

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Royal Mint

Hundreds of years ago coins were made in various towns in Britain, including Bristol, Canterbury, London, Winchester and York. After 1810 there was only one Royal Mint, which was on Tower Hill in London. The last coin to be struck in the Tower of London was 1975. In 1968 a new mint was established at Llantrisant, South Wales for the manufacture of the decimal currency which was introduced on 25th February 1971.

The metal ingots from which coins are made are melted in the closed crucibles for about two hours and the molten metal is then run into moulds to form coinage-bars which vary in width and thicknesses according to the coins that are to be made.

These bars or strips are next passed between rollers to ensure that they are of uniform size and then put into machines which punch out the blank discs on which the design is to be stamped. After being examined to see that they are of the correct size and shape, these blank discs are fed into annealing drums which soften the metal in preparation for the stamping process.

The design is stamped by powerful presses, both sides being done at the same time and the finished coins are placed on a moving belt for inspection by quality control staff who are trained to detect any faults.

The newly-minted coins are tested for weight and after being counted by an automatic machine are placed in bags, sealed and stored in large strong rooms until required by the banks.

Silver and gold were traditionally used for coins. Today coins in Britain's currency are made with copper, nickel and less expensive metals.

Write the definitions of

1. Uniform size : _____

2. Traditionally : _____

3. Vary: _____

4. Examined : _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Tick the correct answer.

- 5. The metal ingots are melted in
a. a large open fire b. an enclosed special container c. a stove

- 6. The bars or strips are passed between rollers to ensure the coins are
a. all the same size b. are cooler c. the same colour

- 7. The annealing drums ensure all coins are
a. of value to be stamped b. soft enough to be stamped c. are round enough

- 8. The newly tested coins are counted and tested for :
a. size b. value c. weight

Write facts on the Royal Mint from this text.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Inside The Vault

James sat down on the steps of the tomb and watched. The light at ebbed from the church. Shadows began to pack the roof and the crowd around the pillars and dark oak pews. The knight and his lady lay on their tomb with worn faces and stiff stone drapery. He was a crusading knight, armoured from head to pointed feet, his hands frozen in prayer: he must have known the strange, hot, far-away places and then come back to die in Ledsham, among elms and willows beside the Evenlode. James fetched himself a cushion to sit on and thought about this and other things while listening to the tapping noises of Ben's pick and watched the dust and chippings fly up around the flagstone.

"I think this is the one" said Ben. "I reckon it is."

"What if someone comes?" said James.

"I'm seeing about the damp, aren't I?" said Bert. "Rising damp, they've got here. I don't know anything about a vault."

The church was very dark and quiet now but not empty because no place that has been used for so long by so many people can ever be empty. Like all old buildings, it was full of their thoughts and feelings, and these thoughts and feelings seemed to crowd in upon James as he sat waiting and watching. He had asked Alan to come and Alan had come at once and was there now, ay James's elbow, waiting and watching him.

"Here she comes," said Ben. He put his pick down and dug his fingers down under the edge of the flagstone. He heaved, muscles stood out like cords in his arms, the flagstones rocked and tipped on to one side. James leaned forward.

"Hang on," said Ben. "I got to get through the next bit. I told you I mortared it up again." He swung the pick down: the floor split mortar crumbled away downwards and these were a jagged black hole, man-sized.

"There we are," said Bert. Let's have that torch."

He pointed the torch down the hole. "Want to have a look?" James clutched the edge of stone step. He said to Alan, "Shall I?" and Alan told him he'd be a silly idiot not to go. He got up, rather slowly and came forward and lay down on his stomach and shone the torch down into the hole.

It was smaller than he expected. A little, crumbling underground room, with rough masonry walls and rubble all over the floor. There were long stone boxes stacked up on top of each other: several at one side, and one by itself on the other.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Ben's face appeared at the other side of the hole. "Let's have some light over here."

James swung the torch around. They could see the lettering now on top of the solitary box, black-shadowed in the beam of light. "I thought so," said Ben.

***Here lyeth, ye body of
Thomas Kempe Apotheraire
He departed this life ye last of October AD 1629
In the 63 year of his Age.***

"Apothecary?" said James. His voice dropped into the vault, sounding deep and hollow.

"He couldn't go having then put sorcerer, could he?" said Ben.

"Not if he wanted to be here. The church wouldn't hold with that."

"Why do you think he wanted to be there?" said James in a whisper. "He wasn't very religious, was he? Believing in all that magic and hating priests."

The Ghost of Thomas Kempe Penelope Lively.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Read the text and answer the questions

1. Why are the faces of the Knight and his lady described as worn ?

2. Who was the first of the three to look into the vault ?

3. What are the stone boxes ?

4. How do you know?

5. Which character is your favourite and why ?

Write the definition of

6. heaved : _____

7. solitary: _____

8. sorcerer : _____

9. Has the author used any grammar or writers craft to add to the story?

10. Use three adjectives to describe the James, the main character .

11. How would you feel if you were there ?

12. Write your own questions for the teacher to answer. Try to catch me out.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____