

## "Tokens of History"

By

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February is here, Valentine's Day is right around the corner, and love is in the air. In honor of Saint Valentine, this month's article features the history of Love Tokens, as well as a Shasta County "Love" token. The making and giving of Love Tokens was a very popular way of expressing one's love in Great Britain and the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A Love Token is a coin that has had one side ground smooth (usually the reverse, but not always), and then hand engraved, most commonly with the initials of the person giving the token (a forget me not) or the initials of the loved one. Usually either a loop was attached or a hole was punched through it so it could be worn as a necklace:



Love Tokens were generally given by a young man to a girl he was courting, but just as there are different types of love (romantic, familial, friendship), there are different types of Love Tokens found reflecting the type of sentiment being expressed. Besides initials, the engraving may be a name, the nature of the relationship (i.e., Mother), a significant date, a saying, a picture, or some combination thereof. In the U.S. this tradition reached its apex of popularity in the late 1800's and examples of love tokens have been found in virtually any denomination of coin, but by far the most common are Seated Liberty dimes (as in the above example). In addition to necklaces, Love Tokens were sometimes made into hat pins, broaches, and bracelets (which would require several tokens), as in this example:



Collecting Love Tokens has become a popular hobby for the more romantic at heart, as each one is a unique expression of one person's love for another, and many are quite intricate and beautiful. Antique Love Tokens can commonly be found at coin dealers, antique shops, or on internet auction sites such as Ebay. For any reader who is interested in finding out more, I recommend the Love Token Society's website as a good place to start:

<http://lovetokensociety.com/>

Antique Love Tokens can also be a unique way to express your own love for someone in your life. It can be quite a challenge to find a token that has their name, initials, or some other significant engraving on it, but well worth the effort. Here are some examples of this from my own family:

For my wife, an 1892 Barber quarter (first year of issue) given as a Love Token for Valentine's Day, exactly one-hundred years from the month that we met:



From an older brother to his sister, an 1875 Seated Liberty quarter:



From grandkids to their grandma, an 1875 Seated Liberty dime:



From a niece and nephew to their aunt, an 1876 Seated Liberty dime:



A "Love" token of a different sort, from Shasta County:

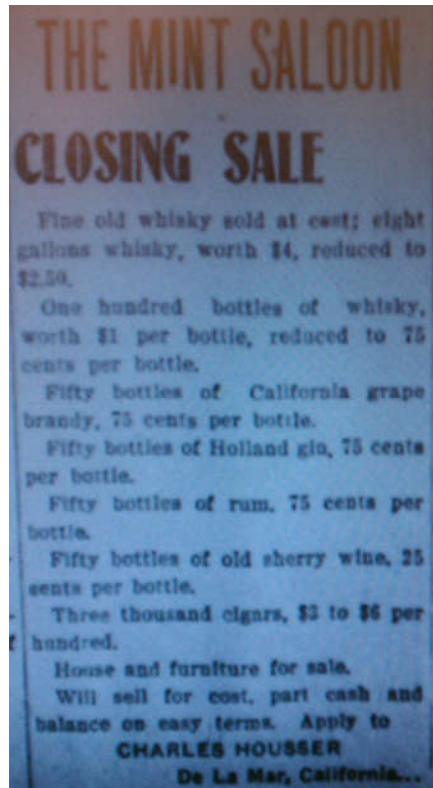


SLAUGHTER'S / BILLIARD / HALL / DE LA MAR / CAL  
GOOD FOR / ONE / DRINK / OR / CIGAR

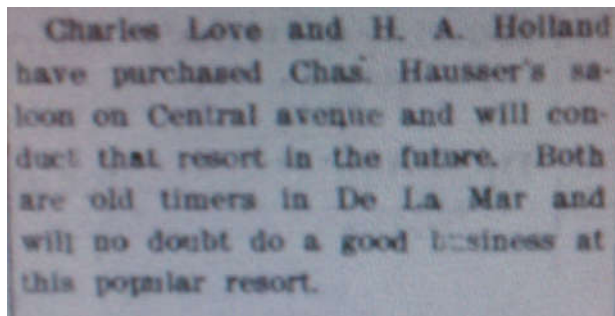
This is the newest addition to my collection, which I recently obtained from one of Duane Feisel's token auctions. The town of Delamar (or De La Mar) sat just below the Bully Hill Mine, and now just below the water line of the Squaw arm of Shasta Lake:



In September of 1902, Charles Housser was having a closing sale, trying to liquidate the stock of his Mint Saloon:



In July of 1903, Charles Monroe Love (hence "Love" token) and Henry Almer Holland purchased the Mint Saloon and renamed it Slaughter's Saloon (though it is possible this was a second saloon being sold by Houser, already named Slaughter's):



I wasn't able to find much information on Holland, but I was able to locate Charles Love obituary from June of 1942:



## Charles M. Love Of Shasta Dies

Charles Monroe Love, 70, of Shasta, died in the county hospital yesterday after a long illness.

Love, a long-time resident of Anderson and Shasta, was a carpenter by trade. He was born March 26, 1872.

He leaves a brother, Frank Love, of Santa Cruz; a half-brother, W. J. Adams of Los Molinos; and a nephew, John Adams, of Shasta.

## Love Services Held Saturday

Last rites for Charles M. Love, 70-year-old Shasta resident, were held Saturday afternoon at the graveside in the Oak Hill cemetery in Red Bluff.

If the reader has any additional information about any of the people or businesses mentioned in this article, please contact me at: [chetsunde@gmail.com](mailto:chetsunde@gmail.com), or (530) 244-4436. Happy Valentine's Day.