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Counterfeit Coins!

By Norman O. Thomas

It seems everywhere you turn in the numismatic news these days you find articles about counterfeit coins from China and elsewhere. The latest issues of both *Coin World* and *Numismatic News* featured articles about counterfeits on the cover. At the recent Whitman Coin and Collectibles Convention in Atlanta there was an excellent educational exhibit on the counterfeits from China. Unfortunately, not all of the counterfeits at the

Whitman show were in this exhibit, many more showed up on the bourse floor.

Working from the dealer side of the bourse table at the Whitman Show gave me an opportunity to see and also purchase some of the counterfeit coins. During the three days of the show I saw six coins that were counterfeit and

two others that I suspect were counterfeit. On the first day of the show a gentleman came to my table and ask if I was interested in purchasing some altered



Figure 1. 1889-S Morgan with raised mintmark.

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Coin Glass Plates

By Richard Jozefiak

People are experienced with using and seeing coins made of metal, but what of coins made of glass? Coin glass plates have been produced in the U.S. for over a century. These items have coin designs in glass, and many in high detail.

Coin glass plates are part of the exonomia area of numismatics. The major design feature is coin designs represented in glass. Some of the glass pieces were designed and meant for everyday use, while other glass pieces were meant for collectors.

The Imperial Glass Corporation was located in Bellaire, Ohio (near Wheeling, WV). Imperial Glass was founded in 1901 and closed in 1984. They produced high quality collector glass products.

Over their years of production, the Imperial Glass Corporation produced three different coin glass plates for collectors. These were not a series of glass pieces, but produced over a number of years to commemorate different numismatic events. The coin

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Georgia Numismatic Association

The Georgia Numismatic Association is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is (1) to advance the science, education, and the history of numismatics through the study of coins, paper money, medals, tokens, and other items related to the field of numismatics; (2) to promote numismatics knowledge through the use of educational programs, coin rallies, scholarships, and other suitable methods; (3) to cultivate an atmosphere of numismatics fellowship among collectors and clubs at the local level; (4) to encourage members attitudes which attract young people to the hobby; (5) to advise each member and club of future numismatic activities throughout Georgia; (6) to actively promote the organization of new and strengthen existing clubs; (7) to sponsor one or more annual coin shows for members.

The GNA was founded in 1964 and has a membership of over 400 individuals and 14 clubs. Annual individual memberships are \$10.00. The *GNA Journal* is the official publication of the Georgia Numismatic Association.

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Show Calendar

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information that is contained here at the date of publication however show dates, location, and times do on occasion change. Before traveling to the show please contact the show's promoters for the latest information.

Greater Atlanta Coin Dealers,

8/16, 9/13, 10/11, 11/15, and 12/13,

Holiday Inn Select,
4386 Chamblee-Dunwoody
Rd, Atlanta, GA,

9 AM-5 PM.

Call Bob O'Brien,

770-772-4359,

Email: atlcoin@hotmail.com

Blue Ridge Numismatic Association Annual Convention

August 21-23

North-West Georgia Convention Center

Friday-Saturday 10AM-6PM

Sunday 10AM-3PM

Contact Bob Hurst ,

321-383-1742

Coin Glass Plates (cont.)

glass plates were produced in 1964 (Photo 1), 1971 (Photo 2) and 1976 (Photo 3) with coin designs of their respective years.

The coin glass plates are nine inches in di-



Photo 1. 1964 Coin Glass Plate



Photo 2. 1971 Coin Glass Plate

ameter and each came with a storage box and an information sheet. The plates were made of high quality crystal, with the coin designs frosted. The coin designs were made larger than actual size on the coin plates for better design. These beautiful coin glass plates were sold to collectors. It is unknown how many were produced.

The first coin glass plate was released in 1964, to coincide with the release of the new 1964 Kennedy half dollar. The obverse of the Kennedy half dollar design was located in the center of the plate. The 1964 coin glass plate also included the obverse and reverse designs of the cent, nickel, dime and quarter. The coin designs on the plate were about twice the actual size of the coins.

The next coin glass plate was released in 1971, to coincide with the release of the new 1971 Eisenhower dollar. The obverse of the Eisenhower dollar design was located in the center of the plate. The 1971 coin glass plate also included the obverse and reverse designs of the cent, nickel, dime, quarter and half dollar. The coin designs on the plate were about twice the actual size of the coins.



Photo 3. 1976 Coin Glass Plate

The final coin glass plate was released in 1976, to coincide with the release of the U.S. Bicentennial coins. The center of the coin glass plate has "1776-1976", surrounded by thirteen stars, one for each of the thirteen original states. Surrounding the plate are a border of fifty stars, one for each state. The 1976 coin glass plate also included the obverse and reverse designs of the Bicentennial dollar, half dollar and quarter. The coin designs on the plate were about the same size as an actual coin.

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Counterfeit Coins (cont.)

coins. He explained that he had consigned his collection to Heritage and three of his coins had been kicked back by the grading services as altered. After looking at the coins I could see why two of the coins were rejected. In the case of the third coin it was not as obvious. After talking with the gentleman for a while we worked out a deal and I purchased the three coins.

The first coin was an 1889-S Morgan Dollar. On this coin the “S” mintmark had



Figure 2. Entry mark on edge of Morgan

been raised from inside the coin, see Figure 1. It was obvious when you looked at the edge of the coin where the “coin doctor” had entered the coin and filled the entrance hole when he finished, see Figure 2. The edge reeding was expertly repaired and showed little indication of having been altered. By adding the “S” to this coin value of the coin increased about 10 fold. I am sure that this coin would have gone undetected by many coin collectors and dealers.

The second coin in this group was a 1922-D Lincoln Cent in which the “D” mintmark had been removed. It was even more deceptive than the Morgan dollar. Several knowledgeable dealers who have seen this coin were not sure it was altered, even though it had been rejected by PCGS. The third coin this gentleman had was supposedly an error

coin. The problem is there was so much going on with this coin it would have been impossible for this to have occurred at the



Figure 3. 1955-D Obv.

mint. The coin is a 1955-D or a 1955-S cent that was double or triple struck on the obverse. Note that in Figure 3 there are two obvious “D” mintmarks and there is a less distinct “S” mintmark to the east of the two “D” and about half as low as the lower “D”. If you flip the coin over the reverse is even wilder. The reverse shows at a minimum a double struck reverse that is rotated and off center. The reverse also shows a double striking of the 1955-D obverse; see Figure 4.

At the show the next morning another customer brought



Figure 4. 1955-D Reverse

two coins for me to look at. One was a nice mint state 1972 Double Die Lincoln Cent and a very fine example of a 1909-S VDB Lincoln Cent. I was suspicious about the 1909-S VDB cent and the seller agreed that it might not be real. I purchased the coin for a rea-

sonable price and went about determining if it was real or not. Bill Fivaz's pocket ***Counterfeit Detection Guide*** turned out to be an invaluable tool in solving this mystery. In determining the authenticity of a 1909-S VDB Lincoln Cent two of the determining factors

are the mint-mark and the designer's initials. With the mint-mark the outer edges of the serifs



Figure 5. 1909-S Cent Obv.

must be vertical and parallel to each other. And there should be a small die chip in the back of the upper loop of the "S". The mint-mark on this coin appeared to be good, see Figure 5.

Now on the reverse of the 1909-S VDB we concentrate on the designer's initials: V.D.B. The absence of the three periods is not indicative of a counterfeit coin as one or



Figure 6. 1909-S VDB Cent Rev.

more of these may be missing on a weakly struck coin. The most obvious indicator on the reverse is the crossbar in the "B" of the VDB. The crossbar should angle up from the left to the right and be the same thickness at both ends. In this coin the bottom of the cross bar is straight across and

thinner on the left than on the right, see Figure 6. This coin is probably a 1909-S Lincoln Cent with the VDB added on the reverse.

These were the only counterfeit coins I was able to purchase during the show, but not the only bogus coins I saw or heard about. A dealer friend made a mistake in purchasing a gold coin without fully checking it out. When he did he found the coin was underweight. On Saturday morning a customer showed up with two 1806 half-dollars. These coins were obvious counterfeits and easy to detect. The surfaces of the coins were bright smooth and not natural. Both coins were identical right down to the surfaces, design element defects and wear. I don't know if I have ever seen identical twin coins before.

The same customer had two Morgan dollars in an off brand slab. I believe the markings on the slab said it was ICGS. The slabs were very thick and heavy. The two halves of the slab appeared to have been glued together instead of being sealed. I could not determine whether the coins in the slabs were real or not, but I could tell they were grossly over graded. One coin was slabbed as an AU coin but in fact was a Very Good or Fine coin at best. The other dollar was slabbed as a MS-63 coin and it was no better than a high end Very Fine coin.

It was an educational three days at the show for this numismatist. Here are a couple of suggestions about buying coins and particularly those high-end coins. First, don't get caught up in the hype of having found a coin you have been looking for; study it carefully. If it is a key date coin buy it already slabbed by a reputable grading service or make sure you know the keys to identifying the coin. And finally if the deal seems too good to be true, it probably is not a good deal! Collecting coins can be fun, educa-

First Anderson Coin Show a Success!

By Mack Martin

The Anderson South Carolina Area Coin Club, a GNA member club, had their first coin show June 12th and 13th with a public attendance of over 600 people.



Pictured above is Katlin Hana, first place winner from the YN competitive exhibits.

They also had quite a showing in the display area. Plaques were given to several adult non competitive exhibits but the competitive YN exhibits were the talk of the show. Four first time youth exhibited: Katlin Hana took first place, a gold eagle, Luke Goodnight second, a Morgan Silver dollar, Brandon Butler third, paper money sheet, and Meredith Bryant fourth, a 1999 collection of state quarters, and all were good enough for first place. The judges, Dennis Schafluetzel, Bob Hartje, B.J. DeVido and Sandy Martin were happy to see such competition and had a hard time with their decisions. I was happy to see this club produce these young exhibitors as most conventions that sponsor exhibits have very few or no young exhibitors at all. Each convention gives away great prizes and it would be great to see more young members of clubs participating in such a fun and educational event. I think this group would be willing to challenge any other clubs. There's already talk of competing at next years GNA show by this group of young exhibitors.

To go along with the displays the club sponsored a Saturday youth program that in-

cluded skits preformed by the youth with George Washington directing (played by GNA's Bob Hartje). I think for a show first, every dealer contributed with give-a-ways for the youth program which was attended by 15 young collectors. Tickets were sold for a drawing every hour for a silver eagle and a show prize of two gold coins, a 1/10 ounce won by Leonard Owens and a 1/4 ounce won by Sean Beasley.



Pictured above is George Washington talking to the YN's at their young collectors give-a-way .

Fifty dealers were treated to a hamburger cookout on Thursday evening set up day and all seem to enjoy the show. Tommy Burriss and Ron Hawkins acted as bourse chairman and said most were ready to sign up for next years show that is set for June 4th and 5th. The concession area had a very reasonable price luncheon prepared by the ladies of the club with LaDonna Hawkins making her famous chicken salad and several pies to go along with Hamburgers and chips. Chris Hanna took the first shift in cooking those burgers and did really well even with the problem of running out of gas -both he and the grill's! The show went really well as the entire club stepped up to do whatever needed to be done as to take care of the dealer base and any problem that may have occurred. I did not see any problem as I was too busy eating the coconut pie.

GNA Board Members Support ANA Summer Seminar

This year at the American Numismatic Association's Annual Summer Seminar, six of



Above: (Left to Right), Bill Myers (former board member), David Crenshaw, Bob Hartje, Dennis Schafluetzel, Mack Martin, Chip Cutcliff, and Joe Meyers.

the GNA board members showed their support. Summer Semniar is one fun but exhausting week that a coin collector will ever experience in the hobby! This years summer the ANA offered



Above are Chip Cutcliff (Left) and David Crenshaw (right) catching a quick shut eye between there classes.

many classes from *Grading US Coins* to *Greek and Roman Coins* many of which were attended by your board members.

To help promote this wonderful hobby of numismatics each year the GNA holds a essay contest where two winners are chosen to receive a full scholarship to Summer Seminar. For more information and deadlines please go to our website at www.gamoney.org.

Glass Plates Cont.

These plates are readily available on the secondary market, and are not expensive (~\$10-\$35 each). These coin glass plates are beautiful and capture the beauty of the coins depicted on them. They are an interesting part of exonumia, and they make an interesting addition to a numismatic collection.

Note: Photos by Ms Joan Cimini, National Imperial Glass Museum Archives in Bellaire, Ohio.

For more information on the Imperial Glass Museum

www.imperialglass.org/museum ph: 740-671-3971

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Ms Joan Cimini of the National Imperial Glass Museum Archives for her support, research and photos provided on the National Glass Corporation and its products.

Have an Article?

The GNA Journal would not be what it is today without the support of you, the reader, and with the continued support I know it will continue to grow. I encourage you to continue to submit your articles and photos. They can be about anything from a review on a book you read, to a collection, a neat find in your change, or how you cherry picked a rare variety at a recent show. When you are ready to submit your article, please send it to Nathan Mahan at:

- (1) Send an electronic copy in either PDF or Doc format to nfmahan@windstream.net
- (2) Send a copy to P.O. Box 97, Baldwin, GA 30511

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(check one category)
 Regular Junior/Student 3-Year Club Life

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City	State Zip Code
E-Mail	

I herewith make application for membership in the Georgia Numismatic Association, subject to the By/laws of said Association. I also agree to abide by the Code of Ethics adopted by the Association.

Signature of Applicant	Date
Signature of Parent or Guardian (required for Junior/Student applicants)	

Membership Dues

Regular (age 18 or older)	\$10
Junior/Student (age 17 or younger)	\$5
3-year (individual)	\$25
Club	\$15
Life (individual)	\$200
Life (age 65 or older)	\$100
Life (club)	\$150

Mail completed application and payment to:
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