

Building an Ideal “CC” Type Set
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#RM-0023

Greetings to all fellow C4OA members and visitor readers of this issue. My article concerns the assembly of what I would consider an ideal 10-piece “CC” type set. Each coin from the ten denominations would be chosen with care to suit its particular purpose in order to achieve this “ideal” set. Type set building can be very rewarding as it offers the collector a break from the often mind-numbing effects of long runs of “lookalike” coins.

I wrote an article in the 8th edition of *Curry's Chronicle* (Summer 2007 Vol.3, Issue 2) entitled, “ASSEMBLING A CARSON CITY MINT TYPE SET,” describing the fun and adventure I had in assembling my set. I'm still its proud owner and I plan to always keep it just as it was portrayed in my 8th-issue article. In all probability it will be passed on to my son, then my grandson, and so on.

That being said, I have now set my sights on building a second 10-piece “CC” type set, an “Ideal” set if you will. Of course there are many great ideas for “CC” type sets; one of which would be an “All-First-Year-of-Issue” set. Think of how tough, not to mention expensive that project would be! The set would have to include the three 1870's gold issues, the 1870 Seated half dollar and quarter dollar, the 1871 Seated dime and the 1873 Trade dollar; all tough coins. Even tougher would be an “All-Final-Year-of-Issue” set. In order to complete that set you would need an 1876 twenty-center, an 1873 Seated dollar, an 1878 Seated half dollar, an 1878 Trade dollar, and of course all the other dates. Whew...two very tough sets indeed!

Now, back to the real world. What I have in mind is a 10-piece “CC” type set that I believe encompasses the best of what a set of coins from the Carson City Mint should offer: variety and history, with an interesting diversity of dates offered in a compact, fun, and easy-to-view format.

In order to achieve that goal, certain criteria must be met. The first order of business would be to ensure that each coin was a nice, problem-free example, well matched with the other coins in the set, and all the while staying the course of keeping cost to a minimum. So, in reference to cost, let’s say the minimum grade should be EF-45, moving up to Mint State when and where possible.

The second criterion is that all ten coins should be different (nonrepetitive) dates in order to cover the widest spectrum of years (1870 – 1885 & 1889 – 1893). Furthermore, the \$5, \$10 and \$20 gold denominations will be not only different dates, but from different decades as well. For example, the gold half eagle might be from the 1870s, the gold eagle from the 1890s, and the gold double eagle from the 1880s.

The third criterion requires examples from the Carson Mint’s first year of production (1870) as well as its final year of production (1893). In addition, these preferred first and last dates should be silver dollars, since the silver dollar was the first (Seated dollar) and the last (Morgan dollar) denomination struck at the Carson Mint.

The fourth criterion is that there be at least one “*Top 25*”* coin in the set, and the fifth criterion is the inclusion of at least one *With Arrows* “CC” coin.

The sixth criterion is the inclusion of at least one major “CC” variety coin.

The last two criteria are: the inclusion of an 1873 issue as this was a pivotal year for *all* U.S. coinage, and finally, the inclusion of a coin

from our U.S. Centennial year of 1876.

A “CC” type set assembled under these “ideals” would certainly be worthy of public exhibition. A casual observer, who knew little or nothing about “CC” coins, would receive a ton of information upon viewing such a set. Simply stated, it would be a very historic, a very interesting, a very informative, and a very fun set to behold.

Following, is a list composed of each coin I wish to include in *my* future set, along with its date, grade, approximate 2008 price, variety (if needed), and the reason for its inclusion. Of course, there are a couple of optional ways to display the set. One option is to have them all encapsulated by PCGS or NGC. Another is (my personal preference) to have the “raw” coins housed in a custom “CC” type set frame made by *Capital Plastics*[™], designed by Rusty Goe, available in three color choices, which can be purchased for a modest price from Southgate Coins in Reno, NV (the only place where they are available).

Following, are my choices for an ideal 10-piece “CC” type set:

1. 1870-CC SEATED LIBERTY DOLLAR Priced between \$3,000 and \$7,500 in XF-45 to AU-50. This would be a great choice to start off the collection. Not only is it a first-year-of-issue coin, but the Seated dollar was actually the first denomination to be struck at the Carson Mint.

2. 1873-CC TRADE DOLLAR Priced between \$3,500 and \$5,000 in the AU grades. This first year in the Trade dollar series is a “*Top 25*”^{*} coin and represents the pivotal 1873 year, when slight weight was added to subsidiary U.S. silver coins, the Seated Liberty dollar series was retired, and the Trade dollar era began.

3. 1874-CC *WITH ARROWS* SEATED HALF DOLLAR Priced between \$4,000 and \$10,000 in grades from XF-45 to the mid-AU range. This coin’s selection adds a “*Top 25*”^{*} coin to the set, as well

as representing the important *With Arrows* issue.

4. 1875-CC TWENTY CENT PIECE Priced between \$1,300 and \$1,900 in the AU grades. This is really the only choice one has for this coin as the only other “CC” twenty-center (1876-CC) is cost prohibitive. The key is to find a well struck example.

5. 1876-CC SEATED DIME (Doubled Die Obverse) Priced between \$1,200 and \$1,750 in the lower Mint State grades. This selection covers two bases on our list of criteria: the 1876 Centennial celebration year, and the major variety category.

6. 1878-CC SEATED QUARTER DOLLAR Priced between \$1,600 and \$3,700 in the low- to mid-Mint State grade range. This selection fills our final-year-of-issue slot (for the “CC” Seated quarter issues). Many examples of this date are “semi-cancelled” die varieties, so if one of these were included, that would be yet one more example of a well known “CC” variety for this set.

7. 1879-CC GOLD HALF EAGLE Priced between \$4,200 and \$11,000 in the AU grade ranges. This selection is an excellent choice for an 1870’s “CC” gold representative, and is just about the least expensive half eagle date from that decade. Occasionally, a nice specimen can be found in XF-45, which will reduce our cost.

8. 1882-CC GOLD DOUBLE EAGLE (Type III) Priced between \$2,700 to \$7,000 in the AU grades. This coin is usually found well struck. Nice examples are plentiful and cost effective, making this an excellent choice as an 1880’s gold “CC” representative.

9. 1891-CC GOLD EAGLE Priced between \$2,500 to \$5,000 for nice Mint State examples. This selection fulfills the requirements for an 1890’s “CC” gold coin representative. In addition, it affords the opportunity to add a high-grade yet relatively low priced gold coin to the set. Many examples of this date are lustrous and well struck, and very affordable for their respective grades.

10. 1893-CC MORGAN SILVER DOLLAR Priced between \$2,500 to \$4,500 for nice examples in the higher AU to lower Mint State grade ranges. This coin is an excellent choice to complete the set. It represents the final year of Carson Mint coin production and it is fitting that since we began the set with a dollar we will end with one too. The dollar denomination was the only one that was manufactured in all 21 years of the Carson City Mint's operations (1870 – 1885 & 1879 – 1893), albeit in three different types: Seated Liberty dollars (1870 – 1873), Trade dollars (1873 – 1878) and Morgan dollars (1878 – 1885 & 1889 – 1893).

There you have it. A reasonably affordable Carson City Mint 10-piece type set worthy of building and displaying. (Total price of this set: from a little over \$26,500 to over \$57,000, depending on the grade choices.) My new set would be assembled for the enjoyment of Carson City Mint fans (myself included), longtime collectors, beginning collectors, as well as everyday non-numismatists. It would be built for anyone and everyone to enjoy and to hopefully be inspired. I would say that just about any museum would be more than happy to have a set like this. The dates selected fulfill all the criteria for my “ideal” set.

I enjoyed writing this article as much as the one I wrote about my first “CC” type set. I suppose it's okay to write about coins you don't have yet!

I'm sure that many of you club members have your own great ideas on what would constitute an ideal “CC” type set. Let's hear about them!

*“Top 25” coin, from *The Mint on Carson Street*.