

HARRIMAN MEMORIAL MEDAL

EDWARD H. HARRIMAN MEMORIAL AWARD MEDAL, 1914. Fruendlich 34; Baxter 233; Marqusee 161; Storer 6626. 68.2mm. Bronze. James Earle Fraser, Sc. Struck by the Medallist Art Co., NY. Uncirculated. Obverse: portrays a central bust of Harriman to the left. In a semi-circle above is the legend: EDWARD H. HARRIMAN MEMORIAL MEDAL. Flanking the bust is the inscription: AWARDED BY THE/ AMERICAN MUSEUM/ OF SAFETY TO. Below bust the awardee's name; for the specimen illustrated below it is: GROUP C RAILROADS 1958 / NEW YORK SUSQUEHANNA AND WESTERN RAILROADS CO. Signed/initialed in right field: JEF. Reverse: depicts a trainman carrying two lanterns and a flag walking the rails. Inscribed to either side is the legend: FOR THE/ UTMOST PROGRESS/ IN SAFETY/ AND/ ACCIDENT/ PREVENTION.

The E. H. Harriman Memorial Medals, awarded for the first time in 1913, were donated by Mrs. E. H. Harriman "to stimulate a direct effort for the American steam railroad making the best record in accident prevention and industrial hygiene affecting the public and its own personnel."

Barbara Baxter believes this to be Fraser's best work. In the book *Beaux-Arts Medal in America*, she comments that: "Fraser's finest medal, the Harriman Memorial medal of the American Museum of Safety, illustrates his ability to blend successfully contemporary realism and Renaissance tradition. Once again he employs the Quattrocento format of a bust surrounded by simple lettering for the obverse, while on the reverse he depicts a track walker in contemporary garb striking along the rails. The realism of this treatment of the theme of railroad safety contrasts sharply with Weinman's symbolic representation of the same subject on the U.S. Lifesaving medal. Fraser's textured modeling of the reverse of the Harriman medal, also used effectively on his portraits of Roosevelt, adds to the vigor of the towering figure, which is barely contained within the space on the tondo."

This was probably one of Fraser's personal favorites as his father was a railroad conductor!

