

## LIFE & TIMES

When the Indian Head quarter eagle began circulating in 1908, Oklahoma had just been admitted to the Union the previous year. Arizona and New Mexico would not become states for another four years.

At midnight on January 1, 1908, a ball dropped in New York's Times Square for the first time to signify the beginning of the new year. The famous Waldorf Thanksgiving dinner menu that year, according to the New York Evening Telegram Cook Book, offered "Cape Cod Oysters, Giblet Soup, Sheepshead with Hollandaise Sauce, Tomatoes Stuffed with Cucumbers, Saddle of New Jersey Mutton, Macedoine of Fresh Vegetables, Turkey Stuffed with Chestnuts, Cranberry Sauce, Brussels Sprouts, Potato Palestine, Lettuce and Grape Fruit Salad with Cracked Almonds, Plum Pudding with Rum Sauce, Mince and Pumpkin Pies, Glace Plombiere, Cafe."



Henry Ford and his famous Model T

Production of oil in the Middle East was just getting underway for the first time. In the U.S., Henry Ford produced the first Model T Ford. It sold for \$850 (by 1925, the price had fallen to \$290), putting the automobile in reach of the common man and ushering in the age of the automobile in America. By 1918, half the cars in the U.S. were Model Ts.

The \$2.50 Indian gold coin paid a day's wages for a worker in Ford's auto plant. Six years later, in 1914, Ford more than doubled wages, from \$2.34 a day to \$5, and reduced the workday to eight hours.

A postage stamp cost two cents in 1908. A Hershey Bar cost a nickel.

Around that time a man's suit went for about \$9, shirts for 30 to 70 cents, pants for \$1.50 to \$3 a pair, and socks three pairs for a quarter. Women's dress shoes ran about \$4.25 a pair and a fur-lined coat could be had for \$4.50.

Fancy creamery butter was about a 25 cents a pound, eggs 15 to 35 cents a dozen, sirloin beef steak three pounds for a quarter, ham 12 cents a pound. A dime would buy two jars of peanut butter or an 8 lb. bag of salt. Ketchup came dear at 75 cents a bottle.

Farmers got 55 cents for a bushel of corn, 69 cents for barley, 47 cents for oats.

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Our Spring Styles are in Today.  
We are up and for your Spring Season.  
We Specialize in the following:  
NEW SPRING SUITS FOR MEN, BOYS, WOMEN AND CHILDREN.  
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We are pleased to offer you goods always at low prices.  
We are up and for your Spring Season.  
TRAINING IN ALL ITS BRANCHES  
NEATLY AND PROMPTLY EXECUTED.  
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ONE PRICE CLOTHIER.

Cincinnati Mayor Mark Breith declared before the city council in 1908 that, "women are not physically fit to operate automobiles." A New York City ordinance made it illegal for a woman to smoke in public.

The year 1908 saw the first observance of Mother's Day, the first passenger flight in an airplane, the first horror movie (*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*), the first U.S. postage stamps in rolls, the first federal workmen's compensation law, and the first U.S. credit union.

A race riot erupted in Springfield, Illinois. Bulgaria declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire. An earthquake near Messina, Italy, and the resulting tsunami killed 70,000 to 100,000 people in Italy and Sicily. A mysterious blast from a giant fireball, now believed to have been a piece of exploding comet, flattened more than a thousand square miles of forest at Tunguska, Siberia.

Tommy Burns knocked out Jem Roche in the fastest heavyweight title fight on record: 88 seconds. Nathan Stubblefield patented wireless radio broadcasting. Winston Churchill married Clementine Hozier. Robert Peary sailed from New York for his final assault on the North Pole. Serbia and Montenegro signed an anti-Austria-Hungarian pact, setting the stage for the First World War six years later. The passenger liner *Lusitania*, whose sinking in 1915 by a German U-boat's torpedo triggered America's entry into WWI, set an Atlantic crossing record of four days, 15 hours.

The year 1908 saw the birth of Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb; economist John Kenneth Galbraith; Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, American journalist Edward R. Murrow and English journalist Alistair Cooke; baseball announcer Red Barber; football coach Paul Brown, first coach of the Cleveland Browns named in his honor; cartoonist Tex Avery, creator of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Droopy; Western novelist Louis



L'Amour and James Bond creator Ian Fleming; comedians Milton Berle and Imogene Coca; composers Percy Faith and Leroy Anderson; jazz great Lionel Hampton; and movie stars Jimmy Stewart, Rex Harrison, Bette Davis, Buddy Ebsen, Anna Magnani, Arthur O'Connell, and Carol Lombard.



Picture Courtesy of Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University

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By the time production of the 2½ Indian gold piece ceased in 1929, Americans had survived the first global military conflict in history, the Roaring Twenties, Prohibition, Al Capone and the Mafia gang wars, and the opening days of what would become The Great Depression.

They were momentous times, and the Indian Head quarter eagle was part of that historic panorama.

Holding an old coin like the 2½ Indian in your hand is like holding a key that opens a door to the past. It's a physical connection to the life and times of the people who worked to earn the coin, carried it in their pockets or purses, and spent or saved it as they managed their money day to day. Learning about those times makes a coin come alive with the images and sounds of real people of another day.

The Indian Head quarter eagle opens a connection to the time of America growing up and coming of age.