



NEWSLETTER

BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOX 632, SHALLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Vol. II, No. 4

November, 1962

THE COINS RECOVERED FROM THE BRUNSWICK TOWN RUINS

The archaeologist is frequently pictured as a man searching for the treasure a ruin may afford. This is true; however, the definition of the treasure in terms of coins is quite different from the archaeologist's definition in terms of knowledge of the culture of the people whose ruined homes he is investigating. Coins aid the archaeologist, not from a financial standpoint, but as a means of dating a particular ruin, and as adjuncts to history.

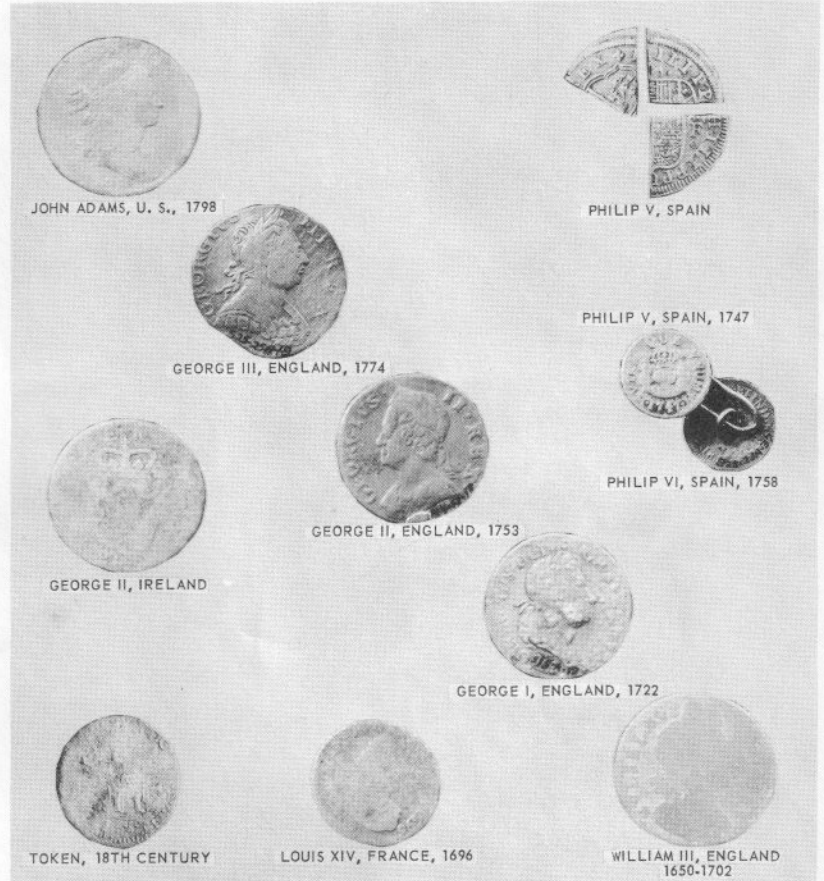
The ruins of Brunswick Town have produced a number of interesting coins, among which is a 1696 French coin of the reign of Louis XIV. This coin, and those of the reign of William III of England were a quarter of a century old when Brunswick Town was founded. A number of tokens have been found, reminding us of the scarcity of coins in the colonies, because these tokens were frequently used in place of the approved coinage. Tokens cut from thin sheet copper were issued by various companies in England for use in making change, and were redeemed by the company for their face value, and used in payment of wages.

Also found at Brunswick are Spanish coins of silver which were always considered highly by the colonists. Two of these had been fastened together with a link for use as a sleeve-link by some Brunswick citizen, and then lost in the Public House where it fell through a crack in the floor, to be found two hundred years later by the archaeologist. These Spanish coins were frequently cut with a chisel in order to make change. From this custom we get our term "two bits" in reference to a quarter of a dollar, since a quarter of a Spanish piece of eight was "two bits".

Most of the coins found in the Brunswick ruins are English or Irish halfpennies. These large copper coins are recovered dating from the reigns of George I, II, and III. One of the most interesting is the "Rosa Americana" coin of George I, dated 1722, and made by William Wood of Ireland, and designed specifically for use in the American colonies. It is the first coin on which the word America is used.

Only one American coin has been found so far at Brunswick. This is a large penny with the head of Liberty, and the date 1798. This coin was found inside the ruin of the home of Captain Stephen Parker Newman, and helped to provide information as to the time during which this house was used. This is a valuable function of coins for the archaeologist.

Most of the coins found at Brunswick are very badly worn, indicating much use. Some have been cut and filed to obtain copper for the manufacture of counterfeit coins. These slick coins are difficult to identify. When found in good condition, which is rarely, the coins from Brunswick are worth only from one to three dollars on the coin market. Those recovered from Brunswick will never be sold, however, but will be retained as the property of the State of North Carolina for use in exhibits explaining the way of life of the early citizens of our state.



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N. C. Dept. of Archives and History

NOVEMBER MEETING
of
BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Place: Camp Methodist Church
Shalotte, North Carolina
Date: November 12, 1962
Time: 8:00 o'clock P. M.

PROGRAM

Mr. C. B. Berry, who is a Civil Engineer from Crescent Beach, South Carolina, will be the guest speaker. His talk will deal with the numerous ways of securing information in tracing family history, including ways of locating old cemeteries, Bible, and official records. He will introduce subjects included in his forthcoming book, HISTORY OF LITTLE RIVER, covering the coastal section of Horry and Brunswick Counties.

We enclose a publication of The Carolina Charter Tercentenary Commission of colonial coins. Our cover page shows coins found at Old Brunswick Town. We hope you will enjoy both publications, and we feel sure the original items taken from the Brunswick Town collection will enhance the realism of the coins.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

New officers will be elected at the November meeting. Be present and cast your vote. They will need your support.

Thanks to Mrs. Edwin W. Taylor for her contribution on the colonial landgrave, Thomas Smith, the first. We need more such contributions for our collection of Brunswick County history.

CLIP HERE

HISTORICAL PLACEMATS

The Society would like to have your interest and support in the sale of the historical placemats. They aid in telling the story of our history. They also provide an authentic map of Brunswick Town for interested persons. Please check below the quantity desired and mail check or money order with your order.

_____ Brunswick Town placemats, \$.05 each, package of eight, \$.35.

_____ Brunswick County placemats. \$.05 each, package of eight, \$.35.

Make check payable to: Brunswick County Historical Society
P. O. Box 47
Winnabow, N. C.

LANDGRAVE THOMAS SMITH, THE FIRST

by
Mrs. Edwin W. Taylor

As the State of North Carolina is at this time all interest in such subjects as the Province of Carolina and the Carolina Charter of 1663, it might be well to mention a man who was prominent in the Province of Carolina - Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first. He was among those who came early to Carolina (Charleston area) and he was active in the affairs of the Province.

Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first, was born in Exeter, England in 1648. There is a record to the effect that he came to Carolina in the 1670s, then there is a record which shows that he came to the Province in 1684. He had two sons, Thomas and George. These two left innumerable descendants. With the names, "Thomas," "George" and "Benjamin" in almost all family lines, it is "hard going" for family line "tracers."

The history of Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first, should be of great interest to the folks of the Lower Cape Fear area, for scattered around are many of his descendants. During the Colonial period some of his descendants moved to this area and became men of note. They had large landholdings here. It is recited in a deed (New Hanover County records), that on May 13, 1691, the Lords Proprietors granted 48,000 acres of land to Landgrave Thomas Smith, part of which lay on the west bank of the Cape Fear River just above the dividing of the said river.

Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first, was a deputy for Thomas Amy in the Council, and he was sheriff of Berkeley County. In 1690 he received a commission appointing him Governor of the Province, but he did not serve as Seth Sothell appeared on the scene with a claim to the office - this after his stormy session in Albemarle! Smith was appointed Governor in 1693; this time he served, but only for a short time as he died in 1694.

It was Landgrave Thomas Smith, the second, (son of Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first) who received on May 18, 1713 a grant from the Lords Proprietors for Cape Island, also referred to as Cedar Island, which is now known as Bald Head or Smith's Island. According to tradition the cedars on this island were in great demand by shipbuilders for masts and spars.

John Locke, the illustrious philosopher, drew up for the Lords Proprietors the "Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" which provided for a feudal system of government. According to these constitutions a baron was to have 12,000 acres of land, a cassique or cacique was to have 24,000 acres of land and a landgrave was to have 48,000 acres of land. Whence came these titles? The word "baron" was introduced into England by the Normans and was used to designate one who held land by honorable service. "Cacique" or "Cassique" was a word used by the Indians of New Spain to denote a prince or chief. "Landgrave" was a title of distinction in the old German Empire. The constitutions didn't work out too well for the most part they were not suitable for the undeveloped lands of Carolina, and for people who had come to the colony with a burning desire for self-government.

Landgrave Thomas Smith, the first, has been described as a man of even temper and of great value to the Proprietors, for he was known to be fair in all of his

dealings and to stand for the good of the public. Many men in the Province were all for self, be it land or power, so it is little wonder that he stood out as a man of great character. He died in November 1694, in his forty-sixth year. He was buried on his Medway Plantation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Encyclopaedia Britannica - VOL. 15, page 648, VOL. 3, page 129, VOL. 4, page 509.

Funk & Wagnalls Dictionary.

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New Hanover County Records - Deed Book E, page 35.