

SURREAL SERIAL NUMBERS

07777, 00004, 18000, P000001, 00016, 222222, P000045

By AGWire™
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We've previously written about [Sequential Serial Numbers](#) and [Serial Number Protocol](#). But there's another aspect to serial numbers that is even MORE intriguing, and that would be... **Surreal** Serial Numbers. I hear my wife in the background smirking, "Yeah, so it's just another stupid number stamped on an ugly old bar. **What's the big deal?**" Well, she has a point. But she's **WRONG!** In fact, it IS a Big Deal! As we've stated on numerous occasion, serial numbers ARE what give Engelhard *accountability*, *rarity*, and thus, **value**. In over a decade of impassioned study, we've only witnessed a few serial numbers that really stand out as unique and special, a few of those are shown in the above photos. Funny that they're mostly 10oz weight class, definitely not in10tional, and cer10ly no pun in10ded. Ok, enough of that.

Is there an additional premium that goes along with these unusual serial numbers? After all, they are the exact same variety as the other serial numbers within their range, likely sharing identical stampings and pour patterns. So what's all the fuss? Well, in a nutshell, we do think unique serial numbers bring added value to the table, but weighing that is truly subjective, and it is really up to what a buyer is willing to pay for something scarcely unique and interesting. Take the UNITED 07777 10oz ingot above, for example. UNITED ingots are already top list Tier 1 ingots in our book. Add to that a unique and "lucky" serial number, and there's a buyer out there who's "gotta have it." And the quintessential P000001 10oz Prototype 11th series bar that we've shown on many occasions, and that you may have seen on eBay. It's the only one, and it's Numero Uno. Is there a better one out there? Doubt it. And the 222222, well, certainly it's the only one, too! Is there a 111111 or a 333333 out there? We know they were minted, but there's also a good chance they've long since been overlooked and melted.

In a quick analogy, imagine if rare coins had serial numbers. Of course they only have date and mint mark stamps, but to put collectible bullion in parity with rare coins, it would be like having each 1914-D Lincoln Cent stamped with an individual serial number, some numbers more unique than others. So not only would the rare cent be scarce in itself, but it would also have additional rarity within its relative mintage. The mintage on these very rare cents is similar to that of the 1oz Engelhard EI-09V at 1,150,000, the most common of all Engelhard bars produced, **all with individual serial numbers**. For this reason alone, coin collectors are taking great notice and intrigue to pre-1988 Engelhard bullion because of this accountability, scarcity and uniqueness.

So, would you rather have a P372498 (we mean no disrespect if this is your bar), or a P000001? There would, of course, be a price differential of maybe \$220 vs. \$7500 respectively. THAT is quite significant. So grab your bowl of cereal and start going through your serial numbers in hope that you, too, have a surreal serial number to celebrate. And if you don't take us seriously, just ask Siri or your friend Shirley in Surrey and they will surely support our cerebrally serendipitous supposition.

Sinserially,

AE

PS. If you have an interesting serial number to share, please don't hesitate to email us at allengelhard@gmail.com.