

Welcome back to large cent collecting after a busy, hot summer. This issue of P-W should go a long way in reviving your enthusiasm and interest after an extended summer's vacation. In fact, we think this issue is one of our best yet!

We have lots more material on hand - outstanding and informative articles - which will appear in the next or future issues. But keep your letters and articles coming! Write us your comments, pro and con. Tell us what you want to read about! We're always open to ideas and suggestions. . . .and we want and need your help!

This present issue is being mailed out by third class mail. It will take a little longer to reach you, but our savings in postage warrants the delay.

Herb Silberman has already announced that an annual meeting of the EAC will be held in New York City sometime in late November or during December. Full details will be carried in our next issue of P-W. If this perchance should prove too late, letters will be sent out to all members residing within a reasonable distance of Manhattan who might be expected to attend. If you live outside the metropolitan area and think that you might want to be present for the meeting, or if you expect to be in New York City on business during some of the time previously mentioned, write to us for the exact date and other details. We can assure you that the meeting will be interesting, that we'll have a prominent speaker, and that there are several other items of interest which would make your trip worthwhile.

All mail to the EAC and to P-W should be directed to our central office, namely to Herbert R. Silberman, c/o Associate Designers Inc., 174 Maplewood Avenue, Maplewood, New Jersey, 07040. If you wish your letter brought to the attention of some particular individual, you can so specify on the top of your letter. Herb promptly forwards all mail to the proper recipients and directs all mail to the proper individuals where no specific individual has been designated.

Attention is hereby called to the new address of our Treasurer and P-W Circulation Editor: William J. Parks, 1109 East Colonial Drive, Orlando, Florida, 32803. Bill has just opened a new coin shop at Orlando and has dropped the post box number which he used previously. All checks for dues and tokens may be referred directly to him.

The next issue of PENNY-WISE is scheduled for release on November 15. Be sure to get your listings of duplicates for swaps or sales to us early enough so that they can be included.

Happy browsing!

A FOREWORD

The following article offers a detailed study of the first U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. It represents a compilation of all pertinent material collected from every available source, then re-told in proper sequence so as to give an accurate word picture of the Mint, just as it was from 1792 to 1832. No new or previously unpublished material is contained herein.

THE U.S. MINT AND COINAGE by Don Taxay, published in 1966, contains much of the information herewith presented, but the numerous references occur at various intervals throughout the lengthy text.

Frank H. Stewart did most of the extensive research now available regarding the first U.S. Mint, and he published several articles in THE NUMISMATIST in addition to authoring a very excellent book THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST UNITED STATES MINT - ITS PEOPLE AND ITS OPERATIONS. The latter was privately published in Philadelphia in 1924. Only 500 copies were printed, and almost half of these were destroyed in a fire before the book was distributed. Hence, a copy of this book is rather difficult to obtain.

Stewart's findings are frequently cited by Taxay. However, both Stewart and Taxay made a few contradictory statements; and every effort has been made in the present article, on the basis of other information available, to correct all items of misinformation or conjecture.

As was pointed out by Stewart, the first U.S. Mint was no tourist attraction - in fact, visitors were discouraged. According to the 1793 Rules and Regulations of the Mint, workmen were forbidden to bring or admit any acquaintances into the Mint; and the penalty for doing so was forfeiture of all wages due. By 1825, the attitude toward visitors had changed. At that time it was specified that visitors were to be admitted on all working days "except Saturdays and rainy days". The only authorized holidays were Christmas and July 4. Because of the rigid restrictions toward visitors, there were only one or two eye-witness accounts of the Mint which could be handed down for present day study and consideration. Not even the old gazetteers of Philadelphia ever mentioned the Mint or pictured it as it was. Hence, all the articles written about the Mint even today, and they have been very few, have been based on a few old documents and records which have since been discovered and on one or two eye-witness accounts.

In any event, I hope that you find the present article informative and interesting.

- The Author

A DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST U.S. MINT

by Warren A. Lapp, M.D.

In 1792 the first U.S. Mint was erected in Philadelphia, then the national capital of the United States, on an L-shaped piece of property consisting of two lots: (1) the main one was on the east side of North 7th Street, between Arch Street on the north and Market Street on the south; and (2) a rear lot contiguous with the first, facing toward Sugar Alley on the south and bounded on the east by Bone Alley.

The main property was 36 feet, 10 inches wide and 99 feet deep. On its south side, also fronting on North 7th Street was the Harrison residence, a brick dwelling; while on the north side were the Cromley and Dumphey residences, also brick. The more adjacent one, the Cromley residence, was the smaller of the two and had a low frame stable at its rear. The Harrison lot had a 20 foot frontage, while the Cromley and Dumphey lots were each 16 feet wide. The Harrison lot was bounded on its south side by Sugar Alley, 14 feet wide; while the Dumphey lot had a 10 foot wide court running along its north side.

The second or rear lot purchased for the Mint measured 17 feet wide and 56 feet, 10 inches deep.

The site for the Mint had been selected by David Rittenhouse, the Mint's first Director, and was deeded by its owner, Frederick Hailer, to the United States of America on July 18, 1792 for a payment of \$4,266.57. Michael Shubert, a prominent Philadelphia distiller, previously had operated a distillery on the property. When Shubert became involved in financial difficulties, the ground, distillery, and equipment were sold at a Sheriff's sale on May 27, 1790 and purchased by Hailer, a surgeon barber. An old still-house remaining on the property had to be razed before construction of the new Mint could begin. Demolition of the still-house was begun on July 19, six men having been hired for the job and two more men added on July 21.

The convenience of the location undoubtedly had a great deal to do with its selection. Rittenhouse lived at the northwest corner of 7th and Arch Streets, then one of the high places of Old Philadelphia, and only a few doors away. President Washington lived on the south side of Market Street near 6th, also nearby. On North 7th Street, only a stone's throw away, Thomas Jefferson had written the Declaration of Independence.

To the north of the main property, directly on North 7th Street, was a deep well, equipped with a hand pump. Less than one hundred feet away was Lit Brothers' Department Store. On the south side of Sugar Alley, just opposite Bone Alley, was a small confectionery shop, said to have the best molasses candy in Philadelphia. Not too far away, at the end of St. James Street, a dead-end court which opened into North 7th Street just south of Sugar Alley, were the fire-engine shops operated by Jacob Perkins and a man named Sellers.

Rittenhouse laid the foundation-stone for the first building of the new Mint at 10 A.M. on July 31, 1792. (Although it has been reported many times in the numismatic literature that a cornerstone was laid by President Washington, extensive research seems to prove this is erroneous; as no cornerstone was ever located when the old buildings were torn down in 1911.) Rittenhouse had sold off some of the junk from the distillery for 7 shillings 6 pence (about \$1.) and he used this to buy punch for the workmen and masons. President Washington did not attend the ceremony - he was spending the summer at Mount Vernon, as was his usual custom.

The buildings comprising the Mint, which had been authorized by Congress, were the first ever erected at government expense for a public purpose. The initial one to be constructed was the Coinage Building (or "shop", as it was called by Henry Voigt). Voigt, the Superintendent of the Mint and its Chief Coiner, supervised construction of all the Mint buildings and was in charge of paying the workmen. The Coinage Building was

a plain brick, two-story-and-attic structure*measuring 30 by 35 feet. In the basement of this building were substantial, well-buttressed, arched vaults, each about 6 feet wide, 6 feet deep, and 6 feet high, for the storage of bullion. One vault was said to be burglar-proof (it had a second vault built within the first, each secured by heavy doors and massive, bolted locks). A large cupola topped by a tall flag pole occupied the south end of the peaked roof, while a large chimney was at the north end. The door sills and the single step at the entranceways to the building were made of marble.

Construction of this building was completed on September 7, 1792, coinage presses and machinery arrived on September 21, and Mint operations began on October 9. Stewart suggests that Rittenhouse, ever a great patriot, undoubtedly hoisted the Stars and Stripes over the Mint property, thereby giving the Coinage Building the unique distinction of being the first government building to display the national colors.

The first floor of the Coinage Building housed the rolling and drawing machines. A smelting furnace was on the second floor. Entrance to the second floor was by steps from the courtyard, there being no inside staircase. Adjacent to the Coinage Building on the north was a small frame house, called the mill house, which contained the horse mill for driving the rolling machines.

Completed a few months later to the west of the Coinage Building was the largest of the Mint's buildings, a three-story-and-attic edifice constructed as a double house and fronting on North 7th Street. This building covered the width of the lot and was built in two parts, No. 39 North 7th Street, 29 feet, 2 inches deep, being built first and probably completed in late November, 1792; after which No. 37 North 7th Street, 32 feet, 7 inches deep, was completed. (Julian suggests that No. 37 may not have been built until 1794, but this seems unlikely.) There was a separate entrance on North 7th Street for each half of the building, with a third door between, which opened into a long hallway whereby one could pass directly from North 7th Street into the courtyard. The first floors of the two buildings were at different levels. The basement windows of each were protected by iron bars set in marble. The upper windows were protected by heavy shutters which could be closed and securely bolted from within.

On the first floors were the deposit room and the weighing room, as well as a press room where the gold coins were struck. On the second floor were various offices for Mint personnel. The third floor was occupied by the assayer, who had his office there as well as a parting laboratory and an assay furnace. Taxay notes that this was a most unpleasant arrangement due to the diffusion of fumes from the nitric acid. Treasury vaults were located in a sub-basement of the building, being 20 feet underground. These were used by private citizens of Philadelphia during the War of 1812 as a protective measure to store their jewelry, silverware, and valuables. To go from one floor to another, one had to climb a dark, winding, narrow stairway lit by tallow candles and whale oil lamps which were kept burning throughout the day.

The mill house and adjoining Coinage Building were separated from the office buildings by a brick-paved courtyard which continued north of the mill house as a walkway, all the way back to Bone Alley.

At the rear of the Coinage Building and to the south, fronting on Sugar Alley, was erected a small, crudely constructed frame building, 17 feet wide and 20 feet deep - 631 Filbert Street. This building served as a stable for the mill horses and for housing an arrester to grind up the "sweeps". The power for the arrester was supplied by a horse walking around in a circle while attached to a capstan. The "sweeps" consisted of worn-out crucibles, dipping cups, and other miscellaneous refuse which the Mint refined to extract traces of gold and silver. After 1816, when steam power replaced the horses, the stable served as a repository for the Mint's coined and uncoined copper.

In September, 1794 the Mint completed a large furnace (for smelting? or possibly for refining?) in a frame building located on the commons in the Northern Liberties, at the north end of 6th Street. The ground was obtained on loan from the Penn Estate, permission having been granted by Edmund Physick, Agent. The rental was nominal - five shillings per annum - but the Mint had to agree to remove the equipment at any time on a two month's notice. The Mint continued to use the commons furnace until 1802, after it stored coke, charcoal, anthracite coal, and wood there. The commons furnace was dismantled in 1804 and sold for junk, and the building was razed.

Late in 1802, perhaps some years later (the exact date has not been recorded), a one-and-a-half story brick building to house the smelting furnace was built adjacent to the rear of the building at 631 Filbert Street, along Bone Alley and directly behind the Coinage Building.

When the coinage of silver began, it was evident that illumination of the premises was necessary for protective measures. In November, 1794 two whale oil street lamps were purchased, also a tin can for oil and a tin burner for lighting the lamps. A watch house was built in front of No. 37 North 7th Street, and a watchman for day, and one for night, were hired. A yard bell, weighing 36 1/2 pounds was purchased for \$17.62 and suspended high on a pole north and east of the Coinage Building toward the rear of the Mint property. A vicious watch dog named "Nero" was purchased for \$3. The dog's care was entrusted solely to the watchmen, the only ones permitted to handle and feed him. It was the duty of the night watchman, armed with a short sword and a loaded pistol, to ring the yard bell every hour by the Mint clock, after which the dog was sent through the yard to search for prowlers.

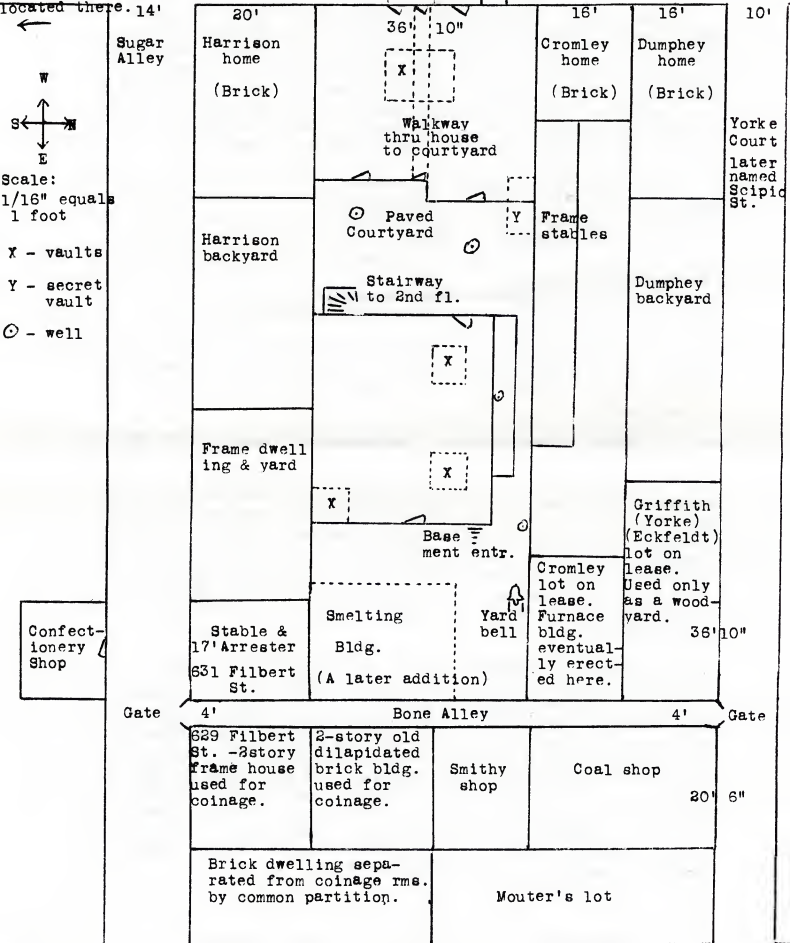
On October 4, 1794 the government purchased from William Hamilton a third lot measuring 20 feet, 6 inches wide and 88 feet deep. This lot was located at the eastern end of the Mint property, just across the four-foot-wide Bone Alley, so-called because the Mint kept a stockpile of animal bones in this area. (The bones were used in making cupels or small dishes used in assaying and refining processes.) On the new property, fronting on Sugar Alley at the south end, was a frail, two-story frame house - 629 Filbert Street - the first floor of which was used as a press room for striking copper coins. After 1828 only silver coins were struck here, the coppers being relegated to the first floor of a small, dilapidated, two-story brick building immediately north of the first. The second floor of both buildings was used for shops where Mint machinery was made and repaired. Further north, occupying the remainder of the new property were a smithy and a coal shop, both very rough, frame buildings.

St. James St. is next intersection. Fire engine shops located there. 14'

North 7th Street #39

Guard hse

Street well



Sugar Alley



Scale: 1/16" equals 1 foot

- X - vaults
- Y - secret vault
- ⊙ - well

Confectionery Shop

Yorke Court later named Scipio St.

Gate

Bone Alley

Gate

629 Filbert St. - 2-story frame house used for coinage.

2-story old dilapidated brick bldg. used for coinage.

Smithy shop

Coal shop

20' 6"

Brick dwelling separated from coinage rms. by common partition.

Mouter's lot

These three lots with the various buildings on them, plus the property in the Northern Liberties obtained on loan, constituted the entire property of the first U. S. Mint.

In June, 1805 a lot facing on Bone Alley, just north of the Mint's paved walkway, was leased from Jacob Cromley. A two-story brick building housing all of the Mint's furnaces was eventually erected on this property. A refining furnace was located in its cellar, in quarters so cramped that contingent operations were often delayed.

On December 13, 1805 the Mint leased from Robert Griffith another lot formerly owned by Whitehead Humphries, which was situated on Bone Alley adjacent to Cromley's lot and just north of it. In 1810 Samuel Yorke acquired title to this property but continued to lease it to the Mint for \$60. per annum. In 1827 the Yorke lot was offered for public sale and was purchased on June 2, 1828 by Adam Eckfeldt of the Mint, who continued to lease the property to the Mint on the same terms. Congress was unwilling to authorize funds for purchase of the property. No building was ever erected on this lot, it being used primarily as a woodyard.

With the acquisition of the Cromley and Griffith lots, the Mint controlled all the property along Bone Alley between Sugar Alley and a private court (Yorke Court), making it possible to erect gates at both ends of Bone Alley. This discouraged any intrusion onto Mint property.

On January 11, 1816 at 2 A. M. the mill house and part of the Coinage Building caught fire as the result of a barrel full of hot wood ashes having been left in the walkway adjoining the frame mill house. The mill house was completely destroyed and had to be replaced. A substantial brick building was erected and was ready for occupancy about January 1, 1817. The roof of the Coinage Building likewise burned away and also had to be replaced, at which time the attic was done away with and a flat roof sloping down to the east was installed. Measurements taken by Stewart at the time the Coinage Building was dismantled showed the second floor to be 12 feet, 1 inch high at the west end and only 9 feet, 10 inches high at the east end. The office building was untouched by the fire, and no damage to coins or bullion was sustained. However, the machinery used in preparing the gold and silver bullion for coinage suffered considerable damage and had to be replaced. Inspection of those machines not damaged by the fire showed them to be so badly worn that they also were replaced.

When the new building replacing the mill house was constructed, an overhead bridge was erected, connecting it to the Coinage Building, and from that time forward the two buildings were considered as a single unit. A ten horsepower steam engine was installed in the basement of the new building and this was used to supply power to most of the heavy machinery except the coin presses. These were still operated by hand. The first and second floors of the new building housed rolling and drawing machines and one of the planchet cutters. The milling machines and screw-driven planchet cutters were housed in the old Coinage Building.

Thus, in these crude surroundings and with antiquated machinery, the first U. S. mint prospered and grew despite the efforts of its critics to close it or to hamper its operations.

On July 4, 1829 the cornerstone of a new and second Mint at Chestnut and Juniper Streets in Philadelphia was laid, and construction of the building was begun immediately afterwards. The second Mint was finished and occupied in January, 1833. The machinery from the first Mint was used at the new Mint until 1835, when it was finally replaced with all new, steam-operated equipment.

When the new machinery was installed, the equipment of the first Mint was hauled back to North 7th Street, and the property and equipment was sold at auction to Michael Kates for \$10,100. on January 12, 1836. The deed was signed by President Andrew Jackson. The rear lot across Bone Alley was also acquired eventually by Kates on November 22, 1837, the deed being signed by President Martin Van Buren.

On a total ground area roughly 8,000 square feet (the equivalent of a lot measuring 53 by 150 feet), with inexperienced personnel, limited facilities, inadequate hand-operated or horse-powered equipment, recurring yellow fever epidemics, and extremely chaotic conditions, the first Mint produced the following substantial coinage figures:

Half cents	6,558,016	Half dollars	60,548,294
Cents	60,882,672	Silver dollars	1,419,626
Half dimes	4,943,243	Quarter eagles	56,102
Dimes	8,095,745	Half eagles	1,618,225
Quarters	2,553,626	Eagles	117,502

To the personnel of the first U.S. Mint during those early years, 1792-1832, the nation owes a debt of gratitude. They produced a series of coinages which did honor to our country!

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10. "The Fading Luster of Mints: Their Inglorious Endings: Ted N. Weissbuch
NUMISMATIC SCRAPBOOK MAGAZINE Dec., 1964 Pp 3310-13

THE 1969 GUIDE BOOK (22nd Edition) - A CRITIQUE

by Capt. John D. Wright

At first glance, Yeoman's new "Red Book" appears to offer an improvement in the large cent listings. However, closer scrutiny shows the reason for the more-information-per-page appearance. The allotment for large cent listings has been cut from seventeen to fifteen pages by extensive use of cut or partial plates. The two pages gained from this maneuver are used later to list the 1968 coinage which is quoted at double to five times face value. (Where do I sell these numismatic treasures?)

Many, old, worn-out cuts of other series have been replaced throughout this edition; but not a single large cent plate has been replaced, even though many are so dark as to be unusable. The extensive plate-chopping seen in the 1793-1814 series was done merely by using bits and pieces of pre-existing plates.

One erroneous listing has been corrected. For almost two decades Breen has shouted into the wind about the identity of the 1826 Over 1825 cent, to no avail. Even the 18th STANDARD CATALOGUE (which Breen co-edited) pictured this variety erroneously as the "Wide Date". Paul Munson put the bug into Ken Bressett's ear about this error, and Bressett evidently made sure the error was corrected in this edition. The cut of N-1, previously titled "1826 Over 25", has been deleted; and the cut of N-8, previously titled "1826 Wide Date", has been correctly relabeled as "1826 Over 25".

Another error was not corrected. The cut of 1800 S-192, now missing all of its reverse and the top half of its obverse, is still incorrectly labeled "1800 Over 1798". This is one of the 1800 Over 179_ varieties, although in the early part of this century it was often referred to as "1800 Over 1799".

As far as the listings are concerned, the same hit-or-miss, haphazard selection prevails, as it did last year and in all previous years. Some extreme rarities such as the 1793 Strawberry Leaf, 1795 Reeded Edge, and 1798 Rev. of '96 with Close Date are listed, unpriced, while other varieties such as the 1795 Jefferson Head, 1803 .lg Dt Sm Frac is known in that grade.

Despite the fact that there are seven known collectible varieties of 1793 Wreath cents comprising two distinct types (Large Trefoil/Small Bow and Small Trefoil/Large Bow), only the edge variations of 1793 Wreath cents are listed. This lumps Sheldon 5 through 11a into one listing, with separate listings for S-11b and S-11c.

The 1794 Missing Fraction Bar (S-64) is listed and priced separately, even though the Starred Reverse (S-48) and the Fallen 4 (S-63), both more popular and better-known varieties, are omitted. All 1796 Bust type cents are lumped together, although there are three different reverse types found on the Bust type and two different reverse types with the LIBERTY obverse.

Wide and Close Dates are listed for the 1798 Rev., of 96 but not for the 1797 Rev. of 96 which is common both ways. The 1801 is listed with pointed or blunt first 1 with perfect reverse, but no distinction is made for the 1/000 reverse or the Three-Error reverse, even though both of these come with either pointed or blunt first 1.

The single 1804 variety is still listed three times, by die states, even though no other coin in the book is listed this way.

The 1817 is listed with Wide and Close Date while the 1818 and 1819 are not, yet both have date-width variations as great as the 1817. The 1821 and 1822 are listed with Wide and Close dates, yet the date-width variation for these years is no greater than that of the 1825 or 1827 which are not so listed.

The 1833 is listed with either Large or Small Letters on the reverse, but all of the six known varieties of this year have only Small Letters.

The 1834 with Large Date and Stars is listed only with a Large Letter reverse (N-6) but this same obverse comes with a Small Letter reverse (N-5).

The enlarged cut of the 1851 Over 81 (N-3) was added a few years ago and has eliminated completely the identification problem of this variety. A similar cut is needed for the 1844 Over 81 (N-2). If partial-coin cuts are to be used in this publication, much more usable information would be conveyed in the same amount of space by an enlargement, cut on three sides such as the 1851 picture, than by the present half-coin pictures.

I'm sure the Whitman staff is capable of a much better presentation than appears in the large cent section of the 1969 GUIDE BOOK. Perhaps they will see fit to correct these deficiencies next year. Considering the errors, unusable plates, and haphazard listings, a simple listing by date and condition would be just as useful to the collector and less confusing to the dealer.

PLAUDITS

Margo Russell, Editor of COIN WORLD, in a recent letter to Herb Silberman said: "I am one of your organization's most ardent fans and consider PENNY-WISE one of the finest reference resources in our library." Our thanks to you, Mrs. Russell.

DOES YOUR YARD BELL RING LIKE A LARGE CENT?

Charles French, noted coin dealer formerly of Troy, New York, tells a story about a bell manufacturer in Watervliet who, years ago, contracted with the government to purchase all the recalled large cents. He planned to make bells from the large cents. Legend has it that at one time over five barrels full of large cents were on hand at the foundry. It was also said that boys would sneak into the foundry and pitch some of the coppers into the Hudson River, which separates Watervliet from Troy. (Ref.: HOBBIES Magazine for May, 1949, Page 134.)

NEW DISCOVERIES IN THE EARLY CENTS

by Walter Breen



1794. NC-8. (NC-7 was the S-20 with both edge devices, described in the last issue of PENNY-WISE, page 149.) Obv. 8 of Sheldon 25, Hays 22.

Rev. MM. 13 leaves left, 18 right. Group of four berries below R of AMERICA, two inside, two outside, the upper of the outside pair half buried in a leaf. Six berries left, eight right. Berries are of diverse sizes, two near top of each branch unusually small, two others extra large, the other ten of ordinary small size.

Die break variations: On the single example seen, obv. is perfect, rev. has straight break from rim almost or quite touching right arm of first T in STATES to left foot of adjacent A and into field.

R-8. 15-O. Unique. W. C. Blaisdell collection. Weight normal at 202.6 grains. Discovered December, 1965 and for some time controversial, but there is no evidence of alteration, nor does any prototype exist from which it could have been altered - the leaf arrangement, berry arrangement, letter placement, etc. are all distinctive.



1801. NC-4.

Obv. New. Pointed first 1. Lacks the distinguishing features of the other pointed-1 dies.

Rev. H.

Die break variations: None.

R-8. 20-4. This is the variety from the "DuPont" sale of 1954, at the time doubted by Dr. Sheldon because the (then) unique example had been extensively burnished

and retooled. Some years later at least one other, worn but otherwise unimpaired, has shown up; this was in possession of a southern dealer who raised his asking price to a **fantastic** level after Walter Breen had displayed something less than a poker face over the coin.

1800. NC-5.

Obv. 1. Perfect die.

Rev. W. "Imperfect" C in CENT - very thin, long serif, corrected from broken punch, as on reverses O, P, S, V, X, and Y of 1798; K, L, S, and V of 1800. Very short fraction bar, about 2 mm., like that on 1798 X but thicker and not extending above second O. Long stems to all berries. Stem to third outer left leaf pair joined to adjacent berry (by die failure?) as well as to wreath stem. Leaves below T in CENT stemless (as on 1800 M) but all other leaves have normal stems. Minute doubling on wreath, showing at undersides of leaves at right, at ribbon, etc. Lacks the stemless berry of reverse K, the imperfect E and F of L, the long fraction bar of S, and the spine from top of I of AMERICA of reverse V.

Die break variations: Reverse: On the single example, there is an immense rim break obliterating upper halves of AM, extending from top of F to right top of E and border above R of AMERICA.

R-8. 10-O. Unique. Discovered by Dr. Stanley Q. West. Now in the collection of Dr. Sheldon.

The discovery of the 1800 new reverse raises the question of how these dies were made. Doughty lumped a group of 1798 dies as "Reverse H" and made little distinction among the 1800 reverses. Dr. Sheldon correctly pointed out that all 1800 reverses were made from a single hub.

This group of dies: 1798 O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, BB, CC, FF, GG, HH; 1799 B; 1800 all dies; 1801 A and E (also B, which is reverse 0 of 1800 re-appearing) - came about by a process not perfected until late 1834 and not completely mechanized until 1839. All these dies were completely hubbed, but the power available for the hubbing press was not great enough to impart the design in complete detail. As a result, the differences visible among these dies are of another kind altogether from those on all other Early Cent reverses. Accordingly, they are also hard to tell apart when worn.

Positions of leaves with respect to letters do not change significantly; numbers of berries remain constant (5-5); numbers of leaves also (16-19); positions of letters with respect to each other change only very slightly and for reasons to be given below; positions of numerals in fraction likewise; size and shape of fraction bar are probably the two outstanding variables, aside from size and direction of berry stems.

In short, the major differences are those arising from hand-refinishing, viz. punching by hand and hammer some letters, numerals, and possibly border serrations or dentilations, and strengthening leaf stems, berry stems, fraction bars, and serifs, by hand and graver.

In some instances, letter and numeral punches became chipped and were "corrected" by adding weaker serifs by hand to replace the missing or defective ones, or later replaced in toto. Reverse BB of 1798 shows one other kind of variation: E of AMERICA was originally (in the hub) weak but normal, then erroneously strengthened with a punch rotated 180 degrees, then corrected, the extra upright and serifs showing plainly.

HOW TO ATTRIBUTE THE 1798's

by Denis Loring

This is the second in a series of articles designed to simplify the attribution of the Early Cents. The subject for today: the cents of 1798. 1798 is not really a tough year as far as attribution is concerned; the diagnostic differences among the dies are often immediately clear, and the coins of this year are often found well-preserved. Nevertheless, with 46 different die varieties to consider, an organized battle plan makes the campaign much easier.

The first step: read pp. 207-208 in PENNY WHIMSY. This classification of 1798's into six major groups is our takeoff point. The rules of the game and the abbreviations used are the same as before. Follow the steps in order. 10BL means 1st Outside Berry on the Left, 2ILR means 2nd Inside Pair of Leaves on the Right, and so on. Good luck!

GROUP ONE - Style 1 Lettering. Check reverses:

1. Long, heavy fraction bar, buckle from A in STATES to R in AMERICA - S-144.
2. Fraction bar ends in long point touching right ribbon, leaf left of C in CENT just a line - S-145.
3. Fraction skewed to the right - S-147.

Now to obverses:

4. ER widely spaced, island at left lower corner of E - S-146.
5. Spur on back of 9, JHF below center of upright of T - S-148.
6. Date spaced 179 8. JHF below left edge of upright of T - S-149.

GROUP TWO - Overdates.

1. Wide overdate - S-152.
2. Close overdate, short fraction bar does not extend to the 1 - S-151.
3. Close overdate, long fraction bar - S-150.

GROUP THREE - Large 8, Style 1 Hair, Style Two Lettering.

1. 8 embedded in bust - S-154.
2. 8 not embedded - S-153.

GROUP FOUR - Small 8, Style 1 Hair. Check obverses:

1. Extremely wide date - S-155.
2. LIBERTY very widely and evenly spaced - S-NC-2.
3. HWH below center of R, Y low and distant. Check reverses:
 - A. PHL midway between S and O - S-158.
 - B. PHL right of center of S - S-159.
4. HWH below center of R, Y in normal position - S-164.
5. Three denticles fused below 9, JHF slightly right of right foot of T - S-157.

Now check reverses:

6. Reverse of 1796 - S-156.
7. Extremely wide fraction, crossbar of E in AMERICA connected with upper pendant - S-NC-1.
8. Fraction spaced 1 00, PHL right of center of S - S-163.

Back to the obverse:

9. Top of hair unfinished, top of 1 almost square - S-162.
10. 7 leans sharply to right. Check reverses:
 - A. Stem of 1IBL points to left side of C, pair of short lines from ER in AMERICA to adjacent denticles - S-160.
 - B. Stem of 1IBL points onto right side of leaf above, small lump on right side of O in ONE - S-161.

GROUP FIVE - Large 8, Style 2 Hair. Check reverses:

1. Arc crack from E in UNITED through final O of fraction - S-166.
2. 2OLR overlap stem - S-165.
3. Short break starting at E in UNITED pointing toward right terminal leaves - S-167.

GROUP SIX - Small 8, Style 2 Hair. These are the rough ones. Start with reverses:

1. Reverse of 1796 - S-178.
2. High numerator, large denominator - S-181.
3. 2ILR, 30LR stemless and disconnected from wreath stem - S-186.
4. Top berry on left hangs down - S-187.
5. Very short fraction bar, both pairs of leaves under T free, lower pair farther from stem - S-174.
6. Wide fraction, AM touch - S-168.
7. M first started too low, upper points show on both uprights; crossbar of E in STATES connected with top - S-172.
8. Left top of E in AMERICA long and heavy, connected with crossbar; rim break over U - S-175.
9. Stem of 1IBL points to left side of C, pair of short lines from ER in AMERICA to adjacent denticles - S-176.
10. Die cut across right ribbon to center of A. Check obverses:
 - A. HWH below center of R - S-182.
 - B. 9 low, B above I and leans right - S-184.
 - C. IB almost touch at bottom - S-183.

Now check obverses:

11. 98 high - S-179.
12. HWH below center of R, 9 low and leans right - S-180.
13. 9 low, defect at upper left corner of 7 - S-185.
14. LIB closer than other letters, HWH below left side of upright of R - S-177.
15. JHF below right side of upright of T, point of 1 equidistant from hair and curl - S-170.
16. 8 high and tilted left, B high, HWH below center of upright of R - S-168.
17. HWH below right side of upright of R, point of 1 closer to hair than to curl - S-171.

And so ends 1798. Next issue we'll try 1797. Good hunting!

LETTERS FROM NON-MEMBERS

THE 1794 S-48 STARRED REVERSE - from Nebraska: (the author requested anonymity):

"I am writing for some information on a rare variety of the 1794 cent that I discovered in my collection. Several months ago I purchased a copy of Dr. Sheldon's PENNY WHIMSY for study and reference. Most of my early coppers were common varieties except the 1794, which turned out to be an S-48 Starred Reverse variety to my surprise.

I had examined this particular piece many times before but had never noticed the tiny stars between the points of the denticles. The sad part is that the old copper is pretty well worn especially on the reverse, which probably was a weak strike. Only about a third of the stars are visible on the reverse, from 5 to 10 o'clock, but those that are visible, stand out bold and clear, some partially covered by the denticles.

The obverse would grade a strong Good, with a fairly nice rim and a strong LIBERTY. The 179 of the date is strong and clear, while the 4 has a mark through it. The coin has a beautiful shade of copper unlike any of the other large cents I have. According to Dr. Sheldon's grading standards, I would say that the coin grades about 3 or 4.

I have made several inquiries about the coin, but received only very limited information. Do any of the EAC members have this variety in their collections? Where are some other pieces of this variety? According to Dr. Sheldon's book, there are only 15 to 20 pieces in existence. Is this about correct? Have any new pieces showed up since PENNY WHIMSY was published? Have any such pieces been sold recently and for how much? It is a real numismatic thrill to discover a rarity such as this in one's collection, and I am greatly interested in finding out more about it.

Please don't use my name or address in your publication for security reasons. Also, I don't wish to sell this piece from my collection."

Editor's Note: A 1794 S-48 of the D. C. Wismer Estate was sold at auction on October 5, 1951 by the New Netherlands Coin Company (N. Y.) for \$225. The coin was graded as strictly Very Fine. On December 8, 1967, another 1794 S-48 in the Bradbury K. Thurlow collection was sold at auction by the Mayflower Coin Auctions, Inc. for a mail bid of \$1,050. This coin has been graded as VF-20.

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REMINISCENCES - Dr. Edward G. Gullord, a physician from Upper Montclair, New Jersey, recently wrote to the Editor as follows: "I saw in the New York TIMES the report of the token of the Early American Coppers Club issued in honor of Dr. William H. Sheldon. I was immediately taken back to my college days at the University of Wisconsin where Dr. Sheldon and I collected pennies. We bought a selection of the early cents from Max Mehl of Texas, and from this each of us obtained many examples of these delightful coppers, some of them in surprisingly good condition. As I recall, we paid \$40. for about 100 different coins - this was in 1929 and 1930."

ADDENDUM TO ARTICLE ON COUNTERSTAMPED LARGE CENTS

Maurice M. Gould and Walter Breen have called the Editor's attention to articles on counterstamped large cents written by Kenneth L. Hallenbeck of Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Editor has been in communication with Mr. Hallenbeck and reports the following:

Hallenbeck specializes in the collection of counterstamped coins and has a rather large collection of counterstamped large cents. In addition, he has written rather extensively on the subject. For these articles he has used his own collection for material as well as information and data garnered from other collectors and from old sales catalogues. Primarily, Hallenbeck has attempted to catalogue the various counterstamped large cents and has introduced a modified Dewey decimal system which assigns a specific number to each. Unfortunately, he lists no dates, even though numerous countermarks are repeated on more than one date of large cent. Hallenbeck explains the omission by stating (1) on many counterstamped coins, the dates are missing through wear; (2) multiple listing of dates for a single entry seems cumbersome; and (3) he catalogued his original series without dates and is now continuing in the same manner.

Your attention is called to the following articles by Hallenbeck:

- "Hallmarks on U.S. Large Cents" THE TOKENS AND MEDAL SOCIETY JOURNAL April-June, 1964 (Vol. IV, No. 2) Pp 41-43. This article discusses the use of hallmarks as counterstamps and gives illustrations of seven hallmarks used on large cents. Each hallmark has been thoroughly identified.
- "Counterstamped U.S. Large Cents" NUMISMATIC SCRAPBOOK MAGAZINE April, 1965 Pp 957-961. This article defines counterstamps, offers a general discussion of them, lists the various types to be found, and includes plates of eight different counterstamped large cents.
- "Counterstamped U.S. Large Cents" THE NUMISMATIST August, 1965 Pp 1249-1255. Hallenbeck states that reprints of this article are available from the ANA for 75¢.
- "Counterstamped U.S. Large Cents" THE NUMISMATIST April, 1967 Pp 425-429. This article is a continuation of the earlier article (q.v.) and lists 491 varieties by initials, numbers, names, store cards, special symbols, etc.
- "A Counterstamped Coin From Virginia" THE VIRGINIA NUMISMATIST Nov.-Dec., 1967. This article describes an 1822 large cent with two different counterstamps on the reverse: "W. PEARSE" and "FREEMAN AND POLLARD". Both are hallmarks of silversmiths from Norfolk, Virginia. Hallenbeck points out, in the article, the uniqueness of two different counterstamps on the same coin.

Mr. Hallenbeck notes, in his letter to the Editor, that he has enough additional material now on hand for another article which he expects to write and have published in the near future.

COMMENTS FROM THE MEMBERS

RE: COUNTERSTAMPS - From Maurice M. Gould:

"Congratulations to Dr. Lapp on his excellent article, 'Countermarks on U.S. Large Cents'.

This field still needs a great deal of research, and if the members of our group will keep notations on their pieces and submit them to whoever is writing, it will be a great help.

Ken Hallenbeck of Indiana has been doing quite a bit of research in this field and has had several articles published, mostly on U.S. coppers.

It may surprise you to know that I had, at one time, more than 6,000 counter-stamped large cents. I spent a great deal of effort and time in trying to trace down the names and initials through city directories and other possible means. Yet, after a number of years at this, I was able to pin down only two pieces. I then gave up on the initials and names in almost all cases and thereafter listed only the pieces which I thought might relate to merchants' tokens, etc.

It is interesting to note that I dumped most of this tremendous lot at mutilated large cent prices - quite a difference from the interest being shown today.

Dr. Lapp refers to a collection which Dave Bowers sold; and I am quite sure that most of this collection was material which I sold him and part came from John Gilbody of Winchester, Massachusetts, who also obtained most of his counterstamped pieces from me.

I hope to list in PENNY-WISE some time in the future unlisted pieces or those with interesting stories."

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RE: COUNTERSTAMPS - From Charles E. Funk, Jr.:

"I have three counterstamped large cents, and I don't find any of them in your list or in the references you cited:

The first is an 1805 S-268 with the C/S "O·H" on the reverse. The letters were incuse in the die (they are raised on the coin), and the die was deeply serrated along its top and bottom edges, but not on the ends. The serrations show up like saw-teeth framing the letters. I noticed in Gould's second article a reference to an Otis Howe who left his C/S on an 1803 cent. Maybe the same fellow?

The second is an 1816 N-6. The stamp is on the obverse and consists of the letters "COD" (no periods), incuse, in an uneven line suggesting that each letter was separately punched. The letters are just under an eighth-inch high, and run from hair-line to jaw.

Third is an 1837 N-16, with the C/S "P.S. Bond" on the reverse. The capital letters are just over a sixteenth-inch high, and the whole legend is evenly and neatly

spaced as though struck from a logotype. The legend crosses through ONE CENT between NE and through N, nearly as long as the inner diameter of the wreath. The letters are unusual in having very large serifs, that on the top of the "d", for instance, extending almost as far left as the loop. This C/S is also incuse."

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RE: PENNY-WISE'S ARTICLES - From Joseph W. Rattner:

"PENNY-WISE reaches more than you know. Last meeting of the Royal Oak Coin Club, I read most of Dr. Lapp's excellent article about copper and its use in early American cents. The members liked it very much."

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RE: CHART COINS Company: - From J. A. Feather:

"I have been trying to liquidate my cents, but every time I walk into a show, I buy. As a result, I am accumulating even a bigger inventory. May as well stay with it, I guess."

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CORRECTION - In Allen Corson's article on "Aluminum Foil Pressings" which appeared in PENNY-WISE No. 7, this statement should be added to the second from the last paragraph following the sentence "That is pure common sense":

"Aside from security, it's a postage saving including insurances of up to \$5. or more per coin, averaging, say, 50¢ per letter for routine substitutions."

Mr. Corson pointed out, in a letter to the Editor, that he wanted to add this sentence, so as to stress the amount of money that can be saved by substituting pressings for actual coins.

In commenting on the Editors' Note, Mr. Corson added:

"Regarding John Wright's idea of moving the finger, of course you do that, but you will find that you may have to do the entire thing over more than once with some coins. A slick surface is always troublesome, and the foil slides:

Regarding the arrows, try this: use the outside, ink-arrow method, then send it to some one who knows a bit about large cents or nothing at all. I began putting arrows on the foil to eliminate extra letter-writing. You'd be surprised at how literal most people are and at how many directions an arrow on the 2x2 can seem to point. I put the arrows on the foil because the only important detail on the foil is not the coin but the specific errors the arrows pinpoint. Admittedly, they do louse up the foil artistically, but they do lead one to the exact point of interest. In my case, that is the intent of the pressing - to make inescapable some error or point that words might cause an inexperienced person to miss entirely. If the basis were pure artistry, then nothing would be marked on the foil. The arrows as I use them do not obscure - they point to the things that are the reason for doing the foil pressings."

RE: THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND LARGE CENTS - Bob Carter, who operates with his father (both are EAC members) the Half Cent Shop in Middleboro, Massachusetts, wrote as follows:

"Massachusetts, especially Middleboro, used to be the cream of the large cent area; but through the years it has been picked pretty clean of quality pieces.

Crocker Bros. of Taunton was only about 15 miles from Middleboro. I used to have two blank large cent planchets which were found there, but they have since been stolen from me. The Glenwood Range Co., also of Taunton, melted down many kegs of large cents years ago. The coins were defaced or cut in half before being melted down - they may have been received that way from the Mint. Once in a while, when we buy a collection of coins, we will get a piece so defaced, possibly from this source.

I cleaned out our junk box a few months ago and found about thirty large cents that had been counterstamped, holed, or previously engraved. I even found a counterfeit large cent which I sent to the U.S. Mint. The F.B.I. wrote and wanted to know who I bought it from, how long ago, and did I have any more. Anyone could see that it had seen a lot of circulation - I thought it had been made in the Hard Times period and told them so.

We have been advertising the EAC here in Middleboro. We set up a nice display of coins, under glass, in our local bank, showing change bags of yesteryear spilling out coins from half cents to dollars. We centralized the EAC token in the middle with the EAC membership certificate beneath it. The display attracted a lot of attention.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

The following articles are on hand, or in the process of completion, and will appear in the next or some future issue of P-W:

"The 'Strawberry Leaf' Cents of 1793" by Walter Breen.

"Maxims and Adages" - a collection of penny wisdom.

"Interesting Sidelights on Various Large Cent Dealers and Collectors"

"Howard R. Newcomb" - a biography, with abstracts from some of his letters to Henry Hines.

"Mutilated Large Cents"

"The Medals of the Philadelphia Mint"

"The Old Crocker Bros. Copper Works of Norton, from a Numismatic Standpoint"
by Robert and Paul M. Carter

"The Use of Stars on Large Cents and Other U.S. Coins"

"New and Unlisted Varieties of Large Cents"

"EAC Census Report and Comments" by Herbert A. Silberman

WALTER BREEN COMMENTS:

"Though the subject of counterstamped cents never did interest me greatly as most such C/S's seemed to be merely personal markings now unidentifiable, I can add one strange piece never elsewhere described so far as I know, and bring to your attention probably a very fruitful source of additional information.

The obscure item is a 1795 cent, lettered edge, S-76a, EF, with a tiny, rectangular C/S "IA" (2 mm. x 1 mm.) below CENT. The "IA" is in a rectangular block, and the lettering is of late 18th century or early 19th century style. This cent came from England about 1952 and was in the Tom Warfield collection, reappearing as Lot 195 in the MANA Convention sale of October, 1955.

The source of information is Kenneth L. Hallenbeck, Jr., ANA 17797. His classification was published in the August, 1965 NUMISMATIST, pp 1249-1255, and includes listings not elsewhere seen. Unfortunately, these were not dated.

There is also the 1796 S-107 in the Anderson DuPont sale of 1954, with the C/S "L. P. KNERR", ex-Newcomb, not elsewhere published.

Re: the installment of Capt. Wright's study of overdated cents, I'd add that a peculiarity of 1819 N-2 is its use of two separate 8 punches - the old 1818 numeral punch first as on N-1, then on the newer 1819 8 punch. His illustration of N-2 shows only the second. On fine enough coins both are visible, tending to suggest that this die was made in 1818 without the last numeral, only to be completed in 1819.

As for the chronological index to the Red Book, the following comments have to suffice for the moment:

(1650?) New England stiver. Probably a fabrication of later centuries.

(1658) Baltimore Penny. Three known plus many fabrications, the genuine showing R in MARIAE on obv. first rotated 90° (horizontal) then corrected, together with many other recut letters.

(1641-48) Mark Newby halfpence and farthings. All genuine have reeded edges and brass plugs though sometimes the plugs were misplaced or occasionally pried out or allowed to fall off the coins.

"1783" Washington Unity States cent: date is fictitious, actual time of issue nearer to 1820 than 1810, obv. design as on other "1783" coins known to originate in the 1810-1820 decade (dies by Thomas Wells Ingram), rev. copied from draped bust cent wreath 1796-1807.

1831 half cent - NOT proof only."

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THE ROVING REPORTER

by Capt. John D. Wright

On July 13 Paul Munson stopped by, en route to Montreal; and we had a most enjoyable evening. I was on Alert as usual, but that didn't crimp our style much. We talked Cents until midnight.

As soon as Uncle turned me out of the Alert shed, we packed and hit the front gate at 3:30 A.M. on the 19th, heading south. By 9 A.M. we were in New York City. The people at A.N.S. were as gracious as always, and I spent a pleasant hour or so photographing a few more of their cents. The A.N.S. is open from Tuesday to Saturday, 9 to 5, and welcomes visitors any time, but if you intend to photograph some coins they appreciate a letter beforehand.

The rest of the day was spent most enjoyably at Stack's, who have a veritable treasure-trove of large cents. Grades run from Poor to Uncirculated in the later dates and Poor to XF in the earlier years, with many pieces in stock (e.g. over 400 cents of 1803). By now most of their better pieces are attributed: some by Breen's efforts, some by mine, and many others by parties unknown. Bring a fat wallet when you visit, but expect a lot of coins for your money.

That evening the wife and I bundled our three little Indians off to Brooklyn for a visit with Doc Lapp. After bedding the kids down, we talked large cents, EAC, and PENNY-WISE until 2 A.M. Doc was as proud as a peacock of some of his newest purchases - some more out-of-print reference books and a packet of letters from Newcomb to Hines.

From NYC the road wound southward to Highlands, North Carolina, via the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway. We spent a few days in the mountains there and got by the only coin shop in town, which sported a beautiful display and a wide array of mixed genuine, counterfeit, and altered coins for sale. At today's prices, it pays to know the difference.

Our next stop was Atlanta, which seems to have gone down hill numismatically in the past five years since we moved away from there. Dantone (Peachtree Coins) still has the same kind of top-quality stock he was known for half a decade ago, but the other shops have either gone out of business or have stopped carrying decent copper.

Next stop, Daytona Beach. Jerry Goldman's stock at Seabreeze Antiques was down, but he always enjoys talking early U.S. anyway. Big Ben had a few cents and I turned up an 1828 N-4 there which completed my 1828's.

In Orlando, I met Bill Parks and C. F. Gordon and had a genial visit with the Treasurer of the EAC. C. F. stopped by the bank for his cents and we spent a few enjoyable hours looking them over. At least three of the high-rarity varieties from the 1967 A.N.A. auction turned out to be something else. Other members who bought at this sale might do well to verify the attribution of their coins. Three mis-attributions in so small a sample speaks pretty poorly for an ANA sale.

After parking our Indians with Grandma in West Palm Beach, the wife and I proceeded to a pre-arranged rendezvous with Allen Corson in Miami. We spent all morning in the bank looking over some of his cents. Allen was once introduced as "the only man I know who can display his large cent collection on a string". That afternoon we poured over the cents in Sidney Smith's shop and blew what little of the bankroll Stack's had left us.

Supper time found us back with Allen Corson, who by this time was reinforced by several of his friends, each an advanced specialist in a different field. Thence we went to the home of Ed Majilton, who ranks as the country's most knowledgeable specialist on Panamanian coinage. There our group talked about Panamanian, Mexican, South American coinage, large cents, and more large cents. The wee hours found the remains of the party breaking up.

A week later we stopped by NYC again for a visit with Walter Breen, Lester Merkin, Norman Stack, and Howard Hazelcorn. Time and Money ran out together and we arrived home in Plattsburgh at midnight on August 9 with \$3. in our pockets and \$6. in the bank.

Our box score for the 20-day leave was twelve additions to the collection, twenty upgrades, two EAC members met for the first time, and five severe sunburns. Everybody we met talked about the upcoming Blue Ridge and ANA shows, hoping to see us at one or the other. We were too far south at Blue Ridge time and Uncle would not turn me loose for ANA. It's just as well, since I could not afford it if he would let me go. We can't all be lucky.

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BOOK REVIEW

Eugene Exman (EAC 22) is the author of a new book THE HOUSE OF HARPER: ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF PUBLISHING, which was published in 1967 by Harper and Row (N.Y.), pp 326, \$8.50. Recounted is the interesting story of one of the most distinguished publishing houses from its start 150 years ago until now and its merger with Row, Peterson, Authors, artists, best sellers - all are part of the fascinating Harper story, so well told here. Mr. Exman is best remembered by coin collectors for his part in the publication of Dr. Sheldon's EARLY AMERICAN CENTS and PENNY WHIMSY.

TWO CENTS WORTH - A NEW FEATURE

There are two things you can do with a question - ask it and answer it. This column is your opportunity to do both. Every EAC member is encouraged to write in and ask the questions, make the suggestions, and propose the new ideas that have occurred to him as he has worked on his collection. And, of course, you're also invited to answer the questions, criticize the suggestions, and comment on the ideas, your own as well as anyone else's. In other words, this is your chance to put in your two cents worth. Let's hear from you!

Denis Loring, EAC 11, starts the ball rolling:

What do you think of the grade F-18? Is it a distinguishable point between 15 and 20, or is it just hair-splitting? Sheldon shuns the grade, but Johnson uses it, as do many other collectors. I find the grade useful as a translation of "About Very Fine", or else I might grade the coin VF-20 and then find my conscience bothering me.

Many of us collect the Late Date cents (1816-1857) by "major variety", using the Red Book. But is the Red Book complete? How about the 1828/88? The 1855 12-star? The 1833 "Horned 8"? Should the EAC try to compose a standardized list of Late Date major varieties? Any candidates for such a list?

How about a readily accessible "Guide to Condition Census Pieces", giving the location of these coins which, according to some centralized, nationally recognized, authoritative source, are deemed to be in the Condition Census? In this way, a prospective buyer need not be in doubt as to whether a coin touted as "second finest known" really is just that.

Who'll be next? Remember, PENNY-WISE is your paper - we want your two cents worth.

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COUNTERFEITING AND DEATH PENALTY

Down through the ages, counterfeiting in almost all nations has been punishable by death. Only in recent times has the law been changed in most countries. Even as late as 1825 in the United States, there was a ruling at the U.S. Mint that any Mint employee defacing the coinage "shall be guilty of felony, and shall suffer death". (Ref.: Frank C. Ross in "Numismatic Thoughts", HOBBIES Magazine for April, 1949, P 136).

LAST ISSUE'S PENNY QUIZ - ANSWERS AND COMMENTS

by Capt. John D. Wright

That's a little better! Responses quadrupled over last issue. Still, twelve replies from 150 members isn't too hot. Sorry that I wasn't able to reply personally to each of you this time, but I was in the midst of preparations for my annual Flying Proficiency Check and was busier than a cat on the proverbial tin roof. P-W is grateful to the twelve men listed below, who cared enough to send their very best:

Rod Burress (Texas)
Bob Carter (Mass.)
Charles E. Davis (Mass.)
Major R. B. Fowler (P. Rico)
C. F. Gordon, Jr. (Fla.)
Walter D. Leavitt (Conn.)

Paul H. Munson (N.Y.)
Capt. D. B. Palmer, Jr. (N. Car.)
George K. Pretsch (N.Y.)
David G. Rhodes (Del.)
John W. Ward, Jr. (Texas)
Thomas Wolf (Fla.)

Since Bob Carter got a set of Sheldon's EAC plates last time, we won't send him another (although his was one of the better papers). A set of the Sheldon EAC plates has been sent to each of the other eleven respondents.

The answers, with appropriate comments, follow:

1. Eight dies with a figure punched inverted, then overpunched correctly:
 - (1) 1794 Reverse A (S-17,18) has N of CENT punched inverted and corrected. Four people got this one. Ref: Sheldon, Plate 4; Breen, "Blundered Dies" in Whitman's NUMISMATIC JOURNAL, Dec. 1965, pp 869-871 and "Die Errors of U.S. Mint Coins" in EMPIRE TOPICS, Oct.-Dec. 1958, pp 22-23.
 - (2) 1794 Reverse Z (S-56) has N of ONE inverted and corrected. Seven people got this one. Ref: Sheldon, p 118 and Plate 8; Breen, as above.
 - (3) 1796 Obverse 13 (S-103, 104), the LIHERTY variety, has the B of LIBERTY inverted and corrected. Nearly everybody got this one - ten out twelve. Ref: Sheldon; Breen, as before; also P 4 of P-W 4.
 - (4) 1798 Reverse BB (S-179) has E in AMERICA inverted and corrected. Five people got this one. References same as others.
 - (5) 1801 Reverse D (S-218, 219) has U of UNITED inverted and corrected. Another easy one: ten right, out of twelve tries. References same.
 - (6) 1811 Obverse 1 (S-286), the overdate, has both of the final 1's inverted and corrected. Only four got this when all should have. Only published reference is pages 72 and 73 of P-W 6.
 - (7) 1844 Obverse 2 (N-2), the "1844 Over 81", has complete date (as a unit) inverted and overpunched correctly. Eight papers included this one. While, in this case, no figure was overpunched with the same figure, by the wording of the question this need not be the case. Newcomb does not identify the "outlines" he mentions on this variety. See the Overdate article elsewhere in this issue.
 - (8) 1851 Obverse 3 (N-3), the "1851 Over 81" has an inverted 18 overpunched with the correct 51. Eight people listed this one.

Another popular answer was 1839 Obverse 1 (N-1), the overdate. This does not fit, as the die when originally prepared did not have the last figure inverted. Although the same punch was used for 6 and 9 at the time, the original intent was a 6. This was altered (not corrected) to a 9 three years later. In the ensuing three years the letter punches had changed and the overfigure was undoubtedly not an identical inversion of the underfigure. Five papers included this die. Two respondents misread the question and did not give any of the correct answers. Three people had seven correct answers on this question and one person had all eight.

2. What is the "Old Maid Head"? We had one guess for the Fillet Head (1796-1807), two for the Turban Head (1808-1814), and three for the Coronet (or Tammany) Head (1816-1839). Five of the respondents did not even venture a guess. One sent a picture of the Loco Foco/Mint Drop token of 1838 as his candidate. (This is one of the "Hard Times" or Jacksonian tokens of 1837-38, this particular one bearing a Negroid head and being a fairly close replica of a U.S. large cent.)

The Coronet type seems to fit this label best, but the reference supplied with the question (18th STANDARD CATALOGUE, 1957, p. 50) gives the "Old Maid Head" label to the Heads of 1840 and 1844 (Braided Hair type, 1839-1857). One reader cited a reference (Slabaugh, NSM, April, 1958, p 696) for the Coronet type bearing the stigma of "Old Maid Head". With conflicting references, we withdraw the question.

3. Another "Three-Error Reverse": The obvious answer is Reverse L of 1802 (S-241) and Reverse A of 1803 (S-243), which are the same die. This die has the following three errors: (1) stemless wreath; (2) fraction bar double; (3) final S in STATES first punched much too low, touching wreath, and repunched correctly. This has been known as the "Dropped S" reverse. Nine readers mentioned these varieties. Reverse X of 1794 (S-49 to 54) and H of 1803 (S-250, 252) were mentioned by two readers, but we were unable to find any peculiarities of these dies that might actually be classed as "errors".

4. Dateless 1797 vs 1801 cent: This was intended to refer the readers to the differences in hair style and the difference in letter punches (straight-tailed R vs curl-tailed R being the most obvious). Nine readers mentioned the hair style but most of these only mentioned the extra curl. If the coin were so poor that the date is gone, the head would probably show as a silhouette only and this curl would not be visible. In this case, letter style and the shape of the outline of the curl under the fillet bow determine the period. See page 42 of P-W 5 or compare plates of pre- S165 with post-S165 obverses in Sheldon. Three members mentioned the Grippped Edge of 1797 as the determining factor. While the presence of this type edge strongly implies a 1797 cent, its absence implies nothing. Most cents of 1797 have plain edges as on 1801. Other readers observed that the only positive way of determining the date of such a coin is by attribution of the variety from whatever points are still legible. The hair-style argument only determines 1798-or-before versus 1798-or-after and does not uniquely determine the date. Indeed, a dateless S-190 or S-191 would be classed as pre-1799 by this method. This is the most complete solution, but for the question as stated, hair style and letter style are sufficient.

5. "Mouse on Head" is a name commonly given to late die states of four varieties of the 1817 cent. N-3,7,8 and 9 develop a crumbling on top of the head which is commonly

referred to as a "mouse". That this particular failure occurs on four different dies of 1817 and none of any other year is most peculiar. Actually, the shape of this lump atop the head does not resemble the silhouette of a mouse on any except the N-9 and there only superficially, but all four of these varieties are called by the same name. Newcomb designates the presence of this crumbling by half-numbers (N-3 1/2, 7 1/2, 8 1/2, and 9 1/2), but the presence or absence of this failure does not constitute a separate variety, as only one variety can be produced from a given pair of dies. Four members named all four of the "Mouse on Head" varieties, while three more gave one of the four. Two members gave only the year 1817 without any mention of particular varieties.

6. How many "types" of "major varieties" of 1834 cent? - Response to this question astounded me. The question was fair and honestly stated (at least I like to think so - it was my question), but nobody gave the correct answer. The Red Book lists three, but nearly half of the respondents realized I would not be naive enough to let them off that easily. Accordingly, they dug out their Newcomb books and gave a fourth: "Large Date, Medium Stars, Large Letters on Reverse". This is N-7 and is a distinct variety, but its close similarity to N-6 (LD, LS, LL on reverse), coupled with the fact that most of us have never seen an N-7 (only two or three are known, and these in Proof), make its separate listing dubious. Nobody noticed that Newcomb states "Large Letters" on the reverses of N-6 and N-7 only. The assumption is "since the Red Book lists only three 1834's, the N-5, which has the same LD, LS obverse die as N-6, must also have a Large Letter reverse." Not so!! Others tried to group N-5 with N-3,4 because of its large 8 and Small Letter reverse, ignoring size of stars. The best excuse is that too few of us have seen an N-5 either, as this variety is quite rare, although not prohibitively so as is the N-7. The 18th STANDARD CATALOGUE (1957) lists four "types" of 1834:

- (1) Small 8, Small Stars, Small Letters on reverse..... N-1,2
- (2) Large 8, Small Stars, Small Letters on reverse N-3,4
- (3) Large 8, Large Stars, Small Letters on reverse N-5
- (4) Large 8, Large Stars, Large Letters on reverse N-6

To this could be added a minor variant of (4), with not-quite-so-large stars.

- (5) Large 8, Medium Stars, Large Letters on reverse N-7

7. The "Father of the Coin Trade in America" was Edward Cogan, earliest full-time coin dealer in this country (mid-19th century). Three readers got this one, which is more than I could have done myself. Ref: "Large Cents That Survived" by R. H. Williamson, THE NUMISMATIST, July, 1949 - reprinted in Whitman's SELECTIONS FROM THE NUMISMATIST (U.S. COINS), p. 95. We had five guesses for Max Mehl and two for Ebenezer Mason, one wild guess for Robert Birch (the Engraver!?!), and one person didn't even hazard a guess. I'm with him!

8. "Keg Rubbed" is the 19th century equivalent for today's "Bag Marked" Cent planchets were shipped in kegs from suppliers in England and elsewhere to Philadelphia and the struck cents were transported in the same kegs. This is not true circulation as most cents which were delivered to banks and other outlets received their quota of minor nicks and scratches from jostling against their neighbors. This is not the same as the term "Cabinet Friction", which is the 19th century equivalent to AU.

9. The largest cent hoard: This is a boomerang-trick question. The member who submitted it intended to spring the Aaron White hoard (60,000 worn, old coppers) on the unsuspecting reader, who would naturally think of the Randall Hoard (mint state 1816-1820 cents). However, the Randall Hoard turned out to be "bigger than all of us". Breen's estimate of the size of this hoard is "certainly over 80,000 pieces, probably over 120,000 pieces....say even kegs". While this is speculative, it is based on years of critical observation and should be reasonably accurate. Breen's best guess at present is two kegs each of 1818 and 1820 and one each of 1816, 1817, and 1819. Multiple this by 17,000 to 18,000 cents per keg for that period. Possibly further search in the archives can turn up a record of a shipment around this size to the South in the mid-1820's. This could give a better idea of the exact size of this hoard. Ten members got this one, one got the Nichol's Find and the Randall Hoard mixed up, and another who knows the right answer decided it must be "the J. D. Wright Collection". I'm flattered, but that's not even close.

10. The 1800 Over 1798 and the 1839 Over 6 are both dies that were used several years after their initial preparation, as evidenced by the appearance of head punches that had been discontinued at least two years earlier. The 1800 Over 1798 has Style I Hair, which dates the die as pre-1799; and the 1839 Over 6 has Plain Hair Cords, which dates this die as pre-1838. These are the only varieties in the entire cent series which bear dates later than their type would imply. Nine readers hit the right answer, two hinted around it a little, and one wandered astray.

Without a doubt, the best paper of the lot was the one sent in by Walter Leavitt. Only the omission of the 1834 N-5 as a distinct "type" separated this paper from perfection.

My apologies for the absence of a new Penny Quiz this time. Mr. Williamson's reprint, elsewhere in this issue, should fill this function nicely this time and we'll try to get caught up for the next issue. Again, our thanks to the readers who thought enough of this column to invest a few minutes (hours?) and a six-cent stamp.

* * * * *

THE PENNY BELL MYSTERY

The Penny Bell accounts for 250,000 of the many millions of pennies that have disappeared without leaving a trace. COLLIER'S Magazine for May, 1948 carried this item: "Probably no bell had a stranger history than the reproduction of our Liberty Bell made for the Daughters of the American Revolution and exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. It contained the metal of 250,000 pennies contributed by patriotic children and was to be taken later on a tour of the United States. When the Fair closed, however, the famous bell disappeared, and no trace of it has ever been found."

COUNTERSTAMPED COINS

by Allen Corson

The subject of counterstamped coins involves a very broad field - far too little knowledge available.

Counterstamps are a big interest of mine - I go for them - and I have some dandies. I like the odd ball stuff - feel that it embellishes a collection. Even have a love token on a large cent. Most fun for me is to come up with a high rarity which I might otherwise never have found. Incidentally, I would consider it a real prize to find a counterstamp on an uncirculated large cent. As a rule, countermarks crop up on lower grade coins. I have a few very nice counterstamped large cents, but most are low grade. Some have no dates at all. Paradoxically, my best piece, by grade, is an 1857 half cent in XF.

One of the huge problems with counterstamps is to track down their origin. I have yet to score, although I own specimens in series other than large cents.

Counterstamped large cents were used as store cards for years prior to the Civil War, but in quantities less than you might imagine. Isn't it curious that thousands of patterns of store cards were struck during the Civil War, less than a decade after 1857 when the last large cent was minted, yet very few if any counterstamped large cents have cropped up which could parallel issues of Civil War vintage?

Have yet to check but suspect that the same name would logically appear on more than one date. For example, if you would empty your pockets of coins, you would undoubtedly turn up with several different dates of Lincoln cents. Same with a man who decided to whang a die into large cents.

Here's something to think about, and you'll have fun making conjectures: ever try to figure out who made up the actual dies? or what they were created for? Certainly not all of these were cut just to use on coin of the realm? Did it have to do with wax seals? or for imprinting on tools or leather? What other usages could there have been?

Counterstamped large cents often show an incomplete name. Sometimes the owner only struck his initials on the reverse. And it was also common practice to stamp in a date other than that of the year of issue.

There are several ways to catalog counterstamped coins: (1) by alphabet, from A to Z (my set is complete except for the "U".); and (2) by date (in the Sheldon series, I have all but 1793, 4, 5, 9, 1811, 12, and 13). One fellow I know has initiated a numerical coding system, but he ran into a rather controversial problem: do you code "W.A.L." under "W" or under "L"? How about if it were "W. Ax"? Of course, when only a single letter was used, one has no such choice.

Did you know that counterstamped coins are still going strong? I have them on Washington quarters, also on modern Canadian and European coins.

A few of my more interesting counterstamped large cents are (1) an 1804 bearing the C/S "C. Dow", probably to warn one away from an altered 1804, although the alteration shows real craftsmanship. (2) About forty years back, I obtained from my father a large cent which was counterstamped on the reverse with an eagle - recently saw an advertisement listing three such specimens at \$80. each - ridiculous. (3) Have another marked with single figures of various sizes and shapes - 1,2,4,3,8,9, etc. - both obverse and reverse. (4) One is counterstamped "Wallace Bakery" - there is also a Civil War store card with a Fuld number for Wallace Bakery - could be the same company. (5) I recently turned down a 1793 at \$100. because it was initialed, not counterstamped. I have some initialed coins but do not actively seek them out; in fact, I shun them except in lots.

Other collections I work on are Floridiana and a collection of one dated item for each year for the period of 1768-1968. Have often tried to match pieces in the mid-1900's against counterstamped large cents, but have failed to score so far.

ADDENDUM TO MEMBERSHIP LISTINGS

The following names should be added to the Membership Roll published in the July 15 issue of P-W. Some were inadvertently omitted while others have joined since the last issue.

Bush, Edward R., M.D.	19 Northway Court, Anderson, Indiana	46011
Carter, Paul M.	10 Star Ave., Middleboro, Mass.	02348
Choban, Irving, Esq.	2255 Church Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.	11226
Cotter, Joseph	4120-47th St., Long Island City, N. Y.	11104
Daly, James F.	19 Shade Hollow, Dearborn, Michigan	48124
Dolloff, Richard D.	116 State St., Portsmouth, N. H.	03801
Fischer, David W.	60 Lakeview Dr., Centerville, Ohio	45459
Froehlig, William J.	1111 Voltz Rd., Northbrook, Illinois	60062
Goodman, Kenneth B.	143-36 Barclay Ave., New York, N. Y.	11355
Halko, Ronald J.	7760 Gregg Rd., Pensacola, Florida	32504
Heiligman, Richard	145 East 16th St., New York City	10003
Janis, Edward	11 Riverside Dr., New York City	10013
Polis, George N., M.D.	8109 Cindy Lane, Bethesda, Maryland	20034
Pretsch, George K.	27 Beechwood Pl., Massapequa Park, N. Y.	11762
Slife, Wayne G.	3770 Brookside, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan	48013
Strother, Arnold F., M.D.	1116 Waterford Dr., Richmond, Virginia	23229
Toney, J. M.	P. O. Box 135, Solebury, Pennsylvania	18963
Washburn, Frank D.	581 Boylston St., Boston, Massachusetts	02116
Williamson, R. A.	933 Rothwood Rd., Lynchburg, Virginia	24503
Yeager, Jack O., M.D.	1720 Springhill Ave., Mobile, Alabama	36604

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Munson, Paul	521 Rutger St., Utica, New York	13501
Parks, William J.	1109 E. Colonial Dr., Orlando, Florida	32804
Schoenberger, Allan	Rt. #3, Box 96A, Lakeville, Minnesota	55044
Ward, John M., Jr.	P. O. Box 58362, Houston, Texas	77058
Parsons, J. Robert	7220 Old Beulah Rd., Lithia Springs, Georgia	33057

A STUDY ON OVERDATED UNITED STATES LARGE CENTS

Part 5.

by Capt. John D. Wright

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1840 Over 1839

The 1840 Over 1839 is a little-known overdate publicized by Breen in 1964. A complete 1839 date, curved to follow the border, was almost entirely effaced from an unused 1839 cent die and a straight, small 1840 date was punched in over it. After extensive use of this die the traces of the underfigures become weaker and specimens of the latest die states show them much fainter and blurred.

The "defects in field below 18, 4, and 40" that Newcomb mentions on his N-4 are remnants of the bottoms of 839. Part of the base of an 8 shows between the bottoms of the 18; the lower curve of a 3 is to the left of the base of the 4; and part of the lowest curve of a 9 shows to the left of the base of 0. Usually the 8 remnant is seen clearly, the 3 remnant not at all, and the 9 remnant weakly. Due to the indistinctness of these marks on worn specimens and to their apparent non-relation to the 1840 date characters, this variety, as with the 1813 Over 1812 and the 1849 Over 1848, is generally considered only a poor "country cousin" to most other large cent overdates.

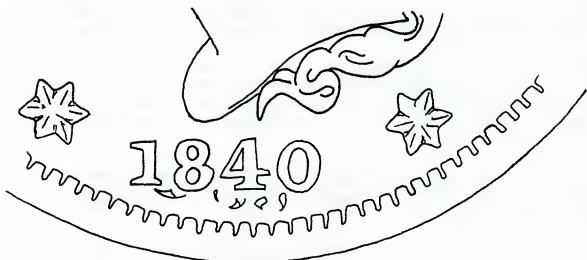
Newcomb 4 is Common, although Breen considers it as "scarce only, not rare". Probably about one out of five 1840 Small Date cents (or one out of fifteen 1840 cents of either type) are this variety.

1840 Over Large 18

Another more popular variety of this year is Newcomb 2, which has a small 1840 date punched over a large 18. Until this time all date characters had been individually punched into the die and the date generally followed the curvature of the border. The large underfigures on Newcomb 2 and all date characters on all large-date varieties of 1840 show this practice. The overpunched figures on N-2, as with all small-date varieties of 1840, are straight, not following the border.

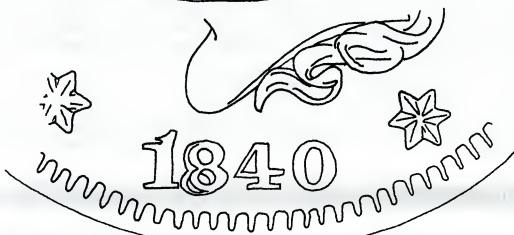
This difference in style was brought about by the introduction in 1840 of a "logotype" (multiple-figure punch), which punched two or more date digits at a time. The first use of this practice on large cent dies produced only two figures at a time (one punch for "18" and another for "40"). A large-figure punch containing more than two figures was apparently considered too unwieldy for hand use at the time.

However, by 1844 a four-figure punch was tried on at least one large cent die that will be discussed later, and three-figure punches were probably used on several large cent dies in the 1840's and 1850's, as evidenced by the misalignment of the final date figure with the first three figures.



1840 Over
1839

N-4



NOT an OVERDATE

1840 Over
Large 18

N-2



PSEUDO-OVERDATE

"1844 Over 81"

Date first punched
inverted

N-2



NOT an OVERDATE

18 first cut
much too high

"B-8"

(Proofs only)

Several varieties of recut dates in the mid-1840's seem to indicate the use of four-figure large cent logotypes. Since all large cent logotypes produced straight, un-curved dates, the 1840 Large Date cent has the last curved date in the large cent series.

The die for N-2 of 1840 was apparently prepared with an incomplete date in the Fall of 1839, overpunched with a logotype in 1840, and used for striking not only regulation strikes, but Proofs as well. That the original, large 18 was not effaced prior to the re-dating process is especially surprising considering the fact that this blundered die was used to strike "Specimen coins", or Proofs.

The undercut large 18 figures on this die exactly match the punches used on 1839 and 1840 Large Date cents, while the overcut 18 is identical to the 18 logotype used on all 1840 Small Date and 1841 cents.

Newcomb 2 is Rather Common, probably upper Rarity 2 or lower R-3. It is Very Rare in Proof, as are most large cent Proofs. The regular strikes of N-2 are seldom seen choice, although about two dozen Proof specimens are known. Breen considers the regular strikes of this variety as "quite scarce" while Johnson considers them to be R-1.

Late Recut Dates

Most large cent recut dates and both large cent pseudo-overdates are attributable to James B. Longacre's ineptness as a die sinker. Longacre obtained the Mint Engravership through political connections after the death in July, 1844 of Christian Gobrecht. Although Longacre was an excellent portrait engraver (he has previously worked on banknote plates), he was slow to gain competence as a die cutter.

Longacre's only duty until 1848 was to punch dates into mechanically-completed dies, but even this menial task was often bungled badly. As a result, the 1844-1869 period abounds with recut and blundered dates in all denominations.

Longacre's shortcomings were not lost upon the Mint Director, Robert M. Patterson (sixth Director, son of the fourth Director, and brother-in-law of the fifth), whose strong opposition to this outsider crashing the "family business" finally culminated in an unsuccessful conspiracy in 1850 to have Longacre removed. With the new gold designs produced in 1849 and 1850, Longacre's ability as an engraver and political in-fighter finally won out and he outlasted his adversaries by a good many years.

Notable examples of recut dates in the mid-1840's include a new variety of 1844 (Breen 8, Proofs only, Rarity 6) with the 18 logotype first punched much too high, the serif of the 1 actually protruding from the top of the bust and part of the top loop of the 8 superimposed on the bust; one of the 1846 Small Date varieties (N-4), whose date shows the most pronounced recutting found on any large cent; and two dies of 1847 (N-2, 31, and N-18) with the doubled-date phenomenon especially strong. On the N-2, 31 the final 47 is actually punched over a smaller 47. Probably a quarter eagle logotype was originally used for these figures. This same logotype would have been used on half cents had any been struck that year.



NOT an OVERDATE

Entire Date
Recut

N-4



NOT an OVERDATE

Entire Date
Recut

N-18



NOT an OVERDATE

1847 Over
Small 47

N-2,31



NOT an OVERDATE

Entire Date
Recut

N-4

Overdates have been claimed for 1846 and 1847, but all specimens examined have turned out to be recut dates only, usually one of the varieties illustrated on the plate (q.v.). Doughty listed an "1853 Over 1852" without description in the tables at the end of his CENTS OF THE UNITED STATES in 1890, but no such coin is known, and there are no other references to it. A complete listing of recut dates will be given at the conclusion of this study.

1844 Over "81"

Newcomb 2 of 1844 represents the earliest conclusive evidence of use of a four-figure logotype on large cent dies. The entire 1844 date was punched into the die inverted, partially effaced, and corrected. The bases of all four undercut figures show at the top of the date. The curve of the undercut 8 and the inverted 1 show plainly on all examples of this variety, while the other traces show on better specimens.

Newcomb 2 is Common in most grades, but "Gem" specimens are quite rare. This has long been a very popular variety.

1849 Over 1848

This overdate undoubtedly falls into the "corrected-error" class and provides another example of Longacre's handiwork. Because of its similarity to the many recut dates of this period, the 1849 Overdate was generally unrecognized until Breen publicized it in 1964.

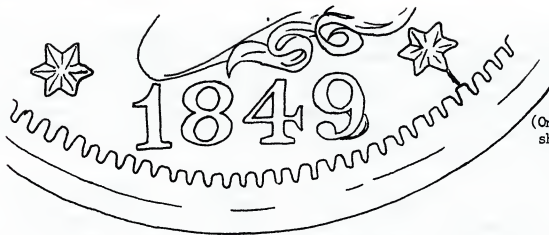
Two features made Newcomb 8a different from other 9-over-8 overdates. This variety does not have the mouth of the 9 closed by the underfigure. Instead, the lower loop of the undercut 8 shows outside the lower right curve of the 9. Secondly, the underfigure does not show on all specimens of this variety. The error was nearly effaced before the die was tempered for use and after a short use the die was lapped to remove all traces of the underfigure.

Newcomb probably considered the "fine outline close to lower right curve of 9" as light recutting, but the shape of this trace does not lend itself to anything else but the curve of an 8. The underfigure shows too much curvature for even the top of an inverted 9 or for a 6. Compare the curvature of the underfigure with that of the 8 or 9 on the plate illustration. Specimens showing the underfigure also show the thirteenth star joined to the rim. This marking and the undercut 8 disappear together with the lapping of the die.

Newcomb 8 is Common, but probably less than ten per cent of all examples of this variety show the underfigure. The scarcity of specimens showing the underfigure appears to be about the same for all grades.

1851 Over "81"

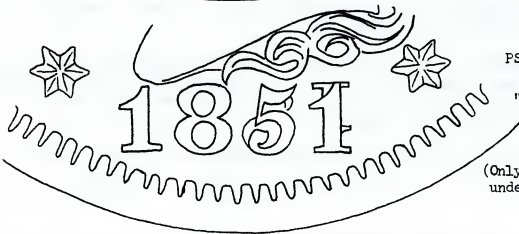
With the retirement of Patterson in July, 1851, Longacre's position finally became more tenable and he was able to devote a greater part of his time to creating new designs. In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, his inattention to purely mechanical details such as date-punching continued to produce in inordinate number of date errors, of which the 1851 N-3a is a classical example.



1849 Over 8

N-8

(Only state "a" shows underfigure.)



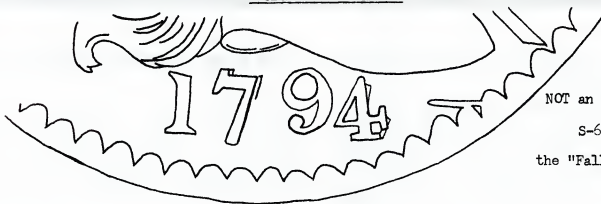
PSEUDO-OVERDATE

"1851 Over 81"

N-3

(Only state "a" shows undercut 8 and foot of 1.)

EARLY RECUT DATES



NOT an OVERDATE

S-63

the "Fallen 4"



NOT an OVERDATE

S-105

the "Doubled 6"

On this variety, a two-figure 18 logotype was punched inverted into the right half of the date area, then correctly overpunched with a 5 and 1. Evidently little or no effort was made to efface the error, as the inverted 1 is quite plain on early die state specimens. A curve of the undercut 8 shows plainly at the lower left of the 5, and other faint traces are seen under the top of the 5. After considerable use the die was lapped, removing all traces of the underfigure with the exception of the point of the inverted 1, which remains as a spike from the center of the back of the final 1.

Newcomb 3 is a Common variety, but many specimens are of the later die state and do not show the underfigures. Even so, there are enough examples of this variety that do show the underfigures to class the 1851 Pseudo-Overdate as Common. This subvariety is highly prized, but is more common than the 1844 Pseudo-Overdate in all grades, especially near Uncirculated.

Other overdates may someday be identified in the large cent series, but the score presently stands at twenty-four, plus two pseudo-overdates. Both of the more recent discoveries have been in the later portion of the series (after 1835) which has been generally exempt from close scrutiny.

This study has opened the door. Only time will tell what more lies beyond.

* * * * *

Capt. Wright's article on large cent overdates will be concluded in the next issue with a tabular summary of all the overdates, pseudo-overdates, recut dates, large cents of uncertain status, non-overdates with oddly shaped date characters, and an extensive credits list and bibliography.

Space did not permit the inclusion of the above in this issue as was originally planned.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT LARGE CENTS

by Raymond H. Williamson

(Reprinted from THE NUMISMATIST, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association.)

In the August, 1949 issue (page 494) of THE NUMISMATIST there appeared a question and answers section on large cents called "The Cent Collectors' Forum", written by Raymond H. Williamson (EAC 54). Questions for subsequent issues were solicited from the ANA membership. The column appeared again in the November, 1949 issue (page 663) and lastly in the February, 1950 issue (page 100). Because of the questions and the information contained in the answers, the series is considered of sufficient importance to reprint in its entirety. PENNY-WISE extends its thanks to Mr. Williamson; Edward C. Rochette, Editor of THE NUMISMATIST, and to the American Numismatic Association for permission to do so.

1. What was the total coinage of large cents from 1793 to 1857?

Answer: According to coinage summary published in Wayte Raymond's STANDARD CATALOGUE, there were 156,388,744 pieces coined.

2. Is there a complete collection of large cents, including all the varieties, in existence today?

Answer: No. The chances are there never will be.

3. What makes the color of a large cent such an important factor in determining its value?

Answer: Personal preference. Cents with choice color are scarce and in demand. They look better and photograph better when the color is uniform.

4. THE STANDARD CATALOGUE lists three varieties of the large cents of 1804. Is this correct?

Answer: Only one pair of dies was used to strike the cents of 1804; hence, we have but one die variety. The die breaks listed are "states" or "conditions" of this pair of dies.

5. Why is it that so few dies were necessary to strike the cents of 1795, yet they appear to wear better than the cents of 1794 and 1796? They are almost as common as the preceding year and far more common than the latter.

Answer: No completely definitive answer can be given to this question. It is doubtful that the 1795 cents wore any better than the cents of 1794 and 1796. To wear better the 1795's would have to average higher relief when new or contain harder metal or both; we have no evidence that this is the case. The fact remains that 1795 as a date seems to have survived well despite the relatively few obverse and reverse dies used:

	Obverses	Reverses
1794	39	37
1795	6	8
1796 (both types)	26	28

Lack of numismatic demand is a probably factor in the availability of 1795's. Attribution guides have always helped to produce a demand. There has been a growing literature on the die varieties of 1794 beginning 80 years ago and a monograph on the 1796 varieties first appeared 40 years ago, while for the 1795's only the confusing Proskey-Doughty data were published up to two years ago. Moreover, most date collectors have acquired two specimens of 1796 (one of each type) as compared to a single 1795. This tendency has been enhanced by the desire to fill up all the holes in commercial display boards.

Another probable factor in the comparative availability of the 1795's is that, despite the inability of our early die makers to exercise proper control over the hardening of the steel coinage dies, every so often they produced a good one. There seem to have been several good ones for 1795. However, the rarity of many varieties is due to early die failure. Some dies were cracked even before initial use. As an example of a properly-hardened die, consider Dr. Sheldon's comments on Reverse X of 1794:

"This reverse die is famous as the 'tough old lady of the big cents'. She outlasted six husbands and even at the end showed not a die break and scarcely a scratch."

However, four of the six "marriages" resulted in varieties which are rarity 5 or higher today, so the "husbands" must have cracked up pretty fast.

6. Were the edges of the cents of 1793 lettered previous to the striking of the coins or at the same time?

Answer: Lettered edges were applied in a separate operation before striking.

7. What is the weight in grains of our large cents?

Answer: 208 grains - 1793, 1794, and early 1795. 168 grains late 1795 to end of series in 1857. Actually, uncirculated specimens vary considerably above and below these figures, and worn specimens weigh even less.

8. Are there any "restrikes" of large cents other than those of 1804 and 1823?

Answer: None known. These restrikes were really counterfeits struck with re-worked government dies about 1858.

9. Are large cents still legal tender, and if so, to what amount?

Answer: Legal tender and redeemability are sometimes confused. Despite many Congressional debates on the subject, copper cents were neither a legal tender nor redeemable by the government during the period of their coinage. They were made legally redeemable by the government from 1857 to 1864 and 1871 to date as a withdrawal measure for the elimination of a discontinued coinage.

In the early years, the majority of Congress believed that the legal tender status should be applicable only to gold and silver coins. However, they were forced by circumstances to make paper money a legal tender early in the Civil War, so that by 1864 their thinking had changed enough to permit starting the bronze cent as a legal tender coin in payments of 10 cents or less. This amount was increased to 25 cents in 1873, but the legal tender status was not extended to the discontinued coinages of copper and nickel. However, the so-called Legal Tender Act of June 5, 1933 apparently gave all these coins an unlimited legal tender for public and private debts - a very sweeping law.

10. What are the five rarest dates of large cents, in order, coined from 1793 to 1857 ?

Answer: 1799, 1804, 1793, 1809; 1796 and 1811 are considered a tie for fifth place.

11. When were large cents first struck with plain edges ?

Answer: Late 1795 at the same time the change was made reducing their weight. However, freaks of several varieties of the earlier dates are known with the lettered edge inadvertently omitted, resulting in plain edge.

12. The large cent of 1821ca catalogues at \$12.50 (Editor's note: 1950) when in fine condition but it seems rather common in good condition and can easily be obtained for a dollar or so. Why the big difference in price ?

Answer: Supply and demand. There are more cent collectors than fine specimens.

13. Much has been written about die cracks found on large cents, but can you tell me if a single variety is a "variety" because of the die crack alone ?

Answer: No, Cracks, breaks, wear, injuries, and recutting identify "states" of a die but not separate varieties.

14. Would you advise a beginner to start collecting large cents with the early dates or to begin with the late dates and work backwards ?

Answer: Either way is satisfactory. You can only get them when offered, so why not attack the entire series at once ? Of course, mistakes will be more costly if you start with the early dates.

15. Are any large cents known to be signed by the designer or engraver ?

Answer: None. The first "signature" on a cent is the famed "L" for Longacre on the small bronze cent of 1864.

16. What causes the "Comet" variety of 1807 ?

Answer: A large flaw in the die; possibly a piece of scale was removed.

17. What is the easiest and surest method of attributing large cents struck from 1835 to 1857 ?

Answer: Study and understand the charts and descriptions in Newcomb's book on the cents of 1816-1857. Specimens should be uncirculated or nearly so, and a strong glass should be used.

18. What are the distinguishing features of a genuine Proof large cent ?

Answer: Mirror surface (not "mint bloom" or frosty surface of uncirculated), wire edge, well centered, and coin is extra sharp including center lines for all stars. Die cracks on Proof cents are rare but not unknown.

19. What causes the small center dot found on so many of our large cents ? Why is it on some and not on others ?

Answer: It is the center mark made by the die cutter's compass when laying out the stars and lettering. The engraver often did not bother to remove it.

20. What date of large cents is most common today ?

Answer: 1850 through 1856 are all about equally common. If one date must be selected, say 1851.

21. What causes the scarcity of the large cents of 1857 ?

Answer: Both large and small cents were struck in 1857. The coinage of large cents was relatively small, being only 6.4 per cent of the average annual coinage for the preceding ten years according to Mint records. Coinage of copper cents was discontinued by Act of Congress on February 21, 1857.

* * * * *

The Editors wish to call to your attention several other articles by Raymond H. Williamson:

1. "Collecting U.S. Large Copper Coins" THE NUMISMATIST
June, 1949
2. "Large Cents That Survived" THE NUMISMATIST
July, 1949
3. "Paul Revere and The First U.S. Mint" THE NUMISMATIST
December, 1950 Pp 789-801

The first two mentioned were reprinted in SELECTIONS FROM THE NUMISMATIST, Volume I, published by the Whitman Publishing Company in 1960.

4. "A Visit to the U.S. Mint in 1812" THE NIMISMATIST
January, 1951 Pp 4-10
5. "The Coinage of Our First U.S. Mint - Lifting the Curtain"
April, 1951 Pp 386-387

COMMENTS ON WILLIAMSON'S "Q & A"

John D. Wright

Mr. Williamson sent in a collection of some of the most intelligent and meaningful questions we have seen in a long time. His answers to these questions are well-informed and well stated. Our only regret is that these questions and their answers were published nearly two decades ago. They would have made a fine installment or two to P-W's "Penny Quiz".

While we can find no fault in Mr. Williamson's answers (Indeed, fault is difficult to find where it does not exist) we thought a few of his answers might benefit from an additional comment or two. The following notes are not intended as "corrections" but merely as supplemental information lacking in a few of Mr. Williamson's answers.

2. There are over fifteen varieties of U.S. large cents that are known by only a single specimen. Of these, the American Numismatic Society owns at least six. The others are spread thinly over the rest of the numismatic fraternity. Since any coin in the ANS collection has legally reached the end of a one-way street, the ANS is the only collection that stands a chance of ever reaching completeness unless new specimens of every "unique" variety in this collection turn up. The odds against such a combination of events are phenomenal! Even this fantastic collection (the nucleus of which is the famed Clapp collection) is far from complete and would have an extremely difficult time remaining so if it were. A case in point is the EAC plate coin of Sheldon NC2 of 1800 (not unique, fortunately), which has mysteriously disappeared since 1948.
4. The single 1804 cent variety is augmented by a spurious issue bearing that date produced some fifty-four years or so later.
8. If the term "restrike" is extended to include productions in other metals, the 1810 cent restrike in silver should also be included. This production was made at the same time as, and by the same people that made the 1823 cent restrike and possibly the 1804 as well.
17. AMEN!!
18. Newcomb's criteria for Proof cents include all those stated by Mr. Williamson, but Proofs are known which fail to meet one or another of these criteria. In particular, some specimens are known lacking centers to some stars and a few of the later-date Proofs come without the wire edges. A very few "semi-Proofs" also exist. These meet all criteria of Proofs on one face but are merely Brilliant Uncirculated on the other, a most curious state of affairs. Generally, if in doubt, it isn't.
19. Since the center dot was caused by a hole in the die there was no way to "remove" it short of grinding down the face of the die to level with the bottom of the hole. On several varieties the center dot is weaker or is missing on the later die states due to lapping (regrinding) of the die. In other instances a tiny bit of selvege could have found its way into the tiny orifice. Mr. Breen was kind enough to provide this amplification.
20. It would seem that the "most common" period should extend back to 1847.
21. Actually, 1857 cents are much more common than their small mintage would indicate. Most of the 333,456 large cents coined that year were hoarded, possibly as novelties or as mementoes of a passing era. The same act probably also accounts for the abundance of cents of 1847 through 1856, which would have comprised the bulk of the near-new copper in circulation in 1857.

THE DIRECTORS OF THE MINT DURING THE PERIOD OF LARGE CENT PRODUCTION

by Warren A. Lapp, M. D.

Part I.

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There is no essay in the numismatic literature, so far as the author can determine, which is specifically devoted to the biographies of the men who served as Directors of the Mint. The part which these men played in developing and producing our nation's coinage assuredly merits the brief recognition herewith presented.

From 1793 to 1857, for various intervals during the period when large cents were struck at the Philadelphia Mint, nine different individuals served as Director of the Mint. Probably the most notable of these was David Rittenhouse who, as the first, was responsible for establishing the Mint and putting it into operation. But all the Directors were outstanding and brilliant individuals: prominent, energetic, public-minded, having great integrity, and admirably suited for the many difficult tasks which confronted them. Surely our early Presidents were men of great wisdom and foresight, as evidenced by their selection of such learned men for this particular position.

* * * * *

DAVID RITTENHOUSE, the first Director of the Mint, was born at Paper Mill Run, near Germantown, Pennsylvania on April 8, 1732 of a family of Prussian and Dutch ancestry. His grandfather was William Rittenhouse, a mennonite minister and pioneer paper manufacturer whose watermarked paper bore a clover leaf, the letters "WR", and "Pensilvania".

Rittenhouse was entirely self-educated, and at an early age exhibited remarkable mechanical talents and mathematical ability, which had been stimulated at the age of 12 by a chest of books and tools inherited from his maternal uncle. One of his first accomplishments was the construction of a clock which rivalled the best of imported timepieces. In 1751, at the age of 19, he opened an instrument shop on his father's farm in Norriton, near Philadelphia, where he soon established a reputation for the fitness of his work, especially in the manufacture of clocks.

Rittenhouse worked and studied assiduously, acquiring a sound knowledge of physical science at the expense of a lifelong injury to his health. He devoted considerable of his time to the study of astronomy, a subject closely allied to surveying in which he was also interested. Limited by his environment, he developed an extraordinary ability of supplying his own needs, acquiring great proficiency in observational, practical, and theoretical astronomy and in instrument making.

In 1763, in order to settle a boundary dispute with Lord Baltimore, William Penn selected David Rittenhouse to establish the line between Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. He did so, using instruments of his own construction. This boundary later became known as the Mason and Dixon line, Rittenhouse's findings having been checked

by a British Commission, Messrs. Mason and Dixon, who used the very latest and finest scientific instruments in their survey but could find no error in his computations.

Later on, Rittenhouse was frequently engaged in boundary surveys and commissions involving Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts - over half of the British colonies in America. Many settlements were based on his field work with instruments of his own construction. He also conducted canal and river surveys.

In 1767, Rittenhouse designed his celebrated orrery, the first to be built in America. This planetarium was constructed from his own computations and according to specifications drawn up by him. Although it no longer exists, a second orrery subsequently built by Rittenhouse still does exist, being owned by the University of Pennsylvania. The instrument designed for the second represents with remarkable accuracy motions of bodies of the solar system and illustrates solar and lunar eclipses and other phenomena "for a period of 5,000 years, either forward or backward". Much of Rittenhouse's contemporary fame stemmed from this. Jefferson, in writing of the orrery in 1782, said: "Rittenhouse has not indeed made a world; but he has by imitation approached nearer its maker than any man who has lived from the creation to this day."

For the transit of Venus in 1769, Rittenhouse built an observatory at Norriton and constructed equipment including a transit telescope, now considered to be the first telescope made in America. Using this equipment, he skillfully and accurately plotted the transit of the planet; and he computed the parallax of the sun which was accepted as the most accurate then known. Later, he observed transits of Mercury, eclipses and transits of Jupiter's satellites, solar and lunar eclipses, the new planet Uranus, and comets, including one he discovered himself in 1792 which he reported to the American Philosophical Society.

In recognition of his scientific ability, he was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society, to which he contributed many important articles over the succeeding years. He served the Society as its curator, librarian, secretary, and vice-president, and was on many important committees. On January 7, 1791 he succeeded Benjamin Franklin as President. Subsequently, he was re-elected and continued to serve until his death, at which time he was succeeded by Thomas Jefferson. But the highest of his many honors was his selection as a foreign member of the Royal Society of London in 1795.

Rittenhouse was closely associated with Jefferson in standardizing the foot by pendulum measurements. This project was carried out to establish a decimal system of weights and measures to serve as standards for the new nation. Later he experimented on magnetism and electricity, working with Franklin on this; and electrical apparatus still exists which was used by both. He measured the barometric effect on a pendulum clock rate and the expansion of wood by heat. He experimented on the compressibility of water, and he solved the problem of Archimedes. He invented a metallic thermometer and a collimating telescope, a useful contribution to practical astronomy for which he was duly credited. Franklin consulted him to explain the micrometer scale on his

telescope. Rittenhouse made and repaired instruments for President Washington, and he presented him with a pair of spectacles and a reading glass.

Commissions and offices were thrust upon Rittenhouse, some petty, some important. He served on committees to test specimens of flint glass, to tend rain gauges, to inspect the first steam-engine in the United States, and to visit Fitch's steamboat. He had charge of the Statehouse clock and the apparatus of the College of Philadelphia. Rittenhouse was widely recognized, both in this country and abroad, as the foremost scientist in America.

In 1775, Rittenhouse responded to the War as engineer of the Committee on Safety. He supervised the casting of cannon and the manufacture of saltpeter, selected a site for a powder-mill and a magazine for military stores, experimented on rifling cannon and musketballs, and devised chain protection for the harbor. To make lead available for bullets, he substituted iron for lead clockweights throughout Philadelphia.

In 1776 he was made a member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and was active in creating the first constitution for the State of Pennsylvania. From 1777 to 1789 he was elected State Treasurer and served also as trustee of the Loan Office. From 1779 to 1782 he was professor of astronomy at the University of Pennsylvania and afterward served as trustee and vice-provost. He served on the commission to organize the United States Bank.

On April 4, 1792 President Washington extended to Rittenhouse a commission to serve as first Director of the U. S. Mint at a salary of \$2,000, per annum. Although he was in poor health at the time, Rittenhouse, on the solicitation of Hamilton and Jefferson, officially accepted the appointment in a letter to the President on July 9, 1792. He was ideally suited for the post: his scientific background, mathematical ability, inventive genius, and scholarly attitude more than fulfilled the prerequisites necessary to the position. The respect and admiration which he commanded lent dignity and prestige to the office he had accepted.

Upon assuming office, Rittenhouse set to work immediately, selecting a site for the Mint, negotiating its purchase, supervising construction of the Mint buildings, securing the machinery and equipment, engaging the artisans, organizing the Mint operations, and bringing the Mint to a successful, full-scale production, all in the matter of a few months. Only a man such as Rittenhouse, with his flawless character, intense purpose, marked determination, and superlative ability could have accepted such a challenge and succeeded.

Despite the fact that the Mint itself was the object of chastisement and criticism by various members of Congress during the latter months of his administration, all of those so concerned took particular pains to vindicate Rittenhouse and to praise his conduct and management.

Rittenhouse was twice married: first on February 20, 1766 to Eleanor Colston, a Quakeress and the daughter of a neighboring farmer, who presented him with two daughters. She died in 1770, and two years later he married Hannah Jacobs, his able assistant in the Loan Office and State Treasury. Their only daughter died in infancy.

Rittenhouse was described as tall, slender and erect, quick and active. His constitution was frail, yet possessed great endurance under stress. His character was irreproachable, possessing good nature and universal good will. He was well-liked by all who knew him, and he was highly respected. His one weakness, if any, was his extreme modesty.

Portraits were painted of him by Peale and Trumbull. A marble bust was made by Ceracchi; and a bronze medal, still available at the U.S. Mint, was made by Barber, Mint Engraver.

Because of failing health, Rittenhouse, resigned as Director of the Mint on June 30, 1795. On June 22, 1796, he suffered an attack of cholera; and his nephew, a physician, was summoned. Four days later, he died. His last words were "You have made the way to God easier."

HENRY WILLIAM DE SAUSSURE, a prominent attorney who was distinguished for his legal ability, succeeded Rittenhouse. De Saussure had been born at Pocotaligo, Prince William's Parish, South Carolina on August 16, 1763. His private schooling was interrupted at the age of 16 when he volunteered for military service during the siege of Charleston. On the fall of the city he was taken prisoner, confined on a prison ship in the harbor, and in 1781 sent to Philadelphia for exchange. There he was reunited with his family, his father having been held prisoner in St. Augustine.

In Philadelphia, he entered the law office of Jared Ingersoll and attended lectures on moral and natural philosophy and mathematics at the College of Philadelphia. He was admitted to the bar of Philadelphia in 1784, and of Charleston, South Carolina in 1785, to which city he returned shortly afterward. He helped prepare a constitution for the State of South Carolina in 1789, and in 1790 was elected to the lower house of the state's General Assembly, serving a total of 10 out of the next eighteen years. His chief concern as a legislator was the conflict between up-country and low-country over the apportionment of representation in the legislature.

In June, 1795, during one of his intervals between service in South Carolina's legislature, while seeing "the restoration of his health in the North", de Saussure was commissioned by President Washington to succeed Rittenhouse as Director of the Mint. Believing himself unqualified for the job and disclaiming all knowledge of the duties as Director of the Mint, he accepted reluctantly on July 8, 1795, having been reassured and urged to do so by Alexander Hamilton.

As one of his first official acts, de Saussure engaged Gilbert Stuart, the renowned portrait artist, to re-design the head of Miss Liberty on the silver dollar. Stuart had come to America from England, expressly to paint the portrait of President Washington, and had arrived in Philadelphia only the previous November. De Saussure hired John Eckstein, a Philadelphia artist, for a fee of \$30. to cut the dies from the design furnished by Stuart. It was these dies which were used to strike the 1795 dollar.

No large cents were struck during de Saussure's term of office. Shortly after assuming his role as Director, de Saussure said that there was no copper on hand at the Mint which was fit for coinage; and none was purchased during his brief administration because of the high price. However, his administration as Mint Director, especially his success in bringing about the first coinage of gold, won the approbation of President Washington.

Because of continuous and persistent attacks by a hostile Congress which was intent on abolishing the Mint, de Saussure quickly became disenchanted with his position as Director. Eager to return home and to resume his law career, he officially resigned on October 27, 1795, after serving less than four months in office.

In his final report which was read to Congress by President Washington on December 8, 1795, de Saussure showed remarkable insight as to the problems of the Mint despite the short time that he had served as its Director. Among his recommendations he suggested a reduction in the weight of copper coins, urged that federal laws be enacted against counterfeiting, recommended the closing of private mints which were boldly operating at the time, and proposed that the Cromley lot on Bone Alley be purchased for the Mint in order to secure better protection against thievery and pilferage of Mint property. None of his recommendations were acted upon immediately.

In 1801 de Saussure helped to establish the State University at Columbia, South Carolina. Subsequently, in 1808, he was elected to the chancery bench, which he occupied for the next twenty-nine years. In this capacity, he performed his principal public service. "To him" said one biographer, "the whole system of equity owes its shape, form, and existence." His reputation rests not only upon his decrees as a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, but also upon his work of compiling and publishing, from 1817 to 1819, four volumes of chancery reports covering the period from the Revolution to 1817.

De Saussure died on March 29, 1839.

(To be continued.)

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