

A FAST NICKEL BEATS A SLOW DIME

BY

AARON WALES

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LEADING UP TO THE NICKEL



SILVER HALF DIME



THREE CENT SILVER



THREE CENT NICKEL



TWO CENT PIECE

- THE SILVER HALF DIME WAS ISSUED FROM 1792-1873 BUT THEY WERE TINY IN SIZE AND DIFFICULT TO HANDLE
- THE THREE CENT SILVER WAS PRODUCED FROM 1851 TO 1873
- THE PRODUCTION OF THE TWO CENT PIECE BEGAN IN 1864 AND ENDED IN 1873
- THE THREE CENT NICKEL WAS PRODUCED FROM 1865 TO 1889
- DUE TO COIN SHORTAGES, FRACTIONAL MONEY WAS ALSO PRINTED FOR 3, 5, 10, 25, AND 50 CENT NOTES
- THE POPULARITY OF THE TWO CENT AND THREE CENT COINS CONVINCED THE U.S. MINT TO MAKE A 5 CENT COIN
- A 5 CENT COIN MADE WITH NICKEL WAS A GOOD ALTERNATIVE FOR THE 5 CENT PAPER NOTES
- THE 5 CENT COIN WAS ALSO A GOOD REPLACEMENT FOR THE HALF DIME

EARLY HISTORY



SAMPLE DESIGNS CONSIDERED FOR 1ST NICKEL

- MULTIPLE OPTIONS FOR THE COIN WERE CONSIDERED, INCLUDING HAVING THE IMAGE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON OR ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE OBVERSE
- NICKEL WAS USED BECAUSE THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF GOLD AND SILVER CAUSED BY THE CIVIL WAR
- THE WORD NICKEL DATES BACK TO THE 1750's IN SWEDEN AND GERMANY WHERE "NICKEL" MEANT "RASCAL"
- WHILE MINING COPPER, GERMAN MINERS WOULD THINK THEY HAD FOUND COPPER BUT IT WOULD TURN OUT TO BE NICKEL WHICH IS WHY THEY CALLED IT "RASCAL"
- THERE WERE 15 MILLION NICKELS MINTED IN THE FIRST YEAR

DID YOU KNOW: A BOTTLE OF COKE COST A NICKEL FOR 73 YEARS

SHIELD NICKELS



WITH RAYS BETWEEN THE STARS



WITHOUT RAYS

- 5 CENT NICKELS WERE FIRST MINTED IN 1866
- THE FIRST NICKELS WERE CALLED SHIELD NICKELS BECAUSE THEY FEATURED THE UNION SHIELD ON THE OBVERSE
 - THIS SYMBOL WAS COMMONLY USED BY THE UNION ARMY DURING THE CIVIL WAR
- THE REVERSE SHOWED A "5" IN THE MIDDLE WITH STARS CIRCLING IT
 - ON THE ORIGINAL REVERSE DESIGN, THERE WERE RAYS BETWEEN EACH OF THE STARS. IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE DESIGNER JAMES B. LONGACRE WAS ACCUSED OF BEING A CONFEDERATE SYMPATHIZER FOR CREATING A REVERSE DESIGN WITH SOME SIMILARITIES TO THE CONFEDERATE "STARS AND BARS" FLAG.
 - 1866 MINTAGES INCLUDE RAYS, BUT IN JANUARY OF 1867 TREASURY SECRETARY HUGH MCCULLOCH ORDERED THAT THE SHIELD NICKEL BE REDESIGNED TO OMIT THE RAYS FROM THE REVERSE

THIS IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST PATRIOTIC U.S. COIN DESIGNS

LIBERTY HEAD NICKELS



WITHOUT
"CENTS"



- LIBERTY HEADS NICKELS WERE FIRST MINTED IN 1883
 - MINT ENGRAVER CHARLES BARBER CREATED THE DESIGN
- LIBERTY HEAD NICKELS ARE SOMETIMES CALLED V NICKELS BECAUSE OF THE ROMAN NUMERAL V FOR 5 ON THE REVERSE
- SOME 1883 MINTAGES DID NOT INCLUDE "CENTS" WHICH LED TO COUNTERFEITING \$5 GOLD COINS WHICH ALSO HAD A V FOR 5
 - THE MOST FAMOUS LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL SCAMMER WAS JOSH TATUM WHO WAS CAUGHT BUT NOT CONVICTED
- IN LATER VERSIONS, "E PLURIBUS UNUM" (OUT OF MANY, ONE) WAS REMOVED TO ADD "CENTS"
- IN 1913, THE MINT TRANSITIONED TO THE BUFFALO NICKEL DESIGN AND THERE WERE NO OFFICIAL STRIKINGS OF THE LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL THAT YEAR. HOWEVER, THERE ARE 5 KNOWN 1913 LIBERTY HEAD NICKELS
 - MANY SUSPECT THAT AN INDIVIDUAL, SAMUEL BROWN, WHO WORKED AT THE MINT MAY HAVE CREATED THEM HIMSELF OR TAKEN THEM FROM THE MINT
 - THE LAST 1913 LIBERTY HEAD NICKEL AUCTIONED WENT FOR 3 MILLION DOLLARS IN 2004



WITH
"CENTS"

MANY MACHINES IN THE LATE 1800'S USED NICKELS

BUFFALO NICKELS



- THE BUFFALO NICKEL WAS RELEASED ON MARCH 4, 1913
- THE COIN FEATURED A NATIVE AMERICAN ON THE OBVERSE AND A BISON ON THE REVERSE
 - THIS WAS THE SECOND ANIMAL EVER FEATURED ON A U.S. COIN (THE FIRST WAS AN EAGLE ON A CENT)
 - THE BISON ON THE REVERSE OF THE BUFFALO NICKEL WAS NAMED BLACK DIAMOND AND LIVED IN THE BRONX ZOO
- ANOTHER NAME FOR THE BUFFALO NICKEL IS THE INDIAN HEAD NICKEL
- 1913 TYPE I: THE LETTERING OF "FIVE CENTS" IS PLACED BOLD ACROSS THE MOUND BELOW THE BUFFALO
- 1913-1938 TYPE II: THE LETTERING IS RECESSED WITHIN THE MOUND TO PROTECT THE DENOMINATION
- THESE COINS CAN BE DIFFICULT TO READ BECAUSE OF BAD MINTING (FROM POOR DYES) AND MANY HAVE DATES THAT ARE WORN OFF



Type I



Type II

THOUGH THE BUFFALO NICKEL WAS NOT ORIGINALLY WELL LIKED, THAT OPINION CHANGED OVER TIME

HOBO NICKELS



- HOBO NICKELS PRESENT A COIN ALTERED PURELY FOR ARTISTIC PURPOSES
- THE PRACTICE WAS POPULAR IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY ESPECIALLY DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION WITH THE INCREASED NUMBER OF DRIFTERS (OR HOBOES)
- NICKELS WERE CHEAP ENOUGH CURRENCY TO ALTER WITHOUT HUGE FINANCIAL REPERCUSSIONS
- BUFFALO NICKELS ARE THE MOST POPULAR HOST AS THEY WERE CHEAP, PLENTIFUL, SOFT, SMALL, AND THICK ALLOWING FOR MODIFICATION
- TOOLS INCLUDED SCREWDRIVERS, NAILS, POCKET KNIVES, AND SMALL HAMMERS
- THE REVERSE WAS ALSO ALTERED SOMETIMES WITH CARVINGS SUCH AS A DONKEY, TURTLE, ETC. BUT THAT WAS RARER
- THERE ARE SEVERAL PROMINENT ARTISTS OF HOBO NICKELS BUT THE MOST FAMOUS IS BO HUGHES. TWO OF HIS WORKS ARE DISPLAYED HERE

“WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS IS A GOOD FIVE-CENT NICKEL” - FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

JEFFERSON NICKELS

- JEFFERSON NICKELS WERE RELEASED IN 1938
- THE OBVERSE SHOWS THOMAS JEFFERSON AND THE REVERSE SHOWS JEFFERSON'S HOME "MONTICELLO"
- A COMPETITION WAS HELD TO SELECT THE NEW DESIGN AND THE WINNING DESIGN WAS BY GERMAN IMMIGRANT AND FORMER GENERAL MOTORS AUTOMOTIVE DESIGNER FELIX SCHLAG
 - AFTER 1966 AN "FS" WAS ADDED AT THE BASE OF JEFFERSON'S SHOULDER
- THE JEFFERSON NICKELS WERE ORIGINALLY HOARDED (DUE TO INDIVIDUALS CONSIDERING THEM COLLECTOR'S ITEMS BECAUSE OF THEIR NEWNESS) UNTIL ~1940 WHEN THEY BECAME COMMONLY CIRCULATED
- DURING WWII, NICKELS WERE MADE WITH NO NICKEL. INSTEAD, THEIR COMPOSITION WAS 56% COPPER, 35% SILVER, AND 9% MANGANESE
- THE JEFFERSON NICKEL WENT UNCHANGED FOR 66 YEARS (UNTIL 2004)



THE FIRST JEFFERSON NICKEL WAS PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT

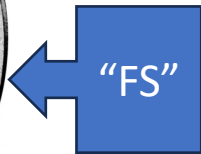
WESTWARD JOURNEY NICKEL SERIES



- FROM 2004-2005, THE MINT MADE 4 SPECIAL NICKELS WHICH WERE CALLED THE WESTWARD JOURNEY NICKEL SERIES
- THESE COMMEMORATED LEWIS & CLARK'S EXPEDITION WESTWARD IN 1804 AND THE 200-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE
- IMAGES INCLUDE THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE PEACE MEDAL (TWO HANDS GRIPPED IN FRIENDSHIP), A KEELBOAT (UTILIZED ON THE EXPEDITION), AMERICAN BISON (REPRESENTING ANIMALS FOUND ON THE JOURNEY), AND OCEAN IN VIEW (BASED UPON AN ENTRY IN CLARK'S JOURNAL FROM 1805 AFTER VIEWING THE PACIFIC OCEAN)
- 2004 WAS THE LAST YEAR FELIX SCHLAG'S ORIGINAL OBVERSE DESIGN WAS USED
- THE OBVERSE PORTRAIT OF JEFFERSON IS UNIQUE FOR 2005

THE "LIBERTY" ON THE 2005 NICKEL IS BASED ON JEFFERSON'S OWN HANDWRITING

JEFFERSON NICKEL REDESIGN



- THE JEFFERSON NICKEL WAS CHANGED AGAIN IN 2006
- THE OBVERSE IS A NEW RENDITION OF JEFFERSON BASED ON A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT PEALE DONE IN 1800 WITH JEFFERSON NOW GAZING OUT TOWARD THE VIEWER
- THE NICKEL REVERSE RETURNED TO MONTICELLO, JEFFERSON'S HOME
- THE RETURN TO MONTICELLO HAD SCULPTOR AND ENGRAVER JOHN MERCANTI RESTORE THE DETAILING OF FELIX SCHLAG'S ORIGINAL MONTICELLO DESIGN
 - THE INITIALS "FS" WERE MOVED TO THE REVERSE NOW THAT THE OBVERSE WAS NO LONGER THE ORIGINAL DESIGN

THE FORWARD FACING JEFFERSON IMAGE WAS SELECTED AS A TRIBUTE TO HIS VISION

TODAY



- NICKELS HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR 157 YEARS
- THE NICKEL IS THE ONLY U.S. COIN TO BE CALLED BY ITS METAL COMPOSITION
- IN 2006, THE U.S. MINT BANNED THE MELTING AND EXPORT OF CENTS AND NICKELS
- IN 2010, CONGRESS PASSED THE CMOCA ACT WHICH DIRECTED THE MINT TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE METALS TO MAKE COINS
 - NICKELS TODAY ARE MADE OF 75% COPPER
- IN 2012, IT TOOK 10.09¢ TO MINT A NICKEL
- MANY WANT TO ELIMINATE NICKELS BECAUSE THE COST OF MAKING THEM IS HIGHER THAN THEIR FACE VALUE
- IN 2020, OVER 1.5 BILLION NICKELS WERE PRODUCED IN THAT YEAR ALONE

"A NICKEL AIN'T WORTH A DIME ANYMORE" - YOGI BERRA