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The Numismatic Collection of the Hungarian National Museum

Lajos PALLOS



Fig. 1. *The Hungarian National Museum, 1865*

This study was first published in the book celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Hungarian National Museum's (Fig. 1) foundation.¹ The main reason for the republication is that an online version can reach a much larger audience, than the hard copy published in very limited numbers. Furthermore, in print the number of illustrations was limited. In this volume the Coin Cabinet's history is presented from the beginnings to 1918, while the second part of the study supplemented with the history of the years 2002–2019 will appear in the following volume. This period is not only important because of the great acquisitions, but the Coin Cabinet also moved to a new place and there were considerable personal changes as well. The digitalisation of the numismatic collections has begun, and important publications have appeared and exhibitions were organised. Finally, the republication gave us a chance to correct the errors of the printed version as well as to standardise the terminology.

The Hungarian National Museum Numismatic Collection houses one of the museum's primary collections. In addition to his books, woodcuts and maps, Count Ferenc Széchenyi also endowed the nation with his coin collection, containing Hungarian and Transylvanian coins and medals.² This donation in 200 years' time was to become the nation's largest coin collection.

Over the years the collections of the Numismatic Collection have been enriched by an unparalleled number of more than 3000 donations. The majority of these donations were from private individuals, with a smaller number coming from government authorities, offices, institutes and organizations. The evolution of the nature of the collections was

1 PALLOS 2004.

2 FRÁKNÓI 1902, 234–243.

fundamentally determined by the fact that a significant proportion of the large Hungarian 19th and 20th century numismatic collections were eventually acquired by the Numismatic Collection through donations, purchases or bequeathals.

Another special feature of the Numismatic Collection within the museum is that the Hungarian-oriented coin collection of the founder grew in the course of 200 years into a numismatic collection of a universal nature. At present, both within and in addition to the four major collections – antique coins, Hungarian and Transylvanian coins, medals, and paper currency – numerous larger or smaller collection groups have arisen, such as the collections of Chinese and Mohammedan coins, badges, awards, and mint casts. In the bicentennial year the archives listed nearly 340,000 objects in approximately 60 inventory books, ranging from primitive forms of money such as cowry shells, bronze bracelets and silver bricks through the coins of the ancient, medieval and modern periods to the securities and banking cards issued in modern times. This enormous amount of material contains innumerable values of political, social, economic and art history, for which reason it is an inexhaustible source of knowledge. In the course of the past 200 years the Numismatic Collection, through its collections, books and workers, has been a primary research center in Hungarian numismatics.

The chapters below will follow the major stations of the road that led to this point.

Count Ferenc Széchényi's collection

Széchényi's coin collection was begun in the late 18th century, parallel to building up his library. In the early 1780's the Count decided to begin the systematic improvement of the family library, which soon after was followed by the collection of coins and antiques.³ At that time many aristocratic families had large libraries.⁴ In keeping with the fashion of that day, some aristocratic libraries were augmented by a coin collection. The most notable of these include the collections of Counts Mihály Viczay Senior and Junior in Hédervár, the Festetics Dukes in Keszthely, Count Lipót Andrassy in Betlér, and Sámuel Bruckenthal in Nagyszeben (now Sibiu, Rumania).⁵ In international terms the most important was the Viczay collection, containing a large number of antique coins. Joseph Eckhel, court academic curator of the Viennese numismatic collection, makes brief mention of the Viczay and Bruckenthal collections among the Hungarians in his listing of the European collections.⁶ Antique coins constituted the foundation of Hungarian coin collections just as they did in other countries, but of course they also contained greater or smaller numbers of coins and medals from Hungarian and Transylvanian rulers.

Széchényi began his collection somewhat later than the aristocratic collectors mentioned above. For both his library and his coin collection he relied on the aid of scholars, the most important of whom was Márton György Kovachich. In addition to the library expansion the first data on the coin collection is from 1787, when the Count acquired Roman antiques and coins from the ancient region of Sirmium (now Mitrovica, Serbia and Montenegro).⁷ The first major

3 FRAKNÓI 1902, 117–120.

4 KOSÁRY 1996, 553–561.

5 HUSZÁR 1985, 83–84. In Europe the fashion of collecting coins traces back to the Renaissance era. In Hungary a number of large collections dated to as early as King Mathias (1458–1490), but these unfortunately did not survive to the 18th century. The greatest losses were the destruction of the art object collections of the Zrínyi family of Csáktornya and the Nádasdy family of Sárvár, both of which included valuable coin collections and which were taken to Vienna following the uncovering of the anti-Habsburg Wesselényi conspiracy (1670).

6 ECKHEL 1792, 178. Public numismatic collections later became a part of all museums, but in French-speaking areas the largest collections to this day are still linked to libraries (Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique in Brussels).

7 FRAKNÓI 1902, 120.

station in the formation of the coin collection was the acquisition of the Jakab Peer collection in 1791. Peer, a teacher at the royal academy in Bratislava (now in Slovakia), was a renowned numismatist and antique collector of the day. His collection contained not only a number of antique coins but also the coins of the Hungarian kings from St. Stephen (997–1038) to Leopold II (1790–1792), as well as the coins of the Transylvanian princes. The second major addition to the collection came in 1792 when Széchényi purchased Franz Neumann's collection of nearly 4500 Roman coins. Neumann was Eckhel's successor as court director of the Viennese coin and antiques collection. For many years he assisted Széchényi in building up his collection, for which he was regularly remunerated.⁸ In the meantime another important numismatic event occurred in Széchényi's life. The coronation of Leopold II in 1790 was attended by the monarch's brother-in-law and sister, Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina, King and Queen of Naples. The Hungarian parliament resolved that "*this auspicious appearance shall be honorably preserved to memory by a special commemorative coin*".⁹ Széchényi was appointed for the production of this commemorative medal, in all likelihood because the count's numismatic interest had become widely known by that time. In the mid-1790's a change took place in Széchényi's collection tendencies: subsequent to that time his interest was solely in Hungarian material with regard to both books and coins.¹⁰ In addition to Kovachich and Neumann, who continued to play a defining role in the formation of the count's collection to the end of the 18th century, others also assisted Széchényi. The Prague university professor and outstanding numismatist, Joseph Mader and the Dresden antique dealer, Abraham Thiele outside the country, while those in Hungary included the Debrecen magistrate, Lajos Domokos and the Pressburg collector, Dániel Crudy.¹¹ The Hungarian and Transylvanian part of this painstakingly assembled numismatic collection was donated to the nation by Count Széchényi along with his collection of books and manuscripts. The collection of antique coins remained in the possession of the Széchényi family. In 1803 Széchényi handed over the books and manuscripts, but withheld the donated coin collection, as its catalogue had not yet been completed. The Count appointed ISTVÁN SCHÖNWISNER to this task. Schönwisner – Széchényi's former teacher at the Teresianum in Vienna – was a noted numismatist of the day and author of *Notitia Hungaricae rei nummariae*, and finished the three-volume catalogue of the collection in 1808.¹² The catalogue consists of a description of the collection, articles on Hungarian numismatic history, a Hungarian numismatic bibliography, and a volume of illustrations, making it a fundamental reference source in Hungarian numismatics.¹³ The collection was then donated on June 9, 1810, at which time its value was estimated at 50,000 forints.¹⁴

The Schönwisner catalogue put the collection at 2675 coins: 702 gold, 1768 silver, 193 copper and 12 lead. In size it was smaller than the more important contemporary collection, but the material consisted solely of Hungarian coins and medals (except for a few Austrian commemorative coins), and for that reason ranked among the top collections of its era. Of particular value were the collection's coins and medals minted in gold. The Numismatic Section currently preserves a collection of more than 3000 Hungarian and Transylvanian gold

8 GÁRDONYI 1904, 42.

9 FRAKNÓI 1902, 144–145.

10 FRAKNÓI 1902, 210, 221.

11 GÁRDONYI 1904, 65, 91–93.

12 GÁRDONYI 1903, 87–90.

13 SCHÖNWISNER 1807.

14 HARSÁNYI 1911, 23.

coins, more than a tenth of which comes from the Széchényi collection. A finer appreciation of the true worth of the collection can be achieved by an examination of its historical composition. The Count collected 129 coins and medals from the kings of the House of Árpád (11th to 13th centuries), 349 from the Age of elected kings (14th to 16th centuries) (Fig. 2), 1622 from the Habsburgs (16th to 19th centuries), and 467 from the Transylvanian princes (16th to 18th centuries), in addition to 108



Fig. 2. Gold florin of Isabella and John Sigismund, 1557

assorted other coins (privately minted coins, unofficial mintings, personal coins, etc.).¹⁵ The medieval coins in particular were of unmatched value in the early 19th century, as no one prior to Széchényi had collected these systematically. The collection contained coins from every medieval ruler of Hungary except King Imre (1196–1204). It included precious series like the ten deniers from St. Stephen, 41 gold coins from King Mathias (1458–1490), and rarities like the gold guldengroschen minted in 1500 by Ulászló (or Wladislaw) II (1490–1516).¹⁶ Of the abundant material from the House of Habsburg, special mention should be made of the series of coins of Leopold I (1658–1705) and Maria Theresa (1740–1780), as well as the “angel” thaler of Ferdinand I (1526–1564) minted in 1553,¹⁷ of which the museum has managed to obtain only two additional examples in the last 200 years. Many of the splendid Transylvanian coins in the collection are pieces which are still considered rarities today: a 1605 city thaler of the city of Szeben (now Sibiu, Rumania), tenfold-weight gold coins of Moses Székely (1603) and Sigismund Rákóczi (1581–1602), and three gold ducats of Catherine of Brandenburg (1630).¹⁸ Along with the coins, the commemorative medals from as early as Louis II (1516–1526) follow the notable events in the lives of Hungarian rulers. Numismatic art in Hungary thrived since the 16th century, and was linked to the mint at Körmöcbánya.¹⁹ The first artistic commemorative medals preserve the images of Louis II and his wife, Maria Habsburg, who was also a coin collector. Several of these were in the Széchényi collection, including a silver



Fig. 3. Commemorative medal of Louis II and Maria and the Battle of Mohács, after 1526

coin of Louis II and Maria and the Battle of Mohács, the work of Kristóf Fueszl and one of the early masterpieces of Hungarian medal art (Fig. 3).²⁰ The collection of medals of the Habsburg rulers preserves numerous fine examples of court art, such as the medal commemorating Maria Theresa’s Mines Act of 1747 (Fig. 4). Other valuable pieces in the collection are the thaler-sized medals of Ferenc Rákóczi II (1703–1711) made by

15 SCHÖNWISNER 1807.

16 This latter coin type was minted by Vladislaus II in silver and gold in the size of the large silver thaler appearing in the late 15th century, presumably from representative and gift purposes. Cf. B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, 6.

17 SCHÖNWISNER 1807, Tab. 20/23.

18 SCHÖNWISNER 1807, Tab. 4/2 and 4; Tab. 5/1; Tab. 8/1–3.

19 HUSZÁR 1927–1928, 72–121: Körmöcbánya (now Kremnica, Slovakia) from the 14th century to 1918 was the most important mint of the Kingdom of Hungary.

20 SCHÖNWISNER 1807, Tab. 15/7.

Swedish coin artist Daniel Warou (*Fig. 5*).²¹ Among the rarities special note should be made of a unique object, the Ulrich Cross, as a fine example of Széchenyi's broad interpretation of objects associated with Hungary. The clasp-equipped cross features on its horizontal stem a depiction of the Battle of Lech, Germany, in 955, where according to legend St. Ulrich, Bishop of Augsburg, stopped the Hungarians by displaying the cross.²²

The Decades of Expansion (1803–1848)



Fig. 4. Commemorative medal of Maria Teresa for the Mine Act, 1747



Fig. 5. Commemorative medal of Francis Rákóczi II. for the Beginning of War of Independence, about 1705

The coin collection began to grow immediately after Széchenyi's offer in 1803. The first donor, on March 1, 1803, was Pest physician Ferenc Fasser, who gave the collection eight Hungary-related coins, including a St. Stephen deniers in extremely good condition. The second donor was Pest tailor József Kiss, who donated two deniers of identical type from Béla III (1172–1196).²³ Expansion accelerated following the 1807–1808 session of parliament. Donations of varying value arrived continuously, coming from collections of different sizes. The collections consisted predominantly of coins found on Hungarian soil: Greek coins arriving here through trade, coins of the Celtic tribes who lived in the Carpathian Basin, coins of the former Roman provinces in the historical area of Hungary (*Fig. 6*), and coins minted by the Hungarian state, which were unearthed along with foreign coins from Austria, Germany, Poland and elsewhere that were in circulation in Hungary. Of the known large collectors, Count Mihály Viczay the Younger in 1811 gave the museum gold, silver, and a large number of bronze coins from Roman and Byzantine emperors. The first purchase was also from an important major collection. The museum purchased twenty-five coins of the Roman republic from university professor István Szüts in 1811. Later, it acquired the entire collection of Miklós Radványi, the Canon of Csanád. The Canon's estate was purchased by Antal Kiss of Ittebe and donated to the museum. The collection contained 25 Greek and Roman gold coins, 199 Republican coins, and 626 Roman imperial coins. The donations from the Palatine Joseph were of both numismatic and theoretical value. For many decades the palatine was one of the major patrons of the National Museum, taking great care in his purchases to increase



Fig. 6. Sestertius of Nero

21 SCHÖNWISNER 1807, Tab. 13/13 and 14; Tab. 14/1. During the national anti-Habsburg rebellion (1703–1711) under his leadership, Ferenc II Rákóczi was elected Prince of Hungary (1705–1711) and Transylvania (1704–1711).

22 SCHÖNWISNER 1807, Tab. 43/80–81.

23 RÉTHY 1899, 167.



Fig. 7. Ivory commemorative medal of Leopold I, c. 1690

the museum's collection of objects relating to Hungary. Also, as early as 1808 he gave the coin collection gold coins by Hadrian, as well as gold coins from Sigmund (1387–1437), Rudolf, Mathias II (1608–1619) and Ferdinand II (1619–1637). In 1809 he donated first gold coins from Koson, king of Dacia, and Lysimachos of Macedonia, then a Diocletian gold coin. His later donation also included antique coins; that is, he did not object to the Collection increasing with the antique coins found in abundance on Hungarian soil. In 1812, through the efforts of Palatine Joseph, the Viennese court permitted the museum to purchase missing coins from discovered coin finds.²⁴ The first addition of this sort was a find of barbarian coins in Sziszarovác in 1812. Among the 175 donors from this period are antiques dealer Zsigmond Ivanics, Pest senator and eventually mayor János Boráros, and the first foreign donor, Caietano Cattaneo, director of the Milanese Coin Collection, who sent the museum thirty coins from the Roman imperial era. From this expansion in its first twenty years, the Collection currently preserves pieces which were listed in the 1825 inventory of antique objects, the *Cimeliotheca Musei Nationalis*. The object discussed in chapter VIII, number 4, depicts a portrait of Leopold I on a circular ivory background (Fig. 7). The annotation accompanying the object states that Leopold I gave the picture to Pál Széchenyi, former archbishop of Kalocsa. The objects listed as numbers 26 and 29 in chapter VIII, according to research by Jakab Ferdinánd Miller, are from the former Csáktorony collection of the Zrínyi family. Number 26 is a one-sided wood-carved relief depicting Anna Jagiellon, sister of Louis II (Fig. 8). Like her sister-in-law Mária Habsburg, Anna collected coins and was depicted on numerous coins alone and with her husband, Ferdinand I. Item number 29 is a highly sculpted one-sided gold coin with a contemporary portrait by Albrecht Dürer. According to its description, it was donated to the museum by Ferenc Széchenyi. In its first twenty years, the coin collection increased by several thousand pieces to exceed ten thousand by the end of this period. In 1814 the coin collection was separated from the library as the independent Coin and Antiques Collection, the first director of which was Antal Halitzky.

According to the collection's acquisition logs from the 1820's, the donations continued: 33 occasions in 1824, 11 in 1825, 23 in 1826 and 14 in 1827. The most important addition was the donation by Count János Barkóczy, whose collection of ancient, Hungarian, Transylvanian and other coins consisted of 28 gold, 187 silver and 108 bronze coins. One of more interesting acquisitions from this period was a donation in 1826 from merchant Ignác Zan, which included silver coins by Alexander the Great and Roman emperors as well as Syrian and Parthian coins.

The acquisitions of the 1830's can be traced in printed form. Notebooks of the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* [*Scientific Collection*] published the latest additions to the Coin and Antiques Collection, recording acquisitions between the years of 1833 and 1836. The data published here record the addition of roughly 1000 coins, predominantly from ecclesiastical sources: numerous



Fig 8. Wooden commemorative medal of Anna Jagello, first half of 16th century

24 KOREK 1977–1978, 4.

Roman coins as well as several medieval and modern coins such as a gold florin of Sigmund, a groschen of Gábor Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania (1613–1630), a silver florin of Ferenc Rákóczi II, a gold coin of Pope Clement XIV, and a 16th century Biblical coin. Demeter Petrovics, a Hungarian coppersmith living in Vienna, donated his plaster reproductions of coins and medals to the museum. Based on the data available, donations were less frequent in the 1830's than they had been previously. One reason for this may have been the coin collection created by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1825, which also received a large number of donations.



Fig. 9. Gold stater of King Koson, mid-1st century B.C.



Fig. 10. Aureus of Magnia Urbica



Fig. 11. Solidus of Constantine I



Fig. 12. Solidus of Julianus Apostata

In the space of just a few years – 1839 to 1844 – in the last segment of this period, three major coin collections were purchased by the Museum's Coin and Antiques Collection. The addition of the Jankovich, Weszerle and Ferenc Kiss collections was one of the most important events of the 19th century with respect to the collection. These additions fundamentally influenced the structure of the collection. Like the other major collections of Europe, antique numismatics now permanently became an integral part of the collection, and one to be developed further. The large collection units took shape, with the groups of ancient coins, Hungarian and Transylvanian coins, and medals.

Miklós Jankovich (1772–1846) is one of the outstanding figures in the history of Hungarian art collection, embodying the character of the scientific collector. Of his writings on the subject of numismatics his most important is the article *Report on the Reliably Attributable and Unknown Coins of Wenzel, King of Hungary* (Pest, 1827). This article describes the 2533 items unearthed at Gellért Hill in 1827, the first large find of coins which – largely through purchase of the Jankovich collection – was obtained by the National Museum. The coin collection donated to the museum by Jankovich numbered somewhat more than 6000 items. The ancient section of the collection contained 8 gold and 155 Greek and Barbarian coins (Fig. 9), 73 gold (Fig. 10–12), 1492 silver and 52 copper Roman coins, and 91 Byzantine coins. The Hungarian section consisted of 543 gold and 2340 silver coins. These gold coins constitute an important part of the Jankovich collection, with guldengroschen of Ulászló II, ten-ducat coins of Ferdinand II, Leopold I, Károly Batthyány and Miklós Esterházy,²⁵ and gold florins of every Hungarian ruler. The majority of the

25 Some aristocratic families were given the right by the Habsburg kings of Hungary to mint coins in the 16th to 18th centuries, such as the ducal families of Batthyány and Esterházy.

silver coins at the Gellért Hill find were deniers of King Vencel (1301–1305). The Transylvanian coins consisted of 181 gold and 139 silver. Although this is numerically somewhat less than that of the Széchényi collection, in composition it is rather more interesting. This group, with a unique hundred-ducat piece from Transylvanian Prince Mihály Apafi (Michael the Patriot, 1661–1690), 30 ten-ducat pieces and other rarities, contributed greatly to the Collection's Transylvanian collection surpassing all other collections.²⁶ Of the foreign coins there were 106 gold, 480 silver and 2 copper coins, the majority of which were German. In the medals group there were 76 gold, 375 silver and one copper. The majority of these related to Hungary, such as the medal made by Christian Harman Roth at Körmöcbánya on the recapture of Buda, or the captioned oval gold medal of Maria Theresa (Fig. 13) by Matthaeus Donner.²⁷ Of particular value among the foreign medals is the gold minting known as the "three-emperor thaler," which depicts the portraits of Holy Roman Emperors Maximilian I, Charles V and Ferdinand I.²⁸



Fig 13. Commemorative medal of Maria Teresa with her slogan. (So called Gnadenmedaille), 1743–1765

An outstanding event in the history of the Collection was in 1841, when Palatine Joseph purchased the numismatic estate of József Weszerle (1781–1838) for 20,000 forints. Weszerle was a major figure in Hungarian numismatics in the first half of the 19th century. He taught at the University of Pest, first in antiques and numismatics, and later in the history department. His early death left his life's work incomplete.²⁹ Weszerle's estate consisted of numismatic notes, copper tablets engraved for illustrations, and his coin collection.³⁰ Although the same cannot be said of his hand-written Latin annotations, Weszerle's engraved copper tablets for the illustration of the coins contributed greatly to the advance of Hungarian numismatics. In 1873 the Coin and Antiques Collection of the National Museum published *Numismatic Tablets Bequeathed by József Weszerle*. This publication featured 144 tablets with 2228 Hungarian and Transylvanian coins following Weszerle's original groupings, such as coins of the House of Árpád, the Age of elected kings, and House of Habsburg, Transylvanian and provincial coins, and city and personal medals. In 1911 the Hungarian Numismatic Society finally published all 165 tablets, adding the ancient tablets to present 2571 coins. A reprint of this edition was made in the early 1990's for coin collectors, in considerably greater numbers than the original printing. The numismatic tablets left by Weszerle remain indispensable tools in Hungarian numismatics even today.

The most valuable part of Weszerle's estate was the collection of 10,834 coins. The Hungarian-related group in the collection merits comparison with the Széchényi collection, with 711 coins of the House of Árpád as opposed to 129, 997 from the Age of elected kings versus 349, 1247 from the House of Habsburg as opposed to 1622, 459 Transylvanian coins versus 467, and 519

26 HUSZÁR 1985, 93.

27 HUSZÁR 1985, Tab. 19/3 and 20/2.

28 B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, Fig. 47–48.

29 GOHL 1907, 4.

30 ÉRDY 1862, V.



Fig. 14. Denier of Otto, 1305–1307

in other categories in contrast to 103. Weszerle's Hungarian coins group contained a total of 3933 items, and was compiled every bit as carefully as Széchenyi's collection of 2675 items, as it served the purpose of scientific research. Its rarities included deniers of Kings Imre and Otto (1305–1307) (Fig. 14), a 1506 guldengroschen of Ulászló II, a 1612 ten-ducat piece of Mathias II depicting the monarch wearing the Crown of St. Stephen, a 1612 gold coin of the city of Brassó (now Braşov, Rumania), and a star-shaped four-carat ducat of Transylvanian Prince Mihály Apafi (Fig. 15), and others not described here.³¹ Noteworthy among the medals are the so-called "personal" medals, as the Museum's collection in this category is based on the 143 items from the Weszerle collection. Since the 16th century it had been the fashion for princes and other aristocrats and wealthy commoners to mint a coin in commemoration of themselves. Early examples of the extent of personal medals in Hungary include one of György Basta, or a skillfully wrought gold medal of Henrik Höflinger and his wife, Zsuzsanna Frisowitz, both of which items came to the museum through the Weszerle collection.³²

The ancient material in the collection is similarly important with regard to the development of the Collection, since the collection of Greek and Roman coins was for a long time its dominant part.³³

The collection of Greek coins consisted of 6 gold, 693 silver and 1306 bronze coins. It comprised virtually all of the non-Roman coins of the ancient world known to the Greeks, from the Iberian peninsula to India, as numismatics, in accordance with the attitude formulated by Eckhel, defined the concept of Greek coins to include all non-Roman coins originating from these regions. Weszerle's Greek collection contained ancient coins ranging from modern Spain across all of Europe and Asia Minor to the areas of modern Iran and Egypt. Series from the regions of southern Italy, Macedon and the Parthian kingdoms were particularly well-represented.

Like the Greek collection, the Roman collection of 4896 coins consisting of 146 gold, 2149 silver and 2601 bronze coins, were grouped by Weszerle according to scientific criteria. From bronze coins depicting the portrait of Janus minted by the Roman republic in the third century BC, and so-called familiar denarii and the coins of the triumvirate to the coins of the Roman and Byzantine emperors, this group of coins brought a qualitative change to the Collection's development of its Roman collection. Of its numerous rarities special mention should be made of the denarii of Roman Emperor Gordian I, who ruled for all of twenty-two days, and the gold medallion of Constantine the Great as well as a barbarian imitation of a gold coin of Constantine the Great.³⁴



Fig. 15. Mihály Apafi's star-shaped four-florin gold, 1668

31 WESZERLE 1873. Part A. Tab. XIV/21–22, Part B. Tab. I/6–7, Part B. Tab. XIII/3, Part C. Tab. VII/2, Part F. Tab. I/6, and Part D. Tab. XII/8.

32 WESZERLE 1873. Part G, Tab. IV/1 and Tab. XIII/2.

33 GOHL 1907, 8.

34 B. SEY–GEDAI 1972, 9–10, Fig. 13, and Fig. 22–25.

Numismatist Ferenc Kiss (1791–1859), who also was a professor at the numismatics and antiques department at the University of Pest, sold the museum his collection of coins and antiques for 12,000 forints in 1843. In terms of imperial-era coins this material surpassed even the Weszerle collection. By attempting to collect coins minted by every emperor, Kiss obtained rarities such as coins from the short reign of Regalianus, which are still extremely rare today.³⁵ A similar rarity in the collection is a Byzantine solidus (gold coin) minted with the images of Emperors Artavasdos and Nikephoros during their short reign.³⁶ Kiss' collection of Greek coins (1797 items), although somewhat smaller than Weszerle's, was similarly comprehensive. The coins of Hellenic Macedonia, Egypt, and the Sassanids and Bactrian kings in particular make up its larger series. Connected to the Greek collection was a smaller unit of 37 coins of the Arabian caliphs. The Numismatic Collection's rich Mohammedan collection would later evolve from this unit. The most valuable part of Kiss' collection unit of Hungarian coins (1019 items) was the group of several hundred coins from the House of Árpád, including rarer coins of King Imre. All in all, nearly ten thousand (exactly 9434) coins came to the Museum from the Kiss collection. The collection was supplemented by 54 books on numismatics.

The three collections described above added more than 25,000 coins to the Numismatic Collection, which at the end of the 1830s had numbered not more than approximately 15,000–16,000. Through these three collections, the Numismatic Collection became the richest collection in Hungarian numismatic history, and among the top in collections of Transylvanian coins. Additionally, the supply of artistic medals relating to Hungary created a basis for large-scale improvements later. From this time on, the museum's ancient coin collection can be considered professional, as well as the equal of similar material from the best Hungarian private collections.³⁷

In the mid-1840s the pertinent data on smaller acquisitions by the numismatic collection were recorded by newspapers and periodicals, according to which the museum made 66 acquisitions, mainly through donations. Donors included aristocrats, clergymen, soldiers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, farmers, and employees of the National Museum. One of the more important donations was a find of 150 16th-century Transylvanian coins given to the museum by Pest jeweler Hermann Löwy. Count Ferenc Nádasdy, Bishop of Vác, donated 163 medieval Hungarian and Slavonian deniers unearthed at a site near Vác. A new phenomenon in these years was the Collection's acquisition of entire series of contemporary medals. The museum obtained a variety of medals minted jointly by the Jász and Kun districts in honor of the 100th anniversary of their liberation and the 50th anniversary of the Jász-Kun duchy of Palatine Joseph, including one gold medal.³⁸ In addition, the museum continuously received medals commemorating the annual convention of Hungarian doctors and natural scientists.³⁹ One of the most valuable donations was from abroad. The University of Christiania (now Oslo) in Norway gave the Museum 64 11th and 12th-century Norwegian and foreign coins, which they had unearthed.

35 Most of the coins of this emperor, who ruled in 260 AD, are re-struck on coins of earlier emperors. The example in Kiss' collection, however, is a rarer "original" minting. See B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, 11–12, and Fig. 14.

36 B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, 12. and Fig. 33–34.

37 In the meantime the Viczay collection was sold, with most of the material going outside the country, mostly to Paris in addition to many coins obtained by the imperial collection of Vienna. Catalogues preserve the memory of this collection of nearly 18,000 ancient coins.

38 HUSZÁR 1981, nr. 934–935.

39 HUSZÁR-VARANNAI 1977, nr. 1449–1451.

A major advance in the history of the collection resulted when the Palatine Joseph appointed János Érdy (Luczenbacher) (1796–1871) as curator of the Coin and Antiques Collection, the post having been vacant since the death of Halitzky. In Érdy's 23 years as curator he worked productively in the disciplines of archeology and numismatics. In numismatics his main area was Hungarian and southern Slavic numismatic history, on which he published articles continuously from 1839 to 1870.

Systematic inventory of the acquisition was begun in 1846. Inventory logs record the expansion of the numismatic and antique collections all the way until 1876. One of the larger donations in 1847 was Archduke Joseph's mixed collection of 479 items, including one gold coin each from Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. Prior to his death in early 1847 Archduke Joseph, the younger son of Palatine Joseph noted for his scientific activities, had continuously added to his coin collection in the 19th century. Another outstanding acquisition in this year was a donation from Prince Fülöp Batthyány, from a find unearthed on one of his properties. This find consisted of 24 thalers, 65 groschens⁴⁰ and 1213 deniers from the early modern era. One of the more important of the smaller donations was Napoleon's Class IV Legion of Honor from Buda carpet merchant Ferenc Zsigmond: this was the first award medal in the collection (*Fig. 16*).



*Fig. 16 Legion of Honor,
4th Class, about 1809*

40 The groschen (Hung. *garas*) is a small silver coin larger than the denier.

The Age of Absolutism (1850–1866)

For a long time following the Hungarian nation's unsuccessful War of Hungarian Independence (1848–49) led by Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) against centralist Habsburg rule, the collection's opportunities for growth failed to improve. The vast majority of new acquisitions were from generous private individuals, with little money allocated for purchases and no opportunity for large scientifically compiled collections during this period. However, it was during this period that the collection underwent its first large-scale cataloging, after lying in sealed crates since the late 1830's due to construction of a new building for the museum. It was not until 1855 that Érdy was able to begin identifying and cataloging the coins. Later, Baron Simon Sina helped make it possible for Érdy to furnish the rooms of the numismatic collection with the necessary display cases. The chamber opened to the public on July 10, 1860.⁴¹ While cataloging the coins Érdy compiled two volumes of descriptions of the coins and medals of the Hungarian and Transylvanian rulers. This amounted to a total of 13,509 items in the collection.⁴²

Despite the unfavorable conditions of the absolutist years, a number of coins were added to the collection. The donations generally consisted of coins from smaller finds. At the same time, József Szerdahelyi's collection of 293 imperial and royal chamber items was the result of systematic scientific collection, yielding a comprehensive picture of Hungarian numismatic history from St. Stephen to the 19th century, although limited to silver and copper coins. Count Béla Keglevich donated a collection of a mere 92 items, yet numismatically very important. This donation consisted of 17th century silver coins in various denominations from Leopold I, arranged in series by year as characteristic of large collections. Among the outstanding donations was that of Archduke Albrecht, civil and military governor of Hungary. In 1856 the museum first obtained Roman coins which had been (along with other objects) to the king of Naples on a visit to Pompei, then Celtic coins (8 gold and 77 silver) unearthed at the Jarndorf pasture fields at the archduke's Magyaróvár estates. In 1861 Count Manó Andrassy of Betlér, a noted coin collector, donated 13 gold and 2 silver coins, including gold coins from the Hungarian mixed Houses.

Another numismatic rarity was the donation by Antal Döbrentey, of the Pest metal badges of the running of the horses, for the supporters of Hungarian horse races of the 1830s and 1840s. This donation became the starting point for a small collection of badges from 19th-century horse races in Budapest and other cities. In 1853 a donation of paper banknotes issued during the War of Hungarian Independence (1848–49) was received. The 10-kreuzer note printed in Károlyváros was in circulation throughout Croatia in 1849 due to the lack of official banknotes (Fig. 17). Still a rarity today, this was the first paper money in the Numismatic Collection.

In 1858 Mária Petrovicsné Milankovics bequeathed a large 349-gram gold medal, one of the showiest medals of St. George, to the museum (Fig. 18). Medals depicting St. George slaying the dragon were worn as amulets by soldiers in battle. In the late 17th century the Körmöcbánya mint evolved a unique and eventually very popular version of these coins. This medal was



Fig. 17 Necessity note of Károlyváros (Karlovac), 1849

41 Érdy 1862, V–VI.

42 Located in the inventory logs of the Numismatic Collection.

made by Jeremiás Roth, Sr., a member of a noted dynasty of Körmöcbánya engravers.⁴³ The artistic effect of the composition is heightened by the fact that for the Körmöcbánya coin Roth used a variation developed in Transylvania: the knight fights the dragon with a sword rather than a lance. The piece is dated by a ducat minted in 1738 under Charles III (1711–1740).



Fig. 18. Hundred-ducat commemorative medal from St. George, 1738

The Numismatic Collection acquired another rarity in 1863: a unique ten-ducat coin from Leopold I. The customary depiction of the Madonna and Child on the back of the coin is uniquely expressed here: in a highly baroque composition the Madonna and Child completely fill the coin image. The caption on this coin from the Nagybánya mint is undated, suggesting it may have been a trial minting. This coin type appears on Weszerle's numismatic tables and may be identical to the Collection's example; in any event the coin shown in the illustration is at present the only known example of this type.⁴⁴

Coins from distant countries were added slowly and in small increments from numerous sources during this period. In 1865 Ferenc Gersich donated gold and silver coins of Louis I, ruler of Portugal, as well as contemporary Mexican silver coins and 8th-century gold coins of Caliph Harun al-Rashid. Emigrants from the War of Hungarian Independence (1848–49) sent the museum valuable donations from throughout the world. Count Sámuel Wass emigrated to America and established a gold smelter in California with his fellow émigrés. Their business, Wass, Molitor and Co., made gold coins in denominations of 5, 10, 20 and 50 dollars, which were donated to the museum in 1855 (*Fig. 19*). Tivadar Duka in emigration



Fig. 19. Gold 50-dollar coin from Wass-Molitor & Co.

served as a physician in the English army in India, where he sent objects to the museum on several occasions. The Numismatic Collection has him to thank for the fine series of cowry-shell coins (*cyproea moneta*) which in Duka's time were used as money in Bengalia (now Bangladesh) and Siam (now Thailand). In 1864 János Xantus, who emigrated to America, sent a collection of around fifty coins from various countries (Canada, United States, Mexico, Haiti, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) to the Numismatic Collection.⁴⁵

43 For this and other medals of St. George see HUSZÁR 1940.

44 Its rarity on the scale of 1 to 25 used in numismatics is rated as 24. See HUSZÁR 1979, nr. 1283.

45 Xantus later returned to Hungary and became the founder of the Museum's Folklore Collection.

The Age of Dualism

The Great Compromise of 1867, creating the dual nation of Austria-Hungary out of the Habsburg Empire, opened a new era for the National Museum and thus for the Numismatic Collection. The budget provided by parliament to the institute ensured the necessary conditions for proper operation with respect to both personnel and resources for new acquisitions.⁴⁶ The growth of the numismatic collection was strongly influenced by the ministerial order from the Finance Ministry on coin and treasure finds.⁴⁷ Before that, the museum and university had selected coins from newly unearthed finds, and the remaining items were melted by the Assayer's Office (*Fig. 20*). The finder and the owner of the property were entitled to one-third each in cash payment based on the nominal value of the coins. According to the new ministerial order, the coins would not be melted, but rather the finder and property owner would be paid their share in kind by the office. The state's share would continue to be selected by the museum and university, while the remainder would be sold at auction by the office. As a result of the order, a large number of coins entered Hungarian numismatic circulation with the mediation of merchants and collectors. Within a couple of decades this process led to a national upswing in coin collecting and numismatics (*Fig. 21*).



Fig. 20. Hexdrachm of the Boii, Biatec, 1st century B.C.



Fig. 21. Solidus of Maurice Tiberius

In 1869 János Érdy retired. He was succeeded by Flóris Rómer. In 1870 József Hampel became Rómer's associate, his job including direction of the numismatic collection. The active scientific work conducted in the Numismatic and Antiques Collection had an impact on the coin collections. By the early 1870s the Collection was composed up of nearly 60,000 coins.⁴⁸ As Érdy had only catalogued Hungarian coins previously, it appeared necessary to identify and organize the entire material of the Collection using the most up-to-date sources. University graduate students assisted in this work in the mid-1870s. At this time the volume of numismatic tables preserved from József Weszerle's estate were first published, exercising great influence on the growth of Hungarian numismatics. Also during this period, the Collection gradually became the national center for numismatics. Collectors sent in coins for identification from all regions of the nation. The Collection was the starting point for the work to publicize Hungarian public and private collections and maintain a central archive of their material.⁴⁹

In the years following the Compromise, thanks to the improved opportunities for purchases, the Collection established contacts with the most important coin dealers. For example, the renowned Egger company of Vienna always gave the museum first offer of material relating

46 FEJŐS 1965, 290.

47 FRIDRICH 1872–73, 308–311.

48 RÓMER 1873, 13 and 177. This number applied only to listed coins, in addition to which there was a large number of duplicated material from the finds.

49 HAMPÉL 1872–73, 2–10.

to Hungary. The purchases were directed primarily at obtaining missing pieces from the Hungarian and Transylvanian collections. At the same time, the museum was able to select from the material from considerably more finds than before. These two factors combined to enable the systematic growth of the individual collections. Additionally, the Collection received a considerably larger number of donations than it had previously, from all sectors of society. Larger and smaller donations continued to play a defining role in the growth of the collection.

The first major donation came in 1867. Baron Antal Prokesch-Osten, the internuncio to Istanbul, actually offered his collection of Mohammedan coins to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, but the Academy in turn offered it to the National Museum.⁵⁰ The collection, consisting of 30 gold, 88 silver and 14 copper coins, represented Islamic numismatic history from the end of the 7th century to the middle of the 19th. Also through the Academy the museum received the estate of Lajos Bitnicz, titular bishop and archprovost of Szombathely, in 1871. For decades Bitnicz had been a dedicated collector of artifacts in the area around Szombathely (the location of the Roman-era settlement of Savaria).⁵¹ The numismatic part of his estate consisted of more than 2000 Roman coins, nearly 500 Hungarian coins and almost 2000 foreign coins, primarily Austrian and German. In 1872 the coin collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was also transferred to the National Museum, as the Academy's collection was very rarely used and in fact had lacked a director for several years. The collection contained slightly more than 5000 ancient coins, 1110 medieval and 1132 Habsburg-era Hungarian coins, 127 Transylvanian coins, and a few medals. The collection had only one or two rarities, but its unification with the Museum's numismatic collection was nevertheless important as it marked the end of the division of forces between the two institutes, and donations henceforth would go to one place.

A number of small donations proved fortunate with regard to the individual collection groups. Gyula Bóni, a Cairo restaurateur born in Zombor (in what is now Serbia), donated some local Roman-era coins, while engineer László Vidéky gave the museum some 19th-century South American coins. The collection obtained rare Oriental coins through the auspices of Bertalan Ónody. The most valuable of these was the boat-shaped 360-gram silver block, called an al-tuyak, which was used as money in the Western Chinese city of Kashgar (*Fig. 22*). A small collection from Antónia Kovács proved important because its Kossuth notes, the Hungarian banknotes of the Independent War in 1848–49, were the first additions to the hitherto tiny collection of paper money. Regular donors to the numismatic collection, in addition to Archduke Joseph, were music teacher Lipót Szuk and pharmacist János Marossy. The inventory logs record the generous donations they made over the course of several decades.



Fig. 22. Silver form of payment from Kashgar in west China, 19th century

The period after the Compromise offered the first opportunity for the regular purchase of objects. The first large-scale purchase took place in 1868 at an auction by Zschiesche & Köder of Leipzig. The museum purchased twenty items from the auction, some ancient coins and some Hungarian. The most important acquisition was a ten-carat medal made in

50 *MTAÉ* I, 195–196.

51 Rómer's report on the Bitnicz collection: *ArchÉrt* 1, 306.

1626 in Nagybánya (now Baia Mare, Rumania).⁵² In the years following the museum made continual additions purchased from various Austrian and German coin dealers. For example, Egger made small donations on several occasions, and exchanges with the museum were also common. In addition to the dealers, the museum also made purchases from collectors and various other private individuals. It was through a purchase of the latter sort in 1871 that the collection obtained a large gold coin of Joseph I (1705–1711) and his wife, Wilhelmina Amalia, as well as a ten-ducat coin of Transylvanian Prince Ákos Barcsay (1658–1661).

The museum regularly selected items needed for the coin collection from state-sponsored excavations. Of the digs of the 1870's the most important material recovered was the find of Celtic coins at Zichyújfalu and early modern coins at Sterus, Austria. The Zichyújfalu site in Fejér County yielded 17 coins characteristic of the Celtic tribes who once inhabited this area (Fig. 23).⁵³ The Sterus site produced 70 16th and 17th-century Hungarian and foreign coins, 19 gold coins and 51 thalers. The site's outstanding group of 24 objects comprised different versions of Ferdinand II's Austrian, Hungarian, Czech and Tyrolian thalers. The number of purchases grew steadily, with 24 in 1873. Although the purchases were numerically far below the frequency of donations, the former always added valuable material to the collection.



Fig. 23. Celtic tetradrachm from the Zichyújfalu hoard, late 3rd century B.C.

It was at approximately this time that systematic, methodical collection began in order to improve the coin collection. In 1874 a large East Asian expedition begun at the start of the decade returned numerous Oriental coins to the Collection. This collection of 1077 coins contained metal, cowry and porcelain coins from many countries of the region from Japan to Borneo.⁵⁴ Of major importance in the 19th century history of Hungarian coin minting was the 83-item collection sent by the director of the Körmöcbánya mint at the request of the museum. The material consisted of lead casts for coins and medals made at the mints at Körmöcbánya and Gyulafehérvár.

After the Compromise the number of additions from donations, purchases, excavation recoveries and collection was in excess of a thousand per year (including coins added as parts of larger collections).

1877 saw changes in the personnel at the top of the Coin and Antiques Collection. Rómer left the museum, having been appointed Canon of Nagyvárad (now Oradea, Rumania). As director of the Collection, he had dealt with numismatics in addition to archeology. Some of his numismatic articles reported new excavations, while others described previously unknown coins and medals.⁵⁵ His excavation reports were not restricted solely to the material acquired to the museum, but also discussed finds which the museum had only catalogued. This practice was continued by his later successors at the Collection.

After Rómer's departure József Hampel became the director of the Collection. Under Hampel's decades of leadership from 1877 to 1913 the Coin Collection enjoyed a golden age. Beginning in 1877 a separate inventory log was kept on additions to the collection. By the end of the 19th century the long-awaited state was reached where two of the Collection's officials

52 The image on the medal is identical to one made in 1643 with an octagonal edge: WESZERLE 1873. Part F. III. 4.

53 See DESSEWFFY 1910–1915, nrs. 329–379. Count Dessewffy's share of the find was later donated along with the rest of his collection to the museum.

54 ORTVAY 1875, 112.

55 *ArchÉrt* 3, 162–163; *ArchÉrt* 6, 158–159.

dealt exclusively with coins, with an impact on both the development and the scientific cataloging of the collection. As director Hampel not only dealt with numismatics but also taught as a university professor.⁵⁶ The majority of his numismatic publications appeared in *Archaeologiai Értesítő*.⁵⁷ One of his best numismatic articles was on a medal commemorating Queen Beatrix (the wife of King Mathias) made by Gian Christoforo Romano.⁵⁸

A number of people worked in the Collection by the end of the 19th century, such as Béla Czobor 1876–1886, Gyula Tergina 1880–1895, Béla Posta 1885–1899 and Bálint Kuzsinszky 1887–1901. All of them dealt to a greater or lesser extent with the science of numismatics in addition to their work in archeology.⁵⁹

László Réthy (1851–1914) was the first official at the Coins and Antiques collection who dealt exclusively with the coin collection. In 1880 he was the first to receive a doctorate in numismatics in Hungary, and in 1881 he joined the museum. His major work, *Corpus Nummorum Hungariae* (CNH), was begun in the early 1880s.⁶⁰ Réthy first catalogued the Hungarian material in the collection of Duke Montenuovo (the son of Count Ádám Neipperg and Archduchess Maria Louise). Within a few decades the duke had established one of the richest coin collections of the 19th century. The Hungarian and Transylvanian section of his collection was considered the second-most complete after that of the National Museum.⁶¹ In the late 1870s the collection was obtained by merchant Adolf Hess. In 1882 Réthy travelled to Frankfurt in order to catalogue the collection of roughly 20,000 Hungarian-related coins in the Montenuovo collection, and to process the material for Hungarian numismatics. The work took five months. Next Réthy studied the coin collection of the Viennese court, and then reviewed István Delhaes' series of coins. In the early 1880s he examined public and private Transylvanian collections, the numismatic material of the Rumanian Academy in Bucharest, and the collections of Prague, Dresden, Leipzig, Weimar, Gotha, Berlin and Copenhagen. Later he examined the major coin collections of Keszthely, Pannonhalma and Zagreb.⁶² Réthy examined the circulation of Hungarian coins in the Far North based on a study of Árpád-era coin finds from around the Baltic Sea. These sites also yielded local imitations of the Árpád-era Hungarian coins, which imitations were published in early reports of the corpus.⁶³ From a few sites Réthy was able to make purchases for the collection, such as the 65 pieces he obtained for the National Museum from the Vossberg site. From the mid-1880's until the publication in 1899 of the first volume of the corpus on the Árpád era, Réthy contacted many Hungarian and non-Hungarian collections, including the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, the British Museum in London, the Brera Collection in Milan and the Schimkó Collection in Pozsony (now Bratislava, in Slovakia).⁶⁴ In 1894 he travelled to Scandinavia, where he visited the museums of Göteborg, Christiania (Oslo) and Stockholm. In Stockholm he made a listing of the Árpád-era finds unearthed in the territory of Sweden.⁶⁵ In the first volume of the corpus Réthy outlined the entire program of the CNH, which was to present Hungarian

56 *ArchÉrt* 12, 35.

57 Hampel's numismatic bibliography: *ArchÉrt* 33, 114.

58 HAMPPEL 1886, 224–228.

59 F. FEJÉR–HUSZÁR 1977, 190, 270, 310, 318, 321; *ArchÉrt* 2, 32–50; *ArchÉrt* 6, 418–421; *ArchÉrt* 9, 284.

60 RÉTHY 1885, 145–147.

61 RÉTHY 1882, 156–161.

62 RÉTHY 1899, 146–147.

63 RÉTHY 1886, 36–40.

64 Réthy 1899, 4.

65 *ArchÉrt* 15, 187.

numismatic history in its entirety; however, only the first and second volumes (the latter on the coins of the kings of the mixed dynasties) were ever published.⁶⁶ These two volumes remain indispensable references on Hungarian numismatics even today.

Non-Hungarian contacts increased toward the end of the 19th century. The Collection sought out a number of numismatists. For example, Theodor Rhode of Germany studied the Aurelian coins in the Roman group of the Collection, Frenchman Arthur Engel examined the medieval Hungarian coins, and Romanian numismatic metrologist Prince Soutzo studied ancient weights and the ancient coins.

The Collection increased considerably in the last decades of the 19th century (*Fig. 24*). In addition to donations, there was also a growth in the amount of material obtained from excavations and through purchases (*Fig. 25*). Nevertheless, the large private collections continued to be the deciding factors in expansion. The growth of the Numismatic Collection was aided by the acquisition of two large private collections at this time.



Fig. 24 Denarius of Julius Caesar, BC



Fig. 25 Celtic tetradrachm from the Mászlonypusztá hoard, 2nd century B.C.

Ferenc Ebenhöch, the Canon of Győr and an antique collector, made several smaller donations to the Numismatic Collection as early as the 1870s. Then, in 1882 he gave the museum his collection of 4648 religious coins. The large series of the collection contained coins with depictions of Jesus, Mary, the Holy Family, saints, and sites of pilgrimages, along with smaller yet important series of coins of St. George and Ulrich crosses. One of the outstanding pieces in the collection is a coin of the Holy Trinity made in 1544 (or later) by Hans Reinhart.⁶⁷ One lovely series was the 16th century Biblical coins from Joachimstahl, Bohemia (now Jáchimov, Czech Republic). Ebenhöch's estate following his death in 1889 bequeathed 1672 tokens, mine notes, coins of necessity and religious coins to the museum. These donations laid the foundation for the Numismatic Collection's collectional group on this theme.

From a second major private collector of the era, Ignác Dobóczky, the institute purchased a collection of Rumanian coins virtually unmatched in its completeness. Dobóczky, a representative in parliament and member of the Academy's archeological committee, was also a skilled numismatist. On its purchase in 1887 his Rumanian collection contained 511 Moldavian coins, 408 Wallachian coins, 142 Russian coins in circulation in the Rumanian principalities, 99 coins minted by Transylvanian princes with the Moldavian-Wallachian coat of arms, 99 late 19th century Rumanian coins, and 223 historical Rumanian medals.⁶⁸ In addition, on several occasions the museum purchased significant items from Dobóczky, including such rarities as the thaler-sized gold coin of Michael the Brave, Prince of Wallachia dating from 1600. Smaller series in these purchases were the coins of Governor János Hunyadi (1446–1453), as well as Bulgarian and Serbian coins.⁶⁹

66 RÉTHY 1907.

67 B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, Fig. 74–76.

68 *ArchÉrt* 8, 178.

69 *ArchÉrt* 5, 143.

In the 1880's coin dealer Hess auctioned off many parts of the Montenuovo collection. The collection became scattered. It was a great loss to Hungarian numismatics that the museum was unable to obtain the Hungarian-related groups of coins. The Árpád-era coins were purchased in their entirety by the Museum of Zagreb, while the other coins and medals were acquired by private collections or remained in circulation in art object trade. Through various means, generally with the mediation of coin dealers, the most important pieces in the collection were nevertheless obtained by the Numismatic Collection. In 1880, at the first auction of Frankfurt coin dealer Leo Hamburger, the Collection obtained a number of fine medals made around 1547 by Leone Leoni, including unusually fine gold medals depicting Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and Maria, widow of King Louis II of Hungary,⁷⁰ and the recapture of Buda from the Turks in 1686,⁷¹ as well as a rare 1637 thaler of Ferdinand III, with the unusual feature that the monarch is portrayed from full face, rather than the customary profile view.⁷² A particularly valuable rarity was the large medal of Tamás Bakócz, Archbishop of Esztergom (1442–1521) (Fig. 26).⁷³

In 1888 the museum purchased the Habsburg-era coins of the Montenuovo collection from Munich jeweler Emil Neustätter. In 1894 the museum bought a 20-piece collection of coins of the Transylvanian princes from the company of Adolf Hess' Successors. In 1901 a discovery was made of a rare 1533 thaler from the Montenuovo



Fig. 26. Commemorative medal of Tamás Bakócz, about 1500

collection, depicting Miklós Zrínyi, a hero in the wars against the Turks and captain of the garrison in the 1566 Siege of Szigetvár. The coin was auctioned to the Wunderly collection, then in a later auction by Hamburger was finally acquired by the museum. Other elements of the Montenuovo collection came to the Numismatic Collection as parts of other large collections. Coin collector Leo Holländer of Eperjes (today's Prešov in Slovakia) had a special collection of nearly 5000 Transylvanian coins which was one of the prides of his town, and also obtained the relevant pieces of the Montenuovo collection.⁷⁴ Holländer sold his collection to the noted Transylvanian collector, Adolf Resch of Brassó. Finally, in 1896 the Transylvanian rarities of the Montenuovo collection were acquired by the Numismatic Collection from the 509-item Resch collection.⁷⁵ Later, medals from the former Montenuovo collection were acquired as part of the Delhaes collection.⁷⁶ In all, the Numismatic Collection added several hundred selected items from the Montenuovo collection.

Among the most important acquisitions affecting the structure of the collection was the 1878 donation from Count Edmund Zichy, Ambassador to Istanbul, which consisted

70 B. SEY–GEDAI 1972, Fig. 50–51.

71 GOHL 1899, 37.

72 HUSZÁR 1979, nr. 1245.

73 HUSZÁR 1999, Fig. 13.

74 *ArchÉrt* 2, XV.

75 *ArchÉrt* 17, 90.

76 RÉTHY 1882, 156.

of Turkish coins that had previously been the collection of Baron Prokesch-Osten. This donation added 56 gold coins, 16 silver and 12 copper to the group of Islamic coins. Of similar significance was the 1879 donation by József Haas, Chief Consul in Shanghai, of 200 East Asian Coins and two Brazilian medals.⁷⁷ The most valuable part of this collection was an imposing collection of 174 Chinese coins illustrating Chinese numismatic history from the end of the second millennium BC to the late 19th century. In 1880 Baron Ferenc Révay donated 21 Arabian glass surrogate coins and money-weights from the 8th to 12th centuries. Augmented by serendipitous acquisitions later, this collection currently numbers 70 items.



Fig. 27 Hungarian Honvéd Medal in Italy, 1863

An outstandingly valuable donation was that of parliamentary representative Károly Vadnai, who from the estate of 1848-49 army officer Géza Hevessy gave the museum a Hungarian Honvéd Medal (Fig. 27) founded by Lajos Kossuth in Italy in 1863, along with the letter of award.⁷⁸ The letter, issued in Torino and dated 1863, states that Hevessy “*earned [the award] as member of the Hungarian Defensive Army – now part of the Hungarian Organization of Italy – and which ... in all wise is warranted by the faithful patriotism he has shown*”.⁷⁹

Donations arrived from many layers of society. A closer examination of the year 1878 will illustrate this. In 1878 the Numismatic Collection received a total of 145 donations from various sources. The donors included four aristocrats, four landowners, four priests, nine schoolteachers and ten students, as well as lawyers, merchants, and merchant apprentices. Among the other donors one finds a ferryman, tailor, apprentice tailor, district magistrate, land steward, geologist, apprentice glassblower, farmers, a sculptor, chancellery forest ranger, head waiter, printer’s assistant, pharmacist, engineer, shoemaker, notary, registrar, bailiff, jailer, canon, windmill constructor, war veteran, nun, veterinarian, and finally even a museologist and museum director. The majority donated one or two items of small value, but some were important collections, such as the donation from Count Zichy. A new museum regulation introduced in 1889 made it possible to reject valueless donations. This new procedure resulted in a decrease in the number of donations. From that time on, acquisitions from purchases for the most part exceeded donations not only in numismatic terms, but also in monetary value. Of course, this statement does not apply to the priceless large private collections donated to the museum.

A significant portion of the acquisitions by purchase was coins unearthed in archeological digs. Although not every discovery of coins was examined by the museum, by the end of the 1870’s a remarkable number of finds were catalogued in the Numismatic Collection. For example, in 1891 14,389 objects from 15 excavations went to the Collection, of which 638 were

⁷⁷ *ArchÉrt* 13, 363.

⁷⁸ HÉRI-DINNYÉS 1994, nr. 49.

⁷⁹ *ArchÉrt* 13, 184.

selected for the collection; in 1892 there were 24,114 objects from 23 excavations, with 539 kept; in 1893 the museum kept 572 objects out of 8404 from 18 excavations; in 1894 20,738 coins from 25 excavations saw 828 kept, and in 1895 12,512 coins from 24 excavations added 581 to the collection.⁸⁰ Of the archeological excavations the 1887 Roman era coin find at Nagytétény exceeded the rest by far with more than 10,000 bronze coins being acquired by the museum.

The collection also made other purchases, which were even more important than the selections of archeological finds. The majority of the purchases were from private collectors and coin dealers, such as the 128 items previously missing from the Lipót Stuhr collection, mostly from the Árpáadian period (10th to 13th century), which the museum purchased in 1887. In 1892 the museum purchased a 10-forint note issued by the Serbian national congress in 1848 in Karlóca (now Karlovci, Serbia) and an even greater rarity, a 10-forint note issued in 1849 during the War of Hungarian Independence and signed by Governor Lajos Kossuth and Prime Minister Bertalan Szemere (Fig. 28). The latter banknote remains one of the most valuable pieces in the history of Hungarian paper money even today.



Fig. 28. Note for 10 florins, 1849

Some of the important of the numismatic objects the collection obtained from other offices are the casting plates, which lay dormant in the archives of the city hall of Brassó (now Brasov, Rumania) until 1879, at which time they were transferred to the museum by the chief directorate of state buildings. Most of the 45 plates were for farthings of the city of Brassó and thalers of Mihály Apaffy. In another official acquisition through the auspices of the financial ministry, the museum obtained extremely valuable material in 1893 with the change of currency from the korona (crown) to the forint. Réthy received permission to select examples needed for the Numismatic Collection from the accumulation of old silver coins waiting to be melted down at Körmöcbánya.⁸¹ The result was 215 modern (18th and 19th century) coins of various denominations. It was also during this period that the museum obtained some outstandingly important objects in numismatic history, a few of the gold bars unearthed in Kraszna in 1887 (Fig. 29). According to the first publication 12 gold bars were discovered during earthworks near Kraszna (now Crasna, Rumania).⁸² From the find, originally weighing 5 kg, the museum received two bars and nine fragments of varying sizes. The origin and purpose of the bars was the subject of heated academic debate at the time, based on the seals found on them,⁸³ but the questions remain unanswered to this



Fig. 29. Roman gold bars from the Kraszna hoard, late 4th century A.D.

80 *ArchÉrt* 13, 181; *ArchÉrt* 14, 87; *ArchÉrt* 15, 88; *ArchÉrt* 16, 283.

81 *ArchÉrt* 14, 88–89.

82 RESCH 1887, 392–395.

83 FRÖHLICH 1888, 39–48; HAMPEL 1888, 48–50 and MOMMSEN 1888, 351–358.

day. What seems certain is that the bars were melted down from gold paid in taxes at the Roman mint in Sirmium (now Mitrovica, Serbia) at the end of the 4th century AD.⁸⁴

Ödön Gohl (1859–1927), a secondary-school teacher of Greek and Latin, became an official at the Coin and Antiques Collection in 1895. For nearly twenty years – until Réthy's retirement in 1914 – Réthy and Gohl meant that two of the most outstanding Hungarian numismatists



Fig. 30. Free masonic medal of the Lodge of Pozsony (now Bratislava)

of age were working in the museum's coin collection under the direction of József Hampel. During his years at the museum Gohl dealt with virtually every area of numismatics, from Celtic coins to the numismatic material of World War One. His studies on Celtic coin minting stand out among his wide-ranging academic accomplishments. He also published works on medals relating to the history of the capital, as well as Hungarian school tokens, medical tokens, scrip, and mine notes. In the course of his work at the Collection he conscientiously strove to fill the missing areas in the collection, with especially outstanding achievements in increasing the groups of Celtic and Greek coins. His modern collector's attitude resulted in the Collection acquiring larger or smaller collections of contemporary numismatic objects such as sports medals, freemason badges (Fig. 30), various forms of surrogate money, and tokens from World War One. Gohl regularly made valuable donations to the Collection, which was made possible by his family's secure financial background. One of his most outstanding donations was an ivory medal of Cardinal Lipót Kollonich (1631–1707) which he bought for the Collection at an auction of the Berchtold collection.⁸⁵

Gohl's scientific work at the Collection was aided by an unusually large number of study tours inside and outside of Hungary, partly for the purpose of attending international conferences and partly to visit the major coin collections of Europe. At the turn of century additions through collection played an increasingly important role: contemporary numismatic objects such as sports medals and freemason badges came directly from the sports associations and freemason lodges. In order to obtain a complete collection of the urban currencies of necessity from the War of Hungarian Independence (1848–49), mayors of the cities involved were asked to send the museum a complete series from their archives (Fig. 31). Efforts were also made to augment the Collection library.

Rapid growth in numismatics and coin collection resulted from the founding of the Hungarian Numismatic Society in 1901. The initiative came from the collectors, who looked to the Collection

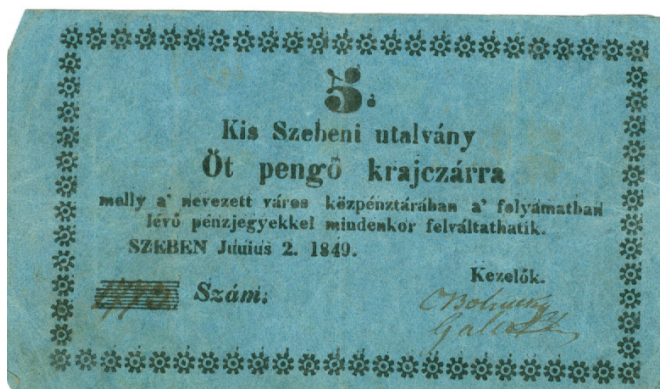


Fig. 31. Necessity note of Kisszeben (now in Slovakia), 1849

84 B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, 24–25.

85 MNM Jelentés 1906, 52, Tab. II/5.

as the scientific center of Hungarian numismatics. In addition to collectors and dealers, the Numismatic Collection's Gohl and Réthy were also present at the Society's birth. Officials from the collection have always taken active part in the life of the Society since its founding.

Quantitative data on the material accumulated in the first hundred years of the Collection was published by the museum in its 1902 centennial publication, listing the coins in rounded numbers by group: 4000 Greek, 1200 barbarian, 2500 Roman republican, 22,000 Roman imperial, 1200 Byzantine (Fig. 32), 8000 Austrian, 15,000 Hungarian and Transylvanian, and 13,000 foreign coins, as well as 5200 medals, 2400 tokens and 5600 religious coins, for a total of 82,100 coins and medals.⁸⁶ This amount did not include the 10,000 Roman era coins from the 1887 find at Nagytétény, the Árpáadian period find of more than 30,000 coins, or the 20,000-coin collection acquired in the centennial year from the István Delhaes estate, as well as duplicated objects, of course. The traditional numismatic approach was to count any given coin type only once in the collection, while other examples were kept for exchange purposes; this attitude influenced the growth of the Collection until the middle of the 20th century. A second accounting at the turn of the century estimated the entire stock of the Collection, including duplications, at 200,000 objects.⁸⁷



Fig. 32. Byzantine weight, 6th century(?)

The most important addition to the Collection at the turn of the century was again a large private collection. István Delhaes (1843–1901), a wealthy Hungarian painter living in Vienna, had established an enormous art collection in the last decades of the last century, which he left to his homeland in his will dated 1893. Along with the other collections, the National Museum grew by the 20,000-coin collection



Fig. 33. Sestertius of Severus Alexander

of the Delhaes estate.⁸⁸ This coin collection of unmatched wealth made some collectional groups of the Numismatic Collection on a par with any in Europe. The itemized increases: 881 Greek, 130 barbarian, 381 Roman republican, 4627 Roman imperial (Fig. 33) and 173 Byzantine coins, with 15 ancient falsifications, 1535 Austrian provincial coins, 4137 medals (Fig. 34), 3849 tokens, and 2722 Hungarian, 431 Transylvanian and 1609 foreign coins. The majority of the Greek collection was comprised of Italian, Sicilian, Macedonian, Sassanid, Parthian and Alexandrian series. Highlights of the collection were a Syracusan silver coin from the turn of the 5th and 4th centuries BC, and two Egyptian gold coins, one of Ptolemy II and Arsione II, and the other of Arsione II alone from the Hellenic period.⁸⁹ These coins were fine examples of ancient numismatic art. The most interesting of the barbarian coins in the Delhaes collection were the

86 GOHL-RÉTHY 1902, 171–176.

87 NK 1, 48–49.

88 GOHL 1906, 117–122.

89 B. SEY-GEDAI 1972, Fig. 2–4.

gold coins from a Celtic tribe in ancient Bohemia. The series of Roman coins featured a group of 2600 coins containing abundant variations of the coins of Gallienus and Salonina. The most important of the several thousand medals were the series of religious medals and medals of St. George, as well as various commemorative issues from as far back as Louis II of Hungary and an imposing group of personal coins. The largest of the series of foreign medals was the group of Napoleonic medals. Along with the medals, the museum received a 44-object collection of awards and honors, comprising the core of the later collection of awards. The tokens included a number of foreign series – mainly Austrian and German – while the most valuable collection was of Hungarian mine notes which, added to earlier acquisitions, constituted a highly respected group in the Collection. The most interesting item among the Transylvanian coins was a long silver plate on which the 1658 thaler of Transylvanian Prince György Rákóczi II (1648–1660) was pressed five times and his 1653 deniers eight times (Fig. 35).⁹⁰ Another interesting feature of this object is that it was acquired by Delhaes from the Montenuovo collection. In addition, a rarity in the Transylvanian collection was the semicircular two-forint gold coin of Mihály Apafi.⁹¹ As a unit, the foreign coins in the Delhaes collection consisted predominantly of German, Italian, French and Polish coins, followed by the groups of Mohammedan, Chinese and Japanese coins. This collection was supplemented by small but valuable coins from a number of other nations.

At the turn of the century the Collection received donations of several smaller yet valuable collections in addition to the Delhaes collection. In 1896 Dr. Károly Mészáros purchased 509 objects from Adolf Resch's famous collection to fill out the museum's Transylvanian collection. This selected material contained ten-carat gold forints from virtually every Transylvanian prince as well as a number of rare gold coins and thalers.

In the same year, János Jedlicska, a retired official in the finance ministry in Vienna, offered to sell the museum his entire collection of paper banknotes from all over the world. Based on Réthy's report, the major financial institutes of Budapest put together the money necessary to purchase the Hungarian and Austrian material from the collection. Thus the museum acquired a collection of 500 notes to establish the core of the Numismatic Collection's



Fig. 34. Commemorative medal of John III Sobieski, king of Poland (1629–1696) for liberation of Vienna, 1683

90 HUSZÁR 1995, 541.

91 HUSZÁR 1995, 685.



Fig. 35. Silver plate with stamps of coins of Prince György Rákóczi II, 1653

paper money collection. The largest units in the collection were the Kossuth notes, the notes of necessity from the War of Hungarian Independence (1848–49) (Fig. 36), 18th and 19th century banknotes from the City Bank of Vienna (Fig. 37) and the Austrian National Bank, Austrian state bonds, privately issued Austrian and Bohemian notes, and Austrian banknotes issued for Venice and Lombardia. With this collection the museum obtained the notes Kossuth had issued in denominations of 1 and 2 forints from exile in London, one of the rarest objects in Hungarian paper money history.

In 1904 Emil Havas (Hirsch), a Hungarian living in Vienna, donated abundant series of coins to the Collection. First, he donated his own collection, containing several hundred Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Polish, Russian, English, Belgian, Dutch, Swiss, French, Spanish, Italian and German coins. Then, at an auction of the Gerhard collection in Munich he purchased 27 marvelous Habsburg-era and Transylvanian gold coins for the Collection. He also purchased many other valuable coins for the museum, including an extremely rare silver florin from Ferdinand I with a depiction of an angel.⁹² Finally, he bought Károly Nuber's collection of 429 Moldavian and Wallachian coins, through which the Rumanian group of the Numismatic Collection – including the Dobóczky collection obtained earlier – became one of the largest in that group internationally.

In 1906 the museum purchased Jenő Sziklay's large Árpadian period collection, which consisted of 4016 objects, 3595 silver coins and 421 copper. Sziklay – a civil engineer for the railroad as well as the vice

92 HUSZÁR 1979, 916.



Fig. 36. Necessity note of Szabadka
(now in Serbia), 1849



Fig. 37. Banknote for
25 Gulden from City
Bank of Vienna, 1806

president of the Hungarian Numismatic Society – graduated university at Graz, a city famous for its art collectors, and became a collector himself. His special collection consisting of every variation of medieval Hungarian coins was a forerunner of 20th century collectors' attitudes. In 1910 the Greek collection added a purchase of the estate of Gyula Neudeck. Neudeck, who had worked at the chief consulate in Sophia, mainly collected Greek bronze coins of the Roman emperors from Thrace and Moesia, including a number of rare objects. In 1914, with financing from the Hungarian Savings and Exchange Bank, the Numismatic Collection purchased a comprehensive collection of 322 Árpadian period coins from St. Stephen to Andrew III (1290–1301) from attorney Lajos Zimmermann, one of the founders of the Hungarian Numismatic Society. These purchases demonstrate that specialized supplementation of the major collectional groups had begun wherever conditions permitted.

A series of major purchases at auctions began in 1896 when Egger Brothers of Vienna auctioned off the collection of Count Jakab Zichy. The museum purchased a total of 43 coins and 34 banknotes at a high price to prevent the entire collection from leaving the country. Outstanding items in the purchase were coins minted by the Transylvanian princes. The banknotes were private issues from Bohemia.

In 1897 the collection of Theodor Unger of Graz was auctioned off by the company of Heinrich Cubasch of Vienna. Rich in Hungarian-related material with 133 Hungarian medals and tokens, plus 46 circulated coins, the collection was purchased by the museum, along with a smaller series of Dalmatian coins.

In 1898 Egger auctioned off the collection of Karl Latour von Thurmburg in Vienna. The Museum managed to acquire 84 mixed-dynasty, Habsburg-era and Transylvanian coins. Of these the largest item was the 1553 angel forint from Ferdinand I,⁹³ a second example of which was donated to the museum by Emil Havas in 1904.

In 1899 the museum purchased two dozen medals from the Mauthner collection from Emil Neustätter and Co. of Munich, including medals of the recapture of Buda and the coronation of Joseph I. In the same year Otto Helbing of Munich auctioned off Josef Adolf Lindner's collection. The museum obtained 47 coins, augmenting its series of Habsburg-era coins.

In 1900 the Theodor Hiersch collection was auctioned off by Egger. The museum

93 HUSZÁR 1979, 916.

commissioned Viennese coin dealer Kraus to obtain a number of Hungarian-related objects from the collection. Of the more than 30 medals the most valuable was a medal issued on the occasion of the recapture of Buda, while the 25 coins included a number of interesting thalers.

In 1904 Jacob Hirsch auctioned off the Gerhard collection of gold coins. Through Viennese coin dealer Emil Fischer the museum obtained 34 objects, including five-florin gold coins of Ferdinand II and five- and ten-florin gold coins of Ferdinand III and Leopold I. The most valuable piece, however, was the gold florin issued by the city of Nagyszeben in 1605, of which the Numismatic Collection has never acquired a second example. Thus, along with the donation from Emil Havas the Collection added a total of 61 excellent gold coins from the Gerhard collection.

In 1906 Egger Brothers auctioned off the abundant collection of the aristocratic Berchtold family. The auction catalogue for the collection listed 1371 items, the vast majority of which was related to Hungary.⁹⁴ More than twenty companies and institutes were represented at the auction, such as the Vienna City Museum, the Germanisches Museum of Nuremberg, the Körmöcbánya Mint, Munich coin dealers, and Spink & Son of London. This circumstance made it more difficult for the museum to obtain the individual items relatively cheaply. Ultimately the Collection acquired several dozen items from the auction, including a coin with the portraits of Louis II and Maria, a medal commemorating the recapture of Buda by Bavarian elector Maximilian Emmanuel, a 1699 medal by Leopold I commemorating the re-conquest of Hungary, and a 1685 medal on the birth of Charles III (*Fig. 38*), made at Körmöcbánya by the famous medalist Christian Hermann Roth.⁹⁵ A valuable part of the purchase was the series of medals linked to various individuals. The most notable of these were Terézia Batthyány-Strattmann's badge for the foundation created in 1753 for widows of military officers,⁹⁶ Countess Ludmilla Berchtold-Ungarschitz Ludmilla

1837 medal,⁹⁷ and, through the auspices of Ödön Gohl, a one-sided ivory medal of Cardinal Lipót Kollonich (1631–1707).⁹⁸ Another 17 medals and 25 Hungarian and Transylvanian coins were purchased from the company from the Berchtold material left over from the auction, including important objects such as a rare 1683 four-florin gold coin of Transylvanian Prince Imre Thököly (1682–1685). Thus, the Collection acquired a total of 88 selected medals and coins related to Hungary from this large private collection.

In May 1910 Otto Helbing of Munich auctioned the storehouse estate and numismatic library of Viennese coin dealer Emil Fischer. More than 300 of the 6501 items in the auction catalogue listed Hungarian and Transylvanian coins and medals. The Collection added two medals and thirteen selected Hungarian and Transylvanian coins, including a gold denier of Ferdinand I, a gold florin of Transylvanian Prince Zsigmond János (1540–1571) minted in Kolozsvár (now Cluj-Napoca, Rumania), a ten-florin gold coin of Transylvanian Prince János Kemény (1661–1662), and two- and ten-florin Transylvanian gold coins of Maria Theresa.



Fig. 38. Commemorative medal on the birth of Charles III, 1685

94 EGGER 1906.

95 MNM Jelentés 1906, Tab. I and II/1-6.

96 NK 17, 113.

97 HUSZÁR 1999, 36.

98 HUSZÁR 1999, 265. A.

In late February 1911 Adolf Hess' Successors auctioned the part of Viennese Johann Horský's collection relating to Hungary and Transylvania in Frankfurt, from which the Collection acquired 9 rare Transylvanian coins, including two different issues of an obol of Zsigmond János and ten-florin gold coins and thalers of his successors. In addition 15 medals, the most outstanding and also most interesting of which was an oval gold medal on a silver chain in honor of János Ponikau (Fig. 39). This is to date the only known gold example of this 1606 medal.⁹⁹



Fig. 39. Gold medal of János Ponikau, 1606

Around 1910 Hess held several auctions of parts of the collection of Dr. Richard Julius Erbstein, director of the Royal Numismatic Collection in Dresden. The Hungarian National Museum had made smaller purchases from this enormous coin collection on several occasions by various means. The most outstanding piece was a skillfully worked 1581 silver coin of Pozsony (now Bratislava, in Slovakia), councilor György Forst, which the Collection acquired from Egger Brothers.¹⁰⁰

In addition to its purchases from auctions the Numismatic Collection also strove continuously at the turn of the century to obtain missing rarities from the individual collection groups. In exceptional cases a fund established by Baron Béla Rudics made it possible for the directorate to purchase more expensive objects. The museum's first purchase for the Collection from the Rudics fund was a gold minting of the so-called "peacock" thaler of Maximilian II in 1900. Made by Valentin Maler in 1563, this artistic coin weighed 70 grams.¹⁰¹ In 1901 a 1643 gold minting of a medal by Daniel Hailer, Jr., of János Telegdi, Archbishop of Kalocsa, was also purchased from this fund.¹⁰² The museum purchased 24 recently minted gold medals from the Körmöcbánya Mint, including a 246-gram medal on the 100th anniversary of the University of Budapest, and a 361-gram medal of award for Mór Wahrmann from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Among the most outstanding purchases were an ancient coin, a gold medallion of Maximianus Herculus (Fig. 40),¹⁰³ unearthed at Szár in Fejér County, a thaler of Miklós Zrínyi¹⁰⁴ and a 1713 silver coin of Constantine Bassaraba, Prince of Wallachia.¹⁰⁵



Fig. 40. Gold medallion of Maximianus Herculus

99 Huszár 1999, 426.

100 Hess 1908, 351; Huszár 1999, 126.

101 B. Sey-Gedai 1972, 61–62.

102 B. Sey-Gedai 1972, 77.

103 B. Sey-Gedai 1972, 16–17.

104 MNM Jelentés 1911, 69; Weszerle 1873, G. XXXVII. 2.

105 MNM Jelentés 1911, 70, IV 3.

The collections also added interesting objects through smaller donations. As a new phenomenon, Hungarian contemporary medalists (Ö. Fülöp Beck, Ede Telcs, Tony Szirmay, Szilárd Szódy, Lajos Berán) donated their own works to the Collection with relative regularity. Object types which previously had rarely or never occurred, such as badges from offices or associations, now appeared in the collection. Bonds and monetary notes from a financial institute were forerunners of the securities collection which would take shape many years later. From the joint ministry of finance the museum received early 19th-century counterfeit notes of the monetary notes of Vienna City Bank. This 20-piece series was to comprise the core of the collection of counterfeit paper money formed from later acquisitions. In 1911 the Collection obtained 69 glass scrip tokens once used by Count Aspremont on his Zboró estate. Smaller units of 19th century foreign money (French, Greek, German, Russian, Swiss, Swedish, etc.) were added to the collection, all by donations.

The Collection made valuable additions at the turn of the century through various inheritances. In 1901 the museum obtained several hundred modern Hungarian and foreign coins and a few medals from the estate of Ádám Busbach, including a fine medal by Ö. Fülöp Beck commissioned by the Budapest Figure-Skating Society. In 1911 the Collection acquired 30 medals and 36 coins of various sorts from the estate of József Lonovics, Archbishop of Kalocsa. The most valuable of this material were papal medals and historical Hungarian medals. From the estate of painter Sándor Bihari the collection purchased award medals such as the grand state gold medal for fine arts from the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, the gold medal of the 1888 international art exhibition in Munich, the gold medal of the 1891 art exhibition of Berlin, and the 1904 bronze medal of the St. Louis exhibition.

Of the many archeological finds unearthed annually at the turn of the century the largest was the Árpadian period coin find discovered in 1897 on Duke Metternich's property at Richárdpuszta in Fejér County, which with more than 30,000 coins was significantly larger than any previous find. The material, practically all of which was obtained by the museum, provided numerous versions of coins of Coloman (1095–1116), Stephen II (1115–1131) and especially Béla II (1131–1141).¹⁰⁶ Another academically important finds included one at Nádasd in Sopron County, from which 10 Celtic coins were added to the Collection; the Budapest-Lágymányos site with several hundred Eraviscan (a Celtic tribe) coins and dozens of Roman coins; the Décsi site (Arad County, now in Rumania), from which the museum acquired 8 ancient silver coins from Apollonia and 104 from Dyrrhachium; and the find of Celtic coins at Réthe (Pozsony County, now Slovakia), of which the Collection obtained 20 coins.¹⁰⁷ At the coin find unearthed in 1910 on the outskirts of Rákos (Fertőrákos, Kroisbach) a previously unknown type of Celtic coins were discovered (*Fig. 41*), of which the Museum purchased a number of pieces.¹⁰⁸ The 1904 find of Arabian coins at Máramaros is still of great academic importance today, and the museum obtained a total of 400 coins from here.¹⁰⁹ The find is an unrivalled memento of



Fig. 41. Celtic tetradrachm from the Rákos (Kroisbach) hoard, 2nd century B.C.

¹⁰⁶ Éber 1904, 87–91.

¹⁰⁷ MNM Jelentés 1905, 42, 46–47.

¹⁰⁸ TORBÁGYI 1999, 61.

¹⁰⁹ FOMIN–KOVÁCS 1987, 7–9.

Arabian trade ties in the region in the period following the arrival of the ancient Hungarians. In rare exceptions the Collection also added coins from foreign finds: in 1911 the Museum purchased 22 Macedonian silver coins from an Egyptian find at Abu Homos from Count Miklós Dessewffy. In the spring of 1912 a major Árpáadian period find was unearthed on the outskirts of Bács, with coins of Béla III and Andrew II (1205–1235), as well as medieval Aquileian and Friesachian pennies. With the mediation of merchant Alfréd Schmideg, the Collection obtained 510 Hungarian coins from this find.

Growth at the turn of the century was considerable in comparison to earlier periods. The rate of annual growth grew steadily from the end of the 19th century, climbing to two to three thousand by the beginning of the 20th century and exceeding 3000 by 1910. For example, the Greek collection consisted of 7627 objects in 1915, compared to 4000 in 1902. In the same timespan the collection of barbarian (primarily Celtic) coins rose from 1200 to 3365.¹¹⁰ Beginning in 1911 the library of the Numismatic Collection regularly added major new acquisitions.¹¹¹ In addition to the continuous growth of the large collection units (ancient coins, medals, Hungarian and Transylvanian coins), the collection of paper money also took shape during this period, as well as a number of smaller groups like the collections of mine notes, scrip, tokens, badges and sports medals. Of the foreign coins the collection groups of Austrian, southern Slavic and Rumanian coins grew the most at the turn of the century.

Prior to World War I there were a number of personnel changes at the Numismatic Collection. Hampel's university assistants began to work at the Collection as apprentices at the beginning of the century. Pál Harsányi (1882–1929) began working at the coin collection as an apprentice in 1904, then as assistant museum curator in 1909. Harsányi dealt primarily with the continuation of the corpus of Hungarian coins. His achievements were published in numerous articles in the *Numizmatikai Közlöny* between 1914 and 1921. Pál Kerekes (1890–1914) joined the Collection in the ancient coins group immediately before the war, but enlisted as a soldier at the age of 24 and in November 1914 died a hero's death on the northern front as a volunteer in the Third Tyrolian Imperial Rangers. Meanwhile József Hampel, who had worked for 43 years in the Coins and Antiques Collection, passed away on March 25, 1913. In August 1914 chief curator László Réthy retired, and on November 24 in the same year passed away in Arad. Consequently, only Ödön Gohl and Pál Harsányi remained to conduct numismatic work in the Collection during World War I.

The collections continued to grow even during the war, and the Numismatic Collection added several thousand objects. One of the most important acquisitions was the collection of coins and medals received in 1917 from the estate of Imre Szivák, who died in 1912. The most valuable part of the Szivák collection was a special Rákóczi collection. The Numismatic Collection obtained 63 different types of coins of Ferenc Rákóczi II (Fig. 42), as well as 10 medals. In addition to the coins of Ferenc Rákóczi II, other rarities included a ten-florin gold coin of György Rákóczi I (1630–1648) and another of Erzsébet Bocskay (1577).



Fig. 42. Gold florin of Prince Ferenc II Rákóczi, 1707

110 NK 15, 64.

111 MNM Jelentés 1911, 65; MNM Jelentés 1912, 61.

In 1917 the museum purchased some outstanding coins from the Festetics collection. The collection of the Festetics dukes dated back to the 18th century and was one of the largest Hungarian coin collections with its vast series of ancient and Hungarian specimens. In Transylvanian coins and Hungarian- and Transylvanian-related medals it was particularly unrivaled.¹¹² At the beginning of the 20th century the Festetics family sold all but one object of its coin collection to Egger Brothers. The company offered the National Museum first option to purchase, thus the Numismatic Collection acquired 100, previously missing Hungarian and Transylvanian coins from the collection. The larger part of the purchase consisted of gold florins from Louis the Great of Hungary (1342–1382) to Charles III, and thalers from Ferdinand I to Maria Theresa. Later, Frigyes Déri, an industrialist, art collector and court curator of the Viennese imperial coin collection, made major purchases from the collection, which are now preserved at the Déri Museum in Debrecen and the Münzkabinett of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

The most important Hungarian private collectors of the 20th century were in regular contact with the Collection by the 1910's, and frequently made donations or sales of larger or smaller items to the museum. Of the Hungarian coin dealers József Fejér was the one who mediated numismatic material discovered on the Hungarian art object market to the museum as "outside associate" of the Numismatic Collection.

The relatively favorable financial situation made it possible for the individual collection groups to continue to grow systematically during World War I. For example, the Greek coin collection made significant purchases on several occasions (Fig. 43). In 1918 the museum purchased 178 selected items from the collection of Count Miklós Dessewffy, and at the same time also regularly bought coins from Viennese coin dealers. In 1917 the Numismatic Collection bought 12 objects for 20 korona, primarily 20-kreuzer coins of Charles of Lorraine minted in Hungary, from the Schwaben find previously in the Viennese imperial coin collection. Through official channels the museum also acquired a number of smaller items from the material sent to them from finds at this time. Of these one of the largest sets was from the Szerencs (Zemplén County) find in 1915, with countless variations of deniers of Mathias, Ulászló II, Louis II and János Szapolyai, totaling 1726 objects in all. In quantity the Borossebes find (Arad County, now in Rumania) stood out; Count Antal Széchenyi donated the find to the Museum in 1918. The find contained 193 Árpádián period Hungarian deniers and 146 Slavonian coins (Slavonia was part of the Hungarian Kingdom from 11th century to 1918).



Fig. 43 Tetradrachm of Antimachos, king of Bactria, ca. 180 B.C.



Fig. 44. Propaganda badge of World War One, 1914

112 HARSÁNYI 1912, 126–128.

Special numismatic mementos of World War I, badges and medals, were also collected (Fig. 44). Ödön Gohl regularly reported the material of this nature in the column Háborús emlékek in Numizmatikai Közlöny between 1914 and 1917. The Collection made regular purchases from companies that manufactured badges, especially Arkanzas and Morzsányi. Thus, by the end of the war a collection of several hundred badges had taken shape in the Numismatic Collection (Fig. 45).



*Fig. 45. Badge of Field Artillery
Regiment 11, 1917*

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