

# RNA News

The official journal of the Rochester Numismatic Association



*What does this  
Chicago jewelry store  
have to do with our  
club's founder – or  
Hard Times tokens?*

**Dave Gottfried explains, as he updates an early RNA  
presentation on “Dated Store Cards of Illinois”**

• • •

**PLUS: A busy February for the board • A slate for next year's  
officers • It's medal ordering time**

**March 2005**



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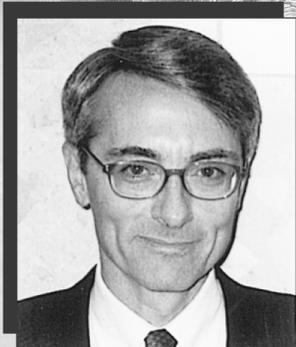
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Newsletter Editor: Scott Fybush  
rnanews@fybush.com

## 2004-2005 Officers:

**President:** Edith Coe  
585-865-7992  
billcoe@juno.com

**Vice President:** Tom Kraus  
585-241-3807  
tkraus1@rochester.rr.com

**Secretary:** Steve Lanzafame  
585-288-1932  
unpub@aol.com

**Treasurer:** Ted Vaccarella  
585-538-6945  
tedvacc37@rochester.rr.com

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Visit the RNA Web site:  
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**P.O. Box 10056**  
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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

# A Productive February

Well, this has been a short, busy month! We held our two regular meetings and two board meetings in February.

Much was accomplished by the board and I thank everyone for attending. Four resolutions were passed:

**1. An award for numismatic writing.** This award will work much the same way as the Speaker's Medal: a medal will be awarded to each RNA member who makes a contribution to numismatic knowledge through published writing, whether in the RNA News or other publication. A silver colored medal will be awarded for the first such article.

Each medal will be personalized with the person's name and date of that publication, and a gold colored medal will be awarded for the fifth presentation and each subsequent five presentations. (Get those pencils sharpened!)

**2. Honoring of officers who die while in service to the club:** The RNA will strike and issue a medal in memory of any officer or board member in good standing who dies while in office without having attained the rank of President, and one example of such medal will be presented to the family of the deceased officer or board member.

Copies of such medals will be made available for sale to club members, with the proceeds of such sales applied to the production of such medals.

**3. Honoring of deceased club members:** Upon notification of the death of a club member in good standing, the club shall purchase for the RNA Library a book in memory of that member, with an appropriate bookplate to be designed and affixed by the Librarian.

The Secretary shall prepare a page for the minutes in memory of that member, listing wherever possible

the important details of that member's life and that member's contributions to the study of numismatics. Also, a moment of silence shall be observed at the next regular RNA meeting in memory of that member.

**4. Resolution on sending a letter to all ANA candidates:** The "2012 Committee" shall send to each declared candidate for ANA office an inquiry to determine the extent of their support for a Rochester convention in 2012, along with a copy of a resolution that the RNA hopes to honor its centennial in 2012 by hosting another ANA convention in Rochester. The RNA hosted the ANA conventions in 1912, 1917, and 1928.

Many subjects were discussed at the February 10 board meeting and were covered in the minutes posted on the wall at the last meeting.

I hope you are keeping up on the Club's activities by reading the minutes. We appreciate all of your support!

The Board also voted to fill the board seat of Jim Sanders for the rest of this 2004-2005 year.

Jim Kemp was selected to hold this director position until the Annual Meeting in May. Congratulations Jim! Welcome aboard! That position and two other board positions as well as President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Curator, and Librarian will be voted on at the Annual Meeting.

I am looking forward to the rest of this year, especially the Meinhart Speaking Contest, Semi Annual Auction, Annual Banquet, and Annual Picnic.

Happy Spring! Soon, I hope.

*Edie Coe*

## Board Meeting

**The RNA will hold a Board Meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 26 at the home of Bill and Edie Coe, 101 Oakbriar Drive. All members are welcome - call Bill and Edie at 865-7992 for directions!**

# An Update to Dr. French's 1916 Talk on "Dated Store Cards of Illinois"

by David Gottfried

As many members of the RNA may know, my primary interest of collecting is Hard Times and Civil War Tokens. I find the history behind them fascinating. These tokens feature various designs advertising stores of every kind, were designed as a substitute for scarce small change, or made political statements on national issues. I find them to be far more interesting than collecting standard US coinage.

Apparently, the market has also jumped on the Hard Times Token bandwagon as another attractive investment choice – note that all the major grading services now grade them – and thus the price of my specialized area has increased substantially. Being a relatively young 27 years, it's funny to look at current prices and say, "I remember paying half that!" It also reminds me of reading through the John Jay Pittman catalogs and comparing prices paid (albeit 40 or 50 years earlier) with prices realized!

Recently, a few RNA members have volunteered for the task of reorganizing the Association's library – which in recent years had fallen into disrepair. The cabinets were falling in on themselves, and the books were seriously out of order. As we went through the old cabinets something caught my eye: talks given by early members of the RNA!

The one I have reprinted below was given by our club's founder, Dr. George P. French, back in 1916. This short paper also grabbed my attention because of its topic: "The dated store cards of Illinois that should be in the Hard Times List."

Now, when I first started collecting Hard Times Tokens, general interest in the area, it's fair to say, was limited to a small group of collectors. Fortunately, due in large part to Lyman H. Low and Russell Rulau, there is a great deal of information on the topic available to collectors today. However, I can only assume that the amount of knowledge on the topic back in 1916 had to be far less than anything we have today! Reprinting this talk allows me to cull the current literature on the subject to give a modern take on the tokens discussed – and also provide some additional information that existing texts lack.

But for the moment, let me take a backseat to our club founder, Dr. French, for his presentation on Illinois Hard Times Tokens:

"The dated store cards in the Hard Times token list by Lyman H. Low extend to and include the year 1846. This evening I wish to call your attention to those store cards of Illinois dated 1845, which should be in the list. These show cards were uttered by four different firms – two combining to issue one card.

This latter card was uttered by N.C. Amsden, Genoa and Geo. Williams, Belvidere, Ill. The other two cards were put out by two firms in Chicago, viz., Hamilton and White and Burbank and Shaw. They were all issued in copper. I have never seen one in any other metal.

## *Amsden and Williams*

The card issued by Amsden and Williams has on the obverse in the upper center part of the field a man walking at a fast pace, underneath which is GENOA and underneath Genoa is ILLINOIS; beneath which at the lower border is the date 1845, on each side of which is a star separating it from the marginal advertisement: I AM GOING TO N.C. AMSDEN'S STORE.

On the reverse side is a semicircle. Above is the inscription GEO. WILLIAMS, and below in a semicircle is BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS, and between these two in three straight lines is:

DEALER  
IN DRY GOODS &  
GROCERIES.

I only remember seeing this piece sold at public sale three times in the last 25 years, one piece having been sold twice. It is excessively rare.

## *Hamilton and White*

The Hamilton & White card has the following inscription on the obverse. In a semicircle around the upper half of the coin is the firm's name: HAMILTON & WHITE. At the lower center is the date 1845, which is curved. Between these two curved lines is the following in five straight lines:

DEALER IN  
DRY GOODS  
GROCERIES  
AND  
PRODUCE.

This token is extremely rare – very seldom being offered for sale.

## *Burbank and Shaw*

The Burbank and Shaw card has the firm's name: BURBANK AND SHAW in a semicircle around the upper half of the border and GROCERIES & CROCKERY in a semicircle around the lower half of the border. Within this outer inscription is a roped circle, within which in a semicircle above is DEALERS and below in a semicircle is DRY GOODS. In the center of the circle in a straight line is the word IN, underneath which are two dashes divided by a dot. On the reverse side around the border, CASH PAID FOR PRODUCE. Below the period is the letter "W" with a period on each side. This letter stands for Wright, the die cutter of Albany. Within this inscription is another roped circle similar to the one on the obverse, within which in a semicircle above is CHICAGO; below in a curved line is the date 1845. Between the two curved lines are the numbers 149 and below, LAKE STREET, below which are two dashes divided by a dot. This comes in planchet of two sizes, one much larger than the other. I have seen but one specimen of the large planchet. This card is very rare but not so rare as the other two.

The Peacock Card comes in two varieties, and they are dated 1837, but were issued at a much later date. The date simply refers to the date the firm started in business."

## *A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Update*

Fast forward to today – 88 years later. Much has changed since Dr. French presented his paper.

## *C.D. Peacock Jewelers – Chicago, Illinois*

First, let me tackle the Peacock Card mentioned at the end of his piece. This refers to cards issued by Charles Daniel Peacock, a jeweler, in the style of a hard times piece. They were, however, as Dr. French noted, minted much later. Elijah Peacock founded his jewelry store, "The House of Peacock," in 1837, the year Chicago was incorporated as a city. Peacock was an Englishman

who worked as a clockmaker and repairman of ships chronometers, and who was praised by his contemporaries for his abilities in that area.

Elijah died in 1889, and the store was then run by his son, C.D. Peacock. However, in 1903, he died and the store moved down one more branch on the family tree to C.D. Peacock, Jr.

C.D. Peacock is still in business today, and is Chicago's oldest firm. The business has relocated to Northbrook, Illinois, but the doors remain at its old location on State Street in downtown Chicago.

Rulau's book – Standard Catalog of United States Tokens 1700-1900 – includes the Peacock tokens in the Appendix to Hard Times Tokens, with the series having been struck between 1900 and 1906. As it turns out, these tokens were contemporary to Dr. French, not the Hard Times period. While not strictly Hard Times Tokens, the pieces are very similar in style and thus warrant a spot in any Hard Times Token collection.

Also, let me take a moment to give a plug to Rulau's text. It's imperative that anyone interested in collecting anything have the best research tools, and his book is by far the best. I highly recommend the broader text covering tokens for the entire period of early America. Over the course of collecting, you'll undoubtedly run into tokens that you don't recognize, and many fall into the other categories covered in the text.

Next we move on to the other pieces mentioned in Dr. French's talk – the tokens of Geo. Williams/N.C. Amsden of Genoa and Belvidere, Illinois; Burbank & Shaw of Chicago; and Hamilton and White, also of Chicago.

Unfortunately, Rulau's text provides very little information on this token. Rulau states, "A double card. It should also be included under Belvidere, Ill. (in addition to Genoa). Noah C. Amsden appears in the 1850 census." This token has found its way into the U.S. Merchant token category – not the Hard Times period. This is due to the years ascribed to the period as 1833 to 1844. This token, as well as the others discussed by Dr. French, all fall into this later classification system.

I have been unable to find any information about either Williams or Amsden. An interesting coincidence is that the founder of the YMCA was named George Williams, who was also a dealer in dry goods! Unfortunately, he lived in London, England, and it doesn't appear he ever made it to Belvidere, Illinois.

Dr. French fails to mention the device on the obverse of this token – an image of a man with an apparently determined gait, with the text encircling him. We don't know what Amsden's store sold, but it must have been worth it! What is interesting, however, is how close geographically the towns of Genoa and Belvidere are to each other. In fact, we could hypothesize that these two store owners planned the use of this token at either of their stores. I have contacted the Belvidere Historical Society, and hope to hear from them soon with any additional information.

### ***Burbank & Shaw – Chicago, Illinois***

According to Rulau, "The diesinkers initial .W. on these tokens has not been traced. It is possible a Mr. Waller or Mr. White of 77 or 72 Lake Street, Chicago are responsible for the tokens." Both Waller and White are listed by Rulau as diesinkers of the time, however it is unclear to me whether or not they are the same person, or if it is just a guess by Rulau that they were diesinkers from Chicago at all. If we go back to Dr. French's piece, he writes that, "Below the period is the letter "W" with a period on each side. This letter stands for Wright the die cutter of Albany."

The name Wright is neither Waller nor White, as supposed by Rulau. However, most serious collectors will know of Charles Cushing Wright. According to information from a recent catalog of the William Reese Company, it states that, "Charles Cushing Wright was a noted medalist and engraver, taking up engraving while working for a silversmith in Utica, New York, about 1817, and worked briefly in Albany and New York City before going to Savannah, Georgia, in 1819. In 1820, after losing all his possessions in the great fire in Savannah, he moved to Charleston. There he married the still-life and portrait artist, Lavinia Dorothy Simons. In 1823 the Wrights moved to New York City and there spent the rest of their lives. Charles Cushing Wright was a founder of the National Academy and frequently exhibited there and at the American Art-Union."

Could it be that Charles Cushing Wright was the engraver for the Burbank and Shaw token? Rulau states Wright's known hallmark as "CCW", and these tokens bear a "W" hallmark only. And this token bears the 1845 date, by which time Charles Cushing Wright was already living in New York City, where apparently he remained until his death on June 7, 1854. This being the case, is there another "Wright" engraver who was known to have been operating in Albany in 1845? In order to confirm that possibility, more research will be required, as initial searches on the Internet have resulted in no information regarding another "Wright" from Albany.

The Burbank and Shaw token itself is pictured here. Rulau writes, "The Chicago Business Directory for 1844 fails to list either Burbank or Shaw. The 1853 directory also fails to mention the firm. Thus it may be accepted that Burbank & Shaw started business in 1844-45 and were out of business before 1853. Since at least 50 of the Burbank & Shaw pieces are known, we assign Rarity 5 to this piece, making it the most readily available of the Illinois' rare 1845-dated merchant tokens."

In my own research – albeit limited to Internet searches – I was also unable to find any additional information on the firm. However, I won't let that stop me from continuing the search!

### ***Hamilton and White – Chicago, Illinois***

Rulau states, "Hamilton & White – Robert P. Hamilton and M.L. White – appear in the 1844 directory as a dry goods and grocery store at 13 Lake Street. The partnership, and the partners, have disappeared by the 1854 directory." French wrote



**The doors to C.D. Peacock Jewelers**  
*(courtesy Chicago Historical Society)*

that the token was very rare. Apparently, the copper variety is available and is valued between \$160 and \$300; however there is a silvered copper variety which Rulau calls "The rarest of all early available Illinois tokens."

In doing a little research on my own, I was able to come up with the following description of Hamilton & White in the 1843 Chicago Directory: "dealers in groceries, provisions, and produce, lard, oil, sterna candles, dried fruit, sash, nails, glass, powder, shot, lead, wooden-ware, clothing, etc., etc., 139 Lake Street, (first door west of Lake-Street House), Chicago, Ill." I was also able to find the name of the clerk at Hamilton & White's in Chicago: William J. Lytle.

Rulau states the White as M.L., and further research discovered his full name to be Marquis L. White. Apparently, Mr. White moved to Nebraska in 1858, and I was able to come up with the following information from the Cass County – Andreas' History of the State of Nebraska:

"MARQUIS L. WHITE, retired merchant, was born in Otsego County, N. Y., in 1815. Was for several years employed as salesman in mercantile business at Guilford, N. Y. In 1835, he went to Chicago, Ill., and was variously engaged in farming, trading, etc., until 1843, when he entered into mercantile business in the firm of Hamilton & White. The firm carried on the business until 1848. Mr. White then carried on a general merchandise business at Waupun, Wis., for two years; then in same business, in connection with flour-mill at Mackford, Green Lake Co., Wis., for some four years, afterward carried on a hardware business at La Salle, Ill., for a year, and for three years at Burlington, Iowa. He came to Nebraska in 1858; located at Plattsmouth; was engaged in farming, building, etc., and for six months in mining and merchandising west of here. In 1861, he entered into the



RESIDENCE OF M. L. WHITE.

M.L. White's house in Cass County, Nebraska

grocery and drug business in company with J. H. Buttery, remaining in that business until 1871, since which time he has been principally engaged in dealing in real estate and improving his property. From 1875 to 1876, he was engaged in dealing in ice at Omaha, Neb., in partnership with Richard Kimball, and, from the spring of 1877 to the fall of 1878, he, in company with others, ran quartz crushing mills at Lead City, Dak. Mr. White was elected Mayor of Plattsmouth four times, and was elected County Commissioner of Cass County twice."

Apparently, Mr. White had little interest in adding more tokens to his repertoire, as following the trail of various business endeavors he was involved in turned up no other tokens with connections to him. Further research turned up another partner of Mr. White's while he worked with Jonas H. Buttery in the medical business, a Dr. George H. Black. Unfortunately, Dr. Black, in his various lines of employment, also failed to produce any tokens. Indeed, of the various incarnations of White's grocery and drug business in Plattsmouth, Nebraska – Black, Buttery & Co., White & Buttery, or just ML White – none had any tokens made.

#### Conclusion

This sums up my update to Dr. French's 1916 talk at the RNA on the 1845 dated tokens from Illinois. All of these tokens are rare – as mentioned in Dr. French's talk. All are also currently classified as Merchant Exchange Tokens, not Hard Times Tokens. Dr. French has potentially provided some new information about the diesinker for the Burbank & Shaw token, which requires further research to confirm the existence of a "Wright" diesinker in Albany, New York. And I hope that I've added a little more to the topic of these rare and interesting tokens.

## Club News and Notes

### David Gottfried Medal Orders

Medal Committee chairman **Bill Coe** sends along word that orders will be taken until March 17 for the David A. Gottfried RNA Presidential Medal. Each member in good standing who was a member during the year of David's presidency is entitled to one bronze copy of the medal.

Additional bronze copies and silver versions may be ordered at the prevailing prices (\$15 and \$35, respectively, last year). Please contact Bill Coe at (585) 865-7992 or [billcoe@juno.com](mailto:billcoe@juno.com) by March 17 with the number and type you wish to order. Orders will be taken also at the March 3 and 17 regular meetings.

### Nominating Committee Slate

The nominating committee offers the following slate of officers for 2005-06, reports chairman **David Gottfried**:

**President - Thomas Kraus, Vice President - Joseph Lanzafame, Treasurer - Ted Vaccarella,**

**Librarian - Michael Luck, Curator - John Zabel**

The following are submitted for the Board of Directors:  
**James Kemp (for term ending in 2007), Scott Fybush and John Bixler (for terms ending in 2008)**

And please note that the position of Secretary, a two-year term running from 2005 to 2007, is still in need of a nominee! If you are interested in serving this position, please contact me ASAP at 738-0908 or [dag@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dag@rochester.rr.com). This position is responsible for taking minutes at member meetings and board meetings. You are no longer required to work on the newsletter, although RNA News editor Scott Fybush would undoubtedly appreciate it! (*Editor's note: Yup!*)

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# The Calendar **March-April**

- **Thursday March 3 – 8 PM – Alec Ollies** speaks on “Heavy Duty Coin Collecting – A Rock-Solid Investment.”
- **Thursday March 17 – 8 PM – Grant Hobika** speaks – and I believe he said the topic was “Macronumismatics.”
- **Friday March 18 – 7:30 PM – Rochester Junior Numismatic Association** Open to anyone 17 or younger – adult members welcome, too! Contact Junior Club advisor Steve Lanzafame at 288-1932 or unpub@aol.com for information.
- **Thursday April 7 – 8 PM – Jason Childers** speaks on “Chuck E. Cheese Tokens.” Also on **April 7**, Nick Graver passes along word that the Archaeological Institute will have a talk on “Phrygian Coins,” at 7:30 in the Memorial Art Gallery auditorium on University Avenue.
- **April 8-10 – ANA National Money Show, Kansas City, Missouri** Everything’s up to date in Kansas City...including the nearest ANA show to the East Coast for 2005.
- **April 16-17 – Buffalo Numismatic Association (Checopex) Coin and Stamp Show.** Over 65 tables. Doors open at 10 a.m. both days. Knights of Columbus Hall, 2735 Union Road, Cheektowaga (Thruway exit 52A). Free admission.
- **Thursday April 21 – 8 PM – Alec Ollies** speaks on “Heavy Duty Coin Collecting – A Rock-Solid Investment.”
- **Tuesday April 26 – 7 PM – Board Meeting** Details on page 3 – all are welcome!

Regular RNA meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of every month except July and August at the Eisenhart Auditorium of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Avenue. Enter through the Eisenhart or Gannett School doors and follow the signs downstairs to our lower-level meeting room. All are welcome! Call Dave Gottfried at 738-0908 if you need a ride or directions.

RJNA meetings are held in either the ballroom of the Eisenhart Auditorium building or an upstairs classroom at the Gannett School; follow the signs posted on the building’s doors or call Steve Lanzafame at 288-1932 for more information.

The Calendar welcomes meeting notices from other area clubs. Send them to rnanews@fybush.com or PO Box 10056, Rochester NY 14610.

## *RNA News*

**Rochester Numismatic Association  
PO Box 10056  
Rochester NY 14610-0056**