

Cape Colony: Cecil Rhodes Memorial Tribute for Mourners on Funeral Train

Cape Colony: Cecil Rhodes Memorial Tribute for Mourners on Funeral Train



Form: Circular with attached boss through which passes a suspension ring. The ribbon is blue with brooch bar at the top stamped "SPINK & SON LONDON".

By: Spink & Son, London

Date: 1902

Ref: AM2: 67; Laidlaw: 0503;

Variations:

Size	Metal	Mass	Value
32.4 mm	Silver	21.9 gm with ribbon	\$750

Edge: Plain. Sometimes engraved with recipient's name.

Obverse: Bareheaded bust of Rhodes in suit with wing collar and tie, front. Legend above: "CECIL RHODES".

Reverse: Within a wreath of palm frond (left) and oak branch with acorns (right), fluted shield with baton(?) below. On the shield a legend: "IN / MEMORY OF / C.J.R / APRIL 16TH / 1902".

Notes: This is the only contemporary medal showing Rhodes.

Comes inside a fitted maroon leather case lined with red silk and maroon velvet. On the inside of the lid in gilt: "SPINK & SON LONDON / DIE SINKERS AND MEDALLISTS / 17 & 18. PICCADILLY / LONDON / ESTD. 1772".

This was medal struck for those friends and dignitaries who accompanied Rhodes' body in the funeral trail from Cape Town to Bulawayo. Some medals are named. This particular medal is engraved: "T. HAMPTON" who was one of the engine drivers on the funeral train.

Cecil John Rhodes (1853 – 1902) was a British businessman, mining magnate, and politician in South Africa. He was the founding chairman of the diamond mining company, De Beers, established in 1887 with funding from N.M. Rothschild. He was an ardent believer in the expansion of the British Empire and was the founder of the territory of Rhodesia, which was named after him in 1895.

During the Boer War Rhodes was in Kimberley during the siege. He died in Cape Town on 26 March 1902, at the age of 48 months before the war ended.

After the funeral Rhodes' body was transported with great ceremony by train to Bulawayo. The line from Mafeking to Bulawayo had only been completed by the British South Africa Company five years previously. From there his body was transported by ox-wagon to his final resting place in the Matopo Hills on 11 April 1902.

Given the date on the medal, it can be assumed that the presentation took place after the funeral train had returned to Cape Town.