

## **NGC Confirms Authentication of Recovered 1913 Liberty Nickel "This coin would likely grade Proof-62" - Rick Montgomery**

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC), the official grading service of the American Numismatic Association (ANA), has confirmed the authenticity of the 1913 Liberty Head nickel that was rediscovered at the ANA convention in Baltimore this summer after being out of sight for more than 40 years.

For the first time since 1920, all five of the 1913 Liberty Head nickels were displayed at the ANA World's Fair of Money<sup>SM</sup> in Baltimore, July 30-August 3. This re-discovered specimen disappeared after a 1962 auto accident that took the life of its owner, George O. Walton. Thought to be an altered date, the coin remained closeted until it was examined at the show in Baltimore and declared authentic. It now is on loan to the ANA Money Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

"A coin of this magnitude doesn't come along very often," says ANA Executive Director Christopher Cipoletti. "As the Association's official grading service, NGC was asked to inspect it and verify the legitimacy of this great numismatic rarity. We were fortunate to have Rick Montgomery, one of the most recognized numismatic authenticators, review this specimen."

After examining the rare nickel and comparing it to the specimen in the ANA Money Museum's collection, Montgomery, NGC vice president and grading finalizer, says, "I have had the opportunity to analyze other examples of this rarity, and there is no question in my mind that this piece is genuine. If I were to grade it as part of the NGC grading team, I would say this coin would likely grade Proof-62."

Montgomery says he "loves the story" of the Walton 1913 Liberty nickel. "It has a better story line than a Sherlock Holmes mystery."

Five 1913 Liberty Head nickels were produced 90 years ago under mysterious circumstances when the United States Mint was changing from the Liberty Head to the Buffalo design. The five coins remained as a set until the 1940s, when they were separated and sold. One of them now is a permanent part of the ANA Museum cabinet, another is part of the Smithsonian Institution's collection and the other three rare nickels are in private hands.

Walton acquired his rare nickel in 1946 and showed it for 16 years before he died on his way to a coin show. His vast collection was sold at auction in 1963 for nearly \$873,00, but his heirs were told the famous nickel was one of many altered-date coins produced over the years and thus worthless.

Walton's relatives, who wish to remain anonymous, kept the piece closeted for four decades. As part of producing the exhibit for the ANA Baltimore convention, Walton family members began corresponding with ANA Curator Lawrence Lee, who arranged for them to bring what was thought to be their altered-date specimen to the show for inclusion in an

exhibit of the other four specimens. Lee believed the coin, even if an altered date, would draw attention to the display since it belonged to the last owner of the genuine specimen. Before placing the nickel in the display case, and after a thorough examination and comparison with the other rare nickels, the Walton piece was declared genuine.

"I appreciate the honor personally and on behalf of NGC to examine this rarity," Montgomery says. "Although I didn't know where it would be discovered, I always knew that, because of its history, the coin would be found."

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The American Numismatic Association is a congressionally chartered nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging people to study and collect money and related items. The ANA helps its 28,000 members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of education and outreach programs, as well as its museum, library, publications, conventions and seminars. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or go to [www.money.org](http://www.money.org).