



North York Coin Club

Founded 1960

MONTHLY MEETINGS 4TH Tuesday 7:30 P.M. AT
Edithvale Community Centre, 7 Edithvale Drive, North York

MAIL ADDRESS: NORTH YORK COIN CLUB, P.O.BOX 10005
R.P.O. Yonge & Finch, 5576 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 0B6

Contact the Club :

E-mail: northyorkcoinclub@rogers.com
Phone: 647-222-9995

Member :

Canadian Numismatic Association
Ontario Numismatic Association

PresidentNick Cowan
1st Vice PresidentBill O'Brien
2nd Vice President.....
Secretary
TreasurerLen Kuenzig
Past PresidentRobert Wilson

Executive Committee

DirectorTony Hine
DirectorRoger Fox
DirectorVince Chiappino
Junior Director
AuctioneerBob Porter
Auction ManagerMark Argentino
Co-EditorsPaul Petch/Tony Hine

Receptionist.....
Draw PrizesBill O'Brien
Social ConvenorBill O'Brien
LibrarianRobert Wilson
Program Planning

THE BULLETIN FOR FEBRUARY 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, here it is, past the middle of February and the smell of spring is in the air. Although as I get older, I really don't like the cold, however, I do like the days when you can walk outside and everything is pure white. It definitely refreshes the senses.

Torex is upon us this weekend and I expect that now it is in a convenient location finally, the turnout should be good. Now that I don't have to pay exorbitant fees to park, I will quite likely stay all day. And you, what plans have you?

Last evening, we had an Executive meeting at my house. I am always harping at you members to remember that we are increasing our ages and we need to look for new blood for the Club. Well, how do you think I felt when I looked around and suddenly realized that I was the oldest person at the meeting? Your new Executive holds many younger members and some that are relatively new to the Club. Wish them well; they will need all your help.

One of the decisions made was that we will proceed with our quest to host the 2011 ONA Convention. Our next job is to get together and set out the tasks and responsibilities of the entire Executive.

Members, again, I ask for your help. You have all done an outstanding job over the years in various capacities at the Club. Now I ask you to assist the new Executive by guiding them and offering any help that you can. I know that you have done it all, seen it all and don't want to do it again, that is why I ask only for your guidance for the Executive. Please help them when they have a question, point them in the right direction, help them not to make too many mistakes. Collectively, you have a

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

We start gathering at 7:00 p.m. with meeting start scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

North York Coin Club member and Ontario Numismatic Association President Tom Rogers is excited about the new electronic age. He is showcasing the work of Ted Leitch and the London Numismatic Society who have transferred many existing slide programs to computer. Tom has mounted a bit of a road show, visiting select

Ontario clubs and presenting programs from a set entitled *Canadian Type Collection; the First Hundred Years*. Tom will be with us at our next meeting to share some of this material.

Please Don't Forget: *Bring donations to our supply of draw prize material, and please bring some items for the auction.*

wealth of knowledge. So, please let some of it flow to the organizers, freely and willingly. Thank you.

We also discussed the possibility of asking Scarborough, Mississauga and the Toronto Clubs to join together for the Christmas Dinner this year. Unless anyone has any suggestions of a different venue, then I submit that we should have our dinner at the Legion again. This time, will someone please pick up Bob Porter? I would appreciate that.

We are presently without a recording Secretary; therefore, no minutes will be taken until we can find someone to fill that position.....Now, who is going to step up and fill the role.

Last on the list, bring along something that you have accumulated in the past couple of months and share it with the Membership.

See you next Tuesday.

Nick

COMING EVENTS

FEB. 23 - 24, Toronto Torex - Canada's National Coin Show, Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel, 5875 Airport Road, Mississauga. Featuring Canada's finest dealers. Hours: Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$6. Official Auctioneer: The Canadian Coinoisseur, Michael Walsh. The Hilton hotel is located directly across from Toronto's Pearson International Airport. For more information, please call 416-705-5348. Web site: <http://www.torex.net>.

MARCH 2, Mississauga V Polish - Canadian Coin, Stamp & Collectibles Show 2008, John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre, 4300 Cawthra Rd. (just south of 403). Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. *Many tables of coins, medals, paper money, stamps, militaria and antique papers. Polonica and historical souvenirs. Exhibit of Upper Silesia coins, stamps, paper money, sports pins, medals and collectibles. Exhibit of Polish POW camps stamps of WWII, Stamp Exhibit, John Paul II On World Stamps. Polish Mint*

MEETING NEWS OF THE JANUARY 2008 MEETING

Sorry, there is no meeting news available. The Club is in great need of a recording secretary to prepare the meeting news you normally see in this space.

COMING EVENTS FOR WINTER / EARLY-SPRING 2008

info table. Polish stamps expert info table. Troyak Junior table with boxes of free stamps for kids. Troyak special medal and show souvenirs. Free admission and parking. Refreshments available. For more information, contact Janusz (Peter) Machulec 647-400-7857 or 416-724-4410 or visit web site: www.troyakclub.com or info@troyakclub.com.

MARCH 7 - 9, Montreal, QC Nuphilex, Holiday Inn Midtown, 420 Sherbrooke St. W. Hours: Fri. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$3 per day, Sunday free. Early bird admission \$25 (\$10 donated to Quebec Autism Society). Coin auction by Lower Canada Auction. For more information, contact Gabriel Sebag, (514) 842-4411, nuphilex@bellnet.ca. Web site: <http://www.nuphilex.com>.

MARCH 15, Cambridge Cambridge Coin Club 17th Annual Coin Show, Cambridge Newfoundland Club, 1500 Dunbar Road. Free admission. Buy, sell, trade and evaluate at 51 tables. Tokens, trade dollars, coins, paper money, militaria, sports cards, CTC coupons. For more information, contact Wolfe, wolfe1937@hotmail.com or Vince Nevidon, 519-622-6625.

MARCH 28 - 30, Kingston E.O.N.S., Days Inn & Convention Centre, 33 Benson St. Hours: Friday, 2:00 to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission \$4 includes ticket on gold coin. Early admission Friday \$20 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., good for all weekend. Fifty tables of coins, paper money, jewellery and more. Hotel reservations 1-800-267-7888. For more information, contact Ted Bailey at 1-866-747-2646, E-mail: tedscollections@bellnet.ca.

APRIL 4 - 6, Niagara Falls, NY Buffalo Numismatic Association, Niagara Frontier Coin Club Gold & Silver over Niagara 2008, The Conference Center, 101 Old Falls St. Hours: Fri. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Over 200 tables, exhibits, free appraisals, door prize drawings. For more information, contact 716-694-2724 or 716-628-9440. Web site: <http://www.goldandsilveroverniagara.com>.

APRIL 6, Chatham Kent Coin Club 40th Annual Spring Coin Show, Wheels Inn, 615 Richmond St. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free Admission and parking, 25 dealer tables (coins and paper money for all interests). Hourly draws and a raffle. Displays with prizes in 10 categories. For more information, contact Lou Wagenaer (President), 27 Peters St., Chatham, N7M 5B2, (519) 352-5477 lous@netrover.com.

APRIL 11 - 13, DEARBORN, MI Michigan State Numismatic Society Spring Show, Hyatt Regency Hotel. Free admission. Hours: Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Exhibit area. For more information, contact Brian Malnar PO Box 87931, Canton, MI, USA, (586) 453 0504. Web site: <http://bam68@comcast.net>.

APRIL 12, Guelph South Wellington Coin Society Spring Show, Colonel John McCrea Legion, 919 York Rd., Guelph or Hwy 7. One of Southwestern Ontario's biggest shows, 50 dealer tables, free parking, fully accessible. Large display area, hot meals. Admission \$2 for age 16 and up. Free gold coin draw. For more information, contact Lowell Wierstra, 8 Smart St., Guelph, N1G 4K9, phone (519) 824 6534.

APRIL 25 - 27, Sudbury ONA 46th Annual Coin Convention hosted by the Nickel Belt Coin Club, Radisson Hotel & Conference Centre, 85 Ste. Anne Rd. Hours: Bourse floor opens at 10 a.m. each day. Admission \$3. Buy, trade, sell. 56 bourse tables. Auction 6 p.m. Friday. For more information, contact Tom Rogers, 519-451-2316 or Gerry Albert, 705-523-1778.

MAY 3, Peterborough Peterborough Numismatic Society Show, Portage Place. Show runs from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Coins and paper currency bought and sold. Dealers welcome. For more information, contact Colin (705)742-0114.

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

BY CHARLES DODSON,
LEWIS CARROLL AND TONY HINE

*eBay and
Canadian grading companies*



“Off with their ratings” yelled the Red Queen. eBay is worried at Mock Tortoises being sold as the real thing in the eBay world through the looking glass of graders not certified by ANA-approved grading services. What do you expect from a country that calls their national professional baseball championship the World Series. Now they will tell you that the name came from a prize donated by the New York World newspaper, if the name was the Avco Cup, as the WHA prize was called, the commercial enterprise would have to pay to renew its naming rights to MLB. eBay declares: “No room,” for grading services not-ANA-approved.

Brian Cornwell, President of ICCS does not run any risk of being mistaken for either a turtle or a mock turtle, thanks to his work on the CNA Educational Program, where along with

Susan Maltby, he “tortoise” about the fine points of grading.



NOT ALL COIN DEALERS STRUCK FROM SAME DIE: A PRIMER ON PARTICULAR TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL NUMISMATISTS

by Rusty Goe

Reno, NV February 7 2008

The term coin dealer evokes about as many images as does the terms car dealer, hardware dealer, book dealer, or just about any other avocation with which the word dealer is associated. There is no one-description-fits-all for the label of coin dealer. Just as in any profession there are different degrees of separation between those coin dealers at the top of the competency chain and those at the bottom.

Consider for example the computer industry. If a person tells you he's into computers; is he at the level of Bill Gates or Steve Jobs, or is he an assistant on the Geek Squad at Best Buy? Likewise, when you consider 2008's crop of presidential candidates, do Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, John McCain, Mitt Romney and Mike Huckabee seem to be on equal footing with Dennis Kucinich, Mike Gravel, Fred Thompson, Ron Paul and Bill Richardson?

So it is in the world of professional (or semi-professional) coin dealers. Some are front-runners, some are consistently solid performers who will always deliver, but never sit on top of the heap, and some are perpetual wannabes.

In this vast universe of coin dealerhood, there are no stringent rules determining who can claim membership. There are no tests administered to see if a person qualifies, nor are there licenses one must obtain to be accredited. It's simply a matter of announcing to the world that you are now a coin dealer. And, as far as anyone is aware, these self-appointments are for life. Once you claim dealership status you can include it on your résumé for as long as you so desire, even if other members of the dealer fraternity refuse to recognize your stature.

If you are familiar with the old adage "you can't tell the players without a scorecard," you might appreciate the following characterizations of different categories of coin dealers. Please keep in mind that it is impossible to pigeonhole every type of coin dealer and that this brief study in no way encompasses every category under the sun. For instance, my focus will be primarily on dealers specializing in the U.S. coin market, although many of them do cross over into the foreign coin market. I think it's safe to say that demand for U.S. coins is greater than that of any other country's coins.

Although, if the Chinese, with their enormous population, get bit by the collecting bug, gold miscals, silver taels, and panda yuans could give U.S. Indian gold pieces, Morgan silver dollars, and Buffalo nickels a run for the money.

Old-Line Coin Companies

Throughout the first seven decades of the twentieth-century a collegiality of influential coin dealers practically dominated the market in the United States. They used their own names, or simply their surnames, or occasionally a catchy adjective for the names of their businesses. The most prominent dealers among these old-line firms conducted auctions as one of their many services to clients.

Coin grading, not nearly as intricately evolved as it became in the last two decades of the twentieth century, took a backseat to other aspects of a dealer's repertoire. Background information on every coin minted in the U.S. was essential. Memorization of mintages, proficiency in pedigree information, knowledge of rarity factors, familiarity with varieties, and a keen awareness of current and historical coin values were foundational elements of a dealer's expertise.

For the most part, these dealers showed up to work every day wearing suits and ties. They displayed a professional and courteous deportment and generally catered to their customers' needs. Although travel factored into their business schedules, these dealers concentrated their efforts in their own backyards. The strenuous national coin show circuit had not as yet emerged.

A handful of these prestigious rare coin companies survived into the final decades of the twentieth century. More often than not, the founders of these firms had passed into the next life, leaving their operations in the hands of their descendants. In some instances, only the firm's name survived, with no family members involved in the business at all.

The descendants who carried on these families' traditions acquired new skills never imagined by their ancestors, such as Internet technology and a more highly sophisticated system of coin grading. New collectors entering the hobby in the first decade of the twenty-first century are often unaware that

these descendants are not the original owners of these old-line firms. Yet common-sense suggests that if a company boasts of being in business for seventy to eighty years, the founder or founders are probably long gone. With the exception of one or possibly two of these "dinosaur" coin companies, which originated in the first half of the twentieth century, none of the rest has survived, unless you include one or two that remain in name only.

Modern-Age Dealers— The Industry Giants

From the legacy left by the old-line coin companies has emerged a plethora of dealer categories, almost as diverse as the types of coins available to collectors. There is one mega-company, which if it continues its exponential growth, could produce gross revenues equal to all of the other coin dealers combined. This is due in large part to the large percentage of this company's revenues which is derived from its diverse auction business.

Another firm, which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, might resemble as much as any the family dynasties from the old-line companies. Whether its founder's descendants will maintain the dominant position it experienced in its niche market for more than three decades remains to be seen.

High-Profile Independents

Securing a healthy segment in the next position on our descending scale are the highly visible dealers with annual revenues of \$50 million to \$100 million (or more in some cases). It appears as if the majority, if not all of these dealers, are backed by wealthy individuals or investor groups. These dealers, for the most part, are knowledgeable in their fields of expertise, but obviously hold significant advantages over their less fortunate peers because of the seemingly bottomless wells of capital at their disposal. They are in many ways living every coin collector's dream by having access to blank signed checks allowing them to purchase whatever rarities their hearts desire.

Then there are the upper echelon independent dealers whose annual revenues at times approach the levels achieved by the highly visible dealers backed by large infu-

sions of cash. These very successful independents can be classified into two categories: old wave and new wave. Dealers in the old-wave group made their bones during the 1960s and 1970s, and have maintained their status as key players to the present date. The new-wavers emerged in the 1980s and 1990s and have risen like cream to the top in the more sophisticated market environment fueled greatly by the Internet. Old- and new-wave upper-echelon independent dealers are seen at most major coin shows, generally operate out of an office, service a diverse clientele, maintain inventories valued between \$2 million and \$10 million (in 2008), are usually experts in one or more series of coins or currency, possess sufficient to superior grading skills, and utilize advertizing to promote themselves in trade periodicals, as well as hosting their own websites.

The Coin Shop Owners

Coin shop owners represent another segment of the dealer community. These independent operators are found in hundreds of cities across the country. Some of them run small mom-and-pop operations, with gross annual revenues of between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000. While others joined in either partnerships or perhaps employing larger staffs, maintain a sizable market presence. Coin dealers that operate shops can offer a wide variety of services to collectors, including want-list researches, providing appraisals, purchasing collections, and education in basic fundamentals. A small percentage of coin shop owners set up at shows as well.

Since there are no exams administered to determine a person's qualifications, anyone can operate a coin shop, or declare himself to be any kind of coin dealer for that matter. Thus, you will encounter some coin shop owners who barely know more (or sometimes less) about the hobby than the collectors frequenting their stores. On the other hand, many coin shop owners are advanced numismatists and possess a vast wealth of knowledge, as well as acumens in categories such as coin grading, rarity identification, investment counseling, and research work.

While a large segment of the coin collector community will rarely, if ever, encounter dealers in some of the other categories described in this article, most, if not all collectors will come into contact with a coin shop owner at one point or another. Coin shop owners are in many ways the links between collectors and the hobby.

The Telemarketers

Another category of coin dealer is the telemarketer, a rather pervasive segment of the industry, which includes the boiler-room salesperson who is hawking numismatic items at exorbitant prices, and the operator of a huge and sophisticated sales force, whose prices are not necessarily considered fraudulent, but whose high-pressure marketing tactics could easily be construed as unethical. There are a handful of rather large and elaborate telemarketing companies that sell millions of dollars of rare coins every year. And while not all members of these firms' sales staffs can be considered coin dealers in the strictest sense of the term, there is usually at least one recognized numismatic authority connected to the company.

There are some in the dealer community who extol the telemarketers, at least the so-called legitimate ones, for the large volume of coins they sell each year. Yet, while it might be true that this stimulates the coin market, the dynamic tension created by the propaganda employed by many telemarketers is cause for concern. Sales pressure and frivolous claims should never be used to coax potential retail customers to purchase rare coins. While *caveat emptor* is the battle cry proclaimed by telemarketers to justify their questionable methods, collectors should be educated and never be forced into situations in which they must beware of their decisions.

The Advertisers

Still, there is another group of coin dealers of which collectors must be on guard. These are the "advertisers," who year in and year out saturate numismatic periodicals with multi-full-page ads, featuring what appear to be great deals on coins. The problem is, the majority of the time, buyers do not receive coins in the grades advertized. For example, a silver dollar might be described as "Brilliant Uncirculated," when in reality it is what is referred to in the hobby as a "slider." In other words, a coin in Almost Uncirculated condition, which has probably been dipped in a solution to make it appear brighter.

These "advertisers" don't sell coins which have been certified by top-tier third-party grading services, such as PCGS and NGC, at least not many such coins. Instead, they sell "raw" or uncertified coins, for which they can employ their own subjective, often very liberal, grading standards. Yet their ads appear like clockwork year round and constitute a major portion of numismatic periodicals' advertizing revenues.

How do these dealers survive, you ask, especially in an age of more sophisticated grading practices? There's a slithery loophole that allows them to continue foisting their brand of hucksterism on an unwitting public. As long as a return privilege is offered on every over-graded, misrepresented item they sell, the "advertisers" are free to do as they please. Once again, *caveat emptor* is invoked, placing the burden of responsibility on the collector. And, there must be enough susceptible people out there, since there appears to be no subsiding of these kinds of ads in the numismatic press.

The Graders

While you will probably not see the "advertisers" submitting large groups of coins to the third-party grading services, our next category of coin dealers thrives on this practice. These dealers are referred to as the "graders," since their modus operandi is to get as many coins graded at either of the two (PCGS and NGC) grading services as possible. They scour bourse tables at coin shows and travel from coin shop to coin shop across the country searching for coins which might be undergraded, for the purpose of scoring upgrades upon resubmission. The most talented of these "graders" generate big profits at times and consistently bang out good livings.

They sell to other dealers for the most part, as they are not usually interested in cultivating relationships with retail clients. After all, this might consume too much of their time, which would be better spent looking for more coins to submit to the grading services.

The Coin Doctors

A subset of the "graders" group is a category known as the "coin doctors." These dealers employ many of the same strategies as the "graders," as they are constantly searching for more coins to submit to the grading services. Yet, their techniques diverge from those employed by the "graders," primarily because of their practice of altering the surfaces of coins in an attempt to outfox the grading services.

These "coin doctors" will apply artificial toning to cover hairlines and abrasions on coins; they will use putties and other substances to conceal wear or fill in nicks or gouges; and they will rub the oil from their noses or foreheads across the surface of coins to hide contact marks.

Supposedly, as the grading services have gotten wiser, the coin doctors have grown less successful. There is no quantifiable way

to prove this however, but one thing is certain, these quick-change artists have left a slagheap of artificially enhanced coins in the marketplace.

The Authors and Experts

A small percentage of coin dealers have carved out niches in specialized areas of the hobby and comprise the next group on our list, known simply as the “authors and experts.” Members of this category have emerged from any of the other aforementioned categories, having developed a penchant for their area of expertise. They write books on their favorite subjects, many of which become recognized as the foremost authoritative references in their respective categories. Most writers and experts are actively engaged in trading numismatic items, although some are simply observant bystanders. Those that do deal in coins for a living, often have keen insights from their experiences in the trenches to share with their readers.

It appears as if there has been a proliferation of numismatic literature published over the past decade. This is welcome news for members of the coin collecting community, especially those interested in furthering their numismatic education. The dealers who write books are making a lasting contribution to their hobby.

The Vest-Pocket Dealers

Before a person becomes a full-fledged coin dealer he or she will often transition from the collector ranks to a part-time participation in the business, known as a vest-pocket dealer. The term stems from the inference that such a person maintains a portable store, carrying his inventory in his pockets so to speak, rather than operating out of a bricks and mortar location. Many vest-pocket dealers have tried and failed; but a small percentage of them have passed the test and entered into respectable full-time status.

The Cyber-Dabbler Dealers

As the Internet has pervaded our culture, increased numbers of what might be referred to as “cyber-dabbler dealers” have emerged. Online auction platforms such as eBay offer these “cyber-dabblers” the ultimate in portable peddling, and require much less accountability than is required from the face-to-face transactions conducted by their counterparts, the vest-pocket dealers. Only the future will reveal how rampant these Internet numismatic novices are. One thing’s for certain, buyers pursuing coins in these online auctions will need to be doubly sure of whom the sellers are.

PLEASE PASS THE CHOCOLATE . . . COINS

BY RICHARD GIEDROYC, WORLD COIN NEWS

Ask Dave Harper, the editor of World Coin News. Ask any coin publication editor -- they all cringe at the idea of someone writing about foil covered chocolate coins. Sure, your non-collecting relatives may give you some of them during the holiday season, but what collector in his or her right mind would collect them?

This time chocolates as a commodity are in the news for real. According to the Nov. 27 issue of The Economic Times published in Madurai, India, the chocolate treat is now being used as a substitute for coins due to the ongoing coinage shortage there. It does not appear the chocolates are being “circulated” in foil wrappings that makes them resemble real coins, but chocolate is being traded in specific size bottles due to the coinage shortage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to remind you that this brief sketch does not encompass every category of coin dealer. For instance, I could have mentioned the coin brokers; individuals that never own inventory, but simply act as mediators between two parties. And then, there are the employees of large firms, who often begin as novices and gradually move up the ranks to become distinguished coin dealers in their own rights. Sometimes, they even branch out and start their own companies.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn’t make a passing comment about the principles and the graders at the third-party grading services. For the most part, these individuals came from one or more of the categories aforementioned (some are still active in their respective categories, while others are committed to only working for their third-party grading company). They are proficient in one of the integral components of coin collecting: grading.

In theory, these third-party graders exist to keep honest the players in all the other categories mentioned in this article—in reference to accurately rating coin conditions, anyway. And while the two major services (PCGS and NGC) have been commendably successful in their mission, there is no better advice for any collector to follow than, “know your dealer.”

I hope this top-to-bottom glimpse into the world of coin dealers has been enlightening and that you will be better equipped to evaluate the ones with which you choose to do business.

According to The Economic Times, “Sale of 50-paise chocolates in this city has picked up manifold not because [of] people’s sudden love for it, but to tide over acute shortage of 50-paise coins. The chocolates are given in some government and private buses, canteens, hotels, drug stores, and parking places in place of coins, a wholesale dealer of confectionaries told [the news] media.”

“Even in hospital canteens, where the coffee or tea cost 3.50 rupees chocolates were given for 50 paise balance&” (India’s currency unit is the rupee, equal to 100 paise).

The high value of the metal of which the 50-paise coins are composed is the cause of the coinage shortage problem. According to the Madurai newspaper, “Some scrap dealers attribute this shortage to mass purchases of coins by blade manufacturers in Mumbai for making high-quality razor blades.”

The scrap metal dealers are now paying twice face value for 50-paise and for 1-rupee coins. The scrap metal dealers then resell the coins to refiners or the blade manufacturers for even more money.

In the mean time, the chocolate industry in India is surging due to the substitution of their product for coins. A person identified as Krishnamurthy and as a leading agent of branded chocolates by The Economic Times is quoted as saying, “We sell two bottles of chocolate instead of one bottle.”

The strange part about the coin shortage in India is the inconsistent distribution of the perceived shortage. According to the Dec. 1 MeriNews newspaper in Vibhav Birwatkar, 25-paise coins are still available there but are being openly refused to be accepted in commerce despite laws making it a crime to refuse the coins. Making it all the more ridiculous is the fact 100 rupees value of the 25-paise coins can be sold to a refinery for 160 rupees due to the steel content of the coins.

Officially chocolates are not allowed to be used as a substitute for coins in India, but readers may recall that when U.S. 1-cent coins have been in short supply in the past the same scenario has been played out by retailers in this country. Substitutes for coins such as candy are not anything new. Siege money from early modern Europe included emergency coins made from diner plates, flatware, and even of cardboard from church hymnals.

The only difference between these siege coins and what is going on now in India is that the siege coins weren’t composed of a consumable good. Don’t expect coin boards to be on sale soon on which you can mount your foil covered chocolate coins.

RCM CENTENNIAL - CHAPTER 2 - 1908 TO 1931

BY TONY HINE

Last month we reviewed the political maneuvering from the 1880s to 1900 toward getting an Ottawa branch of the Royal Mint and looked at the cost overruns occasioned by the delays in selecting an appropriate contractor to build the specified perimeter fence surrounding the Sussex Street location for Ottawa's mint buildings. A brief survey of written histories of the mint was summarized. This month will consider the history from its opening in 1908 until its Canadianization in 1931, during which the Ottawa branch of the Royal Mint was a distinctly colonial enterprise.

This relationship echoed the subservience of Canada's Government to its British Head office, personified by the British Crown. When Canada participated in the Boer War, it was characterized as British Empire support for another colonial venture two oceans away.

Canada entered the Great War as a colonial extension of the British Empire.

While the Battle of Gallipoli was a defining national moment for Australia and New Zealand (immortalized by the song "Waltzing Matilda") and the Newfoundland Regiment still defines itself by the Battle of the Somme, the Battle of Vimy Ridge is often seen as a definitively Canadian struggle.

While the Generals of the First World War may have been cavalier in their estimation of the value of Canadian lives to much tragic effect, the crucible of World War One helped forge a national pride on the battlefields of France. The First World War really began the arc of American ascendancy that would help loosen our ties to Britain and nurture a different dependency and a different relationship. These loosening ties found numismatic expression as early as 1870 when the Province of Canada adopted a decimal currency to replace pounds shillings and pence.

The close relationship between Canada and the United States started no later than July 28, 1755, the date when Governor Lawrence expelled the Acadians from the Maritime provinces, in an act of petulance over the Acadians perceived refusal to swear allegiance to the British Crown. Many Acadians fled to the United States, some as close as Maine, Vermont or Massachusetts, while others went as far south as New Orleans, a French port in the midst of Spanish territory. In New Orleans, the angli-

cized bastardization of Acadian became Cajun, today more recognizable as a cuisine than a nation. At the time of expulsion, the French settlement at New Orleans was seen as a welcoming area to the expelled Acadians. By the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, the French colony became part of the United States, although Louisiana was a resolutely Southern jurisdiction during the Civil War.

On July first, 1916, the Newfoundland Regiment lost twenty six officers and 658 men at the Battle of the Somme. The Battle for Vimy Ridge in April 1917 is often cited as a key milestone in the emergence of Canada's nationhood. As the War Museum website reports:

"Attacking together for the first time, the four Canadian divisions stormed the ridge at 5:30am on 9 April 1917. More than 15,000 Canadian infantry overran the Germans all along the front. Incredible bravery and discipline allowed the infantry to continue moving forward under heavy fire, even when their officers were killed.

There were countless acts of sacrifice, as Canadians single-handedly charged machine-gun nests or forced the surrender of Germans in protective dugouts. Hill 145, the highest and most important feature of the Ridge, and where the *Vimy monument* now stands, was captured in a frontal bayonet charge against machine-gun positions. Three

more days of costly battle delivered final victory. The Canadian operation was an important success, even if the larger British and French offensive, of which it had been a part, had failed. But it was victory at a heavy cost: 3,598 Canadians were killed and another 7,000 wounded.

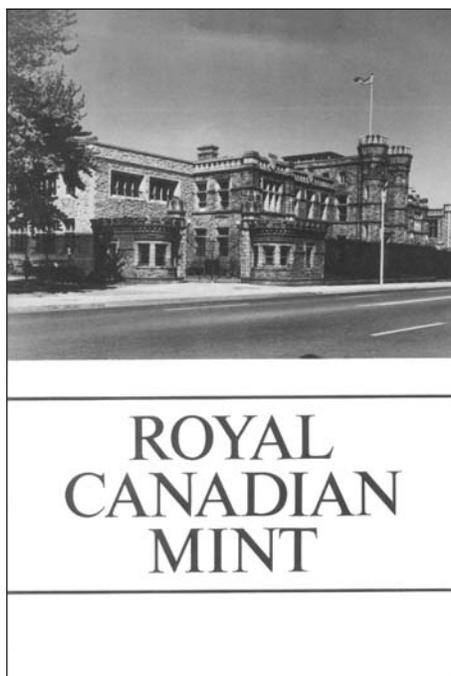
The capture of Vimy was more than just an important battlefield victory. For the first time all four Canadian divisions attacked together: men from all regions of Canada were present at the battle. Brigadier-General A.E. Ross declared after the war, "in those few minutes I witnessed the birth of a nation." Source: www.warmuseum.ca

The Ottawa branch of the Mint added a refinery in 1911.

In Canada, we know the phrase "Dei Gratia Regina," which appears after the monarchs name on the obverse of our coinage. According to Canadian Coin News correspondent George Manz the Latin phrase Dei Gratia Rex was introduced during the reign of Edward I. The Latin translates as King by the grace of God. The title Empress of India was coveted by Queen Victoria, and finally awarded to her in 1877 by Disraeli's Parliament, although it did not appear on her coinage. Godless coins occurred outside Canada and before 1911. Spink's 2001 Coins of England catalogue lists two godless Victoria Sovereigns in 1848 and 1849 on page 400. However, the same catalogue shows that the United Kingdom coinage of 1911 included Grace in abbreviated Latin form: "GEORGIUS V DEI GRA: BRITT: OMN: REX"

Canada's coins of 1911 omitted the Latin DEI GRATIA, but for the first time added ET IND IMP. Anthony Kissmate, the Manager of Communications with the Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa points out that Emperor was added to the titles of Edward VII right from 1901. The inscription read: "EDWARDUS VII DEI GRATIA REX IMPERATOR Indeed, renowned Canadian numismatic researcher Gregory S. Ingram believes that engravers were given broad latitude as to what they could inscribe. Ingram points out that the Newfoundland 1911 fifty cent piece was correctly inscribed: GEORGIUS V DEI GRA: REX ET IND: IMP.

The five and ten dollar gold coins of 1914 are the most highly prized of each respective series. While the 1916C Sovereign has the highest trends value for



any Canadian Gold Coin, the low mintage of only 6,111 pieces, they are in fact one-pound U.K. coins struck in Canada, rather than true Canadian Decimal coins. Ironically, the 1914 GBP/CDN\$ exchange rate meant that the pound was worth very close to five dollars. In 1914, colonial sovereigns were struck in Australia bearing both Melbourne (M) and Perth (P) mintmarks.

Canada's decimal coinage was in the process of change in 1921. The impact of World War I from 1914 to 1918 (which was called The Great War in 1921,) continued to have an economic effect on the World, Empire and Canadian economies. A peace conference had commenced in Paris in 1919. Although the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919, the peace conference continued into 1920.

Since the first coins were struck in ancient Greece, one of the first responses to economic duress is for the government to debase the coinage. In Canada, for the copper cent, this meant a reduction in 1920 from a 25.4mm size (similar to the British half-penny) to the 19.05mm size of the U.S. copper cent. This decreased the weight from 5.67 grams to 3.24 grams. In parallel with this copper conservation through downsizing, the mint prepared to replace the small silver five-cent piece (colloquially called “-fish scales”) with a larger nickel five cent piece, also similar to the corresponding United States denomination. In anticipation of the new nickel coin, very few 1921 silver five-cent pieces were issued, and the Charlton catalogue reports that only four hundred are believed to have survived from a reported mintage of 2,582,495. The 2005 ICCS population report shows over one hundred 1921 five-cent pieces have been graded. A 2006 ICCS population report will be released in April. Even the ten cent coin had a relatively low mintage of 2, 469,562, the lowest since 1915, while the war actively raged. The mintage for the twenty-five cent piece was only 597,337. No more twenty-five cent pieces were minted until 1927. On November 20, 2005, a MS-64 twenty-five cent piece sold for \$5,750.00 at an Oakville, Ontario auction (TICF).

The key coin for the key 1921 date is the fifty cent piece. Although 206,398 were reported to be minted, the 2006 Charlton catalogue reports an MS-63 value of \$125,000.00. About 75 of the 1921 fifty-cent pieces are believed to have survived. Perhaps the most famous find was the piece found by Michael Walsh in a roll of 50-cent pieces he obtained from the Main Street branch of the Royal Bank in Moncton. ICCS

reports grading 23 of the fifty-cent piece in its 2005 population report. Only 2 of those were graded MS-60 or better. A PCGS certified VG-8 was listed for sale in the November 2005 Nuphilex auction.

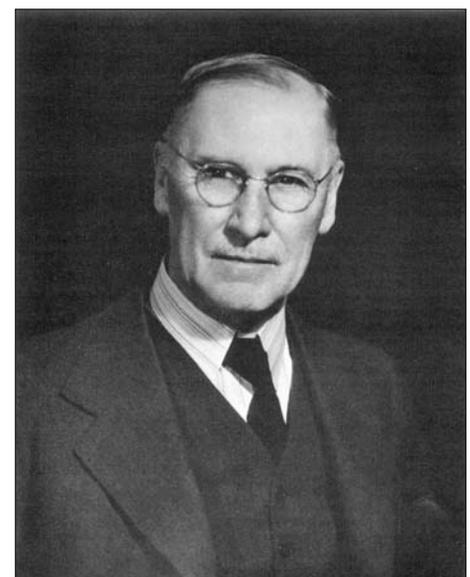
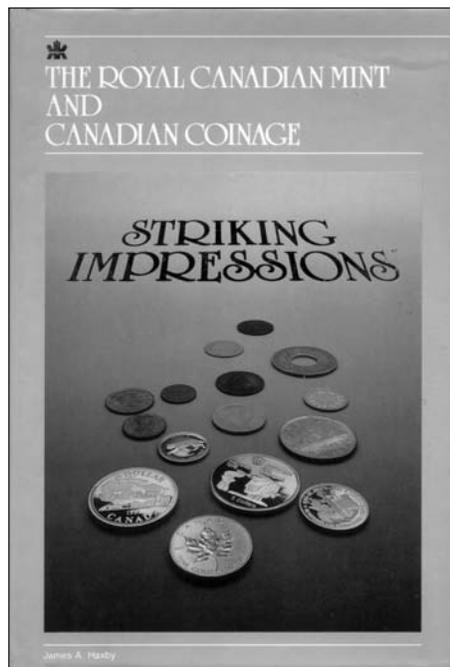
The mintage of the 1925 nickel five cent piece was only 200,050, the lowest ever recorded for that denomination. The nickel material holds up in circulation better than silver, so the absence of silver 25-cent and fifty-cent coins for 1925 increases focus on the five cent nickel.

The rising tide of Canadian nationalism resulted in strained relationships with the Royal Mint in 1925, as Canada strained at the colonial yoke. Deputy Mint Master Arthur H. W. Cleave, who had been one of the first appointments to the Ottawa branch in 1907, when he was named Superintendent. Cleave had been promoted to deputy master in 1919 upon the retirement of Dr. James Bonar, but by 1925 was in deteriorating health, and although he clung to his post until August, 1925, finally retired. On his retirement, the Canadian government hoped to promote H. W. Ewart, an Engineer in the Mechanics and Die Shop, who was Canadian and connected to the Liberal Government of the Right Honourable William Lyon Mackenzie King. Instead, the Royal Mint, without consulting the Finance Ministry in Canada, appointed John Honeyford Campbell as Deputy Minister. Campbell had been Deputy Master of the Sydney Mint and was already sixty years old at the time of his posting to

Ottawa. Ottawa worried that it would be funding the pension of a foreigner who was nearing retirement age. Ewart would have to wait until 1935 to be appointed Master following Campbell's retirement.

1926 is also a key date for nickels, as the two varieties of near 6 and far 6 share a reported mintage of 933, 577. No silver ten-cent pieces were struck from 1921 to 1928. In the twenty-five cent, the 1927 quarter is regarded as a key date, as the denomination saw a hiatus from 1921 to 1927, while 1931 is a key date for the fifty-cent piece. At the February, 2006 Torex show, of B and W Coins proudly displayed a selection from his inventory of 90 1925 nickels. He estimated that he had 40 pieces with him. On Sunday afternoon, he counted seventeen; although he assured this reporter that he had not sold twenty-three pieces. ICCS president Brian Cornwell says that Population reports show about one thousand 1925 nickels have been certified, but only one achieved the grade of MS-65. At a May 27, 2006 auction at Hamilton's TNS Show, Monsieur Eric Paquet of C & P Numismatics reports selling a 1925 nickel certified at MS-64 by PCGS, for C\$5,520.00. Earlier lots graded AU-58 sold for between C\$345.00 and \$672.75. Two lots of 1926 Far 6 nickels graded AU-58 each sold for C\$805.00, M. Paquet reports.

On December 1, 1931, the Dominion of Canada officially took over the Ottawa branch of the Royal Mint, renaming it the Royal Canadian Mint.



Henry Edward Ewart

ANCIENT COIN COLLECTORS' INFLUENCE EXPANDS

by Richard Giedroyc, World Coin News

A cautious but upbeat assessment of the Ancient Coin Collectors Guild and its impact on people outside the coin collecting hobby who would demand certain coins be returned to their place of origin due to their being cultural patrimony was given Jan. 12 at a meeting of the ACCG during the New York International Numismatic Convention.

"Through the year we really got good publicity," said ACCG Director Wayne Sayles. "We finally have an even playing field and the ability to push back."

By pushing back Sayles meant against foreign governments and professional archaeological groups that have demanded coins these groups deem to be "ancient" of Cyprus, Italy, and China be returned to those countries because the coins are their cultural patrimony. Similar demands have been made in recent years regarding antiquities as well.

The United States government recently allowed Cyprus' demands regarding prohibition of import of its ancient coins to be honored, which in turn according to ACCG member and Washington lawyer Peter Tompa could open the door to revisit similar demands made in the past by Italy. Speaking at the NYINC meeting, Tompa said there is concern such demands by Italy could impact the entire ancient Roman coin collecting community.

Tompa added that a recent lawsuit filed by Sayles against the United States State Department was initiated due to concerns of insider manipulation within the State Department to ensure coins would be lumped together with antiquities in any rulings allowing the return of such items to foreign countries as being the cultural patrimony of those countries. Tompa pointed out that while the Peoples' Republic of China is one of the countries of concern, Chinese art dealers have political clout that could blunt recent Chinese demands for return of any antiquity, including coins, originating prior to 1911.

Tompa acknowledged that one of the problems is that there are institutions that are involved in excavations on Cyprus and other countries that want antiquities

returned and for that reason don't want to upset the government by supporting any organization resisting their demands.

Sayles said the mission of the ACCG is "the preservation of ancient coin collecting." He estimates the organization now represents about 5,000 collectors. ACCG has about 600 members and another 20 affiliate member clubs.

The lawsuit brought against the State Department has gained national publicity, including in the Congressional Quarterly, New York Times newspaper, and the Seattle Times newspaper, according to Sayles. He said, "This is really getting to be a national issue."

Podcasts and U-Tube exposure to the cultural patrimony issue are also being considered by the ACCG. The ACCG has, in addition, given educational grants to several public schools as well as ACCG Friends of Numismatists awards to influential people.

Coin dealer Harlan Berk of Chicago recently supported the educational grants effort by contributing ancient coins to be used as learning tools in the schools. Berk said he was told an archaeologist told a school teacher it was a bad thing to give ancient coins to children.

Speaking at the NYINC meeting Berk said, "I am angry at the archaeologists and I want to beat them."

Further information on the ACCG is available at its Web site www.ACCG.US.



A PERSPECTIVE FROM "THE STATES" — UNCOMMON BUT WORTHLESS THINGS

by Dave Frank,

Nevada Appeal Staff Writer

I bought a book of stamps this week because people still use the post office for things they could e-mail. The stamp vending machine looked neat, so I used that. As I took out the stamps, I listened to my change fall into the coin slot.

Then I looked for the bills, because the machine owed me more than a dollar. But no bills came. I opened the coin slot. What?

The machine had given me \$1 coins. "\$1 coins?" I thought. "What am I going to do with \$1 coins?"

I know some people get excited about \$1 coins and that's good. Usually I trade \$1 coins for real money. Besides being the size of a marble, dollar coins are terrible because they are the only piece of American money you have to convince people is real. "It's a \$1 coin," you might tell a cashier inspecting your \$1 coin.

The reason you have to say this is because no one besides that coin collector at work likes \$1 coins.

People are busy, and America is a dollar-bill nation.

Americans and I do, however, love foreign coins. I remember seeing a coin from Germany when I was little and I didn't know what to do I was so excited.

"How much will this be worth when I'm grown up?" I thought. "Can magic be quantified?"

All foreign coins look magical, with the exception of Canadian coins. I want Canadian coins not to look like American coins. Canadian coins also only appear when you're excited about buying something important like a candy bar.

"Time for a candy bar!" you think.

"No it's not," say the Canadian coins.

What's worse is how I feel bad about throwing away Canadian coins because they are worth something in Canada and I'm greedy.

Anyway, I don't know if I'll ever be able to trade away my \$1 coins because I tend to suspect uncommon but worthless things—like geodes—will gain value with age.

Maybe I'll just wait to trade them away at a time when I have no control over my will, like when someone I know has a candy bar.

"Look," I'll say. "It's a \$1 coin."