LITTLETON’S
HOW TO COLLECT COINS

✓ Find the answers to the top 8 questions about coins!
✓ Are there any U.S. coin types you’ve never heard of?
✓ Learn about grading coins!
✓ Expand your coin collecting knowledge!
✓ Keep your coins in the best condition!
✓ Learn all about the different U.S. Mints and mint marks!

Valuable Tips & Information!

$4.95
Dear Collector,

Coins reflect the culture and the times in which they were produced, and U.S. coins tell the story of America in a way that no other artifact can. Why? Because they have been used since the nation’s beginnings. Pathfinders and trendsetters – Benjamin Franklin, Robert E. Lee, Teddy Roosevelt, Marilyn Monroe – you, your parents and grandparents have all used coins. When you hold one in your hand, you’re holding a tangible link to the past.

You can travel back to colonial America with a large cent, the Civil War with a two-cent piece, or to the beginning of America’s involvement in WWI with a Mercury dime. Every U.S. coin is an enduring legacy from our nation’s past!

Have a plan for your collection

When many collectors begin, they may want to collect everything, because all different coin types fascinate them. But, after gaining more knowledge and experience, they usually find that it’s good to have a plan and a focus for what they want to collect. Although there are various ways (pages 8 & 9 list a few), building a complete date and mint mark collection (such as Lincoln cents) is considered by many to be the ultimate achievement. After the anticipation of waiting to fill the next space in your album, you’ll experience proud satisfaction when you locate that coin.

Of course, one of the greatest thrills of collecting is hunting for elusive coins that make your collection stand out. Some collectors dream of owning a scarce coin like the 1909-S V.D.B. Lincoln cent. Others search patiently for prominent rarities from the annals of numismatic lore. Coins like the 1804 Draped Bust silver dollar with only eight known examples, and which sold for $4.14 million in 1999; or the 1913 Liberty Head nickel, with only five known specimens, one of which sold for $5 million in April 2007; or the King Farouk 1933 Saint-Gaudens $20 gold piece, which sold for $7.59 million in July of 2002. Rarities like these are not the majority, and most collectors are drawn to the hobby because it offers history, art, challenge of completion, and fellowship.

Whatever your interest or experience, I hope you’ll find How to Collect Coins a fun, useful, and educational guide to the hobby.

Sincerely,

David M. Sundman, President

David M. Sundman, LCC President
INTRODUCTION TO COIN COLLECTING

For thousands of years, mankind has been attracted to collecting. Whether it is rocks, shells, books, tools or coins, collecting awakens curiosity and interest in all of us. Collecting makes time stand still, and brings the past along with us. If nothing were saved, we would have no knowledge of the past – except for what we read or are told. And bygone days would slip into obscurity.

THE PAST LIVES AGAIN

With collectibles, the past comes to life. It is remembered through objects that people who lived before us actually used. And this is especially true of coins, for they were (and are) the means of daily commerce. When you hold a 50, 200 or 2,000-year-old coin in your hand, you can’t help but imagine where it might have been in its lifetime!

Coins are historical reminders. Whether old coins, or more recent commemorating important people or events, you are holding an important piece of history right in your hand!

This booklet will give you valuable information every collector should know. But beyond a few basics, coin collecting is almost limitless in its variety. As your knowledge increases, you’ll find your own favorite coins and ways to collect. Once you kindle your interest in coins, you’ll have adopted a hobby that will give you a lifetime of enjoyment!

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1. WHAT MAKES A COIN VALUABLE?
A coin is not necessarily valuable merely because of age. For example, some Roman coins more than 1,600 years old can still be purchased today for $20 or even less! The value of a coin, like most items, is determined by supply and demand.

Demand is obviously a major factor. Some coin types, such as Buffalo nickels or Mercury dimes, are more popular than others of the same denomination. Thus, more collectors are seeking the same coins, so their prices will be affected. A coin’s value is determined by the interrelated factors of scarcity, condition and demand.

Perhaps more coins of an earlier date may have been produced than those of a later date, so coins that are far older may still be available. This is supply. Of course, it all depends on how many of each has been saved, and in what condition. A coin’s condition (the state it has been preserved in) is an extremely important factor in its value. An Uncirculated piece may be worth ten times or thousands of times as much as an average circulated coin of the same date. An explanation and grading guide is on pages 28 & 29.

2. IS THE METAL IN THE COINS VALUABLE?
Gold and silver coins have a dual value – their numismatic or collector value, and their intrinsic or precious metal value. Coins of higher grades will have a greater premium over their metal value than coins of lesser grade or condition. Some quantities of 90% gold U.S. coins (last minted for circulation in 1933), and 90% silver U.S. coins (last minted for circulation in 1964), are still available to collectors today. A $20 gold piece, or double eagle, weighs nearly one full ounce. A Morgan silver dollar contains over 3/4 ounce of pure silver. However, the numismatic worth of U.S. coins usually outweighs any bullion value.
3. **When Were Coins First Used?**

Though the first coins are actually attributed to Lydia in Asia Minor around 600-700 B.C., it is now believed that bronze coins were used in China several hundred years earlier. However, the Lydians were probably not aware of China's existence, so their coins – called “Staters” (a unit of weight) – were invented separately. These first Staters were made of electrum, a natural alloy of gold and silver.

4. **When Were the First U.S. Coins Used?**

Early American “money” consisted primarily of wampum, beaver skins, and tobacco, items used by Native Americans and early settlers. The colonists had no use for coinage until foreign traders arrived and demanded payment for goods. Most “hard currency” tended to flow back across the Atlantic, so Massachusetts Bay Colony took matters into their own hands and struck some of our earliest silver coins in 1652: the NE (New England) silver Threepence, Sixpence and Shilling, followed by the Willow Tree and Pine Tree coinage. Other foreign coins like Spanish silver Pieces of Eight (8 Reales) also circulated. After America won independence and the first U.S. Mint opened in 1793, we began to strike our own national coinage.

5. **How Many Different Denominations Have There Been?**

Today, the U.S. Mint produces coins for circulation in these denominations: cent, nickel, dime, quarter, half dollar, and dollar. Plus, commemoratives in both gold and silver are issued in various denominations. In the past, the mints have produced many different types of coins, such as half cents, 2¢ pieces, 3¢ pieces, half dimes, and 20¢ pieces.
Gold coins have been produced for circulation in these denominations: $1, $2.50, $3, $5, $10 and $20 pieces, as well as a few hundred patterns for a $4 gold piece that was never mass-produced.

6. HOW OLD IS COIN COLLECTING?
The earliest known coin collector was the Roman emperor Augustus. Coin collecting became even more popular during the Middle Ages, when wealthy persons and royalty assembled magnificent collections. The hobby was confined mostly to the rich, since the general population needed every coin to pay for food, clothing and shelter.

In the U.S., collecting also began with the wealthy, but by 1858, there were enough active collectors to form the American Numismatic Association. Since the 1920s, with U.S. commemoratives, and the 1930s, with “penny” boards and folders, this hobby has grown steadily. Today, with many exciting coins to collect, there are more than 100 million collectors in the U.S. alone.

7. HOW DO I GET STARTED & ARE THERE VARIOUS WAYS TO COLLECT?
There are several popular methods. At first, you may have a general collection containing a variety of different coins. As you acquire examples of coins – perhaps a Morgan dollar, Liberty Walking half dollar, Buffalo nickel or Barber dime – you will find yourself attracted to certain ones. But the most important thing to remember is to develop a plan.

You may want to assemble a complete set – every date and mint mark of the Lincoln cent, for example. Or you may prefer to collect one example of each different dime, and then tackle quarters in this same fashion.

Joseph Mickley of Philadelphia was the first famous American collector. His hunt for a Large Cent from the year of his birth began the tradition of collecting all of the coins of a series from every year of issue.

Joseph Mickley photo courtesy of Q. David Bowers
Another favorite way to collect is by type. Type collecting is assembling coins of different designs. It may be coins of the 20th century, coins of any one denomination, or perhaps a specimen of each coin type minted in silver or copper. Collecting by type can give you a full overview of coin designs and how they have progressed through time.

Often, when a complete set might exceed one’s budget, you can assemble a year set – one coin from each year within a series. You’ll have an authentic, official souvenir from every year of a particular period in U.S. history. For example: a year set of Franklin halves would include one coin from each year 1948-1963. (A complete set would require a 1948, ’48-D, ’48-S, ’49, ’49-D, ’49-S, etc.) Mint marks (“D”, “S”, etc.) are discussed in more detail on pages 24 & 25.

8. WHY IS COIN COLLECTING SO POPULAR?

Coin collecting is an exciting hobby because money is something used by people now that was used in the past, and is fascinating. Coins can recall exciting periods in American and world history, and for the most part have been issued by official governments. No matter how much time you spend on a collection, you get a sense of satisfaction and pride. At the end of a long day, you can relax as you go through it coin by coin. Your coins will probably outlive you by hundreds or thousands of years! Take care of them, and future collectors will appreciate your thoughtfulness.
Originally, U.S. coins were collected by type. In the mid-1800s, someone might have put together a collection of dollars by design type and date, but not by date and mint, as we do today.

Then in 1859, Dr. Montroville W. Dickeson published *An American Numismatic Manual*. This 256-page book was the first comprehensive encyclopedia of U.S. coinage. Later, Augustus G. Heaton published *A Treatise on the Coinage of the United States Branch Mints*, which raised interest in the mint mark varieties. Collectors then began assembling all the different dates and mint marks of a particular series – such as Lincoln cents or Washington quarters.

**AN OFFICIAL SOUVENIR FROM EVERY YEAR**

Today, the coin hobby is still enjoyed in many ways, but collecting by date and mint mark is certainly America’s favorite. Since 1793, when the U.S. Mint began striking coins, most issues have carried their year of production on the obverse or “heads” side. Coins produced at branch U.S. Mints also carry a small letter or mint mark that indicates where it was struck. As you enjoy finding and purchasing those special dates and mint marks you need for your series collection, you’ll notice that there are some issues that are more difficult to find than others.

**THOSE SPECIAL “KEY DATES”**

In every U.S. coin series, there are certain issues or varieties that because of rarity and prominence are the “keys” to completing the series. Collectors prize them because there are so few to go around!

Mint marks can be a major factor in the value of a coin. In 1950 for instance, the popular Jefferson nickel was produced at two different mints, Philadelphia (no mint mark)
and Denver (“D” mint mark beside Monticello on the reverse). While the 1950 nickel is not as difficult to find (mintage of 9,847,386), the 1950-D was produced only in very small quantities (mintage of only 2,630,030) and is scarce today. The 1950-D (pictured) is the key date of the Jefferson nickel series.

**Most Famous of All U.S. Coins – the 1909-S V.D.B.!**

The Lincoln cent of 1909 to date represents the longest-running obverse design in U.S. coinage history. When it was first issued (on August 2, 1909), people waited at least an hour in line to get these new “pennies.” The demand was so great that banks limited the new cent to just 100 per customer. Even then, supplies ran out in three days. Shortly after its release, an uproar began over the designer’s initials. Many thought they were too conspicuous. When the mint decided to remove them, the 1909 V.D.B. suddenly became the prized issue.

With a mintage of just 484,000, the 1909-S V.D.B. is the undisputed “king” of the Lincoln cent series, in both Uncirculated and Circulated grades. Although it has a low mintage, many were saved because it was from the first year of issue. But because it’s so popular, there are not enough for every collector who wants one. Number two in the Lincoln series – the 1914-D (which has a higher mintage) – is even more expensive than an Uncirculated 1909-S V.D.B. because fewer survived.

**HOW TO CHOOSE A SERIES THAT’S RIGHT FOR YOU**

Over the years, the U.S. Mint has produced a wide variety of coins, and Littleton has archival-quality albums for most. To choose a series, consider how much you like the design and composition of the coin, and the popularity of the series.

Littleton Coin Company offers a wider selection of U.S. coins than any other company, and can help you complete a variety of different collections. You can choose a single coinage series, or you may wish to work on several at once. Whichever way you choose, once you complete your collection, you’ll have a family heirloom that will be treasured for generations to come.
On the following pages is a guide to United States coinage that outlines the major design types of U.S. coins by denomination and date of issue.

**HALF CENT 1793-1857**

The smallest denomination U.S. coin, yet nearly the size of a modern quarter. Made of pure copper, the half cent was useful for making change during its early years of issue. But as time passed and things grew more expensive, the half cent lost its usefulness, and was abandoned shortly before the Civil War. Today, all half cents are scarce. All types carry a bust of Liberty on the obverse and a wreath on the reverse.

**LARGE CENT 1793-1857**

Along with the half cent, one of the first two coins struck by the United States, all the large cents were coined at the Philadelphia Mint. With twice the copper of the half cent, they were large and heavy – greater in size than today’s quarter – so a pocketful was quite bulky. As the price of copper rose during the 1800s, the large cent became too expensive to produce and was replaced in 1857 by the small cent.
The 3¢ nickel, so called because of its copper-nickel composition, was well received by the public. This coin helped the nation retire the unpopular 3¢ paper notes issued during the Civil War. Once the majority of notes had been exchanged for 3¢ coins, and production of 5¢ nickels and cents increased, the banks needed fewer 3¢ pieces.

America’s first small cent, the Flying Eagle, was introduced in 1856. It was nicknamed the “white cent” because of its 88% copper and 12% nickel composition. The Flying Eagle cent was minted for just 3 years before being replaced with the Indian Head cent.

In 1909, the Lincoln cent became America’s first circulating coin to portray a president. It originally featured the “Wheat Ears” reverse design, which was changed to the Lincoln Memorial in 1959. Then, for the series’ 100th anniversary and the bicentennial of Lincoln’s birth in 2009, four different reverse designs were released. A new, ongoing reverse design featuring the Union Shield debuted in 2010.

The 1864 Coin Act also called for a 2¢ copper coin. This Civil War-era coin was America’s first and only 2¢ piece. It was the first coin to carry IN GOD WE TRUST.

The 3¢ piece is the smallest of all U.S. silver coins. Because it was struck in silver, the public hoarded it along with other coins when the Civil War broke out. Since the 3¢ piece was needed to help ease the coin shortage caused by war, the U.S. Mint decided to strike it in copper-nickel.
In 1866, the nation's first 5¢ coin of non-precious metal was created: the Shield nickel. The prior (and first) U.S. 5¢ coin, the half dime, was silver. In 1883 came the Liberty Head or “V” nickel, followed by the extremely popular Buffalo nickel of the early 20th century, and then the long-running Jefferson nickel. In 2004, new Westward Journey Jefferson nickels were released. Commemorating the Bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark expedition, two new reverse designs were issued annually. In 2006, the popular series ended with the “Return to Monticello” coin.

### Half Dime 1794-1873

Minted in fine silver, the famous half dime was the nation's first 5¢ coin. It was smaller and weighed less than a nickel. Several design types were issued long before the U.S. nickel denomination began. From 1866-1873, both the half dime and nickel were struck. The half dime played an integral role in the early life of America, and is of great historic and numismatic importance.

### Dime 1796-date

The 10¢ coin, or dime, follows closely the designs of the half dime through the Liberty Seated type. And until 1964, when production of circulating silver coinage
The shortest-lived coin denomination in U.S. history! The twenty-cent piece, minted in 90% fine silver, was struck for circulation only in 1875 and 1876. A few hundred Proofs were coined in 1877-1878. Soon after the coin’s appearance, people complained that it was too close in design and size to the quarter — causing problems in making change. Fewer than 1.4 million were minted, so the twenty-cent piece is a scarce and treasured item today.

**TWENTY-CENT PIECE 1875-1878**

Because of the practice of cutting up the Mexican 8 Reales coin into eight parts (thus the “Piece of Eight” name), the U.S. quarter, as ¼ of a dollar, became known as “two bits.” As a silver coin of substantial size until 1964, the quarter has always been popular — both in circulation and among collectors. Several designs have been used since 1796, and many collectors try to assemble at least one coin of each type.

**QUARTER 1796-DATE**

Because of the practice of cutting up the Mexican 8 Reales coin into eight parts (thus the “Piece of Eight” name), the U.S. quarter, as ¼ of a dollar, became known as “two bits.” As a silver coin of substantial size until 1964, the quarter has always been popular — both in circulation and among collectors. Several designs have been used since 1796, and many collectors try to assemble at least one coin of each type.
STATEHOOD, D.C. & U.S. TERRITORIES QUARTERS

A new era of coin collecting began with the start of America’s 50 State Quarters Program in 1999. From 1999-2008, every state in the Union was honored in the order they joined, or, in the case of the 13 original colonies, the order they ratified the Constitution. In 2009, an additional six quarters were issued, honoring the District of Columbia and five U.S. Territories.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL COMMEMORATIVE QUARTERS

In 2010 another series, modeled after the Statehood quarters, began – this time honoring America’s national parks and historic sites. Designs are scheduled to be released until 2021 for each of the 50 states, D.C., and the five U.S. Territories in the order their locations first became national sites.

Release dates for America the Beautiful Quarters Series

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Though the half dollar is almost forgotten today, it was once the major silver coin of circulation. At one time, a half dollar was often more than a person made in a day’s labor. To have one, or perhaps two, was a significant stash of money. Because the half dollar is seldom seen today, it continues to grow in popularity.

In honor of the nation’s Bicentennial celebration, 1975 and 1976 Kennedy half dollars carry special 1776-1976 dating on the obverse, and a special reverse design depicting Independence Hall.
Early silver dollars represent the remarkable era in America’s history when the colonies united to form what would become one of the greatest nations on Earth. Since precious silver ore was scarce in that era, the dollars of that period have very low mintages. Silver dollars were not minted between 1804 and 1836, so those that still circulated were scarce and hoarded. In addition to the early dollars pictured, a number of so-called “Gobrecht” dollars were issued between 1836-1839.
The U.S. dollar coins of the late 19th century to the present are among the most sought-after collector issues. These include Trade, Morgan, and Peace dollars struck in 90% silver, as well as the Eisenhower dollars, which were the last large-size $1 coins struck for circulation. The Susan B. Anthony coins began a new era of small-size U.S. dollars, and were followed by the Sacagawea dollars of 2000 to 2008, and the new Presidential dollar series introduced in 2007. Though originally issued for circulation, beginning in 2012 the Presidential dollars were issued in limited quantities for collectors only.

In 2009, new Native American dollars debuted, with the familiar Sacagawea obverse (with date and mint mark moved to the edge) and annually changing reverse designs. The $1 American Eagle silver bullion issues, struck in 99.93% silver, were introduced in 1986 and are the largest of all U.S. coins.

“The Morgans are so beautiful. If it wasn’t for Littleton Coin Co., I wouldn’t even know about them, much less be able to collect them.”

V.S., Lowell, MA

“The Susan B. Anthony coins I sent for have arrived. Their presentation is great! I plan to give them to my three daughters as keepsakes… I want to thank you for opening my eyes to something very unusual and interesting.”

D.B., Salisbury, MD
Between 1795 and 1933, the U.S. Mint produced various gold coins in the denominations of $1, $2.50, $3, $5, $10 and $20 (plus a few extremely rare $4 pattern pieces). These beautiful coins were minted in one of the world's most precious metals, and designed by some of the finest artists of the day. Mintages were quite small, and many have been melted down over the years, so U.S. gold coins are of particular scarcity and interest today. Since 1986, American Eagle gold bullion coins have been issued just for collectors. For many, gold coins with their unmatched beauty and worldwide popularity represent the apex of enjoyment in numismatics.

Official U.S. commemorative coins are authorized by Act of Congress to honor important persons, locations, and events in U.S. history. Commemoratives have been struck in both silver and gold, and more recently, clad. They are minted only in very small numbers compared to regular coinage. After 1954, no U.S. commemoratives were produced until 1982, when the George Washington half dollar was issued to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Washington's birth. Official U.S. issues should not be confused with so-called “commemoratives” produced by private organizations, which are medals, not coins.
Well-known hoards are exciting for collectors and the public, especially when they were amassed under remarkable conditions. During the 1990s, Littleton Coin purchased three unusual hoards.

**NEW YORK SUBWAY HOARD**
Called the New York Subway Hoard, this stash of elusive coins was amassed by George Shaw, a 1940s coin dealer. Located in New York City, Shaw had many sources for coins, including NYC Transit Authority workers. The subway took in many coins daily, and workers had access to thousands. After the hoard purchase in 1996, Littleton’s coin buyers opened the vault and discovered 1916 Standing Liberty quarters, 1916-D Mercury dimes, 1896-S Barber quarters, and that was just the beginning.

**VERMONT YANKEE HOARD**
A. K. Miller and his wife Imogene lived a life of Yankee frugality in their home in East Orange, Vermont. Imogene fashioned raincoats from plastic bags, and A. K. rode a 1903 bicycle with patched tires.

But when they died, a fortune in cars, antiques, silver coins, and gold and silver ingots was discovered hidden in buildings and beneath the schoolhouse floor on the property. In the fall of 1996, Littleton purchased first-year Uncirculated 1878-S Morgans, seldom-seen $500 and $1000 Federal Reserve Notes, and the rare Miss Drury token. This became known as the Vermont Yankee Hoard.

**MIDWEST MEGAHOARD**
Near the end of 1998, Littleton bought the largest coin hoard ever. Dubbed the Midwest MegaHoard, it held 1.7 million Indian Head cents and Liberty and Buffalo nickels, weighed 7.6 tons, and would stretch 21.7 miles if the coins were placed side by side. This stash was hidden in the walls of a Midwest collector’s house. Filling canvas sacks and 55-gallon drums, the coins in this hoard had been off the streets, out of circulation, since the 1950s & ’60s. According to *American Coin Treasures and Hoards* by numismatist Q. David Bowers, the Midwest MegaHoard surpassed prior records by a long shot.
**BIG SKY HOARD**

Soon after the 1971-1978 Eisenhower dollar series came to an end, a prominent Montana family quietly put away more than 220,000 of these last large-size dollar coins in the basement of a Montana bank. Most of the coins were still in original mint-sewn bags, and remained undisturbed for the next three decades.

In 2011, Littleton Coin Company purchased the stash, dubbing these Eisenhower dollars the “Big Sky Hoard”. Over the years, the coins in this Montana hoard avoided the usual frequent movement between Federal Reserve banks and local banks. They had also escaped the widespread use of “Ike” dollars in gaming rooms and slot machines throughout the West.

**BIG SKY HOARD TAKES MANY BY SURPRISE**

Because high-quality “Ike” dollars are so seldom seen, this hoard of carefully preserved Uncirculated coins was a big surprise to many collectors and dealers. Not only were these some of the nicest Eisenhower dollars they had ever seen, most of the coins were still in original mint-sewn bags. Littleton President David Sundman summed it up when he said, “this hoard is a great opportunity for collectors!”
Money. It’s difficult to imagine a world without it. … But what exactly is money? Money can be many things. It’s coins and currency, credit cards and checks. But in some cultures it can be stones, feathers, beads, salt and tobacco, even seashells. Money can represent something else, too. You’ve heard the expressions, ‘Money is the root of all evil’; ‘Money makes the world go ’round’; and how about, ‘Money talks.’ Each piece of money has a story to tell: the people, places and events portrayed on it, those who made it, the way it was made, and why it was made. Money: it’s history you can hold in your hands!”


During an interview with Paul Green, Buddy Ebsen told Numismatic News that he became interested in collecting after buying a coin for a friend.

An admitted history buff, Ebsen told Green that he was fascinated by the history of coins in his collection. One of his favorites being a Territorial gold $50 octagonal slug that had a lot of nicks on [it]. “It’s a long way from being Mint State, but I associate a story with each one of these nicks,” … A story about a family shoving off for the West and this is going to put them in business. And they get attacked by Indians and the coin is stolen”… “Every one of these nicks I start making up stories about. So I enjoy this coin, even the heft of the coin.”

(Photo and excerpt from October 13, 2002 issue of Numismatic News with permission from Krause Publications, Iola, WI 54990)

“Film director-actress Penny Marshall, besides having a numismatic first name, is a coin collector. Marshall said her first name came as a sop for her brothers, who were saving their pennies for a pony, but got a baby sister instead.”

(From August 15, 2002 issue of The Sacramento Bee)

“Money. It’s difficult to imagine a world without it. … But what exactly is money? Money can be many things. It’s coins and currency, credit cards and checks. But in some cultures it can be stones, feathers, beads, salt and tobacco, even seashells. Money can represent something else, too. You’ve heard the expressions, ‘Money is the root of all evil’; ‘Money makes the world go ’round’; and how about, ‘Money talks.’ Each piece of money has a story to tell: the people, places and events portrayed on it, those who made it, the way it was made, and why it was made. Money: it’s history you can hold in your hands!”

He's made millions from his sports and real estate empires, but he doesn’t “invest” in coins... he “collects” them

by Bob Lemke, Editor of Numismatic News

It’s hard to tell why more than 200 people showed up at a special Saturday afternoon forum during the Numismatic Association of Southern California (NASC) convention in Los Angeles.

The lone speaker on the program told the audience, “From experiences speaking to different groups, I find that more people are curious about me than actually want to hear what I have to say.”

In this case, the curiosity may stem from the fact that Jerry Buss, Ph.D., is the only modern coin collector to concurrently own the two great American coin rarities: the 1913 Liberty nickel and the 1804 silver dollar.

They may have come to hear him because of his highly visible ownership of such Los Angeles sports properties as the L.A. Lakers of the National Basketball Association, the L.A. Kings of the National Hockey League, the L.A. Lazers of the major Indoor Soccer League, and the 17,000-seat Los Angeles Forum sporting arena.

In an exclusive interview with Numismatic News prior to his appearance at the NASC forum, Buss revealed himself to be an avid, knowledgeable and responsible collector, who doesn’t let his fortune get in the way of his hobby.

For Jerry Buss is, to use his own words, “a pure collector.” While he classifies his sports interests on the investment side, he calls his stamps and coins “toys... even though they are good investments.”

And he does recognize that rare coins are an excellent investment medium – he just doesn’t think of them that way when it comes to his own collection.

“As a pure collector,” he continued, “I don’t think the ups and downs of the market are at all significant or meaningful. You’re fortunate if on occasion you find the coins you want and the market is somewhat depressed and you buy it low. But at the same time, the next one you find will probably find the market up and you’ll pay for it. In the stock market they call it dollar averaging.”

For Jerry Buss the good times were long in coming. When he was a year old, his parents were divorced.

Los Angeles Lakers owner Jerry Buss is also a coin collector.

His mother worked as a waitress to support herself and infant son. By attending night school, she eventually became a bookkeeper. At the time of her death, she was head bookkeeper for her son’s business, supervising 14 people.

In 1945, at age 12, Buss and his mother moved to a small Wyoming mining and sheep ranching town. He worked throughout his school years, but dropped out of high school because of the need to support his family. A sympathetic chemistry teacher urged him to return and Buss realized that without an education all he could look forward to was a life of unskilled labor, a small pension and a gold watch.

He earned a scholarship to the University of Wyoming and an undergraduate degree in just two and a half years. A Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Southern California followed. He helped put himself through school by, among other things, selling tickets at the L.A. Coliseum.

Later, Buss became friends with the man who was responsible for bringing him to the NASC convention as a guest speaker, Lee Kuntz. Kuntz was an early investor in Buss’ enterprises (“To this day I’ve never been sorry,” Kuntz says), and a fellow coin collector.

Buss decided that the assembled collectors might best identify with how he went from plugging
Lincoln cents into a penny board to ownership of the hobby's greatest treasures.

Buss began coin collecting as a 10-year-old in Los Angeles. "What I would do – of course all of you probably started the same way – was save a certain amount of my allowance and once a week I would purchase a coin."

Buss said he would pore over the "5¢ apiece" box or the "10¢ apiece" box. "I religiously spent several hours every Saturday selecting that 20¢ item," he said.

"Somewhere in that stage I was first introduced to the penny board, and like so many novice collectors really began to get thrilled with the idea that I could find a rare coin in circulation."

The search paid off. "I hold as close to my heart, I think, as any part of my collection, the three original sets – Lincoln Cents, Buffalo Nickels and Mercury Dimes – which were taken totally out of circulation. They were absolutely completed, all out of circulation, with the single exception of the 1909-S VDB," Buss said. In fact, he added, he began to doubt that the coin was ever placed into circulation.

During his teenage years in Wyoming, Buss began to buy his coins via mail order, answering classified ads in the back of *Popular Science* and *Mechanics Illustrated*. He was also introduced to the 1913 Liberty nickel and the 1804 dollar on the cover of a famous numismatic advertising circular.

Buss then related the story of his beginnings in real estate investment and told how he became a millionaire. "There's really no magic required to become a millionaire," he said. "What it really requires is hard work, and hard work for a very long time." His formula states simply, "Get a part-time job on Saturday and do it for 10 years, taking that money and investing it at 12%. Wait 15 more years and you're a millionaire." Buss continued, "If I asked who in this room wanted to be a millionaire, most of you would raise your hand. But if I asked at the same time, which of you wanted to work Saturdays for the next 25 years, the hands would drop. I've been working Saturdays since I was 16."

And that Saturday work finally paid off in 1967, when "for the first time I recognized that I could, in fact, be considered a millionaire."

He continued, "My tastes were becoming somewhat more expensive, but then at the same time, I could afford it. In 1967-1970, the years were becoming more and more lucrative. The million suddenly became two million, which turned into four million which turned into ten million, and of course by this time I was acquiring some really attractive coins."

In the mid-1970s, Buss continued, "I had the first real trauma that any coin collector can ever have. Namely, I was keeping my coins at my house and, of course, somebody came in and robbed me of my sack of gold coins." He said the loss of that $150,000-200,000 worth of coins "hurts more than anything I can imagine in the financial sense," including some deals in which he has lost $5,000,000. Since that time, he has kept his collections in several bank vaults.

With the late 1970s and the unprecedented boom in southern California real estate property values, Buss saw his personal wealth increase to the $100,000,000+ level, and after 35 years was able to realize his dream of owning the 1913 Liberty nickel and 1804 dollar.

While attending a basketball game in the spring of 1978 with Ira Goldberg of Superior Stamp and Coin Gallery, Goldberg mentioned he had a chance to buy a 1913 Liberty nickel, and asked if he would be interested. "I thought about it for maybe 20-30 seconds, and said 'yes, I would.'" The coin was his for a reported $200,000, and later that year he acquired the Idler specimen 1804 silver dollar for a similar figure, also through private treaty from Superior.

"One night after I bought the 1804 dollar," Buss concluded, "I went back to my old, old collections and sat down with my original penny board, my Buffalo nickels and Mercury dimes – the three original boards. I've never replaced any of the coins in those boards. I took out my first copy of the Red Book – totally worn, I must have looked at it a million times. And I still had the old pamphlet of B. Max Mehl, with the picture of the 1856 Flying Eagle cent, the 1913 'V' nickel and the 1804 dollar on the cover; and I took those three coins and sat the pamphlet right next to them. I sat back and said, 'My boy, you ain't doing too badly.'"
All About U.S. Mints and Mint Marks

America’s first mint started operations in Philadelphia in 1793, and cents and half cents were the very first U.S. coins struck for circulation. Once the site of a former brewery, that mint (shown right) was very different from today’s mechanized facility. All the dies were cut by hand, and each die cutter would add his own touches. A screw press was used to squeeze the planchets between the obverse and reverse dies. Horses or strong men powered the press, and the mint’s security system was a ferocious dog named Nero!

Today, four different U.S. Mints strike coins, while four others have struck coins in the past. A small letter or mint mark on coins identifies the mints that struck them. These marks date back to ancient Greece and Rome. Mint marks on U.S. coins began with the passage of the Act of March 3, 1835. This established our first branch mints, and mint marks appeared on coins for the first time in 1838.

Eight U.S. Mints Past and Present

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
1793-Date, “P” mint mark
This has always been the main U.S. Mint facility. Most coins struck here have no mint marks. The exceptions are the Wartime nickels of 1942-45, Anthony dollars of 1979, and all Philadelphia coins since 1980 except the cent, which continues without. (Pictured: 2nd Philadelphia Mint 1833-1901)

**Denver, Colorado**
1906-Date, “D” mint mark
Major gold and silver discoveries in Colorado led to an establishment of a branch U.S. Mint, which grew out of an assay office. The building, completed in 1904 and enlarged in 1937, enabled Denver to set a record in 1969, when over 5 billion coins were produced there.

**West Point, New York**
1984-Date, “W” mint mark
Located adjacent to the U.S. Military Academy, the former West Point Bullion Depository officially became a U.S. Mint on March 31, 1988. Although West Point struck coins and medals beginning in 1974, no mint marks appeared until 1983, with the striking of 1984 Olympic $10 gold eagles.
ALL ABOUT U.S. MINTS AND MINT MARKS

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
1854-Date, “S” mint mark
When gold was discovered in 1848, massive population growth began in California. Coins were in short supply and private issues were being used. So Congress rapidly established a San Francisco branch mint, and coinage was under way by 1854. (Pictured: 2nd San Francisco Mint 1874-1937)

CARSON CITY, NEVADA
1870-1893, “CC” mint mark
The Comstock Lode of Virginia City, Nevada, was such a large strike that a branch mint was set up in nearby Carson City, named after the famous frontiersman Kit Carson. This Nevada mint was a short-lived facility and produced some of the scarcest coins in numismatics.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
1838-1909, “O” mint mark
This southern mint underwent a stormy history through the Civil War years, controlled at times by the state of Louisiana and the Confederacy. After its closure in 1909, the building was used as an assay office until 1942, and was renovated as a museum in 1979.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
1838-1861, “C” mint mark
This short-lived southern branch mint struck only gold coins during its brief existence. It was seized in 1861 by the Confederacy and was never re-opened.

DAHLONEGA, GEORGIA
1838-1861, “D” mint mark
Another short-lived southern branch mint that struck only gold coins. It too was seized in 1861 by the southern forces and was never re-opened as a mint.
World coins offer collectors an amazing variety. Some coins are hundreds of years old, with portraits of bygone kings and heroes, while others are modern, with detailed designs. Many have exotic names like Ducat, Franc, Peso or Rouble. Each coin is a treasure-house of knowledge with its own exciting story to tell! Royal crests, rulers, historic events, natural wonders, and other artwork can be part of their design. Collectors have sought out world coins because

**SOUTH AFRICA GOLD KRUGERRAND**
Released in 1967, the one-ounce gold Krugerrand became the world's first bullion coin. This 91.7% gold coin set the standard for others to follow. (¼ oz. shown)

**MEXICO SILVER LIBERTAD**
Although the 99.9% silver Libertad was struck in 1982, it wasn't released until 1984. The Libertad displays "El Angel," Winged Angel of Victory, first used on Mexican coins in 1921.

**CHINA SILVER PANDA**
China's one-ounce 99.9% silver Panda coin was first released in 1983. The Temple of Heaven, completed in 1420, is on the obverse. A panda, the world's rarest mammal, is featured on the reverse.

**RUSSIA GOLD ROUBLES**
Rouble coinage dates back to the Middle Ages. Struck in 90% gold, this 10 Roubles features Russia's last tsar, Nicholas II. The reverse shows the double-headed eagle of Russia.
they offer a snapshot of the nation that issued them. They bear legends in different languages, unique designs, and represent a distinctive history. Many coins share common themes like tall ships, wildlife, birds or famous people. Plus, there are those with unusual shapes or with holes at the center. World coins offer countless ways to form a collection. Here are a few examples of the numerous types that are available:

**Romania Copper Bani**
Struck in 1867, this Old World coin is from Romania’s first-ever coin series. It was issued under Prince Carol I, the nation’s first ruler. The coat of arms is on the obverse and the denomination is on the reverse.

**Germany Reichsmarks**
The Third Reich’s largest silver coin was the German 5 Reichsmarks, struck in 90% silver. The obverse features the heraldic eagle of Germany, and the reverse features the Potsdam Garrison Church.

**East Africa Bronze Coins**
Prior to 1960, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, and Zanzibar were British Colonies known as East Africa, and shared a common coinage. The distinctive center hole is believed to bring good luck to the bearer.

**Euro Collection**
Twelve different European nations officially converted to the Euro in 2002. Each country’s Euro has a common reverse used by the member nations, and its own unique obverse.
Grade, or condition, is a measurement of a coin's state of preservation (or quality). In most cases, the higher a coin's grade, the more scarce it is, since the majority of coins find their way into extensive circulation. And the higher a coin's quality, the greater its value, since the original design and appearance are more fully present. Hobbyists collect coins in a variety of grades, based upon their preference and budget. Of course, coins in different grades command different prices, depending on the series, scarcity, and demand. Below are general descriptions for circulated grades, as well as attributes of both Uncirculated and Proof coins. There can be a combination of subtle differences that make up various ranges within a grade.

**CIRCULATED COINS**

*Circulated coins* have been used to some extent in daily commerce and have some “wear” from handling. Because older and scarcer U.S. coins may be very difficult to locate in mint Uncirculated condition, circulated coins may better suit your need for some coin series and issues. The grades for circulated U.S. coins are described as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good</strong></td>
<td>Coin will have a fully readable date. The rims will be nearly full and may be worn down to the tops of the letters. The design of the coin will be fully outlined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very Good</strong></td>
<td>Coin will have a fully defined rim and full legends with all the lettering and numerals distinct. Some detail in the design of the coin will begin to show.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fine</strong></td>
<td>Moderate wear will be evident. The date will be bold and all letters and legends will be clear. Major elements in the design will show some separation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Uncirculated and Proof Coins

Uncirculated coins are coins that have never been in circulation. Coins may have been stored for many years in original mint-sealed bags, or stored in bank wrapped rolls, or carefully preserved by collectors. As a result, Uncirculated coins exhibit no wear from general circulation. Depending on the contact they may have had with other coins or atmospheric conditions during or after coining, blemishes, staining, bag marks and toning may be present. Uncirculated coins may lack luster and still be considered Uncirculated. Because they represent greater quality and scarcity, they carry higher values. Uncirculated grades range from MS-60 Typical to MS-70 Perfect. Most Uncirculated coins range from MS-60 to MS-63+, as very few coins meet the technical standards for MS-65 or higher.

Proof is not a grade, it is a method of manufacture. Proof coins are made by a special process using carefully selected coin blanks and dies, which are meticulously polished and burnished to remove any and all imperfections. The coin blanks are slowly fed into a specially adapted coin press, and are struck twice – at slow speed and with extra pressure – to produce high-relief features contrasted against deep mirror-like surfaces. The dies are polished frequently, and are replaced after only a limited number of strikes. The finished Proof coins are inspected to rigid standards, handled only with gloves or tongs, and specially packaged for delivery to collectors.

Some coins have been certified and encapsulated. These must first meet our exacting grading standards and then are graded by an independent service. When adding one to your collection, it's important to look at the coin within the holder to see if it appeals to you.
LITTLETON’S STANDARDS

WHAT MAKES A COIN GOOD ENOUGH TO BE A ‘LITTLETON’?
In this rewarding hobby, collectors are meticulous and their expectations are high. To be in business since 1945, and remain as one of America’s favorite coin companies, means that in addition to delivering coins and paper money that steadily meet or exceed our customers’ expectations, we must consistently deliver superior-quality service.

LITTLETON CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZES OVER 10 MILLION COINS A YEAR!
For more than 60 years, we’ve built invaluable relationships that cannot be duplicated. We seek out the best coins to offer to you and our other valued customers. Each year we examine by hand over 10 million coins. Our in-house staff of coin buyers and graders – one of the most experienced and respected in the hobby – scrutinizes each and every coin! Only after each one is carefully examined by our experts is it added to our inventory. Littleton’s tough grading standards mean that we reject nearly 50% of the coins we look at. That’s approximately 5 million coins a year we’ve painstakingly and thoroughly studied only to determine that they are not good enough to be a ‘Littleton.’ So this is why millions of collectors throughout America only want ‘Littletons’ for their collections.

“I would like to tell Littleton that they are the premier coin company in America. They give you complete and total satisfaction, courteous service, prompt delivery, and above all the best grading system I have ever seen!”
G.C.
Connersville, IN

Our fussiness means that you are guaranteed that every coin you buy has met rigorous standards, so you get what you pay for and then some! Every coin that earns the ‘Littleton’ name comes with a 45-Day Money Back Guarantee of Satisfaction. And our famous, unbeatable, friendly service is second to none.
Proper handling and storage of coins is not difficult and will maintain the natural condition (and value) of collectible coins. Appropriate care also helps preserve your coins for the benefit of future collectors.

**Handling:** Coins should be held by their edges between thumb and forefinger (see picture). This will protect coin surfaces and designs from fingerprints and the natural oils in fingers or palms that can be corrosive over time. In fact, many experienced collectors prefer to use soft cotton gloves when handling their high-quality Uncirculated or Proof coins. A wide variety of coin holders and albums is available from Littleton for easy viewing and examination of both sides of a coin without actual handling.

**Cleaning:** Improper cleaning, more than anything else, has harmed valuable coins. High-quality Uncirculated and Proof coins should never be cleaned, as improper cleaning can cause permanent loss of original mint finish and color (and permanent loss of value). Experts can easily detect an improperly cleaned coin. Most experienced collectors and dealers agree that coins should only be cleaned by experts.

**Storage:** High humidity, air pollution, salt air, and temperature extremes can sometimes affect the surfaces of coins. It is best to store coins in protective holders or albums, and to keep them in an area of relatively uniform temperature. As your collection becomes more valuable, you may choose to store some or all of your coins in a safe-deposit box. If you choose to keep your collection in your home, we recommend that you check with your insurance company to ensure that your collection is covered for its full replacement cost.

**Please note:** The clear coin wrappers used by Littleton are sealed to provide protection for your coins during delivery, and easy identification and examination without removal. You can store your coins in these custom clear wrappers, or you can remove them for placement in albums, holders, or other storage containers (also available from Littleton). When returning coins, we prefer that you keep them in the clear wrappers.

Littleton’s colorful, exclusive Showpak® holders are custom designed for permanent storage and protection of your coins, and cannot be resealed once opened.
Albums and folders provide a way to organize your collection by series, and help you track the coins you already own, as well as those you still need to find. You’ve spent the time searching for each of your coins, so you’ll want to display and protect them. And Littleton has the solution...

Because Littleton Coin Company has helped collectors enjoy the hobby and build collections since 1945, it was only natural to develop an exclusive line of albums and folders. These custom albums and folders, which feature mintage figures and series information, have become the choice among many collectors. Littleton offers more than 40 albums that feature:

- **Archival-quality material to help protect your collection**
- **Sturdy 3-ring binder construction that makes it easy to add or remove album pages**
- **The durable pages with solid brass eyelets lie flat when the album is open for easy viewing of your coins**
- **Labeled spaces for dates and mint marks for easy tracking of your collection**

In addition, Littleton offers over 30 economical custom folders. Also made with archival quality materials, the slim design makes for easy storage and display. The folders feature labeled spaces for dates and mint marks, and provide mintage figures and series information.

Here’s what one satisfied customer recently said about our custom albums:

“I am proud to show my collection, but that increases a hundredfold when they are in your LCC Custom Albums. The albums are easy to use, and show the collection to the best advantage!”

K.A.
Topeka, KS
ABOUT LITTLETON COIN COMPANY

OVER 65 YEARS OF CONVENIENT SERVICE TO COLLECTORS IN ALL 50 STATES

Littleton Coin Company was founded by Maynard Sundman, who turned his enthusiasm for collectibles into one of the largest collectibles firms in the country.

Maynard and Fannie Sundman officially founded the firm in 1945, although Maynard had operated a small stamp business from his home in Bristol, Connecticut in the 1930s. When he was drafted into the army in 1941, he put his stamp business on hold and served his country overseas.

Resuming the business...

After the war, Maynard and Fannie moved to Littleton, New Hampshire, an attractive small town nestled in the picturesque White Mountains. Littleton Stamp & Coin Company began in a small upstairs office, but the mail-order firm experienced steady growth by offering a range of services for collectors. Most popular were its Stamps-on-Approval and Coins-on-Approval Services, which allowed collectors to examine stamps or coins in their homes before they decided whether to purchase. The firm also began publishing catalogs and price lists of stamps and coins.

Growth and expansion...

In 1974, the Sundman family purchased the Mystic Stamp Company in Camden, New York, and Maynard and Fannie’s youngest son Don took the reins of the newly acquired firm. The Littleton operation later became devoted exclusively to coins and paper money. The Sundmans’ oldest son, David, became president of Littleton Coin Company in 1985, and continued to expand its coin selections and collector services. The company’s current headquarters is an 85,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art building.

Today, the company is one of America’s largest coin retailers, offering a wide selection of U.S. and world coins and paper money through a variety of mail-order services to all 50 states and beyond.
**Coin Collecting Glossary**

**Alloy** – A mixture of two or more metals.

**Assay** – To analyze and determine the purity of metal.

**Bag Mark** – A mark on a coin from contact with other coins in a mint bag.

**Bullion** – Precious metal in the form of coins, bars, ingots, etc.

**Burnished** – Burnishing involves specially polishing and treating planchets before striking. The resulting coins bear a smooth, matte-like finish.

**Business Strike** – A coin intended for circulation (as opposed to a Proof coin made specially for collectors).

**Bust** – A portrait on a coin usually including the head, neck and upper shoulders.

**Clad Coinage** – Coins with a core and outer layer of differing substances. Most modern U.S. dimes, quarters, and half dollars feature a clad composition.

**Collar** – A metal piece that restrains the expanding metal of a planchet during striking, and creates the 3rd side of a coin (edge).

**Commemorative** – A coin of special design, issued to honor an outstanding person, place, or event in history.

**Condition** – The physical state of a coin.

**Counterfeit** – A coin or piece of currency, imitating a genuine article and intended to deceive buyers or users.

**Currency** – Any medium of exchange, including coins, paper money, and other items of value used in daily commerce.

**Denomination** – The value represented by specific currency, such as a cent, dime or dollar.

**Designer** – The artist who creates a coin’s design (but doesn’t necessarily engrave the design into a coinage die).

**Device** – A symbol or figure on a coin.

**Die** – A piece of metal bearing the design of the coin. Two dies (front and back) come together against a coin blank to strike a finished coin.

**Edge** – The outer border of a coin, considered the “third side” (not to be confused with “rim”). Some coins feature lettering, reeding, or ornamental designs on their edges, formed by the collar.

**Engraver** – The person who cuts the design into a coinage die (not necessarily the designer).

**Error** – A coin improperly produced but not detected, and released by the mint.

**Face Value** – The sum for which a coin can be spent or exchanged (a dime’s face value is 10¢), as opposed to its collector or precious metal value.

**Field** – The portion of a coin’s surface not used for design or inscription.

**Grade** – Condition or amount of wear a coin has received (see pages 28 & 29).

**Hairlines** – Minute lines or scratches, often caused by cleaning or polishing.

**Incuse** – A coin design that has been impressed below the coin’s surface, rather than raised above the surface.

**Inscription** – The lettering that runs (usually horizontally) across the fields of a coin.

**Intrinsic Value** (melt value) – Refers to the value of the metal in a coin.

**Key Date** – A scarce date required to complete a collection, usually more difficult to find and afford.
Legal Tender – A coin, note, or other article issued by a government as official money.
Legend – The lettering that circles a coin's fields just inside its borders.
Medal – A metal object resembling a coin, but not of legal tender status.
Mint – A facility that produces coins (see pages 24 & 25).
Mint Luster – The dull, frosty, or satiny shine or finish found on coins, resulting from the centrifugal flow of metal as dies strike the coin blank.
Mint Mark – A small letter that identifies the mint that struck the coin.
Mint Set – Uncirculated set of each coin denomination from a particular mint.
Mint State – Same as Uncirculated.
Mintage – The quantity of coins produced.
Motto – A phrase or slogan on a coin that is often political or religious, and meaningful to a particular country.
Numismatics – The study and collecting of coins or articles used as money.
Obsolete – A coin design or type that is no longer produced.
Obverse – The front (or “heads”) side of a coin.
Paper Money – Any currency made of paper or similar woven material (U.S. issues include obsolete Silver Certificates and current Federal Reserve Notes).
Pattern – An experimental or trial piece, generally of a new design or metal.
Planchet – The blank piece of metal on which a coin design is stamped.
Proof – A method of manufacture by which coins are made using highly polished planchets and dies, often struck twice to accent the design.
Proof Set – A set of Proof coins of every denomination made in a year.
Relief – Any part of a design that is raised above the coin's surface is in relief.
Restrike – A coin minted after the year of its date from the original dies.
Reverse – The back (or “tails”) side of a coin.
Rim – The raised circumference of a coin's obverse and reverse, circling the design and protecting it from wear (not to be confused with “edge”).
Roll – Coins packaged by banks or dealers in quantities: 50 cents, 40 nickels, 50 dimes, 40 quarters, 20 half dollars, etc.
Series – All dates and mint marks of a specific design and denomination.
Staining – A white to yellow coloration which occurs naturally during the minting process, commonly found on uncirculated silver coins.
Strike – The process of stamping a coin blank with a die bearing the design.
Toning – Coloration (patination) caused by chemical reaction to the air or other materials over time.
Type Collecting – Assembling coins on the basis of design instead of by date and mint mark; collecting a coin of each different design in a series.
Uncirculated – Without rub, friction or wear from circulation.
Variety – A minor change from the basic design type of a coin.
Year Set – Collection including one coin from each year within a series.
Since Littleton Coin Company opened its doors in 1945, this family-owned business has been dedicated to providing outstanding service to collectors. When you collect with Littleton, you have our entire team of employees working just for you, from right here in New Hampshire’s beautiful White Mountains! Whether helping you build your collection on the phone, through our website and catalogs, or behind the scenes, teams of employees here in Littleton are working to ensure you have the coins, paper money, supplies and collecting information to fully enjoy this exciting hobby. Your satisfaction is our top priority!

**The largest selection of U.S. coins in the widest range of grades!**

Littleton offers you the widest variety of coins and paper money available. Internet-based networks connect us to over 2,000 dealers, and Littleton’s coin buyers continuously travel to coin shows across the country to replenish our inventory.

**See each coin before you buy**

Enjoy Littleton’s convenient “Free Examination” Coins-on-Approval Service and collector clubs. This special service lets you examine coins in your home before you buy. It’s like having a coin shop come to your house. You buy only what you want from any selection, and you can cancel this special service at any time – there’s no obligation. Here’s what W.H. of Bowie, Texas has to say:

> “It is simply wonderful to have the opportunity to receive coins at our homes and view them before actually buying them.”

**Special Request Service**

If you’re looking for special coins, notes, or grades of currency that you just can’t find, take advantage of our Special Request Service. We’re connected to dealers around the world, and our buyers always take customer “want lists” with them.

**Call toll free to order or speak with Customer Service**

Simply call 1-800-645-3122 to speak with one of our friendly Customer Service representatives. Whether you’re placing credit card orders, want details about Littleton’s Interest-Free Payment Plan, or just have questions, we’re here to serve you.
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Visit the informative, easy-to-use LittletonCoin.com, and you can choose from our vast inventory of over 25,000 different coin and paper money issues – as well as our complete line of collecting supplies and publications. You can explore the fascinating world of collecting, and take advantage of online-only special offers! Always safe and secure, LittletonCoin.com offers advanced search and site navigation, easy checkout, and order tracking.

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• Hard to Find Coins & Currency Catalog – Shop from the comfort of your home using this color catalog packed with popular coins, currency, and collecting supplies!
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