

Basic Detail Report



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 1822 medal:
Factory Towns Begin in America Samuel Slater planted

the seeds of the factory town in New England; Francis Cabot Lodge brought them to fruition. Both were blessed with great memories that enabled the United States to break the british monopoly on textile manufacturing. Slater, a former cotton mill apprentice in England, duplicated the spinning looms from memory and Lowell later did likewise with weaving equipment. In 1814 Lowell had built a factory at Waltham, Massachusetts that combined spinning and weaving under one roof. After his premature death in 1817, a new corporation, the Marrimack Manufacturing Company, was organized by his partners in December, 1821. A factory town, named Lowell, was built near the junction of the Concord and Merrimack Rivers in 1822. Dormitories were added, each under the control of a respectful matron where girls from the countryside were boarded. Control was strict, and the hours were from sunrise to sundown, but each of the young ladies made an average of \$3.50 a week, in a day when women had few financial rights. This may not sound like a munificent sum, but eggs (for example) were then only 10 cents a dozen and, in a few years, a tidy dowry could be saved and many girls returned home to marry. No one was indentured for life and many European visitors, familiar with the degraded conditions in European company towns, viewed the Lowell girls as the sociological wonder of their day. And they were. But after 1845 the system declined. Immigrants were employed and factory towns were no longer paternal; lower wages, longer hours of work and indebtedness to the company store became a routine that continued in some areas, particularly coal mining towns, into the 20th century.

Dimensions

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