

Decus et Tutamen.

An ornament and a safeguard.

Bite a sovereign, test it between your teeth  
Confirm that it is really gilt beneath  
Pounds, shillings and pennies  
Decimalised in the seventies  
Gold, silver, nickel plated copper, tin  
On the obverse our Queen's side-on chin  
Arcade waterfalls and slots, gobble up change  
Parking meters always raise rage  
Shop girls in stores, snatch nickels and dimes from your hand  
Woolworths replaced by the ubiquitous Poundland  
Piggy banks store for a rainy day  
Metal detectorists help find the way  
For Time-Team archaeologists to date and display  
Treasure trove hoards abandoned with dismay  
Pirates and buccaneers' fight  
For doubloons and pieces of eight  
Some people just stash them under their beds  
Forgers and clippers hold on to your heads  
Counterfeiting and trimming both a treasonable offence  
Decus et Tutamen – glory and defence  
My ornament - my safeguard - milled and etched  
Standing on the shoulders of giants stamped around the edge  
So Numismatists take care  
You can't exchange them, if your coins are square.

