

The Story of a Carson City Collector

By Hal V. Dunn

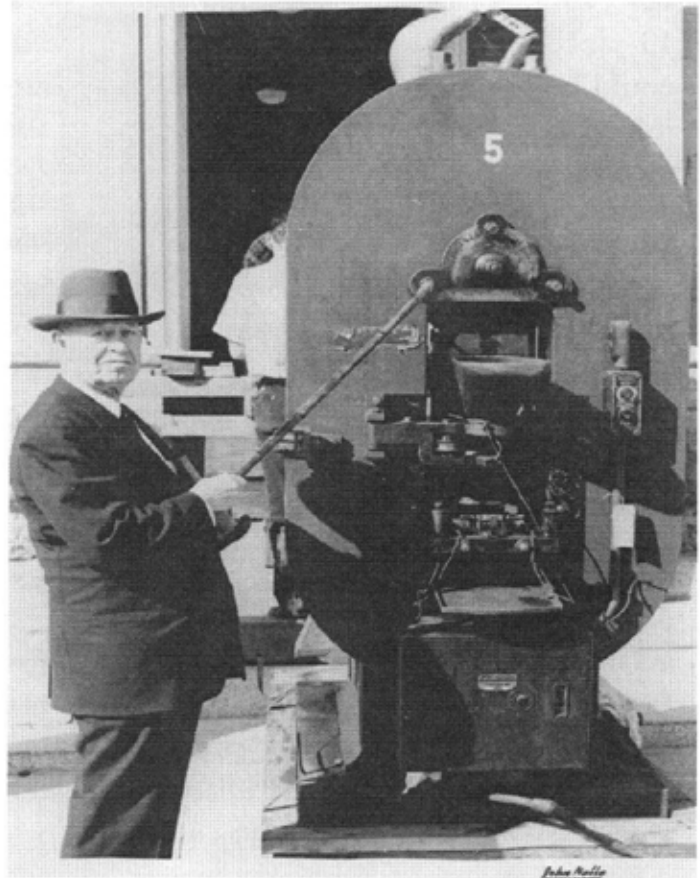
ANA #LM-946

CCCCOA #CM-0005

I began collecting coins in 1949; I was fourteen. I started with Lincoln cents and later progressed into nickels, dimes and quarters. As I recall at this late date, most of my collection was pretty common, coins collected out of circulation and a few acquired through trades or by purchase.

In 1958 I moved to Carson City. For two years I lived on North Curry Street (the next street west of Carson Street) just two blocks north of the old Carson City Mint, now the Nevada State Museum. At the time I owned but one well circulated Carson City Morgan Dollar.

In the 1950s Nevada was a much different place than it is today. The entire state had a population of slightly over 250,000 people. Carson City, priding itself as the smallest state capital, had a population of approximately 4,800. It seemed as though everyone in Carson City knew everyone else in town. It was during these first years in Carson City that I would meet retired District Judge Clark J. Guild, a man who would have a profound influence on my collecting interests. Judge Guild was the "Father of the Nevada State Museum," and it was he who saved the old Carson City Mint from almost certain destruction in the late 1930s. It is because of him that I now have a very special interest in the coinage and memorabilia of the Carson City Mint. The old gentleman had many wonderful stories to tell of the mint and "old" Carson City. In retrospect I wish that I had visited more often with the judge.



Judge Clark J. Guild standing next to old coin press #1 in late 1950s

I have always considered 1964 the demise of "old Nevada." Until 1964 silver dollars were in general circulation in Nevada. Then due to the nationwide silver coin shortage they disappeared almost overnight. It was the end of an era. Most Nevadans disliked dollar bills and they were not in wide circulation throughout the Silver State until after 1964. One of the Northern Nevada pastimes was collecting "CC" Morgan dollars from circulation by residents that did not otherwise collect coins. Although it was probably next to impossible to complete a 13-piece Morgan Dollar collection from circulation, with perseverance most dates could be found in decent circulated condition. After arriving in Carson City I joined the search, and by 1964 had found about a dozen pieces from circulation.

Visits to the museum and with Judge Guild gave me the opportunity to "discover" many new Carson City Mint collecting fields. Now included with my collection of Carson City coins are postcards of the mint, both real photo and early litho types, internal bullion receipts, deposit receipts to mining companies, letterheads, public documents pertaining to the mint, and tokens and medals depicting the mint. For the latter category, in 1999 I authored *Tokens and Medals Depicting the Carson City Mint*. Although all cataloged pieces have been issued from 1940 onward, a number of them are quite scarce to rare.

I suppose that we all have a favorite coin. Mine is an 1891-CC eagle MS-60. Purchased in the late 1970s, I had the coin graded in 1980 by the old ANACS and received a photo certificate as was the custom of the time. Faced with a critical financial problem in 1987, I sold it and a number of other coins to a Reno coin dealer. In 1992 I began the process of rebuilding my Carson City type set and acquired an eagle from a California dealer. Submitted to ANAAB in 1992, I received a certificate that it was a genuine original. About a year later I found the old ANACS certificate and compared the photos for quality. I had repurchased my original coin! I must have been destined to own this particular eagle.

Carson City coins and mint related material will always be my primary collecting interest. I also collect some U.S. coins and Nevada tokens and medals. Although it has been over eighteen years since I have lived in Carson City, I return often, especially for the annual Carson City Mint Coin Show, one of my favorite events held in one of my favorite buildings.

IISA 1891-CC \$10

In our opinion this is a genuine original item as described.

ANACS No. 0616

GRADE: AU-55/55

Registered To: Hal V. Dunn

1-31-80



AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION AUTHENTICATION BUREAU

In our opinion this is a genuine original numismatic item as described.

A.N.A.B. No. AB 1556

**** U.S.A. 1891-CC \$10 ****



(Photos courtesy of Hal V. Dunn.)