

Liberty Seated Dime Survey Section II, Varieties

by

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Liberty Seated dimes have steadily become a popular challenge for the advanced variety collector. This series is blessed with outstanding reference materials which are conspicuously lacking for most other Liberty Seated series. Kam Ahwash's *Encyclopedia of Liberty Seated Dimes* provides an outstanding reference with enlarged photographs and detailed descriptions of most varieties. Additionally, the *Journal* has provided updated information on new discoveries and further information on identifying the more esoteric varieties. In order to provide additional information on the relative scarcity of these varieties, a survey was conducted of LSCC member holdings during the Fall of 1989. In choosing the varieties to be surveyed it was felt that all date and mintmark size varieties should be included as well as all hub varieties. Additional varieties were chosen based upon their perceived popularity among LSCC members or upon their frequency of appearance on fixed price lists. LSCC members are encouraged to conduct further surveys on varieties not included that they believe are important.

The Results

When evaluating the results, one should take into consideration survey biases similar to those listed in Issue #41 of the *Journal* for the half dime survey. The results should not be considered a random sampling of Liberty Seated dimes by variety. Collector interest played a major role. For example, mintmark size variations, most of which are easily identifiable, were quite popular. On the other hand, the seemingly minor hubbing differences for the years 1876 to 1878 have not yet been as enthusiastically collected. Several respondents listed nice holdings of early New Orleans mintmark varieties but left their 1876 to 1878 hub varieties unattributed. For this reason, the relative scarcity of this latter group may have been somewhat exaggerated. Additionally, newer, less well-known varieties, probably show biased low listings due to their limited exposure. For example, readers should not assume, based on the reported examples, that the more recently discovered 1873-S Large S variety is comparable in rarity to the 1841-O Large O closed bud dime. This popular New Orleans variety has been sought by specialists for many years with very limited success.

Of the 62 respondents to the variety survey, 21 contained over half of the listed varieties. Five of these collections were missing 11 or fewer varieties, the controversial 1851-O Small O and 1884-S Medium S being excluded. Varieties missing from two or more of these 5 most advanced collections are:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| 1841-O Small O closed bud | missing from 3 |
| 1841-O Large O closed bud | missing from 3 |
| 1873-S Large S | missing from 2 |
| 1891-O over horizontal O | missing from 4 |

Additionally, none of the above four varieties were represented in more than two of the remaining 16 advanced collections.

Variety Survey Results, Liberty Seated Dimes by Frequency and Grade

| Date | Variety | Total | G | VG | F | VF | VF | XF | AU | MS | MS | MS | PF |
|--------|----------------|-------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|----|----|-----|
| | | | 4-7 | 8-11 | 12-19 | 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60 | 63 | 65 | 60+ |
| 1837 | Small Date | 37 | 11 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Large Date | 33 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 1839-0 | Small O | 20 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Large O | 24 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Recut O | 16 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Shattered Rev. | 36 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Huge O | 7 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1840-0 | Large O | 19 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Medium O | 17 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small O | 25 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1841-0 | Medium O | 29 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small O | 51 | 7 | 1 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Lg O-Clsd Bud | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Sm O-Clsd Bud | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1842-0 | Medium O | 53 | 3 | 7 | 14 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Small O | 17 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1843 | Medium Date | 13 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Double Date | 25 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 32 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1845 | Double Date | 24 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 44 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1847 | Date Overlaps | 29 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 29 | 1 | 5 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1849-0 | Large O | 36 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small O | 30 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Recut 184 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1850-0 | Large O | 22 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Medium O | 17 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small O | 23 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1851 | Repunched 51 | 14 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 33 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1851-0 | Large O | 34 | 1 | 7 | 10 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small O | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1852 | Recut Date | 12 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 36 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1856-0 | Large O | 21 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 56 Recut Up | 23 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | 56 Recut Down | 24 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Medium O | 16 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Date | Variety | Total | G 4-7 | VG 8-11 | F 12-19 | VF 20-29 | VF 30-39 | XF 40-49 | AU 50-59 | MS 60 | MS 63 | MS 65 | PF 60+ |
|---------|----------------|-------|----------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1857-O | Large O | 48 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Medium O | 21 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1859-O | Large O | 38 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Medium O | 27 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1861 | Type I Shield | 21 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Type II Shield | 25 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1873-S | Large S | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small Thin S | 19 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1874-S | Small Thin S | 12 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Micro S | 13 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1875-S | Large S IW | 30 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small S | 21 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Micro S | 16 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1876 | Type I Rev. | 44 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Type II Rev. | 21 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1876-CC | Type I Rev. | 74 | 6 | 10 | 15 | 15 | 7 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | Doubled Obv. | 31 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 10 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 1876-S | Type I Rev. | 36 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 10 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1877 | Type I Rev. | 16 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 37 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1877-CC | Type I Rev. | 29 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 49 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 6 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| 1878 | Type I Rev. | 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 26 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 1878-CC | Type I Rev. | 12 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Type II Rev. | 19 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 1884-S | Medium S | 14 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Small S | 19 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1887-S | Med/Sm S | 17 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 39 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 1889-S | Medium S | 22 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Small S | 26 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 1890-S | Medium S | 26 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Small S | 21 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Med/Sm S | 12 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1891 | Double Date | 17 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 54 | 2 | 7 | 13 | 6 | 5 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 1891-O | Horizontal O | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Remaining | 72 | 3 | 3 | 21 | 11 | 10 | 16 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 1891-S | Medium S | 27 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Small S | 29 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Med/Sm S | 14 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Observations and comments by date are as follows:

| Date | Comments |
|-------------|---|
| 1837 | Both date size varieties are available in a wide selection of grades. |
| 1839-O | This date presents several interesting varieties. The A-6 shattered reverse suffers from its own popularity. Several respondents reported small hoards of this variety. This survey does not indicate how many were of the more desirable late die states. The A-7 Huge O variety appears to be a difficult variety to locate and it is often misattributed by dealers. |
| 1840-O | The three mintmark sizes appeared in a relative frequency that had been expected. All three had similar low mean grades. |
| 1841-O | The perceived rarity of both closed bud varieties was supported by the survey. The Small O closed bud variety is more difficult to identify than the Large O but both low listings were expected. |
| 1842-O | The rarity of the Small O in grades above VF had been suspected by specialists for some time. |
| 1843 | The 1843 medium date represents a minor date placement variety. This variety is not considered significant by the authors and was included in error. Collectors may wish to group this variety's listing with the normal date. The repunched date variety can be obtained with a bit of searching. |
| 1845 | The repunched date variety of this year can be obtained with a bit of searching. |
| 1847 | The date overlaps base variety is not a rarity among 1847 dimes. |
| 1849-O | All three listed varieties are available, although locating examples above VF will present a challenge, especially for the Large O. |
| 1850-O | None of the individual mintmark sizes look to be significantly rarer than the other two. However, locating each in higher grades can be quite difficult. |
| 1851-O | The Small O has been listed in reference materials. However, this survey failed to confirm its existence. |
| 1856-O | The Medium O looks to be much scarcer than the cumulative Large O varieties. Both recut date varieties are available. |
| 1857-O | The Medium O is not the rarity once believed except perhaps in higher grades. |
| 1873-S | The Ahwash unlisted Large S is obviously scarcer than the Small thin s variety. Despite its low listing, the authors have found this variety to be available with a modest amount of searching. |
| 1874-S | The Small thin S is also unlisted in the Ahwash encyclopedia. It, however, does not look to be noticeably scarcer than the Micro S. Both varieties are scarce due to the difficulty in obtaining this date in general. |
| 1876-CC | Only the 1876-CC Type II reverse variety has received publicity as a rarity among the hub varieties in this era. The 1876-CC doubled die obverse suffers from popularity hoarding. |
| 1876-S | The 1876-S Type II reverse variety looks to be scarcer than the Type I reverse for this date. |
| 1878 | The 1878 Type I reverse variety looks to be scarcer than the Type II reverse for this date. |

- 1884-S The Medium S for this date remains a mystery. Do any of the 14 Medium S dimes listed in this survey actually have a mintmark matching the style and size as shown on page 342 of the Ahwash encyclopedia? The photo in this reference is actually a misplaced 1886-S reverse photo. This can be verified by comparing the photo and mintmark description with those on page 352. The photos are identical even though the mintmark placement descriptions differ. The authors have never seen an 1884-S Medium S dime which matches the Ahwash photograph on page 342.
- 1890-S The higher than expected listing of Small S examples was perhaps the biggest surprise of this survey. The authors have found this variety to be quite difficult to locate.
- 1891-O The O over horizontal O appears to be rare. This is another variety which is often misattributed by dealers.

Conclusion

It is believed that the Ahwash encyclopedia and other outstanding references have contributed significantly to this survey's accuracy, however some errors undoubtedly exist. Additionally, some varieties, such as the 1873-S Large S as well as several hub varieties within the 1876 to 1878 groups, will require much additional study to determine their true rarities.

The authors would like to thank all of those who responded to this survey. It is hoped that the membership will find the results to be both interesting and useful.