

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

8th September 2013

LONDON, ENGLAND, – On 8th September 2013, following official approval from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 400 legal tender coins are issued in 24ct Gold and Fine Silver to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Japan-British Relations.

Released exactly 400 years to the date of the very first meeting between John Saris, the envoy from King James, and Retired Shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, these extremely limited coin celebrate the beginning of a long and remarkable friendship between the two nations

The East India Company will hold a British and Japanese themed Cocktail Reception at its Flagship Store in Conduit Street, London, to celebrate this unique coin issue, on the evening of Tuesday 10th September, in partnership with Japan400, as part of a series of special events held throughout Japan400 Week to celebrate the 400th anniversary. Press spaces are limited and interested parties are recommended to register their interest by 6pm Friday 6th September to avoid disappointment.

These extremely limited edition coins feature for the first time ever on a coin the portrait of Retired Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu. Beside him, a portrait of King James I of England and VI of Scotland, with an image representing The East India Company ship the ‘Clove’. The obverse carries the effigy of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.



In July 1613, East India Company ship the ‘Clove’ arrived on the shores of Hirado after almost two years at sea, carrying gifts and official letters for Tokugawa Ieyasu and his ruling son, Hidetada from King James I of England and VI of Scotland. With the assistance of Ieyasu’s confidant and trusted advisor, William Adams, known locally as ‘Anjin’ (The Pilot), the Mission’s commander, John Saris was formally introduced to Ieyasu and Hidetada .

On the 8th September 1613, an exchange of gifts took place with Ieyasu receiving a telescope, the first ever to be presented outside Europe, and Hidetada - a precious cup and cover. In return Saris



was given two suits of armour for King James, ten spectacularly painted gold-leaf screens, a letter and an official shuinjô granting the British permission to live and trade freely throughout Japan.

In the letter carried by Saris and translated for Ieyasu by William Adams, King James wrote:

'Even in our country we have heard with certainty of the greatness of the glory of the Lord Shogun of Japan...Thus for ever and ever we will, we avow, communicate with Japan without any sense of distinction or separation'

By return, Ieyasu wrote to King James:

“Though separated by 10,000 leagues of clouds and waves, our territories are, as it were, close to each other.”

A DESIGN WORTHY OF TWO RULERS

Designed by Former Royal Mint Chief Engraver and Head of Design, Matthew Bonaccorsi, the coin design has been formally agreed and approved by HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Royal Household and is the only official coin issued to celebrate the anniversary between Japan and Britain.

Matthew Bonaccorsi comments "When designing a coin of this stature, it is important to achieve a balance between the two nations, ensuring that each ruler stands alone in their own right. The portraits demonstrate the differing styles of art from each country, highlighting their unique cultures. A ship inspired by EIC ship 'the Clove' is purposely placed behind the portraits, symbolising its importance in connecting the two nations at a time when maritime travel was still a very hazardous enterprise".

After his senior responsibilities at the Royal Mint and 17 years of experience designing and engraving coins and medals, Matthew Bonaccorsi launched his own Numismatic Design Agency in 2012. Creating designs for important UK events such as HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the 100th anniversary of WW1 contribute to Matthew Bonaccorsi's experience in capturing important characters and anniversaries in 3D relief.

RARE COINS OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY

Struck to the highest 'proof' quality available in the minting process, these gold and silver coins are minted by The East India Company, the very Company which, 400 years ago, arrived at the shores of Hirado bearing gifts and official letters from King James I and VI for the rulers of Japan.

The East India Company Chairman, Sanjiv Mehta commented "The East India Company is pleased to have received the approval by both, the Palace and Japan400, to release these very special coins, precisely 400 years to the day since Saris and the Emperor were first introduced back in 1613."

Mehta adds "Thanks to the actions of few brave men who travelled half way across the world, at a time when travel was anything else but cruise-liner luxury, The Company still fosters a strong trading relationship with Japan today. It's an honour to be able to join the Japan400 organisation in their

celebrations and leaving a lasting memory in the form of the silver and gold coins for many years to come.”

Each coin is carefully mounted in a beautiful presentation case, each with a numbered certificate.



With only 400 coins available worldwide, the demand for these coins is expected to be significant and the coins will be placed on general release from 8th September 2013. Prices start at £59.95 for the Silver coin and £755.00 for the Gold coin.

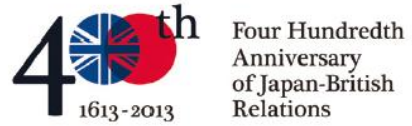
A donation of £100 for each gold coin and £10 for each silver coin will be made to the Japan400 Organisation to ensure that future generations will be able to benefit from the legacy of this special anniversary, through a range of educational and monumental restoration projects.

Japan400 commemorates the start of diplomatic, trading, scientific and cultural relations between Britain and Japan in 1613. Through a host of exciting events during 2013, it celebrates the spirit of discovery and mutual regard that has inspired many successful collaborations and a remarkable friendship between two societies on opposite sides of the world. For more details regarding Japan400 events and commemorations, please visit www.japan400.com.

These limited edition coins are available to purchase from 8th September 2013 through the following outlets in Japan and the UK:

Japan

Telephone : Free call 0120 – 07- 8222



Internet : www.taiseicoins.com

Email : contact@taiseicoins.com

UK/Rest of the World

Telephone: 0870 803 1186

Internet: www.eicgold.com/japan400 or www.japan400.com

Email: japan400@theeastindiacompany.com

The East India Company and Its Coins

The East India Company has long been known in the precious metal trade. It was, and still is, the only company in history to mint its own trading currency and grew to become one of the two largest bullion traders of its time.

Much of the East India Company's history has been captured in the immortal designs used in its coinage. These coins tell the story of how a band of traders created a company that far exceeded the sum of their ambitions, uniting distant markets and building and sustaining an empire.

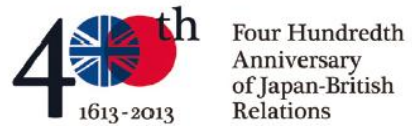
The need of The Company to use bullion as a trading commodity grew from the lack of appropriate goods with which to tempt their eastern partners. Cargoes of heavy cloths, such as woollens, initially loaded onto the East India Company ships, were quickly replaced with bullion coins, more readily acceptable in the new markets they were exploring.

By the middle of the 17th century, The Company's trade increasingly depended on the export of bullion from Britain to serve its needs. By 1677, it had become so influential that King Charles II granted it the right to mint its own currencies in the territory of Bombay which it administered through an earlier grant of charter. This led over time to the emergence of over 14 mints in India including Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

The Company's coins included Gold Mohur, Silver Rupiya, Pagoda, Anna, Fanams and Cash, many of which remain highly sought after and revered by collectors to this day.

By 1835, the Coinage Act decreed that there should be a universal coinage for all of the British Colonies. As a result coins were struck for the first time bearing the effigy of the reigning monarch, King William IV.

Over 150 years later, following in the path of its ancestors, The East India Company secured the right to mint legal tender coins for the Island of St Helena, with which it shares a long and intimate history.



On Royal Approval and once again bearing the effigy of reigning monarch Queen Elizabeth II, The East India Company returned to its by-gone bullion days, releasing its first new legal tender coins in February 2012 with the launch of the famous Gold Mohur and Fine Silver CASH collections.

In 2013, the collection was extended to include the East India Company Guinea, an iconic coin which symbolised the Colonial age and underpinned the growth of international trade. Also released in 2013 is the first edition of The East India Company Treasures of India Silver coin collection, a yearly issue celebrating iconic symbols of this fascinating nation. A collection of this set is due to be presented to the Japanese Emperor on his planned visit to India later this year.

Special edition anniversary coins including the 2013 Koh-i-Noor Coronation coin and the 400th Anniversary of Japan – British Relations Gold and Silver coins complement a collection of beautiful, rare and exceptional coins minted to the very highest standards for the collector, curator and connoisseur alike.

ENDS

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