



United States

\$3.00 GOLD

“Indian Princess”

1854-1889

While first proposed in 1832, it was not until 1851 that the groundwork would be in place for the issuance of one of America's most fascinating and desirable gold coins.

The Act of March 3, 1851 which *lowered* the rate for a local prepaid letter from 5 cents to 3 cents also authorized a 3 cent silver coin. This was for public convenience, eliminating the need to use the cumbersome and unpopular copper large cents of that period when purchasing stamps.

As a logical “next step” **The Mint Act of February 21, 1853** authorized the minting of a \$3.00 gold coin to facilitate the purchase of sheets of stamps or rolls of 3 cent coins.

Chief Engraver James Barton Longacre submitted two designs to Mint Director Pettit. The approved obverse displayed an “Indian Princess” (actually another version of the Greco-Roman *Venus Accroupie* profile Longacre used for his model of Liberty on the \$1 and \$20 gold coins) wearing a feathered headdress intended to give the design an “American motif”.

\$3.00 gold pieces were produced every year from 1854 through 1889 at the Philadelphia Mint as well as branch mints: New Orleans (1854) Dahlonga (1854) and San Francisco (1855-57, 1860 and 1870). The \$3.00 set contains so many low mintage issues that the entire series may justifiably be considered rare. This is especially true of high grade “mint state” specimens. The unique 1870-S is one of the classic rarities in the entire field of numismatics.

Diameter: 13/16” (20.6mm)

Weight: 77.4 grains

Composition: 90% gold-10% silver/copper

Designer/Engraver: James B. Longacre

Mint Marks: Philadelphia (none); Dahlonga (D); New Orleans (O); San Francisco (S); (found below wreath on reverse)

Obverse: “Indian Princess” (Liberty) wearing feathered headdress with a beaded band inscribed LIBERTY surrounded by UNITED STATES OF AMERICA near beaded border.

Reverse: Wreath of tobacco, corn, wheat and cotton surrounds date/denomination.

Edge: Reeded

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