

OUR FIFTEEN RAREST COIN

Their Combined Value Put at Sixteen Thousand Dollars.

NEW YORK DOUBLOON IN FIRST PLACE

Famous Dollar of 1804 Only Fourth on List of Varieties—Cents Worth Big Money—Confederate Coins.

Designs say that the fifteen rarest American coins are easily worth a total of \$16,000. Here are the fifteen:

First may be placed the New York doubloon, coined in this city in 1787 by Ephraim Brasher, a Jeweler. This coin has a record price of only \$500, but many experts regard it as the scarcest of all the American issues, and believe that if one were offered for sale today it would bring \$3,000 or perhaps more.

Only five of these coins are definitely known, one being in the cabinet of coins in the Philadelphia mint and the rest in private collections. The doubloon is the only gold coin of American coinage struck prior to the opening of the United States mint in 1792.

The doubloon shows in the foreground the sun rising beneath a range of mountains, the sea at their feet. Beneath is the word "Brasher," while encircling the whole device is the inscription "Nova Eboraca Columbia Excelsior." The reverse has an eagle, on the breast bearing a United States shield, which is surmounted by a bunch "E. B." Thirteen stars are above the head.

In the right talon is held an olive branch, while in the left is a bunch of arrows. A wreath of olive leaves encircles the central device, around this being the motto "E Pluribus Unum." The coin weighs 4 1/2 grains, and its intrinsic value is about the same as that of the Spanish doubloon, \$16.

The next most valuable coins are the half eagles dated 1815 and 1822, which are worth respectively \$2,000 and \$2,100.

The 1804 dollar, which is fourth on the list, has a record price of \$2,000. It is so well known that it hardly requires description.

Gold Cents.

The fifth coin is the Washington cent of 1792, struck in gold. One thousand dollars is a low estimate of its value. The cent was a pattern submitted for adoption by the United States government at the beginning of operations of the

mint. The design was not accepted, but one specimen was struck in gold, that is, so far as known, only one was struck, though there may be others laid away and forgotten, and this coin now ranks among the great rarities.

On the obverse is a bust of Washington, surrounded by the words, "Washington President." Below is the date, "1791." On the reverse is a large eagle with outstretched wings, bearing upon its breast a United States shield, with a number of arrows in the right talon and a sprig of olive in the left. At the top of the coin, between the expanded wings of the eagle, which fill almost the entire field, are the words "One Cent."

Ranking with this coin in point of rarity is the Washington half dollar of 1792, struck in gold. This is supposed to have been struck as a compliment to George Washington and to have been carried by him as a pocket piece, as it shows some signs of wear. It sold for \$500 in 1875.

It shows the bust of Washington in military uniform on the obverse. The inscription reads "Washington President," the date, "1792," below.

On the reverse is a rather small eagle with expanded wings. Around the whole device is "United States of America." Between the points of the wings are thirteen stars. One thousand dollars is a conservative estimate of the value of this coin, but it is practically unobtainable.

Forerunners of Silver Change.

The Nova Constellatio series comes next in the list of great American rarities, with the 1,000-mill pieces ranking seventh, the 500-mill pieces eighth and the 100-mill pieces ninth. These three coins, which are dated 1792, were sold in a set some years ago for \$1,200, but would bring very much more now.

They were all struck in pure silver, being the forerunners of our 50, 25 and 10-cent pieces. It is supposed that they were designed by Gouverneur Morris of New York and originally coined as pattern pieces for a new United States coinage. They were found in the desk of Charles Thompson, first secretary of congress, after his death.

The first two coins are known as the mark and the quint. The design of all three pieces is similar, showing an eye in the center of thirteen points, these points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. The legend is "Nova Constellatio."

The reverse shows a wreath enclosing the letters "C. B." and the mark has "1792" in the center of the wreath. The quint has a similar reverse, with the exception that in the center is "500," while the 10-cent piece has "100."

Many Nova Constellatio cents were coined and circulated and they are very plentiful and not highly valued.

There is in existence one other specimen of the quint, with an obverse somewhat different from the one just described, which is worth every bit as much.

Good Samaritan Shillings.

The Massachusetts Good Samaritan shillings, credited to New England, is well up in the list of our most valuable coins. The only specimen known having brought \$650. This shows the Good Samaritan attending a fallen traveler by the roadside, a horse and tree in the background. There is the inscription "Massachusetts." The reverse has "1822 XII" within a circle of dots, and "In New England Anno."

The Lord Baltimore penny is worth \$650. This is the only coin of the denomination of the series of pieces struck by Cecil Calvert in the seventeenth century for Marylanders and it came very near getting him into trouble, for on account of this issue he was summoned to appear before the council in London to answer the charge of usurping the royal prerogative in issuing colonial money.

The other denominations were the shilling, sixpence and great, or fourpence. The latter three denominations are worth from \$30 to \$50 each.

The reverse of the penny shows a dual coronet on which, standing upright, are two mastiffs, each bearing a flying pennant. The legend is "Denarium Terre-Mariae." The obverse shows the bust of Lord Baltimore in profile, slightly draped, facing to the left. Around this is the inscription "Casellius Dns. Terre-Mariae, etc."

While this penny has a record price of \$550, still it is probable that it would bring more than \$1,000 if offered for sale. This one specimen originally came from England and was sold at the auction of the Minkley collection in Philadelphia for \$370. At a subsequent sale it brought \$550.

Twelfth in the list comes the Washington New Jersey cent, which has a record price of \$400, but is easily worth more than \$1,000. It is unique. It shows the words "General Washington" around the bust of the patriot. On the reverse is the shield always borne by the New Jersey state, surrounded by the motto "E Pluribus Unum."

This coin was originally sold for a few cents to a Philadelphia dealer among a lot of old copper coins, and it was not until close examination that the dealer found that for a trifle he had come into the possession of the rarest copper coin ever issued in this country.

The continental currency dollar should rank next. This was the first silver coin struck by authority of the Colonial government. On the obverse it bears the Franklin motto, "Mind Your Business," and the word "Fugio." The device shows

the rays of the sun shining upon a sun dial. Around the central device are the words "Continental Currency." On the reverse are thirteen connected links, in each one of which is the name of one of the original thirteen colonies.

This coin is very similar in pattern to the Fugio cents of the same year, which were also authorized by the united colonies. A specimen of the continental dollar is now worth \$500.

A New York cent struck in 1787 follows. This shows an Indian holding a tomahawk in his right hand, a bow in his left, while on his back is a quiver. Around this is the inscription "Liber Natus Libertatem Defendit."

On the reverse are the arms of the state of New York. An oval shield bears the sun rising behind a range of mountains, the sea in the foreground. At the right of the shield stands Justice with scales and sword; at the left is Liberty with a staff.

An eagle stands above upon a globe with outstretched wings. The inscription is "Excelsior." The coin is worth in the neighborhood of \$300.

The confederate half dollar winds up the list of fifteen rarities. Of these there are only four known. The record price for this coin is \$275. These were the only pieces of metallic currency struck by authority of the confederate government.

When the confederates seized the New Orleans mint in 1861 they at once laid plans for a distinct coinage. Dies were made for a 5-cent piece. For some reason the dies were not suitable for the regular coinage press, so four pieces were struck on an old screw press.

The obverse is the same as that of the regular United States half dollar of the year 1861, but the reverse shows a Liberty cap, underneath being a beehive. This is surrounded by the inscription "Confederate States of America."—New York Sun.

A LITTLE NEARER THE TRUTH

Some Facts About Railroad Rates and State-Owned Roads in Europe.

Louis R. Ehrlich returns from a tour of Europe "strongly impressed with the failure of government railways and the high rates charged. Many years' experience have led me to a very different conclusion, both as to rates and quality of service. What lies at the basis of so much confusion on the subject is the comparison between totally unlike conditions. Mr. A. Journeys first class on the Orient or Nord-Sud express and finds the rates very high, ignoring the fact that ninety-five per cent of the people travel third class on slow trains at a fraction of the cost and have no more use for the orient than for the Luis express.

For instance, the rate on the Austrian Staatsbahn for 100 miles, third class, slow, is 4 kronen 50 heller, first class express 18 kronen, exactly four times as much, yet this high rate, used by hardly 1 per cent of the people, is invariably the basis of comparison with American rates, and the failure of state ownership. Then instead of comparing state and private railways in the same country or countries of similar character, we have only to put the most up-to-date part of bustling America beside Spain, Sicily, or even Germany, and write about our own superiority.

Let us examine a few of the rates from schedules before me, using the third class slow rate on which all European tariffs are based. Innsbruck offers an opportunity for fair comparison, the state Arlberg running east and west, and the Brenner (Stadbahn), a private road, running south, both mountain roads of expensive construction, but the state railway much the more expensive. For twenty-five, fifty and 100 miles on each road from Innsbruck the rates are in kronen, state, 1.10, 2.30, 4.50; private, 1.30, 3.50, 6.70, or in our money about 23, 48 and 94 cents for the state road and 35, 73 and 144 for the private road, fully 50 per cent higher on the Austrian side.

Sweden, Holland and Italy, Switzerland slightly more and Belgium a trifle less. The private owned railways of England, France and Spain offer the highest rates in Europe. In England one train daily must be run for 2 cents a mile, but the average rate is a trifle higher. Equipment and speed vary, but this is more a matter of national character and habit than a question of state and private ownership.

All currents of life run slower in European countries; time is considered of less value, this affects all lines of business as well as railways, both state and private, and in about the same measure. Italy might now be used as an example of the failure of state ownership, yet a year or two ago it would have convinced any impartial observer of the hopeless incompetence of private ownership. On the whole government ownership shows a slightly lower rate without discriminations and better service, but the difference under similar conditions is not great enough to prove the question one way or the other.—E. W. Grady, in New York Times.

WOMAN WRESTLING MATCHES

Japanese Amateurs Who Make a Great Show of Strenuous Athletics.

Describing a wrestling match between women in Japan, a writer says: "The wrestlers arranged themselves on two sides, each in a crouching position, feet crossed, legs around the platform in the dirt, all but the two chosen to begin, who advanced into the center with the impetuosity they squatted upon their feet and bowed to each other slowly and solemnly. Politeness thus being signified, they stood up again and bent over opposite one another like two game cocks, watching intently for a chance to seize an advantage. During the preliminaries the audience was tense with expectation. Then suddenly the women sprang, hissing at each other furiously and grasping their hands, at first by simulating ferocity to spur themselves up to greater excitement, but, after a few clutches, in deadly feminine earnest, the umpire meanwhile buzzing close to them as they sprang round the narrow ring.

"Any and all holds seemed fair means to the end of pushing a combatant over the edge. Sometimes with a clean throw one woman landed her opponent sprawling in the midst of her friends. This was the sixteenth for the umpire to begin: 'Hittotau, futatate, mitate, yotatu, itatatu, (one, two, three, four, five), in a series of irregular and disconnected squaraks; and before he ceased counting another wrestler from the loitering side jumped up to meet the champion, who stood panting, hissing and spinning like a boiling kettle in the center of the arena.

"This time there were no preliminaries. A wild rush, and like two furies or two demons the women were struggling again, each affected quick catches, some looked their adversaries in their arms and assed stock still for a full five minutes. Some picked up their opponents almost at once and threw them bodily over the ring, while others rolled over with them."

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