



PAPERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY 2016



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<p>* SANTA CRUZ *</p> <p>Venetian Water Carnival Association.</p>				
<p><i>C. J. Lincoln,</i> SECRETARY.</p>		<p><i>J. P. Smith,</i> PRESIDENT.</p>		

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PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
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Papers of the Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
2016

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The Santa Cruz Venetian Water Carnival
1895–1896

William D. Hyder

Santa Cruz holds a place in my collecting passions for more reasons than picturesque scenery and climate. It shares much of the rich history of California from the first interactions between the Spanish explorers and Native Americans to the beatnik culture that led to the era of flower power to famous natural disasters such as the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake. Maybe that is one reason why collecting memorabilia in addition to exonomia awakens a renewed interest in the history of my home for the past twenty-five years. In California, interesting history all too often follows a natural or manmade disaster.

The April 16, 1894 *San Francisco Morning Call* headlines read:

ALL IN RUINS

Santa Cruz After the Fire
BUILDINGS IN ASHES

Chinatown Wiped Out of Existence

The fire had started late Saturday night, April 14, and the city had been caught without a well-equipped fire department thanks to political infighting over costs. The water delivery system from

the city reservoir failed, further compounding the emergency and hampering the many citizens who came out to help fight the flames as merchants tried to save their wares.

The *Los Angeles Herald* headlines on April 15 read:

SANTA CRUZ BURNED DOWN

The Whole Business Portion Is Swept Away.

The Herald reported, “Santa Cruz is a pretty little city of about 10,000 inhabitants, and is a popular summer resort.” The reported commercial losses were staggering. At least three saloons, the Garibaldi Hotel, City Bank, a furniture store, the Odd Fellows Hall, the Courthouse, Western Union, the Sunset Telephone and Telegraph offices, and all of Chinatown were gone. Many businesses had no insurance or were underinsured.

Devastating fires plagued cities throughout the 1800s, and the residents often turned to planning public extravagances to help fund the cost of rebuilding or announce their return to health. Santa Cruz citizens proposed the combination



Figure 1: *Santa Cruz Venetian Water Carnival* booklet published by *The Traveler*, San Francisco. 1895.

of a flower festival, popular in the 1890s in California, and a water carnival, also a familiar theme. Thus the *Santa Cruz Venetian Water Carnival* was born. True, San Francisco hosted a *Circus Royal and Venetian Water Carnival* as an ongoing entertainment venue, but Santa Cruz boasted in a promotional brochure (fig.1) published by *The Traveler* of its “special climatic conditions and the unique equability of temperature which render Santa Cruz exceptionally favorable as a health and pleasure resort and as a permanent home.” And, for \$2.80, San Franciscans could purchase a round-trip ticket good for eight days to attend the

carnival.

The city needed someone to take the reins and make the proposed economic revitalization a reality. Part-time resident and east coast businessman J.P. Smith stepped forward and offered to underwrite the costs if the citizens made an effort to raise the necessary funds. His wife, daughter of a wealthy San Francisco businessman, had persuaded her husband to buy property in Santa Cruz to create a west coast home in addition to their residences in Chicago, New York, and Paris. Their lovely home on Beach Hill was featured in the promotional brochure. (see fig.2) J.P. Smith was elected Chairman

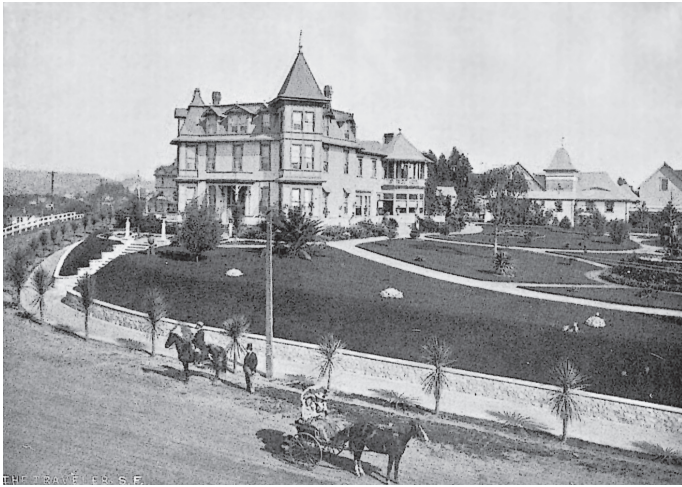


Figure 2. Sunshine Villa in 1895, home of the Water Carnival General Chairman and benefactor, J.P. Smith. Sunshine Villa survives to this day as a Santa Cruz Historic property and is now an assisted Living retirement home.

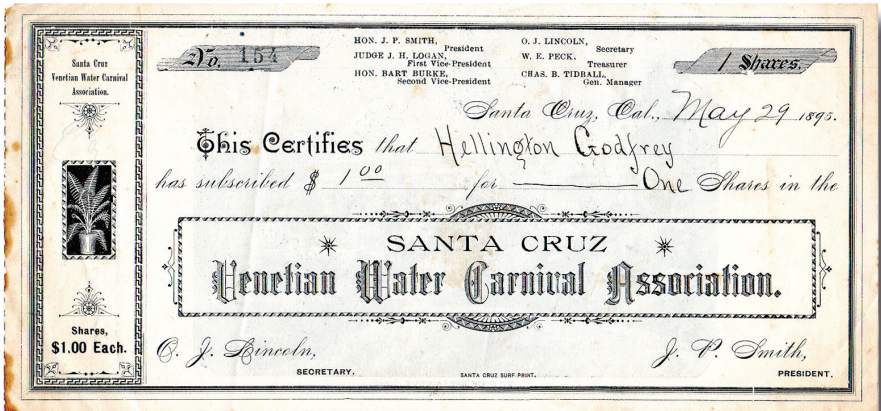


Figure 3: The Venetian Water Carnival Association issued stock certificates not long after the finance committee was formed on May 5, 1895. (9.5" x 4.5")

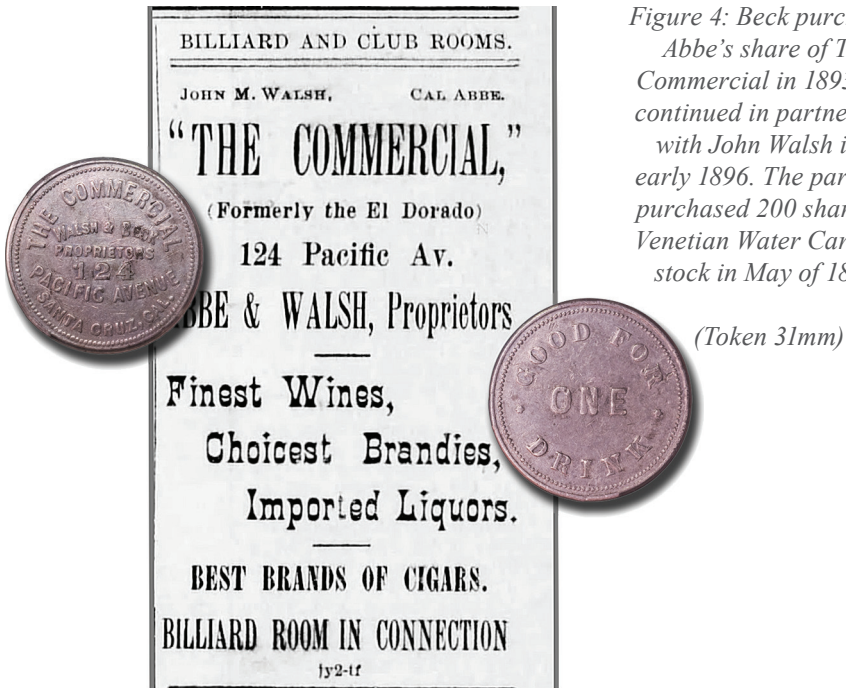


Figure 4: Beck purchased Abbe's share of *The Commercial* in 1893 and continued in partnership with John Walsh into early 1896. The partners purchased 200 shares of Venetian Water Carnival stock in May of 1895.

of the Water Carnival planning committee, and he quickly set to work organizing the effort and raising the necessary funds. Frank Mattison, chair of the finance committee, issued certificates documenting the shares purchased by those helping to underwrite the event. J.P. Smith and J.R. Chase, chair of the transportation committee, each purchased 500 shares to seed the effort. Many businesses recognized the potential to increase business and contributed as well. One drinking establishment, *The Commercial*, owned by Walsh and Beck in 1895, joined the major contributors after purchasing 200 shares.

I felt fortunate when I was able

to acquire one of the ornate paper certificates. Printed in Santa Cruz by the Santa Cruz Surf Print, a small local newspaper, the thin paper certificates (figure 3) were not made to last and are today a rare collectible. I particularly like the bird's-eye view of the city on the reverse.

My interest in the Venetian Water Carnival developed from my acquisition of an unlisted so-called dollar struck by the San Francisco firm L.H. Moise (fig.10, page 9). As I learned more about the Water Carnival, collecting the event's exonomia and related ephemera seemed a natural extension of my collection of city trade tokens.



Figure 5: Badges sold by school children for 10¢ to help raise funds. (3.75" high)

Even the school children had their own role to play by selling badges sporting the official colors of white and yellow for 10 cents each to help raise funds. *The Santa Cruz Sentinel* reported that they had sold 1,080 badges by June 5, a week before the carnival opened.

The program was finalized and printed just days before the festivities got underway. The Floral Queen would be introduced to the public after the visitors received a formal welcome. The women's committee had nominated Mrs. J.P. Smith to be queen, but she had respectfully removed herself from consideration. A balloting system allowing votes in exchange for donations was adopted. Miss Anita Gonzales received 5,499 votes, far more than the 1,889 cast for the

first runner-up. This was likely no surprise, since Queen Anita was J.P. Smith's stepdaughter. I suspect her mother declined her own invitation to be queen in favor of her daughter.

The following day, on June 12, Queen Anita made her regal voyage on a vessel propelled by ten oarsmen while surrounded by a variety of watercraft in the river parade. Over the next few days, spectators saw school parades, illuminated concerts on the water, sporting events, and a grand ball. The carnival ended on Saturday, June 15, with a grand masqued carnival parade including female impersonators, the *queen* riding a street sweeper with her *attendants* riding mules, the Water Carnival *electric fountain* spraying the

SANTA CRUZ
**Venetian
 Water
 Carnival**

June 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th, 1895.

PROGRAMME:

TUESDAY, June 11—Welcome to visitors; surrender to Floral Queen; illustrated concert.

WEDNESDAY, June 12—Prize floral street pageant, Venetian river fête.

THURSDAY, June 13—Parade of public schools; rose regatta; illuminated concert on river.

FRIDAY, June 14—Aquatic sports; band concert; grand ball and concert.

SATURDAY, June 15—Bicycle parade and races; swimming matches; masque carnival and fireworks.

(The S. P. R. R. has issued special rates of travel during Carnival week.

ROUND TRIP from San Francisco, good for Eight Days, \$2.80.

From all other points, two-thirds of usual rates.

APPLY EARLY FOR ROOMS

(Charge not to exceed \$1 per night) to ESTABLISHED BOARDERS.

The music during Carnival week will be supplied by Roncovieri's famous **AMERICAN CONCERT BAND** of forty pieces.

Figure 6, left:

The Santa Cruz Sentinel advertisement for the carnival in the week running up to June 11.

crowds with water, and a bicycle parade of wheelman from around the region including the Pajaro Valley Wheelmen (figure 8, next page).

Carnival organizers must have had a good idea that they were in danger of losing money, because the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* ran an article on Friday June 14 encouraging citizens to buy and wear the official badge. With one day left to go, I wonder how many more badges were sold (figure 9, next page).

Figure 7, below: Queen Anita's barge making its way past the review stand built on her stepfather's property on the San Lorenzo River. (Taber Photography, San Francisco)





Figure 8: *The Pajaro Valley Wheelmen were one of a number of regional bicycle-based men's social clubs participating in the carnival's closing parade. (21mm)*

In addition to the official ribbons, two souvenirs were produced and sold presumably by local vendors. The first was a medal struck by L.H. Moise of San Francisco (figure 10) inspired by the official medal struck for the 1894 Midwinter International Exposition held in San Francisco. The medals are scarce to rare today and were overlooked when Hibler and Kappen wrote their classic, *So-Called Dollars*.

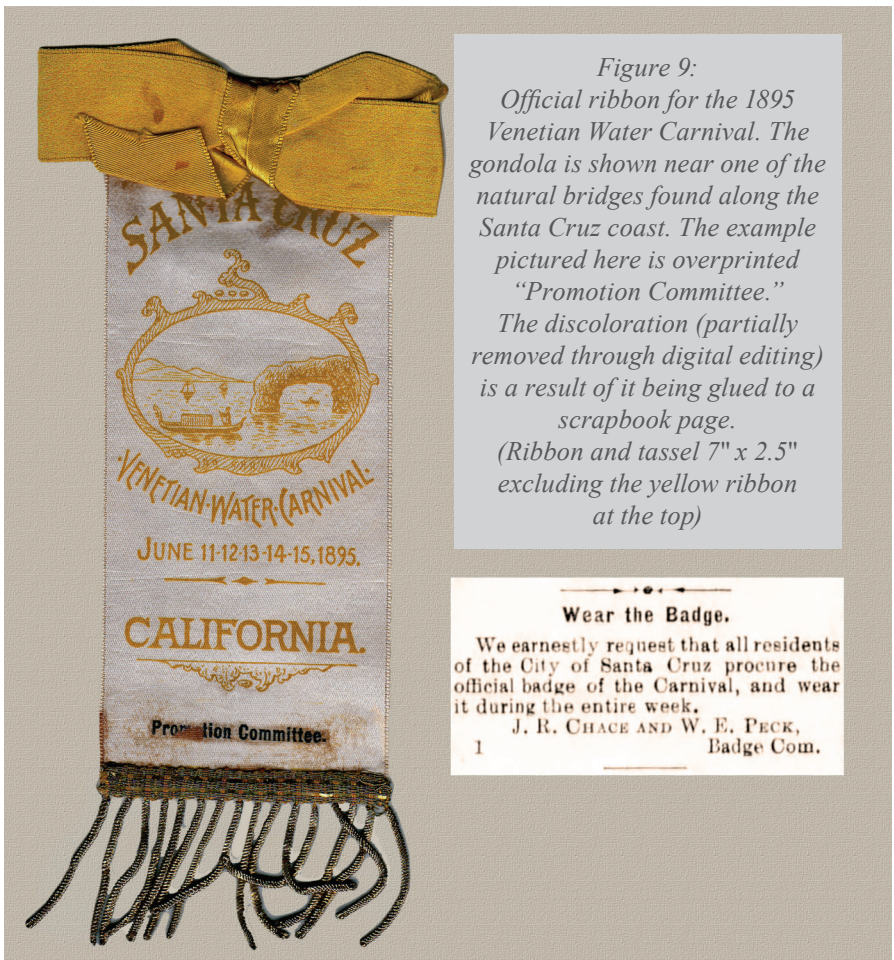


Figure 9:
Official ribbon for the 1895 Venetian Water Carnival. The gondola is shown near one of the natural bridges found along the Santa Cruz coast. The example pictured here is overprinted "Promotion Committee." The discoloration (partially removed through digital editing) is a result of it being glued to a scrapbook page. (Ribbon and tassel 7" x 2.5" excluding the yellow ribbon at the top)

Wear the Badge.

We earnestly request that all residents of the City of Santa Cruz procure the official badge of the Carnival, and wear it during the entire week.

J. R. CHACE AND W. E. PECK,
 Badge Com.



Figure 10: The L.H. Moise souvenir medal struck for the Venetian Water Carnival. The medal was one of several struck to commemorate California local events held in cities serviced by the Southern Pacific. (33mm)



Figure 11: Schwaab Stamp & Seal souvenir hanging badge sold as a Water Carnival souvenir. The gondola design mimics the official ribbon design with an actual bridge in place of the natural bridge. The top badge is missing its pin. The pin bar on the lower badge features the design of the Casino Rotunda of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. The Casino was not built until 1907. Water carnivals continued on a smaller local scale until 1912, so perhaps someone repurposed two badges to make the unique example shown here. (Badges are approximately 70mm x 40mm)

Figure 12: Mano and Demicheli, a local cigar store, became stockholders in the 1896 Water Carnival. C.A. Klinkner, a San Francisco token maker, struck this aluminum token. (24.5mm)



Moise produced several similar medals for events promoted by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Santa Cruz Carnival Association estimated the Southern Pacific collected \$10,000 in fares, which suggests these city events were profitable affairs for the railroad.

The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* published the Carnival Association's financial report in its July 4, 1895 issue. Just over \$19,000 had been collected with another \$5,700 promised. The Association paid out almost \$19,000 with another \$12,000 still owed. J.P. Smith asked the stockholders to share the outstanding liabilities. Few stepped forward, so he covered the remainder of the debt as he had promised on the condition that Santa Cruz continue the Water Carnival into the future.

Walsh and Beck are among the stockholders in 1896, but no longer as partners. A new cigar business partnership, Mano and Demicheli, appear as a small stockholder.

The remaining stock of official ribbons from 1895 was apparently deemed sufficient to be reused



Figure 13: The 1895 ribbon was overprinted with decorative spirals to obscure the 1895 date and the 1896 dates were entered below. The printing alignment was slightly off on the example pictured here. (7" x 2.5" including the tassel, excluding the yellow ribbon at the top)



Figure 14: The 1896 Schwaab Stamp & Seal badge came in two slightly different versions. The central gondola design is the same except the top badge is a circular motif with WATER CARNIVAL / SANTA CRUZ, CAL. VENETIAN appears below the eagle. The lower badge features the same motif in a diamond window with the inscription VENETIAN / WATER CARNIVAL. SANTA CRUZ appears below the eagle. The upper badge has a relatively simple souvenir bar. The lower badge has a California bear on the pin bar. (approx. 80mm x 40mm)

in 1896. The one example I have found has the 1895 dates overprinted with spirals and the 1896 dates added below (fig.13). Schwaab produced two new badges dated 1896 for the event. Why an event of relative small size required two badge designs is a mystery to me.

Additional items of exonomia may exist from proceeding years of the festival, but I have not encountered them in my collecting to date. I did

encounter and acquired one side of a humorous written interchange when looking for 1896 Water Carnival ephemera. I thought the two examples of letterhead and envelopes would make good display items to accompany the badges, medal, and stock certificate from the carnival.

The first item is a press invitation to the carnival made out to the *El Dorado Springs Repeater*.

The envelope, appropriately sized



Figure 15, left: Press invitation and envelope for the 1896 Venetian Water Carnival.

Figure 16, facing page: Letterhead and envelope for the 1896 Venetian Water Carnival. Dimpsie was a poor urchin featured in a popular children's story popular at the time.

for the invitation, is addressed to a Miss Lulu B. Wilson on Mission St. in Santa Cruz. The envelope is cancelled June 1, '96. Was the invitation misaddressed or placed in the wrong envelope? I purchased the invitation with a letter

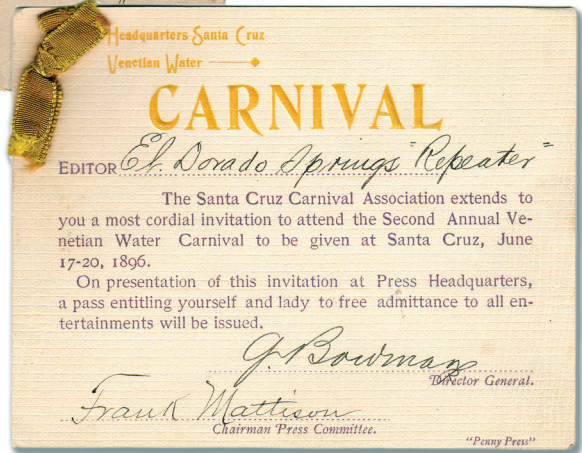
postmarked June 9, also addressed to Miss Lulu. The carnival press agent, William Raymond, writes:

My Dear Dimpsie,

As "one glance at my face would do you for a whole year" you are not due to see me again for about 10 months. I drop you this in lieu of a possible glance.

Your note was highly entertaining. With each note you develop new and unsuspected qualities. Your last proved wholly your aptitude at jumping at conclusions.

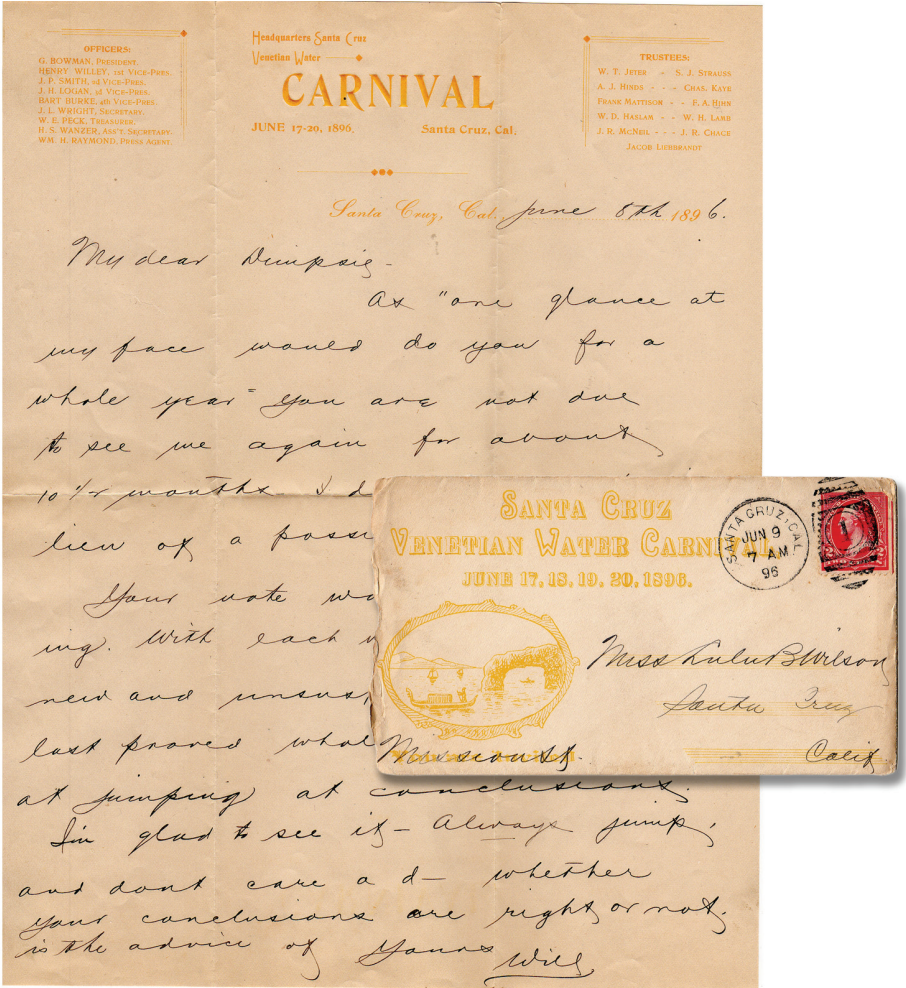
I'm glad to see it — Always jump and don't care a d—



whether your conclusions are right or not is the advice of

Yours Will

After a puzzled search, I discovered Miss Lulu B. Wilson was the teenage daughter of a family that moved to Santa Cruz in 1890 from El Dorado Springs, Missouri. I can only assume she actively spread or *repeated* rumors, falsehoods, and misunderstandings about the carnival sparking the invitation to the *El Dorado Springs Repeater*. Miss Lulu obviously saved the correspondence directed to her.



It is unfortunate that we do not have her responses to Will to better understand why this young girl provoked Will into goading her with the facetious invitation.

The joy of collecting is in finding what you least expect, especially when it brings a smile to your face. I like to think that sharing such treasures as these has a way of reactivating the spirit of

history and promoting a greater appreciation how adversity can inspire creative solutions that have long lasting benefits beyond their initial purpose. And for me, simply putting these pieces together and displaying them photographed within such a formalized written format as this has led to another discovery: an enhanced appreciation and enjoyment of numismatics.



*The Great State Seal of California, Deconstructed:
The Early Medals of the California State
Agricultural Society*

Michael Wehner

A logo can be an interesting statement about the aspirations of an organization. The official seals of governmental entities are often busy images containing numerous symbols, intended to convey a variety of important messages. The Great State Seal of California is a good example. Adopted at the beginning of statehood in 1849 by the Constitutional Convention,¹ the current seal has changed very little from the original design of U.S. Army Major R.S. Garnett. As reported from the December 22, 1849 issue of the *New York Weekly Tribune*, Bayard Taylor noted:²

Around the bevel of the ring are represented thirty-one stars, being the number of the States of which the Union will consist, upon the admission of California. The foreground figure represents the goddess Minerva, having sprung full-grown from the brain of Jupiter. She is introduced as a type of the political birth of the State of California, without having gone through the probation of a Territory. At her feet crouches a grisly bear, feeding upon clusters from a grape vine, which, with the sheaf

of wheat, are emblematic of the peculiar characteristics of the country. A miner is engaged at work, with a rocker and bowl at his side, illustrating the golden wealth of the Sacramento, upon whose waters are seen shipping, typical of commercial greatness; and the snow-clad peaks of the Sierra Nevada make up the back-ground. Above, is the Greek motto "Eureka," (I have found it), applying either to the principle involved in the admission of the State, or the success of the miners at work.

The classical symbolism of the central motif, Minerva, the Roman equivalent of Athena, is an interesting choice to represent the uniquely rapid granting of US statehood to California and certainly characteristic of the period. The secondary image of the bear is a recognition of the short-lived *Bear Flag Republic*. The addition of the bear was debated at the Constitutional Convention and approved over the objections of General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, the former commander of Mexican armed forces in California. Likely because of his

The original design of the Great Seal of the State of California accompanying Bayard Taylor's description in the New York Weekly Tribune.



resentment of having been taken prisoner during the Bear Flag Revolt, he introduced a failed amendment to either remove the bear or to restrain it with a vaquero's lasso.³

While the agricultural symbols still represent important parts of today's California, the hard working gold miner is a link to the tumultuous founding of the state. Interestingly, the presence of grape vines predates Agostin Haroszthy's importation of European wine grape varieties to California,⁴ indicating an earlier cultivation of this signature California crop.

The official purpose of the state seal is to make an impression on documents signed by the Governor, thus serving a notarial function. Hence, there can be only one *Great Seal*, all others being

reproductions. Master dies have been cut only four times to make minor changes, 1849, 1883, 1891, and 1937.⁵ There are numerous references in passing that Albrecht Kuner (1819–1906), the important early California die maker, engraved the first seal in 1849.

At the 68th meeting of our very own Pacific Coast Numismatic Society, held February 23, 1921, his son, Mr. R.A. Kuner verified this by exhibiting an early version of the California seal along with other examples of his father's craftsmanship.⁶

CALIFORNIA STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

The state legislature created the California State Agricultural Society to promote the state's



California State Agricultural Society large silver medal. First Premium awarded 1869 to Brittan, Holbrook & Co. for Peerless Stove. 1.75 inches.

already significant agricultural bounty. The Society held its first agricultural fair in San Francisco in 1854. By 1859, the fair had permanently moved to the state capitol of Sacramento and remains there today as the Cal Expo (officially known as the California Exposition and State Fair). State Fairs have always been a venue for exhibiting and marketing the latest products and inventions. Prizes and awards in a wide variety of categories recognize those of particular note. By 1858, the California State Agricultural Society was awarding gold and silver medals, in addition to cash and other prizes.⁷

The 1869 medal pictured here was awarded by the 4th Department (Mechanical Products, Etc.) to Brittan, Holbrook & Co. of Sacramento for “best display of copper work; best cooking stove

for wood and coal; best home manufactured trays; best display glass, wood, tin, etc” and is the first award listed in this category in the 1890 transactions.⁸ The engraving contains the both the words *first* and *premium* in the reverse engraving, indicating some special merit.

Numerous design elements from the State Seal are incorporated into the obverse of this medal. The bear, mining tools and agricultural produce, including wine grapes, are drawn directly from the Seal. The classical female bust may be a representation of Minerva. In the State Seal, Minerva is helmeted and carries a spear. Here, she wears a wreath of grains, more suitable for a medal honoring agriculture. On the state seal, Minerva’s shield shows the head of Medusa, complete with snakes. While its inclusion on the States Seal has



The Nahl Brothers' advertisement in the 1858 San Francisco city directory.¹³ Note that Carl Nahl is the senior partner in the firm.

been controversial at various times, the symbolism of Medusa bears no direct connection to California and is probably included by the original designer only because the monster is closely associated with Minerva. On the agricultural medal, the base supporting the bust is engraved with a sheave of wheat, also taken from the State Seal. Given the controversy of the imagery of Medusa, some unofficial representations of the State Seal replace it with similar sheaves of grain. In the background of the medal are the mountains of the Sierra Nevada, also as on the State Seal. The agricultural medal, however, features several symbols relating to the trade, not seen on the State Seal. These include a plow in the foreground, a tall redwood tree, a horse, cattle and a house with crops in front of it, replacing the sea and sailing ship of the Seal's original design.

The medal was designed by Hugo (1833–1889) and/or Charles Nahl (1818–1878). Confidence in this attribution is high given the payment of \$20 for *design of medal* to the *Nahl Bros* awarded

on April 23, 1858, as recorded in the Society's Transactions.⁹

In 1858, these half brothers from a famous German family of artists had a studio on Broadway between Montgomery and Kearney Streets in San Francisco, where they enjoyed a successful business of painting, engraving and daguerreotype photography. Charles (or Carl) is remembered today for his topical paintings of early California, usually in oil, and is recognized as an important artist of this era. Hugo (or Arthur) also painted in various media and is also known for his photographs of early California.¹⁰ It is not clear which artist actually designed this particular medal, but the elder brother, Carl, is explicitly credited with the design of the 1857 medal of the San Francisco Mechanics' Institute,¹¹ while the dies for that medal were executed by Kuner.^{11,12} It is distinctly possible that the dies and medals for the California State Agricultural Society were also produced by Kuner. Although there is no documentary proof of such, given that he had the necessary equipment, and that the Nahl



California State Agricultural Society small silver medal. Unawarded. 1.25 inches

brothers had used him the previous year, it does seem quite likely.

In 1858, medals were awarded in three sizes referred to as *first*, *second* and *third size* and in 1859 as *small*, *medium* and *large*. For silver medals, these measured 1.25, 1.5 and 1.75 inches in diameter.

The 1858 Transactions state:

In explanation of what otherwise may seem an absurdity, it should be understood that there are to be three sizes of Medals, both of the Gold and of the Silver. The Gold Medals will be rated at fifty dollars, thirty dollars,



California State Agricultural Society gold medal. Awarded to Shaw, Ingam, Batcher & Co. in 1895 for "Most Attractive Display in Pavilion / Miniature Steamboat." 1.5 inches. Note the significant differences in the die work from the large silver medal, especially in the bear but also in the farm animals, the house and the redwood tree.

and twenty dollars, the Silver Medals at fifteen dollars, ten dollars, and five dollars.¹⁴

Prizes varied by the many different classes at the fair, with some sections making many more awards, than others probably dependent on available funds. In addition to cash and medals, prizes included silver cups, silver butter and cake knives, plates, and framed diplomas. Silver goods were to be manufactured “according to the fineness of United States coin, each piece having the insignia of the society and the arms of the State.”¹⁵ In some classes, exchange of a gold medal for “plate or cash” was offered.¹⁶

The number of medals and other awards in the first three years was considerable, with over 100 gold medals awarded in 1858 alone. The vast majority of the awarded gold medals in 1858 are listed in the Society’s transactions as *third size* with only one specified as *second size*. In 1859, only two *medium* gold medals appear to have been awarded, and by 1860 no mention of size is specified for the two gold medals awarded that year, although all three sizes of silver medals were awarded.

By 1861, awards were generally fewer and less generous with apparently only two silver medals among all of the premiums awarded. The fair soon started

to run into considerable financial difficulties, and no medals were awarded in 1863. By 1868, however, the rules for gold medal awards were made more formal; a Gold Medal to the most meritorious exhibition in each of the seven “Departments” would be awarded.¹⁷

The 1895 gold medal pictured was one of eleven gold medals of that year, and it was specially awarded, having no association with a specific department. Incidentally, the awardee is misspelled and should read *Schaw, Ingam, Batcher & Co.* which was a Sacramento hardware retailer.¹⁸

Silver medals were also awarded more liberally again by 1868, but no distinction in size is made in the Transactions of that or in the following years.

These medals are all rare; however, in a recent auction by Fred Holabird Western Americana Collectibles, a fairly large number (8) of the sized silver medals from various dates were offered, all of which were 1.75 inches across. Comparison of early (1869) through later dates (1895) reveals that the dies were not changed, at least for this larger format silver medal. The later dates are not as crisply struck, an indication of die wear. It would appear that the small and medium size silver medals were only awarded in the very earliest

years of the fair. Furthermore, the large gold medals do not appear to ever be awarded according to the Transactions and small gold medals were awarded only in 1858. From 1859 onward, the medium sized gold medals appear to be the only ones awarded, similar to the one pictured here.

CONCLUSION

By 1900, the design of the California State Agricultural Society award medal was changed to actually be a faithful representation of the Great State Seal, and a version of it continues to this day. However with a little imagination, the deconstruction of the seal by the Nahl brothers becomes apparent, revealing their interpretation of what was important to early Californians.

END NOTES

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2. Bayard Taylor's Letters, No. XXVII "The Great Seal of the State of California," *New York Weekly Tribune*, 22 December 1849, 1 (via wikipedia accessed July 17, 2016 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seal_of_California_](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seal_of_California)
3. Winfield J. Davis, "The Great Seal -- History of the State of California's Coat of Arms," *Sacramento Union*, 14 November 1885, page 6
4. Tim Halloran, "Agoston Haraszthy: The Father of California Wine", <http://www.intowine.com/agoston-haraszthy-father-california-wine>
5. J.N. Bowman (Historian, Central Record Depository), "The Great Seal of California," *California Blue Book* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1950), pgs 162, 170
6. *The Numismatist*, April 1921. pages 169–170
7. 1858 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society. (Transactions from 1858 to 1905 are available at <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100142676>)
8. 1869 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, p. 202
9. 1858 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, page 24
10. Peter E. Palmquist, Thomas R. Kailbourn (2000) *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840-1865*, Stanford University Press, page 217-218
11. Gene Hailey (1937) *California Art Research Project*, page 60
12. (1858) Report of the industrial exhibition of the Mechanic's Institute of the City of San Francisco
13. Henry G. Langley (1858) *San Francisco Directory and Business Guide*, page 212
14. 1858 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, page 81
15. 1860 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, page 89
16. 1859 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, pg. 137
17. 1866-67 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society, page 603
18. F.M. Husted, Directory for Sacramento City and County for 1895.

Four Coins, Three Continents, One Aim — Move Silver!

Mark Benvenuto

INTRODUCTION

The year is 1854 and the *Tinqua*, an extreme clipper ship, has set sail from San Francisco to points in the east — specifically Shanghai, with a stop in Honolulu. She was built only a few years earlier in 1852, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, by Mr. George Raynes for Olyphant & Company, with a tonnage of 668 tons. She was now quite a way from her “birth place” on this Pacific run. In among the goods she will trade are probably silver coins for use in the Empire of China, a large economy that runs on silver as much as it does on gold. Unfortunately, in 1854 none of those coins could have been United States trade dollars. Chances are that any hard silver she had on board was Spanish colonial or Mexican 8 reales, often called *Dollars Mex*, which were used to facilitate trade between the Americas and China.

The *Tinqua* was one of many ships that made the run across the Pacific, and that made the long voyage around the southern cape going from Shanghai all the way to New York. Most unfortunately for the men of the *Tinqua*, somewhere



in January 1855, that run from China to the *U.S. Big Apple* ended with a wrecked ship off the coast of Cape Hatteras and a lost cargo valued at \$300,000. International trade could be a hazardous business.

CHINA'S SILVER TRADE

China's love of silver far predates the voyages of the *Tinqua* or any other clipper ships. It wasn't long after the establishment of the *Casa de Moneta* in 1535 in Mexico City, that Spanish colonial silver in the form of crude 8 reales coins, sometimes called *cabo de barra*, started making their

way east as part of a growing international trade. The reason was a combination of tradition and more recent Chinese law. Traditionally, for centuries really, China had relied on silver — often in ingot form — as a store of wealth. During the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), paper money was introduced as part of the system, and as with paper money in other lands and more recent times, it became devalued as time passed. A tax reform in China in the late 1500s required payment of taxes in silver. Where did this silver come from? Well, much of it from the newly opened mines of Spanish Mexico and *El Peru*.

ENTER THE U.S., BRITAIN, FRANCE & JAPAN

Spain may have had the lion's share of the silver trade for centuries, seeing their crude cobs evolve into attractive 8 reales pieces sporting the image of the king on the obverse and the royal coat of arms on the reverse, but by no means did it have a monopoly on trade or silver. As well, when any one nation makes a significant profit from trading a commodity, other nations — or at least the folks in power in those nations — take notice, and think about how to get involved in that particular trade. It was 1859 when the now famous Comstock Lode was first discovered, and the mid-1870s

when mining output became so large that mine owners and major shareholders needed some place besides domestic use within the United States for all the silver being brought into the channels of commerce. Enter the United States trade dollar.

From 1873 to 1878 United States trade dollars were produced at the Main Mint in Philadelphia, as well as the branch Mints in San Francisco and the then young facility in Carson City. Their weight and fineness were shown as part of the reverse design, to help facilitate their use in trade. There were proofs made from 1879 all the way to 1885 as the only output of these big coins (although just 10 in 1884 and 5 in 1885). Thus, the six years of major production probably made a dent, but not a huge one, in what the influx of predominantly Mexican silver into China looked like.

A bit later than the U.S., Great Britain also got into the trade dollar arena. In 1895, what are called *British trade dollars* were first produced, specifically for trade in the Far East. While weight and fineness were not stated on the British coins, their reverse inscriptions were in Chinese and Malay, making them clearly an international trade coin. At the time, Britain possessed a world-spanning empire of its own, and was able to mint trade dollars in



both Calcutta and Bombay. The British effort lasted longer than six years, with annual issues up to 1904, and then numerous issues (not quite annually) all the way up to 1934. A bit like the tail end of the U.S. trade dollar production, there are apparently 20 British trade dollars that were minted in 1935.

If Britain was in some international scheme, effort, or imperial endeavor, France was generally right in there as well. India was the crown jewel of Britain's Empire for quite some time. Almost next door were five French colonial lands — Annam, Tonkin, Cochin China, Cambodia, and Laos.

Among the many French imports to Southeast Asia was a monetary system that included the *Piastre de Commerce*, or the French trade dollar. The run of these large silver coins started a bit earlier than their British counterparts, in 1885, and progressed pretty steadily until

1909, with several years scattered in beyond that. Ultimately the *piaster* ceased to be a silver coin in 1931. These coins did sport weight and fineness information, and it's fair to say they were probably part of the trade that went on in Chinese port cities.

In the west, we tend to forget that Japan was a rapidly modernizing country in the late nineteenth century, and that after growing pains and some resistance to outside influences, the rising Empire of the Sun also got into the trade dollar business, as it were. The years 1875–77 saw a large influx of Japanese *Yen* — generally called *Japanese trade dollars* — in the markets, especially in China. That these large silver coins were produced with their value and fineness written in English speaks volumes concerning their use as trade coins beyond the shores of the home islands.

THE COLLECTING LEGACY

The United States has never demonetized a coin — except for the trade dollar. These may be beautiful, with their seated figure of Liberty holding an olive branch and sitting on bales of goods, but they weren't welcome for very long in the United States, at least as far as everyday transactions were concerned. Today they are quite collectible, although none are cheap, even in worn grades.



The British Empire has evolved into the British Commonwealth of Nations and some semi-independent lands, and the British trade dollar made way for other means of exchange in international circles. The British trade dollars though were produced in large enough numbers that many of them are considered quite common today. Common date specimens with some minor wear on them don't actually cost too much more than their bullion value.

France has divested itself of its Southeast Asian holdings decades ago, and has seen them undergo many bloody years of war and turmoil. French trade dollars — the big *Piastres de Commerce* —

are still available for the interested collector, and, like the British trade dollars, can be quite affordable. A patient collector can most likely assemble a complete set given enough time.

The *Empire of the Sun* is a land that has been reborn and rebuilt as a modern, democratic powerhouse of a nation, economically coming full circle from the 1870s. The Japanese trade dollars that have survived are quite attractive, and while they can be expensive in the higher grades, once again a patient collector will find the common dates don't flatten a wallet or drain a budget.

FINALLY?

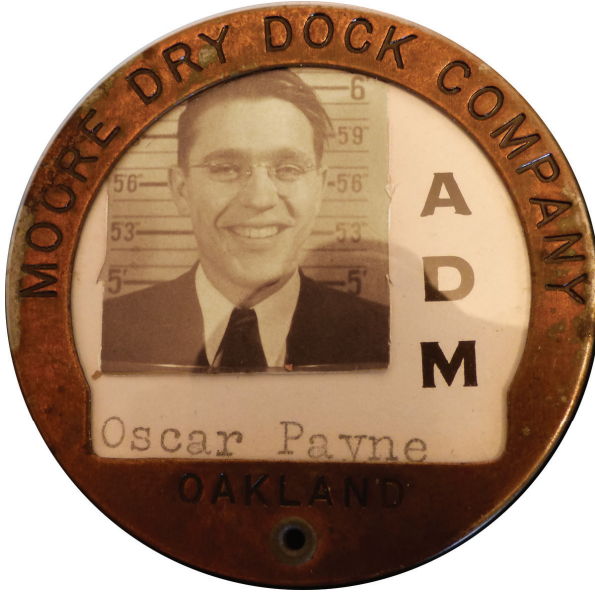
The *Tinqua* went down over 160 years ago, taking with it a valuable cargo, and most likely the profits of some wealthy individuals. But the trade dollars a collector can find today are a reminder of a time when at least four nations — the U.S., Britain, France, and Japan — tried to get in on a trade that spanned three continents — North and South America, as well as Asia — all with one aim: *to move silver!*

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Moore Dry Dock Company

Herbert Miles



Mr. Oscar Payne's smiling face beams from an identification badge from Moore Dry Dock Company, a California ship building and repair firm that existed in San Francisco and Oakland from 1905 to about 1961.

Who was Oscar Payne? Googling his name results in no hits, so he is unknown to the world except for his photo badge which I discovered in an antique mall in Gurnee Mills, Illinois. From California to Illinois is quite a journey.

No maker's name appears on the reverse or edge to give a clue to its age, but it appears to be from the 1950s, based on Mr. Payne's nice suit and tie. The badge looks

to be copper or a copper alloy and is substantially made, not easily disassembled due to a rivet directly below "Oakland" holding the two pieces together. Oscar was probably not a journeyman welder or other lower level shipwright as his suit and tie will attest.

Thus, all we know is what the badge tells us: *Moore Dry Dock Company*, his photo with name underneath, *ADM* (Assistant



Current location of Schnitzer Steel, descendant of Moore Dry Dock

District Manager?) to the viewer's right in vertical letters, and *Oakland* etched in the copper below his name.

Beginning in San Francisco in 1905 as the Moore & Scott Iron Works, the company was destroyed by the earthquake and fire of 1906, but, like the phoenix, rose again in 1909, when the company purchased the Boole Shipyard of Oakland and relocated to that East Bay city at the foot of Adeline Street in West Oakland.

In 1917, Moore bought out Scott, and his firm became the Moore Shipbuilding Company. In 1922, the name changed again to the Moore Dry Dock Company, and it remained so named until the end.

World War I provided much opportunity for ship building and repair and the company grew rapidly, employing upwards of 12,000 during this period of time. After the war, though ship building declined, the company

produced structural steel and built two ferry boats for the Bay Area's urban transit Key System. In addition, Moore was a primary contractor for the Park Street and High Street Bridges connecting Oakland to Alameda Island, also providing the steel for the historic Paramount Theatre in downtown Oakland, including the major steel beam that supports the balcony. Moore also built the caissons for the San Francisco Bay Bridge, the Dumbarton Bridge, and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Moore was a primary military contractor during World War II, building more than 100 ships for the Navy and merchant marines and employing more than 17,000 people during its height in 1943.

The company was also known for employing a large number of black workers during the war years, similar to what Kaiser Shipyards was known for in Richmond, California. During the war years, many people from the South



Moore Shipyard in 1917

moved west for employment and to escape poverty. Blacks had the added incentive to escape Jim Crow treatment and discriminatory laws prevalent in the Old South. Even though many blacks were employed, they were still mostly relegated to low skilled or menial jobs; they were also forced to form local union auxiliaries instead of being allowed to join the national unions.

Moore also employed a large number of women workers during World War II because the war effort required many white men to be conscripted into military service, leaving those left on the home front to produce war materiel. White women and black men and women, took advantage of such an opportunity to learn skills and work steadily.

After the war ended, ship building and ship repair declined, and Moore slowly lost its ability to sustain itself. Its ship repair function only employed a minimum of workers, so business decreased until the ship yard was finally sold to Flug & Strassler, who then sold it to Schnitzer Steel, a recycling firm.

During its existence, Moore Dry Dock produced more than 200 ships, repaired an unknown number, and exerted a mighty effort on behalf of the United States during both World Wars.

As for Mr. Oscar Payne, many of us wish to become immortal by deed or act or historic effort, but almost all of us never will achieve such importance; however, by circumstances that



*Workers at Moore and Scott Shipyard
1912*



*Mr. Paul Robeson singing the Star
Spangled Banner at Moore Dry Dock.
Oakland Tribune, Sept 21, 1942.*

are as serendipitous as they are mysterious, a lasting impression endures. Welcome to immortality, Mr. Oscar Payne.

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