



The Franklin Mint History Of The United States, 1776-1973

Date

No Date

Primary Maker

The Franklin Mint

Medium

Silver

Description

One of collection of 200 silver medals. The 1827 medal: Beginning of the American Labor Movement Craft unions

made their appearance in the United States during the 1790's. Limited to artisans in skilled trades, these local unions frightened employers with their demands, since replacements for tailors and cordwainers (shoemakers) could not be trained overnight. But eventually the unions had to submit, as the employers resorted to court, and the common law doctrine of that day made it a crime of conspiracy for workers to organize militant ends. The American labor movement began in 1827. Where previously there had been abortive efforts by unions limited to one trade, it was not until a number of craft unions banded together that they began to make real progress in securing their demands - a ten-hour day, restriction of child labor, abolishment of imprisonment for debt and mechanics' lien laws. In June 1827, 600 journeymen carpenters went on strike in Philadelphia for a ten-hour day instead of "sun to sun." While it did not succeed, it germinated the first union of all organized workmen. During the fall other unions joined the carpenters through a central organization called that "Mechanics Union of Trade Associations." At its height it included 15 unions of bricklayers, painters, glaziers and other trades. When it tried to accomplish a workingman's party, the union declined. Nevertheless, the movement as a whole was a success. It is estimated that two-thirds of New York City's workingmen were unionized ten years later and the reasonable working conditions these first unions demanded have long since been obtained.

Dimensions

Overall: 1 3/4 in. (45 mm.)