

## Hobbyists Enjoy Numismatic Coin Collecting

Originally the province of royalty and privileged classes, numismatic coin collecting was known as "the hobby of kings." Over time, people from lower classes began coin collecting and today it is a hobby anyone of any age or background can participate in and enjoy.

In ancient Rome, Ceasar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, was known for distributing all kinds of coins to the people as Saturnalia gifts. In 1355, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV was presented a collection of coins by Petrarch. Petrarch, an Italian scholar and poet, is considered the first Renaissance coin collector.

The first book having to do with coins was written by Guillaume Bude in 1514, *De Asse et Partibus*. King Louis XIV of France, King Ferdinand I, Pope Boniface VIII and Maximillian, Holy Roman Emperor, were all avid collectors of coins.

In the early 19th century, coin collecting societies and associations began. The Royal Numismatic Society began in 1836. It still exists today and publishes the *Numismatic Chronicle*, a journal of coin collecting. The American Numismatic Society began in 1858. In 1866 it began publishing the *American Journal of Numismatics*. Today the largest coin collection in America is owned by the society. Located in New York City, it has 800,000 coins of all kinds.

Children and adults from all walks of life enjoy numismatics. The great majority of coin collectors are simply involved in the hobby because they like the history, the look and the feel of coins. The professional numismatians have a much more complex relationship with the coins, including grading and consulting with numismatic societies.

To start a coin collection is very simple. It does not require large sums of money or fancy supplies. Young children can even begin coin collecting with only coins and a cigar box. Any coin store can provide basic coins for a very low price to individuals just getting started with the hobby.

As the collection and the collector grows more involved with the hobby, will need to spend some money on a 5-8x magnifying glass, folders in which to keep the coins and a reference book to aide identification of coins.

More advanced coin collectors may come to the point where they decide to learn how to grade coins using the Sheldon Scale. Others may decide to collect coins from only one country or from only one period of time in history. Still others may want to collect specific coins from all of the years minted. Coin collectors can delve as deeply into their hobby as they desire.

Numismatic coin collecting is a great hobby for people of all ages. The degree of involvement can be tailored from very simple coin collecting for children all the way up to the level of a professional coin collector. The most important thing when first beginning to collect is to take it slow and have fun with your new hobby and share it with your friends and family. Who knows, maybe you will get them involved in coin collecting, too.

## About the Author

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