

A Provenance Reclaimed by Ken Scholm, LSCC #2472

In his article “A Visit with William A. Harmon and his Amazing Half Dimes” in the *Gobrecht Journal* (Volume 43, Issue #127), Stephen A. Crain laments the sale of William A. Harmon’s half dime collection without a thought of their provenance or “Bill’s handwritten notes on each holder, representing an unparalleled, lifelong study of the series” “conducted by Heritage Numismatic Auctions on September 21-24, 2005, as part of the Long Beach Signature Auction #384, with some of the lesser grade coins appearing in the Online Auction Session #385 on September 26, 2005.”

Intrigued, I searched Heritage’s online auction archive to determine that while the provenance of William A. Harmon’s collection was noted in the auction text for individual lots, there was no such indication on the third-party holders. In other words, Bill’s collection was sold without any indication that he had once owned any of the auctioned coins. It was with this discovery that I became determined to find and purchase at least one of these “lost” coins. And so, with the obsessive-compulsive determination that is required of all true numismatists, I went

through each lot of both sales to determine the grading service (ANACS, PCGS, or NGC) and corresponding certification number of each lot attributed to the “William A. Harmon Collection.”

Armed with my amassed data and a desire to reclaim at least one of Bill’s coins, I made periodic searches of eBay and other online auctions seeking out my coveted treasure. It was on May 28th, 2017 that I struck “silver” on in the form of an 1860 Liberty Seated half dime in an ANACS holder with certification #2744520 originally sold as lot #8040 in the Long Beach Signature Auction #385 on September 26, 2005. eBay listed it, as it was, without any indication whatsoever that it once belonged to William A. Harmon. That is, was once part of a “landmark collection.”

Its provenance had been lost but is now reclaimed.

As seen on the holder above this coin was designated as a V(alentine)¹⁻³. My personal examination of the coin confirms that, yes, this is a V-3. Of

(Continued on next page)



1860 V-3 Liberty Seated Half Dime. (Images courtesy of Heritage Auctions)

¹ Valentine, Daniel W. *The United States Half Dimes*. Lawrence, MA: Quarterman Publications, 1975.

A Provenance Reclaimed

(Continued from previous page)

note, however, is that Valentine stated that the 1860 V-3 was a proof coin and yet this coin was graded "Mint State" 61. While I am not an expert collector of proof coins and have never paid much attention to the characteristics of mid-nineteenth century proof coins, I do believe that this coin may, in fact, be a proof issue. If anyone has knowledge as to whether the 1860 Valentine-3 is or is not a proof issue please contact me at kseholm@gt.rr.com.

As for now, I think I will look for another.



1860 V-3 Liberty Seated Half Dime. (Image courtesy of eBay.com)



DAVID KAHN
RARE COINS, INC
EST 2005

Seated and Bust coins our speciality,
quality and eye appeal our focus.

www.DavidKahnRareCoins.com
(301) 570-7070