

# Magnificent Aussie Coin Collection For Sale

## International Auction Galleries to put Benchmark Collection on block

**I**N mid-January one of the great collections of Australian pre-decimal coins will be put up for sale. International Auction Galleries, in conjunction with

Strand Coins, are to auction the renowned Benchmark Collection.

The collection is arguably the most comprehensive ever assembled of top

grade Australian pre-decimal coins. It has taken Mark Duff of Strand Coins over two decades of painstaking searching to complete.



*The Benchmark 1923 halfpenny in NGC MS62BN, the only example graded Mint State. Images courtesy Strand Coins.*



*The Koschade example of the 1916 mule graded NGC AU-Detail. The Indian quarter anna obverse, with its significant die clash, is characterized by its English legend, and the Danish Order of the Elephant on the King's robe. Images courtesy Strand Coins.*



*Spot the difference: the obverses of the both varieties of Australia's fabled 1930 penny, both graded NGC XF45BN. Left the rarer English die; right the Indian die. Images courtesy Strand Coins.*

All major Australian collections to come on the market during this period have contributed items. As a result the Benchmark Collection contains complete date sets of all denominations plus

top grade examples of the majority of intentionally-struck mint varieties. The sheer quality is mind-boggling.

All coins have been independently graded by Numismatic Guaranty Corp-

oration (NGC) and can be viewed on its website: [www.ngccoin.com/gallery/benchmark.aspx](http://www.ngccoin.com/gallery/benchmark.aspx) or in the Benchmark Catalogue at [www.strandcoins.com](http://www.strandcoins.com)

Many of the most desired coin rarities of the Australian series occur among the bronze pennies and halfpennies. The Benchmark collection is particularly strong in both categories.

The top coin amongst the penny highlights must be the XF example of the super-rare English die 1930 penny graded NGC XF45BN. This is the Daly coin certified by the Royal Australian Mint in 1976. It is the finest known of the three surviving examples of Australia's rarest circulating coin. The corresponding Indian die 1930 penny also comes in at NGC XF45BN placing it equal second among the highest grades known for this variety.

Other serious top-graded pennies include a 1921 English die (NGC MS64BN), a 1924 Indian die (NGC MS64 RB), a 1925 penny (NGC MS65BN), and a 1927 Indian die (NGC MS64 BN). The example of a 1920 penny lacking mintmarks is in NGC MS65RB. No higher grade is known for this type.

Both the Sydney Mint dot-above-and-dot-below 1919 penny in NGC AU58BN and the corresponding 1920 penny in NGC MS63RB are extremely rare in such high grades.

The completeness of the pennies is



Well struck-up reverse of the Benchmark 1946 penny showing the distinctive K.G mm. missing on most 1946 pennies. Image courtesy Strand Coins.



Rare in high grade: Australia's first kangaroo reverse halfpenny struck in 1939. Unlike the majority of other 1939 kangaroo reverse halfpennies the Y in HALFPENNY has both serifs on its foot equally developed - the so-called double-footed Y. Image courtesy Strand Coins.



Overstruck threepences in the Benchmark Collection: top 1922/1 NGC AU58; bottom 1934/3 NGC MS66. Images courtesy Strand Coins.



Choice examples of the differing 1926 sixpence date styles, with (below) and without (above) a pronounced serif on the 2. Image courtesy Strand Coins.

shown by an NGC AU58BN dot-above 1920, a dropped 1 Indian Die 1931 in NGC AU55BN, a 1933/2 overdate in NGC MS65 RB, a 1943 I struck with a long-denticle die in NGC MS64BN, and a scarce 1946 K.G mm in NGC MS64RB.

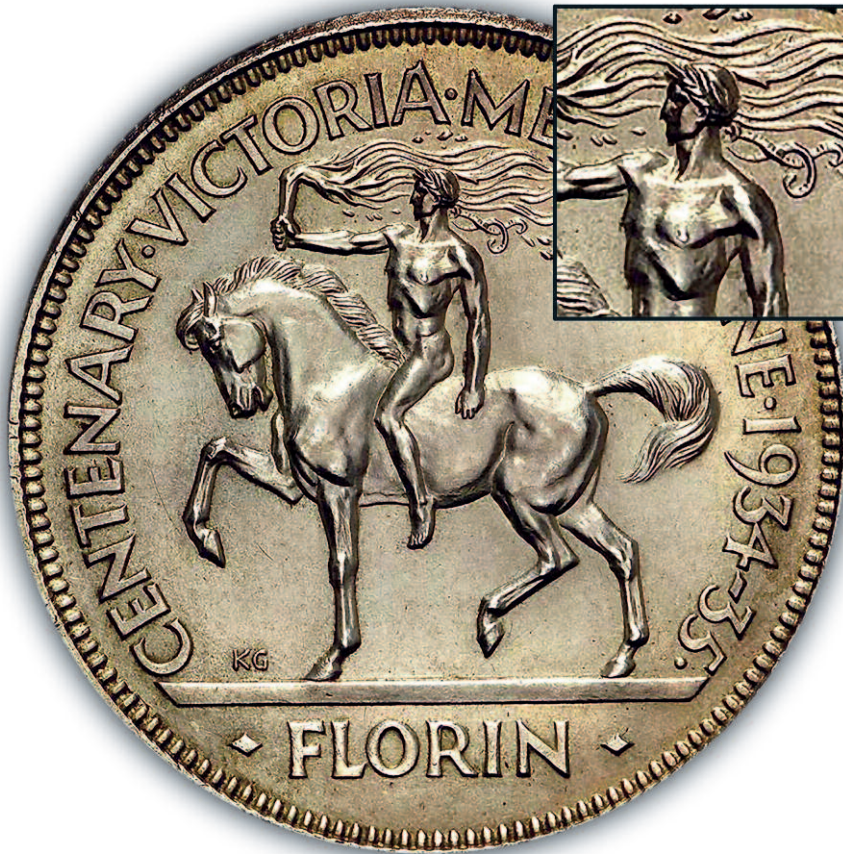
The halfpennies are headed by an uncirculated 1923 in MS62BN, the only example graded Mint State, closely followed by the Koschade example of the 1916 mule graded NGC AU - Detail. The latter coin was discovered in the early 1930s and shows a significant die clash.



Superb quality: 1916M sixpence NGC MS68. Image courtesy Strand Coins.



The top 1923 florin from the Baldwin hoard regarded as the finest surviving Australian George V florin - NGC MS67. Image courtesy Strand Coins.



*The superior quality of the striking of the Benchmark 1934-5 Melbourne Centenary florin is shown by the well struck-up wreath, hand and nipple. Images courtesy Strand Coins.*

The 1939 'roo halfpenny (NGC MS65-BN) came from the Nugget Coombs collection. It is one of the few known in high grade with both serifs on the base of the Y of HALFPENNY fully formed - the rare double-footed variety.

For small silver coins the Australian threepences are a delight. They are among the very best known. Typical is the 1942(M) coin that is the hardest to find in top grade of all World War II struck Aussie coins. That in the collection is remarkable in achieving NGC MS64.

Both threepenny overdates are exceptional: 1922/1 in NGC AU58 and the 1934/3 in NGC MS66.

Among the sixpences the 1916 stands out with its NGC MS68 rating. It is the top coin to be so graded with this date. Two 1926 sixpences illustrate both known date styles that differ as to whether a pronounced serif is present on the tail of the 2 in the date. That with the serif is by far the rarer. The example in the collection (NGC MS64) is believed to be the only one of this type to be independently third-party graded.

Many of the shillings in the collection come from the Jerome Remick sale. Of these the 1911 date (NGC MS65) is the second best graded, the 1918 (NGC MS66) is the equal finest known, while the 1922 is a splendid NGC MS66.

Other top shillings include both 1915 types. Both grade NGC MS65. The

London strike is considered the finest known. The 1915H is a superior coin and would be difficult to surpass.

The quality of the George V florins typifies the Benchmark Collection's excellence. These grade from NGC MS64 to MS67. Twenty-one of the twenty-five coins are the top examples known of their dates. Of these, the 1923 coin, NGC MS67, was the pick of the Baldwin hoard. It currently holds the mantle as the finest surviving George V florin.

The reverse of the 1934-5 Melbourne Centenary florin is remarkable in having wreath, hand and nipple all sharply defined - as the designer intended. Few of these coins in collections show even a trace of a nipple. Any that do, command a significant premium at auction. This coin is not only a superb strike but its NGC MS65 grading provides a double whammy.

And, of course, both crowns are included. The 1937 comes in NGC MS 65, the 1938 NGC MS 62.

The Live Online Auction will be held on January 19th 2015. Complete details and images, will be posted on the IAG website: [www.iagauctions.com](http://www.iagauctions.com). All enquires and requests for catalogues can be addressed to: International Auction Galleries P.O. Box 1380 Broadbeach, Queensland 4218, Australia; ph: +617 55 380 300; fax: +617 5538 7296; e-mail: [iagmail@optusnet.com.au](mailto:iagmail@optusnet.com.au)

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