



AS IT IS

Rare Piece of Money from 1600s Could Be Worth \$300,000

October 24, 2021

A rare piece of metal money made in the 1600s in the New England area of the U.S. could be sold for \$300,000.

The coin is to be sold at an **auction** sale in London next month.

The silver coin was **minted** in 1652 in Boston, Massachusetts. “To mint” means to make, or strike, a coin out of metal. Coin experts consider it to be the best example of about 40 such coins known to still exist.

The business holding the sale is Morton and Eden Limited. It issued a statement on Wednesday. It said the coin was recently found in Britain inside a **candy** container that held hundreds of old coins.

James Morton is the coin specialist for the auctioneer -- the business holding the sale. He called the New England coin the “star of the collection.”

“I could hardly believe my eyes when I realized that it was an excellent example of a New England **shilling**, struck by John Hull in 1652 in Boston for use as money by early settlers in the Massachusetts Bay Colony,” Morton said in a statement.

John Hull was responsible for producing North America’s first silver coins. The Massachusetts General Court appointed Hull as Boston **mintmaster** in 1652. The mint was considered treasonous by King Charles II. It stopped operating in 1682, the auctioneer’s statement said.

The recently discovered coin has a simple design. It has the letters NE, for New England, on one side. On the other side is the Roman number for 12. That was the number of pennies in a shilling.

Jim Bailey is a coin expert in Rhode Island. He called the shilling “a **phenomenal** discovery.” Bailey added that the coin has great “eye appeal.”

The coin belongs to Wentworth “Wenty” Beaumont. Beaumont’s father found it in a container in his study at the family home in northern England.

Beaumont’s ancestor, William Wentworth, was an early settler of New England. He is thought to have arrived in the Colonies in 1636. He likely received the coin when it was new. The Wentworths became a well-known family in New Hampshire.

The online sale includes several other early American coins. It is set to take place November 26.

I’m Ashley Thompson.

The Associated Press reported this story. Ashley Thompson adapted it for VOA Learning English. Mario Ritter, Jr. was the editor.

Words in This Story

auction *-n.* a public sale at which things are sold to the people who offer to pay the most; *-v.* to hold a public sale at which things are sold to the person offering the most

mint *-v.* to make coins out of metal *-n.* a place where money, especially coins, are made

candy *-n.* a sweet food made with sugar or chocolate

shilling *-n.* a British coin used before 1971 that was equal to 1/20th of a British pound

mintmaster *-n.* a person who supervises a mint

phenomenal -*adj.* very good or great; unusual in an impressive way

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