

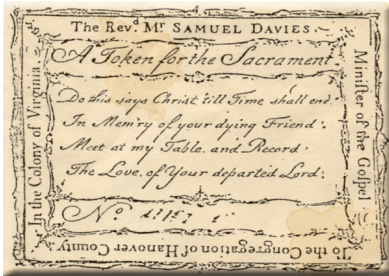
Presbyterian Heritage Sunday

May 26, 2013 Communion Tokens

Communion tokens were a familiar feature of Presbyterian worship in past centuries. Most colonial congregations in America celebrated the Lord's Supper once or twice a year. Only those who showed adequate knowledge of the faith and were deemed to be living upright lives received tokens.



A Communion Gathering in the Olden Time.



During the communion service, communicants sat at long tables where they turned in their tokens and received the elements. Most tokens were cast or stamped out of metal, but other materials were used including printed paper.

Tokens of the 1700s tended to be plain and were often marked with initials of the church. An exception is the card token used by Reverend Samuel Davies in his Virginia congregations, one of the few known paper tokens of that era.



The use of tokens began to decline after 1825. By 1860 most congregations no longer used them. In recent decades many churches have minted tokens as souvenirs for special celebrations and anniversary observances.

*P*The Presbyterian Historical Society provides resources for Heritage Sunday, a day set aside by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to celebrate and learn more about the rich history of Presbyterianism in America.

Visit our website www.history.pcusa.org where additional information and resources are available.

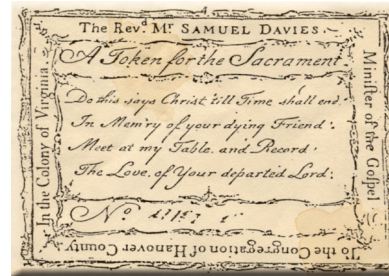
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