

## Request for Coinage

Royal Mint / Privy Council Documents, 1812–1813

---

**PAGE 1 — Council Office, 18 November 1812**

### Transcription:

Sir,

Council Office 18 November 1812

The Lords of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council having had under consideration the copy of a letter from Lieut. General Don, (transmitted in your letter of the 5th instant) stating that in consequence of some mercantile persons in Guernsey having entered into a resolution to receive the different Coins now in circulation at an increased value, a considerable quantity of Specie has been already exported to that Island from Jersey, and a great deal has been hoarded up for the purpose of being conveyed thither, the first favorable opportunity.

Their Lordships having likewise taken into consideration the Act passed by the States of Jersey (transmitted also in aforesaid letter) for the issuing a local Coin, I have it in command to acquaint you, for the information of Lord Sidmouth, that the Lords of the Council conceive that an Association to receive the Coins of a Country at a higher value than that put upon them by law, is highly reprehensible; and therefore think it may be advisable that the opinion of His Majesty's Law-officers should be taken whether such conduct is not punishable by Law.

It does not appear to their Lordships objectionable to allow the States of Guernsey or Jersey to issue Silver Tokens for the use of their respective States, on condition that—

### Commentary:

This letter is from the **Privy Council Office** to an unnamed official (likely the Lieutenant Governor of Jersey or Guernsey). The context is a **currency crisis** in the Channel Islands during the Napoleonic Wars. **Lieutenant General Don** (Governor of Jersey) had reported that Guernsey merchants

were accepting coins at **above their legal face value**, causing a drain of specie from Jersey to Guernsey — classic **Gresham's Law** dynamics (bad money driving out good). The Privy Council considers this practice legally reprehensible and floats the idea of prosecuting it, while simultaneously opening the door to **officially sanctioned local silver token coinage** as a remedy.

**Lord Sidmouth** (Henry Addington) was Home Secretary at this time.

---

**PAGE 2 — Continuation & Second Letter (Council Office, Whitehall, 5 Feb. 1813)**

**Transcription (continuation of pg. 1):**

...such tokens shall be coined at the Royal Mint here, of Silver provided by the said States; and that the States who issue such Tokens shall covenant, by a Law to be passed for that purpose, to receive them back whenever it may become necessary, at a rate not less than that at which they shall have been respectively issued.

I am however to observe that the States ought to be aware of the hazard of counterfeits which must necessarily attend the issue of the Tokens, much above their real value; and that therefore it will be incumbent on them to watch over their circulation, lest the introduction of counterfeits should destroy confidence in the Tokens issued under their authority.

J. Beckett, Esq.re &c° I am &c. Chetwynd

**Second Letter:**

My Lord,

Council Office, Whitehall,

5 February 1813.

Having laid before the Lords of the Committee of Council for Coin a letter from Messrs. De Lisle, Janvier and De Lisle referring to a letter from Lord Viscount Chetwynd dated 18 Nov. last, (copy of which is herewith enclosed) in answer to an application from the States of Jersey to be permitted, in consequence of the very great inconvenience experienced in that Island for

want of change, to issue Silver Tokens for the use of the said Island; and stating that they have received directions from the Committee appointed by the States of Jersey, to effect that desirable purpose, to procure for them Bullion to the Amount of Ten Thousand Pounds sterling, to be coined at the Royal Mint, into Silver Tokens, to be issued by them at 3/. and 1/6 each, & praying that Instructions may be given for such Coinage; accordingly, and their Lordships having taken the same into their consideration, I have it in command to acquaint Your Lordship that—

### **Commentary:**

The first section concludes the November 1812 letter, signed by **Viscount Chetwynd** (a Privy Council clerk) to **J. Beckett** (John Beckett, Under-Secretary at the Home Office). It sets out the **conditions for token issuance**: silver supplied by the States, coined at the Royal Mint, with a legal buy-back guarantee. Crucially it warns of the **counterfeiting risk** inherent in tokens whose face value greatly exceeds their metal content.

The **second letter** (5 Feb. 1813) is from the Committee of Council for Coin to a Lord (likely Lord Sidmouth). The Jersey agents — **Messrs. De Lisle, Janvier and De Lisle** — are acting as commercial intermediaries, seeking £10,000 of bullion to be struck into **3 shilling and 1/6 (one shilling sixpence) tokens** at the Royal Mint.

---

## **PAGE 3 — Mint Office, 3 March 1813**

### **Transcription (continuation):**

...that the Lords of the Committee are of opinion that Directions may be given to the Officers of His Majesty's Mint to make the necessary arrangements for carrying into effect the Wishes of the States of Jersey.

I have the honor to be

The Earl of Clancarty} &c. Master of Mint} & Jas. Buller.

### **Board minutes:**

The Board after granting a few small Applications, through the Clerk of the works, was adjourned to Wednesday, the 3d of March, at 11 o'clock.

Mint Office 3 March 1813.

At the Board of Officers,

Present: Dep. Warden,

Master,

Comptroller,

King's Assayer,

King's Clerk,

Superintendent of Machinery

Read the following Papers.

W. Huskisson Esq.  
1813.

11 January

Sir, Having laid before the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Coin, your Letter of the 10th Nov. last, wherein you request that Mr. Hoblyn may be permitted to inspect some old Rolling Mills and other Apparatus in store at the Mint, and which are not wanted for the public Service, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any part of them may be adapted for the purpose of carrying on a Coinage which you are authorized to execute in the Island of Ceylon, I am directed to acquaint you that—

**Commentary:**

**James Buller** was a Privy Council clerk. The **Earl of Clancarty** was Master of the Mint at this period. This page records formal Mint Board approval to proceed with the Jersey token coinage. The Board then dealt with routine business before adjourning.

The **Ceylon matter** is a separate, intriguing thread: **William Huskisson** (future President of the Board of Trade, famous later for being the first railway fatality in 1830) was involved in colonial coinage arrangements for

**Ceylon**, and a Mr. Hoblyn was seeking to inspect surplus Mint machinery for that purpose — an early example of **colonial monetary infrastructure** being assembled from metropolitan surplus equipment.

---

## **PAGE 4 — Technical Specifications & Board Notes**

### **Transcription:**

...laid before Lord Clancarty and Mr. De Lisle, Agent for the States.

February 1813. See pp. 253, 254 above.

£10000 = 2564 lbs. Weight = about 30 Bags. Allowed to cover the Expenses of, Viz.

Coinage

Package and Insurance

Carriage of the Coin

Interest of Money, Brokerage & Commission

10½ per Cent.

Nominal Value of the Tokens to be 3 Shillings and 1/6d.

Market Price of the Silver being 6/6d. per Ounce,

The Weight of the 3 Sh. piece will be 8s.6 240/1000 [Dollar Standard] being 20 27/1000 to the lb.

Ditto of the 1/6 — 4s.3 120/1000 [Dollar Standard] being 58 454/1000 to the lb.

The Impression to be,

On the Obverse, The Arms of the Island, as per Sketch, with the Legend, "States of Jersey."

On the Reverse, the current Value of the Piece, in legible Characters, and the Date.

Mint Charges, same as for Bank Tokens, Viz.

For 3 Shilling Tokens — 2sh 0d per lb.,                      divided in the usual  
1/6d. Do.                      — 2s.5 per lb.    proportion among the Officers.

And the Charge of the Engraver for engraving the original Matrix Dies —  
£10.10 per Pair.

### **Board close:**

Among other Applications for Repairs (chiefly very inconsiderable) the Board allowed the Estimate for carrying up a cheap and plain Stair to the Workshop of Mr. Wyon, the Junior Engraver, in his Attic Story; and for papering, for the first time, his dining Parlour; but postponed the Painting of his House.

The Board was then adjourned to Wed. 17 March, at 11 o'clock.

### **Commentary:**

This is the most technically rich page. It details the **precise metallurgical and financial specifications** for the Jersey tokens:

- **£10,000 face value** of bullion = approximately 2,564 lbs of silver (~30 bags)
- Total expenses (coinage, insurance, carriage, interest, brokerage) capped at **10½%**
- Silver market price: **6/6d per ounce** (a useful benchmark for 1813 silver prices)
- Weights calculated against the **Dollar Standard** — reflecting the international silver dollar as a reference weight
- **Design:** Arms of Jersey on obverse with legend "*States of Jersey*"; denomination and date on reverse — a notably plain, functional design
- **Mint charges:** 2s 0d/lb for 3-shilling pieces; 2s 5d/lb for 1/6 pieces, distributed among Mint officers as perquisites

- **Engraving:** £10 10s per pair of matrix dies — a significant but standard fee for **William Wyon** (the "Junior Engraver" mentioned), who would go on to become one of Britain's greatest coin engravers

The final note about Wyon's **workshop staircase and wallpaper** is a charming glimpse into the domestic minutiae of Mint administration — even the engraver's dining parlour required Board approval for redecoration.

---

### **Overall Significance**

These four pages document the **complete administrative chain** — from a currency crisis in the Channel Islands, through Privy Council deliberation, to precise Mint manufacturing specifications — for what became the **1813 Jersey Silver Tokens**. They are a rare survival showing how **emergency colonial/island coinage** was authorized and executed in Regency-era Britain, touching on monetary policy, anti-counterfeiting concerns, and the mechanics of the Royal Mint at its Tower Hill premises.