



# The E-Gobrecht

The Electronic Newsletter of the LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

## Liberty Seated Collectors Club

2009 Volume 5, Issue 1  
January 2009 (Whole # 47)

## LSCC Regional Meetings Scheduled

### 2009 FUN

Date: Friday, January 9, 2009

Time: 9 AM

Location: Orlando, Florida's Orange County Convention Center,  
Room 322

### March 2009 Portland, Oregon ANA National Money Show

The Date, Time, and Location are currently being coordinated with the ANA's Convention staff. Details, when available, will be provided in future issues of this newsletter. Club member Scott Mickelson, will be chairing this meeting.

## Other FUN Show activities

LSCC member, Bill Cowburn, will present a talk entitled 'My 20 Favorite Varieties of Liberty Seated Half Dollars' on Friday, January 9th at 11 am. See the show program for exact location. Please try to attend and support our fellow club member.

There will be an educational exhibit on Collecting Trade Dollar Die Marriages at the FUN show in Florida. The exhibitor's name is confidential until after the judging of the exhibit. See the exhibit's narrative on page 10 of this issue.

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## Auction News

by  
**Jim Gray**

December was very slow for coin auctions with the **Heritage Houston** Sale being the only sale of note.

The sale contained a hoard of seven very fine 1844 dimes, all of which were original and obviously selected with care.

The prices realized were as follows:

VF20-\$517; VF20-\$623; VF20-\$546; VF20-\$546; VF20-\$623; VF25-\$632; VF25-\$632.

An additional 1844 dime in XF45 and light from a dipping realized \$1,380. Finally, an absolutely beautiful 1844 dime in MS63, with a good strike and lovely blue toning, soared to \$13,800. An 1846 dime in MS61 was the finest graded by NGC. Unfortunately, the coin was not attractive because

of dull, mottled gray and brown toning and did not sell. An 1873-CC dime in VF25 was a little soft on Liberty's head, the wreath and denomination. However, the coin was nicely toned, gave a nice appearance and was a find for the fine/very fine collector at \$9,200.

Two 1854-O huge O quarters were for sale in the catalogue with a Fine 12 specimen selling for \$2,213 and a Fine 15 piece did not sell. A lovely 1856-S quarter in MS62 with nice toning and very few marks realized a strong \$14,375.

An 1842-O small date half dollar in XF40, with a decent strike and a nice appearance, realized \$3,737. A wholesome natural gray 1866-S no motto half in XF40 sold for a strong \$2,070.

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## ***E-Gobrecht* enters 5th year!**

Thanks to the efforts of many contributors, the *E-Gobrecht* has been very successful and is now entering its 5th year of publication with 400 subscribers! The Editor would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped make this newsletter a success and to encourage others to start and/or continue their numismatic writings by submitting something. Overcoming that initial hesitation to author a short topic or an article may be difficult but is also very rewarding once you see something you wrote in print. So try it, you will enjoy it!



## **Question of the Month**

### ***Topics for e-Discussion by Paul Kluth***

**\* Valentine \* Blythe \* Ahwash \* Greer \* Briggs \* Wiley-Bugert  
\* White \* Breen \***

**The Liberty Seated reference books are all out of print and getting scarcer and, of course, harder to find. Some newer LSCC members can't find the books they need to refer to. What is the Liberty Seated collector to do especially those new to the field?**

**Several of the really scarce books are now bringing huge premium prices when and if found. The cost of publishing books (reprints too) is going out of sight and the quantity that makes sense for a print run usually isn't large enough to justify the means. For most authors, it is a true labor of love.**

**And get this... look at how many dealers and auction houses now use the reference book descriptions and attribution #'s when listing coins for sale in ads and catalogs without any compensation to the book writers who created the sources of information in the first place.**

**All responses are welcome! Please give us your thoughts and opinions. Send your reply to the E-Gobrecht editor at [wb8cpy@arrl.net](mailto:wb8cpy@arrl.net).**





# Answers to Last Month's Question

## *Topics for e-Discussion by Paul Kluth*

**What is your favorite denomination to collect and why? Why do you passionately collect the Liberty Seated denominations that you do?**

From **Rod Green**: I've collected half dimes for the past 15 years. I picked them (and Trade Dollars) when I rejoined the collecting fraternity because I thought that was a pretty unusual denomination, with a fascinating history going back to the half disme. I've found the varieties fascinating, especially the many 1848 versions. I had a rough spot when I bought a proof 1858 that turned out to be badly damaged, but apart from that, it's been great fun. Still working hard on getting nice examples of the Civil War era business strikes, but that too will come in time.

From **Anonymous**: Seated Dollars - why, you ask?? Because they are big, undervalued, HISTORICAL and beautiful and are actually to find VF, XF, AU and with untouched, uncleaned and unmessed with hairline free surfaces with great eye appeal and it is a challenge but they are out there; RARE BUT OUT THERE even the so called common dated 1846; try to find a totally uncleaned "gem circulated" nice XF or AU with great eye appeal and no prior cleanings without the resulting hairlines---good luck, as this so called common date with these qualities is a R-5 in my book, well low R-5. LOL

The passion is there because it is not really about collecting seated dollars in circulated grades with great eye appeal and totally original but it is THE THRILL OF THE HUNT; AND EVEN IF YOU ARE ON A LOW BUDGET IT MIGHT TAKE YOU 12-24+ MONTHS OF LOOKING TO BUY YOUR FIRST COIN..... SO IT WILL NEVER GET OLD OR TIRED AND YOU WILL NEVER ACCUMULATE MANY COINS. Hence the thrill is actually in the hunt!!! At least it is for myself and this is all that matters to me.

From **Dennis Fortier**: It's hard to believe I got hooked on Seated Half Dollars just 3 years ago. It seem like I've collected them forever. I like the half dollar because the size allows you to see so much of the detail of this beautiful design. Once I was hooked, I got into varieties and there are so many tough and interesting varieties to collect in the series it will keep you going for a lifetime. The LSCC community is like the topping of it all with like minded people to share your passion with and to learn from.

From **Barry Stallard**: Here is my two cents worth. As a long time collector of several world coin series, the coins I still need for my collections are much harder to find and more expensive. Without quitting the old, I needed a new area to collect that is also challenging. So I decided to go back to U.S. coins which I had set aside many years (45!) ago.

What is my favorite seated series? - this is a coin flip for me. I started a 'Red Book' collection of the capped bust half dollars a few years ago (now not too far from completion). Seated halves is a long series and a nice follow-on to the capped bust. Such a large coin is also better for my aging eyes (!) and is reasonably priced for many of the coins. Although it's getting more expensive for me now for the tougher dates and mints, because it's a long series, I can usually find needed dates at a show and come home with something to add to the collection. I also like the dollar coin because of its large size, beauty, and rarity. Since they are more expensive for nice coins, I have many fewer in the collection, but at least it's a shorter series. By collecting both denominations, it can become a trade-off between which

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coins I can buy at a show, auction, or web site offering. This will get tougher as I fill out a set. I guess you could say I am an opportunist. Happy collecting to all!

From **Greg Johnson**: Why do I collect? Like my very distant cousin Curious George, I have a strange fixation with shiny objects. Why do I collect liberty seated quarters and not other US coin series? Well, I have collected many other US coin series at one point or another. Starting with Walking Liberty half dollars in the mid to late 1970's, I've completed circulated sets of buffalo and Jefferson nickels, Mercury and Roosevelt dimes, Washington quarters, Walking Liberty and Kennedy halves, and Eisenhower dollars. I've also worked on sets of Lincoln cents and Morgan dollars. Somewhere during about 25 years of off-and-on collecting of US coins, I reached the conclusion that I just don't like coins with heads on them. Portrait coins leave me cold. Perhaps it's the dead president's gallery that has appeared on our pocket change for my entire lifetime, but I simply do not like coins that feature a head on one side. Liberty Seated coins are my favorites, in part, because they don't have portraits. Certainly Walking Liberty halves, St Gaudens double eagles, and Standing Liberty quarters also qualify, but I find them just too common and too popular. I've always liked to be where the crowd isn't.

Once started on Liberty Seated coins, I was drawn to quarters by their rarity and seemingly reasonable price for such rarity. As the quarter collection began to fill out, I branched out into the other seated denominations and started a 19<sup>th</sup> century silver type set. Though I like half dimes and dimes they simply do not have the same grip on my attention that quarters have. I think that is partly due to their size, but partly due to the fact that I greatly prefer eagle reverses to wreaths. I have also owned around eight very nice seated dollars at one time or another, but just do not find them attractive in affordable grades; usually for reasons of strike and/or bag marks. I originally chose quarters over half dollars because it is possible to build a sizable collection of

almost entirely rare or very scarce coins and because I still liked being where the crowd wasn't. At the time, the crowd was not pursuing liberty seated quarters.

The more I study Liberty Seated coins, the more I continue to prefer quarters over other denominations on aesthetic grounds. Quarters seem to have just the right balance between fields and devices. Though I certainly find a nice seated half all but irresistible, the dimes and half dimes are just too small and crowded (the device/field ratio is too large for the coin size) and the dollars have too much space (the device/field ratio is too small for the coin size). Quarters are like Goldilocks' porridge – just right.

The summary of my reasons for specializing in seated quarters: 1) They don't have portraits, 2) They are rare as a series and even now remain under-rated, 3) The attractive liberty seated design (including the eagle reverse), and 4) They are aesthetically more pleasing to me than other seated denominations.

I would also add unsolicited commentary to the effect that not all seated quarters are equal. The design balance that makes them so appealing aesthetically was disrupted by the addition of the motto on the reverse; the no motto quarters are much more attractive to me than their with motto counterparts. A still finer point is the distinction between type I obverses and type II obverses. The change from type I to type II obverse was made in 1859 and may seem subtle to most who are not obsessive seated quarter collectors. Clearly, I qualify as such, as my favorite seated coins are quarters minted from 1840-1859. I note similar distinctions between designs of other denominations. Seated dimes were never again as attractive once the drapery was added at the elbow in 1840 and seated halves never regained their full splendor once the small letters reverse was abandoned in 1842.

From **Gerry Fortin**: What seated series do I collect and why am I passionate about the series?

This is a most fundamental question that I am frequently asked. Following is the long response....

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I started collecting Liberty Seated dimes as a series based on a decision made back in 1987 with Redbook in hand. Most of you know the story; I re-entered numismatics in early 1987 after Diane and I received a thoughtful gift from her mother at 1986 family Christmas party. My wife's mother was a secret coin collector (as we discovered after her death this year while going through her estate). Mrs. Theriault probably wanted to spread her quiet love for coins by giving each son and daughter a roll of silver dollars that Christmas. The gift was a trigger for my long hidden desire for coin collecting after a childhood of Lincoln, Jefferson, and Roosevelt Whitman folders. At first my attention turned to building a set of Morgan dollars but the thrill of the search was lacking as any coin show produced hundreds of Morgan dollar as potential acquisitions. I wanted to collect rare coin with substantial history including the Civil War period. One day, I was reading the *Redbook* and noticed that Liberty Seated coinage could be a new collecting area that corresponded with my rarity and historical criteria. Then a check of pricing revealed that the Liberty Seated dimes could be assembled in F-12 grade for not an unreasonable amount of money. Seated dimes were struck for over 50 years at four different mints; clearly they would present a long term challenge. So the decision was made; I would collect Seated dimes....

The first step on the new collecting journey was to buy the book before the coins. A check of *Coin World* classifieds uncovered a book about Liberty Seated dimes by Kam Ahwash. The book was ordered and upon receipt I became infatuated with all of the different die varieties illustrated by Kam. Being a semiconductor engineer with a keen operations background, I began to wonder about the physical conditions at the various U.S. mints during the striking of Seated dimes and why the mint produced such spectacular varieties as the 1839 Pie Shaped shattered obverse and the 1839-O Cobweb shattered reverse. I wanted to know more and immediately shifted to date, mintmark and variety collecting as parallel pursuits.

So when did the passion really start for me?

After joining the LSCC and working with Brian Greer on a Seated dime population survey in 1989-1990 timeframe, I became hooked on Seated dimes. Brian was finishing his Guidebook at the time and asked for help with certain plate coins and unknown varieties. Still believing to be a novice, Brian's request and chance to participate in such an important numismatic endeavor left me with a strong positive attitude about the possibility to perform addition Seated dime variety research. The passion grew as more articles were published in the *Gobrecht Journal*. I became friends with a young numismatist named Jason Carter at Heritage. Brian Greer and John McCloskey were the important mentors. Jim O'Donnell along with Kevin Zeitler and Chris Pilliod rounded out the principals in my seated coinage education.

Some where around 1994, I made the decision to publish the third Seated dime reference book and complete the project that Brian Greer started with his Guidebook. The LSCC needed a comprehensive Seated dime book with in depth analysis of each date's dies, die states and die marriages. The amount of research was substantial and took an additional ten years after the 1994 decision. I was a "hound dog" for Seated dimes and bought many coins from eBay, coin shows, dealers, and friends. Researching varieties was best done with hoards and I do remember Jason Carter selling me large quantities of certain dates from the Hungary Hoard. My first 1874-CC dime came from Brian Greer and was funded by a small inheritance from a great uncle!

2000 through 2004 were intense years as the evolving web-book started matching my vision for an internet based variety guidebook. In parallel, my collecting standards shifted to slabbed mint state Seated dimes and many of the 1990's purchases went to the TPGs. The PCGS registry was the trigger for shifting attention to higher grade mint state examples. I become passionate about collecting only the best Seated dimes for the grade since the registry set was planned to be part of a retirement funding strategy. Only Seated dimes with full heads, original surfaces and excellent eye appeal were selected for inclusion in the registry collection. But I was still

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building the variety collection at a frantic pace to ensure the web-book's credibility as a comprehensive study on die varieties. These activities took much time and much money! The web-book was launched at the 2004 Pittsburgh ANA and Heritage's own Greg Rohan wrote the first membership check. I celebrated at the show by buying an 1850-O NCG MS67 Star dime from Jason Carter. That was a passionate decision!

From **Bill Bugert**: Like many other collectors, I started collecting coins as a child. Around 1960, I remember sitting around the dining room table on Saturday nights with my parents, Aunts, and Uncles as they played penny poker. In the change they used, I was fascinated by the many different types of coins and by their age. My family recognized my interest and I was rewarded periodically with coins from their "jackpot." I was soon filling the blue Whitman coin holders with collections of Lincoln cents, Jefferson nickels, Mercury Dimes, Washington quarters, and Walking Liberty half dollars. By then I was mowing lawns and doing odd-jobs as an early teenager to purchase the coins I couldn't find in circulation, at first Liberty Head "V" nickels, from the many local coin shops. I credit my maternal grandmother with starting me in Liberty Seated half dollars when she gave me a VG 1858-O.

My interest in coins waned during my college years but when I entered the US Army in 1973, a friend of mine re-sparked my interest. I always liked the size of half dollars and together we concentrated on Uncirculated Franklin halves. I soon remembered my 1858-O. That same year while searching for a reference on seated halves, I obtained Beistle's Register and noticed all the variations he listed. That started me on a serious effort to collect Liberty Seated Half Dollars.

While station in West Germany in the mid to late 1970's, I saw a write up on the Liberty Seated coinage and the LSCC in *Coin World*. I wrote to John McCloskey and joined in 1979. By then I had a sizable date/mint collection and was into die varie-

ties. Upon return to the States, I relocated to Northern Virginia and John linked me up with Randy Wiley. I believe that Randy and I encouraged each other to higher collecting goals of owning all the die marriages of Liberty Seated half dollars. We would spend hours studying and taking notes on our coins, counting reeds, measuring diameters, researching die shipment records in the National Archives to ascertain the number of dies that are possible, and attending many coin shows together. I concentrated on XF/AU coins because they had enough detail to study and their cost fit into my budget.

In 1986, we both gave presentations on Seated Halves at the American Numismatic Association's Coinage of Americas Conference. By 1990, we had sizable reference collections and were approached by David Feigenbaum of David Lawrence Rare Coins to write the Complete Guide. It took us a year to write it and it was published in 1993. Meanwhile, my collection increased in size and is still increasing. Liberty Seated half dollars are now a major part of my life and I can't see not collecting them until the end.

From **Calif Boomer**: Ten years ago, I paid off my house and decided to create a spectacular collection at least from my perspective. I spent over a month looking at all the designs and denominations and the SL design and the quarter rose to the top. The proof was selected because of availability (and exclusion of 1870-CC). After completing the proofs, it seemed logical to fill-in business strikes in nice whatever grade. Someone inspired the expansion to SL halves and a blend of proofs and business strikes was selected. US patterns followed and then ancients - especially those that looked seated libertyish. I wonder where this will end though I know it is eternal and still lots of fun.



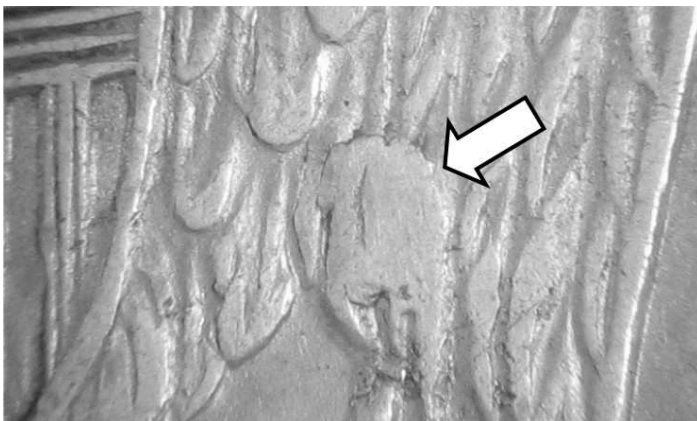
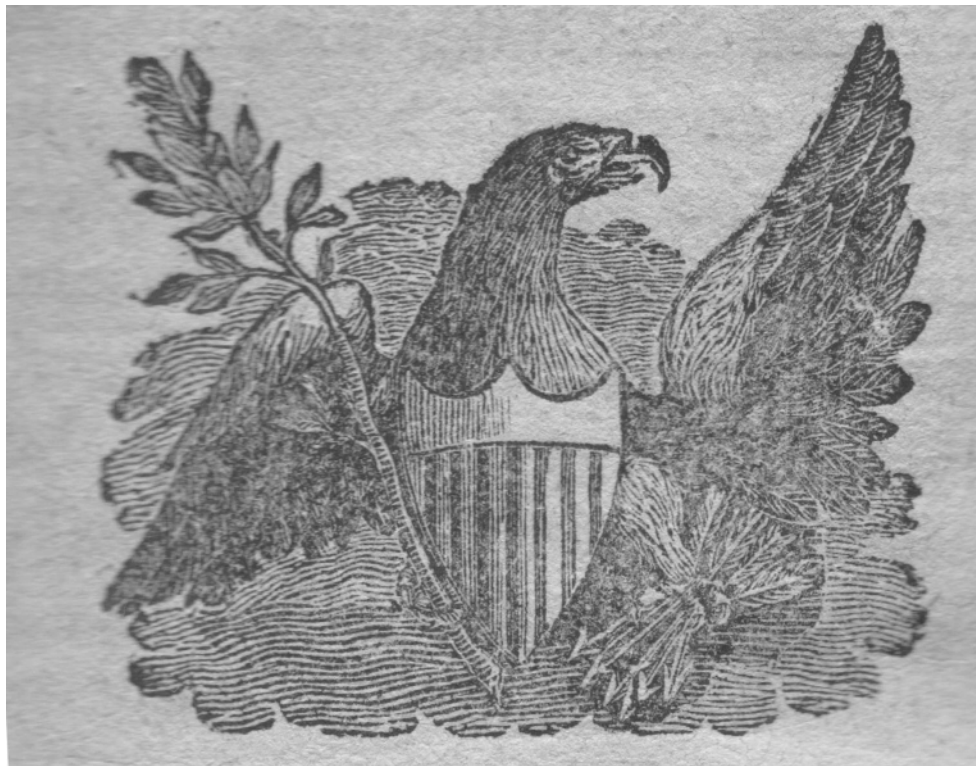




## Gobrecht's First Eagle?

By Len Augsburger

An engraving clearly derived from the Great Seal of the United States appears in "The Children in the Wind," a book published by Warner and Hanna in Baltimore in 1806. The connection to Christian Gobrecht lies in the fact that Gobrecht supplied and signed other engravings in this volume. This particular engraving is unsigned, but Gobrecht seems a likely candidate. Other engravings on the book are alternately signed "C. Gobrecht", "C G," or "Gobright," suggesting that Gobrecht considered using an Anglicized spelling of his last name. Still other engravings, as this one, are unsigned. Gobrecht executed other engravings for Warner and Hanna during this period and appears to have had an ongoing relationship with the firm prior to his move to Philadelphia, c. 1815.



**1862-S Half Dollar with a large die chip in the eagle's right wing**





## Gobrecht Journal Collective Volume #5 Update

Thanks to the massive efforts of Len Augsburger, John McCloskey, and a few others, Collective Volume #5 is nearing completion. Draft copies were made and edited, and the cover art (below) was submitted to the on-line publisher. Everything has been successfully uploaded and accepted by the internet publisher and a hardcopy should be ready by mid-January for final verification. After some additional minor corrections, it should then be ready for internet sales. An announcement will be made in a later issue of the *E-Gobrecht*.



## LSCC Help Wanted!

The officers of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club are soliciting volunteer(s) to run LSCC Western Regional meetings at the 2009 Long Beach, CA Coin Expos in February, May, and September 2009.

The LSCC Club Officers routinely do not attend these meetings and we are hoping to expand the regional meetings to the West Coast at these Expos. Normally, a regional meeting is an informal hour long event with update of club activities, discussions of Liberty Seated activities, and show and tell.

If you are interested in assisting with this, please email Bill Bugert, VP LSCC, at [wb8cpy@earthlink.net](mailto:wb8cpy@earthlink.net)



## COLLECTING U.S. TRADE DOLLARS BY DIE MARRIAGE:

### A Numismatic Road Less Taken

*The following is the narrative that will accompany an exhibit to be shown at the 2009 FUN show. With the author's permission, it is included here without his name so that voting for his exhibit is not compromised. His name will be included in next month's E-Gobrecht. Thanks for sharing it and good luck! - Editor*

This exhibit is designed to introduce the concept of collecting United States Trade Dollars by die marriage. It is not the intent to describe or show all possible die marriages that may exist in this series, rather the exhibit is designed to explain the concept of collecting by die marriage and to show how that collecting discipline can be applied to collecting United States Trade Dollars.

Collecting by die marriage is very popular within early series of United States coinage. Early half dollars issued from 1794 through 1836 are collected by Overton numbers. Bust quarter dollars are collected by Browning numbers. Early large cents are collected by Sheldon numbers. Half dimes are collected by Logan-McCloskey numbers. In every case, the numbers noted above (Sheldon, Overton, etc.) represent die marriages. But, what are die marriages?

A die marriage is created when a coin is produced from a specific obverse die that is paired with a specific reverse die. In the early days of the United States Mint, most of the work required to create a die was done by hand. This manual manufacturing process meant that the relative position of certain features, such as the stars or letters, would differ on each working die produced since the stars and lettering were individually punched into each working die.

With all of the visible differences in alignment of features such as stars and letters on each working die, it then becomes possible to identify each unique die used to produce coins during a particular year. For example, the 1810 Capped Bust half Dollar was produced using 9 different obverse dies and 10 different reverse dies. Think of the obverse dies as 1 through 9 and the reverse dies as being identified with letters A through J. When obverse die 1 was paired with reverse die A, the die marriage 1810 O-101 was created.

Of course, an obverse or reverse die could (over time) be paired with more than one opposing die. Using the 1810 Capped Bust Half Dollar as an example again, obverse die 2 was paired with reverse die B, producing die marriage 1810 O-102. However, obverse die 2 was also used with reverse die C producing die marriage 1810 O-103.

Collecting by die marriage is popular within the early coinage of the United States, but by the time we get to the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, working dies were being created with a more mechanical process. This new process eliminated much of the manual work which created the unique characteristics on earlier coinage that allows us to distinguish individual dies from one another. With the rise of mechanization in creating working dies, there was a resultant increased difficulty in the ability to collect by die marriage since one obverse die was indistinguishable from the next.

Type collectors may want only a single example of a United States Trade Dollar for their collection. Other collectors expand their Trade Dollar collection to include one of each date and mintmark for the series. More adventurous collectors include the subtype 1 and subtype 2 obverse and reverse designs that exist for the 1875 and 1876 issues. Some will even add a few of the popular doubled die varieties that exist in this series. However, it is possible for a collector to expand upon even the larger sets listed above and enter into a relatively unknown area of numismatics – collecting United States Trade Dollars by die marriage.

Some varieties of Trade Dollars are listed in Q. David Bowers' 1993 book, *Silver Dollars and Trade Dollars of the United States – A Complete Encyclopedia*. However, most of the varieties listed in

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any of the current reference books involve only the size of the mintmark, noting whether the reverse is subtype 1 or subtype 2 and/or noting the spacing between the C's for the Carson City mintmark.

Very few varieties are noted in Bowers' wonderful book that relate to the obverse, yet a collector of die marriages needs to examine characteristics of both the obverse and reverse to determine which individual die marriage they have. It is here that the challenge begins for a collector of die marriages within the United States Trade Dollar series, as previously published books do not cover differences in the dies that will assist the collector in identifying die marriages for this series.

By the time that the US Trade Dollar was being produced, generally all of the coin design (including stars and lettering) was included on the hub that was used to produce the working dies. The only items that were being added directly to the working die, and therefore able to be used to identify individual dies from one another, were the date on the obverse die and the mintmark on the reverse die.

The exhibitor has identified 7 major date positions and 1 repunched date on obverse dies for 1877-S U. S. Trade Dollars – see photos and descriptions in the cases that follow. There are also some significant variations in the location that the mint-

mark was punched into the reverse die along with different size mintmarks being used. Again, see the photos and descriptions that follow.

With all of the significant die differences noted above, it is now possible for a collector to identify die marriages that distinguish one example of a specific date from another example of the same date. For example, a collector might have an example of an 1877-S Trade Dollar with the S mintmark 1.2 mm high, the left side of the S inline with the left side of the S in GRAINS and the date in a centered position. Then later they find an example with the same reverse but with the date in a position farther to the left – in other words, a different die marriage from the first example!

The exhibitor's research into US Trade Dollar die marriages has revealed 8 different obverse varieties and 19 different reverse varieties for 1877-S issues. Photos and examples are displayed for each of the examples known to the exhibitor.

Obverse varieties are numbered from 1 through 8 and reverse varieties are identified with letters A through S. The exhibitor has been able to find 22 unique die marriages using these obverses and reverses. The currently known die marriages for 1877-S US Trade Dollars consist of the following pairs of Obverse and Reverse dies:

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#### 1877-S Trade Dollar Obverse Die 1

The date is punched very far to the left in relation to the motto 'In God We Trust'

The top right serif of the first 7 in the date is far left of the first T in 'Trust' with the left edge of the second 7 under the T.

The right side of the numeral 1 in the date is very far left of the left side of the O in 'God'



#### 1877-S Trade Dollar Obverse Die 4

The date is punched very slightly left in relation to the motto 'In God We Trust'

The top right serif of the first 7 in the date is at the edge of the first T in 'Trust'

The right side of the numeral 1 in the date is inline with the left side of the O in 'God'





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<u>Die Marriage #</u>	<u>Obverse #</u>	<u>Reverse Letter</u>
1	1	P
2	2	L
3	3	A
4	3	B
5	3	D
6	3	N
7	3	Q
8	4	G
9	4	K
10	5	B
11	5	O
12	5	P
13	5	R
14	6	C
15	6	E
16	6	F
17	6	H
18	6	M
19	6	O
20	7	I
21	7	J
22	8	S

As you can see, Obverse 6 is paired with six different reverse dies creating 6 die marriages. Reverse die P is paired with two different obverse dies creating 2 die marriages. My research to date has revealed more than 100 die marriages in this series.

Of course, the chart above is only a look at the 1877-S. There are die marriages to be found for each date and mintmark in the US Trade Dollar series. Almost certainly there are more die marriages than what I have been able to find to date, but clearly the reader can see that this study opens a new door to collecting a series that has long been neglected. Perhaps it is time for you to take that road less traveled!

#### 1877-S Trade Dollar Obverse Die 7

The date is punched well right in relation to the motto 'In God We Trust'

The top right serif of the first 7 in the date is well right of the first T in 'Trust' and at the edge of the R

The right side of the numeral 1 in the date is well right of the left side of the O in 'God'







## 1861 Half Dime with Obverse Die Clashing

***Newsletter subscriber, Dan Backman, sent in some photos of a heavily clashed 1861 half dime. I forwarded the photos to half dime expert Steve Crain for comment. His comments are worth sharing with everyone and they are included below - Editor.***

When I first saw the images of Dan's 1861 half dime, with the spectacular obverse die clashing, I was reminded of the well known 1860-O V2 half dime listed by Dr. Daniel W. Valentine, with similar clashing. He describes it rather cryptically as "Die imperfections between figure and flagpole", leading us to assume that he was unfamiliar with the concept of die clashing. Indeed, the term 'die suction' was in wide use during that period of numismatics.

After looking at Dan's coin, I was also reminded of another example with similar obverse clashing, but with a different date, in my reference collection, causing me to do a search in my database for the specific coin. I was surprised to find that I have examples dated 1857, 1860 (P), and 1862, all with identical obverse die clashing, in addition to the aforementioned 1860-O V2. Apparently there was an ongoing problem with die clashing during this period of unprecedented high output from the Mint.

In order to fully understand the observed die clashing, with the letter "M" from the denomination appearing incuse (and upside down) in the drapery at Miss Liberty's elbow, we must think of the entire minting process and the three dimensional relationship of the dies and coin silver. The letters of the denomination (in this case, particularly the M in DIME) appear *in relief* on the reverse of a properly struck coin. Therefore, the letters are incuse in the reverse die. Thus, when the dies are allowed to come together *without* a blank planchet between them, as when a die clash occurs, the letter(s) will also appear *in relief* on the obverse die. Then, when subsequent coins are struck from those clashed dies, the errant letters, which are raised or in relief on the obverse die, will cause them to appear incuse on the struck coin. They appear as if they were counterstamped on the struck coin. On the coins struck immediately after the clashing occurred, the greatest, or strongest, evidence of the clashed letters will appear. (It would be incorrect to refer to these necessarily as "Early Die States" for the die pair since the clashing might have occurred at any point in the life of the die, including late in its life).

Although I had never seen an example of the 1861 half dime with this strong die clashing, the very fact that the same condition occurs on many other dates of that era (including 1857, 1860, 1860-O, and 1862) leads me to believe that this was a common occurrence. Such clashing is rather spectacular, though, and nice examples which exhibit this characteristic help us to further understand the minting process.

I am not aware of any die marriage for 1861 previously identified by any published researcher which specifically identifies this clashed variety. The 1861 V2 is described by Valentine as "Similar to No. 1, but flaw under arm holding pole", which could be his way of describing it, but the photographic plate does not exhibit any severe clashing as on Dan's coin. Close-up inspection of an example of the 1861 V2 half dime in my reference collection shows mild clashing in the field, but nothing as severe as on Dan's coin. As any serious student of the Liberty Seated half dimes will know, the 1861 date had one of the highest mintages for the series, yet Valentine listed only three (3) die marriages, so there must be many additional unreported die marriages for the date, perhaps including Dan's coin.





## Subscriber Correspondence

From **Charles Sullivan**: As the front-page Coin World stories of December 1 and 8, 2008 make abundantly clear, Chinese pseudo-mints are starting to produce high-quality fakes of U.S. coinage at trivial prices. On entrepreneur seems on the verge of offering any U.S. series by date and mint. To complete his product line, he also counterfeits albums to house date-and-mint runs as well as slabs for more "valuable" copies.

What is particularly scary is that these 100+ Chinese pseudo-mints are not even trying that hard to produce deceptive specimens. If they ever start to pay serious attention to planchet diameters and metallic composition, watch out! Even now the fakers are using sophisticated computer scanning and digital technologies to remove/obliterate tell-tale planchet defects from the host transfer coin and are also employing heavy-duty coinage presses "of the period" to produce the counterfeits, i.e., these new coins have flow lines. With eBay's acting as low-cost, laissez-fair distribution channel and the Chinese government standing by in idle mode, in very short order high-quality fakes could easily outnumber genuine coins for even "common" dates.

So instead of worrying about the 1878-S half dollar you have just spotted is fake or real, beware the 1878-P instead. Copies of the 1876-CC twenty-cent piece made in China will now come with factory double die at no extra charge. And did you miss the Philadelphia Mint's midnight sale of 1884 Trade Dollars? Not to worry. Soon you too may be able to own an attractive specimen, no more illegitimate than the original restrrike.

I predict huge numbers of these fakes will soon begin to enter the non-specialized marketplace and start ending up for sale in Craig's List, antique stores and pawn shops, estate sales, neighborhood newspapers and yard sales, and yes, even coin stores and coin shows.

To protect myself, if I do not know the seller personally or by reputation, I will only buy slabbed. Second, I will only pay serious money if a coin is slabbed. Third, I will say "goodbye" to bargains -- if the price is too low, I will immediately think "Fake!"

From **Michael Luck**: NGC NEW TAB HOLDERS----To my eye, these white tabs distract from the beauty and symmetry of the coin, and at least one of the tabs on both sides!! Not only comes over the rims but goes into the dentils; this is really disturbing not only again affecting the symmetry but also hiding any rim and/or nick problems and also rim cuds etc. Also, PCGS, I assume, will more than likely not want to cross these tab PCGS holders unless they will pre-cross an NGC coin at the stated grade with the caveat that if they break out the coin and the tab is hiding something PCGS does not like then the coin comes back to you broken out of its holder with its returned tag and broken holder!!

Myself, I think NGC would have been better to slab coins in their white NGC holders that have clear inner rings that hold the coin like their aren't company NCS does as this looks more presentable and the coin is not buried deep in the white NGC holder. Food for thought!!

From **Weimar White**: Hi, I am confused. I thought I saw very weak arrows at the date on the 1874 dime coin in prooflike showcased in your on line journal.





## Information Wanted on Half Dime Errors

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, [Hengeveld.dennis@gmail.com](mailto:Hengeveld.dennis@gmail.com)

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## Notice: Availability of past issues of the E-Gobrecht

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

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## 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

### **Liberty Seated Quarter Cuds & Rotated Dies**

**Wanted:** Other U.S. series of interest as well. Please reply directly to Paul Kluth @ [pcmdmp@msn.com](mailto:pcmdmp@msn.com) or to the e-mail address of the *E-Gobrecht* newsletter.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.vtcoins.com), email: [puro@vtcoins.com](mailto:puro@vtcoins.com), phone: 1-800-655-1327.

**Seated Dime Die Varieties Wanted:** I am paying high prices for Seated Dimes with major cuds, die cracks, and rotated reverses. Contact David Thomas at [davethomas333@hotmail.com](mailto:davethomas333@hotmail.com) or 1-949-929-2830.



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## Mark your calendar !

### 2009

- LSCC Eastern Regional meeting - Friday, January 9, 2009, 9 AM, Orlando's Orange County Convention Center, room 322.
- Trade Dollar census - Forms will be postal mailed in January 2009
- Next issue of *Gobrecht Journal* - March 2009
- LSCC Western Regional meeting - March 2009, date/time/location TBD, Portland, OR Money Show

## LSCC Dues

**If you haven't done so already, send them to the Secretary/Treasurer!**

## 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@arrl.net](mailto:wb8cpy@arrl.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.