar denomination.

Up to the present the only published details relating to these patterns is a brief note upon one variety by Mr. Howard Linecar in the *Numismatic Circular* June, 1956, page 264, and a subsequent record in his book on *Commonwealth Coinage*, 1959.\* Neither account is quite correct, due to the inference that these dollar patterns were to serve as an introductory piece for a decimal system in India.

The introduction of a Decimal System was first suggested to the Government of India by the Calcutta Mint Master, Major D. V. Deane, in 1945. In February 1946 a bill was introduced

\* Since this was written an article upon the pattern dollars has appeared in the *Numismatic Circular*, May, 1968.

in the Central Legislative Assembly which had the purpose of introducing a decimal coinage system based upon a Rupee of 100 cents. Due to forthcoming changes in the political situation, this was not brought into being during the British Administration.

The 'Dollar' patterns originated from a cause entirely divorced from any consideration of a decimal system.

From 1939 until the end of 1941 when Japan entered the war the Indian economy was not seriously affected. The requirement for coin was well within the capacity of the Indian mints, but demands for foreign coinages brought increasing pressure both in metal stocks and machine capacity.

In England the great pressure of work on the Royal Mint and the insecurity of sea communications from England to Africa, Arabia and the East resulted in a number of foreign and colonial coinage orders being passed over to the Indian mints for execution—namely, those of Ceylon, East Africa, Egypt, Iraq, Malaya, Muscat and Oman, Saudi Arabia and the Maria Theresa Thaler. To this was added demands from several Native Indian States, and the decision in March 1940 to adopt the 500 fine standard for the Indian silver coins.

As this pressure increased and metal supplies gradually became more difficult to obtain (the American silver loans did not materialize until 1943), consideration was given to the problem of economies in domestic coin production, so as to leave more capacity free for foreign orders and also reduce the amount of metals required for this purpose.

It was in the light of these problems that the proposal was made to introduce a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  rupee coin which was provisionally called a Dollar, the term Dollar having no meaning relative to any decimal standard.

The advantages of a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  rupee coin were twofold:—

- (a) a considerable saving of metal would be effected, as each Dollar would replace two One Rupee coins and one Half Rupee, which together had a combined weight of 450 troy grains against a proposed weight of 225 grains for the single  $2\frac{1}{2}$  rupee, and
- (b) the productive capacity set free for other purposes—in the Stamping Department alone, one coining press engaged upon a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  rupee coin would produce the same total value as three presses striking rupees and the half rupee.

The project reached the stage where pattern coins were prepared for submission and approval by the Minister of Finance, with the intention of introducing an amendment to the Coinage Act to enable the coins to be made legal tender. Before this could be done Japan entered the War. The situation changed almost immediately and the proposal had to be abandoned.

The Calcutta Mint Administrative Report for the year 1940–41 (i.e. 1st April 1940 to 31st March 1941) mentions the fact that experimental matrices, punches and dies for a proposed Indian Dollar were prepared in the Engraving Department of the Mint, but fails to relate the reason for their preparation.

As far as can be remembered today the preparatory work on these patterns commenced either late in December 1940 or in the early part of 1941. As they are mentioned in the Administrative Report for the year 1940–41 this is very probably correct. Both patterns were designed by Mr. Spencer.

The obverse of both patterns is from the same die. It was prepared from the second or low relief model of the crowned effigy of King George VI and shows the normal Indian title. (Fig. 29). The reverses were cut by hand and the letters and numerals are executed in the same style as the redesigned coinage of 1938. (Figs. 30 and 31).

## 1943 PICE.

FIG. 32. 1 Pice 1943—*Currency Issue.*

Due to a general scarcity of minor coins caused by the heavy demands of the War (1939–1945) bronze coins started to disappear from circulation and were hoarded against a possibility of the black market value of their metallic content rising above their face value. To protect further issues of bronze coins against such practices the Government authorized the issue of a new quarter Anna denomination in 1943. The design of this coin was a complete change for India. It was smaller in size than the old pice and had a central circular hole. The value was simply 1 PICE and except for an Imperial Crown in the design no reference is made to the reigning sovereign. (Fig. 32).

## 1943. PATTERN PICE.

FIG. 33. *Pattern One Pice 1943—Calcutta Mint.*

Included in the Spencer collection is a pattern Pice with the date 1943 which shows a considerable variation from the design eventually approved for circulation. It was designed by Mr. Spencer in 1942.

On the obverse the Imperial crown occurs at the top dividing the date 1943 with ONE PICE INDIA around the central hole. The reverse has a wreath joined at the bottom with an Imperial crown. At the top and the two sides the wreath pattern is broken by ribbon ties which are the same thickness as the wreath. This ribbon decoration and the crown divide the wreath into four parts and each part is inscribed in very small incuse letters with the value in four different native scripts—Urdu, Nagari, Bengalee and Telegu (Fig. 33).

It will be seen by a comparison with the currency issue that the design finally approved for circulation was a rearrangement of the obverse of this pattern and the use of only two native scripts. The reverse was simply a continuous decorative leaf design (see Fig. 32).

## 1946–1947 PURE NICKEL COINAGE.

Owing to the inadequate supply of silver in the open market, the prevailing high price of the metal in India and the obligation of the Government to return in kind, within a period of

5 years after the end of the War, the 226 million ounces of silver borrowed from the United States of America between 1943–1945, the decision was made to abandon the use of silver as a coinage metal.

On the 23rd May, 1946, the government suspended the minting of silver coins and authorized the minting of the  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rupee denomination in pure nickel. By a later Act of the 18th April, 1947, the Indian Coinage Act was amended to authorize the government to issue all coins, including the rupee, in any metal. Under this authority a Notification, No. F. 2(13)—F. I/47 (i), was issued on the 24th May, 1947, which ordered the minting of the Rupee in pure nickel.

For these completely new coins of the higher denominations the old conventional decorative Saracenic scroll designs and plain statements of value gave way to a representation of an Indian tiger.

Although Mr. Spencer had retired and left India by the time these changes came about he was nevertheless involved in the preliminary work in the selection of their design. Included in his collection was a pattern rupee the dies for which were originally engraved in 1901 by his predecessor in office—F. K. Wezel. The central design of this pattern bears a representation of an Indian tiger (Fig. 34).



FIG. 34. *Pattern Rupee 1901—Calcutta—(F. K. Wezel).*

The design finally approved for the new pure nickel coins showing the Indian tiger was modelled by Mr. P. W. M. Brindley from the animal which appeared on the Wezel pattern and although not the actual work of Mr. Spencer he contributed in no small degree to the adoption of this design for the last British Indian coinage.

#### OTHER WORKS OF MR. SPENCER.

Mention has been made that in his younger days, while employed by Messrs. Pinches, Mr. Spencer engraved dies for coins of certain South American states. During his appointment in India he was also responsible for designing and engraving dies for coins struck at the Calcutta Mint for other governments.

A notable example, and unquestionably his finest work in relation to coins, was the 1928 Bhutan  $\frac{1}{2}$  Rupee silver coinage. The obverse of this coin bearing the effigy of His Highness the Maharaja Jigme Wangchuk (1926–1952) was entirely the work of the engraver and the illustration from the lead model (Fig. 35) shows to advantage the detailed work involved.

The reverse with its religious symbols was engraved by Mr. Spencer from drawings supplied to the Mint by the Bhutan Durbar and curiously these had a slight error in the inscription which was corrected in the following year.



FIG. 35. *Lead model of the obverse of the Bhutan  $\frac{1}{2}$  Rupee.*

MEDALS.



FIG. 36. *Artist's signature in monogram.*



FIG. 37. *Award medal Bombay Agricultural Show 1926.*

A large number of Medals were engraved by Mr. Spencer during his lifetime but unfortunately he kept no record of his work, and towards the last year of his life his memory was not equal to the task of preparing such a list.

However, the following medals have been noted by the writer and were designed and engraved by the artist. The illustrations are representative of his high standard of skill and craftsmanship and exhibit a complete mastery in their several styles of the art of engraving. A number of the medals are signed with the initials—APS in monogram. (Fig. 36).

1. *Obv.* An Indian Ryot on a platform winnowing grain.  
*Rev.* BOMBAY PRESIDENCY AGRICULTURAL SHOW 1926  
In centre native script (Fig. 37).
2. *Obv.* Bust in the Roman style to left.  
SIR WILLIAM JONES 1746-1794 FOUNDER OF THE ASIATICK SOCIETY.  
*Rev.* A laurel branch on the left of the field.



FIG. 38. *Botany Research Award.*

3. *Obv.* A bespectacled bust to right.  
PAUL JOHANNES BRÜHL-MEMORIAL-MEDAL.  
*Rev.* Similar to No. 5 but also inscribed.  
AWARDED TO FOR ASIATIC RESEARCHES IN BOTANY.
4. *Obv.* A pelican to right.  
JOY-GOBIND-LAW MEMORIAL MEDAL.  
*Rev.* AWARDED TO FOR ASIATIC RESEARCHES IN ZOOLOGY.
5. *Obv.* A representation of Jesus and Mary with Indian features.  
CONVENTS OF JESUS AND MARY  
PAREL BYCULLA POONA.  
*Rev.* AGNES-ANN-ARMSTRONG-MEMORIAL-MEDAL-...✠...  
FOR-GOOD-CONDUCT AWARDED TO



FIG. 39. *Good Conduct Medal.*

6. *Obv.* Bust to right.  
W. H. PICKERING.
- Rev.* MINING AND GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF INDIA.  
Awarded to \_\_\_\_\_ Session \_\_\_\_\_ I.S.M.
7. *Obv.* Bust to left.  
SIR HENRY HAYDEN.
- Rev.* As No. 2.

FIG. 40. *Kamala Medal.*

8. *Obv.* Facing bust of Kamala, wife of President Nehru.  
KAMALA MEDAL across the flan. Around:  
FOUNDED BY SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE.
- Rev.* Within a beaded circle the Royal Arms encircled by the inscription.  
+UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA+THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING.  
Above, on a panel: AWARDED TO.  
An open wreath encloses the entire design.