

ANA AUTHENTICATES ANOTHER DUPONT COIN

The American Numismatic Association (ANA) Authentication Bureau has authenticated another unique coin that was stolen from Willis H. du Pont in a 1967 robbery.

The 1866 Proof "No Motto" silver half dollar was recovered by Superior Stamp & Coin of Beverly Hills, California. Du Pont's 1866 "No Motto" quarter dollar, stolen in the same robbery, recently was recovered, and both coins are being held at the ANA Money Museum at the owner's request.

"As with the 1866 quarter, we are confident that this is the du Pont specimen," says ANA Authenticator Brian Silliman, who examined the coin along with Museum Curator Robert W. Hoge.

The du Pont 1866 silver quarter and half dollar do not have the motto "In God We Trust" on the reverse. The motto was not included on the Seated Liberty quarter at its premiere in 1838, but was added in 1866. The unique coins were struck by the United States Mint at the request of druggist Robert Coulton Davis, who reputedly provided Mint personnel with laudanum - a solution of opium in alcohol.

ANA Executive Director Edward C. Rochette says, "Superior contacted the ANA as soon as they recognized that this was another of Willis du Pont's missing coins. More than 30 years have passed since that terrible robbery at Mr. du Pont's home in Florida, so it's good to see the numismatic community keeping watch and returning any of the stolen coins."

Lisa Parker, president of Superior, says the 1866 half dollar was purchased from an unidentified seller over the counter last September.

"Our counter person did not recognize the uniqueness nor the value of the coin," Parker says. "Our senior numismatist, Steve Deeds, later examined the piece and recognized it was probably something more than we first thought. Through further research, we learned the coin matched one sold at auction in 1961. At about the same time, the unique 1866 quarter was recovered in by a San Fernando Valley, California, dealer."

Parker adds, "We contacted ANA President Bob Campbell, who connected us with the ANA Authentication Bureau, so we could confirm that the coin was indeed the one taken from Mr. du Pont and secure its return."

The ANA has authenticated five of the coins taken in the du Pont robbery and assisted in recovering three of them. In 1981 and in 1994, the ANA was involved in the recovery of Willis du Pont's 1804 Bust dollars. He donated the Class I Cohen specimen to the ANA. The 1994 recovery also included du Pont's one-of-a-kind 1850 "Stockton" \$5 gold piece.

Images of both 1866 unique pieces are scheduled to be placed in the ANA's "Virtual Money Museum" at www.money.org.

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.