

To the States of the Island of Jersey Issue of Bronze Coinage

ACT to put into circulation Bronze Coinage to an amount not exceeding **Three thousand pounds sterling**, confirmed by Order of His Majesty in Council, dated **29th January 1923**. (*Registered 10th February 1923*)

TO THE STATES OF THE ISLAND OF JERSEY

In the Year 1922, the 31st day of October.

Considering that the time is opportune to make a new issue of Bronze Coinage:

THE STATES have decided, subject to the sanction of His Most Excellent Majesty in Council, to issue Bronze Coinage to an amount not exceeding **Three thousand pounds sterling**, in coins representing the **twelfth** and **twenty-fourth part of a shilling**, currency of Great Britain.

And the States have charged the Finance Committee with taking the necessary measures to put the present Act into execution, once it shall have received the Royal Sanction, and to issue the said Bronze Coinage as and when it shall be required.

And the Treasurer of the States is hereby authorized to advance the necessary funds under the direction of the said Committee.

Which shall be printed, published and posted.

ERNEST LE SUEUR, *Greffier (Clerk of the States)*

Aux Etats de l'île de Jersey Emission de Monnaie de Bronze.

ACTE pour emettre en circulation de la Monnaie de Bronze a un montant n'excedant pas Trois mille livres sterling, confirme par Ordre de Sa Majeste en Conseil, en date du 29 Janvier 1923. (Enterine le 10 Fevrier 1923).

AUX ETATS DE L'ILE DE JERSEY.

L'An 1922, le 31e jour d'Octobre.

Considerant que le moment est opportun de faire une nouvelle emission de Monnaie de Bronze: LES ETATS ont decide, moyennant la sanction de Sa Tres Excellente Majeste en Conseil, d'emettre de la Monnaie de Bronze a un montant n'excedant pas Trois > mille livres sterling, en pieces representant la douzieme ae la vingt-quatrieme partie d'un chelin, monnaie de la Grande Bretagne. Et les Etats ont charge le Comite des Finances de prendre les mesures necessaires pour mettre le present Acte a execution, lorsqu'il aura recu la Sanction Royale, et pour emettre ladite Monnaie de Bronze au fur et a mesure qu'il en sera necessaire. Et est le Tresorier des Etats autorise a avancer les fonds necessaires sous la direction dudit Comite. Ce qui sera imprime, publie et affiche.

ERNEST LE SUEUR, Greffier.

Analysis and Commentary: Jersey States Bronze Coinage Act 1922

Historical and Constitutional Context

This document is a formal legislative act of the **States of Jersey**, the island's parliament, dating from **31 October 1922**, with Royal confirmation following on **29 January 1923**. It offers a fascinating window into Jersey's unique constitutional position and monetary history in the early twentieth century.

Jersey's Constitutional Status

Jersey is a **Crown Dependency**, not part of the United Kingdom, and has always maintained a distinct legal and administrative identity. The document perfectly illustrates this dual character: the States of Jersey pass legislation independently, but that legislation requires **Royal Sanction** — confirmation by the Sovereign in Council — before it takes effect. This is the ancient prerogative relationship between the Crown and the Channel Islands, rooted in the Norman inheritance of the English Crown and predating the formation of the United Kingdom itself.

The phrase "*Sa Très Excellente Majesté en Conseil*" ("His Most Excellent Majesty in Council") refers to the **Privy Council**, which acts as the constitutional link between the Crown and Jersey. The gap between the States' vote (October 1922) and Royal confirmation (January 1923) reflects this necessary approval process.

Language

The document is written entirely in **French**, which was at this time still the official language of Jersey's legislature and legal system. This is historically significant — Norman French had been the language of Jersey's government, courts and official records for centuries, a direct legacy of the island's Norman origins. English was gradually displacing French in official use during the early twentieth century, and this document sits right at that transitional moment. French finally ceased to be the primary official language of the States during the mid-twentieth century. The use of French here is therefore not merely ceremonial — it was still the authentic legal language of the island.

The Coinage Itself

Denominations

The act authorizes coins representing:

- **1/12th of a shilling** — Jersey's one-twelfth shilling piece
- **1/24th of a shilling** — Jersey's one-twenty-fourth shilling piece

These denominations are distinctly **Jerseian** and do not correspond to standard British coinage, which used a system of twelve pennies to the shilling. Jersey traditionally divided its shilling into **twelfths** rather than the British twelfths/halfpennies system, reflecting older Norman and French monetary customs. The 1/12th shilling was Jersey's basic penny equivalent, and the 1/24th a halfpenny equivalent.

The £3,000 Ceiling

The act caps the issue at **three thousand pounds sterling**. This is a modest sum even by 1922 standards, reflecting the small scale of Jersey's economy and the limited circulation required for a small island community. It also reflects careful fiscal conservatism — the States were not printing money freely but authorizing a specific, bounded issue to meet a practical need for small change in daily commerce.

Why Bronze?

Bronze coinage was the standard material for low-denomination coins across the British Isles at this time. The choice reflects practical economics — bronze was cheap, durable, and widely understood as the material of small everyday transactions.

Institutional Machinery

The act reveals how Jersey's government operated in practice:

- The **States** (the legislature) vote the policy decision
- The **Finance Committee** (*Comité des Finances*) is delegated executive responsibility for implementation — ordering the coins, managing the issue, and controlling distribution "as and when required"
- The **Treasurer of the States** is authorized to advance the necessary funds, subordinate to the Finance Committee's direction

This three-tier structure — legislature, committee, treasurer — reflects Jersey's committee-based system of government, which persisted well into the twentieth century before more modern ministerial government was introduced in 2005.

The Clerk's Role

The document is signed by **Ernest Le Sueur** as *Greffier* — Clerk of the States. The Greffier is one of Jersey's most ancient offices, responsible for

recording legislation, maintaining official records and authenticating acts of the States. The closing formula — "*Ce qui sera imprimé, publié et affiché*" ("Which shall be printed, published and posted") — is the standard promulgation clause, ensuring the act is brought to public notice by posting and publication, in the tradition of Norman and French legal practice.

Broader Significance

This small document encapsulates several important themes:

1. **Jersey's tenacious distinctiveness** — maintaining its own currency, language and legal forms well into the modern era
2. **The pragmatic relationship with the Crown** — autonomous in practice, but constitutionally anchored to British sovereignty
3. **The transition period of the early 1920s** — Jersey was modernizing economically after the First World War while preserving ancient forms and traditions
4. **The survival of Norman administrative culture** — in the French language, the denominational system, and the procedural formulas used

For a numismatist, constitutional historian or student of Channel Islands culture, this is a rich primary source that rewards close reading.