

Historical Information on the Piedfort

The Piedfort is an old European tradition, dating from the late 13th century in Bohemia. According to recent "encyclopedic dictionaries" by Richard Doty and R. Scott Carlson, other early minters of these special productions included Germany, France and England.

The Piedfort, French for "strong foot," is a special minted coin or medal on an unusually thick planchet, usually twice the thickness of the normal issue. Varied reasons for piedforts have been advanced with the most accepted reason being to show examples of an engraver's work or to provide added thickness for striking ultra-high relief coins.

France started producing modern day piedforts of its circulating coins in 1967 and continued such offerings regularly through the 1970s. In the 1980s, Carlson notes, there was an upsurge in popularity of piedforts among collectors. France offered piedforts of the silver 100-franc commemorative for the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty. In addition to piedforts being double thick, split piedforts have been minted with two planchets and in precious metals. European countries and the US Mint has minted its own piedforts with various packaged sets, reverse proof coins and other exotic numismatic issues to the cheers of many collectors.