

Buried Treasure by Pinkney Gage

Brassy Look Doesn't Hurt 1848 Quarter Eagle

"I suppose I was stung," Frank said, "but I figured I couldn't go far wrong for \$2.50, even though the coin looked like genuine brass. "After all, the guy I got it from has been owing me \$20 for months, and this way I might get part of it back."

The reason for its brassy look lay in the alloy used. Officials of the mint were interested in getting a coin that would wear and look well, but which would also have not too much gold in it. That latter point is especially important, because if a \$2.50 gold piece had \$2.60 worth of gold in it, the issue would swiftly go out of circulation via the melting pot.

Well, the catalogue said this particular coin had only 888 parts gold, 108 of silver and four of other metals. That was what gave it the brassy appearance alongside coins of the usual formula which had 900 parts of gold and up to 67 of copper. I showed the passage to Frank. "Okay," he said. "So it's genuine, but what about the CAL?"

"It was put on with a punch. Only a few hundred coins were made with this alloy, and of course, that's mighty lucky for you. In other words, a coin of this kind is worth about \$200. TABLE, SLATE OR STONE SET, IN TOP MAY HAVE VALUE

If you ever come across a table with slate or some other stone set into the top, give plenty of thought to acquiring it. Some months ago, Larry, a friend of mine, found one in a old house he was visiting in Wisconsin. The table was in a corner of a parlor, the most unused corner of the most used room in the house.

"I could see it was the genuine article—something right out of the late 1600s or early 1700s at the latest," he said. "The slate top was bound in a rim of wood about two inches wide all around the octagonal edge. "It was sound and in good condition. The legs were beauti-

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