

Mint State 1873-CC Silver Coins Always Excite Collectors

By Weimar W. White

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The following article first appeared in *Numismatic News*' March 8, 2005 edition. This article was published just two months before the Carson City Coin Collectors of America came into existence. Hopefully the readers will find the material interesting. Please note: the text has been slightly revised for *Curry's Chronicle*.

The Coinage Act of February 12, 1873 placed the United States on a gold standard and eliminated the standard silver dollar. The Act later became known as the *Crime of 1873*. The standard weights for the dime, quarter, and half dollar were slightly increased, and to show this, arrows were added at the date. After April of that year, most 1873 dimes, quarters, and halves *Without Arrows* were melted. This, no doubt, accounts for their great rarity.

Interestingly, five dimes dated 1873-CC *Without Arrows* were sent to Philadelphia for assay. Only one specimen is known today and it's certified as an MS-65. It is believed that 12,399 of these coins were either melted or lost.

Collectors who are interested in the *Crime of 1873* are encouraged to read the following books: *1873-1873*, by Harry X Boosel; *The Crime of 1873*, by Robert R. Van Ryzin; and *The Mint on Carson Street*, by Rusty Goe. These three sources have lots of information about coins minted in Carson City in 1873.

A collector named Waldo E. Bolen, Jr. decided to assemble an 11-piece set of 1873-dated Carson City coins. His set included all eight of the silver coins, including the *Without Arrows* and *With Arrows* types, plus the gold 1873-CC half eagle, the 1873-CC eagle, and the 1873-CC double eagle. All were in Uncirculated condition with the exception of the 1873-CC Liberty Seated dollar, which was graded

AU-58, the 1873-CC half eagle in XF-40 condition, and the 1873-CC eagle graded XF-45. Bolen sold his 11-piece “CC” date set on April 22-23, 1999 for \$1,056,276 through Heritage Numismatic Auctions. The *Unique 1873-CC Without Arrows* dime, graded by Professional Coin Grading Service as an MS-64, realized \$632,500. Today the coin is in a PCGS MS-65 holder. Rusty Goe purchased the coin in July 2004 in a Bowers and Merena auction for \$891,250. He placed it in a client’s collection later that year for an undisclosed price reportedly around \$1 million. It remains in that collection today (as of May 2009).

I doubt that an 11-piece set of 1873-CC-dated coins will ever be assembled again (except as a subset of a larger collection of “CC” coins). The 8-piece silver portion in Mint State is the major challenge. Rarity and cost, are real stumbling blocks to any potential collector pursuing such a goal, not to mention the uniqueness of the *Without Arrows* dime.

Only the half dollars and the Trade dollar offer any hope for the average collector to purchase in Mint State condition, and they are not cheap. For example, the 1873-CC *Without Arrows* half dollar in MS-60 is valued today at around \$11,500. By contrast, the 1873-



A flashy Mint State example of an 1873-CC With Arrows half dollar.

CC *With Arrows* half dollar in MS-60 commands approximately \$10,000: that is if one is fortunate to locate one for this price. The 1873-CC *With Arrows* half dollar pictured in this article is certified as an MS-60 specimen.

The 1873-CC Trade dollar in MS-60 is valued at around \$12,000. Of all the silver “CC” coins dated 1873, the Trade dollar might possibly be the most available one in Mint State condition. However, it’s still classified as rare in Brilliant Uncirculated condition, and is rated R-5 using the William H. Sheldon rarity scale, by which *rare* is designated as 31-75 pieces known.

Needless to say, all Uncirculated Carson City coins dated 1873 are rare, or *Unique* as in the case of the *Without Arrows* dime. To even own a BU half dollar or a BU Trade dollar made in 1873 at the Carson City Mint is a great accomplishment.

The following table provides mintages and estimated survival populations for Mint State 1873-CC silver coins.

**Mintage and Extant Population Data for
Mint State 1873-CC Silver Coins**

Denomination	Mintages	Estimated Extant
1873-CC <i>Without Arrows</i> Dime	12,400	1
1873-CC <i>With Arrows</i> Dime	18,791	3
1873-CC <i>Without Arrows</i> Quarter	4,000	3
1873-CC <i>With Arrows</i> Quarter	12,462	2 – 3
1873-CC <i>Without Arrows</i> Half	122,500	10 – 15
1873-CC <i>With Arrows</i> Half	214,560	20 – 25
1873-CC Liberty Seated Dollar	2,300	4 – 6
1873-CC Trade Dollar	124,500	50 – 75

(Images courtesy of Weimar W. White)