

# I Am Good Copper- Value Me as You Choose

by [Michael E. Marotta](#)

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So said the Granby tokens. When I am in a coin store, I go through the junk boxes and pull out all the old copper I can find. British pennies, French 5 and 10 centime, Mexican 20 centavo, whatever I find, I buy. The range is 8/\$1 to 16/\$1 with 10/\$1 being the mode. I used to give them out as "300 amp fuses" when I played stump-the-trainer at Kawasaki Robot. The Mex 20c are still easy to find, as are Brit p, hp and 2p. I have a few Victorias, olds and youngs.

Numismatically, most are junk -- which is why they're in the junk box. I find something romantic in a coin that is worn flat. A British penny, in particular, got that way travelling around the world, as did Italian and French coins.

The French coppers display good republican themes. Once Napoleon III was turned out, the coinage changed to classical motifs of Justice and her friends. Unfortunately France won two world wars and her coins were debased to aluminum and nickel. (The same thing happened when Britain won those wars: the ha'penny is now the tuppence and the pound is now worth a dollar.)

Copper was the first metal. It was found on the ground and it melts at low temperature. Today, we accept the arbitrary, wertfrei currencies that tally trade and commerce. In a sense, they are indeed generalizations on the idea of gold and silver. That idea, indirect barter, had a precursor: copper. Copper is divisible and uniform, and so on. It is also very useful and pretty to all. Copper coins prove that trade brings profits to everyone. Electrum, silver and gold marked the need to tally tons of surplus. Copper and bronze, the lowest common denominator, indicated that anyone could create and store wealth.

*Run for your life from any man who tells you that money is evil. -Francisco d'Anconia in ATLAS SHRUGGED by Ayn Rand*