

Where's Waldo

By Dennis Fortier

Where have all the "Common Date" Carson City Half Dollars gone? If you're looking to buy an 1875-CC, 1876-CC, or 1877-CC Seated Half Dollar in XF and above you're likely to be in for a bit of a search, they're currently nowhere to be found. During the recent ANA convention I made an exhaustive search of the Bourse and could only locate low grade pieces. A web search of all the usual Auction Houses and Seated dealers turned up nothing.

Cycles happen all the time in numismatics. Could we be in a mass hoarding cycle of common Carson City Half Dollars? The scarce issues like 1870-CC and 1873-CC are as available as they ever are, but the more common issues are unavailable in higher grades. How ironic that just as Bill Bugert releases his new book "*A Register of Liberty seated Half Dollar Varieties, Vol. 2 Carson city Branch Mint*", there are very few high grade examples of the three common dates for collectors to pursue.

Liberty Seated Half Dollars and Carson City coinage have become very popular in the past several years. This expanding popularity is partly to blame for the current market scarcity of the common date CC's. Collectors of long standing may have large holdings of these issues as well. With survivors estimated in the several thousand's they are not scarce, and are usually available in limited quantity in higher grades. Locating quality high grade material usually will require some patience and tenacity, however the current market drought will require even more diligence.

Collectors who have had the foresight to put away several of these sought after CC's may have a golden opportunity to review their holdings and trim down. A few choice pieces could sell for very good prices in this overall slow market and leave their former owners flush with cash to pursue other opportunities at favorable prices.

Update: I wrote this in 2011, Carson City coins of all dates seem to be difficult to find again.