



Original copies of the 1891 reprint are rare. I have the following in stock for numismatic bibliophiles who prefer original editions of Canadian numismatic pioneers: McLachlan, Robert Wallace. *Canadian Communion Tokens: a Catalogue of Metal Sacramental Tickets Used in the Different Presbyterian Churches in Canada*. Montreal: William Drysdale, 1891. 62 p., original paper stapled covers, front cover loose, chipped, pages yellowed and paper extremely brittle, archival copy, \$80.

The following is the most common reprint, excellent for research purposes: McLachlan, Robert Wallace. *Canadian Communion Tokens: a Catalogue of Metal Sacramental Tickets Used in the Different Presbyterian Churches in Canada*. (Charlton Numismatic Historical Series, vol. 1) Toronto: Charlton 1991 reprint. (4), 62, (2) pages, original printed card covers, bumped on right side and slightly creased at lower right. \$20.

Welcome back to my occasional column “Engel’s Angle on Numismatic Literature.” This month we are looking at another venerable leading pioneer of Canadian numismatics, this time “Canada’s foremost collector and one of the leading numismatic scholars of the world,” Robert Wallace (R.W.) McLachlan (1845-1926) and specifically his work *Canadian Communion Tokens: A Catalogue of Metal Sacramental Tickets in the Different Presbyterian Churches in Canada*. This work was originally published serially in 1889-1890 in the *Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal* and then first reprinted as a whole article in 1891 and the reprinted at least a couple of times since then. McLachlan published fifteen books on Canadian tokens; and wrote numerous articles.



ROBERT WALLACE McLACHLAN.

R.W. McLachlan, born in Montreal on March 9, 1845, began collecting at the young age of 12 in 1857 when copper coins circulating in Upper and Lower Canada consisted of a “heterogeneous collection of coins and tokens of many countries” that held out fascination and challenge for the observant young collector to find rare and attractive specimens. He certainly inherited a few of these upon receiving, through his mother, his maternal grandfather’s collection of some dozen pieces amassed about a century before. The collection included “a Scottish James VI silver six shilling coin; a copper Æ 1 Tari coin of François-Marie-des-Neiges-Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc seigneur de Henleix (April 18, 1725-July 14, 1797 Valletta, Malta) who was Grandmaster of the Sovereign Military Order of the Knights of Saint John the

Baptiste of Malta from 1775 to his death in 1797; and one or two 18th Century trade tokens.”

In 1862 he had the opportunity to view the “well-selected and extensively-classified” coin cabinet consisting of some 3,000 pieces of Mr. J. L. Brondson, “One of the most ardent Montreal collectors of the time.” This inspired McLachlan to build up his own collection, which had grown to about 150 pieces by then, with similar discriminating selection and organization into a coin cabinet, specializing in Canadian material. He paid attention to the accurate classification of each piece to better appreciate its intrinsic beauty, history, variety for the sake of education and exhibition, inventory and posterity. McLachlan also appreciated the social aspects of the numismatic hobby, becoming, in 1864, an early and very active member of the Numismatic Society of Montreal (later The Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal), sponsored by his mentor Brondson. In 1894, P. N. Breton stated that McLachlan's coin collection was the most extensive in Canada with over 8,000 pieces, ranging from ancient Greek issues to contemporary coins.



Æ 1 Tari (8.68 gm), 1786. Shield of arms / Head of John the Baptist on charger / platter. Sch.179.3. VF+, brown patina: François-Marie-des-Neiges-Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc seigneur de Henleix, Grandmaster of the Sovereign Military Order of the Knights of Saint John the Baptiste of Malta

He also was elected as one of the earliest members of The Numismatic Society of London in 1868. He became a charter member of the British Numismatic Society and a permanent member of the American Numismatic Society (ANS) in 1884, after a 2-year stint as a corresponding member of the ANS from 1877-1879. McLachlan first became a member of the American Numismatic Association (ANA) in 1908, attending and presenting papers at many ANA conventions. At the Chicago Convention in 1911 he was elected as 2nd Vice-President of the ANA and became 1st Vice-President in 1913. McLachlan was inducted in the ANA Hall of Fame in 1982.

By the time McLachlan turned 77 years of age in 1922, he decided that he could no longer actively manage his extensive collection and he wanted to preserve it for public education in his home city of Montreal. He thus arranged to transfer ownership (partially by donation and partially by sale) of his collection of 20,000 pieces (including the most complete collection of Canadian numismatics amassed to that time), plus his numismatic library consisting of 500 books and 5,000 pamphlets to The Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal to reside in the home of the Society at the Chateau de Ramezay Museum for generations to come. The Bank of Canada purchased the McLachlan Collection from Chateau de Ramezay in 1974 but this did not include his numismatic library, which was sold to a private collector in 1984 and was later dispersed in at least four George Kolbe numismatic auctions in the 1990s.

As a pioneer Canadian numismatic giant, McLachlan would not only subscribe to the adage of subsequent generations, "Buy the book before you buy the coin", he effectively communicated by his extensive numismatic research "Write the book about the coin"! His "home club", The Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal published his many articles in its journal, beginning with the first issue in 1872 with the article "A Plea for Artistic Coinage". Over the years many of his articles were reprinted as a testimony to their quality and authority in the field. Notable examples include "*Canadian Temperance Medals*", "*Money and Medals of the Old Regime in Canada*", "*The Louisburg Medals*", "*The Card Money of Canada*" and "*Canadian Communion Tokens*", the focus of this column's work of numismatic literature.

Communion tokens were a way some churches (most notably, in the Canadian colonies, those of the Calvinist tradition later known, after the union of 1875, as the Presbyterian Church in Canada) to identify their own worthy communing members. They were issued in the base metal of the day (white metal, pewter and later issues in aluminum). In the Calvinist tradition, communion was celebrated only a couple of times a year and required much preparation and anticipation among the faithful. Parishioners would arrive on Wednesday for the Communion event that began on Thursday and culminated with the celebration of Holy Communion on the Sunday. The tokens were distributed on Saturday night by the minister in charge to deserving members who then would submit them at the time of communion the following day. Tokens would typically include the name or initials of the Church and its community, the year of issue and an appropriate Bible verse on the reverse, such as "This do in remembrance of me" (I Corinthians 11:24). In terms of their shape they were typically square, rectangular, or oblong, seldom round, presumably since the need for text was more easily accomplished non-round shapes. Later stock tokens would sometimes replace the name of the parish and date of issue with another Bible verse, like "Let a man examine himself." (I Corinthians 11: 28). Others might include an image of the Communion table, for instance.



The earliest Communion token in the Canadian colonies of British North America was issued by the Associate Presbytery in Truro, Nova Scotia in 1772. Just over a century later, in 1876, the newly formed Presbyterian Church in Canada probably issued the last Communion token with the name of an individual parish, in this case Old St. Andrew's Church in Toronto, Ontario. According to Warren Baker, most churches that had used parish-specific tokens had opted for stock tokens and the much less expensive cardboard tickets beginning in the 1860s. Thus, by the time McLachlan produced his treatise on Canadian Communion Tokens in 1891 and assigned his own numbering system to them, the series was complete and ripe for a comprehensive treatment that only a numismatist of McLachlan's caliber could give. In recognition for McLachlan's numismatic research and service in the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) including many years as the official delegate of The Antiquarian and Numismatic Society's official meetings of the RSC, in 1911 he was elected as a member of the prestigious and exclusive RSC which entitled him to the rare privilege of using the initials F.R.S.C. after his name.

As contemporary numismatic research luminary and the 2019 recipient of Canada's top numismatic award, the J.

Douglas Ferguson Medal, **Stanley Clute** observes, "It is not unfair to state McLachlan left behind him a legacy of numismatic research and writing which helped in large measure to lay the groundwork for today's researchers into early Canadian numismatics." to which I say, "Amen!"

References:

- Atchison, Darryl, ed. *Canadian Numismatic Bibliography*. The Numismatic Education Society of Canada, 2007, p. 412 (reference to McLachlan's series of articles on Canadian communion tokens originally published in the *Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal*).
- Atchison, Darryl. "Robert Wallace McLachlan (1845-1926)" *Canadian Bibliography Project*, Newman Numismatic Portal (<https://nnp.wustl.edu/library/periodical/627777>, accessed Jan. 15, 2021)
- *The Charlton Standard Catalogue of Canadian Communion Tokens*. 1st ed. Toronto: The Charlton Press, 1992, p. ix & x (Warren Baker's introduction), p. 81 (Truro, first token, 1772) p. 239 (Toronto - Old St. Andrew's Church latest name-parish token, 1876), p. 259 (stock token with inscription and altar/communion table design), p. 261 (stock token with inscription on obverse and reverse)
- "Obituary: Robert Wallace McLachlan". *The Numismatist*. Vol. 39 no. 6, June 1926, p. 290-293.
- Robataille, Jesse. "Early Canadian Numismatists gave hobby life". *Canadian Coin News*. Vol. 58 no. 15, Oct. 27-Nov. 9, 2020, p. 1 (quote by Stanley Clute).

[Editor's Note: some congregations were Friday / Saturday meeting and communion, and still are today, rather than Saturday / Sunday.]

François-Marie-des-Neiges-Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc seigneur de Henleix

Frenchman François-Marie-des-Neiges-Emmanuel de Rohan-Polduc seigneur de Henleix held office as 70th Grandmaster of the Sovereign Military Order of Saint John the Baptiste of Malta from November 12, 1775 to July 14, 1797, when he died at age 72. He rests at St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta. Here are some of coins and a medallion issued while he was in office:



AE, 50 mm. Unsigned, 1793, Armored bust right, Rev. Inscription commemorating the building of Fort Tigné, Schembri 9, [Fort Tigné, the last major work of fortification built by the Order, was begun in 1792 by Rohan and designed by the Order's chief engineer, Stephan de Tousard. A very small work by eighteenth century standards, but the design of the fort was probably the most revolutionary of all the fortifications built by the knights in Malta. It is the smallest built by the Order in Malta but its unique shape led to it being considered as one of the strongest set of defences around the harbour.



30 Tari 1779 .AR 29.34g. Similar, but bust of different design and shield bearing the arms of the Grandmaster and those of the Order over headless



AR 30 Tari (29.49 g 6h). Dated 1789. draped and armored bust right; eagle below, crowned coat-of-arms over headless eagle facing, with wings spread; T-30 across field. R&S 27; Davenport



20 Scudi 1782 (16.51 g), Gold, Valletta. Fb. 43; Restelli 7.



KM 266, 30 tari, 1768, 29.67 g Dav.



Scudo, 1796, TTB. KM.342, Ar; 11.85



Grano 1780, TB. KM.293.3,