

# Cumberland Coins

## The Volunteer Coin Club Newsletter

October, 2014

### Next Meeting

Our next meeting will on Tuesday October 14<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30. The meeting is will be held at the 127 Senior Center on Highway 127 (Main Street) South of town. Doors open at 6:00.

This month there will be the usual business meeting, show and tell, raffle, member prize drawing and the auction at the meeting.

We are in need of more educational presentations. If you would be willing to prepare a 5-10 talk about something you are familiar with (or willing to research), please tell Ken Gates or Mike Puhl. The talks by the members have been well received and are a great addition to the meetings. Your help will be appreciated.

### Coin Lore

#### Primitive Civil War Tokens

*by Bill Groom*

During the U.S. Civil War years, 1861-65, tokens were considered "necessity money" and were used to accommodate everyday trade at a time when coins were being hoarded by those who could afford to do so. Union merchants could order tokens from "die sinkers" who would engrave dies to advertise the business and/or express political sentiments. A small percentage of the Civil War tokens did express Confederate sentiments, but these were struck by northern die sinkers. The overwhelming majority of Civil War tokens traded as substitutes for a cent. A merchant could order tokens by the hundred or by the thousand for a fraction of their face value. Thus, every token given out in change constituted a profit for the merchant. It was generally accepted that these tokens had a cent's worth of copper. While the vast majority of these tokens were copper, other metals were used.

There are many ways to collect Civil War tokens, given that there are over 11,000 varieties of them! Some collectors focus on what are referred to as Primitives. Perhaps, the most appropriate description of these so-called primitives is: characterized by simplicity or crudity; unsophisticated. There's an old adage that says, "a picture is worth a thousand words." Compare the following photos and see if you can distinguish the Primitive:



*Compare the elements of these two tokens. Note the pointed stars on the right one. See how the numerals in the date are misaligned on the left token; also, that the Indian is not quite centered as he is on the right one. Many primitives display misspellings. Collecting these rather awkward tokens is akin to assembling a carnival sideshow.*



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The Civil War token pictured below has long been among my favorite Primitives. It's a storecard that lists a business in Buffalo, NY. The diesinker who made this merchant's tokens in 1863, as well as those for some other Buffalo merchants, remains unknown. Frank J. Bieler is listed in Buffalo City directories as operating a saloon at 157 Main Street, during the Civil War. At the time, there was a strong, prohibition movement in New York State, and that may be the reason that Bieler's tokens didn't reveal the nature of his business. Many a prohibitionist would have been antagonized by the mere thought of having a saloon token in their pocket during those volatile years.



*See if you can spot the reasons why this Buffalo primitive is among my favorite Civil War tokens. Answer below ...*

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in  
CARD  
is  
backwa  
rds and  
the date  
is  
upside-  
down!



The great diversity among Civil War token issues is what makes collecting these so increasingly popular nowadays.

**COINfucious Says:** *"Gambler who pull coin from shorts will bet bottom dollar!"*

### Coins on the Web

I came across an interesting web site for those interested in numismatic literature. It is a weekly newsletter sponsored by The Numismatic Bibliomania Society (NBS) called Esylum. The web site is <http://www.coinbooks.org/esylum/index.html>. You can read articles from the archive or subscribe at that site. I found some interesting articles in the archive.

I became aware of this site through an item in the newsletter of another club. I get the Lower Cape Fear Coin Club in Wilmington NC newsletter every month. It is interesting to see how other clubs are run and their activities. I also send the editor of that newsletter a copy of ours every month. I attached a copy of this month's LCFCC newsletter to this month's email for those interested in reading it.

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### Area Coin Shows

November 1 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

November 7-9 **Chattanooga**; Tennessee State Numismatic Society (TSNS). Fall Coin Show.  
Camp Jordan Arena, I-75, Exit 1.

November 21-22 **Sevierville**; Coin & Collectibles Show, Civic Center, 200 Gary Wade Blvd, Sevierville.

December 6 **Knoxville Coin Show**, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

For more information on some of these shows see <http://www.tsns.org/Tennessee Club Shows.html>

### This Month's Raffle Prizes

		Est. Grade
1916	Mercury Dime (first year type)	XF
1893	Columbian Comm. Half (1st Comm. type)	Fine
1964	Kennedy Half (90 % silver)	BU
1883 NC & 1912	Liberty Nickels (first & last year)	XF/AU & Fine
1909	Indian Cent & Lincoln Cent	G-VG

The Door Prize will be a 1996 U.S. Mint Set (Special FDR issue).