



African Americans on U.S. Currency & Numismatic Materials: Coins and Medals

Sherrod N. Gresham

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This book was written for the purpose of informing the reader about African Americans on U.S. Currency and Numismatic Materials: Coins and Medals. The definition of Numismatics is the scientific analysis and study of money and the uses to which people have put money throughout history. When coin collectors use the word numismatics, though, they generally mean the study of coins in particular. A wider and more correct definition includes the study and collecting of all money-related items such as banknotes, tokens, medals, bullion rounds, etc. As any devoted numismatist will attest, our coins, medals and U.S. paper money are tied to the American story, from the earliest colonial times to the birth of the United States, through the great gold and silver debates dominating American politics for much of the 19th century, and during generations of war and peace, prosperity and depression. This book looks at African Americans' contribution to American history on U.S. currency, coins and medals. The depiction of slaves on confederate currency, and Southern States currency is a message of how the labor of enslaved Africans helped build the foundation of the United States' economy. Blanche K. Bruce and Judson W. Lyons signed U.S. currency during reconstruction. Bishop William T. Vernon and James C. Napier signed U.S. currency during the Jim Crow era. Isaac Hathaway was chosen as the designer of the Booker T. Washington silver half dollar coin and the George Washington Carver silver half dollar coin thus becoming the first African-American to design a U.S. coin. The Honorable Azie Taylor Morton was the first African American U.S. Treasurer. She was appointed by President Jimmy Carter and signed U.S. currency from 1977-1981. This book focuses on stories of these people of color whom we are not aware of in American history. Their stories are told and shown here so we never forget the importance of their lives and their contribution to history. I hope this book will encourage and inspire the reader to collect the rich African American heritage available through U.S. currency, coins and medals. WHEN YOU KNOW YOUR HERITAGE... YOU KNOW HOW GREAT YOU ARE...

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