

## Love Tokens

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, many of us have developed the custom of giving candy, flowers, and gifts to loved ones in the name of St. Valentine. This Valentine's Day why not consider giving a numismatic gift to that special coin collector in your life?

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the practice of giving "Love Tokens" was common. Love Tokens were given to not only share affection, but also as a numismatic gift on this special day. It's been said that the practice of giving Love Tokens originated in England in the early 1800's and became popular in the United States around the time of the Civil War.

A love token isn't really a token at all. It's a coin that has been planed down and engraved on one or both sides. Love tokens were originally called "engraved coins." The coins were engraved with their loved one's initials, or sometimes their name. These were often given to young ladies as "tokens of love" by suitors. Coins personalized for a sweetheart were given not only as an expression of their love, but often as a marriage proposal. Because the coins were personalized from one person to another, each love token has its own personality. The designs and inscriptions were put on the coin by an individual and each one represents a love shared between two people.

A major factor in the desirability of the piece is the denomination selected for the love token. Another important factor is the ornate artwork involved. Obviously, the more detailed and fancy the engraving, the more desirable and expensive the love token.

Some people collect love tokens with specific names, specific initials, or by whatever happens to capture their interest or hold special meaning for them.

You can find out more about "Love Tokens" by visiting [www.lovetokensociety.org](http://www.lovetokensociety.org)

If you're looking for that special numismatic gift for Valentine's Day to give to your loved one once, consider giving a "Love Token".