

Pick a Year, Any Year

The Year is 1912

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# 1912 United States Coins



# Liberty Head Nickel

- Liberty Head Type  
1883 – 1912
- 1883 nickel appeared without the word Cents on the reverse
- Some “cents-less” nickels were gold-plated and passed for five dollar pieces



## 1883 Nickel With Cents





# 1913 Buffalo Nickel

- Design change in 1913 from Liberty Type to Buffalo
- Also known as Indian Head type
- Bison modeled after “Black Diamond” from Central Park Zoo



## Two Varieties in 1913



# Buffalo Nickel



# The Mystery of 1913

- Samuel Brown, a one time employee of the Philadelphia Mint, places an advertisement to purchase 1913 Liberty Head nickels for \$500 a piece.
- After advertising, Brown announces that he has acquired 5 1913 Liberty Head nickels but refuses to say how they were obtained.



# Expensive Nickel

- 5 Examples of the 1913 Liberty Head nickel are known to exist.
- 1913 nickel sold in 2007 for a reported 5 million dollars.



# Which Has Greater Value?

- 1912 Philadelphia nickel mintage = 26,236,714
- 1913 Philadelphia nickel mintage = 5



# What is it worth?



**It all depends on how you define  
Value**

# Where Does the Money Go?



- A coin minted in 1912 most likely circulated for 10 years or more.
- Who used the coin and what did it purchase?
- Where has the coin traveled?

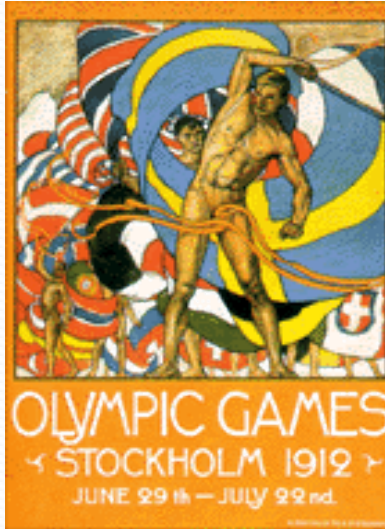


# Events of 1912

- New Mexico and Arizona both enter the Union in 1912.
- Could your nickel have been used to buy a newspaper announcing statehood?



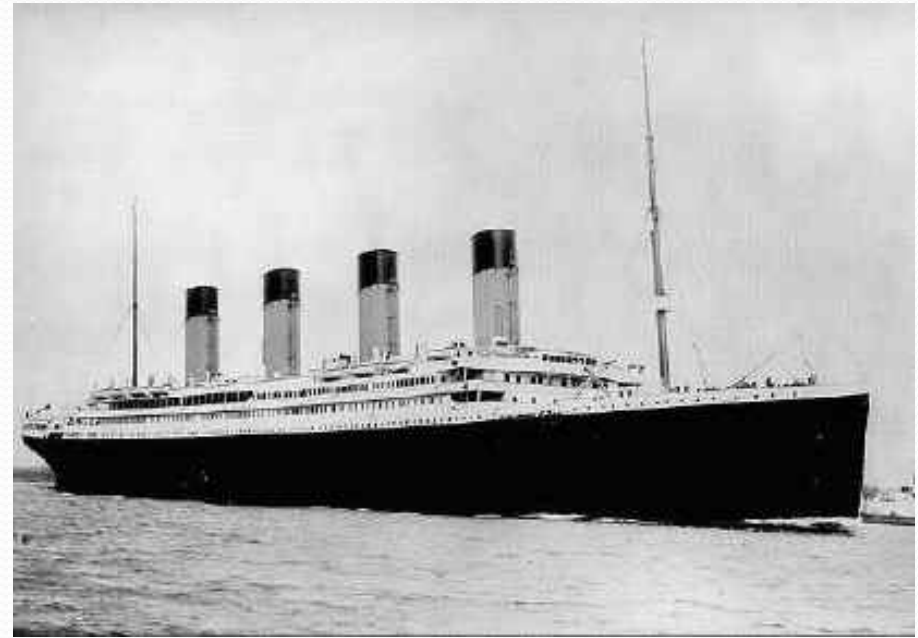
# 1912 Stockholm Olympics



- Modern Olympics discontinued until after the “War to End All Wars”.
- Jim Thorpe wins the Pentathlon and Decathlon but is stripped of his medals because it was discovered that he played semi-pro baseball in 1911 and earned \$25 a week.
- While in Stockholm, Thorpe most likely exchanged American coins for Swedish money.

# Across the Atlantic?

- RMS Titanic sinks on its maiden voyage April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1912.
- Several passengers were Americans, some of whom survived.
- Could someone have carried your quarter in their purse or pocket?





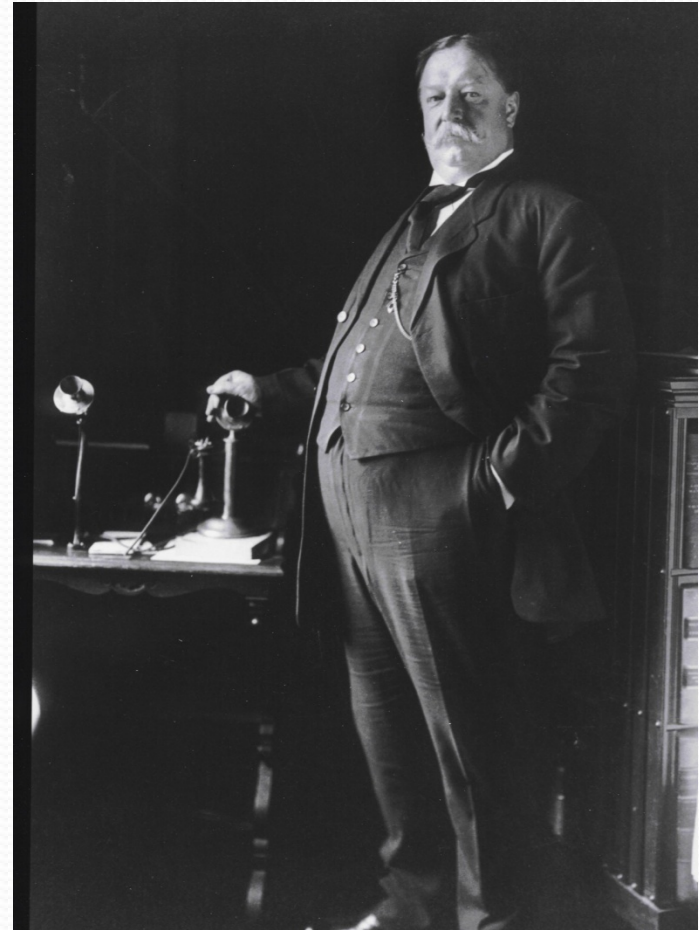
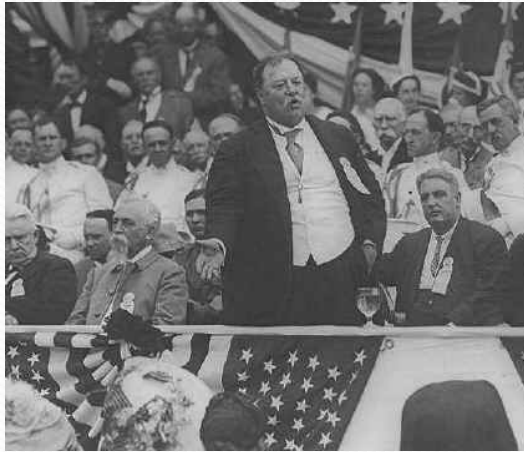




## Presidential Election of 1912

- Republican incumbent candidate –  
**William Howard Taft**
- Democratic candidate –  
**Woodrow Wilson**
- Progressive (Bull Moose) candidate –  
**Theodore Roosevelt**

# President Taft



# Woodrow Wilson



# Theodore Roosevelt

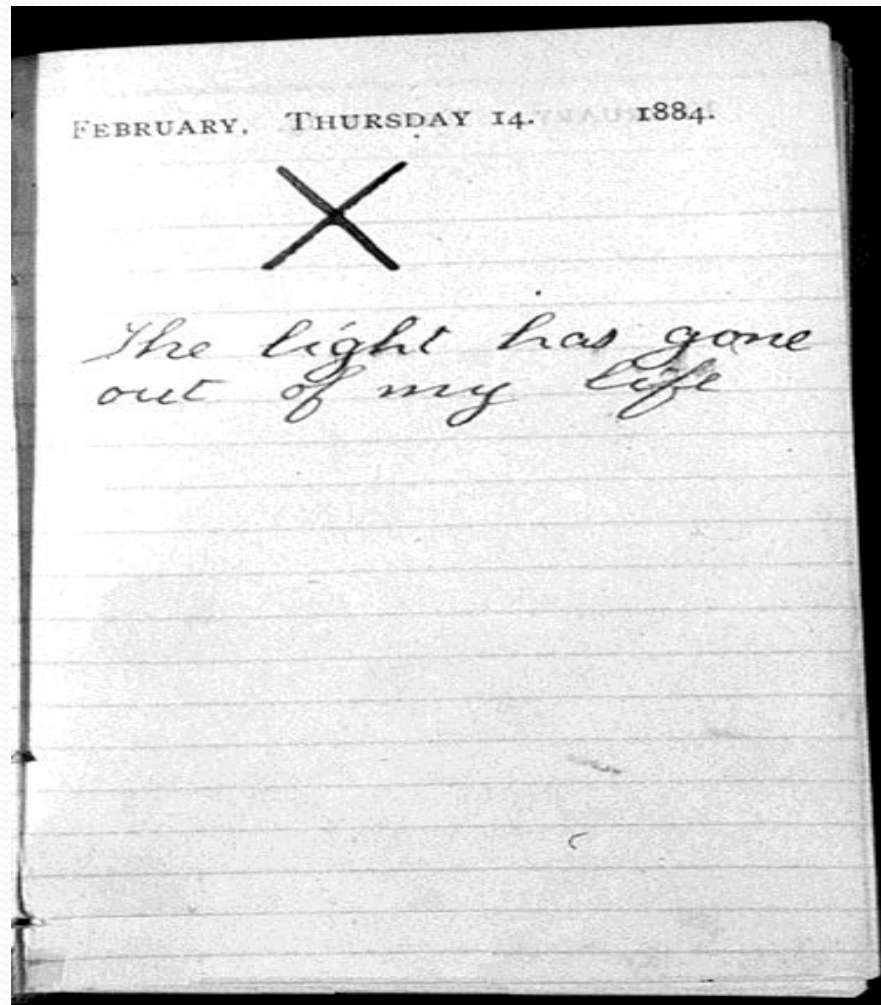




# Alice Hathaway Roosevelt



# Diary Entry



## Where Did Their Change Go?

- All three candidates traveled across the country delivering speeches. What items did they purchase?
- All three candidates had change in their pockets. Did they nervously roll it around while delivering a speech?

# What Could Your Coins Buy?

Prices in 1912

New Jersey



# Transportation

- A brand new Ford Model T could be purchased for \$690.
- A one year old, used Model T could be bought for \$450.



# Food in 1912

- The cost of bacon was 16 cents per pound.
- Eggs were 22 cents a dozen.



# Furniture

- A brass bed could be purchased for \$9.95.
- The mattress for the bed cost \$5.50 - \$6.50.



# Real Estate in 1912

- A 10 room home in Morristown, New Jersey sold for approximately \$3,000.
- The same home near a trolley line might sell for \$1,000 more.



# Captain of Industry

John Rockefeller



- Estimated to be worth 1.4 *billion* dollars.
- Gave 550 million dollars to philanthropic pursuits.
- Handed out dimes to children (except during the Depression when he gave nickels).



# Working Wages in 1912



- Male mill workers earned \$8.76 per 56 hour work weeks.
- Women & children mill workers earned \$6.00 per 56 hour work weeks.

# Plight of Child Labor

- Furman Owens was 12 years old. He could neither read nor write and had been working at a mill in Columbia, South Carolina for the previous 4 years.

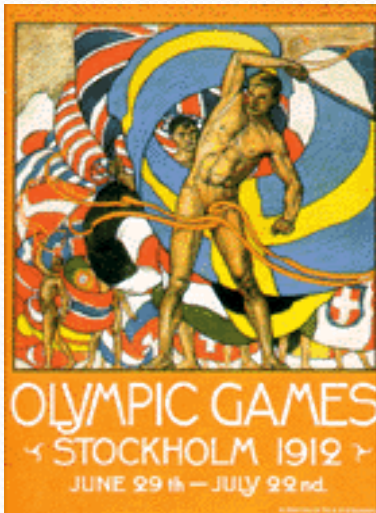
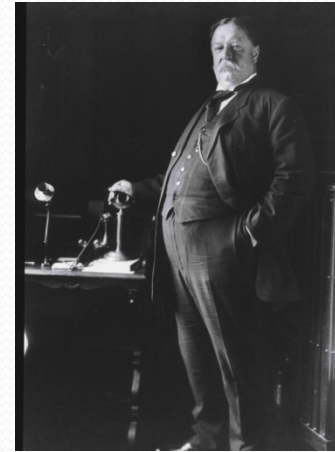


## Did He Earn Your Coins?



- Manuel picked shrimp in Biloxi, MS. He was 5 years old when this photograph was taken. He had worked there for a year.

# So Where Have Your Coins Been?





## A Story to Tell

- A 1912 coin could have lavishly traveled the Atlantic only to come close to an iceberg.
- A coin could have rested in the pocket of a dignitary.
- A coin could have been spent by the world's greatest athlete, or earned by a poor child helping his family survive.
- Help your students learn to tell the story.