

Starting a Type Coin Collection-Part 2

(Please refer to SVCC September Newsletter for Part 1)

How did I apply the information I learned from Part 1 to begin my Type coin collection. My first step was to choose a sub group of coins to collect. Wrapping my arms around the thought of collecting one of every coin produced in the US since the birth of our nation till today was a bit overwhelming so I decided to narrow things down to a subgroup of US coins. I chose 19th Century US coinage excluding gold coins. US history was always one of my favorite subjects in junior high and high school when I began collecting coins. Collecting one of every type coin from the 19th Century would be a great way of connecting my interest in US history with my love for collecting coins.

My next step was to go back to my reference books and choose which coins I should include in a list of 19th Century type coins. I soon discovered that the two reference books had some differences in what they considered "type coins" within this time period. I decided to choose the book "United States Coinage-A Study by Type" by Ron Guth and Jeff Garrett as my key reference for the list. As the authors indicate in their book, determining what types to include in a book might appear to be an easy task; however, the criteria used (by various type book authors) to differentiate types are sometimes contradictory, sometimes overlapping, sometimes liberal and sometimes too restrictive.

Guth and Garrett in their book chose types by the following characteristics:

- A legally mandated change to the design on either side of the coin
- A change to the design (on either side of the coin) that can be seen by the naked eye
- A major change in the technological processes used to create coins

The authors point out that no general agreement exists on a complete listing of type. In the final analysis, collectors remain free to decide which coins to include in their collection.

Once I completed my listing of 19th Century coins from my chosen reference I was surprised to note that I had a total of 64 coins from ½ cents through the \$1.

I decided not to collect raw coins but only slabbed (NGC and PCGS) coins with a minimum grade of AU-50. I wanted coins that would show all the details and that had nice eye appeal. I also decided I would include in my collection both proof coins as well as coins struck for circulation.

I chose to go with slabbed coins rather than raw coins based upon my personal experience of buying what appeared to be wonderful high grade raw coins only to find out that they had been whizzed, cleaned or artificially toned when I sent them into a grading service to be slabbed. I would recommend that if anyone is collecting coins and expecting to spend more than \$60 per coin that they seriously consider buying only slabbed coins from a reputable slabbing service unless the purchaser is a grading expert.

I then looked through my existing collection of miscellaneous US coins and found two coins that I could begin my type collection with. They were an 1883 Proof-64 Indian Head Cent and an 1887 N-64* Morgan Dollar.

Now the fun begins, going to small local shows as well as larger regional and national shows and searching for a type coin to add to my new collection 19th Century US Type Coins.

I hope some of you will find the information in these two articles useful if you decide to start a type coin collection.