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British Royal Mint Medallions Commemorate Battle of Britain

The British Royal Mint has struck medallions in sterling silver proof and brilliant uncirculated cupro-nickel to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The designs are the work of English sculptor and designer Mary Milner Dickens and are her first for the Royal Mint.

By the summer of 1940, a victorious Germany was in control of most of northern Europe. Britain stood alone and defiant. In a radio broadcast to the nation Winston Churchill announced "the battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin". It did!

For months the skies over southern England became the scene of the greatest air battle in history. "The Few", as Churchill dubbed the pilots of Royal Air Force Fighter Command, battled wave after wave of German aircraft, as Hitler sought to soften up Britain in preparation for his anticipated invasion. Finally, in the autumn the Spitfires and Hurricanes of the RAF gained the upper hand and Hitler had received his first setback.

Much has been said in this anniversary year about the courage of the British and allied pilots whose daring and tenacity brought a major turning point in World War II. The magnificent 50th Anniversary Medallions are a tribute to them all.

The obverse shows three of the major aircraft that fought in the Battle of Britain - the British Supermarine Spitfire and the Hawker Hurricane, both symbolically superimposed over the German Messerschmitt BF109 which has been destroyed. The reverse depicts a dramatic scene of aerial combat which was a familiar sight during the summer and autumn of 1940. Mary Milner Dickens has skillfully combined the vapor trails with the clouds to form a decorative pattern. Notwithstanding their beauty, the designs themselves tell the story of what happened during the Battle of Britain and the fight for supremacy in the skies above London and the south of England.

The Battle of Britain Sterling Silver (.925 ag) Proof Medallion has a diameter of 50.00 mm. and a weight of 53.30 grams.

The Cupro-nickel Medallion measures 40.00 mm., weighs 30.25 grams and is struck to brilliant-uncirculated standard.

Orders and inquiries should be addressed to the British Royal Mint, P.O. Box 2570, Woodside, NY 11377-9864, Canadian collectors call 800-543-0237.