

Foreign Coins Struck By U.S. Mints

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On January 29, 1874, a joint resolution of both houses of Congress gave the Secretary of the Treasury the authority to accept contract work from foreign governments. The Director of the Mint would set the prices for this work. It could not interfere with regular production of American coins. For the fiscal year 1875-1876, the US struck coins for Venezuela. This was the start of a long-term relationship with that nation to supply it with coinage. Since then, the US Mints have struck coins for over 40 countries.

Most of the countries which turned to the US Mints for production were either firm allies or economic dependants. Syria stands out as an exception. Among the countries were: Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Israel, Liberia, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Poland, and Saudi Arabia. During World War II, the US struck coins for Fiji under Britain, and for Belgium, France, and Netherlands, which were liberated from Germany.

The details of this work can be found in *Domestic and Foreign Coins Manufactured by Mints of the United States*. The book is sold by the Bureau of the Mint and is often available from the US Government Printing Office at its current price. Your local library can find the book via OCLC and borrow it for you through an Inter Library Loan. ANA members can make their usual arrangements, also.

The February 1998 *Numismatist* reprinted the telling of similar work done by the British Royal Mint. Coinage for export probably goes back to the 1300s, since the king of England also held lands in France. In the 19th century, fully 25% of the Royal Mint's copper coins were for export to areas where British merchants were working. From 1922 to 1945, the Royal Mint served The USSR, Latvia, Bulgaria and a dozen other nations. Since 1962, the Royal Mint has claimed two-thirds of the available world market.

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