



THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Waterloo, Ontario

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VARIETY OR VARIANT

By Bill English

We must consider how a coin is made and the procedure involved in its manufacture before we explain the subject. Basically a piece of metal is squeezed between two other pieces of metal with a design on them, and a coin is made.

Metals used for coinage are melted and mixed together to produce an alloy metal. In a molten state this alloy is poured into moulds to cool and produce ingots which have the appearance of flat long loaves of bread. These ingots are then rolled into thin strips of metal of the correct thickness from which coin blanks are cut similar to a cookie cutter. The Canadian nickels are now made from powdered nickel which changes some of the process.

The blank is the piece of metal that is squeezed or struck by the dies with the designs on its surface producing a coin. The dies are hardened and polished so they can make a clear sharp impression of the design on the softer coin blanks. They are aligned and to make sure the coin is in the right place for each strike of the dies a collar is used to hold the blank in place. The reeding, if it is used on a coin, is cut into the sides of the collar to produce the necessary results. The face side of the coin is called the obverse while the other side normally called the tails is the reverse side. The die press is the name of the machine that combines all the mechanical components to produce coins. Many of these presses exert in excess of a hundred tons of pressure to cause the metal in the blank to actually flow into the design in the dies.

A variety results from a change in the actual die or combination of dies. This may happen due to different dies being made for the same issue of coinage, such as; a change in design by recutting the die to strengthen or change a particular part of the design; a change in the location of figures or letters; by adding something to the original design; by using a combination of obverse and reverse dies; by using a different metal; and by changing the mechanical components purposely.

The variant on the other hand is an unintentional mechanical or chemical error that may result in the following: pitting and die breaks; plugging; multiple

strikes; off strikes; clipping; planchet flaws; liquation; and brokage or capped dies.

All varieties and variants, to be authentic must occur at the mint. One further point necessary to understand how some of these types of each design and from this die all the working dies are made to be used for the actual striking of the coins. The coins of Queen Victoria were not made the same way by using the one master die. Due to the lack of hardening processes many changes occur on some issues.

To explain varieties we will use examples of some of our Canadian decimal coins. I will not delve into every year but will try to mention some of the classic examples.

The 1947 coinage employed different dies by changing the type of 7 on the dollars and half dollars. Different reverse designs on the dimes of 1891, 1909, 1913 and the 1893 with round and flat top threes. Similarly the narrow and wide nines on the 1859 large cents. The H for Heaton mint mark would indicate a die variety. The obverse die changes that come to mind are the different N's in the legend of the 1882 large cents, the different letter designs on the 1891, 1892 and 1953 large and small cents. The 1911 Canadian series is a variety type of its own in comparison with the rest of the George V series. On the 1953 coinage design was changed by strengthening the complete obverse and making changes in the date size and location on some of the reverse denominations.

This brings up the next point of changes by recutting or change. The 1953 coins are a perfect example of changes to improve the queen's profile. The hair lines were deepened, shoulder straps improved, an extra line was added to show a dressline on her back, plus the change in the lettering on the obverse mentioned before. The addition of a maple leaf on the 1947 coins and a dot on some of the 1936 to show they were struck in the year following the date on the coins. The overdate 1859 cents were the result of recutting a nine into the 1858 die to change the year.

As described before once a master die is made all striking dies will be exactly the same. A change in this policy occurred during the 1940's and to economize the last one or two date figures were left off the master die and the required number was punched in. This is the reason on the fifty cent pieces why the last two numbers in the date are in so many positions in relation to each other. This brings up the point of the 1926 near and far nickels. If a date spacing is so important on one coin why should it not be on similar varieties of other coins? The Victoria coins were struck from a variety of dies and on the large cents in particular a great number of date spacings are evident.

The muling of dies is really a combination of different obverse and reverse dies for one year. The varieties mentioned at first, fall into this category as long as there is one year with two or more reverses such as the 1947 dollars for example. There are three reverses namely the blunt 7, the long point 7, and the maple leaf. The 1953 no shoulder strap and shoulder strap cents are the obverse type. When both the obverse and reverse are different as on the 1953 nickels then the coin is no longer a mule, but a "Type" coin.

The tombac nickel combined two varieties at one time. First a change from nickel to tombac which changed the metal composition. Secondly a mechanical change from a round to a twelve sided coin. The five cent series presents a wide range of varieties for the

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collector because not only did they make changes for one year they changed through a particular series of coins. We are all familiar with the changes in metal, designs, and even dimensions of the coins in the series.

The variants are sometimes more difficult to classify as to type since they are caused by mechanical or chemical imperfections. The variant coin may be unique as one of a kind or many may be produced before the flaw is detected.

A pitted die or break in the die will produce a raised dot or line on the surface of the coin. The size and number of these errors vary from coin to coin. Die breaks are numerous on the George VI fifty cent pieces between 1940 to 1952. Many dots are being found on the cents and dimes in particular, on current coinage.

Plugging of the die due to foreign material filling part of the design will cause the design on the coin to be weakened or even removed.

A multiple strike can be caused by a coin sticking in the press and shifting slightly as it is struck more than once. If the die chatters or bounces when it strikes the blank a similar error will result. The coin will have one or more shadow outlines of design and will look similar to reengraving.

An off struck coin will show part of the design on both sides of the coin but both sides should be equally offstruck. This variant happens when the blank does not centre itself in the collar thus only part of the blank planchet is struck by the dies.

Clipping is the result of a blank being stamped from the metal strip at a point where a previous blank has been punched out. This clip (missing metal) can vary depending on the amount the previous hole is covered by the next punch. Something like taking a bite out of the hole in a donut.

A flan is a piece of metal that can be peeled off the surface of a coin. This can happen when dirt is rolled in the metal or a poor bond of the metal in the melting process can produce the same thing. Sometimes streaks of different colour metal appear on a coin. This is called liquation and also results from a poor melting of the metals in the alloy.

Brokage and a coin caused by a capped die are the result of metal sticking to one of the dies. The resultant coins are entirely different. Brokage is the result of a coin already struck, sticking to one of the dies and not ejecting. When the next blank is fed into the press the previous coin then becomes a die. An incuse side will be quite cupped due to the extra thickness of metal with two coins in the press at the same time. On copper coins due to the softness of the metal the incuse design is usually quite weak.

A coin struck by a capped die will have an enlarged design on one side of the coin. The impression is usually shallow but can be very distinct. This type of coin is caused by a combination of three errors and is not too common. To explain how it happens we will tell you how another type of flan may occur. In the rolling of coin strip from the ingots a thick lump of metal is rolled and rerolled until it is the proper thickness for the coins to be struck. As the thick metal is rolled it will tend to stretch with the top and bottom surfaces stretching faster than the centre, which makes a sandwich at the end with nothing to bind the pieces together. When the blanks are punched out there is enough edge binding to keep the pieces intact. If one side is quite thin, when the blank is struck in the die press, the thin side will become separated from the rest of the coin. The metal is thin enough to partially fill the die design and as it is struck it will expand and curl around the die. This capped die will produce a coin with a slightly concave enlarged design of the opposite side of a coin. Some coins with a very indistinct design on one side could be the coin that lost the thin flan of metal that stuck

to the die to produce the most interesting capped die error.

We have discussed a few varieties and possibly a variety of errors. In the process of collecting we tend to save odd coins that we find at face value because the cost is right. Since it is almost impossible to find a scarce or semi-scarce coin in circulation both the novice and experienced collectors are turning to this type of collecting. With more time to determine how these errors occur a whole new field of interest is open. The many letters that I receive indicate the number, that get enjoyment from the hobby of collecting these inexpensive variants, is increasing rapidly.

A word of caution is in order. Some of these errors are advertised at ridiculous prices and many collectors think that they will realize rich returns from their duplicates. To date this is not the case. Most variant collectors want to trade or find these coins in circulation. With the volume of coins minted increasing each year the number of errors reaching circulation is also growing. Many variants, each being different compound the variety of the variants to a point where it is impossible to list them separately. Thus some kind of list of basic types of errors should be compiled to give direction to some standard guide.

The richest reward for the variant collector can be the joy and interest derived from the search, study and display of this type of material;

NEW MEMBERS

Applications published in the June issue of the Ontario Numismatist were accepted. The following applications were received. If no written objections are received, their acceptance will be acknowledged in the August issue of the Ontario Numismatist.

498. Glen Dunham, R. R. #2, Lambeth, Ontario.

C 49. PORT HOPE-COBOURG COIN CLUB, c/o Ray Lingard, 284 Ridout Street, Port Hope, Ont.

C 50. PORT CREDIT COIN CLUB, c/o Mrs. W. H. MacInnes, 2251 Mississauga Rd. W., R. R. #2, Port Credit, Ont.

COMING EVENTS

- July 25 OWEN SOUND COIN CLUB 2nd Annual Beach Show. Bourse Chairman, Mr. Harold Hammond. Admission - 25¢. Bourse reservations, \$10.00, Box 94, Owen Sound, Ont. Souvenirs, displays, dancing, fabulous beach . . . all at Sauble Beach Pavilion, On Lake Huron, 20 minutes west of Owen Sound.
- Aug. 12, 13, 14 CANADIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION 12th Annual Convention. Mount Royal Hotel, Montreal, Quebec. Host club: Montreal Coin Club. General Chairman: Louis Goldsmith, 5251 Sherbrooke St. Montreal, Que.
- September 19 TILLSONBURG NUMISMATIC SOCIETY 3rd. Fall Convention, Mil-Mar Manor Competitive displays. Cup for Best-of-Show. Plaques for best in class. Tickets: \$2.50. Admission: 25 cents. 200-lot auction. by Louie Biro. For information, contact: Mr. W. B. Wolfe, R. R. #3 Tillsonburg; Mr. J. W. Sutherland, Box 164, Port Burwell; or Mr. Fred Cole, Otterville.
- October 2 KITCHENER COIN CLUB 2nd Numismatic Show and dinner. General Chairman: William Mansfield. Displays: Victor Montag. Bourse Ted Turanski.

- October 9 KINGSTON KOIN KLUB Annual Fall Show and Auction, Commodore Motor Hotel, 840 Princess St., Kingston, Ontario. Bourse tables available at \$7.50 from Mr. E. Howlett, 61 Westmoreland Rd. Kingston.
- October 17 BRANTFORD COIN CLUB Banquet and Exhibition. Guest speaker: Mr. John J. Pittman, Rochester, N. Y.
- October 23 ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB Annual Banquet and Auction. Chairman: Bob Prince.
- November 14 HURON COUNTY NUMISMATIC CLUB 4th Annual Coin Show, Elm Haven Motel, Clinton, Ontario ... 12 noon - 9 p. m. Displays -- Bourse -- Prizes
- October 16 BAY OF QUINTE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION Coin Show, Kiwanis Centre, Belleville, Ontario. General chairman: Fred Hoffman. Display chairman: Keith Day, P. O. Box 125, Belleville, Ont.

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O. N. A. AUDIO VISUAL

The O. N. A. Audio-Visual department has received overwhelming response since January of this year, (over eighty requests have been filed) and further requests are still being received. If your club plans to use this service in the fall, please make inquiries now.

CANADIAN VOYAGEUR DOLLAR (Continued)

by Claudia Pelkey

Canoe travel is not measured in miles or knots, but in 'pipes'. At the end of a certain length of time there is a pause and they light their pipes and smoke for a few minutes. But, scarcely before the canoe has lost its momentum, they are up and paddling again. Three pipes is about twelve miles. This does not appear very fast in this jet-age of ours. But remember, this is a man-powered object ... canoe men paddled twelve to twenty hours a day in all kinds of weather ... canoes were often so heavily laden that they sank into the water to within three inches of their gunwale. It is the empty canoe that is so fleet.

The French made it easier to recruit voyageurs for the brigades by the encouragement of songs.

eretofore, the chief use of singing by the Indians in connection with travel was the 'warpath'. Here was a new outlet for the musical talent of the purebred native Indian, not to mention the halfbreed who often had become more than half Indian, and took service as canoeer or voyageurs.

The language of the voyageur, according to Washington Irving, was of a piebald character, being a French embroidered with Indian and English words and phrases. The steersman often sang an old traditional French song with some regular burden in which they joined, keeping time with their paddles. The Canadian waters are vocal with these little French 'Chansons' that have been echoed from mouth to mouth and transmitted from

father to son from the earliest days of the colony.

Many of the songs of the Voyageurs were ditties from old vaudevilles or court songs of Old France; songs of prince or princess, cavaliers, gardens with orange blossoms or of nightingales ... all of which were never seen here in Canada. Some of the songs were Canadian-made. Many are unprintable because of their coarseness. But the main thing was that the melodies were rhythmic and helped to keep the paddles in time. Each verse was sung in solo, then repeated in chorus, 'Northwest' fashion. Every song either began or ended with an Indian 'warwhoop'. Of such use was singing, that it enabled the voyageurs to paddle twelve to twenty miles a day; helped to keep them awake and alert for danger; and helped to pass the time more rapidly. For this, the companies paid extra to those who knew lots of songs and were capable of leading the singing. It was good psychology on the part of the companies to encourage singing. For those French and half-breed voyageurs were an uncouth, savage, uneducated lot. Their pride lay in their strength and ability to fight and the amount of liquor they could consume. There was no law to speak of in those days, so they lived by the "law of the wild" . . . kill or be killed. But, in singing, they either forgot their grievances or put them off to a more opportune time.

As for the working of these boats, the canoe-men plied them sometimes on their knees, namely when they run down a small waterfall; sometimes standing when they stemmed a current by setting the boat along with poles made of cedar; or sat on the bales and paddled when in quiet water. The paddles were made of maple and painted vermillion.

The only tools used in making these canoes were a hatchet, a knife, a file and an awl. To this day, no amount of modern tools or machinery has been able to improve or excel the skill of the Indian in the art of making a birch-bark canoe. Nor has any white man ever quite achieved the fluid oneness of motion of an Indian and his canoe.

It is little wonder then that Pauline Johnson, our own Canadian poetess, was moved to write the beautiful verse:

THE SONG MY PADDLE SINGS

August is laughing across the sky,
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I
Drift, drift
Where the hills uplift
On either side of the current swift.

The river rolls in its rocky bed;
My paddle is plying its way ahead;
Dip, dip,
While the waters flip
In foam as over their breast I slip.

And up on the hills against the sky
A fir tree rocking its lullaby,
Swings, swings
Its emerald wings
Swelling the song my paddle sings.

Canoeing ended as a means of transport in the 19th century (especially during the 30's). Silk was taking the place of the beaver. Roads were being built and railways replaced many old waterways. Canals allowed steamships up the St. Lawrence River. And the first steamer was plying Lake Superior in 1845.

All these interesting things are told to us by our Canadian silver dollar. There is

much, much more to a coin than the date or the price you paid to obtain it. If you have more time than money to spend on your hobby, may I suggest that you make good use of your local library. There will be many hours of profit and pleasure in store for you.

Never, never set aside a coin as just an ordinary variety. For in the palm of your hand you are holding a miniature work of art that is technology; industry; languages; theology; geography; history; romance; poetry; intrigue; and a way of life that is numismatics at its very, very best.

The End.

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Anyone having the following A. N. A. Numismatists that they would like to donate to the O. N. A. library, we would be most grateful: February, and April 1963. Please mail to O. N. A. librarian, Claudia Pelkey, 440 Pineland Avenue, Oakville, Ont.

CLUB NEWS

CHAMPLAIN COIN CLUB featured an ONA Audio-Visual, "Wampum To Decimal", part II, dealing with the Quebec tokens. The June meeting will feature the third part in the series. This series is by Lloyd T. Smith, London, President of the ONA.

THE OSHAWA AND DISTRICT COIN CLUB had as their special attraction at the May 30 meeting an ONA Audio-Visual set, "The Canadian Silver Dollars", by Bill English. A very interesting talk was given by Mr. R. Raymond, Orillia, at the April meeting, highlighted by a display of foreign coins.

OAKVILLE COIN CLUB held their annual meeting at the new headquarters, the Queen Elizabeth Motel on the South Service Road. Mr. Ernest Keith of the Bank of Nova Scotia Gold Department was the guest speaker. The following persons won trophies for their displays at the Annual May meeting: Junior - Douglas Larson; Canadian - Mrs. Pat Hart; British Commonwealth - Bill McChesney; Foreign - Keith King; Paper - Ken Hart; Miscellaneous - Ed. Schroeder; and Best of Show - Ed Schroeder.

WATERLOO COIN SOCIETY showed two O. N. A. Audio-Visual sets at their May meeting "Eddy-stone Lighthouse" and "World Famous Orders", both by David Ash. The club donated \$25 toward the building of the Coin Store at the Pioneer Village. Members are planning a bus trip to visit the Oakville Coin Club in June.

TORONTO COIN CLUB had Dr. Marvin Kay as their guest speaker in May. Dr. Kay showed coloured slides of his collection, accompanied by a lively description of each piece, featuring physicians who have been honoured on coinage though not necessarily for their medical achievements. Mr. H. A. Craig displayed and commented on an interesting collection of well-designed medals.

ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB announced that there will be no meetings during July and August. David Ash, director for the ONA Audio-Visual Service, will be the guest speaker in June.

BRANTFORD COIN CLUB also announces that they will discontinue meetings for the summer months. At the May meeting the club used the first of the ONA Audio-Visual series, "Wampum to Decimal", by Lloyd T. Smith. Mr. Walter Griggs made a presentation to the Brantford Historical Society coin collection of Foreign Coins of United Nation Countries, and Mrs. Hillborn received them for the Society.

BAY OF QUINTE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION had a very interesting and profitable May meeting ... a Coin Quiz, prepared by Cecil Paul on the Canadian five-cent coins, created a lot of fun as the members participated. Mr. Ross Irwin presented a Life Membership in the B.Q.N.A. to Mr. Bill Nickle, secretary of the association. Mr. Nickle has resigned as secretary because he is moving to the U.S.A. Mr. Cecil Paul was honoured with a presentation of a table lighter for his untiring efforts on behalf of the association. The

Sunday meetings have been discontinued for the summer months, but the Thursday night meetings will continue.

HURON COUNTY NUMISMATIC CLUB will soon be losing their president, Mr. Don Folks, who will be moving in the near future. The club is planning a fall show on November 14. More information on this show will appear. Watch for it!

HAMILTON COIN CLUB will have Lloyd T. Smith, President of the ONA, as their guest speaker in June. Mr. Smith will ask the question, "Why Not Collect Foreign Coins?" All members who collect foreign coins have been invited to display.

ST. THOMAS NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION which meets the second Wednesday of each month will have as a special feature in June, Commemorative Coins Used to Make Foreign Exchange.

SARNIA NUMISMATIC SOCIETY reports a very successful banquet. Fifty-two members and guests were in attendance. The main source of entertainment was the ONA Audio-Visual set, "Romance of World Gold", by Lloyd T. Smith of London. The society will continue to meet during the summer months but the meetings will be informal, a time for buying, trading, selling or just "shooting the breeze".

INGERSOLL COIN CLUB had thirty members and guests present to hear Mrs. Winifred Mather, Toronto, speak on "Royal Marriage Commemorative Medals". Mrs. Mather augmented her talk with a display covering a period from 241 A. D. to 1964. In June, Major Sheldon S. Carroll, Curator of the Bank of Canada's Numismatic Collection, will address the joint meeting of Ingersoll Coin Club and Ingersoll Kiwanis Club.

OWEN SOUND COIN CLUB held a most enjoyable evening on May 17. Thirty members were present and again three new members were signed up. Mr. W. Morris, third in British Commonwealth O.N.A. Convention display, showed coloured slides of his proof coins which were beautifully displayed. He gave a lecture on them and indicated that the British E. African proof set was rare as only six sets are known -- mostly in museums.

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M E D A L O R D E R F O R M

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Third Annual Convention
Windjammer Room, Treasure Island, London, Ontario
April 30, May 1 and 2, 1965

The Ontario Numismatic Association's official insignia is on one side of the medal. On the other side, the London Numismatic Society has depicted the Middlesex County Court House. This historic old court house, erected in 1830, was modelled after Malahide Castle near Dublin, Ireland, Ancestral Home of Colonel Thomas Talbot.

No.	Description	Price	No.	Description	Price
1.	10K Solid Gold Numbered 1-25	\$40.00	Set A	-1,2,3,4 in plastic	\$68.00
			Set B	-1, 3, 4 in plastic	\$52.00
			Set C	-2, 3, 4 in plastic	\$26.00
2.	10K Gold Plate	\$15.00	Set D	-3, 4 in plastic	\$11.00
3.	Sterling Silver	\$ 6.00	Set E	-3	\$ 7.50
4.	Bronze	\$ 3.50	Set F	-4	\$ 4.75

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