



# *E-Gobrecht*

Liberty Seated  
Collectors Club

2021 Volume 17, Issue 11

November 2021 (Whole #201)

*Stepping back in time to a bygone era of the Liberty Seated coin design period, both far and wide, and a little before & after...*

## After two long years, the... Whitman Baltimore Coin Show has returned (Fall Show-Nov. 18-20)!

As one of the three major coin show events each year for Liberty Seated Collectors Club enthusiasts, Baltimore is back. See details inside.

## Next LSCC online Zoom Meeting

Is scheduled for December 7th, at 9 p.m. EST, and is always open to all interested collectors.

Also see details inside.



What's all this?





# Liberty Seated Collectors Club

Uniting collectors of Liberty Seated coinage since 1973



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*Welcome to the following new LSCC Members this month:*

*Stephen Bellavia  
Jeffrey Rodriguez  
Harry Wing*



*There are currently 1031 active Subscribers to E-Gobrecht*

*Please keep your subscription e-mail address current as you could be dropped from the monthly issue if your email is twice rejected in a two-month period as non-active or non-existent.*

The *E-Gobrecht* is an award winning informal electronic publication of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC). The LSCC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the attributions of the Liberty Seated U.S. Coin series. The LSCC provides the information contained in this "electronic" e-mail newsletter from various sources "free of charge" as a general service to the membership and other subscribers with a numismatic interest. You do not have to be a LSCC member to benefit from this newsletter; subscription to the *E-Gobrecht* is available on a complimentary basis to anyone. All disclaimers are in effect as the completeness and/or accuracy of the information contained herein cannot be completely verified. Contact information for this publication can be found on the last page.



# Liberty Seated Collectors Club

Uniting collectors of Liberty Seated coinage since 1973



## President's Message

Welcome to the November issue of the E-Gobrecht, our monthly fix of all things Liberty Seated. The coin market is hot, and all eyes will be on the upcoming Baltimore show and associated auction sales. I'll be at the show all day Thursday and Friday and the LSCC will be meeting at our appointed time, 9AM on Friday, November 12.

It's been way too long since the last Baltimore show and I'm looking forward to seeing old friends along with whatever surprises can be found on the bourse floor. This is one of the major shows on the national circuit and I highly recommend in-person attendance for anyone who is so inclined. See you there! ...*Len Augsburger*

**The next LSCC online Zoom Meeting is scheduled for:  
Tuesday, December 7, 9 pm EST <https://wustl.zoom.us/j/5086565637>**

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## Editor's View From the Rim

### *Baltimore*

Baltimore, Baltimore, **Baltimore at last...**

Other than that, I am speechless or have writer's cramp. Read on elsewhere and below especially ... *PK*

**Below is your sneak peek of the highlights of the upcoming Fall issue of the Gobrecht Journal by John Frost**



The **Fall issue of the Gobrecht Journal** will be ready for mailing about November 12th, and it looks like an excellent issue with 56 packed pages inside the cover for members to peruse.

The issue leads off with the long-awaited results of the S-Mint Liberty Seated Half Dollar Survey conducted by Dennis Fortier earlier this year. Detailed results includes date-and-mint results as well as the rare die varieties reported by the membership, along with top rankings of the collections.

Len Augsburger provides new analysis of the unique Judd-110 Seated quarter pattern, along with an insightful article on "dealer code" and the Confederate half dollar.


Craig Eberhart provides a very interesting study on the 1840-O With Drapery half dime. Two other half dime articles include John Frost's

analysis of the so-called "1861/0" half dime, and Dennis Fortier reports on a "bargain" 1846 half dime obtained in the Old Orchard Collection auction. And more!

The issue wraps up with extensive coverage of the LSCC Annual Meeting, held in August in conjunction with the ANA convention. Announcements of the winners of the Kamal M. Ahwash Literary Award, the new John W. McCloskey Research Award, and the 2021 President's Award of Merit are included with the induction of a new member into the LSCC Hall of Fame, the most prestigious level of recognition bestowed by the LSCC on an individual. Minutes of the meeting along with the Treasurer's report are also detailed in this issue.


Subscribers of the E-Gobrecht who are not LSCC members may join the Club at any time. It's never too late to join and receive this outstanding issue, its contents not available elsewhere.





# The Gobrecht Journal

*The Journal of, by, and for  
the Liberty Seated Collectors Club*



The  
Liberty Seated Coinage  
*"odd couple"*  
Half Dimes & Double Dimes

Volume 47.3  
Fall 2021  
Issue #142





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**GFRC  
ONLINE  
AUCTIONS**



Integrated Auction & Retail Sales

Presenting the  
**Tennessee Collection**  
**Liberty Seated Dollar Auction Sale**

November 27, 2021 – December 4, 2021

Tenaflly Collection  
"CAC Approved  
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Starts July 31, 9:00 PM ET  
Closes August 7, 9:00 PM ET

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## Tennessee Seated Dollar Sale Highlights

[www.seateddimevarieties.com/auction](http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/auction)



**1846-O OC-1 \$1, PCGS AU58, Choice Original.** Deep indigo patina blankets the fields of this New Orleans dollar, with the centers and protected areas exhibiting lighter shades. The remaining luster is reflective, with minimal cartwheel. This is the first of four New Orleans Seated dollar issues, with successive emissions coming in 1850, 1860, and 1861. Stars to the right are softly impressed, as is typical for issue. Moreover, in the 1840s, the New Orleans Mint struggled constantly to produce well struck coinage. OC-1, the only die pair for the 1846-O issue, with a high mintmark. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) 30th Anniversary green label holder, with Gold Shield.



**1847 OC-2 \$1, PCGS AU58, Choice Original.** All Seated dollars are challenging pieces, though Bowers notes that the 1847 issue was frequently present in the 1960s Treasury releases. Such pieces were apt to be circulated, unlike the millions of Morgan dollars that had remained in Treasury vaults since the time of issue. Still, PCGS today has certified less than a thousand examples of the 1847 Seated dollar in all grades combined. This piece exhibits moderate, reflective luster that reveals pastel-shaded centers with deeper patina at the rims. A mélange of navy, russet, and spattered gray toning fill the peripheral areas. OC-2, with horizontal die lines in the northwest corner of the reverse shield. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) 35th Anniversary green label holder, with Gold Shield.



**1859-S OC-1 \$1, PCGS AU53, Choice Original.** Natural gray-gold patina is accompanied by original mint frost in the protected areas, especially on the reverse surrounding the legend and eagle. A careful 10x loupe inspection reveals a few micro hairlines in the obverse field. All star centers are defined, while some of the eagle feathers are softly impressed. OC-1, with repunching in the first two digits of the date. San Francisco dollars of this year were primarily intended for trade, as foreign merchants preferred dollars over the smaller denominations that were debased by the Coinage Act of 1853. As a result of large exports, few Mint State pieces exist. This near-MS example is a pleasing piece, uniformly toned on both sides with no major distractions, and the GFRC Choice rating is fully merited. Previously from the Dan White Collection of Liberty Seated dollars, via GFRC. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) holder.





## Tennessee Seated Dollar Sale Highlights



**1861 OC-2 \$1, PCGS AU53 CAC, Near-Gem Original.** This CAC-approved example exhibits thick gray patina on both sides, and a few ebony streaks are additionally apparent. The strike is boldly executed, with full definition of the eagle wings and lower claws. OC-2, with downward sloping date. Examples of the 1861 dollar are rarely seen today, as many pieces were melted near the time of issue to satisfy demand for smaller denominations. A quick check of the PCGS census reveals nearly forty times as many certification events for 1893-S Morgans, a remarkable situation, as the 1893-S is valued much more highly in the market. When considering quality, the situation is even more challenging, as CAC has certified only 17 examples of the 1861 dollar in all grades, with eight coins at the MS level. This Civil War-dated piece is a highlight of the Tennessee Collection and will draw considerable collector interest. Housed in a PCGS Gen 4.4 holder (2005-2011) holder with CAC approval.



**1863 OC-1 \$1, PCGS AU58, Choice Original.** Steely fields host natural gun metal gray-blue patina, and the medium, even shading is pleasing. Protected areas exhibit charcoal color, neatly outlining the figure of Liberty. While CAC did not certify this piece, it is clearly original and might well meet the CAC standard at a lower grade level, though GFRC makes no guarantee. Nicely struck, with star points easily evident and exceptional detail in the feathers and claws. OC-1, the only business strike variety. The 1863 dollar is a tough issue, with 27,200 pieces, and represents one of the more difficult dates in the Seated dollar series. As the Osburn/Cushing reference plainly notes, "1863 coins are rare in any grade." The combination of rarity and aesthetic appeal is compelling, and prospective buyers should carefully consider their bidding strategy. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) 35th Anniversary green label holder, with Gold Shield.



**1867 OC-1 \$1, PCGS AU50 CAC, Choice Original.** Partially mirrored, reflective luster radiates from silver surfaces that are decorated with coffee patina on both sides. Fields are smooth for the grade, with a few ticks evident in the figure of Liberty. Nicely struck, with nearly full detail in the stars, claws, and feathers. OC-1, with repunched date and die lines in the reverse shield. Most Seated dollars have low CAC populations, and this piece is no exception, with only 15 pieces reported in the CAC census. A quick check of the Heritage Auctions archives reveals the challenging nature of the situation - indeed, Heritage has offered but a single business strike, CAC-approved piece since 2016. This piece will be strongly contested at auction. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) 35th Anniversary green label holder, with Gold Shield and CAC approval.





## Tennessee Seated Dollar Sale Highlights



**1870-CC OC-7 \$1, PCGS VF35 CAC, Choice Original.** Uniformly shaded gray surfaces host deeper patina in the protected areas, with the stars and central devices neatly outlined by ebony toning. High points are lighter, as one would expect for a mid-grade circulated example. A few ticks are scattered over the central portion of Liberty, none of recent origin. Seated dollars represent the inaugural production of the Carson City Mint, the springboard for some of the most storied coins in the American series. Although the most collectible of the Carson City Seated dollars, the 1870-CC remains a challenging issue, with an overall mintage of 12,462 pieces. Rusty Goe's recent Carson City reference suggests a survival rate of about 5%, and the situation becomes ever tougher when considering originality - indeed, the CAC population is only 35 pieces in all grades combined. This pleasing piece will attract considerable attention among Seated dollars collectors and Carson City enthusiasts. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) holder..



**1872-S OC-1 \$1, PCGS AU53, Choice Original.** Choice, hairline-free surfaces host partially mirrored, reflective luster. Thick toning reveals varied shades as the piece is flipped under a bright light, including navy blue, gold, and maroon. Star points are clearly defined while the left claw joints blend together. OC-1, the only variety, with a small mintmark. The 1872-CC Seated dollar has traditionally been valued much more highly than the 1872-S, even though the PCGS populations are quite close - 277 pieces for the San Francisco issue versus 257 coins for the Carson City emission. While there is no arguing with the romance of a Carson City Seated dollar, contrarians might do well to consider the actual population data. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) holder.



**1873 OC-2 \$1, PCGS AU55 CAC, Choice Original.** Active cartwheels radiate from the surfaces of this AU piece. Fields are choice, smooth for the grade and hairline-free. Maroon patina swirls over both sides, a touch more intensely at the rims. OC-2, with a high date and reverse die lumps around GOD. The CAC population report notes 36 pieces in all grades. This year marks the end of the Seated dollar series. The coins circulated little in the United States, and, as most were exported, the government decided instead to produce the heavier-weight Trade Dollar, which, it was thought, would be more accepted in international commerce. The piece is a pleasing example of the design and would serve well in a type set or an EF/AU set of Seated dollars. Housed in a PCGS Gen 6.1 (2020-2021) holder with CAC approval.



## **Regional News** by **Dennis Fortier, LSCC #2016**

### **Baltimore is Back**

The Fall of 2019 was the last time we had a Whitman Baltimore Expo. Then Covid struck and there hasn't been a Baltimore show since. That, we hope, is in the past and we're ready to revel in our passion for those little round shiny things called coins at one of the best shows in the country. The Club is looking forward to all the usual Club functions; dinner, meeting, and of course the Club table to gather around. So, make your plans and be ready to enjoy the comradery of your LSCC friends and of course the hunt for that next Liberty Seated coin. See you in Balti!

Cookeville Coin Club Annual Show, October 23, is a small Tennessee show that is local for Dennis Fortier. Dennis displayed CAC Liberty Seated half dollars and gave a talk on "The Historical Liberty Seated Coinage."

Joe Casazza and John Frost hosted a Club table at the Devens, MA show, October 24. It's a local show for them and an opportunity that could not be passed up.

South Carolina Numismatic Association Convention, Greenville SC, October 29-30, is a good size

*(Continued on next page)*



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## Regional News cont.

show that is well organized. It was the Regional Teams first time at this show and Dennis hosted the Club table with a display of San Francisco half dollars and coin glass that was well received. We are booked for next year's show (the same weekend) and will be adding an educational component next year. One new member was signed up.

PAN... John Frost hosted the Club table October 29-30, and gave an educational program. Twelve people attended his lecture. His table display was a multi-denominational presentation of key and semi-key date Liberty Seated coins. Here's is John's Report about the show...

"On Halloween weekend, the **Pennsylvania Association of Numismatists (PAN)** held their fall show in Monroeville, just outside Pittsburgh. This year's show was even bigger than last year, with excellent attendance and activity each day. Brisk bourse activity, dealers reported outstanding sales, and there was steady traffic at the Club table. On display at the LSCC table was a collection of type coins, mostly keys and semi-keys of all series, half dimes through Trade dollars (see photo next page). This display was designed to accompany the educational program entitled "Why You Should Collect Liberty Seated and Barber Coinage". The program, presented by Education Director John Frost, highlighted comparisons of Seated and Barber coinage to key dates of much more common, though more widely-collected series, such as Morgan dollars, Walkers, Mercury dimes, etc. The presentation also explored topics such as artistry, challenge, and the existence of something for every budget. The presentation was recorded by David Lisot of CoinTelevision, on behalf of PAN. A very well-organized and smoothly-run show, the fall PAN show remains one of our favorites, and we look forward to returning next year!"

Joe Casazza and John Frost will host a Club table at the Mt. Kisco, NY, Coin and Collectables Fair November 14, at the Mt. Kisco Holiday Inn.

*(Continued on next page)*

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## Regional News cont.

**Baltimore:** Club Dinner, Thursday 6:30pm at Pratt Street Ale House. Club Meeting, Friday morning 9am, Rm 301, Education, TBA. A cool surprise is waiting for you at the Meeting and Club table. You don't want to miss it.

At the SCNA convention, the question was asked if anyone ever walks a coin over to (us) at the Club table. I replied, "yes, from time to time it happens"; either a dealer or Club member will walk a coin over to the Club table to see if it is of interest. Well during the packing up process at the SCNA convention, that is exactly what happened. A Club member had a rare variety that filled a hole and was offered at a fair price. It was purchased on the spot. So, yes, it does happen from time to time. Another benefit of working the Club table.

Image from the recent PAN Show in Monroeville, PA (Club table)



(END)

**Save the Date:** The next LSCC online Zoom Meeting is scheduled for:  
Tuesday, December 7, 9 pm Eastern <https://wustl.zoom.us/j/5086565637>

**Upcoming 2022 LSCC Annual Dues** will be announced in the next Gobrecht Journal. **Reminder:** When using PayPal to pay your Club dues, please be sure to add \$2.00 extra to your club dues amount to cover the convenience cost of using PayPal. Also, please use the "Friends" option on PayPal as it saves the Club other fees! Thank you.



# LSCC Upcoming 2021 Regional Events Schedule

**\*November 14 Mt. Kisco, NY Coin & Collectibles Fair** at the Mt. Kisco Holiday Inn - Club Table and Education Program (Hosts: Joe Casazza & John Frost)

**\*November 18-20 Whitman Baltimore Coin & Currency Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD** - Club Meeting on Friday morning at 9 a.m. in Room 301, Club Dinner on the Thursday evening before at 6:30 p.m. at the Pratt Street Ale House, Club Table, Educational Program to be announced (Hosts: Len Augsburger, Dennis Fortier, John Frost & others)

**\*December 7 Next LSCC online Zoom Meeting** at 9 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) with Educational Program, Link below:

<https://wustl.zoom.us/j/5086565637>

**December 10-11 The Gallatin Show, TN** at the Gallatin Civic Center, 210 Albert Gallatin Avenue - Club Table and Educational Program titled “Carson City Liberty Seated Coinage” (Host: Dennis Fortier)

Note: Updates provided as they become available, but always check the organization’s show website for further details and any last minutes changes.



(END)

## Upcoming Major Coin/Currency Auctions for Liberty Seated Collectors

**November 27 - December 4, 2021 at 9 p.m. EST** - “Tennessee Collection: Liberty Seated Dollar Set Auction Sale” by GFRC Online Auctions. (See ad on page 5 in this issue)

**November 21-23, 29-30 & December 1, 2021** - “November Baltimore Auction” in 10 Sessions spreadout over a week’s time and held in Cosa Mesa, CA & online by Stack’s Bowers Galleries. (<https://www.stacksbowers.com>) (Refer to website for full details)

**This Space Reserved for future auction event announcements**

LSCC Member Application Form at:

[http://www.lscweb.org/LSCC\\_Membership.pdf](http://www.lscweb.org/LSCC_Membership.pdf)





## The Auction Realm

by Craig Eberhart, LSCC #1348

### Completing a Liberty Seated Half Dollar Set

[Editor's Note: This month Craig embarks on a new twist to his Auction News column by presenting various perspectives about past and upcoming auctions that he hopes will provide fresh insights for E-Gobrecht readers.]

To complete a set of Liberty Seated half dollars may require the acquisition of four rare dates: 1842 with small letters reverse; 1853-O No Arrows; 1870-CC; and 1878-S. All four are expensive, but the 1842 small letters reverse and the 1853-O no arrows are usually considered non-collectibles (NC) and not realistically obtainable for most numismatists. Only four examples are known for each date and it can be years between examples becoming available. Many collectors do not count these NCs as part of a complete set.

The 1870-CC and the 1878-S can be found in auctions and are sometimes available from dealers. At least four 1870-CC half dollars and three 1878-S coins have been auctioned in the past three months:

1870-CC	PCGS	MS62	\$102,000	Stack's Bowers	August 17
1870-CC	PCGS	XF45+	26,400	Stack's Bowers	August 17
1870-CC	PCGS	VF35	7,680	Goldberg Auctions	September 27
1870-CC	PCGS	F15	4,800	Heritage Auctions	October 7
1878-S	PCGS	MS61	108,000	Stack's Bowers	August 17
1878-S	PCGS CAC	MS63	138,000	Stack's Bowers	August 17
1878-S	PCGS	MS63	117,000	Heritage Auctions	October 7

An estimated 200 1870-CC half dollars exist and less than 60 1878-S half dollars are known. A detailed book on the known 1878-S half dollars, "A Register of 1878-S Liberty Seated Half Dollars" by Bill Bugert, is available online at: <http://www.lscweb.org/BillBugertBooks/download1878S.php>

I have not found any upcoming auctions with an 1878-S, but there are several 1870-CC half dollars available over the next three months. The G6 coin in the February 6th auction is an interesting coin because it comes from the collection of John McCloskey. John was the President of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club and Editor of the Gobrecht Journal for 40 years, a length perhaps unequaled in the annals of numismatics.

1870-CC	PCGS	VF details	Heritage Auctions	Nov. 9-10, 2021
1870-CC	NGC	MS62	Stack's Bowers	Nov. 23, 2021
1870-CC	PCGS	F details	Stack's Bowers	Nov. 22, 2021
1870-CC	NGC CAC	G6	Heritage Auctions	Feb. 6, 2022

(END)





**Half Crazy - The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society - Issue #1**



1878-S MS-66 photo courtesy of Stacks-Bowers

# Half Crazy

The Newsletter of the

## Seated Half Society

November 2021, Issue #1

In this issue:

**\*Welcome letter** – SHS President Dennis Fortier

By-laws and Audit information

**\*Announcing** - Wiley/Bugert Research Award

SHS Membership Counter Stamped Half Dollars

Founding Member/Membership Count

Liberty Seated Half Dollar Survey, San Francisco Branch Mint – Results to be in The Gobrecht Journal

**\*Feature Article:** A Review of Bill Bugert's Register of 1878-S Half Dollars by Dennis Fortier

Request for Articles, stories, and photo's

## Welcome Letter

*The dream of a club for half dollar enthusiasts has become a reality.*

Welcome to the inaugural issue of "Half Crazy" the newsletter of the Seated Half Society, a new club for and about Liberty Seated Half Dollars and those who collect them. The SHS newsletter *Half Crazy*, will be published once every quarter in February, May, August, and November in the LSCC's *E-Gobrecht*.

*(Continued on next page)*



## Half Crazy - The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society - Issue #1

The SHS is an association of dedicated Liberty Seated Half Dollar devotees and specialists. My experience at club tables around the country over the last thirteen years has taught me that of all the Liberty Seated denominations, half dollars are the most widely collected within the Liberty Seated series.

The SHS is built a bit differently than traditional clubs. Thanks to the LSCC leadership, the need for the infrastructure associated with most clubs is not required here. The LSCC has generously loaned space on their website and in this publication for the needs of the SHS. As such no dues will be required, and volunteer leadership will be at a minimum. Verne Pitman has volunteered to serve as our first Vice-President, and myself, Dennis Fortier will serve as President

In addition to membership in the LSCC, a significant collection of Liberty Seated Half Dollars is required for membership in the SHS. To be a bit more clear; high grade collections are not a narrow requirement for membership. What is required is a demonstrated passion for the series at whatever level your pocket book allows. A 100 point system has been established to hopefully encompass many of the ways Liberty Seated Half Dollars are collected. Please see the club webpage for more details on the point system for membership.

Unlike the LSCC, which is open to everyone, membership in the SHS must be earned through building a significant collection of Liberty Seated Half Dollars. In years to come, it is hoped membership in the SHS will be looked upon as a numismatic accomplishment in the career of a Liberty Seated Half Dollar collector.

If you believe you qualify for membership, please contact Verne Pitman or myself to schedule an audit of your collection. All who qualify are welcome. We hope you will join our association and become a founding member of the Seated Half Society.

Dennis Fortier  
Seated Half Society President  
[ricajun@msn.com](mailto:ricajun@msn.com)

Verne Pitman  
Vice-President  
[vwpitman@gmail.com](mailto:vwpitman@gmail.com)

\* \* \* \* \*

## By-laws and Audit information

The Seated Half Society By-laws may be found on the club webpage. Although lengthy, they mostly encompass the rules by which the point system for membership are governed.

The audit Excel program is available on the club webpage as well, and may be downloaded for prospective members to self-audit prior to applying for an official membership audit. This Excel program is a date-by-date listing complete with the number of points for each date. WB numbers are to be used for more than one die marriage entry, and only one coin per WB number. Only die states that are listed in Bill Bugert's books may qualify.

Audits may be conducted physically, in person, or virtually through your PCGS/NGC Registry Set.

(Continued on next page)

**Half Crazy - The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society - Issue #1**

## The Wiley-Bugert Research Award

The Seated Half Society is proud to announce its new club award. The Wiley-Bugert Research Award. This award is for the best Liberty Seated Half Dollar research article of the year, as voted by the members. All qualified articles from the *Gobrecht Journal*, *E-Gobrecht*, and our own newsletter "Half Crazy" will be considered.

Articles published beginning in 2022 will be considered for The Wiley-Bugert Research Award. Articles published in each year that meet this criteria will be listed in the February issue (beginning in 2023) of *Half Crazy*. Voting will be conducted by email in February – March of the following year, and the winner will be announced at the ANA Convention in August of that following year.

## Founding Member/ Membership count

Anyone joining the SHS prior to the end of 2022 will be considered a Founding Member of the club. Certain well known numismatists that have, or have had, significant Liberty Seated Half Dollar collections have been granted automatic membership in the SHS. Currently our membership count is 14.

## SHS Membership Counter-Stamped Half Dollars

We want membership in the SHS to be not only a source of pride but fun too. In that spirit, we are instituting a membership counter-stamp. Any SHS member that brings a low grade (common date) Seated half dollar to club President Dennis Fortier can have it counter-stamped with "SHS, and their member number." Additionally, if you have joined before the end of 2022 you can be a Founding member and have an "F" stamped in as well. Finally, if you own an 1878-S half dollar, a star will also be stamped into the piece.

Be sure and bring it with you to shows and other gatherings, you might be asked to produce it... Sort of a "military challenge coin".



(Continued on next page)



**Half Crazy - The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society - Issue #1**

## Liberty Seated Half Dollar Survey San Francisco Branch Mint

In this month's issue of the Gobrecht Journal, Dennis Fortier will publish the results of the Liberty Seated Half Dollar, San Francisco Branch Mint Survey he has conducted throughout 2021. For the full survey results, there is still time to join the LSCC if you haven't done so already.

# Feature Article

## A Review of Bill Bugert's *"A Register of 1878-S Liberty Seated Half Dollars"* By Dennis Fortier

In June of 2020, Bill Bugert web-published his Register of 1878-S Liberty Seated Half Dollars on the LSCC website. From a forty year examination of all available information on every 1878-S example that has come to light, or been made available to Bugert (in auctions, dealer cases, and private collections) was documented.

The 1878-S is the undisputed key to the Liberty Seated Half dollar series. Bugert identifies fifty-one specific examples by "BB" number from MS-66 (shown above) to Fr-2, with detailed diagnostics and condition of each piece. Additionally, Bugert provides histories, auction records, and provenances as much as possible on each individual piece.

Up until now, such an example specific study has been reserved for grandiose rarities with just a handful of examples known. A far less cumbersome exercise for the numismatist and a playground of the rich.

Bugert also provides, a see-at-a-glance chart of the number of examples in each grade, minting background information, certification numbers, detailed diagnostics common to the issue, as well as some knowledge of coins that have been "cracked out" of TPG holders and put into other holders. Photographs of almost every example are found on each individual example's page. As could be expected, the photographs have a wide range of quality depending on what was available for reference.

Found below is a passage from Bugert's Registry which gives insight into how lovers of Liberty Seated Half Dollars feel about this significant rarity.

*"Owning an 1878-S half dollar in any condition entitles you to informal membership of a very select group of elite collectors. Few collectors have or now own an 1878-S half dollar and, by owning one, you set yourself apart from many others. Simply put, few are available, and they are expensive, often*

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## Half Crazy - The Newsletter of the Seated Half Society - Issue #1

*outside the financial resources of most collectors. Even some of the famous coin collections lacked an 1878-S or had a low grade or problem coin. For example, Eric P. Newman did not have one, Anderson-Dupont had a damaged coin, and it was missing from the Garrett Collection. All 1878-S half dollar owners I know are immensely proud to admit they own one."*

No one can doubt Bugert's devotion to the half dollar series after publishing five books, to date, detailing every die marriage known to this important numismatist. A historical reference detailing every known example of this significant key date must be taken seriously by numismatists, scholars and collectors. It is an essential "read" for every collector of the series, even if one never expects to actually own an example.

You can find Bill Bugert's "*A Register of 1878-S Liberty Seated Half Dollars*" at:

<http://lscweb.org/BillBugertBooks/Bugert-1878-S-Half-Dollar-Register.pdf>

## Request for content

Any publication is only as good as the content it gets from its members. Articles, stories and photos are welcome and encouraged. Please submit to this editor, Dennis Fortier at: [ricajun@msn.com](mailto:ricajun@msn.com).

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## The Curious Collector by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

### Pitter Patter About Patterns

Liberty Seated collectors tend to not discuss pattern coins, and it's understandable why. They are expensive, and no one is going to see cases full of pattern coins at a typical coin show. More typically you see a piece here and there in dealer offerings, perhaps a small group if a dealer specializes in patterns, but such dealers are few and far between. Even if pattern coins are generally available, no one is quite sure how to collect them. It's not like Whitman issues a coin folder with a list of the ones you are supposed to acquire.

Some years ago I came on the idea of collecting one each of every major design type within the Seated quarter pattern series. It's about seven or eight coins. Probably I was influenced by the old saying that every collection should contain at least one pattern coin. You can be sure that saying was made up by someone who had pattern pieces to sell. In any event, I bought the first coin from a self-proclaimed "market maker" in the series, a nice toner in PR66. I gave up on the series after a few failed attempts to acquire some of the tougher pieces, which exist in single-digit quantities. The PR66 got offered back to the dealer who sold it, and failed to attract even a lowball offer. So much for "market maker" status. I put the piece in a Heritage sale and took a \$100 loss on it. In my view the \$100 represented the cost to "rent" a rare coin for a few years.

Today I own only a single pattern piece, a Judd-158 1854 pattern cent that features the Liberty Seated design. The workmanship is crude and represents an intermediate step in the die production process. Reduced by a lathe from an 1854 dollar die, the die bears circular lathe marks that, in normal production, would be smoothed out. I enjoy the piece as a curiosity – who ever heard of a Liberty Seated "cent?" These dies were produced in order to test different alloys for coining, none of which were adopted, and the coiner was more interested in testing different compositions than in producing neatly finished dies.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com





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Another approach to patterns is to collect circulated pieces, which do occasionally show up from time to time. Recently Mark Borckardt shared with me an image of a low-grade “Paquet” pattern quarter from 1864. The Paquet designs are well-known, and an 1861 Paquet \$20 (graded MS67 by PCGS and certified by CAC) was sold by Heritage at this year’s ANA for \$7.2 million. The piece Mark showed me cost considerably less, \$1092.50, when sold in September 2003 by Superior (lot 2793, illustration from the Superior catalog). I’m told this will be in an upcoming Heritage sale, though I don’t see it listed yet. In any case it must certainly be the most affordable example of this design type. The Heritage auction archives note a number of lower-priced pattern pieces, including an 1868 J-646 dime, evaluated as “net PR20” by ANACS, which noted the piece is corroded. Indeed it is, and it’s hard to appreciate a coin like this even with the relatively low price tag of \$411.25. This piece sold during the 2013 ANA convention.

John Frost has a mini-collection of circulated patterns, including an 1875 20c J-1407. It’s easy to understand how this might have circulated at the time. How closely do you look at your pocket change? Could you pick out a random states quarter with a minor design modification? Likely not. Granted, we have a lot more different designs in change today, but the point is that most users go by a quick look and feel. A coin like John’s had the right color, the right size, and the right picture of Liberty on the front. There wasn’t much need to look more deeply than that. John also has a couple circulated two-cent patterns, and, with copper coins, these are even less likely to be looked over. Imagine accepting such a coin in a 19th century retail establishment – there was probably not much light, and examining a coin that is dark to begin with would not be a terribly successful endeavor.



For those who have collected Liberty Seated patterns, feel free to reach out and share further thoughts on the subject, and I’ll be back next month with more observations on other aspects of Liberty Seated coinage.



## Quarter of the Month

by Greg Johnson, LSCC #1460

### Die Marriages of the 1841-O Quarter

Collecting Liberty Seated quarters by die marriage is always challenging. The concerns mentioned last month about the often-poor die condition, inconsistent strikes, and varying amount of detail even on newly minted coins, especially early in the series, makes the effort especially difficult. And especially interesting! At some point between 10 and 15 years after I started assembling a die marriage set of 1841-O quarters, I concluded that “The Comprehensive Encyclopedia of United States Liberty Seated Quarters” (Briggs, 1991) lists eight of six existing die marriages. That was speculation, to be sure, as proof that something does not exist lies somewhere between elusive and impossible.

So, it was with surprise and great interest, that on an infrequent visit to eBay a few months ago, I spotted a coin that appeared to be die marriage 4-E from the book. A coin for which I’d not seen a single example in more than 17 years of searching. A coin for which there was also only a single image of a low-grade piece in the book. It features a “Broken O” mintmark which looks about  $\frac{3}{4}$  polished off the die. Both that feature and the mintmark position indicated that this was indeed the elusive 4-E die marriage.

There is a scene in the movie “Raiders of the Lost Ark” in which Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) opens the lid to the crypt which holds the Ark of the Covenant and sees that it’s filled with snakes. Snakes being his Achilles heel, he says with some dramatic effect, “Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?” I remembered that scene as I viewed the 1841-O online and said, without any discernable dramatic effect, “Mint State. Why did it have to be Mint State?” For those who may not be familiar, mint state seated quarters are not cheap. The 1841-O issue, in particular, usually connects a four-figure price tag to mint state coins that are not attractive, or at the very least have limited eye appeal. The pricing also makes a die marriage set of mint state coins a ridiculously resource intensive project. I prefer to fill the set with XF coins when they are available, but the fact is you need to take what you can get for many of the examples.

Lamenting the cost, I ordered the coin and it appeared as scheduled a few days later. In hand and under magnification it became clear that the coin was not, in fact, the 4-E die marriage. It matched every single diagnostic listed in the book for die marriage 3-D. Except that I already had a nice example of 3-D. Or so I thought. Side by side comparison was convincing. These coins represent two different die marriages. There are a few things to conclude: 1) the new acquisition is the 3-D listed die marriage; 2) the old coin I’d thought was 3-D is a new, unlisted die marriage (not one of the eight); and, 3) I’ve still have never seen an example of the 4-E die marriage.

The two coins discussed are pictured on the next page. Note the mintmark positions are both “slightly right of center”, but one is more to the right than the other. Reverse E (not picture here) features a precisely centered (but partial) mintmark as shown in the book. Another diagnostic for the 3-D is that it is “Very weakly struck on the eagle’s left thigh and left feathers,” as is obvious from Figure 1. The unlisted die marriage, shown in Figure 2, is perhaps the most completely realized 1841-O quarter I have seen. That is, it has complete, strongly struck details, especially for a coin that grades Choice XF in terms of wear.

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Figure 1 - 1841-O (Briggs 3-D)



Figure 2 - 1841-O Unlisted Die Marriage (newly discovered)



There is almost always something interesting to find among the New Orleans quarters!  
So Happy Hunting! {Images courtesy of HA.com}

(END)





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*Sharing information is a goal of this newsletter and you need not be an experienced or column writer to submit material of interest to others. "This is your monthly digital publication. It is what you make of it!"*

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