

\$25,000 MYSTERY CENT

MINT DESIGN COMPETITION

COINage

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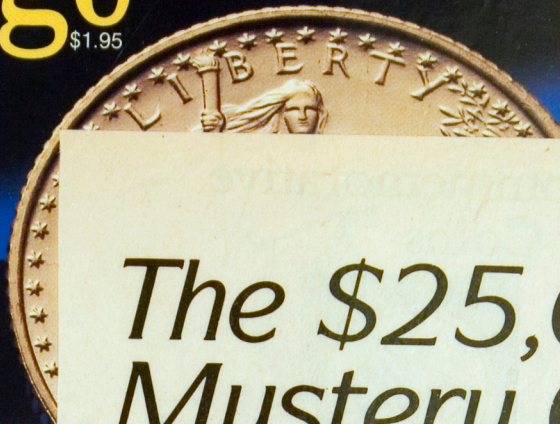
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**WHY NEW U.S. COINS
ARE OVERSEAS
BEST-SELLERS**

Little Eagles

NEW SMALL U.S. GOLD

What Next For GOLD & SILVER?



The \$25,000 Mystery Cent

**WHY DID IT SELL FOR THAT PRICE,
AND WHERE IS IT TODAY?**

Coin collecting has its share of glamour, romance and intrigue. That's what makes certain coins so special—coins like the Brasher doubloon, the 1804 dollar and the 1913 Liberty Head nickel.

The so-called "mystery cent" never came close to winning a place in that select circle of superstar coins. Still, it made its share of ripples in the numismatic stream. And so today, 15 years later, the time seems ripe to take a look back at this fascinating footnote in the annals of U.S. coinage history.

The "mystery cent" first attracted headlines in January 1972. A California man named Dan W. Wilkins announced that he

had paid \$25,000 for a 1936 Lincoln cent. Beyond disclosing the date, he offered no further details about the coin—and that was what made it a mystery.

Why would anyone pay that kind of money for a common-date Lincoln cent? Even rare-date Lincolns weren't bringing anything near that amount.

Wilkins, then 25, identified himself as an investment counselor. That just served to reinforce the snickers being heard at coin shows and coin club meetings all around the country.

Coin World, the hobby's largest weekly periodical, essentially ignored the story.

