



History

Coins in the Classroom

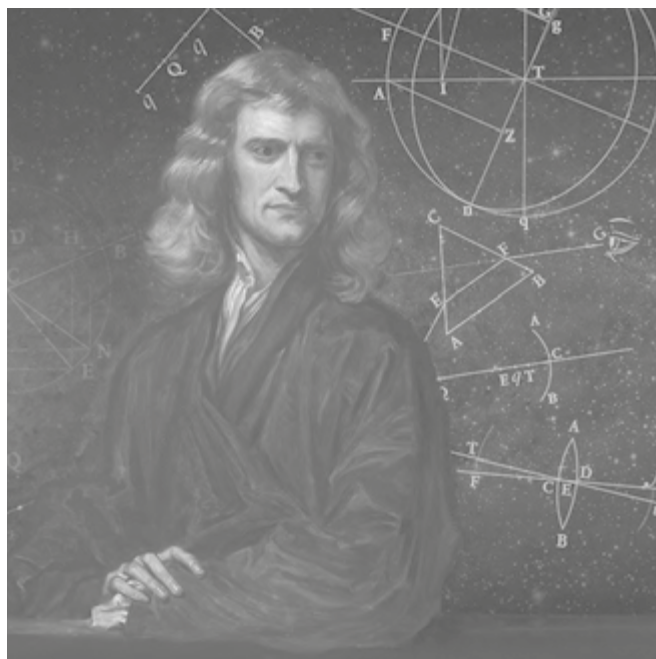
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The History of The Royal Mint

The Royal Mint's story stretches back over 1,100 years, beginning in the small workshops of Anglo-Saxon London and progressing through the centuries to be recognised today as the world's leading export mint.

To the Tower of London

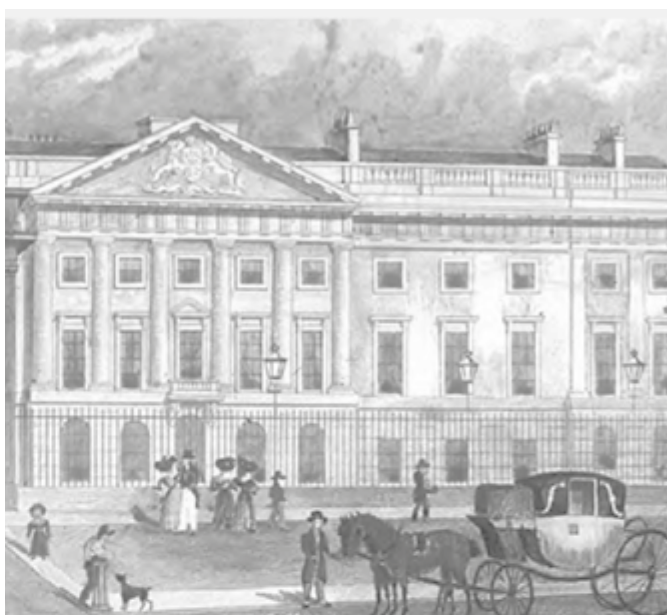
From 1279 a single mint was formed within the Tower of London. As a royal fortress, the Tower provided a secure location for striking the nation's coins, and it became the home of The Royal Mint for the next 500 years.



Sir Isaac Newton Master of the Mint

Technical advances and improvements in standards were made while at the Tower, particularly under the most famous Master of the Mint, Sir Isaac Newton.

He introduced measures to increase efficiency and improve the accuracy of minting, making it harder to counterfeit coins. Advances in coin-making technology and increasingly cramped conditions meant the Tower was no longer fit for purpose.



Tower Hill

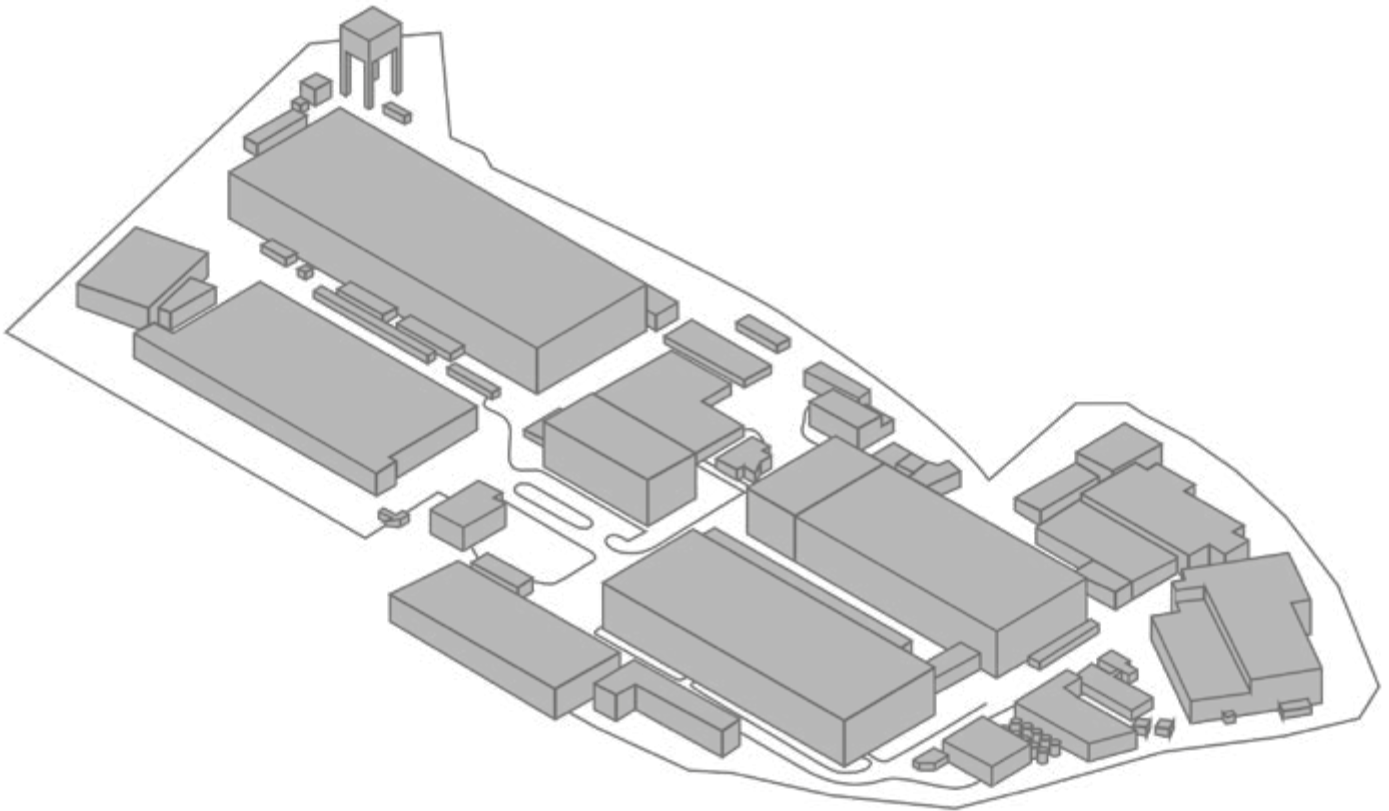
A short distance from the Tower, a new mint was built at Tower Hill. Fully operational by 1812, it was equipped with the latest steam-powered machinery to increase production capacity.

Improvements continued to be made, electricity replaced steam and technology changed processes, but it was still a struggle to meet a huge increase in demand for coins in the UK and overseas. By the 1920s coins were exported to countries all over the world, marking the move to a global operation.

London to Llantrisant

As the UK Government prepared to introduce a decimal currency in the 1960s, the decision was taken to move The Royal Mint out of London. A larger site was needed to cope with the production of the new coins as well as the increased demand for coinage from international markets.

The Royal Mint in Llantrisant, South Wales was opened by Her Majesty The Queen in December 1968. After decimalisation in 1971, all UK coin production moved from London to Wales, with the last coin struck at Tower Hill in 1975.



The Royal Mint today

The Royal Mint continues to grow and diversify, with a popular behind-the-scenes visitor experience opening its doors to the public in 2016. Today, the business manufactures coinage blanks, coins and medals. Over 800 people are employed at the facility to keep it operating 24 hours a day.

One of the UK's most successful exporters, the organisation has won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement on four occasions. The Royal Mint is capable of producing around 5 billion coins annually and supplies around 40 countries a year with circulating coins and blanks.

We are the trusted partner of more governments and central banks than any other mint, delivering high-quality products and services that help our customers achieve value from their currency.

Exercise

1. How old is The Royal Mint?

2. Where was the original site of The Royal Mint?

3. What famous scientist was once the Master of the Mint?

4. When did The Royal Mint relocate to Llantrisant?

History depicted on coins

The Royal Mint releases lots of different coins every year, and many of them depict key anniversaries and events in history.

A few examples include:



The 200th Anniversary of the
Birth of Queen Victoria



50 Years of the 50p



The First World War Centenary



The 400th Anniversary of the
Death of William Shakespeare

Exercise

1. Why do you think The Royal Mint commemorated these people or events on coins?

2. Can you find out a fact about each of the coins?

3. What other people or events have been commemorated on coins?

4. What is your favourite and why?



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