

BY

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Throughout the history of the U.S. mint there have been instances where a particular date has not appeared on a regular circulation issue coin, although in some instances mint records indicate that the denomination was produced during that calendar year. There are at least ten different reasons for the missing dates to have occurred.

- 1) The coins were struck with left over earlier or later date dies. This was a common practice in the nineteenth century. As this information was not generally available, nineteenth century collectors spent many futile hours searching for coins such as 1804 half dollars, all minted from 1803 dies, and 1805 silver dollars, also minted from 1803 dies. In 1815, some cents actually were struck, but from 1816 dies (Julian, Ref 4). During the war of 1812, the mint lost its only source for copper planchets, which was in Britain! By 1815 all cent planchets were exhausted and no more available until late in the year, thus no 1815 cent dies were produced.
- 2) No coins were struck because merchants preferred Spanish or Mexican silver and gold. Amazing as it may seem to modern Americans, foreign silver and gold were legal tender in the U.S. until 1857! The Spanish 8 reale(piece of eight) was a standard coin for international commerce, as was Spanish and Mexican fractional silver.
- 3) No coins were struck due to economic depressions such as the great depression of the 1930's, which led to slowdown of demand for new coinage.
- 4) No coins were struck due to Federal legislation suspending production, such as the mint act of 1873, which stopped production of the standard silver dollar in favor of the trade dollar.
- 5) Bank vaults were bulging with unused coins in a denomination, thus production was curtailed temporarily. This large inventory could be due to public distaste for a denomination, such as with the half cent in the 19th century or the Susan B. Anthony dollar in the twentieth. The half cent was unpopular due to low purchasing power, while Susan B. Anthony dollars were confused with quarters.
- 6) Production was curtailed due to inability to obtain metal planchets for the denomination. During the war of 1812, the mint lost its only source for copper planchets, which was in Britain! By early 1815 planchets were exhausted, thus no cents with 1815 date were struck in 1815, the only calendar year from 1793 to date in which a cent with that date has not been produced.
- 7) Accidents at the mint made production impossible. During 1816 a fire in the rolling mills at the Philadelphia mint stopped production of silver and gold coinage.
- 8) Political intrigue or jealousy stopped production. In 1809 mint director Robert Scot suspended production of John Reich's capped draped bust quarter eagle. Walter Breen (Ref 2, page 488) speculates that it was due to "personal pique".
- 9) Production diverted to silver dollars. In 1922 no nickels, dimes, quarters or halves were struck, as the mints were busy building inventories of the new Peace dollar. This press for production was absurdly political, as there was no need for the over 80 million dollars produced that year. Tens of millions of unused Morgan dollars resided in bank vaults!
- 10) Bicentennial production. In 1975 millions of Washington quarters, Kennedy halves and Eisenhower dollars were indeed struck. All however had the bicentennial dates 1776-1976 and modified reverse designs. Nearly every month I receive e-mail from new collectors asking me why they cannot find 1975 dates of these denominations!

With the aid of R.S. Yeoman "A Guide Book of United States Coins, 2005", (the Red Book, reference 1) and Walter Breen, "Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins"(reference 2) I have identified the missing dates in the regular issue U.S. series and the probable reasons, in table 1, below. Where I have not been able to find a reason, I have left a question mark, or if the series is complete the field is blank. I hope this information will prove of historical interest to U.S. coin collectors. If anyone has further information please contact me at jhm@ix.netcom.com. Thank you!



Figure 1, large cents of 1814 and 1816. No cents with 1815 date were struck, due to a lingering copper planchet shortage caused by the war of 1812. By early 1815 planchets were exhausted, no dies were produced, and no cents with 1815 date were struck, 1815 is the only calendar year from 1793 to date in which a cent with that date has not been produced! In 1815, some cents actually were struck, but from 1816 dies (Julian, Ref 4)



Figure 2, 1805/4 half dollar, O-101. No "pure date" 1804 half dollars are known, although mint records state that 156, 519 half dollars were struck in 1804. Like the "1804" dollars, these half dollars were probably struck from 1803 dies, (Breen, Ref 2, page 377). Most interestingly, apparently a 1804 half dollar die was produced, never used, and overpunched for use in 1805!

John H. MacMillan, Ph.D., a collector for over 50 years, is a chemist and teacher who lives in suburban Philadelphia. His collecting interests are U.S. type coins, Civil War tokens, hard times tokens and ancient coins. His numismatic research centers on identifying trends, or statistics that

have not been identified before in existing data. He would like to hear from collectors and researchers who may offer further insight on this article. His e-mail is jhm@ix.netcom.com.

TABLE 1			
MISSING DATES IN U.S. REGULAR ISSUE COINS			
<u>DENOMINATION</u>	<u>YEARS COINED</u>	<u>DATES MISSING</u> YEOMAN (REF 1)	<u>PROBABLE REASON(s), IF KNOWN</u>
HALF CENT	1793-1857	1798-9	LOW DEMAND DUE TO PURCHASING POWER, NOT NEEDED
		1801	AS ABOVE
		1812-24	NO HALF CENT PLANCHETS AVAILABLE DUE TO WAR OF 1812, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 169
		1830	LOW DEMAND DUE TO PURCHASING POWER, NOT NEEDED
		1837-9	VAULTS CLOGGED, NO CUSTOMERS, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 173
LARGE CENT	1793-1857	1815	CENT PLANCHETS NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL LATE IN YEAR. SOME STRUCK IN DECEMBER 1815 WITH 1816 DIES, RW JULIAN, REF 4
SMALL CENT	1857-TO DATE	NONE	
TWO CENT	1864-73	NONE	
SILVER 3 CENT	1851-73	NONE	
NICKEL 3 CENT	1865-1889	NONE	
5 CENT NICKEL	1866-TO DATE	1922	PRODUCTION DIVERTED TO SILVER DOLLARS
		1932-3	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
HALF DIME	1794-1873	1798-9	BANKS PREFERRED PESOS, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 279
		1806-28	AS ABOVE
<u>DENOMINATION</u>	<u>YEARS COINED</u>	<u>DATES MISSING</u> YEOMAN (REF 1)	<u>PROBABLE REASON(s), IF KNOWN</u>
DIME	1796-TO DATE	1799	AS BELOW
		1806	SPORADIC MINTAGE'S SINCE MERCHANTS PREFERRED USE OF SPANISH OR MEXICAN FRACTIONAL SILVER, WHICH WERE LEGAL TENDER, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 303
		1808	
		1810	
		1812-13	
		1815-19	AS ABOVE
1826	AS ABOVE		

		1922	PRODUCTION DIVERTED TO SILVER DOLLARS
		1932-3	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
TWENTY CENT	1875-8	NONE	
QUARTER	1796-TO DATE	1797-1803	"SPORADIC MINTAGE'S SINCE MERCHANTS PREFERRED USE OF SPANISH OR MEXICAN 2 REAL COINS, WHICH WERE LEGAL TENDER"
		1808-14	BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 340,
		1816-17	AS ABOVE, ALSO MINT FIRE IN 1816
		1826	AS ABOVE
		1829-30	AS ABOVE
		1922	PRODUCTION DIVERTED TO SILVER DOLLARS
		1931	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
		1933	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
		1975	BICENTENNIAL COINAGE, 1776-1976, COMMENCED
<u>DENOMINATION</u>	<u>YEARS COINED</u>	<u>DATES MISSING</u> YEOMAN (REF 1)	<u>PROBABLE REASON(s), IF KNOWN</u>
HALF DOLLAR	1794-TO DATE	1798-1800	"The dollar denomination was the only silver coin struck at the Mint between 1798 and 1800. The reasons are not entirely clear, but the sluggish American economy probably had a lot to do with it." Richard Giedroyc (Ref 3)
		1804	MINTAGE FROM 1803 DIES, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 377
		1816	FIRE RUINED ROLLING MILLS, COINAGE IMPOSSIBLE, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 340
		1922	PRODUCTION DIVERTED TO SILVER DOLLARS
		1924-6	?
		1930-2	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
<u>SILVER DOLLAR</u>	<u>1794-1935</u>	<u>1805-1835</u>	MERCHANTS PREFERRED SPANISH OR MEXICAN 8 REALS (PIECES OF 8), WHICH WERE THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COIN OF THE DAY BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 423
		1874-7	SUSPENDED BY 1873 CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION, FAVORING TRADE DOLLAR, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 441
		1905-1920	NON NEEDED, MILLIONS IN MINT VAULTS
		1929-1933	NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION
TRADE DOLLAR	1873-85	NONE	

IKE DOLLAR	1971-8	1975	BICENTENNIAL COINAGE, 1776-1976, COMMENCED
ANTHONY DOLLAR	1979-99	1982-98	NO DEMAND, CONFUSION WITH QUARTER DUE TO SIZE
SACAGAWEA DOLLAR	2000-TO DATE	NONE	
<u>DENOMINATION</u>	<u>YEARS COINED</u>	<u>DATES MISSING</u> YEOMAN (REF 1)	<u>PROBABLE REASON(s), IF KNOWN</u>
\$1.00 GOLD	1849-89	NONE	
\$2.50 GOLD	1796-1929	1799-1801	1799 COINAGE DATED 1798, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 486
		1803	1802 DIES USED, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 340
		1809-1820	SCOT DID NOT LIKE REICH DESIGN, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 488
		1822-3	?
		1828	KNEAS WORKING ON NEW DESIGN, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 489
		1916-24	NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS
<u>DENOMINATION</u>	<u>YEARS COINED</u>	<u>DATES MISSING</u> YEOMAN (REF 1)	<u>PROBABLE REASON(s), IF KNOWN</u>
\$3.00 GOLD	1854-89	NONE	
\$5.00 GOLD	1795-1929	1801	DIES OVERSTRUCK WITH 2, USED IN 1802, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 517
		1816-17	VALUE GREATER THAN FACE ON BULLION MARKETS FIRE RUINED ROLLING MILLS, COINAGE IMPOSSIBLE, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 488
		1917-28	NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS
\$10.00 GOLD	1795-1933	1802	MINTAGE STRUCK FROM 1801 DIES, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 545
		1805-37	INCONVENIENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE, BREEN (REF 2) PAGE 544 VALUE GREATER THAN FACE ON BULLION MARKETS
		1917-19	NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS
		1921-25	NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS
		1927-29	NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS ?

1931

NON NEEDED DUE TO ECONOMIC RECESSION

\$20.00 GOLD

1849-1933

1917-19

NO DEMAND, MILLIONS IN VAULTS?

References:

- 1) R.S. Yeoman "A Guide Book of United States Coins, 2005", (the Red Book), 58th edition, Copyright 2004, Whitman Publishing, LLC, Atlanta, GA, ISBN 0-07948-1789-0.
- 2) Walter Breen, "Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins", Copyright 1988, Doubleday, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10103, ISBN 0-385-14207-2
- 3) Richard Giedroyc "THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SILVER DOLLAR" Coinfacts, see http://www.coinfacts.com/historical_notes/history_of_the_silver_dollar.htm
- 4) JULIAN, ROBERT W. "The Large Cents of 1815-1816". The Numismatist 108 no. 1 (Jan. 1995) pp. 65-69, 109-10. The author corrects and explains mistaken notions that no cents were struck in 1815.

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