



Liberty Seated Dollar News and Information

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Attributing Proofs vs. Business Strikes



As we did our research for our book on Liberty Seated Dollars, one of the interesting facts that came to light was the number of coins in 3rd-party grading holders that are mis-attributed as being either proofs or business strikes. This isn't a big problem for most, but if you are a focused collector who wants a set that's truly business strike, or truly proof, it becomes a big issue. Prior to the publication of our book (references 1 and 2), there was no truly reliable reference for identifying the die associated with the two formats. Now there is!

We picked 1859 as a good example year. We found no evidence that the 1859 proof dies were used to strike business strikes. However, in doing our review of the coins in the Heritage archives we found 12 different proof coins that were certified as business strikes. This was out of a total of 96 coins certified as business strikes – not a very good average if you're relying on the certification to verify that your coin is truly a business strike. Most of the mis-attributed examples were in the XF-AU grade range, but they varied from as low as VG to as high as MS61.

The photos on page 1 are courtesy of Heritage Auctions. They picture an NGC PR67 example sold in 2009. This same coin was later re-certified. It now resides in a PCGS PR67 holder with a CAC approval. This coin is currently among the finest known examples of the date, exceeded only by a single PR67+.

Comments or suggestions for future articles are always welcomed. Our contact information:

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