

# MICROSCOPICAL EXPLORATION SIXTEEN

## WHEN MICROSCOPY MET NUMISMATICS

Years ago, I can't remember how many, but my computer was running Windows XP and I still went out to work, I bought a USB digital microscope as a novelty. Having plugged it in and proved to myself that it did work (sort of) as a microscope, I put it away and forgot about it. That is, until I realised that the content of this short article required observations with a wider field of view than any of my compound or stereoscopic microscopes could provide. So, would that aged USB device be compatible, and work, with the 64bit version of Windows 10 now running on my current computer? The answer? Yes and No. The image processing software that came with the microscope was not compatible with 64bit Windows 10 but the device was recognised by the software that I use with my more modern microscope eyepiece cameras. That meant that I didn't need to abandon this little project and could proceed as planned.

**Microscopy:** sorted!!

**Numismatics:** not a word that I use every day, is the study of coins, bank notes and medals.

Having found a few old coins lying in the drawer of our old dressing table, inherited from my grand parents via my parents, I thought it might be interesting to take a close look at them. Here's what I saw, in chronological order, starting with the oldest:

Edward VII Penny: Diameter:  $1 \frac{7}{32}$  inches (30.96mm).

Composition: Bronze (95% copper,4% tin,1%zinc)





George V Penny: Diameter  $1 \frac{7}{32}$  inches (30.96mm).

Composition: Bronze (95% copper,4% tin,1%zinc)



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George V Silver Threepenny Piece: Diameter:  $\frac{21}{32}$  inch (16.66mm)

Composition: 0.500 Silver.





George VI Farthing: Diameter  $\frac{13}{16}$  inch (20.63mm)

Composition: Bronze (95% copper,4% tin,1%zinc)





Elizabeth II Coronation Crown: Diameter:  $1 \frac{9}{16}$  inches (39.69mm).

Composition: Cupronickel (probably 75% Copper, 25% Nickel)





Elizabeth II Florin: Diameter:  $1 \frac{1}{8}$  inches (28.58mm)

Composition: Cupronickel ( probably 75% Copper, 25% Nickel)





Elizabeth II Halfpenny: Diameter: 1 inch (25.4mm)

Composition: Bronze (95% copper,4% tin,1%zinc)





**N.B.** All the Imperial measurements were made using a Rabone Chesterman steel rule and my own less than perfect eyes, and the conversions to metric units were rounded to two decimal places.

**Numismatics:** sorted!!

The coins have now returned to the drawer whence they came, and who knows, one day one of my children or grandchildren might find them and be interested.

**As we say here in Cumbria:**

**‘Ave a go yersel’!**

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