

Victorian Money

The decimal system for money was introduced to this country in 1971.

"Dec" means ten and so our money is organised in terms of 1's, 10's (1 x 10) and 100's (10 x 10), with 100 pennies being one pound (£1).

In Victorian times, money was calculated in pounds, shillings and pence, written £: s: d:
(the "d" written for pence stands for "denarius" - a Roman coin)

Instead of 100 pennies to £1, Victorians had 240 pennies to £1!
Their money worked like this:

12 pennies (written as 12d) = 1 shilling (written as 1s or 1/-)

240 pennies (240d) or 20 shillings (20s or 20/-) = £1

A shilling was sometimes called a "bob", so people might have a "ten bob note" to spend.

There were other names for different amounts of money:

$\frac{1}{8}$ d = half farthing

$\frac{1}{4}$ d = farthing

$\frac{1}{2}$ d = halfpenny (pronounced "ha'penny")

3d = threepence (pronounced "thruppence")

4d = groat

6d = sixpence

12d = shilling (1/-)

2s = florin

2s 6d (2/6) = half crown

4s = double florin

5s = crown

10s = half sovereign

£1 = sovereign

21s (£1 1/-) = guinea

Paper money included

10/- note (ten "bob" note)

£1 note

£5 note

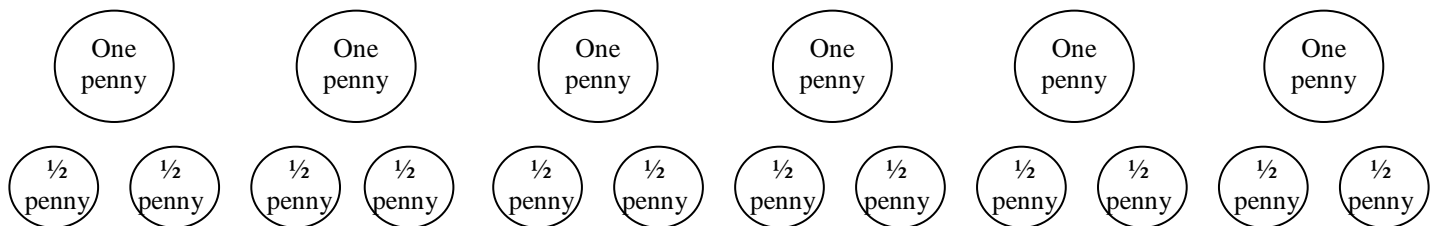
£10 note

See if you can work out the answer to the following Victorian maths questions.

They all come from a book called "Elementary Arithmetic and How To Teach It" by George Ricks, published in 1879.

- 1a) When oranges are one penny each, how many can I buy for sixpence? _____
- 1b) When they are tuppence (2d) each, how many can I buy for sixpence? _____
- 1c) If they cost threepence (3d) each, how many can I buy for sixpence? _____
- 2a) How many penny stamps can I buy for five pence? _____
- 2b) How many halfpenny stamps can I buy for tuppence (2d) _____
- 3a) John has tuppence (2d). How much must I give him to make five pence? _____
- 3b) If he buys a penny ball and a pennyworth of marbles, how much money will he have left?

- 4) Annie carried sixpence to the shop to buy a pound of rice at tuppence (2d) and a pound of sugar at threepence (3d). What change ought she to receive? _____
- 5a) An egg costs three ha'pennies ($3 \times \frac{1}{2}d$); what is the cost of three eggs? _____
- 5b) How many eggs can I buy for threepence (3d) at the same price? _____



Three different portraits of Queen Victoria were used on pennies during her reign.



The "young head" was used on coins from 1838 - 1859.
These pennies were made from copper.

The "bun" penny was used from 1860 - 1894 and was made from bronze (copper, tin and zinc).
It got its name from Queen Victoria's hairstyle on the coin.

"Bun" penny



"Veiled head" penny

The "veiled head" was used on coins from 1895 - 1901. These pennies were made from bronze.

Make a collection of coins from the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

What is the oldest coin you were able to find?

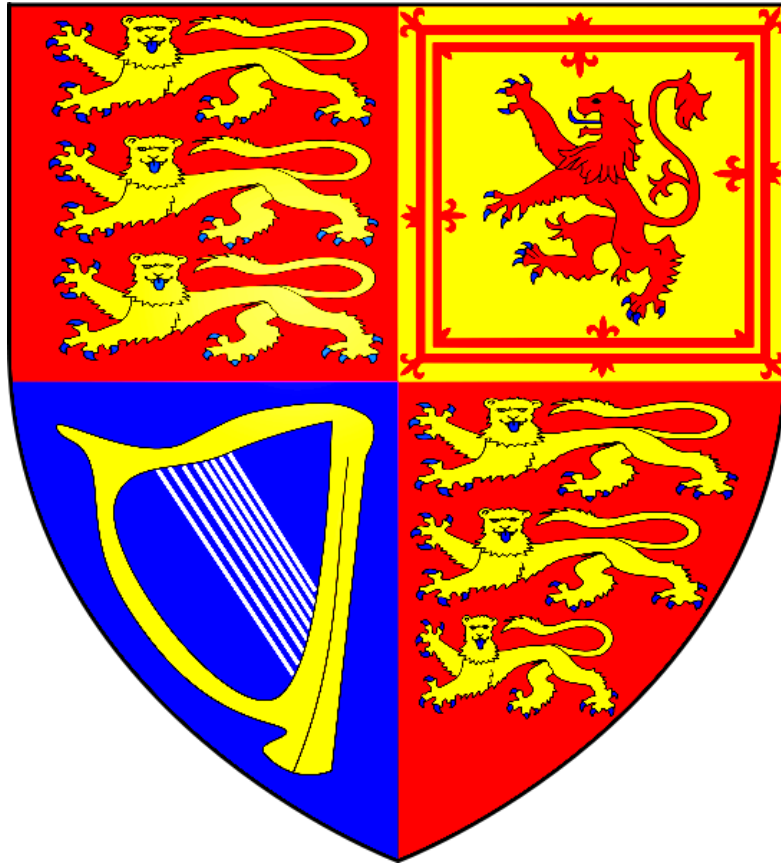
Look carefully at the coins.

How many different portraits of the Queen are shown on the coins?

If you collect enough coins from different years, you may be able to work out when new portraits of the Queen were introduced.

Royal Coat of Arms

The shield shown on many Victorian coins is the Royal Coat of Arms. This particular design was first used by Queen Victoria and is still used today.



The shield shows the various Royal emblems of the different parts of the United Kingdom - the first and fourth quarters show the "three lions" of England, the second quarter has the lion of Scotland and the third shows the harp of Ireland.