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President's Message

WELCOME BACK!

After a great summer we are all becoming active again in our hobbies, and for some it never slows down.

If one were to judge this year's C.N.A. convention, held in Niagara Falls, you would be hard-pressed to find one that appealed to C.N.A. members and the local public more. There were great displays and exhibits in both the competitive and non-competitive categories. A wide array of dealers from all across Canada & the United States made up the bourse floor.

The educational programs were top notch and well attended. The meetings for all the organizations along with special meetings for the delegates worked out with a little for everyone.

Let it be said that all who went to this convention, if only to attend the seminars or lectures went away with a much wider knowledge and understanding of numismatics. Juniors also benefited greatly from a treasure hunt, along with a special auction. I can't emphasize enough all the satisfaction members can receive while attending a convention. Next year will prove to be even better as the C.N.A. will be held in Ottawa, and it will be the 100th birthday of the Mint.

Congratulations to all award winners, new President Michael Walsh, the 2007 C.N.A. executive, and the volunteers who did an outstanding job.

At the ONA table we talked with a lot of people interested in the hobby and wanting direction in ways they can put a collection together and not cost them a fortune. The only solution to this is to attend the club in your area and find your interest by asking questions and observing other collectors. I found the knowledge and contacts one makes at a show to be as valuable as the items you go home with.

We are looking forward to the fall shows, and don't be afraid to ask the all important questions in order to make collecting fun and enjoyable.

Tom Rogers

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* Available only evenings & on week-ends

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Regular Membership - \$15.00 per year
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Life Membership - \$450.00
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one year of regular membership)

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Bruce Raszmann, ONA Treasurer
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Upcoming Shows

SEPT. 7-9, Toronto, ON

TICF, Holiday Inn Select, 970 Dixon Rd. Hours: Fri. 2 to 6 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$4 includes ticket on a gold coin. Early admission \$20 good for the weekend. Approximately 60 tables of coins, paper money and more. Sponsor/Affiliate: SWON. For more information, contact Ted Bailey, 1-866-747-2646, tedscollectables@bellnet.ca.

SEPT. 16, London, ON

15th Annual Coin Show, The Ramada Inn, 817 Exeter Rd. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission \$1; children free. Door prizes, displays. Sponsor/Affiliate: London Numismatic Society. For more information, contact Len Buth, 519-641-4353, lbuth@webmanager.on.ca.

SEPT. 23, Maidstone, ON

4th Semi-Annual Essex County Coin Show & Sale, St. Mary's Hall. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Canadian and American coins, paper money, tokens, war medals, etc. Sponsor/Affiliate: Essex County Coin Club. For more information, contact Dan Jones, 519-733-6296, djones33@cogeco.ca.

OCT. 13, 2007, Oshawa, ON

Durham Coin-A-Rama, Five Points Mall, 285 Taunton Road East. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free dealer, public and membership draws. Free admission. Celebrating 45 years in numismatics. Sponsor/Affiliate: Oshawa and District Coin Club. For more information, contact Sharon Maclean at 905-728-1352 or papman@idirect.com.

OCT. 14, Mt. Elgin, ON

45th Annual Coin Show, Mt. Elgin Community Centre, Hwy. 19. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$1. Sponsor/Affiliate: Tillsonburg Coin Club. For more information, contact Wayne MacFarlane, 519-842-6666, waynemacfarlane@sympatico.ca.

OCT. 20, Guelph, ON

South Wellington and Waterloo Coin Societies, Colonel John McCrae Legion, 919 York Rd. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Displays, free parking, accessible, buy-sell-trade, over 50 tables. For more info, contact Lowell Weirstra 519-824-6534.

OCT. 21, 2007, Stratford, ON

Stratford Coin Club Annual Show, Festival Inn, 1144 Ontario Street. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Adults \$2, admission includes draw on gold coin, 16 and under free. Buy, sell coins, paper money, tokens. Sponsor/Affiliate: Stratford Coin Club. For more information, contact Larry Walker, 519-271-3352, walker@wightman.ca.

OCT. 27-28, Toronto, ON

Torex - Canada's National Coin Show, Radisson Admiral Hotel, 249 Queen's Quay West, Admiral's Ballroom. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$6. For more information, please call 416-705-5348. Web site: <http://www.torex.net>.

NOV. 3, Scarborough, ON

Scarborough Coin Club 11th Annual Coin Show, Cedarbrook Community Centre, 91 Eastpark Blvd. Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free admission and draws with refreshments available. Sponsor/Affiliate: Scarborough Coin Club. For more info, Dick Dunn at cpms@idirect.com or PO Box 562, Pickering ON L1V 2R7.

NOV. 11, Windsor, ON

Annual Fall Show, Caboto Club, 2175 Parent Ave. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lots of free parking. \$1 admission includes draws for hourly door prizes and a grand prize. Juniors admitted free. Sponsor/Affiliate: Windsor Coin Club. For more information, contact Marg Clarke, 519-735-0727 or e-mail mclarke@wincom.net.

NOV. 18-19, Cambridge, ON

TLC Show, Future Inns, 700 Hespeler Road. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission adults \$4, seniors and children \$2. For more information, contact Linda Robinson, 289-235-9288, lindarobinson@cogeco.ca or Tom Kennedy, 519-271-8825.

NOV. 24, Niagara Falls, ON

Coin-a-Rama, Our Lady of Peace Hall, 6944 Stanley Ave. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free parking, \$2 admission, free gold draw. For more information, contact B. Kostyk, 905-356-5006.

MARCH 15, 2008, Cambridge, ON

17th Annual Cambridge Coin Show, Cambridge Newfoundland Club, 1500 Dunbar Road. Free admission. Buy, sell, trade and evaluate at 51 tables. Tokens, trade dollars, coins, paper money, militaria, sports cards, CTC coupons. Sponsor/Affiliate: Cambridge Coin Club. For more information, contact Wolfe, wolfe1937@hotmail.com or Vince Nevidon, 519-622-6625.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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August 3, 2007

Richard Johnson – Editor
Ontario Numismatist
#4 – 285 Lorne Ave. E.,
Box 23016,
Stratford, Ontario, N5A 7V8

Dear Richard.

Membership

The applications for membership that appeared in the July – August issue of the Ontario Numismatist has been accepted. We welcome :

J1935 Joshua DeSouza, Brampton, Ontario
J1936 Andre Bertram, Toronto, Ontario
1937 J.P. Gadoury, Unionville, Ontario
J1938 Luke McFadden, Denfield, Ontario

The following applications for membership have been received. If there are no objections, they will be accepted into ONA membership and their acceptance published in the next bulletin.

C127 Tecumseh Numismatic Society, 13300 Tecumseh Rd. E., Suite 206, Tecumseh, Ont.,
N8N 4R8

1939 Marvin Stamcoff, Windsor, Ontario
J1940 Annick Denomme, Garden Village, Ontario
1941 Bill Dimitropoulos, London, Ontario
1942 Thayer Bouck, Fonthill, Ontario
1943 Terry Ainsworth, Almonte, Ontario
1944 Yvon Marquis, Le Bic, Quebec
J1945 Tyler Rice, Milton, Ontario

Yours truly
Bruce H. Raszmann
O.N.A. Treas. & Membership Chairman

IN THE NEWS...

Viking Treasure Hoard Uncovered



The most important Viking treasure find in Britain for 150 years has been unearthed by a father and son while metal detecting in Yorkshire. David and Andrew Whelan uncovered the hoard, which dates back to the 10th Century, in Harrogate in January. The pair kept their find intact and it was transferred to the British Museum to be examined by experts, who said the discovery was "phenomenal". It was declared as a treasure at a court hearing in Harrogate on Thursday. North Yorkshire coroner Geoff Fell said: "Treasure cases are always interesting, but this is one of the most exciting cases that I have ever had to rule on. I'm delighted that such an important Viking hoard has been discovered in North Yorkshire. We are extremely proud of our Viking heritage in this area."

Metal detectorists David and Andrew Whelan, who uncovered the treasures, said the find was a "thing of dreams." The pair, from Leeds, said the hoard was worth about £750,000 as a conservative estimate. They told the BBC News website: "We've been metal detecting for about five years; we do it on Saturdays as a hobby. We ended up in this particular field, we got a really strong signal from the detector... Eventually we found this cup containing the

coins and told the antiquity authority. We were astonished when we finally discovered what it contained."

The ancient objects come from as far afield as Afghanistan in the East and Ireland in the West, as well as what is now Russia, Scandinavia and continental Europe. The hoard contains 617 silver coins and 65 other objects, including a gold arm-ring and a gilt silver vessel. Dr Jonathan Williams, keeper of prehistory in Europe at the British Museum, said: "[The cup] is beautifully decorated and was made in France or Germany at around AD900. It is fantastically rare - there are only a handful of others known around the world. It will be stunning when it is fully conserved." Most of the smaller objects were extremely well preserved as they had been hidden inside the vessel, which was protected by a lead container.

The British Museum said the coins included several new or rare types, which provide valuable new information about the history of England in the early 10th Century, as well as Yorkshire's wider cultural contacts in the period. It was probably buried for safety by a wealthy Viking leader during the unrest following the conquest of the Viking kingdom of Northumbria in AD927. A spokeswoman for the museum said: "The size and quality of the hoard is remarkable, making it the most important find of its type in Britain for over 150 years." The find will now be valued for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport by the Independent Treasure Valuation Committee. Dr Williams said that the British Museum and the York Museums Trust would be looking to raise the funds to purchase the collection so it could eventually go on public display. The proceeds would be split between the finders and landowners.

PERSONAL, SOUVENIR WOODS ISSUED FOR THE 2007 C.N.A. CONVENTION:

Some of the 'woods' issued, for this convention, are shown here. All others will be shown next month.



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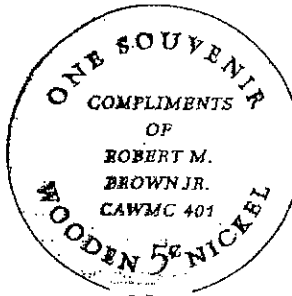
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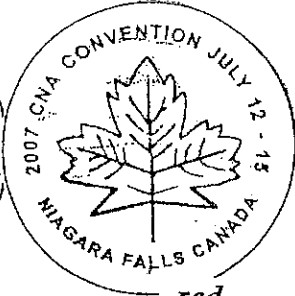
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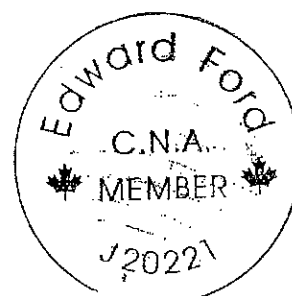
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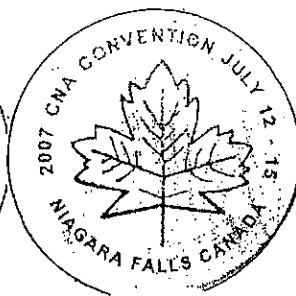
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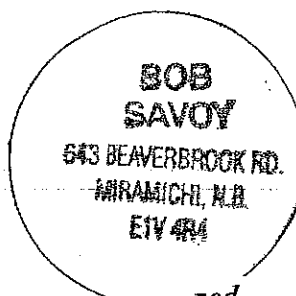
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red



Coloured
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Leaf



red



blue



red

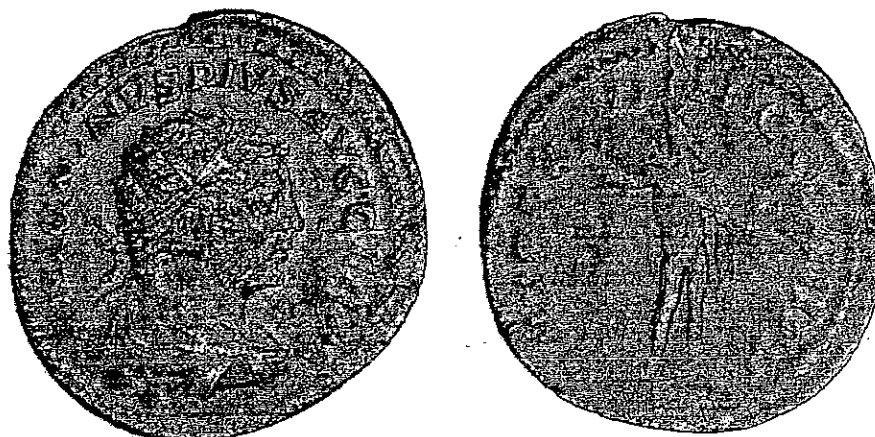


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Leaf

FROM THE VAULTS OF THE NATIONAL CURRENCY COLLECTION

Antoninianus of Caracalla, 216A.D.

by David Bergeron, Curator



The introduction of a new coin into circulation is always a momentous event. While sometimes a new coin simply marks a transition in the form of money used for daily transactions (thinking of the move from a paper one dollar note to the loonie), other times it reflects major changes in the economy, to which the money must adapt. The so-called antoninianus introduced in Ancient Rome in 215A.D. during the reign of Caracalla is a classic example. Faced with a dwindling supply of silver to mint coins required to pay his troops, Caracalla ordered the reduction silver in all coins and authorized the minting of a new denomination. The distinctive portrait of the emperor wearing the radiate crown, an established convention as indicating a double denomination, would conclude that the value of the coin was 2 denarii. Ignoring the coin's actual name in antiquity, modern numismatists have called it the antoninianus based on a reference in a Roman document called the "Historia Augusta" which refers to silver coins named after an Antoninus. The authenticity of this source is questionable, though the name has stuck to identify the 2-denarii coins of Imperial Rome. Despite its elevated currency value, the intrinsic value of the antoninianus was equivalent to only 1.5 denarii.

The debasement of silver coins, including the antoninianus, immediately caused inflation as merchants adjusted their prices to reflect the depreciated value of the coins. Furthermore, old coins containing higher intrinsic values were hoarded thus further compounding the problem. Antoniniani continued to be struck, but only for a short period after Caracalla's reign. In 219, Elagabalus abandoned the use of antoniniani to arrest inflation, which was by then out of control. Interruption in the minting of antoniniani, however, was brief as Balbinus & Pupienus re-introduced the coin, containing even less silver, into circulation in 238. Progressively, as the roman economy continued its inevitable collapse, the antoninianus was issued with less and less silver. By the reign of Aurelian (270-275A.D), the antoninianus was made almost entirely of bronze. Aurelian undertook an important reform of the imperial currency to restore its appearance and reputation. Under his reign order was returned to operations at the mints, especially the main one in Rome, fixed rates of exchange were established thus stabilizing prices and, most important, the precious metal content in coins was restored. At the outset of the coinage reform, it is believed that the antoninianus was renamed the aurelianus, but many scholars refute this claim.

Over time, imperial coinage could not resist the effects of inflation and once again the antoninianus was heavily debased. Under Diocletian's monetary reform between 286 and 296A.D., new coins were struck and the antoninianus became an insignificant bronze coin behind the new follis, which had a value of 5 denarii. After Constantius I (305-306A.D.), antoniniani became known as post-reform radiates, reflecting their total absence of silver in the coin. Within a couple of years, the post-reform radiates ceased to be minted altogether.

Positively identifying the coinage of Caracalla can be tricky because nowhere in the obverse legend does his name appear. On the antoninianus pictured here, the legend reads ANTONINVS PIVS AVG GERM., which could

mistakenly attribute it to the emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161A.D.) The inscription on the reverse of the coin P M TR P XVIII COS III P P allows the coin to be accurately dated, thus attributing it to Caracalla. Deduction from the reverse legend shows that this coin was struck in nineteenth year of the emperor's Tribunicia Potestas year (TR P XVIII) and the fourth year of his Consul (COS III). Only in the year 216A.D. was this occurrence possible, thus it is confirmed that the coin was struck under Caracalla.

Sources: Kenneth W. Harl, Coinage in the Roman Economy: 300 B.C. to A.D.700 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), ch.6; David A. Sear, Roman Coins and Their Values II and III (London: Spink, 2002-2005).

George Manz Coin Auctions presents Auction #3

by George Manz

City of Ottawa Coin Club member George Manz has announced that the Regina Coin Club's Fall Show will be the venue for the third in a series of auctions by George Manz Coin Auctions. The auction includes Part II of the famed Roy Miller Collection, a Regina-based coin collector and dealer for more than 50 years.

The first item for auction among the 184 lots is a Gordian III Antoninianus, the child who became Caesar and Augustus of the Roman Empire at the age of 13. Struck in 240-244AD, the silver coin is in uncirculated condition. World coins include a French Crusader coin struck for Charles II of Anjou in the 13th century, a nicely toned 2-franc coin struck in Paris in 1810 for Napoleon Bonaparte, a British 1745 shilling marked "LIMA" below King George II's bust to indicate it was produced from captured Spanish treasure, an attractive Irish 1805 Bank of Ireland 5 pence token, uncirculated examples of the 1929 half piffin and one piffin from the island of Lundy, and a 1967 New Zealand 2 cents muled with a Bahamas 5 cents.

Many Canadian coins are included in the October 20th auction in Regina, including numerous ICCS certified and graded coins, as well as the most attractively toned 1982 Regina Centennial silver dollar the auctioneer has ever seen. The auction also features a large assortment of Newfoundland coinage, including a 1940 re-engraved cent. Several ICCS certified Breton tokens head the list of pre-

Confederation tokens at auction, while a large rectangular wooden nickel issued in Malden, Massachusetts in 1949 is expected to see spirited bidding.

Medals are one of the highlights at the auction, including six Edward VIII pattern crowns from Australia, India and New Zealand, a French medal commemorating the world's first hot air balloon tests by the Montgolfier Brothers, an unlisted Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee medal, and an enameled 1902 Coronation medal of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. Canadian paper money includes one of each of the three different 1870 25-cent shinplasters, and numerous replacement notes and radar notes. Military medals and badges, collectables from the RCMP, edged weapons, numismatic books, coin show displays, and a brass CNA Life Membership to Hans Zoell, round out the 184 lots in the auction.

The auction will take place at the Regina Coin Club's Fall Show on October 20 at the Western Christian College in Regina. Lots can be viewed in the bourse from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, while the auction begins at 7:00 pm. Those wishing to receive the auction catalogue by email can contact George Manz at george@georgemanzcoins.com. The catalogue can also be viewed www.georgemanzcoins.com. There is no buyer's fee in this auction.

Voice over Internet freed from web cost

Sun Media - No Internet, no problem.

Phone service operated over the Internet no longer needs the web connection in customers' homes, says one Waterloo-based business.

Worldline, which has a London office and offers its service locally through a partnership with The London Free Press, is using technology where a customer can get the low cost of VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) without an Internet connection.

"You just use a normal telephone, you do not change the way you call," said John Stix, Worldline executive vice-president.

When a client subscribes to Worldline's service and dials in to its access code, the customer is dialing into an Internet network offered by Worldline, said Stix. "The call goes over a bandwidth to where the server is located. You do not need a high-speed connection or computer, you just need a phone."

Customers have to listen to a 10-second promotional pitch from The Free Press, but there is no need to switch phone companies.

The service can also be used with a cellphone, Stix added.

For The Free Press, it is another service to offer readers, said Sherri O'Brien, the newspaper's director of sales and marketing.

"It is a revenue opportunity for us, a service we can provide through this partnership with Worldline," she said.

Free Press owner Sun Media is offering the service through all its newspapers across Canada, she added.

For service accessing all of Canada, the service costs \$3.95 a month, with The Free Press getting \$1 of that. There is also a one-time \$10 activation fee. For Canada, the U.S. and 24 countries, the service costs \$13.95 a month, with The Free Press getting \$2 a month.

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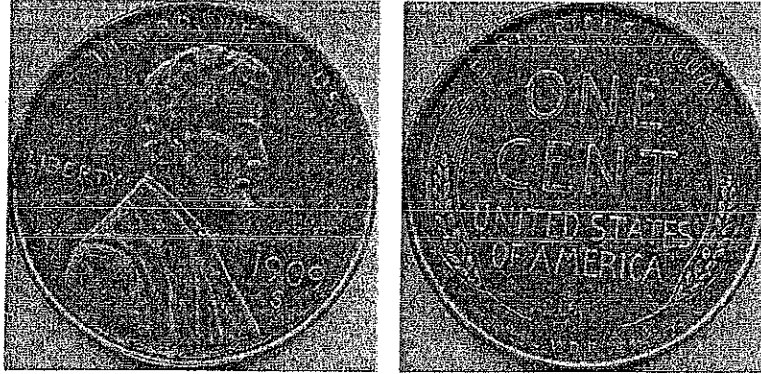
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MEMBER - CAND

My Wife Loves Me!!

by Steve Woodland



The men of the numismatic hobby often joke about our wives, and how they smile sweetly and shake their heads at those of us who are fascinated by little pieces of wood, metal and paper (and I guess I better add polymer too). But my wife is different! While not a coin enthusiast like me, she does have a great collection of Uncirculated/PL sets – or should I say Numismatic BU sets, Mr. Cornwell? Nevertheless, she is great because she supports me in my hobby, encouraging me to get more involved, attending the CNA Annual Convention with me, and sometimes asking about what coins I am still looking for. Little did I know that she was plotting all along to surprise me on my 50th birthday. She went way beyond the typical “now you’re 50” bash with all the family and friends!

A few weeks ago, my sweetheart was on a business trip to Washington, D.C. for a few days. She also knew that I had been looking for some scarce US Lincoln cents, and had been corresponding with a fellow collector in the States to try and find some of them. I was completely unaware that she had been keeping track of what I was looking for, and set her sights on finding one for me while she was on her trip. Well, she was successful in finding one I

was missing, and she brought it home and gave it to me. To my astonishment, it was the “grand-daddy” of Lincoln cents, the equivalent of the 1948 for Canadian Silver Dollars - a 1909S VDB. In other words, (if you don't know your Lincoln cents) a 1909 cent struck at the (S)an Francisco mint, with the initials of the artist/designer (V)ictor (D)avid (B)renner on the reverse. The coin was produced in limited quantity in mid-1909 (the first year the Lincoln cent was struck and the last year the Indian head cent was struck) until the Treasury Secretary, Franklin MacVeagh, decided on August 5th that the artist's initials did not belong on the coin. Thus, the remainder of the cents that year were struck without them. Brenner's initials returned to the cent in 1918, but this time unobtrusively on the obverse under Lincoln's bust.

Anyway, to say the least, I was astounded (the British expression “gob-smacked” is more appropriate) that my darling had found and bought this “biggie” of the US Lincoln cent collection for me! I have included scans of the coin for you to see, and would like to know what grade you think the coin is. Let me know what you think and I'll bring the coin with me to our next meeting. Any other stories of supportive spouses out there?

WILLIAM MORRIS

RODNEY, ONTARIO

A NEWLY DISCOVERED MERCHANT TOKEN

- LEN BUTH - FCNRS



Actual size - 19mm - aluminum

William Morris was born on June 26, 1849 at Portland, Ontario [Bastard Township, Leeds & Grenville United Counties]. His parents Henry and Elizabeth [nee Kidd] Morris were born in Ireland and immigrated to Canada.

William and his brother Samuel B. Morris moved to Rodney, Ontario [Elgin County] in 1874 and purchased a general store from Luther Carpenter. They operated this store until 1881, when they dissolved their partnership. Samuel went into private banking and other business ventures. Between 1882 and 1885 William conducted a variety of businesses including a butcher shop, and later operated a music store selling organs and other instruments. In 1885 William opened a general store on Furnival Street [the main street] between Queen and Harper Streets. The front of this establishment had a sign with a large sheaf of grain painted in gold colour with his motto on both sides reading "Trade at the Golden Sheaf. It will pay". The family living quarters was above the store, and the entire building was lost in a fire in 1911.

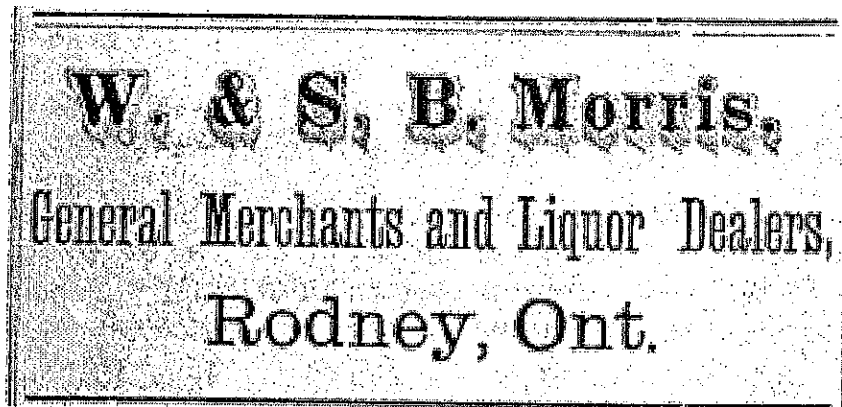
In 1912 William bought the Maple Leaf Grocery Store from James Hillman on Furnival Street just north of Clark Street, changing the name of the store to the "Morris Plain Price Store". William Morris stayed in the grocery business until 1927 when he retired at the age of 78. His son Vernon who had assisted his father for many years took over the business and continued to operate it until the early 1950s.

Also in the 1920s William Morris, and other partners, had an interest in a sash and door factory which was eventually sold to Beaver Lumber Co. in 1945.

William Morris married Sara Lawrence at Toronto in 1876, and they had six children. Sara died in 1919. William was an active and well respected citizen of the town, and was a charter member of the I.O.O.F. which was instituted in Rodney in 1892. He died on May 10, 1929 at Rodney in his 80th year, and at the time of his death was the oldest living resident in the town.

Based on the above, this previously unrecorded token was no doubt in use sometime between 1885 and 1927. The "good for one cent" token is the only denomination known at this time but as was customary, other denominations were no doubt struck.

It is always a surprise to the writer that we can continue to find new unrecorded tokens from so many years back, and that they have not surfaced previously.



Advertisement for the Morris Brothers partnership - from the "Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Elgin, Ontario" - H.R. Page & Co., Toronto 1877

SOURCES:

- "A History of Rodney 1870 - 1950", by John Sinclair Dorland, Mercury-Sun Publications, Rodney, Ont.
- Directories - various; R.G. Dun & Co. and Bradstreet's
- St. Thomas Times-Journal May 11, 1929
- 1901 Census of Canada
- Province of Ontario Vital Statistics - Marriage; and Death Certificates

Unusual Commemorative Issues

by Alexander W. Driega

The reason for striking commemorative coins is usually to mark or celebrate a special event. Its secondary purpose is to market it to defray production costs and, hopefully, make a profit. Since 1952 the most successful commemorative coin program has been the striking of Olympic Coins by host countries. In 1972 this initiative expanded to include issues by non-host countries. The Republic of Guinea led the parade by striking a dual commemorative coin to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the republic's founding, as well as the Munich Summer Olympic Games. Since then the flood gates opened for striking non-host Olympic issues, which we now refer to as Companion Issues.

Topical collectors are always on the look-out to collect items that are unique, different or interesting, and if they are Olympic collectors there is certainly a wide range of items to choose from as there are three times more non-host issues than host issues. I find most collectors are story tellers and are enthusiastic to tell others about their hobby or the special items they have. I am no different. I would like to tell you about a few items that I found fascinating and that have an interesting story to tell.

For its first Olympic issues marking the '92 Barcelona games, Albania struck two coins having the same equestrian design with one being the mirror opposite of the other. One obverse was struck in high relief while the other was incused, so when the two pieces are brought together they fit perfectly inside one another. When a design is impressed on a coin so that the pattern sinks into the flan, the coin is said to be incuse. This, I believe is a first of its kind in numismatic circles and as far as I know, has not been picked up by other countries.



Albania marked the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona by producing this unique fit-together coin.

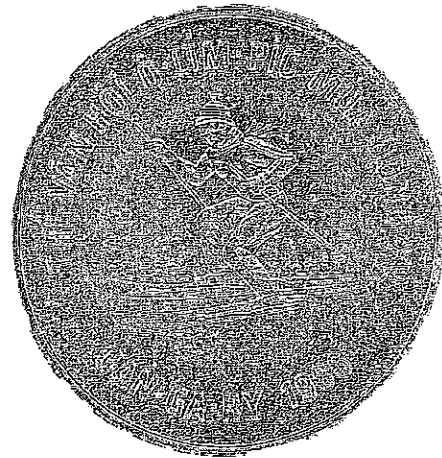
In 1988 Cyprus struck an interesting 'transitional' coin where the design changes from one form to another. The bottom portion of the image is that of an athlete while the top half has changed into the Olympic flame, a strong reflection of the Olympic spirit. The circular designs in the background suggest an Olympic track that appears to change into the Olympic rings. An interesting piece that is subject to other interpretations.



Cyprus, 1988, 1 pound, Olympic Games

In 1983, Vietnam struck a coin commemorating the Calgary Olympics. This coin exemplifies how other nations perceive and interpret different themes. For the Calgary issue the craftsman produced a delightful rendition of the sport of downhill skiing featuring a skier wearing a toque and flapping scarf, sporting old-fashioned skis and harness, and holding extra long ski poles. Those of us who are of senior vintage can look back and appreciate this kind depiction of a sport we grew up with. I am not sure what to make of the bottom inscription.

Sometimes an engraver will take the liberty to incorporate subtle humor into the design. One example can be found on the Fiji 1993 \$10 coin featuring the sport of Judo. A quick glance at the image reveals nothing unusual, but on closer examination with an eye loupe, one can readily distinguish the wrestler in the superior position is a Fijian, whereas the opponent who is about to be thrown to the mat, is Asian. I am sure the engraver must have been chuckling when he put the final touches to the athlete's features. Judo was founded in Japan in 1882, and is a test of skill rather than endurance.



Vietnam, 1986, 100 Dong, skiing.



Fiji, 1996, 10 dollars, judo



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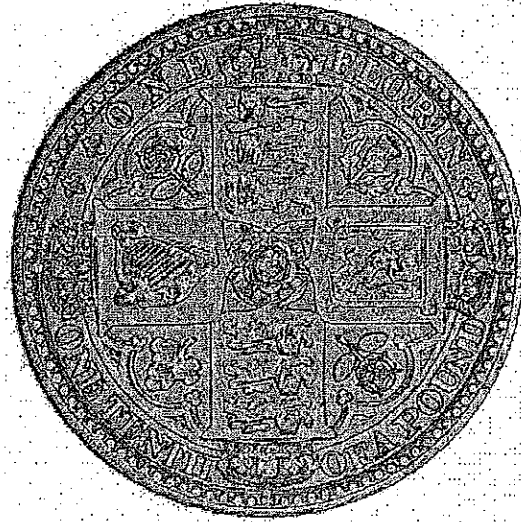
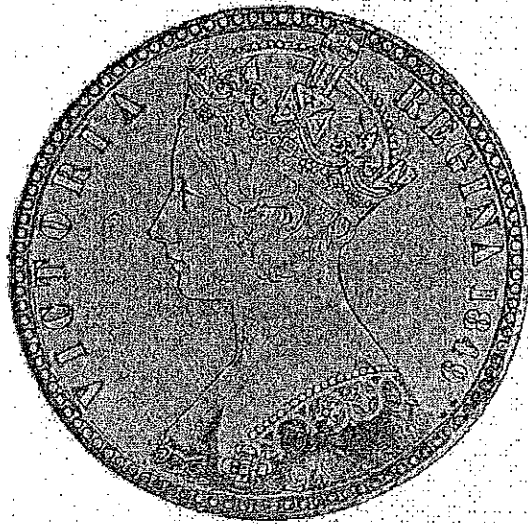
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FROM THE VAULTS OF THE NATIONAL CURRENCY COLLECTION

Great Britain, Victoria, 1849, Florin (Decimalization in Great Britain)

by David Bergeron, Curator



Today, all countries use the decimal system based of their unit of account, whether it is the dollar, the euro, or the peso, and its division into units of 10 and 100. Russia pioneered the decimal system in 1710, when Peter the Great set the rouble equal to 100 kopecks. The United States adopted the decimal system based on the dollar in 1792. In 1857, Canada moved to the decimal system when it abandoned the British pound as its unit of account in favour of the American dollar to facilitate trade with the United States. Great Britain was one of the last nations to move to the decimal system in 1971, having relied for centuries on the sterling system where one pound equaled 20 shillings, which equaled 240 pence. Adding sums was sometimes quite complicated and time consuming under this old system.

Proposals to adopt a decimal system in Great Britain began as far back as the mid-nineteenth century. In a push to simplify accounting procedures, especially when

dealing with foreign exchange, in 1847 a motion was introduced in British Parliament for the adoption of a decimal system maintaining the pound as the unit of account. Several proposals were put forth where decimalization could function with little disruption to the current coinage. These proposals involved the minting of florins, cents and mils, which would all become fractions of the pound, and whose values could still be measured in the old sterling system. The proposed system was quite complex, especially when dealing with the copper coinage. Many feared that such a complex system would pose problems for the people who made most use of copper coins, namely the labouring poor.[1]

Input from several stakeholders led to the creation of a system that involved the reduction in size of the copper coins, and the creation of only one new denomination made of silver, the florin. With a value of 2 shillings (one-tenth of a pound), the florin fell more in

line with the weight and value of foreign decimal coins, such as the American half-dollar and Spanish 4 reales coin than the half-crown, whose value was 2 shilling, 6 pence. The first silver florin was minted in 1849, and was familiarly known as the Godless Florin because the designation DEI GRATIA (D.G.) was missing in the legend on the obverse. It was very much an experimental piece to test the general acceptance of decimalization. To give the coin a chance, minting of the half-crown was discontinued. Mixed opinions forced the delay of the switch to decimalization, however, as well as the reinstatement of the half-crown in 1874.[2]

Even though the move to a decimal system did not materialize until late into the twentieth century, florins continued to be minted in the reigns of Edward VII, George V, George VI and Elizabeth II. In 1969, when plans were finalized to officially move to the

decimal system, the florin was replaced with the 10-pence piece. By this time the coin had long since ceased to be made of silver. In 1971, Great Britain moved to the decimal system with 100 pence equaling one pound. The florin remains to this day a highly desired coin by collectors, not only because of its aesthetic appeal, but also because of some of its unique features, such as the use of gothic lettering for the legend on Victorian florins, and the date rendered in roman numerals.

Notes: [1] n.a., "Remarks On and Suggestions for a Decimal Currency," in Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society 58, 2 (June 1895), 367-369; Frederic James Minasi, "On a Decimal Coinage for the United Kingdom," in Journal of the Statistical Society of London 17,3 (Sep. 1854), 243-258.

[2] John Craig, The Mint (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 312-313.

Photography: Gord Carter, Bank of Canada, Ottawa.



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