

An Old British Coin's Story

I am just an old flat copper disc. Someone said I am about an inch and an eighth across. That same someone said I am worn, dingy, and downright homely. Naturally I cannot see myself unless I can roll myself up nearer to that shiny thing that those creatures called people use to make themselves know how beautiful they are. Here is one on this table. Now I'm close enough so I can describe my features. I really have become worn through all of my hard years. I can see GEO II and the homely head of a man. They tell me that means that I was made during the reign of British King George the second between 1727 and 1760. I flip over and see something like a statue and a date I cannot read. I might be called a penny or a farthing. I do not know because there is nothing on me that tells. I'm now in a collection of historic objects here in Stone Arabia. How did I get here? Years ago a guy called Skip was walking over a historic piece of ground near where old Fort Ehle once stood. On a barge flat piece of bedrock I just laid there in plain sight. Skip picked me up and carried me home. I was and am worn and tarnished. Just how I got there will never be known.

Some possibilities can filter through the mists of time. This site is near old Fort Ehle, part of which was erected in the seventeen twenties. A longer and more formal section was built in 1752. Both of these lie within the period I was minted. Did some workman on this ancient building drip me? Near here was Ehle's ford, a shallow place in the Mohawk River where once the pageant of time allowed the settlers to cross from one side to the other. If we could have watched that procession it would have been of ox carts, farm wagons, riders mounted on horseback or on foot. Bateau men stopping on their way east or west could have dropped me.

Could some Stone Arabia settlers on October 19, 1780, as their life's work was consumed by flames have let me slip from their frightened grasp? I know they were bound for the fort at Fort Plain in an attempt to save the lives of their families. Those flames were started by raiders who were yet loyal to England where I was made. Those whose paths crossed this piece of the Mohawk Valley are so mingled with old Palatines history that an old coin like me can only guess who they were. Peace and war were both intermingled as footsteps passed my long time resting place. I am really honored because I'm being put into a frame and know I'll be hung in a place where the passersby of the 21st century can see me. Could I ask for more? I'm now being given to a lady named Janine whose ancestors were members of the Ehle family. Janine my destiny is now in your hands.

Skip Barshied

Stone Arabia

December 2011