

**George Washington  
Inaugural  
Buttons & Medalets  
1789 & 1793**

By

**J. Harold Cobb C.P.A.**

**REVISED IN PART**

by

**Elmer A. Piercy**

**Victorville, Calif.**

**with the kind permission of the author**

**May 16, 1968**

**Further revised by Kirk Mitchell**

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## FORWARD

This release of facts pertaining to the George Washington Inaugural Buttons is prompted by the fact that Mr. Cobb's original book is out of print and now a collector's item in itself.

The purpose of this treatise is to make this information available to new collectors in the field of Political Americana, as interest in these relics of the days of our first President is growing daily.

Mr. Cobb's original book contained a forward that this writer believes should be restated in this publication as it is so true today and will be more true as time goes on.

Mr. Cobb said that a collector who shall remain nameless wrote in 1953 the following statement: "Economically, each of us acts like a Robinson Crusoe on his own little island of interest -- we fail to arouse the interest of new people and thus encourage competition for ourselves. Each guards his own particular island of interest. Yet, unless such competition is encouraged, who will appreciate his collection? Who will know anything of the vast amount of information one has acquired about the subject he collects and each of the pieces in his collection? Usually the collector dies with his knowledge lost. This is perhaps the most serious loss of all -- this loss of knowledge -- because often the collectors's sources of knowledge are also dead." And that statement was the basic reason for the compilation of facts and pictures presented by Mr. Cobb in his original book. All collectors owe him a great deal for without his devotion to the subject, his long hours spent in the detailed research, the volumes of correspondence he undertook and then the painstaking preparation of his manuscript, all this just so other collectors might have a better understanding of the Buttons and Medalets of George Washington, our first President.

Elmer A. Piercy      APIC #19      Victorville, Calif.      1968

In September, 2002, Harold's labor gained new light with the death of Joan Cobb Thurman, wife of Harold's son, Lloyd. In her effects were Harold's scrapbook, and several copies of his manuscript, and most importantly, his collection of George Washington Inaugural Buttons.

Harold's grandchildren, whom include my wife and her brothers, appointed me to re-search the buttons, and using Harold's work we were able to successfully auction off the collection. I retained an interest in the subject even after the sale, and wish to honor Harold's research by making it available once again. In doing so, I will be including information from the Stack's of New York catalogue and the research done by numismatic expert, Michael J. Hodder.

Kirk Mitchell

Introduction  
George Washington Inaugural Buttons and Medalets 1789-1793

This check list of metallic material related to George Washington, our first President, who was born in 1732 and died in 1799, contains approximately seventy major and minor variations, all of which are known to the compiler either through specimens in his own collection or in collections of others, or from photographs of items in Museum collections. No attempt has been made to include in this list varieties not supported by specimens examined or photographs examined. Variations have been considered by the compiler to represent a difference in border impressions, metal content, whether intentional or unintentional, however minute.

Your compiler has inspected over two hundred specimens of Washington Inaugurals, often referred to as "GWs". Few of the buttons herein listed have been described from any but good to very fine specimens. It is thought that the data provided should be sufficient to distinguish every variety mentioned and permit the most rapid cross reference to photographs thereof already published. Any variation in millimeter diameter of specimens may be due to wear.

It is assumed that the collector and student of these buttons will be familiar with one of more of the standard works on GW buttons. These include"

"Uniform Buttons" by David F. Johnson 1948 pp.172-175 inc.

"Washington Historical Buttons" by A. H. Albert 1949 pp 39-49

"A Century of Campaign Buttons 1789-1889" by J. Doyle DeWitt 1959 pp 1-6 inc.

"Political Campaign & Commemorative Buttons" by A. H. Albert 1966 pp 1-25 inc.

"The Collector's Encyclopedia of Buttons" by Sally C. Luscomb 1967 pp 214-218 inc.  
also

"Records of American Uniform and Historical Buttons" by A. H. Albert 1976

"Medallic Portraits of Washington" by Rulau and Fuld

Some of these authorities contain valuable particulars explanatory of the designs of the buttons , not repeated here.

The principle collections in the United States, known to the author (as of 1968), are those of A. H. Albert of Highstown, N.J., J. Doyle DeWitt of Hartford, Conn., Arthur and Ruth Wilson of Lexington, Mass., Winthrop and Helen Richmond of Acton, Mass., L. Kirk Mosler of Philadelphia, Pa., Waterbury Companies Inc. Museum, Waterbury, Conn., Lightner Museum, St. Augustine, Florida, J. H. Cobb, Hamden, Conn., Ferdinand O'Brien of Chicago, Ill. and Elmer Piercy, Victorville, Calif.

Needless to say, the compiler will feel most grateful to receive photographs or even rubbings of varieties not apparently included in this list, or to inspect original specimens kindly submitted to him. It is hoped that the facts connected with the various patterns presented herein for your enjoyment will fill a void left by other references to these historic buttons.

J. Harold Cobb    Hamden, Conn.

## The First Inaugural April 30, 1789

George Washington's first inaugural was postponed for various reasons from March 4th to April 30, 1789 when the inaugural ceremonies were observed in Federal Hall in the city of New York. When Washington was inaugurated in 1789 no inaugural commemorative medals were issued -- however a number of buttons commemorating the occasion were made and sold. Today, the seventy or so known varieties of Washington Inaugural buttons are in great demand by collectors of political buttons and medals, Washington medals, and button collectors, alike. Only four or five patterns of these buttons are commonly met with by collectors. The dated Eagle, GW in oval, Linked States and Eagle and Star.

In 1950 a total of sixty-nine specimens with forty owners were known. Today (1968) this knowledge has increased to three hundred and sixteen specimens with sixty-one owners. It has been reported that an additional ninety-five specimens exist in "general" button collections, but this has been impossible to verify. These ninety-five specimens have been traded by APIC members until it is impossible to trace present day ownership.

As to patterns discovered, Philadelphia, Pa. has given us nine; Connecticut six; Massachusetts four; New York two; Virginia one and California one. From these original finds variations and like specimens have been found throughout the New England states, Illinois, Washington state and even Canada. They have been found in plowing fields, excavating for construction, in tearing down old houses, in cutting down an old tree, in old trunks, in jewelry boxes in estates, in machine drawers, in cellar rubbish, and one was recently found on a beach by a shell enthusiast. They are often found in old time coin collections.

Page Smith in his book "John Adams" volume 2, page 939, published by Doubleday & Co. Inc. Garden City, N.Y., states "Washington had established the precedent of a presidential party on the Fourth of July for the members of Congress, the gentlemen of the City, the Governors and the Officers and Men of the Militia Companies."

For over eighty years collectors and students of these buttons have been searching for authenticated data, advancing many theories, debating various theories, recording pencilled notations found with specimens preserved, with inherited specimens, examining old newspapers of Washington's time for advertising of the availability of these buttons, carefully scrutinizing artists drawings of the period for picturization of buttons on their garments, etc. To date little factual has been forthcoming. The reason for is that these buttons were considered at that time in the same category as we consider a fine pair of cuff-links and a tie pin today, accessories for the well groomed gentleman of that period and not considered as unusual possessions requiring historic reference or picturization. They were not sewed on the great coats but were worn by inserting the shank through a button-hole and a tape, knotted at the top and bottom, held them in place. Like our cuff-links, at the end of the day they were removed and carefully preserved for the next wearing. They were expensive and not easily replaced if lost.

It is probable that five of the large size GWs in all Eagle and Star patterns were worn on a coat, eight being the accepted number for the Eagle and Star pattern. This has been borne out by the latter being found in places associated with those who served under General Washington, who naturally "dressed up" in uniform, while the other patterns have been found many times in the estates of descendants of prominent citizens of Washington's day who wore "splendored" coats for glamorous occasions such as weddings, dinners, balls and Presidential entertainment of that era.

The small size Eagle and Star have been positively connected with the breeches of that period, while the medium size have been attributed to the capes worn to these affairs. In two instances I have knowledge of eight Eagle and Star pattern buttons being found preserved together and the GW in Oval, Linked States and Plain GW patterns have been found in homespun bags containing five specimens. Twelve of the small size Eagle and Star were found on an original pair of breeches of the period. In most all cases the additional buttons required were plain except in the case of the breeches mentioned where the three additional buttons were Continental Navy with an anchor. These were firmly sewed on with homespun linen tape.

The Gentlemen or "well-to-do" residents of the towns divided into the "Genteel" parts of the town and the remainder made up the "Populace". The "Genteel" who wore the GWs, were very much in the minority and this accounts for the limited number of specimens preserved and also for the desire to preserve any in the first place. Individuality in taste accounts for the various patterns and the fact that the same pattern was made by more than one craftsman accounts for the variations in die strikes in border, etc.

No specimens have ever been offered as being found in either England or France indicating that they could and probably were made in the Colonial States that made copper "hardware". It is probable that some of the planchets or blanks used were English in origin due to the scarcity of copper in the colonial states. Many were probably made by the "coin-makers" of the period as we do find with reference to dies the advertised wording "Details of legend, date, etc., being added to suit the fancy of the artist and the POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE TIME AND COUNTRY".

Pennsylvania obtained their copper items from England, North Carolina from Switzerland, and South Carolina from London. There were no copper coining businesses record in the states of Pennsylvania, North or South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Delaware or New Hampshire. Copper "hardware" was made in the states of New Jersey, Vermont, and Connecticut during the years 1785 to 1789. The various differences in shade, weight, metal content, strikes, borders and the obvious deterioration of dies used discredit any assumption of quantity shipments of imported product for public consumption.

The copper sources were few in number --- Machin' Mills, Orange Lake, New Grange-Ulster County (now City of Newburgh, New York) procured metal by smelting old brass cannon and mortars, relics of the Revolution. The zinc being parted from the brass by the action of the furnace, the copper which came through the fire was worked into shape for making planchets or blanks.

Wetherle & Co., Kirby Street, Boston, Mass., obtained metal from the smelting of old brass racks from machines for boring cannon from the old cannon factory at Bridgewater.

Broome & Platte, Morris Cove and Westville, Conn. and Mark Leavenworth, New Haven, Conn. obtained metal from John Higley at Granby-Simsbury copper mines. Walter Mould, New Jersey obtained metal from Machin & Co.

KM- Michael J. Hodder states however “The source of the metal used in colonial era buttons, coins, medals, and tokens is tough to discover. Melted cannon and mortars are usually assumed to be a prime source for bronze and brass and there are written records of some actually being used for coins. On the other hand, the federal government had on hand tons of raw copper, which it made available to a contractor in New Haven who made 1787 Fugio Cents. The guys who made New Jersey’s copper coins 1786-88 bought their copper from local mines and imported more from England (which got it from Sweden at the time).”

The coining of planchets or blanks was done at:

Thomas Machin & Co. New Grange, New York State.

Harmon & Buel, Town of Rupert, Vermont.

Weatherlee & Co. Boston, Mass.

Broome & Platt, Conn.

Walter Mould, New Jersey (furnished blanks for the coiners of Vermont and Connecticut as well in 1789)

The dies were made of steel and the rollers of wrought iron.

Color variations noted on GWs---

Brass - blue, verd antique, green and red.

Bronze - rich gold, blue, green, red, black and brown.

Copper - pure copper color.

It is interesting to note that border impressions and punchmarks similar to those found on GWs can be found on the “copper colonials” of the period. The writer has seen those similar to the Eagle and Star pattern, the Linked States with three indentations between links at border, the Rayed pattern and the Eagle & Sun 18b border.

The Cobb collection included twenty selected copper and brass colonials.

KM-Michael Hodder mentions in the Stack’s January 2003 Americana catalogue for the Cobb sale that it is difficult to determine actual metal content on many of these buttons without actually taking a sample and scientifically finding the ratio of metals involved. He disagreed with Harold on the composition of several buttons in the collection as a result.

## Notes on patterns -- Specimens found

Pennsylvania	Dated Eagle	Philadelphia	Parson's Coin Sale
	GW in Oval	Philadelphia	
	Rayed	Philadelphia	Parson's Coin Sale
	Linked States	Philadelphia	
	13 Star	Philadelphia	Brock Coin Sale
	Eagle & Star	Ambridge	
	Unity/Prosperity	Philadelphia	Old button string
	Smithsonian	Philadelphia	U.S. Mint Collection
	Majesty	Philadelphia	Wayne Coin Collection
New Jersey	Dated Eagle	Morristown	In a field
	Linked States	Port Morris	In the ground
	Linked States	Succasans	
	Linked States	Roxbury	
	Script GW	Ringoes	In old coin collection
	GW in Oval	Hightstown	In a field
Connecticut	GW in Oval	Preston	In an old house
	Sunburst	Bristol	In coin collection
	Sunburst	Old Saybrook	In old jewelry box
	Grant	Waterbury	In old salve box
	Linked States	Ruckville	
	Pater Patriae	Winsted	
	Script GW	Windsor	Excavated
	Eagle & Star	Colchester	In a field
	Eagle & Star	North Cornwall	In a field
	Eagle & Star	Norwich	
	Eagle & Star	Wallingford	
Rhode Island	Linked States	Newport	On an old coat
Vermont	Eagle & Star	Taftsville	In an old house
Maine	GW in Oval	West Gorham	In an old house
	GW in Oval	Rockland	In a field
New Hampshire	GW in Oval	Charleston	Old Fort Site
	GW in Oval	Near Deerfield	Fort grounds
	GW in Oval	Littleton	In old box car
Massachusetts	GW in Oval	Salem	Dug up on farm
	GW in Oval	North Acton	Dug up on farm
	GW in Oval	Denver	In a field
	GW in Oval	Old Boxford	In a field
	Grant	Ashby	
	Linked States	Ashby	
	Rayed	Wakesfield	
	Plain GW	Southampton	In tree crotch
	Plain GW	Salem	
	Wreath & Star	Framingham	
	Wreath & Star	Sudbury	
	Eagle and Sun	Melrose	In a coin collection
New York State	GW in Oval	Vernon Center	
	Sunburst	Courtland	In a coin collection
	Linked States	Fort Ticonderoga	Nearby farm
	Eagle & Star	Staten Island	Old Bedell house site
	Elder 13 Star	New York	Old coin collection
Virginia	Linked States	Alexandria	In ground
	Script GW	Alexandria	In ground
Washington State	Eagle & Sun	Conlitz River	Indian burial ground

## SPECIMENS

### Class 1 Hand-engraved Obverse Blank Reverse

No.	Est. Rarity	Obv. Description	Details	MM.
1	RRR	Liberty Cap on Pole 1789	Copper	34
2	RRR	Profile with Date 1789	Bronze	34
3	RRR	Pyramid of 13 Stars 1789	Brass	34

### Class 2 Authenticated First Inaugural Die--- Strike Obv. Blank Rev.

4	C	Dated Eagle	Brass	34
4a	R	Dated Eagle	Copper	34
5	C	GW in Oval - narrow spacing	Copper	34
5a	C	GW in Oval - medium spacing	Copper	34
5b	R	GW in Oval - wide spacing	Copper	34
5c	C	GW in Oval - "Emilio"	Copper	34.5
5d	RRR	GW in Oval - incised 30 April 1789	Copper	34
5e	RRR	GW in Oval - no legend above	Brass	28
6	RRR	Rayed	Copper	32
7	RRR	Sunburst - 23 pyramidal flames	Brass	31
7a	RRR	Sunburst - 24 pyramidal flames	Brass	31
8	RR	Grant - 33 punch-marks	Copper	33
8a	RRR	Grant - 32 punch-marks Wide rays	Copper	33
8b	RRR	Grant - 32 punch-marks Close rays	Copper	33
8c	RRR	Grant - 31 punch-marks Close rays	Copper	33
9	C	Linked States	Brass	34
9a	R	Linked States - design shows through	Brass	34
9b	RRR	Linked States - 3 ind. between links	Brass	34
9c	RR	Linked States - gold color	Brass	34
9d	C	Linked States	Copper	34
9e	RR	Linked States - Thick planchet	Copper	34
9f	RRR	Linked States - re-engraved 1776	Copper	34
10	C	Script GW	Brass	35
10a	R	Script GW - design shows through	Brass	35
10b	RRR	Script GW	Copper	35
11	R	Plain GW	Brass	36.5
11a	R	Plain GW - Narrow W	Brass	36.5



<b>No.</b>	<b>Est. Rarity</b>	<b>Obv. Description</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>MM.</b>
12	R	Elder 13 Star, gold color	Brass	34
12a	R	Elder 14 Star, gold color	Brass	34
12b	R	Elder 15 Star, gold color	Brass	34
13	R	Small Wreath	Brass	15
13a	R	Small Wreath	Copper	15
14	R	Wreath & Star	Copper	20
15	RRR	15 Star (Darby)	Brass	15
16	RRR	15 Star	Brass	20
17	RRR	Eagle & Star, 37 imp. in border	Brass	18
17a	RR	Eagle & Star, 37 imp. in border	Copper	18
17b	RR	Eagle & Star, 36 imp. in border	Copper	18
17c	RRR	Eagle & Star, 49 imp. in border	Brass	34.8
17d	RR	Eagle & Star, 54 imp. in border	Brass	34.8
17e	R	Eagle & Star, 54 imp. in border	Bronze	34.8
17f	RRR	Eagle & Star, 54 imp. in border	Copper	34.8
17g	C	Eagle & Star, 63 imp. in border	Brass	34.8
17h	C	Eagle & Star, 63 imp. in border (design shows through)	Brass	34.8
17i	C	Eagle & Star, 63 imp. in border	Bronze	34.8
17j	C	Eagle & Star, 63 imp. in border	Copper	34.8
17k	RRR	Eagle & Star, 72 imp. in border	Copper	34.8
17l	R	Eagle & Star, No border	Brass	30
17m	R	Eagle & Star, No border	Brass	20
18	RRR	Eagle & Sun, 21 punch-marks border	Copper	34
18a	RRR	Eagle & Sun, 24 punch-marks border	Brass	34
18b	RRR	Eagle & Sun, 27 punch-marks border	Brass	34
18c	RRR	Eagle & Sun, 27 punch-marks border (design shows through)	Brass	34
19	RRR	Majesty of the People	Brass	31
20	RRR	Pater Patriae, pewter back	Copper face	25
20a	RRR	Pater Patriae, bone back, catgut shank	Copper face	25
21	RRR	Unity Prosperity Independence	Brass	34

No.	Est. Rarity	Obv. Description	Details	MM.
22	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- Conn. Colonial Cent	Copper	29
22a	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- English Shilling	Copper	25
22b	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- English 2 pence	Copper	34
22c	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- octagonal planchet	Copper	27
22d	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- w/border of dots	Copper	29
22e	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- Conn. Colonial Cent	Copper	29
22f	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- Vermont. Colonial Cent	Copper	29
22g	R	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- 8 reale coin (Mexico City)	No Shank	
22h	RRR	Counterstamp "Long Live the President"- No Initials GW	Copper	34

### Class 3 Second Inaugural Medalets c1793

23	C	Success to the United States (large)	Silvered	
23a	C	Success to the United States (large)	Brass	
23b	C	Success to the United States (small)	Brass	

### Unauthenticated:

24	R	GW in Oval	Pewter	34
25	R	Linked States	Pewter	34
26	R	Eagle, GW and Liberty Cap	Copper	25
27	R	Washington at Valley Forge (Tombac engraved)	Tombac	32
28	R	Washington, Warren and Marion (hand engraved)	Copper	33
29	R	Engraved Initials "GW"	Copper	38
30	R	Foliated Script "GW"	Copper	25
31	R	Silver Flan "GW" and Plow	Silver	13
32	R	Washington in Star	Brass	34
33	R	Foliated Script "GW" and Liberty Cap	Copper	25
34	R	George Washington 1776	Copper	35
35	R	Vigilance-Cock-Rising Sun-Engraved	Tombac	37
36	R	"GW" and Eagle	Copper	

Rarity Code C-Scarce R-Rare RR-Extra Rare RRR-Ultra Rare

### List of Photographic References

J indicates Johnson's "Uniform Buttons" 1948; WHB indicates Albert's "Washington Historical Buttons" 1949; D indicates DeWitt's "A Century of Campaign Buttons 1789-1889" 1959; N indicates National Button Bulletin and JB indicates "Just Buttons" magazine.

1. See Plate
- 1a. N September 1953
2. WHB No. 1
3. N-Vol. 9, No. 3, May 1950
4. J #873, WHB No. 2, D No. GW-1789-4, N-September 1953
5. J #869, WHB No. 3
- 5a. D-GW 1789-7
- 5b. N.Y. Historical Society, Quarterly, Vol. 9, No. 4 page 124
- 5c. J # 870, WHB No. 4, N-September 1953
- 5d. WHB No. 5, Antique American February 1948
- 5e. WHB No. 6
6. WHB No. 9, J #877, Antique American February 1948, N-September 1953
7. WHB No. 7, J #875, Antique American February 1948
- 7a.
8. N Jan. 1961, WHB No. 8, J #878
- 8a. N Jan. 1961
- 8b. N Jan. 1961
- 8c. N Jan. 1961, N September 1953
9. WHB No. 10, J #871, d 1789-9
- 9b. Mass. State Bulletin 1950-1, Vol. 3, No. 3, Page 23
- 9f. N Vol. 9, No. 3, May 1950
10. WHB No.11, J #874, D 1789-2, NSeptember 1953
11. WHB No. 12, J #876, N September 1953
12. WHB No.13, N Vol. 9, No. 3, May 1950, N September 1953, Keynoter Sept 1967
13. WHB No. 14, J #879, N Sept 1953, Keynoter September 1967
14. WHB No. 15, J #880, N Sept 1953, Keynoter September 1967
15. WHB No. 16, J #881, N Sept 1953, Keynoter September 1967
16. N November 1958
17. WHB No. 17
- 17a. JB September 1952 and April 1961
- 17b. JB September 1952 and April 1961
- 17d. WHB No. 19, JB September 1952
- 17g. WHB No. 18, D 1789-3
- 17j. WHB No. 20
18. WHB No. 21
19. WHB No. 25, J #885, N Sept 1953, Hobbies November 1944
20. WHB No. 27
- 20a. WHB No. 26
21. J #905
- 22-22f N Vol. 9, No. 3, May 1950
- 23a. D 1789-1
- 23b D 1789-3

<b>No.</b>	<b>Pattern</b>	<b>No. of Specimens Verified as to location</b>	<b>Additional Specimens not verified</b>
1	Liberty Cap on Pole 1789	2	
2	Smithsonian 1789	1	
3	Pyramid of 13 Stars 1789	1	
4	Dated Eagle	26	12
4a	Dated Eagle	2	
5 to 5c	GW in Oval	76	31
5d	GW in Oval	1	
5e	GW in Oval	1	
6	Rayed	3	
7	Sunburst-23	2	
7a	Sunburst-24	1	
8	Grant	4	
9	Linked States	55	25
9b	Linked States	2	
10	Script GW	20	
11	Plain GW	8	
12	Elder	5	
13	Small Wreath	5	
14	Wreath & Star	4	
15	Darby 15 mm.	1	
16	15 Star 20mm.	2	
17	Eagle and Star	1	
17a&b	Eagle and Star	13	
17c to m	Eagle and Star	55	24
18	Eagle and Sun	5	
19	Majesty	2	
20-20a	Pater Patriae	5	
21	Unity Prosperity, Ind.	3	
22-22g	Counterstamped	12	
23	Second Inaugural Medalets	7	

KM-Keep in mind that these numbers are from 1968. Many of the old collections have disappeared like the Cobb collection did for nearly 35 years. A. H. Albert's collection was sold to a private buyer, J. Doyle DeWitt's is in a museum. As far as I know, no one has currently tracked down specimens like Harold and Sally Luscomb did to the current day.

## LOCATION OF SELDOM SEEN SPECIMENS IN COLLECTIONS OF:

No.	Collection of:
1	J.H. Cobb & Helen Richmond
2	Smithsonian Institute
3	E.A. Piercy
5d	E.A. Piercy
5e	E.A. Piercy
6	A & R Wilson, J.H. Cobb, Peter Shurko
7	A & R Wilson, J.H. Cobb
7a	J.H. Cobb
8a	J.H. Cobb
8	J.H. Cobb
8b	J.H. Cobb
8c	Mrs. F. Stuart Scheetz
9b	J.H. Cobb, Mary McFarland
9f	J.J. Goldberg
10b	E.A. Piercy
11	J.H. Cobb, A.H. Albert, J.D. DeWitt, E. Alling
11a	J.H. Cobb
15	J.H. Cobb
16	E.A. Piercy, A.H. Albert
17	J.H. Cobb
18	J.H. Cobb
18a	A.H. Albert
18b	E.A. Piercy
18c	J.H. Cobb
19	J.H. Cobb, Lightner Museum
21	A.H. Albert, E.A. Piercy
22c	E.A. Piercy, Sally Luscomb, Lightner Museum
22d	E.A. Piercy
22d	E.A. Piercy
22g	P. Arnell
26	Dr. Adler
27	E.A. Piercy
28	E.A. Piercy
29	E.A. Piercy
30	E.A. Piercy
31	E.A. Piercy
32	E.A. Piercy
33	E.A. Piercy
34	E.A. Piercy
35	E.A. Piercy

KM-Elmer Piercy traded many items with Harold. All I know about Elmer's collection is that he's died decades ago, and the collection is probably in a vault.

## NOTES ON PATTERNS

### No. 1. Liberty Cap on Pole 1789



Two Specimens known

Comments of Authorities:

A.H. Albert - "Probably the only one known like it. In a class with the "Profile with

date (Smithsonian) WHB No. 1 in the Smithsonian Institute collection."

David F. Johnson - "It must be of political or patriotic significance."

W.F. Sunday - "A choice specimen, seem to recall a member of the 'Buttonists' had it at one time. I would venture to say it was worn at the first inaugural."

J. Doyle DeWitt - "I really think it is a tremendous item"

The Liberty Cap on Pole was used on the paper "notes" of Georgia. Adopted by the Pennsylvania Council of Safety in 1776 on their seal provided for the use of the Board. Probably worn by a member of the Committee of Safety of Philadelphia, PA.

In addition to the specimen in the Cobb collection, Helen Richmond found one in Florida.

### No. 2. Profile of Washington 1789

(Smithsonian)

Legend "Remember March Fourth 1789"

One specimen known.

This button was written up in the New York Sun in 1946. Was in collection of Adam Eckfeldt of Philadelphia, Pa. who started the U.S. Mint Cabinet collection in 1838. Also listed by James Ross Snowden in 1861 in "The Medals of George Washington" page 56, No. 4

### No. 3. Pyramid of Thirteen Stars, “GW” and “Long Live the President”



All parts of the design are impressed-plain border.

One specimen known.

Found in collection acquired by Warren P. Ruth of Philadelphia, Pa. in 1950. Now in collection of Elmer A. Piercy, Victorville, Cal.

### No. 4. Dated Eagle



Adam Eckfeldt of Philadelphia had one in his collection in 1792-1838.

The earliest publication found was in a coin sale of 1859.

One was listed in a Chapman coin sale in 1914.

Specimen recently in news upon presentation to the Smithsonian collection of Political Americana by gift of Washington attorney. (Coin World, Nov. 1962) This was originally from New York State. Shank had been removed and filed smooth for coin cabinet.

Specimen sold in York, Pa. auction in 1963 brought \$110.00.

Twenty eight specimens are known as to location, with an additional twelve specimens reported, impossible of verification. These are usually found in brass, only two specimens in copper known to writer. Specimens examined show consistent wear in two areas - 1789 and Era.

Questionable “copies ?” seen with absence of dot after 1789 and tail feathers running down into letter M in March, usually in “brass with no sign of old age” and in “re-used metal”.

## No. 5. GW in Oval



*This pattern is found with variations in spacing between the G and W, the size of the ovals, and radial vs. horizontal ends of the ribbon or upper die.*

*One specimen has been found with the date 30 April 1789 incised thereon. This was originally found by Edythe M. Doe of Wakefield, Mass. Now in the collection of Elmer A. Piercy.*

*One specimen has been found with no upper die strike, the legend being omitted. This button is brass, and is not a cut-down specimen. It was originally from the Wm. Lanier Washington collection of Washingtonia (Westport, Conn.) sold in 1920. It was advertised in the New York American February 16, 1920 illustrated by a drawing. Mr. David Johnson has examined this specimen and proclaimed it genuine. see "Just Buttons" August 1944 page 4*

*The cataloging of the specimen in the Emilio collection (#1365 Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.) revealed that it had horizontal ends to the ribbon instead of the usual radial ends. This resulted in the term "Emilio" being applied to this variation. (No. 5c)*

*No. 5a - became known as the "Calver" variation from its inclusion in the Calver collection written up in the New York Historical Society Quarterly Bulletin, Vol. IX, No. 4, January 1926.*

*Five specimens of GW in Oval were found together in a bag in Springfield, Mass. (See Albert's WHB page 63 for picture). A recent offering of these was priced at \$1,000.00*

*In a recent sale of the coin collection of the late Howard D. Egolf of Pennsylvania, held in New York City (Lot 54), a GW in Oval -- general die brought \$220.00 and (Lot 55) an "Emilio" brought \$440.00 (N.B.B., July 1961). Successful bidder was from N.J.*

*No. 5dx - same as 5d without date incised. Found in sweeping out an old box-car on siding in Littleton, N.H. - Now in collection of Peter Shurco, Conn.*



### No. 6. Rayed Pattern



Only three specimens of this pattern are known

In 1914 the catalog of the George M. Parsons collection of coins, sold by S.H. Chapman of Philadelphia, described Lot #585 as follows”

“Washington Button -- GW in script in center -- around ‘Long Life the President’. Outside of this is a glory of rays and a plain band of stars, perfect shank”--”the only one I have seen”. Brought \$4.50. (The Chapmans were in business over fifty years and handled the finest collections at auction.)

The Parsons collection was very rich in colonial coins, Washington tokens and medals, and included four Inaugural buttons-- GW in Oval, realized \$1.50; Linked States realized \$3.75; Dated Eagle realized \$1.50 (no shank); and the Rayed pattern described above.

### No. 7. Sunburst



Up to September 1962, only two specimens of this pattern were known, both 23 pyramidal flames. One is said to be from the Col. Stevens, Bristol, Rhode Island, passing to the Servis collection, Melrose, Mass., now owned by a Lexington, Mass. collector. The other is said to be from a Cortland, N.Y. collection.

In September 1962 a specimen with 24 pyramidal flames, a new variation, was found in a jewelry box in a Connecticut estate.

### No. 8. Grant



This pattern has been found in four variations in die strikes; close-spaced, medium spaced, and wide-spaced rays. These have 31, 32 and 33 punch-marks in border.

The most unusual of these is a proof specimen found in Waterbury, Conn. in 1959. It was preserved in an old metal salve box with a faded thin white ribbon of Masonic significance.

Research revealed that this button was possibly from a wedding coat of 1796. In other instances, GW buttons have been identified with wedding coats of the period.

David F. Johnson rates this "find" as the highspot of button collecting. This was registered with W.I.B.S. as #62 - The Kentish Guard by D.F, Johnson.

### No. 9. Linked States



This pattern is probably the best known.

One interesting group of five were in the collection of a Miss Maxwell of Rockwell, Conn. (1876). They were auctioned in New York in 1944 -- Lot #511, and purchased by a party who kept one specimen and sold to Grant's Hobby Shop of Providence, R.I. for \$100.00. These four were sold to four different parties at approximately \$40.00 each accompanied by photostat copy of the original picture of the five buttons which stated the the five were cut from a coat left at Washington's Headquarters at Newport, R.I.

It is difficult to find a specimen with the strike showing through the back. The rarest variation is the one with three touch-marks between the links at the border. Only two of this type have been found, both in Connecticut. The story of one of these was published in the Mass. State Button Bulletin, 1950-51, Vol. 3, No. 3, page 23. This specimen had no shank when found.

The second was found, with original shank intact, in September of 1960, 10 years later.

The Linked States pattern is know in varying colors, a beautiful greenish brass, in gold brass, in copper, and intermediate shades.

### No. 10. Script GW



Of the twenty specimens known, only one has been found in copper, the rest being brass. The copper specimen is from the collection of F.C.C. Boyd of Ringoes, N.J.

One specimen is in the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia among the George Washington relics.

A specimen was reported found in Virginia in 1825 and one was sold in a coin auction in 1882. A specimen was reported found in Windsor, Conn. in 1861 by a person excavating for a flagpole foundation. This pattern is very similar to the seal of the Fredricksburg, Va. Masonic Lodge in lettering, design, and the use of star surrounded by dots.

See also the Cobb unlisted variety on page 25.

### No. 11. Plain GW



One specimen of this rare pattern is said to have been in the (Eliza Messerve 1893) Essex Institute, Salem, Mass. collection. One specimen is reported as having been dug up in a garden in Hightstown, N.J.

In the early 1940's an unusual find was made. Again the number 5 was the number of specimens contained in a handwoven linen bag, tied with a narrow tape, removed from a tree limb cut down in front of the library at Southhampton, Mass.

The purchaser of this find relates the recollection"

"They took down a very old tree in front of the library and as one part fell, this small bundle fell out. It was of handwoven linen, tied with a very narrow tape and very dirty, but inside were five Plain GW buttons, three with shanks, and two without, copper and in very good condition. It did not take long for collectors to want to acquire them from me."

The National Button Bulletin of May 1963 tells of the finding of a specimen by a shell collector on a beach at Cape Hatteras, North Carolina in 1962, somewhat corroded but GW in center and encircling legend still visible.

### No. 12. "Elder" 13 Star Pattern



The Elder pattern has been found with thirteen, fourteen and fifteen stars and various number of flowers.

The United States Mint numismatic collection is said to contain a similar specimen. There are three of this type in the Ruth Find of 1950.

It is believed that the Ruth Find specimens were once owned by the University of Pennsylvania and possibly made by Charles Wilson Peale, artist, silversmith, watchmaker and engraver. In 1869, 262 lots from his Philadelphia Museum, est. 1794, were sold by Mason, cataloger of coins from the Peale Museum collection. Described were "tokens made of copper, occasionally gilded".

Albert questioned whether the Elder patterns were contemporary after finding a specimen that appeared to be from used brass that could be dated to the early 1800's.

### No. 13. Small Wreath



It is possible that these specimens were designed to omit the GW during the second Presidency of Washington and were expected to be worn even into the Adams' administration.

Another specimen, badly corroded, was found while hunting Indian artifacts in a field on Tench Francis farm in Paradise, N.J. Now owned by K. Bower of Oley, Penn.

**No. 14. Wreath & Star**



The same applies to this pattern, these buttons were originally silvered. They were first reported in June 1944 and again in October of that year.

**No. 15. Darby 15 Star**



An article entitled "Unlisted Inaugural Button Found in California" published in the National Button Bulletin for November 1947 tells of the finding of the only known 15mm specimen of this pattern. This button has been publicized on radio, television and news media.

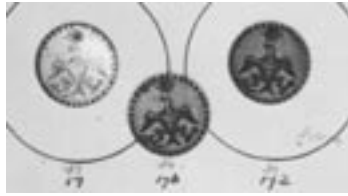
**No. 16. 15 Star 20mm Size**



Two specimens are known, one found in a collection sold in Chicago, Ill. in October 1958 and the second found in a New England collection in 1962. One is now owned by A.H. Albert, Hightstown, N.J. from Cassie Dowdall's collection and the other by Elmer A. Piercy, Victorville, Calif.



### No. 17. Eagle & Star -- Small Size



The small size of this pattern has now been found in both brass and copper. The one brass specimen known was found in a Meridan, Conn. button collection in the early 1940s. At first it was not recognized for its true status as no other had ever been heard of, however it was "identified" in May 1944. (See National Button Bulletin, July 1944, page 26 and January 1946, page 45)

In January of 1961 twelve copper specimens were found on the original breeches, white, just publicized, having been found by Burdette G. Johnson, famous coin dealer of St. Louis, Mo. years earlier in a purchase of colonial items in Philadelphia, Pa. Eleven of these buttons were removed and quickly acquired by collectors, the twelfth button still attached to the breeches acquired by J. Doyle DeWitt, Hartford, Conn. (See story of this find in "Just Buttons" magazine, April 1961 issue) Also see National Button Bulletin, May 1961, for article referring to these rare specimens.

### No. 17. Eagle & Star -- Large Size



There are variations in count of the border impressions, of 49, 54, 63, and 72. Also specimens with no border have been found in the 20mm and 30mm size blanks.

The 72 impression is the rarest (the 49 the most unusual) and the 54 imp. seldom found. It is interesting to note that most of the known 54 imp. came originally from Philadelphia although in 1960 one specimen was excavated at the site of the old Bedell House, Staten Island. This pattern was repeatedly found in places where those who once served under General Washington had at one time resided.

### No. 18. Eagle & Sun



The specimen with 21 punch-marks in the border was from the George Servis collection who collected at the era of Calver, Hart, Stevens and Emilio.

The specimens with 27 punch-marks have two different style borders, one similar to that of the 21 imp. specimen, and a notched edge effect.

As to the 21 imp. the National Button Bulletin of September 1947 first showed this type. Again in the N.B.B. of January 1951, this button is referred to, page 50, and in "Just Buttons", April 1953 issue, the "notched edge variety" is described by David F. Johnson.

One specimen of the Eagle & Sun was reported in 1947, found in a large collection of Indian trinkets and British uniform buttons-- said to have been dug up from an Indian burial ground found on a farm along the Cowliz River in the State of Washington.

### No. 19. The Majesty



The first known specimen reported is said to have been found in the Hart collection now in the Lightner Museum, St. Augustine, Fla. David Johnson in 1948 stated "--may or may not be an Inaugural". The second specimen was found in John H. Andrew's Collection at Lancaster, Pa.

## No. 20. Pater Patriae



Copper face - pewter back:

One seen in 1952 in Connecticut family heirloom. (See "Just Buttons", September 1952)

Two found in possession of family in New York State, family heirlooms since passed into hands of collectors. This was in 1957.

One specimen in collection of Mr. Robert Arnell of Long Island, NY.

Copper face - bone back and catgut shank:

This specimen is subject to question and its present location is unknown. One only known of this construction. Was described as silver on copper face, the pewter back specimens show no sign of silver. Thomas Owens of Gorham, Maine acquired a specimen, somewhat worn, from a woman in his home town.

## No. 21. Unity Prosperity Independence



Three specimens known. One of these is definitely known to have originally come from and old Philadelphia family. Member of that family having moved to Canada it was discovered there by a Wisconsin collector.



## No. 22. “Counterstamped GW Long Live the President”



This die strike has been applied to both Colonial and English coins, and to various metal planchets, both round and octagonal.

One strike, that on a 1794 8-reales piece of the Mexico City Mint is owned by Dr. Fuld of Baltimore, Md. who wrote “Although the buttons may have been issued for the inauguration of 1793, it seems likely that this unique counterstamp was probably struck several years after the official buttons were made.” This piece is from the famous James Brock collection, previously the property of the University of Pennsylvania and acquired about 1950 when that collection was sold (Brock collection). (See Journal of T.A.M.S., December 1962).

## No. 23. Second Inaugural Medalets c1793 (Washington Profile and Success to the United States)

Engraver unknown but thought produced in this country.

Very thin planchet.

Washington’s head from Trumbell’s portrait of 1790.

Harper’s Encyclopedia in 1906 pictured one of these medalets and captioned it a “Liberty Cap Cent”

“Speaking of specimen coins struck at the Mint at Philadelphia, among the most rare is the liberty cap cent having a profile of Washington on one side and on the other a liberty cap in the centre, with rays of light emanating from it, and the words “Success to the United States”.

## Cobb Unlisted DeWitt 1789-2 variation, Albert WI-10 variation



A rare variation with only two specimens known. Harold didn’t know about this variation as it didn’t show up until the late 1970’s. Both specimens are said to be excavated, and from the South Carolina area. This is similar to the Dotted Script GW’s, Cobb #10.



The Plate can also be found at:  
<http://moscow2.pld.com/kirk/cobbgw/index.html>

