

NORTH YORK COIN CLUB

FOUNDED 1960

MONTHLY MEETINGS 4TH TUESDAY 8 P.M.
NORTH YORK MEMORIAL COMMUNITY HALL
5090 YONGE STREET, WILLOWDALE, ONTARIO

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Jan 1975

MEMBER:

THE CANADIAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

UNDERGROUND MEDALS

Editors of Journal of Numismatics:

So many go to see London, ... that it may be well to give your readers a word of caution. In passing along where they are digging out old basements, or making excavations, a workman may ask your attention to a very curious coin or medal which his spade has just turned up. He will be especially apt to do so, if he sees you are from "the States;" and they all know a Yankee at first glance, ... He cannot tell you what it is, but you can have it for two shillings.

Just such a find, consisting of two leaden tokens or medals, was lately offered for sale at the Cabinet of the Mint. The pieces made a good show, and had a good endorsement. The latter was in the shape of a newspaper flourish, which I will not send you, because it gives the name of the learned Professor (in one of our large cities) who translated the inscriptions, and explained the devices. Sufficient to say, they gave the names and faces of two Anglo-Saxon kings, never heard of before; and the larger piece, in which the king was armed with sword and cross, was "intended for his soldiers, going to the Crusades." It bore the date 1000, and was therefore struck long enough in advance [the first Crusade was summoned by Pope Urban II, 1095].

They looked old enough, and barbaric enough, to belong to that very age. And yet, I thought a little more scholarship ought to be exercised upon them before making a purchase. So with the owner's consent, I sent impressions in gutta percha to an esteemed correspondent in the medal department in the British Museum, to have his experience and judgement.



Here I would copy the reply, but cannot just now lay hands upon it. The amount of it was, that the medals were an imposture; the legends had no sense or meaning whatever; and they were just such pieces as are constantly fabricated in some of the manufacturing towns, and sold very cheap to the London laborers, on purpose to be dug up.

And, as if to "pour water on a drowned mouse," it was added, that the date alone was enough to condemn it, since there was no use or knowledge of Arabic figures (1000) for nearly three centuries after that, in England, or any part of Europe except Moorish Spain.

I have charity enough to believe that the translator only meant to help the humbug along, and gratify the lucky holder of the prizes. When I communicated to the latter the reply sent to me, he "believed the British Museum did not know anything about it," and wished the pieces returned. Probably there was a spirit of rivalry, as he has a museum of his own.

U.S. Mint, Philadelphia, Sept. 7.

W. E. D.

[the above is reprinted from the American Journal of Numismatics, of October, 1874. The illustrations show genuine examples of the coins of King Aethelred II, dating from 997-1003 A.D. I think many collectors can benefit from the century-old experience of the writer.-- Ed.]

The LAST MEETING and Christmas party of the N.Y.C.C. was held last December 10th. The non-numismatic talk included John Dewyze, speaking on the collection of beer cans, Christmas cards, and post cards depicting Toronto and famous Dutch and Canadian paintings; Ted Merner on growing African violets, Diane Getgood on writing poetry and songs, and Audrey Conson on her fascinating collection of miniature liquor bottles. Paul Johnson presented Ted Banning with the plaque for the C.N.A.'s Debbie Jane Gould Memorial Award, Ted having been named the recipient at the C.N.A. convention last August. The auction was conducted by Harvey Farrow; and for the first time at the N.Y.C.C., numismatic Christmas gifts were exchanged by those attending. Attendance, incidentally, has been so high recently that the large room in the Hall has been reserved for the club through 1975.

CLUB NOMINATIONS for the 1975 O.N.A. executive were made at the December meeting. Ray Pleau received the club's nomination for O.N.A. president, Tony Gordon for first vice-president, and Ray and Tony again for the offices of area director for areas 7 and 6 respectively, in case they should, for any reason, not be elected to the other offices.

The 1975 EXECUTIVE of the N.Y.C.C. has been acclaimed into office, Jean Orr having withdrawn her candidacy for Director.

Honorary President	- Mrs. Louise Graham
Immediate Past President	- Roger A. Fox
President	- Stanley Clute
First Vice-President	- Frederick C. Jewett
Second Vice-President	- Paul Johnson
Secretary	- Mrs. Lucille Colson
Treasurer	- George Fraser
Directors	- Harvey Farrow
	- Mrs. May Bunnett
	- Reg Strong
Junior Director	- Jon Jones
Editor by Appointment	- Ted Banning

Congratulations to Roger Fox on the arrival of his new daughter!

NEW MEMBERS to the club include Harold A. Robinson, Joseph Pasnick, Ted Merner, Larry Tierney, and Andrew Jurrius. Welcome. Applications for membership have been made by Alan Blair of Rexdale (junior), David Brown of Willowdale (junior), Stephen Bobkin of Willowdale (junior), and Mr. Robert Aaron of Toronto.

BOURSE TABLES will no longer be free at monthly meetings, this year, since the club is moving to a larger room at double the rent. The tables will still be available only to member dealers, but there will be a charge of ten dollars to have the table reserved for the whole year, or two dollars per month on a casual basis. This step has been taken by the executive in an effort to have the meetings carry their own costs each month, as much as possible.

HAVE YOU RENEWED your 1975 membership yet?

For the NEXT MEETING of the N.Y.C.C., members are invited to bring their favourite numismatic pieces, and to talk briefly about them.

COMING EVENTS:

March 14-16 - Charlton Auctions. More information later.

March 22 - North York Coin Club Show: 10 AM - 10 PM, N.Y. Memorial Community Hall, 5090 Yonge Street, Willowdale. Members are asked to bring items for the White Elephant Sale.

April 17-20 - Torex '75: Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto. Information from 347 Bay Street, Suite 1000, Toronto, M5H 2R7.

April 26-27 - O.N.A. convention: Victorian Motor Inn, Stratford, Ont. Information from Ken Wilmot, Box 76, Sebringville, Ontario.

July 14-16 - C.N.A. convention: Palliser Hotel, Calgary, Alberta. Calgary Numismatic Society, P.O. Box 633, Calgary, T2P 2J3.

August 19-24 - A.N.A. convention: Los Marriot Hotel, Los Angeles, CA. E. C. Burgolte, P.O. Box 2377, Sepulveda, CA. 91343, U.S.A.

Assignats



In 1789, after the French Revolution, the new French government had great financial worries. In the first place, the Treasury had already been emptied by King Louis XVI, and as if that was not bad enough, the whole country was in economic chaos. Frenchmen were hoarding gold and silver coins, fearing to spend them in such unstable times; and with no money circulating, shops and businesses were closed.

The National Assembly believed that if enough money began circulating among the public, the country would soon recover, so they issued a new currency called Assignats. These bonds, would pay the bearer 3% interest, and were backed not by gold, nor by silver, but by land which had been confiscated from the Church.

Although declared to be "as good as gold" by the government, the Assignats soon entered a long inflationary spiral, becoming so worthless and such a hated nuisance that millions were finally burned by Napoleon Bonaparte. The eighteenth century French, like the citizens of modern inflation-struck countries, were learning their lesson when it came to poorly-backed "currency."

