

**Regulation confirmed by Order of His Majesty in Council
dated 24 June, 1835. (Enrolled 11 July, 1835).**

TO THE STATES OF THE ISLAND OF JERSEY.

The Year 1834, 18 September.

The States, having deliberated on the report of the Committee charged by Act of 13 August, 1834, to take into consideration the Petition of one thousand one hundred and thirteen inhabitants of this country to His Majesty in Council, regarding the change of the currency of the country; and whereas the old six-livre French coins are to be demonetized, and are moreover so clipped that they can no longer be regarded as useful currency; have resolved to repeal their Act of the 7th day of last April, and, subject to the Sanction of His Most Excellent Majesty in Council, to repeal the following paragraph of the Code of 1771:

"CURRENCY. In accordance with certain Orders of the King and of the Council, one dated 22 May 1729, and the other 9 July 1730, enrolled in the book of the States on the 25th day of August 1730; It is established that the silver currency coins of France shall circulate in this Island solely according to their intrinsic value, in proportion to the Crown piece of England. The Crown piece of England shall continue at seventy-one sous; the half-Crown at thirty-five and a half sous; the Shilling at fourteen sous; and the half-Shilling at seven sous. French Liards are reduced to their ancient value of two deniers each; and the English halfpenny shall pass at seven deniers; and English pennies at three and a half."

And to substitute the following Regulation:

ART. 1. FROM THE 1st of October 1834, English currency shall be the only legal tender for payments made in the country.

ART. 2. One pound sterling shall be estimated to be worth twenty-six livres, old French currency.

ART. 3. No one shall be obliged to accept more than one shilling in copper coinage.

**Reglement confirme par Ordre de Sa Majeste en Conseil en
date du 24 Juin, 1835.**

(Enterine le 11 Juillet, 1835).

AUX ETATS DE L'ILE DE JERSEY. L'An

1834, le 18 Septembre.

Les Etats, ayant delibere sur la rapport du Comite charge par Acte du 13 Aout, 1834, de prendre en consideration la Petition de mille cent treize des habitans de ce pays a Sa Majeste en Conseil, relativement au changement de la monnaie du pays; et attendu que les anciennes pieces de six livres de France vont etre demonetisees, et sont d'ailleurs tellement rognees qu'elles ne peuvent plus etre envisagees comme une monnaie utile; ont resolu de rappeler leur Acte du 7e jour d'Avril dernier, et, moyennant la Sanction de Sa Tres Excellente Majeste en Conseil, de rapporter le paragraphe suivant du Code de 1771:"MONNOYE. Conformement a certains Ordres du Roi ey du Conseil, l'un date le 22 Mai 1729, et l'autre le 9 Juillet 1730, enterines dans le livre des Etats le 25e jour d'Aout 1730; Il est etabli que les especes de Monnoye d'Argent de France auront cours en cette Isle uniquement selon leur valeur intrinseque, a proportion de l'Ecu ou Crown piece d'Angleterre. L'Ecu ou Crown piece d'Angleterre continuera a septante-un sous; le demi-Ecu a trente-cinq sous et demi; le Chelin a quatorze sous; et le demi-Chelin a sept sous. Les Liards de France sont reduits a leur ancienne valeur de deux deniers la piece; et le demi-sou d'Angleterre aura cours a sept deniers; et les deniers d'Angleterre a trois et demi." Et d'y substituer le Reglement suivant:ART. 1. A DATER du 1er Octobre 1834, la monnaie Anglaise sera la seule monnaie legale pour les payemens qui se feront dans le pays.ART. 2. Une livre sterling sera estimee valoir vingt-six livres, ancien cours de France.ART. 3. Nul ne sera tenu de recevoir au dela d'un chelin en monnaie de cuivre.

Analysis and Commentary

Jersey Currency Regulation of 1834–1835

Historical and Political Context

This document captures a significant moment in Jersey's constitutional and economic history. Jersey, as a Crown Dependency, occupies a unique constitutional position — it is not part of the United Kingdom, yet subject to Orders of His Majesty in Council. The regulation illustrates this relationship vividly: the States of Jersey deliberate and resolve, but the measure only takes legal force upon royal sanction, which came on 24 June 1835. The gap between the States' resolution (18 September 1834) and royal confirmation (24 June 1835) — some nine months — reflects the administrative reality of governing a dependency at a distance in the pre-telegraph era.

The Currency Problem Being Solved

The immediate practical trigger was the degradation of the old French six-livre coins. The document notes two compounding problems:

- They were being **demonetised** in France itself, meaning Jersey would soon be left holding coins unrecognised anywhere
- They were so heavily **clipped** — a centuries-old form of fraud whereby the edges of silver coins were shaved — as to be unreliable in weight and therefore in value

Clipping was a persistent plague on pre-industrial monetary systems. A clipped coin's face value and intrinsic metal value had diverged so far that commerce became uncertain and contested. Jersey, as a small island economy heavily dependent on trade, would have felt this acutely.

The petition from **1,113 inhabitants** is also noteworthy. This is a substantial number for Jersey's population at the time, suggesting the currency

disorder was a felt grievance across a broad cross-section of island society, not merely a concern of merchants or elites.

The Old System Being Replaced

The 1771 Code paragraph being repealed itself referenced even older Orders in Council from **1729 and 1730**, meaning the currency framework being dismantled had roots going back over a century. This old system was a hybrid of considerable complexity:

- English coins (Crown, half-Crown, Shilling, half-Shilling) circulated but were denominated in **French sous and deniers**
- French coins circulated at their **intrinsic silver value** relative to the English Crown
- Even the smallest coins — French liards, English halfpennies and pennies — had specified local valuations in deniers

This dual-currency accounting system, with English coins priced in French units, reflects Jersey's historical position straddling two worlds: politically tied to the English Crown since 1204, yet culturally and linguistically Norman French. Ordinary transactions required islanders to mentally convert between two monetary traditions simultaneously. It was a system born of historical accident and sustained by inertia.

The New System: Three Articles

The replacement regulation is strikingly concise — just three articles — yet comprehensive in its effect.

Article 1 is the revolutionary provision: English currency becomes the sole legal tender from 1 October 1834. The choice of date suggests the States wished to implement the change quickly, before the end of the commercial year, without waiting for formal royal confirmation. This was legally somewhat bold — the regulation operates retrospectively once confirmed in

1835, meaning transactions between October 1834 and June 1835 proceeded on the basis of an as-yet-unsanctioned rule.

Article 2 establishes a conversion rate of **£1 sterling = 26 livres** (old French currency). This was essential for the transition period: existing contracts, debts, leases and obligations denominated in the old currency needed a fixed rate at which they could be settled in the new. Without this, debtors and creditors would have disputed every legacy obligation. The rate itself reflects the accumulated exchange convention of the preceding century.

Article 3 limits acceptance of copper coinage to one shilling. This is a standard provision in monetary law, then and now — copper (or base metal) coinage is token money, not intrinsically valuable, and creditors cannot reasonably be forced to receive large sums in small coins. The provision protects against a creditor being paid a large debt entirely in penny pieces.

Broader Significance

Several wider themes emerge from this document:

Modernisation and rationalisation. The 1830s were a period of administrative and legal reform across the British Isles — the same decade saw the Reform Act (1832), reform of the Poor Laws (1834), and municipal reform (1835). Jersey's currency reform fits this broader pattern of sweeping away archaic inherited systems in favour of cleaner, more rational arrangements.

The French cultural residue. Even as French currency is abolished, the document itself is written entirely in French. The States conducted their business in French; the law would have been read and understood by islanders in French. The linguistic and the monetary are thus moving in opposite directions in this moment — the currency anglicises while the legal language remains French. Jersey would not transition to English as its primary legislative language until the twentieth century.

Sovereignty and dependency. The document is a reminder that Jersey's legislative autonomy has always been qualified. The States propose; the Crown disposes. The enrolled confirmation — *enterine* — is not a formality but a constitutional necessity. This tension between local self-government and imperial oversight runs through Jersey's entire modern history.

Legacy accounting. The survival of the term *livre* in Jersey's popular culture long outlasted this regulation. Well into the twentieth century, Jersey people informally reckoned prices in *sous* (pennies) and the currency unit "livre" persisted in colloquial use even after it had no legal standing whatsoever — a striking example of how monetary habits outlive monetary law.

Conclusion

What appears at first to be a dry administrative regulation is in fact a document rich with historical meaning: the end of a centuries-old Franco-English monetary hybrid, the assertion of English economic sovereignty over a Norman-French cultural community, and a practical response to the very real disorder caused by clipped and demonetised coinage. It stands as a small but telling marker of Jersey's gradual, uneven, and never quite complete integration into the anglophone world.