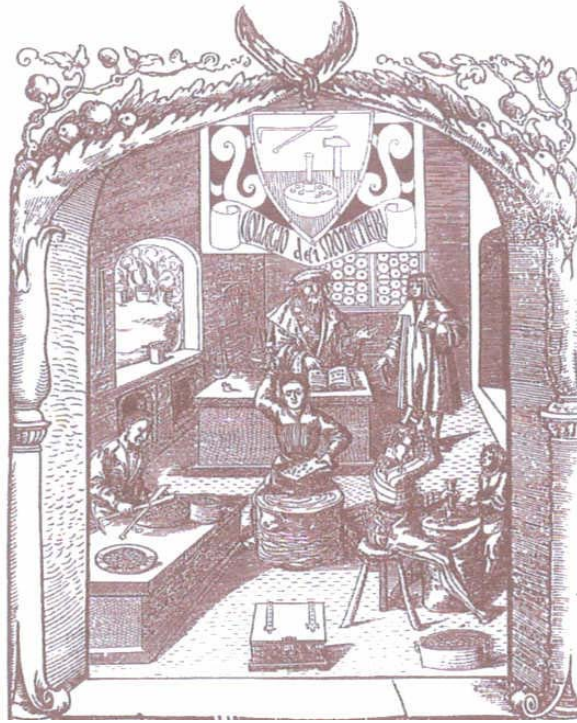


# Antico Uffizio della Zecca di Lucca

## THE OLDEST MINT OF EUROPE

(from 650 b.C. to 1837)



THE OLDEST MINT OF EUROPE

The oldest mint of Europe was the Antico Uffizio Della Zecca di Lucca, located in Tuscany. Among many privileges enjoyed by the city of Lucca the most important was that she could mint its own coins. First under the Goths and later under the Longobards, Lucca minted a coin which represented on one side a six pointed star crowned with six small flames with the inscription "FLAVIA LUCA", while the other side represented a latin cross with the number six or the name of a Longobard king. Under Charlemagne and Otto I the privilege of minting its own coin continued.

Serious problems arose when the Pisans were allowed to reproduce the lucchese coins, but Federico Barbarossa hindered them in their actions. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, something strange happened, the free Comune was entitled to mint, but the Mansi family, originally from Germany, had the privilege to make the minting dies. An agreement was reached between the Mansi family and the Podesta' and in 1335 three officers, whose charge was to last one year, were elected to repress unlawful coiners activities.

Lucca went on to mint 2000 different types of coins in gold, silver, and copper beginning with the Goths and Longobards, then under the French, the Dukes Ugo I and Ugo II, the German Emperors and the Kings of Italy Ottone I, II and III.

The first gold Florin was minted in the 13<sup>th</sup> century during the VI Crusade.

Last but not least, Lucca minted silver and copper francs under Napoleon's rule and finally, under the Bourbons a silver Lira and copper soldos.

