

Cumberland Coins

The Volunteer Coin Club Newsletter

June, 2018

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will on Tuesday June 12th starting at 6:30. The meeting is will be held at the 127 Senior Center on Highway 127 (Main Street) South of town. Doors open at 6:00.

It is only two months until our annual picnic, so I assume that we will need to start planning the details. Please consider volunteering to help organize this year's event.

This will be followed by our business meeting, show and tell, raffle, member prize drawing, and auction.

Coin Lore

Under the Mast

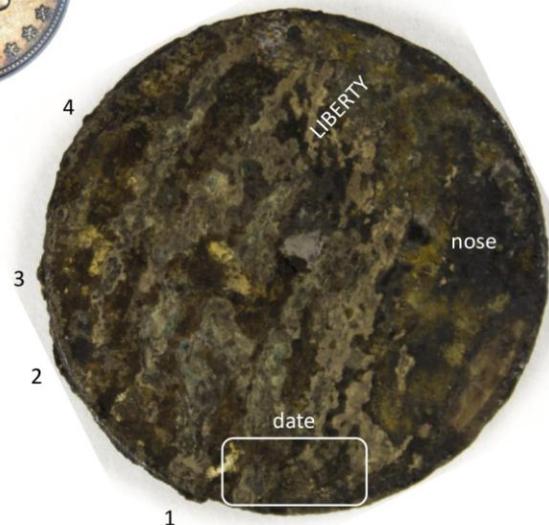
By Dennis Fortier

In 2010 The Mystic Seaport[®] began a complete restoration of their prized living exhibit the whaling ship *Charles W. Morgan*. So, what is this to coin hobbyist? As a means of giving the ship good luck a coin by tradition would be placed under the masts. One of the coins found under the masts being heavily corroded was a suspect coin that required further examination by knowledgeable numismatists to determine its origins. On Sept. 7th 2011 members of the Pawcatuck valley Coin Club (Pawcatuck CT) were called in to examine the coins found. Before examining the coins themselves a brief tour was arraigned of the *Morgan* for the club members, the ship being closed to the public for restoration at the time. On the deck of the ship was a short history of the ships past including photographs of the bottom of the mast that had on it an impression of a coin. I noticed two things on that inspection. The first being the coin in the photo being described as a large-cent was in fact not a large-cent at all. The bust in the negative impression was facing the wrong way for it to be so.

Note the four reference points along the rim allowing vertical alignment to be done (assumes no die rotation). Reverse left, obverse right.



Barber half from *Charles W. Morgan*
Enlarge as much as possible to zoom in
on the date region



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The second thing I noticed was a past owner of the Morgan was none other than noted numismatist Col. E.H.R. Green! At the time this was little more than an amusing curiosity to be filed away in ones memory and passed on anecdotally. As events would proceed that day it would leave a lasting question in my mind. We proceeded to the working area of the museum where we would examine the coins found under the three masts. Carl Swebilius the Seaports Museum Curator greeted us and took us the examining room. There, Larry Erhart (then PVCC President), Bill Jacobik (PVCC Tres.), Scott Rottinghaus (then ANA Board of Governors and PVCC member), and myself (then PVCC Sec.), examined the coins themselves. The first two posed no challenge as the corrosion was not that advanced. It was obvious that these two coins being an Ike Dollar and a Silver Eagle were from the most recent restoration done by the Seaport. The third coin and the reason for our visit was completely and heavily corroded on both sides.

We all took turns examining the coin with little to tell us what was up or down. The reverse was at last found as part of the eagle's wing was still evident on the coin through the corrosion. From the size of the coin and the eagle's wing we determined the coin had to be a Barber Half Dollar. With that thin evidence to work from Larry Erhart was able to locate a mintmark. The mintmark was a D.

This narrowed down the possibilities as to date. The Denver mint only produced Barber Half Dollars in 1906-1908, and 1911-1913. None of these dates are exceptionally rare but that was not our goal. Our goal was to determine exactly what this coin was and if possible an exact date. As to the first part we were successful in determining what kind of coin it was, a Barber Half Dollar. As to the second part that remained a question. Using a 16 power loupe I was able to finally see the bottom half of a 0 in the third digit place. With further examination I located the top half of an 8 in the fourth digit place. This was all that remained of the date, just barely enough to make a positive identification. The date was confirmed by my colleagues and we were able to give a positive ID to the Museum curator that the coin was a 1908-D Barber Half Dollar, and the impression in the photo was not a large-cent but was in fact the 1908-D Barber Half Dollar we had examined.

Now as to my question, please see the Wikipedia entry at [CharlesW.Morgan \(ship\)](#) for a brief history of the ship. (The first three sections were in the original article.)

My question is this: Col E.H.R. Green a noted numismatist who bought the entire M.L. Beistle reference set of Half Dollars (Bust, Liberty Seated, Barber, and Walkers) from Beistle's ground breaking 1929 "The Register of Half Dollar Die Varieties and Sub-Varieties"; first did Col. Green, in his 1924 restoration of the Morgan personally place that 1908-D Barber Half Dollar under the mast and if so was it part of the Beistle collection? These are questions I expect will never be answered, but oh how they tantalize.

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Area Coin Shows

July 9 **Knoxville;** Coin Show, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

August 4 **Knoxville;** Coin Show, Rothchild Conference Center, 8807 Kingston Pike (I-40 exit #378).

August 24-26 **Dalton, GA;** Blue Ridge Numismatic Association (BRNA) 59th Anniversary Annual Convention. Dalton Convention Center, 2211 Dug Gap Battle Rd, Dalton, GA 30720. I-75, Exit 333.

For more information on some of these shows see <http://www.tsns.org/Tennessee Club Shows.html>

This Month's Raffle Prizes

		Est. Grade
1885	Morgan Dollar Key Fob	XF
1876	Liberty Seated Dime (Centennial Year)	VF
1913 V-1 & 1920-S	Buffalo Nickels	F & VG
1848	Large Cent	Fine
300 B.C.	Maurvan Empire silver coin (India)	XF

Door Prize

2005-S Sacajawea
Dollar & Roll of 2005
Bison Nickels
Proof & BU