



The Story of



Our Medal

By EDNA M. CLARK

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Ohioana Medals which the Library awards each year always elicit much favorable comment. Their origin is described in the following article by Edna M. Clark (Mrs. James E. Clark), the leading authority on Ohio art, author of *Ohio Art and Artists* (1932) and a Trustee of this Library.

Medals were originally presented to persons who exhibited great valor or had performed heroic services in time of war. Eventually medals were presented for outstanding efforts in any field of endeavor. Now many organizations are pleased to pay tribute in the form of a medal for remarkable achievements. The Congressional Medal is the only one requiring approval of Congress before it can be bestowed upon any one.

The Ohioana Library decided it wanted to recognize some of our distinguished Ohioans for their supreme efforts in the

field of arts and letters. It seemed that there was only one way to honor them properly, that was by a medal. Medals had usually been made of metal—gold, silver, or bronze. Since Ohio stands in first rank in the medium of ceramics, why not a ceramic medal? That medium was unanimously selected by the Board of Trustees.

Then, what should be the design that would best represent Ohio? Everything, even a flying Pegasus, was suggested. No, no, it must definitely be an Ohio Subject! Ohioans are extremely proud of their state seal, so here was the place to use it; surely it would please everybody. The result was a circular medal, bordered with the legend "The Martha Kinney Cooper Ohioana Library Award." In the center, in relief, is the state seal in pure white, on a pure blue background. It is a beautiful blue—the blue

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the Japanese call, "the-blue-that-shows-between-the-clouds-after-a-rain."

Baggs And Bogatay

The design and the creation of the medal were developed by Arthur E. Baggs and Paul Bogatay, both professors in the Fine Arts Department of the Ohio State University, and both winners of many ceramic honors. From the design a mold was made, filled with a mixture of very fine white clay and fired. This all sounds easy, but actually it exacted the most painstaking attention.

To hold the medal, Beck and Orr, book binders, made an elegant leather-bound hinged case, lined with blue silk to match the blue in the background of the

medal. Placed on the opposite side of the case, facing the medal, was an inscription giving the name and achievement of the winner. This was executed in the beautiful lettering made by W. D. Turnbull, Dean of the College of Engineering, the Ohio State University.

The medal was created during the administration of Mrs. H. L. Bevis as President and Mrs. Depew Head as Executive Director of the Ohioana Library.

Thus runs the story of the development of the Ohioana medal. Through the years it has been an incentive to greater and greater achievement. It is a cherished honor that recipients covet more than any other they could receive. The Board of Trustees has had profound pleasure in bestowing the medals as a reward for "good work well done."