



THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

WATERLOO, ONTARIO

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CANADA'S HALF DOLLARS

by

Cecil Paul

It was in 1858 that a 'Decimal coinage' became the lawful medium of exchange in the Province of Canada. This new form of coinage replaced the British Sterling and an assortment of foreign and private issued tokens.

It was in this year when a large shipment of large bronze cents, 5¢ silver, 10¢ silver and 20¢ silver pieces, totalling slightly over \$400,000.00 arrived in Canada from the Royal Mint in London. This was the beginning of a new form of money for Canada and the end of the reign of the miscellaneous and unstable tokens.

In 1870 the Dominion of Canada made some more changes in the already accepted decimal coinage. The 20¢ piece was discontinued and replaced by the familiar 25¢ coin.

In this year the fifty cent piece was introduced into the series.

The 1870 half dollar shows her Majesty Queen Victoria facing to the left with the inscription 'VICTORIA DEI GRATIA REGINA' and the word 'CANADA' across the bottom. This beautiful design was done by Leonard C. Wyon and his initials 'LCW' appear at the bottom of the neck on most issues. There are some of the 1870 issues minted without the initials.

The reverse shows a maple wreath design and a crown, which was also designed by Mr. Wyon. This familiar design appeared on all silver coins of Canada from 1858 to 1936. It is safe to say that this design has appeared on more coins of Canada than any other.

There were four years during Queen Victoria's reign when the 50¢ piece was minted at a mint other than the Royal Mint in London. At times when demands were too much, the London Mint subcontracted to the Heaton Mint in Birmingham. These coins were identical in all respects except for the 'H' mint mark that appears below the date signifying that this coin was struck at the Heaton Mint. There were 4 years that the 50¢ coins of Queen Victoria were struck at both mints, but during the other 3 years they were only minted in Birmingham.

1902 saw another change in the face on our coinage. With the passing of Queen Victoria in 1901, her son Edward VII came to the throne. This design shows his Majesty, crowned and facing to the right. It was, and still is an English tradition that succeeding monarchs always face in the opposite direction from their predecessor. This design was executed by George William Desaulles and his initials appear in very small letters as 'DES' below the bust of the king. This was the shortest period of reign on any of our decimal coinage, as King Edward VII only appears on our coins for 9 years.

The reverse is very similar to the Victorian issues except for the date and the lettering which is slightly smaller to make room for the word CANADA which now appeared on the reverse rather than the obverse, as in the previous issues of Queen Victoria, but the maple wreath design remained unchanged.

Canadian half dollars were struck at the Heaton Mint in only one year during the reign of King Edward VII, that being 1903. This issue shows the 'H' mint mark below the date.

With the passing of King Edward VII in 1910, his son King George V now appeared on the Canadian coins for the first time in 1911. True to English tradition, he faced to the left, the opposite direction from his father. Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal designed this effigy of his Majesty and his initials 'EM' are on the truncation of the bust.

The issue of 1911 differs from all other issues of Canadian decimal coinage in that the words 'DEI GRATIA', meaning 'By the Grace of God', were omitted from all coins of that year. There is no reason given for this and it is believed to have been an error on the part of the mint. The 1911 issues are therefore known as the 'Graceless' or 'Godless' coins.

In 1908 a branch of the London Mint was opened in Ottawa for the minting of Canadian coins and since that date all Canadian decimal coins have been struck there and bear no mint mark. This also ended the contracts with Heaton Mint for the striking of Canadian coins. 1907 was the last year the Heaton mint struck coins for the Dominion of Canada.

From 1912 to 1936 the 50¢ coins of Canada remained unchanged except for the date. The words 'DEI GRATIA' were restored in that year and continue to appear as part of the inscription till the present time.

The reverse of the King George V coinage remained the same as the Edwardian and Victorian issues, still featuring the maple wreath design.

1921 marks an important year in the life of the Canadian half dollar. There were 206,398, 50¢ pieces struck in that year. Due to heavy mintage of this denomination in previous years and reduced requirements the complete minting of 1921 remained on hand

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at the mint. The low demands during the next 7 years were filled from old stocks and when these were depleted it was decided to strike a new issue for 1929 rather than use the 1921 issue. It is somewhat of a mystery why the mint, during those 7 years, did not issue any 1921 coins from their stock, but instead kept this issue intact and in 1929 the complete stock of 1921 half dollars was melted down. A few 1921 50¢ pieces were probably sold to individuals by the mint and it is estimated that approximately 80 of these coins to be in the hands of collectors. This is one of Canada's rarest coins with an uncirculated specimen demanding a very high price for any numismatist who wishes to possess one. This is one of the most difficult coins to obtain today and I believe this is one reason for the lack of interest shown in this series compared to other denominations as it is almost impossible for an average collector to complete a collection of half dollars.

Another interesting fact about the 1921 half dollar worth thinking about is this - supposing that it is true that only a few of these coins got out to private individuals, does it seem logical that they would spend them, and not keep them for their own collections? They must have been placed in circulation for some time to be worn to this extent. If all the 1921 half dollars that did get out were in the hands of collectors -- why aren't they all in uncirculated condition?

Love plays an important role in Canadian numismatics. With the passing of King George V in 1936, his eldest son Edward ascended the throne as King Edward VIII. He refused to face to the right as was tradition, as he considered this was his bad side, as his hair was parted on the right. But love was greater than glory and King Edward VIII abdicated the throne to marry a commoner and no coins for Canada were ever minted bearing his portrait.

In 1937 King Edward VIII's brother George came to the throne as King George VI. Still maintaining the old tradition, he faced the opposite to his brother - if he had stuck to tradition. We assume King Edward VIII should have faced to the right so therefore King George VI faced to the left. He was depicted wearing no crown. This was the first monarch to appear on Canadian decimal coinage without a Royal head dress. This obverse was designed by T. Henry Paget and his initials 'H P' appear below the bust of his Majesty.

1937 saw a complete change in the design of the Canadian half dollar. It was in this year that the reverse of this denomination changed from the maple wreath design that had graced the back of our 50¢ pieces since 1858. It now featured the Ensign Armorial Bearings of Canada which was adopted by Royal Proclamation in 1921. This intricate design was the work of George Kruger Grey, whose initials 'KG' appear, one letter on either side of the crown. Kruger Grey also designed the reverse of the Canadian 1¢ and 5¢ coins of 1937. The initials 'KG' appearing on these coins; contrary to popular belief, do not mean King George but are Mr. Grey's initials. This half dollar design remained unchanged until 1959.

On August 15, 1948, after months of negotiations, England dissolved their 190 year control of India. As India gained her Independence the inscription on all Canadian coins had to be changed. The words 'ET IND IMP', meaning 'And India Empire', had to be deleted. As the new dies were not ready in time a small 'maple leaf' was added, after the date, to the already existing dies of 1947, to show that this maple leaf coinage was actually struck in 1948. When the new dies with 'ET IND IMP' deleted, arrived late in the year, coins dated 1948 were then minted. In reality there were over 76,000 half dollars struck in 1948 if we add the mintage figures of 1948 to those of 1947 with the small maple leaf. Even this combined figure is low compared to other years. Both these coins are highly desirable to any collector of this series. A mysterious point I would like to mention is this - if India didn't gain her Independence until August, 1948, why weren't some coins struck before that time bearing the date 1948 and the inscription 'ET IND IMP' still on the coins? Actually they minted the maple leaf coinage before India gained her Independence. An explanation for this

might be the fact that it was a foregone conclusion that England would withdraw from India by June of 1948, regardless of the negotiations being held. So it is logical that the 'ET IND IMP' portion of the inscription was going to have to be removed at the beginning of the year. If this was the case why were the dies not ready at the beginning of the year?

The half dollars from 1948 to 1952 show the new inscription with 'ET IND IMP' portion permanently deleted.

King George VI died in 1952 and his daughter Elizabeth came to the throne as Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. The portrait shows her facing to the right, uncrowned with a band of laurel leaves in her hair. This design was done by Mary Gillick and her initials appear on the lower edge of the bust. It is interesting to note that this is the first time a woman has designed any of our decimal coins. It is also remarkable that Mary Gillick was 72 years old when she designed this coin.

There are two distinctly different types of Canadian coins issued in 1953. The early issue shows 'No Shoulder Strap' on the Queen's gown. This design was touched up at the mint and a 'Shoulder Strap' was added to all the later issues of 1953. Mrs. Gillick's original design showed the shoulder strap but as the lines were very light it never showed on the finished product. It was re-engraved and even then the strap was very faint and soon disappeared as the coins were placed in circulation. Many people are under the false impression that the shoulder strap was added because the Queen looked indecent without it. This is only one of the many ridiculous stories that have originated about our coins.

There are two varieties of the date 1953 on the 50¢ pieces. There is a large date and a small date issue. This was due to a different set of punches being used for the date. As you probably know the '19' portion of the dates are the same size and only the '53' appears in two sizes. On a coin die the date is punched on at the start of each year, and only the 53 would have to be changed as the 19 would remain on the die from the previous year. The small date appears on the first issue without the shoulder strap and the large date on the later issue with the shoulder strap.

The reverse of the Canadian 50¢ piece took a change in 1959 when Thomas Shingles redesigned the Armorial Bearings of Canada to conform to our Coat of Arms. Mr. Shingles' initials 'TS' appear at the bottom in the design.

1965 shows a completely changed portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. This shows a more mature effigy of her Majesty wearing a diamond tiara, a wedding gift from the late Queen Mary, instead of the laurel leaves. The portrait is much larger necessitating the Dei Gratia being changed to D. G. This design was the work of Arnold Machin, and it appears on all British and Commonwealth coinage for 1965.

This story shows the birth and growth of our Canadian half dollars, from its beginning in 1870 to the present. It may not have the romance and glory of its big brother, the silver dollar, but it should not be overlooked in the numismatic study of Canada's history.

The End.

WINDSOR COIN CLUB TO HOST 1966 ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

The city of Windsor, Ontario will hold the largest coin show in the area since the joint C. N. A. - A. N. A. Convention which was held in Detroit. The spacious facilities of the Cleary Auditorium will provide the setting for the convention to be held April 29, 30, and May 1.

Lloyd T. Smith, O. N. A. President; and Mrs. Wm. Howells, President of the Windsor Coin Club, announced that all formal plans have been completed and only a few of the

minor arrangements are to be settled.

Bourse chairman, Mr. G. Pomeroy reports the dealers are picking up their tables fast and recommends all interested dealers to return their applications to avoid disappointment. Requests for bourse space can be addressed to Mr. Pomeroy at 264 Kennedy Place, Windsor, Ontario.

The 1966 Commemorative Medals may be ordered from the O. N. A. Box 33, Waterloo, Ontario. This year's medal will have the City of Windsor crest on one side and the O. N. A. insignia on the other. The medals will be struck in four different metals, solid gold (numbered); gold filled; sterling silver; and bronze. Attractive gold inscribed plastic holders are available to house either single or sets of medals. Order forms can be obtained from the association.

The programme promises to be interesting to all numismatists with speakers and slide presentations, countless displays (171 last year), womens' activities, tours, auction, banquet, delegates' meetings, and a renowned guest speaker, plus the many dealers from across the continent.

For a numismatic holiday of warm fellowship, plan to attend the 1966 Ontario Numismatic Association Fourth Annual Convention in Windsor, Ontario.

Bill English.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION CHANGES DESIGN

The design of the crest of the Ontario Numismatic Association has been changed to comply with heraldic design so it can be visually described. The basic crest is the same but changed to facilitate the designations of colour and heraldic authenticity.

The trillium, the provincial flower of Ontario, is now shown face on so the lines depicting the proper colours will show white petals, green leaves and the gold stamen in the centre. The background behind the flower is blue. The cross and cloth in the crown is red. The attractive new design has been used on the new sterling silver lapel pins available to members only. The sterling pins will sell for \$2.75 each, but a new member will have the opportunity to get one for \$2.50 when he joins.

The lapel pins are not in colour, but a full colour membership plaque will be available early in 1966. Manitoulin Plaque and Shield Company will be the exclusive distributor of these handsome personalized membership plaques. Further information will be forthcoming as soon as it is available.

Bill English.

CLUB NEWS

OKVILLE COIN CLUB in December welcomed as their guest speaker one of their own members, Don Flick, recognized through Ontario and Canada for his prize-winning numismatic displays of Canadian coins, medals and tokens. Mr. Flick gave a very interesting account of his numismatic beginning, punctuated with many amusing anecdotes. December was election night and following is the 1966 executive: President - Jack McLean; Vice-President - Dirk Becker; Secretary - Ossie Ikola; Treasurer - Dirk Becker; Directors - Messrs. Don Flick, Ken Hart and Dick Lockwood; Honourary President - Ed Schroeder; Past President - Alan McLean.

ST. THOMAS NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION list the following 1966 executive: President - W. R. Pressey; Past President - C. J. Miedema; Vice-president - George Gale; Secretary - Mrs. Edna Gale; Treasurer - Leslie McGregor; Six directors were elected and at the executive meeting appointed for the following office: President's aide - P. B. Nickson and George Kerhoulas; Treasurer's assistant - H. J. D. Farthing; Editor - C. J. Miedema; Librarian - G. Gale; Public Relations - D. Farthing; Auction Committee - George Conroy, Harry James and D. Farthing; Auctioneers - C. J. Miedema and Dick Ray.

INGERSOLL COIN CLUB now hold their monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month. The November meeting featured a National Film Board production, "Money In Your Pocket". The December meeting was less formal than usual with plenty of time for friendly conversation and bartering. A film issued by the C. N. R., "Canada's Atlantic Provinces" was shown.

OMEN SOUND COIN CLUB had as a recent guest speaker, Mr. J. Stoddart, who highlighted his topic, "My Visit to Russia", with coloured slides. The October meeting featured an O. N. A. Audio-visual, "Odd and Curious Money". Election of officers for 1966 is as follows: President - E. Jephson; Vice-president - H. Stobbe; Secretary - Mrs. Horton; Treasurer - Ken McIntosh; Programme - Del Curtis; Finance - J. Loughheed; Membership - G. Gimboldby; Bulletin - G. Ebel.

HAMILTON COIN CLUB have announced the following 1966 executive: President - Sid Phillips; Vice-president - Eugene Culp; Secretary - Evelyn Murray; Treasurer - Bob Low.

BAY OF QUINTE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION have released their list of executives for 1966: President - Cecil Paul; Vice-president - Jim Little; 2nd. Vice-president - Charlie Miller (also Programme Director); Secretary - Ron Miller; Treasurer - Kieth Day; Editor - Edith Morra; Membership Director - Art Savage.

SARNIA NUMISMATIC SOCIETY had 27 members out to their December meeting to view the O. N. A. Audio-visual, "Seafaring", by Alex Munro.

NORFOLK COIN CLUB celebrated their Fourth anniversary in January ... CONGRATULATIONS. The club holds its meetings on the second Sunday of the month.

ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB December meeting was primarily for the election of officers for 1966: Past President - Robert Cassidy; President - Bernard Cook; Vice-president - Lloyd Dorsey; Secretary - Mrs. Rose Thompson; Acting Secretary - Mrs. Trudy Lambert; Treasurer - Fred Barley; Librarian - Mrs. L. M. Ritchie; Membership - J. L. Morrison.

LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY held a Social Evening in December as the closing meeting of 1965. Sixty-three members and guests joined in the celebrating. Tom Masters read a portion of a general numismatic article from the September Reader's Digest and mentioned the L. N. S. numismatic collection. The evening held a regular auction, donation auction and the member's own auction. Many of the proceeds were returned to the club's numismatic collection.

BRANTFORD COIN CLUB also elected their 1966 officers at the December meeting: President - John Barchino; Vice-president - Wm. Sutor; Past President - Ernie Lightle; Secretary - George Wagner; Assistant Secretary - Thomas Savory; Treasurer - Henry Meggitt; Advisory - Walter Griggs; Directors - Phil Baker and Ernie Baker; Librarian - Louie Biro; Historian - Mrs. Mary Hilborn; Editor - Fred Hiuser.

CENTRAL COIN CLUB, Canada's largest coin club, is the ambitious club that meets every Monday night. The January 17th meeting featured representatives from the various national and provincial organizations of Canada telling prospective members of their respective organization's aims, membership dues, etc. Organizations represented were the Canadian Numismatic Association (by Mrs. Louise Graham, Sec.), Ontario Numismatic Association (Mr. Alex Munro - Regional Director); Canadian Numismatic Variety Collectors Association (Sammy Sales, member); Canadian Paper Money Society (Fred Jewett, Treasurer); Canadian Military Medals Society (Paul Bawden, member); and the Venturian Society (Vince Doran, member). George Bedford spoke briefly of the advantages of belonging to the Central Coin Club. At the January 10th meeting, officers for 1966 were elected and are as follows: President - Larry McNeill; Vice-president - Sid Preston; Secretary - Vince Doran; Treasurer - George Bedford; Programme Director - John Regitko; Receptionist - Dominic Toth.

WATERLOO COIN SOCIETY enjoyed an O.N.A. Audio-visual at their December meeting and are planning a movie night for January. The W. C. S. announced an item of interest in their bulletin ... "Since the Churchill crowns were issued on October 11, 1965, there has been an increase in public demand for them. The total of orders received by the Royal Mint, London, now exceeds 12 million.

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AN ITEM OF INTEREST
to
COLLECTORS OF FOREIGN COINS

The Third International Convention of International Numismatics, June 17, 18, and 19, at the International Hotel, Century and Sepulveda Boulevards, Los Angeles, Calif. C. O. I. N. features only foreign coins, currency, tokens and medals. For further information write: General Chairman Harvey L. Rose, P. O. Box 577, LeMessa, California, 92043.

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THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST!

Memberships due are due. We mean NOW! This will be the last issue of the Ontario Numismatist that will be mailed to you unless your 1966 membership dues are received shortly.

"MOVERS"

Please notify the Ontario Numismatic Association at P. O. Box 33, Waterloo, Ontario of your new address. This will avoid the inconvenience caused by returned mail. Once an issue of the Ontario Numismatist is returned, your name is automatically removed from our mailing list until a better address is received.

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COINS UNCIRCULATED
POST OFFICE BOX 470, OTTAWA 2, ONTARIO

The sale of coins will be governed by the following conditions:

- (1) a. Only UNCIRCULATED coins of the current year in sets, may be purchased. Note: A set of coins consists of one coin of each denomination - i. e., one dollar, fifty cents, twenty five cents, ten cents, five cents, and one cent.
- (2) a. Orders will be accepted commencing January 6th until production capacity has been reached. Quantities limited to 5 sets.
- b. Orders will be accepted for one, three, or five sets. Note: The Mint reserves the right to refuse orders if it is necessary to do so for any reason. Orders will be filled in strict sequence of receipt date. The volume of orders and other circumstances will determine the date of shipment.
- (3) Orders should be sent to Coins Uncirculated, Post Office Box 470, Ottawa 2, Ont.

(Continued on next page)

O R D E R F O R M

() 1 Set \$4.00	() 3 Sets \$12.00	() 5 Sets .. \$12.00
NAME	ADDRESS	CITY, PROVINCE, STATE
.....

COINS UNCIRCULATED, POST OFFICE BOX 470, OTTAWA 2, ONTARIO, CANADA.

- (4) a. Price which includes face value of coins, service fee, postage, registration and handling charges is \$4.00 per set IN CANADIAN DOLLARS.
- b. Each order must be accompanied by a covering remittance in the form of a money order, bank draft or certified cheque payable IN CANADIAN DOLLARS to the RECEIVER GENERAL OF CANADA. Note: Uncertified cheques from any source or remittances for incorrect amounts will be returned. Prices and terms are subject to change without notice.
- (5) a. The Mint does not maintain a mailing list.
- b. The Mint does not furnish information with respect to the value placed on old or rare coins, nor supply the names or addresses of coin dealers.
- c. Parcels containing coins, which for any reason, cannot be delivered to addressee and returned by carrier to the Mint as undeliverable will be held for the purchaser for one year from date of issue. Thereafter, the coin will be melted and only the face value of the coin will be refunded.
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NEW MEMBERS

Applications published in the January issue of the Ontario Numismatist have now been accepted. The following applications have been received. If no written objections are received, their acceptance will be acknowledged in the March issue of the Ontario Numismatist:

522. Anatole N. Hoffman, 429 Oulette Ave., Windsor, Ont.
523. Ross Irvine, 11 Torrance Cr., Guelph, Ont.
524. Bert Wooning, 110 Celestine Drive, Weston, Ont.
525. Walter H. Brink, 129 $\frac{1}{2}$ Yonge St., Toronto 1, Ont.
526. Robert Stix, 484 Runnymede, Toronto, Ont.
527. Keith M. Day, 35 Oriole Park Ave., Belleville, Ont.
528. Archie Sinclair Jr., Box 88, Tweed, Ont.
- G53 NORTHUMBERLAND COIN CLUB, c/o George Turner, P. O. Box 155, Cobourg, Ont.

LAPEL PINS

O. N. A. Lapel Pins (size 5/8") in Sterling Silver either button or safety catch are now available to members at \$2.75 each. Please specify which type when ordering. Make money order payable to the Ontario Numismatic Association and send to P. O. Box 33, Waterloo, Ont.

COMING EVENTS

- March 12, 13 WATERLOO COIN SOCIETY Seventh Annual Banquet, Walper Hotel, Kitchener, Ontario. General Chairman: Heinz Herzog, 8 David St., Kitchener.
Bourse Chairman: John W. Craig, 105 Lancaster St. E., Kitchener.
ANNUAL BANQUET MEDAL: Waterloo's First School House.
- April 2 HURONIA NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION Fifth Annual Coin Show, Continental Inn, Hwy. 400 and Dunlop St. W., Barrie, Ontario.
- April 16 WOODSTOCK COIN CLUB Annual Coin Show, Old St. Paul's Church, Dundas St., Woodstock, Ont.

April 29, 30,
May 1

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION Fourth Annual Convention, Cleary Auditorium, Windsor, Ontario. General Chairman: Paul Landry, 14200 St. Marys Street, Detroit 27, Michigan, U. S. A. Bourse Chairman - Gordon Pomeroy, 264 Kennedy Pl., Windsor, Ontario.

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AWARD OF MERIT

O. N. A. members and participating clubs are requested to submit recommendations for the O. N. A. AWARD OF MERIT. All submissions are to be in the hands of the O. N. A. Secretary not later than March 1, 1966. Please use extreme caution in your selections and adhere to the rules governing this distinctive and highest of O. N. A. AWARDS.

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1967 MINT SETS

The mint has announced that the 1967 proof-like sets will be made with or without the 20 Dollar gold coin to mark the Centennial of Canada. The gold coins will not be put into circulation, but only sold in sets, in a leather case. No price has been set as yet, but with the face value of \$21.91, a much higher price can be expected.

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The Centennial of Confederation in 1967 will be marked by the minting as keepsakes of the first gold coins Canada has produced since 1914. Twenty dollar gold pieces, with the Queen's effigy on one side and the Coat of Arms on the reverse will be turned out by the Royal Canadian Mint in special coin sets. The coin will be approximately the size of our quarter.

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All of Newfoundland's coins of the one-cent denomination were struck in bronze and are composed of 95 percent copper, 4 percent tin and 1 percent zinc.

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Hybrid coins have an obverse belonging to one series while the reverse comes from another.

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The first English Mint was established by Atherstane about the year 928.

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The only Canadian firm to issue encased postage stamp money was Weir and Larminie of Montreal. They are in denominations of one, three, five and ten cents,

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The penny that is frequently mentioned in the New Testament is almost unquestionably a Roman silver denarius.

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Queen Mary appears on the 1935 Two Dollar note issued by the Bank of Canada. The note was issued with French and English text.