



The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

This & That: San Francisco Version

An 1870-S Dollar Appears

On September 18, I visited Russ Bega at Harlan Berk Rare Coin in downtown Chicago. The obvious attraction was the F.C.C Boyd example of the 1870-S Liberty Seated dollar, which is currently on the market at \$275k. At one time the initials “FHI” were engraved on the obverse and were subsequently removed. The reverse is a decent XF/AU and reasonably original. This is the only example that is “relatively” affordable, with most of the other pieces residing in straight-graded holders. Nine examples total are well-documented, while rumors of a couple other pieces exist.

This coin is well known to LSCC’ers as being from the Mark & Stephen Petty Seated dollar collection, which was sold by Legend Auctions in July 2022. Dick Osburn, Brian Cushing, and John Frost reported in Gobrecht Journal #128 that the obverse die for this coin originated in Carson City – the only case of two branch Mints sharing a die that I am aware of.

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An 1870-S Dollar Does Not Appear

The September 23, 2025 edition of Numismatic News included an advertisement for an 1870-S quarter, graded XF/Cleaned and residing in a PCGS Genuine holder. Priced at \$700, I quickly dismissed the idea that it was a genuine 1870-S quarter. However, I thought it might be an 1871-S quarter in a mislabeled holder. Worth \$700 just as a curiosity, right? I thought so. Alas, a quick check of the company website (Integrity Coin Store) revealed the coin in question was an 1870-S half dollar.

Views from the San Francisco Mint

The old San Francisco Mint is today operated as an event space, with some interior rooms restored. Construction of this building began in 1869 and completed in 1874. It remained in operation until 1937, when it was replaced by the current San Francisco Mint building. A well-known bit of trivia is that this was one of the few structures to survive the 1906 earthquake and subsequent fire. A couple images from their website are on the next page:

[\(https://thesanfranciscomint.com/\)](https://thesanfranciscomint.com/)

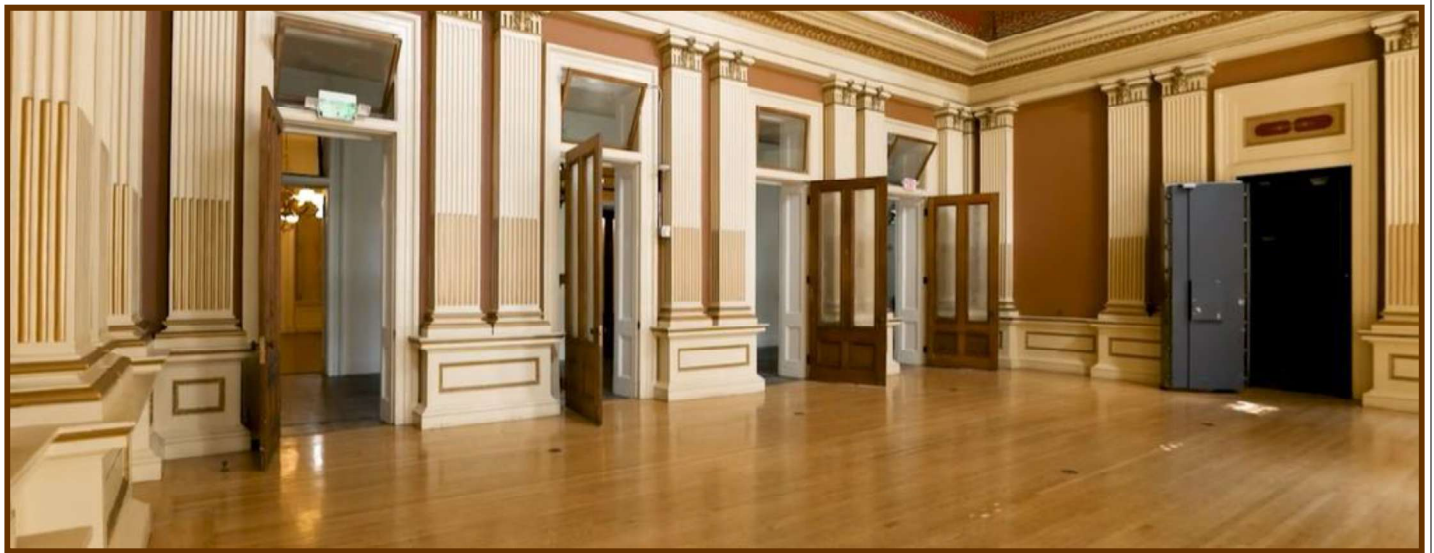
Definitely the venue of choice for an LSCC area meeting!

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Old San Francisco Mint Building constructed in 1869-1874



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