

# NUMISMATIC SECTION

By Serge Huard, numismatist and exonomist

## THE 1993-1997 COINAGE-OF-TRADITION OF THE KINGDOM OF ARAUCANIA-PATAGONIA



Founded in 1860, the Kingdom of Araucania-Patagonia is the first and only modern state established by the natives of the Americas. This independent kingdom enjoyed international recognition for a number of years, but ultimately was absorbed by the neighboring Republics of Chile and Argentina.

The indigenous people of Araucania and Patagonia are Mapuche. A fiercely independent and highly developed people, they successfully repelled the territorial incursions of the Spanish Empire and of the Republic of Chile and Argentina for nearly 400 years.

Orélie-Antoine de Tounens, a French lawyer appeared on the Araucanian stage during a crucial junction in Mapuche history. Arriving in Chile in 1858, Orélie-Antoine travelled south into Araucania and settled among the Mapuche. In 1860, he was elected their king and began to confederate surrounding tribes, forming in the process the Kingdom of Araucania-Patagonia. The Mapuche were aware that their continued independence depended upon becoming a modern state. Orélie-Antoine de Tounens and the Kingdom of Araucania-Patagonia offered them this opportunity.



In 1862, Chilean troops entered Araucania and captured King Orélie-Antoine I, took him to Chile and put him on trial. The King defended himself in a court which had no jurisdiction over him or over Araucania. He was convicted of no crime, but was deported to France against his wishes. King Orélie-Antoine I spent the rest of his life mounting expeditions to reclaim his kingdom and to reassert the sovereignty and independence of the Mapuche. He died, in exile, in 1878, having passed the torch of Mapuche independence to his lieutenant, Gustave Achille Laviarde, who reigned as King Achille I.

The Royal House of Araucania-Patagonia continues to operate, in exile, pressing its claims and promoting the interests of the Mapuche. The current head of the Royal House, the fifth heir to King Orélie-Antoine's legacy, is Prince Philippe d'Araucanie.



The very first numismatic issues of the Kingdom of Araucania-Patagonia, a bronze 2 Centavos coin and a silver 1 Peso coin, are dated 1874 and were issued by King Orélie-Antoine I. Since 1988, Prince Philippe d'Araucanie, head of the Royal House of Araucania-Patagonia in exile, authorize two numismatic issues each year in support of the cause he represent: a 100 Pesos coin-of-tradition with a thematic related exclusively to its rich history and unusual tradition and a Soberano (i. e. Sovereign) issued usually in December to celebrate Christmas (these will be the subject for a series of articles in a future edition of this magazine).

For informations on the 1988-1992 100 Pesos, please refer to the issued #37, #38 and #39 of ATALAYA which are still available for a few dollars direct from the Editor in Sweden.

The 1993-1997 100 Pesos commemorate the Dynasty of the Royal House of Araucania-Patagonia. As usual, all 100 Pesos are crown size (38.5mm.)

and struck in Proof with reeded edge. All the coins in this series reproduce, on the reverse, a portrait of Prince Philippe and illustrate, on the obverse, a map of the Kingdom and the Coat of Arms of the Royal House with different inscription for each year.

The 1993 100 Pesos commemorate King Orélie-Antoine I, the founder of the Kingdom, who reigned from 1860 to 1878. The mintages of this issue are as follow: 2,000 in nickel-silver, 500 in sterling silver, 133 in palladium and in gold (denoting the 133<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Kingdom; later issues in these precious metals follow this same form). Also, 43 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts (double-thickness prestige coins) were struck to denote the 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Succession of Prince Philippe (again, later issues follow this same form).

The 1994 100 Pesos commemorate King Achille I, the second head of the Royal Dynasty, who reigned from 1878 to 1902. The mintages of this issue are as follow: 2,000 in nickel-silver, 500 in sterling silver, 134 in palladium and in gold. Also, 44 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

The 1995 100 Pesos commemorate King Antoine II, the third head of the Royal Dynasty, who reigned from 1902 to 1903. The mintages of this issue are as follow: 2,000 in nickel-silver, 500 in sterling silver, 135 in palladium and in gold. Also, 45 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

The 1996 100 Pesos commemorate Queen Laure-Thérèse, the fourth head of the Royal Dynasty, who reigned from 1903 to 1916. The mintages of this issue are as follow: 2,000 in nickel-silver, 500 in sterling silver, 136 in palladium and in gold. Also, 46 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

The 1997 100 Pesos commemorate H.R.H. Antoine III, the fifth head of the Royal Dynasty, who reigned from 1916 to 1952. The mintages of this issue are as follow: 2,000 in nickel-silver, 500 in sterling silver, 137 in palladium and in gold. Also, 47 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

A second 100 Pesos was issued in 1996 to commemorate the wedding of Prince Philippe and Princess Elizabeth which was held on September 8 of that year and the mintages are as follow: 500 in nickel-silver, 100 in sterling silver, 10 in palladium and in gold. Only 10 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

For the first and only time, a 70 Pesos was issued in 1997. The purpose of this unusual denomination is to commemorate in a special and unique way the 70th anniversary of the birth of Prince Philippe, the actual head of the Royal House. The mintages are as follow: 500 in nickel-silver, 70 in sterling silver, 7 in palladium and in gold. Only 7 two Troy ounces silver Piéforts were struck.

For information on the availability of these coins-of-tradition or of those issued previously, please contact the North American Araucanian Royalist Society at the following address: N.A.A.R.S., Mr. Daniel Morrison, Secretary, P. O. Box 9033, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15224, United States. The best source of information in the English language on the Kingdom of Araucania-Patagonia, its history and its tradition is without doubt the magazine *THE STEEL CROWN* published by the N.A.A.R.S.; if you would like to receive a sample copy, please include a few dollars to help cover the cost of your request.

You may also contact the Secretary of the NAARS, Mr. Dan Morrison, by e-mail at [figtree@vms.cis.pitt.edu](mailto:figtree@vms.cis.pitt.edu). The NAARS maintains also a web site, which contains interesting and instructive texts and many photos, at <http://www.pitt.edu/~figtree/kap.html>.

### FREE TO ALL THE READERS TO ATALAYA

I recently acquired a small quantity of the superb Hutt River Province Principality 1977 nickel-silver Proof 50¢ coins. The total mintage of this coin is of only 1,000 pieces and, twenty years after issue, they are quite scarce and difficult to obtain. In order to stimulate interest in numismatic among the readers of ATALAYA, I am offering these FREE on the basis of the first-come, the first served. Simply send your name and address with \$2 to cover the airmail cost to: Serge Huard, C.P. 402, Pointe-aux-trembles, Quebec, H1B 5K3, Canada.

