



We normally meet at the El Segundo Library on Mariposa Avenue, West of Sepulveda, South of LAX. Next meeting: Thursday, July 9, 6:30 PM

1859-64 INDIAN HEAD COPPER-NICKEL CENT

Article requested by member, Bernie Malis



There was nothing penny-ante about the one cent piece in the mid-19th century: Its buying power was substantial. The famed King Ranch in Texas, for example, came into being in 1853 when steamboat captain Richard King bought 15,500 acres for just \$300, less than two cents per acre. For working-class Americans, 10 cents an hour was a living wage, so people understandably watched their "pennies" closely.

By the 1850s, many Americans actually were clamoring to have the cent's clout diminished. What bothered them, however, wasn't its buying power but its size: The copper cent then being minted was almost as large and heavy as today's half dollar, and many had come to consider it simply too big for their britches.

The United States Mint responded to this concern in 1857 when it discontinued the large cent and half cent and introduced the nation's first small-size cent, the Flying Eagle design. But it soon became obvious that the new cent, featuring a portrait of an eagle in flight, was a less-than-perfect solution: Because of deficiencies in its design, it often emerged weakly struck, especially at the eagle's tail and wingtip.

The Flying Eagle cent had barely begun to circulate when Mint Director James Ross Snowden instructed Chief Engraver James B. Longacre to start preparing new designs, one of which would be chosen to replace it. Longacre must have felt mixed emotions at this assignment, for while he undoubtedly welcomed the chance to fashion the new design, the Flying Eagle portrait about to bite the dust was also his.

Ambivalent though he might have been, the chief engraver threw himself into the task with remarkable zeal, creating more than a dozen pattern cents. Many of these were refinements of the

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1859-64 INDIAN HEAD COPPER-NICKEL CENT

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Flying Eagle coin, with modifications meant to make it easier to strike. On some, for example, the eagle's tail and wingtip were shortened and moved away from the obverse's rim; that way, they didn't appear directly opposite the wreath on the reverse that had caused the weak-strike problem in the first place.

Given the volume and variety of these patterns, 1858 may well have witnessed the striking of more different U.S. cents than any other year. And many, if not all, reached the public, or at least the collecting public since the Mint put them up for sale in sets of 12 different kinds.

At one point, Director Snowden suggested that Longacre fashion a head of Christopher Columbus for the cent. The chief engraver replied that while the idea was "entitled to consideration," it seemed likely to stir opposition, for "how can it be relieved of any of the objections that have theretofore prevailed against the introduction of the head of [George] Washington upon the coinage of the United States?"

In the end, Longacre came up with an alternative that Snowden liked even better: a portrait of an Indian girl or more likely a Caucasian wearing a feathered headdress. The Mint director chose this design to replace the flying eagle with the start of production in January 1859, paired with a simple laurel wreath on the reverse not only for aesthetic reasons, it would seem, but also because the combination had the lowest relief of all the ones proposed. Simplicity is the hallmark of the coin: Aside from the Indian portrait, the obverse bears only the date and the inscription UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, while there's nothing on the reverse except the wreath and the words ONE CENT within it.

An oft-repeated story has it that Longacre modeled the "Indian" after his young daughter, Sarah. Evidence suggests that this is pure fantasy: Researchers have found drawings of virtually the same female head in Longacre sketchbooks from 10 years earlier, always with the same adult proportions and the same long "Greek" nose. And the artist himself referred to this profile in letters and official memoranda as being that of the Venus Accroupie, or "Crouching Venus" a Greco-Roman statue displayed at that time in a Philadelphia museum.

Whatever the source of his inspiration, it's clear that his idea was indeed inspired, for the Indian Head cent won immediate and enduring acclaim from the American public. In his book *Numismatic Art in America*, Cornelius Vermeule hails it as "perhaps the most beloved and typically American of any piece great or small in the American series."

"Great art the coin was not, but it was one of the first products of the United States Mint to achieve the common touch and to identify itself with the transitions from frontier to industrial to social expansion during its decades of circulation..."The Mint could not have chosen a more momentous time to introduce the coin.

1859-64 INDIAN HEAD COPPER-NICKEL CENT

(Continued from Page 2)

It entered the nation's commerce on the eve of the Civil War. Perhaps in anticipation of the coming crisis, in 1860 Mint Director Snowden sought and obtained permission to add a national symbol— a small federal shield at the top of the coin's reverse. That same year, the laurel wreath gave way to a thicker oak wreath.

Copper-nickel Indian Head cents were minted annually from 1859 through 1864, with a total of about 158 million being made all in Philadelphia. Proofs were struck each year as well. The series contains no great rarities, and the only major variety is an 1860 cent on which the Indian's bust is **pointed, rather than rounded**. Mint-state examples are relatively abundant in grades up to MS-65. When grading this design, the first places to show wear on the obverse will be the hair above the ear and the curl to the right of the ribbon; on the reverse, check the bow knot. Because the series is so short and has no real "stoppers," many collect it by date. Many others prefer to collect it by type, acquiring one example of the 1859 and one to represent the years from 1860 through 1864, when the reverse was different.



Pointed Bust



Rounded Bust

Like its Flying Eagle predecessor, the Indian Head cent started out as a copper-nickel coin, made from an alloy whose light color led to its being called a "white" cent. War-related hoarding caused the Mint to switch to a cheaper bronze alloy in 1864 and also to reduce the weight by a third, resulting in a thinner coin much like the cent we know today. But the Indian Head portrait remained in use for half a century before giving way to the Lincoln cent in 1909.

HOW TO SPOT COUNTERFEIT MONEY

By: Wise Bread Article requested by member, Lou Block

It used to be that spotting a “good” counterfeit bill was impossible for ordinary people. If it was good enough to pass the “look and feel” test, then it was going to take an ultra-violet light or a magnetic ink detector. But for the past ten years, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing has been making bills that are easy to check.

The amount of counterfeit money in the US is low enough that most people feel safe taking money with barely a minimal check for counterfeits. Does it look and feel like money? Then it probably is. But have you ever gotten a bill where something—didn’t seem right? Ever wished you could quickly check to see if it was good? Well, here’s how—

Step 1) Look and Feel

This is as far as most people go, and it’s good enough most of the time. US bank notes are printed on special paper that’s 75 percent cotton and 25 percent linen. The linen gives it an extra stiffness that’s distinctive. There are also red and blue fibers imbedded in the paper. Bank notes are printed with a process called “intaglio” that leaves ink on top of the paper, giving the money a distinctive texture. The printing is also very high quality, so the lines are sharp and clear, not broken, fuzzy, or blobby.

Step 2) Color-Shifting Ink

Bank notes bigger than the \$5 bill use color-shifting ink to print the number showing the denomination in the lower-right-hand corner. Just look at the numbers head-on, and then from an angle. For genuine notes the color will shift (copper-to-green or green-to-black).

You can get this far pretty discreetly. The look and feel you’re checking automatically as soon as the bill is handed to you, and you can confirm the color-shifting ink in a quick glance. Going further will require that you hold the note up to the light, which is basically saying that you think you might have gotten counterfeit money. A lot of people hesitate to do that, but it’s the next step if you want to be sure.

Step 3) Watermark

All bills bigger than \$2 now have a watermark; hold the bill up to the light to see it. For the \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100, the image matches the portrait. You can use the watermark to spot bills that have been bleached and reprinted with a higher denomination. The watermark is part of the paper and is visible from the rear of the note as well.

Step 4) Security Thread

All bills bigger than \$2 have a security thread running vertically through the bill. Like the watermark, you hold the bill up to the light to see it. The thread has text with the bill’s denomination and an image that is unique to that denomination. The different denominations have the threads in different places, again so you can spot bills that have been bleached and reprinted with a higher denomination. (The threads also glow different colors under ultraviolet light, but that’s not much help to ordinary folks.)



Watermark

Hold the bill up to the light and look for the watermark, or faint image, similar to the large portrait of President Ulysses S. Grant.

Security Thread

Hold the bill up to the light and look for the security thread, or plastic strip, that is embedded in the paper and runs vertically to the right of the portrait. If you look closely, the words “USA 50” and a small flag are visible along the thread from both sides of the note. This thread glows yellow when held under an ultraviolet light.

Color-Shifting Ink

Look at the number “50” in the lower right corner on the front of the note. When you tilt the note up and down the color-shifting ink changes color from copper to green.

Club News From June

The June meeting was called to order at 6:50 PM with 16 members, 4 new guests and 1 old guest present. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Clint McG. The membership drawing of \$3 was won by Phil Iverson but he was not present so the second drawing for \$2 was won by Eric A., which he took in raffle tickets. The minutes for March were approved, followed by the Treasurer's report.

Richard N., our vice-president, conducted the meeting upon Garn's request so that Garn would not dominate the meeting because it was Garn's turn for speaking on our Member Spotlight.

New guests Marc and his son Joshua attended the meeting to help Joshua earn the Boy Scout Coin Collecting Merit Badge. They are also planning to attend the ANA Convention in Los Angeles in August for the same purpose. Marc collected coins from an early age and sold that collection to buy his first car. Joshua is collecting Jefferson nickels.

New guests Scott and his son Tyler attended the meeting via his friend, Clint McG. Scott collects Jefferson nickels. He started collecting coins when he was 8 years old. His father had a store that allowed him to search through the change for coins to collect. He bought his 1st house with the proceeds from selling his silver dollar collection. His son, Scott, is also working on his Coin Collecting Merit Badge.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Garn A.—Talked about attending the Long Beach Coin Show with John S. While there they met Clint McG. and the three of them ended up having lunch together to round out the day. That led to a discussion about coin grading via professional coin grading service companies.

Garn A.—Announced that he brought the coin holders to the meeting that he wrote about in his President's Message. The holders fit our 50th Anniversary medallions perfectly whereas other holders we have found did not. He had enough holders to give our members one each and if there were any left over at the end of the meeting then members could take more at that time.

Garn A.—Mentioned that the Coin Dealer Newsletter (commonly called the Gray Sheet) has a special going on presently. You can get a \$13.75 pack that gives you the newsletter monthly for six months or you can get the newsletter once ever six months.

Jack vB.—Passed out a member badge to our newest member, Bernie Malis. He also had one for Rob Pahl but he was not in attendance.

George G.—Brought in two slabbed gold coins that he purchased for the purpose of selling one to the club for our annual gold drawing. A discussion of our gold drawing followed.

SHOW AND TELL

Jack vB.—Five \$2 bills. Two Federal Reserve notes, series 1976 and 2003. Three United States Notes, series 1928, 1953 and 1963.

John F.—Metal detecting in ghost towns and back East. At the ghost town he found an 1854 quarter and an 1867 Shield nickel. He found tokens, a Hudson auto badge, a State Auto Insurance badge from Indianapolis and a lot of other stuff. He also brought in a roll of new Presidential dollar coins, Guam quarters and new Lincoln pennies that he was willing to sell at face value. A great many thanks go out to John!

Eric A.—Brought in his Indian Head Cent collection in coin folders. He received 2,000 of them from his father from which he sorted out the best ones.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT—Garn Anderson

Garn grew up in Wendover, Utah, a town of about 600 people. There is another town just across the border in Nevada, named West Wendover, that is a gaming/gambling center. His first job was at a gas station where he remembers counting real coins (aka silver coins).

June Club News-Continued

He also remembers his Scoutmaster talking about coin collecting but he didn't have too much interest nor the money to invest in coin collecting at that time. He moved to New York in 1998 and that was right at the beginning of the 50 State Quarter Program, which got him started. (First release was in January of 1999.)

He went to the Long Beach Coin show and found out about the Culver City Coin Club from a now deceased member, Wilfred Gamble. Garn joined the club shortly thereafter.

A friend gave him three mint state S-mint silver dollars. It turned out that the friend's mother had worked at the San Francisco mint and purchased them while working there.

He kind of went nuts for a while, going to coins shows and auctions buying coins. Finally he needed a way to sell some of what he bought, so he rented a coin case to sell coins at an antique store. Then he started his type collection by buying a 19th Century to Present Type Collection folder and buying coins to fill the slots. His favorite coin in the collection is an 1894-S Morgan \$1 and his second favorite is a 1955 Doubled Die Lincoln cent in AU+. He has been working on the type collection for five years now.

BREAK TIME

Jack von Bloeker—Brought the goodies—Homemade Amish Friendship Bread, brownies, 3 kinds of cookies, Fritos with Spinach Dip and a veggie tray with Ranch Dressing along with sodas. George Gill added a box of See's candies to the mix. Thanks go out to both.

COIN AUCTION

We had 18 lots from six groups that were auctioned off with some lively bidding on a few lots. Many thanks guys for taking the time to bring in your coins for our auctions. Each time the club makes a few dollars on the auctions which our treasury needs and appreciates.

COIN RAFFLE

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.) 1891-P—Indian 1c-Clint McG. | 8.) 1946-P—Roosevelt 10c-John F. |
| 2.) 1955-D—Lincoln 1c-Anthony L. | 9.) 1909-P—Barber 25c-George G. |
| 3.) 1953-D—Lincoln 1c-Marc M.(guest) | 10.) 1928-P—St. Liberty 25c-John F. |
| 4.) 1905-P—Liberty 5c-Lou B. | 11.) 1956-P—Washington 25c-Geo. G. |
| 5.) 1938-S—Jefferson 5c-John R. | 12.) 1853-P—A&R 50c-Joshua (guest) |
| 6.) 1913-P—Buffalo 5c-Eric A. | 13.) 1939-P—Walker 50c-Jack dB. |
| 7.) 1944-P—Mercury 10c-Richard N. | 14.) 1948-P—Franklin 50c—Jack dB. |
| | 15.) 1969-D—Kennedy 50c-Bernie M. |

WANT LIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1.) 1917-D—Walking Liberty 50c
Obverse G, VG | 7.) 1917-S—Walking Liberty 50c
Obverse G, VG |
|---|---|

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

CORRECTION TO MAY MINUTES

George Sobodos gave the May MEMBER SPOTLIGHT program. The first sentence in the journal minutes for that section stated "Anthony started collecting.....", whereas it should have stated, "**George** started collecting.....". The editor's deepest regrets go out to George for the mistake.

President's Message
JULY 2009

In last month's letter, I ran out of space talking about the Long Beach Coin Show so that I wasn't able to fit something in that I wanted to mention. So I will start with that in this month's letter.

As I initially attended the show on Friday with John Sherman, I returned again on Saturday to take a thorough look through the poker chip inventory of one of the dealers at the show. I spent a couple of hours poring through his books of poker chips and ended up purchasing half a dozen or so. Afterwards, I walked the bourse for awhile and eventually came to Michael Aron's booth. Over the years, I have done some business with Michael in connection with his auctions and I generally make a point of stopping by his booth at the shows. This time he gave me some bad news. His next auction scheduled for Sunday, July 19th will be his last. The economy has apparently taken its toll on several of his larger buyers, which has impacted attendance at the auctions and of course auction sales. So Michael has decided to hold just one more auction then focus his attention on developing an online coin business. He will still be in the coin business just not in the coin auction business after this month.

I have always enjoyed attending the Michael Aron auctions over the years. When I initially started collecting coins and was anxiously filling holes in all my books, his auctions were one of my principal sources of coins. And when it came time for me to sell those books, again his auctions provided an excellent avenue to sell them at a fair price. His auction catalogs are the only ones that I still get in the mail and I always look forward to reading the offerings for each auction. I will miss reading his catalogs and attending his auctions. Unfortunately, I will be returning from my vacation in Pennsylvania on July 19th so will miss the final auction. I guess I will have to submit some written bids instead.

On a more positive note, I was very pleased with the attendance at our June meeting of two sets of father & son guests, Scott & Tyler and Mark & Joshua. I was trying to think back to the last time we had father & son guests and was unable to come up with an instance. So it was quite unusual that we had two sets of father & son guests on the same night. And it was fun to hear that both fathers, Scott and Mark, had extensive experience collecting and, in Scott's case, selling coins. This just shows what the great efforts to promote the club are doing...by Jack von Bloeker to get the club name and meetings into the Daily Breeze and by Steve Gornick to put up and maintain our webpage. Again, you guys are doing a great job for the club.

I look forward to see you all at our next meeting on July 9th. Until then...

Collect Early and Often

www.culvercitycoinclub.org

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MONEY JOKES

Q: Two coins add up to 30 cents, and one is not a nickel. What are they?

A: A quarter and a nickel. The quarter isn't a nickel.

Q: Was there money on the Ark?

A: Yes: The duck had a bill, the skunk had a scent and the frog had a greenback.

Q: Why did Robin Hood steal from the rich?

A: Because the poor didn't have any money!

Q: Have you heard about the new aftershave that drives women crazy?

A: It smells of \$50 dollar bills.

REFRESHMENTS

July—Steve Demmer

August—Carol Craft

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

July—Steve Demmer

August—Bernie Malis

COIN SHOWS

Jul 12 Anaheim

North County Monthly Coin Show. Embassy Suites Hotel 3100 E. Frontera St. Hrs: 9AM-4PM FREE

Jul 18-19 San Diego

52nd COINARAMA Scottish Rite Masonic Center 1895 Camino del Rio S. Hrs: 10AM-5:30PM ADM

DID YOU KNOW???

The Smithsonian Coin Collection has approximately 850,000 coins.

That Franklin D. Roosevelt's profile was put on the dime in February, 1946, ten months after his death.

That mint marks first appeared on U.S. coins in 1838 with the opening of branch mints at New Orleans (O), Dahlonega, GA (D), and Charlotte (C).

That the Boy Scouts of America added a merit badge for coin collecting in 1937.

That the smallest monetary unit ever issued in the U.S. was the half cent. It was minted from 1793 through 1857.

Any items of interest for this newsletter can be mailed or emailed to:

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Take the 105 Freeway West to the end, go about a mile or so to Main Street, turn left, the Library will be after you make a right turn on Mariposa.

We will be in the Meeting Room downstairs.



2009 OFFICERS

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Vice President
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