



# THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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## ONA AT CNE

AUGUST 21 - SEPTEMBER 7, 1964

The Ontario Numismatic Association has been offered, and has accepted display space at the forthcoming Canadian National Exhibition. This will be a great opportunity for our organization to present to more people than ever before, the growing interest in numismatics.

It is a great honour to be asked to exhibit a display at Canada's annual exhibition. These exhibits will be viewed by thousands of visitors from all parts of the world.

With this in mind, we will need an ample supply of your club's membership forms, together with any other pertinent information such as the time and place of monthly meetings, in order that they can be distributed daily by either ONA executive members or personnel from various ONA member clubs.

It is our sincere hope that your club will participate in this project and any help or suggestions to make this a success will be greatly appreciated.

Those wishing to enter their displays at the exhibition, please contact the ONA secretary, stating the nature of the display. Security will be provided on a twenty-four hour basis.

Again, we ask those of you who are planning a day at the exhibition, and would be willing to spend a few hours at the ONA booth, to let us know at your earliest convenience. We need all the help available so that the faithful few will not become overburdened. If you can help in any way, please contact either of the two chairmen: Alex Monroe, 3703 Kingston Rd., Scarborough, Ont.; or, John Regitko, Jr., 29 Spruce St., Toronto 2, Ont.

Plans to advertise the Ontario numismatic clubs are already under way, but if your club wishes to send along literature to be given out to interested inquirers, please see that it reaches the ONA secretary in ample time.

A CLUB PROJECT

Has your club made any plans to man the ONA booth at the CNE? This could be great advertisement for your club. A group of your members could take turns at the booth while the others enjoy the Ex. Here is a project that will bring your club to public attention. So, enjoy a day at the Ex. and promote your club.

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ONA MEDALS

Have you bought your ONA medals yet? Bill English is still waiting to hear from you. Don't put off buying them much longer . . . they can't last forever!

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LIBRARY DONATIONS

The ONA is pleased to announce a donation from J. MacKay-Clements of the "Catalogue of the Montague Guest Collection of Badges, Tokens and Passes", by the London: British Museum. The collection of trifles here catalogued is of unusual character, but perhaps destined to increase in value as affording side-lights on various aspects of life mainly in the last two centuries (Preface).

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TENDERS FOR 1965 ONA AUCTION

Those interested in submitting a bid for the 1965 ONA Third Annual Convention auction, please do so before September 30, 1964. Place your bid in a sealed envelope, marked "Auction Bid", and mail to the ONA secretary.

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CONVENTION HOSTS

The ONA executive will entertain applications from Ontario clubs in consideration for the 1966 or 1967 conventions. These applications are to be made in writing with full data on accommodation available, locale, etc. Direct all applications to the ONA secretary.

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The design of the Armorial Bearings of Canada, in use on the Canadian fifty-cent piece since 1937, was re-designed by Mr. T. Shingles, Chief Engraver of the Royal Canadian Mint in 1959. The original design was made by Kruger Gray.

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The 1871 Prince Edward Island cent is the only coin of the Heaton mint at Birmingham Mint without the 'H'.

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The ONTARIO NUMISMATIST is published monthly by the Ontario Numismatic Association. The publication may be obtained with memberships of one of the following categories: Adult -- \$2 yearly; junior -- \$1 yearly (up to 18 years of age), husband and wife (one copy) -- \$3 yearly; club -- \$10 yearly. Remittances (plus bank exchange if paid by cheque) payable to the Ontario Numismatic Association, Post Office Box 33, Waterloo, Ontario.

### 1965 CONVENTION PLANNED

Executive members of the ONA recently met with those of the London Numismatic Society, London, Ontario, to start the wheels turning for the 1965 ONA Third Annual Convention which the London group will host on April 30, May 1 and 2, 1965, in the Windjammer Room of the Treasure Island Centre, London. General Chairman will be William E. West, 166 Base Line Road West, London, Ontario; Donald Wheeler, Treasurer, J. Graham Esler, Secretary; Sam Smith, display chairman, assisted by Lorne Branton and William T. Jensen; Alex Sweeton, tickets; Lloyd T. Smith, advertising and publicity.

The central location of London for the various Ontario clubs and collectors should prove convenient for attendance to the convention.

### NEW MEMBERS

Applications published in the July issue of the Ontario Numismatist have now been accepted. The following applications were received in July. If no written objections are received, their acceptance will be acknowledged in the September issue of the Ontario Numismatist.

- 411 W. E. Moddleton, 390 Sunnyside Ave., Ottawa, Ont.
- 430 Mrs. Kenneth M. Gaver, P. O. Box 111, Montreal, Que.
- 431 William C. Hibbert, Sr., 309 Harris Ave., Croydon, Pa. 19021, U. S. A.
- 432 H. Cecil Rhodes, 54 Thorncliffe Park Drive, Toronto 17, Ont.
- 433 Ronald H. Hill, R. R. #4, Harriston, Ont.

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- 223 Allen E. Guay, 27 Fairview Cres., Trenton, Ont.

### COMING EVENTS

- Aug. 27-29 CANADIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION Eleventh Annual Convention, Nova Scotian Hotel, Halifax, N. S. Chairman: A. M. MacDonald, Box 243, Armdale, Halifax, N. S.
- Sept. 26 LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY Annual Banquet and Auction, Major Sheldon Carroll, Guest Speaker.
- Oct. 3 KITCHENER COIN CLUB First Exhibition and Dinner, Iona Hall, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Queen and Weber Streets, Kitchener. John Craig, general chairman, 105 Lancaster St. E., Kitchener.
- Oct. 3 BAY of QUINTE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION Annual Coin-a-rama.
- Oct. 17 TORONTO COIN CLUB Fall Rally. Royal York Hotel, Toronto. Host to the Ontario Numismatic Association semi-annual meeting.
- Oct. 24 ST. CATHARINES Annual Banquet, at the Queensway. Guest Speaker: J. D. Ferguson. One hundred lot auction.
- Oct. 24-25 BLUE WATER International Coin Show, Keswick Terrace, Sarnia, Ont. Sponsored by the Sarnia Numismatic Society and the Port Huron Coin Club. General Chairman: D. W. Park, 308 Savoy St., Sarnia, Onta

- Oct. 31-Nov. 1 WINDSOR COIN CLUB EXHIBITION, Norton Palmer Hotel, Windsor, Ont.  
Sec. Miss A. Watt, 1604 Goyeau St., Apt. 18, Windsor, Ont.
- Nov. 15 HURON COUNTY NUMISMATIC CLUB Annual Exhibition.

#### CLUB NEWS

HURON COUNTY NUMSIMATIC CLUB announces that 75 persons turned out to hear ONA President, Rod Rekofski, with his presentation of Crowns of the British Commonwealth. A bit of humour was added to the meeting when a bat dropped in to see what numismatics was all about. Membership in the club is very close to the 100 mark; a new member, Mr. W. B. Daer is #92.

OAKVILLE COIN CLUB welcomed J. E. Charlton to its June meeting, who recalled the development of Canadian coins and tokens since 1858, noting the distinct rise in prices. Mrs. Winifred Mather is scheduled to talk on Marriage Tokens at the July meeting.

WOODSTOCK COIN CLUB had a trading session at its July meeting, specializing in Lincoln cents.

ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB sponsored a picnic at Lakeside Park, Sunday, July 26. Everyone brought his own baskets.

HURONIA NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION plans informal meetings for the summer months. A new column, commencing with the July issue of the Association's bulletin, will be known as "Lou's Views". Included in the column are some timely tips such as: If you have started a collection, or intend to, concentrate on the key or scarce dates. Each year you put off purchasing that hard-to-get coin, the value will increase.

SARNIA NUMISMATIC SOCIETY enjoyed "What's My Coin" at their June meeting. Three panels took part with Dave Price acting as moderator. Informal meetings are planned for the summer months with trading sessions. As a project to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the City of Sarnia, the club is developing plans for the striking of a medal bearing the city crest on one side and a club design on the reverse.

TORONTO COIN CLUB had as its speaker in June, its own treasurer, Alex Monroe, who highlighted his talk with slides illustrating his beautiful Seafaring Collection. Plans are well under way for their Fall Rally, October 17th.

OSHAWA AND DISTRICT COIN CLUB. Bob Pritchard was the speaker at the June meeting. His topic was Biblical Coins. Bob explained what the coins were, where they came from, and who used them. This was the final meeting before summer holidays. September will be the finalizing of the letterhead contest.

LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY IS PLANNING A BANQUET FOR Saturday, September 26th. Categories for competitive displays will be: Canadian Decimal, Canadian Tokens, Paper Currency, British Commonwealth, Foreign and Miscellaneous. The theme for this year will be Banks and Banking.

CHAMPLAIN COIN CLUB announced a change of meeting night. Beginning with July, the club will meet the first Thursday of each month. This club has come up with a unique stamp for its members. It is approximately  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ", featuring the club's crest. The seal, featuring the Champlain monument, is for use on letters to publicize the club.

BAY of QUINTE NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION featured ONA Audio/Visual, Canadian Silver Dollars, at the June meeting. Editor, Cecil Paul, relates a real 'Believe It Or Not': Sometime in May or June, someone stole a 1911 half-dollar from his collection. On June 29th, his mother was shopping and saw a half dollar in the cashier's till that looked old. When she asked her son if he could use it in his collection, he examined the coin and found from the different scratches that it was the same coin that had been stolen.

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### AFRICA -- WHY NOT?

by Claudia Felkey

Have you become depressed with the rising cost of our Canadian coins? Does your Canadian set still have a lot of blank spaces, becoming increasingly hideous to you because you can neither afford or find that special piece? Then, why not turn to something different? Something exotic and different from what everyone else is collecting. Look through your world coin books or your geographies and histories. There is bound to be something there to catch your imagination.

Have you tried Africa? A lot of people have coins from South Africa, but I mean Africa as a continent . . . the fascinatingly magnificent, the alluringly mystic, the incredible, legendary AFRICA. Here is a continent bursting with new independence, yet steeped in tradition. There are hundreds of ways to go about collecting coins from this inconceivably gigantic continent. There are the desert countries; coins with Arabic dates and/or inscriptions; the new countries as they gain their independence; countries that are, or once were possessions of England, France, Portugal, or Belgium, etc.

With interest in foreign coins on the rise, it is not such an absurd project. The more you consider this aspect, the more ideas you will conceive.

In the last year, quite by chance, I became interested in the odd and curious means of exchange from this incredible land. With friends and relatives living on the continent, I began to receive bits and pieces of curios. I began bringing home books from the library and the project became more challenging. There is sort of a poetic justice when you compare the friction on our continent over the black population, with the reverse conditions of friction over the whites in Africa. The daily newspapers keep these unfortunate conflicts constantly in our headlines. But, if you delve a little deeper below the surface of this seething, boiling bitterness, there is a mystic influence that will lure you to its profoundest depths. You will want to know and understand why only the countries at the very north and south extremities were widely known. You will become intrigued with their superstitions and taboos; why certain elements and conditions strike terror to the hearts of a whole tribe and not to another. You will want to know why civilization has not progressed in time with ours. And you will find in inconceivable that all these things still exist in a great degree.

Off and curious pieces can be collected from just one area and this will give you a deeper and clearer view of that section and its people. Just as an example, I would like to explain some of these pieces which I have collected from East Africa, namely Kenya. This is the country where in the 1950's, Mau Mau terrorized the white settlers. It is a land still steeped in superstition and tribal traditions.

The 'cowrie shell' money was used here as in so many other parts of the world. It is a small yellowish-white sea shell (*sypraea moneta*), about one half inch long. It was popular as a charm and as a currency. Despite the labour involved in boring, polishing, and threading them, their value remained minute. Approximately 16,000 equalled an English pound (amounts vary).

Then there is the 'circumcision bead' money, very colourful, but with a shocking background. This is a string of beads with a small hippo tooth (ivory) section attached much in the same way as a coin would hang from the middle of a chain or a necklace. These are used by the witch doctor to purchase a girl's clitoris at the local KIKUYU circumcision ceremony. Every four years an age group is circumcised; about 12 years old. The girls, after much ceremony, stand in an icy cold mountain stream for four hours in the night and at daybreak they are carried to an open site in the forest where they are spread out on a large rock where the operation is performed. The water has acted as an anaesthetic and they feel nothing. They must not wince or murmur during the whole time. They then go into hiding for four months, until fully recovered. The operation is illegal but commonplace, as the girls command a higher bride price. The witch doctor who does the job, collects the resulting flesh as a valuable ingredient, when dried, in nature medicines. The horrible part of it all is that a great many of these young girls die as the result of poison contracted from the crude instruments used in the operation, and lack of care.

The 'bride price' pennies are made of ostrich egg shells, carefully cut or scraped into small circles and holed, for stringing. Many hours of tedious labour goes into the making of these pennies. They must not be chipped or cracked to be of value. A wife could be bought for 75 goats or sheep, 100 camels and 400 pennies strung on a camel hide thong.

The 'comb' money is still in current use. It is carved from native wood, about four inches wide and six to eight inches long. It is worn by the girls at the back of the head protruding up and above. One of these combs will purchase 30 lbs. of maize (corn) meal.

'Ball' money is a round stone about three inches in diameter and is used to purchase a spell on an enemy. The stone, worn smooth by constant rubbing is presented to the sorcerer just prior to a thunder storm. The name and whereabouts of the enemy is revealed to the conjurer of evil. Then as the lightning flashes and the thunder rolls, the stone is held outstretched in the upturned palm; the name of the enemy is repeated three times . . . the enemy dies. Because superstition is so prevalent in Africa, mental telepathy becomes a common factor.

The 'hippo tooth' will buy fish hooks and line for the Luo Tribesmen, at Kisumu, on Lake Victoria. These teeth are about an inch in diameter and eight to ten inches long. This type of currency conjures up all sorts of inquiries as to how the natives obtain them. Just everyone wouldn't take on the job of pulling a hippo's tooth.

The 'spear' money of Kenya will purchase about \$5.00 in merchandise. This spear differs from those of other parts of Africa in that it is all one piece. That is, there is no separate metal to fasten it to the shaft. They are twelve to fourteen inches long, completely handtooled and razor-sharp.

'Salt Basket' money (containing Indian Ocean salt) is used as a general exchange medium by the women of any tribe. The basket is handmade from hand-twisted twine and dyed with local dyes. The one I have is from the Kikuyu Tribe (Mau Mau).

The 'Karai', or cooking pot money is another item used by the women for general exchange. No matter how many times it has been used to cook the meals, it is still exchangeable.

The Masai short 'broad sword' is used as a barter for cattle. This is a double-edged sword about twenty to twenty-two inches long, razor-sharp. It is made of native smelted iron, with goatskin handle and scabbard. It handles beautifully in the hand and is said to be the ideal thing to brain one's husband with.

Then there is the Suk Tribe 'head stool' that is used in trade for about anything. These are used like a pillow for the head or seat. They are hand-carved from native wood with magnificent craftsmanship.

Everyone has seen the 'arm bands' (in pictures) worn by the African women . . . rows and rows of them, often covering the entire length of the arms. These, too, are exchanged by the women for useful merchandise.

And so, you see that there is no end to the odd and curious items that are used as a medium of exchange in Africa. I have only told you of some of the pieces in my collection. Although these are not expensive pieces, they ARE conversation pieces. They are items that will keep you haunting the libraries to unearth the reasons behind them.

Once you get started on this sort of a collection, you will find yourself involved in some extremely interesting correspondence. Because customs vary so widely you will entail some rather interesting anecdotes. In writing to a friend in Kenya, I asked if he would be so kind as to relate some of their odd and curious customs. To my delight, I got a prompt and rather lengthy reply. At the close of the letter, however, he said that these things were neither odd nor curious, but years of tradition and superstition. But, he continued, you there in Canada have a custom that is both odd and extremely curious: You blow your nose on a piece of clean white cotton; very carefully fold it up and then put it in your pocket. Then you carry it about with you all day. To what purpose?

This, then, is a field of numismatics waiting to be explored and one that will give you hours of pleasure. There is a continent young in currency, but abounding in the odd and curious.

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Did you know that in 1327, the royal edict of an English king, Edward III, posted on Silversmith's Hall in London . . . decreed that every piece of silver and gold of quality must bear the mark of the hall where it was made. Each master craftsman worked with infinite care, so that he could be justly proud of every item that carried his hallmark. For over six hundred years, the hallmark has continued to be a mark of the finest, a symbol known and trusted, a guide to quality.

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Orders for Canadian Proof-like sets and silver dollars were cut off this year at the unprecedented early date of April 30.

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The Royal Canadian Mint, Ottawa, revealed 1,638,733 sets, and 1,199,654 individual dollars ordered in 1964.

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