

## CAMBODIA



**1860 - 50 CENTIMES - OBVERSE**

CAMBODIA, FRENCH PROTECTORATE OF  
BRUSSELS

50 CENTIMES 18.4 MM .835 FINE 2.5 GRAMS

1860 (1875) u/m

▲OV: Head of Norodom I, facing left, NORODOM I RIO DU CAMBODGE (Norodom I King of Cambodia) around / C.WURDEN under head / 1860 below.

▼RV: Shield of Arms within an ermine mantle, surmounted by a conical crown, denomination in Siamese (muey huông = one huong) above / • 50 centimes • below.

EDGE: Reeded

MINT: (no mintmark) = BRUSSELS, struck in 1875.

DESIGNER: C. WURDEN = Henri Charles Wurden

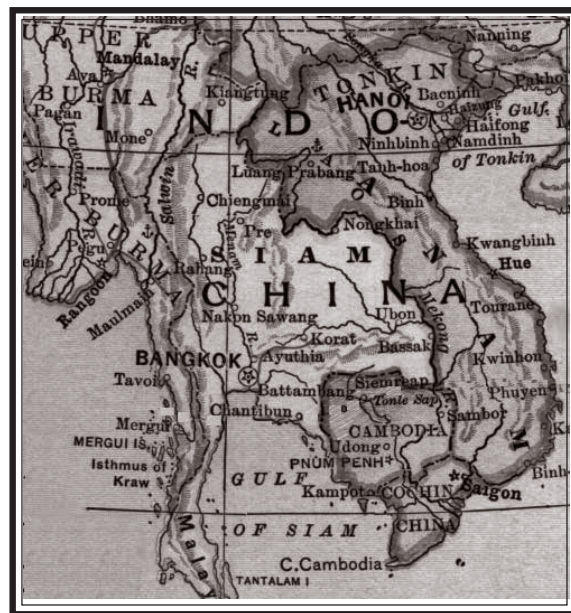
REFERENCE: Y-5, KM-45

FOOTNOTE: Cambodia, an extensive country of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, now a Protectorate of France, bounded on the S.W. by the Gulf of Siam, on the S.E. by French Cochín-China, and on the N. by Siam. Area, about 33,000 sq. miles; population about 900,000. The surface is mostly flat, and the soil fertile. There are extensive forests, which shelter elephants and deer; there are also wild-cattle and ponies, and the rhinoceros abound. Among the chief products are rice, bertel, areca-nuts, gamboge, spices, sandalwood, and ivory. Iron occurs. *Library of Universal Knowledge, N.Y. 1879.*



**1860 - 50 CENTIMES - REVERSE**

FOOTNOTE: This issue was dated 1860, the year King Norodom I became King of Cambodia. It was struck in 1875 at the Brussels mint and later restruck in 1899 at the time of the death of the Queen Mother with their weight reduced and with a rough appearance from the old dies.



**Map of Indo-China and Cambodia**

FOOTNOTE: Cambodia (called by the inhabitants *Sroc Khmer* and by the French Cambodia). The French persuaded King Norodom I (1859-1904) to accept for Cambodia the status of French protectorate. A treaty establishing the protectorate was signed by Norodom I on Aug. 11, 1863, and was latter ratified by the French government.. In 1866 the capital of Cambodia was moved to Phnom Penh. In 1904 King Norodom was succeeded by his brother Sisowath. *Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition, 1910.*

FOOTNOTE: This issue which was part of a set, as indicated in the previous note; was specially engraved by *Henri Charles Wurden* and struck in Brussels to commemorate the accession to the throne of King Norodom I of Cambodia in 1860. Actually the date should have been 1859. It is believed that the set of coins were actually struck in 1875. Cambodia was then under the protection of France and this set was prepared for the 1878 Paris Internationale Expedition. The set included silver coins with denominations of; 4 francs, 2 francs, 1 franc, 50 centimes and 25 centimes along with bronze coins of 10 centimes and 5 centimes. Most early French catalogues included a reference to this set of coins. *E. Zay* in his *Histoire Monétaire des Colonies Française, Paris, 1892.*, first described the coins as follows: *Pièces de 4,2,1 francs, 50 et 25 centimes, argent; 10 et 5 centimes, bronze. Frappées a Pnon-Penh, au millésime de 1860, année de l'avènement du rio Norodom.* He describes the crown thus;



1. - *Pièce de 4 fr.* Lég. cir. à g. **NORODOM I ROI DU CAMBODGE.** Tête à g.; au-dessous C.WURDEN. EX. 1860. Rf Lég. circ. siam. à g. CRÔNG CAMPUCHÉA. BUỒN SLENG (Royaume de Cambodge. Quate slèng) Ecu ovale d'azur chargé d'une vasque, d'une coupe, d'un glaive posé en fasce et d'une bisse, posés l'un sur l'autre, le tout d'or. L'écu embrassé de deux branches de laurier et accolé du cordon de l'Ordre du Cambodge, est posé sur un manteau d'hermines relevé par deux lances passé de la couronne royale de Cambodge rayonnante d'or. Ex. • **QUATRE FRANCS** • - Tr. cannelée; d. 34 ½, ép. 2 ¾ m/m; 20 gr.

The 50 centimes is described by *Zay* as;

4. - *Pièce de 50 c.* Semblable, mais avec MUEY HUÔNG (un huông) 50 CENTIMES - d. 18, ép. 1 m/m; 2 gr. 50.

FOOTNOTE: *Zay* in his *Supplement* published in 1904 by *Raymond Serrure* mentions the restrike issue of 1899 distributed as souvenirs. *Victor Guilloteau* shows the set as 3563-71 in his 272 *Années de Numismatique Française, Versailles, 1942.* *Jean Mazard* lists the set as 499-504 in his two volume tome *History Monétaire Numismatique, Paris 1953.* The *Societe Numismatique de Paris* lists the series as **Monnaies souvenirs** 55-60 in their little book *Les Monnaies Coloniales Françaises depuis 1815, Paris, 1974.* In 1976 *J.L.Thimonier* was still listing the series in his *Encyclopedie des Monnaies Coloniales.* The cataloguers, *Victor Gadoury* with *Georges Cousinié* in their *Monnaies Coloniales Française 1670-1980, Monte-Carlo, 1979,* details the background for this series indicating they were struck in 1875. (continued).

FOOTNOTE: (Continued) World cataloguers followed the earlier French references, including; *Wayte Raymond* in his *Coins of the World - Nineteenth Century Issues, New York, 1953.* The 50 centimes was priced at \$1.00, thus in no way reflecting the rarity of this coin. When *Richard S. Yeoman* first published his famous **brown book** *Modern World Coins*, he listed the series under the section of French Indo-china as Cambodia Y 4-9 and the 50 centimes is still \$1.00., *The 13th Edition, 1984 Modern World Coins*, now edited by *Arthur and Ira Friedberg* still lists the series, re-alphabetized under Cambodia, with the prices from VF to UNC now \$25.00 to \$125.00 for the 50 centimes. Another series of world type catalogues; *Catalogue of the World's Most Popular Coins, Fred Reinfeld*, revised by *Burton Hobson, Garden City, N.Y., 1969-56* also listed the series under Cambodia as #1-6 for the silver coins with the price of the 50 centimes only \$2.50. Then came the beginning of the catalog popularly known as the **telephone book**, *Standard Catalog of World Coins, 1st Edition, by Chester L Krause and Clifford Mishler, Iola, WI, 1972.* This volume pictured the series Y 4-8 (using the **Yeoman** numbering system) and valuing the 50 centimes from Good, VF, and UNC as \$1.75, \$5.00 and \$20.00 respectively. By the time the *Deluxe A.N.A. Centennial Two Volume Edition of the Standard Catalog of World Coins*, was published in 1991 the series was repositioned under the current name for Cambodia, Kampuchea and renumbered with Km#'s. The 50 centimes coin as KM-45.1 and KM-45.2 for the restrike of 1899 produced from the original dies, then rusty and on a thinner planchet. The original issue was priced from FINE to UNC as \$20.00 to \$250. The proof strike is listed at \$600. (The author added this, a proof to his collection for \$55.00 years ago and has never seen the circulation strike). There is now a debate as to whether these coins were regular issue, NCLT, or not even coins to begin with. *Colin R. Bruce II*, lists the series in his *Unusual World coins, 3rd Edition, Krause Publications, Iola, WI.* He also states" Originally produced in Brussels, Belgium by Menning Brothers, specifically for collectors ca. 1875". No matter who is right, this particular coin - referring to the 50 centimes dated 1860 is considered by the author as one of the most striking and interesting pieces listed in this volume. The portrait of King Norodom I is finely engraved by the designer *Wurden*. The coat of arms of the Cambodia royalty on the reverse is beautiful with much detail.



**Nordom I King of Cambodia**