

A MINOR CONTRIBUTION

by Patrick Beauvais

Well hello again. It's your friendly old Librarian here. This month I am writing "An Introduction to Minor Varieties" or "What Started People Collecting Them." After prolonged use, dies will break down and if you collect minor varieties you will know what I mean.

The thin hairline breaks were quite common in the 1940-52 Canadian cents, and other denominations. They can be found on either the obverse or reverse of the coin. It would appear that since the obverse of the coin usually has a more open field, damaged obverse dies are more frequently noticed than reverse dies, possibly the cause for more reverse die breaks being found over the years.

There are some excellent examples of die cracks on 1¢ and 10¢ pieces, from the fine hairline crack to the more obvious die break. Then there are the dots or spots which become quite large due to the constant pounding or usage of the dies. I have a 1945 Canadian 50¢ piece which has a large spot at the numeral "5" in "50 CENTS."

Another type of minor variety known as "plugged characters" are caused by small chips breaking away from the die, leaving small fillings on the coin. The chipping and breaking continues and the filling gets larger and larger until the letter or numeral becomes completely filled. Below are a few examples.



Well, I hope this article and a few of these examples will be of help to you in your search for minor varieties. I'll be preparing regular monthly articles on some of the many minor varieties which I hope you will read and enjoy.

I'll be seeing you again next month. ☺