

The Planchet

Vol: 56
Issue: 1
January 2009



This Issue

Love Tokens

...My Lucky Coin

Roman Realities

...Find for a Thaler

L'ARC de TRIOMPHE...

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2009
Doors 7:00pm -- Meeting 7:30pm
Royal Alberta Museum
12845-102 Ave, Edmonton

Contact

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New Mint Website Easier to Navigate

Not long ago, the Royal Canadian Mint switched over to their new website. This change over has been eagerly awaited by many frustrated customers. The old Mint website had a nasty habit of freezing on the starting page, and if one was lucky enough to get inside, they would have to navigate a maze of webpages to find the product they were looking for. Unlike the old website, the new website has more information about

Canadian coins including mintage figures and design specifications. Even for people with slow internet connections, the new mint website seems to load faster. Easy to follow link and larger picture icons make browsing the mint inventory much easier. The Mint has also included more categories in their online shop. Colorized coins, holographic coins, and odd shape coins have their own category as well as different themes. With all these upgrades, there are still



some problems with the new site. When entering any quarry into the search bar, even something as simple as GOLD, the search engine returns zero results. After repeated attempts with many different quarries, the search still returned no results. Another annoying feature is a convenient pop-up placed on the mint webpage. This popup is sponsored by the Royal Canadian Mint and is hosted by an independent survey company. In the short ten minutes of surfing the Mint page, this popup re-appeared three separate occasions. It will not be long until the Royal Canadian Mint fixes these problems. For now, the upgrade is greatly appreciated.

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The Edmonton Numismatic Society

The Edmonton Numismatic Society (ENS) dates back to September 1953. At that time the members met and discussed the hobby under the name, the Edmonton Coin Club. During the 1960's, 70's, and 80's the Club sponsored 20 Annual Coin-A-Rama shows, issuing many collectable souvenirs. In 1979, The City of Edmonton's 75th Anniversary, the Club was host to its first CNA Convention. A number of mini shows and Anniversary shows were held during the 1980's and 90's. As a reflection of the varied collecting interest of the current membership, and a continuing commitment to promote the hobby, the Club changed its name to the Edmonton Numismatic Society (formerly the Edmonton Coin Club) just prior to hosting its second CNA Convention in 1998. Since 1996 the Club has sponsored two shows each year, one in the late winter/early spring and one in the fall. The ENS will host the first RCNA Convention in 2009.

Club Meetings

NEXT MEETING

January 2009

Wednesday January 14, 2009
Royal Alberta Museum 12845-102 Ave
Doors open at 7:00pm Meeting starts 7:30pm

- a) **nomination committee** - will provide preliminary report to membership present about nominations received to date. Nominations from the floor.
- b) **Jamie Horkulak**- Is to give a November 2008 show report.
- c) **appointment of an audit committee.**
- d) **Guest speaker** - Markus Molenda - "Canadian Lead Tokens."
- e) **any other business**

For more information regarding these events, please send an email to editor_ens@yahoo.ca

ENS is a Member of:

Canadian Numismatic Association
American Numismatic Association
Canadian Paper Money Society

December 2008

The December meeting started off with an interesting discussion by Marc Bink about the various coins produced by the City of Lubeck. Following the talk, Pierre Driessen and Matthew Sztym of the nomination committee went to the front of the room to discuss the upcoming election and positions available. They announced that they will be taking nominations at the upcoming January meeting for the AGM and election in February. Following various announcements the ENS hosted their annual donation Auction. Hundreds of items were donated by club member and auctioned off. The auction raised just over \$500. After the auction some of the members went to the traditional after-meeting Boston Pizza.

Message from the President

Hello everyone and welcome to another exciting year of the ENS! This one will prove to be demanding with 3 shows including the RCNA August 12-16, as well as our regular shows March and November.

Despite all the talk about the struggling economy, I keep reading how strong the coin and paper market is. And the proof is in the numbers. Gold and silver bullion's actual value is well above spot according to Kitco, and the mint can't get enough gold to fill production demand, even at these above spot prices.

Michael Walsh in his last Torex auction reports a record gross sales figure, and that paper money realized 107% of estimate on average. The market is still strong as well, having dabbled a bit recently in it, I can tell you to be prepared to bid at least 100% of estimate to get anything. Items with above average eye appeal can expect to realize double trend or higher. Expect this trend to follow into , that is, eye appeal weighing heavier on value than technical grade.

A world coin auction in on December 2 & 3 set a record realized price for a non-US auction, \$25.6 million total, equating to 75% over estimate. The auction also set a record for highest price paid for an ancient coin, \$1.9M for a Sestertius of Hadrian struck in brass.

Many speculate that investors are turning to bullion and numismatic markets after a substantial loss from their "on paper" portfolios and retirement plans. You can hold coins in your hand, unlike shares of some online tech company who only asset is the money it supposedly makes. Our election for 2009 will be held at the Annual General Meeting in February.

Most officers will likely want to hold their positions, but we encourage members to step up to the next level and be more involved in the club. If you are interested and capable of being part of the executive, please notify our nominations committee, Pierre Driessen and Matt Sztym.

Jamie Horkulak.

IMPORTANT MESSAGES FOR 2009

- **The ENS is currently looking for speakers to give presentations at club meetings in 2009. There are many blocks available and we invite all members to give a talk in their area of interest. If you would like to give a talk, please contact; editor_ens@yahoo.ca**
- ***The Planchet* Is now in the 56th year of printing. To keep our newsletter a success, we invite all club members to submit an article to be published. As of 2009 the ENS has made annual awards to recognize the hard work of those individuals who submit articles to *The Planchet*. If you are interested, please contact; editor_ens@yahoo.ca**
- **February is the annual AGM and elections. Coming into 2009 the ENS has many events planned and need a strong executive committee to get things done. If you are interested in running in the election, or would like to nominate someone, please contact the nominations committee.**
- **2009 Membership fees are now due. If you have not yet paid, you can make payment in person at the January meeting, via Paypal through the ENS website, or send in your membership through regular mail. If you have not paid your dues, you are not eligible to run in the February election.**

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The following amendments, submitted to the ENS, are to be voted on at the upcoming AGM.

1. Elevating Editor to executive office.

Be it resolved that:

"The position of editor be changed from director to executive officer of the Executive Committee. This officer shall be responsible for: editing and publishing the official newsletter *The Planchet* and coordinating the selling of advertising and track payment and duration of said ads. All monies received for said ads shall be paid to the Treasurer."

2. Removal of chronic absent board members.

Be it resolved that:

The Executive Committee reserves the right to dismiss a Director who misses three (3) consecutive executive meetings due to unexplained absences. Dismissal shall be determined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Mutilated Money

Part 1 of 6

Love tokens

BY MATTHEW SZTYM

Welcome to the first installment of my six month feature on mutilated money. Mutilated money is one of the least collected items in Canadian Numismatics. These items are often discarded or thrown to the back of a junk bin. However the history behind these items is worth more than its price tag.

This first installment is on Love Tokens. What are Love Tokens? Well love tokens by numismatic definition are, "coins that were taken from circulation and engraved"¹. This definition is very narrow and it fails to take into account dozens of other varieties of love tokens that I have come across in my years of collecting. The vast majority of Love Tokens that exist today, are engraved on small Bent half penny token US seated dimes, Victorian Canadian dimes, and British 6d coins are most commonly engraved. Even so, love tokens can be found on all most all denominations of coins.

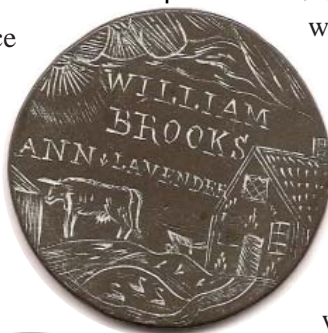
History

Love tokens began to make an appearance around the 16th century in England. It was common practice to take a 6d coin and bend the edges twice forming an "S" shape. By bending the edges the coin could not be spent, and it was given to a loved one as an offering or a gift. Another use of these tokens was in the form of a marriage proposal. Money symbolized

the wealth and stability the man could offer to his wife. This tradition carried on into later love token practices as well. Although 6d coins were most commonly used, bender love tokens have

been found on nearly all denominations of early British currency. In the early 18th century a cross over began to happen. "Bender" Love tokens began to appear with initials scratched, engraved, or stamped into the coin. Some love tokens began to appear that where only engraved. Many of these tokens had elaborate art, and scroll work etched into their surface.

During the mid 18th century, non-traditional love tokens started to appear. Birth and death tokens were produced to mark a person's life history. These tokens were often made by the family as keepsakes as a way to remember their loved one. Engraved coins were also used as advertising for stores, and others were engraved to mark special events such as anniversaries, holi-



Bent half penny token



Oddfellows engraved token

days and even political elections. Mason lodges and other organizations also began to make tokens with their symbols and crests. In the late 18th century Love tokens began to gain popularity in British colonies across the globe. In North America early love tokens appear on bank and merchant tokens that were circulating in the colonies. Many of these tokens were crudely manufactured and often had very little artwork. By the early 19th century, money was more readily available in the colonies, and more love tokens began to appear.

Canada Coin & Paper Money

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In Canada prior to 1858 many of the love tokens produced, were done on US and world currency. Prior to this period Canada did not have a universal currency system and residents were using any money they could find. Because the US had been producing large amounts of coins for decades, these coins were readily available and fairly inexpensive. After 1858 most of the love tokens produced in Canada, were on Victorian dimes and half dimes. Other colonies such as India, Straights Settlements, Hong Kong, South Africa, and Australia were also producing Love tokens in this period. Throughout the 19th century, almost all of the Love tokens produced were engraved. A man who was looking to propose to a woman would often have his last initial engraved intertwined with the first initial of his girlfriend. If she accepted the token the couple was said to be engaged. Other common love tokens of this period were engraved with names of family members, and were then turned into jewelry.



(top) Canada half dollar engraved *Minnie*. (Above Left) 1853 US seated quarter enamelled *M*. (Above Right) US Seated Quarter cut-out Love Token *TMC* (Below Left) 1873 US enamelled dime *G*. (Below Right) 1890 US dime with 14k gold overlay on engraved background.



More elaborate love tokens began to appear during this period. Some of these elaborate tokens were enamelled, cut out, or had overlay placed on

the surface. Many of these tokens appear in jewelry in the form of brooches, pendants, fobs, pins, and charms. Prior to this period many love tokens

were pocket pieces. The coins would be carried around in the pocket as a memento rather than be displayed in jewelry form. As Love Token jewelry became fashionable a new market began to spring up. Jewelers would produce love tokens for sale to the general public and were creating large amounts of business.

People would purchase a love token for many events such as a birth of a child, anniversary, birthday, holiday, or even moving to another city. These love tokens would then be assembled into necklaces, bracelets or pins. Around the turn of the 20th century an interesting thing began to occur. Love Tokens were an extremely popular jewelry item and people began



(above) 1900 US Barber dime and Edwardian Canadian dime made into blanket or diaper pin. Engraved *Baby Keith*.

to wear them, even if there was no personal or sentimental reason behind them. Quite often when buying these collectables, you can come across tokens with pendant loops and holes filled in, clasps and other accessories hanging off of them, or Love Tokens from around the world assembled on the same necklace. It is quite common to find period pieces where these love tokens have been mix-matched to for strictly aesthetic jewelry. Other people of the period began to assemble collections of Love tokens forming them into charm bracelets. I believe that the reason behind this trend was that grass-roots jewelry was very in-expensive and was often just as fashionable as the items found at the local gold-smith.

Continued next page.....

Coming into WW1, Love Tokens had begun to lose their appeal with consumers. Although still being produced, there are not nearly as many being made as there were in the 19th century.

One theory we have behind this trend, was the easy availability of consumer jewelry. It was just as easy to order a 14k gold ring from the Sears catalogue for 95 cents, as it was to get a love token made by a jeweller. As marketing changed, the tastes of consumers did as well. During WW1 a new form of Love Tokens began to appear. Often known as sweetheart coins, soldiers who went off to war would carve coins they had in their pocket, and send them home to their loved ones. Others were carved up as going away presents, or as gifts to those who enlisted in the army. Some of these tokens can be found with images of the battle field, military insignia, or just a loved ones' name. WW2 also saw a revival of sweetheart love tokens. Soon after the wars ended, love tokens were rarely produced.

Besides the traditional definition, I group many other items into the Love Token Category. In Australia convict tokens are quite common and were carved on a wide variety of materials. Although many of these tokens are considered Love Tokens because they were produced on coins, others were carved on sheets of medal and other metallic objects. Although there are a wide variety of items that were carved, the tokens that were produced for no other purpose but jewelry or keepsakes could be considered Love Tokens. These "alternative" items as I call them, are often on round discs of medal that resemble coins in circulation.

Matrimonial tokens or fidelity tokens are not considered Love Tokens because they are engraved on medallions, rather than circulating coinage. Presentation tokens and engraved medallions provided they are hand engraved, are often overlooked by love



token collectors, because of the fact they were not engraved on circulating coinage. Many of these items when

hand engraved were to signify events that are also commonly depicted on true love tokens, such as weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, or even early sporting events.

Hobo nickels are often classified into their own collectable category. These coins were produced

during the great depression and were commonly carved on US buffalo nickels. The engraver would take the bust on the obverse of the nickel, and carve it to the appearance of a hobo. Other creative artists would carve the reverse to resemble a wide variety of scenes. The reverses were rarely carved and are quite scarce in comparison to obverse side carvings. Other hobo nickels that can loosely fit in the category, were carved on



other denominations of coin. Because these items are hand engraved I like to group them into the Love Token Category as well.

(Top) WW2 sweetheart token given to a soldier leaving for war. Engraved *Good Luck HG* on a 1943 Australian Florin.

(Above) Non-Typical hobo nickel with carved donkey.

Possible Democrat Political item. **(Below Left)** Victorian Canadian 5c engraved hearts. **(Below Right)** US California Gold coin engraved with bird holding umbrella. **(Bottom)** 3rd Place sports love token on 1873 US 10c coin. Engraved with the initials *LS*



Many Love tokens have very little information about their origin. It is almost impossible to find any history of the items from the few intricate designs etched on them. On some of the more extravagant pieces that include full names and dates, we can attribute them to a specific person. These tokens with a good provenance, are more

valuable to collectors and hold a higher premium. Other tokens have provenance that was either written down by the owner, or passed on by word of mouth. Although this type of provenance can give an interesting story to the item, sometimes the stories are fabricated or exaggerated. Most love tokens have no provenance at all.

The history is often the most interesting aspect behind love tokens. This is one example of how money was used for more than just commerce.

The symbology of giving money as a gift, and the detailed artwork, make these items a truly interesting collectable.

Next week, I will be continuing this series with part 2. This is a look at counterstamped coins, coin buttons, pins, and other interesting forms of mutilated money.



(Left) Large double sided US Morgan Dollar Love Token Intricately engraved *SHT* and *SHI*. Hole drilled into the top so it could be made into a pendant.

(Above) 1888 Germany Love token Engraved *Halloweve* (Halloween) Holiday love token.

(Right) 6 coin Chatelane with 5 Victorian Canadian dimes and 1 Victorian Canadian Quarter. Engraved with names and initials. C. 1880.



Works consulted;

1. Love Token Society,
<http://www.geocities.com/lovetoken-society/>
2. 1908 Sears Roebuck Catalog

* Tokens of Love ISBN: 9781558591004



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The Bargain Bin

A little bit of everything.

Remembering my Lucky Coin

By Graham Sproule

When I was six years old I had a lucky coin. And what I learned from that time is that most valuable things we gain in life are usually not sought after, but are discovered quite by accident. At the time I was growing up in Thailand as the son of a Canadian diplomat. The downtrodden streets in the large city of Bangkok were not safe for kids to go play around. As a result, all the children of foreign businessmen, diplomats, and aid workers had to find games to play behind the walls of the luxurious Asia Gardens apartment buildings where we all lived comfortably. My friends and I often tired of playing Nintendo games and longed to go outside and explore. Limited by the confines of the walls, we came up with a creative variation of hide-and-go seek where we used toy guns to 'kill' each other. Not surprisingly we called this game 'guns'. This was our favorite game which we would play using different variations depending on the circumstances.

One Saturday when I would have preferred to be playing 'guns' with my friends, my parents demanded that we clean up the apartment. Much to my chagrin, this often included the dismantling of the "Millennium Falcon" I had built with my friends. My parents and other adults usually mistook the Falcon for several pieces of tipped-over furniture covered by blankets. I believe Lego blocks were used to for the Falcon's control panel. During one such cleaning session, my dad found what looked to be a very old coin underneath some books inside his night table. Since he would usually give me coins he collected during his travels around the world, he decided I might like this one as well. I have only a faint memory of its appearance, but I remember it was circular with a hole in the middle of it with Thai words engraved on it. I remember showing the coin to a Thai neighbor of ours who worked in a bank. He told me that it was from the King Chulalongkorn era and, while he wasn't completely sure, he thought it was probably valuable.

At the time I didn't even know who King Chulalongkorn(*above*) was. It was only later in Thai Class that I learned that he was one of Thailand's greatest and most revered kings. Thais would refer to him as "The Great Beloved King". And, among his many notable achievements in modernizing Siam, it was under his direction that the country developed a mod-



ern central banking system that included banknotes. Although I didn't have an appreciation for this history at the time, as most young kids do not, I certainly convinced myself that I had become rich! Like Chet in the old Hardy Boys books I used to read, I let my excitement over my discovery get the better of me before even taking the time to get my "treasure coin" properly

appraised. I went around the whole apartment building showing off my coin to friend and stranger alike. After showing it off, my next inclination was to go and cash in this valuable coin so I could buy heaps of Ninja Turtle action figures for me and all my friends. But my dad, appealing to my Irish sensibilities, told me it was a lucky coin and persuaded me to keep it instead.

I came to see my coin as much more valuable than the entire Ninja Turtle Van box set; it was a good luck charm. So I kept it with me everywhere I went. I still wanted to find out if it was a rare and valuable coin. After all, what harm was there if it was both a lucky and valuable coin. Unfortunately, when I was swimming or playing 'guns' with my friends around the apartment buildings I did not always have a pocket I could keep it in. And very often, I would just carry it around with me in my hand. I even developed an unhealthy dependence on the coin, believing I needed it with me to pass a school quiz or win a game of soccer. Sometimes my friends would even call down to my apartment to tell me that I had left my lucky coin on their sofa after having spent an afternoon at their place playing video games. Not surprisingly, one day I woke up and I couldn't find my coin. I panicked and spent days looking for it. I even swam to the bottom of the apartment's swimming pool in case I had dropped it down there by accident, but I never found it.

I was upset for quite some time after the reality that I had been irresponsible and lost my coin. In only a few years later, I accumulated quite the collection of international coins including many other Thai coins. But I never quite appreciated any of them the way I did that coin. I think it had something to do with the fact that I sought out these coins out purposefully whereas I had found that one by sheer luck. In those same years I also remember having read my first Hardy Boys' book, *The Melted Coins*, which I had loaned from the library at the International School of Bangkok. It was then that I realized the events of finding and losing my coin had far more meaning than whatever the monetary value of it may have been. Otherwise, what I had gained would likely now be just another forgotten coin collecting dust in my basement. Instead I gained a vivid memory from my childhood that can neither be melted nor stolen.

Ebay Categories Word search

COLONIAL	LARGE CENTS
DIMES	MEDALS
DOLLARS	MINT SETS
ENCASED COINS	MIXED LOTS
ERRORS	NICKELS
GOLD	NOVELTY
HALF CENTS	BOOKS
HALVES	PROOF SETS
PROVINCES	SMALL CENTS
PUBLICATIONS	THREE CENTS
QUARTERS	TOKENS
REPRODUCTIONS	TWO CENTS
ROLLS	WORLD

OBSOLETE CURRENCY
WOODEN NICKELS
ELONGATED COINS
COMMEMORATIVE

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E H T C J O L G T W T O A D C M N
P R L P O L M N V N O L N N G I O
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One Cent	Trends	CC Price
1859 W9/8 ICCS MS63Bn.	\$2000.00	\$1400.00
1895 PCGS MS64RB	\$650.00	\$400.00
1898 PCGS MS65RB	\$2600.00	\$2200.00
1900 PCGS MS65RB	\$3000.00+	\$2000.00
1916 ICCS MS65RD	\$650.00	\$550.00

Five Cent	Trends	CC Price
1875H LD PCGS VF30	\$1200.00	\$1100.00
1885 5/5 VF30	\$535.00	\$450.00
1897 N8/W8 PCGS AU55	\$550.00	\$475.00
1899 PCGS MS64	\$1100.00	\$800.00
1925 ICCS EF45	\$550.00	\$450.00

Ten Cent	Trends	CC Price
1872H ICCS AU50	\$1350.00	\$1050.00
1875H PCGS AU53	\$5400.00	\$4000.00
1884 PCGS EF45	\$3875.00	\$3000.00
1889 PCGS VF25	\$3750.00	\$3300.00
1893RT ICCS VF20	\$4000.00	\$3850.00

1870 Commercial Bank \$5.00 F&B PF	\$1900.00	\$1400.00
1870 Commercial Bank \$10.00 F&B PF	\$1900.00	\$1400.00
1872 Molsons Bank \$4.00 F&B PF	\$2500.00	\$1950.00
1878 DC-8e-iii-o \$1.00 F-15	\$1325.00	\$1100.00
1887 DC-11 \$2.00 F	\$2400.00	\$1900.00
1897 DC-14b Abt. VF	\$1750.00	\$1400.00



Currency



Twenty Five Cent	Trends	CC Price
1858 20 Cent PCGS AU50	\$600.00	\$500.00
1875H ICCS VF30	\$3750.00	\$3500.00
1885 PCGS AU50	\$2800.00	\$2100.00
1887 ICCS AU50 Cl.	\$3500.00	\$2800.00
1912 PCGS MS63	\$1750.00	\$1350.00

Fifty Cent	Trends	CC Price
1872H PCGS MS62	\$9000.00	\$7800.00
1872H A/V ICCS VF30	\$3650.00	\$3500.00
1890H PCGS EF45	\$12600.00	\$10520.00
1914 PCGS MS63	\$15000.00	\$12000.00
1947 MLCR ICCS EF40		\$5200.00

One Dollar	Trends	CC Price
1938 PCGS MS64	\$825.00	\$675.00
1945 ICCS MS63	\$900.00	\$750.00
1946 PCGS MS64	\$1600.00	\$1350.00
1948 MS60	\$1900.00	\$1750.00
1950 PCGS MS66	\$1500.00	\$1200.00

1912 DC-21c F	\$1200.00	\$1150.00
1935 BC-3 \$2.00 EF++	\$1250.00	\$1000.00
1935 BC-9b PCGS VF20	\$2200.00	\$1890.00
1935 BC-11 F+	\$4800.00	\$4600.00
1937 BC-27b \$100 Unc. +	\$1150.00	\$975.00
1954 BC-34a \$50.00 CUnc.	\$1650.00	\$1450.00

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Ancient/Medieval

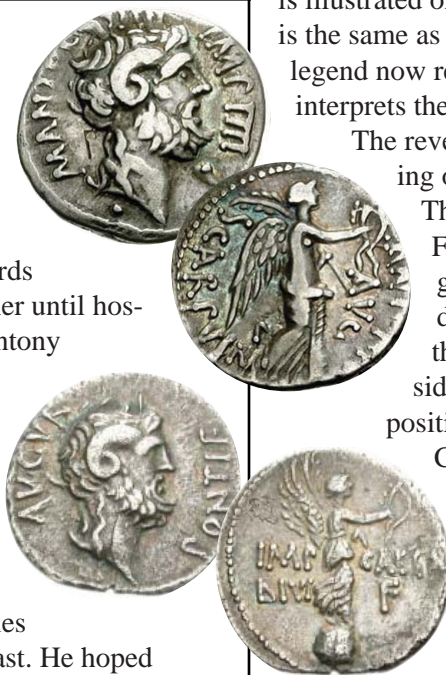
Roman Realities 31 B.C.

By Terrance Cheesman

Civil war is usually a very ugly affair, and the civil war between Marc Antony and Octavian was no different. Once allies, the two warlords began to find fault with the other until hostilities broke out in 32 B.C. Antony feared that the presence of his consort, the Queen of Egypt Cleopatra, would cause deep resentment in Italy should he invade. Therefore he adopted a defensive posture placing the bulk of his army in Greece and occupying a series of fortified posts along that coast. He hoped that through bribery, he could weaken Octavian fatally, his money contrasting nicely with Octavian's taxes. To protect his home base of Egypt Antony placed four legions under the command of L Pinarius Scarpus, who occupied Cyrenaica, which today is eastern Libya. This was a sizable force representing about one sixth of Antony's total armed forces.

L Pinarius Scarpus was a distant relation to Octavian. He was a general under Antony serving with him in the east. He appears to have been saluted Imperator, a title which appears on his coins usually signifying a great victory, but the circumstances are unknown. What is known is that Scarpus began to mint coins in his and Antony's name.

The first coin is a denarius minted 32 to 31 B.C. The obverse features a bust of Jupiter Ammon the chief god of Egypt. Around his head is the legend M ANTO COS III IMP IIII Essentially this translates into Marcus Antonius Consul for the third time and having won four great victories. On the reverse Victory advances right The legend reads SCARPUS IMP ANTONIO AVG Basically the legend translates into Scarpus victor and Marcus Antonius priest who interprets the will of the gods by studying cloud formations. Today these are



called pollsters.

Antony was badly defeated at Actium in 31 B.C. He fled to Egypt. Scarpus's reaction to this defeat is illustrated on the second coin. The obverse is the same as the previous coin except that the legend now reads AVGVR PONTIF Priest who interprets the will of the gods and chief priest.

The reverse now features a Victory standing on a globe signifying world rule.

The legend reads IMP CAESAR DIVI F. Translated this means victorious general Octavian Caesar son of the divine Julius Caesar. Scarpus saw the writing on the wall and changed sides. His defection made Antony's position impossible and he along with Cleopatra committed suicide leaving Octavian master of the Roman world and eventually the first Emperor of Rome. Scarpus disappears from history His subsequent life and career are unknown.

Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group.

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A Penny's Worth

By Marc Bink

What can a guy find for a Thaler?

This month I wanted to do something different. I know had promised some articles on English coinage, but I picked up a rather neat coin at the last Edmonton Money Show in November. One of the things I collect is German coins of all eras, and I have always wanted a medieval Saxon Thaler. The one that caught my eye, was in a display case with a lot of other medieval coins. What made this one stand out, was the way that the effigy of Augustus leered back at me. Here finally was a coin that didn't look too bad, and was surprisingly affordable. So here is the problem; -there I was, looking at my first Thaler, and I didn't know anything about these coins. I just knew they were big, beautiful, and usually expensive. So with a cup of Starbucks in hand, I embarked on a journey through a few old history books and of course, my computer. I wanted to see what I could find out about the coin, and the ruler, who looked like he was rather offended to be hammered onto a piece of silver. This is where coin collecting gets fun!

And so it starts...

Where did the coin come from? Does the place still exist? This part of the search was easy, there's a lot of material out there. The coin came from Saxony in Germany. Saxony is currently a small province in the southeastern part of Germany. It used to be much larger. During the Middle Ages and up into the modern age, Saxony was at the forefront of German politics, second only to Prussia. Prior to the Second World War, Saxony, in particular its capital Dresden, was famous for high-tech goods like cameras, pharmaceuticals and petroleum prod-

ucts. It started off as a Dukedom, becoming a hereditary kingdom until 1918, when the King was finally forced to abdicate and head into exile. The Saxons have a long rich history, and they minted some of the most beautiful coinage prior to German unification in 1871, especially when it came to Thalers from the late medieval period.

The first hurdle in my search came up fairly quickly; - my catalogs only go back as far as 1600, and of course, this thing is 20 years older. Next, I thumbed through my copy of "Saurma", only to find that it didn't have a listing for this particular Thaler. The flip had a Davenport number on it, (D-9798) but when I checked my copy of Davenport's book (The Standard Price Guide to World Crowns and Thalers, 1982) I found to my dismay that the number and the coin didn't exist. I think part of the problem is that I have a very old copy of the book. It apparently has undergone some revision since the time when my copy was printed. The other problem with my copy was that there is no history or explanation of mints, mintmarks, or anything in it, just a listing of a few coins and some out-dated prices. So it was back to the internet, and it was finally on Coin Archives (coinarchives.com) that I was able to find out anything about this Thaler.

My Thaler was struck in 1580 in Saxony and features an effigy of Elector Augustus I in armor on the obverse, and the very large and complex coat of arms of the Wettin family on the reverse.



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It's a large silver coin, (39 mm.) about the size of an English crown, and it weighs 29.2 grams. My example could be considered "good VF", since this was still a hammered coin, it has a few weak spots and some doubling on it. It shows evidence of having been mounted at some point; there still is some flashing on the top edge. It also looks like the edge of the rim was ground flat so as to make the coin more "round", and this was possibly done to take off any rough edges that could have occurred during the minting process. All the legends are intact and fully legible, and the coat of arms shows some wear, but is still legible. The obverse side features Augustus in his full ugly glory, and if Cranach the Younger is accurate in his painting, the coin seems to have a fairly faithful depiction of him. He's shown facing right in a full suit of armor holding a sword. This seems to be a recurring theme throughout the whole run of Saxon Thalers; most of the ones that I've seen feature the Duke or Dukes in the similar poses. The coin follows all the guidelines set out by the Reichsmuenzordnung of 1566, the weight being correct at 29.2 grams, and its purity should be 889 of silver. It had a value of 72 Kreuzer, and was also known as a Speciesthaler, or "Reichsthaler". There is a mintmark "HB" on the reverse, and it stands for Hans Biener, who I assume was the mintmaster. It was probably minted in Dresden, although I can't confirm that as of yet. If anyone out there knows more about these things, please email me!

The Thaler was a relatively new denomination at that point in time. At around the end of the 15th century, a large silver mine opened up at Schwaz; and the coins that were minted for Sigismund of Tyrol at Hall were some of the earliest examples of a true Thaler sized coin. These coins, first called Guildiner, were an unqualified success. With a larger template to work with, coin engravers really started to expand their art for the

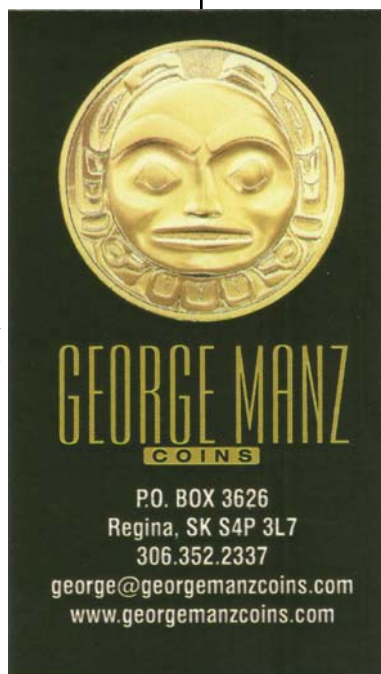


first time since the classic age, making intricate and elaborate designs. These new large silver coins are thought by some to be some of the most beautiful minted during the medieval period; - they represent the epitome of the coiner's art during the middle ages. By 1518 a large vein of silver was discovered near Joachimstal, a town in a valley in Bohemia. Pretty soon there was a flood of silver being mined and Europe finally had a coin that could be used as a continental commercial standard. At first these coins were referred to by which ever valley they originated from, - hence the term for the first one, "Joachimsthaler", ("Thal" in German means "Valley") which was eventually shortened to just "Thaler". Soon every kingdom, dukedom, or city-state in Europe minted their own version of a Thaler, (a "Crown" in England) and this denomination found its way into the New World; - and evolved into our dollar.

Eventually, a need arose to try and standardize the weight and purity of the coins, due to constant inflationary pressures and wars. The German states were among the first to try and standardize weights and purities with a series of national edicts. But these always seemed to be ignored or debased until the Thaler was finally standardized in the 1860's to become the Vereinsthaler, which became the 3 Mark piece once the country unified in 1871.

So what about the ugly guy on the obverse standing with a sword? Who was he?

Augustus I (*above*) was the Elector of Saxony from 1553 to 1586. Saxony was split in two in those days because of a succession issue in 1485. Augustus came from the Albertine Line, and his cousins in the elder Ernestine Line actually ruled their part of Saxony as Electors until it was transferred to the Albertine line as a result of the Schmalkaldic Wars. He married the daughter of the King of Denmark, Anna, in 1548 and proceeded to



have 15 children, and only one survived to succeed him. Augustus succeeded his brother as Duke in 1544. He was declared "Elector" in 1547, and this caused relations between the two branches of the Wettin family to deteriorate to the point where the head of the Ernestine line was eventually imprisoned in 1567. After this, the Albertine line cemented their hold on the Electorship and became the dominant line, and the Ernestines faded into insignificance; - or did they?

Augustus was generally regarded by history as being an enlightened, just and fair ruler, but personally he wasn't a very nice guy. He tended to be covetous, cruel and superstitious; -very much a product of his age. He married for a second time after his first wife died in 1585; - this time to the daughter of the Prince of Anhalt. He died three months after the marriage, on February 11th of 1586. In our modern day and age, the very idea of a disgusting, filthy, ugly old man taking up with a thirteen-year-old girl is absolutely abhorrent to us, but for succession purposes it was a fairly common and highly desired thing to do in those days. I'd hate to think she might have had something to do with his quick demise after the wedding, but it probably served him right.

Allow me to digress for a moment; I discovered an interesting twist to the story of the family while researching this article. It seems that regardless of what Augustus and the Albertine line did to marginalize them, one could say the Ernestines eventually got the last laugh. They still occupy a throne, whereas the Albertines don't anymore. The elder Ernestine line of the Wettin family fractured with every successive generation, and one of those lines eventually became the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The descendents of that family

still occupy the throne of England today. Queen Elizabeth can trace her lineage to the Wettins of Saxony through her great-great Grandmother Victoria's husband Albert; and Queen Elizabeth's husband Philip is descended from yet another branch of the Ernestine line!



Wettin Family Crest

So there you have it; - a small sampling of what I was able to find out about my new Thaler and the place that it came from. There's obviously a lot more out there, and I'm still learning. What makes coin collecting worthwhile for me is the journey to find out the story behind the coin; and the people on it, or who made it. And it's a journey that never really ends either; it can bounce around from place to place, and different time periods. Every time I pick up something new and

interesting, it spurs me on to learn more. Researching this Thaler has opened a new door for me to another area of numismatics and history that I would have never known about, had it not been for Augustus glaring back at me from that display case at the show.

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Canadian Coin History

For January

January 1965 saw the burst of a bubble in speculation and quick profits in mint dollars and sets. The recent rise in silver prices led to well-publicized profits in silver coins. The coins could not be legally melted, but that didn't stop their numismatic and speculative value from soaring.

On January 2, the Mint began accepting orders for 1965 mint sets, with a stated quota of 2 million sets. The post office in Ottawa sent two truck loads of 156 bags of mail to the Mint, containing 350,000 pieces of mail requesting 2.4 million sets. By February, the Finance Minister deflated the bubble by announcing that the Mint would expand its facilities, and honor all requests for collector coins. By May, a new facility opened in Hull, Quebec, and began cranking out nothing but collector coins. Sanity was soon restored to the coin collecting hobby, until history repeated itself in January 1980, when silver nearly hit \$50 per ounce and gold briefly touched \$850.

Other events in January:

January 1, 1858 - By an Act passed in England, the Province of Canada is put on the decimal system of currency.

January 2, 1908 - Governor General Earl Grey formally opens the Ottawa branch of the Royal Mint. He strikes the first coin minted in Canada, a 50-cent piece.

January 1, 1920 - The revised standard fineness for silver coins at 0.800 becomes effective.

January 3, 1922 - Governor General Julian Byng strikes the first nickel 5-cent coins of Canada.

January 18, 1950 - The Ottawa Coin Club changes its name to the Canadian Numismatic Association.

January 2, 1953 - Canada's coins are changed to show Queen Elizabeth II on the obverse.

January 2, 1963 - The 5-cent coin is changed from 12-sided to round.



January 14, 1963 - Dinko Vodanovic wins \$1000 for his design for the reverse of the 1964 silver dollar commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1864 Charlottetown Conference on Confederation.

January 2, 1967 - A \$20 gold coin is authorized, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Confederation.

January 26, 1973 - Olympic organizer Louis de Chantigny unveils plans for commemorative Olympic coins for the 1976 Summer Olympic games.

January 1, 1985 - The portrait of Queen Elizabeth II is changed on all coins to the design of Raphael Maklouf.

January 8, 1987 - The Mint announces the new dollar coin will feature a loon design, due to the loss of master dies featuring a canoe.

January 1, 1990 - The portrait of Queen Elizabeth II is changed on all coins to the design of Dora de Pedery-Hunt.

January 31, 1991 - A design competition is announced for 1992 25-cent coins, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of Confederation.

January 9, 1992 - The first 25-cent issue in the Canada 125 Coin Program is issued, honoring New Brunswick.

January 5, 1999 - The Mint unveils designs for all twelve 1999 25-cent coins.

January 6, 2000 - The Mint unveils the designs for twelve 25-cent coins for 2000, depicting Canada's strengths for the future. The January coin is launched, entitled "Pride".

January 13, 2003 - The Belzberg Collection is sold at auction; a 1936 dot 1 cent sells for \$353,000, a record for any North American small cent. A 1911 \$1 silver pattern sells for \$1,059,300.

January 26, 2007 - The Mint unveils plans for the 2010 Olympic coin program. Over four years, 17 circulating commemoratives and 36 collector coins will be released.

You can find more Canadian coin history on my Web site timeline: Chronology of Canadian Coins, <http://www.islandnet.com/~kpolsson/cancoin>

L'ARC de TRIOMPHE de l'Étoile

Triumphal procession ways have an ancient history. Built in one form or another by the ancient Egyptians, Chinese and most notably, the Romans. They celebrated in stone their victories and military might. Some of the most famous ever constructed are the arches of the Roman emperors Titus, Septimius Severus and Constantine I.¹ In Western Europe, following the collapse of the western Roman Empire in 476 A.D., their construction all but ceased. It was not until the Renaissance that the concept and use of the triumphal arch was truly revived.²

The vast majority of triumphal arches built during the Renaissance were temporary structures, constructed of wood and plaster.³ France was one of the first states in early modern Europe to again start building triumphal arches in stone. During the era of Louis XIV (1643 - 1715), French royal architects combined the city gate and the concept of the triumphal arch, transforming the simple gate from a mere entry way into a 'gate of honor'.⁴ This new conceptualization deviated from the classical tradition of free standing arches located in the center of a city. By combining these, it became an even more powerful propaganda tool; every time a person passed thru such a gate, he would be reminded of the king's power, majesty and glory.

To commemorate his military victories, Louis XIV ordered triumphal gates built all over France, including two in Paris - the Portes St. Denis and St. Martin. He also had the Porte St. Antoine remodeled. During the reigns of Louis XV (1715 - 1774) and Louis XVI (1774 - 1792/93†), the building of triumphal gates continued throughout France, with notable exception in the city of Paris.⁵

It was not until the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte (1804 - 1814/15) that Paris would again see them built. Napoleon, his ministers, architects and engineers set about to recreate Paris. The city was to be transformed into a capital worthy of being the centre of the vast new French Empire which dominated Europe after the spectacular victory of the Grande Armée over the Austrians and Russians at the battle of Austerlitz in December 1805.

Paris was to become the new Rome.⁶ A vast building program was ordered, which included the building or refurbishment of bridges, aqueducts, roads, churches,

palaces and other public buildings and structures. While meant to beautify the city, to provide services and employment for its citizens, they were also intended to awe and inspire; promoting the power and grandeur of the new imperial order, both domestically and internationally.

As Napoleon's rise to and his maintaining power were largely dependent upon his abilities as a victorious general and the loyalty of the army, the army figured prominently in his building program.

In 1806 the construction of two triumphal gates was ordered.⁷ The arch known today as the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel, completed in 1808, was built in classical Roman style with pedestal and column construction, three passage ways and topped by the famous horses of Saint Mark's Cathedral, taken by Napoleon from Venice.⁸ This arch conformed perfectly with the style of the new regime known as Neoclassical Empire, a stylish mixture of ancient Egyptian and classical Greek and Roman symbols and design elements. The Empire style was developed to provide the new regime with the aura of permanence and respectability by using ancient symbols of power.

The story of the second arch, ordered built at the same time, is very different. This arch, often simply referred to as the Arc de Triomphe, is today the most famous arch in the world, yet its very existence, let alone its completion were uncertain for much of its construction. It was not completed until 1836.

Construction of this arch, officially titled the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile on the place Charles-de-Gaulle, provides a fascinating insight into the politics, architecture and art of turbulent 19th century France.



Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel designed and built by architects Pierre Léonard Fontaine and Charles Percier between 1806 - 1808, on the orders of Napoleon I, to celebrate the victories of 1805. Its original purpose was to serve as the triumphal entry gate into the grounds of the Tuileries palace, Napoleon's official residence in Paris. Its present isolated location results from the fact the Tuileries burned down in 1871⁹ and was demolished in 1883¹⁰. *continued on next page*

It was officially dedicated to the Grande Armée and French Empire soldiers who had died in the service of their country. The Arc de Triomphe from its inception was envisioned to be much more than a typical arch or gate, it was meant to encompass all the concepts and ideas associated with a triumphal arch and gateway. It was also to be a memorial, a monument, a place of reverence and a brilliant tool of political propaganda. Its location, design, scale and decoration had to function in harmony for this arch to accomplish its difficult multifaceted purpose.¹¹

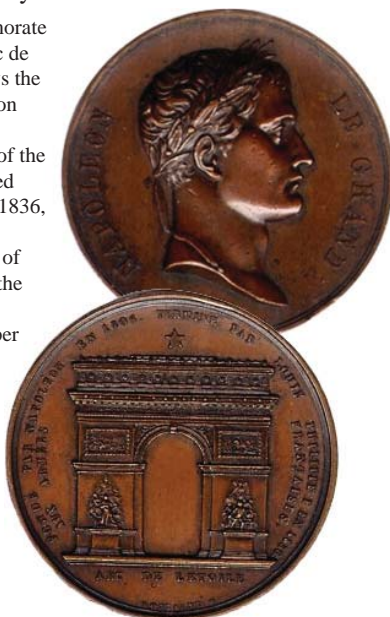
First came the search for the perfect location. After an exhaustive effort, weighing the suitability of each site, Place de l'Étoile was chosen. Located near the toll booths at Paris' western outskirts, once completed the Arc would become part of a gateway complex. According to Champagny, Minister of the Interior, the area was one of the most beautiful public places in Paris and visited by Parisians of all classes for leisurely strolls in the Bois de Boulogne nearby. It was also connected to the broad Champs-Élysées promenade allowing for military parades. The area was large enough for this scale of construction and would do justice to such a grande monument. Once finished the arch would paint a majestic view from the Tuileries palace and Napoleon could pass thru the arch when travelling from Paris to his country estates at Malmaison, St. Germain and Versailles.¹²

Furthermore, due to its height and size it would be visible from all over Paris and to visitors from a great distance away, long before they would reach the city.

Although the foundation stone was laid on 15 August 1806, the Emperor's birthday, the pace of construction would prove to be very slow.¹³

Medal struck to commemorate the completion of the Arc de Triomphe. Obverse shows the truncated bust of Napoleon I, as a Roman emperor. Reverse shows the front of the Arc de Triomphe. Bronzed copper, 25mm, struck in 1836, original strike. There are many varieties of medals commemorating the Arc's completion. Struck in lead, tin, bronzed copper and silver, ranging in diameter from 15mm to 53mm. Some, as this example, show the single bust of Napoleon I, or the single bust of Louis-Philippe I or the facing busts of Napoleon I and Louis-Philippe I.

B - see end note



The commissioned architects, Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin and Jean-Arnaud Raymond, were given the basic ideas and purpose, outlined in broad sketches by Napoleon and his chief advisors, such as Denon and Fontaine. The intent was a structure with simplicity and clarity of design, so that it could communicate the regime's message clearly.¹⁴ Napoleon wanted an arch which would overshadow all others build before, honor the Grande Armée and all French soldiers fallen in battle, and show his power and grandeur for posterity.

The designs submitted by the architects show that they were unable to translate these ideas into stone. They were constrained by traditional ideas and could not easily think beyond classical examples. This was not the only problem, Chalgrin and Raymond were also unable to agree on the use of columns, the nature of the decoration and the use of statuary.

It was Napoleon's chief architect, Pierre Léonard Fontaine, who translated Napoleon's ideas and purposes into architectural form.¹⁵ He suggested an arch with four equal sides, openings in both directions, a minimum of decoration and no columns. The project's height and size would be the main features providing its beauty.¹⁶ Napoleon agreed. In early 1808, Chalgrin and Raymond jointly submitted new plans incorporating most of Fontaine's suggestions. Soon after their feuding started

continued on next page

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anew and ultimately in late 1808, Raymond resigned. His designs, although altered, continued to champion more classical forms, which for a monument of this scale were deemed inappropriate and too expensive.¹⁷

Chalgrin's plan had won Napoleon's backing. His ultimate design was able to express through the plainness of the heavy walls, elegance of lines and minimal decoration, the simplicity and clarity which would convey the Arc's power and majesty.¹⁸

The Arc de Triomphe would be a uni-arch, truly monumental in scale, being 49.54 meters tall, 44.82 meters wide and 22.21 meters deep, built of uniform colored stone. Its sheer massiveness can be seen when compared to its sister, the Arc du Carrousel, which is 14.62 meters tall, 17.87 meters wide and 6.54 meters deep. No other structure in Paris at the time was taller, except the towers of Notre-Dame which are 69 meters tall.¹⁹

With the location, architect and design decided, construction could finally begin. The foundations required were massive, they were to carry an unheard of load. Obtaining stone of a uniform color, which came from the Château-Landon region, caused further difficulties. Progress was very slow, by 1811 the project had reached 5.40 meters in height; by 1815 it had reached 20 meters.²⁰ In 1810, on the occasion of the entry of Napoleon's new Austrian wife, the Archduchess Marie-Louise, a full scale wood and plaster model was erected. This model served to obtain Napoleon's final approval and as a construction template.²¹

In 1811, the architect L. Goust took over supervision upon the death of his teacher Chalgrin.²² Political and military events, and their subsequent economic implications, soon overtook the project. Work was suspended. By 1823 the work site looked like a ruin and what had been built was in danger of being torn down.²³ Following Napoleon's downfall, the restored Bourbon dynasty attempted to change the nature of the Arc to suit its political ends. Many new designs were proposed, ranging from making the Arc into a temple-like structure dedicated to great kings and illustrious men, to making it a fountain.²⁴ Finally in 1823, Louis XVIII decided to dedicate it to the exploits of his nephew, the Duc d'Angoulême, following France's 1823 intervention in Spain to restore the Spanish Bourbon king Ferdinand VII. Goust was reappointed as architect and ordered to change the iconography accordingly, yet keep the overall design of the Arc intact.²⁵

In 1830, following the accession of Louis-Philippe I, the peoples king, the program was returned to its original intent under Napoleon I, with one notable change. Not only was the glory of the French armies of the First Empire to be celebrated, but also the glory of

Sketch of the wood and plaster model of the Arc de Triomphe built for the ceremonial entry of Napoleon's new Austrian wife, Marie-Louise into Paris in 1810, erected by Louis Laffite.



the armies of the First Revolution.²⁶ With the placement of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier there in 1922, this role came to include all French soldiers.²⁷ Today, it no longer serves as a gate, Paris having grown far beyond its western boundaries of 1806. The Arc de Triomphe has taken on far greater importance and serves as a French national symbol, a monument and memorial to the nation and service of its citizens. It continues to be used as a backdrop to celebrate and mourn great events and figures in France's public and cultural life.

The remains of Napoleon I, Victor Hugo and Marshal Joffre passed underneath its arch.²⁸ The victory parades for WWI and WWII were celebrated here and the eternal flame burns here today. The official French national government celebration of Bastille Day and observance of the 1918 Armistice are held yearly in front of the Arc. This central role is due to its creators, their vision was so grande and timeless that, despite numerous obstacles and delays, their original intent became reality. They succeeded in creating a triumphal arch, monument, memorial and place of reverence, which speaks to eternity. When standing before the Arc de Triomphe d'Étoile, you can not help but be awed and inspired by its size, simplicity and majesty.

by J.P. Driessen

A - the horses were plundered by the Venetians from Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade, in 1797 they were sent to Paris as war booty by Napoleon, in 1815 they were returned to Venice by Louis XVIII. They were replaced by a quadriga, dedicated to the Restoration of the Bourbons following Napoleon's final abdication, depicting Peace riding in a triumphal chariot escorted on either side by Victories. B - no medals or jetons were issued during the reign of Napoleon I publicizing the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile, there was however a medal issued showing the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel.

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The opinions herein are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the Edmonton Numismatic Society.

Editors Note

January is a relaxing time, when most people get back to their normal routines after the Holiday season. For me, it will be a good time to start saving money to spend on the hobby. 2009 is looking like a good year to be buying coins in Edmonton. The ENS will be hosting 3 coin shows this year. Our annual Edmonton's Money Show will be held on March 13-14 and on November 7&8. During August 12-16 the ENS will also be hosting the RCNA convention at the Delta Hotel. These shows will draw hundreds of guests to Edmonton to take in the sights of our city, and attend our shows. Our volunteers will be busy preparing these shows and they are always looking for a helping hand. We hope that some of you can come out to help us make 2009 a memorable year for those attending the shows.

At the January meeting Pierre Driessen and myself, will be taking nominations for the ENS election in February. If you would like to nominate someone for a position on the board, please put their names forward at the meeting. If you have any questions regarding the elections, please feel free to contact me.

Finally, I wish you all the best in the new year.

Matthew Sztym
Editor, *The Planchet*

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Coming Events

JANUARY. 23 - 25, 2009, Hamilton, ON

CAND Show, Sheraton Hotel, 116 King St CAND, (905) 643-4988, e-mail: cand@cogeco.ca.

FEBRUARY. 1, 2009, Paris, ON

S.W.O.N., Special Events Building, 139 Silver St. (Fairgrounds). <http://tedscollectables.com>.

FEBRUARY. 7, 2009, Oshawa, ON

Coin-a-Rama, Five Points Mall, 285 Taunton Rd. E. e-mail: papman@idirect.com.

FEB. 21 & 22, 2009, Toronto, ON

Torex - Canada's National Coin Show, Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel, 5875 Airport Road, Mississauga Ballroom Website: <http://www.torex.net>.

MARCH 7 & 8 2009, Calgary, AB

Calgary Numismatic Society's Money Fair, Radisson Hotel, Calgary, Airport Contact: jawilliston@shaw.ca

MARCH 13 & 14 2009, EDMONTON AB

EDMONTON'S MONEY SHOW, Canada's Largest Coin show. Mayfield Inn & Suites 16615 109 Ave, Over 75 Tables, Door Prizes, Kids Table and More! Contact Jamie, jhrlrd @shaw.ca

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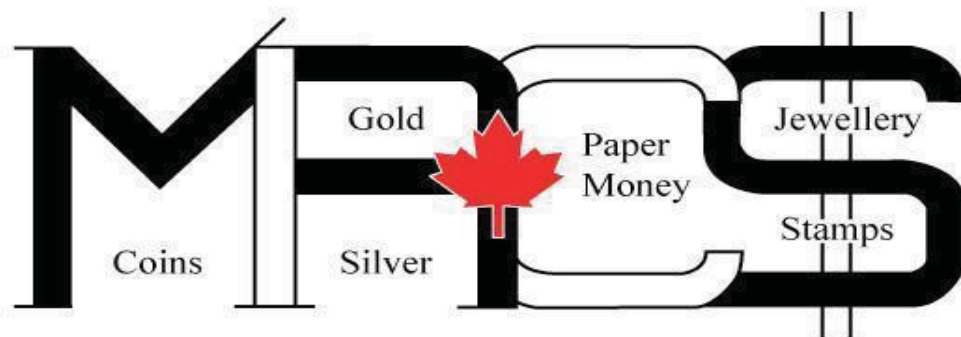
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WANTED

WANTED Recyclable used plastic coin flips. Any Qty. Bring to next club meeting, See Howard. taneri9@netscape.ca

Wanted early French medals dating from 1642-1821. Contact Pierre pierre@nancykbrown.com

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