

CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

ROYAL VISIT COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS

Lagoa, S. Miguel, Azores, Portugal

Leite Ceramics Factory

20th century (1901)

Terracotta

Diameter: 12 cm

Thickness: 1,5 cm

Weight: 182 g

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These medals, commemorating the 1901 Royal Visit to Azores of King Carlos I of Portugal (1863-1908) and D. Amélia de Orleães (1865-1951) were produced by the Leite Ceramics Factory, at the time named Azorean Factory.

At the time of this visit, it took place in S. Miguel Island, the first Free Fair and Exhibition, with the aim of presenting the local products, particularly objects and pieces of pottery, among which these medals that, at present, are part of Angra do Heroísmo Museum Numismatics Management Unit.

The 1901 Royal Visit stands as a milestone in the story of the Atlantic archipelagos. For its impact and symbolism, more than one century later, it is still alive in the local collective memory.

The backgrounds, the organization, the conjecture in which this visit took place, as well as the reasons that led D. Carlos to visit the islands and also the several meanings and interpretations that it provoked, called the attentions of different historians.

The echoes of this visit in the national press were abundant and diverse. While certain journals were very sober in what concerned the royal visit to the archipelago, some other published large reports on the event, illustrated with gravures and descriptions of the islands. It was the case, for example, of the newspaper *O Século*, that, in several publications, offered faithful portrayals of the islands, with descriptions of landscapes and historical notes, also covering the characterization of local traditions. These portraits were related to the demography, the political, juridical, and religious organization, and the main farming productions. Panoramic gravures and images of monuments from the towns of Horta, Angra do Heroísmo and Ponta Delgada, came out side by side with landscapes images of these islands. Overall, the Visit of the Royal Family to the Azores represented a pretext for the promotion of the insular natural wonders, together with the detailed explanation of the traveller's agenda.