

The SJ CSRA CC of Aiken, SC meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month at the Aiken Public Library

Pres. J.J. Engel  
V.P. Pat James  
Sec. Jim Mullaney  
Treas. Chuck Goergen  
Sgt. in Arms: Jim Sproull



The Stephen James  
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Volume 19, No. 9

the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club, Founded in 2001  
Monthly Newsletter

September, 2020

**Our next "Zoom" meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept 3 starting at 6:45 PM  
rather than at the Aiken Public Library which is closed due to the Coronavirus Pandemic**

## The US Coinage of 1875 had lots of Denominations

### 2020 Club "Zoom" Meeting Schedule

Jan. 2	Apr. 2	July 2	Oct. 1
Feb. 6	May 7	Aug. 6	Nov. 5
Mar. 5	June 4	Sept. 3	Dec. 3

### Finding Gems off the Internet



An 1879 Liberty Seated quarter with motto  
graded MS-64 by PCGS

[Enlarge page to fill the monitor screen to view coin details.]

Only 14,450 quarters were struck in 1879 and while the mintage seems low and the date is scarce, it isn't considered rare.

As a result of the Bland Allison Act passed by Congress and signed into law by our 19<sup>th</sup> President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1878, silver dollars were produced in the multi millions at the expense of the three lower silver denominations then in service, which were the Liberty Seated dime, quarter and half-dollar. This situation would last only three years for the dime but for the quarter and half-dollar the lower than normal mintages would remain thru the year, 1890.

To toss a "bone" to the would-be collectors of the period, the Philadelphia Mint struck a small number of business strikes--which for the quarter--ranged from a low of 5,000 in 1886 to a high of 80,000 in 1890, the sole exception being the 1888-S in which 1,216,000 were struck at the San Francisco Mint and although they circulated heavily, the 1888-S is still more common as a collectible and is not as well struck as the Philadelphia Mint issue nor the 1879 Liberty Seated quarter *with motto* on reverse shown above.

One would think that each date of this portion of the Liberty Seated *with motto* series would be extremely rare but unlike the similarly low mintages that occurred during and after the Civil War, many of the coins of the 1879-90 period were saved similar to the proof issues that were annually made for collectors with the result that a fairly large number of these business strike coins are available in choice uncirculated condition like the 1879 specimen graded MS-64 shown above. That said, they're still pricey. This example was procured on line in July, 2019 from a reliable dealer and is quite attractive.

### Collecting the US Coinage of 1875 by Arno Safran



### The obverses of the US Coins of 1875 (excluding gold)

Shown directly above are the obverses of the eight denominations that were in use in the United States of America in 1875, excluding gold. These included the silver Trade dollar, Liberty Seated half-dollar, quarter, double dime and below, the Liberty Seated dime, Shield nickel, 3¢ nickel and Bronze Indian Head cent. With the exception of the dollar and dime which were struck at the San Francisco Mint, the other six were coined at the Philadelphia Mint. The only other active mint during this period was in Carson City and it usually issued coins in far lower mintages, most of which tend to be far scarcer today in



Ulysses Simpson Grant

the grades shown above. From the author's standpoint, 1875 was a significant year in US history for a number of reasons. It was a year before our nation's Centennial. Ulysses Simpson Grant was in his third year of his second term as 18<sup>th</sup> President and the author's maternal grandpa Charlie was born in New York City in June of 1875.

(Continued on page 2, column 1)

## Collecting the US Coinage of 1875

(Continued from page 1, column 2)



**The reverses of the US Coins of 1875 (excluding gold)**  
**Top: Silver \$1.00, 50c, 25c, & 20c piece**  
**Bottom: Silver 10c, 5c and 3c nickel and 1c copper**  
 [Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

The coin jutting out to the far right atop is the controversial 20c piece, (AKA, the double-dime) of which will be discussed later in the article.

Unlike the earlier years of the 1870s when the mintages were still relatively low even at the Philadelphia Mint--but extremely low at the Cason City Mint which opened in 1870--the 1875 coinage is more available due to its higher mintages and are collectible in most grades up thru MS-64 depending on one's discretionary income. The eight coins can be divided into two groups; "the little three", (the cent, 3¢ piece and 5¢ nickel) and the silver coinage from the dime up to the dollar.



**An 1875 Indian Head cent graded MS-64 RB by ICG**  
 [Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

In 1875 the Philadelphia Mint struck 13,528,000 Indian Head Bronze cents and while the date isn't considered rare, it's not thought to be common either, especially in the grade shown. This specimen was acquired "raw" by the author at the South Carolina Numismatic Assn. show held in Greenville, SC back in October, 2009 and was later submitted for circulation at the GNA show where it was graded MS-64 Red-Brown by ICG. Obsolete copper coins are graded within three separate categories in addition to their overall condition; Brown, Red-Brown and Red; (looking as if it just left the Mint). If the example is well struck whether it be Brown, RB or full Red, it can still be quite valuable. The author considers the Red-Brown grade to be a best-buy especially if the coin shows a lot more red than brown and the 1875 specimen show above is such an example. My mother used to see a number of Indian Head cents in her father's change and recalls using the coin as a little girl.



**An 1875 3c nickel piece graded MS-65 by PCGS**  
 [Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

Like the cent, the copper-nickel three cent piece was struck only at the Philadelphia Mint. The coin was authorized for issue in 1865 in order to put more change into circulation after the coin draught caused by the Civil War which ended in April of that year. For the first six years over a million of the copper-nickel dime-sized 3¢ pieces were struck with no one ever confusing them with the silver dime and they circulated. From 1871 thru 1876 the coin was struck only in the six figures with 228,000 struck in 1875, and while scarcer than the earlier issues, it is still relatively affordable up thru MS-63 but not so easy to find. Proof only specimens of the three-cent nickel piece were struck in both 1877 and 1878 and starting in 1879, with just 38,000, the three-cent nickel nose-dived to only four figures to the end of its run in 1889 with the sole exception of the 1881 issue which for some reason, over one million were produced. The MS-65 specimen pictured above was acquired at the FUN show held in Orlando, FL in January, 2010.



**An 1875 Shield nickel graded MS-63 by PCGS**  
 [Enlarge page to 200% to view the details.]

In 1875, slightly over two million Shield nickels were struck at the Philadelphia Mint and while a far cry from the over 28 million that were coined in 1867 and 1868, the date is considered common and available at reasonable prices up to MS-63. The engraver for all three of these minor coins was James Barton Longacre who served as Chief Engraver at the Mint from 1844 thru 1869. He was considered a mediocre coin designer as a result of these low value coins which for a short period also included the bronze 2c piece (1864-1873) but these were hurry-up jobs intended to stimulate coin circulation. Longacre's best designs came with the Flying Eagle and Indian Head cents along with the magnificent gold \$3.00 and \$20.00 gold pieces which are truly artistic creations in the author's opinion.

### "The Little Group of 1875'ers--



**The 1875 Indian Head Bronze cent, 3c and 5c nickels**  
 [Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

## Collecting the US Coinage of 1875

(Continued from page 2 column 2)



An 1875-S Liberty Seated dime with **LEGEND** on **OBVERSE**  
Graded **MS-62** by **PCGS**

[Enlarge page to 500% if possible to view the details]

The half-dime was one of the denominations discontinued as part of the Coinage Act of 1873, sometimes referred to as “The Crime of ‘73”. As a result, the dime became the lowest silver denomination. In 1875, the mintage of the dime was plentiful at all three mints with 10,350,000 struck at Philadelphia, 9,070,000 produced at San Francisco and 4,645,000 coined at the Carson City Mint. That year, the mint marks for the dime were placed below the wreath as usual but also inside it and under the left side of the **M** in **DIME** although that occurred about one-fourth of the time and the reason for the decision remains unknown. The 1875-S specimen shown above has the mint-mark under the wreath and while not as well struck as the Philadelphia mint issue, is still attractive for a MS-62, having the eye appeal of a MS-63 and was reasonably priced in the grade shown. The coin was acquired back in 2010 at the Georgia Numismatic Association convention.



An 1875-S 20c piece graded **MS-62** by **PCGS**  
[Enlarge page to 500% if possible to view the details]



Due to the need for more silver coins in the far western states during the early 1870s, newly elected Senator of Nevada **John P. Jones** proposed a new denomination—which was referred to as a “Double Dime” or twenty-cent piece and it was passed into law in time for its first minting in 1875. In 1869, William Barber an English born engraver became the Chief Engraver of the

Mint after the death of James Barton Longacre and designed both the obverse and reverse of the Trade dollar in 1873 and the reverse of the twenty-cent piece in 1875. Christian Gobrecht’s Liberty Seated design however was retained on the obverse of the new coin based on the decision made by Mint Director Henry R. Linderman and therein lies the tale of one of the great failures in US coinage history.

At the time, the diameter of the quarter was 24.3 mm (about one inch), same as today, and the newly designed proposed twenty-cent piece was 22 mm but close enough in size for it to be confused with the quarter by buyers and sellers alike.

In 1875, the twenty-cent was struck at all three mints, with 38,500 struck at Philadelphia, 133,290 at Carson City, Nevada and a whopping 1,155,000 at the San Francisco facility, which is by far the more common of the three and the least expensive. The 1875-S specimen shown on the preceding column was acquired at the Blue Ridge Numismatic Association (BRNA) convention held at the Dalton Convention Center back in late August of 2008. The photo of the image has some reflective problems but when enlarged sufficiently, the viewer will see that for an MS-62, the coin has a lot of eye appeal.

In 1876, just 14,640 20¢ pieces were coined at the Philadelphia Mint due to low interest for the coin in the eastern states with 10,000 struck at the Carson City Mint, although most were apparently melted leaving a handful of survivors that have since become great rarities. The author was able to obtain a proof-like specimen of the 1876-P graded MS-63 by NGC at the 2008 ANA Convention held at the Baltimore Convention Center. In 1877 and 78, the Mint only released proofs for collectors before the series was terminated for good.



A Mini set of the four collectible 20c piece **Business Strikes**  
[Enlarge page to 500% if possible to view the details]



An 1875 Liberty Seated with motto quarter graded **MS-64+** by **PCGS**  
[Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

In 1875, the quarter was struck at all three mints, with 4,292,800 in Philadelphia, 680,000 at San Francisco and a paltry 140,000 at the Carson City Mint. The 1875-P is collectable up thru MS-64 with the 1875-S being a lot more expensive in the same grade while the 1875-cc is well beyond the discretionary income in mint state for most serious collectors. The example shown directly above was acquired at the F.U.N. show held at Orlando, FL. in January, 2010 and the author is considering resubmitting it because it looks more like a MS-65. When comparing the quarter with the twenty-cent piece shown on the same page, the differences in sizes are more apparent than when in the hand and while both reverses show a spread eagle format the one on the 20c piece displays the eagle’s head arched to the right and on the 25c piece arched to the left.

(Continued on page 4, column 1)

## Collecting the US Coinage of 1875

(Continued from page 3 column 2)



**An 1875 Liberty Seated half-dollar graded AU-58 by PCGS**  
[Enlarge page to 200% to view coin details.]

At the very same 2010 FUN show, the author came across this well struck 1875-P Liberty Seated half-dollar with the motto, IN GOD WE TRUST on reverse. From the late 1990's thru the first decade left the 21<sup>st</sup> century the two grades that became very popular with collectors were the AU-58 and MS-62 grades. During that period, a coin certified AU-58 often looked like a MS-63 with a little bit of "rub" on the high points of the central devices. With coins graded MS-62, some looked like MS-64's except for a few tiny light ticks scattered across the surface. Today, an AU-58 shows more wear and looks closer to an AU-53 and a MS-62, appears closer to a 61 or even a 60.

When the photo above is enlarged, one can barely make out any flatness on Miss Liberty's right leg pictured below her left leg on the obverse and on the reverse there doesn't appear to be any wear at all. Today, a coin similarly graded would definitely display visible wear in the author's opinion which indicates that grading is not as stringent as it once was. In 1875, half-dollars were struck at all three mints with the Philadelphia Mint producing the most at 6,026,800, (*although not record which was set back in 1858*), the San Francisco Mint with 3,200,000 and the Carson City Mint with just 1,000,800 which circulated heavily. As a result, both the 1975-P and S are priced relatively low in AU-58 while despite over one million struck at Carson City in that same year, far fewer coins were saved or hardly circulated lowering the number of AU-58 survivors today forcing higher priced across the grading spectrum.



**An 1875-S Trade dollar graded MS-61 by PCGS**  
[Enlarge page to fill monitor screen better view the coin details.]

The Trade dollar was struck from 1873 thru 1885 but only for domestic circulation six years. After 1878, all Trade dollars were struck as proofs with decreasing mintages to ten in 1884 and just five in 1885. Chief Engraver William Barber designed the coin and it is a beauty in the author's opinion.

As a rule, the San Francisco Mint usually struck the most Trade dollars with the 1875-S having the second highest mintage although it is considered the most common. The coin shown was acquired at the South Carolina Numismatic Association convention in late Oct. 2009. For a certified grade of only MS-61, this Trade dollar looks fairly attractive with a minimum of marks on its surface. While the coin was originally issued for trade with China, it was considered legal tender up to five coins here in the United States. Upon receiving a shipment of these large cartwheels, the Chinese would punch an indentation mark into the coin as a test to assure that its silver content was accurate which are referred to as "Chop marks". Trade dollars free of these are usually worth far more by US collectors but there are a number of collectors who enjoy collecting those that appear with chop marks as well.

### The Purchasing Power of 1875 Coins compared to today

- A cent had the purchasing power of 24c.
- A nickel had the purchasing power of \$1.20.
- A dime had the purchasing power of \$2.40.
- A 20c piece had the purchasing power of \$4.80.
- A quarter had the purchasing power of \$.60.
- A half-dollar had the purchasing power of \$12.00.
- A dollar had the purchasing power of \$24.00 in 1875.

### The 1875 Gold Denominations



**An 1875-S Cornet Liberty \$20.00 double Eagle**  
**graded MS-62 by PCGS**  
**It recently sold at a Heritage Auction for \$2,200 in August, 2020**

Five gold denominations were struck for circulation in 1875 out of the six authorized. These included the \$1.00, \$2.50 quarter eagle, \$5.00 half-eagle, \$10.00 eagle and \$20.00 double-eagle. Twenty \$3.00 gold pieces were coined but only as proofs. With the sole exception of the very common 1875-S \$20.00 double eagle--which had a mintage of 1,230,000--all of the other denominations were produced in very low mintages, some extremely tiny, in some cases with as little as 400 pieces. Most of the examples from the \$1.00 thru the \$10.00 denominations that exist today surface in the middle to lower circulated grades yet are still fairly expensive and probably beyond the means of 90% of the collecting population, so if one has the discretionary income and is interested in acquiring at least one of the gold coins from 1875, it would most likely be the 1875-S Cornet double eagle. This is not a bad deal since James Barton Longacre's engraving of or largest size gold coin was arguably his finest work and while not as awesome as Saint-Gaudens's \$20.00 coin design, it is nevertheless extremely attractive. The author's only regret is that he didn't consider acquiring the 1875-S double eagle before February, 2020 when the same coin shown above would have sold for \$500 to \$600 less.

## STEPHEN JAMES CSRA COIN CLUB Regular Meeting Thursday, August 6, 2020

The Club held an August meeting via a Zoom session arranged by Club Secretary, Jim Mullaney. Kelsey Forde generously allowed the Club to use her Zoom account. President J.J. Engel called the regular meeting of the club to order at 7:05 p.m.

There were sixteen members who joined the Zoom session, which was up from the thirteen members joining the July meeting. J.J. noted that Club Secretary, Jim Mullaney, had circulated emails with websites with info to enable the use of the Zoom app and also made himself available to help any members learn how to join the meetings; Jim could be contacted through the Club's email.

Marion Engel won the members' attendance door prize, a 2020 Silver Eagle, and Pat James will mail her the coin.

A motion was made by Marion Engel, seconded by Steve Kuhl, and passed, to dispense with the reading of the July 2020 meeting minutes. A copy of the minutes will be on file with the other club records, and a copy will appear in the club newsletter.

Treasurer Chuck Goergen reported that the bank showed the Club's bank balance was approximately \$1,404.39.

President J.J. Engel reported that the Board had made a final decision there would not be a Coin Show in 2020, and one dealer who sent in \$75 to reserve a table months ago will receive a refund.

### Show & Tells:

There were several Show & Tell Presentations. Steve Kuhl shared an inexpensive tool which could be helpful with measuring coins or distances between features on coins.

Roger Seitz had a token he found at his parents' home; it was a dime-sized round coin with a hole in the center. Roger also shared an aluminum bus token from Washington, D.C.

Jim Mullaney, as a follow up to his suggested monthly mini-grading program on just a couple of coins, asked the members to grade two Standing Liberty quarters. The knowledgeable members guessed the correct grade for the EF 1918 over 1917 variety quarter. The date on the 1921 quarter was almost entirely worn away, and the members guessed a range of Good, Good + and VG.(Very Good). While the date was so worn, other areas of the reverse made the coin look to be a higher grade than G.

**The Program:** Steve Kuhl gave an entertaining program about two cent pieces, which were first minted in 1864 at the Philadelphia Mint and only produced for circulation through 1872, with those produced in 1873 just proof coins for collectors.



**1864 small motto and large motto 2c pieces**  
Enlarge page to fill monitor screen better view the coin details.]

The total mintage in 1864 of the two cent coins was 19,847,500. The bronze coin was designed by James Barton Longacre and was comprised of 95% copper and 5% zinc/tin, with a diameter of 23.00 millimeters and weighing 6.22 grams. Steve related that thoughts of minting a two cent piece had originated sixty years previously, but that it made its appearance in 1864 during a stretch of coin shortages brought on by the Civil War. It was the first U.S. coin to bear the motto "IN GOD WE TRUST". Steve noted that the obverse of the coin depicted the U.S. seal topped with a banner with the motto, and in 1864 there were two distinct types: large and small motto's. **The two different motto types were quite easily detected by the difference in the size of the letters, with the letters on the small motto coin tending to be shorter and wider while those on the large motto are taller and thinner.**



**Detail showing 1864 small motto (left) and large motto (right)**  
Enlarge page to fill monitor screen better view the coin details.]

Steve related that there were also several varieties within the two different types such as a doubled die and triple punched date on the 1864 Large Motto coins, and differences in the berries and feathers, and distances between letters and features on others.

Cherry-pickers on the lookout for the scarce and interesting varieties can consult numerous reference books such as ***the Cherry pickers' Guide***: Fifth Edition by Bill Fivaz and the late J.T. Stanton, Beth Deishers' ***Making The Grade***," and ***Getting Your Two Cents Worth*** by Kevin Flynn.

Other coins such as the nickel proved more popular, and the mintage of the two cent piece decreased each year to just 65,000 pieces for the last circulation coins minted in 1872. Steve also provided information of the current prices of these coins noting that an 1864 MS 66 Red Small Motto at a recent auction fetched \$82,500.

President Engel adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Jim Mullaney, Secretary*

## ROMANIA 100 LEI FAO 1995 COIN

By Bill Myers



A 1995 FAO 100 Lei Romanian coin in Gem BU condition  
Magnify page to fill monitor screen to view details.]

A few months ago, I was going through a box of world coins and came across a 1995 100 lei coin from Romania. What caught my eye were the dates on it which were 1945 – 1995. I collect coins related to World War II and thought it might be associated with the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. Closer examination of the coin revealed a wheat stalk with FAO around it and FIAT PANIS (let there be bread) under the wheat stalk and was in an ellipse with 1945 -1945 below it (this is the reverse). The Crest of Romania is on the obverse. The coin was composed of .0.625 silver, (0.8126 oz. ASW) and was 37mm in diameter, almost as large as a Morgan dollar. It had a mintage of 30,000 and is listed as KM-118. I know FAO is the Food and Agriculture Organization. I have seen FAO on a lot of coins and own some of them. I knew it was not a coin commemorating the end of World War II but 50th anniversary of the FAO but with a connection to World War II.

First, some background history: In 1905 the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) was formed by Victor Emmanuel III in Rome to address food and agriculture on a global scale. Victor Emmanuel will later become a player in WWII. The war ended the IIA. Australian nutritionist, Frank McDougall, had the idea to wed health and agriculture to fight malnutrition. Eleanor Roosevelt supported this idea and in 1942 introduced McDougall to FDR. In 1943, FDR held a pre United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture in Hot Springs, Virginia, where forty-four governments committed themselves to founding a permanent organization for food and agriculture.

World War II had severely impaired Europe's ability to produce food, and hunger was an issue. To feed the people and help countries produce their own food the FAO was created by the UN on 16 October 1945. The FAO is the oldest existing agency of the UN. World War II was not the sole reason to create the FAO, but the devastation caused by the war was the catalyst to create the agency and its' first mission. The FAO is still active today. FAO Coins International Catalog covers the FAO coins and list 1,214 coins struck from 1968 to 2008. Coins were issued by 300 countries before the coin program ended in 2008.

I am sure most collectors have come across FAO coins like I have but, I never knew the history behind these coins.

Bill Myers is a retired Army Colonel and Orthopedic surgeon who served two tours of duty during the height of the Iraq War between practicing Medicine in Augusta. He also was an active member and contributor to both area clubs, Augusta's and ours when not deployed and presented numerous Show & Tells featuring coins with hands on them along with banknotes of various types related to his service along with a series of masterful PowerPoint programs, two of which that featured Iraqi coins and bank-notes based on his experiences in the war zone In Oct. 2008, he moved to Tucson, AZ where he resides with his wife, Kathy today. [ED.]

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