
The MCA Advisory

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What's New on Our Website!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE EVERY MONTH

From the Editor

This issue features a truly splendid article on the John Eager Howard medal by Tony Lopez. Rarely does a researcher succeed in presenting so many different dimensions of the subject.

For the better we're sure, the Club has entered an active phase. In the pages that follow, you will read about the Oral History Project. Basically, a small group of members has devised an easy and economic means of conducting oral interviews and posting these to our website. This is an objective toward which many in our hobby have strived because of the obvious desirability of preserving the wisdom as well as the persona of those who have been active in collecting. We are indeed blessed to have this capability now. We salute and thank those responsible: John Sallay, Bob Fritsch, Mark Schlepshorst, Ben Weiss, and Dick Johnson.

A fascinating account of an MCA field trip at this year's ANA meeting will appear in the October issue. Next year's meeting will be in Los Angeles. By a most fortuitous coincidence, it is the Los Angeles County Museum that now holds the superb medal collection of our recently deceased member, Kahlil Gibran. Through the courtesy of Mrs. Gibran and Stuart Denenberg, a close family friend, we hope to arrange a field trip for members to view these treasures. More to follow but this is certainly a good reason to make the trek to Los Angeles if we can pull it off.

Indian Peace Medals (by John W. Adams)

It is with a mixture of pride and regret that I announce the sale of my Indian peace medals from the colonial period. The collection will be offered by Stacks' in January, 2009, in tandem with that firm's annual Americana Sale. I am delighted that both

Michael Hodder and Dave Bowers will be involved in the preparation of a special catalogue.

Why sell? Very simply, I have been collecting these marvelous symbols of our heritage for 26 years but have been unable to make any additions for the past eight. Clearly, I have reached a point from which it is difficult to move forward and, given that the medals have provided me with so much psychic income, it is logical to share with others my collecting experience.

I have written extensively on the subject of Indian peace medals. Some of you will have read various articles that have been published or the book, The Indian Peace Medals of George III. Ironically, the divestiture of the collection has re-kindled my interest in writing about aspects not heretofore covered. The Advisory should prove an ideal venue for such work.

The field of Indian peace medals attracted my interest because I am part Native American. My focus on the colonial period followed because it was during this era that the Indians held the balance of power. European nations actively sought diplomatic and military alliances with the various tribes and peace medals were the tangible evidence that agreements had been reached. Peace medals from later periods more typically were used to facilitate land grabs or other such skullduggery.

MCA Oral History Project

(by John Sallay)

The MCA Board has recently been meeting monthly via conference call, with much discussion focused on expanding our organization's range of activities and more deeply involving a larger number of members. One idea that generated immediate support – and then took on new urgency with the recent passing of a few very prominent long-time

collectors and medalists – was the MCA Oral History Project.

The idea is to interview “old-timers” in order to capture the knowledge they’ve never had time to write down and record their recollections of the people and events that got us collectively where we are today. The concept is as old as written history itself, but taking oral histories has become a much more widely used tool with the advent of tape recorders, film, and videotape.

The MCA is a geographically dispersed organization presenting some challenges. First, we wrestled with how to get one or more enthusiastic members to meet with interesting subjects on a more than one-off basis. We’re rarely together and when we are, like at the ANA Convention or an auction, there are always other things going on.

We also discussed how best to capture and share the interviews, since we didn’t want to have either one person responsible for a single recording device or have to deal with multiple recording formats. Finally, we talked about what to do with all of these recordings, since the MCA doesn’t have a central library.

Dick Johnson, who is an expert in taking oral histories, introduced me to Mark Schlepffhorst, a relatively newer MCA member whose professional activity has overlapped with our various technical challenges. Mark initially suggested buying a device similar to what police departments use to record 911 calls. We could conduct the interviews over the phone, record them in a digital format rather than on tape, edit the recordings, and then post them on our MCA website.

That way, anyone could listen to them on his or her computer or even download them onto an iPod or similar device. At this point, MCA webmaster Ben Weiss got more deeply involved in the project, and we discussed how exactly the process would work from beginning to end, both technically and practically.

At the recent MCA meeting held during the Baltimore ANA, we outlined the project

and mentioned the concept of buying the phone-recording gizmo, perhaps sending it around by mail to members who wanted to conduct interviews. Bob Fritsch raised a key idea that he had raised previously on one of the board calls, only this time it registered. Why not use just a web-based conference calling service that offers recording capability?

While there would be per-minute toll charges to the MCA, we would save all of the up-front cost and wouldn’t need to hassle with any physical machinery. Any member with a phone, computer and the necessary dial-in code could simply conduct an interview and arrange with Ben to post the recording on the MCA website.

Mark explored a number of conference calling services and found one that seems like it will best suit our needs. More important, he has agreed to coordinate the project from here, with Ben still involved in editing and posting the interviews. Dick Johnson has volunteered to summarize his experience in conducting these sorts of interviews and outline a standard approach for all of us to follow. He has also volunteered to conduct the first few interviews, to show us how it’s done.

What follows below is more detail from Mark, Ben, and Dick on where we go from here!

Mechanics of Oral History

Interviewing (by Mark Schlepffhorst)

Two pieces of technology have been selected for conducting the telephone interviews and editing the resultant audio recording. The first is an online teleconferencing service that allows the interviewer and interviewee to use toll free access numbers to record their conversation.

The service doesn’t require a reservation; instead both parties call the same number, each using access codes to connect to the conference bridge. The call is recorded,

and when completed, the audio recording is available for download from the teleconferencing website. The teleconference service selected also offered MCA a non-profit rate discount; we will be billed only for minutes used.

After downloading the recording to a PC, an audio editing tool can be used to remove any unwanted conversation, extraneous noise, or distracting silence. The same tool can 'chop' the interview into shorter conversations, with the resulting smaller files offering convenience for downloading via slow internet connections.

Once the appropriate files have been edited, Ben can upload the files to the MCA website to be downloaded by members or visitors.

Oral History Test Interview

(by Dick Johnson)

After a false start or two on a Sunday last month, Mark Schelpphorst finally set me straight. You have to dial in 18 numbers to get connected to a unique login page at the firm that furnishes the recording service.

We tried it again on the next day, Monday, and I got all 18 numbers correct. This was done before Mark left for work, so we did not have a lot of time. This time it worked and this brief interview, a 10-minute segment, was edited by Mark and passed on to Ben Weiss, who in turn placed it on MCA's web site.

Everything worked and the Test Interview was on the web for a brief time. Okay, now we know how to do it and how it works.

We are ready for the Big Time. I have chosen who I would like to interview first of all: Alan Stahl. He has been involved with medals in so many ways this will be an easy interview.

In an article in E-Sylum two years ago (1 Oct 2006*) I listed eight tips for an oral

interview. I wish to modify the second tip in which I said plan for an interview no longer than an hour.

Now I want to change that to 45 minutes. The hand gets tired holding the phone and the butt gets tired setting in one spot. I would like to interview Alan in two sessions.

Tip one was do your homework. So I want to compose enough questions for a total of about an hour and a half. The questions don't have to be a full fledged question with a question mark at the end. They can be *subjects* you want to discuss. State the question as the interview is in progress. That adds a little more spontaneity to it. I triple space between question/subject to aid reading in a hurry and get about 10 questions to page. Figure about 3 pages to an hour recording.

Finally, I drafted an *MCA Interview Release Form* for the interviewee to sign. I am not a lawyer but I play one on my computer. I will pass this draft on to President John Adams for him to have a lawyer look this over. When we get the green light from the attorney this form can be used for every new interview in the future.

I am looking forward to conducting an interview or two. I hope other MCA members will do the same.

*To read chick on:

www.coinbooks.org/v09n40a11.html

Webmaster's Report (by Ben Weiss)

The MCA is to launch a new feature on its MCA Website. The Medal Collectors of America will be posting on its website a new feature, Oral Histories of Medallion Art, based on interviews of prominent medal collectors, dealers, curators and other historians of medallion art. The interviews will be available for listening by logging on to our website at: www.medalcollectors.org.

The Oral Histories feature will be set up in a similar way as that which links to MEMBERS' CORNER currently on the site. By clicking on the ORAL HISTORIES link, the viewer will get a new page with introductory remarks, a list of the interviewers, the medallic historian being interviewed and brief descriptions of the content of the interviews. If the interview is very long, it would likely be broken up into sections so the download time is reasonable. The link to **ORAL HISTORIES** will be available on every page of the website.

The Oral Histories Project is the result of a close collaboration between your webmaster and several other members of the MCA, notably, John Adams, John Sallay, and Bob Fritsch. Special thanks go to Mark Schlepfforst, who did most of the initial work in setting up the technical aspects of the project and who has so generously offered to do the very large job of editing the interviews before they are posted, and to Dick Johnson, who not only provided several useful suggestions concerning the interviews but will also serve as an early interviewee as well as an interviewer.

This novel project will constitute an important new addition to our body of knowledge of the History of Medallic art. The Internet is uniquely suited for this project for it allows rapid and readily accessible dissemination of this information. By posting the interviews on our website it will place the MCA at the forefront of documenting the early history of the field of Medallic Art and making it readily available for all to hear and view.

Best wishes,

Ben

John Eager Howard (by Tony Lopez)

On the morning of January 17, 1781, on a pasture located in northwest South Carolina

near modern day Spartanburg, a critical turning point took place in the balance of fortunes in the American war for independence. On the battlefield known as the Cowpens, roughly 1,600 American Continental soldiers, militia, and cavalry¹ were engaged in an epic battle against the British army, whose cavalry was commanded by the notorious Major Banastre “Bloody” Tarleton. Little known or remembered today, the leader of the third line of Continental Infantry was a Marylander, Lieutenant Colonel John Eager Howard, rallying his troops on horseback, on the brink of changing the course of History.

Amidst the human carnage, the disorder and confusion of battle, and surrounded by blinding smoke, the burning smell of gunfire, the deafening thunder of weapons discharging, and the horrified screams of those stricken, an order was given for Captain William Wallace’s unit of Virginia Continentals to wheel 90-degrees right, and regroup to protect the American flank. The command was misinterpreted as an order to retreat, and the Virginians turned and ran. As Wallace’s unit retreated, the American extreme right flank was exposed.² Other American units followed, and the retreat of the main line of American infantry was underway, pursued by the advancing Royal Fusiliers of the 71st Infantry Regiment. This elite Scottish unit of “Fraser’s Highlanders” was no stranger to chasing American troops across the South Carolina battlefields.

The retreat was orderly, and the Continentals were disciplined and well trained. The Americans had a distinct advantage; they were rested and well fed after camping overnight near the battlefield. The opposing British forces had endured a grueling 5-hour overnight march to the Cowpens prior to the battle and, from the 1794 account of contemporary British historian Charles Stedman, were “*enfeebled by their fatiguing march in the morning*”.³ They were not only tired, they were hungry as well. Food had been

severely rationed as they followed the American troops through South Carolina, with the British discovering that their route had already been foraged and pilfered of most food sources by the movements and needs of the American Army.

The retreating American infantrymen quickly distanced themselves from the pursuit of the fatigued Scots who, according to Stedman “*by their subsequent exertions in the action, were unable to come up with the flying enemy*”⁴. After they had covered 80-yards to the rear of the field,⁵ Colonel Howard, alarmed at the unplanned withdrawal, galloped over to his troops, ordering the officers to halt the retreat. Greatly respected by his men, the Continental Infantry followed Howard’s instructions flawlessly when he commanded them to turn about, reform their line at the rallying point, and fire at close range into the enemy. The American volley of .69 caliber musket balls found its mark with devastating results,⁶ tearing into the advance of the weary 71st Regiment. Howard then ordered an immediate counter-attack with bayonets, and the Scots, decimated and in shock by the sudden and vicious turn of events, had no choice but to turn and run for their lives, routed. For the first time in their history, Fraser’s Highlanders were retreating on the battlefield.

Lieutenant Colonel William Washington’s Cavalry soon charged in to join Howard and the Continentals in the fray, slashing at the Highlander infantrymen with their broadswords. Thirty-five minutes after the British fired their first shot near dawn, the battle was over, with the Americans victorious. In the end, nearly 1,000 British casualties were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner.⁷

Colonel John Eager Howard fought with gallantry on the battlefield that day. Howard personally accepted the surrender of seven British officer’s swords. Even more significant, Howard ordered his men to give quarter and accept the surrender of any soldier

who requested it. In the heat of the battle, Howard personally protected an enemy British officer who had attempted to surrender, only to be attacked by aggressive American infantrymen and their bayonets. The British officer was rightfully fearful for his life; the soldiers had no intention of accepting his surrender. The British commander on the other side of the field, Major Banastre “Bloody” Tarleton, had earned this nickname by his reputation of giving no quarter on the battlefield, and killing any American soldier who surrendered. Many of the American soldiers, especially the South Carolina Militia, took on a battle cry of “Tarleton’s Quarter!” intending to kill any enemy who surrendered as revenge for the ravages dished out to their families and their brother combatants under “Bloody Tarleton’s” mistreatment in the British southern campaign.⁸ When Howard ordered that his soldiers stand down, he saved the British officer’s life.

Colonel Howard is Awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor

On March 9, 1781, In recognition of his bravery and leadership in the victory at the Cowpens, John Eager Howard was awarded a silver Congressional Medal of Honor by Resolution of the United States Continental Congress. This was a great and significant honor; the young United States Congress awarded a total of only eleven Medals of Honor to their military leaders during the entire Revolutionary War. These medals are known collectively as the “Comitia Americana” medals, Latin for “Congress of America”, and also an inscription which appears in the exergue (below a line at the base of the medal’s design) on most of the medals.

Three of these eleven Comitia Americana medals were awarded to military leaders at the Battle of Cowpens, a testament to the importance of the victory in the revolutionary cause. In addition to the silver

medal awarded to Howard, Congress awarded a gold medal to General Daniel Morgan as the American Military Commander at Cowpens, and a silver medal to the leader of cavalry, Lieutenant Colonel William Washington. They join a small but historically significant group of fellow Comitia Americana medal recipients, some legendary, and some not so well known. This illustrious group includes George Washington, John Paul Jones, Nathaniel Greene, Horatio Gates, “Mad” Anthony Wayne, John Stewart, Henry “Light Horse Harry” Lee, and the French Colonel, Francois Louis Teisseidre de Fleury.

Medal expert, author and collector John W. Adams and Massachusetts Historical Society Numismatic Curator Anne Bentley recently released their long awaited masterwork “*Comitia Americana and Related Medals, Underappreciated Moments of our Heritage*”. Their opus is by far the most complete study of the history of the Revolutionary War Comitia Americana medals. Much of the history of these medals discussed in this article was gleaned from the pages of *Comitia Americana*, and the detailed research of Adams-Bentley. In focusing on the John Howard medal, this article cannot come close to doing the entire medal series justice. I highly recommend that anyone interested in Revolutionary War history, or learning more about these important artifacts of our battle for freedom obtain a copy of *Comitia Americana* for their library.

Howard’s Comitia Americana Medal: A Witness to American History

At the time that the resolutions for the eleven Revolutionary War Comitia Americana medals were passed by Congress, the United States Mint had not yet been established. Despite the lofty intentions of Congress, the new country did not have the technological means or equipment to strike any of the medals. The United States was at war with England, so by necessity it was arranged that most of the

medals be designed, engraved, and struck in France by the very capable Monnaie Du Paris (Paris mint), including the Howard Cowpens medal.

The responsibility to arrange for the engraving of the dies and striking of the medals was at first given to none other than Doctor Benjamin Franklin, who was the unofficial Ambassador and Minister in France on behalf of the American cause. Franklin, a true Francophile--perhaps to a fault--gave highest priority to the striking of the De Fleury medal for the French Colonel, and ultimately managed to have only the De Fleury medal completed.⁹ This was a serious violation of protocol, considering the fact that five of the medals were for Generals who outranked De Fleury, including the Commander-in-Chief of the American troops, General George Washington, and De Fleury’s Commanding Officer, General Anthony Wayne.

Despite his failings, Franklin did manage to arrange for the design and striking of the stunning and important Libertas Americana medals during this time, though likely at the expense of rightfully giving the Revolutionary War Congressional awardees their timely honors. After Franklin’s failure, David Humphries, and ultimately Thomas Jefferson, were given the duty to procure the medals. Humphries and Jefferson’s inaction added years of delays in completing the medals, but Jefferson finally accomplished the task, and personally brought the John Eager Howard medal with him, along with five other completed Comitia Americana medals on his return to the United States in 1789.¹⁰

The medals nearly met an early demise before their arrival on American soil. Jefferson left Paris on September 26, 1789, and sailed aboard the *Clermont* with a group which included two of his daughters and his well-known slave and mistress Sally Hemmings. After waiting offshore for three days for a thick fog to abate, Captain Colley chose to attempt the dangerous blind trip into the Capes of the

Chesapeake. The ship soon encountering vicious winds as detailed by Jefferson's daughter, Martha Jefferson (Randolph) who was 17 years old at the time: *"After beating about for three days, the Captain...determined to run in at a venture...the ship came near running upon...the middle ground when anchor was cast...The wind rose and the vessel drifted down, dragging her anchors one or more miles. But she got within the Capes, whilst a number which had been less bold were blown off the coast, some of them lost... We had to beat up against a strong head wind which carried away our topsails; and we were very near being run down by a brig coming out of port, which... was almost upon us before we could get out of the way. We escaped, however, with only a loss of a part of our rigging. We arrived in Norfolk in the afternoon, and in two hours after landing, before an article of our baggage had been brought ashore, the vessel took fire and seemed on the point of being reduced to a mere hull. They were in the act of scuttling her, when some abatement in the flames was discovered, and she was finally saved. ...everything in her was saved... Our trunks... had been put in our stateroom and incidentally the doors had been closed by the Captain... and the thickness of our trunks alone saved their contents from the excessive heat."*¹¹

Jefferson's group of Comitia Americana medals were personally delivered to President George Washington when Jefferson reported to him as Secretary of State on March 21, 1790,¹² including the other two Battle of Cowpens medals for Daniel Morgan and William Washington. Most significant, at this point Jefferson presented Washington with his gold Comitia Americana medal, the infamous original "Washington Before Boston" gold medal awarded to Washington for commanding the American units which forced the March 17, 1776 evacuation of Boston by the British occupying forces. This precious artifact of our nation's history currently resides in the permanent collection of the Boston Public

Library, its single most prized possession. The gold Washington Comitia Americana medal is arguably the most valuable numismatic treasure in existence. Valued conservatively at ten million dollars,¹³ but never to enter the marketplace, the medal is truly a "priceless" piece of American history.

Jefferson also presented another treasure to Washington on that day in 1790, a cased collection consisting of eleven medals, all struck in silver. This included silver strikes of George Washington's medal and eight other Comitia Americana medals (missing only Henry Lee and John Paul Jones), and also a silver 1786 Natus Boston medal honoring Benjamin Franklin, and finally a silver Libertas Americana medal. Through a series of events, this set of medals finally made its way to the collection of Daniel Webster, and today resides intact and in the original case in the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.¹⁴ This is another priceless American treasure, referred to now as the Washington-Webster set of Comitia Americana medals.

On March 25, 1790 nearly 10 years after Congress had originally passed the Resolution to award him the medal, George Washington forwarded the silver Comitia Americana medal to John Eager Howard with this note, *"You will receive with this a medal struck by order of the late Congress in commemoration of your much approved conduct at the battle of the Cowpens, and presented to you as a mark of the high sense which your Country entertains of your services on that occasion. This medal was put into my hands by Mr. Jefferson and it is with singular pleasure that I transmit it to you now. I am Sir, With very great esteem, Your Most Obedient Servant, George Washington."*¹⁵

The Howard medal was engraved in Paris by the noteworthy French medalist, Benjamin DuVivier, as were the Washington Before Boston and William Washington Cowpens medals. Arguably, this is the best effort of DuVivier among the three medals. The design

on the obverse of the medal presents a detailed high-relief allegorical depiction of Howard's military triumph; Colonel Howard mounted with sword in hand in pursuit of a fleeing enemy bearing a flag, with winged Victory descending in the background above Howard, holding a palm branch in one hand, and a laurel wreath over Howard's head in the other. Measuring 46mm in diameter, it bears the surrounding legend in Latin:

"JOH•EGAR•HOWARD, LEGIONIS PEDITUM PRAEFECTO"¹⁶ (The American Congress to John Eager Howard, Commander of a regiment of Infantry), and below the exergual line is the inscription: **"COMITIA AMERICANA"**, above the exergual line at left appears the engraver's name: **"DUVIV"**. The reverse features a laurel wreath surrounding a descriptive seven-line inscription in Latin: **"QUOD IN NUTANTEM HOSTIUM ACIEM SUBITO IRRUENS, PRAECLARUM BELLICAE VIRTUTIS SPECIMEN DEDIT IN PUGNA. A.D. COWPENS, XVII JAN. MDCCLXXI"** (Because, rushing suddenly on the wavering line of the foe, he gave a brilliant example of martial courage at the battle of Cowpens, 17th January 1781).

John Eager Howard: Soldier, Public Servant, & Philanthropist

John Eager Howard was a distinctive and highly respected warrior and military leader, who fought and led his men in the Revolutionary War battles of Monmouth, White Plains, Germantown, Camden, Hobbie's Hill, Ninety Six, and Guilford Courthouse. Finally, at the Battle of Eutaw Springs, he sustained a severe injury to his shoulder, requiring surgery, and his return home to Baltimore for recuperation. The injury was debilitating, ended Howard's military career, and causing him discomfort for the remainder of his life.¹⁷

John Eager Howard was known to be a calm and soft-spoken, yet competent and fierce

military leader; these abilities earned him the deep respect of many of his contemporaries. The most notable of his admirers was the newly elected President George Washington who in 1795 offered him the lofty position of Secretary of War, and later a commission as a Brigadier General in 1798, when war with France seemed imminent. Howard turned down both of these honorable positions,¹⁸ believing that his health was detrimentally affected by his war injury, sufficiently so that he could not manage the demands of either job.

Among Howard's military contemporaries, Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee spoke highly of Howard's leadership in battle: *"We have seen him at the battle of Cowpens seize the crucial moment and turn the fortune of the day; - alike conspicuous, although not alike successful at Guilford and the Eutaws; and at all times, and all occasions eminently useful. He was justly ranked among the chosen sons of the south."*¹⁹ General Nathaniel Greene, Commander of the American Southern Force at the time of the Battle of Cowpens, also praised Howard in stating that *"Colonel Howard is as good an officer as the world afforded, and deserves a statue of gold, no less than the Roman or Grecian heroes"*.²⁰

John Howard's ferocity in battle is memorialized in his home State's Official Song, *"Maryland, My Maryland"*:

*"Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,-
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland! My Maryland!"*²¹

John Eager Howard went on to serve an illustrious career as a political and civil servant. He served his new nation diligently for decades. He was the Governor of the State of

Maryland from 1789-1791, when Maryland granted a portion of their state to be used as the Nation's Capitol. He was a delegate to the last Continental Congress in 1788, a Maryland State Senator from 1791-1795, United States Senator from 1795-1803, and was the unsuccessful Federalist Vice-Presidential candidate in the 1816 election which elected Republican James Monroe.

There is an interesting series of events relating to both Howard's military career and personal life which is well worth revealing here, and of particular interest to numismatists. On October 4, 1777, during the battle of Germantown, Howard, at the time a Major of the 4th Regiment, fought the British at their encampment at the Cliveden estate of Benjamin Chew. In Howard's later personal account of the battle, he describes the action at the Chew Mansion: "*The enemy by this time had given way, and I pushed on through their encampment. Their tents standing, and in the road, before we came opposite to Chew's house. . . I had orders to keep to the right of the road, and as we passed Chew's house, we were fired at from the upper windows, but received no injuries.*"²² The Chew Mansion was the British center point of the battle, and is prominently featured on the important Germantown medal, which was apparently awarded to members of the British 40th Regiment of Foot under Colonel Musgrave. Engraved by Thomas Milton and struck at London's Tower Mint, the medal acknowledged the British defense of the Chew Mansion, and their victory at Germantown.²³

At the time of the 1777 Germantown battle, Benjamin Chew was not at his estate. Chew had been under American arrest in New Jersey for perceived loyalties to the crown, and a lack of support for the Declaration of Independence. His daughter, Margaret "Peggy" Chew was at the time in British occupied Philadelphia. She was young and beautiful, and was publicly courted by British Major John Andre.²⁴ Major Andre later played

an infamous role in the most treacherous American incidence of treason; he carried Benedict Arnold's maps and diagrams of the fort at West Point. After he secretly crossed American lines and met with the notorious traitor Benedict Arnold, he was captured by the Americans with the clandestine maps in hand. He was condemned to death for his involvement, and subsequently hung at the gallows. Of course, Margaret Chew's involvement with Major Andre and the British soldiers was scandalous at that time from the perspective of the Americans fighting and sacrificing for liberty.

In an ironic twist of fate, on May 17, 1787, John Eager Howard married Margaret Peggy Chew, none other than the British loyalist Benjamin Chew's once disreputable daughter. (Both Benjamin Chew, and his daughter Peggy had long since recovered their respectability.) Ten years earlier, little did Howard realize that he was under fire by British soldiers in front of his future wife's family home. Add to this an implausible historic and numismatic coincidence; John Eager Howard and Peggy Chew Howard's personal history ties them and their families to both the Germantown and John Howard Comitia Americana medals. Stranger yet is the fact that these two medals were given by the opposing sides in the Revolutionary War conflict.

The links between Revolutionary War medals, John Howard, and Peggy Chew Howard do not end there. In all, during a six and a half year bloody war for independence, there were only 13 important military medals awarded to military leaders and other military personnel. This includes the 11 Comitia Americana Congressional Medals of Honor bestowed upon important American military leaders, and the Germantown medal awarded to British officers and soldiers. The thirteenth medal was also awarded by a resolution of the United States Congress, a silver medal²⁵ to be bestowed upon John Paulding, David Williams,

and Isaac Van Wart, the three captors of British Major John Andre, Benedict Arnold's co-conspirator, and, of course, one time escort and romantic interest of Peggy Chew Howard! In all, out of the 13 medals, John Eager Howard has close ties to three of them, a historic superstar to numismatists collecting early American or colonial era medals.

Ultimately, the John Eager Howard – Peggy Chew Howard union was fruitful; they had nine children (including their last daughter who died at three months old), and fifty-three grandchildren.²⁶ Their legacy includes one son, George Howard, who later served as Governor of Maryland, and another son, Benjamin Chew Howard, who served in the United States Congress. Four of their sons were involved in the defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812. They married into the most prominent families in Baltimore, and John Eager Howard and *Star-Spangled Banner* author Francis Scott Key were in-laws.

As an important and unselfish philanthropist, John Eager Howard's generous legacy remains today. Many of the parks and public lands in downtown Baltimore were donated by Howard during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and Howard County, Maryland is named after him. Land donated by Howard was used for Baltimore's Washington Monument, the Lexington Market, University of Maryland Medical School, St. Paul's Parish House, and the Catholic Cathedral. A large equestrian statue of Colonel John Eager Howard on horseback is prominently located in Washington Square, adjacent to the colossal Baltimore Washington Monument.

Finding a Treasured Revolutionary War Relic

The other two original Cowpens Medals of Honor awarded to General Daniel Morgan and Lieutenant Colonel William Washington for the Battle of the Cowpens have apparently

gone missing, and their location is completely unknown today. The original gold medal awarded to General Daniel Morgan was stolen from the bank where it was stored, so Congress passed an act in 1836 to strike another gold medal from replacement dies for the heirs of Morgan. New Morgan Comitia Americana dies were engraved by Barré in Paris and the replacement gold medal was struck and presented to Morgan's grandson Morgan L. Neville in 1840. The last known report of the location of the Barré replacement gold Daniel Morgan medal appears in the August 3, 1885 edition of the *Saratoga Journal* (New York), where the *Journal* announces that the gold Daniel Morgan Comitia Americana medal, then the property of "Jesse B. Neville, of Columbus, Ohio" was to be "on exhibition at the E.R. Waturbury's Jewelry store."²⁷

The pivotal moment in Colonel William Washington's military career occurred as his cavalry pursued and captured the retreating British soldiers scattering from the Cowpens battlefield. Washington spotted and caught up with Major Banastre Tarleton along Green River Road, and engaged him, only to become outnumbered; battling Tarleton and two other British Officers who came to his aid. In the fray, Washington injured Tarleton's hand, and it is reported that he slashed off one of Tarleton's fingers while defending himself. Attacked from all sides, and fired upon by Tarleton's pistol, Washington did managed to escape with his life, and most accounts claim that his horse was shot and killed, but Washington was uninjured.²⁸ After his death in 1810, it was discovered that his body had the "ghastly scar of a terrible wound" across his chest, revealing that he may have actually been injured at the Cowpens in the swordfight with Tarleton. The cause of that wound was a secret that died with Washington, and no one, including his family, had previously known of the severe injury.²⁹ The history and location of William Washington's Comitia Americana

medal also went with him to the grave; it may still remain in the possession of his heirs.

The original silver medal awarded to John Eager Howard had long been considered to be in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society, donated to them in 1959 by the Howard family. In *Comitia Americana*, Adams-Bentley include a footnote regarding the Maryland Historical Society silver Howard medal, indicating that colonial numismatic expert John Kraljevich had “examined it in the summer of 2005 and reported that it was a ‘competent cast’”³⁰, and also that “the piece in the cabinet today appears to be a cast, not the struck original.”³¹

The Maryland Historical Society’s silver Howard medal has been in storage, unavailable for examination. I contacted Chris Becker at the Historical Society, and while the medal was not available, he was able to locate high quality photographs apparently taken of the silver medal donated by the Howard family. In examining the photos he provided, I quickly concurred that Kraljevich was accurate in his assessment; this medal was apparently a copy, likely cast, and definitely not an original struck Howard medal. The medal completely lacked the sharpness and detail of other Howard medals struck with the original Paris Mint dies for collectors.

Has the original silver Howard medal tragically disappeared along with the other two Battle of Cowpens medals awarded by the Revolutionary War Congress? Have all three of these treasured relics from this crucial battle for American independence been lost forever?

Looking back once again, and following the history of the *Comitia Americana* medal awarded to Howard, in 1824, French Revolutionary War General Marquis de Lafayette returned to America with great fanfare. As Lafayette traveled from city to city, the grateful citizens of his adopted country welcomed him and celebrated his return. The October 16, 1824 edition of Baltimore’s *Niles Register* goes into great detail recording the

events surrounding Lafayette’s visit to Baltimore. Fellow Revolutionary War hero and much beloved Baltimorean Colonel John Eager Howard delivered the opening remarks during the festivities honoring the visit of Lafayette. Howard was also Lafayette’s personal host throughout his visit to Baltimore.

Homage was bestowed upon Lafayette at a dinner celebration at the Baltimore Hall of the Society of the Cincinnati. The *Niles Register* reports that there was a display of prominent Revolutionary War awards exhibited there, including swords and “*two precious revolutionary relics, the high rewards . . . of a grateful country to one of her best and bravest sons. They were two silver medals which the revolutionary Congress had presented to Colonel John Eager Howard.*” The article then describes the two medals, one of which is the well known silver Howard *Comitia Americana* medal by DuVivier.

The second Howard medal on display is described in great detail: “*the other medal has the device of an officer pointing with his sword to a retreating enemy and beckoning to his men to advance; while hovering in the air is the figure of Justice with her scales. The motto is ‘Virtute et Justicia Valet.’ On the reverse is the figure of an officer treading upon the British loin and flag, with one hand piercing him with a spear, and the other holding the end of a chain passing around the body of the animal. The motto around the device is ‘Vinculis suis Vintus’.*”

This other medal is further documented by virtue of its appearance on a circa 1784 painting of John Eager Howard by the well known American portraiture artist Charles Wilson Peale, now held in the Independence Hall collection in Philadelphia. In Howard’s portrait, you can see that the second medal has a design and legends which are actually hand engraved, and the medal is suspended from a ribbon, with the “Virtute et Justcia Valet” side displayed. The engraved medal is also included in C. Wyllys Betts “*American*

Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals". This adds the engraved medal to the important group of now widely collected "Betts Medals", where it is listed as Betts-596; the Howard Comitia Americana medal is listed as Betts-595.³²

Why was Howard given this second engraved medal? Curiously, the basic allegorical design with a winged figure hovering over him, and a suspended garland above his head matches elements of the final design of the obverse of his Comitia Americana medal. There has long been a mystery as to the source of the engraved medal worn in the Peale painting, and the *Niles Register* account sheds some light on its history where it states that the engraved medal was, in fact, presented by the United States Congress. It may be that this medal was simply a temporary replacement for the pending and overdue Congressional award, created in the intended style of the Comitia Americana medal, and within the limited technological means of craftsmen in the United States at the time.

Later that evening, after the celebration honoring Lafayette, another important event took place involving the history of the Howard medal, recounted in an 1879 Volume III issue of *The Magazine of American History with Notes and Queries*. In a brief article, James Howard McHenry, grandson of John Eager Howard, recounts the passing down of the two Revolutionary War medals which had been bestowed upon his grandfather. Sophia Catherine Howard Read, Colonel Howard's daughter, brought two of his very young grandsons into the room where the reception was held: "*Mrs. Read...remembers that at the time of the dinner given in Baltimore by the Cincinnati Society to Lafayette, in 1824, she took me and my cousin John Eager Howard to the hotel at which the dinner was given, and while she remained in a private room, we two boys were taken into the dining-room at the close of entertainment, and Colonel Howard gave each of us one of his revolutionary*

medals." Only three years old at the time, Howard's grandson, John Eager Howard III, was presented with the silver Comitia Americana medal awarded to his grandfather by Congress. James Howard McHenry then goes on to describe the medal given to him which he still possessed at the time; the engraved "Virtute et Justicia Valet" medal seen on the Peale painting. The *American History with Notes and Queries* article also includes a diagram of both sides of the engraved medal, documenting its appearance. The whereabouts of this engraved medal is unknown at this time.

The Maryland Historical Society Howard Medal

During the recent ANA World's Fair of Money in Baltimore, a group of members from the Medal Collectors of America were invited by Curator and Deputy Director of Collections Jeannine Disviscour to visit the Maryland Historical Society and examine historic medals in their collection, including the important silver John Eager Howard Comitia Americana medal donated by the Howard family. Joining me, and meeting with Jeannine Disviscour and Maryland Historical Society volunteer Patricia Roberts, the other three representatives from the MCA were an illustrious group of American colonial medal experts and authors: Dr. George Fuld, Barry Tayman, and Dr. David Menchell. There was unquestionably the experience and knowledge present to authenticate or condemn the Howard medal in their collection.

George Fuld was the first to examine the medal, and almost immediately declared "this is not a cast medal!" After a thorough examination and measurement of the medal, there was unanimous consent that the medal before us was absolutely a Paris strike silver medal from the original Comitia Americana Howard dies engraved by DuVivier. The medal was sharply struck, measuring 46.1 mm in diameter, and weighing 52.4 grams,

consistent with the weight and measurements of six known silver Howard medals struck with the original dies.³³ This was definitely not the cast copy examined by Kraljevich on his previous visit. Kraljevich later confirmed this after being shown photos of the medal we examined at the Maryland Historical Society.³⁴

In addition to the authentic silver Howard medal, the Society had another surprise, a lengthy and detailed handwritten family history of the silver medal awarded to their patriarch. Any provenance with important historical medals is extremely rare. To have a lengthy written provenance of this nature is almost unprecedented, and in many ways the history is another treasure. Written by John Eager Howard's grandson McHenry Howard (son of the Colonel's sixth son, Charles Howard)³⁵ in December of 1912, it tells how he came in possession of the silver medal in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society in 1870: "*I noticed on...the third story of my mothers house...an old paste board "band box" ...apparently intended to be thrown away or burned...when I thrust my hand into it to investigate. Feeling something which seemed a little hard and weighty, I drew it out and found it was circular in shape...unwrapping it I found a silver medal, but it was so tarnished that it was only after rubbing or washing it I saw it was silver, and I recognized it as either the original medal voted by Congress to Colonel John Eager Howard after the battle of Cowpens or a duplicate of it.*" The medal in the Maryland Historical Society has been harshly cleaned and polished, so its characteristics match the medal described by McHenry Howard.

Does the Maryland Historical Society have the original silver Comitia Americana medal actually awarded to John Eager Howard? With an authenticated silver Howard medal donated by the Howard family, and a family provenance, it seems logical and apparent that the original medal awarded to Howard has been located. Unfortunately, the family history,

including McHenry Howard's provenance, and other accounts of the history of Howard's medal, may still leave the question unanswered.

Amusingly, McHenry Howard reveals a less romantic version of the passing down of the medal by Colonel Howard to his grandson John Eager Howard III after the 1824 reception for Lafayette, recalled to him by his mother, the daughter of Francis Scott Key, Elizabeth Phoebe Key Howard: "*The two babies, the Colonel's grandchildren, James Howard McHenry son of his deceased daughter Juliana E. (Howard) McHenry, and John E. Howard, son of his deceased eldest-son John E. Howard, were brought in and Colonel Howard hung one of his medals around the neck of James Howard McHenry; that Mrs. Cornelia A. (Read) Howard, the mother of young John E. Howard (III)...who was always jealous of her son – being the son of the eldest son – said "What will you do for John?" whereupon the Colonel hung upon his neck (or gave him?) his other medal.*"

After discovering that he was in possession of a silver medal of the design awarded to his grandfather, many years later McHenry Howard came across an exhibition in Baltimore which included a silver medal matching his own, and purported to be the original medal awarded to Colonel Howard. He discovered that the medal belonged to the great-grandchildren of Colonel Howard through the family of his fourth son, William Key Howard. McHenry Howard asked other family members, and discovered that the grandchildren of Colonel Howard through his third son, Benjamin Chew Howard, also had a silver medal which they believed was the original awarded to the Colonel.

These accounts can become confusing, particularly due to the common reuse of first and last names within the Howard family for generation after generation. To summarize, the original medal was passed down to Howard's grandson, John Eager Howard III, only son of his oldest son, John Eager Howard Jr. This fact

is repeatedly documented in several family histories and publications. The medal at the Maryland Historical society comes from the line of Howard's sixth oldest son, Charles Howard, and after examining this medal, we know it to be an authentic silver Paris strike from original dies. From McHenry Howard's account, there are possibly silver Howard medals which were in possession of the family of his third oldest son, Benjamin Chew Howard, and fourth oldest son, William Howard. McHenry Howard bemoans the confusion caused by all of these medals in determining which of the silver medals was awarded to his grandfather. In his own written history, he states that "*Silver facsimiles of the medal ought never to have been made.*"

In fact, it was common practice for the Monnaie Du Paris to make copies of their medals for the collector market using original dies, and this was done with most of the Comitia Americana medals. The original Howard dies were used to strike copies well into the 1880's, though the vast majority of those made were of a copper-bronzed composition. In *Comitia Americana*, Adams-Bentley include a census of the known medals, and report a total of only six silver copies of the Howard medal³⁶ with plain edges (and thus struck prior to 1830),³⁷ which includes the Maryland Historical Society example. Since its publication, a seventh example has been documented in a West Coast collection.

McHenry Howard, in doing his research on his grandfather's medal, became aware that the Paris mint made restrikes, and indicates in his history that at sometime between 1845 and 1850, James Howard McHenry, Howard's fifth son, traveled to Paris and had bronze copies of the Howard Medal struck, giving them to each living descendent of Howard. (Note: the Maryland Historical Society has three of these bronze medals from the Howard family in their collection, and all have plain edges, indicating they were actually struck before 1830.) McHenry Howard suggests that James Howard

McHenry may have also procured silver Howard medals while in Paris, speculating this may be the source of the additional silver medals in the Howard family.

It is apparent that the original awarded silver Howard medal was passed down to his grandson John Eager Howard III during Lafayette's visit in 1824. John Eager Howard III was later a Major in the US Army who served with some distinction in the War with Mexico. In 1859, he endured a lunacy hearing, and was declared incompetent, dying soon afterward in 1862.³⁸ John Eager Howard III was never married and had no children. Where did the original awarded medal go after it was in John Eager Howard III's possession?

Howard's second son was the Governor of Maryland, and it seems unlikely he was excluded from any distribution of silver medals to the family. Colonel Howard's third and fourth son's families purportedly have silver medals, though there is no physical evidence of their existence or authenticity. Considering that his fifth son may have procured those silver medals in Paris, it is not too far a stretch to suggest that his line would also have a silver medal. His sixth son, Charles Howard, may or may not have had a silver medal, but Charles' son McHenry Howard definitely had a silver medal – the same medal we examined in Baltimore.

John Eager Howard served in Congress and was Maryland Governor during the production of his medal in Paris. He was deeply involved in politics, and was likely in frequent contact with Washington, Jefferson, and others. George Washington attended his wedding reception, and they were regular correspondents. Howard could have easily made arrangements to have additional copies of his silver medal struck at the Paris mint, though there is nothing to substantiate this theory. He certainly had the contacts and resources to do so. Howard was the highly respected patriarch of the large Howard family, and his Comitia Americana medal was a family Holy Grail as

evidenced by the attention given to it by family members for over a century after it was presented by George Washington. There would have been a demand for copies of the medal.

Traditionally, medal collectors will use die states and die progression seen on struck medals to determine the time frame within which a particular medal was struck. As a die is used to strike medals, it can become worn, damaged, or rusted from time and use, and those marks or characteristics can be found on the medals which are struck from the dies. The more advanced the damage, the later the strike. In practice, however, this is not always an exact science, as repairs and polishing are done at various times, and can return the dies back to what appears to be an apparently previous die state.

It is known that the silver medal awarded to John Eager Howard was struck at or near the same time as the Washington-Webster example. An August 16, 1789 receipt written in Jefferson's handwriting shows an order for "3 Medailles d'argent" (three medals in silver), with Jefferson's notation on the back "DuVivier Howard's medal".³⁹ This order would include striking the awarded silver Howard medal, the silver medal for George Washington's silver cased set, and a third copy, possibly to be presented at the Salon for the medals struck in 1789 at the Monnaie du Paris.

Comparison of the die characteristics seen on any of the Howard medals with those on the Washington-Webster example can be used as an indicator as to when the medal was struck. Washington-Webster die states are often used for comparison when identifying the die state of Comitia Americana medals.

I have photographs of five of the seven known silver Howard medals.⁴⁰ In examining the medal in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society, it appears to be of an early die state, based upon early progression of the noteworthy die breaks in and around the obverse lettering. I have a high resolution

picture of the Washington-Webster Howard medal, and the die states of the Maryland Historical Society example are a close match, and perhaps of a slightly earlier die state. Both the Washington-Webster⁴¹ and the Maryland Historical Society examples have been cleaned, however, and this could remove die breaks or rust marks from the surface of the medals, creating the appearance of an earlier die state.

The Maryland Historical Society is in possession of an authenticated silver Howard Comitia Americana medal originating from the family of John Eager Howard, struck from original dies at the Paris mint. The medal is of an early die state apparently matching or preceding that of the Washington-Webster example which was struck at the same time as the medal awarded to Howard. In my opinion, given the history of Colonel Howard's medal, most of the objections and arguments that could be offered against the Maryland Historical Society's medal being the original Howard medal are conjectural. Overall, there is compelling evidence that the Howard medal they possess is, in fact, that awarded to John Eager Howard by the Continental Congress for his bravery and leadership at Cowpens.

One small, but critical detail is included in McHenry Howard's account of his discovery of the Howard medal in 1870. The medal he found was "*wrapped in an old and rumpled and rather sere piece of thin light brown paper, and on it was writing...in the hand of Major John E. Howard.*" Ultimately one single word, included in McHenry Howard's lengthy dissertation, is crucial to closing this debate – the word "Major". Major John E. Howard - John Eager Howard III – was unquestionably the family heir of Colonel Howard's Comitia Americana medal. The Maryland Historical Society is both Colonel and Major John Eager Howard's heir apparent.

On July 10, 1959, nearly 50 years before our visit to the Maryland Historical Society, Julia McHenry Howard, daughter of McHenry Howard, granddaughter of Charles

Howard, and great-granddaughter of two American icons; Francis Scott Key and Revolutionary War hero Colonel John Eager Howard, passed away. Upon her death, she had bequeathed to the Maryland Historical Society a silver medal, once hidden away in a box, intended for disposal or destruction. Almost 100 years earlier, her father, McHenry Howard, miraculously discovered and rescued that medal for posterity. Over 80 years before McHenry Howard unearthed his grandfather's medal, under the care of Thomas Jefferson; it nearly sunk to the bottom of Chesapeake Bay, and was almost incinerated.

The legacy of immense personal devotion, and enduring generosity, from generations of the Howard family of Baltimore to the American people, extends from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century; from Colonel John Eager Howard to his great-granddaughter Julia McHenry Howard; and beyond.

While holding and examining the extraordinary silver medal, gazing upon and admiring the artistry of Pierre-Simon Benjamin DuVivier displayed upon its surface, chills came to me as I reminisced about its incredible journey and history. This was indeed the American treasure once beheld by Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and the Marquis de Lafayette, and presented by Washington as our first President to the esteemed Revolutionary War Colonel John Eager Howard, acknowledging his command and intrepidity while fighting for the cause of American freedom and independence, in a cow pasture in South Carolina, more than two centuries ago.

Letters to the Editor

Mr. Adams,

I am a professional numismatist and exonomia enthusiast. In reading your book *Comitia Americana*, I noticed that you and Anne Bentley dedicated a page to the "corded border" versions of the Libertas Americana medals (Betts-615). I have the same piece described in your book (image attached). This example also measures 49.3 mm and weighs 871 grains. It appears to be cast in silver and is certainly antique. Beyond that, I have no other information, hence this email to you.

You, and previously Michael Hodder, have put forth the possibility that the corded border medals were some sort of prototype employed to hide the die break at 7 o'clock on the obverse. Others have suggested that the corded border medals were cast from a genuine piece in a bezel. Do you have any additional insight into these pieces?

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Tarrant

Mr. T,

Congratulations on your ownership of a fabulous piece! I doubt not that it is contemporary but I would be skeptical of the "bezel" theory because why then an uncorded reverse? In any event, the more important question, in my opinion, remains who did this work and why was it not adopted? Do you have any theories?

I will put your letter in The Advisory hoping to attract further comments. More on this subject in the next issue.

Best,

John Adams



Massachusetts Historical Society Numismatic Bibliography

<<MHS Author bibliography.doc>>

<<MHS Collections biblio.doc>>

<<MHS Proceedings biblio.doc>>

Here are my bibliographic lists from the ANA conference last week. I forgot to bring in the business cards I was given, but I'll catch up with those folks tonight.

Feel free to contact me with any questions and please pass this along to anyone you think might be interested.

Thanks again to the Numismatic Bibliomania Society for the warm reception--I enjoyed myself immensely! My JFK medal has pride of place on my coffee table.

Anne E. Bentley
Curator of Art
Massachusetts Historical Society

Anne - This is fabulous. If you are OK with it, I will publish availability in The Asylum.

Best,

John Adams

Dear John,

I am delighted to hear from you. It is my understanding that the renovation of the LA County Museum's medal galleries and installation will be ready in time for the August 09 date; it would be fascinating to be a "fly on the wall" as selected convention attendees stroll through.

I am aware of the MCA newsletter, thanks to Kahlil. As you may be aware from conversation with Jean Gibran, he was my oldest and closest friend, and is terribly missed.

In his memory and in honor of your visit, I invite you to a dinner party at our home at a convenient time during your visit. I believe

Jean Gibran is coming, and of course Mary Levkoff. We can accommodate comfortably 8-10 people (including ourselves).

As the date approaches, I am sure Mary will be in touch and will make all appropriate arrangements with you regarding the visit. Let us stay in touch on the proceedings!

With all best wishes,

Stuart Denenberg

Hello All,

Please forgive me for e-mailing all of you but I was not sure of the appropriate one to email.

Back in the early 1980's I purchased a gold space coin from a dealer in Texas near my home in Austin. I have always been fascinated with the space program after watching some of the last Saturn 5 launches on TV in the classroom of my grade school.

A few years ago I came across several silver alloy medallions and one looked just like my Gold one. After the coins arrived I went and dug out my old coin and found it. Sure enough they are exactly a like with the exception of the material they are made of and the hallmark/mint marking. I deal in Military collectibles such as Distinguished Insignias of the AAF and I am familiar with this mint mark, it is for Balfour. This particular marking of LGB started showing up on pins toward the end of WWII when they discontinued the use of the "Balfour" marking. This being said I am only familiar with and comment on the Military pins and there markings.

At the time I bought this medal the dealer had two of them but of different mission numbers so I bought the one I knew was the most famous, Apollo 11. For the last couple of years, off and on, I have been trying to find information on this medal. I found your web site and another discussing the making of these coins in "Pewter" and "Silver" only. My coin

set seem to be made of an alloy more like as aluminum than pewter and I have never seen one made of silver.

Do any of you have any knowledge of this Gold version? I expect since it is not listed that they must have been for someone special? It is NOT for sale. I am just curious, sorry. I have attached photos of the front, back, and the marking (LGB10K). You are welcome to use these photos as you see fit. I look forward to hearing from any of you.

Regards,
Mark Dutton
Albuquerque, New Mexico

John:

The space medal by Balfour this gentleman has is one of a series of 13. They were not **dies truck** like typical medals are made. Instead they were **die cast**.

The 13 medals consisted of one Freedom, one Friendship, three Gemini, one Apollo 8, and seven, Apollo 11 thru 17. Balfour did not market the medals; instead they were sold by Neil Cooper, of International Numismatic Agency, New York City, who sold them in sets and singly beginning in 1972.

Die Casting is a very cheap way of making medals in a quick time. Molten metal is shot into a die cavity and rapidly cooled. The metal must have a low melting point. **Zinc alloys** have this low melting point and are widely used in die casting. This alloy is usually called **white metal** because of its color of the surface, and is this color after diecasting.

If you have medals in this series whose surface tests (or look) gold or silver they were **plated**. If your gold medal is marked "10kt" that is the composition of the gold plating. It still has a base metal of the zinc alloy. Since Balfour is a jewelry manufacturer it had the equipment on hand, including plating tanks for gold and silver plating, to do all this.

If you still believe your medal is solid gold, have a specific gravity test made. Solid 10kt gold would have to have a specific gravity of 11.7 or higher. Anything below that would indicate gold plating on a base metal.

If you purchased this medal as solid gold, and the seller guaranteed it you may ask for your money back. You will have to have the invoice or receipt. If not, this may be an expensive lesson to know what you are buying and who you are buying it from (are they a reputable dealer, not some eBay type seller, for example?).

Neil Cooper learned a similar lesson from that experience with these die cast space medals. He never again marketed a die cast medal. In addition to being cheaply and quickly made, they also do not increase in value with time in comparison with comparable die struck medals which are far more coveted by collectors.

Dick Johnson

[**Thank you, Dick!!—ed.**]



To MCA Officers and Oral History Committee

With the Committee's permission, I would like the first interview to be with Alan Stahl. I have given a lot of thought as to who should be the first interviewee. Frankly I choose an easy subject. Alan was present at so many medal events and was involved in so many medal activities. He was even present at the Creation!

I remember sitting in the Colorado Springs Airport with Alan waiting for our respective flights after the FIDEM convention was over. We had chatted often during the previous four days. But that was all business. Here we were relaxed and the conversation was absolutely fabulous. I wish it had been recorded.

I would like to replicate some of that conversation in this interview and recognize that is what should be saved and placed on the internet for others to hear. For long-term permanence, perhaps like medals themselves.

I have agreed to do a "How To" article for other interviewers, should they wish to see this, and to publish my list of questions I would



have on hand in advance of Alan's interview. As with all interviews there is no guarantee every one of those questions will be asked -- they are guidelines not marching orders.

You go with the flow in an interview so it is smooth from beginning to end.

However, you do want to have a theme of the interview -- you are gathering facts -- but it should be interesting throughout. You lose a listener if it becomes tedious or boring.

It is like a radio broadcast. That is somewhat out of my element, since I am a print writer. But I will do my best.

I hope this interviewing of medallic people catches on. In addition to the obvious of medallic artists, collectors and dealers, I see the possibility of interviewing people from the U.S. Mint, from private firms, and others.

Even those who issued medals. I got dibs on interviewing Jim Harper, who issued all those medals 40 years ago under the Presidential Art Medal banner. If someone else can track down Neil Cooper of International Numismatic Agency I will turn over my files on Neil to them. Neil was living in New York City when last I heard from him, he was then in the music business. Neil did "one shots" where Jim Harper liked issuing medals in series.

So many people who should have been interviewed are now dead. I interviewed Bill Louth of Medallic Art on September 25, 2006. Six weeks later he died.

That tape is priceless to me. Bill's mind was sharp at the end, great memory. He was "up" for it and seemed to recognize the importance of the interview. A last great "Hurrah!"

Think of some senior citizen who has some special medallic knowledge or experience. Why don't you contact him (or her) and set up an interview. We now have the mechanics to do this (thanks, Mark). It's as easy as talking on the telephone. Now the ball is in your court.

Dick Johnson

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date:
Name:
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City: State: Zip code:
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Email:

QUESTIONNAIRE

How did you learn about the MCA?

What are your collecting interests?

What would you see highlighted in MCA publications?

For volunteers: I am willing to devote time to the following MCA projects:

DUES: \$20.00 PER CALENDAR YEAR (Includes a subscription to monthly publications of the MCA advisory)

Please send completed application and payment to:

Medal Collectors of America
c/o Barry Tayman
3115 Nestling Pine Court
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Or email completed form to: bdtayman@verizon.net
MCA WEBSITE: <http://www.medalcollectors.org>

¹ Lawrence E. Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping, The Battle of Cowpens* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998) 150-152. According to Babits, Tarleton claimed Morgan had 2,000 men; Morgan claimed to have only 800 men. Morgan estimated the American Militia at 200; Tarleton claimed their numbers were 1,000. Based upon known unit sizes, and pension records, Babits agrees Morgan underestimated the Militia numbers and estimates there were 1800-2400 American combatants, with “at least 1,600 men.”

² *Ibid*, 109-110. In an 1804 letter from JEH to John Marshall, Howard recalls Wallace’s retreat: “I can account for the retreat....This Company on my right were Virginians commanded by Capt. Wallace who some time previous had formed a connexion(sic) with a vile woman of the camp, and the infatuation was so great that on guard or on any other duty he had this woman with him and seemed miserable when she was absent. He seemed to have lost all sense of the character of an officer. He was in this state at the time of this action.”

³ Charles Stedman, *The History of the Origins, Progress, and Termination of the American War* (Self-published, London, 1794).

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping, The Battle of Cowpens*. 115.

⁶ The American Continental Infantry were armed with 1766 Charleville French Muskets which fired a .69 caliber ball measuring approximately .62 inch in diameter.

⁷ Babits, *A Devil of a Whipping, The Battle of Cowpens*. 142, Table 6. Babits shows estimates between 839 and 957 British casualties.

⁸ See Benson L. Lossing, *The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, Volume II* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1852) 664. Lossing details Tarleton’s massacre of Col. Buford’s American Regiment after they attempted to surrender at Waxhaw Creek on May 29, 1780, the event which Tarleton’s “bloody” reputation and the “Tarleton’s Quarter’s” battle cry originated. Tarleton later defended his actions at Waxhaw claiming that he rightfully refused to accept quarter as some of the Continentals continued firing.

⁹ See John W. Adams & Anne Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals, Underappreciated Moments of our Heritage* (George Frederick Kolbe Publications, 2007) 79-80. In fact, Franklin also managed to have medals struck for both Stewart and Wayne, of the same design as the De Fleury medal. This was apparently accomplished by DuVivier simply removing the legends applying to De Fleury, and replacing them with ones for Wayne and Stewart. This was unsatisfactory, and ultimately Wayne and Stewart’s medals were redesigned by Gatteaux.

¹⁰ *Ibid*. 45. In addition to John Howard’s silver Comitia Americana medal, Jefferson carried gold medals for Generals George Washington, Anthony Wayne, and Daniel Morgan, and silver medals for Major John Stewart and Lt. Colonel William Washington.

¹¹ Martha Jefferson Randolph, *Reminiscences of Thomas Jefferson by Martha Randolph*.

¹² Letter from George Washington to John Eager Howard March 25, 1790, copy in Washington’s diary, Library of Congress.

¹³ Estimated value from conversation with Earle Havens, Acting Keeper of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Boston Public Library.

¹⁴ Adams & Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. 11-17. Adams-Bentley reveals an extensive history of the silver Washington-Webster set of medals.

¹⁵ Letter from George Washington to John Eager Howard March 25, 1790.

¹⁶ Howard's middle name Eager is misspelled Egar. This has been attributed to carelessness by DuVivier, but I have seen notes from Jefferson where he uses this same misspelling, thus Jefferson may be responsible for the error.

¹⁷ Howard was shot in the shoulder, with the ball passing entirely through him, exiting through his back under the shoulder blade. General Nathaniel Greene had Howard attended to by the best medical personnel available. Greene must have believed that Howard fared better from his injury than in actuality; in a November 14, 1781 letter, given to Howard by Greene to deliver to a friend in Maryland while Howard was sent on furlough for his wounds, Greene refers to Howard's injuries: "*He has been wounded, but has happily recovered.*"

¹⁸ The official US Congress website indicates Howard declined the Brigadier General's commission, but other accounts indicate that Washington actually named Howard as one of his Brigadier Generals. Howard never served, as the war with France never took place. Howard did decline a commission as a Brigadier General in the Maryland Militia in 1794, and the US Congress website or its sources may be confusing these facts. In an April 22, 1782 letter from Nathaniel Greene to Howard, it seems Howard desires advancement in rank, and Greene addresses Howard's aspirations: "*I am told Congress have again changed the plan of promotion. If so, I fear you will meet with difficulty in obtaining yours. However you must learn patience, justice moves slow.*"

¹⁹ Henry Lee, *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States* (Bradford & Inskoop, Philadelphia & New York, 1812. Republished: University Publishing Company, New York, 1869) 592. Lee's memoirs were written in 1809 while he was in debtor's prison.

²⁰ November 14, 1781 letter of General Nathaniel Greene, the same listed earlier, given to Howard to deliver to a friend in Maryland while Howard was on furlough for his wounds at Eutaw. This well known quote followed the letters introduction, which began "*This will be handed you by Colonel Howard, as good an officer. . .*"

²¹ Verse III of *Maryland, My Maryland*, penned by James Ryder Randall in April 1861. Adopted as the Official Maryland State song on April 29, 1939. Set to the traditional tune of "*Lauriger Horatius*" ("*O, Tannenbaum*".)

²² Letter from John Howard to Colonel Pickering, January 29, 1827. According the Maryland Historical magazine, Volume IV, 1909, the letter is in the collection of the Harvard library.

²³ Michel Hodder, *John J. Ford, Jr. Collection, Part XIV - Betts Medals -Part 2* (Stacks Auction, May 23, 2006) Description of silver Germantown medal, lot # 162, realized \$51,750.00.

²⁴ On May 18, 1778, Andre courted Peggy Chew at the "Mischianza", described in the August 1975, Volume 25, Issue 5 of American Heritage Magazine: "*At the gigantic farewell party of the British officers, the mischianza, he chose Peggy Chew to be his honored lady . . . And for Peggy Chew also he wrote and illustrated a souvenir booklet descriptive the mischianza, signing himself her most devoted Knight and Servant.' The booklet is still in the Chew house, Cliveden, in Germantown.*"

²⁵ The Andre medal was a silver repoussé, and not a struck medal.

²⁶ George Adolphus Hanson, *Old Kent: The Eastern Shore of Maryland; Notes Illustrative of the Most Ancient Records of Kent County, Maryland..., etc.* (John P. Des Forges, Baltimore, 1876) 43-48.

²⁷ William Leete Stone, *Visits to the Saratoga Battle-grounds, 1780-1880: With an Introduction and Notes* (Joel Munsell's Sons, Albany, New York, 1895) 123-125.

²⁸ This is one of many versions of the encounter between Washington and Tarleton. From the different accounts, it is difficult to determine the specific factual details of the exchange. It is recorded that the two men crossed paths at social events after the war, and engaged in verbal repartee over the details.

²⁹ *The Magazine of American History with Notes and Queries* (Historical Publication Company, New York, June 1883) 105. "*When, after death, the body of Colonel Washington was being prepared for burial by his friends, they discovered the*

ghastly scar of a terrible wound extending almost across his broad chest. Sending for his son they inquired as to how it had been received, and where? The reply was he never knew of its existence before upon his father's body, as he never alluded to his warlike exploits or "hair-breadth 'scapes" either to his family or friends." The wound could be from the Battle of Eutaw Springs, where Wm. Washington was wounded and captured.

³⁰ Adams & Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. 258.

³¹ *Ibid.* 27.

³² C. Wyllys Betts, *American Colonial History Illustrated by Contemporary Medals* (Quarterman Publications, Boston, 1972. Originally published 1894) 280-282. Betts names the engraved medal "Battle of Eutaw Springs" and conjectures the medal was awarded to Howard for the Eutaw Battle.

³³ In addition to their collective knowledge, the MCA members also had an additional original silver John Howard Comitia Americana medal in their possession for direct comparison, authenticated and encapsulated by Numismatic Guarantee Corporation, graded NGC MS-61.

³⁴ July 31, 2008 conversation with John Kraljevich at the ANA Baltimore show.

³⁵ Hanson, *Old Kent: The Eastern Shore of Maryland; Notes Illustrative of the Most Ancient Records of Kent County, Maryland...*, etc. This extensive family tree was used to sort out this and all of the family relation references which follow in the article.

³⁶ Adams & Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. 148. Census of silver Howard medals.

³⁷ Beginning in 1830, the Monnaie du Paris began the use of punches to place symbols and the composition on the edge of their medals. These various punches, known as "privy marks" are used to determine the time frame in which medals were struck. Medals struck before 1830 do not have a privy mark.

³⁸ Howard Family Papers, Maryland Historical Society.

³⁹ Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Library of Congress.

⁴⁰ Adams & Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. 148. Authors photos include: Massachusetts Historical Society (Washington-Webster); Maryland Historical Society; John J. Ford Collection (now in a western Collection); David Dreyfuss Collection (now in a New England collection); and the west coast collection example.

⁴¹ The Washington-Webster example appears to have been cleaned in the author's photographs of the medal provided by the MHS. This was confirmed in an e-mail by John W. Adams.