

The Planchet

Vol: 56
Issue: 3
March 2009



This Issue

Magic Mayhem

The Devil's Medal

Ancient/Medieval

Canadian Coin History

The Imperial Eagle...

Next Meeting

SILENT AUCTION

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Doors 7:00pm -- Meeting 7:30pm

Royal Alberta Museum

12845-102 Ave, Edmonton

Contact

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265 year old British Warship Discovered

The Deep Sea Explorers who were made famous from their discovery of 500 million in sunken treasure two years ago have discovered another famous shipwreck. The British man-of-war HMS Victory sank 265 years ago in the English Channel and now rests in 100m of water. Researchers believe that the ship was carrying around 4 tonnes of gold coins when it sank in a storm in 1744. The HMS Victory was returning to England from Lisbon, Portugal, with a reported 100 000 Portugese gold coins for merchants. With 110 cannons and a crew of 900, the HMS Victory was one of the most heavily armed warships of the day. 31 of the cannons are visible on the wreck and helped identify the wreck. Currently only 2 of the cannons have been salvaged from the wreck. While searching for other famous shipwrecks, the Odyssey stumbled upon the wreck approximately 45-60 kilometers from the British coast. The wreck was found roughly 80 kilometers from where it was reportedly sank. To protect the wreck from plunderers the exact location of the wreck has not been revealed. The Deep Sea explorers have filed salvage



rights in Tampa Fl. for exclusive recovery of the wreck. Under anonymity, a spokesperson from the British Ministry of Defence stated that they are aware of the Odyssey's claim to have found the Victory. "Assuming the wreck is indeed that of a British warship, her remains are sovereign immune, this means that no intrusive action may be taken without the express consent of the United Kingdom." He would not say whether or not the Government have begun talks with the Odyssey over the future of the wreck.



2009 Executive

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Secretary: Marc Bink
Planchet Editor: Matt Sztym

2009 Directors:

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* John Callaghan *Joe Kennedy
* Marv Berger *Howard Gilbey
*Greg Wichman *Bob Eriksson
*Terry Cheesman *Bill Demontigny

The names posted above are the current executive of the ENS as chosen at the recent AGM in February.

Director positions will be determined during the first executive meeting held in the upcoming months.

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

March 2009

Wednesday March 11, 2009
Royal Alberta Museum 12845-102 Ave
Doors open at 7:00pm Meeting starts 7:30pm

- talk: Bill Demontigny
- topic: Napoleon medals and related material
- silent auction (Maximum 5 items per person due to lack of space)
- individual members are invited to bring items for show and tell
- words from the president regarding the upcoming show

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

February 2009

The February meeting was quite busy for those who attended. A silent auction ran the duration of the meeting and a surprising number of members brought items to sell. Later on during the meeting, David Peter gave an interesting talk on early Canadian bank notes. This was followed by the election of the 2009 executive committee. During the AGM both amendments to the constitution were discussed altered and with unanimous support were passed. The treasurer and secretary gave their year end reports and they were received well by the members in attendance. Following the meeting many members went to the traditional after-meeting Boston Pizza.

Message from the President

Greetings everyone, the busy season has quickly set upon us. First there was Torex in late February, attendance was great Saturday, and Chuck Moore had a very large auction. The hot commodities were gold and silver bullion, chartered notes, and early dominion notes. Next show is the Calgary Money Fair, March 7&8. The ENS will have a club table there to promote the Edmonton Money Show March 14&15, the RCNA convention August 12 to 16, and to recruit new members. If you are making the trek to Calgary, please stop by our club table and help out a while. The Calgary show has grown to be the second biggest show in western Canada, with a lot of dealers that attend our show, as well as some others we don't get here. I will be presenting a Calgary money Fair report at our next club meeting March 11.

Next is the largest Numismatic show in Canada, the Edmonton Money Show, March 14 & 15 at the Mayfield Inn. Once again, the ENS will have a club table for literature, and case space for members to sell items. All we ask in return is you help out at the club table for a while.

Running the same weekend as our show, the American Numismatic Association is holding a big show in Portland.

One of our ENS members is lucky enough to be going, so he will be presenting a show report at our club meeting on April 8th.

The ENS has purchased and received 10 new Allstate cases, so members with displays shouldn't have difficulties finding a case. If you have a numismatic display of any kind please bring it along, who knows, it may spark a new interest for someone.

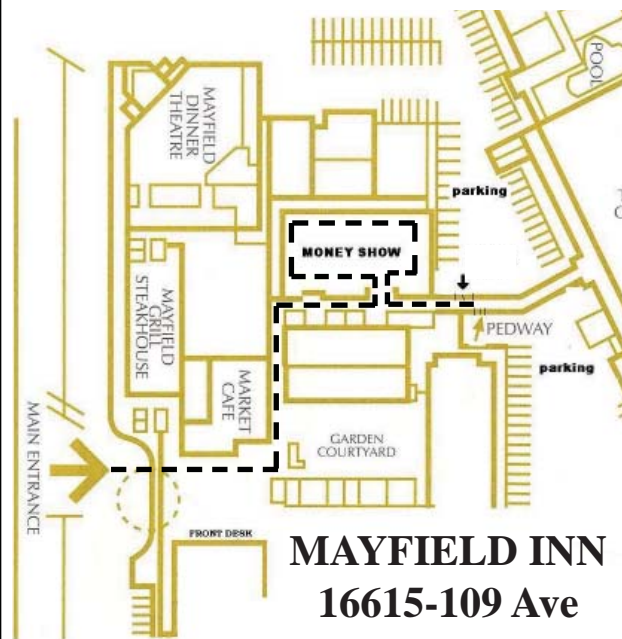
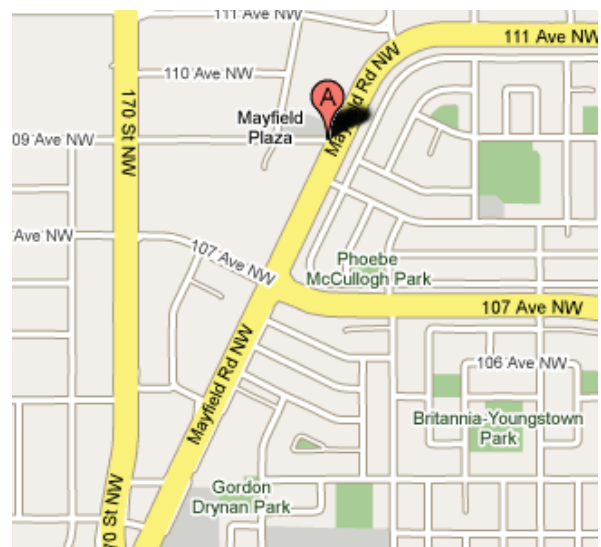
Returning is the educational seminars, but this time they are to be held Saturday March 14th, across from the main ballroom. They are geared more toward beginners so if you are interested or know someone interested, there will be a sign up sheet at the admission table.

There has been some talk of late about the future of coin shows in general, with internet sales

up and economic downturn. There is no denying online venues are prevalent in coin sales, but there is still no substitute for site-seen buying. Some sites have very good photos... but yet you can't spin the luster in hand. Another huge advantage unobtainable on the Internet is fellowship. To meet in person people you've dealt with is always enjoyable. To hear stories or collecting antic-dotes in person is much more interesting, and to obtain collecting advice can be priceless.

So do your part in keeping the coin show alive... attend as many as possible.

See you there,
Jamie



Mutilated Money

Part 3 of 6

If you have ever been to a magic show it is quite common to see the magician do some interesting coin tricks. Magicians, not wanting to give up their secrets never tell anyone how these tricks are done. Because I am not a magician, I will be more than happy to share the secrets of the trade. Magicians use two different types of magic coins known as gimmicked and gaffed coins. These coins are often used in conjunction with unaltered coins that they can switch out with the use of sleight of hand. So what are gimmick and gaffed coins? Simply defined, a gimmicked coin is a coin that has been drastically altered or tooled to perform a specific trick. A gaffed coin on the other hand, is a coin that has been altered in a simple fashion but does not perform a specific trick without the aid of sleight of hand. In the rest of this article I will be showing you some tricks involving these two types of coins.

Heads or Tails

Two headed and two tailed coins are some of the most common forms of gaffed coins. A magician would present to the audience an authentic coin for inspection and ask them to unanimously determine the outcome of a number of coin tosses. With sleight of hand the magician would swap out the authentic coin for a gaffed coin that would give him the desired outcome. These coins are also widely used by scam artists looking to take money from unsuspecting passersby. Other forms of simple gaffed coins include an 11 cent coin, where one side of the coin is a penny and the other is a dime. Plated coins such as 1943 US steel cents copper plated to look like regular pennies for magnetic tricks, and gold plated coins for dramatic effect.



Scotch and Soda

The Scotch and Soda trick, also known as penny-dime, gin & tonic and Half-Penny, is



one of the oldest magic coin tricks used by magicians. This trick is done by the use of a gimmick and a gaffed coin. Two coins such as a Kennedy half dollar and a large British penny are shown to the audience. Both coins are placed in the magicians hand and are given to an audience member. The audience member is then instructed to put their hands behind their back and put one coin in each hand. Then they are asked to open both their hands. To their surprise there is a Kennedy half dollar and a Washington quarter. This trick has many variations with all different sizes of coins but it works quite simple. The half dollar is known as a shell, because it is hollow on one side. The second coin is gaffed and is half a British penny and half Kennedy half dollar. To perform the trick, a quarter is hidden in the hollow portion of the half dollar. All three coins are in the magicians hand when he shows them to the audience. He only shows one side of the coin to prevent revealing the trick. When he places the penny and half in his hand, he removes the quarter and squeezes the penny into the shell. Because the penny is

gaffed with a half dollar the result is in a coin that looks identical to a normal half dollar and a regular quarter.

Quarter in a bottle

This is one of the more common tricks on the market. A magician would hand around a regular quarter or half dollar to the audience. When the quarter is brought back up stage he would take out a glass bottle and magically force the larger coin through the open-



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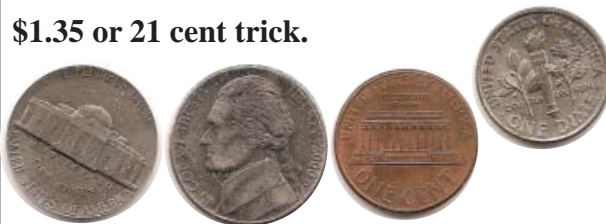
ing into the bottle. The audience can look into the bottle and when turned upside down the coin is stuck in the neck. This is done by a little slight of hand and a gimmick coin. The real quarter returns to stage where it is switched out for the gimmick. The gimmick coin has been cut in two places and has a hollow rim. An elastic band acts as a hinge holding the coin together. With a swift move the coin folds and enters the bottle returning to its previous shape.

Bill thru quarter

The bill though Quarter trick is uses a very ingenious gimmick coin. Right in front of the audience the magician pushes a bank note thru a quarter. After pulling the bill out, he swaps the gimmick coin for a real one and hands it out for inspection. This trick is done with a hollow quarter shell with a hole in the front. Another quarter is then hinged on the back with a portion of the second quarter protruding thru the hole giving the appearance of a solid quarter. When the bill is pushed thru the hinge opens allowing the bill to pass and closes when the bill is removed.



\$1.35 or 21 cent trick.



This trick involves the use of a variety of gimmick coins. A magician holds out 2 nickels a dime and a penny (or 2 halves a quar-

ter and a dime). He then takes one coin and places it in his hand, each time asking how much money he has in his hand. When the last coin is placed in his hand he asks how much money is in his hand. Most people want to believe that there is only 21 cents or \$1.35 in his hand, however when the magician opens his hand there is only a nickel or half dollar remaining (depending on the coins placed in the hand). This trick is preformed with a stack of layered shells. Every coin that is shown to the audience is hollow, and as the magician places them in his hand he stacks them together. The largest coins (half dollars or nickels) then lock together giving the appearance of a solid coin.



These are only a few of the many coin tricks currently on the market. There are many varieties of this trick utilizing many different coins from around the world. Gimmick and gaffed coins have been made for decades destroying thousands of perfectly good coins. I hope you enjoyed this segment of mutilated money, I will continue my series next month with even more interesting destroyed currency. These magic coins and more will be on display at Edmonton's Money Show March 14&15, 2009. So if you would like to see how these tricks are done close up, stop by the show and take a look.

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A Penny's Worth

By Marc Bink

The Devil's Metal; Nickel Coins of the Third Reich

The other day I was listening to a German radio station on the internet, and they had a phone-in trivia contest running. They asked five questions, and the caller had to get at least three right. Then they asked the zinger, which had to be answered correctly. I could have won this one, but I wasn't prepared to rack up a long distance bill and the prize didn't justify the airfare. The question was, "What was the weight of a 1 pfennig coin?" The answer of course (2 grams, in case anyone wanted to know) wasn't correctly guessed, and contestant after contestant lost their chance at a free dinner at a "Weiner Wald" restaurant. One exasperated caller said; "How the devil would anyone know that? Which one and which metal composition are you referring to?" – Hearing the term "devil" and metallic composition in German gave me an idea for an article concentrating on Nickel coins of the Third Reich.

Nickel is a great metal for striking coins. It is harder than copper or silver, yet soft enough to strike; it wears well and does not tarnish. It can be alloyed with copper to form "cupro-nickel", thereby keeping the intrinsic costs of the coinage down, while maintaining a silvery colour and hindering the progression of discolouring or oxidation. The element was isolated in 1751, by Swedish chemist Axel Fredrik Cronstedt,

given the name "nickel", and it was being used in coinage starting around 1840. Apparently raw nickel ore and copper ore were pretty close in appearance; so when the medieval Germans failed to extract copper out of what they thought was a copper ore body, they gave the resulting mess the name "Alte Nickel",

thereby blaming their misfortune on the Devil. No one can accuse the Germans of not having a sense of humor, the word for the bread "pumpernickel" translates into something akin to demonic flatulence, - but I digress.

Cupro-nickel coins had been minted in Germany since the 1870s. The 50 Reichspfennig coin of 1937 was the first pure nickel issue (left). This coin is listed in Krause as KM-49 and probably ranks up there as one of the

prettiest coin issues ever made. It is very art-deco, with an incuse denomination set in rays, surrounded by an oak leaf wreath. The reverse side features the German state Eagle surrounded by another wreath. Legends are in block letters, with "Reichspfennig" appearing on the obverse, and "Deutsches Reich, 1927" appearing on the reverse. This

series ran from 1927 to 1938, with no changes. It was designed by Tobias Schwab, with the dies prepared by Reinhard Kullrich, both working out of the Berlin mint. Six mints were involved with the manufacture of these charming little coins, (20mm, weight 3.5 grams, close to a Canadian nickel) and the mintage figures are huge. Rarities in this set include the 1930 E, F, G, J mintmarks; as well as the 1931J, 1932E, G, and finally 1933G mintmarks. This series is one of the most popular of the Weimar issues, and it was extensively collected in Germany at the time.



The next nickel coin struck in the Nazi period was the 1 Reichsmark coin. Krause has this one listed as KM-78 (Right). It was designed by Oskar Gloeckner and is 23mm and weighs in at 4.8 grams (about the same size as a Canadian quarter). This coin replaced the silver Weimar issue (last struck in 1927) in 1933. It was smaller than the previous silver coin, and featured a gothic "1" with "Reichsmark" underneath it, surrounded by an oak wreath; and the reverse featured a German Eagle surrounded by the legend "Gemeinnutz vor Eigennutz", which loosely translated means "community before individuality". This was one of the Nazi's more popular slogans. It was also used on the edges of the 2 and 5 Reichsmark coins starting in 1934. It replaced the former Weimar Republic slogan of "Unity, Righteousness, and Freedom", which by 1933 was pretty much a forgotten concept. The lettering font is in old German Gothic, which was supposed to give the coin a more "Nationalist" appeal, separating it further from the "decadent" Weimar period. This series was made by the same 6 mints from 1933 to 1939, and was the only general circulating German coin issue that never received a swastika. There were plans to replace it with a swastika issue in 1940, but the war intervened. The mintage figures for these coins are also large, and as with any German issue, there are a few mintmarks that are harder to find than others. Prices for these coins are significantly higher



in Germany than elsewhere in the world; - they are all believed to be rare, for reasons which are described below.

Krause has the average BU price listed at around \$40.00, whereas the German Michel catalog lists the same at 70 Euros.

The last coin in this series was the elusive 50 Reichspfennig issue in Nickel from 1938-39.

Krause has these listed as KM-95. This was the "Nazified" successor to the previous Weimar issue, (KM-49). The design elements are similar, with the denomination and the lettering font being changed to gothic script, and the eagle was burdened with a swastika. These coins were probably the prettiest of the whole Nazi series. Physically it is the same size as the previous Weimar issue, (which was still being minted alongside this issue in 1938) and it was designed by Franz Krishker, who was responsible for the dies to all of the Nazi small change, except for the zinc coinage. Mintage figures for these coins are also large, but it was well known at the time that the 1939

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issue was never fully released.

Which brings up another interesting, important point. These coins are surprisingly rare, and are seldom seen offered for sale. The 50 pfennig coins were avidly collected in the day, and the 1 Mark coins were widely circulated.

The Reichsmark was never easily convertible to a hard currency, like the US dollar, so most of the coinage remained in Germany.

However, one rarely sees them in poor condition.

There are a couple of reasons for this; - the first was that these coins were “de-monetized” and recalled on the 8th of August, 1940. After that date they were no longer considered circulating legal tender, and had to be turned into the Reichsbank where the bearer would receive a replacement coin. The reason these coins were recalled was because they were an easy source of pure nickel; and nickel was a strategic material, - crucial in the manufacture of stainless steel and other alloys. The German economy had no indigenous sources of nickel left, (except for the coins and personal pots and pans that were also subject to this recall order) and was fully reliant on supplies of ore from Sweden, - so they needed every bit they could find in order to keep building Messerschmitts and tanks. The nickel 50 Reichspfennig coins were replaced by an aluminum issue (KM-96). The 1 Reichsmark coin was not replaced at all. Another reason is that most of the “survivors” come from private collections, - meaning that these coins were deliberately hoarded during the war, and were not submitted after the recall was ordered.

So here was the classic old saying applied in



reverse. Instead of “beating swords into plowshares” it was “plowshares being beaten into swords”. So the next time you come across an old photograph of a German World War II gun, truck, airplane or tank, - you can be pretty sure that some pretty little coin had been part of it, proving that Nickel truly is the “Devil’s Metal”.

Sources:

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- Grosser Deutscher Muenzkatalog, von 1800 bis Heute, 15en Auflage, -Battenburg
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- Wages of Destruction, -Adam Tooze, Penguin Books, 2006

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By Joeseeph Kennedy

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Victory	5¢	2005
Volunteers	10¢	2001
Canada Day	25¢	2002
Ship	25¢	2004
Poppy	25¢	2004
Alberta	25¢	2005
Saskatchewan	25¢	2005
Ribbon	25¢	2006
Bravery	25¢	2006
Poppy	25¢	2008
Coronation	50¢	2002
Olympic Flames (Privy)	\$1	2004
Terry Fox	\$1	2005
Settling Loon	\$1	2006
Loon Dance	\$1	2008
Knowledge	\$2	2000
Churchill Bear	\$2	2006
Quebec	\$2	2008

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Dealers Attending Edmonton's Money Show

Table #	Dealer
1-2	NORTH MAIN COIN & STAMP, WINNIPEG
3	LOOSE CHANGE, St. MICHAEL, AB
4-6	CLASSIC CASH, SYLVAN LAKE, AB
7,8	COLLINS COINS, SHERWOOD PARK, AB
9-10	A&E COINS, EDM
11-13	GEORGE MANZ COINS, REGINA
14-15	CANADA COINS & PAPER, St. ALBERT, AB
16-17	MRCS, EDM
18	DB&D COLLECTABLES, EDM
19-20	ANDY MCKAIG / CCGS Inc, CALGARY
21	WINDWARD COLLECTABLES, EDM
22-24	B&W COINS, BRAMPTON
25	DAVID PETER COINS, EDM
26-27	CLYDE VINCETT, CALGARY
28-31	NEWCAN COINS & CURRENCY, KENORA, ONT
32	TRADERS GOLD CORP, HAMILTON
33-34	DIVERSE EQUITIES, CALGARY
35	NATIONAL PRIDE, EDM
36	CHARLES MOORE, CALIFORNIA, USA
37	BALMORAL COINS, BURNABY B.C
38	CHANTOU INTERNATIONAL, B.C
39	BLUENOSE COINS & CURRENCY, KELOWNA
40-41	OLMSTEAD CURRENCY, N.S
42	SVEN'S MODERN BANKNOTES, EDM
43	J&J COINS, EDM
44-45	THE CANADIAN NUMISMATIC COMPANY
46	ALBERT NICOLAUSON, SASK
47	EDDIES' PAPER, EDM
48	KAMERICAN COINS, EDM
49-51	CALGARY COIN GALLERY, CALGARY
52-53	REX WILSON COINS, ONT
54	M7 FINANCIAL MANEGMENT, EDM
55-56	HUB CITY COLLECTABLES, SASKATOON
57-58	LUCKY DOLLAR COINS, EDM
59	LIGHTHOUSE NUMISMATICS, HALIFAX
60	SCORNY'S STUFF, EDM
61	AL TEBWORTH PAPER, VANCOUVER
62-63	GILBEY NUMISMATICS, ARDROSSAN
64-65	CERTIFIED COINS of CANADA, ONT
66	LORANS COINS & PAPER, BRUNO, SASK
67	TREASURE GALLERY, FLORIDA
68	LONDINIUM COINS, ONT
69	KIDS-ON-COINS, EDM
70-71	ENS CLUB TABLE
72	CANADIAN CURRENCY, ONTARIO
74-75	WEST EDMONTON COIN & STAMP

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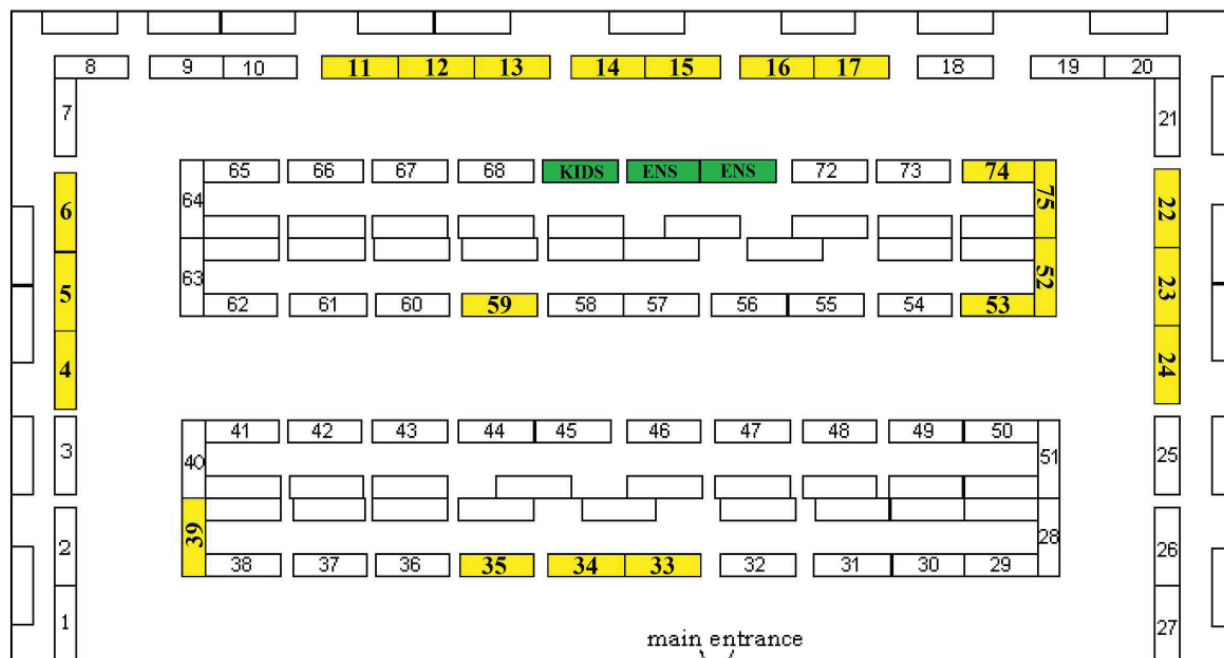


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Ancient/Medieval

By Terrance Cheesman

At the February meeting I had the opportunity to show the club a recent acquisition to my collection, unfortunately many were unable to actually view the coin. This article is an attempt to recap the short presentation on that coin.

The coin was a Sestertius of Marcus Aurelius minted in 171 A.D. The sestertius was the equivalent to our dollar as a means of determining wealth. Just as we would say that something was worth a sum in dollars a Roman would use sestertii the plural of sestertius. The obverse of the coin features a bust of Marcus with a laurel wreath in his hair. The legend reads IMP. M. ANTONINUS AVG. TR.P. XXV thus Imperator Marcus Antoninus Augustus with the power of Tribune for the twenty fifth time. Imperator means commander of the army. Marcus Antoninus is his name. Marcus had given up his name Aurelius in honor of his adoptive father Antoninus Pius. Augustus means the illustrious one, and was the title given to the first emperor of



Rome. The power of the tribune, was the ability to veto acts of the senate. During the early republic the office protected the people from the power of the aristocrats. The Roman emperors used a number of offices many from the republic to define their power.

The reverse features a laurel wreath. Within the wreath is the legend PRIMI DECENNALES COS. III S.C. This legend translates to First Decennial vows completed successfully Consul for the third time. Coin issued by the authority of the Senate. The decennial

vows were vows undertaken by the Emperor to rule wisely and well and not use his absolute power to be a tyrant. This coin celebrates the successful conclusion of these vows.

The office of consul was the highest office during the republic and it still existed in the Empire and was much sought after. Usually at the end of his term in office the consul could look forward to a term as governor in one of the wealthy provinces.

The inscription S.C. is usually found on base metal Roman Imperial coins. The Emperor controlled the minting of gold and silver coinage, and the base metal coins were left under the authority of the Senate. However over time the Emperor took over the control of all the coinage and while the inscription S.C. remained, it became more a testament to how much the Romans had to change something that seems to work.

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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

Currency	Trends	CC Price
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



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

Currency	Trends	CC Price
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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Canadian Coin History

For March

BY KEN POLSSON

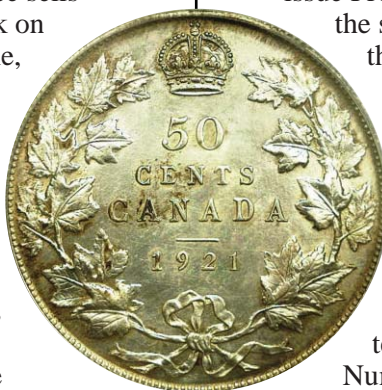
“Uncirculated 1921 50-cent piece sells for \$200”. That was the news back on March 31, 1951, though at the time, \$200 was probably seen as a huge sum for a 30-year-old Canadian coin. The coin we know today as the King of Canadian Coins was not treated as such for most of its early life. Wayte Raymond’s 1952 catalog of “The Coins and Tokens of Canada” was the first publication to make note the coin’s rarity, despite a mintage figure of 206,398 in 1921. At some point, it was explained that in 1929, the Mint decided to melt all silver coins on hand, to be reminted with the current date. New coins dated 1920 and 1921 might look suspicious, so almost half a million of those 50-cent coins were melted. That left an estimated 75 1921 50-cent coins in circulation and collectors’ hands, the few coins that had been obtained by visitors to the Mint. In 1976 the cornerstone of a school in Alberta was found to contain an uncirculated 1921 50-cent, and in 2006 another building’s cornerstone also contained a slightly circulated example. The rarity rose in value rapidly since the 1950s: 1956 \$1380, 1976 \$31,000, 1989 US\$110,000, then settling at \$60,000 for many years, before several sales since 2000 reaching to \$120,000.

Other events in March:

March 27, 1919 - The Finance Minister announces that the 1-cent coin will be reduced in size, closer to the size of the American 1-cent coin.

March 4, 1963 - Cal Orton buys the 1911 silver dollar pattern from B.A. Seaby for \$3500, reselling it within the month to Les DeFoy of California, for \$17,000.

March 26, 1965 - Thomas Shingles, chief engraver of the Mint, retires, after 25 years of service.



March 7, 1968 - An amendment is made to the Currency Act authorizing circulating silver coins to be struck in nickel.

March 1971 - In the Journal of the Canadian Numismatic Association, Jerry Remick makes some suggestions for future Canadian coins: issue Proof dollar coins and sets, change the size, shape, and metal content of the circulating \$1 coin, issue a \$2 or \$5 coin, and make \$5-\$50 gold coins.

March 8, 1975 - The branch mint in Winnipeg begins producing Canada’s circulation coins.

March 1981 - Eagle Coin Company sells a 1911 silver pattern dollar for \$325,000 to Carlton Numismatics of Michigan.

March 25, 1986 - The Government announces that a bronze-plated nickel \$1 coin will be introduced into circulation in 1987, gradually replacing the \$1 bill.

March 5, 1992 - The Mint unveils the third 25-cent issue in the Canada 125 Coin Program.

March 17, 1992 - The Mint releases the first coins in the International Olympic Committee Centennial Coin Program, a \$175 gold coin, and two \$15 silver coins.

March 31, 1995 - The Government announces the intention to make the 1-cent coin of bronze-plated steel, and the 5- to 50-cent coins of nickel-plated steel, to make the coins cheaper to produce.

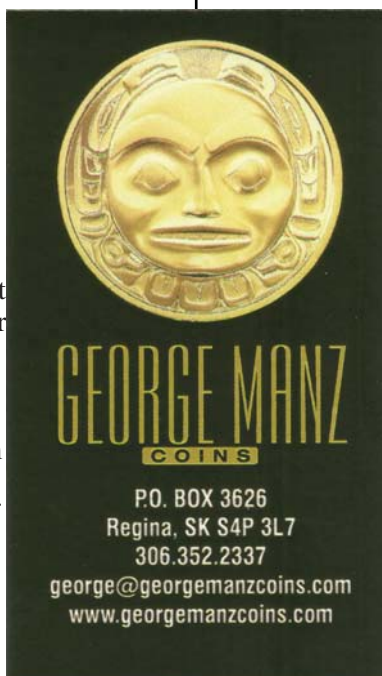
March 30, 1999 - The Mint releases the fourth Millennium 25-cent coin, entitled “Our Northern Heritage”.

March 8, 2006 - The Mint and Canada Post issue a \$5 coin and \$5 stamp set, featuring a Sable Island horse.

March 2008 - The Mint unveils a three-sided 50-cent silver coin, depicting a dairy cow and milk bottle, with green enamel effect.

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

Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions.



Pro Diligo Exonumia

(For the Love of Exonumia)

The IMPERIAL EAGLE of FRANCE

Napoleon Bonaparte had a problem. Following his proclamation as Emperor of the French on 28 Floréal, AN XII (18 May 1804), what would be the symbols of his regime and dynasty? Symbols which would personify the new political order and his subjects could identify with and rally around.

At a counsel of state on 23 Prairial, AN XII (12 June 1804), the topic of the main symbol of state was hotly debated. It had to be distinct, clear and powerful. In Napoleon's case, it also had to be very different from those of the Bourbon monarchy of the Ancien Régime and any competing European power.

The suggestions ranged from an eagle, a lion, an elephant, the bee, an oak, the cockerel and the fleur de lys to name the most notable. All were suggested for sound reasons. The lion because it would be more powerful than and distinct from the English leopard. The elephant because it is the most powerful animal in nature. The fleur de lys, because it signified France, not the Bourbons. The bee because France was a republic with a head, like a bee hive. The oak because it grows strong, straight and is almost eternal.

Finally the counsel decided upon the cockerel, because it stood for vigilance and had been associated since mediaeval times with France. Napoleon preferred the lion however, stating: "the cockerel has no strength, in no way can it stand as the image of an empire such as France." However, on 21 Messidor, AN XII (10 July 1804), when preparing to sign the decree establishing the Imperial seal and coat of arms, Napoleon crossed out the lion and substituted the eagle.¹



The Imperial French eagle, with wings displayed, facing left, resting with its right talon on a thunderbolt against a field of azure. It formed part of the official Imperial code of arms and was the symbol of the French First Empire and largely unchanged, also of the Second Empire.

continued on next page



- bronzed copper medal, 27mm, commemorating the personal distribution of the new imperial standards/flags surmounted with the imperial eagle to army units by Napoleon, 5 December 1804, on the Field of Mars outside Paris.

obverse: Napoleon I as 'imperator' (victorious Roman general)
legend: Napoleon Empereur.

engraver: Jean Pierre Droz (1746 - 1823)

reverse: Napoleon distributing the new imperial standards/flags surmounted by the imperial eagle to the various branches of the French army, and the army swearing their oath of allegiance.

legend: Drapeaux donnes a l'armee par Napoleon Ier
(flags/standards given to the army by Napoleon I^{er})

exergue: au champ de Mars / le 14 Frim[aire] AN XIII

engraver: Romain Vincent Jeuffroy (1749 - 1826)

The design and character of this medal was executed under the supervision of Vivant Dominique Denon (1747 - 1825), Directeur de la Monnaie de Médailles à Paris and Directeur général des Musées Impériaux.

attribution: Bramsen 357, Essling 1040, Zeitz 45, Laskey XLV, Millin 90.



The eagle was not chosen on a whim. Rather it was a calculated and brilliant political and propaganda choice. A symbol of great antiquity, imbued with a rich and powerful mythology, it fit perfectly with the power, style and prestige the new regime wished to project. It linked Napoleon and his dynasty with the ancient glorious past, particularly ancient Greece and Rome. It also provided a symbolic link with France's more recent history, the Franks and the Carolingian empire. The Christian religious overtones were also unmistakable.

In Greek mythology, the eagle was sacred to Zeus, his sceptre being surmounted with an eagle. It was this bird which sustained him by bringing nectar while he, as an infant, was hiding from his father Cronus.²

In Roman mythology the eagle was associated with Jupiter. Its use and political symbolism goes back to the very founding of the Republic. According to one version of the founding legend, Romulus claimed to have seen the omen of the eagle overhead first, signifying Jupiter's approval and allowing Romulus to claim the right to found the city.³ Eventually the eagle became the official insignia of the Roman state and its legions marched under its protection. During the Imperial period, the eagle also became associated with the divinity of the Emperor as the Creator of the Cosmos.⁴

In Hebrew mythology, the eagle was equated with divinity as it was the bird which comes from above and soars above the clouds.⁵

In Christian mythology the eagle is symbolic of the Fourth Gospel and associated with its author Saint John the Evangelist. It represents Jesus' Ascension and Christ's divine nature. As the eagle was believed to have the ability to look straight into the sun, its use extols Christians to look directly onto eternity. Many ancient beliefs and associations surrounding the eagle were absorbed and usurped by the early Christians, with note the Roman emperor's role as Creator of the Cosmos was transferred to Christ.^{6,7}

During the Middle Ages, the iconography of the eagle was prominent in religious texts and buildings. Early medieval sources record that a bronze eagle stood on top of Charlemagne's chapel at Aachen. Even today many lecterns found in churches are in the shape of an eagle with outstretched wings.

The thunderbolt, Zeus/Jupiter favorite weapon, upon which the eagle rests its right talon warns all of the ferocity with which enemies of the regime and the French Empire will be attacked.

As an emblem, the eagle provided the new regime the aura of legitimacy, stability and power. Its use associated Napoleon with the prestige of past empires and advertised he was laying claim to their legacy.



reproduction of the French Imperial eagle which topped the regimental standards. This particular example is modeled after the post-1814 eagle, which can be seen from its closed legs, pre-1814 models had open legs.⁸

This was of particular importance in reference to his pan-European aspirations, which were to echo the territorial expanses of the Roman and Carolingian Empires. The assumption of this legacy can be seen in the style of the period, known as 'Empire', which was an 18th century interpretation of ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman culture and motifs.

The power of the symbolism of the eagle was most dramatically employed in the French army. When deciding to issue the new standards to the troops, Napoleon had initially wanted to make the eagle part of the overall design of the colours. Then he changed his mind and decided to make the eagle itself the standard. He wrote to his chief of staff Berthier: "The Eagle with wings outspread, as on the Imperial Seal, will be at the head of the standard staves, as was the practice in the Roman army. The flag will be attached at the same distance beneath the Eagle as was the Labarum." This reduced the flag from being the regimental colour to a mere ornamental ancillary to the eagle.⁸ This can be seen on the reverse of the medal on the previous page.

The eagle was made of gilded copper and placed atop a staff painted imperial blue, 240cm in length. The importance attached to these was evidenced by the fact that Napoleon issued every eagle personally. Initially each battalion was issued one. In 1808 this was changed to one per regiment, with detailed regulations for its carrying and protection in battle. Soldiers who carried the eagles were especially selected and given special rank. They were appointed and dismissed by Napoleon himself.⁹

Due to its personal connection with Napoleon, the

continued on next page

eagle standard was an important prize in battle. This caused Napoleon to gradually restrict their issuance to line (regular) regiments and their carrying into battle to units which could give proper protection to them. Eventually regiments of hussars, chasseurs à cheval, dragoons and light infantry, although issued eagles, no longer carried them into battle.¹⁰

A good example of the use of Roman motifs for propaganda purposes by the Napoleonic regime is illustrated by the similarities between the Napoleon medal shown on the first page and the sestertius of Trajan depicted here. The obverse of both depict the truncated bust of a Roman imperator, the victorious field commander entitled to wear the laurel wreath. The reverse of the Napoleon medal shows Napoleon dressed as a Roman emperor standing on a 'sugestum' or platform, like that on the sestertius.^{11, 12, 13, 14} The attendant behind Napoleon is also clothed as a Roman. On both reverses can be found the folding campaign chair in the Roman style and military standards figure prominently. There is one important departure from the Roman motif however. This departure makes the motives of the Napoleonic regime for issuing the medal clear.

At first sight it would seem that the medal was merely issued for commemorative purposes. Upon closer inspection however, you can see that the soldiers receiving the new imperial eagle standards from Napoleon are clothed in 19th century French military uniforms, not in Roman legionary attire. This detail symbolically brought together the present and the past. It shows Napoleon laying claim to Europe's heritage and assuming the mantle as the legitimate heir of Rome's emperors and all those who, throughout history have done the same, such as Charlemagne.

Napoleon is literally bringing forth the grandeur, power and majesty from the past to a new and invigorated nation of the French. Through Napoleon, France would assume its rightful place of preeminence on the European continent and in the world. The age old dream of a pan-European empire could finally be realized, under French dominance. The foremost symbol of which would be the French imperial eagle.

by Jean Pierre Driessen

1 - Napoleon.org, 'The Symbols of Empire'; 2 - The Dictionary of Mythology, an A - Z of the themes, legends and heroes, p.314; 3 - Encyclopedia of World Mythology, p.214, 231; 4 - Ibid; 5 - Ibid; The Catholic Encyclopedia, St. John the Evangelist; 7 - The Encyclopedia of Saints, p.49; 8 - Napoleon's Army, p.67; 9 - Ibid; 10 - Ibid;

11 - Medallion History of Napoleon, Millin, pp33-34; 12 - A Description of Medals struck at the National Medal Mint by order of Napoleon Bonaparte, Laskey, p84; 14 - Napoleons Medaillen - die einzigen Zeugnisse des Ruhms, die alle Jahrhunderte Überdauern, p112. A - The original French imperial eagle weighed 1.85 kg, was 310mm in height and 255 mm in width.

sestertius of Roman Emperor Trajan struck between 114/116 AD. Showing the Trajan being acclaimed by legionnaires as emperor. Trajan is seated on a suggestum. Note the similarities of the scene on the reverse with that of the Napoleonic medal feature in the first page of this article.

The driving force behind the development of the Empire Style of the Napoleonic period, for both state and personal purposes was Vivant Denon, a cultured and talented man, whom was known as the "eye of Napoleon".



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Editors Note

Looking at the new circulation coins being produced by the US mint, will there come a time when collectors say "enough is enough"! The US mint recently concluded the state quarter program with the release of the US territories and district of Columbia quarters. This came on the announcement of another commemorative quarter program featuring National parks, only to be overshadowed by 4 new penny designs being released into circulation this year. Canada has been releasing droves of commemorative circulation coins, however with a short spark of interest, the collectors soon fizzle out. I remember back in 1999 when the millennium quarters came out, people were buying rolls of each month to store them away for investments, only to find 10 years later that the money saved in those rolls is still only worth face value. On ebay I saw a roll of 2007 US state quarters selling at \$28.00. Will these people wake up in 10 years to find that their "investment" has collapsed much like those Canadian quarters from a decade ago? When the US mint completes the national park quarter series what will they move onto, commemorative Olympic quarters (cough)? As you can see I am not a fan of all this new circulation commemoratives, here in Canada it has lost its purpose of drawing in new collectors and has become so boring most people no longer give a second look to their pocket change. Both the Canadian and US mint need to try something new, please send me your suggestions.

Matt Sztym
Editor, *The Planchet*

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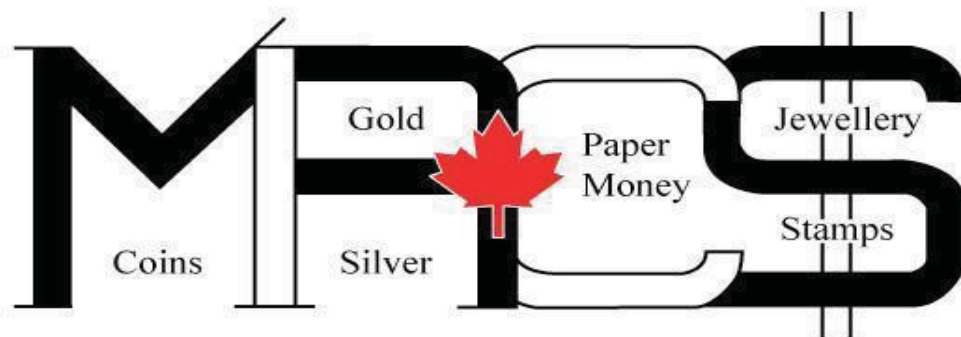
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