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# The MCA Advisory

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*The Newsletter of Medal Collectors of America*

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## Coming Events

**October 17, 2006** - Indian Peace Medals  
I of John J. Ford, Jr.

## What's New On Our Website!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE EVERY MONTH

[www.medalcollectors.org](http://www.medalcollectors.org)

Stack's auction schedule is published on their website [www.stacks.com](http://www.stacks.com) since last minute changes to the Ford schedule have been known to occur unexpectedly.



## From the Editor

We had an excellent meeting at the Denver ANA. Some 21 members showed up to hear the Secretary-Treasurers report (we have \$11,500 in the bank plus 140 paid up members) and to address other items on the agenda.

The Carl Carlson award was given to Michael Hodder. His superb cataloguing of the Ford material made the choice an automatic one. These catalogues will each serve as references for the hobby going forward.

The Gloria Stamm Chamberlain award was presented to Max Spiegel. It is refreshing to see talented young newcomers attracted to medals. He has promised to give us a sample of his interests in the form of an article for MCA.

The group assembled ratified the Board's decision to make a donation to the libraries at the ANA and the ANS. It is appropriate that we share our sound fiscal position with those two entities, each of which supports the hobby in a major way.

Bob Fritsch, our nominating committee for next year's elections, asked for volunteers and suggestions. He got some of both. How about you? Regular turnover in our leadership is both wholesome and necessary.

A great deal of useful dialog was exchanged on a variety of topics: life membership, MCA articles and promoting the club. The latter is my particular hot button: yes, we do have a growing membership but it is tiny compared to our opportunity. In my opinion, the best way to increase it is by baiting the MCA Advisory with an irresistible menu of interesting articles.

## The First American Peace Medal

(by John W. Adams)

About a year ago, we came across an interesting numismatic reference in the journals of the Continental Congress. In May 1788,

Thomas Goadsby petitioned the body as follows.”

. . . That a contract in behalf of your memorialist was made with the Board of Treasury for the furnishing of two dye's (at a stipulated price) for the purpose of striking medals for the Savages.

That your memorialist at a very considerable expence had the dye's executed (he conceives agreeable to contract, and the orders of the Board of Treasury) which he presented together with the proof of the medal here-with enclosed, but that for reasons your memorialist is uninformed of, the Board of Treasury refused payment . . .”<sup>1</sup>

It occurred to us immediately that Goadsby's medal must be one and the same as an unattributed piece belonging to the American Numismatic Society. We sent the above excerpt to Robert Hoge at the ANS and asked him to do an article for the Advisory if he could establish a connection. Bob did better than that. He discovered that “my” idea had been published twice before.

Credit for first publication goes to a great expert on colonial coinage, Damon G. Douglas. Writing in the July 1945 *Numismatist*, he announced “The First United States Indian Chief Peace Medal.” His article not only included Goadsby's memorial but also a congressional order, dated 1786, that American medals be given to Indians for any British or French medals turned in. He next quotes from a passage by Bauman Belden wherein, in 1792, the Cherokee chief Bloody Fellow exchanges two silver medals that had been given him four or five years earlier.

Finally, Douglas analyzes the design and fabric of the piece in the A.N.S., concluding that it was typical of the technology of the time. Moreover, its obverse was in keeping with earlier colonial peace medals, whereas its reverse was an excellent means by which to render the authority of Congress.

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<sup>1</sup> Papers of the Continental Congress, microfilm 247, reel 49, Vol. 3, p. 559.

The matter rested there until 1976, when Bob Julian wrote a brief piece for the A.N.S. Museum Notes #21. Julian found subsequent congressional records demonstrating that, in 1790, the payment for the dies was finally made. Thus, it could be shown that Congress ordered the dies, paid for them and thus had all the necessities for issuing peace medals. So far so good.

Julian goes on to provide an ostensible missing link: “The reason for the preparation of these first medals was the mission of Colonel Joseph Martin, in the latter part of 1785, to the Cherokee nation. The result of this journey was the Treaty of Hopewell, November 28, 1785. The known records are silent as to whether or not Martin passed out medals at the signing of the treaty.” He then links this new piece of information to Douglas’ 1792 citation wherein the Cherokee Chief Bloody Fellow returns two silver medals that had been given to him earlier by Colonel Martin.

All in all, it adds up to a pretty good case. However, both Douglas and Julian made the same error. Colonel Martin did not work for Congress. Rather, he was the Indian agent for the Commonwealth of Virginia. When Thomas Jefferson was governor of Virginia in 1780, he designed the so-called “Virginia Happy While United” peace medal. He and his successors issued these medals on various occasions up until the federal government came into being. Indeed, had Julian used a more complete quote available from the State Papers, he would have noted that Blood Fellow was extremely reluctant to give up the medals awarded him by “his friends the Virginians.”

Thus, to set the record straight, the Continental Congress had the means and the intent to award its own Indian peace medals. However, there is still no evidence that they ever did. Like Douglas and Julian, we accept the A.N.S. “proof” as the design ordered by Congress. However, where is the record of its having been produced and/or awarded? Where is another example?

Note: An image of this medal will appear in the September issue.

## **John R. Gaines: Horses and Medals**

(by Chris Eimer)

In one of many obituaries for John R. Gaines (1928-2005), the *New York Times*\* referred to his life’s work with thoroughbred horses, as one of the profession’s most active promoters and innovators, and as founder of the Breeders’ Cup. Indeed, the estate which he ran at Gainesway Farm in Kentucky had become one of the world’s most prominent stallion farms.

Less well known was the interest which he had in fine art, the legacy of which survives in the form of illustrated auction catalogues. An interest that happened to be inspired by a chance visit to the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, where amongst the choice items on display were select groups of early drawings and medals.

John Gaines managed to put together a collection of old master drawings, forty-six of which formed a one-owner auction catalogue. It included such illustrious names as Carpaccio, Tiepolo and da Vinci and was sold in New York by Sotheby’s in 1986 for a little over \$21 million. His acquisition of medals began in the late 1980s, with much of the buying done at auction houses in the U.K. and on mainland Europe. Although barely twenty years ago, the availability of material in the art market at that time was quite different than it is today, and coincided with some very good Renaissance medals coming to auction, much of it through Sotheby’s in London. John Gaines was an avid learner and unafraid to seek advice. He retained the consultancy services of a New York-based dealer in sculpture and did much of his auction buying through a European dealer in works of art, from whom he also bought privately, while also occasionally bidding on the telephone himself.

The summation of some fifteen years of medal buying was a collection largely of Renaissance interest, but with the addition of some plaques and plaquettes, and a cut-off date of c.1650. With an acutely conscious eye for quality, material deemed inferior or unwanted would be unceremoniously culled. Although I did not act for him, we did speak from time to time, and in the last conversation that we were to have, on the telephone in early 2005, he related to me his decision to sell the collection at Morton & Eden in London, a small proportion of which was held back and not auctioned. In urging me to go and look at what he had assembled, the degree of pride with which he spoke about his medals was clearly palpable, and was something that obviously had given him much satisfaction.

Unfortunately, and most regrettably, between consigning the collection and the appearance of the first catalogue, John Gaines passed away, on 11 February. He was thus unable to see the material in its fully catalogued and illustrated state, for which Tom Eden and his colleagues at Morton & Eden had done it proud. There were 118 lots in total, which were to be sold in two tranches, with a balanced representation of the Italian, French, German and Low Countries medal making schools in each.

The first sale took place on 21 April 2005, and buyers consisted of dealers in medals and works of art, as well as some private collectors, together with a number of bidders on the telephone, their anonymity preserved. For the most part estimates were exceeded, and in some cases by a goodly margin, but there were some things which did not get into positive territory. This is not altogether surprising with material attracting a relatively small and specialist circle of interest; not to mention the ardour and single-mindedness with which John Gaines would usually pursue a medal to his liking, until victory was assured. With such a strategy, it is inevitable that a very high price was occasionally paid. But given this

background to the collection and its relatively short period of formation, it is surprising how well certain medals performed and how relatively few the failures were. This says much about the level of quality that had been achieved and the direction which the market is taking.

The opening medal in this first sale, of 53 lots, and the front cover piece, was a portrait of Vittorino da Feltre by that most celebrated of Renaissance masters of the medal, Antonio di Puccio, known to us all as Pisanello. This carried an estimate of £40,000-60,000 and sold for £54,000 to Larry Stack, who, together with various telephone bidders, was a prolific buyer at both this and the second auction, and present in the room on both occasions. When last sold, this medal had fetched £42,000 in a Sotheby's works of art auction in London in 1995. Lot 2, a large gilt-bronze medal of Borso d'Este, by Petrecino da Firenze left its estimate of £40,000-60,000 way behind, selling for £112,000. Having a particularly fresh provenance was the double-portrait medal of Niccolo Michiel and his wife Dea Contarini by Fra Antonio da Brescia (Lot 6). Estimated at £4000-6000, and having brought £6000 in London in 2002, it sold for £15,000. On the whole, Morton & Eden's estimates tended to reflect a modest discount to what had been paid for the item. In many cases, this proved tempting enough to bring several bidders into the arena.

The most prominent and certainly the most glamorous of all the medals in this first sale was Jacopo da Trezzo's large gold portrait of Mary Tudor, Queen of England (1553-58), of which the one other known example is in the cabinet of the British Museum. This has a provenance going back to an 1864 Sotheby's sale, and a re-appearance there in 1927, when it was purchased by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and thereafter donated to the British Museum. The Gaines example had been bought at Christie's in London in 2000, when it had formed part of the collection of the late

Baroness Batsheva de Rothschild (Lot 36). It had apparently come through a previous member of the family, and it has a suggested provenance linking it to the Viennese Habsburgs. I well remember the sale, with Christie's Great Room and overflow rooms packed to capacity, the audience expectant, cameramen falling over themselves and banks of telephones at the ready. Thus a more high-profile auction it would be difficult to imagine, and on the day the medal sold for £115,000 against Christie's overly modest estimate of £20,000-30,000.

How to pitch the estimate this time round was clearly no easy task, but it was set at £80,000-120,000, and the possibility, if not the likelihood, that the hammer price would on this occasion fall short of that obtained at Christie's five years earlier loomed large. However, the opening figure of £55,000 was left standing when it went on to sell for £210,000, again to Larry Stack. Large size mid-sixteenth century gold medals of this quality do not exactly grow on trees, and coupled with its provenance, who is to say what the 'right price' for such an important item should be. 'It is what it is', as Alice (in Wonderland) might have remarked.

Another personal favourite was Guillaume Dupre's magnificent uniface silver portrait medal of Marcantonio Memmo, Doge of Venice, signed and dated 1612. Surely as sharp a cast as it is possible to find, this had been acquired by or for John Gaines at a Sotheby's London medal sale in 1993, when £14,500 was paid. This time round, the bidding started at £6000 before settling at £37,000 (lot 29). Jan de Vos's wonderful oval silver medal (Lot 37), an allegory of Vanitas, with its wonderfully crafted bust of a skeleton, had been acquired at a Sotheby's London sale in 2001 for £27,500, and here is one example of a medal falling short of its original price, selling on this occasion for £22,000.

The second part of the Gaines medal sale was held on 8 December 2005, and it opened with the large bronze portrait medal of

Alfonso V of Aragon, dated 1449 and fully signed by Pisanello. This had been acquired in a Swiss sale in 2000, when, in circumstances not fully understood, it realised the sum of 315,000 Swiss Francs, or approximately £145,000. Subsequent to that auction and the medal's acquisition by John Gaines, an exhibition on the work of Pisanello appeared at the National Gallery in London, and the exhibition catalogue entry for the medal attributed it to the 'workshop of Pisanello', rather than directly to the hand of the master himself. A review of the catalogue found it difficult to accept the medal as not being by the master himself, to whom George Francis Hill had attributed it in his *Corpus* in 1930. Indeed, Hill had referred to the medal as 'splendid' and chose it as the frontispiece illustration to his earlier work on *Medals of the Renaissance*, published in 1920. Whatever the merits of the debate, this is a very fine medal and looks in hindsight to have been something of a bargain at a hammer price of £46,000. The estimate had been sensibly set at £60,000-80,000.

A little further on in the catalogue was to be found Sperandio of Mantua's bronze portrait medal of Camilla of Aragon, the widow of Costanzo Sforza. The obverse is coupled to a delightful reverse, showing a female figure on a seat comprising the foreparts of a unicorn and a hound. This charming and charismatic medal had appeared at a Sotheby's London sale of coins and medal in 1989, when it sold for £8000. That figure formed the upper end of the estimate this time round, and the medal sold for £21,000 (Lot 5).

Decorating the front cover of the second catalogue was the wonderful and ravishing silver portrait medal of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor (1519-56), by Albrecht Durer and Hans Krafft the Elder (Lot 41). Dated 1521, the reverse side features a double-headed eagle, while on both sides are raised heraldic borders. This medal has a provenance going back to the Prince Furstenberg collection, sold in 1931, and had most recently been sold by Sotheby's in

London in 1994, when it brought the then-impressive price of £50,000. The passage of time had, however, rendered this price increasingly less impressive and the catalogue estimate for this medal was understandably pitched at £70,000-100,000. The auctioneer opened bidding at £40,000, and in no time it reached £170,000, the victor being Larry Stack, underbid by a German dealer-cum-collector. There immediately followed Hans Reinhart the Elder's large Trinity medal, signed and dated January 1544 (Lot 42). Estimated at £40,000-60,000, this went for £130,000. It is understood that John Gaines had purchased this medal for approximately £65,000 in a private sale.

The latter part of the catalogue included a selection of plaques and plaquettes. A bronze of Venus chastising Cupid by Andrea Briosco, commonly referred to as Riccio (c.1470-1532). (Lot 57) had been in the collection of Sylvia Adams and sold in London by Bonhams 1996, when it made £40,000. This time round, it took £64,000. Particularly pleasing was a circular gilt-bronze plaquette by Moderno (Galeazzo Mondella), c.1467-1528/9, showing a seated figure of Mars amidst shields and trophies. This had been acquired from a Paris dealer, and was estimated at £10,000-15,000, but went on to sell for £23,000 (Lot 54).

The first part of the sale realised £717,774 and the second £670,850, sums which reflect the evenly balanced spread of material between the two auctions. However, it is sobering to think that the total realised figure for both parts would buy you little in the field of old master drawings.

On the face of it, the world of Renaissance medals could not be more different to that of a Kentucky horse breeder, but in the selection process of his quite different passions, John Gaines clearly had an uncommonly good eye as well as a fine instinct. Something which his medals - as seen within the confines of these two catalogues - bear witness.

\* 16 February 2005.

All prices quoted from the various sales are without the buyer's premium, which at the Morton & Eden sale of the Gaines collection was 20%.

## **LACONIA**

(by Bob Fritsch)

Laconia was established as a city in 1893. In 1855, Laconia had been incorporated as a town from lands at Meredith Bridge, Lakeport, Weirs and from a part of Gilmanton. The town's name was likely taken from the name of the original company formed by Captain John Mason and the Masonian proprietors in order to sell parcels to the original colonists during the colonial era: the Laconia Company. Laconia is the county seat for New Hampshire's Belknap County which was established by the legislature in 1840 (and named in honor of one of the most notable historians of the state, Dr. Jeremy Belknap). Prior to the establishment of Belknap County, the area now Laconia was in Strafford County (1773 -1841) and prior to that, the area was originally in Rockingham County (1771-1773). Belknap County originally was made up of eight former Strafford County towns: Alton, Barnstead, Centre Harbor, Gilford, Gilmanton, Meredith, New Hampton and Sanbornton. Currently, Belknap County includes Laconia (from Meredith in 1855) and ten towns.

The native inhabitants had long established one of the region's largest settlements at the Acquadocton Village located at the point now known as the Weirs, named after the wooden fishing weirs of woven branches set in the waterway at that point by the native peoples. The Weirs location had been visited as early as 1652 by the Endicott surveying party, a point now marked by Endicott Rock. The Europeans did not return to permanently settle the area for quite some time

owing to the series of colonial wars being waged across northeastern America during this period between the English (along with their Indian allies) and the French (along with their Indian allies). The last of these wars, the one Americans commonly call the French and Indian War, was ended by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The township of Gilmanton was granted east of the Winnepesaukee River in 1727, and a colonial fort was built in the location now Laconia in 1746. European colonists, however, did not finally settle in the Laconia area until 1761, that settlement being called Meredith Bridge and situated in what is now downtown Laconia.

The settlement was for the most part self-sufficient, the settlers producing their own food, clothing and other necessities. The main trade center for New Hampshire was Portsmouth and the settlement was connected to Portsmouth by a road initiated by Governor John Wentworth, who wished to have a route from Portsmouth to Canada other than the Connecticut River. That road is the route now along Pease Road and Parade Road and on through town along Pleasant, Province and (in part) Main streets to Route 107. Starting in 1765, lumber, wheat and corn mills were quickly established near what is now Mill Street. Taverns soon followed on what is now Parade Road (Farrar Tavern, 1782, and Davenport Tavern, 1785).

Manufacturing mills began to appear early in the 19th century; indeed, in 1800, the Bean Carding Mill was built. In 1813, the Avery Mill was opened. The importance of the thriving settlement to the region can be seen by its selection as a site for the court, built about 1822. In 1832, regional industrial growth based on water power was marked by the building of the Belknap Mill. Currently restored this textile mill, still standing in the heart of Laconia, is listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks and is the oldest such structure in the United States. (A second distinction for the Mill is its water-powered wheelhouse from the

early 1900's. It once supplied electricity to the downtown area and is the last of its kind in America.) At the formation of Belknap County in 1840, the courthouse was designated the county court, establishing the settlement as the county seat.

This period was also notable for the expansion and improvement of the regional roads with many major routes being established. Not only did the roadways in the region improve throughout the 19th century, but railroads also arrived in the area. By 1849, there was rail service provided by the Boston-Concord and the Montreal Railroad through Laconia to Lake Village, the Weirs and Meredith. During the same period, steamboats were appearing on Lake Winnepesaukee. The first such vessel, built at Lake Village in 1833, was the S.S. Belknap (like the county, named for Jeremy Belknap). In 1848, the Winnepesaukee Steamboat Company was formed.

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, industry grew in Laconia in many different areas of endeavor (lumber, textiles, shoes, hosiery, knitting machinery and needles for knitting machines); the increasing labor needs of the region were met in large part by immigration of French Canadians, many settling in East Lake Village. Among the emerging industries for the region was tourism, spurred by the growth of the railroad and the steamship lines. Lodging needs for these tourists were met by boarding houses and large hotels. Transportation needs within the city for tourists and residents alike during this period were met by trolley cars. The Ranlet Car Company, at first a builder of railcars, played an important role in the city's development. The car company became the city's largest employer, expanding to the building of trolley cars and subway cars. The Laconia Car Company was operated from 1848 through to the 1930's.

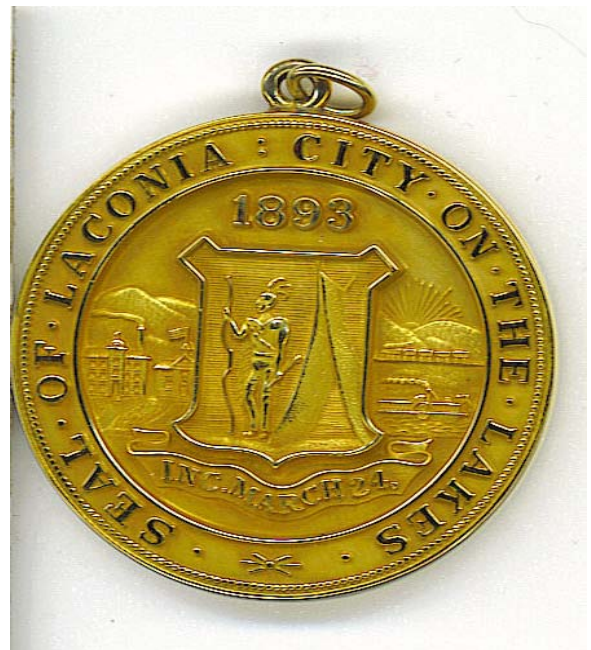
With the city's growth as an industrial center came a growing need for fire protection

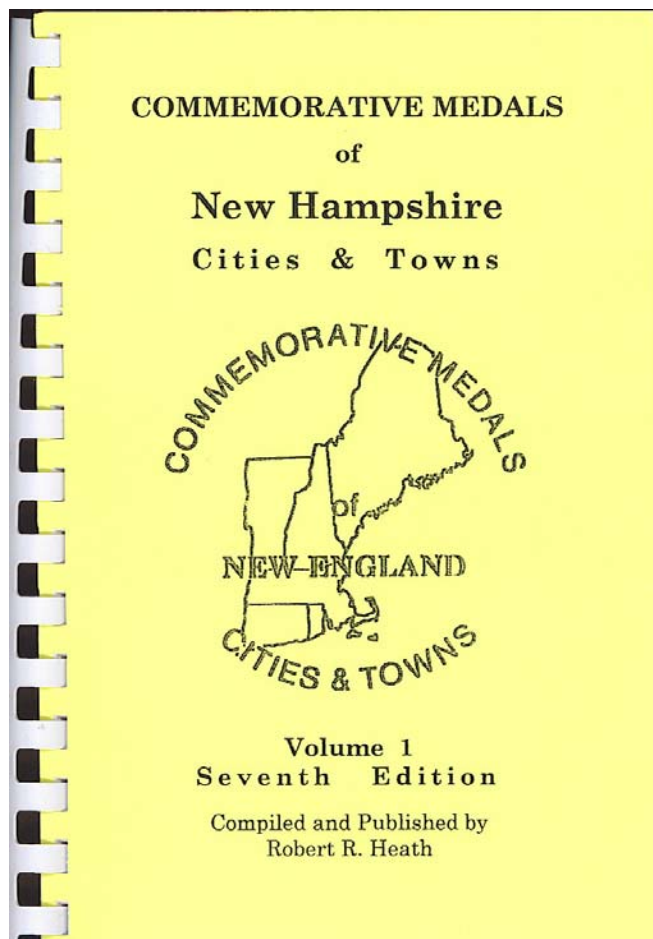


and early private fire brigades were set up in the city by manufactures to protect their facilities. The services of these fire brigades were made available to the public as well by the companies which had set them up. The main incentive for establishing this service was the Great Fire of 1860 which destroyed most of the property on Main Street from Mill Street to Water Street on November 21 of that year. These private fire-fighting companies were well established by the 1870's with fire houses, men in uniform and up-to-date equipment. A horse-drawn Amoskeag Steamer (a steam-powered water pump) and its fire brigade were photographed in Laconia in 1875. In 1888, a photograph of a large fire company is notable for its two hose wagons and its hook and ladder. Upon the establishment of Laconia as a city, the City Council as one of its first acts voted to have the Weirs firehouse built and that structure was complete in 1894. Fire brigades were called in by telegraph and, later, by telephone. In winter, equipment was placed on trains to get it as close to the fire as road conditions would allow. It is worth noting that there were two major disasters in the early 1900's: in 1902 there was an explosion which destroyed the Masonic temple and the adjacent livery stable. On May 26, 1903, a fire destroyed Lakeport, with fire companies being brought in by train from as far as Dover, NH, to fight the Great Lakeport Fire.

As electricity came to the area (thanks largely to the abundant water power available), the horse-drawn trolleys were replaced with electric ones and the last horsecar run was made in 1898. The car building shops continued to operate until they closed down in the 1930's, but other manufacturing remained in the area into the 1960's. The heavy industries eventually relocated, but Laconia revitalized its downtown during the 1960's and 1970's and now the region has light manufacturing and high-tech industry as well as a solid base of professionals and service industries. Very important to the area now, of course, is the

four-season tourist industry, many features of which can be seen through the Links page in this site.





## NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

2007 marks an election year for the Medal Collectors of America and we are looking for a few good men. We are looking for members to step forward and help to run the club. Positions to be filled are President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and six Directors. Duties are light and the reward is a good feeling that comes from helping a good club. Bob Fritsch is the Nominating Committee of one, and can be contacted on email at [bobfritsch@earthlink.net](mailto:bobfritsch@earthlink.net) or via USPS at PO Box 3003; Nashua, NH 03061-3003. Don't be surprised if Bob comes up to you at the Denver meeting to ask for your involvement.

## The Political Satire Medals of R.W. Julian, 1977-1981

(by Steve Pelligrini)

### Introduction

Without doubt some energetic and devoted numismatist will one day decide to stand on the shoulders of Edmund B. Sullivan<sup>i</sup> and write a successor volume about 20<sup>th</sup> century political tokens and medals. Within that book the satirical political medals produced by RW Julian in 1977-1981 will have pride of place as the highest quality and perhaps most important political medals of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are certainly the most politically telling of their particular time and place.

When considering political medals, whether from a previous century or from the previous generation, it is necessary to put them into the context of their time. In the bicentennial year of 1976 R.W. Julian, one of the United States premier numismatic historians, completed his Magnum Opus on early US Mint Medals<sup>ii</sup>. After having spent the majority of the previous five years reading and writing in the company of the founding fathers, the scholar emerged to view the current result of the endeavors of those noble men. From their perspective, he saw a country divided against itself, politically adrift, with leadership that either would not or could not lead the nation as a whole. Unlike Americans of 1776, the people of 1976 seemed without a compass to help guide themselves back on course. Julian identified the main problem in bicentennial America as the liberal Democratic establishment. In 1976 the Republican Party, for all intents and purposes, had been out of power since the onset of the Great Depression and Franklin Roosevelt's election 1932. But, after 45 years Roosevelt's grand coalition was beginning to fray and loosen at its center. A confluence of disaffected Americans voters were beginning to quietly come together in what would soon become a groundswell. Ironically these voters were first identified and courted by Lyndon Johnson, the last of FDR's

progressive New Dealers. Johnson called this growing swath of disaffected Americans the 'silent majority'. R W Julian determined he would give a voice to this (actually not so silent) group of Americans.

As a numismatic historian and professional educator Julian knew just how to make his point. Julian had long admired Karl Goetz's work, most especially his series of political satire medals. The success of these medals rested on their startling imagery, the clever irony of their inscriptions and their timeliness. Goetz in his medals seemed to have a sure feel for the heart, mind and political sympathies of the average citizen – even when they themselves did not. So popular and effective were Goetz's medals that they had helped to form public opinion in Germany between the wars. During WWI Goetz had produced a series of medallic satires that lampooned the perceived foibles of Germany's enemies. When the war ended Goetz, again through his satirical medals, was instrumental in helping the German people find and concentrate on a new set of enemies. In addition to former battlefield foes, Goetz now included a whole new set of internal enemies: the former Kaiser, liberal politicians, Weimar democrats and the shaggy radicals of the socialist and communist left. As immediately topical as these medals were to the 1914-1924 era, they continued to strike such a strong cord with the public such that Goetz was able to sell them right up until his death in 1950. With this most effective numismatic model in mind, R.W. Julian set about designing the first of his high-end medallic editorials.

Once he had his ideas and designs on paper, RWJ began to search for a sculptural artist who could render his vision into plaster – one of the first steps toward producing a finished medal. Before the 1970s, there were few artists in the U.S. experienced in the crafts and art of medal making. One of the few was septuagenarian artist-sculptor Warner Williams of Indiana. Williams' favorite artistic theme

was Americana and his native West. At about this time there was a dramatic spike in precious metals prices. This brought about a revival in interest among collectors and 'investors' for small medals struck in silver, gold and platinum. Artistically the majority of these medals were mediocre and not much above the creative level of ingots and bullion. However, optimist Warner Williams saw in this an opportunity to once again try his hand at fine art medals. He was surprised to soon find himself with a growing reputation for his medallic work.

RWJ already knew Williams through his art medals and through his work with the National Sculpture Society. Both men were from Indiana. When the two met, the young scholar and the old artist, they talked about Julian's vision and his plan for an American medal series. When RWJ produced a packet of his preliminary designs and some sketched-out ideas for future medals Williams was immediately enthusiastic. No doubt what impressed him most and drew him favorably to the commission was Julian's proposal that each year's medal be fronted with an original portrait of an American. Whatever luminary was chosen, would have to act as a clear allegory illustrating the political point of the medal. Julian was proposing a modern update of the classic formula of the renaissance medal: a strong obverse portrait with its interpretive impression on the reverse. The opportunity to create such an American suite was very much to William's taste. He quickly accepted the commission agreeing to create the master models for the first of the proposed medals – 'The Media Medal'. Equally importantly to RWJ was the artist's commitment to the series going forward. Williams had committed to the project for however long they both chose or were able to continue.

With an experienced and dependable medallist on board, RWJ had overcome the first of two hurdles. The next task was to find a private medal mint that could turn his and

Williams' models into a finished medal--not just a *finished* medal, but a medal finished to the most exacting standards. He wanted a medal struck from dies engraved to the finest fidelity, struck on flawless planchets of highest quality alloys, struck on presses powerful enough to bring up his design in the sharp extra high relief he envisioned and then finished by craftsmen skilled enough to apply the beautiful patinas perfectly.

Keep in mind that RWJ was in 1977 already acknowledged as one of the world's foremost experts in the realm of historical medals and their minting. He had to have a mint that could meet all of his exacting criteria. Perhaps inevitably he turned to the Medallic Art Company - formerly of New York City now of Danbury, CT - universally known as MACO. Since the earliest years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, MACO stood at the pinnacle as America's most prestigious maker of fine art medals. Over the years their clientele included the brightest names in the worlds of Art and Commerce. Once he'd secured MACO as his mint, RWJ was ready to make his medals.

RWJ carefully planned the first medal in the series - 'The Media Medal.' It was a satire on the Liberal bias of the American media. To illustrate this point, the designer chose to portray Ex-President Richard M. Nixon on the obverse. Since the McCarthy hearings, Nixon had been the boogiemán under the bed for the American Left. An anti-Media medal that at the same time expressed sympathy for Richard Nixon would be the perfect vehicle to unequivocally present a point of view. It would also, engender controversy: Julian knew that the mere mention of Nixon in conversation sparked a gut reaction in American Liberals still inflamed by the Watergate Hearings. He knew the medal would get a reaction out of the media resulting in free publicity and a boost in sales for his medals.

No doubt the medal upset the media. And they did react - as Julian knew they would. But their reaction was not what he had

anticipated. Later that year the embittered scholar wrote about the Press's reaction to his first medal: "The concepts involved were so unpleasant that many newspapers refused to print the material. Those acting in this manner have proven the point that newspapers are no longer totally unbiased and uncensored... Publicity for this Medal did appear in approximately fifteen newspapers as well as the numismatic press.... If the publicity had been widespread and uncensored, several tens of thousands of medals would have been struck."

In late 1977 the first Julian medals were struck in bronze. MACO used heavy planchets of a relatively bright colored alloy and its most powerful medal presses. About half a hundred of the medals were also struck in a lovely Cu-Ni alloy called 'nickel-silver.' Throughout the five years of the series the technical specs for both types of medals remained consistent. Each year, at the end of the medal's production run, the dies were defaced. This was to insure that no more of the medals would ever be struck. The finished medals were packed between cotton padding and placed into one of MACO's standard, ivory-colored presentation boxes. Along with the medal, RWJ included a small plastic easel and a short written explanation of the medal's symbolism and message. In this paper also were the year's exact mintage figures for both bronze and nickel-silver medals. Collectors of the series came to appreciate these extra touches. They were recognized as the thoughtfulness of an enthusiastic scholar-numismatist whose love of medals was as great as their own. To RWJ's mind, a table medal is meant to be displayed, studied and talked about. And to a collector there is nothing more enjoyable than having a new medal explained by its creator.

In each November's issue of the 'Numismatist' from 1977 through 1981, a ¾ page ad appeared offering that year's bronze Julian satirical. The ad stated that advance orders would be accepted up until the 30<sup>th</sup> of November and that the cost was \$9.95,

included shipping and insurance. Curiously the CuNi medals were not mentioned. Nor was the extraordinary offer to sell 15" hydrocal plaster casts of the original artwork. These were uniface high-relief models of the obverse and reverse designs. They could be ordered directly from the artist and Warner Williams insured that they were flawless, clean and neatly trimmed – well suited for wall display. It would seem that interest in either of these objects, the CuNi medals and the plaster models would come from readers of the Numismatist. Yet, almost after the fact, these two items were offered only in the written inserts that accompanied the delivered medals. In fairness, RWJ planned the series to be marketed primarily to the public at large, latent conservatives and potential crossover voters - and not especially to the relatively small numismatic community. That is why today these well-distributed medals are rarely seen on the numismatic secondary market. The nickel silver medals in particular are very scarce and the large hydrocal models are downright rare. RWJ has retained a set of the hydrocal models.

RWJ was able to hold the price of the medals to a modest \$9.95 throughout most of these inflationary years. However, by 1981 mounting expenses and declining sales had changed the equation. The price for the last medal, "The Justice Medal" had to be raised to \$12.50 in order just to break even. With that year's medal, subscribers received a note from RWJ, "Due to the severe decline in sales over the past two years, this medal is the last of the series...It is with a great deal of reluctance that I have decided to end the series... I would like to express my appreciation, in particular, to those persons who stayed with the entire series of medals. (Sig.) R. W. Julian." - From the beginning all profits had been donated to a non-profit, non-political organization to further numismatic research. And so the series ended as it had begun, with the rare touch and flourish of an American gentleman and scholar.

## THE MEDALS

### NOTE ON DESCRIPTIONS

In the following brief descriptions of R.W. Julian's political medals I have tried to use Mr. Julian's own words whenever possible. Due to space considerations I've had to drastically edit and paraphrase Mr. Julian's own descriptions of his medals. If in the process I have changed or distorted the message of that fine writer I can only offer my sincere apologies. I'm sure my paraphrasing, rusty scissors and even more rusty writing style have not done justice to RWJ's artistic or intellectual intentions.

***Each year RWJ wrote a short explanation of the meaning and symbolism of the annual medal. This analysis was included with the medal when it shipped. A truncated version of these descriptions appeared each year in advertisements for the medals as they were issued. An ad aimed primarily at the collector community appeared each year in the November issue of the 'Numismatist'. The first of these 'Numismatist' ads, offering the 'Nixon-Media Medal', appeared in the Nov 1977 issue. A similar ¾ page advertisement appeared in each November's issue thereafter. These old ads, and the texts that accompanied the medals, are the most readily accessible means of reading RWJ's own analysis and explanations of his medals.***

### ***1977 THE MEDIA MEDAL***

RWJ-77 Bronze 63mm Mtg:1,340 / RWJ-77a  
CuNi 63mm Mintage: 49



R.W. Julian explains:

OBV: "Portrait of the former President Nixon facing right. Constant personal attacks on Mr Nixon over the years show to what extent a corrupt media can go.

REV: "The reverse symbolizes the TV news media, a slickly packaged industry which slants the news to its own ends. The Janus head is from a Roman coin of about 200 BC and symbolizes the media's DOUBLE STANDARD. The blindfold on the left indicates that the misdeeds of the political Left are ignored while concentrating on the imagined wrongs of the Right."

### ***1978 THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY MEDAL***

RWJ-78 Bronze 63mm Mtg: 1,340 / RWJ-77a  
CuNi 63mm Mintage: 49

OBV: "Portrait of President Theodore Roosevelt facing right. More than any other man TR was responsible for building of the country of Panama and the Canal. This medal is a permanent memorial to those Senators who so callously gave away a part of America."

REV: "A kneeling Uncle Sam gives away the Panama Canal on a silver platter to a two-headed figure standing over him – Panamanian dictator Trujillo and his conjoined evil twin Fidel Castro. The umbrella above is a symbolic reminder that 1978 was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Munich Agreement and British PM Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Adolf Hitler."

### ***1979 THE ENERGY MEDAL***

RWJ-79 Bronze 63mm Mtg:1,055 / RWJ-79a  
CuNi 63mm Mintage: 45

OBV: "Presidential portrait of Lincoln (after Brady photo of Feb.' 1864) facing right with the quote: 'Let The People Know The Facts And The Country Will Be Saved'.

REV: "This medal is meant to remind us of the inaction that has characterized US energy policy. Famous 3 Monkey tableau represents those most deserving of blame: Congress (Dem.-led), current administration (Dem. Pres. J. Carter), and a distant 3d, the Oil Industry – for failing to educate the public. Ecology Groups and National Media were also to blame."

### ***1980 THE DEFENCE MEDAL***

RWJ-80 Bronze 63mm Mtg: 1,000 / RWJ-80a  
CuNi 63mm Mintage: 50

OBV: "Facing portrait of Gen. Douglas Macarthur with direct quote, 'There Is No Substitute For Victory'. If the General's policy had been followed we would not now be facing the problem we do. Loss of will by leaders in the late 1940's (Dem. Pres. Truman) eroded America's might and encouraged aggression by Commie Bloc."

REV: "Uncle Sam, shirtless, blindfolded, armed with antiquated weapon, his power greatly diminished, attempts to defend the nation. The blindfold symbolizes the muzzling of the CIA (Dem. Pres. J. Carter)."

### ***1981 THE JUSTICE MEDAL***

RWJ-81 Bronze 63mm Mtg:1,000 / RWJ-81a  
CuNi 63mm Mintage: 50

OBV: "Washington portrait facing right. Quote (paraphrasing the Constitution), 'The Laws Shall Be Faithfully Executed'.

REV: 'Goddess of Justice statue with broken sword, slipping blindfold, She is and holding an unbalanced Scales of Justice symbolizing the bias existing in favor of the criminal over the innocent. Inscription: 'The Criminal is Set Free While The Victim is Forgotten'.

### **NOTE ON INCUSE EDGES EDGE INSCRIPTIONS:**

All of the medals in the series carry an edge inscription. The inscriptions on the medals in my collection vary from year to year and between the bronze and CuNi strikes. On the Ae example of the first year 1977, the inscription reads: (copyright logo) Medallie Art Co. – Danbury, CT-Bronze. The Ae medal of the next year 1978 reads simply: Bronze. The third year reads: (copyright logo) 1979 MACO Bronze. The fourth year Ae except for the date is the same: (copyright logo) 1980 MACO Bronze. The last year in Ae is again the same: (copyright logo) 1981 MACO Bronze.

In CuNi, the 1977 first year edge inscription reads about the same as on the Ae strike except, naturally, the words Nickel-Silver are substituted for Bronze. The next year 1979 reads similarly to the Ae of the same year, again with the just alloy name being different. However the third year inscription on the CuNi example differs from its Ae counterpart: (copyright logo) 1979 Medallie Art Co. – Danbury, CT – Nickel-Silver. The last two years in CuNi carry the exact same inscription *including the date*: (copyright logo) 1981 Medallie Art Co.- Danbury, CT – Nickel-Silver. The first of these last two, the Defense Medal, should carry 1980 as its date, rather than 1981 as it does. This seems to be an error by MACO as the same medal in Ae carries the correct date of 1980. The edge inscriptions on all ten medals appear centered at 6:00.

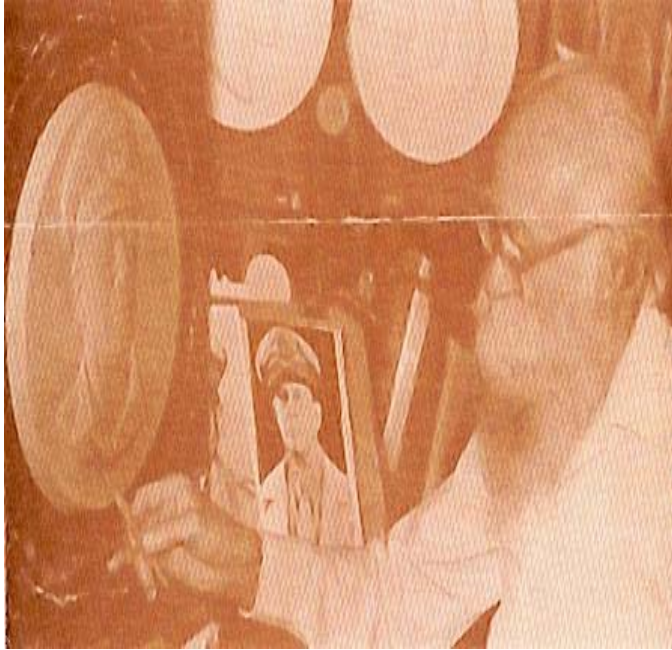


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- Sullivan, Edmund B. 'American Political Badges and Medalets 1789-1892' Quarterman. 1981
  - Kienast, Gunther W. 'The Medals of Karl Goetz.' Artus. 1967
  - Julian, R.W. 'Medals Of The United States Mint, The First Century 1792-1892' TAMS 1977









## Letters to the Editor

Dear John

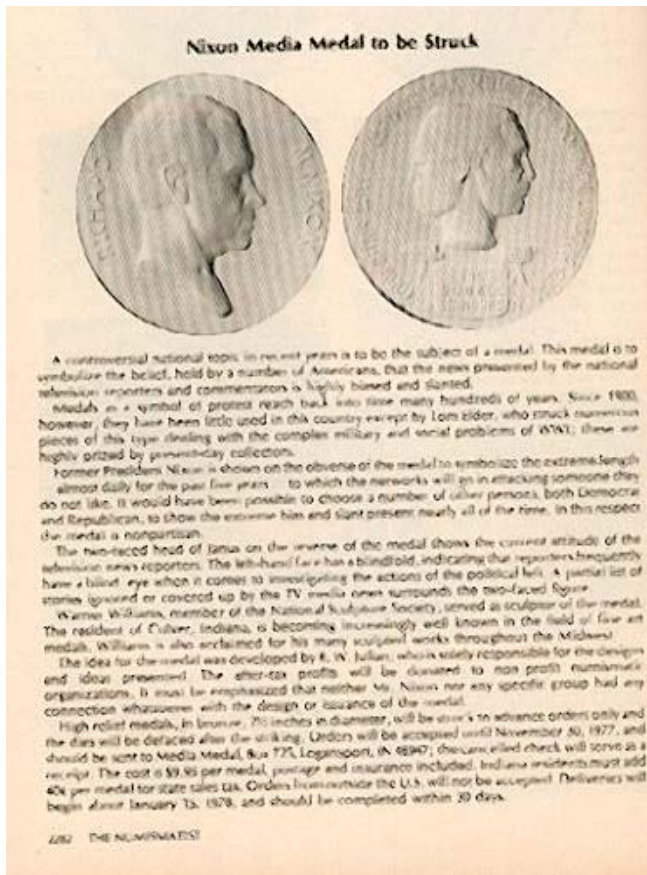
This comes to you as Editor of the MCA ~ many thanks and best wishes ~ Daniel

John,

The latest MCA Advisory has arrived and another Ford-fest it is too! Since you draw attention to Warren Baker's mention of the Reford Sale, held by Sotheby's in Toronto in October 1968, may I add my two cent's worth. The Reford Collection was a small adjunct to a much greater collection of Canadiana paintings and prints. It was sent to London where I catalogued it (and it was not a bad effort for a 23 year old, unfamiliar with the wonders of Indian Chief Medals, even if I say so myself!), and then I traveled with it back to Toronto for the sale.

David Spink attended with Mr. and Mrs. Norweb, for whom he hoped to buy. Warren Baker bought two lots! But it was the likes of Judge Sam Weir, who caused the excitement, when he bought the "Happy While United" medal, and others including Peter Winkworth (whose collection of drawings and paintings were acquired for the Canadian nation shortly before his death last summer), Warda Drummond and Charles de Volpi - all Canadiana collectors.

And, of course, John Ford was there viewing thoroughly (and cleaning his hands with wipes after each lot). He imparted knowledge and appreciated the captive audience I provided. It was the way to learn. I was to see more of him the following year when I worked for Sotheby's in New York and would visit the New Netherlands, and from then onwards we kept in touch. I have a copy of *The Coin Collector's Journal* for May - June 1951, with an article on the "Copper Company



of Upper Canada", along with a dedication from April 1983 (when it arrived out of the blue!), "For Daniel Fearon - From an aging 'boy wonder' - J. J. Ford."

If permitted a final line of self-promotion - a copy of the Reford auction catalogue is listed for sale on my web site, [www.danielfearon.com](http://www.danielfearon.com).

Daniel Fearon

Dear John,

Here is an idea for the MCA Advisory. I recently received a letter from Brookgreen Gardens about their medal program. They have twenty-two large size medals for sale at \$75 each. You will notice from the enclosed list that some top notch medalists are represented.

So few institutions have on-going medal programs I feel this should be supported. The only problem is no photographs of the medals on line yet. Carol says however that she soon will remedy that problem.

I hope your summer is going well. Sorry I can't get to Colorado but I will be at the Medallic Art Society of Canada meeting next week in Niagara Falls.

Sincerely,

Gerry Muhl

[Those interested in these medals can reach Brookgreen at [www.brookgreen.org](http://www.brookgreen.org) -ed.]

### **Inquiries Answered**

**The following inquiry was sent to David Boitnott, MCA's webmaster, who forwarded it to Dick Johnson for answering.**

David,

My name is Bryan Ellis, I am a fine medal collector. I have been trying to find out some information about a coin/medallion I came across the other day and have had no luck at all. I was hoping that you or someone there might be able to give me some information about it or where I might be able to find some information about it.

Anyway, it's pretty nice size, weighs 7.13 ounce, and has a 3D head of Michael V. DiSalle on it. Underneath the head it has Ralph J. Menconi, who I assume is the artist. On the back side it has the state of Ohio logo with the rising sun. The coin date is 1962 and is stamped on the edge .999+ pure silver medallic art company, 262. Any help with this will be greatly appreciated, if its fake that's okay too, I'd just like to find out something about it.

If you have any info. at all could you send it to my email address at home [bentl@verizon.net](mailto:bentl@verizon.net) Thanks!

Sincerely,

Bryan Ellis

### **From Dick Johnson:**

Bryan Ellis:

David Boitnott, the webmaster of the Medal Collectors of America website, has asked that I answer your recent inquiry to him.

Your medal is known as the Michael V. DiSalle Campaign Medal, 1962. It was indeed created by sculptor Ralph Joseph Menconi (1915-1972) and struck by Medallic Art Company, then of New York City (later of Danbury, Connecticut, and even later of Dayton, Nevada). It is MAco catalog number 68-87.

The medal was issued by Presidential Art Medals of Englewood Ohio. How they issued this medal is an interesting story. This

organization began two years earlier by issuing half-dollar size medals of the presidents of the United States (struck by Medallic Art Co). This series proved so successful they commenced plans in 1962 for a second series on the States of the Union.

Since they were located in Ohio, they wanted to issue the Ohio Statehood Medal as the first medal in this series (MAco 62-2-1). They contacted the governor's office for a suggestion for the most famous Ohio citizen(s) to place their portrait(s) on this medal. (The ultimate decision was to place the Wright Brothers portraits on this Ohio medal.)

The governor at that time was the very Michael DiSalle you see on your medal. He became intrigued with their project and invited them to visit him. All four principles of Presidential Art visited Governor DiSalle. He was running for reelection in 1962 and asked if they could strike a medal for his campaign. The answer obviously was yes.

But that is not the end of the story. Later DiSalle became associated with one of the Presidential Art principles, Max Humbert, and the two became very active in the issuing or marketing of coins and medals. DiSalle, who commanded an impressive appearance, large in stature, voice and intent, was an excellent negotiator. He traveled in diplomatic and political circles, was often in the White House. The pair even solicited foreign governments for issuing their coins, somewhat like the Franklin Mint was doing at the time.

Michael DiSalle (born January 6, 1908) died September 14, 1981. The duo had done quite well and Max Humbert bought a home in the Bahamas or West Indies but continued to run a numismatic firm out of Florida.

Now about the DiSalle medal. It was issued in three sizes. The 2 3/4-inch (70mm) you have was issued in bronze and silver. A 1 1/4-inch (32mm) size was issued in bronze and platinum, and a 13/16-inch (21mm) size in bronze and silver.

The 262 on the edge of your medal is a serial number. There were 2,000 issued this size all serially numbered. There were 1,000 issued in bronze unnumbered this size.

The medium size is the most common, 17,000 in bronze were struck and these were widely distributed as campaign medals (a practice that goes back in American history to Abraham Lincoln and before). Of the platinum, only 10 were struck and these were serially numbered.

The small sizes were all made into jewelry items (ideal for charm size medalets). For women, 25 silver medalets were struck for 12 pair of earrings, and 524 bronze struck for 262 sets of earrings. For men 1,000 medalets were struck in bronze for 500 sets of cufflinks.

About the genuineness of your medal; I would have to see the medal, of course, to attest that it is genuine. However, I have never heard of this medal being copied. In fact, very few medals have been replicated of Medallic Art Company medals because of their high quality (it is so difficult to replicate this quality).

Collecting these would be a challenge, imagine the thrill of the chase to find and acquire these elusive items! Other than the platinum medal, you already have the most expensive silver medal. Good luck in your further collecting.

Respectfully,

Dick Johnson

**(You ask a question of Dick Johnson and you get a world-class answer.—ed.)**

Dear John,

We have corresponded in May of 2000. Once again, I am in need of your expertise. I have recently acquired a Distinction May, 1786 given by John Johnson in Montreal to a Ottawa chief; it mentioned a small medal. My question



to you would be, what small medal could it have possibly been? Your input would be deeply appreciated. Last week, I visited a dear friend, Fr. Paul Prucha, and your name came up and he mentioned favorably your landmark book. By the way, my email address has changed from angelfire to [raslovick@yahoo.com](mailto:raslovick@yahoo.com)

Thanks again,

Ron Slovick

Hi Ron - The small medal then in use was the undated George III, either the obverse with George and Charlotte or with the king only. This was a medal meant for warriors, not chiefs, but presumably Johnson knew what he was doing.

As you probably know, distinctions are a lot rarer than the medals. Paper gets lost or destroyed a lot easier than silver. How about giving us the full text of your distinction as well as an image for our next issue? It will provide a fine primer for Ford XV.

Best,

John

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<sup>i</sup> Sullivan, Edmund B. 'American Political Badges and Medalets 1789-1892' Quarterman 1981.

<sup>ii</sup> Julian, R.W. 'Medals Of The United States Mint, The First Century 1792-1892' TAMS 1977.