

Recollections on the Value of a Penny

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*Find a penny, pick it up. Then all day, you'll have
good luck.*

—*Origins unknown*

Home!

There's magic in that little word.¹

—*Anonymous*

As it turned out, the weather gods smiled on that snowy autumn morning in 2016; despite the flurries, my father left Gjoa Haven. We were relieved to learn that the turboprop plane to Yellowknife had lifted off, more or less on schedule, from the airport's frozen packed-dirt runway. It was the first flight of his two-day journey home. From Yellowknife, another flight, and a night in Winnipeg; he arrived the next day in Vancouver. Airplanes are the lifeline between Nunavut and the outside world. There are no roads or railways in. Everything—passengers, groceries, mail, cargo—moves by air. The harbor hamlet of Gjoa Haven,



Thomas Ward and Co., *Christian Melodies* (1836), paper and fabric, 110 x 73 x 15 mm, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. Retrieved from www.collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/2192.html. Accessed Nov. 21, 2020.

¹ The excerpt is part of a verse printed on the title page of *Christian Melodies*, published by Thomas Ward & Co., London, in 1836. This cloth-bound book was found in an abandoned boat at Erebus Bay, King William Island, by a Franklin Expedition search party in 1859. A variation of the quote is attributed to British poet Robert Southey (1774–1843).

the only permanent settlement on King William Island, is separated from the mainland by Simpson Strait: access is by plane, or by barge when the ice finally clears in September. My father is a veteran of northern travel, having worked in remote communities for more than fifty years, and he is philosophical about its vagaries. At the end of this particular contract, my father returned with his suitcases full of dental instruments and left-over supplies. But he also brought back two old copper coins, carefully packed among his clothes. When I learned what he had, the collector that I used to be, long-dormant, fluttered with anticipation.

From: Malcolm Crozier
Sent: October 6, 2016 8:36 AM
To: Joanne; Melanie; Jen; John Crozier
Subject: Old coins

Hello everyone,

I am in Gjoa Haven on King William Island. Yesterday a friend, a Scotsman who has lived here for 45 years, gave me a present. He came to the office for dental treatment and said he would like to give me something, as they would be thrown away when he dies. He gave me two coins. One was an English 1858 young Queen Victoria penny. The second was a 1792 Scottish halfpenny.

He had found them on the western side of the island.

Love to all, Dad

* * *

LOOKING BACK, I BELIEVE that I have collected things all my life, in different ways and for different reasons. As a child, shelves laden with treasures lined my bedroom. Thimbles, clothespin dolls, Avon perfume pins.... As soon as I had more than two of each, it became an active collection. Tropical seashells beachcombed in Maui sang their siren song with exotic colors, patterns, and textures. Purple sea urchin exoskeletons—delicate yet miraculously



The author's thimbles and coins

intact—were feather-light. A glossy leopard-spotted *Cypraea tigris* barely fit into my cupped hand. The crenellated crown of a Striated Cone reminded me of Thumbelina's tiny tiara. Porcelain thimbles from my Welsh grandmother stood in their own miniature display cabinet. The oldest one, decorated with floral garlands and *Home Sweet Home*, now feels tight on the end of my sewing finger. My parents and their friends contributed international costume dolls from their travels; a dashing Spanish couple danced the flamenco, flanked by a Dutch doll in wooden clogs, and a little Welsh girl wearing the traditional tall black hat. A delicious line-up of Bonnie Bell Lip Smackers—with flavors like peppermint, piña colada, and root beer—edged the dresser. One desk drawer held small cardboard boxes of coins, my least visible but most intriguing collection. Lying in my basement bedroom on dark winter nights, with my parents and younger sisters sleeping above, I'd nod off to the sounds of creaking walls and the *click-click* of the baseboard heater. My things, signs of a vast, fascinating world beyond the outskirts of our small northern town, formed a magic circle around my bed.

That young magpie grew up and flew the nest, no longer attracted to shiny things. Excessive stuff has become a tiresome burden in my already-complex life. Now I try to collect only the immaterial—thoughts, ideas, recollections, bits of conversation—saving them in digital notebooks for future use; “words, these are the only things that I like to collect. They do not weigh me

down.”² And yet, I still want to connect with the tangible objects that bring back memories of family, home, and the days of freedom preceding the pandemic. These are stressful, uncertain times. In the room where I work, my little thimble cabinet and a jar of old coins watch from atop the bookcase as my life shrinks, for now, into this one space where I write, teach, meet, study, and reminisce. Emotionally bolstered by their presence, I take shelter in this place.

* * *

THE OBJECTS THAT WE IMBUE WITH MEANING—the things that evoke special memories—are anchors that hold us in place as the currents of modern living swirl around our roots, threatening to erode our identities. These material traces of the past tell our stories and define who we are. But how do we create a sense of order from the possessions we are passionate about and the emotions they evoke? Some people choose to collect, and by doing so they control the chaos through curation. Desired items are acquired, organized, and presented according to a personal rationale. In retrospect, I think that my childhood inclination for collecting was a signpost for my future career as an interior designer. There is a natural affinity between the personal environment and the curation of meaningful objects, as I have appreciated in the homes of my friends and family who collect: Green Depression glassware in my mother’s sideboard; a cousin’s Spider-Man comics filed in cabinet drawers; white vintage pitchers displayed in my friend’s kitchen. Another friend, renting a small apartment, owns a harpsichord in addition to his clarinets, lutes and guitars. Philosopher Walter Benjamin’s passion for books is apparent in his 1931 essay “Unpacking My Library.” As he pulls his beloved volumes out of boxes after two years in storage, he shares a feeling of anticipation that borders on euphoria. The reunion couldn’t be any happier than if he were greeting an old friend after a long absence. My husband is, like Benjamin, one of those who collect “with a tactical instinct; their experience teaches them that when they capture a strange city, the smallest antique shop can be a fortress, the most remote stationary store a key position. How many cities have revealed themselves to me in the marches I undertook in

² Adrienne Angelo, “Taking Stock: Marie Nimier’s Textual Cabinet of Curiosities,” *Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature* 38, no. 2 (2014): 13. doi.org/10.4148/2334-4415.1020.

the pursuit of books!³ His latest woodworking project—full-height bookcases—will consume him until they are complete. Then the piles of world war history books, presently stacked around our home, can muster permanently in his study.

My father, on the other hand, is an accumulator rather than a collector. I detect no pattern in how he orders his possessions. He has always blamed his busy work schedule, saying he will have time to organize when he retires. My father is 79 years old. I admit to occasionally poking around in his basement crawl



1858 Queen Victoria penny and 1792 Scottish halfpenny

space while he is traveling up north, in hopes that some forgotten object from our Manitoba past will have mysteriously shaken loose from its surroundings to rouse a memory that I can take home. The metal steamer trunks that accompanied my parents on their migration from Liverpool now hold childhood toys, but they remain hidden behind boxes of files, dental supplies, Christmas decorations, and, for the winter, the sails off our boat. Inuit art from my father's Arctic visits is scattered around the house. Soapstone carved animals, framed drawings, quilted wall hangings.... Some were gifts from patients, but most he bought from the artists. His quiet basement office is, to me, the most engaging room, the room that best defines him. Bookshelves bow under the weight of biographies of Royal Navy leaders and explorers; tomes on British history; dentistry texts; hardcover classics from his grammar school days; books about sailing; family photos; Inuit carvings. Now he has the old pennies, reposing on green felt in an oakwood box made by a family friend and engraved with the words "Arctic Artifacts." A curio cabinet might look slightly old-fashioned in his Westcoast Modern home, but I might recommend one just the same, to safeguard the fragile soapstone pieces and the box holding two pennies, that are at risk of disappearing among the books.

³ Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library". In *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 63.

Frans Francken the Younger (1581-1642), *Chamber of Art and Curiosities* (1636), oil on panel, 34" x 47", Museum of Fine Art, Vienna. *Wikimedia Commons*.
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frans_Francken_\(II\),_Kunst-_und_Rarit%C3%A4tenkammer_\(1636\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frans_Francken_(II),_Kunst-_und_Rarit%C3%A4tenkammer_(1636).jpg). Accessed 21 Nov. 2020.



THE MODERN CONCEPT OF COLLECTING is a product of the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Exploration, transformative periods of discovery and learning in Europe. Rooms, or sometimes only cabinets, displaying curios from science, art, and nature began to appear in 16th century homes. In 1735, Carl Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* became the first hierarchical classification system that is still in use today. Classification, or taxonomy, is integral to the organization of a collection. Aristocratic sons sent to Italy on their Grand Tours, an essential element of every nobleman's liberal education, would return with precious books, art, and antiquities to display in the family's town or country house. Railway expansion during the Industrial Revolution transformed the Grand Tour into a less-exclusive excursion. Mechanization made it possible for the newly prosperous lower classes to buy more decorative objects for the home. A desire to collect and to live amongst "treasures" like the upper class led many to purchase mass-produced collectibles. Others sought the novelty of exotic goods brought home by the European explorers infiltrating ever deeper into the New World.

From: Malcolm Crozier
Sent: October 7, 2016 9:18 PM
To: Joanne; Melanie; Jen; John Crozier
Subject: Re: Old coins

Hi Joanne,

Yes, I heard the news. There is some excitement here but the locals are mostly bemused, since they have known about the locations of the wrecks for years. The HMS Terror—the ship

captained by Francis Crozier—was found in a bay on the western side of King William Island a few weeks ago. My Scottish friend was a sailor; he visited Pitcairn Island of *Mutiny on the Bounty* fame and travelled many parts of the world. He settled here and married a local Inuit woman, but sadly his wife died aged 45. I had told him about the book *Last Man Standing?* on Francis Crozier that Uncle John found while researching our family history.

He knew most of the details already. He has spent the past 20 years looking for evidence of the Franklin Expedition.

Love, Dad

* * *

THE HISTORY OF THE GJOA HAVEN pennies began a new chapter when they joined our family. My father was touched by the gift; the Scotsman had no heirs, and my father was honored to accept the coins. For thirty-five years, my father practiced dentistry in and around our northern Manitoba town; now he flies from Vancouver to High Arctic settlements. The places he visits are so remote that they are off the radar for most Canadians—places such as Gjoa Haven (*Uqsuqtuuk*, the “place of much fat” in Inuktitut), located just above the 68° north latitude. The English name was derived from the Norwegian *Gjøahavn*, as it was called by polar explorer Roald Amundsen. From 1903 to 1905, his ship, the *Gjøa*, remained locked in harbor ice during his attempt to transit the Northwest Passage; Amundsen was the first European to successfully complete the voyage in 1906. The pennies, to my



“Gjoa Haven,” retrieved from www.travelnunavut.ca/regions-of-nunavut/communities/gjoa-haven. Accessed Nov. 21, 2020.

father, are mementos of the Scotsman and Gjoa Haven. If my siblings and I inherit them, we will remember our father and his love for northern Canada. What makes me sad about this story, however, is that today, just four years later, my father no longer remembers the Scotsman's name. One day, no one will remember my father.

* * *

JUST AS MY FATHER'S OLD PENNIES will always remind him of the north, my coin collection reminds me of people I have loved, places I have visited, and significant events in my lifetime. The intricately detailed five-shilling piece—a gift from my grandmother for my first Christmas—still rests on cotton batt in the cardboard box that she inscribed. I inherited, from my cycling enthusiast stepfather, a Canadian ten-dollar coin, engraved with penny-farthing bicycles to celebrate the Montreal Olympics. With the Charles and Diana commemorative crown, I remember my sisters and I waking at 4 a.m. Manitoba time to watch the royal wedding, spellbound by the sparkling celebrity princess but blissfully unaware of how that fairy tale would end.

I can pinpoint exactly how my collection started: with a chance discovery. We had just moved into our new home; my toys were still boxed. Bored, I wandered into the dark child-sized space under the stairs, where a lustrous Calgary commemorative silver dollar, still sealed in its black clamshell case, lay forgotten. Old British coins followed: During family visits to England, I often came across shillings engraved with the profiles of Edward VII and the Georges (surprisingly common even after Decimal Day in 1971). My parents brought home pesetas, liras, and guilders, along with the costume dolls, when they traveled. My attention soon turned to Canadian coins, because they were the easiest to find. I would visit the bank and exchange bills for rolls of coins to search, but secret raids on my father's change jar were so much easier. Supplemented every evening when he returned from work, the jar surrendered more than a few captives to my collection. I would spill its contents onto my parents' bed and rake the cool coins apart with my fingers, sorting the copper from the silver. On a good day, I might find one, or even two, missing dates. There was no shortage of change around our house then. Loose pennies seemed to multiply under the sofa cushions, at the backs of drawers, in the car's glove compartment. My father's pockets spilled coins on the closet floor when he hung up his

trousers. A clay canister labeled “Kisses” held my mother’s stash of quarters. Pennies piled up in my piggy bank. On Saturdays, we spent our allowances at “Pops,” the local corner store, where one cent bought us five penny candies—spearmint leaves, blue whales, gumballs—in a paper bag. We were fortunate. My father and his brothers, as children growing up in a working-class neighborhood of Liverpool, would each find an orange and a tuppence in their Christmas stockings, just enough to buy a beloved *Beano* comic, but no sweets, owing to postwar rationing.

* * *

A COLLECTION IS INHERENTLY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IN NATURE. Its parameters are personal: what objects are sought, how they are acquired, and the methods used to organize or display them, to name just a few. The objective what-when-where of my own collection is clear, but the “why” remains ambiguous: Why was I attracted to coins? The murky depths of subjectivity often obscure the reason, or the compulsion, to collect certain objects. If asked *Why do you collect ‘X’*, each collector’s answer is unique (that is, if they have an answer). Belk⁴ categorized those who collect mass-produced objects as either taxonomic (pursuing a series of similar items like coins or stamps) or aesthetic collectors who are guided by personal preference. There is passion (even obsession) for the sought-after objects. Collectors commonly pull their collectibles out of active service, enclosing “the particular item within a magic circle, where, as a last shudder runs through it (the shudder of being acquired), it turns to stone.”⁵ An object added to a collection gains newfound security; whether it remains or moves to another collection, its future as a collectible is almost certainly assured. Sneakerheads are contemporary collectors who acquire new sneakers for display only, because wear would decrease their value. Sucrologists collect sugar packets from restaurants but keep

⁴ R. W. Belk, *Collecting in a Consumer Society* (London: Routledge, 1995), 45. Retrieved from www-taylorfrancis-com.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/books/collecting-consumer-society-russell-belk/10.4324/9780203167311. Accessed Nov 21, 2020.

⁵ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999), 205. Retrieved from blogs.commonsgorjorgetown.edu/modernities-working-group/files/2013/07/benjamin_the-collector.pdf. Accessed Nov. 21, 2020.

the paper items intact. Action figures or Barbie dolls maintained in their original packaging are not for play. From books to butterflies, back scratchers to banana stickers, the range of things that people will collect is truly fascinating, often surprising, and occasionally bizarre, but no single object type is more personally gratifying than any other.

* * *

EATON'S LONELY COIN AND STAMP KIOSK, high up in the landmark Winnipeg department store (demolished in 2002), drew me like a moth to the flame whenever my family visited the city. Conveniently adjacent to the toy department, where I could leave my sisters, the kiosk's counters supported the weight of my elbows as I practically pressed my nose to the glass, hypnotized by the metallic riches below. A new *Charlton Coin Guide* and a collector's binder joined us for the eight-hour drive north, back to home. I felt such satisfaction every time I could slot a coin into one of the binder's tiny plastic pockets. The pages slowly filled, first with pennies, then nickels, dimes, and upwards to the silver dollars (the fifty-year-old "Coureur Des Bois" design was replaced by the "Loonie" in 1986, but by then I had stopped collecting). In the peace of my basement bedroom, alone but not lonely because I could hear my family thundering around the kitchen over my head, I studied the coins and the guide. Collections have their own narratives, separate from those of their owners, and each object plays a part. As I read about the evolution of Canadian coins by way of terminology, shape, size, metal, and decoration, the pieces began to fall into place. The one-cent coin, for example, is commonly known as a penny in English Canada, thanks to the British monetary system used before Confederation. The same coin in Quebec is named a *cent*, from the French word for one hundred. I appreciated the unity in the similarities of each denomination and noticed their differences, like the evolution of the Canadian "large" cent in use since 1858 to a more economical size in 1920. *Charlton's* buying prices intrigued me because they were based on many factors, such as mintage numbers, design anomalies, metal content, and the coin's grade or condition.

From: Bill McLaren
Sent: October 8, 2016 2:21 PM

To: Malcolm Crozier; Joanne Crozier
Subject: Re: Question about old British coins

Hello Malcolm and Joanne,

Let's take the easy one first. The Queen Victoria coin from 1858, if copper, is a genuine English coin. If the condition is worn to the point of no date showing, it is essentially worth nothing. Next, the 1792 piece was made to be used in Edinburgh. But they made a good many thousand of the coins so they are common. If in Very Fine condition, it's worth roughly \$15. I'm always interested to see what others find; regretfully you will not get rich on these.

Cheers, Bill

* * *

DESPITE THE ORDINARINESS OF CURRENCY (from the Latin *currens*, "current, or to run"), coins are one of the few cultural common denominators that Canadians appreciate regardless of background, community, or region. Coins unite the country. The "tails" sides show images of nature—beavers, loons, maple leaves—that are common across the nation. The polar bear and caribou, featured on the two-dollar coin and 25-cent piece, respectively, represent the remote Canadian north. The celebrated schooner *Bluenose* is an exception among the natural images on Canadian coins. Although the boat was built in Nova Scotia, its presence on the dime celebrates Canada's sinuous coastline, which borders three oceans, as well as our rich maritime history. With fascinating stories like these, coins appealed visually and emotionally to my Anglo-Canadian heritage: the monarch's likeness on the "heads" side, and a Canadian icon on the flip side. Holding an old penny inspired my imaginings of past generations who had once saved and spent it, even cherished it as I did. Mystery and wonder surround my father's old pennies, and yet the market value is low. But the coins' memorable story will ensure their place in Crozier family lore.

From: Rick Dansereau
Sent: October 30, 2016 7:25 AM
To: Crozier, Joanne
Subject: Re: Franklin pennies

Hi Joanne,

The box is made from oak, it is one piece and took forever to getting the finish I wanted. I'm glad you like the box; it is a memorial for these coins from such an auspicious historical event. One of the coins is a token - I sent a document with the box to explain.

All the best, Rick

* * *

COINS MAY IMPASSIVELY WITNESS our human events, but the memories associated with their dates can bring the past back to life. A 1941 George VI penny on my desk was minted in the year that both of my parents were born, during the Liverpool Blitz. They gave me an uncirculated set of centennial coins for my twelfth birthday in 1979, to commemorate my Centennial Baby status. The last coins in my binder are dated 1980. I turned thirteen that autumn, shortly after moving into a girls' boarding school in Winnipeg. Here I grew up, in a new city, with new friends but without my collections. My collections waited, frozen in time, for my return. I can still remember traveling home for the holidays and the elation I felt, stepping off the bus to find my parents waiting. Our car would pull into the driveway. I would rush downstairs with my bags and flip on the bedroom light...there were my things, just as I had left them.

My youngest sister recently confessed that whenever I returned to school, she'd sneak into my room to look at my collections, play with the dolls, smell the Lip Smackers...partly out of curiosity, but also to feel connected with me during my absence. She was eight years old when I first moved to Winnipeg. By the time I turned fourteen or so, my desire to collect had faded. If an unusual coin crossed my path, I set it aside, but the binder stayed at home. Ten years later, my mother moved out. When my father eventually sold our family home, my collections disappeared for the next three decades. I didn't miss them. He bought a house in

Vancouver, not far from where I live now. For reasons unknown to me, he shipped almost everything from Manitoba to British Columbia, including all of our childhood belongings, instead of using the move as an opportunity to pare back. For my father, owning a dental practice was a seven-day-per-week commitment. He was alone. It is possible that, for him, the sorting was just one more onerous chore that he could postpone until retirement: that is what I suspect. But what I would like to believe is that my father found it too painful to dispose of his family's possessions.

* * *

PRECISELY WHEN THE PENNY became a nuisance, I can't be sure. I stopped picking up lucky pennies long before the coin was phased out. I will even confess to



Evolution of Canadian one-cent piece: 1858, 1920, 2012

vacuuming up more than a few while cleaning under my car seats. Pennies have not changed physically since the design of the 1920 small cent, but the purchasing power of currency decreases every year: A penny candy, today, costs a nickel. When the cost to produce a Canadian one-cent piece rose above its value in 2012, the Royal Canadian Mint ended their production. Coins are inconvenient to carry, which partly explains why so many end up in change jars like my father's. But people are also reassured by the metallic materiality of coins; they have intrinsic value and feel permanent compared with paper money or digital currencies. Once, for a brief period of thirty years or so, I possessed a Roman coin that my grandfather had picked up in North Africa during his war service. Bigger than a nickel, but smaller than a quarter, it felt substantial; it was heavy and thick. I remember the irregular shape. Maybe it used to be round, but two millennia of existence had worn down the edges. The coin vanished one afternoon along with my jewelry, when I ran out for milk and left the balcony door unlocked. I hope, albeit grudgingly, that it lives in a safer home now than mine was then.

* * *



Five-shilling piece

MY FATHER WAS ALMOST SIXTY when he migrated west to Vancouver, ready to carry on working. Instead of practicing locally, he takes contracts in Nunavut, flying into small communities for a few weeks at a time. In between trips, he spends time

at home cleaning out the basement, gradually chipping away at the mass of boxes brought from Manitoba. When he asked me what possessions I wanted to keep, I retrieved my coins. The binder still has its original Eaton's price tag for ten dollars and eighty cents (the T. Eaton Company no longer exists, despite its venerable Canadian history). Like Benjamin unpacking his books, I felt the excitement of a child on Christmas morning as I opened the binder and tiny boxes. There were my favorites, the coins that I couldn't wait to see again, like my grandmother's heavy five-shilling piece. Others instantly reminded me of their origins. But many coins sparked no recollections at all; they were interesting, but not exciting, to see. It is probably time to cull my coins. Decimalization outmoded the British shilling; pesetas, liras, and guilders were replaced by the Euro in 2002. And not everything we own or inherit can have personal meaning. But I don't know what to do with them.

* * *

THE WHOLE IS WORTH MORE than the sum of its parts when a collection tells a story. In 2017, I visited the British National Maritime Museum's exhibition "Franklin: Death in the Ice." Sir John Franklin had left England in 1845 with two naval vessels to search for the Northwest Passage. After three years, neither ship had returned. Search parties, dispatched to the area now known as the Canadian Arctic, found only traces of the expedition. Parks Canada located the wrecks of *Erebus* and *Terror* near King William Island in 2014 and 2016. Relics and remains, gradually scattered over the polar barrens by natural causes, are still being recovered today. The Greenwich museum was the first to display the artifacts recently taken from the wrecks. Clearly, the expedition's tragic failure was the product of 19th century imperial over-ambition and cultural arrogance. But for me, the collection told the tales of one hundred twenty-nine men—sons and brothers, husbands and fathers—who

slowly perished on the ice, bereft of hope, thousands of miles from home. Some artifacts were common domestic objects: porcelain dishes, a hairbrush, one woolen mitten. Their personal and unheroic nature amplified the pathos of the experience.

From: John Crozier
Sent: November 2, 2016 3:03 AM
To: Malcolm Crozier; Joanne; Melanie; Jen
Subject: Re: Old coins

Hi Mal,

What a coincidence! After getting together and talking about Francis Crozier, your friend turns up with the coins. He sounds the sort of chap you could sit and have a few beers with. He must have some tales to tell. Is there a map of the area to mark out where he found the coins? It might be of use to the charitable Arctic Research Foundation, the group heading up the search for the Franklin Expedition.

Love to all, John

* * *

THE SCOTSMAN'S PENNIES may never join my small collection. In fact, I hope they do not, because I believe they are part of a wider sociocultural and historical context that extends far beyond my family. Based on the coins' dates, according to my father's Scottish friend, the 1792 halfpenny could have been lost by one of Franklin's men. The Queen Victoria penny was probably dropped by a rescuer. If this theory is correct, I hope to see the coins housed with the other expedition relics.

* * *

IN THE END, perhaps a collection is a defiant *Memento Mei!* shouted by those of us who accept mortality, but not the "Last scene of all, / That ends this strange eventful history, /... mere

Confluence

oblivion.”⁶ The lifespan of an object can far exceed its owner’s existence; the evidence is my lost Roman coin, or my father’s Gjoa Haven pennies. When he is gone, when I am gone, what is left for those who loved us will be memories, slowly fading over time, and the things that our family might cherish, such as two old copper pennies and a binder of coins.

⁶ William Shakespeare, “As You Like It”. *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1974), 382.