

The Ten Greatest Carson City Seated Coins

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During May 2004 the Liberty Seated Collectors Club conducted a member survey to determine the 20 Greatest Seated Coins from the 19th century. A review of the responses showed that the listing was dominated by Carson City coins with eleven of the top twenty issues being products of the Carson City Mint. It was therefore decided to conduct a second survey to identify the Ten Greatest Carson City Seated coins. New survey forms listed the seventeen Carson City coins that were ranked in the top 40 among all Seated issues in the initial survey. Survey forms were sent to all club members during April 2005 asking them to select their top ten choices from among the 17 listed issues. Club members were explicitly asked to rank their choices so that order could be considered when tabulating the results. Completed survey forms were received from 47 club members by the deadline of May 27, 2005. The results were initially published in the March 2006 issue of the *Gobrecht Journal* with this presentation being a revision of that original article.

The survey results indicate that there was an emphasis on rarity at the top of the list and that there was a clear choice among the respondents for the three top issues. The top ten listing contains at least one issue for each denomination from the dime to the silver dollar and includes three issues from both the dime and quarter series. The top ten listing also contains three issues that were the first coins struck of their denomination at the Carson City mint. A few additional facts about The Ten Greatest Carson City Seated Coins as voted by LSCC members are as follows:

#1

1873-CC *No Arrows* Dime

This is the rarest Carson City issue with only one known example. This specimen has been graded NGC MS-65 (Recently graded PCGS MS-65) and was in the *Eliasberg* Collection for many years until it was sold by Bowers and Merena in May 1996. More recently this piece was sold by Bowers and Merena during their sale of the *James C. Gray* Collection in July 2004 (Purchased by Rusty Goe for \$891,250). This beautiful coin is the ultimate rarity among Carson City coinage. This issue was a clear first choice in the listing with 24 first place votes. No other issue received more than 6 first place votes from the respondents. Overall, 51% of the 47 respondents placed this issue at the top of their list.

#2

1873-CC *No Arrows* Quarter

This is another great rarity among Carson City coins with only five known specimens. Three of these pieces are Mint State with certified grades of MS-64 or higher while the remaining two coins are well circulated. This issue was a clear second choice in the listing with 21 second place votes. No other issue received more than five second place votes. Overall, 57% of the 47 respondents placed this rarity first or second in their listing.

#3

1876-CC Twenty Cent Piece

This is the key date in the twenty cent piece series with no more than about 20 known specimens. Most of these coins are Mint State and they are usually available only at auction. However, this date is not pursued by many collectors because it is in the short twenty cent piece series that includes only five business strike dates. This issue was a clear third choice in the listing with 15 third place votes. No other issue received more than 8 third place votes. Overall, 51% of the 47 respondents placed this issue among the first three coins in their listing.

1876-CC 20c Piece.



#4

1870-CC Quarter

This is the rarest of the three silver denominations struck at the Carson City mint during its first year of operation. This is one of the key dates in the Seated quarter series and extremely rare in grades of XF and above. Most known examples are well worn and many have been damaged from heavy use on the western frontier. This issue was a clear fourth choice in the listing with more fourth place votes than any other issue. Overall 51% of the 47 respondents placed this issue among the first four coins in their listing. Even though this issue placed fourth in the listing, it received 44 top ten votes from the respondents, more than any other issue in the survey. This can be explained by the fact that this is the rarest Carson City Seated coin that most collectors can reasonably expect to obtain.

#5

1874-CC Dime

This is a key rarity in the Seated dime series with most of the surviving specimens in average circulated grades. A few Mint State pieces do exist but collectors find that even nice original coins in average circulated grades are extremely difficult to obtain. This is a highly prized rarity in the series with 21 of the respondents placing this issue fourth, fifth or sixth in their listing. Overall 49% of the 47 respondents placed this issue among the first five coins in their listing.

#6

1873-CC Seated Dollar

This is the rarest of the Carson City Seated dollars and one of the key dates in the Seated dollar series. It is very rare in Mint State with most of the surviving specimens in average circulated grades. This is a highly prized rarity with 17 of the respondents placing this issue fourth, fifth or sixth in their listing. Overall 53% of the 47 respondents placed this issue among the first six coins in their listing.

#7

1871-CC Quarter

This is another rare Carson City quarter that circulated freely on the western frontier. There are three magnificent Mint State specimens but most of the surviving coins are in average circulated grades. More than half of the 47 respondents placed this issue fifth to eighth in their listing. This is the first issue on the list without any first place votes but most respondents still recognized it as one of the important Carson City issues in the Seated series.

#8

1871-CC Seated Dollar

This is the second rarest Carson City Seated dollar and one of the key dates in the Seated dollar series. It is very rare in Mint State with most of the

surviving specimens in average circulated grades. More than half of the 47 respondents placed this issue fifth to tenth in their listing. This is another issue without any first place votes but a highly prized rarity within the Seated dollar series.

#9

1871-CC Dime

This is the first Carson City dime and a rare date that is very difficult to obtain in grades of XF and above. A few Mint State coins are known but most of the surviving specimens are in average circulated grades. This issue received one first place vote but most of the 47 respondents placed it near the end of their listing.

#10

1870-CC Half Dollar

This is the first Carson City half dollar and one of only three silver denominations struck at the Carson City branch mint during its first year of operation. It is the rarest of the Carson City half dollars and the most difficult of these issues to obtain in Mint State. Most examples are in average circulated grades and even pieces grading XF and AU are very difficult to obtain. This issue has a higher mintage than the other coins on this list and most of the 47 respondents placed it near the end of their listing.