

PENNY-WISE

The Official Publication of Early American Coppers, Inc.



Volume LX Number 2

April 2026

Consecutive Issue #324

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Penny-Wise has been published regularly since September 1967. Its founding editor was Warren A. Lapp (1915-1993). Harry E. Salyards has served as Editor-in-Chief since 1986. Contributing Editors: Denis W. Loring, John D. Wright and William R. Eckberg.

Printed by Advance Graphics and Printing, Chandler, OK

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR: 40th ANNIVERSARY REMINISCENCES

Harry E. Salyards

Looking back at the first issue of *Penny-Wise* which I edited, May 1986—we published every odd-numbered month through October 2011, before going quarterly in 2012—I’m struck by both what has changed and what has remained constant. That issue consisted of 44 pages, on plain white “typewriter paper” stock, unbound, with exactly one black-and-white coin illustration: the second known specimen of 1794 NC-9, discovered by Tom Reynolds and written up by Tom and John Wright. Tom and John, of course, are both still with us—as is Mike Packard, author of the lead article in that issue, his report on the results of his Massachusetts Half Cent Survey. A review of his 2025 magnum opus on the Massachusetts coppers appears in this issue.

Among the other “Original Articles”—my idea, borrowed from *The New England Journal of Medicine*, to focus attention on the original research published in each issue—were Del Bland’s corrections to the recent Van Cleave Sale Catalog: “I made some errors, others were made by those responsible for writing the text, and still others resulted from failure to correct the text from updates received.” Bill Jones offered a number of caveats on rarity ratings, perhaps best summed up in the sentence, “Before you pay a big premium for an item with a high rarity rating, especially if the coin is a low-grade specimen, THINK. Is this a series with a well-established track record...or is it a series which has recently come into vogue?” And William Daehn offered a detailed flow chart for attributing 1803 large cents.

A bit later in the issue, Bill Jones offered his “Interview with a Numismatic Investment Advisor.” The satire is timeless. I laughed all over again when the dealer, I. M. Cagey, having described grading an Ike dollar MS-64.75, based on a 2 mm. hairline scratch on Ike’s jaw, as evaluated under a stereomicroscope, is asked if there are any other points to look for, and responds, “Full split

continents. If you can see the Panama Canal on the earth above the eagle on the reverse, you’ve got one heck of an Ike dollar! I’ll pay \$10,000 for a 1971 copper-nickel clad Ike with full split continents and canal locks!”

Pete Smith provided a review of the aforementioned Van Cleave Sale, including a detailed analysis of the catalog, written by George Fuld, with pedigree research and EAC grading by Del Bland, photography by Jack Collins, and additional contributions by Darwin Palmer and Walter Breen. Sadly, among this group of EAC members, only Darwin survives. Pete’s concluding paragraph, introduced with the words, “As with most major copper auctions, the most interesting stories are confidential...” (Collusion?—I’m shocked, simply shocked!)

Alan Weinberg offered a commentary on the colonial coin market, based on a review of the recent Bowers & Merena Ezra Cole Sale. What had been sluggish since the Garrett sale, was suddenly sluggish no more! Alan left the auction room reassured “that there still is a strong contingent of real collectors out there.”

John Morton offered a review of the EAC meeting at the January FUN show. The following jumped out at me, given the ongoing problem with fakes (see Jack Young’s ‘Dark Side’ piece, and letter, in this issue): “Tom Matthews passed around a Gem 1841 Proof (?) for all to pass judgment on. Several of the EAC ‘old heads’ thought it had been tampered with and was not a proof. It would have fooled me. [And] counterfeits were discussed, particularly 1805 and 1851/81, emphasizing how good the coins are.”

There is more, but you get the idea. Take a look at the full issue, archived on the Newman portal (nnp.wustl.edu). Personally, it’s been quite a ride. A lot has changed, and yet...*Plus ça change, plus c’est la meme chose.*

* * * * *

DISTINGUISHING BRASS AND COPPER NEW HAVEN RESTRIKE FUGIO CENTS

Craig Sholley and John Dannreuther

Exactly when the belief that the most common New Haven Restrike Fugio cent, Newman 104-FF, was struck in yellow brass came into being is lost to history. Damon Douglas certainly believed these pieces existed as he mentions them several times in his unpublished manuscript compiled in the mid-to-late 1940s. He did not describe how to identify such pieces, so we are thus left to conclude that by this time it was generally accepted that a “yellowish color” equals brass.

Trying to visually discern between brass and copper New Haven Restrikes did not matter much through the end of the 1970s as there was little difference in price. However, in the mid-1980s a significant price differential began to take hold with brass pieces bringing as much as a 75% premium over copper pieces. This price disparity rapidly escalated in 2006 as the third-party grading services began certifying New Haven Restrikes as brass. The first brass to appear at auction, a PCGS AU55 example, brought \$3450 versus copper pieces in the same grade bringing around \$750. Of course, a good portion of this premium was simply “slab mania.”

As the services continued to certify additional brass pieces, the price for brass pieces dropped. By 2015 the price for brass pieces had generally declined by about 50% and, by 2018, MS63 brass pieces were bringing just half of what the AU55 brought in 2006. Too many “brass” pieces had come to market.

In 2018, PCGS began testing all New Haven Restrikes with a hand-held x-ray fluorescence analyzer, colloquially known as an “XRF gun.” The first surprise from that testing was that the conventional belief that coins with a yellowish tint to the toning were struck from yellow brass is completely wrong! So far, most of the yellowish coins have tested as nominally 90% copper and 10% zinc, an alloy in the red brass family, commonly called “Commercial Bronze.” A few other yellow-toned pieces have tested as pure copper.

For those wondering, “red brass” is a group of alloys which, due to the high percentage of copper, have a reddish color similar to that of pure copper. In fact, 90/10 copper/zinc looks so much like pure copper that it is difficult to tell them apart. The old adage that “appearances can be deceiving” applies here or, as Sholley likes to say, “Not all brasses are created yellow” and “Never

judge an alloy by its toning.”

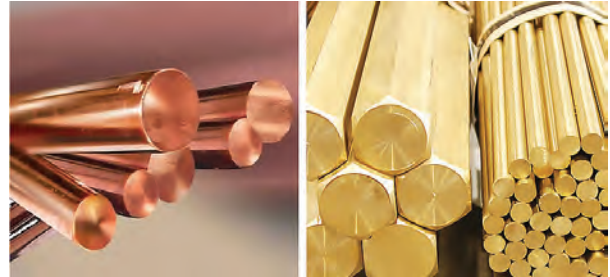


Figure 1. 90/10 red brass (left) and typical 70/30 yellow brass (right).

So, why do some coins look like they were made from yellow brass? Copper and high-copper alloys will turn yellow in the presence of certain chemical compounds or when exposed to high heat. While it is possible that some “coin doctor” hit upon the idea of heating New Haven Restrikes, the most likely reason for the yellowish coins is environmental conditions.

To illustrate the issue, we’ll present some recent auction appearances of yellowish colored New Haven Restrikes. The first piece is lot 4324 from Stacks Bowers August 2024 Global Showcase Auction. The PCGS photograph unfortunately makes this coin look really yellow, so the image below is the Stacks Bowers photograph which provides a far more accurate representation of the coin’s actual color. Nonetheless, the coin does have a “yellow, brassy” look.



Figure 2. “Yellow brass” New Haven Restrike, Stacks Bowers 8/2024 Global Showcase.

The next piece is likewise from a Stacks Bowers auction, lot 2043 from their Spring 2025 Global Showcase auction. Our illustration uses the PCGS “TrueView” image.



Figure 3. “Yellow brass” New Haven Restrike, Stacks Bowers 4/2025 Global Showcase.

Both of these coins do have a distinct yellowish tint to the toning. And that yellowish tinge is what everyone, dealers, collectors, and grading services alike, had been trying to use for decades to identify (or, more properly, misidentify) coins as being yellow brass. In keeping with Sholley’s admonition that you should not judge an alloy by its toning, both of these coins tested as 90/10 red brass at PCGS.

The final coin we’ll use to illustrate the problem is lot 54074 from Heritage’s June 30, 2025 Showcase sale. The toning is a deep chocolate-brown, typically seen on copper coins. However, the label clearly says “brass” and the label is correct! The piece was tested at PCGS and is, again, 90/10 red brass.



Figure 4. “Brass” New Haven Restrike, Heritage Auctions June 2025 Showcase sale.

These three pieces present quite the conundrum since two of the pieces look like what everyone has been calling “yellow brass,” but instead are red brass and the third piece obviously looks like the typical chocolate-brown copper coin, but again is not, it’s also red brass. To confuse matters even further, there are pure copper strikes such as lot 1437 from Stacks Bowers’ 2025 Global Showcase auction, is a very nice “milk chocolate” brown MS64 piece tested at PCGS as 99% pure copper.



Figure 5. Copper New Haven Restrike, Stacks Bowers 2025 Global Showcase sale.

Since color cannot be used to tell copper from red brass pieces, that raises the question of how to tell if your piece, or one you want to buy, is red brass or copper. Furthermore, why are there New Haven Restrikes in two very similar-looking copper compositions? And, finally, is there any difference in rarity?

In answer to the first question, there is a simple way to tell red brass from copper pieces for recently certified coins. As previously noted, PCGS began XRF testing all New Haven Restrikes in 2018. And, in 2020, PCGS slightly modified the holder label for the 6.1 generation of holders which have an “RF” symbol on the reverse of the label. Another way to identify 6.1 gen holders is the denomination noted as “Fugio 1C” which was added in 2022 as a result of our article showing the Fugio cents were federally authorized.

So, all New Haven Restrikes in generation 6.1 holders (and whatever follows) have been XRF tested at PCGS and are brass or copper as noted on the holder insert. Just be aware that “brass” means 90/10 copper/zinc red brass, not yellow brass.



Figure 6. PCGS 6.1 generation label with an “RF” symbol on the back. Also note denomination of “FUGIO 1C.”

Testing at PCGS has shown that all of the early to middle die state pieces are red brass and the later state pieces are all copper and there is a very simple explanation for why this is so. According to the handwritten note in his personal copy of Sylvester Crosby’s *The Early Coins of America*, shortly after Horatio Rust purchased what he thought were genuine Fugio dies, he took the 104-FF die pair to a factory in Waterbury and had 500 struck in copper, 50 in silver, and one in gold.

While Rust thought his pieces were struck in copper, the manufacturer actually used 90/10 red brass. While

red brass is cheaper than copper and would thus increase the profit a bit, most likely red brass was used simply because that was what the factory was using for whatever they were making at the time. There was no real harm done since red brass looks essentially the same as copper and it's not all that much cheaper, so it's not like they were cheating Rust.

According to a November 26, 1882 letter, Rust sold his remaining supply of red brass strikes and the 104-FF die pair to noted Philadelphia coin dealer and collector J. Colvin Randall. Randall had additional pieces struck and that striking is the genesis of the copper pieces.

Testing at PCGS has shown that all of the pure copper strikes are from die states later than the Horatio Rust strikes. In fact, the testing has shown that all of the pieces with the heavily cracked obverse, including the terminal state, are Randall's pure copper strikes.

There are several different die states with the heavy obverse cracking, the first being that with a fine crack from above I in FUGIO, though the top of the O, and then to the lower lobe of the left upper cinquefoil. Be aware that there are early state red brass strikes with a similar, but far weaker, "stress line" in this area. To make sure that a coin is in this early cracked state is copper, make sure **the crack clearly goes through the top of the O and to the lower lobe of the cinquefoil.**



Figure 7. Early obverse crack on copper pieces.

This early crack rapidly becomes heavier, extending to and through the sun's rays to the sun face. At the same time, a crack develops at the rim between FU of FUGIO, down through the top of F, through the lower cinquefoil to the left base of the sundial.

In later states, the "FU crack" (admit it, you were just itching to say that) becomes heavier, extending nearly through the left sundial base. Another crack develops just above the left sundial base, passing through the M of MIND YOUR BUSINESS, along the bases of most of the other letters, and out through the center of the R

and the right sundial base to the lower right cinquefoil.

At the same time, the IO crack grows heavier, extending through the two inside lobes of the cinquefoil, through the left rays, and across the sun's face, eventually extending to the 1 in the date. In the terminal state, the left field is heavily bulged due to the die sinking in that area and IO/sun crack extends through the date.



Figure 8. Copper 104-FF New Haven Restrike. Top row, "FU" and "IO" to sun cracks. Bottom, terminal state cracks through MIND YOUR BUSINESS.

There are copper strikes without any visible cracks. Most of these pieces can be distinguished from red brass strikes due to the obverse being lightly polished to remove the surface rust that had developed in storage prior to Horatio Rust selling the dies to Randall.

These early copper strikes are distinguished by the rather smooth left and right obverse fields, the polishing having removed most of the defects seen on red brass strikes, including the rather extensive lumpiness in the fields due to spalling, the two dull die lines below IO in FUGIO, the heavy pits in the lower right sun rays below the cinquefoil and those below 178 in the date.



Figure 9. Left and right obverse field defects on later state brass strikes



Figure 10. Early copper strikes with smoother fields and lack of heavy pits below 17.

While there are several other features that can help distinguish an uncracked copper strike from one in red brass, doing so faces several challenges. First, the early copper strikes are very similar to the earliest red brass strikes, so a sharp, high-resolution photo or in-person viewing is necessary to have any chance of identifying a piece by die state.

Additionally, the probability of finding a copper piece in older holders is not that great. From PCGS and NGC population counts combined with counts of pieces in the auction house databases, we estimate that there are around 320 red brass pieces extant and perhaps 85 or so copper strikes, with the latter including about 20 pieces with the heavy obverse cracks. So, aside from the late state pieces with the cracked obverse, the odds of a coin in an older holder being copper are about one in five.

So, with the exception of the late state cracked obverse pieces which are unquestionably copper, collectors who want to be sure of the coin's composition should stick to one in a PCGS 6.1 (or later) holder. We do expect that copper strikes will command a premium once collectors realize the scarcity, with the heavily cracked die state eventually achieving a fairly decent premium. However, we doubt the premium will reach the height of absurdity seen with the fictitious "yellow brass" pieces.

There is also a fairly scarce red brass variety with the dies aligned in medal turn. All pieces seen thus far are clearly very early state red brass strikes, leading to the conclusion that the dies were incorrectly aligned during the initial set-up and a number of pieces struck before the pressman realized the error.

Medal-turn red brass pieces are a solid R-6 sub-variety with an estimated 18 or so known. Sholley recently acquired a piece from Stacks Bowers Summer 2025 Global Summer Showcase auction, lot 1438. The piece was in a PCGS "Old Green Holder" (OGH) with the label noting it as "copper"

and no mention of the medal alignment in the auction listing.

Despite the fact that an "OGH" will typically add a small premium, along with increased collector interest, the coin was sent back to PCGS for XRF testing and reholder as a double-check on our die state thesis for distinguishing red brass from copper strikes. As expected, the coin tested as red brass and now resides in a new generation holder with the label identifying it as a brass strike. The PCGS cert number is 05361881.



Conclusion

XRF testing at PCGS has shown that pieces thought to be struck from yellow brass due to the color of the toning are actually either 90/10 red brass or pure copper. In addition to this recent testing, it should also be noted that we have not found any mention of yellow brass New Haven Restrikes in auction records, fixed-price lists, and numismatic journals of the 1860s through 1880s.

At that time, these pieces would have been either untoned or minimally toned, so a true yellow brass piece would have stuck out like the proverbial sore thumb. The lack of any historical documentation is thus very solid evidence that they never existed and the modern claims are thus nothing more than a visual faux pas.

For those who maintain that their coin is a rare yellow brass strike, please send it to PCGS for XRF testing and reholder. Either of us will gladly pay twice bid for a piece that tests as yellow brass.

* * * * *

Editor's Note

Jim Neiswinter has been studying—and assembling personal recreations—of the celebrated Levick plate for over a quarter century. The original first appeared in the April 1869 issue of the *American Journal of Numismatics*. If the end of the large cent and half cent in 1857 created the widespread casual accumulation of the old coppers in the United States, the Levick plate marked the transition to true large cent scholarship. It jump-started the use of photography of large cents in journals and auction catalogs decades ahead of the similar illustration of other denominations. Jim's latest contribution reflects the additional discovery, in the ANS rare book room, of preliminary versions of obverse and reverse plates including images of the Libertas Americana and Liberté Française medals. These of course served as inspiration

for the Liberty Cap design on early U. S. coins. The article that follows first appeared in the Autumn 2025 issue of *The Asylum*, journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, and is reprinted with permission of the editor, Maria Fanning. For those members who wish to explore—or rediscover—Jim's prior work in this area, here are the articles: "Auction History of the S-15," *Penny-Wise*, July 2001; "The Strawberry Meeting," *Penny-Wise*, March 2005; "Original Levick Plates," *Penny-Wise*, November 2005; "Levick's Plate," *Penny-Wise*, May 2010; "Two Versions of the Levick Plate of 1793 Cents," *The Asylum*, Summer 2021. Each of these is available on the Newman Numismatic Portal, nnp.wustl.edu. Search under Library > Periodicals > Specialty.

ORIGINAL VARIETIES OF LEVICK'S PLATE OF 1793 CENTS

Jim Neiswinter

In the Summer 2021 issue of the *Asylum* I submitted an article - "Two Versions of the Levick Plate of 1793 Cents." I wrote: "It is my belief that Levick originally planned to publish obverse and reverse plates of the 1793 cents, but it did not take him long to realize that the cost of publishing two plates for each *AJN* issue would be double the cost of a single plate." Albumen photography was expensive.

Now, thanks to *ANS* Librarian David Hill, this is no longer a belief. David told me at the *ANS* general meeting in October 2024 that he had found an envelope with Crosby's and Levick's names on it (Figure 1) that contain "Additional plates illustrating 1793 cents prepared

by Joseph N. Levick" found in a box in the *ANS* rare book room. It has two versions of obverse and reverse plates of these cents. The first version has *Smith Counterfeits*, the second does not. Both have two examples of Liberty Cap medals minted in France. The larger was the 1783 *Libertas Americana* medal, the smaller was the 1792 *Lyon* medal. These medals were the inspiration for the Liberty Cap design.

The contents of this envelope prove that Levick originally was going to make obverse and reverse plates of 1793 cents. The first version included examples of *Smith Counterfeits*. In the February and March numbers of the 1869 *AJN*, Levick wrote a commentary "The

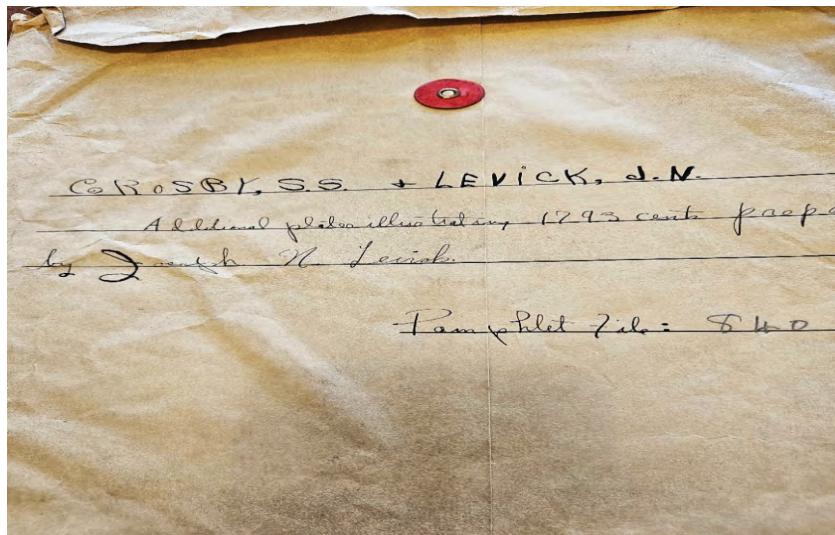


Figure 1

Cents of 1793.” In this he talked about the problems and the cost of borrowing 1793 cents from collectors around the country. He also wrote in the February *AJN*: “*It is remarkable to observe how many collectors there are who have ‘93s and are totally ignorant of the fact they have been hoarding counterfeits until informed by us. We have received from several gentlemen their collections of ‘93s for our use, among which pieces we found many counterfeits. It is our intention to have a plate taken embracing both the genuine and the counterfeits, in order to aid the collectors in designating the difference; for, were we to present simply the genuine varieties, many collectors would find in their cabinet’s varieties of ‘93s which we did not represent. But when compared with the counterfeits, they could readily see, from the style, etc., that their pieces were probably not genuine.*”

Also contained in the envelope were four sets of obverse and reverse plates that Levick had sent to collectors so they could compare what was in their collections to what Levick already had. He included on these plates three cents that he called counterfeits. At the bottom of each of these plates Levick wrote: “*8, 9, & 12 counterfeits.*” In Levick’s notebook, also found in the rare book room, page 16 shows the names of the owners of the cents on both plates. Between the numbers 8, 9, & 12 and the names of the owners Levick wrote “*Smith’s manufacture tooled*”. William D. Smith was an engraver who worked at 1 Ann St. in lower Manhattan from 1851 to 1866. His specialty was turning very worn 1793 and 1794 cents into high grade 1793 cents by re-engraving them. These cents were not counterfeits – they were well-worn cents that were turned into high grade cents by Smith’s tooling.

I think Smith started his re-engraving after coin collecting took off in 1857. This is when the size of the large cent was changed to the small Flying Eagle cent. The price of copper had risen so much that it had become too costly to continue making the large coppers. Since large cents were being recalled to be melted people realized they would soon be hard to come by, so they started collecting the big cents.

W. Elliot Woodward was one of this country’s first coin dealers. His first three auctions, beginning in 1860, were in his hometown of Boston. Starting with his fourth auction he moved them to New York City. His second auction there included a 1793 Wreath Cent that had been re-engraved. He called it a “*splendid specimen*”, but he did not yet know who created it. By his tenth sale in October 1864, he named the engraver in his description of lot 1807: “*1793 Flowing hair an alteration, edge lettered, very beautiful, warranted genuine, but has been*

improved by Mr. Smith. As a work of art this cent is a wonder, the head in its present state being more artistic and beautiful in appearance than any cent ever issued from the U.S. mint.”

It is obvious that Woodward was impressed by Smith’s work. In the beginning he always used more words to describe them than most 1793 cents in his sales. It was not until lot 196 in his 32nd sale in 1880 that Woodward makes the connection of Smith to Ann St. in New York City: “*This cent, which surpasses in beauty of design and perfection of workmanship any coin that ever yet emanated from the U.S. Mint, is from the private workshop of Mr. Smith, late of Ann Street, New York.*” From this sale on he would be forever known as *Smith of Ann Street*.

Levick’s first attempt at doing obverse and reverse plates included Smiths. Above the last row on the obverse plate, Levick wrote: “*Bottom row all counterfeits.*” On the reverse he wrote: “*This bottom row are counterfeits.*” Also, the first and last cents on the row just above were counterfeits as well. The first cent was a Smith Liberty Cap (Sheldon 14), while the last was a 1794 (S57) with only the date re-engraved to 1793, however there was no tooling of the hair.

The last row consists of five Wreath Cents and all five have a triangular bow which means they are all Sheldon 8s. The S8 is the second most common variety of 1793. The S8 Smiths are by far the most common *Smith Counterfeits*, but since each is re-engraved by hand, they are unique even if they are of the same variety.

Since Levick used numbers to designate both the obverse and reverse cents on the plates he sent to collectors, I believe it was Sylvester Crosby’s idea to use letters for the reverses. On his first version of the obverse plate Levick put numbers on top of

each cent and letters signifying the reverse used with that obverse to the left and right of that number. The reverse plates have letters at the top with the numbers associated with their obverses to the left and right.

Levick’s second version did not have any *Smith Counterfeits*, but both versions had two varieties of the AMERI. Levick had discovered an AMERI. in the collection of his friend and neighbor Robert Hewitt. It was actually an altered Sheldon 3. George Clapp wrote about this cent when he acquired it for the *ANS* in April 1942: “*C, 3-B. Was proved to be an alteration from 3-C by carefully milling off the CA in AMERICA and putting in a copper pin as a period after I.*”

I believe Crosby came to New York City in December

1868 to help Levick with the plates. It was here Crosby saw Hewitt's AMERI. He obviously thought this was a different variety of AMERI., as did Levick - at first.

In Levick's *Book of Rubbings* (ANS rare book room) page 19 has a rubbing of this reverse (Figure 2). He wrote above the rubbing: "Hewitt's reverse of his Ameri. being the second variety." Sometime later he changed his mind as he wrote underneath it: "Not a genuine Ameri. being an alteration from the America!"

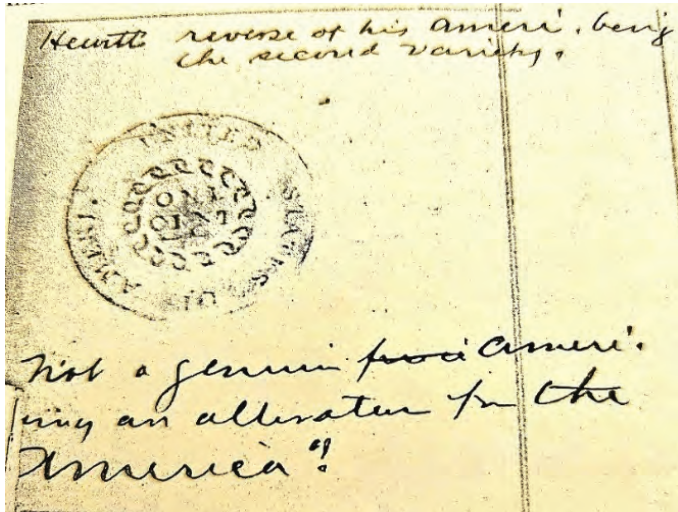


Figure 2

On page 34 Levick discusses this reverse: "The Hewitt Ameri. cent I have concluded since the observation made by Crosby that the piece is tooled and altered to an Ameri. from an America, which can seen by examination with a strong glass." (I wonder what Crosby's observation was.)

Crosby must have believed this was a genuine cent, because he included it in his 1897 *AJN* monograph and then book "THE UNITED STATES CENTS and HALF CENTS of 1793" as the "B" reverse. In its description he wrote: "I have found only one impression of this die and cannot now trace that but describe and illustrate it from a copy taken some years ago." Crosby made a copy of this cent just as he made electrotype copies of the 1793 cents figured on the *AJN* plate. These electros sold in a Woodward sale (lots 803-823) of a Levick collection in May 1884, but Crosby had to keep the copy he made of the Hewitt AMERI., since it was not included in that sale.

Levick moved to New York City from Philadelphia in 1860. He opened a coin store at 904 Broadway, corner of 20th Street. In 1868 the *ANS* had no permanent home. I believe that Crosby made the electrotypes of all the 1793 cents that were sent to Levick for the *AJN* plate at

his store.

Crosby brought three cents that were figured on the plate: reverses of his 7E and 8G and both sides of his 12K. (I owned this 12K for 33 years and it began my interest in Levick and his *AJN* plate.) Since this cent was unique in 1868, as was the 6D Strawberry Leaf, Levick ran into a problem when he decided to use only one plate - how to show both sides of a unique coin. This is why Crosby made the electros. The obverse of the 12K shown on the *AJN* plate was the electro.

I think there is a strong possibility that Crosby and Levick had a disagreement over the Hewitt cent. It made both versions of the original plates, but not either version in the April issue of the *AJN* the next year. Twenty-eight years later Crosby wrote "THE UNITED STATES CENTS and HALF CENTS of 1793." He donated a copy to the ANS. There is a letter glued inside the rear cover that Crosby wrote to Levick in February 1896. He asks for Levick's assistance with this monograph. Since there is no record of a response, and he is not mentioned by Crosby in the monograph, it seems Levick was not involved.

The second original version has "JNT Levick Compiler Dec. 1868" printed at the bottom of both obverse and reverse plates, which is similar to the final published version on the 1869 *AJN* plate "Compiled by Joseph N. T. Levick."

On the two versions of the plate that were published in the April 1869 *AJN*, the first has **JNTLEVICK** with **1868** underneath the name hand printed in a box in the lower right corner. The second, in the same position, does not have a box or the year and is typewritten: **COMPILED BY JOSEPH N. T. LEVICK** with the name on a second line. The cents are the same on both versions. I am sure that the reason for the two versions was that Levick was not happy with the first plate. The cents on that first version were 1mm larger than the actual coins. Also, the lighting was changed. Sun-light was the best way to illuminate photographs in the 1860s. For the second version the sunlight was moved to the top left from directly over the top. So, Levick changed photographers (from Napoleon Sarony to George Rockwood), but he still used the first version in the *AJN* because albumen prints were costly, and he did not want to waste the ones already printed. The first version is slightly rarer.

I believe Levick decided to put both obverses and reverses on the same plate when he realized that using two albumen plates would be too costly. He had to fit the 22 cents (12 obverses, 10 reverses) onto just one plate.



Doing this left no room for *Smith Counterfeits* or examples of the French Liberty Cap medals. Either Crosby or Levick drew lines between the obverses with their respective reverses. This method of “chaining” the dies has been used by numismatists ever since. Putting just one number or letter on top of each cent made the plate less cluttered.

The reverses of these plates have JNT Levick’s name

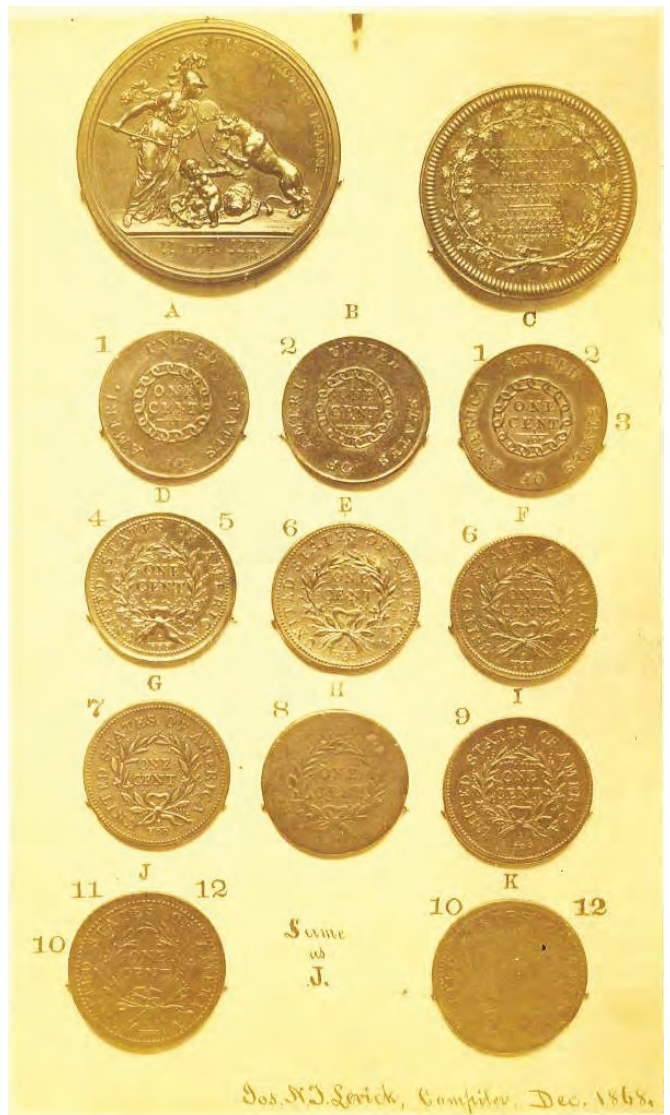


and 5/16/76 written in blue pencil. Several have the name Hall. One of the reverses has Brooklyn next to Hall’s name. Joseph Hall, a photographer from Brooklyn, was active 1865 – 1915. He specialized in mass-producing albumin prints.

Sarony & Co. photographed these plates on Aug. 17, 1868, making them the first photographs of coins taken in this country.



Levick's first attempt with Smith Counterfeits and French Liberty Caps medals.



His second attempt without the Smiths, but still with the Liberty Cap medals.



Hall 'C'
 163
 from
 J. G. Tucker
 5716176

by Hall, Brooklyn
 see 1868
 J. G. Tucker
 571476
 to
 Soc

The final version in the April 1869 *AJN*

RIBBONS ON A LIBERTY CAP?

Bill Eckberg

I recently received an email from David Consolo asking my opinion about some marks on a late die state 1794 Cohen-4 (Breen 6-b, Eckberg 4-E) half cent (Figure 1). Walter Breen called them ribbons, and Ron Manley described them as “ribbon-like defects” that are found between the hair and the bottom of the cap. David wanted to know what I thought of them. Were they clash marks or something else?



Figure 1. Terminal die state 1794 C-6 that started the investigation. Images courtesy of Great Collections

They certainly weren't engraved into the die, because they don't appear until well into the striking of the variety. Also, they couldn't be clash marks as they are raised, and clash marks are always raised in the clashed die and therefore sunken in the coin. First found in in Breen State IV, which he, unfortunately, did not illustrate (also Manley 3.0, Fuhrman 3), they grow heavier in the latest die states.

I consider the variety to be the most attractive of the 1794 half cents (Figure 2). The engraving is very clean;



Figure 2. The Missouri Cabinet example of the variety exhibits an early die state. Images courtesy of Goldbergs

Scot seems to have gotten carried away with putting every individual hair on Liberty's head, but the overall look is very lovely. The illustrated coin, from the Missouri and Pogue Cabinets, is also the Breen Plate Coin. Graded About Uncirculated by Breen in 1983, it was graded MS-63+ in the 2014 Missouri Cabinet sale and PCGS MS-66 in the 2016 D. Brent Pogue sale. There is definite rub on the cheek and hair. Did grading standards evolve, or was Breen overly harsh?

I was able to confirm all of the obverse clash marks previously reported by Breen, Manley and Fuhrman. The die states reported by the latter two are very similar. Their state 1 has no or a very light clash marks; state 2 (Figures 2, 3a and 4a) shows clash marks before the throat, between the cap and back of the head and from the D just below the cap; state 3 (Figures 3c and 4c) shows substantially more deterioration with clash marks from berries in the cap, a bulge forming from 6:30-8:30 and two strong “ribbon-like defects” from the back of the hair into the

cap; in state 4 (Figures 3d and 4d) the ribbon-like defects are very strong and the bulge is heavy in the field between the cap and the date. Breen identified seven die states and illustrated five of them, but only the first four are relevant to the obverse deterioration, and they seem to correlate reasonably well with the Manley and Fuhrman die states.

The difficulty in understanding this seems to arise from the earlier authors' tendency to group the results of multiple clashing together. Based on the emission sequence and the surviving population size, Ron Manley and I reported that this variety was struck on June 26 and 27 (*Penny-Wise XXXV*, 2001, pp. 96-100). Evidently, these dies clashed several times during the two days that they were in the press.

To simplify the story, I will call the die states I believe are important for the development of the ribbons Early Die State (EDS, equivalent to Breen III, Manley 2.0 and Fuhrman 2), Middle Die State (MDS, not equivalent to any previously reported die state), Late Die State (LDS, not equivalent to any previously reported



Figure 3. Four different die states of the variety: a, EDS; b MDS; c, LDS; d, TDS. Images a, c and d courtesy of PCGS CoinFacts; b by the author.

state) and Terminal Die State (TDS, equivalent to Breen IV, Manley 3.0 and Fuhrman 3). The reader will note large differences between the various Breen, Manley and Fuhrman die states; that may mean that some significant and/or useful information has gotten lost in the shuffle. I introduce what I call MDS (Figures 3b and 4b) and LDS (Figures 3c and 4c) that I believe help us understand how the die deteriorated.

From at least the MDS on, the dies were misaligned, with weak or missing dentils to the right, and strong dentils to the left. This has apparently not been noted before, but is obvious from the images in Breen, Manley and Fuhrman. Strong clash marks from the reverse dentils appear to the left of the cap (Figure 3b, c); this, too, has not been previously reported, but is visible in the previously published images.

Beginning with an EDS coin (Figures 3a and 4a), and focusing only on the areas relevant to this discussion, the hair and cap and their environs, the most obvious clash marks are from a leaf between the cap and hair and from the D at the left middle of the cap (lower red arrow). There is also a faint clash from the I at the top of the cap (upper red arrow), another from part of the first S just below the cap (black arrow; this fades out), and a very faint, curving clash between some of the hair

waves and through the bottom of the cap (blue arrows). There is also a barely noticeable clash in the hair just below the cap (white arrow). The horizontal line below the I in LIBERTY is a die defect present from the earliest strikes..

The MDS state (Figures 3b and 4b), between the Manley and Fuhrman states 2 and 3, is previously unpublished. An additional clash has occurred, and because of the misalignment, the clash marks from I and D are considerably stronger, though the D is still incomplete, and there are clash marks from three berries in the cap (yellow arrows) and from the L in the neck below the ear. The curved clash mark from the previous state (blue arrows) is heavier. The clash below the cap is also heavier, and there is an additional light clash in the bottom of the cap and adjacent hair (upper white arrow).

In the LDS (Figures 3c and 4c), at least one more clash reveals the two “raised ribbon-like defects.” The clash marks from I and D are much heavier, as are those of the leaves between the hair and cap, the three berries and the clash between the supposedly raised areas. A



Figure 4. Closeup views of the cap and adjacent hair in the same die states as shown in Fig. 3. Illustrations by the author.

bulge in the field between the cap and date is light.

In the TDS (Figures 3d, 4d) the bulge from the corner of the cap almost to the date has grown heavier, nearly merging with the ends of the two lowest locks. At least two additional bulges can be seen above the cap and below LI. The clash marks from the leaves between the hair and cap are now very heavy Figure 4d). By this point, the die had struck at least 25,000 coins – more than any other 1794 obverse die – and reached well beyond what should have been the end of its useable life.

How did these ribbons form? An overlay of the VLDS reverse on a VLDS obverse (Figure 5) provides a clear and unambiguous answer. The incuse line between the ribbons is a clash mark from the wreath stem (blue arrows). It aligns perfectly from where it disappears into the cap down to where it bifurcates at the third lock from the bottom. The berries perfectly match all three clash marks in the cap (yellow arrows).

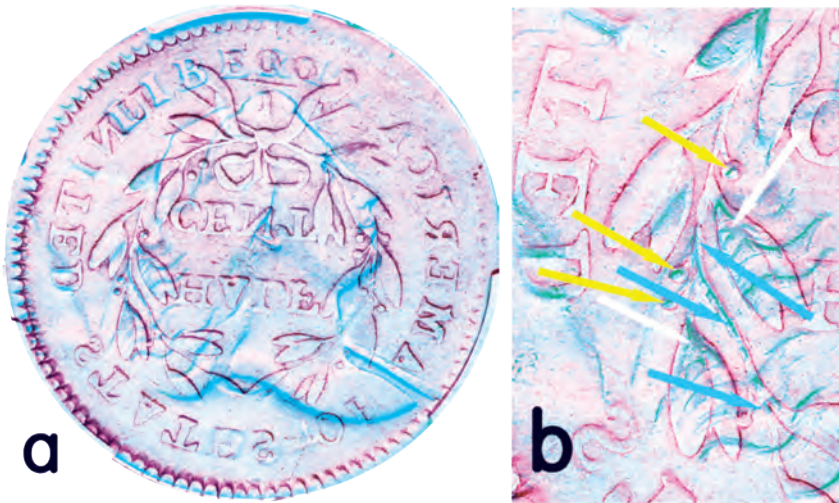


Figure 5. Overlay of the reverse on the obverse, showing the locations of the clash marks from the stem, leaves, berries and the letters I and D. a shows the entire coin; b shows the area around the ribbons. Illustration by the author.

However, this only explains how the incuse line *between* the ribbons formed. To understand how the ribbons themselves formed, look first at the position of the leaves to the right and left of the stem (Figure 5b, white arrows); they align with the indentations next to the ribbon. The right clash is from a single leaf, because the one next to it is not as deeply engraved and so did not clash. The left clash is from a pair of leaves, but does not really look like a leaf; the reason for that is that the clash did not obliterate the edge of the cap or the hair strands, traces of which can be seen in both of the clashes and in the one from the wreath stem. That is because the cap

and hair strands, like the other raised elements of the coin, were below the surface of the die.

In other words, the ribbons are not raised at all, but rather represent the original surface that was left behind after clashes from the leaves and stem. All of the clashing and bulging around them only makes it appear that they represent a new element of the coins, when in fact, they are the original surface remaining from the early die states.

How many times did these dies clash? Earlier authors suggested that they clashed “many” times (whatever that means), but what does the evidence tell us? The reverses of EDS examples show two sets of clash marks on the reverse from the bust and cap. The MDS coin shown here has three sets. The later states show no additional clash marks on the reverse, though die deterioration may mask further clashes. I suggest that the dies might not have clashed “many” times as previous authors have thought, though they must have clashed four or five times. The clashes around the ribbons appear much heavier in the TDS (Figure 4d), but if we consider the rest of the coin, we find numerous bulges from die sinking have formed on the left side of the coin (where the dies were most closely aligned), especially in the area between the cap and date. In other words, the deterioration of the die – adjacent sunken clash marks and bulges from die sinking – are what gives the ribbons their appearance.

The study of die states can be challenging because nobody has seen every coin from most die pairs. That is certainly true of a variety like this one with about a thousand survivors. The exception would be if there is an obvious and extended sequence of deterioration happening throughout the course of the variety being struck. The 1804 C-6 Spiked chin would be an example of a variety many die states of which can be differentiated. A variety such as 1794 C-4 does not offer such an easily followed sequence of deterioration. It therefore requires luck to find an example that can help us to understand the sequence of die changes such as the MDS reported here and formerly in the author’s collection. No matter how long or how thoroughly information has been entrenched, it still remains possible to find new information that advances our understanding of these fascinating coins.

* * * * *

MUSINGS ON MARIS'S MONIKERS

Larry Schafer

“It makes me uncomfortable to talk about meanings and things. It’s better not to know so much about what things mean. Because the meaning, it’s a very personal thing, and the meaning for me is different than the meaning for somebody else.”

- filmmaker David Lynch

Edward Maris was born in 1832. His ancestors, George and Alice Maris, came to America in 1683 to escape religious persecution in England. The “Quaker Physician” was 37 in 1869 when he authored *Varieties of the Copper Issues of the United States Mint in the year 1794*. It was the first separately printed work on large cents and listed 39 different varieties. A second edition was issued the following year. It added four additional findings, pushing the number to 43, while correcting some errors and also making an attempt to gauge rarity. The second edition Maris is extremely rare with only about a dozen copies known to exist today. Besides being the original works on 1794 cents, they are remembered for the fanciful names, sometimes still used today, given to the different varieties.

He did not christen every variety with an appellation,



Dr. Edward Maris, Circa 1870

but a preponderance of them were baptized forevermore with a new identity. Some of the names are obvious enough, such as the Tilted 4, Fallen 4, Crooked 7, or even the Pyramidal Head, aptly named for the hair profile that follows its geometric namesake. Others are more esoteric, calling upon the fields of mythology and medicine, and some require an active imagination as well. Consider the Egeria, Maris number 41. Egeria was a Roman nymph known as a counselor and consort to Numa Pompilius, the discerning second king of Rome who reigned for about 40 years. She is said to have rendezvoused with the king at night, meeting in a sacred grotto. During these sessions she would provide, among other things, the laws and rituals for the nascent Roman state. Maris was clearly a Classicist, as was the American founder, John Adams. In a letter to his son Charles Adams dated January 2, 1794, he writes concerning Thomas Jefferson: “Jefferson is going to Monticello to spend his Days in Retirement, in Rural Amusements and Philosophical Meditations, - Untill the President dies or resigns, when I suppose he is to be invited from his Conversations with Egeria in the Groves, to take the Reigns of the State, and conduct it forty Years in Piety and Peace.” Adam’s reference to “his conversations with Egeria in the Groves” has been interpreted by some as a coded reference to the Sally Hemings affair. If so, Adams was apparently aware of it some eight years before James Callendar would publish the scandalous allegations in 1802. So next time you’re conversing with your S-27, think of all the wisdom Egeria has to impart to you - and also the political intrigue of the Founding Fathers.

Try visualizing the Venus Marina, Latin for Venus of the Sea. Venus was the Roman goddess of love, fertility, and beauty. She is sometimes depicted reclining on a shell and in the presence of dolphins in Roman frescoes. The term Venus Marina essentially refers to her timeless beauty as depicted in art across the centuries. Clearly Maris was moved while admiring the flowing locks on the obverse of S-32, likely seeing in them those of Venus as she rises out of the sea, a strong gale breezing through her hair. Now think about what Maris may have had in mind with the Coquette. Here he continues the theme

of using the fairer sex while also drawing a relationship between the meaning of the word and the rarity of the variety. Just as a coquette flirts with you and is not easily won over, so the S-52 variety is not easily obtained, and certainly not in nice condition. Indeed, the finest of the variety holds a grade of VF-35. The next closest are two coins at the F-15 level, then seven more at F-12. This lady doesn't surrender her secrets easily.

There is the Amatory Face, which Maris tweaked and called the Amiable Face in the 1870 second edition. Known for Liberty's pleasant smile, Maris notes it has the "physiognomy that of a lady in love." An interesting occurrence here is that as fate would have it, someone long before Maris chose the variety as the canvas for a love token. This particular 1794 S-30 grades in the very good range on the obverse. The reverse was smoothed off and is engraved with "Hope Stratten 1795." Research has found a Hope Stratten born in 1780 in Eversham (now called Evesham) New Jersey. It is one of the earliest known American love tokens. One can imagine the engraver looking for the right coin for his work, then coming across the Sheldon 30 with Liberty's subtle little smile and exclaiming - Yes, now that is the right coin to use! Or not.

In addition to the Amatory/Amiable Face, Maris also made some other changes between editions. In 1869 he called his variety number 11 (Sheldon 59) the Mint-marked Head, noting "behind the ear, 1 1/2 distant from it, on the hair is a point." Almost assuredly what Maris was describing here was the centering dot. This is a raised dot seen on a coin left by the engraver's compass used in helping lay out the circular positioning of the devices. These center dots can be seen on most early coins of high enough grade, not just this particular variety. In 1870 he updated the name to the more congruous Many Haired variety, with Maris himself counting "fourteen hairs passing down over the neck." In the first edition, he called the S-29 variety the Nondescript, and found it similar to his number 18, the Venus Marina. In the second edition he did away with the Nondescript sobriquet and left the variety unheralded, perhaps after realizing that it shared the same obverse as his number 17, the Ornate. The Ornate is a nice descriptor for Sheldon 28 with its perfectly proportioned and luxurious flowing hair. One last change was to the Maris number 15, the obverse for Sheldon 26, with the name changing from the original Severed Hairs to the Separated Date.

Continuing on, another name given was the Patagonian, the obverse found on S-60. While Patagonia refers to the southern tip of South America, given Maris's penchant for mythology he probably had something

more in mind. Accounts of a race of giants living in this part of the world captured the European imagination for centuries and were reported by several explorers starting with Magellan's voyage of 1519-1522. Antonio Pigafetta, Magellan's chronicler, recorded thus: "But one day (without anyone expecting it) we saw a giant who was on the shore, quite naked, and who danced, leaped, and sang, and while he sang he threw sand and dust on his head. Our captain sent one of his men toward him, charging him to leap and sing like the other in order to reassure him and to show him friendship. Which he did. Immediately the man of the ship, dancing, led this giant to a small island where the captain awaited him. And when he was before us, he began to marvel and to be afraid, and he raised one finger upward, believing that we came from heaven. And he was so tall that the tallest of us only came up to his waist." (Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*). The likely source for the legend of the Patagonian giants was the Tehuelche people, an indigenous tribe whose physical stature and large footprints astonished the European explorers. Though almost certainly not as tall as allegedly reported, they were of significant size, especially compared to sixteenth century Europeans. Looking at the coin, Maris notes "an unusually deep depression above the chin" and "the ala of the nose prominent and the hair coarse." So take a close look at your S-60. Does it evoke a Patagonian giant? You decide.

Medical references bestowed by Maris include the Plicae, the obverse found on S-45 and 46. This term refers to a condition of the hair where it becomes matted and entangled. Liberty's hair on this obverse ends in five thick, twisted locks. Then there is the Roman Plica, S-67, in which Maris perceived an "expression of Roman sternness." There is something to this sentiment at the upper end of the grading scale, and the effect is enhanced when the specimen displays the jagged diagonal die crack across Liberty's cheek. However, the variety seems to lose whatever austerity it possesses as wear on the portrait increases. One of the more enigmatic Maris names is the Trephined Head. This refers to one of the oldest medical procedures, trepanning, where a hole is drilled into a human skull. In ancient cultures it was used for spiritual reasons—by drilling a hole in the skull, the evil spirits afflicting the person would be released. In more modern times, the technique has been employed to relieve pressure on the brain from cerebral edema. On Sheldon 62, look at the back of Liberty's head where the pole, cap, and hair converge. This is one of the tougher ones to see but there is a slight depression in the head in

this area. Not to be confused with the Trepined Head is the Scarred Head, Maris's nickname for S-24. Here looking towards the back of the neck you will see a void in the hair due to excessive die polishing.

Thinking about Maris's descriptive names given to 1794 cents should cause us to contemplate what was really going on. This was not just a numismatist cataloging a series. This was Maris allowing the cents to lead him where they may in a daytime reverie. Why has this series so captivated collectors? Well, there are more than three dozen individual portraits of Liberty, each with their own unique facial expression and hair

style. This is all without even considering the reverses. And the thick planchets. Maris may have been the first to look at these talismans as one looks at a work of art. Certainly, he was the first to put this love affair into writing. The cents of 1794 have cast a deep spell over our consciousness ever since coin collecting took off in earnest in America in the mid nineteenth century. And as David Lynch suggests, we are free to let these pieces speak to us as they will, just as they did to Dr. Edward Maris, and to let our imaginations be moved to find our own meaning in them.

* * * * *

MY INTERESTING 1798 LARGE CENT UNDERTYPE

Jack D. Young

Some time back, I purchased a 1798 S-176 from a Heritage Auction. The coin was from a prominent early copper collector and encased in a PCGS slab as "1798 1C Second Hair Style, S-176, B-24, R.4 -- Struck Over a Token -- VG8 PCGS Gold Shield. Ex: Reynolds." Tom Reynolds's collection included a number of great coins, but I feel this one slipped under the radar. I was intrigued by the description and jumped at the opportunity to add



it to my collection and for further research. previous Goldberg auction where there it was described and imaged as follows:

Images courtesy Goldbergs

So, stumped on identifying the undertype, I had a cool research project going forward! Walter Breen's *Encyclopedia of Early United States Cents, 1793-1814* offered one intriguing clue, in his discussion of S-176, page 488: "Richard Doty identified a reeded edge specimen [in the ANS collection] as overstruck on a genuine Anglesey Mines (Druid's Head) halfpenny token, D & H 282 or 294." That example reportedly retained the letters N ANLG on the edge, residual of the original PAYABLE IN ANGLESEY.

Having the coin in-hand afforded the opportunity to really review my example. Starting with the images available, I pulled these shots together to highlight where the undertype shows through, as well as a Druid token for comparison.

I later had the opportunity to show it to several Conder token experts, and they agreed that it was struck over a Druid. Druid tokens were struck to a 13.5 grams stan-



it to my collection and for further research.

Images courtesy Heritage Auctions

And again, no mention of what type of token. I immediately started a provenance investigation and found it in a

Lot 186
1798 S-176 R4 Style II Hair, Small 8, PCGS graded VG-8. Struck over a Token. Glossy light to medium chocolate brown and steel. Smooth and attractive showing only a few trivial contact marks. A tiny pinprick over the 9 and a shallow pit in the field over the hair ribbon are good identifying marks. MDS. Breen state V late. Swelling is starting to weaken ES in STATES. What makes this cent so special is that it was struck over an as yet unidentified token, most likely one of the British "Conder" or merchant tokens of the late 18th Century. Clear undertype from the token is visible at RTY and in the opposing area at CA to the denominator. On the reverse you can make out two letters, H and E, and the numeral 8 shows under the second A in AMERICA. Perhaps an expert in the token series could attribute the token, but we are stumped. A really neat cent. **Our grade is VG7**. The attribution and Reynolds provenance are noted on the PCGS Secure label, but they failed to mention the undertype token (PCGS # 36098). Estimated Value \$500-UP.
 Acquired from an unrecorded source at a St. Louis Coin Show 5/1991



dard, whereas Draped Bust large cents weighed 10.89 grams. Unfortunately, this one was not weighed between slabbings. There is no observable edge lettering on this one, as seen through the edge-view PCGS holder. Gary



Groll, Jerry Bobbe, and Jeff Rock all had the opportunity to see it in the slab prior to its being reviewed for

the Druid token undertype at PCGS, which I organized through a contact there. I quickly received it back in a new holder:

I then took the opportunity to post it on the Conder Café Facebook Group, where it received quite a response. How it ended up in the press to coin a 1798 large



cent will always be a matter for speculation.

I'll end with several closeup images taken with my low-cost microscope, which show traces of the Anglesey undertype, as well as images of the edge, which is clearly free of any lettering.



I sent some of the images to my fellow EACer and friend Dan Rice to do one of his YouTube fun podcasts on this and it can be found at:

[1798 Cent Struck Over 1788 Druid Halfpenny?! The Early Mint's Copper Sources Were Wild!](#)

* * * * *

JACK YOUNG'S AUTHENTICITY CHALLENGED CORNER, NUMBER SIX

A New example of 1797 "S-136"!

So, again for this edition of my Corner, I will tap back into Kevin Vinton's article that exposed several of the deceptive counterfeit early coppers, and focus on another I know well, the 1797 "S-136" large cents! I wrote a revised article for *Coin Week* back in 2022 after collecting three different examples including two Kevin had documented:

I intend to have this coin with me at this Spring's Central States Coin Show for anyone interested in reviewing in-hand. I am also considering consigning it to Stack's Bowers during the C4 Convention Sale in Baltimore later this year.



weight was reported as 9.9 grams versus the standard of 10.89. The others that we could weigh were light as well. And the timeline for these is included below:

So, I owned at the time the following three examples including Kevin's original "discovery" piece.

COINWEEK

Home » US Coins » Struck Counterfeit Coin of the Week: 1797 "S-136" Large Cent - 1-Page

Struck Counterfeit Coin of the Week: 1797 "S-136" Large Cent + 1-Page Attribution Guide

By Jack D. Young July 21, 2022



Jack Young Struck Counterfeit Feature 1797 S-136

By Jack D. Young, *Early American Coppers (EAC)* for *CoinWeek*

This latest installment in the continuing summary of the deceptive struck counterfeits documented to date concerns the 1797 "S-136" Large Cent. As with previous articles in this series I have included a one-page attribution guide to aid in the identification of any that are still out there. Unlike other varieties documented to date all of these discovered examples are raw – none were encapsulated by a TPG.

I included this summary of the key "attribution marks" of the four known examples at the time:

The 4th example was documented by PCGS from a submission at the time and images shared with EAC; the



Timeline for 1797 "S-136" Large Cent:

1. Sept 8, 2015 raw example – sold on the internet
2. Oct 27, 2015 raw example – sold on the internet
3. Dec 18, 2015 TPG submission example (determined to be a counterfeit)
4. Feb 28, 2017 raw internet listed example – listing terminated as a counterfeit
5. Mar 6, 2017 internet sale – raw example owned by author; **probably same as # 4**)

The "discovery" piece from September 2015 (image courtesy NGC)



The 2nd eBay example from October 2015 (image courtesy NGC)



I had sent both examples to NGC for review and images.

The next documented example was also seen on eBay in 2017. After discussion with the seller I purchased it as well...



eBay 2017 example also imaged by NGC

So, it's been awhile since the last one was seen, but like the 1806 half cent these appear to be the gifts that keep on giving. In just the past month, I received a message about a "new" S-136 from a friend (the one who sold me a recent 1806 counterfeit half cent) who asked my thoughts. Well...

The owner had purchased it off eBay from the same seller as the 1806; I could tell pretty quickly it was the fifth documented example!

Weight was reported as 9.54 grams, and it obviously had several of the matching "false dies" attribution marks.



some of his money back and we negotiated a sale. Once in-hand, I was able to use my cheap microscope to verify the main attribution features of the counterfeits.

So, these really are the gifts that just keep giving!

And as in my 1796 counterfeit discussion, fellow EAC'er Dan Rice put together a YouTube podcast and interview on this one, which I think the Membership will enjoy: [Jack Young's COUNTERFEIT 1797 S-136 Large Cent - The Interview! PLUS Verdicare Corrosion Touch-Up](#)



New Example

Counterfeit

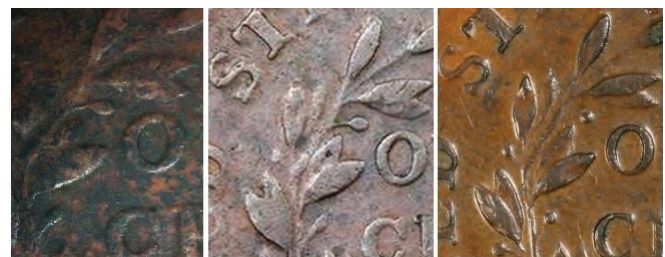
Counterfeit



New Example

Counterfeit Example

Genuine Example



New Example

Counterfeit Example

Genuine Example



Jack Young
Just now · 🌐

My Friend [Dan Rice](#) is a rock star! Really enjoyed this discussion and the podcast he put together!

YOUTUBE.COM
Jack Young's COUNTERFEIT 1797 S-136 Large Cent - The Interview! PLUS Verdicare Corrosion Touch-Up!



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WHY LARGE CENTS REWARD LOOKING LONGER

Bill Van Ornum

Die Marriages, Die States, and the Life of Copper

Collectors often come to early American large cents through one of two doorways: collecting by type or collecting by date. Many stay because of die marriages. Others are drawn in by die states. But what ultimately makes large cents uniquely absorbing—especially in circulated grades—is that all of these stories coexist on the same coin, alongside something even more personal: the visible aging of copper itself.

No other major U.S. series offers this combination so consistently. Large cents do not merely document minting practice; they preserve process, fatigue, and survival in ways that remain legible even after decades of circulation, and long after that circulation ceased. In doing so, they invite a kind of looking that is slower, more patient, and ultimately more rewarding than is

required by many other series.

Die Marriages: The Genealogy

Die marriage study is foundational to early copper. The hand-engraved dies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were not anonymous tools; they bore the habits, quirks, and limitations of individual engravers. Subtle differences in portrait style, letter formation, spacing, and wreath construction reflect not only artistic preference but also training, time pressure, and the gradual wear of the tools themselves.

Obverse dies were paired with reverse dies, separated, and sometimes re-paired, producing a web of relationships rather than a simple linear sequence. These pairings were driven by practicality rather than aesthetics. A usable die was too valuable to discard simply because its mate had failed. Steel was costly,

skilled engravers were scarce, and production demands were relentless. As a result, two cents of the same date may differ profoundly in appearance—not because of deliberate design change, but because different hands and circumstances were involved.

For many collectors, this genealogical aspect is the initial draw. Attribution gives order to apparent chaos and invites comparison across related pieces. The act of identifying a die marriage can feel like discovering a family resemblance: familiar lettering here, a known wreath punch there, a spacing quirk that links one coin to another across years or varieties.

Yet reminding ourselves of genealogy alone does not fully explain why some large cents feel more expressive, more “alive,” than others. Two coins of the same die marriage may tell very different stories. To understand that difference, one must look beyond pairing and into the life history of the dies themselves.

Die States: The Biography

Copper planchets place significant stress on steel dies. Compared with gold or silver, copper resists more forcefully, exacting a cost over time. In an era when steel quality, heat treatment, and die preparation were inconsistent, this stress mattered. As a result, copper dies often lived difficult, abbreviated lives.

Cracks developed as microscopic fissures invisible to the naked eye. With continued striking, they lengthened, branched, and eventually reached the rim. In later stages, rims softened, devices distorted, and occasionally cuds formed as sections of the die failed outright. These changes were not viewed as catastrophic in their early stages. A die was used until it could no longer perform its task because replacing it meant delay, expense, and disruption in a system already operating close to its limits.

Modern collectors sometimes forget how tolerant early minting practice was of imperfection. The goal was not aesthetic consistency but functional coinage. As long as the coin could circulate and be recognized, the die was considered serviceable. That tolerance allowed late die states to develop far beyond what would be acceptable today.

Many of these features survive heavy circulation. While fine polishing lines or early clash marks may vanish below Extremely Fine, bold die cracks and late-stage stress often remain visible into lower grades, sometimes even down to About Good. In this way, die states form a kind of biography—not of the coin, but of the tool that made it. They record endurance, adaptation,

and eventual failure under pressure.

At this point, it is natural to ask whether late die states actually produce “softer” coins, or whether something else is happening at the surface.

Die States, Metal Flow, and the Illusion of Softness

Strictly speaking, die state has no effect on the intrinsic hardness of copper. A late die-state cent remains copper at roughly Mohs ~3, just as an early state cent. Hardness is a material property, not a function of die wear. What does change—sometimes dramatically—is surface geometry.

As dies age, vertical relief is lost. Letters flatten, inner contours relax, and flow lines broaden into low, diffuse ridges. The struck surface becomes increasingly exposed. With less height remaining to absorb contact, even minor abrasion can affect the entire visible surface at once.

This helps explain a familiar grading puzzle. Late die state cents can appear suddenly “soft” or muted after minimal cabinet friction. The illusion of softness arises not because the metal has weakened, but because the protective architecture of the design has already been worn away. In an early die state, abrasion tends to clip the tops of relief while leaving deeper structure intact. In a late die state, there is little structure left to sacrifice.

A useful way to visualize this difference is to imagine an early die state as a landscape of hills and valleys, while a late die state resembles a floodplain. Abrasion on an early state removes peaks first; abrasion on a late state has nowhere local to go. The result is a rapid visual collapse—loss of luster, merging of details, and an overall “washed” appearance that can easily be mistaken for additional circulation wear.

Collectors encounter this effect regularly at bourse tables and club meetings. Two cents of the same variety and apparent grade may sit side by side, one appearing lively and crisp, the other subdued and tired. Die state often explains the difference. Awareness of this dynamic helps prevent both over-grading and unnecessary discounting of honest coins.

And aging die does not change the hardness of struck copper; it changes how quickly remaining detail disappears.

Copper as Witness: Color, Texture, and Surface

There is a third aspect that distinguishes large cents from nearly every other U.S. series: copper’s responsiveness to time and environment. Large cents display extraordinary variation in color—tan, cinnamon,

mahogany, olive, charcoal—and in texture, from glossy and smooth to granular or softly porous.

These qualities are not merely aesthetic; they are historical. Storage, burial, handling, and environment all leave traces. A cent that spent decades in a pocket tells a different story from one that rested quietly in a drawer or cabinet. Copper records these experiences faithfully, even when details are worn away.

This responsiveness gives copper a voice. It allows the collector to infer something about where a coin has been, how it has been treated, and sometimes even how it was regarded by its owners. A smooth, evenly worn cent suggests long circulation; a sharply detailed but oddly colored example may hint at early withdrawal and long storage.

Once die state is understood, surface condition becomes easier to read. Late die state coins, already geometrically exposed, are more vulnerable to subtle abrasion that alters appearance without adding true circulation wear. Early die-state coins, by contrast, may retain visual strength even after considerable use. Recognizing this distinction sharpens both attribution and grading.

The Convergence: Why Large Cents Are Different

Large cents uniquely preserve three histories at once: what struck the coin (die marriage), what happened to the tool (die state), and what happened to the coin afterward (surface evolution). These stories remain accessible in circulated grades, where meaning is often underestimated but far from absent.

To collect large cents this way is not to compromise. It is to listen for a different register of meaning—fatigue, endurance, and survival—qualities that resonate precisely because they are visible and imperfect.

Conclusion

Large cents reward patience and repeated looking. They ask the collector to slow down, to compare, and to notice subtle differences that accumulate into understanding. They are not merely catalog entries or price-guide items, but artifacts that hold multiple timelines in balance.

That combination is rare. It is also why large cents continue to reward those willing to look longer.

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GREETINGS EAC MEMBERS

Welcome to all EAC members! I also want to welcome those of you who may be trial members, please reach out to me or to any officer or member if you have questions or comments.

We are within a month of our convention! This is my favorite numismatic and/or social event of the year! We will have many opportunities to learn about the great coins we collect, as well as the chance to spend time with good friends and to make some new ones. The bourse is sold out and the EAC Sale is busting at the seams with great opportunities to add to your collections. If you collect copper, want to learn about copper, or just make some new friends, this is an event not to be missed! This is also an opportunity to help the club and the convention chairman make the convention run more smoothly for everyone. Whether it is helping during the Happenings, at the reception desk, or just encouraging some of the volunteers that make this convention so great year after year, helping hands and kind words are the oil that make the convention run smoothly.

Please find in this edition the roster of candidates running for office this cycle. The nominating committee was successful in getting a full ballot of qualified candidates, which was challenging given the amount of turnover in officers this cycle. The officers from Region 7 have agreed to run for an additional 1 year transition period. We will be voting for them and then immediately looking for some qualified candidates to give them a break at the end of their agreed year. While we are in good hands for now, our bylaws call for term limits for national offices, and we have many regional officers who have served a long time. Please consider investing some time and running for office in the next cycle. Remember this is YOUR club, and it can only be as good as the effort we all put into it.

Please reach out at any time,
Bob Klosterboer
President, Early American Coppers

EAC ELECTION BALLOT

All members are eligible to vote for the National Officers. *Please vote for the Chairman and Secretary for your region ONLY.*

NATIONAL EAC OFFICES

PRESIDENT BOB KLOSTERBOER grngto1@gmail.com

Write in _____

VICE PRESIDENT TERRY DENMAN tsdenman@yahoo.com

Write in _____

NATIONAL SECRETARY BOB KEBLER rsdrk1985@sbcglobal.net

Write in _____

TREASURER TOM NIST pennyless1857@gmail.com

Write in _____

REGIONAL CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARIES

Region 1 Chairman Tim Skinski

tim.skinski@earthlink.net

Write in _____.

Secretary Kevin Winn

kevinriver@comcast.net

Write in _____

Region 2 Chairman Glenn Marx

gmari@aol.com

Write in _____

Secretary H. Craig Hamling

hcraig@hcraig.com

Write in _____

Region 3 Chairman Joe Pargola

Joe@Pargola.com

Write in _____

Secretary Edward Fox

edfox@fox-engineering.com

Write in _____

Region 4 Chairman Jerry Sajbel
jsajbel@comporium.net
Write in _____

Secretary Mark Kosanovich
mkosan5173@aol.com
Write in _____

Region 5 Chairman Mark Borckardt
Markb@ha.com
Write in _____

Secretary Tom Wachtel
drtom50@gmail.com
Write in _____

Region 6 Chairman Russ Butcher
mrbb1794@sbcglobal.net
Write in _____

Secretary Jim Carr
jimone1007@yahoo.com
Write in _____

Region 7 Chairman Ron Shintaku
B737PIC@yahoo.com
Write in _____

Secretary Dennis Fuoss
dfuoss92624@gmail.com
Write in _____

- Ron and Dennis have agreed to serve a 1 year term and to help with transition. We will need candidates for these offices.
- If you write in a candidate, please confirm the candidate has interest in serving in the role.
- Please mail ballots in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible as we are close to the convention.

EAC 2026 Convention Schedule

Wednesday, April 29

Registration table open 11:00-5:00

7:30PM – 9:00PM Boyz of '94 Meeting Meeting Room E

Thursday, April 30

Registration table open 8:30-5:00

9:00 AM – 11:00AM Grading Seminar Meeting Room DOS

12:00PM – 5:00PM Dealer and Exhibitor setup Grand Ballroom

5:00PM – 7:00PM Reception & Buffet Dinner Waterfall + ABC

7:30PM – 9:30PM Large Cent Happening Meeting Room E

7:30PM – 9:30PM Half Cent Happening Meeting Room D

7:30PM – 9:30PM Colonial Happening Meeting Room F

Friday, May 1

Registration table open 8:30-5:00

Dealer setup 8:00-9:00

Bourse open 9:00-5:00

9:00AM – 5:00PM Sale Lot Viewing Grand Ballroom

12:00PM – 1:00PM Robert Scot's Signature – *Bill Eckberg* Junior Ballroom

1:15PM - 2:15PM Don't Jump to Conclusions – Pedigree Research Junior Ballroom

in a Modern Numismatic World - *Mark Borckardt* Junior Ballroom

2:30PM – 3:30PM New Haven Restrike Fugio Cents – *Craig Sholley* Junior Ballroom

5:30PM – 6:00PM Shuttle Buses to Olde Mecklenberg Carport off hotel lobby

6:00PM – 9:00PM Reception and Guest Speaker Olde Mecklenberg

6:30PM – 6:45PM Colonel Steve Ellsworth War Stories Brewery

8:00PM – 9:30PM Shuttles Return to Hotel Back to Hotel

Saturday, May 2

8:00AM – 10:00AM EAC Board Meeting Oscars

Registration table open 8:30-5:00

Dealer setup 8:00-9:00

Bourse open 9:00-5:00

9:00AM – 5:00PM Sale Lot Viewing Grand Ballroom

12:00PM – 4:00PM Merit Badge Program Meeting Room DOS

12:00PM – 1:00PM The S48 Starred Reverse – *Chuck Heck* Junior Ballroom

1:15PM - 2:15PM Massachusetts Cents & Half Cents – *Mike Packard* Junior Ballroom

2:30PM – 3:30PM What I wish I'd Known About Collecting 40 Years Ago –
Craig Sholley Junior Ballroom

5:00PM – 10:00PM EAC Sale Junior Ballroom

Sunday, May 3

Bourse open 10:00-2:00

9:00AM -11:00AM EAC Members Annual Meeting Junior Ballroom

11:00AM Meeting Adjourned

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EAC REGION ONE ZOOM MEETING MINUTES- FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Kevin Winn, Region One Secretary

EAC Region One held its fifth annual Zoom meeting on February 10nd at 8:00 PM Eastern time.

The meeting was opened by region one Chairman, Tim Skinski, at 8:00. There were twenty-two members present. That was the most attendees ever for one of our annual meetings. Thanks go out to Joe Pargola for helping us set up the Zoom call on his account. The twenty-two attendees were from a total of twelve states including Texas, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, and Virginia, so this was clearly not just a Region One meeting. Tim and I appreciate the support from all members of the organization.

The agenda included a talk by EAC Convention Bourse Chairman, Jerry Sajbel, about the upcoming 2026 EAC Convention to be held in Charlotte NC., from Wednesday April 29th to Sunday, May 3rd. The Convention will be held at:

Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel

3315 Scott Futrell Drive
Charlotte, NC 28208
704-392-1200

Hotel reservations will be made directly with the hotel; on the Group Web Link or by calling 1-800-325-3535. Single and Double room rates are \$152/night.

Jerry mentioned that all sixty-four tables in the bourse have been sold and they are now working on sharing tables among dealers to try and get even more vendors access to the event. Jerry also mentioned that there are tables reserved for Early Copper Exhibits, sale lot viewing, and club tables.

Jerry reviewed the agenda for the entire show which includes a "Boyz of '94" meeting on Wednesday, a grading seminar taught by Jim Carr on Thursday, the Reception and the Happenings on Thursday, Bourse on Friday through Sunday, the EAC Sale on Saturday night, and the Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday. There will also be six educational seminars held, three per day, on Friday and Saturday. There will be a field trip on Friday to the Old Mecklenburg Brewery where they serve "Copper" beer, and possible side trips to:

The Whitewater and Raptor Center

The Federal Reserve building and operation

The Reed Gold Mine, site of the first U.S. gold discovery.

The Mint Museum in Charlotte

Tim Skinski talked about the half cent Happening which he will be facilitating at the convention on Thursday, April 30th at 8:00 PM. Tim's selections for the Happening include: 1793 C-4, 1794 C-1B, 1803 C-3, 1804 C-2, 1832 C-1, and 1834 C1. There will also be a Large Cent Happening.

Jack Young talked about his research and writings regarding early copper counterfeits. His columns entitled "Jack Young's Authenticity Challenged Corner" have been appearing regularly in recent editions of *Penny-Wise*.

Bob Kebler then took over the meeting to talk about his half cent collection which has been consigned into



Bob Kebler's 1793 C-1 in the EAC Sale.



1804 C4 Gilbert (Plate Coin)-Commodore W. C. Eaton (sold privately)-"Anderson Dupont" Sale (Stack's) 11/1954:1074-Philip M. Showers (Stack's privately 1969)-Willis I. DuPont-R. Tettenhorst-Bill Weber 3/1985-Roger S. Cohen, Jr. (Superior) 2/1992:143

the EAC members-only Sale at this year's convention. He had really great slides and stories about some of his favorite coins which will be sold. Those included his 1793 C-1, one of the first half-cents ever produced; a 1797 C-1 made from a Talbot, Allum, and Lee token; and three others with great pedigrees, including an 1804 C-4 which was one of the coins involved in a famous 1985 half-cent trade between Bill Weber and Roger Cohen. (See picture and Provenance above from Bob K.)

The meeting was supposed to last one hour but almost everyone had something to say, and it turned into nearly

two hours of enjoyable copper discussion when Tim adjourned the session at 9:48 PM.

The next Region One meeting will be an in-person only event (no zoom) on Friday, April 3rd, at 1:30 PM, at the Manchester Coin and Currency Expo.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Winn

EAC Region One Secretary

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EAC 2026 UPDATE, DEC 15, 2025

Jerry Sajbel

Dear club members, EAC 2026 in Charlotte is just around the corner, April 29 to May 3. The Sheraton Airport Hotel has us covered for rooms and space for all of our activities. We will have Registration open around noon Wednesday, with Security available for your valuables. The Boyz of 94 will meet that night.

Thursday begins with the Grading Seminar--lots of fun, interaction and a great eye calibration exercise by Jim Carr. Dealers can set up on the bourse as well as Exhibitors. We'll have the Reception and dinner at 5PM, please consider making a donation for the dinner. The Happenings will follow, including Large Cents run by Allen Ross; Half Cents by Tim Skinski, and Colonials by Ray Williams.

Friday the Bourse is open to the public and we expect a good influx of collectors from the area. The Educational Presentations will begin; consider submitting a talk to Chuck Heck.

On Friday night, we will be having a road trip to the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery in Charlotte. There will be shuttle transportation leaving the hotel at 5:30 to OMB, and staggered trips back from approx. 8:15 to 9:15. This is a German themed restaurant with a large beer garden just outside of our meeting rooms. You can sit inside, stand at cocktail tables or sit on the patio on picnic tables. We will have enough of their signature slider sandwiches to absorb any alcohol that you may spill into your system. Note that one of their most popular brands, an altbier, is simply called "Copper." They're clearly ready for us!

Saturday the Bourse is open to the public and Educational Presentations continue. The Sale starts late afternoon, including Terry Denman's Middle Dates, Part

Two, as well as other important coppers.

Of course on Sunday we will have our annual Member Meeting at 9 AM and the bourse will be open for a few hours. Note that a current schedule for all activities has been drafted, with the Presentations' titles and presenters being the largest items left to fill in the agenda.

Bourse Layout and Contract – the bourse layout has about 64 dealer tables and ten more split up for Sale lot viewing and Exhibits, in roughly 7000 square feet. We have 36 tables sold so far, including two area dealers, one of whom is new to EAC and one is a returning member. Both the bourse layout and the Application/Contract may be seen with one click on our web site eacs.org. (Thanks, Joe.)

Activities - There will be a list of other area activities for those who would like to venture out from the Convention. One such destination is the Reed Gold Mine, site of the first US gold discovery in 1799. It is about 25 minutes away from the hotel, <https://historicsites.nc.gov/all-sites/reed-gold-mine>

You could also visit the NASCAR Museum in Charlotte, about 15 minutes away. This is the area of the country where racing first started to get the moonshine to all the recipients! More information can be found at: <https://www.nascarhall.com/>

Charlotte Mint Museum – the Museum is on two sites; although neither is the original site of the mint, it hosts many fine collections, including a collection of gold coins minted in Charlotte (OK, they do have 10% copper content): <https://www.mintmuseum.org/>

Raptor Center – this is a zoo and nature center for birds of prey and is only about fifteen minutes from the

hotel, info may be found at: <https://carolinaraptorcenter.org/>

Top Golf – this is a fun filled group event where you get a booth on a driving range and have food and drinks served to you; if you’ve been to one you know: <https://topgolf.com/us/charlotte/>

Restaurants – if you can find a free night to eat out there are many fine dining restaurants in the Charlotte area, all within 10-30 minutes from the hotel. We will have a list of area restaurants, and these include all the top Steakhouses (Sullivan’s, Ruth’s Chris, Morton’s, Del Greco’s); a wonderful Brazilian Steakhouse; Italian and any other ethnicities of restaurant; Mr. Tokyo’s sushi & hibachi, etc. A list will be available at your check in.

Advertising – so far we have had a lot of help from both the South Carolina and North Carolina Numismatic

Associations, placing ads in their bi-monthly publications. The show is being listed in the Coin Dealer Calendar as well as the Coin Show & Auction Guide that goes out with *Numismatic News* and *Coin World*. We will be using various forms of social media to advertise, and I am still soliciting help from the younger members of our large local [Charlotte] coin club. A coinzip.com ad has also been placed.

Brochure – Bill is diligently assembling the Convention Brochure with all activities listed and sporting some lovely coppers.

EAC 2026 is shaping up and we hope to see you all there. In the meantime, please keep those suggestions coming (especially the Eckberg ones!) on how we can make it an even better experience.

See you in Charlotte!

Jerry Sajbel, EAC 1106

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EAC 2026 HOSPITALITY DINNER DONATIONS

Dear Convention Attendees, we are planning on a welcoming Reception starting at 5 PM on Thursday night. We plan to have a delicious buffet dinner including a much-requested carving station. This is one of the largest expenses for our Annual Convention and we very much appreciate your donations in any amount. Please

consider a small (or Huge) contribution to the Annual Convention dinner.

Please use the envelope enclosed with this issue.

You can also donate at <https://www.eacs.org/members/>.

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2026 EAC LARGE CENT HAPPENING

Allen Ross

1793 S-1 R4

First cent struck by the newly established United States Mint. The AMERI. reverse exhibits progressive die cracking that ultimately results in a cud. A historically significant variety marking the beginning of federal cent coinage.

1796 S-84 R3

A Liberty Cap cent with limited die progression but strong aesthetic appeal typical of the 1796 issue. An available yet challenging variety representative of the type.

1800 S-200 R3

This variety develops a prominent die crack across the lower obverse that continues onto the reverse, resulting in a dramatic die progression. No prior appearances at

an EAC Happening are known.

1822 N-7 R4

Notable for the “ghost leaf” below IC in AMERICA, which appears as a faint outline in the early die state and nearly disappears in later states. A challenging R4 variety, particularly difficult to locate in high-quality condition.

1823 N-2 R2

The normal date variety for the year. The obverse develops a sequence of small rim breaks, culminating in a cud extending into the field and touching the outer point of star 6. Six distinct die states are identified by Grellman.

1835 N-3 R3

A conditionally challenging die pairing characterized by multiple obverse and reverse die cracks, obverse rim

crumbling, and the formation of small cuds.

1845 N-7 R5-

The rarest variety of the year. Displays a minor reverse die crack.

1846 N-25 R5

An extremely rare Tall Date variety. No uncirculated examples are known.

1857 N-4 R1

Small Date variety, along with N-2. The N-3 and N-5 are proof-only issues, making N-4 one of the final large cents struck for circulation and the concluding variety of the series.

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The 2026 Half Cent Happening Varieties

Tim Skinski

An annual EAC convention event since 1986, I am very pleased to announce that the 41st edition of the Half Cent Happening will be held at the upcoming April/May 2026 convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. We are expecting that Mike Packard, our Half Cent Happening Emeritus, will have concluded his national book tour and will be joining us in the Tar Heel State! As is our tradition, six varieties have been selected for this year’s Happening. They are:

1793 C-4, R3

The C-4 is one of the four 1793 varieties. It is distinguished by the very long ribbon tails on the reverse, which is unique to this variety. On the obverse, it shares the so-called “Hooked Bust Line” attribution with the C-3 variety. The C-4 last appeared at the 2010 Happening.

1794 C-1b, R5+

The C-1b is the scarcer Small Edge Letters sub-variety of the C-1. The C-1 variety is identified by the location of the bust, which is positioned relatively high in the obverse field. This is the sole 1794 “b-girl” sub-variety with Small Edge Letters. This variety made its last Happening appearance in 2012.

1803 C-3, R2

This variety is easily attributed with the spacing of the date “180 3” on the obverse and the so-called “cross-eyed zeroes” in the fraction on the reverse. As with our first variety, it also appeared most recently at the 2010 Happening.

1804 C-2, R6-

The rarest of the 1804 varieties, and the second rarest of all Draped Bust half cents, it attributable by the “Low 4” on the obverse, and the “cross-eyed zeroes” in the denominator of the fraction on the reverse. Yes, this variety shares the same reverse as the previous

variety (see 1803 C-3 above). Its last Happening appearance was in 2011.

1832 C-1, R2

There are three varieties for 1832, which all share the same obverse die and are attributed solely by their reverses. The 1832 C-1 has the same reverse as the 1831. Its reverse is distinguished by the base of a letter/number, which protrudes under the wreath leaves below “ES” in STATES. This variety returns to the Half Cent Happening after a lengthy hiatus – last seen in 2002.

1834 C-1, R1

The C-1 is the only variety for this date, and is making its first appearance at an EAC convention since 2006. Will we see any altered 1834s trying to imposter as 1831s?

If you would like to volunteer to be a monitor for this year’s Happening, please contact me via email at tim.skinski@earthlink.net. I always truly appreciate experienced monitors stepping up and volunteering their time for at least part of the evening. We will often have monitors oversee a table for an hour and then participate in the Happening during the second hour (or vice versa). Please let me know if there is a specific variety, which you would like to monitor, and I will do my best to honor your request!

As usual, there is a balance of rare, scarce, and common Little Half Sisters selected for this year’s event. *All* Half Cent collectors are strongly encouraged to bring their *most interesting* examples of this year’s varieties (please note: that **grade is but one consideration**). Please plan to join us on Thursday evening, April 30 for the 41st Half Cent Happening! I very much look forward to seeing many of you in person in Charlotte.

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COLONIAL HAPPENING

Thursday April 30th 7:30 PM

Ray Williams

It's that time of year again when we copper collectors gather for our annual convention. The Colonial Happening will be held in **Meeting Room F** of the Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel. All are welcome. Even if participating in the other Happenings, duck into the Colonial Happening when you can, just to check us out.

The Happening is a time of sharing numismatic items from the pre-federal period of our country. Items brought to share will be placed under a camera to be projected on a screen for all to enjoy and comment upon. The theme

of this event will be colonial error coins. **But** please bring something...a recent acquisition, a favorite coin or paper money, a coin you'd like an opinion on, etc. Even if you don't bring something, bring yourself for a time of sharing and fun! No one will handle your coins except you and the person (me) operating the camera.

I hope to see many old friends and yet-to-be friends there. Double check the schedule upon arriving to make sure no changes had to be made. Contact me with any questions.

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CONSIDER APPLYING FOR A GARVIN FUND GRANT

There are grant funds available to anyone who has been a member of EAC for at least one year for travel or registration at a seminar or educational class, or for travel to a regional or national coin convention, or to a museum featuring coins of interest to EAC members, just to name a few possibilities. These funds have been set aside as a result of a donation from long time EAC member David Garvin who donated the proceeds of his copper collection at the 2005 EAC Convention. While David is no longer with us his memory lives on and his vision has enabled EAC to award several grants during

these past years. Other than the one-year membership requirement the only other condition is to subsequently write an article for *Penny-Wise* setting forth what the grant was used for and its results. Grants are usually in an amount of \$500.00 or \$1,000.00 but may vary. The financial situation of the applicant is not a consideration. For an application for a grant or for additional information please contact Lou Alfonso, *via* email: loualfonso@aol.com or *via* phone: 561-252-4001.

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CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following candidates have applied for membership in EAC since the last issue of *Penny-Wise*. Provided that no adverse comments on any particular individual are received by the Membership Committee before the April, 2026 issue of *P-W*, all will be declared elected to full membership at that time. Chairman of the Membership Committee is Bim Gander, 12770 NW Steelhead Falls Drive, Terrebonne, OR 97760.

New Members		
<u>Name</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u>Member #</u>
Kevin Van Kanegan	Chicago, IL	7177
Brian Thetley	Charlotte, NC	7178
Andy Bostick	Charlotte, NC	7179
Stephen Bodnar	Charlotte, NC	7180
Bob Pedolsky	Charlotte, NC	7181
Elliot Eng	Anaheim, CA	7182J
Brad Keefe	Boca Raton, FL	7183
Corey Adam Crowley	Easley, SC	7184
Anthony DiChristina	Waldwick, NJ	7185
Marcus Nashelsky	Iowa City, IA	7186
Ryan C. Dibilio	Huntersville, NC	7487
William Wesley McWhorter, Jr.	Spartanburg, SC	7188
Pete Cipriana	Richfield, OH	7189
John Sideris	Beechurst, NY	7190
Floyd Messina	Highland, UT	7191J
Gregory Dalew Young	Ptaskala, OH	7192
Alton F. Adkins	Fort Worth, TX	7193
Jacob Chen	Troy, NY	7194
Doug Langworthy	Rapid City, SD	7195
Randy L. Hartnell	Bellingham, WA	7196
Kelen Gailey	Dansville, MI	7197
James Davis	Burlingtonk, CT	7198
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James W. Sheets	Santa Clara, CA	7200
Kevin Ford	Urbana, IL	7201
Susan Amodeo	Albany, NY	7202
Paul Reilly	Greer, SC	7203
Eric Kibbey	Connersville, IN	7204A

Rejoining Members		
Michael S. Kopcha	Aravada, CO	2014
John A. Bricker	Loch Raven, MD	2020
Philip Segui	Mt. Pleasant, SC	5618
Steven Small	Ontario, CA	6067
Mark F. Klaus	Glendale, AZ	6749
Mike Nixon	Pearland, TX	6919

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The following article first appeared in *The Numismatist*/Reading Room online, March 2026, and is reprinted with the permission of the American Numismatic Association (*money.org*).

BOOK REVIEW

The Cents and Half Cents of Massachusetts, by Michael Packard

Amid the chaos of contract coinages in the 1780s, Massachusetts chose a different path. If private contractors could turn a profit on such arrangements, why not let the state profit instead? That decision led to the establishment of the Massachusetts state mint, Joshua Witherle director. When Witherle spread the mint operation over multiple locations, miles apart, it was perhaps inevitable that the enterprise would fail to prove profitable. But when the decision to close the mint was made, Witherle's final accounting raised as many questions as answers. All of this forms a rich historical tapestry, carefully delineated by Mike Packard in this superb reference work.

While failing to produce the massive volume of circulating coppers projected by the legislature, the Massachusetts mint did achieve two important "firsts": It was the first to adhere to the weight and purity standards for copper coin established by the Confederation Congress; and it was the first to actually use the words "CENT" and "HALF CENT" on the coins. As such, it occupies a pivotal point in American coinage history.

Anyone writing a new reference for an old, established series must deal with that series' prior authors, a sticking point which I believe Packard handles judiciously. The Massachusetts cents and half cents were first attributed in tabular fashion by Sylvester Crosby in 1875, without regard to any sense of striking order. When Hillyer Ryder numbered the varieties in 1920, he simply attached numbers and die marriage letters to Crosby's tables. This left us with sequential die pairs like 1-B, 2-F, and 3-G—not remotely the order in which they were coined. Packard admits that this "grates upon [his] sense of logic and order." But he ultimately concludes that a complete emission sequence is simply impossible. Unlike the early Philadelphia mint, no delivery records are extant for the Massachusetts coinage, and there are both interrupted die marriages and remarriages within the series. Thus, I believe his decision to retain the Crosby/Ryder numbers was eminently reasonable. To have renumbered the series would have involved learning an entirely new shorthand, not to mention that, for the veteran collector of Massachusetts copper, "Ryder 3-G" is probably as solidly entrenched as "Sheldon 48" is for the early cent collector.

When Packard proceeds to his own attribution guide for the series, he rises head and shoulders above his predecessors. This is a comprehensive catalog, in which each variety receives a two-page writeup, complete with enlarged color images of the obverse and reverse, magnified images of key attribution points, and a narrative discussion of each die, plus comments on die states and rarity. These are "fresh" images, in high-quality digital photography, something that wouldn't have been possible until very recent times. Printed on high-quality, glossy paper, this guide is very easy on the eyes.

Between Crosby and Ryder, four contemporary counterfeits crept into the numbered series, varieties which have recently been posited as patterns, instead. Packard presents a closely-reasoned argument for continuing to regard these as counterfeits. He also provides a color catalog of modern copies and replicas. His table of rarity ratings goes beyond simple numbers to include the grade above which any given variety should be considered tough. There are R6's tough above Good and R6's tough above Fine. If you want to know which is which, you need to have this book.

Since the two engravers hired by the mint, Joseph Callender and Jacob Perkins, are known for certain nuances of style, and the date when Perkins replaced Callender is likewise known, Packard decided to create die linkage plates segregating the 1788-dated work of each engraver. This is an unprecedented advance in scholarship, and provides at least a hint as to when in that year particular varieties were coined.

The book also includes an element of romance, in the story of the voyages of the ships *Columbia* and *Lady Washington*, known to have departed the port of Boston on September 30, 1787 with Massachusetts cents and half cents aboard. One rare variety of Massachusetts cent is known to have turned up in the 20th century, in places visited by those ships in the 18th. Are these two facts connected? Packard presents the story in intriguing detail, and lets the reader decide.

Finally, there are supplemental biographical notes on the men associated in one way or another with the Massachusetts mint—one-to-two-page bios on the principals, shorter notes on lesser mint workers, simple birth and death years for otherwise-anonymous laborers. All

of these people contributed in some measure to the creation of this fascinating series of early American copper coins, and Mike Packard's love for the series shines through in these tributes. For anyone interested in the

"cradle age" of coinage in the newly-independent United States, this book is a must.

Harry E. Salyards

* * * * *

SEARCHING FOR RULAU'S MISSING 800 NUMBERED HARD TIMES TOKENS

Ray Rouse

In Russell Rulau's ninth edition of his *Standard Catalog of Hard Times Tokens 1832-1844*, he uses the numbers 800 to 820 to include many additional political campaign tokens of the era with the items normally recognized as Hard Times Tokens by other authors of Hard Times Token books such as Lyman Low and Q. David Bowers. In doing so he skips numbers 809, 813, and 816. Why is this?

A glance at the HT 800 numbers on pages 28 and 29 of Rulau's book shows disarray. The second column of page 28 reads from the top 800, 801, 803, 79, 79A, 79B, and finishes with 802. The first column of page 29 starts with a written description of HT 802 and the rest of that column reads 804, 805, 806, 807, and 808. This all looks normal with a picture for 804 being above its description. However, a closer look finds that the picture above the description of 805 is that of 806 while the picture for 805 is above the description for 806. Confusion! Nor does it end. There is no 809 at the bottom of the column and the second column reads: 810, 810A, 810C, 812, 811, 811A. Confusion!

Page 30 is a little better. There is no HT 813 or HT 816 included on the page as we would expect. What he has seems straight forward and reasonable. Can we make sense out of all of this?

Rulau gives us a clue. At the top of page 30 he tells us that "DeWitt lists eight additional minor varieties of this token as WHH 1840-29 through 1840-36. These are unimportant variations, showing that Gardiner used many dies to create his campaign pieces, changing the placement of straps, buttons, etc."¹ What is Rulau telling us?

Apparently, Rulau wanted to list the "MAJOR" variations of these political tokens found in DeWitt's work in his own Hard Times Token book but not the "Minor" variations. Taking Rulau at his word means, for example, that while tokens WHH 1840-29 through WHH 1840-36 should NOT be included in his book, as noted above, it follows that both WHH 1840-28 and WHH 1840-37 (the numbers before and after the ones to be left out) should

be included. They are. WHH 1840-28 is Rulau's 811 and WHH 1840-37 is Rulau's 812. Both tokens are listed on his page 29.

Obviously, after having HT 812 as the highest number on page 29, the first token shown on page 30 should be Rulau's number 813. While Rulau lists no 813 token, it is certainly not from superstition, as Rulau lists Hard Times Tokens using numbers 13, 13R, 113, 213, 313, and 413 in his book. Since DeWitt's WHH 1840-51 is 814, it appears that Rulau is closely following DeWitt's work, selecting the "Major" varieties as they occur and ignoring the less important tokens. Thus, it follows that Rulau's HT number 813 should be a major variation after WHH 1840-37 and before WHH 1840-51. There seem to be several likely candidates. But wait a minute. WHH 1840-43 is Rulau's 817, WHH 1840-53 is his 818, WHH 1840-46 is his 819, and WHH 1840-27 is Rulau's 820. Confusion again, these tokens ARE NOT in any numeric order based on DeWitt's work. So where does that leave us?

Let's try resorting. The first token in the second column on page 28 is Rulau's HT 800, an 1840 Martin Van Buren token MVB 1840-10. The second token in the column, HT 801, is a Martin Van Buren token MVB 1836-2. The third item in the column is listed as HT 803 (note this is not HT 802 which is at the bottom of the page) but it is a Martin Van Buren token, MVB 1836-3. This is followed by a Henry Clay token HT 79 and its variations. Then listed as HT 802 is another Henry Clay token HC 1844-25, whose written description follows at the top of the next page. Page 29 continues with Henry Clay tokens used for Rulau's HT 804, 805, 806, 807, and 808. It seems we have switched from "important" Martin Van Buren tokens to "important" Henry Clay tokens. At the bottom of the column, we switch again, this time to "important" William Henry Harrison tokens. This still causes much confusion because the tokens are both numbered irregularly in Rulau's book and some of Rulau's numbers are being skipped. Still, William Henry Harrison's tokens are used to complete the section.

With a possible pattern established, “important” Martin Van Buren tokens, followed by “important” Henry Clay tokens, followed by “important” William Henry Harrison tokens, we can now make a guess at what Rulau’s missing token numbers 809, 813, and 816 could have been. Strangely, the easiest one to identify is the last, Rulau’s HT 816, it is all there for everyone to see. Rulau’s carefully written description of HT 815 (the token before his presumed HT 816) shows clearly that his HT 815 is also DeWitt’s WHH 1840-50, but at the end of this description, Rulau list it as “(DeWitt WHH 1840-54 ...)”² Now certainly this is an error, because WHH 1840-54 has a Civilian Bust of Harrison on the reverse instead of Harrison in a military uniform. There are at least two possible explanations for this error. One: Rulau simply typed 54 instead of 50 on his typewriter; and two, he was thinking ahead as to what his HT 816 would be. As the 4 and the 0 are far apart on the typewriter I think the second possibility is much more likely. If so, since the change on the obverse of the token from a log cabin to a civilian bust as in WHH 1840-54 is certainly “major,” and would thus call for a new Hard Times number, and with it following Rulau’s HT 815, it is probable that he intended WHH 1840-54 to be his next token, his HT 816.



Going back to one of the earlier missed numbers, HT 809, I note that although this number is after the “important” Henry Clay tokens but before the “important” William Henry Harrison tokens, it is surely a Henry Clay token; otherwise, it would start the William Henry Harrison listings and I can’t imagine Rulau forgetting the first token that he was using to start a new group. Rulau tends to place tokens in into three groups: Hard Times Satirical Tokens (numbers 1-83); “important” political tokens (numbers 800-820); and Hard Times Store Cards (numbers 98+). Within these large groupings there are smaller ones. For example, within Hard Times Satirical Tokens, many of the “NOT ONE CENT” tokens are grouped together using numbers HT 35 to HT 60; many sailing ships are found with

Hard Times numbers 14 to 24; and William Seward and Gulian Verplank tokens are grouped together, possibly because they use the same portrait for both men.³

Thus HT 809 would be another Henry Clay political token from DeWitt’s list of Clay’s 1844 presidential campaign. Now Rulau has already used many of these tokens for his Hard Times 804, 805, 806, 807, and 808 numbers. Rulau’s last one, his HT 808, used DeWitt’s number HC 1844-37. This is significant because DeWitt’s 1844 Henry Clay token numbers end with HC 1844-42. (they are followed by DeWitt numbers for Henry Clay Medalets, Buttons, *etc.*) The only candidate for Rulau’s HT 809 that I can find is HC 1844-39, which has a new inscription, “PRESIDENT, HENRY CLAY 1845” on the obverse and a new eagle and the inscription, “UNITED STATES OF AMERICA” on the reverse, while the other obverses are all described as “Same as preceding.”⁵ Thus by default, HC 1844-39 should be HT 809.



That leaves only Rulau HT 813 to find. Certainly, it is a William Henry Harrison token as the numbers both before and after HT 813 are Harrison tokens. Well, it should be after WHH 1840-37, HT 812, and before WHH 1840-51, HT 814. Now again, some of these William Henry Harrison numbers between 37 and 51 were used for “minor” modifications to the tokens, and others with “major” changes were used for other Rulau Hard Times numbers. WHH 1840-43 for example was used for HT 817 and WHH 1840-46 became HT 819. Of the remaining DeWitt numbers having “major” changes, one has an eagle with TIPPECANOE on it, which is the name of the battle that made William Henry Harrison famous. Another token has a quite changed log cabin in a very different setting of trees. However, WHH 1840-44 shows Harrison on horseback leading the soldiers to fight with the Indians. As the winners live to tell the battle stories, and they are often the heroes of these tales, I am confident that in this token, WHH 1840-44, they found much of their story. It was their HT 813.

However, with the information I have, I can only suggest but not “PROVE” which tokens are Rulau’s Hard Times numbers 809, 813, and 816, so I CHALLENGE



- ¹ Russell Rulau, *Standard Catalog of Hard Times Tokens 1832-1844*, Krause Publishing Inc, Iola, WI, 2001, p 30
- ² *ibid* p 30
- ³ *ibid* p 22
- ⁴ Edmund B. Sullivan, *American Political Badges and Medals 1789-1892*, Quarterman Publications, Inc., Lawrence, MA., 1981, p 110-111
- ⁵ *ibid* p 110-111

YOU to identify and justify items that are the missing Hard Times Tokens 809, 813, and 816!

* * * * *

THE RARE BUT NOT VERY PRETTY CORNER

Jon Truskey and Tim Skinski

Recently Found: An Unattributed 1795 Cohen-3

On my endless search for some of the rarer early cents and half cents, sometimes I go for many months without seeing anything of interest in my price range. This was quite common in 2025. When I do find something, it is almost always in a lower grade. Fortunately, these finds are what make up the bulk of my column. The 1795 Cohen-3 below is the first rarity I have discovered in quite some time.

Ed Fuhrman, in his book, *The Half Cent Handbook, Liberty Cap Varieties 1793-1797*, on page 196, when discussing the Cohen-3, said, “There are so few problem-free examples that exist that most collectors will have to settle for a less than perfect specimen if they wish to own this variety. There are numerous examples like this in the world of early copper coins. Rare and ugly always seem to go hand in hand.”

I can testify to and agree with this fact. This is my second example of this variety, and both are at the ugly end of the spectrum. My most recent example is shown first.



The second example I found back in 2020. The pictures are color-enhanced to show detail.



On that same page Ed also notes that most C-3’s are in “very low grades.” As you can see, mine certainly are! Needless to say, I feel very lucky owning two of any Rarity 5+ (40 estimated) variety coins.



Of particular interest to me was the bidding history of this coin. I don't know if it was because bidding ended on December 29th, four days after Christmas (and people had already overspent that month), or if no one else recognized the variety and thus its rarity. Or perhaps its pitted condition was a turn off. In any case, bidding was low energy.

The pole and comma-like defect on this example are quite weak, almost gone. This may have confused some into believing that it was actually the more common Cohen-6 variety, thus explaining their lower bid numbers.

Of the twelve bidders, ten stopped at just over one hundred dollars. Only one other came close to submitting a serious bid for this rare example. Fortunately, my bid was five dollars higher than the competition, and thus this coin became another exciting addition to the "Rare But Not Very Pretty" collection!

An Idea and An Invitation

In the January issue, friend and fellow half cent collector, Tim Skinski, had the idea of inviting other members to submit their own rare but not-so-pretty early coppers, in an ugly coin competition for publication here in *Penny-Wise*. Tim is starting this competition off with a submission of one of his own coins and its story, below:

Tim Stkinski writes,

Attached please find the two pictures for my submission to your April "Rare But Not Very Pretty Corner" column. Also, as promised, here's the story of its acquisition:

In June 2024, Kevin Winn, Tony "Tony Tony" Anthony, and I were among the students at the "Advanced Topics in Early American Copper" at the ANA Summer Seminar in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Our instructor was Jim Carr, who has taught this class and its introductory class for several years. One of the highlights of

this class is the daily variety attribution exercise, where Jim will distribute approximately a dozen half cents and large cents to the class, who will then use their favorite guides to determine the proper attribution of the coins (or otherwise ascertain that they are counterfeit).

During our seminar, one of the example attribution coins was an exceptionally worn 1797 C-1, which was (kindly) graded in Fair-2 condition. After the conclusion of our class that week, I asked Jim whether he had any half cents for sale. I was pleasantly surprised when he offered the 1797 C-1 for sale, and we quickly agreed upon a fair price for it. My favorite feature of the coin is the TAL (Talbot, Allum & Lee) token undertype, which is clearly visible between 3:00 and 5:00 on the obverse. I thought that it was remarkable that the TAL undertype of the source coin was more visible than most of the devices of the overstruck half cent.

Thanks for the opportunity to include this in your regular column! I hope that this will encourage additional "Rare But Not Very Pretty" submissions from other EAC members.

Thanks and best regards,

Tim



Anyone else out there care to contribute?

* * * * *

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

R.W. Julian writes:

In the January 2026 issue of *Penny-Wise* there is an article by Bill Eckberg entitled “Henry Voigt – First Engraver of the United States Mint.” The title is in error and there are some problems with the text as well.

The chief coiner did in fact prepare dies for the 1793 copper coinage but he was not the first engraver at the Mint. In June 1792 one of the workmen in the coiner’s department prepared the half disme dies and probably for the disme as well. The cent dies, with BIRCH on the truncation, likely also date from then.

We do not know the name of the June 1792 workman/engraver but he was the first mint engraver beyond any doubt. Voigt was the first engraver for the regular 1793 copper coinage but that does not make him the first mint engraver. The Boudinot congressional report of February 1795 referred only to 1793 for the engraver.

The text problems begin with a sentence on page 24: “It is well-established that, despite having no previous experience, Voigt created the dies for the 1792 disme, 1793 Chain cent, Wreath cent, half cent, and Liberty Cap cent.” This statement is correct for the Chain and Wreath cents, and the half cent, but the 1792 disme and the 1793 Liberty Cap cent are doubtful at best.

According to Eckberg the disme dies were prepared by Henry Voigt in late 1792. At that time Mint Director David Rittenhouse was facing a serious problem. The chief coiner and assayer (Albion Cox) were unable to post the necessary surety bonds required by law; it was not until 1794, and bond reductions by Congress, that the two men were able to handle the precious metals.

This means that no silver coinage was then planned for late 1792 or even for 1793. The rise in copper prices during the latter part of 1792 forced Rittenhouse to concentrate on this area; at his request Congress in early 1793 did lower the weights of the copper coins so that they would not be issued at a loss to the government.

It would have therefore been pointless for the chief coiner to have prepared disme dies in late 1792. Moreover, if one compares the obverse disme die with the silver-center cent obverse die, known to have been executed by Voigt in late 1792, the difference in quality of the Liberty heads is striking. The disme head of Liberty is rather well done but the Liberty head on the silver-center cent is not. The same engraver did not do both.

Eckberg apparently assigned the disme obverse die to Voigt by circular reasoning. He seems to have de-

cidated that a possible Liberty head hub used for the half cent had originally been created for the disme obverse die. He then assigned Voigt as the disme dies engraver without proof of any kind. He also provides no proof that disme dies were even needed in late 1792.

The other problem is the engraver of the Liberty Cap cent dies. Until a few years ago it was widely accepted that Joseph Wright was the engraver. He was specifically named as the mint engraver by President George Washington and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. In addition Adam Eckfeldt stated in 1841 that Wright was the first person to occupy the post of engraver.

It is true that the known Mint fiscal accounts do not show any payments to Wright or his estate. His estate may have been paid, however, for such service by the Treasury. There is proof that this was possible but the destruction of Treasury records by British troops in 1814 creates problems for this line of research. It is also possible that Wright’s estate was paid out of the coiner’s contingent funds in 1794 or 1795 but these records are missing.

Eckberg declares Voigt the engraver of the Liberty Cap cents without a shred of real evidence. I think the remarks by Washington, Jefferson, and Eckfeldt are more telling than a presumed missing account.

* * *

Bill Eckberg replies:

Because the 1792 disme and 1793 half cent were produced from the same hub, I think it defies logic to attribute them to different men. If Julian wants to present an alternative hypothesis that fits the available evidence and makes sense, he is welcome to do so, but I don’t find one in his letter.

He raises the issue that, since no silver coinage was in the offing in 1792, why would Voigt engrave a disme pattern at that time? However, Washington had authorized the coinage of dismes and half dismes as early as July 9 (<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-10-02-0363>). Beyond that, as I have previously reported, Voigt was testing the Mint’s ability to produce a hub for the obverse devices. The test was successful, so he then created hubs for all of the 1793 coins. Why the disme? I don’t know, as no records have been found. Perhaps he created a disme because it was a reasonable size to start with.

Julian says he does not believe that the same person engraved the disme and silver center cent patterns. I agree. I have published [*The Numismatist*, January,

2025, p.36] that I have no basis to attribute the silver center cent obverse portrait to any particular person, but I doubt that it was by Voigt.

Julian is correct that someone – probably not Voigt – engraved the Judd 6 Birch cent. For lack of a better candidate, I have attributed that to Robert Birch and the extremely similar – and from the same original drawing – half dime to the same person. But Birch was never an employee of the Mint, so I’m not comfortable calling him the Mint engraver.

As Julian notes, “until a few years ago, it was widely accepted that Joseph Wright was the engraver” of the 1793 Liberty Cap cent. True, but that old notion has been discredited; I doubt that anyone who studies these things still believes it. Washington and Jefferson never appointed him. They only referred to him as “our engraver” in early October, several weeks after his death on September 13. The 1793 Liberty Cap cents and half cents were coined in July, almost two months before Wright’s death, so if he created the dies before being appointed, he would at least have expected to be paid for them, and if he had been appointed, he would have received a salary. He did not. We can exclude Wright from having engraved any coinage dies for the Mint (*P-W*, October, 2017).

My reason for assigning the Liberty Cap cent to Voigt comes from Boudinot’s 1795 report to Congress: “It was also a considerable time before an engraver could be engaged, during which, the Chief Coiner was obliged to make the dies for himself.” Again, if Julian has someone else to propose, he is welcome to do so and to provide the evidence behind his proposal.

* * *

Gene Anderson writes,

My workload the last few years has thrown me way behind in my early copper reading. But a recent retirement has allowed me to start eliminating that knowledge deficit. I just completed reading the July 2025 issue of *Penny-Wise*. Bill Eckberg’s article, “A Paradigm Shift,”

was a pleasure to read as I walked on my treadmill. Saying the article was a job well done would be a gross understatement. As soon as I finished walking, I dug out the 1793 chain cent I purchased from Jim Long in January of 2000. While my S-3 is graded only “Good,” I looked at it with renewed excitement. Thank you, Dr. Eckberg.

I should also express appreciation to Craig Sholley and John Dannreuther for their articles on the New Haven Restrike Dies. Excellent job, Gentlemen!

* * *

Jack Young writes,

At the end of my October “Authenticity Challenged Corner,” I stated “No end in sight? Likely not, as we continue to search and document more examples still in the ‘wild.’” And since then, I have added two more to the collection as follows:



The National Numismatic Certification likely dates back to the 2017 timeframe, and there was one of the counterfeit 1787 Massachusetts half cents in their bargain basement slab, too. And we saw ANACS-certified ones back then as well, but this one was certified genuine this past summer...

As I have asked in other articles, at what point will these all be considered genuine?

* * * * *

SWAPS AND SALES

EACers are invited to submit their ads for inclusion in this column. Ads up to twelve lines are free. ADS LARGER THAN 12 LINES MUST BE SUBMITTED CAMERA-READY OR AS ELECTRONIC FILES, AND PAID IN ADVANCE. A full-page ad is \$250. One-half page is \$125. Discounts are available for repeating ads. Ads should be limited to early American Coppers or tokens and books related to the same. **Deadline for material to appear in the July, 2026 issue is June 15, 2026.** All ads must include the individual membership number of a current member in good standing. Copy should be sent to the Editor, Harry E. Salyards, P.O. Box 1691, Hastings, NE 68902 or by email to hesalyards@gmail.com.

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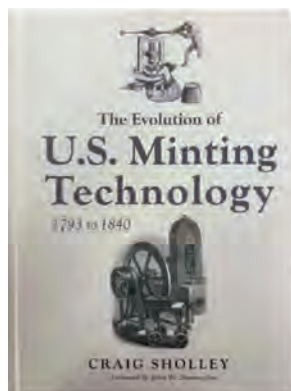
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The Evolution of U.S. Minting Technology

Craig Scholley, 2025



As part of our on-going commitment to numismatic education, we are happy to offer EAC member Craig Scholley's book on early US minting technology. Why should you buy this book? We can think of no better words than those in the foreword by noted author John W. Dannreuther:

"Using the available documents and depictions of minting equipment, Craig has coalesced his decades of analyzing the mint's records and inner workings into this work. The reader will experience a vivid depiction of mint technology and how the improvements over the years changed the coinage. From using only manpower for nearly every machine to the mechanization fueled by the Industrial Revolution, Scholley presents a timeline of the people involved and their contributions to the innovations."

We would also like to note that Craig has donated the copyright to EAC, so all proceeds from the sale of his book will go to support club activities.

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* * * * *

A New Look at Some Old Cents
The Kneass-Gobrecht Transitional Head Large Cents: 1835-1839

A new book by **Ken Laymon, EAC #4655**

These cents are examined from more of an artistic perspective than a technical one in this new book. The design changes that occurred, how and why those changes came about, and the people responsible for them, are examined. Some of the material is new and should be useful to all large-cent collectors; some may be controversial; all of it, I hope, will be interesting. Hardbound with an old-school binding, and available to EAC members at cost: \$86 post-paid. Email: k_laymon@yahoo.com.

* * * * *



British and Irish Tradesmen and their Copper Tokens of 1787 – 1804, a book by **Jon Lusk, (EAC #356)** It has been fifty years since a book dedicated to the subset of Dalton & Hamer tokens known as *Tradesmen's Tokens* has been published. The author of this work reveals discoveries concerning the issuers, their lives, names, and occupations. Tokens are pictured in large size, and in color, along with photographs of the edges unwrapped into a straight line. Variety identification photographs and availability ratings are included to assist the collector. Using inclusion criteria developed by the author, he suggests four collections of these tokens each containing from 110 to 248 pieces. This book was written for collectors, or those interested in history. Better yet, it is meant for those who are both. It is available from the author, Jon@Lusk.cc. (400 pages, hardbound, 8½ x 11 -- \$109, free shipping in US)

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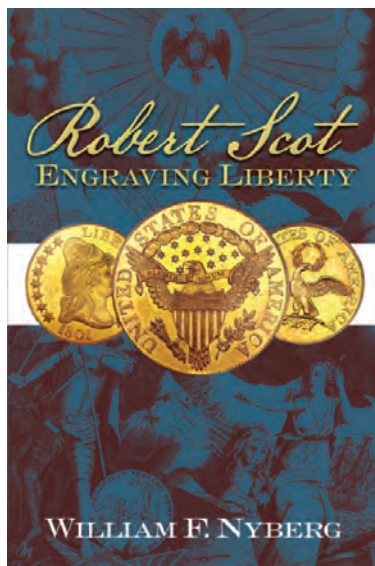
Jan Valentine, EAC #479

(719) 591-6721

ATTENTION

Any current owners of any Walt Husak coins who wish to reunite their coin with its previous 2x2s, please contact me at the above number. The Liberty Cap Foundation is committed to bringing these two together. Call me with the variety and any information as to previous owners or sales the coin was in, and I will send you any 2x2s that I can find.

* * * * *



Robert Scot: Engraving Liberty, a book by

William Nyberg (EAC #5632).

This is a comprehensive biography of the U.S. Mint's first chief engraver. Robert Scot also created important engravings throughout the American Revolution, and he was instrumental in the growth of illustrated books in early America. Complete listing of Scot's engravings including paper money, coins, seals, medals, copperplate book illustrations, maps, and federal revenue stamps. Color photographs and a bibliography of all sources. Paperback, 252 pages. Available at the publisher American History Press, along with Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other internet retailers.

Tom Webster, EAC #5752

webs1873@gmail.com

(269)217-7700

Connecticut and Vermont Copper Material Wanted for my Personal Collection

Vermont 1785 RR-1 wanted, Immune Columbia variety, top CC preferred, nice color, legible, quality planchet, please offer.

Connecticut and Vermont Copper Counterfeits or Electrotypes, please offer.

Connecticut varieties struck in an off metal, likely brass. Any variety, please offer.

Unpublished Connecticut Copper reference material that may be useful.

* * * * *

**John F Conour 419-410-6461 jrcon1799@sbcglobal.net
Available to EAC Members for \$85.00 including shipping**

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* * * * *

Ed Fuhrman, EAC #4715

167 Depew St., Dumont, NJ 07628.

(201) 281-1448

Guitarman68@optonline.net

New Books for Half Cent Collectors: *The Half Cent Handbook* series:

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Half Cent Handbook: Liberty Cap Varieties 1793-1797, 8 1/2 x 11 hardcover, 253 pages, \$125

Half Cent Handbook: Errors and Oddities, 8 1/2 x 11 hardcover, 182 pages, \$115

Half Cent Handbook: Ultimate Grading Guide, 6x9 softcover, spiral bound, lightweight and easy to carry for quick reference, 137 pages, \$35

Half Cent Handbook: Ultimate Attribution Guide, 6x9 softcover, spiral bound, lightweight and easy to carry for quick reference, 143 pages, \$50

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* * * * *



Half Cent Attribution Guide Makes identifying Half Cents easy. Book was awarded EAC Book of the year 2016. Large photos with all attribution points clearly illustrated. With each book ordered a quick finder Small format guide is included. (a must have tool)

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Michael Demling 1750 Zion Rd Suite 106A Northfield NJ 08225
EAC # 781 mdemling@mdaarchitects.com

* * * * *

Massachusetts Coppers Attribution Guide Just like the NJ Copper Guide this publication covers both Mass Cents and Half Cent. 228 pages in 10 chapters outlining proven methods for easy attribution. Also four chapters with large photos showing Obverse and Reverse die combinations for both cent and half cents. Order yours today.



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* * * * *

Allan Davisson, EAC #3299 (Davisson's Ltd) P.O. Box 323 Cold Spring, MN 56320

British Trade Tokens have been a speciality of ours since the 1980s. Our auction catalogs each feature a changing array of these issues. Our emphasis is on what Americans call the "Conder" series. (Though James Conder was British, British collectors seem to never use his name to describe the series.)

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* * * * *

Ray Rouse, EAC #2675 7568 Regency Lake Drive Boca Raton, FL 33433
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* * * * *

Garry Apelian, EAC #2686 910 Revere Road Glenview, IL 60025
(847) 414-8879 garryapelian@att.net

Wanted all Half Cent Counterstamped Coins. Any coins listed in Brunk, or unlisted. Please email me or call with what you have.

* * * * *

Peter Setian, EAC #3529 P.O. Box 570 Wilbraham, MA 01095
setcoin@mail.com (413) 552-6336 or (413) 596-9871

VINTAGE BOOKS: Please inquire if interested in purchasing any or all.

Early American Cents 1793-1814 by William Sheldon, 1949 first edition

Early Coins of America by Sylvester Crosby, 1875, Token & Medal Society reprint, 1965

The United States Half Cents by Ebenezer Gilbert (soft green cover, no date)

A Historic Sketch of the Coins of New Jersey by Edward Maris, 1881, republished 1965

"The Copper Coins of Vermont" by John Richardson, reprinted from *The Numismatist* 1962

Coin Collectors Journal, W. Raymond, 1952: Cont. Currency coinage, & Fugio vars., Newman

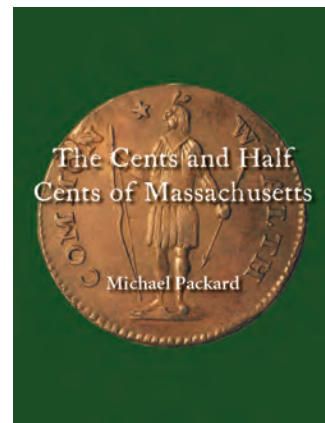
Catalog of the International Exhibition of Contemporary Medals, ANS, 3/1910, revised 1911

* * * * *

The Cents and Half Cents of Massachusetts

by Michael Packard EAC #722

This new 296 page hardcover book covers the history of the mint, its location, the people who worked there, and includes a detailed attribution guide with rarity estimates. Priced at \$120. Orders may be placed with either Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers (<https://www.numislit.com>) or Charles Davis Numismatic Literature (<https://www.numisbook.com>).



* * * * *

Colonial Coin Collectors Club (C4)

- Which of these coins was the first struck in the New World?
- Which of these were the first coins struck in what would eventually become the United States?
- Benjamin Franklin designed which coin?
- Which is the first American coin to include the famous motto, "e pluribus unum?"



If you are interested in the answers to these questions or want to know more about the coins on this page or colonial era history, check out our website at:

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XF40 PCGS



1694 London Elephant Token
Diagonals
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1766 Pitt Halfpenny
MS64 Brown PCGS



1787 Immunis Columbia Copper Pattern
Eagle Reverse
MS62 Brown PCGS



1787 New York Excelsior Copper
Eagle Left
VF35 PCGS

Ex: Troy Wiseman Collection



1818 New Spain Jola
XF40 NGC



1799 Funeral Urn Medal
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Ex: Ford



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MAY 2ND 2026, 5 PM

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CHARLOTTE, NC 28208



1793 C-4, R3



1794 C-1A, R3



1794 C-2A,



1794 C-5A,



1795 C-5B,



1803 C-1, R1



1804 C-8, R1



1808/7 C-2,



1808 C-3, R1



1809 C-2, R5



1810 C-1, R1



1825 C-1, R3



1826 C-2, PCGS
MS62BN



1828 C-2, R1



1850 C-1, R2



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CHARLOTTE, NC 28208



1830 N-9 R6+ VF25



1830 N-6 R4
PCGS AU50



1831 N-5 R4
PCGS MS63 BROWN



1831 N-9 R2
PCGS MS64+ RED & BROWN



1831 N-10
PCGS MS64 RED & BROWN



1833 N-1 R2
PCGS MS65 BROWN



1833/2 N-4 R4
PCGS MS64 BROWN



1834 N-7 R7 (PROOF-ONLY)
PCGS PR10



1835 N-2 R3
PCGS MS64 BROWN



1835 N-4 R4+
PCGS AU58



1835 N-5 R2
PCGS MS64 RED & BROWN



1835 N-9 R4
PCGS MS63 BROWN

1834 N-2 R1
PCGS MS65 BROWN,



1837 N-17 R4
PCGS MS65 BROWN



1835 N-18 R4+
PCGS AU58



1836 N-4 R3
NGC MS65 RED & BROWN



1837 N-2 R2 VF30



1837 N-5 R2
PCGS MS64 RED & BROWN



1838 N-2 R1
PCGS MS65 RED & BROWN



1838 N-5 R1
PCGS MS65 RED & BROWN



1838 N-15 R5-
PCGS MS62 BROWN



1839/6 N-1 R3+
PCGS AU53



1839 N-9 R2
PCGS MS65 RED & BROWN



1839 N-12 R4+
PCGS MS64 BROWN



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1794 S-20b



1794 S-22



1794 S-26



1794 S-31



1794 S-36



1794 S-51



1794 S-53



1794 S-57



1794 S-67



1796 S-94



1797 S-125



1797 S-131



1798 S-159



1798 S-182



1800 S-199



1800 S-211



1801 S-220



1802 S-228



1802 S-231



1802 NC-1



1803 S-252



1803 S-253



1803 S-259



1809 S-280



1814 S-295



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AUGUST 27, 2026



S-1
PCGS AU55



S-2
PCGS MS63+ BN



S-6
PCGS AU50



S-11c
PCGS VF35



S-13
PCGS VF30



S-19b
PCGS XF45



S-21
PCGS MS62+ BN



S-22
PCGS MS61BN



S-26
PCGS AU55



S-28
PCGS AU58



S-29
PCGS AU58



S-30
PCGS MS62+ BN



S-31
PCGS MS62 BN



S-33
VG8



S-36
PCGS AU55



S-38
PCGS XF40



S-40
PCGS AU50



S-43
PCGS MS62BN



S-45
PCGS AU53



S-46
PCGS MS62BN



S-50
PCGS XF45



S-51
PCGS AU53



S-65
PCGS MS63BN



S-68
PCGS VF35



S-84
PCGS AU58



S-94
PCGS XF45



S-105
PCGS MS62+ BN



S-109
PCGS AU55+



S-117
PCGS MS61 BN



S-138
PCGS MS64+ BN



S-147
PCGS AU55



S-151
PCGS AU50



S-179
PCGS MS65BN



S-202
PCGS AU53



S-214
PCGS MS62+ BN



S-235
PCGS MS62 BN



S-266 EF40



S-242
MS63



S-278
PCGS MS63BN

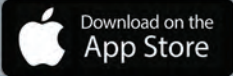


S-283
PCGS MS64 BN

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Address _____
Telephone _____ Applying for: \$1000 Scholarship _____
\$500 Research Grant _____
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 - b. Presenting a program or seminar at a coin club or coin show.
 - c. Writing articles for local, regional, or national numismatic publications.
 - d. Service in leadership positions for local, regional, or national numismatic clubs or organizations.
 - e. Volunteer work for local, regional, or national numismatic clubs or organizations in an effort to insure a successful specific program or show.
3. By signing this application, you agree that should you receive an EAC Scholarship you will prepare and submit an original article to ***Penny-Wise*** discussing the subject matter of the class or seminar including personal observations or comments. Such article will be due no later than four (4) months from the end of such class or seminar.

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2. Please submit original documents (to be returned) showing clearly the nature and amount of such expenditures that relate directly to the research being conducted.
3. By signing this application, you agree that should you receive an EAC grant you will prepare and submit an original article to ***Penny-Wise*** that details the results of the research project. Such article will be due no later than four (4) months from the completion of the research covered under the grant.

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David Huang, 20 Quail Run Lane, Glenmoore, PA 19343-2020 or oysterk@hotmail.com



Washington Before Boston medal, Baker 48

A gold medal was awarded to General Washington for his army's expulsion of British General George Howe's from Boston without firing a shot. Henry Knox had transported 55 pieces of artillery in February from Fort Ticonderoga, and they were positioned on Dorchester Heights overlooking Boston on the Morning of March 6, 1776. All of the British troops had evacuated by March 17. This was the first medal authorized by the *Comitia Americana*, the American Congress. Engraved by Benjamin Duvivier, it was produced by the Paris Mint in 1789 and struck in silver and copper as well as Washington's gold medal. Baker 48 is a restrike.

Images courtesy of an anonymous EAC member.