



The E-Gobrecht

The Electronic Newsletter of the LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

Liberty Seated Collectors Club

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Counterfeit Seated Half Dollars Alert!!

(Editor: David Lange, Director of Research for the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation sent me this note on January 23, 2008.) "I received the following bulletin from Ray Czahor of Cookie Jar Collectibles, and we agreed that it should be reprinted in the *E-Gobrecht*. I was just talking to a good friend in Manila Philippines this morning on a couple of Philippine issues. He attended a local auction this weekend. He said Moslems were offering to local dealers, some of whom bit, 80 to 100 SCARCE to RARE US Liberty 50 Cent pieces. They included dates 1847, 1857, 1857-S, and 1857-O. He said the pieces were the correct weight, high grade UNC's, nice reeding but rounded edges. One dealer there bought 65 pieces for up to \$250 for the rare date. Maybe you have already seen them but thought I would pass this info on."

Collecting Date Sets of Liberty Seated Coinage

Part 1: Dollars and Half Dollars

By Dennis Hengeveld

Collecting seated coins can be fun, rewarding, and above all very challenging. Not many people can afford both the time and cost to search, find, and have the opportunity to buy the hard to find coins which are included in every seated series due to the many dates and mintmarks included in the series. Examples could be the 1878-S half dollar and various Carson City coins. These coins, "stoppers" as they are called, are expensive and very hard to find, often causing collectors to fail in their final goal of completing a series they have specialized in for a long time.

Although I love seated coins, as a 19 year old I just can't afford to complete any of the seated series in the grades I like, mainly AU50 to MS64 or higher in as original condition as I can find them. Of

course, I might be able to buy those coins later in my life but I am not really the person who has the patience to buy coins for a set. I know won't be complete within an acceptable period time ("acceptable" for me is 8-10 years).

As you might guess, I had to find a solution. So, after buying my first certified seated coin (and my first seated coin anyway), which happened to be a wonderful and very original PCGS MS64 1871 Half Dime, I decided to try a very complete type set, with every single type in there (including coins with

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Auction News and Question of the Month

By Jim Gray

After a slow December, January warmed up with six major auctions.

The Bowers & Merena Rarity Sale featured a beautiful well struck 1871-CC dime in AU50, which sold for \$21,850.

The Superior, Elite Auction contained AU58 examples of both the 1840-O drapery and 1844-O half dimes. They were both attractive and light gray, but neither sold. An XF40 1843-O dime with a strong obverse and a nice look went for \$2,875.

A MS62 1852-O quarter with attractive dark blue toning and a typical strike only sold for \$10,350. A similarly struck piece, an MS63, sold for \$126,500 at the Heritage, November Sale. It is hard to believe that one grading point could make a coin worth twelve times as much.

An 1855-S quarter in MS62 with a sharp strike and nice toning went for \$5,750 and an 1873-CC with arrows half dollar in AU50 with dark gray toning, but very nice, sold for \$3,105.

The Stacks, Franklinton Sale featured an AU50 1842-O half dime with typical flatness on the wreath but nice toning at \$1,294. A bright 1849-O in MS63 with an obverse scratch and a typical strike did not sell.

A lovely AU58 1846 dime with album toning sold for an impressive \$14,950. An 1871-CC dime in MS61 which had been dipped, with many marks and hairlines, did not sell but a duplicate in XF40 but cleaned and scratched, sold for \$8,050. A VF30 1872-CC dime with a flat strike went for \$6,037. An awesome beautiful 1873-CC Arrows graded AU55 with a good strike and nice toning did not sell. This coin did not sell in Stacks, August Sale and appears to be a lovely coin. There is either some hidden problem such as porosity or an unreasonable reserve that has caused this piece not to sell. The sale also contained the AU50 1873-CC with arrows dime

from my collection. It was a nice AU50 with only one MS65 graded finer by PCGS but it also did not sell.

An 1849-O quarter in cleaned AU53 went for \$5,750, and a very fine 1854-O, huge O, with a flat strike went for \$2,875. An attractive 1858-S quarter in XF45, but cleaned with marks and rim bumps, only realized \$1,265. An MS62 1865-S quarter with a good strike and nice toning went for \$5,290. A wholesome XF40 1869-S hammered for \$1,150, and an 1872-CC quarter in G4 with the reverse AG only realized \$1,380. An 1873-CC arrows quarter in XF40 with nice toning, some marks and rim bumps did not sell, nor did a duplicate in F-12 and very nice for the grade.

An 1856-S half dollar in cleaned XF45 did not sell, but a cleaned 1873 no arrows open 3 in F-12 hit \$3,565. The MS61 1873-CC no arrows had been dipped but was still choice at \$16,100. An 1874-CC in AU58 with mottled toning, but a sharp strike, realized \$9,775.

An 1852 original dollar in AU58 with a dark area by stars 11 and 12 did not sell, nor did a decent looking 1855 in AU58. A cleaned XF40 1878-CC trade dollar did not sell.

The Stacks, Americana Sale featured an 1874-CC dime with VF details, but a mount removed from the obverse leaving a void in the central area, realized \$4,600.

An 1871-CC dollar in VF35 with a nice look went for \$9,200, and a VG-8 duplicate, plugged and ugly, only eked out \$632. A VF30 1872-CC dollar with an old cleaning hammered for \$3,450, while a Fair-2 pocket piece duplicate realized \$373. A VF20 1873-CC, buffed and reengraved, sold for \$5,175.

The Heritage FUN featured an 1840-O with drapery half dime in XF45 which was choice but did not sell, but an 1846 half dime in AU50 tooled, whizzed and nicely retuned sold for \$1,725.

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An 1845-O dime in XF45 in nice original condition sold for \$1,380, and an XF40 1846 with an obverse spot realized \$2,070. A VF30 1872-CC dime, and choice for the grade, soared to \$7,475. An 1873-CC arrows, which was slabbed VF20 but ugly with dark areas, did not sell but an XF cleaned example of the same date with dark staining on the lower reverse realized \$7,475.

An 1842-O small date quarter in F15, a gem for the grade and destined for a F/VF set, sold for \$2,990. Three 1854-O, huge O quarters, one in cleaned F15, one in VF30 and very nice, and one in cleaned XF45 did not sell. This coin is more available than was once thought but is still rare in AU or above. An 1864-S quarter in AU 55, but either cleaned or dipped, did not sell. Two cleaned and corroded VF20 1870-CCs sold for \$18,400 and \$17,250, respectively.

An 1842-O small date half in XF45, which was cleaned and with the usual softness on the chest and lower eagle, managed \$3,910, but an 1844-O double date in AU 55 did not sell. An 1855-S in VF30, an original in an old holder sold for \$7,250 and would grade XF40 today. An 1857-S in AU 55 with light toning went for \$2,300, and a rarely seen MS61 hammered for \$8,625. An 1872-CC half, in AU50 and nicely toned, with a light scratch from the rim to the Liberty's left wrist still managed \$2,300. An 1873-CC no arrows, in XF, scratched and cleaned, went for \$805. An 1873-CC with arrows, in AU58, dipped but attractive, hit \$6,325. An 1874-CC in VG10 and choice for the grade sold for \$1,380, and a harshly cleaned example of the same

date, in AU55, which was retuned in an album or a flip, soared to \$7,475.

The Heritage, Platinum Night Sale contained an 1873-CC dime in XF45 and a little jewel for \$34,500. An 1874-CC in VF25 was original but had a gouge in the field before Liberty's neck and still realized \$21,275. Another 1874-CC in AU50 with very deep toning that subdued a number of marks, including a partial decapitation of Liberty, hammered down for an incredible \$63,250. An 1870-CC quarter, in VG8 and perfect for a G/VG set, cost \$17,250.

The MS62 1857-S half dollar from the Pryor Collection was well struck with some dark toning at upper left part of the obverse and difficult to find better, soared to \$16,675. An 1872-CC in MS61 which was well struck and toning back from a dipping went for \$18,400. A VG8 1878-S half dollar sold for \$40,250, which was much more than any current price guide valued it. The diagnostic line was clearly visible.

An AU55 1852 dollar, which was cleaned but naturally retuned over a long period to an acceptable appearance, did not sell. It is not often that two 1852 original dollars do not sell. The 1857 dollar was an old friend from my collection that had a good strike, frosty luster and lovely toning. In an MS63 holder, it sold for \$7,475 in 2004. Now it is worth \$18,400 because it is in an MS64 holder. In current numismatics, plastic is more valuable than gold. An MS63 1878-CC trade dollar, with a circular bright area on the obverse from another coin laying on it for many years, did not sell.

Question from last Month

Jim Gray asked: Does anyone have the bid price for an 1890 dime in MS63 from the 4/1987 Greysheet so we can compute the gain or loss in the 20.5 years as compared to the 1870-S dollar? **No one responded to this.**

No question this month



Gerry Fortin Wins 2007 Ahwash Award

By popular vote, the Kamal M. Ahwash Award is given annually for the best article to appear in the *Gobrecht Journal* during the past year. The current award cover issues #97 to #99 and was won by Gerry Fortin for his article entitled "Liberty Seated Dime Survey Results - Top 100 Varieties." His article appeared in *Gobrecht Journal* issue #97 and he will receive his award at the LSCC Annual meeting in Baltimore. Congratulations Gerry!

ML Beistle's Stamp Collection Sells

Len Augsburger sent in this information on the sale of ML Beistle's stamp collection. ML Beistle was interested not only in half dollars but in many other collectibles including stamps. Many thanks to the Numismatic Bibliomania Society and their electronic newsletter (E-sylum) for this information.

The E-Sylum: Volume 10, Number 53, December 30, 2007, Article 4

H.R. HARMER SALE OF M.L. BEISTLE PHILATELIC MATERIAL

Michael Sullivan writes: "I thought our E-Sylum readers would be interested in knowing the Beistle collection of Philatelic material was sold by H.R. Harmer in October. The collection included an impressive array of US stamps. I've been a long-time collector of material crossing the boundary between numismatics and philately related to bank note engraving, bank note engraving history, and counterfeiting. The Beistle collection included a number of essays, proofs, and material engraved by specific bank note engraving companies."

www.hrharmer.com



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Collecting Date-Sets of Liberty Seated Coinage, Part 1: Dollars and Half Dollars

different weights but the same design). After buying my second Half Dime (1843 PCGS MS63 which after studying proved to be V-6a, the well-known repunched date) before buying any other seated coin, I got hooked to that series.

Yet, I already knew that the series was not possible to complete in both the time period in those grades I had in mind. So I searched for other solutions, with one of them described in this article: collecting the date-set; each date just one time without paying attention to mint marks. This technique is affordable and possible to complete, even for me with a limited budget.

In this article, all seated series, with the exception of the 20-cent series and the Trade Dollar (a series I personally do not consider a real seated type coin), are discussed. The 20-cent series is relatively easy but not fun to complete with only two business strike dates. Thus, for now, it is not included in this article. I will shortly describe the coins in the set and the difficulty of completing a date-set. For the first series of the seated type, this article will start with the highest denomination in the series, the Silver Dollar.

Collecting Seated Silver Dollars by Date-Only

The largest Silver denomination ever struck in the United States for circulation is the well known Silver Dollar. In the seated series, besides being the largest coin in both diameter (38.1 mm) and weight (412.5 grains and a silver fineness of .900), it is also the shortest series of the seated type. Excluding the Gobrecht Dollars which were first struck in 1836, these were first struck in 1840. Although technically the Gobrecht Dollars are not patterns (but there is a raging debate among dollar experts on this), I've decided not to include them here due to the extreme rarity and the few issues. Three years after the completed and "final" design was first used on half dimes and dimes, the first Liberty Seated Silver Dol-

lars were struck at the Philadelphia Mint. Together with the 2 cent, 3 cent and half dime (see below) pieces, it was discontinued by the Coinage Act of February 12, 1873. In 33 years, coins of this type were minted at the Philadelphia, San Francisco, New Orleans, and Carson City Mints, creating several rare dates but, also for the date-only collector, possibilities to choose from fitting their budget.

The first five years of its life, the Liberty Seated Dollar was solely struck at the Philadelphia Mint, giving any collector a limited choice. The first branch Mint issue is the 1846-O with a mintage of 59,000 pieces, which in very low grades does not command too much premium over a "common" Philadelphia Mint coin. In higher grades, this certainly is an issue the collector should choose to include in his collection as the first Silver Dollar struck at any branch Mint.

The next few years again were not minted at the New Orleans Mint (the only branch Mint for silver coins in use at the time as both Charlotte and Dahlonega limited their production to gold coins), so there is a limited choice again. In 1850, the New Orleans Mint again struck silver dollars in good quantities, with the result that lower grade pieces now actually will cost less than their Philadelphia counterparts. In higher grades though, most collectors will choose to include a Philadelphia Mint in their collection to save money for other coins.

Two of those most important other coins are the stoppers for the one-per-date (as NGC calls the sets at their registry) sets. Very limited mintages at the Philadelphia Mint and no branch Mint coins in 1851 (1,300 original pieces) and 1852 (1,100 original pieces) cause these dates to be the most difficult to find. Nice EF-AU pieces certified by any of the top grading company's will cost anything from \$12,500 up to \$30,000. Restrikes exist in proof only, but will cost the same as any original issue in both circulation strike and proof format.

The scenario of no branch Mint silver dollars again occurs until 1859, when a new branch Mint

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opened in 1854 starts to strike silver dollars: the San Francisco Mint. These issues could be easily ranked with the San Francisco issue the scarcest, being rare in full Mint state. The Philadelphia issue comes in second, and surprisingly, the New Orleans issue is the most common of the trio until MS64. In full gem, the Philadelphia issue is more common because more coins from that Mint were saved by collectors who bought them at the Mint or at banks in the area. The 1858 was only struck in proof format with a total mintage of approximately 300 pieces. Of course, every collector should choose what to include in their collections, but in the author's opinion, a normal circulation strike set does not need to include the rare and expensive 1858.

The New Orleans Mint struck silver dollars for the last time in 1860, a year before the Mint was closed by the Confederacy. The issue is not scarce at all (with a mintage of 515,000 pieces); in fact, it is in most grades cheaper than its Philadelphia counterpart. Many collectors choose to include this issue in their sets, not only because of the price but also from a historic perspective.

All other dates in the 1860s are only available from the Philadelphia Mint, with most issues relatively common except the 1861 and 1862, which are somewhat scarce in comparison of other dates in the era, especially in high grades.

The fun for collectors starts again in 1870, when another branch Mint was opened in the small city of Carson City, Nevada. A historic and popular Mint to collectors, the mintages of silver dollars were small, this being specifically true for seated silver dollars. Because of its popularity, the coins bring a strong premium over a Philadelphia silver dollar, with the historic minded collector leaving a choice open to spend more for a historic piece.

Carson City was founded in 1858 by Abraham Curry. Back then, the state of Nevada did not exist. It was a region within the Utah territory which was established by US Congress in 1850 and Nevada did not join the Union until 6 years later, in 1864. Abraham Curry came from Cleveland, Ohio and went west to start his own general merchandise store.

His first attempt to negotiate with a landowner failed; soon he found that land prices in California were very high so he then decided to build his own city more to the east.

In early 1859, history was about to be made in what would later become the state of Nevada. Peter O'Riley and Patrick McLaughlin, two prospectors who almost wanted to give up the work, discovered a huge silver deposit on Mount Davidson at Washoe, 14 miles from Carson City. The land was claimed by Henry Comstock, who passed by the same day the ore was discovered. To avoid any trouble and lose everything, O'Riley and McLaughlin agreed to give Comstock a share of the claim. He sold his mining interests early for \$20,000, a decision which soon seemed to be a big mistake.

After the first silver was discovered in the upcoming Nevada territory, Curry tried his luck and staked a claim on one of the highest ledges of the Comstock Lode. He merged his claim together with Alva Gould and the new mine was unveiled to the world as the Gould and Curry mine.

The Comstock Lode proved to be the biggest ore of silver ever discovered in the United States. Unfortunately, in the country founded only 80 years earlier, the people generally knew almost nothing about silver mining. In the gold mines near San Francisco, however, many Mexicans were working, many of whom had experience in silver mining in their own country. They were hired by the Americans, but it seemed that the old Mexican methods were too slow and new ways were soon founded.

Only 6 months after the Gould and Curry mine was founded, Abraham Curry sold his interests in the mine for \$2,000. He used the money to be reunited with his family, who were still living in Cleveland. The city of Carson was growing and Abraham Curry had influence and interest in almost everything in the city. He made the city larger, expanding it with a hotel and engine house for the local fire department and several other things for the local community.

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Then, the idea of having a Mint and assay office in the area cropped up in the people minds in the early 1860s. The amount of silver and gold coming out of the mines was overwhelming and most was immediately transported to San Francisco, where it was used to mint coins of several denominations. When the bullion could be used in the state itself, it would remain in Nevada and have a very big influence in the upcoming state's economics, necessary to become a state of importance like Abraham Curry wanted.

On March 2, 1861, Nevada, which name was shortened from the Spanish *Sierra Nevada*, was granted territorial status and became separated from the territory of Utah. On October 31, 1864, only eight days before the presidential selection, it became the 36th state of the United States of America. This was primarily done to help ensure the re-election of Abraham Lincoln and to keep the Republicans in dominance in Congress. From then on, Abraham Curry had another dream, as he wanted Carson City to become the capitol of Nevada.

On the evening of September 24, 1866, ceremonies took place of laying the corner stone of what would become the building where the Carson City Mint would be situated. The *Daily Appeal*, a local newspaper reported: "*There was a large attendance... the ceremonies were performed without interruption and they were quite impressive*".

After several years of building construction and with many problems, the obverse dies for the silver dollars arrived, dated 1869 and they were to await the reverse dies. These arrived a few weeks into the New Year; the 1869 dated obverse dies were useless and were destroyed without striking a single coin. The Mint did stand a major test when a giant earthquake hit the Carson Valley area on December 28. Many buildings were damaged but the Mint building was luckily enough not being among them and thus withstood its first major test.

The new Mint was located on Carson Street close to the centre of the city. On January 8, 1870, a year after the work should have been completed with the original planning, Superintendent of the Mint and

founder of the city, Abraham Curry finally opened the US branch Mint in Carson City, Nevada. Four days later, the correctly dated dies arrived from Philadelphia and, on February 10, 1870, the first coins, 2,303 silver dollars, were produced.

The San Francisco Mint also started to strike silver dollars that year again, although the production was very, very limited. In total, only nine 1870-S silver dollars are currently known to exist, including one Mint State example currently in the Legend Collection of seated silver dollars (the only known full mint state collection of seated silver dollars ever completed).

In 1871, both Philadelphia and Carson City Mints struck seated silver dollars. Because of the rarity of the Carson City issue, most collectors will not include the issue with the famous CC mintmark. If you do want to include a Carson City Dollar in your set but do not want the "common" (common is very relative here), the 1871-CC is the second to best coin to choose. However, be prepared to pay a strong price in comparison with other dates in your set, especially so for premium pieces with original surfaces.

The same story applies for 1872, with the exception that the San Francisco Mint again started to strike silver dollars. Especially in higher grades, this coin is very scarce to rare and much more expensive in comparison with its Philadelphia counterpart. In fact, the 1872-CC is, in my opinion, the scarcest silver dollar struck at the Carson City Mint, despite its slightly higher mintage in comparison with the 1873-CC. The 1872-CC is very rare in the higher AU and even more so in true Mint State, fetching a lot of interest when it comes up for auction once in a few years or less frequently.

Although the reports say the 300,000 silver dollars were minted in San Francisco in 1873, none have ever turned up since the time of their minting. This leads to three possible theories: the first is that coins were accounted for in the annual report of the Mint as silver dollars but actually were half dollars

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or any other denomination. The second, more likely theory is that all coins were melted shortly after being minted and that none were ever released to the general public nor where any sent to the Mint Cabinet. A third possibility is that a single 1873-S seated silver dollar was sent to Philadelphia for assay. If this coin was not tested and not melted, it could, however unlikely, turn up. With the Carson City issue having the lowest mintage of any Carson City silver dollars (although the 1872-CC is scarcer), collectors again will most likely choose the Philadelphia example for their collection.

Collecting Seated Half Dollars by Date-only

Starting as a series one year earlier and ending 18 years later, seated half dollars are a much more expanded series than the silver dollars. These coins were struck continuously at the Philadelphia Mint in every year of its issue and at certain dates at the Mints of San Francisco, New Orleans, and Carson City.

Seated half dollars have been popular with collectors for a long period of time. Unfortunately, it's like many other (if not all) seated series; nearly impossible to complete without very deep pockets and lots of time. The true key dates of the series, coins like 1853-O No Arrows, 1870-CC, and 1878-S hardly ever come up at auction and when they do they bring very strong prices, especially when in higher grades and problem free.

Again, the solution can be simple, very simple. Again with exception of the 1851 and 1852, all Philadelphia grades are very easy to complete with the two Philadelphia key dates being less expensive in the context of the series as is the case with the silver dollars. Of course, just buying the Philadelphia issues and skipping all the other ones is possible. But again, in this series, there are certainly branch Mint issues that do not command much of a premium over their Philadelphia counter-parts.

But first, let's take another problem in ac-

count when collecting by date only. In the seated series, this will happen to all of them and it can be a big dilemma for the collector. During the 53 years the design was minted, several changes were made to denote changes to the silver value and the addition or change of several legends on the coin. This happened in several years and for half dollars - 1842 (Modified Reverse), 1853 (arrows & rays), 1854-1855 (Arrows only), 1866 (Motto above eagle) and 1873-1874 (again Arrows). There wouldn't be much of a problem when there was just one type minted in each year, but as you will probably know this has never really been the case. Most old style varieties were struck for a short period of time before the design changes became effective later in the year, often creating rare and hard to find coins. To the date-only collector the choice: to collect these or not to collect the rarer types.

I think this is certainly what makes coin collecting such a great hobby. You, the collector, can decide what or what not to include, regardless of what others or registry sets say. It is your choice and you are fully in charge. Although I'm sure others will disagree with me, just one (most likely the most common) type will do when collecting by date-only.

When it comes to collecting Philadelphia Mint issues only, the task is not difficult. The 1880's are interesting because not a single branch Mint half dollar was struck in that decade of industrial changes. With silver coinage circulating again after being out of it since 1862, all coins hoarded in that year came out of the closets again and there simply was no need for small silver coinage. In his *Expert's guide to collecting and investing in rare coins*, Q. David Bowers clearly says why these coins were minted for circulation when they were not needed: "*From 1879 onward, Liberty Seated half dollar Mintages were small. The reason any circulation strikes were made was that the Mint didn't want to create rarities for numismatic speculation and investment profits*".

The highest mintage of the decade was achieved in 1888, with 12,833 coins struck in the

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year including 832 proof coins for collectors. These proof coins, of any denomination can be included in a series, and for some dates, that solution can be cheaper than collecting a rare circulation date which is virtually unknown or at least very rare in higher grades. Although an easy solution, I don't collect this way as I don't like an unmatched set with proof coins (although they are very interesting to collect in their own way). The circulation strikes of these dates were widely hoarded, and today there is not much difference in price between a fine and lower mint state piece. Get the best grade you can afford is the best thing here.

As I said, there are several possibilities for the date-only collector to collect several branch Mint issues for a not too high price. This way, the collector can also complete a short "sub-set" at the same time. For the New Orleans dates, the dates that first come to mind are those in the late 1850s and 1860s. As is different than with the silver dollars, the New Orleans Mint struck half dollars in 1861, creating a classic coin which certainly is a favorite for collectors. The total mintage, 2,532,633, includes only 330,000 pieces struck under the U.S. government, which has been the case all those years before. 1,240,000 pieces were struck under that State of Louisiana after it seceded from the Union and the other 962,633 were struck after Louisiana joined the Confederate States of America.

The same scenario is the case with Double Eagle gold coins. Researchers now believe that the time and government of striking of those \$20 coins can be distinguished by die breaks on examples of that issue. Only in recent times, there has been a method found to do the same with the half dollar issue by seated half dollar expert Randy Wiley, leaving it no longer just to your imagination under which government the seated half dollar you own was struck.

With the cause going back throughout the first part of the 19th century, this is one of many examples how America's Greatest War (although bloody is a better word here) was fought between the Union and the Confederacy from 1861-1865. All

these events had their influence on what coins were struck during a certain period and what mintages they had. Without many of these historic events which caused the Civil War, the history of United States coinage could have been completely different.

The antebellum generation of America was at first primarily located in the east, where the first thirteen states founded the United States of America on July 4, 1776. Starting in the early 1800s, people left the safety of the eastern states and trekked westward to explore and to expand their horizon in the unsure and unsafe territories of the Indians and the Spanish. These territories would someday become states when the US Army could win the wars, but the "when" was not known to the ordinary people or the politicians. When it was finally done, a high price was paid to accomplish the final goal, but that was the way God wanted it and thus it happened

Life for the antebellum generation was definitely not easy. Hard work was needed to make some sort of a living which would satisfy the needs of a family. But hard work did not always pay well, and even under those circumstances, most people enjoyed what they did as again, it was the way God had wanted it and nobody had the power to change the will of God.

"Liberty is what our fathers fought for, and now we must preserve it" was a commonly heard sentence on the streets where the workingmen stayed in the mid-19th century cities of America. But was it as easy as it is thought today to preserve that same Liberty? Certainly not; the expanding territory of the United States raised many political questions among the politicians of the day. One of the most important (but certainly not the only) and well known by today's standards was slavery.

Slavery was generally accepted in the 19th century. But as the end of the first part of that same century approached rapidly, the slavery question became a more and more important part of the politics at the time, which was mainly ruled by Whigs and Democrats. The Whigs of those days are the Ancestors

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tors of the Republicans in modern times, although differences can certainly be found. With more states entering the United States of America, the variety of cultural and political ideas became larger and larger. Naturally, many political problems needed to be solved before the safety of Liberty could be fully guaranteed in every state of the Union. This only came after the Civil War of 1861-1865, when as commonly heard today, the Union fought for Liberty and the Confederates for Slavery. As always, there are many different versions of the story which I can't cover here without making this a long narrative which is about anything but seated coinage.

I brought this up because these unsure times and fights for Liberty influenced many people's lives in 19th century America, both before and after the Civil War. One of those was the use of coins and paper money in commerce; so here we are again back on the subject.

When including a San Francisco issue in your date-only set, the main choice will be any of the 1860s dates not commanding much premium over a common Philadelphia coin of the era. A second choice could be the 1855-S. Although this coin is quite scarce in the AU grades and even more so in Mint State, it is more or less affordable in lower circulated grades, although still being about 20 times more expensive as a Philadelphia or New Orleans issue. The reason that I do choose this coin to be highlighted in this article is both its relatively low mintage (211,000 pieces) and it being first half dollar and silver issue struck at this Mint. The San Francisco Mint had opened a year earlier, in the middle of the California gold rush. During its first year of operation the production was just limited to gold coins (as could be expected in a gold rush area) but silver production started a year later. When holding such a coin, one can only imagine what that exact same coin must have seen in his early life.

Last but not least is the Carson City Mint. This Mint in Nevada struck coins from 1870 to 1885 and again from 1889 to 1893 as I have noted in the silver dollar section of this article. The half dollar production was limited from 1870 to 1878 producing

a total of 10 different issues (when both 1873-CC with and without arrows are taking into account). Although most of those are quite scarce, the trio of 1875-CC, 1876-CC and 1877-CC half dollars are affordable and a great addition to any collection. Production of half dollars was stopped and never resumed at the Carson City Mint from 1878 onwards. Most of the Minting facilities were needed for silver dollar production of the Morgan design and all the silver flooding from the Comstock Lode.

To be Continued next month...

(Editor: I thought this article was very interesting, informative, and very advanced for a young collector living in the Netherlands. I, therefore, asked Dennis to write a short numismatic autobiography so that others could appreciate his background.)

I've been interested in numismatics for quite a long time, as per my age. I got interested in them when I was 8 or so, and started up building a small "collection," with accumulation being a better word of coins from around the word I got from family members coming back from vacation. This went on until I was 13 or so, when I finally got into coins more seriously. I decided to start buying what I considered nice coins from my home country, the Netherlands, and did this for a few years. However, I was soon bored with the present state of Dutch numismatics and decided to try something else. I had narrowed the choices down at one point to Roman Imperial coins and US coins. Being a sort of history geek and, with a long-lived interest in anything from the United States, I choose the latter.

I soon got on the internet forum (Collectors Universe from PCGS) and, from that point on, I was on my way. I decided to sell of most of my collection, although there was nothing special in it. I kept a few special items, like my first 19th century coin which got me into coin collection when it was given to me by my grandmother.

At one point, after posting on that forum for

(Continued on page 11)



(Continued from page 10)

Collecting Date-Sets of Liberty Seated Coinage, Part 1: Dollars and Half Dollars

quite a long time and learning very much about all sorts of US coins without ever being in the country itself (something which is still the case unfortunately), there was some sort of competition by another member. The task was to write an article about coins, and as it goes with a competition there were some nice prizes. I started writing, with my article focusing on US patterns, an area of numismatics so out of reach for my budget wise but very interesting to study. As it turned out, I won a 2nd prize with my article (which had quite a bad outcome; the original poster of the contest suddenly disappeared without ever given any of the prizes he promised to the competing youngsters).

Whatever the outcome of that competition was, I decided that I finally found my area of inter-

est. I started writing more articles about patterns and other related topics on US numismatics. I've wanted to collect many different coins along the way (really everything, from clad Washington quarters to 20th century gold coins to Early Copper and everything in between) as they were all so historical to me. After a while, I finally settled down for seated coins and I'm happy I finally made that decision.

Currently, I hope to spend at least 6 or 7 weeks in California this Spring/Summer and finally come to the country I love so much, at least from a distance. I'm hoping to get a coin-related job in the US for next year, finally move across the ocean to settle in the United States, and pursue the dream I have since I started getting interested in the United States such a long time ago.

1861-P Double Die Reverse Half Dollar



There are currently two known doubled die reverse varieties for the 1861-P half dollar. Show above is the more dramatic of the two. It can be readily identified by the very strong doubling on UNITED.

Check your collection - you may have this interesting variety already.



LSCC to meet at the Baltimore Coin Convention

There will be a regional meeting of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club on Friday, February 29th, 9 AM, at the Baltimore Coin and Currency Convention. The room number is currently unknown but will be listed in show program. Please try to attend.



1873 NA Closed 3 NGC MS63 Quarter Dollar

Heritage 1/2008 (Auction 4545 lot 2785): \$74,750

Photographs courtesy of Heritage Auctions

Len Augsburger had a few comments from the consignor of this 1873 NA Closed 3 Quarter Dollar:

"This coin originated from the Harry X Boosel collection. Boosel was fascinated with the 1873 date and published an extensive series of articles in the Numismatist Scrapbook magazine on the subject. He conducted research on the 1873 coinage in the National Archives, something only a handful of writers had done in the early 1960s when his work appeared. Later, he presented an anthology of the 1873 articles in his book "1873-1873". Boosel's collection of 1873 coinage appeared in Merkin (9/1968) and Rarcoa (4/1972) sales.

From Harry Boosel, this coin passed to Harry Bass and appeared in Bass I, lot 2010 (Bowers and Merena, 5/1999). The coin reappeared several years later in Heritage 11/2003 (lot 6188) and then sold to the recent consignor."

\$100 Reward

I am willing to pay anyone \$100 for any seated dime with a rotated reverse which is not currently known. I am close to finishing my research on the subject and want to see if any other might be floating around. Send claims or request additional information from Jason Feldman at jasonfeldman@gmail.com.



Information Wanted

I'm currently working on the large task of cataloging the known seated half dime errors known to collectors by date/mintmark. If you own any seated half dime errors, please send me an e-mail at the address below and provide the following information to make this survey as accurate as possible:

- Date and Mintmark of coin
- Type of error
- Grade
- Certification service if graded
- Photographs of both sides of the coin (if possible)

Information about any known errors including blank planchets is welcomed. The results will be published in an article at the end of this year. Dennis Hengeveld, qeagle88@gmail.com

Announcement

Club member Rich Uhrich announces that Stack's will be selling nearly all of his collection at the pre-Baltimore auction on February 26 – 27, 2008. The Liberty Seated sets in the collection are virtually complete, except for the 1870-S half dime, 1873-CC No Arrows dime and quarter, 1876-CC twenty cent piece, 1853-O No Arrows and 1878-S half, 1851, 1852, and 1870-S Seated dollars, and 1884 and 1885 Trade dollars. The coins range in grade from Good to AU, and all of the key coins will be sold as separate lots.

Rich Uhrich Rare U. S. Coins Inc. also announces the acquisition of a complete set of Seated Half Dollars (excluding the 1878-S) and a nearly-complete set of Trade Dollars. Most of the coins are VF to AU. For further information, check Rich's website www.richuhrichcoins.com

Advertisements

Rare Coins for Sale: Since 1979, David Lawrence Rare Coins has specialized in Seated and Barber coinage for collectors. Please visit our web site for 6,000+ offerings of U.S. & World coins, currency, and stamps for sale and auction. We are also interested in buying or selling your coins at auction. <http://www.davidlawrence.com> or phone 1-800-776-0560, members: PNG, ANA (life), FUN, CSNS

Cuds & Rotated Dies Wanted: Looking to purchase major die breaks / retained cuds / full cuds / shattered die states on Liberty Seated Quarters. Also, major rotated dies of greater than 75 degrees CW or CCW. Preference is for breaks/cuds in the field areas only, no rim cuds please. Other U.S.

series of interest as well. Please reply directly to Paul Kluth @ pcmdmp@msn.com or to the e-mail address of the *E-Gobrecht* newsletter. Thanks!

Rotated Reverse Seated Dimes Wanted: I am looking for rotated reverse Liberty Seated dimes. Any interested parties can email Jason Feldman at jason@seated.org

Wanted to Buy: Nice, problem-free bust and seated material. We specialize in affordable collector coins. Puro's Coins and Jewelry, web: www.vtcoins.com, email: puro@vtcoins.com, phone: 800-655-1327.



Subscriber Correspondence

From **Arno Safran**: [Last Month's] feature article on *Undervalued Dimes* makes a lot of sense. Back in the 1990's, I put together a complete P Mint date set of Liberty Seated dimes (1837-1860-S). The set also included all of the notable transitional sub-types from the 1837 Bust and LS *no stars* to the 1860-S *with stars* and 1860-P *with legend* including some of the *large and small date issues*. Most of these pieces averaged between VF-30 and AU-50; some stronger and a few weaker such as the 1838-O, 1844, and 1846, but all relatively problem free. Considering my discretionary income at the time, they didn't cost me all that much. Today, one hardly finds even some of the commoner dates in this grade range with eye appeal at the major shows or on the internet and yet they're still relatively inexpensive according to the Gray sheet.

From **John P. and Joe B. (similar questions)**: Bill, does this email replace the hard copy? Will I still receive a hard copy? (*Editor: The E-Gobrecht does not replace anything; it is a supplemental free electronic newsletter of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club and is distributed via the internet once per month. As a member of the LSCC you will also receive the Gobrecht Journal three times per year; the latest issue is #100 that came out in November 2007. Does this help clear things up? Please let me know if you have further questions or concerns.*)

From **Dick Osburn**: Ruth and I returned from the Florida United Numismatists (FUN) show in Orlando, Florida last Monday. I've been busy since then trying to recover and catalog the new acquisitions. I can only say one thing about the show – WOW!!!

I haven't heard the attendance figures, but they must have been large. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday the aisles were crowded to the point that it was slow going from table to table. We had 4

to 6 collectors at our table most of the time, filling the chairs and over-flowing to standing-room-only. The demand for rare early material was incredibly strong. I didn't attend the pre-sale auctions, but heard that the prices were strong (and was virtually skunked on the absentee bids I submitted). Prices at the Heritage auction, held during the show, were astounding. Any thought that the market was weakening was swept away in a deluge of record and near-record prices. Heritage's pre-sale estimate of the auction total was around \$50 million. Last time I heard it was over \$65 million. Many of the lots went to internet bidders, indicating that the coins were going into collections, not dealer inventories.

I bought a lot of nice material at the show. The better pieces are now listed on the web site, www.dickosburn.com. I've still got a lot of stuff from several large consignments and purchases to evaluate, attribute, and list, so there will be a lot more new coins going onto the site every day for the next week. I noted one worrisome trend at the show. Because of my reputation as a dealer in these type of coins, I'm normally offered far more opportunities to purchase rare coins at the big shows than I can possibly afford. At this show it didn't happen. As usual, a lot of coins walked up to the table, but there were very few rarities, mostly just generic type. The few rare dates that I did see were major problem coins and/or priced off the charts. This may be another indication that the supply of rare dates is beginning to dry up as the new collectors from the baby boom generation add the coins to their collections, with no intent of selling in the near future. If so we're heading for a new round of major price increases for the scarce and rare dates.

From **Thomas Crump**: I do have a question for the *E-Gobrecht*: Any theories why large numbers of Seated Coinage have had holes drilled through them? My theory is, the holed coins were strung and carried, possibly by Civil War Soldiers.

Notice: Availability of past issues. Through the generosity of Gerry Fortin, the previous issues of the *E-Gobrecht* are readily accessible on his seated dime website at <http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/LSCC.htm>



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Mark your calendar !

- 35th Anniversary of the LSCC - 2008
- Deadline for submission of advertisements for the next issue of the *Gobrecht Journal* - February 8th
- Regional meeting of the LSCC - February 29th, 9 AM, at the Baltimore Coin and Currency Convention
- *Gobrecht Journal* Issue #101 published - March
- Deadline for submission of your seated dollar census - March 15th
- Regional meeting of the LSCC - April 18th, 9 AM, at the Central States Convention in Chicago
- LSCC annual meeting at the ANA Convention, Baltimore - July (Details TBD)
- LSCC Trade Dollar census - 2009

LSCC Pledge

To encourage, promote, and dispense numismatic knowledge of the Liberty Seated coins; to cultivate fraternal relations among its members and all those interested in the science of numismatics.

LSCC Membership Information. Dues are \$20 per year and include three issues of the *Gobrecht Journal*, an award winning numismatic publication. To join the Liberty Seated Collectors Club, for *Gobrecht Journal* mailing address changes, or for other membership questions, correspond with the LSCC Secretary.

Articles, comments, or advertisements for publication in the *Gobrecht Journal* may be addressed to the LSCC President.

Information, input, comments, or suggestions for improvements to this *E-Gobrecht* are actively solicited from anyone and may be sent to the Editor, *E-Gobrecht*.

To be added or removed from the *E-Gobrecht* mailing list, send an email message with the words "Subscribe/Unsubscribe" in the subject line of the message to: wb8cpy@arrrl.net.

Wanted: Material for this newsletter!

Please consider submitting something for print. It need not be elaborate; it can be something as simple as a short note on your favorite variety, neat find, nice cherry pick, happenings at a coin show, rare Liberty Seated coinage coming up for auction, etc. If you are interested in it, rest assured, others will be too! Sharing information is a goal of this newsletter and you need not be an experienced or famous writer to submit something. This is a continuing plea.

*The *E-Gobrecht* is not copyrighted; use its content freely but please be sure to quote the *E-Gobrecht* and the Liberty Seated Collectors Club.*