

ANTIQUE COLLECTIBLES

Numeral Chips and New Finds

by Dale Seymour and Ken Craig

Numeral Chips

One hundred years ago, poker players could order chips from a variety of catalogs, as they can today. Chips were for home games and the choice of designs was greater then than it is today. These composition (clay) chips were available plain, with no design, or customers could choose from various pictures or geometric designs.

Most chips came in the colors white, red and blue. Players assigned numerical values to the different colors depending on the level of the game. For this reason, it was not necessary for numerical values to appear on most chips as they do on our casino chips today.

Some of the card players in the 1900's must have preferred chips with numerals on them over the chips containing pictures or designs. Numeral chips were available in a variety of manufacturing styles: engraved, embossed, inlaid and Crest and Seal. The most common denominations were 5, 25, 50 and 100, although chips have been found with many different numerals. Some of these unusual denominations were used for debt markers or for games other than poker.

Selected chips shown on the following pages show a sampling of the more than 1,000 different numeral chips collectors have found that were made in the period 1890-1940. The engraved numeral chips shown on this page are more than 100 years old. This design seems to be the favorite of antique numeral chip collectors.



Selected samples of numeral 5 chips



Selected samples of numeral chips



Selected samples of numeral chips



Collector News and New Finds

It has been quite a while since this column last appeared so there has been an accumulation of new finds. A few of the new finds that were submitted were not of sufficient quality to reproduce clearly here. Hopefully, they can be shown in a later issue if better copies are submitted.

Activity on ebay with mother-of-pearl counters has increased with the appearance of a beautifully designed newsletter by British collector, Matthew Silverstone. Silverstone's newsletters are very informative regarding the history of English mother-of-pearl gaming counters. There is a wide range in the quality and desirability of English counters. Ones that bear family crests or coats of arms are the most collectible. Chips belonging to King George III and Queen Charlotte have been bringing as much as \$500 each. The website is www.oldtimegaming.co.uk.

In the past year, there have been more new finds of ivory poker chips than of the lesser-valued composition or clay chips. New codes assigned to these chips are shown on the following pages. Credit for these finds include: Bud Meyer, Jim Myers, Stan Wilker, Ralph Strandwold, Al Kleindienst, Michael Whaley, Fred Krick, Roy Klein, Nancy Olson, Luke Rapley and Jim Garrard. Chip codes are from the book, *Antique Gambling Chips*.

New Clay Codes



**PA-FG Elephant Head
Engraved / v:g
(celluloid)**



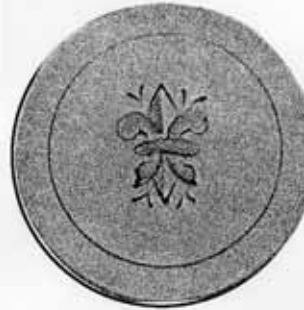
**PA-FQ Elephant
Engraved / v:g**



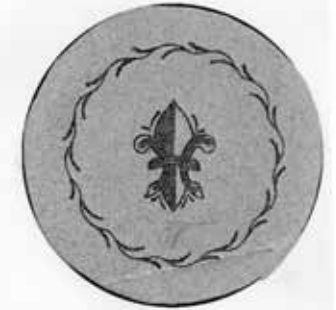
**PA-KX Horse Head
Engraved / v:g**



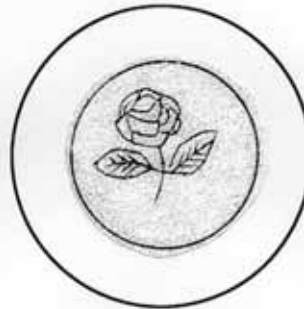
**PB-OC Owl
Engraved / v:f**



**PD-GN Fleur-de-lis
Engraved / v:f**



**PD-GO Fleur-de-lis
Engraved / v:g**



**PL-FS Rose
Engraved / v:g**



**PL-GD Rose
Engraved / v:f**



**PL-MD Maple Leaf
Engraved / v:f**



**PS-SM Horseshoe
Variation Example**



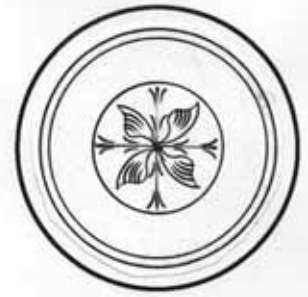
PS-UM Horseshoe
Engraved / v:e



PW-MZ Cross
Inlaid / v:f



ID-YY Four Leaves
v:k



ID-ZS Four Leaves
v:k



PY-EF Fireman's Fund
Stamped / v:f



ID-AY Bird on Nest
v:q



ID-ZW Four Leaves
v:k



IE-AM Four Leaves
v:k



ID-PG Star
v:l



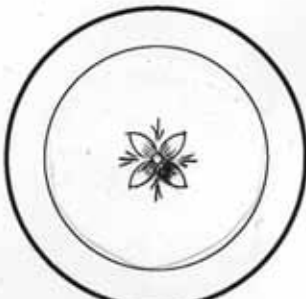
ID-PI Star
old code (better graphic)



IE-CUa Straws
v:k



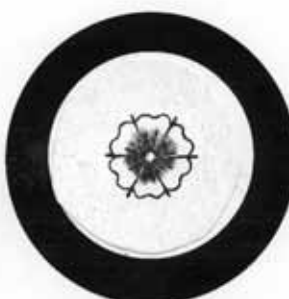
IE-EVa Mirror Leaves
v:l



ID-TS Four Petals
v:k



ID-WL Four Leaves
v:k



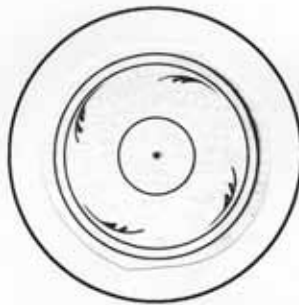
IE-OWb Blossom
v:k



IE-TPa Flower
v:k



IE-YA Tulip
v:l



IF-CD Four Twigs
v:k



IO-KU
v:m



IP-ML
v:m



IM-CC
CCU / v:n



IM-CC
reverse



IZ-LP
Twenty-Five
(recent creation?)



IZ-LP
reverse



IM-CD
CCU / v:o



IM-CD
reverse



IM-ICa
v:l



IN-UH
v:l

Send new chip finds and inquiries on antique gambling chips to:
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