



# THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

WATERLOO, ONTARIO

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## ROMANCE OF TIME

by

David Ashe

When a numismatist requires specific dates for events in history, he is often unable to agree on a date previous to modern times because of lack of uniformity in calendars.

The Gregorian calendar now in use in Canada was imposed by the government of Great Britain on all its possessions, including the North America colonies, in 1752. The British decreed that the day following September 2, 1752, should be called September 14, a loss of 11 days. All dates preceding were marked O. S. for Old Style.

When Pope Gregory XIII decreed that the day following October 4, 1582, should be called October 15, an adjustment of 10 days, all nations did not immediately follow suit. Thus different nations had different dates for specific events such as battles, even if their armies took part in them on the same day.

While parts of Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands adopted the calendar at once, the other regions waited until 1700-1701: France accepted it at once; Poland in 1586; Hungary in 1587. Great Britain adopted it in 1752, Sweden in 1753, Japan in 1873; the Chinese in 1912; the Turkish Parliament in 1917; Societ Russia in 1918; Rumania in 1919. Finally, in May, 1923, prelates of the Greek Orthodox Church, meeting in Constantinople, decided to accept the Gregorian Calendar, and it was adopted by Greece and Greek Orthodox communities throughout the world.

The only serious interference with the Gregorian Calendar in any country of Europe occurred in September, 1793, when the Convention of the French Revolutionary Government decreed that the common era should be abolished in all civil affairs, and that the new French era should begin on September 22, 1792, the day of the true Autumnal Equinox, and that each succeeding year should begin at the midnight of the day on which the true Autumnal Equinox falls. The French Revolutionary year was divided into 12 months of 30 days each. In

ordinary years there were five extra days, from the 17th to the 21st of September, and at the end of every fourth year was a sixth complementary day. This new French Era reckoning began November 22, 1793, and continued until December 31, 1805, when it was abandoned by order of Napoleon, and the Gregorian Calendar was reinstated in France.

Somewhat confusing was the method of observing the legal first day of the new year. Scotland made January 1 the first day of the year in 1600, but England recognized March 25 as New Year's Day until 1752, when it adopted January 1.

The word January has come down from the name of an Etruscan blacksmith who lived in Rome and made a specialty of locks and bolts for doors. When he died, he was deified as a pagan god, and was represented as having two faces, so that he could look both ways at the same time, and was associated with the opening and closing of doors. So the month that stood at the close of one year and the opening of another was called January or the month of Janus. So when we talk of January, a keeper of doors, we are honouring the name of a blacksmith who lived a thousand years before the Birth of Christ, and who had a wife by the name of Jane.

The month of February comes from the Latin word Februo, to purify. It was customary for the Romans at this time of the year to celebrate certain religious festivals and perform all sorts of ceremonies for the purpose of purifying themselves from sin.

March was named for Mars, Roman god of war, and in the time of Romulus it was the first month in the year. In this day there were only ten months in the calendar. These were of uneven lengths, some having less than twenty days and some containing as many as thirty-five days. When Numa became King, which was about 700 years before Christ, he decided that there should be 12 months and added two - January and February - and placed them at the beginning of the calendar; and in that way March became the third month. Among the old Saxons this month was known as Lenct, meaning spring, and this is the origin of our word "Lent."

The word May is said to be named for the Roman Goddess Maia. It is also said to be derived from a Latin word meaning "to grow."

June was named for the Goddess Juno.

The seventh month, July, was for a long time known by its old name of Quintilis, from the Latin meaning five, as it was the fifth month in the ancient calendar of Romulus; but its name was changed to July in honour of Julius Caesar; so the Emperor Augustus, not to be outdone, called the next month August. But the eighth month had only thirty days at that time, and Augustus did not propose to have the month named after him any shorter than a month named after Julius; so he took one day away from February and added it to August, and the marks of this vainglorious theft are evident on the calendar of today. Prior to Emperor Augustus, the month of August retained its old name of Sextilis (the sixth month).

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September is from the Latin septem, seven; this being the 7th month according to the old calendar; and, although it is now the ninth month, and has been so for 2,600 years, we still call it September.

The words October, November, and December also retain the names by which they were known when there were but ten months in the year, being derived from the Latin words Octo, Novem, and Decem---eight, nine, and ten.

All the days of the week are named in honour of gods of ancient mythology.

Sunday was the sun's day, or the day dedicated to the sun. Monday was sacred to the moon. Tuesday was Tyr's day. Tyr was the Norse god of war. Wednesday was sacred to Woden, the chief deity of Norse mythology. Thursday was the day dedicated to Thor, the Norse god of thunder. Friday was sacred to Freya, the Scandinavian goddess of marriage. The fish was her sacred emblem and was always eaten on that day in honour of her, a custom which survives to this time. Saturday was Saturn's day.

Whenever a numismatist ascertains the meaning of a word, it is wise to find its derivation. Do not imagine for a moment that the words we speak each day are only dull, listless sounds. Their history, their origin are alive with romance. Truly, the history of words are fascinating in the romance of time.

#### NEW MEMBERS

The following applications have been received. If no written objections are received, their acceptance will be acknowledged in the February issue of the Ontario Numismatist.

- 517 Gordon E. Pomeroy, 264 Kennedy Pl., Windsor, Ont.
- 518 Mrs. Gordon E. Pomeroy, 264 Kennedy Pl., Windsor, Ont.
- 519 Jack Watson, 305 Lock St. W., Dunnville, Ont.
- 520 Phil S. Pratt, 964 Ellwood Ave., Sarnia, Ont.
- 521 Mrs. E. Victor Snell, 6 Rosemount Ave., St. Catharines, Ont.
- C51 ONTARIO HYDRO COIN CLUB, c/o J. Boitson, Room 1104, Ontario Hydro, 620 University Avenue, Toronto 2, Ontario.
- C52A WESTMINSTER S. S. COIN CLUB, c/o David King, 159 Opessa Ave., London, Ont.

#### 1966 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues are due. We mean Now! The February issue of the Ontario Numismatist will be the last issue mailed to you unless your 1966 memberships dues are received shortly. The February issue will be in the mail before you turn around so please act fast. Mailing address is: Ontario Numismatic Association,  
P. O. Box 33,  
Waterloo, Ontario.

#### LAPEL PINS

O. N. A. Lapel Pins (size 5/8") in Sterling silver either button or safety catch are now available to members at \$2.75 each. Please specify which type when ordering. Make your money order payable to the Ontario Numismatic Association and send to P. O. Box 33, Waterloo, Ontario.

COMING EVENTS 1966

- March 12 and 13 - Waterloo Coin Society Seventh Annual Banquet, Walper Hotel, Kitchener, Ont. General Chairman: Heinz Herzog, 8 David Street, Kitchener. Bourse Chairman: John Wm. Craig, 105 Lancaster St. E., Kitchener. ANNUAL BANQUET MEDAL: WATERLOO'S FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE
- April 16 - Woodstock Coin Club Annual Coin Show, Old St. Paul's Church, Dundas Street, Woodstock.
- April 29, 30, May 1 - Ontario Numismatic Association Fourth Annual Convention, Cleary Auditorium, Windsor, Ontario. General Chairman - Paul Landry, 14200 St. Marys Street, Detroit 27, Michigan, U.S.A. Bourse Chairman: Gordon Pomeroy, 264 Kennedy Pl., Windsor, Ontario.

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AWARD OF MERIT

O.N.A. Members and participating clubs are requested to submit recommendations for the O.N.A. Award of Merit. All submissions are to be in the hands of the O.N.A. Secretary not later than March 1, 1966. Please use extreme caution in your selections and adhere to the rules governing this distinctive and highest of O.N.A. awards.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS (Continued)

4 (d) Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- (i) To act as Secretary at General Meetings and to the Executive, and to keep a true record of all proceedings of the association.
- (ii) To preserve all documents pertaining to his office and such other documents as may be committed to his custody until permission is granted by the executive for their disposal.
- (iii) To deal with correspondence as directed by the President.
- (iv) To prepare a full and final report of all matters pertaining to his office at the end of the Association year and render same at the Annual General Meeting.

To be continued.

CLUB NEWS

HAMILTON COIN CLUB had their own editor, Bruce Brace, as speaker for their November meeting. Bruce spoke on "The Mints of Spanish America."

SARNIA NUMISMATIC SOCIETY highlight for November was a talk on Canadian Tokens given by President, Dave Price. Interest was added to the lecture by a display of most of the tokens. Following are the new executive for the coming year: President - Jim Moore; Vice-president - Earl David; Secretary - Don Park; Exec. Secretary - Phil Pratt; Treasurer - Bill Crisp.

WOODSTOCK COIN CLUB -held their election of officers at their November meeting. Following are the results: President - Albert H. Cole; Vice-president - Douglas McGill; Secretary - George Bayne; Treasurer - George Gray.

OKVILLE COIN CLUB featured an O.N.A. Audio-Visual at their November meeting by David Ashe. Election of officers for the coming year was the main business of the evening.

WATERLOO COIN SOCIETY thoroughly enjoyed "What's My Coin"? presented by Mr. Rod Rekofski, at their November meeting. Election of officers took place and following are the results: President - Shirley English; Vice-president - Heinz Herzog; Secretary - John Shaw; Treasurer - Bruce Raszmann; Membership Chairman - Wilf Erb; Directors - Mrs. E. Shantz, Mrs. Jean McGregor, Harold Lauber, John Craig and Hugh MacKenzie. Ex Officio - Phil Mueller.

ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB is preparing for their election of officers for the coming year.

TORONTO COIN CLUB is indebted to Mr. Lloyd T. Smith, O.N.A. President, for his fascinating history of "The Allure of Gold." The title was well chosen and the beautiful coins on display were numerous. Dr. Kay exhibited an interesting display of numismatic material based on the theme - The Day The Mint Ran Out of Money.

LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY members and guests viewed 11 cases of tokens displayed by Lloyd T. Smith supported by a talk on "Canadian Tokens." The club is considering collections at their meetings with which to buy world mint sets to compliment their collection.

BRANTFORD COIN CLUB featured the fourth in the series, "Wampum to Decimal" by Lloyd T. Smith, an O.N.A. Audio-Visual service set. B.C.C. held its Fifth Annual Banquet in October with John J. Pitman as guest speaker, who gave a clear and concise history of the early stages on how our coins were collected today were spread throughout the country. Approximately 50 people remained for the banquet. Following are the display winners: Canadian Coins and Tokens - 1st. Louie Biro (Anchor Series); 2nd. Tom Kostaluk (Canada in General). Paper Notes - 1st. John Barchino (Brazilian Notes); 2nd. Mrs. Hilborn (Chinese notes). Foreign Coins - 1st. Tom Gear (Ancient Roman); 2nd. Mrs. Hilborn (Chinese). Miscellaneous - 1st. Tom Kostaluk.

Editor's Note: Now is the time when clubs are changing over to new executives. Will the new secretaries or editors please send a copy of their news bulletins to the Ontario Numismatic Association editor. Other clubs and individuals are interested in reading about your activities. Don't forget to turn over your brochures of all O.N.A. activities to your new executives.

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#### LIBRARY

We are pleased to announce a new librarian for the O.N.A. Mrs. Hazel Munro, 3703 Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ontario, has generously offered her services in this capacity. Any requests for borrowing literature from the library may now be addressed to Mrs. Munro. If you have any donations to make to the O.N.A. library, please forward them to the above address.

#### O. N. A. AUCTION

Jack C. Dietrich, Clinton, Ont. has been the successful auction bidder for the Ontario Numismatic Association Convention to be held on April 29, 30, and May 1, 1966, in Windsor, Ontario.

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In only one case did the Philadelphia mint place mint marks on its coins: the silver content Jefferson nickels from Philadelphia issued from 1942 to 1945 had a "F" mint mark.

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In the past 75 years, more than 150 million pounds of nickel have been used for coinage throughout the world.