



THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

WATERLOO, ONTARIO

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THE MANHATTAN COMPANY BANK

by David Ashe

The origin of some banking concerns are colourful and varied and, at times, with an element of historic interest. Such is the amazing story of the Manhattan Company Bank who opened their doors at 40 Wall Street, during the turn of the 1800's with the right to supply the City of New York with pure and wholesome water.

Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton were known in New York City, they had both gained considerable wealth and political power, and, like most ambitious men, the more they acquired the more they desired. Fate often brought them together and both had a fine example of intense mutual hatred for each other.

Burr became the third Vice-president. In 1800 Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr received equal votes for president, so the House of Representatives voted Jefferson in, with the help of Alexander Hamilton, who preferred Jefferson to Burr.

The mutual hatred of Burr and Hamilton continued until 1804. They had battled from the day of their first meeting until July 11, 1804, when Burr challenged Hamilton to a duel. They met early in the morning on the Hudson Palisades, Weehawken, New Jersey, and Hamilton fell fatally wounded during the pistol duel with Burr.

The numismatic story, however, starts in the later part of the eighteenth century when Aaron Burr made several attempts to establish a banking concern in New York City. On each occasion the move was blocked by the state legislature at the behest of Alexander Hamilton. At the time there were only two banks in New York. One was a branch of the Bank of the United States. The other was the Bank of New York, an institution of finance owned and operated by one Alexander Hamilton.

In the year 1797, Aaron Burr was elected to the New York State Assembly. Alexander Hamilton immediately feared the move was a mere preamble to an attempt to acquire a bank charter, but Burr seemed quite content, during the 1798 session, to occupy himself with normal legislature.

During the summer of 1798, New York became crippled with one of the most virulent epidemics of yellow fever. The epidemic was due of course to the disease-laden ships that tied up at the New York wharves; it was also due to the filth of decayed matter of dead horses, pigs, and dogs that lay in the streets.

Few of New York's populace knew this. Instead, the plague was blamed on the brackish water that offended their taste.

Meanwhile, Burr proved such a willing and able legislator that his re-election in 1799 was accomplished with ease. And while Hamilton was now convinced that Burr was up to something, he kept a suspicious eye on his hated opponent.

Burr travelled to Albany for the 1799 session of the Assembly and, during the closing days of the legislature, when the members scarcely had time to read it, brought about the passage of his water bill, on April 2, 1799, granting him the right to supply the City of New York with pure and wholesome water. The capital of the company was fixed at two million dollars.

The capital was quickly raised and a well was dug in the summer of 1600, followed by the laying of a pipe line to convey water.

The real purpose of the company, however, was made evident through the opening, at 40 Wall Street, of the Manhattan Company Bank, an occurrence that puzzled, to say the very least, Alexander Hamilton, since he owned the only bank charter other than that of the branch of the Bank of the United States.

Hamilton immediately sent his lawyers to investigate and they had little trouble determining the answer. Among the many clauses of Burr's water charter was a paragraph in small print, which stated that the surplus capital might be employed in any way not inconsistent with the laws and Constitution of the United States or the state of New York.

Hamilton protested, accusing Burr of chicanery in securing passage of his bill. But nothing could be done and Governor Jay, who had signed the bill granting the water charter, would not repeal the enactment.

It was as late as 1955 that Burr's water charter came into the news again. The Chase National Bank of New York decided to be the surviving corporation when it merged with the Manhattan Company Bank. But lawyers found yet another clause in Burr's

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charter requiring that any sale of the bank to be approved by every single shareholder, which meant that if one person opposed the merger, the merger could not take place. So the Manhattan Company Bank bought the Chase National Bank of New York instead and the Chase-Manhattan Bank is the present-day form of the water company and banking business that Aaron Burr started in spite of Alexander Hamilton.

COMING EVENTS

- August 24, 25, 26 CANADIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION 13th Annual Convention, New Marlborough Hotel, Smith St., and Elliott Ave., Winnipeg, Man.
General Chairman - Albert Stern, 457 Main Street, Winnipeg, Man.
- September 24 LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY Annual Banquet and Coin Show, Holiday Inn. Awards for Prize-winning competitive displays. Separate Junior category with an award. Display Chairman - Sam Smith, 92 Elworthy Avenue, London, Ontario. Auction - Lloyd T. Smith. General Chairman - William N. Clarke, 167 Delaware St., London, Ontario.
- October 2 KITCHENER COIN CLUB 3rd Annual Coin Show, Walper Hotel, Kitchener, Ontario. 10:00 a. m. to 6:00 p. m. Admission ...FREE! There will be: competitive and non-competitive displays...hourly prize draws...bourse dealers...GIANT SILVER DOLLAR DRAW!!! Six competitive display categories - Gold; Canadian Decimal; Paper; Foreign (except U. S. A.; United States; Medals and Tokens. Special Awards for Best-of-Show and Most-Like by the public. Display Chairman - Albert Fuller, 80 Water St. N., Kitchener, Ontario. Bourse information - Patrick Collins, R. R. #2, Petersburg, Ont.
- October 8, 9, 10 CENTRAL COIN CLUB Semi-Annual Central Coin Show, Westbury Hotel, 475 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario. General Chairman - Larry McNeil. Bourse Chairman - Vince Doran. Display Chairman - John Regitko, Jr.,. Information from: Central Coin Club, Central YMCA, 40 College Street, Toronto 2, Ontario. (This show will include a varied educational programme, including a quantity of O.N.A. Audio-Visuals).
- October 15 ST. CATHARINES COIN CLUB Annual Banquet, Queensway Hotel. Co-chairmen - Pat Lambert and Sam McMullen. Guest speaker - Mr. Art Duncan, executive of Bata Shoe Company. Fifteen bourse dealers \$10.00 bourse fee includes dinner...contact: Mr. Victor Snell, 6 Rosemount Ave., St. Catharines, Ontario. A "POT OF GOLD" (?) guessing competition. A meal fit for a king, complete with all the trimmings. Exhibits, all comers welcome, prizes for visiting exhibitors. Admission FREE. Banquet tickets \$3.00 only. Prizes every hour on the hour. A million dollars worth of friendship to all who attend our banquet.
- November 19, 20 CANADIAN NUMISMATIC VARIETIES COLLECTORS' ASSOCIATION First Annual Coin Show, Central YMCA, 40 College St., Toronto 2, Ontario. First show of its kind in Canada and the United States. Displays, bourse, Audio-visuals, Films and Guest Speakers dealing entirely with Mint Errors and Die varieties. Chairman: John Regitko, Jr., 29 Spruce Street, Toronto 2, Ontario. Assistant Chairman -

Vince Doran, 606 Pape Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. Plan to attend this unique show dealing only with this interesting phase of numismatics

NEW MEMBERS

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

- 550. W. H. Measor, 105 Forster Avenue, London, Ontario.
- 551. Mrs. W. H. Measor, 105 Forster Avenue, London, Ontario.
- 552. L. M. Smith, 691 Strathmeyer St., London, Ontario.
- 553. James F. Lougheed, 317-2nd. Avenue East, Owen Sound, Ontario.
- 556. CANADIAN NUMISMATIC VARIETY COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION, c/o Jack Wallace, Secretary-Treasurer, P. O. Box 194, Kingston, Ontario.

CLUB NEWS

HURONIA NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION had thirty-three members and guests in attendance, in June. H. N. S. will celebrate their anniversary in September and plans are well under way for a real celebration. The July meeting will be auction and bourse with no business meeting for this summer month.

LONDON NUMISMATIC SOCIETY's President, Thomas Masters welcomed 40 members and guests to the June Display Night, Even though this was a non-competitive show, the members co-operated by displaying 26 cases of very nice numismatic material. Junior members took a very active interest in displaying their coins.

ST. THOMAS NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION, June meeting, was highlighted by an O. N. A. Audio-visual, "Odd and Curious Money", produced and narrated by Percy Elgie, with photography by Lloyd T. Smith, O. N. A. President. It was also "Guest Night". July meeting featured a "Dutch Auction."

THISTLETOWN COIN CLUB holds its monthly meeting at the Senior Public School, 925 Albion Rd. June 14 was the final meeting until fall. The club enjoyed an O. N. A. Audio-visual. In addition, a special contest was set up to test the members' numismatic knowledge. Meeting night when the club resumes activities in the fall... Tuesday, September 13.

WATERLOO COIN SOCIETY TO HOST 1967 ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

The 1967 O. N. A. Convention will move back to the Kitchener-Waterloo area. The Waterloo Coin Society have many new and different plans to interest the collectors, during the show to be held on May 27, 28 and 29, 1967.

John Shaw of the Waterloo club will be the general chairman. The convention executive will be selected at a special meeting to be held in August. A complete list of the convention chairmen will be published as soon as it is available.

The City of Waterloo has given permission for the crest of the city to be used as one side of the commemorative medal that will be struck for the event.

Spacious facilities at the Granite Club will provide plenty of room for large display and bourse areas. A questionnaire has been sent out to all bourse dealers to find out how a large convention can best assist them. Many displays have already been committed for the show, and a strong effort will be made to have the largest number of exhibits ever shown at an Ontario show.

Lloyd T. Smith, O. N. A. President, and the executive of the Association know from past performances that the Waterloo Club will put on an excellent show. Any enquiries may be directed to John Shaw, Box 41, Waterloo, Ontario.

REMINDER

FIFTEEN "Wonderful" days at the Canadian National Exhibition. The Ontario Numismatic Association display will be in the General Exhibits Building, near the Princes' Gate. Come in and see "World Coins and Currencies." Stop, and say "Hello"! And REMEMBER, we need helping hands. It is a wonderful place to rest those tired feet; meet old friends and make new acquaintances; most of all, a chance to talk about our favourite subject, NUMISMATICS.

REMEMBER, O. N. A. at the C. N. E., August 19th through September 5th

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TRADING - WHY?

Taken from Thistletown Coin Club Bulletin

Trading is one of the most enjoyable aspects of numismatics. It allows you to improve your collection without a further outlay of money because you are merely trading away something you have previously purchased, or even better, something you picked up in change. You can always find somebody who needs that extra you have, and has something you need in return. It is really the boon of novice collectors because through trading they meet new people, learn more about their coins, and deepen their interest in the hobby.

HOW DOES ONE TRADE?

This can be done wither person to person or through the mail. It is easier person to person because you see the coins you are trading for before you part with your own. You therefore both agree on the spot as to the condition and worth of the coins involved in the trade. By mail, it is often disappointing and does not work out as well as you anticipate, for people have a tendency to overgrade their own material and undergrade yours. The new grading catalogues have done much to alleviate this problem. You might even have the misfortune to correspond with some dishonest person who does not live up to his end of the deal and you will find yourself minus some coins, but this is the risk you take dealing through the mail. Members of the A. N. A. and C. N. A. are usually trustworthy. If the transaction involves considerable cash value, it is wise to deal through your local bank. They will be glad to administer the transaction for you at a nominal charge. When this is done, the bank holds your coins for you in trust until they have received the coins of your correspondent and they are satisfactory to you.