

THE ENGELHARD GOLD STANDARD

By **AGWire™**
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There was something about Auric Goldfinger in Ian Fleming's 1964 film, *Goldfinger*, that painted an intense likeness to the man and mogul he portrayed, Charles Engelhard. And, much like the man and his metals, there is great irony in the partnership of Engelhard and the Gold Standard Corporation, whose founder, Conrad Braun, launched the Gold Standard Corporation in Kansas City, Missouri in 1977. Gold Standard Corporation is well known for the gold, silver and platinum coins produced that were denominated in Braun's own contrived denomination, the Gold Standard Unit. Braun worked tirelessly to sway the House of Representatives to consider an alternative means of value besides the (then) recently debased dollar, but unfortunately his mission of circulating Gold Standard units became more novelty than success, preceding a similar fate to Bernard von Nothaus and his Liberty dollars. Imagine the thought of someone trying to market and lobby for a fair, honest and rational measure of value increment against today's corrupt monetary system! Not gonna happen! (Until it does! And it will...) Braun's legacy, however, lives on because of his union with Engelhard from the early to mid 1980's.

Just as Auric Goldfinger and Charles Engelhard were cut out of the same mould, Gold Standard bars also shared the same moulds, and likely production runs, with their comparable Engelhard bars. The varieties and sizes of Engelhard Gold Standard bars were 1oz bars, 10oz machined flat loafs, 10oz extruded commercial bars, and 100oz Extruded bars. Gold

Standard 1oz bars did not have serial numbers and were reportedly produced in the early 1980's within the same production span as the Engelhard landscape non-serial EI-1AV2, with an estimated mintage of <7000. The 10oz flat machine finished Gold Standard loafs were serial numbered, and issued at the end of the standard 10th series "P" 10oz run. Serialized 10oz Gold Standard commercial bars appear to be from the same mould as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd series 10oz Engelhard Portrait bars, however, these were a landscape presentation, and grouped into either an independent serial run of 5000 to 9999, or without serial number. Serialized 100oz extruded Gold Standard bars came in two varieties; The 1st series with a "P" prefix, produced within the same run as standard 8th series "P" 100oz Engelhard bars, with some numbers, like the P000140 shown above, likely backfilled with a void number from an earlier serial run, these with an estimated mintage of <100. And the 2nd series in a mirror finish with beaded edges and convex lettering, these with an estimated mintage of <1000.

Overall production within the Engelhard Gold Standard alliance was approximately 15,000 bars. Gold Standard 1oz bars are often found on eBay auction, and currently command prices of approximately 3-5x spot. Gold Standard 10oz commercial bars are also frequently found on eBay and trade in the 2-3x spot price range. Gold Standard 10oz flat machined loafs are quite rare, only occasionally come to market, and lately have traded in the 4-5x spot range. Gold Standard 100oz bars, while quite possibly the rarest of all Gold Standard bars, and seldom seen, and trade at approximately 1.25 – 1.5x spot price, as larger bars bring a higher price point and thus have a smaller buyer audience.

As silver enthusiasts, we couldn't be happier to see our favorite precious metal and refiner represent the Gold Standard, and we honor and salute Engelhard for integrating Gold Standard's hallmark onto Engelhard bars. These Gold Standard's are beautifully designed, well struck, exacting in specifications, and precisely represent all that the hallmark so proudly displays. If you look up "Gold Standard" in the dictionary (or Google these days), you will find "*A model of excellence, paragon. The best, most reliable, or most prestigious thing of its type.*" Charles Engelhard was a passionate, determined and purposeful businessman who knew exactly what he wanted. His alliance with Conrad Braun was an imperial match, one that will stand the test of time.

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