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FOUND IN AMERICA



MARK A. MCMENAMIN

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INTRODUCTION

Fantastic stories have circulated about the extent of Phoenician maritime exploration. Did the Phoenicians reach the Americas? Did they circumnavigate the globe hundreds of years before Christ? Such concerns have long been delightful topics for speculation, but hard evidence for testing the claims about Phoenicians crossing the Atlantic has proven very hard to come by.

Any claims for such evidence must be subjected to the harshest critical scrutiny before the evidence can be accepted. In this book I describe an episode of critical scrutiny that has led to rejection of a key piece of evidence suggesting that the Carthaginians crossed the Atlantic, and has also led to the recognition of a new type of modern American exonumia (medals and tokens).

THE CARTHAGINIAN COINS FROM AMERICA

My 1999 books, *The Carthaginians Were Here: Evidence for an Early Crossing of the Atlantic, Volumes I and II*, described at length an odd occurrence of supposedly Carthaginian coins, supposedly found buried across North America from Nebraska to Connecticut (McMenamin 1999a, 1999b). I had this to say about the coins in *Volume I* (p. 7-8):

A series of coins, supposedly struck by Carthage in 350 BC, have been found scattered across North America. These coins, some specimens of which were struck from the same dies, were apparently silver-plated counterfeits of large silver coins in circulation in the Mediterranean region during the fourth century BC. The copies appear to be very old and may have been struck in antiquity. If authentically minted by ancient Phoenicians, and assuming that the coins have not been planted to fool archeologists, then these coins could represent definitive evidence for a Phoenician presence in pre-Columbian North America. If the evidence lacks veracity, and the coins are modern forgeries, they represent the most elaborate archeological hoax since the Piltdown Man debacle, combined with a conspiracy that would blanch Kennedy assassination buffs.

In this book we will carefully examine these coins with the intent of either drying off the baby and flushing the bath

water, or exposing the hoax. Either way--rewriting history or exposing the perpetrator of a nefarious humbug--we face an equivalent challenge. At the end of our labors, there will be a great story to tell.

At the end of *Volume II*, after a careful analysis of each of the coins known to me at the time, I concluded that the coins were (p. 46) "probably" authentic although I expressed grave doubts (p. 32, 47): ~~that~~ the coins could in fact be bogus. I considered the possibilities that the coins were Roman copies, Masonic fantasy pieces and Mormon fantasy pieces (p. 24-26), and also conducted elemental analyses of the coins to try and determine whether the metal alloys could have been used in antiquity or had a distinctively modern aspect. All of this work proved inconclusive and I was unable to characterize the coins as either ancient or modern, although I did make an attempt to translate the Punic inscription on the reverse of most of the coins.

HISTORY OF STUDY OF THE COINS

These coins were first brought ^{to} light by Joseph B. Mahan and Douglas C. Braithwaite in an article in the non-peer reviewed (and now defunct) *Anthropological Journal of Canada*. The article was entitled "Discovery of Ancient Coins in the United States" (Mahan and Braithwaite 1975). In this paper they described (their Figure 1) a "Syracusean [sic] coin found near Phenix City, Alabama, 1957." Following is their account (p. 15) of the coin's discovery:

[In] 1957, a small negro boy brought a strange coin into a Phenix City, Alabama grocery store and said that he had found it in a field near his home at the edge of the city. He wanted to trade it for candy; although they did not know what the coin was, the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Otis Richards, gave the boy about 15¢ worth of candy.

The coin was later shown to Preston E. Blackwell, then professor of history at the University of Georgia. Blackwell sent the coin to the Fogg Museum in Boston for identification. Museum officials identified the coin as a Syracuse coin dating from 490 BC.

Blackwell kept the coin for some time in his wallet, showing it to interested parties. Blackwell suffered a mild stroke in 1957 and was taken to the hospital in Montgomery, Alabama. When Blackwell

recovered, he learned that his wallet and the coin it contained had vanished.

The next publication to discuss the coins was a 1977 cover story of *The Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications* by Norman Totten (1977) entitled "Carthaginian coins found in Arkansas and Alabama." Totten had been sent a coin similar to the one described by Mahan and Braithwaite (1975) by Prof. Barry Fell of Harvard, who had received the coin from Gloria Farley. At the time, Farley was president of the Eastern Oklahoma Historical Society. After examining the Arkansas specimen, Totten concluded that the coin was genuine and that based (p. 3) "on the obverse style alone, one might date this coin to about 350" BC.

By 1980, enough claims had been made of the discoveries of ancient coins in America to merit serious scholarly attention. Jeremiah Epstein concluded in an article in *Current Anthropology* (Epstein 1980) that all of these claims of finds of old world ancient coins in America could be dismissed because they lacked proper archeological context and were merely individual, isolated finds. Epstein felt that the coins were lost by modern collectors. Epstein mentioned the Alabama coin and accepted it as authentically ancient, although he did not believe that ~~the~~^{it} reached America in antiquity. This is nevertheless important, as it indicates serious, critical scholarly acceptance of the coin as an authentic ancient coin.

Gloria Farley purchased the Arkansas coin from a man named Jessie Kelley. Kelley claimed in a witnessed statement to have found the coin with a metal detector buried six inches deep in a field near an old home site near Cauthron, Arkansas (McMenamin 1999b).

Farley wrote an article on this coin for *Oklahoma Today* (Farley 1977) that was later reported in the Sunday newspaper insert *Family Weekly* (Fleming 1978). These widely circulated articles brought Farley more information about discoveries of similar coins as people reported their finds from Kansas, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Nebraska. Farley collected accounts of these coins in her chapter "The Coincidence of the Coins" in her book *In Plain Sight: Old World Records in Ancient America* (Farley 1994).

In the 1990's the coins received increasing notice as evidence for ancient transatlantic crossings (Huyge 1992, p. 72-73).

BARRY FELL

The name most closely associated with research into ancient maritime travel to America is Barry Fell (1917-1994). Fell began his academic career as a zoologist, and as a result of this work was hired

for a faculty position at Harvard (Fell 2000). His zoological and paleontological research led to interesting results (Fell 1962) on the distribution of echinoderms in circumpolar south seas. Unfortunately for Fell, his research into the transoceanic dispersal of organisms positioned him on the wrong side of the 1960's debate about continental drift and plate tectonics. Fell argued that the continents had not moved relative to one another since the Cambrian (540 million years ago), and that disjunct distributions of organisms could be accounted for by oceanic current dispersal mechanisms. Plate tectonics and continental drift ^{are} ~~is~~ now of course well accepted by geologists (McMenamin and McMenamin 1990).

Fell did not change his position on plate tectonics, although perhaps ironically his views on the shift of surface crust over the bulk core of the planet (Fell 2000) are being reexamined by geologists (Kirschvink, Ripperdan and Evans 1997) who study plate tectonics. By 1968, Fell's geological ideas had become so unpopular that he found it impossible to get his scientific studies through peer review (Fell 2000, p. 48). Forced to abandon his zoological distribution studies, Fell devoted increasing attention to anthropology and epigraphy.

In a series of articles and books, Fell outlined his mobilistic views on the dispersal of humans. These views seemed to echo his earlier work on the dispersal of marine animals; in fact, Fell cites this earlier zoological work as contributing to his insights into the origins of the Polynesian language.

Fell's work in this area earned him a devoted following among amateur archeologists such as Gloria Farley. Attacks on Fell by his fellow academics (Stephen Williams [1991] labelled Fell a "rouge professor") only served to increase the fervor of Fell's supporters. The intellectual stakes have become dramatically higher with the recent appearance of a cover story in *The Atlantic Monthly* favorable to Fell's archeological research (Stengel 2000). Archeologist David H. Kelley's (1990) balanced review of Fell's work accuses Fell of academic "sins" such as (p. 2) "distortion of data, inadequate acknowledgment of predecessors, and lack of presentation of alternative views." These sins are apparently not mortal ones in Kelley's view, for he goes on to state (p. 3) that Fell "achieved a substantial number of remarkable results which are broadly correct in spite of frequent errors of detail." Kelley (1990) accepts as authentic a number of ancient American inscriptions in Celtic Ogham, Iberic Punic, and proto-Tiffinagh. All three represent old world languages.

Fell's defenders claim that although he was often wrong in detail, he was right on the larger issues (i.e., ancient peoples did indeed cross the Atlantic). They (and he) may be right about this; the Phoenicians and others may very well have crossed the Atlantic. However, Fell's methods of epigraphic study are so distorted that many of his analyses do not yield straightforward, useful information. For example (McMenamin 1999b, p 44):

Barry Fell's worst blunder as an epigraphist involves his report of a putative inscription in "the Punic language of Carthage" at Massacre Lake, Nevada. Fell took a black-and-white sketch from a 1962 paper (which admittedly does resemble Punic writing), projected the black and white image that resembled writing onto a textured background for reversal printing and published a photograph of what looks like a remarkably clear inscription engraved in stone. This highly questionable "replica" (not identified as such in Fell's book) bears no relationship to what is on the rock, and Fell's reading of the "inscription" has been decisively falsified by a group who took pains to relocate the original rock. There are no Punic inscriptions at Massacre Lake, Nevada.

Much of the information in Fell's books (Fell 1976; Fell 1980) can be dismissed as unreliable or at least inadequately documented. There was one piece of evidence in these books, however, that was not so easily dismissed. These were the putative Carthaginian coins found across America. Interpretation of these coins looms in importance, as their presence may influence the ease with which archeologists will accept claims made by Fell and others regarding ancient Old World inscriptions in America.

FOUR MAIN TYPES

These coins, which are referred to as the "Farley Coins" in my earlier books in recognition of her role in making these coins widely known (McMenamin 1999a, 1999b, 2000b), occur in four main types that are referred to below as the Alabama type, the Arkansas type, the Pennsylvania type and the Tennessee type.

The Alabama type is most common. It is composed of bronze or copper and is about 28 millimeters in diameter (the diameter of these coins is apparently variable). On the obverse is the head and neck of a goddess (Persephone or Tanit?) facing left surrounded by four dolphins. Above the head is the inscription ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣCAN. On

the reverse is the head and neck of a horse facing left. To the left of the horse is a palm tree with six leaves, two date clusters and five roots. Below the neck of the horse is an inscription in Punic letters.

The Nebraska, Georgia, Connecticut and Alabama coins (see below) share a distinctive oval or rice grain-shaped die break between the lower dolphin and the goddess' neck. These four coins were thus struck after the other coins (Massachusetts and Kansas) of this type.

The Arkansas type is similar but somewhat larger, being 30 millimeters in diameter. It is struck in bronze. The design appears to be similar to the Alabama type except that the obverse apparently lacks the Greek inscription (the single known Arkansas type coin is corroded, however, and the obverse inscription may once have been present). The Punic inscription, much worn, is present under the horse. Details of the engraving confirm that the Arkansas type and Alabama type coins were struck from different dies.

The Pennsylvania type is smaller (27 millimeters in diameter) and is of a more refined style. It is similar in overall design to the Alabama type except that the initials AINE (part of the name of Greek celator Euainetos) appear below the lowest dolphin and the palm tree lacks roots. The N in AINE is retrograde (backwards). This coin is known from a single example. It is struck in brass.

The Tennessee coin, also known from only a single example, is much larger (36 millimeters diameter). It consists of silver layering over tin. The obverse again has the goddess looking left, surrounded by four dolphins with the inscription ΣΥΠΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ above (retrograde N). On the reverse is a fast quadrigga (chariot). In the exergue below the quadrigga is a panoply of arms.

THE MASSACHUSETTS COIN

On January 18, 2000 I made a chance discovery that solved the problem of authenticity for these coins. From my research notebook (p. 115-117) is the entry dated January 19, 2000:

I report here a very interesting development in 'Phoenician' numismatics. At about 2:00 pm yesterday I dropped my daughter Sarah off at the Jones Library in Amherst, and drove to Northampton to visit a coin and antiques store called The Collector Inc. [proprietor Augie Woicekoski]. While examining the [coin] cases, all the while the proprietor regaling me with good natured Irish jokes, I spotted a coin for sale labelled "Copy of Ancient Greek Coin from Sicily

410 to 310 BC, Holed, BB, \$10.00/Sim.[ilar] to *Greek Coins & Their Types* #1254." I asked to see the coin and was astonished to be handed a pristine copy of the most common type [Alabama type] of Farley coin!

The coin is in extremely fine to about uncirculated condition. It appears to be composed of bronze or perhaps pure copper. It has a dark brown patina and appears to be coated with a thin coat of lacquer. The hole is right before ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣCAN.

The most notable thing about the coin is its nearly mint condition and its smooth surfaces. This is not a coin that has been buried for any length of time. I would not estimate its age to be more than 100-150 years.

Based on the incredibly lucky find of this specimen (for only \$10.00!), I am now able to safely conclude that the Farley coins represent modern exonomia. There appear to be four types:

Type #	Coins
1 [Alabama type]	Alabama, Kansas, Massachusetts Connecticut, Nebraska, Georgia
2 [Arkansas type]	Arkansas
3 [Pennsylvania type]	Pennsylvania
4 [Tennessee type]	Tennessee

The most newly discovered coin of the series is the Massachusetts coin. It is 28 millimeters in diameter . . . It shows more of the coin engraving than the other known specimens, as the border beading to the left of the horse is visible. This is thus a particularly well centered piece.

Who minted these coins, and why, remains a mystery.

The Massachusetts coin, with its nearly pristine condition, seems to falsify any claims to antiquity for these specimens. Detailed descriptions of this and the other coins appear below, revised and modified from McMenemy (1999b).

THE PUNIC INSCRIPTION

The enigmatic inscription (consisting of six letters) below the horse on the reverse of eight of these coins is not easily interpreted.

Barry Fell translated this inscription as Punic *byrst*, meaning "country district." A problem with Fell's interpretation of the inscription is that the text clearly has six letters, not Fell's five. To make his *byrst* translation, he was compelled to combine the first two letters of the inscription (as read from left to right) to read *b*. I disagree with this approach of combining two letters into one (McMenamin 1999a).

In 1999 I read the inscription as *bpgrlt*, meaning "the bearer of this coin is entitled to land allotments." This interpretation was based on my work with Phoenician grammar (McMenamin 1997a) and a Phoenician lexicon (McMenamin 1997b). I no longer believe this interpretation to be correct. Like Fell, I had misinterpreted the Punic letters.

The inscription on the Arkansas type, Alabama type and Pennsylvania type coins is in fact a not very faithfully rendered copy of the Phoenician phrase *ommhnt*, meaning "the people of the camp." The first letter of the enigmatic inscription (on the right, since Punic is read from right to left) is a degraded copy of a Punic *o*, but the circle of the *o* is not complete, possibly because the genuine coin used as a model for this copy had an incompletely struck *o* as well. The next two letters are incomplete *m*'s with a shape something like a "7", the next letter is a modified *h*, the next a Punic *n*, and the last letter (this is the only letter for which all interpretations are in agreement) a *t*.

The inscription on the American coins is very similar in gross shape to the Punic inscription on the Carthaginian silver coin shown in Plate 26, number 9 of Jenkins and Lewis (1963). The coin in Jenkins-Lewis plate 26, number 9 is so similar to the Pennsylvania coin (differing only in the presence of earings and the absence of a Greek inscription) that something like it might have used as a model for the Pennsylvania coin's dies. The *ommhnt* inscription on the American coins looks as though it was engraved by someone who did not understand the proper ideal shapes of Phoenician letters, perhaps because they had only a single Carthaginian coin to use as a model.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

Each numbered coin is followed by its literature pedigree or synonymy. The pedigree includes the date of publication, a short

identifier as used in the publication referenced, and the author of the publication being referenced.

ALABAMA TYPE

Coin 1—The Massachusetts Coin (Figure 1 A-B)

Composition: Bronze or copper.

Diameter: 28 mm.

Mass: 9.1 grams.

Die axis: Approximately 20 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: $\frac{3}{4}$ Holed, hole (1.7 mm diameter) placed immediately before first Σ in obverse inscription. One side of the hole has a bevelled edge, the other side has bits of metal adhering to the flush edge of the hole (and therefore the hole is not very worn). Well centered, border beading visible to left of horse's head.

Inscription: Obverse: $\Sigma Y \bullet P A \bullet K O \bullet \Sigma C \bullet A N$. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Obverse: extremely fine to about uncirculated. Reverse: extremely fine to about uncirculated, some wear on neck, cheek and mane of horse where the lacquer coat was broken through. Traces of mint luster are visible around the lower two dolphins on the obverse.

Comments: Purchased in a coin shop in Northampton, Massachusetts in January 2000 for ten dollars. The coin is coated with a thin lacquer; hardened air bubbles in the lacquer are visible in the leaves of the palm tree and in the goddess' hair. Pristine, smooth surfaces. Radial striking lines visible and well preserved. The dark brown or blackish patina thins in areas to a coppery color. Small spot of green verdigris before the Punic inscription. This coin displays a state of preservation (mint luster and smooth surfaces largely intact beneath a lacquer coating) that is unknown in genuinely ancient bronze or copper coins.

Coin 2—The Kansas Coin

1980	Kansas coin	Totten
1994	Kansas Coin	Farley
1999b	Coin 3	McMenamin

Composition: Base metal.

Diameter: Approximately 29-30 mm.

Mass: Unknown.

Die axis: Approximately 12 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: Large hole in front of upright blade-shaped leaf in hair. Obverse: Left dolphin is very close to goddess' chin, and its right pectoral flipper is nearly vertical. The belly of the upper dolphin is concave. The right dolphin has a short snout.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣY•PA•KO•ΣC•AN. First Σ rotated approximately 30° counterclockwise. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Obverse: fine condition. Reverse: fine condition.

Comments: This coin was reported by Eddie Thornton of Franklin, Kansas. He discovered it while using a metal detector in an attempt to locate a lost ring in a field in southeastern Kansas near two creeks which flow into the Spring River, a tributary of the Arkansas River. He reported the coin as being buried six inches deep. The coin has a hole drilled at the top. The hole is nearly identical in size to the hole drilled in the Nebraska coin (Coin 6,⁴ see below), but it is not in exactly the same place.

Although the photograph of the reverse of this coin is somewhat out of focus, it is apparent from the clearer obverse image that the coin is in fine condition and has not been cleaned to such an extent that all of the original toning (oxidation) had been removed by cleaning at the time of the photograph. In spite of difficulties with the reverse photograph, the wear friction visible on this coin, if genuine and not simulated by a hoaxer (Warshawsky 1998), would represent at least a decade of more-or-less constant wear (Fisher 1996).

Coin 3—The Georgia Coin

1994	Georgia Coin	Farley
1999b	Coin 8	McMenamin

Composition: Base metal.

Diameter: 25 mm (Æ 25).

Mass: unknown

Die axis: Approximately 12 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: Large hole, size and position very similar to that of the hole in the Nebraska coin. This coin is very similar to the Nebraska coin, but differs by the presence of slight differences in the rim near the Greek letters ΣYPA. Same die crack on obverse as Alabama coin.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣY•PA•KO•ΣC•AN. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Extremely fine, both sides.

Comments: After reading Farley's book chapter on the coins, and looking at her photographs of Braithwaite's specimen, it at first appeared to me that what she had identified as a second specimen of the large version of the coin, "The Georgia Coin," was in fact the same specimen as the one from Phenix City, Alabama. A detailed analysis of the coin photograph shows, however, that the coins are not the same ~~(Figures and)~~.

Gloria Farley has never actually seen nor photographed the Georgia coin, and there is no agreement on the exact provenance of the coin. According to Joseph B. Mahan, as Farley relates, the coin was found February 1, 1986 by John Carroll, whom Mahan had known as a boy. Carroll reputedly sold the coin to Michael O. Smith. Smith told Farley that the coin was found in Columbus, Georgia, on Third Avenue between 5th and 6th streets buried 13 inches in an area where coins dating to the 1890's are found buried three inches deep (Farley 1994, p. 281).

Farley was told (McMenamin 1999b), in a half hour telephone conversation with Norman Totten, that Totten had been told a different story by the men with the Georgia coin. They told Totten at an Institute for the Study of American Cultures that the coins had been found in Macon, Georgia, along with three other coins. Totten noted that one of the three coins (not the coin of interest) was obviously fake. Then an unidentified man snatched up the coin of interest, saying "I'm going to wear this around my neck in a necklace." Whether this account refers to the same Georgia coin, or to another specimen, is unknown.

Coin 4—The Nebraska Coin

1993	Carthaginian Coin found in Arkansas [sic]	McGlone et al.
1994	Nebraska Coin	Farley
1999b	Coin 6	McMenamin

Composition: Base metal.

Diameter: Approximately 29-30 mm.

Mass: unknown

Die axis: Approximately 12 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: Large hole on first Σ. Same obverse die crack as Alabama coin.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣY•PA•KO•ΣC•AN. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Extremely fine, both sides. Supposedly polished for years by discoverer Delsa Knapp; now coated with nail polish.

Comments: This coin was reputedly found by Delsa Knapp in 1926 when she was a young child in central Nebraska. Knapp claimed to have found the coin in a cave on the bank of a small stream tributary to the North Platte River. The coin was recovered from a hole dug five feet deep by her brothers. After the brothers gave up, Knapp reputedly dug a few inches deeper and recovered a lump of corroded metal. She cleaned the lump over the years to reveal a specimen of the larger coin type, and coated it with nail polish to protect it (Farley 1994).

One thing that seems odd about this story is that in one photograph of the coin (Farley 1994), it appears to show only signs of ordinary wear (the coin appears to be in very fine to extremely fine condition), not heavy corrosion. An actual inspection of the coin itself would be necessary to confirm this.

The coin has a hole approximately 2.5 millimeters in diameter, the same size as the hole drilled in the Kansas specimen, but the hole is shifted (as viewed from the obverse) to the right with respect to the position of the hole in the Kansas coin.

On September 21, 1998, I asked Delsa Knapp to loan the coin for x-ray fluorescence analysis, but she refused. The coin is "almost like it's a part of me," she said, and she further stated "I'm sorry, Sir, I won't part with it."

Coin 5—The Alabama Coin

1975	Syracusean Coin	Mahan and Braithwaite
1977	Alabama Find	Totten
1980	Syracuse coin	Epstein
1980	Alabama coin	Totten
1980	Carthaginian coin	Fell
1994	The Phenix City Coin/The Alabama Coin	Farley
1999	Phoenician Copy of a coin from Syracuse	Anonymous
1999b	Coin 1	McMenamin

Composition: Base metal.

Diameter: Approximately 29-30 mm.

Mass: unknown

Die axis: Approximately 12 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: No hole. Obverse: Head and neck of goddess (Tanit?) looking left, surrounded by four dolphins. Goddess wears necklace of twelve pearls. Greek inscription in upper

right quadrant of obverse rim. Right dolphin very skinny, with a long snout. The eighth letter in the obverse inscription is shaped like a "C" formed as a broad arc. Reverse: Lively image of the head and neck of the Carthaginian horse. Horse's mouth is open. Punic inscription below. To the right, a date palm tree with fruits and five dangling roots, as if the palm tree had been uprooted. The decorative border of dots ends as it reaches the top of the palm tree; this hiatus in the dot border appears to be an intentional design omission on the part of the die engraver.

There is a distinctive oval-shaped die crack between the neckline and the lower dolphin. There are distinctive cuts and scratches (made after striking) on both sides of this coin.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣY•PA•KO•ΣC•AN. The dots in this rendering of the inscription indicate where the inscription is broken by curls of hair or other design features of the coin. Reverse: *ommhnt.*

Condition: Obverse: very fine condition. Reverse: very fine condition.

Comments: This was the first coin⁶ to be described in the literature, by Joseph B. Mahan and Douglas C. Braithwaite (1975) in the *Anthropological Journal of Canada*.

The coin was found by a small boy, whose name has not been recorded, near evocatively named Phenix City, Alabama in an open field. The boy exchanged the coin for fifteen cents worth of candy at a local grocery store. The store owners gave the coin to Dr. Preston Blackwell. Blackwell, a history professor at the University of Georgia. Blackwell carried the coin in his wallet for many years, and eventually sent photographic enlargements of the coin to the Fogg Art Museum in Boston. The curators at the Fogg responded with an identification of the coin as "Syracusan, dating from 490 BC," leading Gloria Farley and Norman Totten (1977, 1978; Farley 1994) to wonder whether the Fogg curators were basing this identification on an image of the obverse of the coin only. An attempt by Gloria Farley to locate any Fogg Museum records on the coin were not met with success.

Some time later Blackwell was hospitalized with a mild stroke (and rushed to hospitals in Montgomery and Birmingham), and while incapacitated his wallet and the coin it contained were stolen. The coin was never recovered.

Coin 6—The Connecticut Coin

1980

Connecticut coin

Totten

1980	Carthaginian coin	Fell
1994	Connecticut Coin	Farley
1999b	Coin 5	McMenamin
2000a	Farley coin	McMenamin

Composition: Base metal.

Diameter: Approximately 20-30 mm.

Mass: unknown

Die axis: Approximately 12 degrees (uncertain).

Distinguishing characteristics: No hole. Apparently has the same die crack as the Alabama, Georgia and Nebraska coins.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣΥ•ΠΑ•ΚΟ•ΣC•ΑΝ. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Obverse: low end very fine condition. Reverse: low end very fine condition.

Comments: This coin was reputedly found by Frederick J. Glastonguay of Waterbury, Connecticut. He reputedly had carried the coin around in his pocket for 20 years before sending photographs of the "somewhat worn" coin to Norman Totten in approximately 1978 (Farley 1994). Thus the coin may have been discovered around 1958 in, according to Glastonguay, a field near Waterbury. Since Glastonguay had read the article (Fleming 1978) in *Family Weekly*, and considered his coin to be a duplicate of the one illustrated in that article.

ARKANSAS TYPE

Coin 7—The Arkansas Coin (Figure 2 A-B)

1977	Ancient coin	Farley
1977	Arkansas coin	Totten
1978	Arkansas coin	Fleming
1980	Carthage coin	Epstein
1980	Arkansas coin	Totten
1980	Carthaginian coin	Fell
1994	Arkansas Coin	Farley
1998	Carthaginian Coin	Farley
1999b	Coin 2	McMenamin

Composition: Bronze.

Diameter: 30 mm; Æ 30.

Mass: 11.8 grams.

Die axis: Approximately 33 degrees.

Distinguishing characteristics: Small hole in front of upright blade-shaped leaf in goddess' hair on obverse. The hole has beveled edges as if it was drilled from both sides of the coin. Obverse: heavy corrosion; exfoliation of metal on goddess' cheek. Belly of upper dolphin convex. Curl in hair present immediately below horizontal blade shaped leaf in hair, close to goddess' temple or forehead. Distinctive scroll-shaped curl in hair immediately above ear. Coin too worn or corroded to count number of pearls in necklace, but the leftmost two or three pearls are visible. Reverse: There is what appears to be a failed hole attempt below and slightly to the right of the actual hole.

Inscription: Obverse: apparently none. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Obverse: very fine condition in point of wear; heavy corrosion. Reverse: ?weakly struck or worn die, fine to very fine in point of wear; heavy corrosion.

Comments: This is the coin described above as being found by Jessie Kelley and purchased by Farley. Based on the design elements on obverse and reverse, Totten (1977) felt that the coin must have been struck before the end of the Third Punic War (146 BC), and that the design elements were suggestive of an age of 350 BC.

This coin shows evidence of heavy surface corrosion. Totten believed the coin to be authentic and of great age because of its "patina [oxide layer] of several colors: very light green, very dark green (black to the naked eye), oxblood, and a light yellowish tan. The coin is in very fine condition in terms of wear. The coin is holed and judging from the corrosion inside the hole (Totten 1977, p. 2), was holed "close to the time the coin was struck."

Light green patinas and oxblood patinas are not necessarily indicative of great age in bronze coins. A bronze medal in my possession had slipped out of my pocket some years ago and into a green padded rocking chair in our laundry room. When my youngest daughter discovered it several years later, it had both light green oxide (verdigris) and oxblood patina. I have also seen nearly black patinas on modern coins that have been buried for decades.

Nevertheless, such patinas are often seen on coins of great age, and the light yellowish tan patina (perhaps some type of iron oxide such as limonite) would be in accord with Kelley's story of soil burial for the coin.

PENNSYLVANIA TYPE

Coin 8—The Pennsylvania Coin (Figure 3 A-B)

1980	Carthaginian coin	Fell
1994	Pennsylvania Coin	Farley
1998	Jewelry piece or ancient coin	Giedroyc
1999b	Coin 4	McMenamin

Composition: Yellow brass (copper and zinc alloy, possibly with traces of lead).

Diameter: 27 mm; Æ 27.

Mass: 8.3 grams.

Die axis: Zero

Distinguishing characteristics: This coin has a soldered-on silver loop between the first S and subsequent letters. The dotted border visible at the top of the obverse tapers out from both left and right towards the vicinity of the loop attachment site. This tapering is a result of acid etching of the coin surface during preparation for soldering on of the loop. The loop is composed of German or Nickel silver.

On the obverse there is a thin die-crack running from the venter of the lower right dolphin that crosses the goddess' neck and reaches the second pearl from the left in her necklace. The crack reemerges from the back of her neck, forming a backward-directed 'spike' near the rightmost corner of her neckline. The crack then passes between the two dolphins on the right, passing just above the upper tip of the tail of the lower of these two dolphins.

The coin is bent in the direction of the obverse next to the letters IQN . Two light tooling scratches delineate the goddess' chin from her neck.

Obverse: Two blade-shaped leaves in hair instead of three. Superb style of engraving. Triple drop earring; string of pearls around goddess' neck. The string of pearls, although now partly worn off, originally had thirteen or fourteen pearls. Reverse: no roots on palm tree. As on obverse, high style of engraving. Apparently complete set of rim border dots on original die. A single pellet appears immediately above the horse's nose.

Inscription: Obverse: $\Sigma\text{YPA}\bullet\text{KO}\bullet\Sigma\bullet\text{IQN}$. Initials AINE below lowest dolphin, with retrograde N. Reverse: *ommhnt*.

Condition: Very to extremely fine (both sides).

Comments: This coin is a unique specimen of a smaller coin type, 27 millimeters in diameter. The coin was reputedly in the possession of a Gypsy woman named Florence for years before she gave it, as she was dying, to a young girl Mini Frank (now Mini Shepherd) after telling the girl to take care of the coin because it was

"very-very-very-very-very old." The Frank family, of the Baltimore-Philadelphia Pike region of Pennsylvania, had shown great kindness to Florence after she had been abandoned by her gypsy group (Farley 1994).

The images on both sides of the coin are nearly identical to those of the more common coins of the first type, with the exceptions that the palm tree lacks dangling roots, and, most interestingly, there appears to be a partial signature beneath the lower dolphin on the obverse. The engraving on this unique coin is considerably more refined than the more common version, and the engraving of the goddess, with her regal bearing and delicate triple-drop earring, rivals the quality of the best Punic and Greek coins. The image of the horse in this coin is of similar quality.

The coin is in extremely fine condition, with moderate corrosion pitting in the smooth fields of the coin on both the obverse and reverse. The bust and the horse protome are surrounded by a zone of field that does not show corrosion pitting, in other words, there is a smooth zone that surrounds the main image on both sides of the coin like a halo. This would be consistent with a coin that had a heavy patina of toning oxides, had been subjected to mild corrosion (by, for example, soil moisture), and had subsequently been cleaned. The patina would have been heaviest near the edges of the horse and goddess head, where the patina would have been somewhat protected from frictional wear and in turn would have protected the metal of the coin below. The undisturbed patina, after being cleaned off would be responsible for the surfaces of the coin that were still smooth. This pattern of wear and light corrosion is consistent with (but does not prove) a great age for the Pennsylvania coin.

The signature below the dolphin consists of three or four Greek letters, AINE, with the last letter being uncertain but from context it must be a Greek E. This short inscription is clearly meant to portray the middle part of the signature of the Greek celator, Euainetos. This is the part of Euainetos' signature (beneath the lowest dolphin) that is most commonly and clearly preserved on Syracusan dekadrachms designed by Euainetos (Gallatin 1930).

I was able to contact Mini Shepherd in 1998 after she published a letter and a pair of photographs of the same coin (Giedroyc 1998) in a reader's advice column in the periodical *Coin World*. We struck up a correspondence and she eventually sent me the coin for archeometallurgical analysis. Some comments from her letters follow:

July 11, 1998. "I have had it for 63 years—It was put around my neck when I was 5 years old. A gypsy woman that was [abandoned] by her family—because she was sick—was taken in by my parents. She lived over 6 years with us. The doctors said she was almost 100 years old and was going to the hospital to die. She said her father put that [coin] around her neck when she was 5 years old. [Assuming that the woman was 95 when she died, the coin would have been in the possession of her Gypsy family since about 1840.] Said her mother had worn it and died then. I wore it until I got out of High School.

Had it silver plated. No jeweler could identify the metal. Said it was a kind of brass or mixture. Every coin dealer I've showed it to, said "It's tool old to be in my catalogs." Please, let me know what you think.

July 24, 1998. It's time this coin came out of the closet . . . It's in your hands now.

August 25, 1998. In answer to your question about the color/tarnish of [the] coin. Yes, it was dark and cruddy—I used every kind of cleaner and steel wool I could find. Did what ever anyone suggested—back in the 1940's and 1950's. Jewelers would put it in their cleaning solution. After the silver plating wore off—I never wore it again. Later, I used modern cleaners—before showing it to anyone—silver or copper cleaners.

Clearly the Pennsylvania coin had been harshly cleaned. This had an advantage, however, for removal of the patina made it easier to get an elemental analysis from the surface of the coin (McMenamin 1999b).

TENNESSEE TYPE

Coin 9—The Tennessee Coin (Figure 4 A-B)

1976	Reproduction of Syracuse Decadrachm
	Burke
1999b	Coin 7
	McMenamin

Composition: Silver plating over tin.

Diameter: 36 mm.

Mass: 16.5 grams.

Die axis: Zero

Condition: Very fine, both sides.

Distinguishing characteristics: Obverse: The goddess has 4-5 leaf blades in her hair, and a pearl necklace consisting of approximately 22-23 pearls. Excellent style portrait. Four dolphins with tail rings. Inscription ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ with retrograde N. Reverse: Fast quadriga, driven by Nike (?). Panoply of arms in exergue, helmet right, shield left. No inscription. The edge of the coin has reeding.

Inscription: Obverse: ΣΥ•ΡΑ•Κ•Ο•ΣΙΩΝ. The Ω is very narrow, having a shape something like an inverted Y. The N is retrograde.

Comments: The coin illustrated by Burke (1976) is not the coin described here and does not appear to be part of this coin series; apparently Burke printed a photograph of a somewhat similar coin.

This large and impressive specimen was found in Tennessee in the mid-1970's. Gloria Farley first made me aware of the existence of this coin but it took months to finally track it down. Following Farley's lead, in 1998 I became the first researcher to see this coin, when Rick Ledford of Orange, Massachusetts dropped the specimen off at my house in May 1998. Rick recalls that the coin was found by his father (Charles Sylvester Ledford) "in an unplowed field on his property in Roan Mountain, Tennessee, sometime between 1975 and 1977." The coin was buried, and Rick believes that it was found with the aid of a metal detector. Some members of the Ledford family are Mormons.

Burke correctly identified the coin as a copy of a Syracusan Dekadrachm, noting that it is much thinner than an actual specimen. Burke had no idea who created this specimen, nor any idea why it was made. It was clearly intended to mimic the Syracusan dekadrachms of the Euainetos type (Gallatin 1930), although there is no attempt at reproducing Euainetos' signature on this coin as was the case on the Pennsylvanian coin.

DISCUSSION

Like Barry Fell, I began my academic career as a (paleo)zoologist with an interest in the paleobiogeographic distributions of ancient organisms (McMenamin 1982) and later acquired an interest in epigraphy and voyages to ancient America (although I maintain an active research program in paleontology; McMenamin 1998). Thus I am in complete sympathy with Fell's interests in these subject areas and understand the motivation behind his research transition from the biogeography of animals to

the biogeography of humans. How our species distributed itself around the globe is a compelling area of research.

As I mentioned earlier, to honestly pursue this type of research one must ruthlessly scrutinize all evidence and be prepared to throw out anything that is bogus. The putative Carthaginian coins must now be removed from the body admissible evidence favoring a pre-Columbian transatlantic crossing. It gives me some chagrin to admit this, as I have earlier come out mildly in support of the authenticity of these coins (McMenamin 1999b, 2000a, 2000b). Weak evidence (involving measurements of die axis; the Arkansas coin has a die axis [33 degrees] differing from the Alabama type coins [12 to 20 degrees]) in support of the authenticity of these coins (McMenamin 2000b) is superseded by the strong evidence in the current work.

The only way that the Massachusetts coin could be a genuinely ancient American coin is via the following course of events. First, the coin would have to be preserved in a place (after having experienced very little wear) where it would be protected for several millenia from extremes of moisture and humidity. This would be necessary to explain its very smooth surfaces. Most burial environments do not satisfy this criterion. Second, the coin would have to be located (without fanfare) and thoroughly cleaned in modern times. What I have interpreted as mint luster might in fact be a retoned, cleaned surface (the shiny surface does show some polishing scratches between the two lower dolphins). Third, the coin would have to be lacquered and added to a modern coin collection. This is not too unusual as today ancient coins, modern medals and modern coin replicas are lacquered to protect their surfaces. Fourth, relatively dark toning would have to develop under the lacquer. This seems to have been the case and I am not sure how it happened regardless of whether the coin is modern or ancient. Thus it is not impossible that this is an ancient coin, it just seems very unlikely at this juncture that all four of the events outlined above could have occurred.

The 'Carthaginian' coins or Farley coins remain an interesting and largely unexplained piece of early Americana, and pose a significant exonumismatic conundrum. If the story of the Pennsylvania gypsy woman can be believed, the Pennsylvania coin may very well date back to the 1840s. Such an age would be consistent with the relatively dark toning of the Massachusetts coin (unless the toning was artificially applied).

The coins exhibit a high degree of manufacturing skill and were struck from irregular flans by someone with either intent to perpetrate a hoax or a sophisticated sense of humor (a palm tree

with roots to represent transplanted Phoenicia is actually a very good pun!).

Several of the coins (Massachusetts, Georgia, Nebraska) appear to have been coated with clear lacquer. Perhaps the dark toning of the Massachusetts coin could then be explained as 'antiquing' or artificial oxidation of the freshly struck coin before the lacquer was applied.

I own a medallion that has somewhat similar surface characteristics (artificial oxidation and a thin lacquer coat). It is struck in copper. The obverse reads "Masada" in both English and Hebrew, followed by the date "73 AD." The reverse reads "'O that my people had hearkened unto me . . . ' Psalm 81/commissioned by Dr. MORRIS CERULLO ©1975." Cerullo was an American televangelist of the 1970's. The flexible blue plastic coin holder reads on the outside reads: "THIS TRIBUTE TO MASADA COMMISSIONED BY DR. MORRIS CERULLO, COMES TO YOU IN GRATITUDE FOR YOUR PRAYERFUL SUPPORT/WORLD EVANGELISM, INC./ P. O. BOX 700, SAN DIEGO, CALIF. 92138." This message is repeated on a cardboard insert inside. A second cardboard insert reads on one side "This medallion commemorating the heroic stand of Masada's defenders against Rome in 73 A. D., was made in Israel, the copper a product of King Solomon's mines. The inscription from Psalm 81 was part of the Biblical scrolls found in the ruins of the casement walls nineteen centuries later (see reverse side for full scripture text)./Medallion made in Israel." Reverse of this cardboard insert has "'O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways. I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries'/Psalm 81". Perhaps the putative Carthaginian coins have a modern Israeli (or European?) source; futhermore they could quite plausibly have been manufactured in the 1970's (as was the Masada medallion), when the first photographs of the 'Carthaginian' coins begin to surface (Alabama coin, 1974-1975).

The anomalously pristine condition of the Nebraska coin (in light of Delsa Knapp's story of corrosion and harsh cleaning) casts serious doubt on Knapp's account. Could the lacquer coat present now on the Nebraska coin be its original surface coating? If so, what possible motive might someone have to make up an elaborate story about the burial and recovery of this coin?

Another consideration casts further doubt on the authenticity of the Tennessee coin. This coin could possibly be an electrotype made from a genuine Syracusan dekadrachm. In electrotyping, a silver shell of the obverse and reverse is made using an

electroplating process applied to a wax impression of the coin. The two shells are joined together, and are then filled with molten base metal to form a reproduction. Electrotypes of this sort were made in the 19th century AD by the British Museum and other museums (see lots 2337 and 2338 on page 245, *Classical Numismatic Group Mail Bid Sale 49, Closing Wednesday, March 17, 1999*, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and London, England). Although silver plating was accomplished in antiquity (McMenamin 1999b), whether or not the ancients were able to do electrotyping is another matter.

Why would anyone manufacture these coins and strew them helter skelter across America? Were they prizes from some long forgotten contest or favors handed out at a museum? Was someone deliberately trying to confuse the study of early American history? If so, what was the motive? Many questions remain. American exonumismatics is a fascinating area of study (McMenamin 2000c), and this particular case adds considerably to the historical interest of reproductions of ancient coins.

The Phoenicians, of course, may very well have crossed the Atlantic along with other peoples such as the Celts (McMenamin 1996a, 1996b, 1999c; Kelley 1990). But the putative Carthaginian coins (the 'Farley coins') described here may no longer be used to support the early crossing hypothesis. If I was able to locate this coin during a routine check of a local coin shop, then there are likely to be a number of other copies of this coin residing in coin stores and private collections across America. These otherwise unexceptional specimens are probably known by their owners to be fanciful (hybrid Greek and Punic) modern reproductions of ancient coins ('fantasy pieces'), but the owners may be unaware of their notorious nature and of the curious footnote these coins provide to the history of study of early America.

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Figure 1A



Figure 1B



Figure 2A

Figure 3A



Figure 2B

Figure 3A



Figure 3B



Figure 4A



Figure 4B



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