

The date when medals were introduced among the aborigines of this continent is lost in the dim distance of the early settlements, for the first, so employed, bore no date or special design; nor did those who participated in this act consider it an event worthy to be recorded. Medals struck to commemorate some episode in the life of the king or event in the history of the nation were used. The earliest mention of medals in connection with Canadian Indians is found in the *Relation de ce qui s'est passé au Canada du 27 novembre 1670 jusqu'au départ du vaisseau en novembre 1671*, which mentions: "Un sauvage du Sault, (Caughnawaga), nommé Louis Atouata, filleul du Roy, qui conserve chèrement la médaille dont Sa Majesté lui a fait présent."⁽¹⁾ This shews that the practice was well established at the time. The earliest known special medal, issued in America, appears to have been struck about the year 1670. This was authorized by the colony of Virginia to be given to the friendly Indians permitting them to come within the settlements. It bears on the obverse the head of Charles II and on the reverse the Royal Arms with a representation of a tobacco plant.⁽²⁾

Canadian medals for the Indians, with a single exception, bore the head of the reigning sovereign on the obverse; and generally the Royal Arms or some other such attribute of royalty on the reverse. Usually neither the devise nor the inscription, had any

(1) Archives, Canada, Correspondance Générale, Vol. IV.

(2) "American Contemporary Medals," New-York, 1894, page 26.