

John Brown medal

Gold medal showing a bust-length relief of John Brown on one side and an inscription in French on the reverse. The inscription translated reads, "In memory of John Brown, legally assassinated at Charlestown (sic), 2 December 1859, and to those of his sons and his companions, who died victims of their devotion to the cause of freedom for blacks." Members of the John Brown Association, a French abolitionist group, presented this medal to Mary Day Brown, the widow of John Brown, in 1877. Victor Hugo was a prominent member of this group and an outspoken supporter of Brown's activities. The Paris-based association explained its actions in a letter to the George Anthony, the Kansas governor, dated Feb. 2, 1878: "Just before the recent Franco-German war, a subscription committee was organized of French Republicans, for the purpose of presenting to the widow of John Brown a golden medal commemorative of the memory of her husband, of his sons, and of his companions, who died victims to their devotion to the cause of freeing the Blacks. The sending of this medal, delayed by political events, was effected on the 21st of October, 1874." The descendants of John Brown, represented by his son John Brown, Jr., donated the medal to the Kansas Historical Society in 1888.

Creator: J. Wurden

Date: 1874

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