

Holthoefer Family History

From Serkenrode, Westphalia, Germany to the Early Years in Detroit, Michigan
By Yagley, Holt, Aragon, Holthoefer & Leeds. Copyright 2004, 2015 by Robert J. Yagley

Second Generation

Caspar J. Holthoefer & (1st wife) Amelia Keusch - 1.3

Caspar J. Holthoefer

Civil War Token Penny, Circa 1863



1863 Civil War 'Store Card' Token Penny, about 0.75" diameter, reeded-edge. Obverse 1863. Reverse 'C. J. Holthofer, Dealer in Dry Goods, Detroit'. Token in possession of Charles & Helen Holt. Photo used by permission, 2015.

NOTE ON C. J. HOLTHOEFER PENNY

Written by Howard Holthoefer, Grandson of Casper.

"In the year of 1863 during the civil war the South or rebels ran out of copper metal which was very essential to their cause.

This metal was used in the manufacture of percussion caps to fire the old fashioned rifles they used. As there were no copper mines in the south they sent spies or agents up to the northern states with orders to procure all the U.S. Cent piece's they could lay their hands on. The U.S. cent pieces were very large & contained lots of the copper they needed. This was so successful it made a great shortage of U.S. pennies.

The cent pieces were very necessary to the operation of business here in the north, as many items at that date were sold for one, two or three cents. Businessmen were stymied for change. They appealed to the U.S. government for help and were notified that the U.S. mint would make U.S. pennies of copper but very small and the merchant ordering them were to have their name and business address on the reverse side of the Indian head side of the coin. These pennies were at the end of the war to be returned to the mint for redemption.

My Grandfather was one of these merchants with a large dry goods store in Detroit Michigan. He had quite a large business and needed many pennies to operate on. At the end of the war they were redeemed by him with silver coins. "BUT" One penny got away and one hundred years later turned up in a Cincinnati Ohio Gum Machine. A friend of mine found it and sent it to me. This is one GOOD PENNY that returned to its rightful owner. "