

The 1962 Dated Proof Sovereign of Elizabeth II

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The purpose of this post is to draw attention to the 1962 dated proof sovereign of Elizabeth II as it is unlisted in the British reference catalogues. It is not included in Spink's *Coins of England & the United Kingdom*, Bull's *English Gold Coinage*, Wilson and Rasmussen's *English Pattern Trial and Proof Coins in Gold* or Marsh and Hill's *The Gold Sovereign Series*.¹ Like other pre-decimal proof sovereigns of Elizabeth II, it was struck as a proof-record specimen. Proof-records were produced by the Royal Mint to serve as coins of the highest quality for archival purposes.² These coins were minted, in exceedingly small quantities, until 1964. They were primarily intended for inclusion in institutional collections and were not made available for sale to the public.³

The coin below is the 1962 dated proof sovereign in the collection of The Hunterian. It was presented by the Royal Mint in October 1963, alongside 1958, 1959 and 1963 dated proof sovereigns. In return, the museum paid the cost of the coins' bullion value, then £3 per coin.⁴ As well as having a proof finish, it also displays the sharper edge milling that is a feature of other proof sovereigns of the period.⁵

* Thank you to David Mason, Public Engagement and Information Officer of the Royal Mint Museum, for answering my enquiries about proof-record coins and drawing my attention to Spencer's articles on the subject. Thanks also to Ella Paul and Alice Blackwell, respectively the Assistant Curator of Renaissance and Early Modern History and the Senior Curator of Medieval Archaeology and History at National Museums Scotland, and Jesper Ericsson, The Hunterian's Curator of Numismatics, for providing access to the numismatic collections in their care.

¹ Emma Howard, *Coins of England & the United Kingdom: Pre-Decimal Issues*, 59th Edition (London: Spink & Son, 2023), p.586; Maurice Bull, *English Gold Coinage from 1816-1971: Incorporating the British Sovereign Series Issued Within the British Empire, Volume II* (London: Spink and Son, 2023), p.324; Alex Wilson & Mark Rasmussen, *English Pattern Trial and Proof Coins in Gold 1547-1968* (Cambridge: Alexander Publishing, 2000), pp.520-521; Michael A. Marsh & Steve Hill, *The Gold Sovereign Series* (Exeter: Token Publishing Limited, 2021), p.153.

² Harry E. Spencer, 'Proof-Record Coins Struck by the Royal Mint 1922-1964', *The Numismatist* vol.96 no.12 (December 1983), p.2506.

³ Harry E. Spencer, 'Proof Record Coins of the British Royal Mint', *The Numismatist* vol.92 no.8 (August 1979), pp.1661, 1666.

⁴ Information from The Hunterian's *Accession Register*.

⁵ This is based upon its comparison with the 1958, 1959 and 1963 proof sovereigns in The Hunterian's collection. David Mason also made the same observation from photographs of the 1962 dated Hunterian specimen.



Elizabeth II, United Kingdom, proof sovereign, 1962
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While the 1962 proof sovereign is unlisted in the British catalogues, it has been noted in other publications. It is included in the Krause *Standard Catalog of World Coins* and Spencer's survey of the 1922-1964 dated proof-record coins in the collections of the British Museum, Ashmolean Museum, Fitzwilliam Museum, National Museum of Wales and the Royal Mint Museum.⁶ The latter museum holds two specimens of the coin.⁷ A single example is also in the collection of National Museums Scotland.⁸



⁶ George S. Cuhaj, *Standard Catalog of World Coins 1901-2000*, 41st Edition (Iola: Krause Publications, 2013), p.1013; Spencer, 'Proof-Record Coins Struck by the Royal Mint', pp.2505, 2508.

⁷ Information provided by David Mason.

⁸ National Museums Scotland no.H.C396.

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