

My time working with the British Museum was a dream come true from start to finish. Upon arriving at the museum, I was astounded to see the galleries for the first time. When I met Wendy Scott, my supervisor, know, she gave me a tour of the building before it opened.

I worked my shift over two weeks, with a gap in between. The first week was my introduction to the department and getting used to the systems. The staff were incredibly kind and understanding, especially when I had questions or made mistakes. I was given a tour of the department, and was shown amazing specimens like past Olympic Medals. One of the collections I found most interesting was the play and fake money collection - it had never occurred to me that these would come under the banner of numismatics.

Then I was set to work on the first project - going through a collection of Tudor and Civil War coins and creating a database for them. I found these coins to be the most beautiful among the ones I encountered, being incredibly detailed and well-preserved. On the other hand, I was also asked to sort through some Roman Nummi later, which were fascinating, though challenging due to their degraded state. Over the two weeks of my trip, I was also asked to sort through a horde of Edgar coins, record coins onto the PAS Database, and even helped to write the BNJ yearly report on treasure cases.

So, what did I get out of this experience?

Firstly, I have definitely improved my knowledge of numismatics. Having practiced my examination and identification skills, I feel much more confident being able to successfully identify coins. Also, I was able to interact with coins from many different time periods, giving me a better perspective on what characteristics coins can have.

Another advantage I have been afforded from this experience has been to get new ideas and advice for my dissertation. Not only was I able to get advice from experts who have already gone through the experience of writing a dissertation and finding a job in the industry, but I was also introduced to new perspectives on the nature of coins; the intersection of coins being turned into artefacts and objects, more methods that people might use to go about manipulating coins and why, and ways of specialising my subject down to a more simple topic.

Lastly, this opportunity gave me an experience that I have wanted to have since childhood. I grew up watching "Relic: Guardians of the Museum" and "Horrible Histories", which gave me an interest in history and eventually archaeology. The British Museum has always been on my bucket list, and this internship has let me experience it in a way I could never have anticipated at 6 years old. I now have a new appreciation for how museums run, what challenges and controversies arise, and what work goes on behind the scenes to make the experiences I appreciated so much as a child.