



Time is money in Britain after Royal Mint error 英造幣廠印證「時間就是金錢」

An error by the Royal Mint in Britain has seen the issue of tens of thousands of "dateless" 20 pence coins — driving their value up to £50 (60 euros, US\$80) each, a collector said.

There are believed to be between 50,000 and 200,000 of the coins, worth 24 euro cents or 33 US cents, in circulation, all of them missing the stamped 2009 date which was supposed to appear on the back of the coin.

It was the first time an undated coin has entered circulation in more than 300 years — the last such error occurred in 1672 under the reign of Charles II.

Describing the mistake as "incredibly rare", the Royal Mint — the institution responsible for making Britain's notes and coins — said the error occurred last year during a redesign of every denomination of coin.

The old 20 pence coin had the date on the

front of the coin, but the updated version was supposed to shift the date to the other side.

However, the coins were minted using an old version of the side of the coin featuring Queen Elizabeth II's head which does not carry the year.

According to the London Mint Office, a private company specializing in collectable coins which has no link to the Royal Mint, people who get handed the curious coins in their change could be **laughing all the way to the bank**. The company is now offering anyone who has one of the dateless coins the chance to cash in, and is willing to pay up to 50 pounds.

Nick Hart, a spokesman for the London Mint Office, said: "Mistakes like this not only fascinate people but also have considerable value and increase the significance (of the coin)." (AFP)

英國皇家造幣廠因作業疏失，鑄製了數十萬枚「未鑄印日期」的二十便士硬幣，結果一名收藏者表示，這批硬幣的價格已飆漲至一枚五十英鎊（六十歐元、八十美元）。

據信這批硬幣共有五至二十萬枚在市面上流通，每枚約合歐元二十四分或美元三十三分，上頭全都少了理應鑄印在背面的2009字樣。

這是三百多年來首次有未鑄印日期的硬幣流入市面，上一次類似的錯誤發生在一六七二年，查理二世統治期間。

負責製造英國紙鈔和硬幣的皇家造幣廠稱這是個「百年難得一見」的疏失，並表示這個疏失是發生在去年各面額硬幣重新設計期間。

舊二十便士硬幣的日期鑄印在正面，而新版的硬幣應該將日期改印在背面。

然而，造幣廠卻用了反面是女王伊莉莎白二世頭像，但沒有日期的舊版本鑄幣。

和皇家造幣廠無關，專門收藏硬幣的私人機構「倫敦造幣辦公室」表示，拿到這種稀奇硬幣零錢的人賺到了。因為該公司要以每枚五十英鎊的價格，向硬幣持有者收購這批未鑄印日期的硬幣。

倫敦造幣辦公室發言人尼克·哈特說：「像這樣的錯誤不僅吸引大眾，還具有相當高的價值，並增加（該硬幣的）重要性。」

(法新社/翻譯：袁聖璽)

Top: An undated handout photo issued on June 29, 2009 by public relations company Watershed of dateless twenty pence coins produced in error by Britain's Royal Mint.

PHOTO: AP
最上圖：這張未註明日期，由「分水嶺」公關公司於六月二十九日發佈的資料照片中，是英國皇家造幣廠因作業疏失而鑄製的無日期二十便士硬幣。

照片：美聯社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **circulation** /,sɜːkjəˈleɪʃən/ n.

流通 (liu2 tong1)

例：The financial authorities are working hard to remove counterfeit currency from circulation.

(財政當局正致力解決市面上偽幣流通的問題。)

2. **denomination** /diːnəməˈneɪʃən/ n.

面額 (mian4 e2)

例：What denomination would you like your change in?

(你想要哪種面額的零錢?)

3. **mint** /mɪnt/ v.

鑄造 (zhu4 zao4)

例：The coins were minted in 1983, and have been in circulation ever since.

(這些硬幣鑄造於一九八三年，之後便一直在市面上流通。)

IDIOM POINT 重要片語

laugh all the way to the bank 輕鬆賺大錢

If you are **laughing all the way to the bank**, you have made money easily. In the article, people who obtain a dateless coin can make some easy money by selling it to collectors.

Example: "Kelly has been **laughing all the way to the bank** ever since she qualified as a lawyer."

若你「laugh all the way to the bank」就表示你輕鬆賺大錢。文章中說，得到未鑄印日期硬幣的民眾只要把硬幣變賣給收藏者，就可以輕鬆賺一筆。

例如：「凱莉自從得到律師資格後，錢就一直輕鬆入袋。」