

Stepping back in time to a bygone era of the Liberty Seated coin design period, both far and wide, and a little before & after...

Fall is in the Air!



*Images courtesy HA.com (1878-S Half Dollar)
and
David Sunshine (Fall Foliage down “memory lane”)*

See President’s Message on page 3

50
Years
1973-2023



Liberty Seated Collectors Club

Uniting collectors of Liberty Seated coinage since 1973



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*E-Gobrecht's
17th Year
2014-2021*

*Welcome to the
following new LSCC
Members this month:*

*Nathan Burlingame
Chris Raemsch*



*There are currently
1029 active
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Please keep your subscription e-mail address current as you could be dropped from the monthly issue if your email is twice rejected in a two-month period as non-active or non-existent.

The *E-Gobrecht* is an award winning informal electronic publication of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC). The LSCC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the attributions of the Liberty Seated U.S. Coin series. The LSCC provides the information contained in this "electronic" e-mail newsletter from various sources "free of charge" as a general service to the membership and other subscribers with a numismatic interest. You do not have to be a LSCC member to benefit from this newsletter; subscription to the *E-Gobrecht* is available on a complimentary basis to anyone. All disclaimers are in effect as the completeness and/or accuracy of the information contained herein cannot be completely verified. Contact information for this publication can be found on the last page.



Liberty Seated Collectors Club

Uniting collectors of Liberty Seated coinage since 1973



President's Message

Welcome to the October issue of the E-Gobrecht. Fall is in the air, and in many parts of the country the leaves are starting to turn. For some reason, trees remind me of toned coins, and there is no disputing that trees exhibit 100% natural toning. Colors move throughout a tree with smooth transitions from one shade to the next, and "wild toning" is rare. Occasionally you have a dying branch that can lead to sharper gradations in color.

For several years I had a tree outside my office window that exhibited a two-tone effect, with the dying branch going full red long before the rest of the tree. That branch is long gone and things are now back to normal. Silver of course reveals gray and blue tones you won't see on a tree, but the fall colors – red, gold, and green, appear quite frequently on our Liberty Seated coins, occasionally with stunning effect. With the return of larger coin shows, here's hoping you can find a few such examples for your collection! ...*Len Augsburg*

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Editor's View From the Rim

Did you know that...

...The Club and the Regional Promotional Team is always looking for assistance at coin shows around the country?

Volunteer assistance at the Club Tables, the Club Meetings & Educational presentations is always welcome from members, and you don't even have to be a seasoned collector. All that is needed is just the desire to participate even if it is just for a couple of hours.

It's truly a great opportunity to meet other collectors with the same interest as you have and to learn more about the Liberty Seated series of collecting. It's all about sharing knowledge and some friendly socializing with others with a similar thirst for collecting this fascinating series of 19th century coinage!

Not to change the subject, but if you have



been wondering about the photo above, my desk is never so clear and uncluttered. In fact, it is usually a real mess, especially around the monthly publication time! ... PK

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|----------------------|------------|--|
| January thru March | \$25 | 3 (March, July, and November) |
| April thru July | \$20 | 2 (July and November) |
| August thru December | \$15 | 1 (November) |

Fill in the above information and send this application with payment to:

Liberty Seated Collectors Club
PO Box 119
Lavalette, WV 25535



The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

Think Like a Dealer

Recently, I asked a dealer if they would represent me at an upcoming auction of some (non-Liberty Seated) coins. This was specialized material and I had no problem paying a few percent over hammer for his expertise, as he knew the area far better than I. The dealer declined, responding that he was bidding on the same coins for his own inventory. I could only congratulate myself for sensing the same buying opportunity as this highly respected dealer, but of course that results in no coins for my collection. Still, the exchange sheds light on the current market. While collectors can buy and sell at leisure, dealers have a constant need for fresh inventory, and, if their usual sources are drying up, they have to compete at auction just like everyone else.

In the pre-Internet era the situation was somewhat different. Auctions were more wholesale type affairs mostly attended by dealers. Dealers could stock up, return home, and apply whatever margin they needed to cover expenses and payroll. Prices realized data lagged considerably, with only bits and pieces reported by the numismatic press. Once a year you could buy the Krause "Auction Prices Realized" volume, an important source of market information during the 1970-2000 period. The power of this book was demonstrated early to me in my collecting career – this happened around 1990 in a local coin shop. A fellow Liberty Seated quarter collector, in order to make a point, asked the dealer to look up auction appearances of the 1871-CC quarter for the previous year. Only one or two listings were found, and a couple lessons stuck. One, that some coins were truly rare, and two, that you needed to learn where to look for information. Thereafter the Auction Prices Realized annual became a required purchase every year. Still, most of the data in the Krause book was about 12 months old by the time you got it.

Fast forward to today... Auctions prices, like the stock market, are reported instantaneously, and it is widely known how much a dealer paid for the latest widget in inventory. I've heard at least one dealer complain about it. How are you supposed to make money, the thinking goes, if everyone knows how much you paid for something? Well, apparently the market is figuring out how to do just that, judging by the large number of dealers who continue to set up at national shows. The truth is that collectors are willing to allow working margins but not obscene profits. If a dealer attends a sale, looks over lots carefully, and bids on their own account for a coin, chances are that it's a decent purchase, though to be sure dealers make mistakes too. Still, the dealer has added value to the equation by looking at all the chaff in the sale and picking out the best pieces. That's worth something – 10% is reasonable, 40% is not.

As a collector, you can go a couple ways here. You can buy out of dealer inventory, knowing that you'll pay a "finder's fee" for an auction coin. If you trust the dealer's eye, it's not the worst way to go. The alternative is to go head-to-head with the dealer at auction. The advantage is that the dealer needs to flip the coin fairly quickly, while the collector has the luxury of holding a coin indefinitely and is less concerned with immediate profit. This gives you some room to work with. A dealer might see room for margin if a coin is hammered at \$1,000, but not at \$1,100. If you really want the piece and like the long term value, \$100 may not

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be a big deal. Even better, if you can land on the \$1,000 bid before the dealer does, you've nailed it. I once saw a dealer hit the underbid at several lots in a row at auction – only to be outdone by a cut bid in each case. Although unsuccessful, this was actually quite a demonstration of bidding prowess – the dealer knew exactly where the market was on each of these coins.

The disadvantage of competing directly with the dealer is that your knowledge of the market generally won't be as good as the dealer, who is doing this for a living. The best way to evaluate this is to buy and sell coins yourself – if you can do this on a small scale and demonstrate profitably, that's a good sign you needn't rely on other folks to evaluate coins. Why pay the dealer's margin if you don't have to? My own observation is that collectors who have moved along this curve are more successful over the long haul, and derive significantly more enjoyment from the hobby. It doesn't mean you outduel the dealer every time, but it does mean you have consistent success.

Note, some dealers simply don't buy out of auctions at all. They've developed their own trading networks with other dealers, or have large client bases who also represent a good source of coins for inventory. This isn't going to change, and it's important to realize that behind the large public auctions there is a substantial amount of private trading. It's harder to characterize this activity, because it is, by definition, private.

You can look at dealer's fixed price lists, but that's a loose guide. Published prices get negotiated downward, and favored clients may get better terms than casual collectors. The best way to gain insight into this realm is to effectively become a dealer, at least on a small scale. Trade with fellow collectors, dealers, and develop your own contacts. Coin clubs are a great place to start, and I'd be remiss to not mention the Liberty Seated Collectors Club in this regard – it's a great place to form connections.

I haven't decided what to do about the upcoming auction coins – I won't be able to look at them myself or get a trusted advisor to do the same. In this case it may be best to see what shows up in the inventory of the usual dealers, and then decide whether I want to pay what amounts to an additional bid in the auction sale. It's an interesting dynamic – I might have had to pay the same price at auction, but this way I get a return privilege along with the knowledge that the coins are already vetted by an expert. Check with me at the next LSCC "show and tell" to see how it turned out!

(END)



Images from the recent Virginia Numismatic Association (VNA) Show in Fredericksburg, VA (Coin Glass & S-Mint Half Dollars)





Regional News

by Dennis Fortier, LSCC #2016

New Shows on the Regional Team Calendar

The Virginia Numismatic Association (VNA) was held on September 24-25 with Dennis Fortier hosting the Club table. The Regional Team has not been to the VNA for some time. Dennis displayed his complete set of Liberty Seated Half Dollars from the San Francisco Branch Mint, as well as his Liberty Seated coin glass collection. The display was well received by show attendees.

The show was well attended and several Club members introduced themselves at the Club table. Mike, a half dime collector and recent contributor to the Gobrecht Journal, and Walt, a quarter collector who was kind enough to bring in his collection for some sharing of visual eye candy, came to the show. It was grand meeting them and sharing club experiences with them.

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Oregon Beaver "Liberty Seated Half Dollar Sale - Part 2"



Oregon Beaver Collection

"Liberty Seated
Half Dollar Auction
Sale - Part 2"

Starts October 16 - 9:00 PM ET
Closes October 30 - 9:00 PM ET

Save
the
Date





Regional News cont.

One new member was signed up at the VNA show, and a Club shirt was sold. Our supply of Club shirts was running very low and the selection for new **50th Anniversary** shirts has now been completed. The awesome looking new shirts will be introduced to the membership very soon!

The following weekend, October 1-2, New England Regional Director Joe Casazza and Mark Archambeault hosted the Club table at one of the Regional Program's oldest and most loyal shows; the New Hampshire Coin and Currency Expo.

Mark is known as a Carson City specialist and displayed some fascinating Carson City coins; Carson City half dollars, dimes, and quarters, as well as an almost complete die marriage set of the 1877-CC half dollar that Mark has been working on for several years now.

A new show for the Regional Team in Tennessee is the Cookeville Coin Club's annual show in Cookeville. It will be at the Cookeville Community Center, 240 Carlen Road, on October 23. Dennis Fortier will host a Club table featuring some CAC Liberty Seated half dollars. An educational presentation titled "The Historical Liberty Seated Coin Series of 1836-1891" will be presented on Saturday at 1pm.

Another new show on the Regional schedule is the South Carolina Numismatic Association's Convention in Greenville, SC. The SCNA kindly invited us to have a Club table this year and to plan an education program for next year's show. This invitation recognizes the hard work of the Regional Team and the Club leadership. Organizations around the country are becoming more and more interested in having the LSCC be a part of their events. The show is being held at the Greenville Convention Center at 1 Exposition Drive on October 29-30. Don't miss it if you can attend. We hope to see many Club members at the Club table. Dennis Fortier will be hosting.

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Regional News cont.

The same weekend of October 29-30, John Frost will host a Club table at the Pennsylvania Association of Numismatics (PAN). The PAN show is held at the Monroeville Convention Center, 209 Mall Blvd, Monroeville, PA. John will have a seminar on “Why You Should Collect Liberty Seated and Barber Coinage.” At the Club table will be a display of key and semi-key Liberty Seated coins from several denominations.

If you're interested in serving the Club and series you love, there are several opportunities available to fit your schedule and abilities. The LSCC offers many advantages for personal and numismatic growth! The Club works more successfully when more members contribute to the Club's overall success! If interested, contact Dennis Fortier at ricajun@msn.com.

(END)

The Video of the LSCC Annual Meeting in August at the Summer ANA Convention is now posted on the LSCC website at: <http://www.lscweb.org>

Upcoming 2022 LSCC Annual Dues will be announced in the next Gobrecht Journal. **Reminder:** When using PayPal to pay your Club dues, please be sure to add \$2.00 extra to your club dues amount to cover the convenience cost of using PayPal. Also, please use the “Friends” option on PayPal as it saves the Club other fees! Thank you.

Save the Date: The next LSCC online Zoom Meeting is scheduled for: **Tuesday, December 7, 9 pm Eastern** <https://wustl.zoom.us/j/5086565637>



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LSCC Upcoming 2021 Regional Events Schedule

** Details Mostly Finalized*

October 23 Cookeville Coin Show, Cookeville Community Center, 240 Carlen Rd, TN - Club Table (Host: Dennis Fortier)

October 29-30 South Carolina Coin Convention, Greenville, SC - (Host: Dennis Fortier)

October 29-31 PAN, Monroeville Convention Center, PA - Club Table & Educational Program (Host: John Frost)

November 17-20 Whitman Baltimore Coin & Currency Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD - Club Meeting, Table, Dinner & Educational Program TBD (Hosts: Len Augsburger, Dennis Fortier, John Frost & others)

Note: Updates provided as they become available, but always check the organization's show website for further details and any last minutes changes.



(END)

Upcoming Major Coin/Currency Auctions for Liberty Seated Collectors

October 16-30, 2021 at 9 p.m. EST - "Oregon Beaver Collection: Liberty Seated Half Dollar Collection Sale - Part II" by GFRC Online Auctions. (See ad on page 7 in this issue)

October 7-10, 2021 - "Long Beach Expo U.S. Coins Signature Auction" and various Gold collection auctions also in October by Heritage Auctions. (<https://coins.ha.com>) (Please refer to website for full details)

October 27-28, 2021 - "The Regency Auction 48" featuring The Boylston Collection Part III of Liberty Seated Half Dollars" by Legend Rare Coin Auctions (See website for catalog details) (<https://www.legendauctions.com/>)

This Space Reserved for future auction event announcements

LSCC Member Application Form
on page 4 or at:

http://www.lscweb.org/LSCC_Membership.pdf





Auction News October 2021

by Craig Eberhart, LSCC #1348

Major Auction Results in September 2021

September Auctions

These auctions will be covered in the November Auction News.

Contributions from Readers/Subscribers of E-Gobrecht

Pulling Pre-1800 Gold Coins from Circulation?

Yes, It Did Happen, but in the 1880's

by Jim Hirtle

It is rare today to see even a Buffalo nickel or Indian Head Penny in change, but this was not always the case. Let me tell you a story of a man whom I knew who pulled pre-1800 U.S. gold coins out of change. When I lived in Annapolis in the 1960s, a coin club member in his nineties invited several of us to his home to view his coin collection. This man was the retired President of the Farmer's National Bank of Annapolis and his coin collection was amazing. There was early U.S. copper and silver, but the highlight was an incredible lot of pre-1800 U.S. gold coins. I asked where he got them all and the reply was "From circulation! As the president of the bank I got to buy all this gold at face value when it came over the counter". Now, this may seem amazing to most current collectors but remember that during the Great Depression of the 1930s, Liberty Seated coins were frequently seen in circulation and very few people had the means to save them. Walter Breen recalled seeing a Liberty Seated half in a church offering plate in 1943 and, in the 1860s, Aaron White put away some 250 Colonial coins in his Civil War era stash. So, for the president of the bank to be able to pull pre-1800 gold from change in the late 1800s (1880s) is not at all unreasonable.

On a personal note, as a young collector in the mid 1950s, I rejected Type I 1913 nickels unless they had a full date as they were so common as to be an everyday occurrence. So, what you can find in change is just a matter of when and where you lived. California collectors drool over Philadelphia coins as all they see are the S Mint pieces, while East Coast residents are excited by the "S" coins that are so common on the West Coast.

Just think, this guy was a bank president in the 1880s and still alive in the 1960s...

[Editor: It is certainly fun to reminisce about the past!]



Quarter of the Month

by Greg Johnson, LSCC #1460

Weak Strikes

Coin descriptions often include reference to strike. Phrases such as “weakly struck”, “fully struck”, “strongly struck”, or “hammered strike” grace dealer and auction catalog descriptions with some frequency. It’s not a challenging concept to understand. Coins are made by what manufacturing people call a stamping operation. In that stamping operation, obverse and reverse dies are used to form a coin from a blank metal planchet. If the coin presses are not controlled precisely enough, the obverse and reverse dies remain too far apart and insufficient pressure is applied to the planchet. This “weak strike” results in a coin on which the parts of the design in highest relief, representing the deepest areas of the dies, may not be fully formed. Those areas of highest relief for most Liberty Seated quarters are Liberty’s hair, the eagle’s left leg, the arrow feathers, and perhaps unexpectedly, the stars.

In addition to starting with coins of high enough grade that wear doesn’t mask lack of originally struck detail, conclusively identifying a weakly struck coin requires another critical piece of information. You need to know what detail was originally present on the die used to strike the coin. This can be a particular challenge for many quarters struck in New Orleans. Not surprisingly, it was difficult to prevent rust and other forms of damage when storing coinage dies in New Orleans during the 1840’s and 1850’s. Evidence of those challenges remains in the form of coins produced from badly rusted dies and coins produced from heavily polished dies. It is possible to speculate about the most likely cause for missing detail on a particular coin, especially when the areas of weakness are not in the areas of highest relief, but difficult to be certain.

But, what does it matter? Whether the weakness in the coin design is from a weak strike or a die that did not have the detail to begin with is not necessarily an interesting question for all collectors. Type collectors who simply avoid coins without full detail, collectors of low-grade coins, and collectors who focus on filling holes in their set without strict regard for appearance may not concern themselves with the distinction between causes of missing detail. It starts to get interesting for date and mintmark set builders who seek “fully struck” coins, meaning coins with full detail. Some issues either do not exist or are very rare with full details. It gets very interesting for variety and die marriage collectors. There are many die marriages, particularly among New Orleans Liberty Seated quarters, that appear to be unknown with full detail. This is often abbreviated as “weakly struck” but is probably due to lack of detail on the die in many cases.

There are too many Seated quarter die marriages with “weak strike”, or less than complete detail, to discuss in one column. I will, however, point out a few examples. An additional, interesting feature of these coins is that they tend to be overlooked by type collectors and even many date and mintmark set builders, when other more completely realized die marriages of the same issue are available. Opportunity then, for variety and die marriage collectors who can appreciate coins without complete detail as important examples of what the mint was producing at the time. Coins with a character that says, “we’re doing the best we can, but this is a hard job in a life and a world full of challenges.”



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The reverse die in Figure 1 is an 1857-O Reverse B, as listed in “The Comprehensive Encyclopedia of United States Liberty Seated Quarters” (Briggs, 1991). There are 8 listed die marriages of 1857-O and one unlisted which I have cataloged in my own notes and collection. Of the nine die marriages (known to me) Reverse B was used on 5 of them. I have very rarely seen an example of a coin struck from Reverse B with full detail on the eagle’s left (facing) leg, it is typically very weak as seen in the Figure.



← 1857-O
Reverse B (Fig. 1)

(Fig. 2) 1853-O →
w/ Filled O Reverse



The obverse pictured in Figure 2 is an 1853-O quarter with filled O reverse. Interestingly, for this die, it is not the head and hair that is particularly weak, it is the central part of the obverse design as seen in the Figure. It was noted in Brigg’s reference noted above that uncirculated examples can appear to have only the detail expected from a choice VF. This is a very interesting die marriage for which I’ve written a Gobrecht Journal article (GJ #105, July 2009). It is also included in the Top 25 Liberty Seated Quarter varieties (GJ #111, July 2011). There were 35 examples of the variety reported in the Top 25 survey (GJ #119, March 2014), with only nine grading better than fine and a single one of the 35 examples certified by a TPG.

The final coin is the 1850-O quarter. The issue is known for weak head and hair detail on the obverse, but it can be found with quite strong detail with some patience. The interesting thing about the issue is that there are three die marriages, but almost all examples with complete obverse detail come from a single die marriage, Obverse 1 - Reverse B. Figure 3 shows Obverse 2 with missing head and hair detail. Figure 4 is Obverse 1 as paired with Reverse B.

If you’ve read this far, thank you. And Happy Hunting!

(END)



← 1850-O (Fig. 3)
Obv 2 - Rev B

1850-O (Fig. 4) →
Obv 1 - Rev B





Liberty Seated Dollar News and Information

by Dick Osburn, LSCC #717
and Brian Cushing, LSCC #2170

1872 (and 1873) Doubled Reverse Proofs



We don't often think of proofs as a source of major die varieties, but a surprising number of proof varieties exist in the Liberty Seated Dollar series. One of the most obvious occurred on the reverse die used to strike proofs in 1872 and 1873, our 1872 PA reverse. This die is strongly doubled. It was used to create #30 in our list of the Top-30 Seated Dollar die varieties.

The figure below depicts this die. Note the obvious doubling on IN GOD WE. Compared to many of the modern doubled die varieties that excite variety collectors, this doubling is MAJOR! The spread is about the same as the spread seen on the famous 1955 doubled die cent. It's an eyeball variety. You don't need a glass to see the doubling.

Liberty Seated Dollar reverse die 1872 PA



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This was the only reverse die used to strike proofs during the final two years of the Seated Dollar series, so finding an example is relatively easy. They won't be cheap (no seated dollars are), but they can be found at almost any major coin show. A very nice lightly circulated example can be found in the \$1200-\$1800 price range. Low-end uncirculated examples are a little easier to find, and price in the \$2000-\$2750 range.

The photos that lead this article are courtesy of Heritage Auctions. They picture a PR66 Cameo example that is the second finest graded by PCGS. The photo of the reverse motto detail is a PCGS PR61 coin from our reference collection.

Comments or suggestions for future articles are always welcomed.

Our contact information:

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Brian Cushing, 410-571-4699, osburncushing@gmail.com

References:

1. Dick Osburn and Brian Cushing, Seateddollarvarieties.com
2. Dick Osburn and Brian Cushing, Liberty Seated Dollars, A Register of Die Varieties, self-published in January, 2018.

(END)



Courtesy of:

COINWEEK™

**Counterfeit Coin Detection –
Key Date Counterfeit Carson City 1870 Quarter**

By **Max Spiegel**, Numismatic Researcher
– Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC)

The **1870-CC** is the key to the **Seated Liberty quarter** series.
Read about this counterfeit that was submitted to NGC and how their experts recognized it.

See this important article in CoinWeek of October 6, 2021.

https://coinweek.com/counterfeits/counterfeit-carson-city-1870-quarter/?fbclid=IwAR0Z6a2FqHUvIIRte9Gf2AHlaYwk8epIRhLC-_Kp-iyG2nPOGm5Ovsuwaqg





Liberty Seated Basics 101

by Dennis Fortier, LSCC #2016

Issue XVI - Chopmarks

Introduction: One of the requests we often hear is for articles in club publications that reach back to more basic skill building. Members are at all different levels, and newer members are in some instances unfamiliar with commonly used terms in our little corner of the hobby. Mint production has changed over the last two-hundred +plus years. The Liberty Seated years (1836-1891) saw its share of production change during that time. Those changes came with a learning curve. A good deal of that learning curve had to do with the first few Branch Mints coming on line and Mint employee's at those Branch Mints needing to learn their craft.

Some of the topics already discussed include the following:

- Issue I - Weak Strikes (June 2020 E-G)
- II - Die Wear in (July 2020 E-G)
- III - Security/Home Safes (August 2020)
- IV - Security/Safe Deposit Boxes (Sept. 2020)

- V - Buying White Coins (October 2020)
- VI - Raw vs. Certified (November 2020)
- VII - Mintage vs. Survival Rate (Dec. 2020)
- VIII - Mintmark Sizes & Placement (Jan. '21)
- IX - Liberty Seated Oddities (February 2021)
- X - Die Lines & Lint Marks (March 2021)
- XI - Learning to Say 'No' (April 2021)
- XII - Covid, CAC and Market Change (May)
- XIII - Doubled Dies vs. Machine Doubling (Jun)
- XIV - The Cadillac Effect (July 2021)
- XV - Networking (September 2021)

Additional topics to be discussed in future months will include: Design Changes, Type Collecting, Popular vs. Rare Dates, Varieties, Cuds/Rust Lumps/and Die Cracks, Dished Dies and more.

"An Introduction to Liberty Seated Basics 101" also appeared in the *The Gobrecht Journal* Summer 2020, Volume 46.2.

Chopmarks

Let me begin by saying I am not a chopmark expert or necessarily a collector of chopmarked coins. I do own one 1862-S half dollar, WB-2, which is an R-5 die marriage that is chopmarked. I bought it because it was an R-5 die marriage and I thought it was cool that it was also chopmarked.

Prior to the 2000's, chopmarked coins were considered damaged coins and usually sold for very

little. To be sure, in a technical sense they are damaged coins as are counterstamped coins (which are a different class of repunched coins and will not be attempted in this article). Collectors collect what interests them and anything different or unusual will find its way into a collection.

Today, coins with old chopmarks are not only collectable but have become a special segment of numismatics (at least for Trade Dollars). Knowledgeable collectors are even paying multiples over list for

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L.S. Basics 101 - Chopmarks cont.

certain Trade dollar dates like 1875-P and 1878-CC that are rare with chopmarks.

Most U.S. chopmarked coins are Liberty Seated Trade dollars. This makes sense as the Trade dollar was intended for trade with the orient where chopmarks were used. Chopmarked Liberty Seated dollars are quite rare due to limited mintages and circulation, and the half dollars are also scarce with chopmarks.

Most chopmarked coins are from the San Francisco mint which is reasonable from a geographic standpoint. There are some from Carson City while New Orleans and Philadelphia are very scarce. Philadelphia Trade dollars being made for trade with China are more available with chopmarks than the other denominations but are still scarce overall.

Why and where were chopmarks used? Chopmarks are oriental symbols used all over the far east that were either a name (of a merchant) or a word, usually attesting that the coin was good. Some collectors of chopmarked coins endeavor to learn what each chop translates to. Generally, they are of

little anecdotal interest. Back in the 1800's counterfeit coinage was abundant in circulation. At the time counterfeiting was not meant to fool collectors but to fool merchants and the public in commerce. Chopmarks attested that the coin had passed the inspection of a merchant as genuine money and contained the requisite amount of silver.

Chopmarked coins can have anywhere from one, to over 40+ chops, on an individual coin. For a long time, third party graders slabbed chopmark coins as "Details - Chopmarked" but more and more they are now being graded problem-free, even uncirculated with chopmarks. How a coin can be graded uncirculated with a chopmark is beyond me, but they have done it.

Chopmark collecting has emerged from its infancy and is becoming accepted. Any collector wanting to explore this area of collecting will want to ferret out the needed information to advance their knowledge. A good place to start would be coin blogs such as Collectors Universe, or you might try the club Facebook page.

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**1862-S Liberty Seated Half Dollar with Chopmarks
(Dennis Fortier Collection, Image by Bill Bugert))**



L.S. Basics 101 - Chopmarks cont.

There hasn't been much in print in official Liberty Seated publications for coins with chopmarks because until recently they were considered damaged coins. Much of the expert information is still being passed from member to member. This is of course another reason to attend meetings and get to know the people knowledgeable about this specialty area.

Some worthwhile reading on chopmarks from earlier Gobrecht Journals include:

"A Hoard (of Trade Dollars) From the Orient", John E. Dreyer, Gobrecht Journal Collective Vol IV, page 566, Gobrecht Journal #50 March 1991.

"The Chopmarked 1878-CC Trade Dollars", James Sneddon, Gobrecht Journal Collective Vol V, page 640, Gobrecht Journal #77 March 2000.

"A Chopmarked 1860-S Half Dollar", Bill Bugert, Gobrecht Journal Collective Vol II, page 284, Gobrecht Journal #21 July 1981.

These articles can all be found on the Newman

Numismatic Portal or in the collective volumes mentioned.

Other references include:

"Chopmarked Coins - A History", Colin James Gulberg.

There is a Chopmark Collectors Club that mostly deals with world coins. I don't know how much help they might be for the collectors of Liberty Seated Chopmarked coins? Here is the link in any case: https://www.resellos.com/info/chop_club.php

There is a loyal and growing following for chopmarked Trade dollars. Half dollars have yet to gain traction except as a single coin oddity in a collection. Liberty Seated dollars are so rare only the strong may venture.

Hopefully, if chopmarked coins are of interest to you, this Basics article will help you get started. Good luck, and good hunting!



An 1875 Trade Dollar with Chopmarks on both the obverse and reverse



L.S. Basics 101 - Chopmarks cont.

An 1874-CC Trade Dollar literally obliterated with Chopmarks on both sides
(Both Trade dollars shown and images are from John Frost)



[Terms used in this article, if unfamiliar, can be found in literature published in series-specific books by Liberty Seated experts. Some of these are available on the club website.]

(END)

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Reeded Edge Halves (Also known as Pre-Liberty Seated Halves)

*****2021 Final Census *****

Top 15 Collections

by Jim Koenings, LSCC #2798 & JRCS #048

In 2012, Dick Graham determined there were 56 die varieties when he wrote his book "A Registry of Die Varieties of Reeded Edge Half Dollars 1836-1839". At that time, his collection was the most complete, missing only the Classic Rarity 1838-O GR-1.

In November 2018, I presented the first Census of Reeded Edge Halves in the John Reich Journal. Prior to that, Dick had sold a few of his coins and was then 3rd in the Top 15 Collections.

In July 2021, Dick Graham sold his reference set to David Kahn and David promptly sold most of it at the ANA Coin Show in Chicago in August 2021. Although Dick's collection is not shown in the 2021 Census, they are still included in the total reported. One fortunate collector, JRCS #1387, reported he had purchased 7 of Dick's coins and now has 40 different die varieties in the 2021 Census, with an average grade of 60. Bust Half Nut member #166 continues to be the only collector with all 56 known die marriages. He also has an average grade of 60.

Before presenting the Census, a few explanations are necessary. Those collectors with B in front of their name are members of the Bust Half Nut Club. Those collectors with L in front of their member number are Life Members of the John Reich Collectors Society. Those that are initials only are non-members.

RPD = Number Reported.

You may also notice a,b,c etc. after a number or initials. These are collectors with more than one collection, some collect by die stage.

Obviously, not all collectors reported their inventories, only 2 of the 9 known owners of 1838-O's are listed.

At this time, I would like to thank all 37 participants of the 2021 Census for reporting their Census. This compares to 22 that reported in 2018. There were at least 4 members of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club that participated in 2021.

2021 Final Census Chart presented on next page...

**2021 FINAL CENSUS****TOP 15 Collections****Reeded Edge Half Dollars – 1836 to 1839**

| Year | GR# | Rarity | JRCS MEMBER NUMBER or INITIALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | RPD | AVG. | MAX |
|------|-------|--------|--------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|----|------|------|-----|-------|-----|------|-----|
| | | | B166 | 48a | 212a | 48b | JDa | 1104 | 48c | LM56 | 1387 | 48d | BK | 212b | B195 | 869 | LM56b | | | |
| 1836 | GR-1 | 2 | 65 | 45 | | 3 | 25 | 45 | | | 61 | | | | 45 | 30 | | 20 | 45 | 65 |
| 1837 | GR-1 | 5 | 62 | 55 | 55 | 50 | 53 | 45 | 45 | 35 | 62 | 40 | 50 | | | | | 12 | 50 | 62 |
| | GR-2 | 3 | 55 | 58 | 58 | 45 | 50 | 45 | 45 | 12 | | 35 | 40 | 40 | | | 8 | 16 | 40 | 62 |
| | GR-3 | 2 | 62 | 58 | 45 | 45 | 50 | 50 | 45 | 6 | 61 | 40 | 30 | | | | | 15 | 43 | 62 |
| | GR-4 | 3 | 63 | 61 | 35 | 55 | | 50 | 53 | 30 | | 53 | 45 | 30 | | | | 12 | 50 | 63 |
| | GR-5 | 1 | 64 | 58 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 45 | 53 | 20 | 62 | 45 | 40 | | 35 | | | 15 | 48 | 64 |
| | GR-6 | 3 | 63 | 62 | 25 | 53 | 50 | 20 | 45 | 8 | 58 | 45 | | | | | | 10 | 42 | 63 |
| | GR-7 | 2 | 63 | 53 | 55 | 45 | 53 | 25 | 45 | | 55 | 20 | | 40 | 45 | | | 13 | 46 | 63 |
| | GR-8 | 4 | 64 | 58 | 20 | 45 | 53 | 40 | 40 | 45 | 55 | 20 | 35 | | | | 40 | 14 | 39 | 64 |
| | GR-9 | 1 | 65 | 55 | 55 | 40 | 55 | 45 | | 40 | 61 | | | 8 | 45 | 30 | 35 | 15 | 45 | 65 |
| | GR-10 | 4 | 62 | 58 | 45 | 53 | 40 | 25 | 45 | 20 | | 45 | 40 | | | | | 11 | 45 | 62 |
| | GR-11 | 5 | 63 | 58 | 55 | 55 | 45 | 45 | 40 | 45 | 58 | 35 | 40 | | | | 30 | 17 | 46 | 63 |
| | GR-12 | 2 | 62 | 62 | 55 | 30 | 55 | 60 | | 35 | 63 | | | | | | 8 | 10 | 49 | 63 |
| | GR-13 | 1 | 60 | 58 | 53 | 45 | 55 | 8 | 35 | | 55 | | | 35 | 58 | 40 | | 11 | 47 | 60 |
| | GR-14 | 1 | 62 | 61 | 62 | 50 | 50 | 55 | 45 | 12 | 62 | 45 | 45 | 45 | 45 | 40 | 10 | 22 | 45 | 64 |
| | GR-15 | 3 | 63 | 55 | 50 | 45 | | 50 | 45 | 45 | 62 | 45 | | | 45 | | 30 | 12 | 48 | 63 |
| | GR-16 | 4 | 58 | 55 | 55 | 53 | 53 | 50 | 53 | 40 | 61 | 50 | 25 | | | 45 | 12 | 14 | 45 | 61 |
| | GR-17 | 1 | 64 | 58 | 58 | 53 | 55 | 40 | 53 | 40 | 62 | | | 40 | 58 | 40 | | 14 | 54 | 64 |
| | GR-18 | 1 | 66 | 62 | 58 | 45 | | 60 | | 15 | | | | 50 | 30 | 35 | 8 | 12 | 46 | 66 |
| | GR-19 | 3 | 64 | 62 | 62 | 58 | | 35 | 55 | | | 20 | 50 | | | | | 9 | 52 | 64 |
| | GR-20 | 3 | 63 | 55 | 30 | 53 | 55 | | 45 | 25 | 62 | 40 | | | | | | 11 | 49 | 63 |
| | GR-21 | 2 | 62 | 58 | 55 | 30 | 53 | 30 | | 25 | 63 | | | | | | | 9 | 48 | 63 |
| | GR-22 | 2 | 64 | 55 | 40 | 55 | 45 | 40 | 55 | 30 | | 40 | 40 | 40 | 53 | | | 18 | 46 | 64 |
| | GR-23 | 2 | 65 | 62 | 45 | 55 | 55 | 60 | 55 | | 55 | 35 | | | | 30 | | 12 | 54 | 65 |
| | GR-24 | 2 | 64 | 61 | 50 | 40 | 61 | | 35 | | 62 | | | | | 30 | | 9 | 55 | 64 |
| | GR-25 | 5+ | 62 | 45 | 50 | 40 | 55 | 4 | 8 | | 58 | | 20 | | | | | 10 | 38 | 62 |
| 1838 | GR-1 | 3 | 66 | 50 | 60 | 50 | 55 | 45 | 40 | 30 | | 30 | 45 | 50 | | | 25 | 21 | 43 | 66 |
| | GR-2 | 3 | 63 | 58 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 30 | 50 | 30 | | 40 | | | | 45 | | 14 | 50 | 63 |
| | GR-3 | 2 | 63 | 53 | 45 | 53 | 58 | 35 | 45 | 6 | 64 | 45 | | | | | 4 | 15 | 43 | 64 |
| | GR-4 | 1 | 40 | 55 | 63 | 35 | 50 | 40 | 35 | 35 | 58 | | | 50 | 58 | | 30 | 20 | 47 | 63 |
| | GR-5 | 7 | 55 | 53 | 50 | 45 | 6 | | 45 | 35 | | 45 | 45 | | | | | 12 | 44 | 55 |
| | GR-6 | 3 | 58 | 61 | 61 | 58 | 53 | 50 | 53 | 8 | 58 | 50 | 40 | | 35 | 45 | | 16 | 51 | 62 |
| | GR-7 | 4 | 61 | 58 | 62 | 55 | 58 | 40 | 53 | 45 | | 45 | 35 | 40 | | | | 12 | 50 | 62 |
| | GR-8 | 2 | 62 | 58 | 35 | 45 | 58 | 35 | 45 | 35 | 63 | 30 | | 30 | | | | 11 | 45 | 63 |
| | GR-9 | 3 | 65 | 55 | 58 | 55 | 30 | 45 | 55 | 40 | 55 | 40 | 40 | | | 45 | | 17 | 49 | 65 |
| | GR-10 | 3 | 63 | 62 | 50 | 58 | 50 | 35 | 55 | 8 | 62 | 53 | | 30 | | | | 15 | 47 | 63 |
| | GR-11 | 1 | 64 | 58 | 55 | 55 | 58 | 40 | 55 | 45 | 58 | 50 | | 45 | 55 | | 35 | 20 | 48 | 64 |
| | GR-12 | 4 | 64 | 53 | 55 | 45 | 55 | 45 | 40 | 35 | 62 | | | | | | 12 | 16 | 45 | 64 |
| | GR-13 | 1 | 64 | 62 | 40 | 58 | 53 | 50 | | 20 | 62 | | 45 | 20 | 45 | | 10 | 14 | 46 | 64 |

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| Year | GR# | Rarity | JRCS MEMBER NUMBER or INITIALS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | RPD | AVG. | MAX |
|-----------------|-------|--------|--------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|----|------|------|-----|-------|--------------|------|-----|
| | | | B166 | 48a | 212a | 48b | JDa | 1104 | 48c | LM56 | 1387 | 48d | BK | 212b | B195 | 869 | LM56b | | | |
| 1838 | GR-14 | 3 | 55 | 62 | 58 | 58 | 40 | 53 | 45 | 25 | 58 | 40 | | | | | | 14 | 48 | 62 |
| | GR-15 | 3 | 62 | 58 | 55 | 53 | 30 | 25 | 45 | 35 | 62 | 40 | | | | 45 | | 12 | 49 | 64 |
| | GR-16 | 4 | 58 | 45 | 55 | 45 | 50 | | 45 | 6 | | 35 | 35 | | | | | 10 | 41 | 58 |
| 1838-O | GR-1 | 7 | 64 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 64 | 64 |
| 1839 | GR-1 | 7 | 45 | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 48 | 50 |
| | GR-2 | 5+ | 62 | 45 | 50 | 45 | 53 | 50 | 35 | 45 | 62 | 35 | 45 | | | 40 | | 11 | 48 | 62 |
| | GR-3 | 5+ | 53 | 53 | 30 | 50 | 50 | 45 | 40 | | | 40 | 45 | | | | | 10 | 47 | 61 |
| | GR-4 | 1 | 53 | 53 | 55 | 45 | 55 | 40 | 53 | 18 | 62 | 12 | 15 | 30 | | 30 | 12 | 14 | 47 | 62 |
| | GR-5 | 2 | 66 | 58 | 50 | 55 | 40 | 40 | 53 | 10 | 61 | 50 | 40 | 50 | 58 | 40 | | 21 | 51 | 66 |
| | GR-6 | 3 | 64 | 55 | 45 | 50 | 58 | | 25 | 15 | 62 | | | | | | | 10 | 45 | 64 |
| | GR-7 | 1 | 62 | 58 | 40 | 53 | 53 | 58 | 35 | 20 | 58 | 12 | | | 45 | 35 | 12 | 20 | 46 | 62 |
| | GR-8 | 3 | 50 | 58 | 55 | 50 | 58 | 30 | 40 | 45 | 58 | 35 | | | | | | 12 | 49 | 61 |
| 1839-O | GR-1 | 1 | 66 | 35 | 50 | | 55 | 40 | | 6 | 58 | | | 50 | 35 | 40 | | 27 | 42 | 66 |
| | GR-2 | 8 | 35 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 20 | 35 |
| | GR-3 | 8 | 35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 35 | 35 |
| | GR-4 | 4 | 63 | 35 | 55 | 12 | 53 | 40 | | | 55 | | | | 35 | | | 12 | 46 | 63 |
| | GR-5 | 4+ | 58 | 40 | 40 | 6 | | 45 | | 30 | 55 | | 4 | | | | | 12 | 38 | 58 |
| Marriages Owned | | | 56 | 54 | 51 | 51 | 47 | 47 | 43 | 43 | 40 | 36 | 25 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 56 Known Die | | |
| Average Grade | | | 60 | 54 | 50 | 47 | 50 | 41 | 45 | 27 | 60 | 38 | 37 | 38 | 46 | 38 | 19 | Marriages | | |

RPD = Number Reported

Two collectors have chosen not to report their inventories for various reasons. One of them has 53 die marriages and the other has 50. They both own an 1838 GR-5 (R-6+), the 5th rarest Reeded Edge Half. Dick Graham owned (2) 1838 GR-5's before selling to David Kahn in July 2021. They were NCS AU Details (formerly Reiver) and a Raw XF (polished). Although I do not know the current owners, they are still included in the 12 as being reported. JRCS #1083 reported that he had purchased an 1838 GR-5 in PCGS XF45 unattributed in a Heritage Coin Auction in August 2021. He also reported 12 additional coins to just miss the Top 15 Collections, ending up in 17th place.

New to the Census, in 2021, is John D. of Chicago as he reports he has 47 die marriages and is currently tied for 5th place. John started collecting Reeded Edge Halves in January 2019.

The fact that having only 40 die marriages is in 9th place indicates that this series is still in its infancy. Of the 56 known die marriages, only 18 are rated R-4 or rarer. Only 4 die marriages may be out of reach for the average collector. They are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------|----------|---------------------------|
| 1839-O GR-3 | 1 known | 1 reported in 2021 Census |
| 1839-O GR-2 | 2 known | 2 reported in 2021 Census |
| 1838-O GR-1 | 9 known | 2 reported in 2021 Census |
| 1839 GR-1 | 11 known | 2 reported in 2021 Census |

The 5th rarest die marriage is

| | | |
|-----------|----------|----------------------------|
| 1838 GR-5 | 17 known | 12 reported in 2021 Census |
|-----------|----------|----------------------------|

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Only one collector owns all 5 of the above die marriages.

A little history on 1838 GR-5:

1. Jules Reiver did not know of this variety when his Variety Identification Manual was printed in 1988.
2. Sheridan Downey reported the first specimen as 1838 JR-18 in May 16, 1988.
3. When Dick Graham's book on Reeded Edge Halves was printed in 2012, he listed 3 specimens known.
4. On August 17, 2021, an unattributed 1838 GR-5 in PCGS XF45 (the 17 known) sold for \$1,560 in a Heritage Auction. (Purchased by collector JRCS #1083)
5. On August 20, 2021, the first ever attributed 1838 GR-5 in PCGS VF25 sold for \$5,400 in a Heritage Auction. (Owner unknown) (believed to be one of 17 known)
6. A NGC Shipwrecked specimen will be offered in the November 2021 Stack's Auction in Baltimore. I believe the ship sank in 1846 and was recovered in 2008. The NGC serial number may be verified by NGC by inserting MS60 as the grade. The obverse appears to be warped by the sea water. (this coin is one of the 17 known)

Of the remaining 51 known die marriages, the 1837 GR-25 may be the 6th rarest. A PCGS VG-8 specimen sold in a Heritage Auction in February 2018 for \$1,200.

In the December 2020 issue of E-Gobrecht, I wrote an article entitled "Reeded Edge Halves are NOT Capped Bust Halves". I explained that the reverse, reeded edge, thickness and diameter are all more like Liberty Seated Half Dollars. All Liberty Seated Half Dollars say "HALF DOL." on the reverse, while Capped Bust Halves say "50 C.". Reeded Edge Halves after 1838 say "HALF DOL." on the reverse. When you consider the fact that Christian Gobrecht designed Reeded Edge Halves, I would think Liberty Seated Half Collectors would want to have Reeded Edge Halves 1836 to 1839 as part of their series. Another fact is that Capped Bust Halves, 1807 to 1836, have many features that are hand-stamped into the dies and they were minted using a screw press. Reeded Edge Halves, 1836 to 1839, only have the last digit of the date stamped into the dies and were made with a steam-powered press. Liberty Seated Halves were also minted with the steam press.

Reeded Edge Halves are priced about the same as Liberty Seated Half Dollars. Since 38 die marriages of Reeded Edge Halves are common (R-3 or less), I believe ANYONE can find the 38 die marriages in less than 3 years. I also believe that a serious collector can find at least 10 of the R-4 and rarer die marriages. Even if attributed, the 10 die marriages would only cost a small fraction over the common price. Think about it, 48 die marriages would put you in 5th place in the 2021 Census.

Since August 2019, I have been writing monthly Newsletters on the 38 most common die marriages of Reeded Edge Halves. My last Newsletter #29 was emailed on September 15, 2021. It had large photos and information on the 1838 GR-4 die marriage. The next Newsletter will cover 1838 GR-6. There are at least 11 members of LSCC that receive these free Newsletters. If you would like to receive them, you simply must send your email address and your member number to: bustcoin1@verizon.net

I also believe there are new die marriages to be found. One former JRCS member found a die marriage in 1994 and is still looking for a second specimen to confirm that discovery. My son has one die marriage in his collection that I can't attribute.

I believe Reeded Edge Halves are a fantastic series with more study needed on die states. Who will discover the next new die marriage? Happy Hunting! ...Jim

(END)



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Please consider submitting something for print. It need not be elaborate; it can be something as simple as a short note on a favorite coin, variety, neat find, nice cherrypick, happening at a coin show or local club, Liberty Seated coinage at auction, etc. If you are interested in it, rest assured, others will be too!

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