

Recently, a friend sent a photo of a newly discovered coin of the Monghyr mint bearing the date AH 1177.⁶



Fig. 1. Rupee of Monghyr dated AH 1177/ RY 4
Weight 11.59 g; Diameter approx. 22 mm

Whilst it is possible that this coin was struck during the period from late July to early October 1763, it could have been struck after that date (RY 4 ended on 17th October), and may therefore be the first known coin issued from this mint whilst under the authority of the East India Company. This coin, therefore, raises the possibility that the mint continued in operation after it had been captured by the British, although it requires a coin showing RY 5 to make it certain.

References

1. Bengal Public Consultations. IOR P/1/36, 17th October 1763, pp. 314/315. Letter from Major Adams to the President at Calcutta, dated 11th October 1763.
2. O'Malley LSS, (1909), *Bengal District Gazetteers*, Monghyr.
3. Stevens PJE, *The Coins of the Bengal Presidency* (2012), Baldwin & Sons Ltd.
4. Bengal Public Consultations. IOR P/1/36, p. 389. 21st November 1763. Letter from Anselm Beaumont (mint master) to Bengal Council, dated 21st November 1763.
5. Bengal Consultations. IOL P/2/10, 15th June 1775, p. 282. Letter from the Sub-Treasurer.
6. My sincere thanks to Noman Nasir, who sent me the photo and information about the coin.

A NEW OBVERSE IN THE 1862 RUPEE

Amit Surana

In the British India (BI) coinage series, the 1862 rupee is very popular among collectors, given its enormous mintage and the variations that it presents.

It is significant to note that the East India Company (EIC), once it had secured a foothold to carry out trade and mint coins in the subcontinent, had attempted to issue coins in the name of its sovereign as early as the reigns of James II, Charles II, or the joint sovereigns, William and Mary. That these attempts were thwarted is another story, but in 1835 the EIC brought in the uniform coinage with the bust of the British monarch on the coins. As an outcome of the 1857 Revolt, India became a 'crown colony' and a possession in the name of Queen Victoria from 1st November, 1859.

The first Crown coinage was issued in 1862 and the date was 'frozen' on the coins in subsequent years. The obverse design showed the crowned bust of Victoria in an ornate dress of floral pattern and had a legend reading *VICTORIA QUEEN*. This general design continued till the end of the reign of Queen Victoria. The celebrated 1862 Rupee was minted prolifically from the three mints at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras (as the present cities of Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai respectively were known then).

Several authors have discussed the designs of the 1862 rupees used for currency issues. Prominent amongst them is Eric Wodak, curator of the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia (*The South Australian Numismatic Journal*, Vol. 8, no. 2, April 1957). He

classified the Queen's effigy on the rupee as Bust A and B, and this nomenclature still continues to be used.

Following this, George Falcke and Robert Clarke (*vide* their classic monograph *India's 1862 Rupees*) added one more obverse, denoted as Bust C. Major Fred Pridmore, the doyen of BI coinage, through his monumental work, *The Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations - Part 4 India - Vol. 2 Uniform Coinage*, summed up the 1862 rupee issues by adding one more obverse design, *viz.* the design popularly called '5-panel design', which first made an appearance on patterns dated 1863. Recent contributions to the field have not added to these basic designs, except for mint variations.

The author came across an entirely new bust design in May 2011 and has since physically seen about 6 specimens of this design. These have been reported from different parts of the country. It is pertinent to point out here that many senior numismatists and collectors have derided the new obverse as fake. Some even went to the extent of questioning why no such obverse has been reported in the past so many years. Eventually the author had to himself acquire such a specimen from an auction (Todywala Auction 114, Lot 415). The purpose of this article is to establish the authenticity of the new design, which the author has chosen to designate as 'CJL'.

Firstly, it is pertinent to describe in detail each of the obverse designs used for the currency issues and how they have been derived.

Journey of the 1862 Rupee

On 30th June 1859, the Treasury in London authorised the master of the Royal Mint to prepare matrices and punches for the new Indian coinage. L. C. Wyon engraved the dies, and the initial patterns for the rupee were prepared in, and dated, 1860. Wyon's dies for the new coinage were dispatched to India in August 1861.

1. Wyon's 1861 Rupee Pattern



Fig. 1. Wyon's 1861 Rupee Pattern

This bears the letters 'L. C. Wyon' engraved on the truncation of the bust of the Queen (Fig. 1). The bust is slightly larger and taller. The front panel *i.e.* jabot of the queen's robe, has 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ sections. The first and second strings in the necklace have nineteen and eight pearls respectively. There is no symbol 'v' with a dot in the bottom left corner at the right of the jabot.

However, upon arrival Wyon's dies were found to be technically inadequate for use in the Indian mints, and new matrices had to be produced in Calcutta. According to a report dated 29th January 1863 by Captain H. Hyde, mint master of Calcutta mint, the locally made matrices, made to commence the new coinage in 1862, also proved unsatisfactory. The report mentions that, two other sets were put in hand, by two separate engravers, with a view to substitute these for the ones first made. Hyde mentions that a German engraver was making the second set.

2. Obverse B

This design (Fig. 2) is very similar to Wyon's patterns, struck with dates 1860 and 1861, but the bust from the neck down is slightly smaller, being shorter and cut-off at the bottom. The jabot is divided into 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ sections, and there are three horizontal dividing lines below the lowest loop of pearls of the necklace. The fourth or lowest complete rectangular section has a four-petalled flower on the right. The ornamental border has 141 beads. At the right of the jabot there

is a small symbol resembling a 'v' with an inserted bead or dot. This symbol does not seem to be part of the design, which consists of floral-like scrolls. It is not part of the Wyon patterns, which have almost identical scroll designs. Falcke & Clarke suggest that this symbol is a mark of the Calcutta die centre because it does not seem to be the mark of an individual engraver and certainly is not a mint mark.



Fig. 2. Obverse B

There is little doubt that obverse B was engraved first, and was the work of Kashinath Das, who was the head engraver at the Calcutta mint from 1834 to 1863. He obviously modelled it on Wyon's designs, seeking inspiration in the Royal Mint punches. He cut a new matrix to suit the requirements of machines employed in the Indian mints. He might have also introduced the symbol 'v' with a dot inside as a mark of the Calcutta die centre.

3. Obverse A

Although this design (Fig. 3) follows, in general, that used in Obverse B, the detail is quite different, particularly the jabot and the scroll design on the robe. The head is a little smaller and the letters of the legend are also smaller, more narrowly spaced and of a slightly different type than on Obverse B. The jabot is divided into $3\frac{3}{4}$ sections and there are only two dividing lines below the lowest loop of pearls of the necklace. In the lowest section, which is incomplete, there is a five-petal flower in the left corner. The ornamental border has 124 beads. At the bottom, in about the centre of the bust, there is a small mark shaped like a thin 'v'. There is little doubt that this 'v' is a die mark of the Calcutta mint, because the symbol appears on other denominations dated 1862, as well as the coins of the later series dated 1874-1901.



Fig. 3. Obverse A

The head engraver of the Calcutta mint, Kashinath Das, had been assisted by a German engraver by the name of Johannes Lutz (he was actually Swiss, but referred to as "German" by the language he spoke) since September 1859. Lutz took over as head engraver in 1863 on the retirement of Kashinath Das and continued to be head engraver at the Calcutta mint until February 1884. Hyde, in his report, states that the set engraved by Lutz was "by far the best" (Pridmore mentions this in his catalogue on Page 112). According to Pridmore, Lutz used the original punches and partially engraved a new matrix. As stated by Falcke and Clarke, Obverse A is considered as the distinctive design of the Calcutta mint. It is clear that Obverse A was the work of Lutz as he had taken over as the head engraver.

Another reason that the obverse is attributed to Lutz, is the small mark that resembles a thin 'J' in the bottom right corner of the bust. This scroll shows at the right a very short and indistinct horizontal stroke. The dated rupees, from 1877 onwards, have in the same

position a longer and thicker stroke, and on the scroll itself there is a distinct thick vertical stroke that looks very much like an 'L'. Both markings possibly are the initials 'JL' for Johannes Lutz, as conjectured by Falcke & Clarke. It is relevant to mention here that the British Museum specimen of the 1862 pattern rupee carrying Obverse A shows clearly both the 'v' at the bottom centre and the 'J' in the right corner.

Interestingly, Pridmore ignored Falcke and Clarke's attribution of the initial 'J' on Obverse A to Lutz, on the basis that this 'J' looked like the 'crescent' that was the Calcutta mint mark found on earlier EIC issues. However, Pridmore also noted that the Bombay dot rupees do occur with the 'crescent' and he mentions that it was introduced in Bombay sometime after 1864. This means that the 'J' is unlikely to have been the Calcutta mint mark and adds weight to the idea that it stands for Johannes.

4. Obverse C

This design (Fig. 4) is a modification of Obverse A, on which there are only $3\frac{1}{2}$ sections in the jabot. The bust therefore is shorter and appears to be cut off at the bottom. The whole design is somewhat heavier and the letters of the legend are thicker. Border beads, which number 124, are slightly larger and longer. This obverse was used in the 1862 series only at the Bombay mint, and that too at the end of the dot-dated series, i.e. around 1874.



Fig. 4. Obverse C

5. 1863 proof/ pattern rupee

Since the very beginning of the production of these new coins, the mints were beset with problems using the dies. In particular, they had problems with the relief, which being 'heavy' often led to heavy wear on the dies and they succumbed relatively early to machine forces. As dies are expensive tools this added considerably to the cost of manufacturing the coins and also slowed down the production.

The mint officials in India complained to the Royal Mint about this problem. In response, new dies, punches and matrices were prepared in the Royal Mint and sent to India in August 1863. Examination of a Royal Mint proof/ pattern rupee dated 1863 (Fig. 5) shows the engraving of the Queen's effigy in slightly lower relief and small differences in the outlines of the crown. Other equally minute differences occur in the decoration of the robe. $4\frac{1}{4}$ panels in the jabot, with distinctive double lines to the curves of the crown, are the distinctive features of this revised die.



Fig. 5. 1863 proof/ pattern rupee

6. Obverse D

In India, neither Calcutta nor Madras appear to have made use of this 1863 Royal mint revised matrix, but Bombay certainly carried out experiments with theirs and produced currency rupees, which were dated 1862 as a matter of practice. These are popularly called 5-panel coins (Fig. 6). This particular obverse was not given any nomenclature by Pridmore. He just mentioned that it was similar to Wyon's revised 1863 die and that the Bombay mint undertook an experimental coinage with this die. Pridmore adds that this particular obverse was not used for the 'dot' dating type coinage. The author has recently seen images of a three-dot reverse with Obverse D, but has not verified the coin physically.



Fig. 6. Obverse D

The precursor of the new obverse

The new rupee dies of 1863 were equally unsuitable when tried out in India. Lt. Colonel J. A. Ballard, mint master of Bombay mint, reported a list of technical difficulties with these dies. In 1867 Lt. Colonel H. Hyde, mint master of Calcutta, visited the Royal Mint in May of that year and the subject of a revision of the dies for Indian coinage was discussed. A number of points were mentioned, but the principal one was the engraving of dies in high relief resulting in excessive wear and tear, because of the lack of protection by the rim or margin. With dies of this type, the operation of stamping resulted in the expenditure of more power and time, incompatible with rapid and economical coinage.

Hyde estimated that a re-modelling would give an increase of 15 per cent in the number of coins struck without an increase in power or expense, and at least a 30 per cent saving in expenditure on dies. Probably, these arguments were accepted, because a letter dated 9th December, 1867 refers to a new die for the Indian rupee by L. C. Wyon, and the items were dispatched on 12th March, 1868. Pridmore mentions further that no currency issue has been traced which confirms that Wyon's 1867 revised design was brought into use in India.

7. 1867 proof/ pattern rupee

This follows, in general, the previous designs, but is quite different in the details (Fig. 7). The two jewels in front and at the back of the crown are larger and the front *fleur de lis* is closer to the crown arch, which has at left and right 13 pearls. The hair plait commences at the point where crown rests on forehead. The crown band directly above the hair is plain. The floral design of the jabot is rather indistinct and the scroll-like design of the dress, in an incuse field, is much thicker and broader. The Royal Mint proof comes in two types, one with *L.C.W.* incuse on the truncation of the shoulder and second without these initials. In the Calcutta mint proof, no initials occur under the bust.

Apparently, none of the currency issue of this revised die of 1867 has been traced, but the author is convinced that the 'CJL' issue is the missing currency issue following from the 1867 pattern.



Fig. 7. 1867 proof/pattern rupee

It is also seen that after the 1867 pattern rupee design, no further demand was made upon the London establishment for designs or dies for silver or copper coinage due to the evident unsuitability of the Royal Mint engravers' work for direct die production. The Calcutta mint die department was able to meet the future requirements from its own resources. But before this, between 1868 and 1870, the Calcutta mint did make efforts under their head engraver to produce a pure Calcutta rupee die. This die may well have been the 'CJL' die. The reasoning for the author's conviction is as follows:

8. New obverse 'CJL'

The obverse is similar to the 1867 pattern/ proof rupee and re-designed and re-engraved at the Calcutta mint, struck sometime between 12th March, 1868 and 1870. These were struck only at the Calcutta mint, probably as an experiment for currency rupees. The obverse has a crowned and robed mature-looking bust of Queen Victoria, giving a good representation of how she looked, the hair plait commences at the point where the crown rests on her forehead; the lower band or circlet of the rim of the crown is plain and the embroidery of the bodice is thick and bold, the central jewel of the crown is plain and not surrounded by beads like the proof/ pattern issue of 1867, with initials 'C' & 'JL' arranged prominently in a triangular pattern at the base in the centre of the jabot.

It is the contention of this author that the initials 'C' stand for Calcutta and 'JL' denote the engraver, Johannes Lutz. Given the fact that the newly discovered obverse has its roots in the 1867 proof, it can safely be concluded that the head engraver at the Calcutta mint, Lutz, tried his hand at re-designing an obverse and adorning both his mint's and his own name on the coin. The coins with this 'CJL' obverse are so scarce that it implies that the die was again not found to be suitable and hence discontinued.



Fig. 8. New obverse 'CJL'

The use of the initials 'JL' by Lutz is described above for Obverse A of the same 1862 rupee, as pointed out by Falcke & Clarke.

Additional evidence

The author has traced a Calcutta mint medal minted for commemorating the Jubbulpore exhibition. This is a silver medal, dated 1866, having the young bust of Queen Victoria with initials 'W. Wyon'. The reverse has initials 'R. A. ST. DES.' & 'J. L. SC.'.



Fig. 9. 1866 medal with 'J. L. SC.' on reverse

Puddester, in his masterpiece *Medals of British India*, Vol. 1 (866.2), mentions that W. Wyon designed the obverse and Thomas Stokes designed the reverse. Puddester fails to identify the meaning of the signature 'J. L.'. The letters 'DES:' following Stokes' name denotes that he is the designer of the reverse portion of the medal and the letters 'SC:' following initials 'J. L.' denote that 'J. L.' is the engraver. Now, it can be safely deduced that, since J. Lutz was the head engraver at the Calcutta mint during the time the medal was struck there, the initials 'J. L.' on the Jubbulpore medal are those of J. Lutz. This supports the belief that J. Lutz used his initials as 'J. L.' for signing off his works.

It is significant to point out here that after the Crown took over from the EIC, a new gold coinage was introduced and accordingly, mohurs with the date 1862 were struck. Later, following the Indian Coinage Act 1870, it was decided to introduce other denominations in gold, namely two-third and one-third mohur pieces i.e. ten rupees and five rupees respectively. The bust of the Queen on the Royal Mint proof ten and five rupee coins was designed by L. C. Wyon and these coins bear the date 1870. Coins with the same obverse and date were also struck as currency issues.

Significantly, a proof issue of the same denominations, but with a different bust and bearing the dates 1870 and 1875, was struck at the Calcutta mint. Since Lutz was the head designer, it is clear that he re-designed the ten and five rupee proof gold coins dated 1870 and 1875 by re-engraving L. C. Wyon's dies. These were struck at the Calcutta mint (Fig. 10) and had the initials 'C.M.' incuse on the ten rupees and in relief in five rupees in the centre of the line of truncation. In addition, the initial 'J' can be seen in the bust used for five rupees exactly in the same place where it occurs for Obverse A in the 1862 rupee, i.e. at the bottom right corner of the bust. Hence, it is clear that the re-engraved bust used for ten and five rupee gold coins was made by Lutz and the initials 'C.M.' in all probability denote Calcutta Mint. Pridmore has already mentioned that "C.M. = Calcutta Mint" and the proof coins were "apparently intended to replace the Royal Mint design".



Fig. 10. Ten rupees (A) and five rupees (B) in gold

The most noteworthy aspect of these ten and five rupees bust designs is the fact that they are similar to the 1867 proof rupee in design. The hair plait commences at the point where crown rests on forehead. The crown band, directly above the hair, is plain, and this clearly shows that the design is derived from the 1867 proof rupee.

The design of the gold coins' bust is similar to the 'CJL' rupee. The five rupee gold coin also has 3½ dress panels, like the 'CJL' rupee. The 5 petal-flowers in the jabot are located in almost identical locations to the 'CJL' rupee. This strongly supports the view that the 'CJL' rupee is a product of British Indian coinage, tracing its lineage to the 1867 rupee, and the re-designing and re-engraving that the bust underwent was done at the Calcutta mint under the then head engraver Johannes Lutz. Hence the letters 'CJL' were engraved to represent 'Calcutta, Johannes Lutz'.

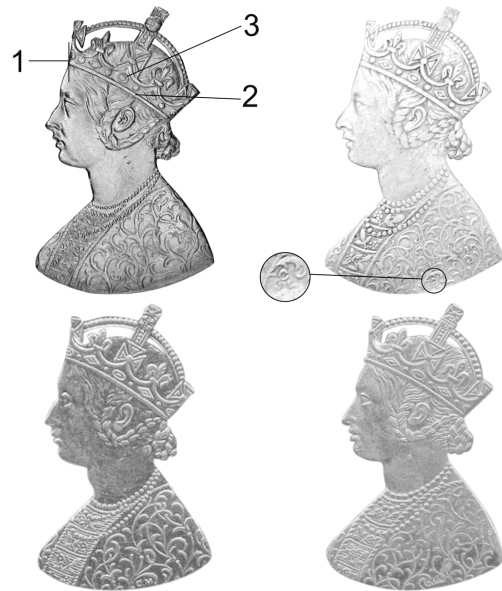


Fig. 11. Points of similarity between (clockwise from top left) 1867 proof/pattern rupee, new obverse 'CJL', ten rupees, and five rupees:

1. Hair plait commences at the point where the crown rests on the forehead.
2. Lower band or rim of the circlet is plain.
3. Central jewel of the crown is plain and not surrounded by beads.
4. The five-petal flowers in the 3½ dress panels of the 'CJL' and five rupee coins are in almost identical positions.
5. The five rupee coin has a 'J' on the right hand corner of the jabot.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Shailendra Bhandare and Paul Stevens for their conversations on this topic. He also wishes to thank Ratan Daryanani of Mumbai for sharing pictures of his 1867 pattern rupee, and Kamal Misra of Lucknow for making his specimen of 'CJL' rupee available for study purposes.

References

1. *India's 1862 Rupees*, by George Falcke and Robert L. Clarke, Krause Publications, INC Iola, Wisconsin, USA (1970).
5. *The Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations to the end of the reign of George VI, 1952: Part 4 INDIA: Volume 2: Uniform Coinage, East Indian Company 1835-58, Imperial Period 1858-1947*, by F. Pridmore, Spink & Son Ltd, London (1980).
6. *The Numismatic Circular*, Vol. 13, Spink & Son Ltd, London (1905).