

# THE Asylum

VOL. 34 NO. 1



SPRING 2016

Quarterly Journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society • COINBOOKS.ORG

TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION, ON  
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY AFTERNOONS  
JUNE 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1859,  
COMMENCING EACH DAY AT FIVE O'CLOCK.  
BY BANGS, MERWIN & CO.

AT THE TRADE SALE ROOMS No. 13 PARK ROW, NEW YORK.



7



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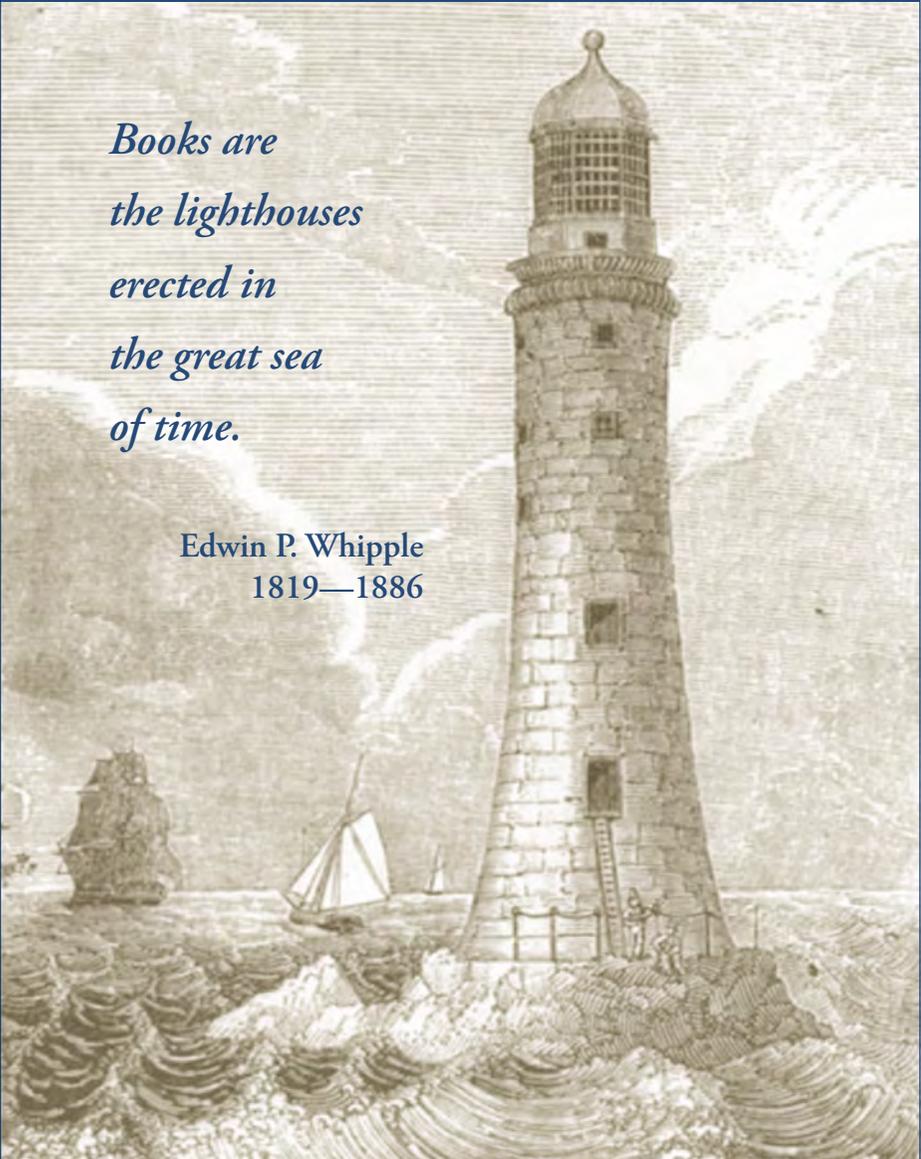
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*Books are  
the lighthouses  
erected in  
the great sea  
of time.*

Edwin P. Whipple  
1819—1886



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# Numismatic Bibliomania Society

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*Managing Editor*, The Asylum  
Maria Fanning  
nbsasylum@gmail.com  
141 W. Johnstown Rd  
Gahanna, OH 43230

*Editor-in-Chief*, The Asylum  
Elizabeth Hahn Bengé  
lizzieitalia@yahoo.com

**NBS Membership/Subscriptions:** *The Asylum* is mailed to all NBS Members. Membership is \$25.00 inside the United States and \$30.00 outside the U.S. New members receive one back issue plus all new issues upon publication. Requests for membership and change of address should be submitted to the Treasurer at the address below.

**Submissions:** *The Asylum* (ISSN 1552-1931) is published in four issues per year. Submissions should be sent to the editor at nbsasylum@gmail.com. Authors, please put your name(s) and contact information on all submitted material. All accepted manuscripts become the property of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. For more information, please contact the editor.

## Advertising rates for 2016

See our full Ad Rates and Guidelines at [coinbooks.org/asylum](http://coinbooks.org/asylum) or contact editor.

Full page	\$120	5.5 x 8 inches
Inside front, inside or outside back cover	\$125	5.5 x 8 inches
Half page	\$75	5.5 x 4 inches
Quarter page	\$40	2.75 x 4 inches

\*A 10% discount may be applied for a full-year commitment. A 10% discount is available for NBS members and community organizations.

## Deadlines for Submissions and Advertising:

Spring Issue (No. 1) February 1	Autumn Issue (No. 3) August 1
Summer Issue (No. 2) May 1	Winter Issue (No. 4) November 1

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*President*  
Marc Ricard  
mccricard@yahoo.com

*Vice-President*  
Elizabeth Hahn Bengé  
lizzieitalia@yahoo.com

*Treasurer*  
Terry White terrywhite5475@yahoo.com  
P.O. Box 39, Hilliard, OH 43026-1278

## Board of Governors

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Leonard Augsbürger, Vernon Hills, IL leonard\_augsburger@hotmail.com  
David Fanning, Gahanna, OH df@numislit.com  
Dan Hamelberg, Champaign, IL danhamelberg@aol.com  
Sydney Martin, Doylestown, PA sfmartin5@comcast.net  
W. David Perkins, Centennial, CO wdperki@attglobal.net  
P. Scott Rubin, Lawrenceville, NJ numislit@msn.com

*Editor*, E-Sylum  
Wayne Homren whomren@gmail.com

*NBS Historian*  
Joel J. Orosz joeljorosz@gmail.com



# President's Message

Marc Ricard, NBS President

Dear Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Maria Fanning as the new Editor of *The Asylum*. She is a talented and dedicated professional who has agreed to manage all of the publication aspects of our fine journal into the future. She works with her husband, Board Member Dr. David Fanning, at Kolbe and Fanning Numismatic Literature. Her position in the numismatic literature community makes her uniquely qualified for her new role, and the Officers and Board of NBS are grateful for her service.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our previous Editor, David Yoon, for his long tenure at *The Asylum*. The publication continuously improved under his leadership, and the quality of *The Asylum* is due in large part to his efforts. He has been involved with Maria during the transition of roles, and for that, and his service to NBS and the literature community over the years, we are also very grateful.

This is an exciting time to be involved in numismatic literature. With the rapid improvement of technology in publishing and archiving, many important works that previously would have been lost, are being preserved for future generations of collectors. Most of you are interested in building and improving your own libraries. The Numismatic Bibliomania Society continues to be the best resource for information in our field.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the World's Fair of Money in Anaheim, CA in August. Much more on our Symposium, General Meeting, and Auction will be shared with you in the near future. Stay tuned to the *E-Sylum* and this publication for details.

With warmest regards,  
Marc Charles Ricard

## CORRECTION

Only rarely can I find an error to correct in *The Asylum*. One appeared, however, in the October-December 2015 issue. In "A Modest Exoneration of B. Max Mehl's "Hazeltine Type Table," the article's author stated: "Dave Bowers remembers the "Texas Master of Coins" belying his vivid reputation by being personally colorless."

Dave Bowers never said or wrote this. The "colorless in terms of personality" assessment was

made by John W. Adams in *United States Numismatic Literature*, Volume II, p. 55. The author obviously confused his numismatic icons in making the attribution.

I have it on good authority that the author is embarrassed, and will be much more careful about his accuracy in the future. Given his remorse, I'm inclined to forgive him.

Joel J. Orosz



Maria Fanning,  
*The Asylum* Editor

## From the Editor

Welcome, fellow bibliomaniacs, to my editorial debut in *The Asylum*. Many of you may know me through my work at Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers and have met me at the ANA's World's Fair of Money, the New York International Numismatic Convention or through email correspondence. I am pleased to be succeeding David Yoon, who has continued to produce an impressive publication for the past nine years. He has graciously offered his support and assistance in my first few issues and I thank him for leaving me with a vibrant journal. I know we all wish him the best for the future, be it in numismatics or archeology!

*The Asylum* has a long history of being a hub of research and discussion for those serious about their love of numismatics. I hope to draw on that passion to include even more contributions from those we have not yet heard, as well as our excellent regular contributors. There is plenty of room for those with a scholarly bent as well as inexperienced writers with a passion for numismatic books and we want to hear about yours.

We have some fascinating articles in this issue. We are very lucky to have an article by P. Scott Rubin on his 19th-century auction catalogues, which we hope will become an ongoing series. We also have a spicy tale of love and murder written by no other than famed Mint Director William E. Dubois and brought to light by our own Joel Orosz. David Fanning shares another of his award-winning "Off The Shelf" columns, this one on Newcomb's book on 1801-03 cents, and Len Augsberger gives us an exciting update on what's happening with the Newman Portal.

### *Getting to Know You*

To get to know you all better I have put together a brief 10-question multiple-choice survey about your collecting and reading interests. I hope that you will indulge me for a few minutes so that I can tailor content to what you as NBS members want most to read. My ulterior motive is also to collect information on our readers' specific areas of interest and collecting habits to share with potential advertisers and help expand and improve our journal. You can take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N295ZKS>. Information will be kept anonymous. Your input is much appreciated!

I am excited to meet all of our readers, whether in person or by email, and would love to hear from all of you. If you have an idea for a submission, please let me know as soon as possible so we can fit it into our editorial calendar. Please feel free to contact me at [nbsasylum@gmail.com](mailto:nbsasylum@gmail.com) at any time with suggestions or contributions for future issues. Happy reading!

# To the Editor

Dear Editor,

Every member of NBS is familiar with the writings of Joel Orosz—his scholarly research combined with his eloquent style. However, not everyone has heard Joel from the podium, where he is just as scholarly and even more eloquent. The attached photographs depict the man in his role as Master of Ceremonies at the recent ANS Gala. All hail our talented fellow bibliomaniac!

Sincerely,

Nom de Plume



TRIPPLICATE

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday Afternoons,  
June 21st, 22nd and 23rd, at 5 o'clock.

## CATALOGUE

OF A

LARGE AND VERY CHOICE COLLECTION OF

# Coins, Tokens and Medals

(Ancient and Modern.)

Among the many gems in this collection, are a large variety of American Gold and Silver Coins of rare dates, some of them proofs;—Complete sets of American Cents and Half Cents, many of them proofs;—Proof Patterns, Gold, Silver and Copper Pieces—Rare New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts and Virginia Cents and Half Cents, all fine—Fine American and Foreign Medals—English Coins and Tokens, in Silver and Copper, &c., &c. Also a collection of rare AUTOGRAPH LETTERS and DOCUMENTS, &c.—The whole forming the finest collection ever offered in New-York.

TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION, ON  
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COMMENCING EACH DAY AT FIVE O'CLOCK.  
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AT THE TRADE SALE ROOMS No. 13 PARK ROW. NEW YORK.



Gentlemen who cannot attend the Sale may have their orders to purchase executed by the Auctioneers.

# The John K. Curtis Auction of June 21, 1859

*Only the Fourth Coin Auction to realize over \$1,000 before 1860.*

**By P. Scott Rubin**

Starting on June 21, 1859 and continuing until the 23rd of the month a coin auction was held at No. 13 Park Row, New York conducted by the auction house Bangs, Merwin & Co. The title of the sale was “Catalogue of a large and very choice collection of Coins, Tokens and Medals (Ancient and Modern). Among the many gems in this collection are a large variety of American Gold and Silver Coins of rare dates, some of them proofs; - Complete sets of American Cents and Half Cents, many of them proofs; - Proof Patterns, Gold, Silver and Copper Pieces – Rare New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts and Virginia Cents and Half Cents, all fine – Fine American and Foreign Medals – English Coins and Tokens in Silver and Copper, &c., &c.; Also a collection of rare AUTOGRAPH LETTERS and DOCUMENTS, &c. – The whole forming the finest collection ever offered in New York.”

As can be seen by the lengthy title, this was to be a very important auction for the time. However, missing from this title were the names of the cataloguer and any consigners. To modern researchers the answers to these questions are left to Emmanuel Joseph Attinelli, who in his 1876 book *Numisgraphics* (or the more recent version by Quarterman Publications)<sup>1</sup> we learn that this sale was sold in three parts contained in two publications. First, a 40-page catalogue containing the main part of the collection, followed by (starting on page 27) an Addenda that starts with new lot numbers, and a two-page single-sheet second addenda which again starts with new lot numbers.

From Attinelli we also learn that John K. Curtis<sup>2</sup> is the prime cataloguer and supplier of the lots in all three parts of this auction. Only the first 59 lots of the 333-lot first addenda were not his coins. These lots, according to Attinelli, belonged to A.M. Wilder, Thomas Walsh and E.M. Camp, and contained nothing of note.

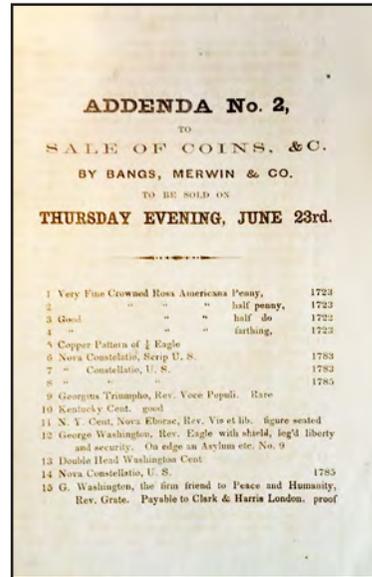
Some auction sales of the 19th century have been honored for their place in numismatic history. The November 1, 1858 Cogan sale is known for its ground-breaking sale of a set of U.S. cents and for being the first sale conducted by a full-time coin dealer in the United States. However, some of the statements in the last sentence are not really true. While it may be true that the sale was the first conducted by a full-time coin dealer, it was not a public auction as we know today. It was more like the sales that were common when I started collecting coins in the 1950s: a dealer would place a group of coins out on display, customers would write down their best offer, and the coins would be sold to the person who offered to pay the most by a date set by the dealer. Edward Cogan made a slight change in this system by setting a starting price, and his next two sales were handled in the same way. It was

not until his October 28, 1859 sale of the W.C. Tripler collection did Cogan sell a collection at auction. With this sale he had an auctioneer: W.C. Cook was brought into Cogan's store in Philadelphia to call the auction. It should also be noted that in the case of the first four Cogan Sales no printed catalogues were available at the time of the sale. Only manuscript copies of the items offered and the prices they sold for existed until the early 1860s when Attinelli reprinted Cogan's second, third and fourth sales from hand-written copies. This was followed by Cogan's reprinting of his first sale.

This leads us to the fact that in the 1850s—the first decade of organized coin auctions taking place in the United States—only three individuals who were considered coin dealers at the time held sales: Augustus Sage who was a teenager when he catalogued three auctions in 1859 and an Addenda to one of his sales, Edward Cogan who, as shown above, did not hold an auction as we know it today until October 28, 1859, and John K. Curtis who held his first sale on June 21, 1859. After his initial burst of auctions Sage disappeared from the auction business and Curtis did not hold any significant sales after this first one, but did keep a hand in the auction business until at least the early 1870s. Cogan, starting with his catalogue for his December 1859 auction, continued in the coin auction business until December 1879.

This brings us back to the question of what makes this June 21–23, 1859 Bangs, Merwin & Co. auction so important. The answer lies in the contents of the sale itself. While the Cogan auction of October 1858 included a complete date set of large cents, that was about all it contained. This Curtis sale not only contained a complete date set of large cents but also had a nearly complete set of half cents along with a number of duplicates of 1793 large cents and proof large cents of 1819, 1841, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1848, 1854, 1855 and 1856. The silver American coins contained many of the classic collectables such as 1794 silver dollar, 1796 15 star and half dollars, 1796 quarter and dime. Also included were gold coins such as eagles of 1799 and 1800, half eagles of 1795, 1800, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811 and 1813 and most important Quarter eagles of 1802, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1824, 1825, 1827, 1829, 1830, 1831 and 1832. All the gold was called Proof, the 1799 Cent Almost Proof and the 1804 Cent never circulated.

Add to the above-mentioned regular issue United States coinage, California gold dollar of 1853, and California gold half dollars of 1853 and 1856 (Octagon), also patterns including and 1852 ring gold dollar, 1854, 1855 and 1856 large and small pattern cents, and two 1836 flying eagle silver dollars. Among the many other items of interest to collectors of American coinage were: a Massachusetts 1787 half cent, a Rosa Ameri farthing UTILE DULCI 1722, large and small size Pine Tree shillings, an



1787 Nova Eborac copper, a 1794 Talbot, Allum & Lee Token, a bar cent, a few 1787 Fugio coppers, a 1785 Nova Constelatio with U.S. in Scrip, three New Jersey coppers: 1787 E. PLURIBUS, 1788 running fox (called dog) and a 1788 head left, a 1789 Mott Token and finally a 1737 Higley copper with 3 sledge hammers. The rest of the collection contained many gold, silver and copper English coinage as well as gold and silver coinage from other countries.

In his groundbreaking book *United States Numismatic Literature. Volume I: Nineteenth Century Auction Catalogs*, John W. Adams did a wonderful job of detailing the history and contents of noted 19th-century coin dealers. In chapter 19 he departs from his method of identifying coin dealers' auctions or, in some cases, fixed price lists, to list auctions by the auction house that handled the sale, not by the individuals who did the sale, in this case Bangs & Co. Included in this listing is the John K. Curtis June 21, 1859 sale with a rating of C+. I do believe that while the inclusion of this sale is well-warranted it probably deserved a listing of at least a B, but I am not one to argue with such a finely-researched work. Mr. Adams did such a wonderful job of research on an unheralded body of work.

It is also interesting to follow the Bangs Company name from its early start, especially in numismatic auctions<sup>3</sup>. Bangs & Co. was better known as a book auction company who also handled other items for individual collectors or businesses. Many of the well-known coin sales of the 19th century were sold by Bangs & Co. In fact, the first auctions by a member of the Bangs family originated in 1837 when Lemuel Bangs joined with James E. Cooley to open Cooley & Bangs. A year later the company changed with a new partnership under the name Bangs, Richards & Platt. In 1849, the company changed again and became Bangs, Platt & Co. In 1851, Lemuel's brother Nathan Bangs joined the firm and the name was changed to Bangs, Brother & Co. In 1858, another reorganization of the firm gave us the name Bangs, Merwin & Co. In 1876, yet another reorganization of the firm saw its name changed to Bangs & Co. On April 1, 1903 the firm was sold to John Anderson, Jr. who was already in the auction business since 1900. By the fall of 1903 Anderson had combined both companies under the name Anderson Auction Co. In mid-1929 Anderson Auction Co. was consolidated with the American Art Association to become American Art Association Anderson Galleries. The firm went out of the business after the death of its last owner and two of its chief employees; Mr. Parke and Mr. Bernet left to start their own auction company which was later merged with Sotheby's and still exists today as Sotheby's New York.

I hope this story opens up more research into the early years of numismatic auctions and their value to collectors today.

#### Notes

1. Attinelli, Emmanuel Joseph. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN NUMISMATIC AUCTION CATALOGUES, 1828-1875. Reprint. Lawrence: Quarterman, 1976.
2. A person he identifies as a coin dealer with a shop on Bleecker St. who has been in business since 1857.
3. Attinelli has their first coin related sale as March 17, 1841 when they were called Bangs Richard and Platt.



# A Random Page from the NBS Wiki

Explore the wiki and share your own research at [wiki.coinbooks.org](http://wiki.coinbooks.org)



## Early Coins Of America

The One Hundred Greatest Items Of United States Numismatic Literature Rank: Number 2

[Clain-Stefanelli 12115\\*](#), [Davis 291](#), [Grierson 218](#), [Sigler 603](#).

If *Breen* is one bookend of American numismatics, *Crosby* is surely the other. In 1875, Crosby had not even the use of a telephone to aid his research. On the other hand, he had access to the great collectors and collections of yore, among them *Bushnell*, *Stickney*, *Parmelee*, *Appleton*, *Maris* and others, all giants on the 19th century American numismatic scene. Crosby's dive into the primary source documentation surrounding colonial issues is beyond remarkable, particularly in light of the lack of modern bibliographic resources. Coupled with his observant technical eye and capable cataloguing, this work is properly described by Davis as "the masterpiece of nineteenth century numismatic literature."<sup>[1]</sup>

### Original Edition



Image courtesy of Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers.

CROSBY, Sylvester Sage. THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA; AND THE LAWS GOVERNING THEIR ISSUE. COMPRISING ALSO DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WASHINGTON PIECES, THE ANGLO- AMERICAN TOKENS, MANY PIECES OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES, AND THE FIRST PATTERNS OF THE UNITED STATES MINT.

Boston: The Author, 1875.

361 pages, 10 Heliotype plates, 2 folding manuscript plates, 110 wood engravings.  
Quarto: 30 x 24 cm.

Originally, *Early Coins of America* was published as 12 parts, issued in 11 by subscription.<sup>[2]</sup> Binding of the individual parts was left to each subscriber. This accounts for the myriad of bindings seen for this edition.

A supplemental 1876 plate of New Jersey coppers, the *Maris Woodbury* type plate, is found in some copies.

An estimated 350 copies issued, of which approximately 100 are thought to have survived.

### Nova Constellatio Edition

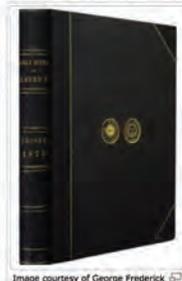


Image courtesy of George Frederick Kolbe - Fine Numismatic Books.

CROSBY, Sylvester Sage. THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA; AND THE LAWS GOVERNING THEIR ISSUE. COMPRISING ALSO DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WASHINGTON PIECES, THE ANGLO- AMERICAN TOKENS, MANY PIECES OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES, AND THE FIRST PATTERNS OF THE UNITED STATES MINT.

Boston: The Author, 1875.

(2), v, (5), (11)-381, (1) pages, 10 heliotype plates, 2 folding manuscript plates, 110 wood engravings.  
Quarto: 31 x 25 cm.

Hardbound: Black half morocco, lettered in gilt. Gilt Nova Constellatio 'Mark' on cover.

The actual number of these bound in this manner by Crosby is unknown and is thought to be limited to only a few copies.

### Low Edition



Image courtesy of Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers.

CROSBY, Sylvester Sage. THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA; AND THE LAWS GOVERNING THEIR ISSUE. COMPRISING ALSO DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WASHINGTON PIECES, THE ANGLO- AMERICAN TOKENS, MANY PIECES OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES, AND THE FIRST PATTERNS OF THE UNITED STATES MINT.

Boston: The Author, 1875.

(2), v, (5), (11)-381, (1) pages, 10 heliotype plates, 2 folding manuscript plates, 110 wood engravings.  
Quarto: 30 x 24 cm.

Hardbound: Blue embossed cloth.

Lyman Low purchased all unbound sheets and had them uniformly bound circa 1886. It is thought that approximately 100 were issued in this format but these appear so infrequently that the quantity thought to be issued is questionable.

### Estes & Lauriat Edition



CROSBY, Sylvester Sage. THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA; AND THE LAWS GOVERNING THEIR ISSUE. COMPRISING ALSO DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WASHINGTON PIECES, THE ANGLO- AMERICAN TOKENS, MANY PIECES OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN, OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES, AND THE FIRST PATTERNS OF THE UNITED STATES MINT.

Boston: Estes & Lauriat, 1878.

(2), v, (5), (11)-381, (1) pages, 10 heliotype plates, 2 folding manuscript plates, 110 wood engravings.

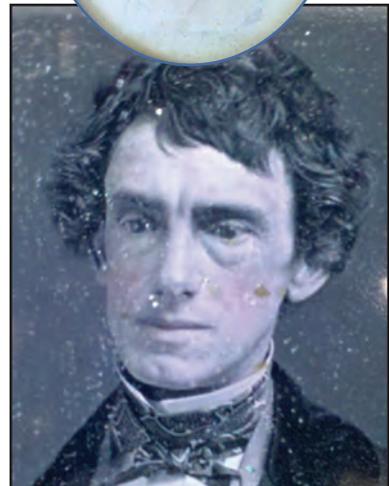
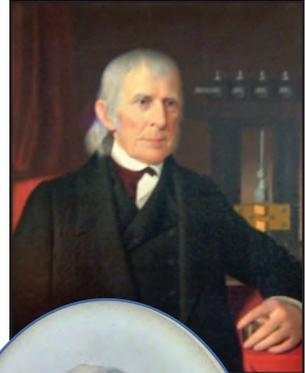
# A Walk On The (Literary) Wild Side with William E. Dubois

Joel J. Orosz

Numismatically considered, William E. Dubois (1810-1881), like love, was a many-splendored thing. From one coigne of vantage, he was an exemplary employee of the mother Mint in Philadelphia, both an accurate assayer, and a careful curator of the Mint's cabinet of rare coins. Espied from another angle, he was the embodiment of nepotism run riot at the mid-century Mint. Still another glimpse of him reveals a serious scholar, the co-author of the first books written expressly for United States numismatists. Yet another way of viewing him finds as pious a Presbyterian as a religious century ever produced. Now, we can add one more facet to the gemstone that was William E. Dubois, albeit a facet that seems at first glance to be wildly out of character: author of a tabloid-worthy account of an illicit love affair-cum-literally poisonous murder plot.

Any chronicler of William E. Dubois, no matter how charitably inclined, must confront his family tree, which was a mighty oak that, in the early days, virtually supported the United States Mint. During his long tenure, he could hardly hurl one of his cupels without it caroming off the noggin of one or another of his kith and kin. Dubois' maternal grandfather, Robert Patterson, was the fourth Director of the Mint, and his uncle, Dr. Samuel Moore, was the fifth. William's "uncle Sam" quite literally wanted him: to fill the position of clerk at the Mint in September of 1833. Dr. Moore's successor was Robert Patterson's son, Robert Maskell Patterson, another of Dubois' uncles.

All of that would be nepotism enough for most folks, but for William E. Dubois, that was only the *Patterson* side of his work family. In 1836, Adam Eckfeldt, the venerable (and



Top to bottom: Adam Eckfeldt, Jacob R. Eckfeldt and William E. Dubois: father, son, and son-in-law.

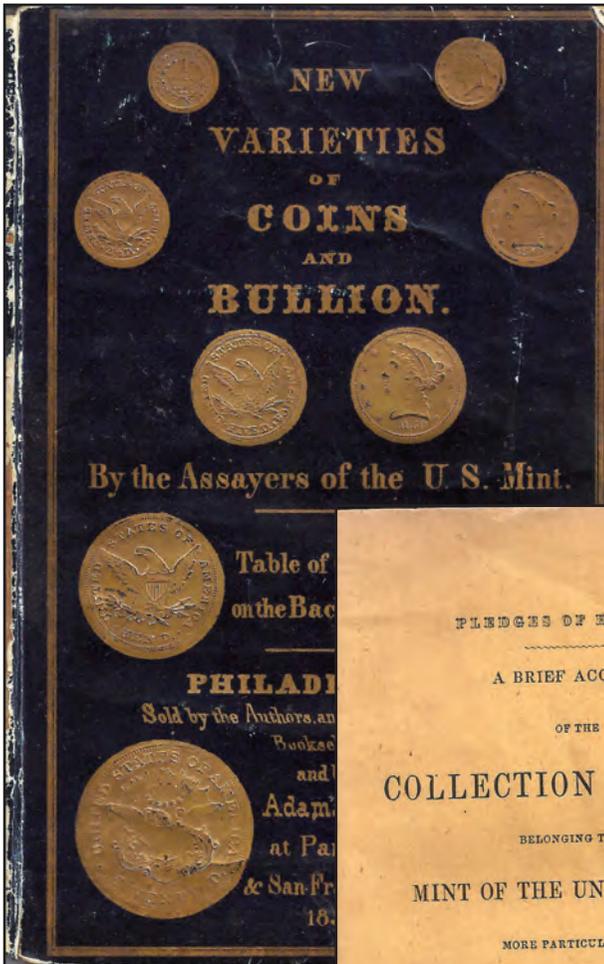
enerated) Chief Coiner, requested Dubois' services in the Assay Department, where he became Assistant Assayer working under Assayer Jacob Reese Eckfeldt, Adam's son. Five years later, William married Adam's daughter Susanna, thus gaining a Chief Coiner for a father-in-law and an Assayer for a brother-in-law. The happy couple had a son, whom they named Patterson Dubois, in honor of the young man's extended family. Years later, when Patterson, too, came to work for the Mint, it seemed as if he was related by blood to just about every living thing there with the exception of Peter, the mascot bald eagle.

Keeping the nation's coinage factory all in the Patterson/Eckfeldt family produced surprisingly good results. The opening of a splendid new Mint edifice in 1833, and the full embrace of steam-driven technology, made the American Mint at last a worthy counterpart to its older siblings in London and in Paris. The Jacob Eckfeldt/William Dubois team ran the Assay department with dependable efficiency, Eckfeldt being the more scientifically minded, and Dubois better at communicating results. In June of 1838, William added another responsibility to his portfolio: becoming the first formal curator of the Mint Cabinet of Coins, a collection informally started—it hardly need be told—by a kinsman, Adam Eckfeldt. Dubois held that post for the rest of his life, proving to be such a canny collector that he is credited with forming the nucleus of what is today the National Numismatic Collection of the Smithsonian Institution.

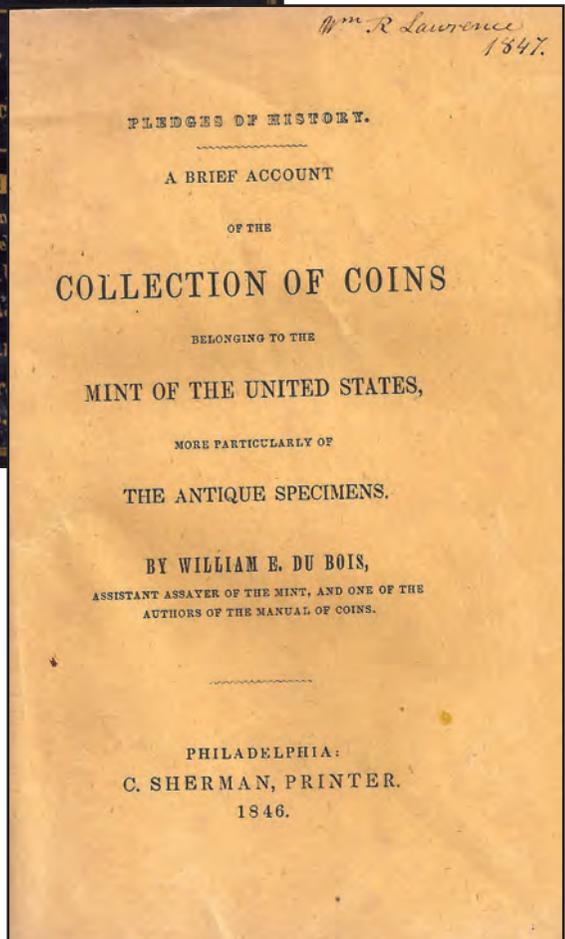
The brothers-in-law also found the time to team-write themselves into the forefront of the American numismatic literature field, more than a decade before coin collecting took off as a mass hobby in the United States. Their debut literary production, *A Manual of Gold and Silver Coins of All Nations, Struck Within the Past Century* (1842), well-illustrated with the aid of Joseph Saxton's medal-ruling machine, became the go-to reference work for aspiring collectors across the nation. The existence of the 1804 dollar was announced to the world via its appearance on the second plate of this book. A second edition followed in 1849, and a third in 1851. Dubois went solo for his next book, *Pledges of History* (1846), which provided the first written guide to the contents of the Mint Cabinet. The California gold rush accelerated interest in numismatics, and in 1850, the in-laws were back together with *New Varieties of Gold and Silver Coins, Counterfeit Coins, Bullion with Mint Values*. This was a smaller volume than their 1842 *Manual*, but it was enhanced by samples of actual California gold, placed under mica windows. The second and third editions, appearing respectively in 1851 and 1852, sadly lacked the golden samples.

Something else eventually was lacking in Dubois' life, but this was by choice. His father spelled the familial surname as good Huguenots would: Du Bois. As it did for many another descendant of old world immigrants, the temptation to simplify the spelling of the name proved irresistible. First the space was lost, and Du Bois became DuBois. By the end of his life, William lost the second capitalization, as well, and DuBois became Dubois.

William E. Dubois—assayer, author, curator—was obviously a big man on the Mint's campus, but when he went home to Susanna, he was also a pillar of the Presbyterian church. His father, the Rev. Uriah Du Bois, was a divine of considerable piety, which trait was inherited by his descendants. William was "a devoted member of the Presbyterian church," according his obituary in the October 1881 issue of the



Two of Dubois' numismatic titles, *Pledges of History* (1846) and *New Varieties of Coins and Bullion* (1850).



*American Journal of Numismatics*, written—it hardly need be told—by a kinsman, his son Patterson. The same could be said of Patterson, who wrote extensively on the moral formation of children. The Dubois men may have worked in a factory devoted to facilitating mammon, but they were truly men of God.

Which is why it is so surprising that in his father's obituary, Patterson acknowledged William's fling with the sensational in the formative years of his writing career:

Schooled in the classics from the age of six, Mr. DuBois early developed literary, linguistic, and antiquarian tastes, which soon turned productive. At sixteen, the weeklies welcomed his essays; as a tale writer, he found marked success in his twenties. A law student at twenty-two, he was highly commended for an able report of one of the most famous trials on record. Though soon after admitted to the bar, an encroaching weakness of voice compelled him to relinquish the law. This affection was a cross patiently borne through life....

So, just what was this “able report of one of the most famous trials on record” that Dubois wrote while still a law student in 1832? The answer is found in the 148<sup>th</sup> *Catalog of Rare Americana* issued in early January of 2016 by David Lesser of Woodbridge, Connecticut. Lesser describes item 29 of his catalog as follows:

**DU BOIS, WILLIAM E.:** TRIAL OF LUCRETIA CHAPMAN, OTHERWISE CALLED LUCRETIA ESPOS Y MINA, WHO WAS JOINTLY INDICTED WITH LINO AMALIA ESPOS Y MINA, FOR THE MURDER OF WILLIAM CHAPMAN, ESQ. LATE OF ANDALUSIA, COUNTY OF BUCKS, PENNSYLVANIA, IN THE COURT OF OYER AND TERMINER, HELD AT DOYLESTOWN, FOR BUCKS, DECEMBER TERM, 1831, CONTINUED TO FEBRUARY TERM, 1832. PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY WILLIAM E. DU BOIS, STUDENT OF LAW. Philadelphia: G. W. Mentz & Son, 1832.

Clearly our William, 22 and a law student in 1832, was the author of this “able report.” But oh, how this report must have scandalized the fastidious denizens of the City of Brotherly Love! Lesser's summary of its contents, slightly condensed here, remain a bit lurid even to our jaded 21<sup>st</sup> century ears:

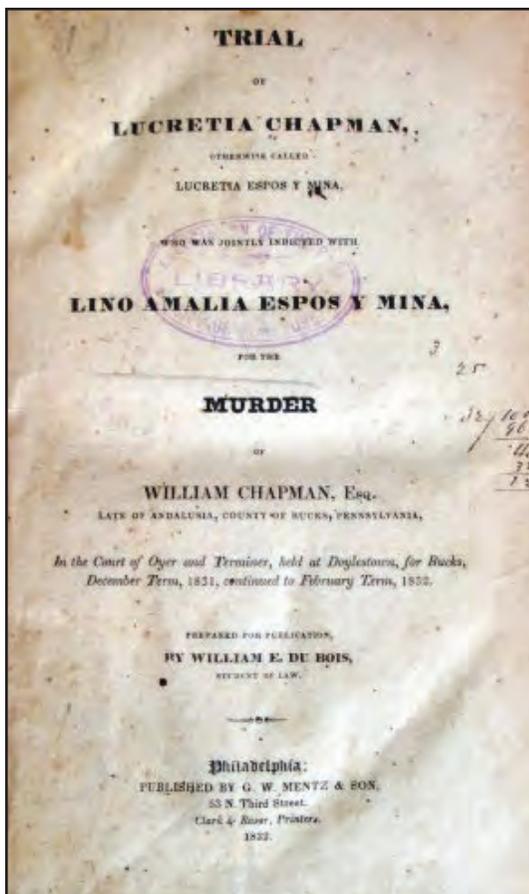
Lucretia, “past 40 and buxom,” according to Dubois, and Lino, a young boarder who claimed to be the son of the Spanish Governor of California, became lovers. Obstructing their path to bliss was Lucretia's “inconvenient” husband, William Chapman. Five weeks after he arrived, Lino purchased a quarter pound of arsenic from a Philadelphia druggist, explaining that he intended to stuff some birds. Instead, he used it to stuff the unfortunate Mr. Chapman, who conveniently died within four days. The lovers slipped off quietly to be married in New York, but “Almost immediately, the true character of the Spanish adventurer came out, with the disappearance of the family silver and other obvious signs of his chicanery.” The police investigated, discovered that Chapman “was heavily

dosed with arsenic,” and arrested both Lucretia and Lino.

Though jointly indicted, the lovers were destined to have separate trials, with both proceedings found to be equally sensational in the eyes of the public. Lino was swiftly convicted and swung for his crime. Lucretia’s trial turned on the question of whether she had conspired with Lino to poison her husband. The jury, recoiling from the notion of hanging a woman, gave her the benefit of the doubt and acquitted her of the charge of murder.

Thus did the “over 40 and buxom” Lucretia get away with homicide, and thus did her chronicler get away with writing a sensational page-turner under the cover of a trial commentary. Cynics may note that this was not the last time that Dubois produced legal fiction, for he assured owners of 1804 dollars like Matthew Stickney that their coins were “original” (that is, struck in 1804), which he knew to be untrue.

Such assurances, however, were offered in Dubois’ weakened voice, and did not rise to the level of written affidavits. His *Trial of Lucretia Chapman* stands out as a walk on the wild side of writing by a man who habitually, in his published productions, stuck to the prim and proper. Yet one wonders, what might have been the contents of the “tales” Dubois wrote when he was in his 20s? Were they moralistic parables in which virtue received its due, and evil was severely chastised? Or were they ripping yarns of fetching maidens and murderous paramours? Further research may show that in his tales, as in so many other aspects of his life, William E. Dubois trod the straight and narrow path, but at least once, with the *Trial of Lucretia Chapman*, he leavened his piety with a spectacular dash of impropriety.



Dubois’ report on the crime of the (19th) century.



**The United States Cents**  
OF THE YEARS  
**1801 - 1802 - 1803**  
BY  
HOWARD R. NEWCOMB

Figure 1: Newcomb's 1925 study, *The United States Cents of the Years 1801–1802–1803*.

# Off the Shelf:

## Newcomb's Book on the Cents of 1801–03

by David F. Fanning

In 1925, Howard R. Newcomb published *The United States Cents of the Years 1801–1802–1803* (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> It was the first of three important volumes penned by Newcomb and George H. Clapp that did much to revitalize the study of early-date United States large cents.<sup>2</sup> Newcomb would go on to pen his masterpiece *United States Copper Cents, 1816–1857*, which remained the standard work on the middle- and late-date cents until recent years.<sup>3</sup>

Newcomb's 1925 study was published in a tall quarto format, in an edition that has been estimated at only 100 copies, but which was probably somewhat higher. It was well-received, with Dr. Sheldon famously writing that the book "marks a milestone in the cent literature. Approaching a field which had been left almost in chaos by the Doughty book, Newcomb assembled a vast quantity of numismatic material, ordered and reordered it, finally set up a new classificational system and a list which seemed adequate; and after testing the new list for upwards of a decade, published. The verdict of time on this work has been favorable."<sup>4</sup> The book was published with five photographic plates, finer in quality than anything that had been published previously.

Of foremost concern to Newcomb was that the work be as accurate and complete as possible. He was realistic enough to know that it wouldn't be the final word on the subject, but he did his best to write a truly comprehensive reference. When Newcomb's die combination 1803 5<sup>b</sup> = I<sup>d</sup> was discovered after the page on which it belonged was already set, he had the relevant attribution points printed on slips on paper that were then tipped into the margin. As further data came to his attention, he updated unsold copies of the book by hand in pencil, so that buyers would find the latest information available.

The discovery of an entirely new variety, however, required more extensive measures. In January 1928, Newcomb issued a new plate, giving both the relevant text and a photograph of 1803 No. 24, which has a previously unknown reverse die, designated S. In October 1928, the 1801 No. 13 variety was published, with a previously unknown reverse die designated I (known only through an advanced die state and so designated I<sup>b</sup>). Finally, in July 1931, Newcomb published 1801 No. 14, with a previously unknown reverse die designated J.

Collectors of large cent literature are aware that copies of Newcomb on 1801–03 are often encountered with two supplementary plates.<sup>5</sup> What is less well known is that there are two varieties of each plate.

The plate issued for 1803 No. 24 exists in two rather similar versions (Figures 2 and 3). In fact, they are identical except for the photograph of the S reverse and the citation of Elmer S. Sears as discoverer. The photograph in the two variations is of the same coin (there only being one known example at the time), but on the one version it appears darker and less distinct. This, coupled with the fact that Sears is credited

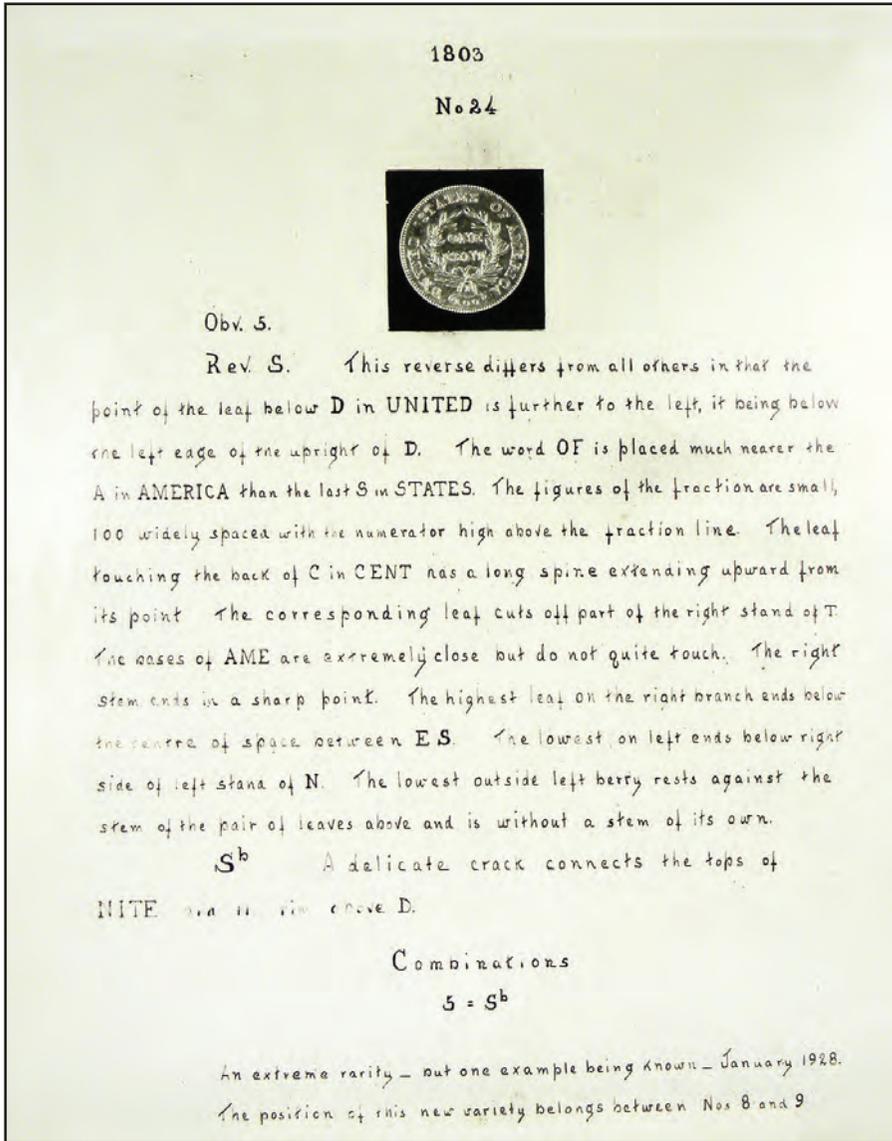


Figure 2: The first version prepared of the January 1928 supplementary plate for 1803 No. 24.

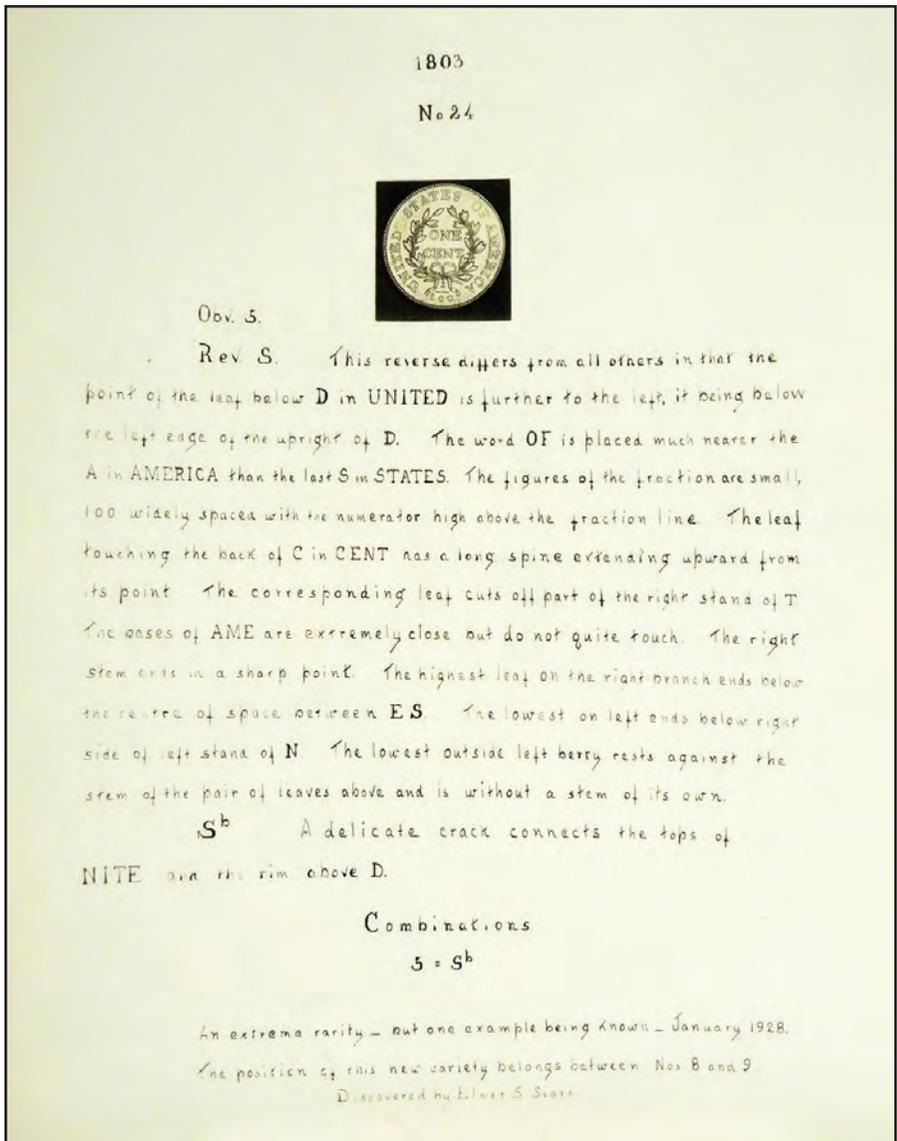


Figure 3: The second version prepared of the January 1928 supplementary plate for 1803 No. 24.

1801  
No 13



Obv. 5

Rev. I The fraction is perfect with 100 closely spaced together. The fraction bar is slightly longer and thicker than usual and has a fine line, a scratch from the engravers tool, extending on to the right ribbon. AM-RICA widely spaced but MER very close. The first A smaller than the final. All N's perfect as in reverse A. First S in STATES slightly low. C in CENT also low and touches a leaf. Lowest leaf on left branch ends to left of right side of N, leaf tip under centre of curve of D, highest leaf to right of left side of last S.

I<sup>b</sup> A heavy rim break obliterates half the upper arm of E, upper two-thirds of S and extends to right covering a part of O and ends at rim again over centre of F. The die is sunken from rim to left of A and extends down to tops of AT. A fine crack connects the tops of TE, another from bottom of O runs diagonally to right through left tip of F to rim above. A chip out of the die through C to bottom of E in CENT.

Combinations  
5 = I<sup>b</sup>

An extreme rarity - but one example being known - October 1928  
The position of this new variety belongs between Nos 5 and 6.

Figure 4: The October 1928 plate prepared to announce 1801 No. 13.

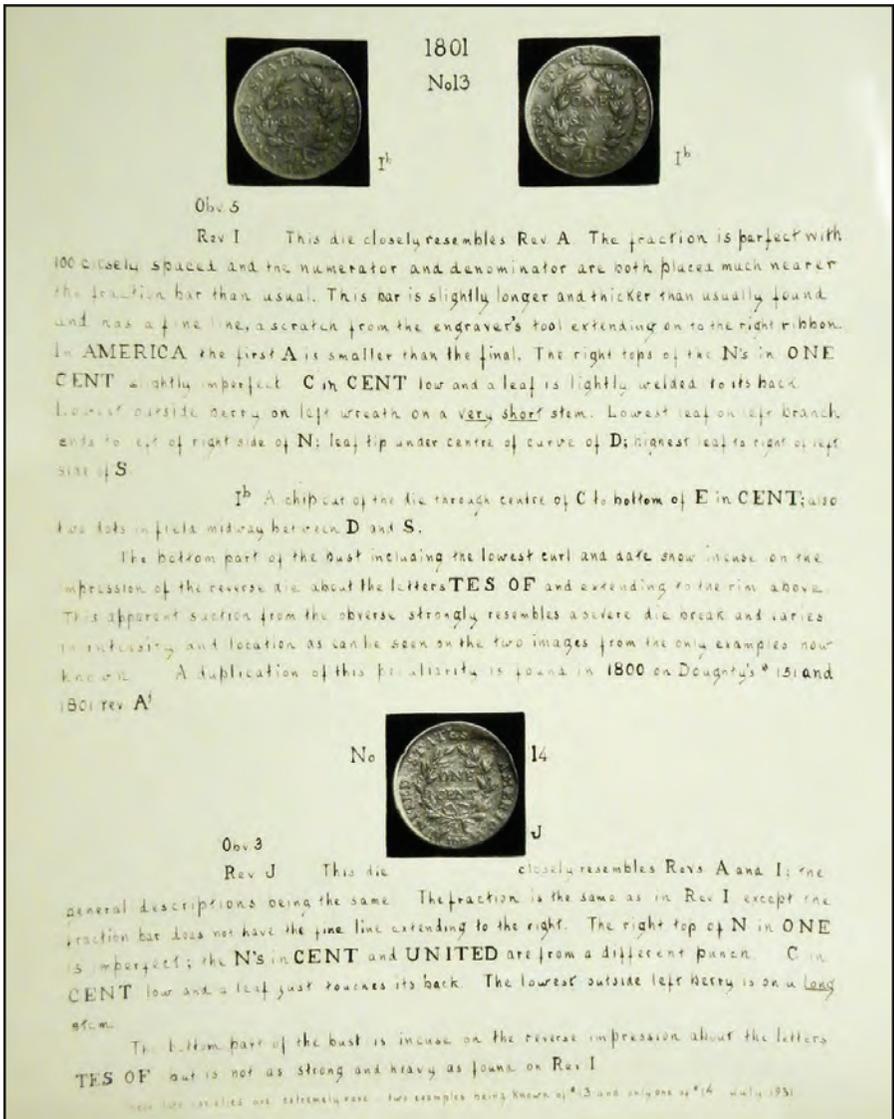


Figure 5: The July 1931 plate depicting 1801 varieties Nos. 13 and 14.

with the discovery on the variation with a more clear image, leads me to believe that the uncredited version with the darker image was produced first. Being found unsatisfactory, a more pleasing version was prepared—at which time Sears was added at the bottom of the plate.

The two versions of the other plate are more substantially different. A supplementary plate dated October 1928 exists providing the text for 1801 No. 13 and a photo of the new reverse die I (Figure 4). Almost three years later, another 1801 variety was discovered (No. 14), and Newcomb decided to prepare an entirely new supplementary plate giving the text for both varieties and depicting their reverses (Figure 5). Indeed, he chose to depict two separate examples of the 1801 No. 13 reverse I die on the new plate, which is dated July 1931.

As the differences in these supplemental plates are not generally known, they have not been remarked upon in the descriptions of copies of Newcomb's book when offered for sale. Hence, I have no real data to offer on rarity. That said, I would suspect the first version of the 1803 plate to be scarcer than the second, if only because it would seem that the second was produced to correct for inadequacies in the first. I would suspect that the second version of the 1801 plate is more common than the first because Newcomb would have replaced the old supplementary plate with the new one in any copies remaining available for sale. In both cases, though, these are just suppositions. Regardless, it is another aspect of this groundbreaking work to take into consideration.

#### Notes

1. Newcomb, Howard R. *The United States Cents of the Years 1801–1802–1803*. Detroit, 1925.
2. The others are Clapp's *The United States Cents of the Years 1798–1799* (Sewickley, 1931) and Clapp and Newcomb's joint production *The United States Cents of the Years 1795, 1796, 1797 and 1800* (New York, 1947).
3. Newcomb, Howard R. *United States Copper Cents, 1816–1857*. New York, 1944.
4. Sheldon, William H., Dorothy I. Paschal and Walter Breen. *Penny Whimsy. A Revision of Early American Cents, 1793–1814. An Exercise in Descriptive Classification with Tables of Rarity and Value*. New York, 1958. Page 23.
5. These supplementary plates are lacking from the 1976 reprint.



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# Flashback

## *Bibliomaniacs Unite!*

This *Coin World* clipping documents the formation of the NBS in Cincinnati in 1980. Photo provided by Joel J. Orosz, NBS Historian.



Share your own photo and story from NBS history by sending it to [nbsasylum@gmail.com](mailto:nbsasylum@gmail.com).

## *Numismatic Nugget*

SH Chapman admitted that he was “5 foot 9 without my shoes” in the introduction to the Gable Sale.

Submitted by John Kraljevich.



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Dave Harper - *Numismatic News* and *World Coin News* Editor

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# Behind the Scenes at the Newman Numismatic Portal

**Len Augsburg, NNP Project Coordinator**

Announced in December 2014, the Newman Numismatic Portal (NNP) is today fully engaged with activities centered at Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL) and at the American Numismatic Society (ANS) in New York. The project is funded by a \$2 million, 4-year grant from the Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society to WUSTL and is administered through the University libraries. Early on, a strategic decision placed the Newman Portal<sup>1</sup> within the Digital Library Services unit, creating synergy with existing library programs dedicated to digitization and knowledge sharing. Two WUSTL library employees (Len Augsburg, project coordinator and Robert Manley, digital imaging specialist) focus exclusively on the Newman Portal, and a number of part-time students round out the team in St. Louis. At the ANS, NNP has contracted with Internet Archive to place staff (John Graffeo) and scanning equipment onsite at their New York location. Finally, the Portal has procured the services of John Feigenbaum for software development, while Wayne Homren acts in a consulting role. Roger Burdette and Joel Orosz have also provided consulting support to NNP.

The stated mission of the Portal is to provide numismatic knowledge on a free and forever basis to the worldwide community, with focus on American numismatics. Today's digital technologies place us at a unique point in history—this generation has the first opportunity, and responsibility, to convert millennia of documents into digital form. The ability to search this vast archive creates what the library community calls “discoverability.” Imagine a misfiled document in a library or archive—in a repository with millions of items, a misfiled document is effectively lost. While software is not infallible, it generally files and retrieves data with substantially lower error rates than human counterparts.

The Newman Portal partners with Internet Archive for scanning and storage solutions. Internet Archive (IA) is a San Francisco-based non-profit dedicated to digitally archiving the world's knowledge. The 263<sup>rd</sup> most visited site on the Internet, IA and its partners have digitized millions of books in addition to substantial amounts of audio and video content, with a total of over 13 million text and media files. Internet Archive also archives the Internet itself through the “Wayback Machine,” which allows users to view a given web page as it appeared at an arbitrary point in the past. Although not comprehensive, the IA collection of billions of historic web pages is the most definitive effort of its kind.

For most researchers, Google Books is more well-known than Internet Archive. The efforts may appear similar at first glance, but there are important differences. The Google books content has largely been built by “backing up the truck” to large university collections and scanning millions of documents, especially those in the

public domain. The resulting store of knowledge has richly enhanced many works, but Google fundamentally remains a for-profit enterprise that ultimately answers to shareholders. Internet Archive has a core mission of preserving the world's knowledge and has been able to leverage crowdsourcing to a greater degree. IA partners, such as NNP, build collections in diverse areas and concentrate on adding content while IA maintains focus on technical activities related to storing and serving partner documents. In this way, IA reaches niche areas (like numismatics), whereas the Google approach could only deliver, for example, all of the plated catalogs of Thomas Elder in the Harvard Library (which is to say, not a great number). IA further emphasizes multimedia, whereas Google Books is aimed as textual sources. IA has aggregated, for example, nearly a million television news videos in its collection<sup>2</sup>. A search on "Brasher Doubloon" reveals an MSNBC news broadcast on December 13, 2011.

The Newman Portal has Internet Archive equipment both in St. Louis and New York, which offers turnkey scanning and hosting of the documents that pass through our scanning labs. A document scanned in St. Louis or New York is available for viewing by all within hours in the Newman collection on Internet Archive. In this way, NNP has been able to share content with the numismatic community from the moment our scanning activities were launched. We posted our first document on July 6, 2015, an example of Heath's Counterfeit Detector, catalogued as variety 2-P-s-Special, per Eric Newman's article on the topic in the 1991 ANA Centennial *Anthology*. To date (this written February 10, 2016), the Newman Portal has posted over 2,600 documents in our Internet Archive collection.

The Newman Portal site is separate from the Newman collection on Internet Archive<sup>3</sup>, and additions to Newman Portal site are a two-step process. Scanned documents appear more or less instantaneously in the Newman collection on Internet Archive but a second step is required to connect these documents into the hierarchical view provided by the Newman Portal. Think of this as a factory, with Internet Archive providing an inside look at the manufacturing line, and the Newman Portal representing the finished product. A typical example is the *N.O.W. News*, the publication

**N.O.W. News**  
The N.O.W. News is the official publication of the Numismatists of Wisconsin, and has been continually published since 1963.

**Select a year**  
1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985  
1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008  
2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015

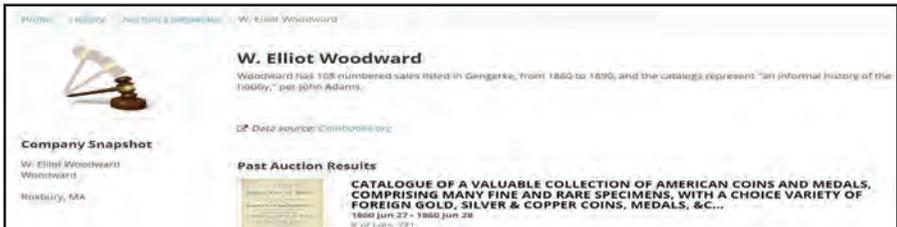
**4 entries found for [year:1963]**  
Displaying records 1 — 4

**N.O.W. News, 1963, no. 1**  
The N.O.W. News is the official publication of the Numismatists of Wisconsin, and has been continually published since 1963. The Numismatists of Wisconsin are a vibrant state organization with any number of numismatic celebrities identified in the earliest issues, including Ken Bressett, Chet Krause, Neil Shafer and others.

Landing page for the N.O.W. News, featuring a year-by-year picker for the desired issue.

of the Numismatists of Wisconsin. A search on Internet Archive reveals 207 issues, and these are variously ordered and listed according to user settings. Conversely, the Newman Portal site will have this publication hierarchically placed within “Periodicals,” and the landing page for the publication displays a year-by-year picker that facilitates location of the desired issue.

A similar example model exists for auction catalogs. While the Internet Archive listing is arbitrary (they may be presented in order by scanning date or other criteria), the Newman Portal will have these organized by cataloger and emission date. Users may drill down from the library to auction companies, and from there to a specific firm. The Woodward section, with 108 numbered sales in Gengerke, is nearly complete and was scanned from ANS copies.



Landing page for the W. Elliot Woodward auction sales.

## *The Scanning Pipeline*

The Newman Portal began, naturally enough, by scanning items from the Eric P. Newman library. This library resides in several locations, with the bulk of the material either at the Newman Money Museum (located on the main campus of Washington University) or within the West Campus library (located about one mile west of the main campus). The most valuable materials are stored in a bank vault at a separate location. Tom Serfass, Newman Money Museum curator, has prepared inventory lists of the library, and these are quite useful in determining which materials to scan. Numismatics has its own bibliographic landscape, and so our pipeline aims for a diverse mix of auction catalogs, books, periodicals, and archival material.

The Newman library is what bibliophiles might refer to as a “research library.” Newman collected literature according to his research interests, and one should bear in mind that during his most prolific research period the idea of numismatic literature as a collectible was relatively inchoate. Newman was not one to systematically pursue, for example, the plated catalogs of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century American catalogers, but all the core references are present along with complete sets of many periodicals. In books, the library inventory numbers 2,700 volumes, of which 950 are in the public domain (published before 1923). From the Newman library we have scanned early dealer house organs such as Mason’s *Coin and Stamp Collectors’ Magazine*, Frossard’s *Numisma*, Elder’s *Monthly*, and Scott’s *Coin Collector’s Journal*.

Occasionally one encounters a particular volume that has its own bibliographic significance. The Newman copy of the first six volumes of *The Numismatist* is ex. Chicago Art Institute and was donated by the collector William F. Dunham to the

Art Institute in 1922. In 1999, David Sklow prepared a census of sets of the first six *Numismatist* volumes, published in *The Asylum* and available online<sup>4</sup>. It appears that nos. 13 and 23 in the Sklow list can now be consolidated. The Newman copy features a “withdrawn” stamp from the Art Institute, and, per Sklow, was offered in 1948 at \$100, at the time a princely sum for a numismatic book.

Other notable items scanned from the Newman library include a run of U.S. Mint reports and a comprehensive collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century counterfeit detectors. We prefer to scan in coherent groups as opposed to random lists, so that additions to the site are both impactful and as comprehensive as possible. At some point Google’s “back up the truck” approach may come into play, but for the immediate future the Newman Portal will be working with well-defined groups of literature. The counterfeit detectors feature a definitive set of Heath’s in addition to similar emissions from Mendelson, Hodges, Thompson, Peterson, Dye, and others. There is easily enough source material here for several articles, and Slate.com took the first try in September 2015, featuring a blog<sup>5</sup> on the February 1846 issue of *Thompson’s Bank Note Reporter*, as scanned on the Newman Portal.

In addition to the Newman library, our St. Louis scanning team has also processed materials loaned by Dan Hamelberg and Bill Burd. Hamelberg graciously loaned his set of Chapman bid books, unique records of the auction firms of Samuel and Henry Chapman that detail buyer names and prices. Included in this group were plated Chapman catalogs, and a separate client list, with addresses, maintained by the Chapman brothers (c. 1906). Hamelberg has also loaned a complete set of the plated catalogs of Thomas Elder, along with Elder fixed price lists and ephemera. Extreme care is naturally taken with such treasures, and our scanning lab is located behind a locked door in a building accessible only to University staff. The scanning equipment itself is completely non-destructive and safely cradles material so as to avoid stress on the binding.

From the Bill Burd library we scanned a group of U.S. Mint Reports and other government publications including Treasurer’s reports, reports of the Comptroller of the Currency, and multiple editions of *Domestic and Foreign Coins Manufactured by Mints of the United States*. U.S. government publications are attractive to the Portal as these are all in the public domain and there are no restrictions on scanning. In parallel, the Washington University library itself is a member of the Federal Reserve Libraries and as such holds a large collection of similar material that is currently in processing. This includes congressional reports with numismatic content, and ephemeral emissions from the United States Mint.

## *The American Numismatic Society Library*

While materials from the Hamelberg, Newman, Burd, and Washington University libraries will keep the St. Louis-based team engaged, the mother lode of American numismatic literature resides in New York City at the ANS library. After St. Louis operations were established and operating smoothly we began discussions with IA and the ANS with an eye towards sponsoring a similar effort at the ANS. Today we have an IA TableTop Scribe placed at the ANS (the same machine as used in St. Louis), where it is operated by John Graffeo. John had previously worked with the



John Graffeo operates the Internet Archive TableTop Scribe at the American Numismatic Society. Scanned material is laid between the book cradle and the glass. The cradle is lowered to execute a page turn (done manually by the scanning personnel) and then raised to the glass before scanning. Image quality is inspected using the monitor to the right.

ANS as a library intern and was a natural choice for this position. Our first target at the ANS is the set of bound American auction catalogs in the John W. Adams Rare Book Room. The Newman Portal launched scanning operations at the ANS on November 30, 2015, and the first document posted was the Edward Cogan sale of the Gratz collection (May 21, 1859). The ANS bound auction catalog set numbers about 600 volumes, and to date 464 catalogs have been made available on Internet Archive, representing substantial runs of Chapman, Cogan, Woodward, and Frossard auction sales. Most of these bound volumes contain multiple sale catalogs, so we expect this task to continue for some months. Our initial goal is to scan all the catalogs listed within volume 1 of Adams' *United States Numismatic Literature* (1247 sales), and this is well within reach.

## *Periodicals*

As mentioned above, the Newman Portal has scanned the major dealer house organs of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. We have also been granted permission to scan back issues of a number of regional and specialty organizations. Some organizations choose to retain their most recent content, an important consideration for the current membership. The NBS has allowed the Newman Portal to digitize all issues of *The Asylum* from inception (1980) through 2013<sup>6</sup>. The ANS has opened up the *American Journal of Numismatics* (both the first and second series) and the *Coinage of the Americas Conference Proceedings*, both of which are now featured on the Newman Portal. Several state organizations have enthusiastically participated, including the Numismatists of Wisconsin, the Pennsylvania Association of Numismatists, the Missouri Numismatic Society, and others (just as this is being written, a fifty-year run

of *The Centinel*, from the Central States Numismatic Society, has arrived in St. Louis for scanning). This is particularly exciting as today there is no single repository for the collected journals of these groups. ANS holdings are not comprehensive in this area, and even at the state level complete runs might be held only by the organization archivist. State and regional publications have been an underused resource within numismatic research – they are relatively inaccessible and even with access there are few indices. As an example of what is available, a quick glance through *The Clarion* (the journal of the Pennsylvania Association Numismatists) reveals interviews with a number of Philadelphia Mint personnel. There are no doubt many other useful articles, and with the Newman Portal the “discoverability” of this material is greatly increased.

## *Archives*

Archival material is among the “sexiest” material in numismatic literature, offering a combination of rarity (often unique) and a visceral connection to the creator of the material. One can read about Eric P. Newman and John J. Ford, but the experience is more compelling when one holds correspondence physically exchanged between the pair. Archives include manuscripts of reference works, inventory listings, photographs, personal memoranda, and of course correspondence. All of these present challenges in digitization. While our core mission is spreading numismatic knowledge, archives demand additional overhead to physically process material and catalog metadata prior to scanning. A single page letter, before scanning, may require as much preparation as a several hundred page book. Several months ago we scanned the Burdette Johnson invoices from the Newman library. The group spans from 1940 – 1947, and is comprised of nearly 6000 pages. What started as thousands of loose sheets, all with high acid content, ended as a neatly divided group stored in archival containers. These invoices were first divided by year, and then by correspondent within each year. This subdivided the archive into about 400 groups, and each of these was scanned as a single document<sup>7</sup>. The Newman correspondence files, collected over at least 75 years, are much larger and more complex, but this is a challenge we especially look forward to, as much of the information is unpublished.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the Newman library, Dan Hamelberg has also supported the Newman Portal with archival material, such as the Chapman client list (mentioned above), Thomas Elder personal papers, and manuscripts on Connecticut coppers from Dr. Thomas Hall.

## *Numismatic Reference*

In addition to a hierarchical view of numismatic literature, the Newman Portal provides core reference material not found in the Newman collection on Internet Archive. Pete Smith’s *American Numismatic Biographies* is present on the Newman Portal in a structured format, with an individual entry for each biography. These entries are located under the “people” submenu of the “library.” Similarly, one may navigate to “dictionary,” also in the “library” submenu. This has been seeded with Frey’s dictionary, from the *American Journal of Numismatics* (vol. 50, 1916), broken out into over 3,000 individual entries. Finally, the U.S. coin encyclopedia portion of the site has been populated with over two million auction prices realized.

## Search

Google has created a user expectation of full-text search within any context on the Internet. The task is complex, and the market capitalization of Google, the world's premier search engine, attests to the importance and valuation of this capability. A look under the hood is instructive. Imagine searching through a single document—when a user enters a search term, one might logically start at the beginning of the document and execute a comparison against each successive word until the end of the document. An average book might contain 100,000 words, and so the computation task is a like number of comparisons against the search term. Computer science refers to this as a “brute force” algorithm, one that turns out to be wildly inefficient. Instead, most search engines will first “index” a document prior to supporting a user interface for full-text search. Indexing is essentially alphabetizing the entire document, and creating an ordered table with a list of every word in the document and its location within the document. When a user enters a search term, this table can be efficiently consulted for a match. Given the alphabetical order of the table, only 20 comparisons are needed to isolate a match—the software will divide the table in half for each comparison, and then go forwards or backwards depending on the alphabetical comparison. This speeds the search process, in this case, by a factor of 5,000. When scaling across thousands of documents, the user experience becomes considerably enhanced. The Newman Portal uses third-party software to perform this task, so that our programming work chiefly consists of feeding documents into the indexer, and then presenting a user-friendly interface around the delivered search results. The NNP search function currently isolates a requested search term to a specific document, at which point a user may pull up the identified document within Internet Archive and search for a specific occurrence. This two-step process is not optimal and will be improved in the coming months. Nevertheless, the capability to search across several thousand documents is an important beginning, and, given the highly focused numismatic content of these documents, a valuable tool for numismatic researchers. As an example, a search on the term “Gasparro” (U.S. Mint engraver) reveals references from U.S. Mint annual reports, *American Numismatic Biographies*, *The Clarion*, and other sources.

## The Future

With two scanning operations in place, the Newman Portal will continue to add content to its “virtual library,” with a balanced approach across the major bibliographic areas within numismatics. While this will build the Portal to a certain extent, it is ultimately limited by the bandwidth of the scanners. *Crowdsourcing* is critical to extending the scope of the Portal. By working together as a community, we can accomplish tasks beyond the reach of a few. As an example, R.W. Julian contributed a copy, from the National Archives, of Franklin Peale's 1835 handwritten manuscript on European coining technology. This is a core document relating to the evolution of Mint practices in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, yet has never been published in full, with the most significant treatments being Don Taxay's *U.S. Mint and Coinage* (1967) and Roger Burdette's *Benjamin Franklin Peale – Inventions and Innovations for the United*

*States Mint, 1835 to 1852* (*Journal of Numismatic Research*, Spring 2013 Issue 2). Dick Johnson supplied a partial transcript of this several hundred page document, but the remaining work requires a certain familiarity with numismatic vocabulary. Crowdsourcing allows the work to be divided into many pieces, and the Newman Portal had launched such an effort to complete this transcription. A contributor may work on a single page at a time, and the combined results will naturally be made available to all at the conclusion of the project.

Another example of crowdsourcing is the search for missing literature. Last summer the Portal scanned Newman's run of the *Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Association of Banks, for the Suppression of Counterfeiting*. A mid-19<sup>th</sup> century anti-counterfeiting initiative, this publication outlined strategic efforts to protect coin and currency, providing useful background information as opposed to the mere listing of suspect banknotes found in many other publications. Eric's run was complete with the exception of a single issue. Wayne Homren, *E-Sylum* editor, issued a call to the readership on August 23, 2015, and within a few days *E-Sylum* reader Loren Gatch supplied a scan of the missing issue.

Projects such as [tokencatalog.com](http://tokencatalog.com) demonstrate the power of crowdsourced group research. To date, this site has gathered basic cataloging information on nearly half a million U.S. tokens, with over a thousand different individual contributors. This is a herculean task that has been accomplished in only a few years. "Together, we can" is the clarion call of the site, and, powered by the Internet, a group has arisen to aggregate information that would have otherwise consumed several lifetimes. Eric Newman harnessed the power of collaboration to the extent possible in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, systematically assembling research and correspondence files and constantly sharing information with fellow researchers. Today, the Newman Portal aims similarly for collaborative efforts, using today's technology not just to save and preserve information, but to create new ways of sharing and unlocking the collected knowledge of the research community. While technological change is always inevitable, we are fortunate to live in a time when this collective power can be harnessed in new ways unimaginable only a few years ago.

#### Notes

1. [newmanportal.org](http://newmanportal.org)
2. [archive.org/details/tv](http://archive.org/details/tv)
3. [archive.org/details/newmannumismatic](http://archive.org/details/newmannumismatic)
4. [archive.org/stream/asylumquarterlyj17n3numi#page/20/mode/2up](http://archive.org/stream/asylumquarterlyj17n3numi#page/20/mode/2up)
5. [slate.com/blogs/the\\_vault/2015/09/28/history\\_of\\_free\\_banking\\_a\\_list\\_of\\_banknotes\\_from\\_the\\_antebelleum\\_era.html](http://slate.com/blogs/the_vault/2015/09/28/history_of_free_banking_a_list_of_banknotes_from_the_antebelleum_era.html)
6. [newmannumismaticportal.org/library/publisherdetail/2101](http://newmannumismaticportal.org/library/publisherdetail/2101)
7. [archive.org/details/eprn\\_archives](http://archive.org/details/eprn_archives)
8. Newman's 1930s correspondence with Pennsylvania dealer D. C. Wismer, as an example, is available at [archive.org/details/ericpnewmancorre0000newm](http://archive.org/details/ericpnewmancorre0000newm). The Wismer correspondence contains an interesting tidbit—on August 12, 1939 Wismer alerted Newman to the presence of important Missouri currency in the estate of Col. E. H.R. Green. On August 15, Newman wrote to the Green estate administrators, initiating one of the most storied transactions in American numismatics.



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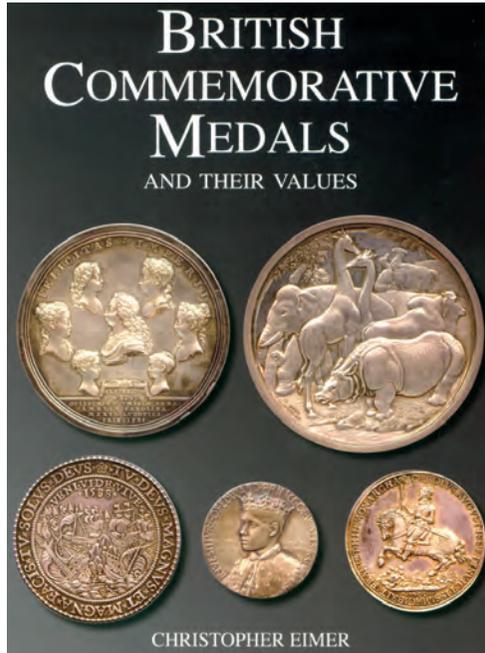
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