

The **PLANCHET**

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**ENS FALL COIN
SHOW AND SALE**



Edmonton Numismatic Society

Volume 64 · Issue 6



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The PLANCHET

Volume 64 • Issue 5

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Message from the President

Marc Bink

October 23, 2017

Grüß aus Berlin!



It's been a great trip so far. Some of you might remember that a group of us from the Executive had been planning to attend the Numismata in Berlin on October 15-16. Well, we're here. It is a great show; and not having travelled to coin shows anywhere else, it is easily the biggest show I've ever seen. I've never seen so much good stuff in one place! It is well attended, there are dealers from all over Europe speaking all sorts of languages, and for me it just became sensory overload after a while.

One of the things we were looking at was to see how things work on this side of the pond. And it was put together with typical German efficiency, but I think their show is professionally run for profit and not done by volunteers like ours. In some respects we have them beat; we have a larger presence of members or identifiable "help" available with our Black Shirts, but they showed us a few tricks that I think we will try and incorporate to make our shows flow that much easier.

I brought the family over and am making a vacation of it, so we will all now have a lot of new experiences and memories of some pretty interesting places. We're headed all over Germany. Along with Berlin, some of the things we've seen so far is "Mad King Ludwig's" Neuschwanstein Castle in the south and we'll end the trip up in my home town of Lübeck in the north.

As far as our club goes, I haven't got much to report. Show preparations are in the final stretch, the banners have been hung with care, and it looks like we'll have another sell-out with regards to tables for this show. Special thanks to all of those who've helped us out in the past few weeks getting things done while we are away.

Well; back to it; hope to see you at the show in November! 🍷



The ENS Expeditionary Force on the Friedrichstraße in Berlin...

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Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2017

Royal Alberta Museum

12845 – 102 Avenue, Edmonton

Meeting Starts at 7:15 pm

- Society Matters
- Show and tell
- Silent auction
- RCNA Show Report
- Presentation
- Break for: coffee, pop and cookies
- Door prize draws

For information regarding events, or to add an item to the agenda, please send an email to editor_ens@yahoo.ca

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About Your Society

by **Mitch Goudreau** ENS Secretary

September 13, 2017 ENS Meeting Minutes

Marc Bink, the ENS President, opened the meeting at 19:25 hrs and welcomed the 40 members in attendance for our annual pizza night. He hoped that everyone had a great summer.

Our president announced that *The Planchet* won 2 awards at the RCNA convention which are:

- 2016 Best Local Club Newsletter
- 2016 Best Local Club Newsletter Editor

Congratulations were given to Joe Kennedy for his outstanding work in creating *The Planchet*, as well as the contributors who wrote the articles. The awards were picked up by Howard Gilbey, the ENS delegate to the RCNA convention.

Greg Jones of Lighthouse Numismatics donated several sets of coin postcard calendars for our members, which were distributed this evening. These 18 month sets showcasing top quality coins, were sent to us in appreciation for the great coin shows we host. The ENS is very appreciative of having received these and thanks Greg for his generosity.

November 11–12, 2017 Coin Show

The volunteer list for the coin show requirements was circulated once again for members to sign up.

It was requested that members assist with advertising by placing ads in various publications.

The deadline for the Silent Auction lots is next month's

meeting. The forms are available from Howard Gilbey this evening or can be found on the ENS website.

Mirko volunteered to assist Pierre in placing the show banners over 4 overpasses on October 21.

There will be a kid's coin auction, as well as a table that they can purchase items from.

Our club purchased 20 new Allstate coin cases and boxes for our coin shows. We will be looking at selling some of the old wooden cases.

Negotiations have started with the Howard Johnson hotel for the 2019 shows.

Club Matters

The ENS/RCNA Canada 150 medals have arrived but they will only be released in December.

Our monthly meetings will continue to be held here at the RAM until June 2018. We will be looking at other options beginning in September 2018.

A major overhaul of our website is anticipated to begin this fall, with the goal of it being implemented in time for the New Year.

Presentations

James Williston gave a talk about the RCNA. He is the organization's Area Director for Alberta and the Northwest Territories. He has been a member of the ENS since 1998 and now resides in Calgary. His goal is to make the rounds extolling the benefits

of the RCNA, and explaining the organization to those not familiar with it. James also reminded us that the Calgary Coin show is being held at the Clarion hotel near the Deerfoot trail and 16 Avenue on September 23–24.

Tickets were drawn for the door prizes, while the next presentation was being prepared.

Pierre Driessen then presented the ENS's financial statement for 2015. Jeremy Martin made a motion to accept the report, 2nd by Chris Hale. A vote was held, and the motion passed. The 2016 financials are currently being worked on.

Howard Gilbey gave a talk about the 2017 RCNA convention in Boucherville, Quebec. He described the symposium sessions he attended and also had Dan Gosling, Randy Ash and yours truly talk about our own experiences at the convention.


Terence Cheesman then spoke about his trip to the ANA in Denver, Colorado.

Show & Tell

Items circulated for Show & Tell included:

- A binder with a complete set of one cent hanging dates.
- An item not seen very often, a Prince Edward Island Holey Dollar!

Conclusion

The silent auction lots were sold, and the meeting was adjourned at 21:10 hrs. 

2017

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Coming Events

Nov 8, 2017: ENS Meeting at the Royal Alberta Museum; 7:15 pm start.

Nov 11 & 12, 2017: ENS Fall Show

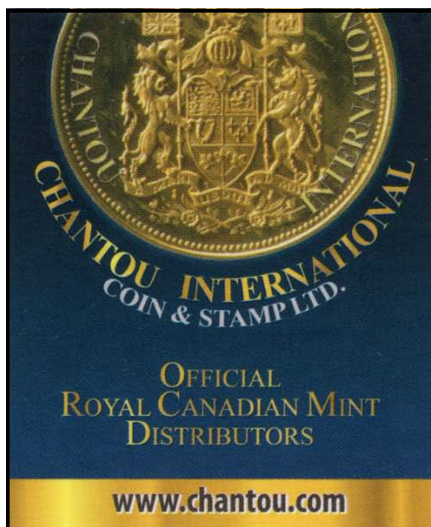
Dec 13, 2017: ENS Meeting at the Royal Alberta Museum; 7:15 pm start.

Dec 15, 2017: Issue 7 of the 2017 PLANCHET

January 10, 2018: ENS Meeting at the Royal Alberta Museum; 7:15 pm start.

To list your coming events, send them to editor_ens@yahoo.ca

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1:00 pm to 3:00 pm (arrive by 12:45 pm)

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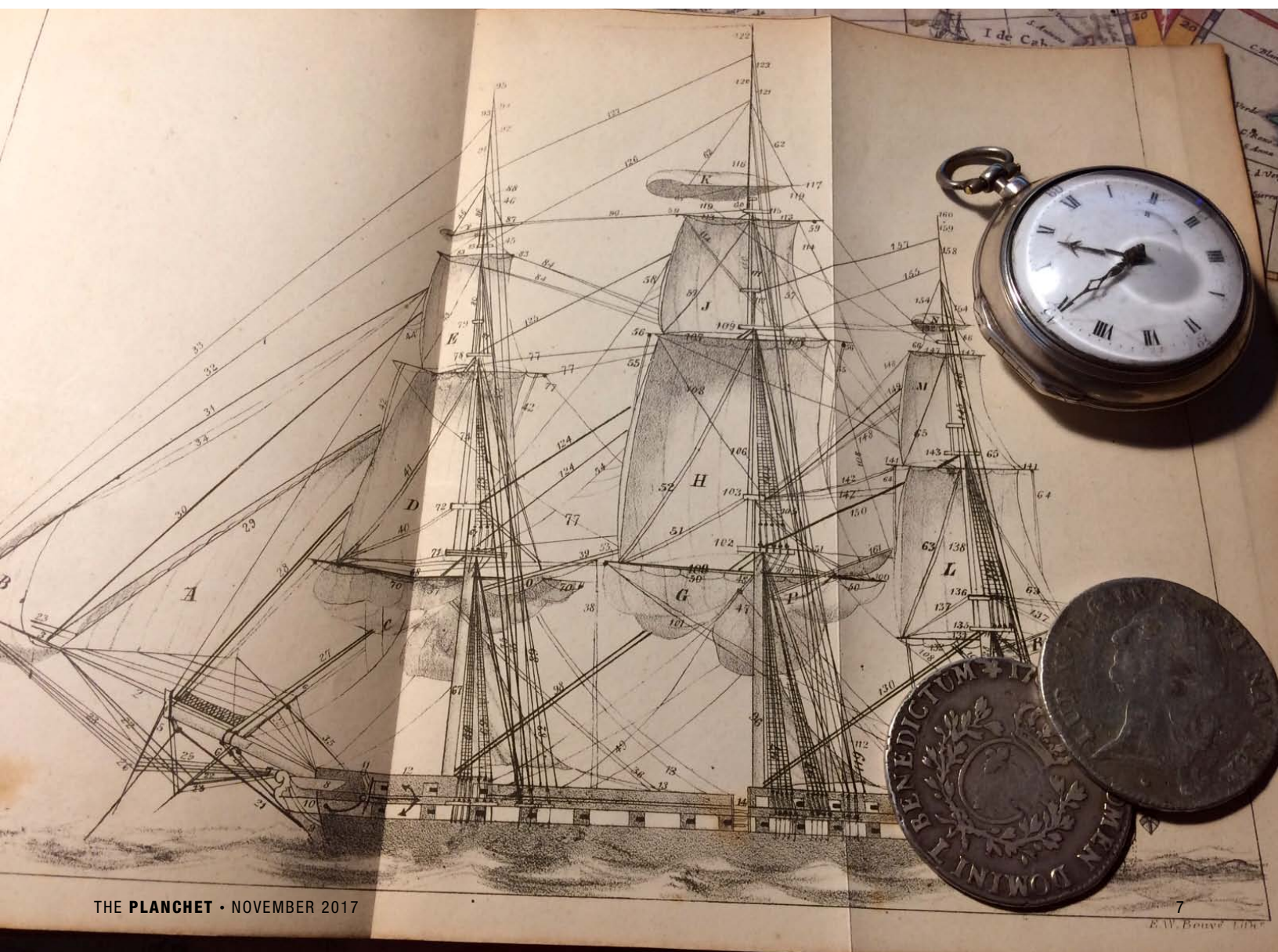
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Once upon a time

by Marc Bink

Imagine if you will, you're standing on a windswept beach in northern Nova Scotia on Cape Breton Island, admiring the view out towards the Atlantic. What impresses you at the moment is just how vast the ocean looks, it looks endless. But what hits you is just how biting the wind is, it literally bites through to the core; it's cold! Facing the wind, you shuffle back along the beach towards the car. You stumble on a small dune and notice something poking out of the sand; it looks like a blackish green piece of metal. Cool! It's a very old coin! Now how did that get here?



I was looking at an old coin that I had bought the other day, and this was the kind of image that came up as I held it. No, I'm not psychic or anything like that, but to me a coin often tells a story. And this coin's story was one of hardship. The coin was an old French Ecu from 1741, and it had Louis XV on it. It was very

worn and badly cleaned. Upon further investigation, it looked like it had seen some pretty extensive chemical damage; it was pitted and discoloured in places. The coin was essentially VG, and it was weird that the severe damage was localized to a few areas. It looked as though the coin might have survived an

acid bath, or it had spent a long time in salt water. Looking at it, I could see why no one would want it, it was positively ugly. But something about it called to me; it was the idea that it could possibly be a shipwreck coin. There were a lot of things about the coin that just fit.

Without going into too much detail, it appears that this coin came from a collection that was basically assembled in the Maritimes or by someone who was initially from there. I have no concrete proof of that, it's just that's the way the evidence points. So with that in mind, I set out to find which shipwreck would make the most sense. I knew from previous research that Anticosti Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence was a good spot for wrecks, but most of the ones known to have ended up there tended to be outside of the period when that French coin would be in circulation. I could have come up with some cockamamie story about some French Chocolatier using these at his hunting lodge on Anticosti, but that would be too farfetched to make any sense at all. Much as it was with the infamous Anticosti Token, there's no evidence that it was ever needed or used there. So I need to hunt further on.

The first thing to establish, was where a coin like that would have been used. They were essentially used in New France, or Quebec. Sure, they would have and could have circulated into the 13 colonies of the United States, and into what is now Louisiana, but for the most part they would have been used as more of a "bank" coin due to their high value. Most circulating stuff was either copper or bad silver; the good stuff was hoarded by nobility and very rarely was used outside of large transactions. No one could have made change for such a thing. The predominant coin in use at the time was the Spanish 8 Reales,

I was one of the lucky ones. When I hauled myself up on the beach, I wasn't too sure if I was lucky or not. It was bitterly cold, and I realized I needed to get shelter and dry quickly otherwise I would freeze to death. A quick look out over the water shocked me; I had expected to see the ship, but it was gone, there was nothing there. There was just some junk bobbing in the surf in amongst a few unidentifiable specks. To my horror I realized that those specks were bodies. I was almost one of them; it was only luck that prevented me from getting swept under as the ship capsized. It all went so fast... Oh man, was it cold! Clinging to wreckage until a boat worked free where we could abandon ship. My muscles ached and my sodden clothes were quickly beginning to stiffen up. It would be easy to just lie here and rest for a bit. It was November and the sleet was quickly turning to snow. As I lay on the beach, I noticed a few of my shipmates emerging from the water. There weren't many of them; I had expected that more would come. But there weren't any more coming... some were washing up unmoving... It would be just so easy to close the eyes and let go... no, not today, not yet. With a deep breath I shook it off and got up; a fire had to be built, otherwise we'd all freeze...

So that meant that someone with a lot of money brought it from France. This isn't the kind of coin that would come over in the pocket of some draftee from Lyons. It could have come over with a governor or a banker. It most likely was part of someone's fortune when they were sent over. So, who could have had something like that?

As was the case throughout European history, a lot of promising families and fortunes were destroyed in the seemingly ceaseless wars. It seemed that every generation of Europeans from the Fall of Rome to the present day has been affected by some stupid war at some point. A lot of people went to the New World to get away from the endless carnage and battles. There's no record if that was the case with the de la Cornes, but they had prospered in Quebec and were looking forward to continuing to do so. And then along came the "Seven Years War" in Europe, otherwise known as the "French and Indian War" in North America.

the German territories and the Austrians had started the long and painful decline that would cumulate with the destruction of the Hapsburg Empire in 1918. Prussia, under King Frederick the Great, was looking to usurp some of the smaller states in Germany and expand into Silesia. The Austrians were



French Ecu (1741)
Louis XV. Strassbourg Mint

French controlled the major rivers and seaways into the Great Lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico. The French could expand their territory, the English could not. Both colonies were beginning to fill up, and economically both territories were in need of expansion. So the bottom line was either the two sides had to figure out how to get along, or one of them would have to go.

The English opened things up in 1754 in the Ohio valley. They sent Colonel George Washington out to attack a smaller French force. At first he won, but was surprised and beaten by a larger French force further on. In 1756 things opened up in Europe and the alliances were set. It was now a true world war, as opposing forces in all corners engaged each other. For a while it looked like the French alliance would carry the field, but then in 1758 it started to turn against them. By 1759 they had lost most of Quebec, and by the time the war ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1763, the French were forced out of most of their possessions. They had lost Quebec and Louisiana was shrunk down. Napoleon eventually would sell what was left of Louisiana to the American government in order to fight his wars 40 years later.

So after the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759, the writing was clearly on the wall for French interests in Canada. The British had won. They needed to consolidate their winnings though. That meant they needed to rid themselves of any French influences. So the British elected to expel the French nobility that were trapped or left behind after the French armies were defeated. They chartered a couple of merchant ships and put most of the "who's who" of Montreal and Quebec society on them. The de la Cornes by this point had decided they did not want to remain in English

controlled Quebec, so they willingly submitted to the English demand that they vacate. They then supervised the loading of the first two boats, and then realized that a third was needed. They would all be the last to leave on that third boat.

By all accounts the transfer went quite well, and both sides got along reasonably well considering there was a war on. The English to their credit tried to make the leaving French as comfortable as possible. They allowed them time to clean out their fortunes and households, and then put them on half-decent ships. The first two boats left without so much of a hitch, it was only the third one that got into serious trouble.

Not too much is known about the *Auguste*, except that she was a three masted-square rigged ship displacing about 245 tons and had nine guns on her. She was a foreign built ship but registered in London. Some

documents refer to it as the *Augusta*, or *Augustus*. The other thing the de la Cornes tried to do is hire themselves a decent pilot. The British provided them with one, but he wasn't too familiar with the St. Lawrence river and all of its issues. This would prove to be their undoing later. The Captain was a gentleman by the name of John Knowles, in other words an English captain and crew with French deportees on board as cargo. Luc de la Corne rented a cabin on board for 500 Spanish Piastres. There were a handful of others that knew the de la Cornes very well, so they were travelling in good company. One can assume they paid about the same amount of money, which would have gone into British coffers.

They finally got going on October 15, 1761. A few days earlier they had tried to depart, but a wind blew up that prevented them from leaving. It just went downhill from there.

In 3 days they hadn't even gotten out of the St. Lawrence yet. By October 30th, they'd lost sight of the other two ships and were forced to go it alone. On the 4th of November a storm hit them and almost dashed them into the rocks. Apparently it was a bad storm; the captain had told them he'd never experienced a worse one in his 20 years of experience. Everyone on board worked to repair the boat, and then a fire broke out in the galley and damaged it even worse than before. Then a strong wind blew them around a bit more, and then they got nailed by another storm on November 9th. By now they were thoroughly lost, they only had European maps on board, and they didn't know where they were. The masts and the sails were wrecked. By this point the crew was exhausted and would not go on any more. On the 13th they took to their hammocks, and later on the 14th they foundered

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Photo credit: Scott Cornwell

as they ran aground into the sand bars at Aspy Bay in what's now Nova Scotia.

Luc de la Corne was one of seven survivors. The boat foundered and broke up so fast that the others didn't have a chance. He lost 2 of his sons as well as his brother the Chevalier and his two sons. Their entire fortune was sunk in the sand. But Luc de la Corne was tough; even though he was 50 years old he soon had the survivors whipped into shape and burying the dead and fixing up to survive. They recovered whatever washed up. They then set off to find Louisbourg which they thought was just a few miles away. It was only the beginning of the ordeal for de la Corne, luckily he sort of knew his way around and he was friendly with the local Indians who eventually helped him and his party out. Luc de la Corne himself decided not to go to Louisbourg with the others, he decided he'd walk home. And that's just what he did, he walked all the way from the tip of Nova Scotia back to Montreal and began life anew.

He arrived in Montreal on February 24th, 1762. He then had the terrible job of telling all who came to inquire as to what happened to their family members. The British now realized they weren't about to get de la Corne on another boat, so they let him stay. For his part, Luc de la Corne decided to work with the occupation officials and actually towards the end of his life served as a councilor on the Legislative Council. He then married for a third time in 1774, had more daughters, and died at the ripe old age of 73, active to the last.

He never did get his fortune back.

And for the longest time, no one went after it. Over the years, things would wash up. The one thing about the sandy beach at Aspy Bay, is that the sands are constantly shifting, and the sea soon gives up bits and pieces

of what was left there. A lot of people went looking for the wreck, but none ever found it. It was only in the late 1970s that the sands shifted enough to start washing up pieces and fragments. An expedition put on by the Canadian Parks Service finally located the site and began diving on it. The stuff they brought up was pretty interesting to say the least.

The expedition brought up a lot of coins. The coins recovered were a mixture of all types and mints. English coins were found with Spanish and French ones. One thing was that



Luc de la Corne

(image created between 1750–1761)

French Canada was always in short supply of bullion, and the wealth that was lost here represented the wealth of families and generations. The hoard was just that, a hoard of all sorts of coins in all sorts of metals. The newest dates found were 1759, and the oldest was a Charles II guinea dated 1677. Most of the French coins found dated from 1726 and were apparently lightly circulated, indicating that they were probably hoarded.

Now, the coin I have is French; a 1 Ecu dated 1741 minted in Strassbourg. It shows definite signs of water corrosion and is fairly well worn. It would have

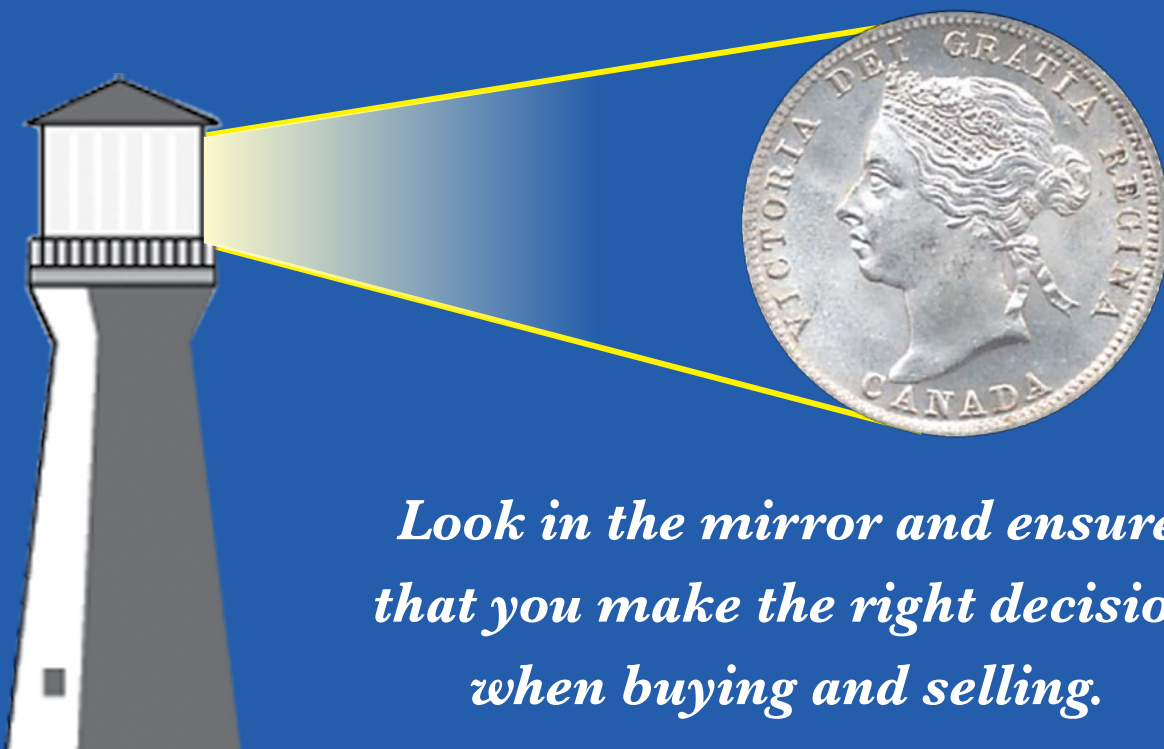
been 20 years old when lost, so it should be about VF. Underneath all the corrosion damage, some of the devices are still there. Overall though, the coin comes up as VG/F. There is some discolouring going on, the coin is trying to tone but comes up in a rainbow of colours. There is some sanding out of the edge; this is wear that would occur if the outer rim was exposed to sanding action caused by tides.

The one thing the locals report is that stuff has been washing up for centuries. Who knows who might have picked this coin up and when? That's the big problem with shipwreck coins, they're only worth something if they have provenance. It makes sense that my coin could conceivably have come off the *Auguste*. But I have no proof. It has been recently brutally cleaned and is still "active", it's starting to oxidize back the way it wants to be. This is one of the hallmarks of a coin that has been in the ground or underwater, it wants to go back to the state of decomposition that it is most "happy" at. I've seen a couple of coins that were known to have been recovered from the *Auguste*, and mine falls in about the middle when it comes to damage and wear.

The human dimension is what makes shipwrecks so sad but fascinating; they offer a brief glimpse back in time. It's as if the clock stood still right at the moment of the disaster. Every now and again some personal article would turn up and remind the reader that this was a tragedy of incredible proportions and real people, mostly innocent ones, died as a result. But what caused the wreck, was it weather, was bad engineering, or was it war? These are all questions that come up every time a shipwreck coin is picked up...who was the last person to touch this and what happened to them?

The seas hold their secrets... if only this coin could talk. ☒

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Money Talk

by Jeff Fournier

Money buys the food we eat, the clothes we wear and the homes we live in. It pays for our schools, hospitals and entertainment. It touches virtually every aspect of our everyday lives. And because of its influence, “money” has also made its way into our language, infiltrating not only our dictionaries of proper English and French, but also our common slang terms and expressions that we use on a daily basis.

We so often use slang terms and expressions relating to money in our language, in fact, that we rarely give them a second thought.

Many of these terms and expressions have been “coined” by ordinary folks to fill the need for a meaningful and simple way of expressing thoughts and feelings. Some have been recent innovations, while others have been used by Canadians for many decades.

To coin a phrase

We Canadians are a colorful lot. We’re not satisfied with the mundane, the ordinary, the blasé. So we’ve tinkered with many things – not the least being our language.

Over the years, a few restless souls must have found that the word “money” wasn’t adequate enough to describe what we use in our everyday economic transactions, so they created new names for it such as “boodle, booty, bread, cabbage, cash, dough, dineros, lettuce, loot, jack, bread and butter and moolah”. To describe great sums of money others thought it best to use “megabucks, big bucks, big money, a king’s ransom, mucho dinero, a nice hunk of change and a pretty penny”. For small amounts of money,



ingenious wordsmiths dabbled and came up with a host of new words to offer something a little more favorable: "peanuts, chicken feed, beer change and small potatoes".

When something had very little worth, a person might profess that it was worthless. To the common Canadian folk, however, this was not enough, so they came up with other expressions such as: "that's not worth a wooden nickel", "it's not worth a plug nickel", "it's not worth two cents" or "ça ne vaut pas les chars".

It seems we Canadians like a good variety in our everyday speech. Perhaps this is why, when we speak of someone who has a lot of money, we don't simply say he's rich; we'd prefer to say "he's filthy rich", "he's rolling in the dough", "he has money to burn", or he's "made of money". French Canadians might say, "Il de l'argent à ne pas savoir qu'en faire".

Similarly, someone who doesn't have a great deal of money "doesn't have two cents to rub together". In fact, one might say she's "flat broke" or as Quebecois say, "Être cassé".

What's a more inventive way to describe something that costs a lot of money? Well, we could say the item is "dear", ("ca coûte

cher" in French) that it "costs an arm and a leg", it "costs a bundle", or maybe "C'est du bacon".

Some people, it seems, are stingy with their money. Most people call this type a "miser", but those of us who prefer something with a little more kick might use terms that are quite blunt such as: "cheap", "penny-pincher", "nickel-nurser", "sucela-cenne", or "avoir le penchant pour la cenne".

Many years ago, money was tight for most Canadians, which is why every child was told "money doesn't grow on trees". Persistence by a child for an item which was simply out of a family's financial reach might result in the parents asking, "do you think we can spit nickels?" or "me prends-tu pour une banque à-pitons?"

In modern times, money has become a little more plentiful – especially for those who've won big in the lotteries. Those people, we might say, have "hit the jackpot". Now they're finally "in the money". Indeed, "their ship has come in!"

Our coins and currency have also been popularized and notarized by slang. Today, Canadians have loonies,

toonies, doubloonies and so forth. In days gone by, having reached in our pockets for change, we might have pulled out a fish scale, a shinplaster, a death dollar, or two bits.

Why would any self-respecting Canadian want to talk about a one dollar, five dollar, ten dollar, 100 dollar or 1000 dollar bill when they could talk about a "buck", "fiver", "ten spot", "C-note" or a "grand"?

These terms are a lot more colorful, and fun.

Words of wisdom have been passed down through generations of Canadians: "A penny saved is a penny earned", "In for a penny, in for a pound", "Find a penny, pick it up, all that day, you'll have good luck" and of course "Money can't buy you love".

Times have changed over the years, and so has our idea of fun. Years ago, we might have played a tune on our penny whistle, while riding our penny-farthing, wearing penny loafers on the way to the penny arcade. If we were lucky, and there was a little mad money left over, we might be treated to an afternoon at the nickelodeon, while Dad read the penny press.

But of course, we all know, money isn't everything. After all, money can't buy happiness.

And on that note, I think I should wrap up this article. I've rambled on enough and, after all, time is money! ☒



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Canadian Retail Coin Prices

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Victoria 50¢	G 4	VG 8	F 12	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	EF 45	AU 50	AU 55	MS 60
1870 no Shmrck no Lcw	790.87	1,603	2,394	3,861	4,836	5,811	6,786	7,761	10,249	15,225	19,969	29,455
1870 with Shmrck no Lcw	790.87	1,603	2,394	3,861	4,836	5,811	6,786	7,761	10,249	15,225	19,969	29,455
1870 with Shmrck & Lcw	41.20	77.71	136.41	252.67	328.87	405.06	481.26	557.46	809.69	1,314	2,695	5,457
1871	58.46	121.86	224.94	529.45	657.15	784.85	912.56	1,040	1,508	2,445	3,941	6,935
1871H	96.41	183.16	347.99	755.85	1,011	1,266	1,522	1,777	2,280	3,285	5,847	10,970
1872H	42.37	84.74	166.10	333.74	421.51	509.29	597.06	684.84	993.47	1,611	2,975	5,705
1872H A/A ReginA	58.83	130.20	208.57	367.79	461.91	556.03	650.16	744.28	1,033	1,609	2,984	5,733
1872H 2/2 in date	58.83	130.20	208.57	367.79	461.91	556.03	650.16	744.28	1,033	1,609	2,984	5,733
1872H A/V in Victoria	248.07	485.06	956.65	1,699	2,677	3,656	4,635	5,614	7,321	10,735	15,908	26,255
1881H	52.75	104.03	186.24	386.97	508.77	630.57	752.36	874.16	1,308	2,177	4,047	7,786
1888	178.16	409.24	618.03	1,258	1,515	1,773	2,030	2,287	3,037	4,536	7,309	12,855
1890H	892.37	1,943	3,242	5,123	6,186	7,250	8,313	9,376	11,485	15,702	21,322	-
1892	60.35	155.09	251.89	509.46	643.79	778.11	912.44	1,047	1,659	2,884	4,622	8,099
1894	348.38	622.61	1,103	2,330	2,707	3,085	3,462	3,840	5,104	7,631	11,348	18,781
1898	59.58	120.20	258.17	570.47	721.54	872.62	1,023.70	1,175	1,873	3,268	6,904	14,174
1899	135.84	317.44	556.77	1,092	1,446	1,799	2,152	2,506	3,518	5,543	9,599	17,710
1900	46.49	86.30	163.18	368.22	477.51	586.79	696.08	805.36	1,236	2,097	3,747	7,047
1901	48.66	115.77	213.09	440.26	569.46	698.65	827.85	957.04	1,418	2,339	4,139	7,739

Edward 50¢	VG 8	F 12	F 16	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	EF 45	AU 50	AU 55	MS 60
1902	34.64	69.04	135.44	201.84	258.86	315.89	372.92	429.94	582.66	888.10	1,189	1,791
1903H	42.57	95.76	174.71	253.66	345.90	438.13	530.37	622.61	734.29	957.65	1,381	2,229
1904	230.71	440.95	622.73	804.51	987.56	1,171	1,354	1,537	1,870	2,536	3,402	5,134
1905	259.24	501.66	824.52	1,147	1,349	1,550	1,752	1,953	2,713	4,232	5,979	9,474
1906	27.88	59.93	114.52	169.11	243.06	317.01	390.96	464.91	604.19	882.75	1,273	2,053
1907	30.84	57.59	105.76	153.92	227.35	300.78	374.21	447.64	564.70	798.83	1,227	2,082
1908	48.99	121.78	216.79	311.80	406.30	500.80	595.29	689.79	788.60	986.23	1,229	1,715
1909	37.59	120.20	219.49	318.79	434.30	549.82	665.33	780.84	1,052	1,595	2,205	3,424
1910 Edwardian Lvs	25.54	49.33	91.44	133.55	205.25	276.96	348.66	420.36	531.91	755.03	1,234	2,191
1910 Victorian Lvs	41.84	79.06	141.88	204.70	317.11	429.53	541.94	654.36	841.23	1,215	1,686	2,629

George V 50¢	VG 8	F 12	F 16	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	EF 45	AU 50	AU 55	MS 60
1911	37.86	125.82	268.92	412.03	517.12	622.21	727.30	832.40	970.20	1,246	1,610	2,339
1912	22.05	43.98	108.29	172.60	232.12	291.64	351.16	410.68	535.47	785.06	1,136	1,836
1913	20.38	53.50	133.59	213.68	268.83	323.99	379.14	434.30	577.12	862.76	1,335	2,279
1914	46.99	97.24	197.50	297.75	436.29	574.83	713.38	851.92	1,214	1,938	2,683	4,174
1916	16.07	29.59	60.28	90.98	129.46	167.94	206.42	244.90	318.24	464.91	618.16	924.65
1917	15.82	27.39	45.57	63.76	94.48	125.20	155.92	186.64	240.93	349.50	490.98	773.94
1918	15.42	25.05	38.61	52.17	78.97	105.78	132.59	159.39	219.23	338.91	456.08	690.44
1919	14.56	25.05	35.91	46.77	74.93	103.08	131.24	159.39	203.45	291.57	406.90	637.58
1920	19.12	30.05	48.41	66.77	107.74	148.70	189.67	230.63	302.23	445.43	580.92	851.89
1921	40,218	49,581	53,067	56,552	58,587	60,623	62,658	64,693	67,888	74,278	76,276	80,272
No 1922 to 1928 50¢	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1929	15.23	29.62	44.49	59.36	90.87	122.38	153.88	185.39	246.86	369.78	506.36	779.51
1931	29.51	50.11	97.71	145.31	219.77	294.22	368.68	443.14	572.27	830.53	995.52	1,325
1932	208.05	327.18	457.21	587.24	780.19	973.15	1,166	1,359	1,838	2,795	3,626	5,288
1934	37.19	57.35	108.37	159.39	217.68	275.96	334.25	392.53	492.75	693.20	835.18	1,119
1936	39.31	68.90	114.98	161.07	208.35	255.64	302.92	350.20	422.98	568.55	675.99	890.86

George VI 50¢	VG 8	F 12	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	AU 50	AU 55	MS 60	MS 62	MS 63
1937	7.52	12.42	17.53	19.32	21.12	22.91	24.71	35.22	42.68	57.59	104.89	128.54
1938	8.28	16.70	28.80	37.81	46.82	55.84	64.85	89.40	118.67	177.21	365.59	459.78
1939	6.96	13.88	20.48	24.25	28.02	31.78	35.55	69.98	86.56	119.73	277.52	356.42
1940	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.54	14.41	15.28	16.15	22.16	29.82	45.15	77.25	93.30
1941	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.65	14.64	15.62	16.61	23.83	31.77	47.66	81.42	98.30
1942	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.65	14.64	15.62	16.61	23.83	31.77	47.66	81.42	98.30
1943 High/Low Near 3	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.65	14.64	15.62	16.61	23.83	32.16	48.83	100.17	125.84
1943 High/Low Mid 3	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.65	14.64	15.62	16.61	23.83	32.16	48.83	100.17	125.84
1943 High/Low Far 3	5.19	8.31	12.67	13.65	14.64	15.62	16.61	23.83	32.16	48.83	100.17	125.84
1943 High/Low Far Dbl 3	9.62	15.42	23.50	25.33	27.16	28.98	30.81	44.20	59.66	90.58	185.81	233.43
1944	5.08	8.31	12.67	13.70	14.74	15.78	16.81	22.16	29.82	45.15	81.70	99.97
1945	5.25	8.98	13.51	14.58	15.65	16.72	17.79	23.94	32.18	48.66	94.52	117.45
1946	5.19	8.89	18.41	20.33	22.24	24.15	26.07	42.61	58.05	88.93	169.46	209.73
1946 Hoof in 6	36.65	52.36	90.57	133.12	175.67	218.22	260.77	592.05	1,104	2,129	3,165	3,684
1947 Long 7 left	5.42	10.84	16.87	19.76	22.65	25.54	28.43	54.13	68.86	98.31	246.41	320.46
1947 Short 7 right	6.29	17.97	28.07	31.70	35.34	38.97	42.61	75.13	99.82	149.22	303.21	380.21
1947 ML Long 7 left	35.18	60.40	80.54	97.31	114.09	130.87	147.65	201.34	248.49	342.80	494.58	570.47
1947 ML Shrt 7 right	1,505	2,039	2,458	2,732	3,005	3,279	3,552	4,588	5,443	7,153	10,564	12,270
1948	125.86	188.80	214.76	228.19	241.61	255.03	268.45	335.57	369.12	436.24	525.72	570.47
1949	5.37	9.32	13.79	14.82	15.85	16.88	17.90	26.73	40.60	68.36	145.83	184.56
1949 Hoof over 9	18.81	27.59	52.34	65.36	78.38	91.40	104.42	244.98	370.26	620.80	1,191	1,476
1950 Design in 0	5.37	7.11	12.56	14.45	16.33	18.22	20.10	26.18	29.15	35.09	50.29	57.90
1950 Half Design in 0	7.15	10.74	13.67	15.97	18.27	20.57	22.88	28.86	38.06	56.46	79.95	91.69
1950 No Design in 0	16.04	25.06	28.38	33.39	38.40	43.41	48.41	89.11	122.90	190.49	269.09	308.39
1951	5.37	7.11	9.22	11.05	12.88	14.71	16.54	20.05	22.06	26.07	35.04	39.53
1952	5.37	7.11	9.22	11.05	12.88	14.71	16.54	20.05	22.06	26.07	35.04	39.53

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DTS AVERAGE • 50¢ COIN RETAIL PRICES

Elizabeth II 50¢	VG 8	F 12	VF 20	VF 30	EF 40	AU 50	MS 60	MS 61	MS 62	MS 63	MS 64	MS 65
1953 NSF Small date	5.03	6.03	7.27	9.61	11.96	15.69	19.37	21.81	24.26	26.71	48.41	250.41
1953 NSF Large date	8.02	10.03	14.02	18.36	22.70	50.69	101.13	150.33	199.54	248.75	733.88	-
1953 SF Large date	6.02	7.02	8.02	11.52	15.03	21.11	30.05	39.47	48.90	58.32	136.17	803.00
1954	5.53	6.28	7.40	12.30	17.20	20.03	35.04	42.55	50.06	57.57	100.12	375.21
1955	5.53	6.28	7.33	10.67	14.01	16.93	21.12	26.32	31.52	36.72	83.51	378.83
1956	5.03	5.78	6.65	8.83	11.01	15.38	18.15	19.92	21.69	23.46	78.50	393.82
1957	5.03	5.78	6.65	8.08	9.50	12.59	15.36	17.73	20.09	22.46	38.40	178.80
1958	5.03	5.78	6.65	8.08	9.50	12.59	15.36	17.56	19.76	21.96	38.40	210.41
1958 Dot	12.03	13.53	15.16	16.35	17.54	20.05	25.06	30.58	36.09	41.60	99.45	298.24
1959	5.03	5.78	6.65	7.95	9.25	11.37	13.14	15.16	17.18	19.20	35.89	193.10
1960	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.40	14.24	16.07	30.26	170.61
1961	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.40	14.24	16.07	27.76	148.53
1962	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	89.17
1963	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	127.16
1964	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	102.58
1965	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	86.68
1966	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	126.16
1967	4.52	5.03	5.53	6.03	6.53	7.04	10.57	12.05	13.53	15.02	25.03	117.90
1968	0.75	1.01	1.26	1.51	1.76	2.01	2.25	3.34	4.42	5.51	16.27	85.11
1969	0.75	1.01	1.26	1.51	1.76	2.01	2.25	3.34	4.42	5.51	16.27	85.11
1970 thru 1979	0.65	0.90	1.16	1.41	1.66	1.91	2.15	3.27	4.39	5.51	13.77	78.10
1978 Round Jewels	2.51	3.02	3.52	4.02	4.52	5.03	6.57	8.55	10.53	12.52	25.03	82.58
1980 thru 1989	0.65	0.90	1.16	1.41	1.66	1.91	2.15	3.27	4.39	5.51	12.52	44.43
1982 Flat Bust	7.54	12.56	17.59	21.95	26.32	32.58	41.74	47.86	53.98	60.10	97.50	204.01
1990 thru 1999	0.65	0.90	1.16	1.41	1.66	1.91	2.15	3.27	4.39	5.51	12.52	41.18
2000 thru 2009	0.65	0.90	1.16	1.41	1.66	1.91	2.15	2.77	3.39	4.01	9.01	31.29
2010 thru 2016	0.65	0.90	1.16	1.41	1.66	1.91	2.15	2.58	3.01	3.44	8.39	21.28



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DTS AVERAGE • \$1 & \$2 COIN RETAIL PRICES

George V \$1	VG 8	F 12	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	AU 50	AU 55	MS 60	MS 62	MS 63
1935	14.43	23.74	33.29	35.65	38.02	40.38	42.74	52.63	61.87	73.86	85.84	97.83
1936	14.43	23.74	33.29	35.65	38.02	40.38	42.74	52.63	62.71	87.11	111.51	135.90
1936 Dot Obv King	1,414	2,327	3,263	3,494	3,725	3,957	4,188	5,158	6,145	8,536	10,928	13,319

George VI \$1	F 12	F 16	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	AU 50	MS 60	MS 61	MS 62	MS 63
1937	28.14	30.15	32.16	33.17	34.17	35.18	36.18	40.10	50.13	71.37	92.62	113.87
1938	45.30	55.37	65.44	70.89	76.34	81.79	87.25	107.86	144.29	208.05	271.81	335.57
1939	12.56	13.72	14.88	15.76	16.63	17.50	18.37	21.94	27.73	33.03	38.32	43.62
no 1940 to 1944	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1945	140.59	180.26	219.93	235.24	250.55	265.86	281.17	335.19	429.38	611.97	794.56	977.14
1946	30.18	38.04	45.91	51.83	57.75	63.67	69.60	89.08	139.26	247.79	356.32	464.86
1947 Blunt 7	76.43	96.94	117.45	128.77	140.10	151.42	162.75	192.95	229.86	332.34	434.81	537.29
1947 Pointed 7	101.64	126.90	152.17	164.67	177.17	189.67	202.17	268.86	436.49	944.61	1,453	1,961
1947 Maple Leaf	167.78	197.21	226.64	245.54	264.45	283.36	302.27	379.72	454.52	624.52	794.52	964.53
1948	886.27	1,028	1,169	1,219	1,269	1,320	1,370	1,527	1,822	2,248	2,675	3,101
1949	14.43	18.91	23.38	24.36	25.33	26.31	27.28	32.29	37.73	39.48	41.24	42.99
1950	12.53	16.79	21.05	22.43	23.81	25.19	26.57	30.58	34.52	45.97	57.42	68.87
1951	12.53	13.98	15.42	16.72	18.01	19.30	20.60	24.61	27.29	33.79	40.28	46.77
1952	12.53	13.74	14.95	15.74	16.54	17.33	18.12	24.72	27.71	34.23	40.74	47.25
1952 no waterlines	13.76	16.23	18.71	19.58	20.45	21.33	22.20	27.84	33.72	45.16	56.60	68.03

Elizabeth II \$1	F 12	F 16	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	AU 50	MS 60	MS 61	MS 62	MS 63
1953 NSF	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.93	17.75	18.57	19.40	25.25	32.96	35.24	37.52	39.80
1953 SF	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.93	17.75	18.57	19.40	25.25	32.96	34.74	36.52	38.30
1954	13.76	16.41	19.06	20.70	22.33	23.97	25.61	30.18	38.31	42.57	46.82	51.08
1955	13.76	15.91	18.06	19.78	21.50	23.22	24.94	28.38	38.31	47.15	55.99	64.83
1956	13.76	17.66	21.57	22.66	23.75	24.85	25.94	30.84	40.73	52.19	63.64	75.09
1957	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	25.25	31.96	33.55	35.14	36.72
1958	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	24.75	31.96	33.55	35.14	36.72
1959	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	21.74	28.62	29.01	29.40	29.78
1960	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1961	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1962	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1963	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1964	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1965	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1966	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1967	13.76	14.93	16.11	16.78	17.45	18.12	18.79	20.24	23.21	24.82	26.43	28.03
1968	1.51	1.63	1.76	1.88	2.01	2.14	2.26	3.52	4.52	7.91	11.29	14.67
1969	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.51	3.52	5.70	7.87	10.05
1970 thru 1979	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.26	3.27	4.69	6.11	7.54
1974 Double Yoke	20.10	25.13	30.15	35.18	40.20	45.23	50.25	65.16	90.23	107.45	124.68	141.90
1980 thru 1989	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.26	3.27	4.69	6.11	7.54
1990 thru 1999	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.01	3.02	3.69	4.36	5.03
2000 thru 2009	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.01	3.02	3.69	4.36	5.03
2010 thru 2016	1.01	1.13	1.26	1.38	1.51	1.63	1.76	2.01	3.02	3.69	4.36	5.03

Elizabeth II \$2	F 12	F 16	VF 20	VF 25	VF 30	VF 35	EF 40	AU 50	MS 60	MS 61	MS 62	MS 63
1996 thru 1999	2.01	2.14	2.26	2.39	2.51	2.64	2.76	3.02	4.02	5.19	6.37	7.54
2000 thru 2009	2.01	2.14	2.26	2.39	2.51	2.64	2.76	3.02	3.77	4.69	5.61	6.53
2002 dot in H	10.05	11.31	12.56	13.82	15.08	16.33	17.59	20.10	25.13	28.48	31.83	35.18
2010 thru 2016	2.01	2.14	2.26	2.39	2.51	2.64	2.76	3.02	3.52	4.36	5.19	6.03

The Awful Fate of Dionysos

Age and Alcohol Ravage the God of Partying and Wild Ways

by **Wayne Hansen**



Head of God Dionysos Wreathed With Ivy

A Three-Tetradrachm Chronological Portrait (circa 150–80 BC)

The word ‘wonder’ implies a certain mystical fascination. We have just returned from our great 2017 full solar eclipse expedition to Idaho, which created a good amount of wonder and mystical fascination in its own right. While on the trip, my wife spotted a small item in a humor book describing what cows wonder about: will Farmer Fred have cold hands today, when will my friends that Farmer Fred put on the truck be back, what are boots made of, what happened to all those bugs that were in the grass I ate, etc. Just normal cow-wondering stuff. That kind of cow-wonder is obviously different from eclipse wonder because it enquires about the unknown. Well, ancient coin collectors also need a sense of wonder – both the tingly wonder of utter (no, not udder) amazement, as with the eclipse, and the questioning wonder of enquiry, as with the cow. For the collector, the tingly wonder would come first, depending how much of an impression each coin makes on first viewing. Then the collector’s enquiring wonder would kick in to assess the coin’s quality and explore its historical context. Without quality, a coin is a slug, and without context, a coin is an anonymous orphan. I can say unreservedly that all three of this article’s featured coins not only elicited the initial tingly sense of wonder we expect from a quality coin, but they also prompted a full exploration of context.

OK, on the context thing, only the good coins are worth a lot of enquiring effort, and ancient specimens generally come from a sparse background, so you are partly off the hook. For the important ones, you will have to piece together relevant mint sites and historical detail as best you can. However quality is another thing. Quality can be quickly assessed in a glance – the fineness of the design and style, the centeredness of the strike,

the soundness of the metal, the preservation of the surface, the amount of detail versus wear, etc. In this article, the featured coins of Dionysos come from a narrow period of late Greek coin production, so you might think they would teach us very little. *Au contraire*, I think they are fascinating not only because they present a distinct 'degradation' of style for the same subject god over a short time, but because they illustrate the

tremendous importance of character to the design quality of an ancient coin. Though often not well appreciated, character and uniqueness can set a coin apart artistically and add an immeasurable attractiveness to a coin's appearance. In short, I would pay more for a coin that offers an appropriate amount of character in place of pristine cookie-cutter sameness, even if the result may verge on artistic crudity.



Historical Perspective

The late, spread flan Dionysos coins featured in this article were minted in ancient Thrace, which stretched north from Macedon and Byzantion to the Balkan mountains, covering a large territory west of the Black Sea. The city of Maroneia and the island city-state of Thasos (both involved in minting these Dionysos portrait coinages) were on its southern edge. The region of Thrace was not named by its original, disparate, tribal inhabitants – it was named by the Greeks for the mix of indigenous and Indo-European tribes who spoke the Thracian language (the Greeks thought Thrax, the son of the war god Ares, lived in Thrace, and the Iliad told them that Thracians were allied with Troy against the Greeks in the Trojan War). Thracians were seen as warlike and ferocious, using horses and javelins particularly well. The Greeks considered Thracians rural barbarians, although they had developed industry and arts. Like the Celtic and Slavic tribes, they did not pursue a unified identity or build cities, preferring to settle in small, fortified villages. In the 8th century BC, the Greeks began establishing colonial city-states along certain coastal sections

of Thrace, including Maroneia, Thasos, Byzantion and areas farther north. These Greek city-states began minting their own classical coinages in the late 5th century BC using the abundance of natural silver available from Thracian mines.

The Persians invaded and subjugated Scythia, Thrace, Paeonia and Macedon in 513 BC, forcing them to assist in the invasion of Greece in 480 BC (this was reciprocated when Alexander III used Thracian mercenaries to help conquer Persia late in the next century). With the defeat of the Persians by the Greek cities, the Thracians developed a small kingdom, but it was overtaken by the expansion of the Macedonian Empire under Philip II in the mid 4th century BC, which eventually became a vassal state under subsequent Macedonian rulers. Celtic Gauls invaded in 279 BC, but most were later forced out. During the Macedonian Wars against Rome, Thracian tribal power increased, but rule passed to Rome after Perseus of Macedon (the last Macedonian king) was defeated at the Battle of Pydna in 168 BC. There were a few brief revolts subsequently, but Thrace soon became a permanent Roman

client state divided into two provinces – Thracia and Lower Moesia.

The Greek city of Maroneia, focus of the coinage discussed below, was supposedly named after Maron, a son of Dionysos. It was founded by Greek colonists from Chios in the first half of the 6th century BC, on a hill beside the Aegean that had been occupied by a much older Thracian settlement. Maroneia was the most important of the Greek colonies in western Thrace because of its rich soil and excellent port. It was famous for its vineyards and its wine that had the scent of nectar. Its people worshipped Dionysos and built a sanctuary for him, the foundations of which are still visible. In 200 BC, before the Macedonian Wars, Philip V took the city and slaughtered many of its inhabitants. After the Macedonian defeat in 168 BC, the Roman Republic gave the city to Attalos of Pergamon but then rescinded the decree and granted the city its freedom along with increased territory. This action, together with other new privileges and the development of a network of rural settlements, created even more prosperity for the city, which in turn prompted the

extraordinary minting of the new, large Dionysos tetradrachms in the mid 2nd century BC. A similar scenario played out in nearby Thasos, which issued a similar, contemporary coinage.

To complete this historical perspective, it should be noted that Rome likely exerted greater control over these Greco-Thracian cities in later decades. With its aggressive expansion into Asia Minor, then farther into the Seleukid and Ptolemaic kingdoms, it needed conscripts and manpower. Coinage may have been a means to support recruitment, even specifically to fund the long-standing Thracian slave trade. While Maroneia and Thasos first developed their own legitimate coinage in a period of autonomy (see Figures 4 and 5), it is surmised that Rome

eventually took over the mints in order to strike massive numbers of the same coins for slave payments into the 1st century BC. This would account for the significant deterioration in artistic quality, die preparation and production standards over that period – more so in Thasos than Maroneia, where fewer degraded coins are found. This explanation could also be extended to the advent of Thracian tribal imitative coinages (as in Figure 6). Certain Thraco-Macedonian tribes such as the Bisalti, Orreskoi and Derrones, had previously struck regular and very large denomination silver coins around 480–470 BC, soon after the Persian occupancy (see my article 'Two Staters of Archelaos and the Emerging Macedonian Kingdom', *The Planchet*, April 2012 for

photos of several examples). Under this slave/mercenary payment scenario, Rome would have pressed some of the indigenous tribes to mint their imitative silver tetradrachms, either alongside Maroneia and Thasos, or after both legitimate Greek mints had stopped production (the latter, if we assume that Thracian tribes minted all of the poor quality/totally corrupted Thasian imitations). Obviously, the situation is not clear, but the probable link to Roman expansion and the slave trade is intriguing. Whether for the slave trade or not, the tribes employed their own interpreted designs on their coins based on the Thasos model - it apparently didn't matter what the coins actually looked like for inter-tribal or extra-tribal exchange.

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Figure 1 – Map Showing Location of Dionysos Mint Locations



Figure 1 – This map identifies cities where the most iconic Dionysos precious coinage, particularly portrait coinage, was minted. Several of these mints struck beautiful Dionysos coins in the classical era, around the 5th-4th century BC, but it was in the Thracian area north of the Aegean Sea where the 2nd century BC portrait coins featured in this article were struck (see the ‘Survey of Dionysos Portrait Coinages’ section below). My two highlighted, late period Dionysos portrait tetradrachms came from the Thracian Greek city-state of Maroneia, while the third, imitative portrait tetradrachm came from an unknown Thracian tribal location. Ancient Thrace was a vast area stretching from the northern border of Macedon to the entire west side of the Black Sea. Celtic tribes may also have struck imitative Greek tetradrachms in parts of this territory around the 3rd century BC, likely in the mid to lower reaches of the Danube River. On the map, Naxos and Nagidos look like outliers for Dionysos worshipping, but both had been colonized from Aegean cities, and both had a grape industry. As well, it has been suggested that the Dionysos of Nagidos was a Hellenized substitute for the eastern fertility god Baal.



Who Was Dionysos?

Dionysos was the Greek god of wine, the grape harvest, fertility, madness, wild frenzy, religious ecstasy and theater, along with the protector of trees. Since wine was important to Greeks, he figured prominently in its worship and consumption. Minoans and Mycenaean Greeks may have had similar cult-like followings from the 15th century BC, but his later Greek origin may have been connected more with Thrace or Asia. Regardless, his influence increasingly took hold in Greek and Thracian areas by the 7th century BC. He was ultimately added to the pantheon of Olympian gods – the twelfth and last of them, and the only one from a mortal mother. He had an unusual birth, son of princess Semele, the daughter of king Kadmos of Thebes and the god Zeus who had taken a human form for the purpose. Zeus's wife, Hera, discovered his dalliance but put on a disguise and tried to convince Semele that it couldn't be true. Semele, against Zeus's advice, then forced Zeus to reveal himself as a god, but she died when he came to her in a tumult of fiery lightning bolts. Zeus rescued the unborn Dionysos and sewed him into his thigh until he could be born the second time on the island of Ikaria. Since Dionysos was related to Zeus, he was the half-sibling, grandson or great-grandson to many of the greater and lesser gods in the Olympian firmament.

In 5th–4th century works, Dionysos is generally depicted as clothed and bearded, but later he tends to be seen nude and beardless (as in Figure 2), which coincides with his generally more effeminate demeanor. Images of the cult of Dionysos often show him accompanied by a troupe of satyrs and nymphs (later the nymphs became maenads – female devotees/demonic creatures who hunted for victims



Dionysos riding a Leopard and holding a Thyrsos

Pebble Mosaic – House of Dionysos, Pella – late 4th century BC
(Courtesy Wikimedia Commons)

in the forest and ate their raw flesh). His symbols included the bull, snake, leopard, panther, ivy, drinking cup, grapes, grapevines, figs and the thyrsos (a staff of giant fennel wrapped with ivy vines and topped with a pine cone), plus he was strongly associated with centaurs as well as satyrs. Many depictions show him riding in a chariot pulled by panthers. The bull linked him to a myth where he is slaughtered as a bull calf and eaten by Titans. The snake is related to his association with the phallus and fertility.

Most of the wild traditions related to the worship of Dionysos arose quite late in mythical development – that is, after the Homeric Poems where he is little mentioned as a divinity. His fame

spread along with the increased cultivation of grapes, where he was presented more as a power of nature rather than a moral authority. The wild, orgiastic excesses of his followers seem to have begun in Thrace and then migrated south to Delphi and Thebes, to the island of Naxos, to the rest of Greece including Athens, then to Sicily and Italy. In his festivals and rituals, the participants were overtaken by a frenzy of dancing and intoxication, reaching a transcendent state. This is thought to have incidentally led to the development of Greek theater. Actual sacrifice may have been practiced in earlier times – although humans were mentioned, the most likely animal would have been a ram followed by more symbolic offerings.

Figure 2 – Dionysos Sculptures



Figure 2 – I found these two sculptures of Dionysos at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek museum in Copenhagen. Both explore the nude, effeminate side of the god in a bold attempt to cloak his primitive origins. We can immediately tell that each is Dionysos from his elaborate wreath of ivy leaves. The more elaborate composition on the left is like a Michelin Guide to the symbols of Dionysos. In addition to the ivy wreath, it includes his remarkably sturdy thyrsos (a pine cone topped staff) and two of his usual creature side-kicks: a goat-legged satyr and a rather unassuming leopard. Here we can appreciate the imposing size of the god compared to his companions, and, based on the relatively small size of the leopard/panther, we can also imagine how unimpressive a regular human would look in comparison. In addition, it is apparent from the abbreviated state of their genitals, that neither Dionysos nor the satyr was able to reproduce.

(Photos by the author.)

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Survey of Dionysos Portrait Coinages

Here is a short, perhaps incomplete, survey of Greek coins bearing the Dionysos image. Being a later addition to the Greek pantheon, Dionysos was not revered as widely or as early as the main Greek gods. His adulation was centered primarily in Thrace, Greece, western Asia Minor and parts of the Black Sea. These were regions where industry tended to revolve around wine production, so many of their coins incorporated images of Dionysos, his satyr companion, bunches of grapes and/or grape vines. Ironically, however, the most magnificent example of Dionysos coinage was issued rather early in Naxos, Sicily, around 460 BC. That Sicilian Greek colony had access to volcanic soils, became rich on the wine trade and issued fine coins in several silver denominations. Its most famous, rare and expensive tetradrachm featured a Dionysos portrait on its obverse and his chronically drunk, artistically drawn, ithyphallic satyr companion, Silenos, on its reverse (Dionysos can always be identified by his wreath of ivy leaves). Other larger, desirable Dionysos classical denominations included a tetradrachm struck on the island of Thasos in Thrace, circa 350 BC; a stater from Thebes in Greece proper, circa 426–395 BC; and another stater from Nagidos in Cilicia, circa 380 BC. The Thasos tetradrachm displayed a classically splendid profile of Dionysos on its obverse and an equally splendid crouching Herakles drawing a bow on its reverse, while Nagidos paired a Dionysos portrait with a head of Aphrodite. Thebes placed the Dionysos portrait on the reverse instead, since the city's shield is always the most prominent civic symbol. Again, all of these lovely classical silver coins are seldom seen in the market, and they are very pricey.

Various other Dionysos precious metal coins were also struck largely in the mid-classical period, from the late 5th to late 4th centuries BC. Kyzikos in Mysia minted a little-known, full electrum stater with a punch reverse; Herakleia Pontika in Bithynia minted a silver didrachm portrait coin; Mytilene, on the island of Lesbos, issued electrum hektes with an obverse head of Dionysos and reverse facing head of Silenos; while Phokaia in Ionia did a similar hekte but substituted its trademark punch on the reverse. Virtually all of the early portraits depict a bearded Dionysos. A few examples of the aforementioned classical portrait coins are shown in Figure 3.

Otherwise, the greatest number of late silver Dionysos coins were struck by the featured mint of Maroneia and its sister mint in Thasos during the 2nd to 1st centuries BC.

Of the two mints, the less common, spread flan portraits of Dionysos at Maroneia were more austere in appearance, but they were also more dramatic and accomplished. My two late issue Maroneia coins are shown in Figures 4 and 5. Issues at Thasos (not covered in this article) were more relaxed in appearance and more plentiful, but they seem to be predominantly from a later, mass produced period where quality was not important. All of the late coins show a clean-shaven Dionysos.

In addition to the precious, silver and electrum, coins of Dionysos, there were also a few mid to late period bronze denominations from known cities in Thessaly, plus a respectable, large bronze portrait coin from remote Pantikapaion. Various other late bronzes show a standing Dionysos as a secondary figure on coin reverses.

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Figure 3 – Early Dionysos Portrait Coins



Top: Naxos Tetradrachm, 460 BC, 17.25g; Thasos Tetradrachm, 390–335 BC, 15.28g.

Middle: Nagidos Stater, 380 BC, 10.37g; Thebes Stater, 426–395 BC, 12.16g.

Bottom: Kyzikos EL Stater, 450–330 BC, 16.01g; Mytilene EL Hekte, 377–326 BC, 2.55g.

(Photos courtesy: Top – Numismatica Ars Classica, Classical Numismatic Group; Middle – Gorney & Mosch, Gerhard Hirsh Nachfolger; Bottom – Roma Numismatics, Classical Numismatic Group.)

Figure 3 – These are examples of the most important Dionysos coinages that preceded the late tetradrachms discussed later in this article. They were struck in Sicily, Greece, Thrace and Asia Minor – places tied to grape production. Some mints, also including classical Maroneia, struck related issues that incorporated grape bunches or grape vines without showing Dionysos directly. Most early portraits show a bearded Dionysos, changing to beardless in later issues. These pictured coins were highly styled, classical, city-state issues with few dies and limited striking, so they are generally rare and not often found in public offerings. However, many of the hektes have become more common lately, since a vast collection of randomly accumulated electrum has recently appeared.

Another angle to the Dionysos story can be found in the use of Silenos, one of his satyr companions, on Greek coinages. The satyr image is always popular since he is usually found in a blatantly naked, full-frontal position. For many decades, Pantikapaion in the northern Black Sea, struck multiple gold, silver and bronze denominations featuring a satyr head. Katana in Sicily issued a small, scarce, silver litra coin in the late 400s

BC, whose obverse only showed the head of Silenos, including an ivy wreath, with a winged thunderbolt on its reverse. Siris in Thraco-Macedon struck silver staters and smaller coins with a crouching satyr or a satyr abducting a nymph; while Kyzikos, in Mysia, struck a seated satyr stater and a couple of satyr-type hektes in electrum, as did nearby Phokaia. The other major location for Silenos-type coinage was, of course, 'Thasos'


in the 510–470 BC period, which is generally credited with the well-known series of satyr-carrying-nymph staters. However, these popular coins may not be from the same island settlement of Thasos that struck the much later Dionysos spread tetradrachms discussed in this article – they might instead have been struck by an unidentified Thracian tribal group on the adjacent mainland. Silenos will be the subject of a future article.



Three Special Portraits


It is to our benefit that mints in the Thracian region of northern Greece decided to strike large silver coins to honor god Dionysos starting in the mid 2nd century BC. Portraits of that god were usually struck in a fairly straightforward manner, particularly at the late-period Thracian Greek mints of Maroneia and Thasos, but I have acquired two atypical ones from Maroneia that show starkly contrasting interpretations (Figures 4 and 5 below). The differences are so telling that they lead us to a greater insight into the true nature of the god and his essence. The third Dionysos coin (Figure 6) was minted by an unknown local Thracian tribe intending to replicate the typical Maroneia/Thasos coinage, but

by garbling the original artistic and production values of those earlier issues, they unintentionally revealed even more of the depraved qualities of Dionysos and his rural adherents. The three tetradrachms described below together form a chronological portrait of an obviously aging god, revealing in the second coin the focused zeal and oppression which drove his fanatical cult; then revealing in the unnatural, degenerated image of his third coin a deterioration of his character and sacred ideals. As such, the three portraits are a kind of metaphor for the changing perception of this imperfect god within the region that worshipped him. The explicit depiction of this transition on coinage is quite remarkable.



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Figure 4 – Young Dionysos of Maroneia



Maroneia Tetradrachm – mid 2nd to early 1st century BC

Obv: Head of young Dionysos wreathed with ivy; ΩZ signature at front of wreath.

Rev: Dionysos standing holding bunch of grapes; ΜΑΡΩΝΙΤΩΝ below.

Data: 15.41g, 35.0 mm, 12h. Mint: Maroneia, Thrace.

Acquired: Classical Numismatic Group Web Auction (30 July 2001).

(Collection of the author and photo by the author.)

Figure 4 – I bought this coin in July 2001, my first Maroneia tetradrachm. I thought it was quite special because Dionysos portrait coins are uncommon in better grades and finer styles. This one also has a very wide, 35-mm flan and great metal quality – it is basically as struck with no corrosion. Its only flaw is that it was under-struck, meaning there was not enough metal in the pre-flattened flan to fill the high points of both obverse and reverse upon striking (the same problem encountered at other mints with thin flans, only partly overcome in late 6th century south Italy when using an incuse reverse die). The dies used for this coin were early in the series, marked by a very young, pleasant, adolescent version of the Dionysos portrait. The portrait is delicate and plainly carved, with minimal sculpturing and detail. There is, however, a celator signature reading as ΩZ or ΩN partly hidden between the rosettes of the obverse wreath. An artist signature is a highly unusual feature on any Greek coinage, and I have not seen another on Maroneia portrait dies, so this one may be unique to the whole series. There have been two or three other coins with this obverse die for sale over the years, including one with a better strike a few months before I bought this one (CNG M/B 57, lot 252 in April 2001).

Figure 5 – Mature Dionysos of Maroneia



Maroneia Tetradrachm – mid 2nd to early 1st century BC

Obv: Head of mature Dionysos wreathed with ivy.

Rev: Dionysos standing holding bunch of grapes; MAPQNITQN below.

Data: 15.81g, 32.4x31.6 mm, 12h. Mint: Maroneia, Thrace.

Acquired: Ancient Auction House, eBay (14 January 2005).

(Collection of the author and photo by the author.)

Figure 5 – Here we have a similar coin to the Figure 4 issue in many ways. This flan is slightly smaller, and the surfaces are less fresh, but the fabric and iconography are the same. This coin was also likely struck in roughly the same, fairly brief period as the foregoing version. However, with large quantities of this Maroneia coinage being produced, multiple dies would have been made, and, judging by the references, most tended to provide a rather mature and stern-faced interpretation of the Dionysos portrait. It was as if succeeding dies incurred the burden of advancing age. I realized, however, that this particular coin was special as soon as I saw it. It is very well centered and struck, and the obverse features are deeply incised into the die. The normal sternness present on other such coins took on a forcefulness and character on this one. The head and wreath are drawn very boldly, including strongly defined hair, ivy leaves and nose, but in addition, the die manages to give Dionysos a lively, cognizant expression. Not only was it a knowing

expression, but I saw it immediately as verging on maniacal. This fit perfectly with the nature and reputation of the god as controlling and possessed. I saw the coin as a rather exceptional artwork. It was offered by a little-known, now long defunct, eBay dealer who specialized in batches of reasonably common, hoard type coins which often included items from Maroneia and its sister Dionysos mint in Thasos. Soon after winning this one, he offered another with the same obverse die but only less completely struck around the neck. I got the second one as well, but sold it to another collector the following month. Both coins showed evidence of a vertical die break at the edge of the mouth plus various squiggly breaks or previous surface damage in front of the face, all present on the original die during striking. This coin also displays a lamination flaw near the bottom of the nose, where a surface flake of metal became partly detached during striking or later – not a serious problem given the overall boldness and relevance of the obverse image.

Figure 6 – Decrepit Dionysos of Thracian Tribe (Imitating Thasos)



Thracian Tetradrachm Imitating Thasos – late 2nd to early 1st century BC

Obv: Devolved head of Dionysos with jutting jaw; wreathed with pellets.

Rev: Abstract Herakles crowned with dots; abstract dotted legend.

Data: 15.75 g, 37.30 mm, 9h. Mint: Thracian Tribe.

Inventory: Art Ancient, London (Spring 2017). (Photo courtesy Art Ancient.)

Figure 6 – I must admit, I was really taken with this coin when I first saw it on the Art Ancient website. There are many other tribal versions of the Dionysos image, but this one was unique and over the top for sheer bravado – a primitively artistic tour de force with a Picasso-esque nod. It is an obvious copy of the main Dionysos types, but at the same time it is an absolutely inspired original. With limited tools and skills, the carver did the best he could when the die metal was hard, and something ‘close’ to the original was good enough. I wanted to buy it, but the price was a little high, especially when I found it had been sold at auction for about half the price a few months earlier (always a turn off). It was also a bit out of my collecting zone. Anyway, I didn’t act until I noticed it again on the dealer’s VCoins site recently, but it was too late since they had already sold it on their main site. I had thought it was an eastern Celtic tribal issue, but the seller attributed it to a Thracian tribe, which makes sense (I discovered that Thracians were not Celtic from my recent ‘Celtic Gold’ article investigation). The flan of this coin is irregular and rough, but the coin’s weight is the same as mainstream Maroneia and Thasos examples. This seems to confirm that either they were probably struck for a related authority, or they were over-struck on one of the official Maroneia or Thasos coins. It is hard to say whether they were made contemporarily or some decades later when the Romans were controlling all coin production and trade activities in the area. Regardless, this tribal type is fascinating. It may only be a coincidence that this obverse image reflects the day-after, party style of the raucous god of wine and carefree ways, but the result certainly seems appropriate. This coin teaches us that life is full of consequences. I can tell that you want one too.



Full Comparison

Here is a full comparison of the three coin images to scale. The Thracian coin is certainly a standout for its size and

startling portrait interpretation. Each portrait appears larger and more distinctive through the progression. Taken together,

these coins are a remarkable testament to the ingenuity of 'Greek' die carvers in the late/post Hellenistic period.

Figure 7 – Evolution of Obverse/Reverse Designs to Scale



In Closing...

I have found that prettiness, fine strike and good details only take you so far when considering the quality of an ancient coin. For archaic coins, you also need a solid, nicely carved and interesting rendition of a civic badge or dynastic symbol. Classical and Hellenistic coins are more nuanced, often employing decorative figures, heads of gods or portraits of real people. The quality of these coins is largely based on the talent of the die carvers in terms of the style and character of the finished product. The large and powerful Greek minting cities could afford to hire experienced and capable celators, which in

turn boosted the quality and consistency of the coins those cities produced. Since quality is timeless, high quality coins back then are still high quality today.

This article highlights the role that character plays in the quality of a coin. Flawless, artistically virginal and plainly executed designs are only so attractive. Give me a coin with character every time. Of the three coins featured above, the first is of the artistically virginal type – a cute rendition of young god Dionysos from a city and a celator that may have been fairly new to such representations. Neither

wanted to besmirch the image of a civic deity. The latter two tetradrachms are dramatically different however. The middle portrait was created slightly later in the same city, among a whole series of new, more mature Dionysos dies, while the last coin leaves all conventions in the dust. Both of the latter coins overflow with star quality because they provide interesting, quirky interpretations of a usual coin design, and also because they convey a wondrous sense of Dionysos as a real portrait subject. It's impossible for coins with this much quality and character to be boring.



Addendum – A Standing Dionysos Coin from Nagidos

Here is a different view of the wine god, Dionysos. The following stater, minted just after 400 BC, is from the Greek Cilician city of Nagidos, a colony of Samos. I acquired it very early in my collecting career, a few years after a bright new hoard of these coins was being dispersed (the NFA XXXIII catalogue from Spring 1994 listed 28 of these among several hoard groupings, but mine wasn't there). The reverse shows a standing, partially robed, Dionysos holding both a bunch of grapes and a thrysos (both symbols of the god). It was struck just before the Nagidos portrait coin seen in my survey of Dionysos coins. They both share the same classical fabric, but the style of this one is definitely a restrained mid-classical, somewhat eastern in composition, while the portrait coin is veering into

late classical. My coin is actually a nicely concocted, solidly presented stater from a prime, definitively city-state era. It contains interesting subject material, including two main deities, as well as a winged Eros – the son of Aphrodite and god of sexual attraction! Like the portrait version in Figure 3, row 2, it features Dionysos and goddess Aphrodite, but here they are drawn as full figures in active poses. It provides a view of Aphrodite making an offering over an altar with the god Eros crowning her, plus we see Dionysos displaying his main godly symbols. The NFA commentary in the above-noted catalogue suggested that Aphrodite and Dionysos were Hellenized equivalents of the 'oriental' fertility gods Astarte/Ishtar and Baal ('oriental' meaning the eastern gods of Persia and

the Levant). I find that this coin is pretty and interesting, but many may not. Nagidos coins have always been somewhat undervalued since the city is otherwise not very noteworthy. However, its coins confirm the importance of both Aphrodite and Dionysos to the city, which would have constructed a local temple sanctuary for each of them.

Dionysos is rarely shown in standing form with this amount detail. He tended to have more portraits, and his late versions are stick figures. It is good to see the god so confident, virile and attractive in this bearded incarnation. The image allows us to imagine the young, vigorous life he led before Greek and Thracian celators documented his inevitable, grape-fueled downfall ☺. ☒



Stater – 400–385/4 BC

Obv: Aphrodite holding phiale (bowl) over altar, being crowned by Eros.

Rev: Dionysos standing, holding thrysos and grape bunch on vine; ΝΑΓΙΔΑΕΩΝ.

Data: 10.50g, 23.3 x 22.2 mm, 10h. Mint: Nagidos, Cilicia.

Acquired: Calgary Coin (March 1998).

Coin Storage & Packaging

by Joe Kennedy

E T M U V C N M A P I G G Y C B A G
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Answer to the Puzzle Page
from the September 2017
issue of THE PLANCHET

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