

Rare Scots coins sold at auction

A COLLECTION of rare coins dating back up to 900 years, “spanning the history of the Scottish coinage”, has fetched over £86,000 at auction.

The 180 historic coins, including fine examples minted in Edinburgh, were amassed by one “passionate” Scottish collector over more than 50 years.

They represented the reign of every monarch from David I – the first Scottish king to produce his own coinage in the 12th century – to Queen Anne, who was on the throne when the Edinburgh Mint produced its last batch in 1709, two years after the Union of Parliaments.

The rare finds went under the hammer in Noonans’ sale, “A Collection of Scottish Coins, the Property of a Gentleman (Part I)” in London, where they attracted bids from around the world.

Jim Brown, Noonans’ coin specialist, said: “This large collection of Scottish coins had been amassed over the last 50 years by an anonymous collector with a real passion.

“Every lot was sold and fetched an overall hammer price of £86,270.”

Highlights included an “exceptionally well-struck” groat from the Edinburgh mint in the reign of James II (1437-1460), which was bought by a UK collector for £2,400 – double its pre-sale

high estimate – and a groat from the mint of Holyrood Abbey showing a Renaissance-style portrait of James V (1513-1542), which also fetched £2,400.

A “rare and important” sterling from the first coinage of Alexander III (1249-1286), from the Kinghorn mint in Fife, made £2200, and a groat of Robert III (1390-1406) from the very rare Aberdeen mint, was bought by a bidder in the US for £2,000.

The top lot however was a very rare silver penny struck by Robert the Bruce after his forces recaptured the town of Berwick and its mint in 1318, which made £4,200.

Bruce is thought to have imported experienced moneyers from the Continent to produce the coinage, which featured the king’s crowned head and sceptre, and the abbreviated Latin Robertus Dei Gra, translated as “Robert by the Grace of God”.

Brown added: “Coins of Robert the Bruce are always popular, and this exceptional example sold to a collector in the USA.”

