

Celtic

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internet fakes

WE have all heard horror stories about internet auction sites. Yet there are still collectors who are willing to take that gamble, especially when they are being told by the seller, often a seller who has 100 per cent positive feedback, that the coin is "100 per cent authentic". But what happens if you don't know that the coin you are buying is a fake? Why would you? The likelihood is that it will get put into your collection for several years until you or, in the event of your death, your family, dispose of the collection.

Modern forgeries are a growing problem for dealers and collectors alike. Frequently I am sent collections to sell, which have been formed over a long period of time, and I can pretty much guarantee that there will be one or more fake coins in them. Having to tell the person, or indeed the family of the person, that some of the coins are fake is stressful and distressing, usually because there is no chance of the family being able to reclaim their loved one's money (unless of course they have bought from a reputable dealer).

This coin was recently offered on a well-known internet auction site:



It was being offered as a "VERY RARE Ancient Celtic Hammered Silver Icenic coin circa 60-54 BC. Fenrir the Wolf stalks the lands of East Anglia in savage beauty, replacing the mythic Sun-horse of Apollo.

Norfolk Wolf. Right Type. c. 60-54 BC. Icenian wreath motif with upward-facing leaves. Wolf standing r. on corded line, bird on rump, pellets and crescents above, large pellet and crescent below, 'coffee bean' behind, exergual decoration. ABC 1393, VA 610-1, BMC 213-216, S 30. CCI 05.0624.

Good VF, small unobtrusive hairline crack, lovely wolf with bristles on back clearly displayed. SCARCE. With stunning Celtic design. Metal detector find. MINT. Just as seen on the photos. UNCLENED METAL DETECTOR FIND---100% Authentic--Condition: UNCLENED. Metal detector find. Just as seen on the photos. Material: Silver. Uncleaned. Just as excavated. SIZE: Small. About 10 mm. Just as seen on the photos. WEIGHT: 1.3g."

The irony is that the seller has quoted references and grading information which he has taken from a genuine Norfolk Wolf gold stater which we sold last year in *Chris Rudd List 143*, No.13. This is our description for the genuine coin:



"Norfolk Wolf. Right Type. c. 60-54 BC. Gold stater. 17mm. 6.10g. Icenian wreath motif with upward-facing leaves. / Wolf standing r. on corded line, bird on rump, pellets and crescents above, large pellet and crescent below, 'coffee bean' behind, exergual decoration. ABC 1393, VA 610-1, BMC 212-216, S 30.

CCI 05.0624. Good VF, small unobtrusive hairline crack, yellow gold, lovely wolf with bristles on back clearly displayed. Ex Anton Beasley collection, ex Clive D Aston collection. SCARCE."

The same seller also offered these fake coins with their false descriptions:



"Atreates and Regni Verica, circa AD 10-43. Ancient ICENI SILVER CELTIC COIN."



"Ancient Celtic--Atreates and Regni, Verica, circa AD 10-40. Silver Minim Coin."



"Boudica, Queen of the Icenic, circa 100 BC/AD. Ancient ICENI SILVER CELTIC COIN."



"The Celtic Tribes. Ancient Silver Hammered Icenic coin, circa 100 BC-AD 100."

They are all modern fakes, unequivocally, unquestionably, without doubt, 100 per cent modern counterfeits. If you are the unsuspecting purchaser of any of these coins, I would advise you to contact the seller to obtain a full refund or pursue the refund through the auction sites own money back guarantee.

When I am approached by new collectors looking for advice about forming a collection it is "always buy from reputable dealers, you may pay a bit more, but you have that reassurance that what you have paid is money well spent, not money down the drain". You owe it to yourself and to your family.